

Due date: Saturday, 9 October 2010, 09:10 PM

Last edited: Saturday, 9 October 2010, 04:58 PM (791 words)

Justin White

Assignment 1

The story that caught my attention was the one of Tran Thi Gung, a woman who had fought against the South Vietnamese government and the Americans during the Vietnam conflict. Her story is very captivating to me because it is a point of view from the "enemy", which I find to be very informative and unbelievably fascinating. The things that she had to endure are simply amazing to me, and the fact that she was the only women in her company of fighters and was one of their best soldiers makes it that much more impressive to me. Tran joined the guerrillas in 1963, at the young age of seventeen. She joined because of the death of her father, killed by the American GI's and the South Vietnamese soldiers. When Tran's father was killed she decided that she would seek revenge for her father's death, and that is exactly what she did.

The story of Tran Thi Gung is a powerful story but is it completely true, that is the question. In my opinion, I believe that it is true, but is it possible that she could have embellished some of her stories? The thing that factors in is the subjectivity, is it factual or is it objective, it is really hard to determine. I personally do not know how credible this person is but I definitely believe her story. I don't know what she could gain from lying about killing Americans and fellow Vietnamese people. So in my opinion the story is completely true. It is really up to the reader to decide if the person telling the story is credible or not.

The story I chose to talk about for part 2 is that of Henry Prunier, a retired brick and masonry contractor who had been an ally to Ho Chi Minh for a few weeks in 1945. Prunier had parachuted into the jungles of Indochina just a few weeks after World War 2 had ended, as a part of a seven man "Deer Team" organized by the Office of Strategic Services. Their mission was to support an anti Japanese resistance called the Viet Minh led by a "Mr. Hoo." When Prunier got to Indochina he began training the guerrilla resistance group. After a few days Prunier met up with a very frail Ho Chi Minh, who had walked down from the Chinese border and was in terrible shape. Minh was suffering from dysentery and malaria. The medic that was with Prunier gave Ho Chi Minh quinine and sulpha drugs which may have helped save his life. Although America and Ho Chi Minh were allies for a short time, Minh could not have seen the coming conflicts between his people and the Americans. When the Americans sided with France instead of Minh, it had to be a great disappointment to him.

When I finished reading this story I was really surprised. I had no idea that

America had been so close with Ho Chi Minh at one point in time. It is shocking to me that America was helping Minh at one time and then not long after we were fighting his people in fierce combat. There is so much politics that are involved in war it is disheartening, and to know that we take sides so easily and plunge into war. I know there is probably more to it than that but it is hard to really determine. What probably disappointed me the most is that the people we help train and would eventually fight were nothing more than patriots that just wanted to do what any human being would do, and that's protecting their homeland. I believe most people in their positions would have done the same thing. The really sad thing is, is that they weren't going and looking to take someone else's land, like what many wars have been about throughout history. They were simply trying to gain independence and freedom.

I am trying to find something positive from this story but it isn't easy. I still can't help but feel like we kind of double crossed Ho Chi Minh by acting like we were friends with his groups and training them for crying out loud. When we decided to back up France instead of Ho Chi Minh's forces I do believe it was in America's best interests but it still seems kind of two faced. I think what we can learn from this story is that war is complicated and unwinnable, in the sense that everyone suffers from it and even if you're on the so called winning side you will still carry the scars, inside and out.

Close this window

 [Moodle Docs for this page](#)