

# The village a book report book review

[Countries](#), [Vietnam](#)



The Village is a well acclaimed book written by well known military writer Mr. Bing West. The book is based on the Vietnam War. This book paints a complete picture of the Vietnam War and the mental, physical, psychological conditions of fighting soldiers during and after of the war. Since Mr. Bing west has worked on the several important posts of American defense and has served as marine infantry officer during Vietnam War itself, the writer is well aware of the war conditions, policies of the war and the state of mind of soldiers. Bing in this book has portrayed the life of a small army unit of marines that was sent to protect the people of a small Vietnamese village from the Viet Cong, a communist political organization of rebels who used to use force against the common people to support them unconditionally against the South Vietnamese government.

The book starts with an incident describing the atrocities of the communist organization Viet Cong on the common villagers. Lam, the chief of the village Binh Nghia, was told that an important member of Viet Cong named Truong requires his wife for one night to sleep with her. Lam was not ready for this and he did not accept the command but he decided and made a plan to kill Truong. According to his plan he killed the member of Viet Cong but then Viet Cong decided to take revenge for the said act. Lam having no option started running but finally decided to combat them when he was assured that a unit of American marine soldiers have reached there to protect the villagers.

The village and the Viet Cong: - Binh Nghia was a small village in the Vietnam and author of the book has described the life of this village in a very natural, interesting and in the simplest manner. The people of this village

were living peacefully until they were not targeted by the members of Viet Cong. When Viet Cong started targeting the village, turmoil started and then the heroes of the book and the war came into picture. When the American marines reached into village the villagers were very happy and they tried to facilitate the army men. They made a fort for them and were ready to assist them in military operations also. The villagers realized that this team of American soldiers only can save them from the brutal hands of Viet Cong. The Viet Cong, also known as national liberation front was an organization of political rebels who was in favor of liberalization the Vietnam and for the very same purpose they created the army and also trained their men in guerilla war. They started the armed operations also against the government in 1960. The members of this organization were very brutal, equipped with the deadly weapons and they started taking benefits of their power and unity by exploiting villagers and by ne demands from them. They started forcing people to cooperate, join and assist them in war against Americans and the government of South Vietnamese government and there were various penal provisions for those who dare to refuse their demands or orders. They made every effort to include people in their cadre, mission and tortured those people who denied obeying them.

Korean and Corruption: - Armed forces of Republic of Korea (ROK) soldiers were also present in the village Binh Nghia and they were involved in village activities. Author informs the readers that the Korean army of course was present in that war but fighting alone was not their motive, they were also making money in Vietnam. A number of illegal activities were also taking place in the contemporary society and officials of Vietnam were also involved

in making money, especially when America started giving Vietnam economic assistance and other aids, a large sum of the money and goods was manipulated and looted by Vietnamese officials as well as by the officials of Republic of Korea. Black-marketing of goods was also a way of making money and it was on peak (GI, 2008). It was very interesting seeing that in such disturbed and odd conditions also the Koreans and Vietnamese officials did not let a single chance go to make money. Their primary motive was changed and confined from serving their duty, serving their nation to making money by illegal means and to overlook the security of their own country men.

US Marine's Operation to protect village: - to protect villagers from the atrocities of Viet Cong, in June, 1966 a unit of a dozen marine soldiers left their cozy life behind and went to village with few Vietnamese. All members of this team were in their twenties and equipped with very impressive army skills. In the village they met Lam, the chief of the village and a brave villager along with local police and people of popular forces. They decided that existing headquarter over the hills is not the strategically right place and decided to move closer to the village, they made all the necessary changes. They selected the place and with the help of villagers they built their new outpost. There was no reporting structure existing in popular force and no leader was appointed for the village. After marine's arrival in the village, popular force unofficially declared one of their members as their leader and things started taking place in an arranged manner. This made a positive impression among the villagers and members of local police and popular forces. Trained by American soldiers these people were able to fight

members of Viet Cong now and later on numerous small teams were made and was name as Combined Action Platoons (CAP's).

Once every thing settled and situation became a bit comfortable for the marines, four Marine's decided to go on petrol to observe things happening in village closely. Popular Force leader asked one member of his team to come along and guide the team of American soldiers. The members of popular forces were very nervous and crumbling but their leader gave them assurance that nothing will happen as Marine's are with him. They started their petrol and made certain observations and returned back. Marines along with Lam and Popular Forces started identifying Viet Cong spots where Viet Cong members used to stay. After a week time Marine's maid a raid on of their spot which was outside the village. Thirty people were caught during the operation. Police sent all the prisoners them to headquarter for further proceedings. It was not a difficult task for Viet Cong to find replacement after each raid but it sends a message among villagers that police is in better position and in future they will succeed. Villagers informed Lam that Viet Cong members are also planning to attack and during the nights they have heard whispering of Viet Cong members. Lam was also aware that Viet Cong people must be planning to attack on the place where they are staying. It was very difficult for Marine's to identify Viet Cong member's as they never wear uniforms. Making identification between enemies and friend was a real tough task. It was required to set a process of regular patrolling and developing relationship with villagers. The marine's formed a very strong and equipped patrol team. American soldiers and popular forces started regular and intensive patrolling for the security of village (Brush).

Marines started giving training to members of popular forces, local police and other brave villagers who deliberately and enthusiastically wanted to combat Viet Cong. This whole process enhanced confidence among them. After giving various defeats to Viet Cong the confidence of popular forces went up and they started showing their authority. They became more powerful by equipping themselves with additional security equipments to secure villagers.

After getting several defeats Viet Cong started feeling exhausted in their wealth and manpower. They finally decided to move away from the area. After 17 months of the arrival of Marines, command felt that popular force is in a good position and they are capable enough to take care of security of village and to face the Viet Cong.

The Author himself was a member of the combat team but he did not portray himself in the book. He described the each and every activity, accidents that took place during the petrol or at any other place or time in a very real way. The author did not present only their official life but also touched their personal life by mentioning hilarious moments that they spent together by cracking jokes at each others. Any reader will feel related with villagers and officials while reading the book especially at the moment when marine die while safeguarding the village and combating the members of Viet Cong. American forces or any other force of world tries to defeat their enemy as soon as possible because this act does not completes their tasks only but further stops the opposite party to combat or further preparation of combat and to surrender by singing songs of peace. Vietnam War was the exception because this is one of the longest wars that Americans fought. The strategic

condition and location of war place plays a very important role in winning or losing the war. In the case of Vietnam after several times bombing over Vietnam, American generals realized that they can not achieve their goals in Vietnam by merely bombing the war place or by winning over large platoons, they will have to win the war at the very local level also and for that several small battles were to be won. The plan was made practically possible when several small units of soldiers were prepared; they were made identical of the geographical conditions, military conditions and the war methods and tactics of the enemies.

In this war the Americans had to face a very brutal enemy and so brutal was the geographical condition for them. The chances to win or loose this war was very uncertain and since this was a new kind of war place for them they also at times started feeling that they are trapped in something very wrong situation. The local members of the Viet Cong were not much aware of modern war methods and there guerilla members were not equipped with modern war accessories but were very brutal and expert in their way of fighting. Americans learnt many things from this Vietnam War and these lessons are very useful for them because it would help them in future. The people of Vietnam remember the brave marines with respect and their name and stories are on lips of Vietnamese till today.

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