

## In an Alternate Universe: If Vietnam Had Lost

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### Abstract

British comic-artists Alan Moore, Dave Gibbons and John Higgins created a comic-strip titled *Watchmen*, published in 1987 as a graphic novel from Detective Comics, which gathered cult-status over time. It was adapted as a Hollywood movie in 2009, directed by Zack Snyder. The novel explores a parallel universe located in a different timeline, and projects an alternative history. In this case, the U.S. Army wins the battle at Vietnam. The Vietnamese forces of resistance are defeated in their protracted war of decolonisation and a group of superheroes help their political masters in the USA and the US army to win the battle in this alternative scenario. The world has to pay a price for this epoch-altering event. The free voice of the people is doused. The superheroes are no longer a symbol of justice to the world, they morph into metonyms of the terror of the American dream, an instrument of repressive state machinery which would wipe out any voice of dissent, dream of alternatives, as the world inches towards nuclear annihilation. My paper seeks to trace the global socio-political implications of the novel and the film in relation to the Vietnam war, how farther is this counter-history from our contemporary metadata-dictated reality?

### Keywords

*Alternative History, Graphic Novel, Postmodernism, Superhero Narrative, Decolonisation, Vietnam*