

Suggested Reading List for Vietnam

Books

Kill Anything That Moves (*Nick Turse*)

In this groundbreaking investigation, award-winning journalist and historian Nick Turse uncovers the pervasive and systematic acts of violence carried out against Vietnamese civilians during the war. Drawing on more than a decade of research into secret Pentagon archives and extensive interviews with U.S. veterans and Vietnamese survivors, the writer describes how the notorious My Lai massacre and other incidents were a consequence of official orders to "kill anything that moves."

Perfect Spy: The Incredible Double Life of Pham Xuan An, Time Magazine Reporter and Vietnamese Communist Agent (*Larry Berman*)

The extraordinary life of a twentieth century spy is brought to light in this fascinating biography by Larry Berman. During the Vietnam War, Time Magazine reporter Pham Xuan An American gained the trust of journalists David Halberstam and Neil Sheehan, the CIA's William Colby, and the legendary Colonel Edward Lansdale. None of them suspected that the journalist was also providing intelligence to Hanoi, smuggling invisible ink messages into the jungle inside egg rolls.

River of Time (*Jon Swain*)

Between 1970 and 1975 Jon Swain, the English journalist portrayed in David Puttnam's film, "The Killing Fields", lived in the lands of the Mekong River. This is his account of those years, and the way in which the tumultuous events affected his perceptions of life and death. He describes the beauty of the Mekong landscape - the villages along its banks surrounded by mangoes, bananas and coconuts, the exquisite women and the odors of opium as well as observations of the violence and corruption that occurred during that period.

A Dragon Apparent, Travels in Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam (*Norman Lewis*)

A classic account of the author's travels during the last years of French Indochina, this book provides a wonderfully detailed description of the region's local cultures and archaeological treasures. From his meeting with a King of Cambodia and an Emperor of Vietnam to the remote hills where he stayed in a highlander's longhouses, the author describes his adventures in this enchanting land and his experiences with the gentle, tolerant and dedicated people.

A Good Scent from a Strange Mountain (*Robert Olen Butler*)

Winner of the 1993 Pulitzer Prize, this collection of 15 short stories, each told from a different point of view, captures the spirit of Vietnam in the aftermath of the war. American and Asian perspectives are juxtaposed in these stories, which jump back and forth from wartime Vietnam to rural Louisiana.

The Sacred Willow, Four Generations in the Life of a Vietnamese Family (*Duong Van Mai Elliott*)

The history of Vietnam over the last 100 years is beautifully portrayed through this wonderfully nuanced portrait of a family. The great granddaughter of a mandarin in the imperial court, Mai traces her family's journey, from her childhood days in her grandmother's shop to her village being torched by French troops and the agonizing choices that caused the family to split apart.

Television and Films

The Quiet American (1958 and 2002)

Based on the novel by Graham Greene, this film explores the relationship between the civilization of the West and the exotic-ness of the East through a love triangle that develops between the three main characters – a British journalist, an American aid worker, and a Vietnamese woman. The story of America's intervention in France's war against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam is depicted here in a sophisticated and nuanced way.

Indochine (1992)

This French-language film is set in the 1930's and tells the story of Eiane Devries, a French plantation owner during the time of Vietnam's struggle for independence. An intriguing glimpse of life in the last 25 years of colonialism, this film offers a fascinating historical account along with exceptional views of the inspiring Vietnamese landscape.

The Lover (1992)

A beautiful adaptation of the Marguerite Duras' autobiographical novel, this film depicts the torrid love affair between a young French schoolgirl and a Chinese aristocrat in 1920's Vietnam. Their interracial romance is forbidden by society and eventually comes to a heartbreaking end. One of the film's major attractions is the stunning backdrops filmed in historic locations around Ho Chi Minh City and the Mekong Delta.

Websites

<https://edition.cnn.com/travel/destinations/vietnam>

Blogs

<http://vietnamcoracle.com/>

<https://saltinourhair.com/vietnam/>

<https://www.goatsontheroad.com/category/southern-asia/vietnam/>