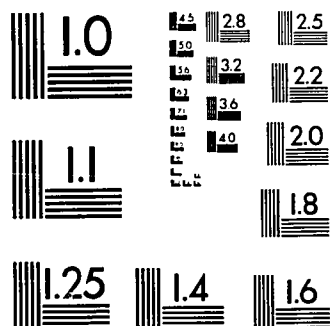
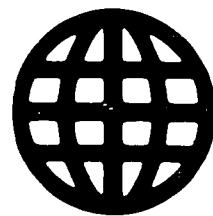


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THE VIETNAMESE IN OKLAHOMA CITY: A STUDY OF ETHNIC CHANGE

The University of Oklahoma

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THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA
GRADUATE COLLEGE

THE VIETNAMESE IN OKLAHOMA CITY:
A STUDY OF ETHNIC CHANGE

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

By
CHARLES CHRISTOPHER MUZNY
Norman, Oklahoma
1985

THE VIETNAMESE IN OKLAHOMA CITY:

A STUDY OF ETHNIC CHANGE

A DISSERTATION

APPROVED FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY

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THE VIETNAMESE IN OKLAHOMA CITY:

A STUDY OF ETHNIC CHANGE

BY: CHARLES C. MUZNY

MAJOR PROFESSOR: WILLIAM E. BITTLE, Ph.D.

This study was concerned with the investigation of individual changes and group organization development among Vietnamese in Oklahoma City. A background of Vietnamese culture was presented to establish pre-emigration behaviors, values, and traditions. Individual emigration experiences were presented to distinguish the three periods of Vietnamese arrival and to identify differences between life in Vietnam and the United States.

This approach facilitates the examination of individual changes in behaviors and values since immigration. The investigation of group organizations among Vietnamese also demonstrates the significance of the host culture in determining the form of ethnic associations in Oklahoma City.

The comparison of information concerning life in Vietnam and data collected in Oklahoma City reveals changes which the Vietnamese have undergone. Varying rates for individual changes inside and outside the home are identified. This demonstrates different changes in public and private

areas of life and attests to the importance of studying behaviors and values in the investigation of change.

THE VIETNAMESE IN OKLAHOMA CITY:
A STUDY OF ETHNIC CHANGE

CHAPTER I

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND FOR THE STUDY
OF AMERICAN ETHNIC GROUPS

Introduction

Since the fall of Saigon, ten years ago, and the sudden influx of approximately 140,000 Vietnamese in 1975, the interest in Vietnamese people has been steadily declining. Only recently, with the tenth anniversary of American withdrawal from Southeast Asia, the media again increased coverage of the Vietnamese. During the first phase of exodus, there was a popular campaign which appealed to American patriotism to assist in sponsoring Vietnamese refugees and to help our former allies adjust to their new lives in America. Many churches, social groups, and American families sponsored Vietnamese in 1975. Following this initial involvement there has been little cultural information provided to the public about Vietnamese. Excluding the success stories of Vietnamese children becoming valedictorians, a few reports on Vietnamese Boat People in refugee camps, and the well known gunbattle between the Vietnamese

and irate American fishermen, there exists a paucity of information about the daily life of Vietnamese in the United States. From working with the Vietnamese since 1978, I realized that the 1975 evacuation was merely the beginning of the continuing account of America's newest Asian ethnic group. Throughout the years thousands of additional Vietnamese have continued to emigrate to America, and now the original 1975 population is actually a small portion of the total number of Vietnamese in the United States. After working with Vietnamese and observing their lives in Oklahoma City for several years, the questions arose: are the Vietnamese different from other American ethnic groups?; how have other American ethnic groups been studied?; and are these other approaches meaningful when applied to Vietnamese? The purpose of this study is to begin to find answers to these and other questions about Vietnamese life in the new homeland.

Recent Developments

The first large numbers of Vietnamese were admitted to the United States in 1975, and this pattern of admission has continued up to the present time. Within their national boundaries, Vietnamese individuals were members of the larger Vietnamese nation and culture. Upon their departure from Vietnam and their arrival in the United States, the Vietnamese were no longer the dominant culture but were a minority population within the American host culture. This

unprecedented Southeast Asian population constituted one of America's newest ethnic groups.

Ethnic group was defined as "a self-perceived group of people who hold in common a set of traditions not shared by others with whom they are in contact" (De Vos 1975: 9). The subsequent changes which ethnic peoples experience has been further distinguished as "ethnic change" and was characterized as ". . . cultural change identified with ethnic groups" (Banton 1981: 37). For the purpose of this study of Vietnamese in Oklahoma City, ethnicity was equated with nationality. The ethnic population under investigation shared the common factor of being from Vietnam. The larger "national identity" of these people currently living in the United States rendered them an ethnic group within American society. The recent arrival of the Vietnamese also facilitated the establishment of a cultural baseline which can be monitored through time to demonstrate continued changes. The objectives of this study were to identify the initial changes that first generation Vietnamese individuals have experienced and to investigate the development of group organizations among Vietnamese following their arrival in Oklahoma City.

The contemporary emphasis upon changing terminology and studying "ethnic change" was perceived to be more than just a passing fad in anthropological jargon. The increased attention to ethnicity and the examination of ethnic groups

expressed in the works of Barth (1969), Despres (1975), De Vos (1975), and Lal (1983) was understood to have major significance for the field of anthropology. Sharing this current interest Cohen stated: "Ethnicity like structure before it, represents a shift toward new theoretical and empirical concerns in anthropology" (1978: 380). In order to appreciate the need for changes in terminology and the "shift" in focus for anthropological inquiry, it was useful to identify some of the developments in social science which have precipitated these changes.

Traditionally the study of culture with limited regard for the individual culture members has dominated the interests of anthropologists. "Anthropology takes the group as its unit and point of departure; it is not greatly concerned with the function of the individual in the group" (Wissler 1920: 2). Primarily anthropological studies focused upon the group and the changes that occurred when contact was established with other cultures and environments. The Indian groups of North America have been the subjects of numerous investigations of culture contact and culture change (Lowie 1935; Mead 1932; Linton 1940; Linton 1943). Unlike the related field of sociology which was studying American immigrant groups, anthropology was more concerned with the examination of distinct cultures and change within colonial contexts.

It is common knowledge that immigrants from cultures obviously different from our own settle in colonies

where they maintain their native languages and customs. Some necessary adjustments seem to be made to the political and economic complexes of our culture, but otherwise the group exists as an area of foreign culture The initial difficulty in all programs of Americanization comes from our lack of specific knowledge as to what goes on under the surface in these groups. No anthropologist has investigated these 'colony cultures', yet there are fifty or more Indian colonies in the United States and Canada for any one of which you can obtain a publication in which there will be found an exposition of its culture based upon investigation by anthropologists (Wissler 1920: 9-10).

In spite of this early indication of the need for increased attention to immigrant "colony cultures", there was little change in the concern for studying immigrant groups. More than three decades later another investigation of the literature revealed "less than thirty publications written by anthropologists on the cultures or the acculturation of ethnic groups" (Spiro 1955: 1240). Spiro also noted that "sociologists have been studying these groups intensively for at least two generations . . ." and that the majority of information about American immigrant groups was the result of works by sociologists, historians, and psychologists (1955: 1240). Realizing the lack of early anthropological studies of immigrant groups and the contributions of history and sociology to the literature, it was necessary to briefly review some of the major trends and developments in studies of American immigrant groups. This facilitated the delineation of the recent anthropological concepts of "immigrant change" (Cronin 1970) and "ethnic change" (Banton 1981) which were under investigation and clearly established this study within the existing theoretical framework.

Historical and Sociological Approaches

The earliest social commentators on the development of America after the Revolutionary War postulated several concepts which have been distinguished as "Anglo-conformity" (Cole and Cole 1954). This school of thought expressed the belief that English or Anglo-Saxon culture and institutions would dominate the developing American nation. As immigrant groups forgot their own national cultures, they were expected to assume the dominant pattern of the Anglo-Saxon host society. This early interest for immigrants to adopt Anglo-American culture was perceived to be a predecessor of the similar and more recent concepts of assimilation (Gordon 1964).

Contrary to the early desires for conformity, Crèvecoeur (1782) interpreted the American experience to be a mixing process of various nationalities which would ultimately forge a new race of Americans. The simple and romantic notion of "melting" or a "melting pot" continued to persist in both scholarly and popular writings. Turner postulated the significance of a "frontier melting pot" in the formation of a new American nationality. "In the crucible of the frontier the immigrants were Americanized, liberated, and fused into a mixed race, English in neither nationality nor characteristics" (Turner 1920: 22-23).

Following the decline of the frontier, "new immigrants" arriving during the 1880s and 1890s settled in

American cities. The Americanization of these immigrant groups was also assumed to follow a melting process, which was identified as an "urban melting pot". This concept was best exemplified in the popular work, The Melting Pot (Zangwill 1909). The continued investigation of the melting process among immigrant generations produced a "triple melting pot" rather than a "single melting pot" hypothesis (Kennedy 1944). According to this orientation, Protestants, Catholics, and Jews of the same and different nationalities were understood to marry within their same religion and to not follow the simple "melting" ideal.

The areas of religion, generation, and maintenance of some cultural traditions became important topics for sociological studies. Some who investigated generation and religion postulated that the second immigrant generation had relinquished the religion of their parents for material benefits of the host society (Herberg 1960). The third generation, lacking ". . . a more vital form of group self-identification" was then understood to return to the religion of the original immigrants (Lazerwitz 1964: 529). This interest in the "third generation" was associated with the works of Hansen, who first expressed the "third generation" rule: "What the son wishes to forget the grandson wishes to remember" (1952: 495). This approach, which emphasized returning to immigrant religions to replace lost ethnic self-identity persisted; however, others questioned the accuracy

of the three generation process. Lenski (1961) and Lazerwitz (1964) both challenged the validity of declining religious participation among generations and observed that there was little change in religious attendance for generations of immigrants. The three generational concept was characterized as simplistic and incapable of adequately dealing with complex immigrant change.

In another investigation of generation and religion, Gans (1956) assumed an alternative approach for the study of immigrant groups. He proposed that the second generation Jews had lost not only their religion but also the Jewish culture of their parents. In an attempt to regain the Jewish religion, the second generation was understood to have developed a "symbolic Judaism" which was considered an "objects culture" without continuation of the traditional immigrant religion and culture. He stated, "objectification is not unique to American Jewry; it goes on among all ethnic groups" (Gans 1956: 428). These groups were perceived as assimilating to the American middle class, undergoing varying degrees of change through each generation, and lacking any real revival of immigrant generation culture. Gans not only questioned the existence of a third generation religious revival but also the substance of generational immigrant ethnicity which was seen as nothing more than symbolic activities of assimilated middle class Americans.

The examination of persistence and forms of ethnic

differences in American society has continued to be an important area for further study. A recent inquiry into American ethnicity, The Ethnic Imperative by Hill and Stein (1977) distinguished two forms of ethnicity, "ideological ethnicity" and "behavioral ethnicity". The former was characterized as activities of acculturated militants, and the latter as activities of those following traditional patterns. Both of these types were considered to be influenced by unconscious mental processes (Hill and Stein 1977). The study of ethnic groups and change has been interpreted to be a complex area of research which warranted more than the investigation of religious practices among generations and exceeded simple concepts of uniform generational assimilation (Warner 1945).

Contrary to the approaches of Americanization and assimilation which viewed all immigrants as becoming more similar to the larger American society, cultural pluralism postulated the long term existence of ethnic groups within American culture (Kallen 1924). Rather than emphasizing trends for reduction in cultural differences, this school of thought proposed that ethnic or cultural distinctions were maintained across generations. Unable to accept these general terms of "cultural pluralism", Gordon (1964) postulated the related concept of "structural pluralism". This more complex approach distinguished American ethnic groups as "substructures" or "subgroups" existing within the larger

American society. Cultural pluralism and structural pluralism presumed the long term continuation of ethnic differences; however, both inadequately allowed for the continued influence of daily contact with the larger American culture. These two concepts were understood to have facilitated the identification of areas and degrees of participation within the host culture and the development of a dual perception of ethnic group life. This school of thought recently found expression in the "salad bowl" approach in education, which stressed "ethnic pluralism" and the importance of maintaining ethnic differences within public schools and American society.

Anthropological Approaches

While sociologists and historians were investigating "Americanization", "melting pots", "assimilation" and "cultural pluralism", anthropology was concerned with the study of culture and culture change. For these purposes the separate term of "acculturation" was developed. Unlike the one directional approach of assimilation, acculturation allowed for different forms of change. According to the original definition of acculturation, there was no definite indication of the direction of change nor a set pattern which change would follow (Redfield, Linton and Herskovits 1936). Within the context of specific contact situations, cultures have been identified to influence each other and to have resulted in the formation of other cultures (Herskovits

1937; Linton 1940; Bogardus 1949; Beals 1951; Spicer 1961).

In addition to being considered a multiform change, acculturation has been characterized as a group and an individual experience. As the Social Science Research Council (Barnett et al. 1954) indicated, the major interest in acculturation studies has been upon culture on the group level. However, the individual role in the acculturation process has also been the subject of some investigation (Thurnwald 1932; Hawley and Senter 1946; Dohrenwend and Smith 1962). Both the individual and the group have been considered in the acculturation approaches of Beals (1951), Spiro (1955), and Brook and Kitsuse (1955). In the examination of "Acculturation and Personality", Gillin and Raimy expressed the importance of studying the individual as well as the group: "Neither the individual nor the cultural configuration can be meaningfully understood except by reference to the other" (1940: 372).

Although attempts were made to clarify and reconcile the anthropological concepts of acculturation and the sociological concepts of assimilation (Gordon 1964; Teske and Nelson 1974), difficulties still existed in utilizing these terms. Through the years authors have continued to expand original meanings to fit their particular approaches to the study of change until confusion existed within the terminology (Cronin 1970: 6). The most common focus for assimilation and acculturation studies was upon change on the group

level and the identification of changes that the group experienced. This more general type of analysis was not appropriate for this study which was concerned with the examination of the individual and recent concepts of "ethnic change". The process of ethnic change was perceived ". . . as resulting from the choices of individuals when faced with alternatives generated by social structures and situations" (Banton 1981: 33). Following a similar orientation, Cronin (1970) had earlier expressed the importance of the individual in her study of "immigrant change" and summed up the relevance of this perspective.

Anthropologists who emphasize the group and the culture have by and large failed to realize that cultures or societies do not immigrate and they do not acculturate. Individuals or at most families immigrate, taking with them their values, beliefs and few material possessions. Their pre-immigration institutions do follow them. Some may try to establish pre-emigration institutions, but circumstances force the alteration of these institutions and eventually the values which relate to them (Cronin 1970: 9).

Earlier observations of immigrant life revealed acceptance of some changes and resistance to other changes. Wissler noted that ". . . some necessary adjustments seem to be made to the political and economic complexes of our culture, but otherwise the group exists as an area of foreign culture" (1920: 9-10). In a more recent study of Jewish immigrants Gans indicated that the first generation only adopted parts of American culture that were necessary to live in the new country and "sheltered their transplanted European Jewish way of life" (1956: 423). Continued

investigations of immigrant generations (Gans 1962; Glazer and Moynihan 1963) also demonstrated that some features of culture were retained. The examination of what changed and what persisted among first generation immigrants not only revealed the process of change for them but also the pattern for retention which was identified among subsequent generations of American immigrants.

Immigrant Change

In her study of first generation Sicilian immigrants in Australia, Cronin (1970) distinguished between external changes and changes in personality. The latter was understood to consist of alterations of ideas and values. Culture traits were perceived to change quickly while values remained more resistant to change. Change itself was identified as a dual process following public and private lines.

Those areas of life which fall in the public sector (and are controlled to some extent by the legal and moral sanction of the country) are affected quickly and easily by conditions of change, while those areas of life which fall in the private sector (and are not controlled by societal institutions) are more resistant to change (Cronin 1970: 13).

The justification for the distinction of public and private areas was based upon the compulsory participation in the public level to secure a job or livelihood. However, this necessary involvement did not indicate that the immigrant identified with the culture of the host society. Habits and some values changed in the public level, but accompanying changes in habits and values within the private

level were not indicated.

Public sector are all those activities in which the immigrant is forced to conform to societal rules and regulations. Thus occupation, residence, language ability, and adherence to the laws of the new country are considered to be public sector variables The private sector includes all those activities with their attendant values in which the immigrant has free choice. Some variables are family patterns, relatives, extended family, nuclear family, friendships, memberships in associations, home language, food habits, religion and political affiliation (Cronin 1970: 14).

In addition to emphasizing the role of the individual in the process of change, Cronin also believed that the study of the pre-immigrant culture was necessary to establish a basis for distinguishing change. Her approach to the study of Sicilian immigrants followed the orientation of Spiro (1955) and Ianni (1958) for the development of a "cultural baseline" without reliance upon "shaky inferences" and the comparison of the pre-immigrant and post-immigrant cultures. Cronin's very rigorous study of immigrant change went beyond other studies which provided only synchronic views of change. Both cultural information collected in Sicily and observations of changes in behaviors and values after immigration were presented.

Ethnic Change

Resembling Cronin's approach in the study of immigrant change, Banton (1981) recently differentiated the concept of "ethnic change". He proposed that change among ethnic groups was "a process of great generality . . . whereby cultural differences are reduced . . . resulting

from the choices of individuals when faced with alternatives generated by social structures and situations" (Banton 1981: 33). The role of the individual in the process of change was significant in his approach; however, change was also understood to follow many patterns which depended upon the power relations between groups.

The particular alternatives from which the individual could select were limited to those available within the contact circumstances. This specific context not only determined the available options but also the degree to which ethnic cultural elements were incorporated into the host culture. Situations which lacked sharing of cultures resulted in a one directional change in which immigrants adopted the culture of the host society. The acquisition of the host culture was perceived to be influenced by the "attractiveness" of both cultures.

FIGURE 1. Types of Ethnic Change

		Attraction of Sending Society	
		Low	High
Attraction of Receiving Society	High	Conformist	Transilient
	Low	Isolationist	Colonial

The vertical axis measures the attractive power of the receiving society, the horizontal axis that of the

sending society The circumstances defined by the boxes below the line (2 and 3) result in minority groups with relatively strong boundaries; those defined by the boxes above the line (1 and 4) result in groups with very weak boundaries because the members of them respond as individuals to the relative attractions of the two societies (Banton 1981: 37).

Banton's concern for understanding the process of change was first upon the individual and secondly upon the group. On the individual level the immigrant was characterized as adopting certain behaviors and language patterns that were relevant to earning a living in the host society. At the same time the individual might exhibit little change in his personal or home life. "The adoption by immigrants of majority practices may give an appearance of change but underlying values may not have altered" (Banton 1981: 35). The individual was perceived to readily adopt new patterns that were beneficial to his best interest and resist other changes in cultural patterns. The analysis of these types of change was understood to include not only modifications in behavior but also changes in values.

The disposition on the part of an immigrant group to maintain or reduce cultural differences, that is, its social orientation will be affected by the extent to which members of the group are disposed to adopt the values of the receiving society, or hold to those of the society from which they have come (Banton 1981: 37).

In addition to emphasizing changes in values as well as behaviors, Banton also considered the significance of the pre-immigration experience. The circumstances surrounding departure from one's homeland and one's attraction to that society were noted to influence the attraction to and

identification with the host culture. Various forms of immigrant adjustments resulted from complex circumstances involving both the sending and receiving societies. These immigrant situations were not static and would change through time. Banton saw ethnic group members changing "their orientation and possibly, moving from one box to another as the outcome of a bargaining process" (1981: 41). For example, an immigrant group found the attractions of the receiving society low and acquired very few host behaviors. Through time the group eventually adopted some behaviors, such as improving language ability for employment, and also improved its position within the work force. This ethnic group was then understood to be bargaining and changing toward the rewards of the host society.

The process of group bargaining was distinguished as the mechanism for groups to continue undergoing change within the host society. Depending upon specific circumstances, an ethnic group might not be alone in the host society and would have to compete with other immigrant groups. The presence of other ethnic groups necessitated another form of bargaining which Banton called "intergroup bargaining". Integral to this process of bargaining was the "rise of elites that press new strategies upon fellow members of their group The position of such elite resembles that of trade union leaders" (Banton 1981: 42). These ethnic group leaders were characterized as working to mobilize their fellow

ethnic members to effectively compete and change their group position in relation to other ethnic groups. New immigrant groups were postulated to undergo group bargaining and to produce leaderships that encouraged group member development and successful intergroup bargaining.

Banton was more concerned with the presentation of a general typology of various ethnic change situations and the identification of the method of ethnic change. The distinction of change as a bargaining process which operated on individual and group levels reasserted the importance of both the individual and the group in the study of change (Gillin and Raimy 1940; Beals 1951; Spiro 1955; Brooke and Kitsuse 1955). His definition of ethnic change recognized the significance of the individual as an active agent in the process of change; however, it also included an examination of change on the group level. From this perspective the development of immigrant elites was significant in the process of group change and competition with other ethnic groups in the host society.

Both the approaches of Banton and Cronin were similar in their distinction of various types of participation in the host society and specification of individual changes in behaviors without changes in values. Cronin focused her major attention upon investigating the role of the individual in the process of change and demonstrated little concern for relating the individual to the group. Unlike

Banton's more general consideration of individual change, Cronin's study of immigrant change included twenty-six months of field work and carefully outlined areas for the observation of individual changes. The identification of public and private levels of change and the division of these broad categories into additional topics for examination provided an organized analysis of complex individual change. This approach for the study of individual changes was appealing but lacked any correlation of the individual to the group. Although Banton did not test his concepts in the field and more generally discussed change, he considered the articulation of the individual as well as the group in the process of change.

The Present Study

Development of the current approach for investigating change among Vietnamese in Oklahoma City utilized the contributions of Cronin and Banton. Their concepts of "immigrant change" and "ethnic change" were understood to be primarily individual processes which included the adjustments made by individuals. The pre-emigration culture and experience were also acknowledged to influence subsequent changes in the host society. The adoption of some patterns and resistance to others exemplified individual change which was characterized as consisting of modifications of values as well as behaviors. Changes in values were considered to proceed at a different rate than changes in behaviors.

Cronin's distinction of individual change into public and private sectors facilitated the examination of multiple areas of change. The public sector which included work, school, and residence was noted to change more quickly than the private sector of family home life. Also differentiating types of change, Banton identified a bargaining process as the selective mechanism for individuals to undergo change. Bargaining was not limited to the individual and was also postulated to exist on the group level as "inter-group bargaining". A synthesis of the two similar ideas of "immigrant change" (Cronin 1970) and "ethnic change" (Banton 1981) resulted in a more complete model for the exploration of individual and group changes.

Utilizing Cronin's typology of areas of individual change and Banton's concepts of bargaining, this investigation included individual and group analyses of change in the host culture. Therefore, this study was concerned with two areas of Vietnamese change, the individual and the group. On the individual level attention was upon first generation Vietnamese and the distinction of changes in public and private sectors of their lives. This double approach followed the orientation that immigrants must participate in certain areas of the new culture but were free to choose for themselves in other areas (Cronin 1970; Banton 1981). For the Vietnamese individual it was postulated that there were habit changes in the public and private sector.

Habit changes are alterations in those customs that carry little or no value, and they will not seriously damage the more important values that the immigrant brings with him. On the other hand, value changes are those alterations which will drastically change not only activities but also ideas and beliefs and ultimately the way of life, outlook and identity (Cronin 1970: 15).

The examination of change on the group level focused upon the development of ethnic organizations and the influence which the host culture had in determining the form of these associations. In addition, the leaderships of Vietnamese organizations were scrutinized to detect if there was a "rise of elites that press new strategies upon fellow members of their group . . . and function like a labor union in intergroup bargaining" (Banton 1981: 42). On the group level it was postulated that Vietnamese organizations had leaderships that attempted to mobilize ethnic group members to improve their group position and better compete with other ethnic groups in the host society.

Methodology

Before presenting the individual experiences of Vietnamese in Oklahoma City, it was desirable to first review other studies of Vietnamese in the United States. This demonstrated various methods which have been utilized in the examination of the Vietnamese and facilitated an appraisal of the present approach of ethnic change among Vietnamese.

After establishing trends for studies of Vietnamese in the United States, a brief view of the Vietnamese pre-immigration culture was presented to establish a baseline or

reference point for the identification of changes in habits and values following arrival in the host culture. First hand observation of Vietnamese culture was not feasible, and it was necessary to utilize existing sources which adequately presented Vietnamese culture, behaviors, and values. The recent arrival of the Vietnamese also made it possible to collect additional information about the pre-immigration culture and the individual emigration experiences.

This additional knowledge greatly supplemented earlier general studies of Vietnamese culture. By utilizing both the cultural background information and the recent emigration experiences of Vietnamese a more complete cultural baseline was established for the distinction of subsequent changes. This approach demonstrated the circumstances under which Vietnamese individuals left their homeland and revealed individual attraction to the sending society and disposition toward change.

The field of this study was limited to the Oklahoma City metropolitan area. Vietnamese informants did not come from a particular ghetto setting. All were from various sections of the city and represented a cross-section of the current Vietnamese population in Oklahoma City. The subjects were first generation Vietnamese who were born in Vietnam and arrived in the United States between 1975 and 1983. The Vietnamese informants were extensively interviewed to retrieve pre-immigration experiences and to

clearly document types of habit and value changes that have occurred in the public and private sectors since their arrival.

To collect information about group organization among Vietnamese, members and leaders of different associations were interviewed. These specific short term interviews were limited to questions about development purpose, and operation of Vietnamese associations. In addition to investigating other organizations, major interest was upon the Vietnamese American Association, its policy for Vietnamese development, and the influences which the government had in these transformations. A presentation of VAA programs in Oklahoma City and surrounding states was included to further demonstrate the role which the VAA has had in Vietnamese group development and intergroup bargaining throughout the region.

CHAPTER II

VIETNAMESE IN THE RECENT LITERATURE

Camp Studies

In reviewing the recent literature about Vietnamese, one finds few studies of Vietnamese in their homeland (Cooke 1968; Hammer 1966; Hickey 1964; Penner 1976) and even fewer studies of Vietnamese adjustment in the United States. The first type of studies of Vietnamese in the United States are concerned with refugee camp situations. The description of the establishment of the refugee center at Camp Pendleton, the arrival of the first Vietnamese, health care delivery and psychiatric evaluation of refugees are the topics of research for Rhae, Looney, and Ward (1978).

Following the request of the Camp Pendleton medical director, three Navy psychiatrists came to the refugee camp for consultation. The assets and liabilities of the refugee camp were evaluated and proposals were made for improvements for the mental health needs of the Vietnamese. To obtain information about the Vietnamese refugees various psychiatric tests were initiated. These included the Recent Life

Changes Questionnaire (RLCQ), Cornell Medical Index Health Questionnaire (CMI), and the Self-Anchoring Scale (SAS). All were administered to 200 refugees in the camp (Rhae, Looney, and Ward 1978: 186-187). The findings of this research provided a statistical description of the Vietnamese population in terms of demographic characteristics, religion, income, life change and psychological symptoms.

Utilizing the information from the interviews conducted at Camp Pendleton, Liu and Muratta together published four articles relating to various aspects of escape, life in the refugee camps and resettlement (1977a, 1977b, 1978a, 1978b). Later Liu published a book about Vietnamese refugees, Transition to Nowhere, (1979) and again utilized some of the same information collected by the Asian American Mental Research Center in their work at Camp Pendleton. However, Liu developed a more historical approach toward the Vietnamese refugees and addressed the topics of: flight; transit; sojourn in camp; sponsorship out and subsequent immediate resettlement and speculative comments on long-term adjustment (Liu 1979: 10).

The chronology of the military deterioration, political instability, and the U.S. government's intended plan for evacuation that had to be stepped-up at the last minute are presented as the foundation of the Vietnamese refugee movement. The haste in evacuation and panic situation preceding the fall of Saigon are understood to have contributed to

more refugees escaping who were not in the designated "risk" categories for evacuation.

The risk persons included: past and present United States government employees, officials whose cooperation was necessary for the evacuation of American citizens, individuals with knowledge of sensitive United States government intelligence operations, vulnerable political or intellectual figures, communist defectors, employees of voluntary agencies, certain labor officials and participants in United States government sponsored programs (Liu 1979: 13).

Liu provides a very detailed account of the evacuation process and includes indepth interviews with Vietnamese. The main limitation to this study is that it is primarily concerned with historical information and accounts of the initial phase of Vietnamese refugee sojourn in the United States and does not adequately document the pre-emigration culture as a baseling for measuring future change.

Following the camp study approach, Kelly (1979) conducted another Vietnamese study at Fort Indian Town Gap, Pennsylvania. Her approach also documented the confusion and haste which characterized the evacuation of South Vietnam. Through interviews with camp residents a profile of the evacuation is presented. Statistical information concerning all Indochinese refugees in the United States is utilized to give a general view of the characteristics of age, occupation, family size, and education.

Although the first part of the study resembles that of Liu, the second portion follows the orientation of Louise Holborn (1968: 362). According to this approach, "refugee"

is seen as a transitional phase which gives way to the voluntary immigrant type between departure from the homeland and resettlement in the host country. Kelly emphasizes the transition from refugee to immigrant.

In the U.S. Vietnamese went into the camps as refugees; they came out of the camp as immigrants. As refugees they were a chapter in Vietnamese history and culture; when they emerged from the camps, they had begun a series of painful adjustments that severed them from Vietnamese life as they knew it and were on the road to becoming Vietnamese Americans (Kelly 1977: 62).

The author points out that life in the camps was not a continuation of their previous lives. The camps were operated by Americans and conformed to the routines established by the government program. This included school for children, English classes for adults, presentations about American life, and waiting in lines for meals three times each day. Through documentation of programs on American culture in the camps, Kelly makes a good case for her argument that refugees were transformed into immigrants in the camps. Following their stay in the camps, refugee families were sponsored out by American families and churches. The program of the government turning refugees over to voluntary agencies, and these agencies assigning Vietnamese to sponsors is understood as an attempt to disperse the Vietnamese across the United States into small family units. Although the dispersal of Vietnamese across the U.S. ended group life in the camps, Vietnamese were living mostly in seventeen cities. Within these cities the

Vietnamese individuals and families became acquainted and gradually developed group contacts outside the camps.

FIGURE 2. Initial Vietnamese Relocation in 1975

City	Number of Families Over 2 Persons	Percent of Families
Los Angeles	2,499	18.0
San Francisco	2,028	14.6
Jacksonville	1,244	9.0
Dallas	973	7.0
Washington, D.C.	957	6.9
Philadelphia	795	5.7
Seattle	733	5.3
New York	633	4.6
Minneapolis, St. Paul	561	4.1
Chicago	530	3.8
Denver	478	3.5
New Orleans	453	3.3
Columbus (Ohio)	437	3.2
Oklahoma City	419	3.0
Kansas City, Kansas	384	2.8
San Antonio	379	2.7
Little Rock	351	2.5

Source: Interagency Task Force on Indochina Refugees, Report to the Congress, 15 September 1975, p. 14.

Although both of these early studies of Vietnamese in the U.S. are concerned with life in the refugee camps, Liu subscribes to the orientation of Kunz, which emphasizes the unique aspects of refugees compared to other immigrants. Aware that most studies of refugees rarely attempted to distinguish between immigrant and refugee situations, Kunz proposed increased distinction between voluntary and involuntary immigration. Following the approach of Lee (1969) he proposed that the situation surrounding refugees leaving

their homeland affects their later adjustment in another country. Therefore, refugees were distinguished from immigrants in terms of their departure situation and later adjustment to another host society.

Kunz was concerned with providing information about refugee needs not in terms of "individual historical occurrences . . . but as recurring phenomena" (Kunz 1973: 127). Two main types of refugee movements, anticipatory and acute were delineated. Anticipatory is characterized as a more planned or organized movement which allows for preparation before departure. Acute is seen as the opposite form and is understood in terms of haste and lack of preparation. Therefore, the refugee studies of 1975 Vietnamese emphasized the chaos which characterized the American withdrawal from South Vietnam and the fall of Saigon.

The Vietnamese are placed in the acute phase by some authors, Liu, Liu and Muratta, and Starr. However, the actual experiences of the Vietnamese refugees of 1975 show that, according to the three categories for evacuation, the families had members who were in contact with Americans. Some knew English, worked for Americans, and were already more prepared than other previous immigrants. The first studies of Vietnamese practically considered the 1975 movement of refugees as the definitive chapter of Vietnamese immigration. The early works on Vietnamese refugees did not anticipate the continuing flow of Vietnamese during 1979,

1980, and 1981, which accounts for the greatest numbers of Vietnamese immigrants.

Subsequent Studies

The United States received 25% of its Southeast Asian Refugee population in a two year period following the spring of 1975 The 'great wave' of refugee intake in North America began in 1979. During that year the United States accelerated its intake to nearly 7,000 refugees per month and again doubled even that volume to a ceiling of 14,000 persons in July 1979 (Lanphier 1983: 5).

FIGURE 3. Southeast Asian Refugee Intake

	1975-76	77	78	79	80	81	Total
U.S.	151,800	7,000	34,500	112,126	154,405	150,532	601,363
%	25	1	6	18	25	25	100

Source: Office of Refugee Resettlement, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

After studying the information available on Vietnamese refugees, one realizes that there were two periods of exodus. The Vietnamese situation follows both categories proposed by Kunz and can be considered as unique. This refugee movement has an acute phase characterized by previous contact with the host culture and an anticipatory phase characterized by organized escape attempts with the preconceived idea of immigrating to the United States. Some came alone and others came to live with relatives who left in 1975. Since the Boat People or refugees of 1979, 1980, and 1981 anticipated their leaving Vietnam and their future

destination, Tsamenyi (1983: 348-73) questions the appropriateness of their being considered refugees. Montero supports the refugee orientation of Kunz and interprets the two Vietnamese movements as conforming to both types of refugee situations. He proposes a new type of "Spontaneous International Migration" for Vietnamese (Montero 1979a: 624-48).

Depending upon which refugee orientation the author follows, the presentation of information about Vietnamese is affected. The emphasis upon refugee rather than Vietnamese resulted in detailed accounts of only the short lived evacuation of Vietnamese and their temporary stay in refugee camps. The few detailed studies of Liu, Kelly, and Montero are primarily the definitive works on Vietnamese refugees. The later and more numerous groups of refugees or Boat People are virtually undocumented in their escape and life in refugee camps in Malaysia, Indonesia, Hong Kong, Thailand, and Philippines. Although many of the Vietnamese lived in these camps for years before coming to the United States, there are no studies of camp life that compare to those initiated in 1975. With the exception of Nguyen and Henkin (1982), few studies have been concerned with investigation of the Boat People and comparing their demographic characteristics with those of the refugees of 1975.

The emphasis upon one particular approach to Vietnamese only as "refugees" limits the adequate consideration

of the current Vietnamese population in the United States. Although the first phase of the Vietnamese movement into the United States was obviously a refugee situation, the second phase of Vietnamese emigration was preplanned and accomplished over several years. The refugee category has been greatly reduced in the third and current phase of the official Vietnamese exodus, the Orderly Departure Program.

According to this plan, Vietnamese in the United States arrange through the State Department for their relatives to leave Vietnam. Now Vietnamese are given exit visas and fly directly from Saigon to Thailand and on to the United States after one week of processing in Bangkok. The ODP program actually specifies that the Vietnamese arrivals are not refugees. They are considered immigrants and are not eligible for any social welfare programs which refugees may use. Although the Orderly Departure Program is the official policy of emigration, Vietnamese without relatives in the U.S. must still escape by boat. However, the number of Boat People has recently decreased. The overemphasis of one approach to Vietnamese as refugees does not adequately allow for the study of Vietnamese currently in the United States and those who arrive daily.

The first portion of the recent literature about Vietnamese focuses upon the initial refugee situation of 1975 and gives detailed reports of refugee camps at this time. Following the research of 1975, very few detailed

studies have been conducted on Vietnamese. The majority of research has been concerned with only one aspect of Vietnamese culture and resettlement. Some of the topics investigated include: Vietnamese Identity and Religion (Rutledge 1982); Aging Among Vietnamese Women (Yee 1982); Vietnamese and American Values (Oggeri 1979). The majority of articles written about Vietnamese may be placed in three categories of demographic profiles, occupational patterns, and general public policy.

Demography

Montero (1979a and 1979b) reported the results of five telephone surveys of Vietnamese from 1975 to 1977. The topics of age, present occupation, previous occupation, employment status, income, assistance received, education, family size, sponsors, residence, and household composition are presented for Vietnamese resettled across the United States. Starr (1979) followed this same approach in presenting the characteristics of Vietnamese along the Gulf Coast and in the San Francisco Bay area. This comparative approach provided statistical information concerning age, household composition, income, English ability, health, and education. The profiles of those interviewed show that the Vietnamese in the Southern U.S. have lower education and lower prestige occupations than those Vietnamese in California.

In these types of studies the authors attempted to

provide very significant information about the Vietnamese by relying upon the presentation of impersonal statistical survey information. This more common approach to studying Vietnamese quotes statistics and percentages to characterize the population. It has been suggested that this approach "borders upon being a sociological meat-grinder, tearing the individual from his social context" (Barton 1968: 1-9). Utilizing this strategy one can adequately handle large numbers of Vietnamese surveyed; however, it lacks the intimacy of detailed interviews like those conducted by Liu and Kelly in the camps during 1975.

Occupation

The U.S. government policy of Vietnamese refugee resettlement is one of economic self-sufficiency rather than cultural adjustment. The Vietnamese are encouraged to accept a job as soon as possible, postpone learning English and new job skills, and terminate their utilization of public assistance. This all out effort by refugee resettlement programs has precipitated studies of Vietnamese occupational adaptation (Bach 1980; Stein 1979; Taft, North and Ford 1979). Most studies of Vietnamese occupational adjustment are mainly statistical profiles which show percentages of types of jobs taken. These emphasize the fact that most Vietnamese have jobs that are below their previous positions in Vietnam.

In her study of Vietnamese occupations, Finnan (1982)

focuses upon the actual training program of Vietnamese employed in the electronics industry and interviews Vietnamese taking skills training in this field. Finnan demonstrates that each area of the United States has specific types of jobs. This regional availability of occupations limits the choices which Vietnamese have to choose from. In addition to this limitation, Vietnamese must select jobs that are acceptable to their previous cultural orientation toward status and self-esteem. Although many jobs which Vietnamese have in America were not available in Vietnam, Finnan postulates that the Vietnamese community supports certain types of jobs as being acceptable and encourages Vietnamese to take these jobs. This community involvement in identification of new occupations is seen as instrumental in the successful adjustment of Vietnamese to the American job market.

The continuation of occupations found in Vietnam is also the subject of studies of Vietnamese fishermen in America. Orbach and Beckwith (1982) are concerned with the description of the fishing adaptation of Vietnamese in Monterey, California. Similarly, Starr (1981) documents the development of Vietnamese fishermen in the Gulf Coast region. Although the fishing occupation is practiced in Vietnam and in the United States, the Vietnamese soon learned that Americans utilize different techniques and have their own set of rules.

Some of the rules are formal laws which are enforced by the fish and game authorities, and others are informal codes of etiquette and acknowledgment of fishing claims to specific fishing grounds. The difference between American and Vietnamese fishing patterns resulted in problems in the fishing industry in California and in the Gulf Coast region. These problems had to be resolved through the intervention of interagency task forces. The continuation of an occupation found in Vietnam and in the United States is not a simple transfer of skills. The Vietnamese must learn and follow American regulations and informal policies which govern the fishing industry. New legal and cultural patterns must be incorporated into the Vietnamese system to continue occupations in the United States.

Public Policy

The third group of studies of Vietnamese are concerned primarily with the interaction of public policy and Vietnamese adjustment. The U.S. government has been involved in the lives of Vietnamese since the evacuation of 1975. Some Vietnamese scholars, Vuong Gia Thuy (1976), Duong Thanh Binh (1975) and Le Xuan Khoa (1981) have written general articles concerning governmental policy and the importance of cultural pluralism within the American educational system.

Not limiting their interests to only education, Haines (1982), Howell (1982) and Zucker (1983) expressed

their concern about governmental involvement and policy for the Vietnamese. Beginning with the dispersal of Vietnamese families across America in 1975, the authors point out that there has always been a significant attempt to encourage rapid adjustment and to disregard the cultural patterns or preferences of the Vietnamese. The large size of Vietnamese families and their desire to live near relatives has been a problem for resettlement.

Available housing for large families is limited in most cities and Vietnamese have had difficulty in finding adequate shelter and continuing to live within extended households. The lack of governmental concern and assistance in providing adequate and appropriate housing has resulted in overcrowding in certain areas and strict competition for limited types of housing. The governmental emphasis upon termination of social welfare benefits without adequate job availability and training has also resulted in a large secondary migration of Vietnamese to areas with more jobs and higher welfare benefits. This secondary migration of large numbers of Vietnamese to certain areas of the U.S. has overburdened the community resources in these desirable areas. The government has always had a high degree of involvement in the resettlement of Vietnamese; however, the continued lack of coherent policies is credited as being one of the greatest problems facing Vietnamese adjustment in America (Zucker 1983: 172-86).

The first studies of Vietnamese in the United States were concerned with the documentation of the escape from Vietnam and life in the refugee camps. Although these early studies devoted much time to the description of the Vietnamese, their primary concern was for the study of the refugees. Unfortunately this emphasis upon Vietnamese refugees was short lived, and there were no comparable studies of the continuing flow of Vietnamese during 1979, 1980, and 1981. Subsequent studies of Vietnamese have not demonstrated the detailed concern of those initial studies of 1975. As a result, the pre-emigration culture and escape accounts of continued Vietnamese arrivals have been inadequately presented. The important purpose of contemporary studies of Vietnamese should be the documentation of their entrance into American society and the establishment of a basis from which subsequent changes may be measured.

CHAPTER III

VIETNAMESE CULTURAL BACKGROUND

Historical Influences

The Vietnamese people trace their origins back to a mythological time when a fairy princess or angel married a dragon. From this union the fairy laid one hundred eggs which bore fifty sons and fifty daughters. The mother took the fifty daughters and went to the mountains and established a matriarchy. The father took his fifty sons to the coastal area and established a patriarchy (Vietnamese informant 1983). The Vietnamese claim to be the descendants of the sons of the dragon.

The first Vietnamese dynasty or the Hong Bang dynasty is believed to have had its origins in this mythological time and is dated from 2879 B.C. Although these early accounts of the origins of Vietnamese culture are significant in the history of the nation, the first actual historical documentation of Vietnam begins in 221 B.C. during wars of conquest by the Chinese.

Following the common practice of the Chinese, subjugated populations were encouraged to adopt elements of

Chinese culture. Consequently the Chinese introduced agriculture and various cultural contributions. Briefly these included: the areas of governing practices; education systems; writing; literature; medicine; religious practices and art. During the initial contact period and the subsequent one thousand years of Chinese domination, the Vietnamese were greatly influenced by the Chinese. However, the Vietnamese managed to maintain their own national identity and eventually drove out the Chinese in 938 A.D. (Hickey 1964: 3; Tran 1982: 7-43).

The maintenance of a distinct Vietnamese identity has been attributed to their adoption of Chinese administration methods with the utilization of Vietnamese administrators.

As the best safeguard against reconquest by Chinese emperors and against attack by local dissidents, Vietnamese rulers eventually chose to adopt the Chinese system of government and social control. This called for the establishment of a civil service of bureaucrats and administrators recruited through literary examinations as in China (Huynh 1979: 47).

According to the governmental or mandarin system utilized in Vietnam, one could qualify for a position in the administration by successfully completing the competitive exams. This practice continued until the French colonization of Vietnam in the 1800s.

The more or less egalitarian system of examination was the primary method by which individuals and families could rise from practically any social level to higher positions in the Vietnamese government and society. The

examination process was quite rigorous and required that students take local, regional and national exams. The exams themselves were divided into two types, military and civil. The military exams included physical aptitudes and skills while the civil tests were literary. In the written exam, one's understanding of the basic texts of the Confucian school were examined. As many as a few thousand students were given the examinations at one time, and testing periods would last several days. Those who succeeded in passing the exams would go on to the next level for more testing. Ultimately the great number of students would be reduced to only the best. Those remaining could compete in the national exams and receive the highest title in the country. Following the various examinations, licenses or degrees were awarded and the candidates were able to secure a position in the national administration (Crawford 1966: 96).

Through the Confucian system of education the Vietnamese studied and memorized the classical texts. The successful mastering of the subject matter would also permit the student to advance in his social position. In traditional Vietnamese culture teachers and scholars occupied the highest position in the social hierarchy, and teachers were more revered than one's parents. This long tradition of high regard for education and respect of teachers still persists in Vietnamese culture. Vietnamese encourage their children to study and excel in their education. This

culture places a higher value upon education rather than upon material accumulation. Social status has been dependent upon education and academic performance and reflects the continued importance of the Confucian system.

Philosophy and Religion

The Chinese influence upon religion and philosophy has also been significant in the development of Vietnamese culture and values. The introduction of Confucianism from China is understood to have affected the Vietnamese traditions of family hierarchy and honoring ancestors. Confucian teachings have become an integral part of Vietnamese character and family observances. The importance of history and remembering ancestors was a major concern for Confucius. This influence is still seen in Vietnamese culture.

Among many if not most of the families practicing the four main religions in Vietnam, including Buddhism, Catholicism, CaoDaism, and Hoa Hao, ancestor worship is a parallel religion practiced simultaneously (Tran 1982: 64).

Although this religious philosophy has no organized clergy, the family acts together to conduct various ceremonies in the memory of the ancestors.

In order to achieve human perfection one must follow the established codes of behavior of Confucianism which include reverence for ancestors and respect for elders. Acceptable behaviors emphasize the ideal of a virtuous person who acts politely and moderately in all instances.

The importance is not upon the individual accomplishments but upon his duty to family and society. Paramount in this tradition is the son's obedience to his parents and a daughter's obedience to her parents until she marries. Following marriage she must obey her husband. After his death she continues obedience to her eldest son. In this system there exists a code of appropriate behaviors which regulate the relationships between "king and subject, parent and child, and husband and wife" (Tran 1982: 70-71).

The influence of Taoism has also found expression in the Vietnamese culture. The acceptance of one's fate as unavoidable and the importance of maintaining harmony with nature and between people are understood as elements of this tradition. The Taoist emphasis upon harmony with nature and the ability of sorcerers to intervene for man are influential in the Vietnamese preoccupation with geomancy. Geomancers were traditionally consulted before burial of the dead and the construction of new homes or buildings (Hickey 1964: 120-22; Sully 1971: 17). In addition to harmony with nature, the maintenance of harmony between people is significant to Vietnamese. Any types of disagreement or negative expression are discouraged. Therefore, arguing, giving negative responses, and emotional displays between people are avoided. One assumes a "quiet and passive attitude toward life" (Vuong 1976: 10).

Mahayana Buddhism was also introduced from China and

has contributed to the development of Vietnamese culture. The importance of the Law of Karma is a major concern for Buddhists. Vietnamese follow this orientation by viewing the events of their life as a result of their previous life. The main emphasis of this religion is to extinguish all desires and achieve nonattachment to material objects. Therefore, denial of the material world is the primary goal of this philosophy and it has maximum influence upon those living in a monastery rather than those Vietnamese living in society at large. Although the majority of Vietnamese follow Buddhism, the Confucian and Taoist teachings have had more obvious influence upon the Vietnamese codes of etiquette and behavior. Hickey (1964: 4-5), Penner (1976: 5-6), and Huynh (1976: 49) agree that Confucian doctrine was emphasized by Vietnamese rulers and continued to be of great cultural importance for the state and the people of Vietnam. Unlike other neighboring countries of Cambodia and Laos which follow the Hinayana school of Buddhism and have a tradition of a "god king", Vietnam is not as greatly influenced by Buddhism but reflects the cultural influences of China throughout the centuries (Whitmore 1979: 19-26).

The Family

The Vietnamese household traditionally follows the extended multigenerational pattern. The parents, their sons and their wives, their children and unmarried siblings usually constitute a Vietnamese household. However, this is

the ideal pattern and it is not uncommon to have families of various compositions.

The Vietnamese family is composed of the parents, all children and their inlaws, the grandparents (paternal as well as maternal), the great-grandparents, and also in some circumstances, uncles and aunts and their spouses, cousins, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and all inlaws. In other words, it might embrace up to six generations with everybody, who is related either by blood or marriage (Vuong 1976: 20).

Although the physical size of the dwelling would determine the number of family members who could reside there, other households of the same family were usually located nearby in the same village or in the same section of a city. Due to the close proximity of family households, frequent contacts were maintained, and one's primary reference group was the family. This constant closeness to family is emphasized from childhood and continues to be important to Vietnamese throughout their lifetime. Children tend to live with their parents until they marry, and the son may bring his bride to live with his family. The eldest son is expected to never leave his parents and to continue living at home with his wife and children. Following the death of his father the eldest son assumes the position of family head and continues to provide for the family. After marriage, other sons might establish their own households near the parents, but unmarried daughters must always live with their parents.

In a consideration of the family, one should note the unique qualities which are found in the Vietnamese culture. Reflecting the Confucian tradition the family is considered

to be more important than the individual. All family members contribute their paychecks to the common family fund and work to accumulate wealth for the family rather than for the individual members. One is expected to make personal sacrifices for the benefit of the family. Permission must also be received from the family for what Americans would consider individual expenditures or decisions. The family determines what members buy, whether one works or continues his education, and who one will marry. The family institution is indispensable in the maintenance of Vietnamese culture.

Vietnamese society rests entirely on the solid structure of the family which owes its cohesion to the religious nature of the relationship between the living and dead (Phung 1979: 77).

The family is the main reference group for the Vietnamese, and is quite unique, because it includes more than the living members. When one thinks of his family duties this includes obligations to the deceased as well. Following the Confucian tradition of reverence for the ancestors, the Vietnamese acknowledge the presence of ancestor spirits in their home. After death the relative's spirit is believed to reside within the ancestor altar in the home. At this shrine the spirits are honored on various holidays and the anniversary of their death. The solemn remembrance of ancestors is continued for five generations. After this period of time, it is believed that the dead reincarnate or go to the "bliss of heaven". When Vietnamese think of their

family, they have to consider the proper regard for the dead members. The family and the ancestors must be included in all important issues for the household (Crawford 1966: 68-70).

Ceremonies

Unlike its western counterpart, the Vietnamese family must approve the individual requests of its members. The family is the main organizer of important events and plays an integral part in the preparation and conducting of weddings and funerals and ceremonies to commemorate the ancestors. Rather than have celebrations on the birthdays of family members, the Vietnamese family makes offerings to the deceased and observes their death day. The importance of the family is further demonstrated in its role in weddings and funerals for the family members. These important life events are carried out by the family in the home. The Vietnamese approach to weddings and funerals may be contrasted to the American pattern, where weddings and funerals are usually held at churches with clerical assistance.

Reflecting their concern for the family, Vietnamese ask for their approval on most decisions. The selection of a spouse is an important event and requires family consideration. Parents must always approve if not actually select their child's spouse. Familial consent and sanction is a precondition to engagement and marriage. According to the Confucian principles, marriage is considered a

performance of one's duty. Western style courtship and romance were seen as inappropriate for unmarried children. Traditionally Vietnamese parents arranged for the marriage of their children, and the groom never saw his bride until the "coi mat" or meeting of the families involved. The son's family would have an intermediary approach the girl's parents. After the matchmaker conferred with the boy's parents he visited the girl's family to discuss the intention for marriage. Following the initial contact through the matchmaker, the parents consulted astrologers to see if the couple were compatible. Then an astrologically appropriate day was chosen for the meeting of the families or "coi mat" which actually means "show the face" (Hickey 1964: 101).

The meeting of the parents at the girl's home is regarded as an integral part of the wedding formalities which continually emphasize the importance of the family rather than the individual. After the first meeting several exchange visits occur between the interested families for the discussion of the proposed marriage. Again consulting the astrologer, the families set a date and time for the "le hoi" or engagement party which is held again at the girl's home (Hickey 1964: 102).

Leading the group, the groom carries gifts for the bride which include gold earrings. He is followed by his friends and family who may carry additional presents of wine

and food. When the groom's party arrives at the bride's house, they are received by her family. Upon entering, the groom goes to the ancestor shrine, which is brightly decorated for the occasion and kowtows to the ancestors of the bride. After this he bows to her parents to show respect and presents the gifts, which completes the engagement ritual. This is usually followed by a large feast during which the families set the date for the wedding. The length of time until the wedding may range from a few months to a year. If someone in either family dies, the wedding must be postponed for the appropriate time of mourning.

On the day of the wedding the groom's family assembles to form the procession to the bride's home. Usually an older man leads, followed by the groom's parents, older relatives, the groom, his siblings and friends. The procession has been traditionally on foot; however, in urban areas the families may ride in cars decorated with flowers. When the wedding party enters the bride's home, the bride's father lights candles and prays to the ancestors for their blessing of the marriage. Wearing the ceremonial blue silk robe, the groom presents the bride with her red wedding dress which she will wear during the remainder of the wedding ceremonies. After the bride puts on the dress, the return procession forms. The groom, the bride, their families and friends return to the groom's house for the completion of the ceremony (Crawford 1966: 119).

As they arrive firecrackers burst to drive away evil spirits and simultaneously announce the wedding to the neighborhood. In front of the groom's ancestor altar, an older male relative lights candles, burns incense and prays for the success of the marriage. The bride and groom then bow in front of the altar. A cup of liquor is poured and offered to the groom which he sips and shares with his bride. The couple again bows to the ancestors and the wedding ceremony is concluded. The wedding feast which follows is traditionally an elaborate affair in which the bride and groom act as hosts. Drinking, music, and the giving of wedding gifts enhance this most auspicious occasion for the family. Catholic families follow the established wedding procedures as other Vietnamese. However, instead of bowing in front of the ancestor altar, Catholics pray before the shrine of the saints in their home. On the wedding day the ceremonies differ with the procession stopping at the church for a mass or ceremony on the way to the groom's home, where the ceremony is concluded (Hickey 1964: 103-106; Crawford 1966: 120-121).

Showing their priority to the family, Vietnamese prefer to die within the comfortable surroundings of their home. Although someone may be hospitalized, before death they are usually brought home to die. "It is considered to be a misfortune to die away from home and bad luck to carry a corpse home" (Crawford 1966: 124). After death the

family is responsible for the preparations and funeral rituals. The body is washed, groomed, and dressed and placed in a coffin. A funeral bier is usually set up in front of the ancestor altar, and a special altar for the deceased is arranged at the foot of the coffin. Candles and incense burn on this altar, where the family offers food for the spirit of the deceased. At various times family members kowtow to the shrine of the dead in order of direct relationship. The spouse and children bow first followed by other relatives (Crawford 1966: 125).

Marking the beginning of the funeral, the mourning clothes are given out by family elders and the "nhan dieu" or wake begins. During this time relatives and friends arrive and stay until the funeral is concluded. Some bring gifts of liquor, food, or money for the family. Similar to the wedding feast, many dishes are prepared for guests during the wake. Music as well as alcohol are provided, and the "nhan dieu" may resemble a festive occasion which may last for several days (Hickey 1964: 125).

At the end of the "nhan dieu" the family assembles at the coffin and again kowtows in order of relationship to the deceased. Then the funeral procession forms for the carrying of the deceased to the cemetery. This elaborate cortege or "giang do" traditionally consists of a brightly decorated hearse or catafalque, pallbearers, musicians, banners, the altar for the deceased, and the mourners. The

large cloth banners proclaim the virtues of the dead. The procession is usually very long and winds through the city or town to avoid passing by temples or pagodas. Once at the grave site more prayers are offered for the deceased by a family member or a Buddhist monk, and then the family kowtows to the coffin. After the burial, the family returns home and offers prayers at the ancestor altar to insure that the deceased's soul will join the other ancestors. Following this a large meal is offered for all who attended the funeral (Hickey 1964: 126-127; Crawford 1966: 129).

Catholic families follow the rituals of the church for the funeral ceremony and do not have the elaborate "giang do" procession to the cemetery. Vietnamese Catholics keep the body in their home in front of the shrine of the saints. Relatives and friends come to pay their respect and share elaborate meals that are served for the guests. A rosary is said for the dead on the eve of the funeral. The next day a simple procession takes the deceased to the church and to the cemetery for burial (Hickey 1964: 128).

After death in the family Vietnamese observe customary mourning periods. The surviving widow, children and daughter-in-law must follow the mourning practices for three years. The surviving husband, children, siblings, nephews, nieces and grandchildren of a woman must observe this for one year. During this time weddings are postponed and celebrations are avoided. The mourners usually wear a black arm

band or a patch of black cloth on their clothing (Crawford 1966: 126).

After the funeral the family must continue to make offerings to the deceased in accordance with the ancestor cult. Every seven days rituals are conducted for the dead at the altar of the ancestors. With incense and candles burning, the family assembles to kowtow before a picture of the dead and make food offerings. On the forty-ninth day and the one-hundredth day more elaborate ceremonies with feasting are observed for the deceased. On the anniversary of the death, the family again offers prayers for the deceased, and has a large meal. At this time the mourning period might end; family members may then discard the mourning clothes and return to their normal social activities. The anniversary of the death becomes a family observance and occupies a position in the lunar calendar of the ancestor cult. Families remember the dead and invite them to feast with the living members on their anniversary day. Catholic families follow the observances of the dead by having a mass celebrated for the deceased and praying at the family shrine on the appointed days. They also prepare a large meal for the family and friends on the death anniversary (Hickey 1964: 129).

In addition to these special celebrations of each family, all households honor the ancestors on the eve of the lunar new year or Tet. Before the new year arrives the

family carefully polishes all brass objects on the altar and decorates the shrine with flowers, candles, and fruits. On new years eve the souls of the ancestors are asked to come to the home to celebrate the new year. At midnight fire-crackers burst and family spirits are believed to arrive for the new year celebration. The family assembles before the altar; they make offerings of incense and food and pray for good fortune for the year. Veneration of the ancestors is the first ritual observance for the celebration of the new year. This exemplifies the priority given to the ancestors in Vietnamese observances and ceremonies (Vuong 1976: 39).

Roles of Members

Vietnamese society is structured in terms of age and relationship and reflects the Confucian principles of respect for elders and family. The common forms of address are determined by age and relationship. In addressing a man the corresponding forms are used, "ong" (grandfather) or "anh" (older brother). In addressing women the forms of "ba" (grandmother), "co" (aunt) or "chi" (elder sister) are employed in response to one's position in terms of age and respect. Within the family one must also distinguish between age by addressing older brother as "anh" and older sister as "chi". For younger siblings the terms "cau" or "chu" are utilized (Nguyen 1972: 4; Phung 1979: 78). The constant definition of one's position by the selection of appropriate forms of address and kinship terminology

demonstrates the importance of well defined roles in Vietnamese society.

The highest status in the Vietnamese family is given to the father. The husband traditionally provides the main source of income for the household. He works and can usually support the whole family on his income. His position and authority as provider for the family is unchallenged. Although he secures the financial support for the family, the husband gives his complete income to his wife, who budgets it for the household. When he needs money for small expenditures or spending money he takes what money his wife gives him. The Vietnamese wife traditionally keeps all the money for the family, and the husband does not express concern for this duty. When the husband comes from work he relaxes and is cared for by his wife. The husband is never expected to work in the kitchen, and it is practically unheard of for a Vietnamese man to enter the kitchen or to cook. Household tasks are taken care of by the wife and the daughters. The father being the head of the family has the final decision on all matters, although he might consult his wife or children. He also leads the family in ancestor ceremonies. Following the Confucian principles, the husband has the duty to exercise restraint and wisdom in running his family in order to deserve his respected position (Vuong 1976: 23-24; Phung 1979: 78).

Vietnamese women have traditionally been subordinate

to the men in the family. As dictated by the Confucian code, a woman must first obey her father, and then obey her husband after marriage. When her spouse dies, the surviving widow must be obedient to her eldest son, who assumes the role of the family head. Following this orientation, the women had no need for legal transactions. Under the Vietnamese system, women were incapable of owning or selling any property without the approval of their husband. The traditional position of women is reflected in the Vietnamese saying: "The husband is king and his wife is his slave" (Vuong 1976: 24).

Vietnamese women were expected to be dependent upon their husband and to be quiet and reserved. The possibility of a woman entering the working ranks and competing with men is virtually unheard of, and only recently have a few Vietnamese women chosen a professional career. The main duty of a Vietnamese woman is to care for her husband and his family. After marriage the wife becomes a member of the husband's family and has obligations to respect and to care for her new inlaws. When the new couple has a baby the wife begins her life long task of caring for the many children that will come. Vietnamese families are usually quite large and the wife must spend many years giving birth and nurturing from five to ten children.

Women are expected to excel in housekeeping, cooking and rearing the children. For the benefit of her husband

and children the wife must work hard and sacrifice her personal interests for the family. Rather than praise physical beauty, Vietnamese prefer to enumerate the practical virtues of women. The four main Confucian virtues for women include: "cong", housekeeping skills; "dung", feminine appearance; "ngon", gentle and reserved speech; and "hanh", exhibiting virtuous and good conduct (Phung 1979: 78). Consequently Vietnamese women are usually shy or quiet outside the family surroundings and they rarely drink alcohol or smoke cigarettes.

Considered almost exemplary members of the Vietnamese family, women are expected to be the paragon of virtues which include virginity until marriage. After marriage a wife is expected to be faithful to her husband even after his death. Until recently, 1959, the Vietnamese husband could legally take several wives or concubines, and his first wife quietly accepted his will. Polygamy and concubinage were common practices; however, divorce was not acceptable. Rather than accept divorce, the family encouraged the wife to sacrifice and endure the difficulties of the marriage for the benefit of the children. The husband might also abandon his wife and children and remarry. Usually an abandoned wife would continue living with her children and the eldest son would assume the duties of the father (Hickey 1964: 112-14).

The proper place for the Vietnamese woman has been in

the home, where she works to insure the success of the family. Vietnamese women have been traditionally lower educated than men and usually do not enter the job market outside the home. "Women as secretaries or office workers was unheard of in Vietnam" (Vietnamese informant 1984). Some women, usually widows, enter business and support their family. Running a small shop or restaurant is acceptable for some women. Other women also become elementary school teachers. Although these women work outside the home their jobs are understood as extensions of their female duties of caring for the children in schools.

Early in life, children observe and learn the principles of the Vietnamese family. Obedience to their parents, duty to the family and respect for elders are the main Confucian principles that children must follow. Vietnamese children quickly learn the importance of distinction between male and female roles. Within the household, boys sleep in one bedroom and girls in another. Boys are not expected to help with housework and are usually kept out of the kitchen. Studying is the proper task for young men in the family. Young girls commonly take care of their little brothers and sisters and help their mother with cleaning and cooking for the family. Girls soon learn the appropriate duties of being a woman in the household. The authority of the parents in making decisions for the children is also an important lesson for Vietnamese. Children are taught that

parents should make decisions for them. In the operation of the family, authority of the parents, obedience of the children and duty of children to parents are emphasized. Children also observe and learn that it is their duty to care for their parents when they become old.

According to the Confucian teachings children are taught to have a very high regard for learning and respect for their teachers. Once in school children exhibit the proper attitude toward teachers, and any deviation from this norm results in severe disciplinary action. The practical segregation of girls and boys at home is also found at school. Girls play with and talk to other female friends and boys congregate with other boys. This pattern does not change but continues throughout high school and college. "The American term 'boy friend and girl friend' cannot be found in the Vietnamese lexicon" (Vuong 1976: 31).

Rather than go out alone, groups of boys and girls meet at social gatherings under the supervision of adults. Adhering to Confucian principles, virginity is cherished and marriage is considered a duty rather than a romantic adventure. Pregnancy out of wedlock is uncommon, and it is a grave disgrace to the family. The offending daughter could be disowned by the parents or even encouraged to commit suicide (Vuong 1976: 8). Consequently, parents do not encourage or expect their children to go out on dates. Whenever the time comes for marriage, the parents supervise

the meetings of the potential newlyweds in their own homes. Dating in the American sense was not common in Vietnam and only a few college students might go on dates (Vuong 1976: 31). Regarding courtship and marriage, Vietnamese usually follow their strict moral code and obey the wishes of their parents. Only after considering the marriage of their son or daughter, do Vietnamese parents encourage socializing with the opposite sex.

Conclusion

According to the Vietnamese culture, loyalty and duty to the family are highly valued. Rather than think of personal interests, one is taught to forget himself and to think of the family. For Vietnamese emphasis upon the self is not important. Individuality without regard for family is not encouraged (Oggeri 1979: 147). This low regard for the "self" is also reflected in the Vietnamese interest in obedience and freedom. In a study of Vietnamese values, Penner reported that Vietnamese showed less concern for their individual freedom and more concern for obedience (1976: 13). The analysis of Vietnamese values demonstrates the continued influence of the Confucian philosophy.

According to Confucian teachings "filial piety" binds the individual to the family. Children learn to respect their parents, elders, and ancestors. Children also continue to live with their parents until they marry. Then the son brings his wife to live with his parents. Marriage is

considered duty to family and dating is not encouraged. Virginity is cherished and girls and boys do not go out alone until they are ready to marry. When time comes for marriage, the parents play an important part in selecting a proper spouse for their child. This includes the engagement as well as the wedding formalities.

In the family the husband assumes the position of head and exercises his authority without question. He also leads the family in ceremonies for the ancestors. The wife works at home and practices obedience to her husband. Children respect their parents, elders, and teachers and have a high regard for education. Traditionally material wealth or financial success have been secondary concerns for Vietnamese. Scholars occupied the highest social position while businessmen or merchants were considered less prestigious. Education and social class have been traditionally linked throughout much of Vietnamese history. For centuries Vietnamese culture and values developed under the Confucian and Taoist influences. The continuation of these traditions and values is linked with the survival of Vietnamese culture in the United States.

CHAPTER IV

ENTRY INTO THE FIELD

Experience with the Vietnamese

Through an advertisement in the newspaper I became aware of the need for instructors in a refugee program in Oklahoma City. I began working with Vietnamese in 1978 as an English as a second language teacher and in January 1979, I was also offered the position of training coordinator for Indochinese counselors. At first I was teaching classes of ten to fifteen Vietnamese adults in several homes in the northwest area of Oklahoma City. After this initial outreach phase, the students, who were previously reluctant to come to our new location, began to attend classes at the center, and the teaching in homes was abandoned.

This first contact with Vietnamese adults as a "visiting teacher" gave me immediate access to their homes. Within a few class periods we began to feel comfortable and accustomed to each other. I was not so much an American intruding into their lives, but a teacher, which occupied a position of respect and honor in Vietnamese society. According to this tradition my role was well defined. I was

respected and given special consideration. Relying upon their previous experiences of behaving around a teacher, the Vietnamese adults knew how to act around me. The men sat at my end of the table and the women occupied the opposite side. Books and papers were given to or received from the teacher with both hands and eyes averted.

At break time, I was regularly served cool lemonade in the summer or hot tea in the winter. Sometimes older male students would also be served refreshments, but I was always the first served. Usually during the break men would sit in one circle with me engaging in conversations and offering me cigarettes. Although at this time I could not understand any Vietnamese, I sat with the men's group and participated in limited English conversations with my aide, when he was not busy speaking Vietnamese.

These first experiences with Vietnamese families impressed upon me the continuation of Vietnamese behaviors in the privacy of their homes. My position also allowed me to make first hand observations of my adult students and their families in this more or less Vietnamese world. Following these original contacts, I have continued to teach and work with Vietnamese for the past six years. I am currently the Director of the English Language Program for Refugees in Oklahoma City, and I have personally taught over 400 Vietnamese adults. I have become familiar with many Vietnamese families and individuals through the years and have been

able to achieve contacts with Vietnamese throughout the Oklahoma City area. My position also enabled me to attend weddings, funerals and other ceremonial activities which involved my students, their families and other members of the Vietnamese population.

Data Collected

The first experience in collecting data on the Vietnamese in Oklahoma City first began while I was training coordinator of the Mental Health Project during 1978-1979 and 1979-1980. In the first year of the project an assessment survey, which was designed to present the characteristics of the population and determine their needs was conducted. In this first survey 409 Vietnamese were interviewed. I worked closely with the counselors who conducted the interviews and had frequent conversations about their experiences and observations. I also assisted in the coding of data and had access to all the information from this first survey. In 1980, the Mental health Project was no longer funded and I continued working with the ESL program and assumed the position of director of ESL. Although my official position had changed, I continued to work daily with other agencies, and have many discussions about their clients and their cases.

In 1978 the Vietnamese population in Oklahoma City was estimated by the State of Oklahoma and the USCC to be 4,000. At this time the Director of the Department of Human

Services estimated that there would be an additional 3,000 Vietnamese coming to Oklahoma City. During 1979 and 1980 I observed the increased influx of Vietnamese Boat People and became interested in this new segment of the population. Continuing my collection of information about Vietnamese, I designed a questionnaire which was administered to 100 randomly chosen Vietnamese families. My first study was concerned with monitoring changes that 1975 Vietnamese had experienced over a three year period from 1977 to 1980. At the time of this study in 1980, the VAA estimated that 20% of the population in Oklahoma City were Boat People. The next year in the autumn of 1981, another survey was administered to collect information on the estimated 2,500 Boat People then living in Oklahoma City. One hundred sixty three Vietnamese Boat People were interviewed. I conducted some of the interviews, but the majority were conducted by the Vietnamese counselors with whom I had worked for three years. I analyzed the survey questionnaires, compiled the data and wrote the final results of this study in January, 1982.

I worked on these surveys, wrote both of the final reports and included my name on the title page, however, my Vietnamese boss felt that the Vietnamese American Association should receive all the credit. Consequently, my name as author was deleted from the title page before the originals were taken for printing. Being primarily responsible

for the development of these studies and being the author of the final reports, I continue to claim these as my own works without dispute from the Vietnamese American Association. This was an unfortunate experience which caused me much frustration. I was very angry and upset when I saw copies of my studies being handed out at workshops without any acknowledgment from the VAA. In spite of that, I still needed my job. From this experience I learned that it is common practice for government and business to utilize the resources of their employees and give them no credit for their own work.

Data collected for this study falls into two phases over a five year period. The first portion utilized life histories, surveys, observations, and informal interviews to collect more general background information. The area of study for the second part was more specific and focused upon public and private sector behavior and value changes among Vietnamese. During 1982 and 1983, I continued to collect more detailed personal information from Vietnamese students, co-workers and contacts that I had established over the previous years. At this time, through observations, over 100 informal interviews and twenty-five scheduled formal interviews, I collected the remainder of the information which is utilized in this study. My group of over 100 informants included 1975 Vietnamese, Boat People, and ODPs. From this larger group I successfully persuaded twenty-five household

heads to participate in extensive formal interviews utilizing a schedule of 160 questions. These interviews were in two parts and required three or four hours to administer. In some households I was able to interview both the husband and wife together and could contrast their views of the same situation. These twenty-five households were a cross section of the Vietnamese population in Oklahoma City which was characterized by the VAA in 1984 to consist of 50% arrivals from 1975, 40% Boat People, and 10% ODPs arriving during 1982, and 1983. In addition to this information, my data has been augmented through interviews with knowledgeable Vietnamese scholars, psychiatrists, leaders, and Vietnamese counselors who have known and worked with the Vietnamese in the United States and Oklahoma City during the past nine years. Their extensive contacts with fellow Vietnamese have proven to be invaluable in my work and a greater understanding of Vietnamese in Oklahoma City.

CHAPTER V

EMIGRATION EXPERIENCE

Vietnamese emigration prior to the recent Orderly Departure Program in 1981 can be contrasted to the experiences of other American immigrant groups. A forced exodus from one's homeland has been categorized as a "refugee" situation by Kunz (1973). Following this approach, Liu (1979) has characterized the Vietnamese emigration experience of 1975 as an "acute refugee movement". In presenting the experiences of 1975 Vietnamese and later Boat People, who arrived primarily from 1978 to 1981, the refugee orientation is meaningful. However, in considering the accounts of the Vietnamese who left under the recent Orderly Departure Program, the continued emphasis upon "acute refugee" or "refugee" situations appears to be questionable (Tsamyeni 1983).

Through a comparison of the emigration experiences of 1975 Vietnamese and later Vietnamese arrivals, it is apparent that larger family groups were evacuated during 1975 (Kelly 1977; Liu 1979; Montero 1979). Following this initial phase, smaller family groups, nuclear families, and individuals characterize the recent Vietnamese population

known as Boat People and ODPs (Nguyen 1982). In the 1984 final report to Oklahoma's Department of Human Services, the Vietnamese American Association estimated the population of Oklahoma City to consist of 7,500 Vietnamese. This group is further broken down into: fifty percent, 1975 arrivals; forty percent, Boat People; and ten percent, ODPs. It was also reported that during 1984, 400 Vietnamese arrived in Oklahoma City through the ODP program. Hundreds of other Vietnamese in Oklahoma City have applied to the ODP program for family reunification and are waiting for notification from Vietnam. It is possible that this last group of Vietnamese arrivals may prove to be the largest of all Vietnamese to come to the United States. Three separate groups of Vietnamese have been distinguished in terms of time as well as method of departure. These differences are apparent in the individual emigration accounts.

In Vietnam I lived with my younger brother, my wife, my wife's parents and my three children. I had worked for the American embassy for ten years and they told us to be prepared to leave Vietnam. I told my other brother to not return to his army unit outside Saigon, but to desert and remain with us until we were evacuated. He was afraid to do that, and returned to his unit and was left behind. I went to work one day and at noon they told me I had one hour to get my family to the airport. At home we had only thirty minutes to leave. My wife's father was upset and was in such a hurry that he dressed quickly. We realized he was wearing his pajama pants at the airport My wife's sister's and brother's families were also planning to leave with us. They lived nearby and I sent my brother to tell them to come quickly to meet us. There were twenty-nine of us and we drove three cars to the airport. When we got to the airport the police said that only I could enter. I went into the airport and found my boss from the embassy. He told the Vietnamese military police to let my whole

family in My wife's brother had studied pharmacy at the University of Wisconsin. When we arrived at Fort Chaffee he contacted his old professors and they agreed to sponsor us. There were too many of us, so they divided us into three families. My family, my wife's sister's family and my wife's brother's family. My wife, her parents, my brother and my children and I lived in one house. Later we moved to Oklahoma City because it was too cold in Wisconsin. Now my wife's sister lives in San Diego and her brother lives in Austin.

This type of experience is characteristic of some families who escaped in 1975. Usually these families qualified under the three categories for evacuation: military or political official; employee of American company or government; and security risk. The Vietnamese who were planned to be evacuated by the U.S. government had some advanced notice and were therefore able to escape in larger and multigenerational extended family groups. Not all evacuees from 1975 took many extended family members with them. The majority were primarily nuclear families, and others included fragmented nuclear families, and single individuals.

After I got married I moved from my parents' house to live with my husband's family. There were his parents, his seven brothers and sisters and us. My husband was an officer in the navy On April 29, 1975, my husband, our three children and I got on a big navy boat and went to the Philippines We were sponsored by a convent in Oklahoma City. My husband and I left all our families in Vietnam. I have no relatives in the United States. Only my husband and three children.

In Vietnam I lived with my parents, my uncle, aunt and three cousins I was afraid when the communists came in April, 1975. I left my family and went with my friends in their fishing boat. I thought we would go out, stay on the boat for two days and then return. We went out 20 miles and were picked up by an American ship. I don't have any family in the United States. I live with a Vietnamese couple.

The experience of the 1975 Vietnamese can be contrasted to the accounts of Boat People who anticipated their departures for months and even years. Although these departures were well planned, the circumstances surrounding escape by boat did not allow many Vietnamese to bring large extended families or even complete nuclear families.

In Vietnam I was a physician. In 1975 I thought that I could continue living under the communists. All the physicians were controlled by the political officers. They gave us orders to do cruel things to patients; make abortions and give patients poison in their medicine to kill someone they disliked. For example, the owner of a factory, a capitalist, or a politician from the old government. If we resisted their orders they would cut my rations for food or stop my practice of medicine. So we decided to escape. We attempted three times The first time we were cheated by some people and they took our money and told the police. I managed to run away but my wife and children were caught and put in jail for ten days. The second time we pretended we were Chinese. We got an I.D. card and used a Chinese name. We were ready to go when the government announced that the Chinese escape program was canceled. The third time my wife, our two children and I escaped. My parents were going to escape too, but after two failures they were afraid of being caught. My wife's father actually helped to organize our escape. In 1975 my sister and her husband left Vietnam. They sponsored us to come to the United States.

In Vietnam I lived with my wife, her mother and our three daughters. I was a captain in the military. After the communists came they sent me to prison in the jungle and made me cut trees before I managed to escape. I returned to Saigon and hid out. I lived with friends for three months. I knew that I must escape or the police would finally catch me I saw my wife before I left Vietnam. I took my eleven year old daughter with me and escaped by fishing boat Now I live with my daughter and my cousin (common law wife) and her son. Her husband died in prison in Vietnam.

In my study of Boat People in 1981, the population was distinguished by date of arrival in Oklahoma City.

Thirty-six percent came in 1979; forty-three percent came in 1980 and twenty-eight percent came in 1981. Three percent reported to have relocated to Oklahoma City from other states. Differences between the two population groups, 1975 and Boat People, are further demonstrated through a comparison of family compositions. Utilizing information collected in my 1980 study of 1975 Vietnamese and my 1981 study of Boat People the following differences were reported.

FIGURE 4

Characteristics of Vietnamese Households in Oklahoma City

1975 Arrivals		Boat People	
Nuclear	57%	Nuclear	55%
Married w/o child	8%	Married w/o child	6%
Extended	12%	Divorced	2%
Divorced	2%	Widowed	4%
Single (living alone or with a friend)	5%	Single (living alone or with a friend)	21%
		Fragmented Nuclear Family (One spouse and one or more children)	11%

It should be noted that some households reported to be nuclear with one or two other relatives such as sibling, niece, nephew, etc. This tendency was also observed by Liu in his study of Vietnamese at Camp Pendleton. "Heads of households often considered younger siblings, cousins, and inlaws as a part of the family" (Liu 1979: 46). For Vietnamese extended family would usually include more than one or two relatives which were dependent upon the nuclear

household heads for support. Reflecting the cultural orientation of the Vietnamese, these households are considered nuclear families in this study. Realizing the need for further analysis of the composition of Vietnamese households, I asked more detailed questions in the extensive interviews conducted in 1982 and 1983. In this third study, the Boat People reported: nuclear family, thirty-three percent; nuclear family and one or two siblings or relatives, twenty-five percent; single parent with child, seventeen percent; and single individuals, twenty-five percent. My group of selected informants closely resembled the overall characteristics of the Boat People studied in 1981. To better illustrate actual family composition, nuclear families were further subdivided into two categories, but the largest number of Vietnamese escaping were still nuclear families.

The most recent development in Vietnamese emigration is the Orderly Departure Program. The differences in this third and most current phase of exodus from Vietnam are well demonstrated in the emigration accounts of my informants.

Before the communists came and Saigon fell we quickly married. He was an officer in the South Vietnamese army, and the communists sent him to re-education camp for one year. When he was released from prison he escaped by boat and came to the United States. We decided that I would wait and come later to America. I continued living in Ho Chi Minh City and had a small beauty shop and sold cosmetics. After Mr. K. arrived in Oklahoma City in 1978, he lived with some friends and got a job in construction. He began saving money for me to come and join him. After the Vietnamese announced the ODP program we quickly filled out all the

applications Before I left Vietnam I hired a Vietnamese tutor who had taught English during the war. I studied with him for one year, and made preparations to leave. When the papers were accepted and all the fees had been paid, including my plane ticket to the United States, I was granted my exit permit. I turned everything over to the government and flew from Ho Chi Minh City to Bangkok. I stayed in a hotel there for one week while I was processed. I flew to Los Angeles and on to Oklahoma City. Mr. K. and his friends met me at the airport.

Recently the ODP program has brought Vietnamese to Oklahoma City. The VAA reported that during 1984, approximately 400 Vietnamese came to Oklahoma City through the ODP method. Time Magazine stated that, "More than half a million people have applied to leave the country (Vietnam) legally, but under the Orderly Departure Program, only about 300 emigrants a week make it out" (April 15, 1985: 39). This method for Vietnamese coming to the United States would appear to continue into the next decade. The ODP cases with which I am familiar include immediate family members: wives; wives and children; and parents accompanied by other extended family members. A prerequisite for this program is that one must have family members in the United States. Without this, the only resort is to continue to escape by boat. The number of Boat People has drastically dropped since the beginning of the ODP program. Some of these Vietnamese are admitted to the U.S. as refugees and others as immigrants. Those classified as immigrants do not qualify for cash assistance after arrival. Vietnamese who are already American citizens can apply for their families

to immigrate to the United States. These Vietnamese must sign a document stating that they will provide for their family's needs after arrival and will not utilize welfare for three years. Excluding elderly immigrant parents, most new arrivals under the immigrant program find jobs within a few weeks of their arrival.

The Vietnamese pattern of family cooperation as described in the literature (Vuong 1976; Crawford 1966; Hickey 1964) has been observed to be an important strategy for Vietnamese continuing to come to the United States. The tradition of large diversified family living situations was reported to be the norm in Vietnam. Eighty percent of my respondents reported to have lived in extended multigenerational households, and only twenty percent stated that they had lived in nuclear households in Vietnam.

In Vietnam my husband and I and our three children lived in a big house. My mother, my sister, my brother and his wife and their six children also lived with us. For the big family we had three servants; one cook, one maid for cleaning, and one girl who only took care of the children. When we escaped from Vietnam, only my husband, me and our three children left in a small boat. Now in Oklahoma City the five of us live together. We have no other relatives in the United States.

My four children, my husband and I had our own house in Vietnam. We had a maid to do the cleaning and cooking. After I married I went to live with my husband in a new house. His parents and his older brother lived in another house nearby The communists sent him to jail for three years. After he got out of the prison camp, we decided to escape from Vietnam. Our four children, my husband and I escaped by boat to Malaysia.

The dominant pattern in Vietnam was for large extended family households. Some Vietnamese reported to live

in nuclear families and managed to escape with all members. Most nuclear households were located near other relatives, and none of my informants reported to have lived alone in Vietnam. The importance and cohesion of the family was well demonstrated during the 1975 evacuation. Nevertheless, the full dynamics and operation of the family system were yet to be realized by the American public. In 1975, as many Vietnamese families as were possible were evacuated. Some families included grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins, but most families did leave some members in Vietnam. The majority of extended families that have most of their immediate members began leaving days before the fall of Saigon.

My father worked for an American company. In April, 1975, they told him that he must leave soon. Around the 20th of April, all my family, my uncles, aunts and cousins all left Vietnam together. We flew together on a commercial airline to the Philippines.

Some of the evacuees with advanced warning still have parents, siblings and other relatives in Vietnam whom they want to bring to the United States. During the 1975 phase, there was much media comment upon the large Vietnamese families arriving in the refugee camps. Although the physical difference in size was quite apparent, the functioning and operation of the family system was not well understood by the public or the resettlement agencies.

Very few of the 1975 arrivals had relatives residing in the United States. The five cases that I am familiar

with include: Vietnamese women who had married Americans in Vietnam and were then living in the United States; and Vietnamese professionals who were studying or working in the United States in April, 1975.

My husband had gotten a scholarship from Vietnam to go to Oklahoma to study medicine. He had lived here for several years. When he finished his medical program, he returned to Saigon in 1974. Within one year we were in the refugee camp. A few days after he arrived he began calling some people that he had known from school. They helped to sponsor us to Oklahoma City.

Excluding the very few cases that already had relatives in the United States, the vast majority of Vietnamese had no family members or friends to sponsor them in 1975. These first emigrants found themselves living in military refugee camps waiting for a Voluntary Agency (VOLAG) to sponsor them. For many the sponsor was a church or an American family in a place they had never heard of.

We were in Fort Chaffee. I had no idea where it was either, somewhere in America. I am a Buddhist, and they asked me if I would accept a sponsorship through the Lutheran Social Service. I said, yes. Later they told me that my family had a Lutheran Church to sponsor us in Manhattan, Kansas. It must be a big city, I thought. Later I discovered where it was, but I was still happy to have a sponsor.

We were sponsored out of Fort Chaffee by a Baptist Church in North Carolina, but we are Catholic. My family lived there for one year. There were no jobs so we moved to Little Rock, Arkansas, to live near some Vietnamese friends of my father.

The pattern of Church and American family sponsorship continued through the Boat People phase of Vietnamese immigration. At this later time more diversified methods of sponsorship were utilized. In my 1981 study of Boat People

in Oklahoma City, seventeen percent reported they had an American family sponsor; thirteen percent were sponsored by American churches; sixty-two percent were sponsored by Vietnamese family and relatives; eight percent were sponsored by a Vietnamese organization. The Vietnamese American Association was the primary sponsoring organization cited. Others were sponsored by Vietnamese friends whom they had known in Vietnam or had recently met in a refugee camp. Those who had relatives in the U.S. were more quickly brought to Oklahoma City. Later these same arrivals would sponsor others who were still waiting in a camp in Southeast Asia.

We escaped by boat from Vietnam with ninety-five people. After several days at sea we arrived in Malaysia. We were put in the refugee camp with all the other Vietnamese. After eight months we were sponsored by the Baptist church. They rented us a small apartment and we took welfare and studied English.

My children and I paid money to the communists to escape on a big boat with 150 people. Before, the communists took some people's money and put a bomb in the boat and killed everyone. My mother-in-law told me not to go. I knew if I lived in Vietnam I will die, and maybe I will die on the sea. We went to Indonesia. I knew a friend there for nine months. Her family sponsored her to Oklahoma City, and then she sponsored me and my children. We lived with them for two months until we got welfare. Then we rented our own apartment.

My wife and my sister and I escaped to Thailand. We didn't have relatives in the U.S. and it was difficult to get a sponsor. They told us that the Vietnamese American Association in Oklahoma City was one of the groups sponsoring refugees without relatives in America, and they sponsored us here.

Of the more diversified methods of sponsorship for Boat People, the most common type was relatives acting as sponsors. The dependence and reliance upon the family system,

which had characterized Vietnamese culture, was beginning to become visible in the new environment. Following the first arrival of Vietnamese in 1975, many Boat People utilized the family network as a strategy for entry into the United States.

My wife, our baby, and her two younger sisters and her young brother and I escaped to Malaysia. My uncle and aunt and their five children escaped in 1975, and were living in Oklahoma City. They sponsored us from the camp to come to live with them. There were thirteen of us living together. After six months my wife, the baby, my two sisters-in-law and my brother-in-law and I rented our own apartment.

I had to bribe the communists with gold to let us escape. My wife, five children, one nephew and I escaped on a boat with 95 people to Indonesia. My mother and brother stayed in Vietnam My older brother and his family left in 1975 and they sponsored us to Oklahoma City. Fifteen people were living in the same house, and it was too crowded. After one month we moved to another two bedroom apartment.

My young brother, one nephew, my wife, our three children and I escaped in a fishing boat with twenty-five other people. We were picked up and taken to Japan. We lived there for one and a half years My sister's husband's parents were evacuated from Vietnam in 1975 and they sponsored us to Oklahoma City. We lived with them for three months until we rented a small apartment of our own.

The pattern of utilizing family as sponsors continued to be a common plan during the greatest flow of Vietnamese into the U.S. from 1979 through 1981. Within this three year time period, letters to Vietnam from recent arrivals in the United States often contained very interesting reports. Contrasting the economic situation of postwar communist Vietnam and food shortages, the letters from the U.S. would have resembled those of earlier Chinese immigrants, who

referred to America as a "mountain of gold" (Sung 1967: 10). Unfortunately, the Chinese immigrants didn't have pictures to send home. An informant's family of six were receiving approximately \$600.00 and food stamps each month through the welfare program. She told me that she and her friends, and their families had dressed in their new clothing and gone to a department store. Once inside, they took family pictures between the aisles of merchandise. These pictures were then sent to Vietnam. Sending these types of pictures as well as pictures of your car, house, and apartment was observed among Boat People.

The new arrivals without English or jobs were soon living comfortable lives much better than those in postwar Vietnam. This was possible through public assistance programs in the U.S. Excluding free medical care, social welfare programs in America were unknown in Vietnam. In their home country the strategy was for reliance upon family through difficult times. Boat People were able to soon move out of crowded living conditions with their sponsors and relatives with the assistance of government programs. Vietnamese arrivals could qualify for Indochinese Refugee Assistance Program benefits (IRAP) which were administered through the local welfare office. From 1979 through 1981 assistance could be received for the first thirty-six months. In the Refugee Act of 1983 Congress limited the period of eligibility to eighteen months after arrival.

The news from Boat People who had left earlier inspired others to try their luck and escape. Not all were successful and it has been estimated that half of all Boat People were lost at sea or killed by pirates before arriving at a country of first asylum (ORR 1983: 12). For those who did succeed, family in the U.S. were able to sponsor them usually within six months to a year.

I escaped from Vietnam in February 1979. My wife, her sister, and I lived in Hong Kong for nine months We arrived in Oklahoma City during November 1979. After living in Oklahoma for almost one year, my brother and his family wrote me a letter stating that they also planned to escape in October 1980 They arrived in Thailand in November 1980. Very quickly I went to the USCC to fill out all applications for sponsorship. They arrived in Oklahoma City at the end of summer in 1981.

Through the utilization of temporary public assistance, Vietnamese were able to establish their own households within a few months. These new arrivals were no longer entirely dependent upon their family or sponsor for support. In my study of first phase or 1975 Vietnamese, nine and one-half percent reported to be on cash assistance, but in my second study of Boat People in 1981, thirty-seven percent stated that they were receiving cash assistance. The majority of my Boat People informants who were sponsored by family or relatives moved into their own homes. These examples indicate a departure from the traditional Vietnamese reliance upon family for economic assistance.

When we first came to the U.S., we applied for welfare after one month. During the first year my relatives helped us to find an apartment and a car, but now after

two years they don't help us anymore. We live in our own apartment and my wife also works now and we support ourselves.

I have only an aunt and a cousin here in Oklahoma City. Soon after we arrived we received welfare, which paid us a little money each month. In America we live independently and don't ask family or friends to help us very much. In Vietnam we depend more on relatives because they live nearby. All our relatives lived in the same city and we could just go around and see them easily.

In Vietnam it was common to live in an extended family household, which consisted of several generations. Each household was linked to the larger family system and cooperated together (Haines 1981). The few Vietnamese informants who lived in a nuclear household in Vietnam stated that their relatives lived nearby. The traditional Vietnamese pattern of large family systems has not been completely transplanted to the U.S. The existence of large extended households with grandparents, parents, sons and their wives and the grandchildren, aunts, and uncles are rare. Only eight percent of all my respondents reported to live in an extended multigenerational household with parents, sons, daughters and grandchildren. In Oklahoma City the majority of Vietnamese live in nuclear households. Some of these may also include one or two other friends or relatives. Living alone was uncommon among the Vietnamese and was considered undesirable but sometimes unavoidable in the United States. Single individuals prefer to live with other friends or couples rather than continuing to live alone.

Vietnamese people love to live with other people. They never live alone like American people do. I live with one friend and his wife. We live like brothers and help

each other.

In Chapter III it was stated that the individual Vietnamese identity is linked closely with that of the family. During 1975, the family was the only Vietnamese cultural institution which was transplanted almost intact. Although some family members were still in Vietnam, their American relatives continued to observe their affinity and obligations to their family in Vietnam. Informants who arrived during 1975 and Boat People commonly reported assisting their family in Vietnam through sending packages and supplies to contribute to the family economy.

Every month I must send about \$100.00 worth of supplies to my brother and relatives in Vietnam to help them. They are so poor and can't buy enough food to eat; there is no medicine in Vietnam when they get sick and they have nothing. They must also make their own clothes from what I sent them.

In Vietnam my rations were 13 kilos of what they call mix, 40% rice and the rest corn, manioc, or sweet potatoes, one liter of fish sauce, and one kilo of meat each month, and 10 grams of monosodium glutamate quarterly. Each year I was allowed to have two meters of fabric. I send packages every three months to Vietnam to my parents and to my brothers to help them support the family. They have little and I must help them.

Always I must send cloth, fabric, medicine, tylenol and other things to Vietnam to support my wife and my eight children. They can sell or trade this merchandise in the black market for food and something they need.

Within the past ten years, many have left Vietnam and have come to the United States. Some of these later arrivals joined family who came during the first wave in 1975. Others came alone or in small groups and acted as the vanguard which preceded the arrival of other family members.

This process continued the transplanting of Vietnamese which began in 1975. The majority of all my Vietnamese informants, including 1975 evacuees, Boat People, and ODPs, hope and plan to bring more family members in Vietnam to the U.S. The physical plan of American homes may restrict the feasibility of having a traditional extended family household. The first concern for Vietnamese in Oklahoma City is family reunification and overcrowded living conditions take second priority.

CHAPTER VI

IMMEDIATE POST-IMMIGRATION EXPERIENCE

The Vietnamese who arrived in 1975 were involved in a forced and unprecedented emigration experience (Liu 1979; Kelly 1977). Being driven out of their homeland and losing everything to the communists resulted in very bad memories which persist even ten years after the fall of South Vietnam. In asking informants, 1975 Vietnamese and Boat People, about their first year experiences, the purpose is to establish a foundation of preliminary experiences and monitor the dispositions toward continuing change. This approach also reveals some of the big differences between Vietnam and America that impressed Vietnamese shortly after their arrival. Only my ODP informants, who were reunited with family, expressed happiness and excitement upon first arriving in the United States.

I felt horrible when I came to America. I lost everything in Vietnam to the communists and left my family too. I had to sell my gold earrings and even my wedding ring to get money. I felt all alone. In Vietnam I never lived away from my family. Now I was living alone with my husband and my kids. The first year we were poor and the weather was so cold and different I thought I would die . . . (1975 Vietnamese).

I was a commander in the Vietnamese navy. By now, 1983, I would be an admiral. We lived a very high standard of

living in Vietnam. Then the first year in the U.S. I had no money and no job. I had no skills and had to accept any job for the minimum wage. (1975)

From my contacts through the years, it is most apparent that the immediate loss of possessions and status was a major problem for 1975 Vietnamese. Many talked about what they had left behind in 1975 at great length. This was less common among later arrivals, Boat People, who had lived under the communists and had seen their factories, shops and businesses confiscated by the new regime. Their family members had also been sent off to re-education camps. For them there was less remorse concerning their material losses, but a great feeling of disgust for the communists. In addition to lengthy accounts of their experiences in Vietnam, all informants mentioned varying degrees of difficulty with the English language.

The language problem was difficult for us. I studied English in Vietnam before, but I could not speak or listen well to the Americans. (1975)

Life was very difficult when I arrived. It was only me and my daughter. I spoke no English, and after I studied English I had problems in pronunciation. For one year Americans didn't understand me, and I could not understand the Americans. I had to write on a piece of paper. (Boat Person)

I didn't speak English and I couldn't talk to anyone for one year. I just stayed home and got welfare. (Boat Person)

All of my informants and most Vietnamese whom I have known through the years have had problems with the language. Regardless of previously studying English in Vietnam and working with Americans for many years, many complained that

English is an impossible language. The Vietnamese whom I think have good English skills continue to have problems with speaking and listening on the telephone. The great differences between Vietnamese, a monosyllabic tonal language without final consonants, and English precipitate these difficulties. Through my observations of Vietnamese dialects, Nam Ky (north), Bac Ky (middle), and Trung Ky (south), I have also realized that Vietnamese from each region have special pronunciation problems. The people from Vietnam who speak northern seem to have more of these problems.

For many new arrivals the sounds "N" or "L" were interchangeable or undistinguished, as well as "P", "B", "F", or "PH". The "J" (dz), "R" and "SH" sounds were virtually impossible for them to articulate even after much practice. Initial, middle, and final consonant clusters caused panic among most of my students. In many words some of the consonants might be pronounced, confused or even deleted completely.

An example of these language problems was provided by a newly arrived Boat Person who possessed some knowledge of English. He had gone to the Catholic Charities Office, USCC, to request some service. Following the established procedures, he produced his I-94 card and gave it to the sister who completed the client intake records. Unfortunately she forgot some necessary information and asked the

young man to give his card back to her. She repeated, "Where is your I-94 card?" several times without any response. Finally when he spoke, he changed the initial "P" to "B" and the initial "P" to "F". He thought that he had said, "Put in pocket". The sister did not respond. He repeated this several times. Unfortunately for the Vietnamese man, the sister heard something else and had him removed from her office. These instances can be considered amusing and a release for those who teach Vietnamese and are familiar with their pronunciation problems. Nevertheless, it is most obvious that English is a great source of difficulty, frustration and embarrassment for Vietnamese. Language ability is the usual problem faced by Vietnamese upon their arrival in the U.S.

The second most common complaint among Vietnamese was climate change. The weather was cited by half of my informants as a source of difficulty during the first year in Oklahoma.

The weather was so bad. When we arrived that summer it was 117°F, and we didn't have an air conditioner. The first winter it was too cold with too much snow. It made me sick too much.

I never saw anywhere with weather like Oklahoma. The weather changes too quickly. One day it is nice and then the next day it is cold. The change and cold winds are bad for my health.

The first thing that I didn't like was the weather. It is so different from Vietnam. It gets too cold and too hot for me and my family.

Virtually all of the Vietnamese in Oklahoma City came from

South Vietnam. I am familiar with only one family that escaped by boat from North Vietnam in 1978. Some of the Vietnamese informants had lived in the North, but moved to the South in 1954. North Vietnam has cool winters with the lowest temperatures near 40°F, and south Vietnam is tropical without cold winters (Crawford 1966). In the traditional Vietnamese Folk medicine, "Cao Yao", cold winds and changes in temperatures are considered to cause imbalance and illness within the body (Golden 1977: 949-50). Fluctuating temperatures and climate changes caused physical discomforts as well as illness for many new arrivals. After almost ten years, some Vietnamese still complain about the weather changes in Oklahoma and their resulting periods of illness.

Another most difficult adjustment for Vietnamese was adapting to the American fixation with the automobile. Almost half of all my informants also complained of having problems with learning to drive a car. Passing the driving test required many attempts for most Vietnamese. After studying the driving manual and lessons which had been translated into Vietnamese, many needed to take the test three or four times. Others complained of the differences within the American pattern of buying a car on credit and needing automobile insurance. A few of the men, in Vietnam, had driven private cars or jeeps in the military and reported little difficulty in passing the driving test.

Many things were different. I never drove a car in Vietnam. I had to learn to drive a car. I took the written test five times before I passed. I used my friend's car and I took the driving test four times. After this I had to get the money to buy a car and always you must pay for car insurance.

I first came to America and I was so amazed; everything was so different. In Vietnam the communists don't have cars and everyone walks or goes by bicycle. In Oklahoma City there were too many cars everywhere and I couldn't drive a car.

For me America has a very fast pace and everybody hurries. Go to work; go to school; go home quickly everyday. Everyone drives a car. You go to work and go to school far away from your home, and everyday you drive for 45 minutes.

Other Vietnamese informants reported having difficulties with various combinations of aspects of American life. The topics of housing, economics, and work were also cited in addition to the common problems of English and the weather.

The big problem was housing and the language. When we arrived there were nine of us. We lived with our sponsor's family of five. Fourteen people lived in their small house. When we moved out it was impossible to find a cheap three or four bedroom house for the nine of us.

The way you buy everything is not like Vietnam. The American market and shops are too different. In Vietnam we go shopping everyday and buy fresh food, fresh vegetables, live crab, fresh shrimp, and live chickens. In Oklahoma City you go shopping one day a week and everything is not fresh.

I think the big difference is economic. In Vietnam after 1975 there was nothing. No car, no food, no medicine and everyone was very poor. Now in the U.S. there is everything but it is so expensive and costs too much to buy.

Before 1975 it was easy to live in Vietnam. After 1975 it was very difficult; communists controlled everything.

Before this in Vietnam many people lived by farming, a very easy life. You grow rice six months and relax six months. You don't worry about lay-off. No winter and the house was easy to build. No electric, no gas, no worry, an easy life. But now in the U.S. I must worry about everything; car, bills, and lay-offs. If I get laid-off I have demands and I can't pay for the car, rent, insurance or anything.

In addition to the more environmental differences of weather, housing, and economy one out of five respondents also mentioned behavioral and cultural differences which they felt were peculiar. American family practices, parental permissiveness, women smoking and drinking in public and aggressive straight forward behaviors were also observed by Vietnamese informants.

In America I think it is very strange that among the American family they let the young children, 16, 17, 18, years old move out into their own apartments and go to school or work by themselves. They are not close to their parents. Also what is so strange or cruel is how the Americans put their parents in nursing homes until they die. Even the rich men do like this in America. In Vietnam they never do like this.

When you go to a job interview you must look in their eyes and shake hands. If you don't the Americans think you are a bad person and will not hire you. American women also smoke cigarettes like the men do at work.

Americans are more open and they talk about their feelings to other people. Vietnamese are closed and keep all their emotions inside. You know, the Vietnamese and the Oriental in general, we mind and keep our feelings to ourself and we don't like to express ideas to other people. But with the Americans, they can express their ideas easily with other people. I think this is a big difference.

Among all the Vietnamese whom I have known during the past six years, no one reported to have an easy first year in the U.S. From my observations through the years, the

Vietnamese of 1975 appear to have had different types of difficulties than the later arrivals. For many of them the sudden loss of status and position was a great blow. Few managed to escape with any substantial portion of the wealth which they had enjoyed in Vietnam. As one informant told me,

One day I was in Vietnam and I owned many warehouses filled with wood and building materials; the next day I was in a refugee camp fighting with others to get one piece of plywood so we wouldn't have to sleep on the damp ground.

Most of the Vietnamese in 1975 just left everything behind. When they arrived in the U.S., there were no Vietnamese people to welcome them, and they were sponsored primarily by Americans. Vietnamese grocery stores, publications, and programs were not yet in existence in the U.S. The majority of 1975 Vietnamese also left family members in Vietnam, and this was another source of anguish for them.

The later arrivals, from 1978 to the present, have not had an easy first year either. However, the sudden loss of wealth and status and unanticipated leaving of family in Vietnam was less. Some Boat People and their families planned their escape for months or years in advance. The lack of Vietnamese in the U.S. was also not a problem for them. Although many of the 1975 Vietnamese had been highly educated and were elites in their own country, suddenly they left everything behind (Kelly 1977: 179). For those who remained after April 30, 1975, their experience was more of

a continual deterioration of their previous existence over years.

Businesses and factories were confiscated. Former "puppet government" officials and military officers were shipped off to jungle re-education camps. Old currencies were exchanged for new paper money, and families' hidden savings of gold gradually dwindled as they bought needed food and bribed the police. The new order was in complete control when the Boat People left Vietnam. Their status, possessions, and wealth were already gone before they left. The only thing of value which they left behind were their family members. Some of these relatives had helped them to escape and had even helped to pay the police for them.

When these later arrivals came to the U.S., some already had relatives here, and there were other Vietnamese living in Oklahoma City. Vietnamese markets, shops, and a Vietnamese American Association where one could study English, find a translator, and receive assistance were also present. The new Vietnamese found a different type of situation that was not present in 1975. Other difficulties which were enumerated by Vietnamese included transportation, housing, economy, and other behavioral differences. All these factors contributed to making the immediate post-immigration experience difficult in America. These statements from the informants provide a perspective of the Vietnamese receptiveness to change and their initial impressions

of the host culture. The perceived differences and difficulties which were enumerated were primarily limited to activities and participation in the larger American culture.

CHAPTER VII

THE PUBLIC SECTOR

The importance of distinguishing contact with and participation in the host society to delineate the mechanism of change has been of interest to social science for many years. The significance of working in the new culture has been presented in the first chapter through the approaches of Wissler (1920), Gans (1956), Kallen (1956) as well as Warner (1945). Participation in the specific area of work in the host society has been understood to require limited changes among immigrants. Expanding this approach to include other required changes to participate or function in the host culture is identified as public sector change. This is not so much a total change, but merely a "change in those aspects which are necessary to living in a new country" (Cronin 1970: 155). These necessary changes are usually determined by strategies for economic survival within the existing culture. The appropriateness of these distinctions is further demonstrated in these statements from my Vietnamese informants.

Everybody must go to work. Everybody must work so hard to get money to buy a car and pay the insurance and pay

the bills. You can't go anywhere without driving a car. No car, no job, no money and you will die soon.

Vietnamese people are usually quiet and not aggressive. When I work with Americans they like people who are aggressive and so right now I try to learn a lot from them. I have to adapt to the way Americans act at work.

Employment

The identification of adjustments is not only limited to changes at work but must also include the whole group of strategies and skills necessary to acquire and perform a job in Oklahoma City. Finding a prospective employer would require reading the newspaper or hearing about openings from others. Then one would probably telephone to inquire about the job and go to the location to fill out an application. This would be followed by an interview and possibly a test. Before even securing a job a Vietnamese person would have to: read English; talk on the telephone in English; find transportation; fill out an application; and respond to commands and questions during a test or interview. These are merely the limited repertoire of important skills needed to secure employment and represent only the initial phase of participation in the public sector.

Understanding the complexity of such initial adjustments, it would seem highly improbable that any newly arrived Vietnamese could find employment. It would also appear that a command of the English language would be a prerequisite for securing employment in the public sector. Still, not all Vietnamese spoke English when they arrived,

and they began to work almost immediately. A variety of strategies have been employed by the Vietnamese to achieve entry into the economic sphere of employment. In the 1978 study of Vietnamese, some male heads of households had limited knowledge of English through their former positions in Vietnam. Other members of these same households usually spoke no English. During the 1975 period, Vietnamese entry into the world of work was dependent upon the American sponsors, who primarily directed their lives during the immediate post-immigration period. At this time many of the preliminaries for employment were simply circumvented.

My husband was an officer in the military before 1975. When we got to Oklahoma City within a few weeks the sponsors found my husband a job as a grounds keeper. Everyday he would ride to work with an American man who worked at the same place. The sponsors gave me a used sewing machine and I began to sew and make clothes for ladies in the Church After a few months, they helped us to get a used car and later they helped my husband find another job in a factory. (1975)

When we arrived my sponsor told me of a job and he asked me if I thought I could do it. I said I need a job and I need the money. I took the job, but I hated it. I was an officer in the navy, and then I was working in a factory as a machine operator. After two years I quit and moved to Oklahoma City. My friend helped me find a job at his company.

As these examples illustrate, it was not always necessary to follow usual procedures to find employment after the evacuation in 1975. In the interim sponsors helped to find jobs, assisted in transportation, and secured housing. Through reliance upon other Americans and churches, Vietnamese were able to obtain jobs quickly after their arrival.

It has been observed that mastering English is not absolutely necessary before going to work; however, the types of jobs one may choose and the potential for job mobility are more contingent upon English language skills.

I helped my friend to go to work with me after she arrived in 1981. She didn't speak English and my company had openings, so I took her to work with me. My company makes plastic buckets. My friend works with me, and we put rubber gaskets in the lids of large plastic buckets.

If you are ignorant and can't speak English you can find a job. Someone can help you find a job and fill out the application. At work someone can translate for you and tell you what to do. Then you do the same thing all day long. If you want to get a better job you must speak English.

At work I don't speak English too much. I must talk to my supervisor in English and at break time I must speak to the other Americans. My supervisor said that I will not get a raise until I speak English better. So I study more English at night after work.

The reliance upon American sponsors to acquire employment was common in 1975. Other more recent arrivals have also relied upon American sponsors, Vietnamese sponsors, relatives, and friends to help them in their job search. This strategy has been mostly successful in finding minimum wage, assembly type jobs that require the repetition of a limited number of tasks. To change jobs, receive promotions, increase salary, and upgrade one's job, English ability is important. Among all my Vietnamese informants and hundreds of students, all agreed that learning the language of the host culture is of utmost importance for them and their children. To acquire these English skills, Vietnamese have used several approaches other than reliance

upon their sponsor.

Education

After their arrival in Oklahoma City in 1975, Vietnamese children were sent directly to public schools to study English. This program has become more sophisticated in the past nine years, and is still the dominant pattern for children today. Vietnamese under sixteen are required by law to attend school. Entry into the public sector of education for children comes quickly after arrival. Within one week they must report to the Board of Education for intake and placement in public schools. Soon they are riding the bus and going to school with all the other children.

For Vietnamese adults in 1975, short crash courses were organized in the temporary camps by other Vietnamese who knew English. After sponsorship, Vietnamese adults with little English attended classes organized by local churches, sponsors, or other well intentioned persons. Vietnamese with some English skills also reported to attend classes at local community colleges. In the first year there were a few classes organized by sponsors and other organizations, such as Friends of Refugees in Oklahoma City. These small programs operated on emergency federal funds for only one year. Those who wanted to continue learning English went to other free programs. Some studied at the Public Library for two nights a week, and others studied at the Mexican American Center in Oklahoma City. Vietnamese with more English

continued to study at local community colleges. In 1977, Federal funds became available to establish classes and programs for Vietnamese.

By October 1978, there was an English Program for Indochinese operating in Oklahoma City. Vietnamese who had arrived in 1975 could continue to study English at their own center. When the Vietnamese Boat People began arriving in 1979, there was an English program already established for them in the city. The purpose of the program, in accordance with federal guidelines, is to provide survival-functional-work oriented English language training. The emphasis is upon listening, speaking, and following commands. Writing skills are primarily limited to filling out forms and applications. The curriculum guidelines and requirements from the Office of Refugee Resettlement are quite specific in limiting English language training to skills needed to find a job and function at work. Other survival and consumer skills which are necessary to participate in the public sector are also taught. These include: shopping; banking; going to the post office; going to the doctor or the dentist; renting an apartment; paying bills; buying insurance; driving a car, etc.

Understanding the importance of English language ability in the U.S., Vietnamese from 1975, Boat People, ODPs and Immigrants have utilized these services within the past six years. Many of the second wave Vietnamese began

attending shortly after their arrival. These more recent arrivals did not have to rely solely upon their sponsor for language training as was common in 1975. During the second phase of immigration, the existence of social welfare programs for Vietnamese allowed alternative strategies for learning English and acquiring job skills before entering the work force.

In the United States we had to learn English first. We studied English at the Vietnamese American Association school for six months and took welfare. Then I got a job at Western Electric. My husband didn't have a job yet and he stayed home. He studied English and watched the children after school. I got laid off after six months and had to find a new skill. I went to CETA program and learned computer key punch. My husband also studied auto mechanics at CETA. Now I work for a company and do key punch and my husband has a job as a mechanic.

When we first arrived our sponsor didn't want us to take welfare. They wanted us to go to work immediately, but we decided we must study English first. We lived with the sponsor for one month. When we received our first welfare check we moved out to our own apartment near the school. We didn't have a car and we must walk everywhere. In Vietnam my wife and I could drive a car and it was no problem to take the driving test. We had to save money to buy a car After studying English for one year, I got a job as a machine operator for \$7.00 an hour, my wife got a job as a teacher's aide. My sister continued to study English at the community college for nine more months. Now she has a job as a sales lady in a big department store.

I was a doctor in Vietnam. When I arrived in Oklahoma City, my cousin took us to welfare to apply. We lived on welfare for two years, studied English and I prepared to take my medical exams. When the welfare was cut I got a job translating materials for the public schools and continued to study for the exams. My wife got a job with an accountant firm to help support the family. Finally, I passed my medical exams and now I am doing internship at the hospital to complete my medical recertification.

Utilizing public assistance was common among Vietnamese Boat People after arrival in Oklahoma City. Among the one hundred sixty-three Vietnamese families interviewed in 1981, thirty-seven percent reported to have utilized welfare for varying periods of time. Almost half of my later respondents who had taken welfare also stated that they had studied skills through the CETA program. The first IRAP program allowed Vietnamese to receive federal assistance through county welfare programs for three years after their arrival. The considerable number of Vietnamese utilizing this program for years prompted the Federal government to limit eligibility to only eighteen months after arrival. Although some Vietnamese had taken the opportunity of public assistance to learn English and prepare themselves to seek employment, not all cash recipients demonstrated such planning.

When I arrived I didn't speak any English, and I didn't understand anybody. I went to the employment service but I couldn't speak any English, and they couldn't find me a job. So I went to apply for welfare. I just stayed home and continued to live on welfare. When they cut the check I plan to apply to the CETA (JTPA) program to learn a skill.

I think I still have a Vietnamese way of life now, because I stay home and take welfare. I have not yet worked in the U.S. and I am not yet familiar with the American way of life.

My four children and I escaped and came to Oklahoma City. After we arrived my friend took us to apply for welfare. I tried to study English at the VAA school, but I am too old and my brain isn't good anymore. We were on welfare for three years. When they cut the welfare I got a part-time job in the hospital food service. I can't learn to drive a car either. My daughter

studied driver education in school and got her license. We bought an old car for her to drive, but I must walk to work. I work thirty-five hours a week and they don't pay health insurance, sick leave or vacation. They said after six months I may work full time.

Of those Vietnamese respondents who utilized welfare before seeking employment, only one out of three who had studied English were still unable to find employment or found minimum wage, unskilled jobs after their welfare checks were cut.

Whether the Vietnamese Boat People, receiving cash assistance, studied or just stayed at home, ultimately they had to enter the job market of the larger host society. To do this they had to undergo changes necessary to follow the American pattern. Recently implemented 1983 Federal guidelines require all refugees receiving cash assistance to attend English classes. It is the goal to prepare all new arrivals to find employment when their benefits are terminated.

Employment Patterns

The pattern of work in Oklahoma consists of numerous differences from that experienced in Vietnam. Some Vietnamese reported to work two jobs, and also work night shifts.

In the U.S. life is very different about working. I must work two jobs to support the family. I work the eleven to seven shift and must leave my wife and children home alone at night. My oldest son sleeps by the door in case someone tries to break in. In Vietnam you never work the night shift like this.

In Vietnam, usually the husband worked and supported the

family and the wife stayed at home. Only ten percent of the 1975 Vietnamese respondents stated that their wife had worked in Vietnam in teaching or in the family businesses. Among the Boat People, twenty-five percent reported to have had working wives in the household before 1975. These occupations for women included teachers, nurses, shopkeepers, restaurant owners, and sales ladies.

After the communist takeover many things changed for my informants in Vietnam. While their husbands were in prison serving sentences for involvement with the former government or military, the wives worked in schools, markets, farms and shops to provide for their family's needs. Most of the women who owned shops and restaurants saw them confiscated in 1975. Other women report to have grown vegetables to sell in the markets and some did sewing and weaving of rattan furniture at home to earn some income. In Oklahoma City among the 1975 Vietnamese, Boat People, and ODP households that I extensively interviewed, eighty percent reported to have working wives. In some households other strategies were also utilized by wives. Twelve percent of the households said the wife was unemployed and receiving welfare benefits, and only eight percent reported that the wife had no outside source of income for the family.

In addition to the observed change in the employment patterns for women, there have also been great changes in

the types of employment which Vietnamese men could continue in the United States. In my 1980 study of one hundred Vietnamese who arrived in 1975, the following was reported for occupation of head of household in Vietnam: military officers, thirty-two percent; government employees, twenty-two percent; businessmen, fourteen percent; clerical or sales and shop owners, twelve percent; skilled craftsmen, five percent; laborers, eight percent; students, seven percent. In my following study of one hundred sixty-three Boat People, they revealed different occupations for men. The results were : professional, eight percent; military officials, thirty-seven percent; business owners, twenty-two percent; skilled workers, six percent; laborers, five percent; students, twelve percent; and fishermen or farmers, ten percent.

In Vietnam during the war, I was a provincial head, like a governor of a state like Oklahoma. After 1975 the communists sent me to prison for two years. My wife and eight children and I escaped in 1978 and came to Oklahoma City. I got a job as an office clerk for a company in the city and my wife went to work in a sewing factory. I was very lucky and I got hired to work at GM. My wife continued working until we had enough money to open a restaurant. Now she works there all day and after work and on weekends we work together at the restaurant.

Before 1975 I was a captain in the army. I was a leader of a battalion. I was in the military for thirteen years, 1962 to 1975. After I escaped from the re-education camp I escaped from Vietnam. In Oklahoma my first job was a machine press operator making air conditioners. I got laid-off after five months. Then I studied welding for four months, but there were no welding jobs anymore. Then I got a job as a fry cook for six months. I quit this job to take a job as a welder and I was laid off after six months. Then I went

to the CETA program and studied plumbing. Now I work as a plumbing assistant.

In Vietnam I was a mechanic for the military. After 1975 I became a fisherman. My wife didn't work before 1975, but after the communists came, she was a vendor on the street. She sold things for women like clothing, make-up, perfume, etc. In Oklahoma City I got a job packing and shipping fabric. Then I got laid off and went to work as a waiter for one year and was laid off. Now I work at a candy company and box candy. My wife got a job in a small American restaurant as a bus girl, then she became a cook and now she is the chief cook at the restaurant.

In the U.S. most Vietnamese experienced a complete change in their occupation which they had in Vietnam, and most reported that their new jobs were below their former positions in Vietnam. For some this has caused much frustration, but many have gone to work and learned new skills. A few have gotten jobs at high paying factories such as GM, or AT&T. Others have taken jobs, studied new skills, found new employment and been laid off. The Vietnamese have much in common with fellow American workers who have also been experiencing lay-offs and disappointments in the work sector. When a Vietnamese is laid off, he behaves like other Americans. He/she applies for unemployment and begins looking for another job. This also demonstrates that Vietnamese conform to the public sector work patterns of employment as well as unemployment.

When asked if they prefer to work with Americans or Vietnamese, all of my respondents stated that "it didn't make any difference". Some Vietnamese actually prefer to work with Americans. Others who reported to work with

Vietnamese commonly stated that they had limited contact with other Vietnamese at work.

It doesn't matter to work with Vietnamese or Americans. I work with Americans, and everyday I can practice to speak English with them.

I prefer to work with Americans because you can learn to speak English better and learn about the American way of life.

At the first job I had, I was the only Vietnamese there. Then I worked in a big plant and there was only one other Vietnamese. He was a former colonel in Vietnam. He worked on another line. Everyone else was an American.

At all my jobs I worked with Americans. At the company where I work now, there are some other Vietnamese in another area. I work in packing and shipping with other Americans.

Some Vietnamese don't speak English well at my company, and they mostly talk to other Vietnamese. Sometimes the supervisor asks someone to translate to other Vietnamese at the plant. Usually the Vietnamese just do their job and don't talk much until break time or lunch.

Most of my Vietnamese informants work with other Americans in Oklahoma City, and English ability is very important for them. Vietnamese employees with little English speak minimally to the other Americans and speak primarily to other Vietnamese. The presence of other Vietnamese workers would determine the prevalence of this pattern. Vietnamese with limited English who work with only Americans must rely solely upon their own language ability at work. Other public sector behaviors at the work place are acquired by the Vietnamese. Conformity to the dominant American pattern includes such behaviors as: using the time clock; being punctual; observing break times and lunch time;

calling if one is late or sick; working overtime, being off on American holidays, etc.

The proper observance of lunch time and break times have been proven to be an important issue at some companies where Vietnamese work. American employees generally cherish their breaks and lunch periods. Not realizing this, some Vietnamese workers would not take breaks or would stop for a few minutes and then return to their jobs. The other American workers resented this and complained that the Vietnamese were trying to make them look bad by continuing to work nonstop. Others deplored this practice and said that it would eventually "cause the hourly quotas for all employees to be raised". At some companies, the Vietnamese were told to observe the American practice. Other employers took advantage of the productive Vietnamese situation and began to offer employees the option of pay by the piece or by the hour. Those Vietnamese who worked more productively could earn more money and not threaten other American employees.

The most common type of employment for Vietnamese in Oklahoma City is factory worker. Here it is appropriate to distinguish between the two categories of factory work as perceived by my Vietnamese informants. Companies with unions and high pay scales are preferred. The two most popular are GM and AT&T (formerly Western Electric). The majority of other factories begin salaries near the minimum

wage and gradually increase to a median range of four to five dollars an hour. In my interviews, twelve percent of the household heads reported to work at GM or AT&T, while twenty percent declared to be employed at other less desirable factories. For the remaining heads of households other occupations included: eight percent as professionals (continuing in their field after recertification); twenty percent as clerical and office workers; twelve percent in blue collar positions (welder and plumber); sixteen percent as service workers (janitor, restaurant); four percent as business owners; and eight percent as cash recipients (welfare or unemployment). The largest number of Vietnamese workers are employed in factories.

Some of the former factory workers have saved enough money to open a business for themselves. Within the last year, one female informant opened a day care center, and two other lady informants opened laundromats. Another male informant opened a convenience store. All of these new businesses were observed to be operated by one spouse. The other spouse and family members continued working at other jobs. This achievement appears to be an ideal goal for some Vietnamese families in Oklahoma City. One out of four of all my informants said they had plans or hopes to open a business which would eventually support the whole family.

Residence

The next area of public sector involvement to be

considered for Vietnamese is that of residence within the larger urban setting of Oklahoma City. The objective is to note the types of residence changes shortly after arrival and to monitor continuing changes within the following years. Previously discussed in Chapter III, the Vietnamese cultural pattern included a preference for large extended households and residence near other relatives. With many family members still in Vietnam, this desired pattern is not always possible. Haines (1981) has also reported that the size and physical plan of American designed apartments and houses is prohibitive in the development and maintenance of large extended households.

One Vietnamese family of ten, which arrived in 1981, solved the size problem by renting two apartments back to back; that is, their address was apartment D and E. The first apartment included the living and dining area for the family. The other apartment was used for sleeping, and its living room also had four mattresses on the floor. The refrigerators were used in both apartments to store food for the family, but the cooking was done in the living area apartment. After six months this family moved to an old two story house a few blocks away. This second house better accommodated all ten people. Changing residence within the first three months was commonly observed among Vietnamese. Some moved out of the sponsor's house. Others who did not originally live with a sponsor family also moved within the

first year to a larger house or apartment. The main reason given for changing residence was to increase space or comfort for the family.

When we first arrived the seven of us lived with an American family (sponsor) for one month. Then the church helped us to rent a two bedroom apartment where we have lived for one year.

I lived with my brother and his family when we arrived. My family and my brother's family made thirteen people for the house. It was too crowded so my family moved out after two months. Now we rent an old house on 10th street.

When we arrived we lived with my aunt and her family. After six months we found this apartment and moved. The old apartment was crowded and too hot. It didn't have an air conditioner and the landlord never repaired anything.

Very few of those Vietnamese households interviewed reported that they had continued living in the same apartment which was rented soon after their arrival. These families cited price and proximity to school and work as grounds for living in the same house for years. The reason of wanting to live near other Vietnamese was never given.

My three children and I lived with my sponsor for one month, then we rented this apartment three years ago. It is small but not expensive and I can walk to work.

Our sponsor from the Baptist Church helped us to find this two story house in 1979, right after we arrived. We have lived here for four years. It is close to school and close to work for me and my husband.

Changes in residence for most Vietnamese appear to be related to finding more space for the family, increasing proximity to work and accumulating a down payment for a house. Through the years Vietnamese have continued to move

out of the inner city to the suburbs where they have bought new homes. The extreme northwest or southwest areas of Oklahoma City currently have the largest housing developments. These suburbs are most appealing to Vietnamese and other American families.

I lived with my family in Arkansas for two years and then I got married. After that I moved to Oklahoma City with my husband, my brother, and our daughter. We lived in an apartment on northwest 29th for nine months. Then my family helped us make a down payment on a house in south Oklahoma City. It is near GM where my husband works.

When we first arrived we lived with my sponsor for one month. We didn't have a car and had to walk. We took welfare and moved to a small apartment on northwest 17th street. One year later we moved to another apartment on northwest 29th. Later that summer I got a job in south Oklahoma City at a factory, and I had to drive so far everyday. We have just bought a house on southwest 100th about ten minutes from work and the college where my sister studies.

When we first arrived we lived in a house that our sponsor helped us to rent. The next year we rented an apartment on northwest 32nd for two years and saved money for a down payment. We bought our first house on northwest 50th. After we lived there for three years we rented it out and bought another house on northwest 89th by Lake Hefner.

Although many Vietnamese have chosen to reside within the northwestern quarter of the inner city, this does not constitute a "ghetto" with one dominant population. In an interview with the Director of the Oklahoma City Public School Bilingual Program, she mentioned that she had observed a change of residence for Vietnamese after their arrival. In the fall semester of 1975 Vietnamese children were scattered throughout schools across the Oklahoma City

area, and the next year, 1976, teachers were surprised to find that the "majority of Vietnamese children were in the northwest, Edgemere area of Oklahoma City". The opening of some Vietnamese grocery stores along northwest 23rd street, and the presence of some Vietnamese Catholics around the cathedral on northwest 31st street may have contributed to making this a desirable area for Vietnamese. My informants who are currently living in this area report that it is a heterogeneous area reflecting ethnic and racial diversity.

On this block there is one other Vietnamese family and one Lao family. The others are black families and white American families. There are also some old American couples who live on the street.

Two other Vietnamese families live on my block. The rest are black, Indian, and white Americans. My children know all the children in the neighborhood but my wife and I don't have time to visit Vietnamese or American neighbors. My relatives live in the southwest area and sometimes we go visit them on weekends.

There may be other Vietnamese families living in one area, but this does not indicate closeness or friendships with other Vietnamese neighbors. Traditionally family relationships have been more highly regarded than other relationships (Vuong 1976: 17). Some of my informants commented on the changes which they had observed among Vietnamese and in the American residential pattern.

In Vietnam families often lived close together and in your neighborhood you knew everyone. Vietnamese usually know each other and are very friendly, too. They would talk to each other often and sometimes come to visit their neighbors. In Oklahoma City I am not familiar with any neighbors, not even the Vietnamese.

There are two or three Vietnamese families living on this block, but everyone is too busy to know them. We

go to work and then go home. Sometimes I see them outside, but we don't talk much. In Vietnam I saw my relatives every day and I talked to my neighbors often, but in America it is difficult.

No Vietnamese live in my apartment complex and I don't know of any Vietnamese on this block. In the next block I saw some Vietnamese living there but I don't know them.

On my street there are Americans and some black people. On the weekend we visit my relatives in Oklahoma City. There are few Vietnamese families in my neighborhood but we don't visit any Vietnamese in our neighborhood. My Vietnamese friends live in the northwest and southwest parts of Oklahoma City.

It is typical for Vietnamese new arrivals to live in the northwest inner city area of Oklahoma City. The trend of moving out of the inner city to suburbs and new developments is also a common pattern among Vietnamese. Within a few years after arrival, families usually save enough money for a down payment and move to the suburbs. Buying a house often further separates families from other Vietnamese neighbors. This is most obvious among Vietnamese who have bought houses in the newest and most distant suburbs. Their new homes are located approximately five to ten miles from their former neighborhoods.

When we lived in northwest Oklahoma City (inner city) there were some Vietnamese neighbors. Now we bought a new house on northwest 100th street and there are no Vietnamese living in my area.

In my new neighborhood (suburbs) there is one Vietnamese family that lives one mile away. Sometimes my wife goes to see them and they (women) go shopping together.

Before, we rented a small apartment and there were some Vietnamese families living there too. Then we moved to a three bedroom house and there are only Americans

living in our neighborhood. I like to live with my Vietnamese relatives when I first arrived to learn how they live in America. Then we moved to our own apartment. Now I like to live around American people.

Very few of my informants felt that it was beneficial or desirable to live around other Vietnamese. Coincidentally these respondents also had limited English ability, and were receiving welfare.

There are three Vietnamese families living in this apartment building (eight units). It is good to live near other Vietnamese because I don't speak English very well and they can help me. If I speak English well I don't need to live near other Vietnamese.

There are three Vietnamese families in this building (12 units). I am friends with one Vietnamese lady and we watch each other's children. After school she can watch my children when I am at work and my daughter helps her do some housework.

In my comparative study of one hundred Vietnamese households in 1980, the number of families buying a home in 1977 was twenty-three percent, while those same families buying a home in 1980 had doubled to forty-six percent. This observed preference for Vietnamese families to buy a house within a few years after arrival has continued among the Boat People. Some informants who arrived in 1979 and 1980 are now buying their own homes. This commonly observed strategy usually follows this pattern. Newly arrived families first lived with sponsors or relatives for a few months, and then moved to their own apartments within the inner city area. Within the next few years, changes of residence to find larger and more comfortable housing are common. Usually after four years the Vietnamese family buys a

house and moves out of the inner city to the suburbs. The available choices include those older suburban areas and the most recent housing developments.

The prerequisite for this "big" move is the down payment, which is accumulated through participation in the public sector of employment. The rate and amount saved by the family depends upon the individual abilities of the members and the number of people working in the household. These factors affect the total family income as well as the family expenditures. Having various levels of English ability and occupational skills, the family members begin to accumulate the money necessary to buy a house. When this goal is reached, families regularly move and leave their old neighborhoods. This pattern has been observed among other Americans who have left the inner city for the suburbs; however, the Vietnamese families do this within a few years after arrival. Rather than continue renting in an area with some other Vietnamese neighbors, families prefer to buy a house and make advancement for themselves.

Public Sector Associations

Although most Vietnamese participate in the larger sector of employment, very few of the households reported having any affiliations with other American organizations. Vietnamese membership in larger public sector associations was found to be usually linked to work. The only households reporting involvement with American groups were working at

preferred factories with unions. Their employers required that everyone join the labor union, and membership in the union is necessary for employment. The household heads who had been recertified as professionals in America were also members of American professional associations. Participation in American organizations has been observed to be dependent upon work requirements.

The number of Vietnamese affiliated with educational and residential associations was also very low. In only three households, the wives reported to attend PTA meetings at their schools. These women also were employed by the public school system as teacher aides or translators. This participation in PTA may also be interpreted as job related. Only one Vietnamese household reported that the wife attends the meetings of her suburban neighborhood association. She is also a realtor in Oklahoma City. For Vietnamese, membership or participation in larger American associations was observed to be related to one's occupation.

In addition to investigating membership in American organizations, households were also asked about their religious associations. Some Vietnamese attend Christian churches with predominantly American memberships. Others attend the Vietnamese Buddhist Temple which has primarily a Vietnamese congregation. Among the extensively interviewed Vietnamese households twenty-eight percent reported to be Catholics. Within this group there existed the options of

attending a Vietnamese mass at the cathedral, English masses at the cathedral or any number of English masses at several other Catholic churches. Affiliations with Protestant churches were also indicated. Sixteen percent of the households attended Baptist churches and another four percent were Lutheran. Usually the Protestant families reported to have been sponsored by these churches and to have converted to the religion of their sponsor. The majority of the Protestant congregations are Americans and the services are conducted in English. Two Baptist churches with Vietnamese membership provide some translations. Only four percent of households stated that they had no religious affiliations outside the home. The majority of Vietnamese families, forty-eight percent, reported to be Buddhists and attend the Vietnamese Buddhist Temple. Services at the temple are conducted in Vietnamese and very few Americans attend these services. The non-Vietnamese members at the temple were commonly married to Vietnamese and had converted to Buddhism. Religious participation with the larger American public was observed to be limited among Vietnamese households. Catholic and Protestant Vietnamese reported attending various churches across the Oklahoma City area. Some of these churches provided services in the Vietnamese language.

Vietnamese participation in American public sector associations appears to be divided into two categories, job

related and religious affiliated. Membership in unions and professional associations were indicated. Activities with PTA and neighborhood organizations were also associated with one's job. Attending American Christian churches is a way for Vietnamese to establish associations with other Americans. Excluding these limited instances related to work or church, most Vietnamese do not participate in American associations or organizations.

Conclusion

The main purpose of delineating public sector involvement for Vietnamese is to demonstrate the types of change that were advantageous for existence in the new host society. These changes can also be understood as indicators of differences between the two cultures. Public sector activities included the areas of work, education, residence, and associations.

In the employment sector, English language ability and occupational skills were not necessary to go to work. The acquisition of these skills was beneficial in making advances in one's work. Driving skills were also observed to be important in maintaining a job in Oklahoma City. Within the area of residence it was common to find Vietnamese in the northwest area of Oklahoma City. Other Vietnamese also live throughout the areas of Oklahoma City. Changes in residence shortly after arrival, and subsequent moves to other rented accommodations were usual. After a few

years many Vietnamese ceased to rent and purchased their own home. The buying of suburban homes was also observed to disperse the Vietnamese farther across northwest and southwest Oklahoma City. Associations with American groups and organizations were limited and confined to the areas of work and church attendance. The Vietnamese were not significantly involved with larger American groups. Participation in the public sector and contacts with other Americans appear to be primarily limited to the workplace. The family, its activities and success are the main concern for most Vietnamese in Oklahoma City.

CHAPTER VIII

THE PRIVATE SECTOR

The next level of analysis is concerned with Vietnamese life away from the larger American culture. Within the privacy of their own homes, Vietnamese and Americans are still subject to the laws of the larger society. Excluding such infractions as homicide, wife abuse, child abuse, and violations of various city ordinances, Vietnamese are "pretty much" left alone to live the life they choose within their own households. The "need to know what goes on under the surface in these groups" (Wissler 1920: 9-10) is well established in the literature and discussed in Chapter I. The investigation and documentation of family life within the household provides a method to identify changes which have occurred since emigration from the native country. This approach also establishes a basis for subsequent studies of change through time.

In addition to the appropriateness of the public sector and private sector interpretation in the literature, the Vietnamese themselves also find this distinction in their lives in America. The majority of all my informants

throughout the years reported that they no longer had an exclusively Vietnamese way of life. The common response was that they had a "half and half" way of life now. My informants' observations about themselves further demonstrated the utility of the public and private sector approach to delineate change among Vietnamese in Oklahoma City.

I look like Vietnamese but I work like Americans. I go to work now everyday like American women. I do everything like American women. I live like half Vietnamese and half American.

My life looks like Vietnamese because I eat Vietnamese food, see kung fu movies, go to the temple, and I have the Vietnamese attitude toward old people. When I go to work I look like the Americans. I drive my car to go to work and I speak English to other Americans at work. I look like Vietnamese but parts live in American (society) sometimes. We are half and half now. We must live the American way because we live in the U.S. now, but we keep the Vietnamese culture also.

I have less than the American life. I live in an American house, drive an American car; I work with Americans, but I like to eat Vietnamese food Vietnamese people are too short compared to Americans Vietnamese men married two or three wives in Vietnam, but in the U.S. they can't. My life is mixed up Vietnamese and American.

I think now we have both (ways of life). We take the best of the American and we learn the new culture. We keep the Vietnamese way in the house, but in the society we have the American culture.

Most Vietnamese, in comfortable and relaxed situations, openly admitted that they no longer lived in a completely Vietnamese manner; however, they also carefully pointed out that they still maintained "some" of the Vietnamese ways of life. The significant influence of the larger American culture within a short time was also

acknowledged. Their acceptance and acknowledgment of their "dual" way of life lends credence to the public and private distinctions of life in the host culture. The social scientists have advocated this approach, and the Vietnamese also viewed themselves this way. The issue is not which social scientist or ethnic group first observed the "double" way of life, but how to identify types of changes beyond this general level.

To accomplish this, the private sector has been divided into categories for a more detailed analysis. The topics of: language usage; food habits; relaxation and social activities; and the family system are considered. The last topic is the most complex and deals with several components of life within the household. The family is subdivided into smaller units of family economy; roles of women, men, and children; family values and expectations. Values include the experiences of the parents and their expectations for children in the areas of marriage, engagement, and dating. The observations of traditional Vietnamese family ceremonies are also presented to further demonstrate changes within the Vietnamese family in Oklahoma City.

Language Usage

The significance of language ability influencing public sector participation and success has been mentioned in the previous chapter. The benefits of possessing English

language skills are not to be forgotten by the Vietnamese in their daily contacts with the larger American society. In the first needs survey of the Vietnamese population in 1978, it was reported that thirty percent of the adults had no English ability. This group was characterized as elderly, low educated and new arrivals. Within the past six years, I have observed a continued importance for Vietnamese to learn English and have seen many make much progress. Sometimes older family members became very frustrated and gave up. The observed factors of desire to learn and years of education influence English acquisition among older Vietnamese. Someone in their late fifties and who has had little education would have less interest in learning more English to change jobs or study at college. Older Vietnamese with limited English ability commonly rely upon younger family members to do their English speaking for them.

Young, school age Vietnamese children have been observed to acquire English language skills quite rapidly. Before going to school, small children learn English at home primarily through T.V. programs. For several hours each day, young children amuse themselves with T.V. and are bombarded with English phrases before they enter kindergarten. After they enter school, English language acquisition becomes more formalized within the public school programs. Soon young children find themselves acting as interpreters for the family members who speak little or no English. I

have observed children as young as four or five answering the door, talking on the telephone, and interpreting for their parents or older relatives.

Within a Vietnamese household, different degrees of English ability exist for each individual member. In many surveys, the Vietnamese adult is asked to rate his own English abilities. Usually poor or fair skills are indicated when higher skills are actually present. This can be understood in the Vietnamese preference to not boast and humble oneself rather than respond in an American manner. Through the years many studies (Liu 1979; Kelly 1977; Montero 1979) have focused only on the head of household and little concern has been given to identifying differing levels of English skills in the home and resulting usage.

Within Vietnamese households in Oklahoma City, various patterns of language usage exist. Those with no English skills cannot speak English, and conversely, those with excellent English do not have to speak only English at home. Rather than focus exclusively upon the English abilities of the parents, I was interested in the actual usages within the home. The attitude of the parents was also significant in determining what language would be used in the home.

One thing I think that is not changing right now is the Vietnamese language. We try to speak Vietnamese in our own family, so our children can speak Vietnamese, although they have already lived here for three years. This is our special purpose to speak the Vietnamese language in the home, but outside we must speak English.

My children speak English very well and they learn very quickly. They always talk to their American friends in

English, but at home my children must speak Vietnamese with me and my husband.

I don't want my children to forget Vietnamese. They speak and study English at school and we speak Vietnamese at home.

The pattern of parents speaking Vietnamese at home and insisting that their children also speak Vietnamese at home was common in all households. The importance of good English for their children's futures and the desire to maintain their native language was acknowledged by parents. It was the ideal of most parents that their children speak both languages well and switch languages as they walk through the door. The difficulty in enforcement of this ideal pattern and the actual daily occurrences have also been indicated by my informants.

My wife and I speak English at work all day and at home we speak Vietnamese. It is my native language. I want my children to speak English at school and Vietnamese at home, but at home they see T.V. and want to speak English too.

I want to speak English like an American so I can get a good job. My parents both speak English but at home they want us to talk Vietnamese. I must speak English to my brothers at home.

As some Vietnamese have observed, the home is not easily separated from the larger English speaking world outside. Excluding such obvious intrusions as T.V., radio, stereo, and telephone, Vietnamese parents prefer to maintain the Vietnamese language in their private domain. Within half of the households that I have observed, the actual pattern appeared to be that of parents speaking Vietnamese and

the children using both languages to varying degrees at home.

I want my children to speak English well so they can go to college, but I want them to remember Vietnamese. So when their grandparents come from Vietnam (ODP applicants) they can talk to them. At home my husband and I speak Vietnamese and sometimes we speak English to the children. The children speak both and mix it up. In one sentence they will say half in Vietnamese and the other half in English.

My daughter has American friends from school. They speak English together too well. Before she went to school, she only spoke Vietnamese to me at home, but now she mixes it up with English.

When I lived with my parents, I spoke only Vietnamese at home. After I got married (1976) and moved to live with my husband we continued to speak Vietnamese at home. When the two children were little we only spoke Vietnamese, but now they are older and we speak both Vietnamese and English with them. I feel that I am losing the Vietnamese language, because I speak English at work and now I speak English at home too.

The last three statements clearly demonstrate the observed phenomenon of mixing languages in Vietnamese households. Although the parents may prefer that Vietnamese be spoken at home, they sometimes find themselves speaking English to the children at home also. This mixing pattern was found in one third of the Vietnamese households, and no household reported to speak only English with their children. In all the households that mixed languages, young children were present. The parents preferred that Vietnamese be spoken at home, but the actualization of this ideal was greatly influenced by the presence of children in the home.

Within Vietnamese households the types of language

patterns included: only Vietnamese; mixing among children; and mixing among children and parents. The existence of English ability is necessary to affect changes in home usage patterns. Most families showed a whole range of English skills for its members rather than one common level. Parents may speak English well, but prefer to speak Vietnamese at home. The continuation of this pattern can be complicated as the children enter school in the public sector. The presence of school age children accelerated the mixing of languages within the home. The success of parents to maintain Vietnamese as the household language was influenced by the English abilities present and the ages of the family members.

Food

The study of personality formation and acquisition of cultural traits has long been of interest to anthropology. Following the psychological orientation that "oral" contacts characterize the first experiences that influence one's development, food patterns have been identified as significant areas for consideration ". . . the characteristics acquired later in life would be least resistant, while those acquired in early life would be most resistant to acculturative forces" (Spiro 1955: 1249). In his study of Italian Americans, Child reported that "one of the most persistent traits . . . is cuisine" (1943: 197). Similarly Gordon (1949) and Burrows (1947) observed that food preferences continued to

be found in Jewish, Japanese, and Hawaiian ethnic groups. Continuing this interest in studying changes in one's eating habits, Vietnamese food patterns were also investigated. My interest in this area is not to establish an index to determine degrees of ethnicity but to describe the changes in food patterns which the Vietnamese have experienced since their arrival.

Utilizing the similar approach to language, the public and private levels of influence are considered for food patterns. Public sector involvement at school and work appear to be the primary method for Vietnamese to come in contact with American foods. Vietnamese in Oklahoma City have several markets that import Asian foods for their consumption; therefore, availability is not significant in the continuation of Vietnamese cuisine. Influence of the public sector has been acknowledged by informants to cause changes in their former Vietnamese eating patterns.

In Vietnam the family eats three meals at the same time: breakfast at 8:00; lunch at 12:00; and dinner at 6:00. In America you eat when your work schedule allows you to.

In America we eat only two times a day, lunch and dinner. During the week we only eat dinner at home. On the weekend my wife cooks Vietnamese lunch too.

Eating is not like Vietnam, everything changed. In Vietnam you eat three meals on time everyday, but in America there is no time. I am too busy. I don't cook breakfast or lunch at home, and I only cook dinner at home.

In addition to influencing family eating patterns and meal times, public sector participation also exposed

Vietnamese to previously unknown American foods. This is clearly demonstrated by two informants who acknowledged their limited contact with the public sector. The first is currently a welfare recipient who stays home and does not work, and the second is a former cash recipient who has been working for almost one year.

I always eat Vietnamese food. I stay home and cook soup, rice, vegetables and meat everyday. Since I came to the U.S., my way of eating has changed little. The only difference is that I drink milk. In Vietnam I didn't drink milk.

Before I went to work I stayed home and cooked only Vietnamese food. Now at the hospital food service, they give me breakfast, lunch, or dinner when I am working. I eat everything now: scrambled eggs; toast and butter; jello; roast beef, mashed potatoes, etc. My children eat at the cafeteria at school, but I still cook Vietnamese food for us at home.

Only ten percent of the households interviewed reported no basic change in their eating habits. The majority of households mentioned some consumption of American food either at work or at school. At home the preferred pattern was to continue preparing traditional Vietnamese food for the family.

At home I cook Vietnamese food for the family. My husband and I eat American food at work. I eat with other Americans at lunch and usually have a sandwich, chips and a Coke. My husband does the same. My children learn to eat American food at the cafeteria at school, and they like hamburgers the best.

At home before I go to work sometimes I eat soup (pho) or rice for breakfast. Usually I take a ham sandwich to work or I buy a sandwich or hamburger somewhere. After work my sister-in-law cooks Vietnamese food every night.

When I (husband) work I eat American food in the cafeteria. My wife brings her own lunch to work every day.

She brings rice, meat and vegetables. She thinks that she is not used to American food. I must eat American food because I can't carry around Vietnamese food with me all morning The kids get free lunch at school so, of course, they eat American food with their friends. I (wife) cook Vietnamese food at home, but I think my children like American food at home too. They like hamburgers and hot dogs and they ask for them when we go to Safeway, but I don't know how to cook American food.

Participation in the public sector has been distinguished by the Vietnamese as the single important factor that influences changes in food patterns for the household. There was an observed difference between the rate which men and women experience change. All children were reported to eat at school cafeterias with other American children. Eighty percent of the working men stated that they usually buy their lunch at work and eat some types of American food. Contrary to this, only forty percent of the employed women said that they eat American food at work. The majority of Vietnamese women preferred to eat their own food and commonly brought a Vietnamese style lunch of rice, meat, and vegetables to work. Twenty percent of the households mentioned the occasional preparation of American food at home.

Usually I cook Vietnamese food, but sometimes I cook American food. American food is fast to cook after work. I make T.V. dinners, hamburgers, roast beef, and even microwave hot dogs for the kids. I like to cook in the microwave because it is very fast. My oldest child likes Vietnamese food and the younger children like American food.

I mix food, American and Vietnamese. In Vietnam you only eat Vietnamese food. At home we usually eat Vietnamese food. I was a fry cook at my last job and I learned to cook fried chicken, fried fish, steak, and

cheeseburgers. Sometimes I cook American food for my daughter and me at home. She likes American food very much.

At home my wife cooks Vietnamese food, and sometimes she cooks American food too; frozen pizza, hamburgers, steaks, and roast beef My oldest son and daughter like Vietnamese food the most, but my young daughter likes American food more than Vietnamese.

The introduction of Vietnamese to American foods and changes in family eating schedules have been associated with public sector involvement at work and school. In the school cafeterias Vietnamese children acquire a taste for American foods. At work Vietnamese men usually buy their lunch and become familiar with American cuisine. Some Vietnamese women also follow this practice, but many still prefer to bring their own Vietnamese lunch to work. Although American food was consumed outside the home, the dominant observed pattern was to serve exclusively Vietnamese cuisine at home. A few households also cooked American food sometimes, but no one reported to have exclusively switched to American food. Resembling their preference for speaking Vietnamese in the home, most households demonstrated a similar choice for Vietnamese food at home. Parents commonly reported that only school age children requested or even preferred American food. The dominant pattern observed was to change eating habits at work and school but to continue eating Vietnamese food at home.

Recreation and Entertainment

The Vietnamese home has traditionally been the focal

point for entertainment and social gatherings for the family members. Recreational strategies commonly included entertaining at home. "Going out to dine or to a bar are not common practices, because Vietnamese are basically home-oriented" (Vuong 1976: 43). The American patterns of family evening outings for movies or dinner and weekend trips to the lake were not familiar to the Vietnamese. Most informants reported preferring to spend their leisure time at home with the family in Vietnam. This pattern continues to still be dominant among Vietnamese in Oklahoma City. Only on special occasions did families state that they went out together for social purposes.

Sometimes we go to the Myriad or some place to enjoy some special event like the Tet festival, mid-autumn festival or a Vietnamese musical performance and dance. Usually we stay home and watch T.V. We like movies on T.V. and the children like cartoons the best.

Following the Vietnamese orientation, most households reported to stay home with the family for recreation. The popular American pastime, T.V., also appears to be the most common form of family entertainment. All my informants reported to have televisions, and twenty-five percent of the households interviewed had cable and video cassette recorders. In northwest Oklahoma City there is a Vietnamese owned video store which specializes in Kung Fu movies, limited Vietnamese releases from California, and American films. All informants also reported to play Vietnamese music cassettes at home or in their cars. Vietnamese singers from

Texas and California were the most popular artists. All Vietnamese grocery stores carry a wide selection of Vietnamese cassette tapes. Parents commonly also reported that younger children preferred American music over the "sad" Vietnamese songs.

The amount of time one had for relaxation and entertainment varied from each household. Most adults stated that they watch T.V. sparingly and children watch T.V. the most.

On my day off I work for an American lady. After work I must do the housework for the family. I am always very busy; sometimes I watch T.V. with my children. They like everything on T.V.

My family watches T.V. only on the weekend. We have an old sixteen inch black and white T.V. that works badly. During the week we don't watch T.V., and my children must study every night. On the weekends we just stay home and my children play and watch T.V.

For entertainment usually we watch cable T.V. together. We are too busy to go visit friends and going to the movies is very expensive. There are nine persons in our family. We watch movies on HBO usually. The children like T.V. too much and they watch T.V. after school and all Saturday mornings.

My husband works nights and I work days. He works late Friday nights and must sleep on Saturday morning. Usually we go shopping on the weekend and then relax at home. We watch cable T.V. in our spare time and sometimes we rent movies to watch on the VCR.

The majority of adult Vietnamese time was spent working and doing household chores. The little spare time remaining was usually spent watching T.V. With the exception of a rare Vietnamese cultural event or dance there was little Vietnamese entertainment in Oklahoma City. Large social

gatherings, such as the Tet festival, were commonly cited as the only event attended by the family every year. Spare time was usually spent at home.

Visiting friends was not a commonly mentioned form of recreational activity. Many complained of the lack of time to do anything except occasionally call their friends on the telephone. This was a convenient way to keep in touch with relatives and friends and still maintain a busy schedule. Family vacations were practically nonexistent. Twenty percent of the households interviewed stated that they "have never left Oklahoma City" since their arrival. Fifty percent of the households reported to have taken only weekend trips to surrounding states to visit friends or relatives. Only ten percent stated that they had gone on "American style" vacations, but most of these trips did not include all family members. Usually the wife and/or some of the children stayed at home. Most Vietnamese preferred to spend vacation time at home with the family relaxing from work. Vacations were often considered too expensive, extravagant and difficult for the large Vietnamese family.

The Vietnamese in Oklahoma City were observed to have maintained their previous cultural orientation of spending leisure time within the home. The amount of available time for relaxation varied from each household, and most reported being very busy with little spare time. The principal strategy for family entertainment was watching T.V. Individual

family members listened to the music of their own choice, and younger Vietnamese preferred American music. In every household children watched more T.V. than the other members.

Television was present in South Vietnam before 1975, but it was reported to have been found only in Saigon. The programming was limited to a few hours each day on only two channels. Television is not a new cultural item for most Vietnamese who did have some limited exposure in their native country. The expanded number of channels, the existence of cable and video cassette recorders have increased the types of programs available to the Vietnamese households in Oklahoma City. The families were observed to quickly adopt the American pattern of watching several hours of T.V. at home each day. This practice is still compatible with their preference for relaxing at home and seeking entertainment with other family members.

The Extended Family

The significance of the Vietnamese family system within Vietnamese culture has previously been established in Chapter III. This is well demonstrated in the works of Crawford (1966), Cooke (1968), Hammer (1966), and Hickey (1964). Vietnamese authors have only expressed the highest regard for the Vietnamese family which differs greatly from that found in America. It has been characterized to "include the living and dead members" and to be the "cornerstone" of Vietnamese culture (Phung 1979: 77). Vuong has

delineated some of the characteristics of the Vietnamese family which functioned as an integral component of Vietnamese culture. The common family pattern included combinations of various relatives and generations within the same household. Other smaller member households were generally located in the same area and were closely linked through the extended family system.

This consisted of . . . clusters of brothers and their families and similar groupings . . . segments of patri-lineages which in most instances have fissioned. They manifest considerable cohesiveness and for them kinship is a reality in the veneration of common ancestors (Hickey 1964: 96).

The Confucian concepts of honoring ancestors and duty to family were important in the maintenance of the extended Vietnamese family system.

For centuries this family system has remained primarily intact throughout periods of Chinese domination, independence, and succeeding periods of colonialism. Only recently have some extended Vietnamese families and smaller nuclear component families been transplanted to the U.S. The main objective in this portion of the study is to describe the Vietnamese family observed in Oklahoma City and to document changes that have occurred in this significant part of Vietnamese culture.

As demonstrated in the various emigration experiences, the compositions of Vietnamese families in America differ. During 1975, some of the large multihousehold extended families came to the U.S. Still, the majority of

families were nuclear households, and almost all families left some members in Vietnam. After the first 1975 phase, Vietnamese Boat People began emigrating from Vietnam. The greatest number of Vietnamese Boat People arrived in the U.S. during 1979, 1980, and 1981. The most common type of family for this population was also nuclear families, or nuclear families with one or two other accompanying relatives. After their arrival in the U.S., Vietnamese families, large and small, began to experience changes.

Excluding obvious types of changes, such as geographical separation from members far away in Vietnam, other modifications were observed. Large Vietnamese extended family systems were commonly reported to have been divided into component households to facilitate resettlement and spread the burden of sponsorship over several American households. This initial separation was followed by additional changes. Secondary migrations and frequent relocations of families have continued since 1975. This is easily demonstrated through the observation of some large multi-generational extended families that arrived virtually intact. Through the years after their arrival in 1975, nuclear and extended households of the same family systems have moved all across the U.S.

My wife and I and our daughter, her husband and their children still live in Oklahoma City. My other daughter and her family moved to Huntington Beach, California. My oldest son, his wife and our grandchildren live in Houston, Texas. Now my older brother, his wife, children and grandchildren live in the San Jose, California area.

Vietnamese families are different in the U.S. The families live apart in different parts of Oklahoma City or even in another state. I have relatives in Houston and Minnesota and I see them only in the summer. I have relatives in Oklahoma City too, but we are so busy working and are too tired to visit them very often.

The family life is less close than it was in Vietnam. In Vietnam you see your mother, sisters, and brothers almost every day and you talk to them often. In the U.S. not all my relatives are here. Some are still in Vietnam. Other relatives live in California and I can only call them on the telephone sometimes.

In addition to physical separation of extended family components that relocated to other states, some of my informants reported other changes in the family system. These reflected deviations from the traditional Vietnamese pattern of family cooperation after their arrival in the U.S.

Relatives help less in the U.S. than in Vietnam. In the U.S. everybody needs money and your relatives don't want to give you their money.

When I need advice I usually go talk to my aunt and uncle. They loaned me the money to rent our first apartment and I paid them after I got my job. In America families help each other a little, but in Vietnam they help more.

My relatives are selfish here in Oklahoma City. They gave me very little help. When I first came to the U.S. my young brother never gave me any money. In Vietnam I would be boss and tell him what to do. Nobody helped me when I got laid off. I went to my brother and said 'help me' and they gave me nothing. I think many Vietnamese people change with their families in the U.S.

All Vietnamese families openly acknowledged differences in their families after leaving Vietnam. For most this included separation from family left behind in Vietnam. Close relatives and extended family members were also commonly reported to be living in other areas of the United

States. The distance between relatives and the lack of time to visit family were cited as significant influences in the reduction of contacts with other family members. Besides changes in frequency of contact with family, Vietnamese also noted changes in family helpfulness among their relatives. The traditional Vietnamese pattern of family assisting other extended family members was reported to be changing. The Vietnamese in Oklahoma City without relatives to help them must rely upon their own abilities and the existing social welfare system in times of difficulty. The large extended family systems which encompassed several component households within one locality in Vietnam are virtually nonexistent in the U.S. The lack of numerous households to contribute to the financial resources of the extended family and the common distance found between existing component households make the Vietnamese pattern less feasible. The common strategy observed among Vietnamese in Oklahoma City is for individual household economic reliance.

The Household as an Economic Unit

The tradition of cooperation among component households of the larger Vietnamese family is well documented in the literature (Phung 1979; Vuong 1976; Hickey 1964). This ideal preference and the continuation of this pattern in the U.S. have been observed to differ. The preferred organization and operation of the individual household in Vietnam has also been described in Chapter III. According to this

ideal pattern, the male household head is expected to support the entire household. Any additional income from other working members such as younger brothers and working sons, would also be contributed to the common household fund. The management of the household money was usually relegated to the wife.

In Vietnam only I worked and supported my whole family. I gave my paycheck to my wife and she paid all the bills. In Vietnam, we didn't have a checking or savings account like in the U.S. We always paid in cash. It is different now in the U.S. I work and my wife works too. I don't make enough money to pay for all the bills for the family, and I must share to pay the bills with my wife now.

In Vietnam the head of the house worked and supported his family. In the U.S. both husband and wife must work. I must discuss with my wife about the money to pay the bills. In Vietnam I didn't discuss with my wife about money to support the family.

Unlike the pattern in Vietnam, many household heads in Oklahoma City are no longer sole provider for the family. The utilization of welfare was recorded at nine percent for 1975 Vietnamese in my 1980 study and thirty-seven percent for Boat People in my 1981 report. The widespread dependence on welfare continued to decline within a few years. Currently twelve percent of time eligible Vietnamese in Oklahoma are receiving cash assistance (ORR 1984). When the eligibility period of thirty-six months or more recently eighteen months was finished, Vietnamese had to go to work. From my observations and through interviews, the Boat People after four or five years in the United States now more closely resemble the 1975 Vietnamese pattern noted in 1980.

Currently the majority of Vietnamese households have both spouses working, and sometimes other relatives are also employed.

The number of incomes within each household varies, but the observed pattern is for all working members to give their paychecks to the common household fund.

There are fourteen living in my family now. Two of my sons are married and have brought their wives to also live at my home. We have two grandchildren and my wife's parents living with us too. I work in an office, my wife works as a seamstress, my son works at GM and his wife works at an electronics plant. My other son works at an automotive parts factory. There are five of us working now and we put our checks for the family. Every month we must pay almost three thousand for bills only. We have four car payments, the house payment, insurance and everything to pay each month.

This is an extreme example from a rare multigenerational extended household. Combined family income is usually found in Vietnamese households. Most families reported to have only the husband and wife working, and some households also had one other working member.

My daughter works part time after school and on the weekends. She gives me her paycheck and I use the money to pay for everything. Without her paycheck we couldn't pay all the bills.

My wife works, my son works, and I work. Every month we give our paychecks to my wife and she keeps the money for the family. I always write the checks for the house payment and the bills and she does everything else for the household.

The strategy of combining family paychecks is only feasible in those households with multiple incomes. Of the households extensively interviewed, thirty-five percent reported to have three or more combined incomes; twenty

percent reported one income (including welfare and unemployment); and forty-five percent reported only two incomes. The Vietnamese preference of combining incomes is influenced by the employment characteristics of each household. This pattern was observed to change as children entered the work force and also moved away from home. Although a whole range of combined family incomes were observed, the great majority of the Vietnamese parents thought that working children should contribute their whole paycheck to the family. This attitude is unlike the American pattern in which working children save their own money or pay the parents rent while still living at home.

My oldest son works part time after school and sometimes the other sons work during the summer. My children always bring their paychecks to me and I keep it for them. They must ask me for how much they want to spend.

After high school classes and after college classes two of my children have jobs. They give their paychecks to their mother It is the duty of the parents to keep the money for their children. They do not know about money, and the parents should keep them from making a mistake with their money. When they (children) want to buy something they must first ask their parents who will decide if they can buy anything.

In America the children need to have money to buy some things when they are at school. My daughter has a part time job and I save her money for her. I will give her what she needs to buy something at college.

When my sons get jobs after school or in the summer they can keep their own paychecks. If my children want to give me their paychecks, that will be good, but I will not force them to.

The economic integrity of each Vietnamese household is of utmost concern to the head of the family and the other

members. Recalling their recent experiences of losing everything in Vietnam, households greatly emphasize the importance of working together to maintain and improve the family income. Resembling other American families, the Vietnamese wife has also gone to work to help support the family; however, unlike American families, Vietnamese also have sons, daughters, and other working relatives who contribute to the common household fund. Some Vietnamese families also utilize the incomes from high school and college students who work part time. Very rarely have any Vietnamese informants reported to have changed their ideas about this. It was uncommon for parents to feel that it was acceptable for their children to keep their own money. The Vietnamese adage "one house, one cooking pot" (one household, one economy) continued to characterize the economic pattern observed among Vietnamese households in Oklahoma City.

Role of Women

In the Vietnamese family the positions and roles of the members were well defined. One's behaviors, duties, and responsibilities were carefully enumerated in the Confucian principles. Following this Vietnamese tradition women "must be obedient to their fathers (tai gia tong phu) . . . submissive to their husbands (xuat gia tong phu) . . . and listen to their grown sons after their husband's death (phu tu tong tu)" (Vuong 1976: 25). Vietnamese females were taught

to be subordinate to men before marriage, during marriage, and even in widowhood. Their duties and responsibilities in life were primarily concerned with the family and its maintenance. From a current western perspective this Vietnamese system has been understood as "the elevation of slavery into a virtue" (Nga 1985: 2).

The traditional Vietnamese woman and her contemporary American counterpart are quite different and can be considered almost opposites. Primarily the Vietnamese woman's life was controlled by men. Legally she had no rights to conduct business and was dependent upon her father, husband, and sons for financial support. In Vietnam, occupations for women were commonly limited to education of children or the operation of small shops, and very few women went to work outside the home (Vuong 1976: 26). In my comparative study of Vietnamese, only forty-five percent of the households had two or more family members working in 1977; however, in 1980, fifty-five percent of the same families reported to have two or more family members then working. This tendency for increased participation in the work force, which was first identified in 1980, has been observed to also continue into the present. Among my Vietnamese respondents, sixty-eight percent of the households reported to have both husband and wife working.

I never worked before. In Vietnam, I went to college and after that I married. I was a housewife and stayed home and took care of the family. It was different; the man worked and the woman stayed home. In America the women have freedom and all people must go to work.

Women spend less time with their family because of the pace of American life. You must go to school and go to work. The family needs money to live. In Vietnam women didn't usually work, but in the U.S. women must work to support the family.

In Vietnam my wife stayed home with the children She had a maid to help with the housework. In Oklahoma my wife goes to work and does the cooking and housework every day. My daughter helps her do some things at home.

In Vietnam I didn't work, I was a housewife. When the welfare was cut we both had to find jobs. In America women must work because they must help to support the family. First the husband has to work and to study to make his career, and I have to go to work and do everything. The wife still has to take care of everything: the children; and everything at home; and go to work too. I have then three jobs.

The role of the Vietnamese woman in Oklahoma City has dramatically changed to include increased participation in the public sector of work. Previously their duties were mainly limited to household chores. Following the larger American practice of working wives, Vietnamese women have also gone to work outside the home. Most working women stated that this change was not a response for women's freedom but necessary for economic survival in America. I have observed some households in which the husband was laid off, received unemployment and looked for a new job, while the wife continued working one or two jobs to support the family. The husbands usually received benefits for a few months, and his contribution to the family income was greatly reduced. In the current economic situation of Oklahoma City, it is sometimes easier for women to find full time work and additional part time jobs in restaurants or

hotels.

The change of going to work outside the home for women is an expansion of their former role and duties. Their obligation to their husband, children, and the maintenance of the home continues to dominate the daily lives of Vietnamese women. Housework is predominantly still a female concern. In addition to cooking, cleaning, sewing, and caring for her husband and children, many Vietnamese women have also accepted another task and work outside the home to sustain the family.

Vietnamese women acknowledged the differences between life in Vietnam and America. For them these changes included: going to work; spending less time with their families; and having increased freedom. My informants had several opinions about these new female freedoms.

For women's freedom

Freedom for women is good for the women and the family. The women can go to work now and help to bring money home for the family. (female)

Women in America have more freedom. It is good for the women, but not good for the family. The wife works outside the home and doesn't have as much time for the children. (working mother)

I think freedom for women is partially a good thing. It is good that the women can go out and deal with other people. Especially for me, I can say that when I go out to work I am more joyful than if I just stay at home, and my children go to school all day and my husband goes to work too; I will be alone and feel sad. It is good to go to work for me. I have to work hard and have duties at work, but I think I like it.

Against women's freedom

Freedom for women is not good. Man and woman are

different. If the woman goes to work outside the home she gets money. If she has money she thinks she is as strong as a man. (husband of working wife)

In the U.S. women have freedom. They never think of divorce in Vietnam, but now they go to work and they think it is possible to live without their husband. Some Vietnamese women divorce their husband now. (working wife)

Freedom is always good, but with a woman, if they keep or remain as a housewife it is better for the family. She can take care of the children, and she can take more care of the home; and the husband can get the money for the family. Now, if the husband cannot get enough money, then his wife must work to help the family economy. For me if the woman keeps her job as a housewife I think it is better. (husband of working wife)

Although many Vietnamese women now go to work in Oklahoma City, this was understood by them as a necessary change to help the family rather than an expansion of their individual freedom. The Confucian ideals of duty to the family, and maintenance of the household are compatible with Vietnamese women working to support the family when necessary. Examples of this are found throughout the long history of wars in Vietnam. Frequently women would assume all the duties of farming, as well as rearing children while their husbands were at war. However, when the husbands returned, the women assumed their previous ways of life (Vuong 1976: 27). Women are going to work in the Oklahoma City area, but duty to the family, obedience to the husband, maintenance of the home, and a virtuous and proper conduct continue to dominate the daily lives of Vietnamese women. Some Vietnamese reported to view the changes in women working as a cause for increasing divorce among Vietnamese

in Oklahoma City.

Americans have a different attitude about marriage. A Vietnamese man and his wife would never divorce, but Americans, wife and husband divorce too easily. I am separated from my husband now and he is in another state working, but I will never remarry. At work the Black and American women always laugh and talk about their second or third husbands and their boy friends. They ask me, how can I live without a man? Vietnamese women never do like this.

My first idea is the Vietnamese families change. Therefore, in Vietnam we have few divorces because of our society, but now in America we have Vietnamese divorces. Some Vietnamese families plan to divorce or separate. I think this is because in Vietnam only the husband works and he supports the whole family, but in America the husband and wife both work. That is the reason why the family changes now.

Divorce in Vietnam was virtually unknown. In cases where the wife could not bear children or sons, it was acceptable to adopt a child or take a second wife. Polygamy was openly practiced in Vietnam until 1959, when it was made illegal by the Vietnamese parliament. Taking a concubine, or abandoning one's wife and children were common alternatives to a divorce (Hickey 1964: 112). Divorce is a scandalous topic for Vietnamese, and the few cases that do occur are the subject of popular conversations. During 1984, the Indochinese Refugee Crisis Center provided counseling for thirty-two Vietnamese couples that were having marital problems, were separated, or seeking a divorce. Among most of my informants, divorce was considered shameful and a disgrace for the couple and their families. Vietnamese respondents couldn't understand why Americans divorce and said that they would never allow it to happen in their families.

I don't like divorce and I never would divorce, ever.
If my children would want to divorce I always try to
make them stay together.

If my children want to divorce, I will say, please no.
Then I will advise them to not divorce.

If my son tries everything first and no success then
maybe they can divorce, but it will be very bad for the
whole family.

Only three of the Vietnamese respondents said that
they might possibly consider divorce for themselves or their
children. Divorce was seen as a problem which concerned all
family members and not a private decision between the hus-
band and wife. In four cases of divorce with which I am
familiar, the tendency has been for other Vietnamese to at-
tribute marriage failure to the wife working, or the wife
being derelict in her duties of satisfying her husband's
needs.

Many Vietnamese women have changed their traditional
pattern of working only at home for the family, and now go
to work like their husbands. This change is understood by
most Vietnamese as necessary rather than a desirable choice.
Excluding going to work daily, little change in women's be-
havior was observed inside the home. After their additional
duty of work, Vietnamese women returned home and completed
their traditional household chores. Sometimes daughters or
other females in the household would assist in the "women's"
work. At the workplace, Vietnamese women did not exhibit
western style behaviors or values, such as: talking loudly;
smoking cigarettes; openly talking about their love life,

boy friends, or personal family matters with co-workers. Socializing with women from work for a "ladies night out" was never observed among any female informants. The Confucian virtues and values have dominated women's lives since early childhood. These same principles continue to be most significant in influencing women's behaviors at home and at work.

Role of Men

Unlike the Vietnamese women who have changed and now work in the United States, Vietnamese men have traditionally been the sole provider for the family. In accordance with the Confucian ideals, the husband considered it his duty to support the family. Following this tradition, the husband was not expected to help with housework. At home he relaxed and was cared for by his wife and daughters. As previously stated in Chapter III, going into the kitchen, cooking, washing dishes, and other household chores were considered inappropriate for Vietnamese males. The main difference between a Vietnamese and an American husband is that the former's "authority is much more institutionalized, recognized and vigorously exercised without much resistance" in the family (Vuong 1976: 24). The Vietnamese husband in the U.S. must now share his traditional task of supporting the family with his wife. Most Vietnamese men were reluctant to relinquish this formerly exclusive duty which substantiated his claim as "king" of the household. Excluding work, men

are reluctant to share any other duties or authority with their wives.

My husband chose the house that we bought for the family. He knows about real estate. My husband picked out the cars we bought also. We have a joint checking account, but my husband writes all the checks to pay bills, house payment, insurance and things like this. He wants to do all the business for the family outside the house.

Sixty percent of the respondents stated that they had joint checking accounts for both, husband and wife. The duty of writing checks and paying bills was observed to vary among households. Although family paychecks are usually turned over to the wife, the writing of checks and payment of bills appeared to be an individual choice of the husband and not a strict sexual division of labor.

I give my paycheck to my wife. Each month my son also gives his paycheck to her. My wife keeps all the money for the family and puts it in the bank. I always write the checks for house payment, but she does everything else.

We do not have a bank account. We pay cash for everything. I give my paycheck to my wife and she gives me the money to pay the rent and bills and keeps the rest.

We have a joint checking and savings account, but I (wife) pay all the bills. My husband is so busy, he gives me his paycheck and I pay everything for the family.

Although there was some relegation of the responsibility of paying bills to the wife, all husbands continued to claim their traditional position of "boss" in the family and maintained their right to make all final decisions. Some husbands also commented that they did not like the differences between the Vietnamese and American practices of

working wives. Unwillingly the formerly exclusive male domain of work must be shared with women.

I only worked in Vietnam to support the family. But I don't bring home enough money, and my wife also works to help. Together we share to pay the bills for the family now.

In Vietnam only I worked. I gave my paycheck to my wife. We never discussed about money to pay the expenses for the family. Now in the U.S. my wife works and I must always be talking with her about money for the family.

Due to the current economic situation in the United States, both husband and wife often work to sustain the family. This practice has diminished the husband's prerogative of sole provider for the family. His traditional role has been infringed upon, and his claim of final authority may also be affected. Sharing financial support of the family with the wife appeared to be the extent of departure from the traditional Vietnamese male role.

A few reports of men cooking and performing other household chores were limited to only male households. Two or three Vietnamese men living together shared housework and did limited cooking, but most single Vietnamese men insisted that they "don't know how to cook" and frequently "eat at restaurants". It was common for single Vietnamese men to live with relatives or friends who had a wife in the household to care for them.

When I lived with my friend, his sister cooked and cleaned for everyone in the apartment. Now I live with a Vietnamese couple and it is the same. The lady does the shopping, cooking and washing for us.

Married men admitted that they sometimes helped their working wives around the house with heavy chores, but housework was viewed as exclusively female tasks.

In Vietnam we (men) had to work everyday. We worked six days a week and I had to work one Sunday every month. So I didn't have time to take care of my house. But here, we must help to take care of the house to clean something I clean some things, vacuum and move the furniture I never wash dishes. My wife always washes dishes I never cook. I don't know how to cook. I just arrange the furniture and clean the house. (husband)

He is only the housekeeper or houseman. He is my assistant when I make eggrolls. He only knows how to cut the carrots for me. (wife)

After work my husband comes home and relaxes. He works in the yard in the summer. Sometimes he helps me take care of the baby and feeds the baby. He helps put the dishes in the dishwasher after dinner sometimes.

Vietnamese men may help more around the house in America than they did in Vietnam, but this is still very limited housework. There has been little observed change in traditional male roles and behaviors. Now both husband and wife contribute to the family economy and work in the public sector. Supporting the family is no longer an exclusively male duty. Inside the home, males continue to behave in primarily a Vietnamese manner. Husbands continue to reserve the right to have final decision in family matters and to conduct business for the family. His behaviors, values, and position of authority and respect have usually remained unchanged by the wife and children in the household.

Role of Children

Obedience and respect are the traditional virtues which Vietnamese children are taught to exhibit in the family. Children continue to live their lives within the family until marriage. Depending upon the family for financial support, requesting permission for expenditures, and having parents make decisions for them characterize the traditional Vietnamese child (Yee 1985). All Vietnamese informants expressed the importance of children obeying their parents. Among my respondents the majority felt that these Vietnamese traditions should continue in the United States. Very few households felt that these practices should be modified to reflect the more egalitarian American pattern.

In Vietnam children must obey their parents all their life. Even until the children are forty or fifty years old. I think it should be the same in the United States.

Children must listen to their parents in everything. They must obey their parents until they die.

If the children are smart they can decide some things for themselves, but they must always listen to their parents.

In Vietnam the customs are different. Children must obey their parents until they marry. In America my children must listen to their parents, but they can choose what college they want to attend. After they finish college they can decide some things.

All Vietnamese parents placed great value upon education for their children. There was no distinction between the importance of higher education for males or females.

The majority stated that their children were attending college or would study at college after high school. The only instances in which children did not continue their education after high school were found in families with financial difficulties which delayed this goal of higher education.

Education is very important in the United States. I want to study at college after I study at community college. When my children finish high school they will study at college and be engineers, electronics technicians, or doctors.

When my children finish school, I want them to go to college, because they will have a chance to get a better job after school.

When my children go to high school, I do not think that they will go around with boys and girls like Americans do. We want both our children to finish high school and go to college, and then to the university and become professionals in America. Like engineer or any profession they like. At the minimum I want them to graduate from college.

According to the Vietnamese tradition, the primary duty of children is to study and do well in school. The majority of the informants also reported that their children like school and do very well. The common interest for parents was that their children could excel in school and study at college. To achieve this goal, children were usually required to study at home every night. Some respondents stated that children were not allowed to watch T.V. on school nights, and others had study periods for children everyday after school. Girls were required to study after school, but they were also expected to help their mothers around the house. After working in the kitchen, cleaning

the house, or watching the baby, girls would then study at home. Except for the additional household chores for girls, there was no significant difference in the allocation of study time and the importance of academic achievement for all children in the family.

It is also a common American goal to want to send the children to college; however, the Vietnamese parents pursue this with great ardor. The value of continuing education for themselves and their children is a significant priority for the Vietnamese family. The differences between Vietnamese and American parents was not the desire that children should go to college, but the attitude that the children will go to college and study some intended profession. Most parents stated that their children would study engineering, computers, medicine or other professions which they had selected for them. The preference for children to excel in school and become a professional was a common ideal in Vietnamese households.

To realize these educational goals, Vietnamese children are encouraged to devote most of their time to studying and to disregard extracurricular activities at school. Most families expected children to arrive home within one hour after school and begin their studies. Following this they remained home for the rest of the evening. Vietnamese students were observed to have little involvement with school activities, unlike other American students. In junior high,

high school, and even college, their life continues to revolve around the home. Independence from the family has never been a desired trait for Vietnamese children to display, and attempts at this can cause problems in the family (Yee and Hennessey 1982).

Vietnamese children do not leave their family. After they become eighteen, they continue to live at home until they marry. Sometimes they live at home after they marry. Vietnamese parents take care of their children until they marry.

Vietnamese people are not like American people. They are very 'old fashioned' and they don't want their children to leave home until they marry.

This inclination was observed among all Vietnamese parents. Marriage or finding a good job in another city were the only acceptable reasons for children moving out of the home. Some families reported that their children continued living at home after college and even after marriage.

After my son and daughter finished college they found jobs and continued to live at home. We all try to save our money so I can build a big house, then my children will continue to live at home after they marry.

We don't have enough money to pay for everything and my children must work to help to support the family. After my children marry I want them to all live with me for a long time.

Unlike their American teenage classmates, Vietnamese students did not have a significant social life outside the home. Although some children worked after school, the family usually kept their money and decided how much to give them for expenditures. Contributing to the family economy and relying upon the family for most financial decisions,

Vietnamese children are trained to completely depend upon their family (Yee 1985). The development of money managing skills through children having their own bank accounts was not found among my informants. Parents preferred to keep the money for their children. Dependence upon the family in most matters is still the desired pattern for Vietnamese children in Oklahoma City. The development of American traits of independence from the family were not desirable for my Vietnamese informants. The exhibition of American teenage behaviors and the desire for increased freedom from the family was identified as a source of conflict for Vietnamese families.

Through contacts with other American students at school, Vietnamese have learned about contrasting American behaviors. Some Vietnamese teenagers have been attracted to increased independence and have disregarded obedience to their parents. This phenomenon is commonly referred to as "the generation gap" by Vietnamese counselors. Discipline and physical punishment are acceptable remedies for disobedience in the Vietnamese tradition.

I know this man who was spanked by his parents when he went around with his friends and drank beer. When he would come home his parents would make him lie down on the floor or bed and his father would beat him with a stick. They spanked him when he was twenty-five years old. Now he is forty-one and married with a wife and a child and lives with his parents. His parents still spank him when he does something bad.

This is an extreme example of discipline found among my Vietnamese informants. It well demonstrates the

utilization of physical punishment in the strategy of Vietnamese parenting. During 1984, the Indochinese Crisis Center provided shelter, counseling, and services for thirty-two families experiencing problems with the generation gap. Twelve cases (nine male and three female) of teenage runaways were also reported in this same time period. Compared to the larger Oklahoma City population, this is not a great number of cases, but it is an indication of conflict between Vietnamese parents and children.

Resembling their parents who have experienced changes in their traditional roles through public sector participation at work, Vietnamese children are exposed to American behaviors at school. The influence of the public sector has been found to affect behavior changes in Vietnamese women, men and children. The housewife now goes to work, has additional responsibilities, can file for a divorce, and has more freedom than in Vietnam. The Vietnamese husband can no longer claim to be the only provider for the family. He must now share this important responsibility with his wife. Some Vietnamese teenagers have begun to display more independence and less concern for their traditional roles in the family. The influence of the public sector is not only limited to life outside the home. It has been associated with the changing roles of family members within the home. Various changes in behaviors have been observed, but those among younger Vietnamese have been more disruptive to the

family. The continuation of traditional behaviors and values in the Vietnamese family will ultimately become the responsibilities of the children. The process of the maintenance of traditional family roles and behaviors can only be further evaluated later in time.

Courtship and Marriage

The discussion of marriage in Vietnam was presented earlier in Chapter III. At that time it was stated that the Vietnamese tend to view marriage as a family duty which unites two families rather than two individuals (Vuong 1976: 30). The Vietnamese practices of family arranged marriages; the use of a go-between for the "coi mat" and the engagement ceremony; and family marriage ceremonies are well described by Hickey (1964) and Crawford (1966). Although the "coi mat" ceremony was still important in village Vietnam (Hickey 1964), my informants reported that the "coi mat" was practiced primarily before the 1930s in Vietnam. Still, it was not uncommon to have informants state that their marriage had been arranged by their parents.

I was thirty and my wife was twenty when we got married in 1973. Her mother and my parents were people of the same village in central Vietnam and they knew each other for a long time. My father and her mother arranged it. I never saw her before the first time our parents arranged that we meet at her parents house. Very quickly after this I came to her parents house to talk to her to know all about her before we had the engagement party. I was to visit only at her house but sometimes I asked her out secretly. Her parents were so strict. I would have to pick her up at her sister-in-law's house in the afternoon and we would go somewhere for a few hours.
(husband)

My parents didn't want me (wife) to go out with him. In Vietnam they don't want you to go out until you marry.

In Vietnam I knew my husband in school for six years. My parents knew his family for many years. Later the parents agreed for us to become engaged, and he and his parents came to my house. He gave me a gold ring at the engagement party. Sometimes we went out to the park in the afternoons together.

Before I went to the navy I knew my wife at college for two years. I talked to my parents. They went to talk with her parents, and they all agreed. Then we had an engagement party. It is the Vietnamese custom that the man gives gifts, liquor, and cake to the bride's family. Then we were married six months after the engagement.

All Vietnamese informants that were married in Vietnam reported to have followed the same basic pattern. Meeting the prospective spouse sometimes happened at school and other times the families would make the introductions. After knowing each other, usually for years, an intermediary or the parents arranged for the engagement party at the girl's house. The wedding followed within a few months or years after the engagement. All the respondents celebrated their wedding ceremony at the groom's home. Catholics reported to also have a wedding ceremony at the church in addition to the Vietnamese ceremony. There is little doubt that, in Vietnam, the customs concerning engagement and marriage were strictly followed. Dating before engagement was quite uncommon, and some Vietnamese report to have gone out together between engagement and marriage. The same basic formalities were followed by all respondents during courtship and marriage. Differences in degree of complexity and extravagance were indicated. One informant reported

to have very quickly organized a small, simple wedding at his parents home, because communist troops were rapidly approaching the city and there was little time. Excluding these minor variations, most Vietnamese reported following the traditions and customs for their courtship, engagement, and marriage.

Remembering their own marriage experiences, Vietnamese parents preferred that their children follow the same pattern in the United States. The continued idea of the family taking an active role in engagement and marriage procedures was common among Vietnamese parents.

Without the approval and help of the family my sons could never marry. They could never pay for the expense of the wedding and no Vietnamese family would let their daughter marry without the proper arrangements.

Parents must agree to the marriage before children marry. If the parents disagree the child must not run away, but must wait until the parents agree. Some parents disagree because they want to marry another religion, Buddhist or Catholic or because they want to marry another race, like Chinese. In Vietnam I must do as my parents said, but now in the U.S. I must change my ideas. I will help my children select a good Vietnamese person to marry, and any religion is OK It is an old custom that the daughter lives with her husband's family, but after marriage she will live with me.

When my daughter gets married I want her to marry a Vietnamese Catholic and have the engagement party and wedding just like I did Now in the U.S. it is a little different, the bride and groom decide that they want to marry. If the families don't approve they must get to know them better until they approve. They could run away and marry without approval but they could never come back, like they are dead. In the U.S. young married couples don't have to live with their parents always. They can move out now and buy their own house too.

It is my idea that I want our children to have some Vietnamese friend and they will come to us (parents) and

ask our ideas about their friend. If we think their friend is good and approve, we will suggest to their parents that they get married. We don't care about religion. My religion is Catholic but my wife is a Buddhist. We are a mixed marriage. We would like them to marry a Vietnamese because it would be easier.

Parents must teach their children about who to marry, so they will make a good choice. In America parents may have to change their ideas to accept the choice of their children, because Americans marry who they want.

My oldest son is engaged to marry a Vietnamese girl and we will follow the Vietnamese wedding custom. I think my older daughter will also marry a Vietnamese. My young daughter will follow the Vietnamese custom unless she marries an American, then we will do the American way.

The significance of family involvement in marriage continues to dominate the ideas and expectations which Vietnamese parents have for their children. Since their arrival, parents have become aware of some differences between the American and Vietnamese patterns and acknowledge that some changes might be necessary. Their ideas of change are a curious combination of Vietnamese and American factors. Typically informants stated that: the family would assist in the selection of a spouse; the boy's family would discuss possible engagement with the girl's family; the families would conduct the engagement and wedding ceremonies; and the child would continue to live at home after marriage.

These notions clearly demonstrated that the experiences of the parents continued to influence their presumptions about the marriage of their children. Some parents stated that their children might have other ideas about selecting a marriage partner and that they might have to

accept their children's decision. Very few of the Vietnamese informants were acquainted with the larger American pattern of courtship and engagement.

The least understood component of American teenage behavior was dating. It has been mentioned in Chapter III that the Vietnamese have no word equivalent to the American "girl friend or boy friend" and physical contact and holding hands were limited to members of the same sex (Vuong 1976: 31). From my observations this inventory may be expanded to include other practices of: girls and boys holding hands; kissing in public; going steady; and even the obligatory date to the prom. Primarily all the American teenage courtship patterns and behaviors which are exhibited at school and after school are not found in the Vietnamese tradition. Of all the topics discussed with informants, girls' dating was least acceptable, and most refused to change their opinions about this. Parents were observed to retain their Confucian values of little contact between the sexes before marriage and the maintenance of virginity until marriage.

In Vietnam girls and boys never drive around in the car after school like Americans do. Sometimes Vietnamese would marry at sixteen and have a baby, but usually Vietnamese marry after twenty-one or twenty-two, and they would never date before twenty-one. If the police would see them (teenagers) in a car and kissing they would put them in jail in Vietnam.

In Vietnam the girl always stays home; the boys can go around the street at daytime or in the evenings. It is different from America.

In this area there was no observed deviation from

traditional Vietnamese expectations for children's behavior. Parents refused to consider the acceptance of the American behaviors of teenage dating and intimacy.

I don't know about your family, but my family they don't want to let daughters go out with boys or boy friends, something like that. Because as you know our culture is different from the American culture. We have what you call the careful watching of the family before you marry. It is not easy for a couple of young people to make love in our country.

When my daughter is a teenager and she has friends from school, she can go out with friends after school, but not alone with a boy friend. I don't let her go out at night. She is supposed to be at home in the night I think like a Vietnamese woman and I still keep some traditional ideas that it is the custom that daughters stay home.

I do not allow my daughter to go out with friends from school. After she is eighteen or twenty years old, she can go out with friends if I know their families. After she is twenty-two years old and finishes college, she can go on a date.

One of my informants, who is the Director of Social Adjustment Services at the Vietnamese American Association, has worked with many families experiencing the "generation gap". During 1984, he personally counseled twenty families with this problem. His observations of other Vietnamese families and his personal experiences of rearing eight children in Oklahoma City make him quite knowledgeable about this issue for Vietnamese families.

Dating depends on each family. Some families never let their daughters go out and others may let them go out on special occasions when they are supervised. In high school I don't let my daughters go on dates. After high school my daughters continue to live at home and go to college. This is common among most Vietnamese families.

When your daughters go to college you can't control them. They meet Vietnamese and American boys at college during classes and talk and make friends. Usually they want to go out with other Vietnamese girls and boys in a group to a movie or a dance party at someone's house. If my daughters have very good grades and did well in school sometimes I will let them go out in the evening on the weekend with friends, but they never tell me if they go on a date.

Through their own experiences of courtship and marriage, Vietnamese parents are inadequately prepared to understand and cope with the contemporary American teenage dating behaviors at school every day. All Vietnamese parents were very concerned about their daughters possibly becoming like American girls. The parents cannot disregard the law and prevent their girls from attending high school, but they can assert their preferences by regulating their daughter's way of dressing and restricting them from social activities and dating. The variation of personal tastes among parents is also reflected in the range of behaviors displayed by Vietnamese high school students.

In high school there are some Vietnamese girls who wear their hair long in traditional style and only associate with other Vietnamese students. Other Vietnamese teenagers like rock and roll and have their own sock hops at their homes and play new wave music on the weekends. These people like to dress in mini-skirts and wear everything cool. (high school student)

Vietnamese parents try to enforce their ideals and preferences in clothing and behaviors for their daughters while they are at home. In one case that I am very familiar with, the father had agreed to let his daughter attend a rock concert with other friends. When she came down the

stairs dressed in a leather mini-skirt, he refused to allow her to leave the house "dressed like that". She quickly changed her clothes to suit her father's taste, and put the mini-skirt in her purse. On the way to the concert her friends stopped at a gas station where she again changed into her original outfit. On the way home the process was reversed and she once again reflected her parents choice in clothing. Resembling this same pattern parents may allow their daughters to go out with other girl friends, but once outside the home the girls can meet their boy friends at some neutral location. The main difference observed among my younger informants was the method in which they left and returned home. A Vietnamese boy did not come in and meet the parents and later bring the girl home like other American teenagers.

This pattern of switching was first observed in the areas of family language preference. In these examples the child also conformed to the parental ideals of speaking Vietnamese at home. The reported practices of some Vietnamese teenagers outside the home indicate the limited ability of parents to completely control their children after they enter the public sector and become familiar with other American patterns. This also demonstrates the differences between the ideal and actual observed behaviors among Vietnamese families. The parents have their own ideas about what language the children should speak at home and how the

children should behave at home. Vietnamese parents strictly try to maintain these ideals; however, as the children become older it was observed that the enforcement of these preferences becomes more difficult.

Family Ceremonial Life

Traditionally the Vietnamese home has been the place for birth, engagements, marriages, deaths, holiday celebrations, and the remembrances of the ancestors. In a previous discussion in Chapter III, the Vietnamese family was understood to consist of living as well as the dead members (Phung 1979). The deceased were acknowledged and given special consideration in important events for the family. The goal in this portion of the study is to monitor changes in the continuation of these traditional practices for Vietnamese families in Oklahoma City. After observing switching in language and some other behaviors in the family, my interests were also expanded into an investigation of family rituals. As I went to more Vietnamese homes for visits and interviews, I observed that the family altar was no longer found in many homes. Catholic families sometimes displayed holy cards, statues, and candles, but Buddhist families usually had no permanent altar in their home. The Vietnamese family has historically conducted rites of passage for its members and annual ceremonies for the dead. The household altar was the center for these ceremonial family activities. The lack of a family altar would also indicate

changes in the traditional family ceremonial life.

Engagement

Families have always played an important part in arranging marriages for their children in Vietnam. The meeting or introduction of potential marriage partners was usually supervised by the families. Following the initial meeting and subsequent family negotiations, the "le hoi" or family engagement ceremony was conducted at the girl's home.

In Vietnam the families were more involved in the meeting of the children. The family had to get someone for an intermediary to go the girl's parents when the son asked his parents that he wanted to marry. We don't do that in the U.S. anymore. In the U.S. the son finds the girl by himself. In Vietnam I would take my son to meet the girl and her family, but here we are like an advisor. My son brought her to my house and introduced me to her. In the U.S. we just accept the new way that the children will meet together and decide to marry.

Although some parents had known their son's potential fiancée and had met her parents, families reported to still use an intermediary. The boy and girl might have known each other from school and have discussed marriage with their parents, but the final decision remains with the parents. Vietnamese families in the U.S. still don't go directly to the girl's family, and prefer to send a neutral party first. If her parents agree to the initial proposal, the boy's family will then come to discuss the marriage. The rejection of a family's proposal for marriage of their child continues to be a great embarrassment that must be avoided. After the first meeting, it was customary for families to

consult the astrologer before the engagement party. In Oklahoma City there are no Vietnamese astrologers to consult and this formality has been dropped. Families now consult a Vietnamese/Chinese calendar with daily notations that indicate favorable and unfavorable activities. The date for engagement is usually set on an appropriate weekend or holiday.

The "le hoi" ceremony continues to be observed in Oklahoma City and is usually conducted at the girl's home, as it was in Vietnam. The fiance and his family or representatives bring a specified number of duplicate gifts for the fiancée's family. The gifts are later distributed to the friends of the girl's parents. In addition to these gifts, he must also bring a gold ring, tea, cakes, cookies and a bottle of whiskey. At the "le hoi" which I observed a special altar had been set up. It was quite elaborate and contained candles, flowers, a whole roast pig, an incense burner with incense, three cups of whiskey, a bottle of whiskey, and a bowl of cooked sweet rice.

FIGURE 5. Le Hoi Altar

candle	flowers	incense	flowers	candle
bottle of whiskey		3 cups of liquor		
sweet rice		whole roast pig		

The incense and red candles were lighted and then the fiancée's father spoke about the appropriateness of the day, etc. He stated that they had come to seek engagement with their daughter. After this, the girl's father acknowledged that it was a very good day and accepted their proposal. Then he requested that the fiancée's parents and the newly engaged couple pray (lai) before the altar. Following this, a tea party and a dinner was held for all the guests. Other families reported to have had less elaborate "le hoi" ceremonies and served only tea and cake to the few guests. Some also stated that they had gone to restaurants for lunch or dinner after the tea party. Vietnamese families in Oklahoma City still observe the engagement formalities. However, this is not always feasible when the fiancée has no parents in the United States or the child marries an American. To observe the engagement ceremonies families were reported to have driven from Houston, Dallas, and other cities. The "le hoi" ceremony is commonly practiced by Vietnamese in Oklahoma City.

Marriage

I have had the opportunity to attend several weddings during the past six years and have been able to make first hand observations. I will first present the details of a traditional ceremony. Before the wedding day the groom went to the fiancée's home and inquired about the gifts she wanted. These included a diamond ring, a wedding dress, two

other dresses, and a diamond necklace. It was his duty to provide all the gifts, and the expenditure was worth several thousand dollars.

On the wedding day the groom, his parents, relatives and friends brought gifts, sweet rice, and a bottle of whiskey to the bride's home. Upon arrival at her house, a line was formed. The oldest couples went first, followed by gifts and his parents. The groom and his attendants came last. Inside the bride's house, a brief ceremony was conducted. The gifts were placed on the altar. The bride's father prayed first (lai), and then the bride and groom prayed. After this her father made a speech about the benefits of the marriage, etc. The father of the groom acknowledged this and also spoke of the benefits of the marriage. After refreshments had been served, everyone went to the groom's house for the wedding ceremony.

As the bride and groom entered his father's house, firecrackers were ignited. The groom's father lit candles and incense on the altar and officiated the wedding. The father prayed first and then asked the bride and groom to also pray. After praying the father poured some whiskey into the three cups on the altar. The parents came forward and instructed the couple on their new duties and obligations in married life. The groom's father then gave the bride and groom each a cup of liquor. The bride was instructed to pour her cup into the groom's cup. The groom

offered for her to drink from his cup, and then drank after her. After the wedding ceremony refreshments were served.

A dinner, reception and dance for 250 guests was held at a popular Chinese restaurant later that evening. After one hour of men drinking and much conversation, a twelve course dinner was served over a three hour period. Finally tea, wedding cake and champagne were served. The dance began at eleven P.M. and continued until two A.M. This extravagant and complicated wedding which I described was an extreme example and serves as a basis for comparison of other observed wedding practices in Oklahoma City. It was a most traditional and lavish affair. The father of the groom later confessed that it is found "only among about ten percent" of the Vietnamese families in Oklahoma City.

Other weddings were less complicated and exhibited deviations from the "ideal" Vietnamese wedding previously mentioned. In two instances, the girl's family lived in another city, and the ceremony at the bride's house was omitted. In another wedding there was a ceremony at the groom's house at ten A.M. and then a Lutheran service at noon. He was a Buddhist, and her family had converted to the faith of their sponsor. Three other examples that I have known are probably more indicative of the changes observed in Vietnamese weddings. Two couples cited the lack of family in the U.S. to conduct the ceremonies and the expense of a Vietnamese wedding as reasons for changing their

ceremony. In another case the groom had no family in the U.S. and the bride was Catholic. This couple had only a church wedding and reception at a restaurant. One Vietnamese groom was without family in America, and the bride lived with her aunt and uncle. Both parties agreed to have a small Vietnamese ceremony at the bride's house. Other Vietnamese have had no traditional wedding ceremony. These couples merely had their blood tests, purchased the license, and went before the judge. This latter type of wedding represents the other extreme of disregard of the Vietnamese customs.

Although the types of wedding ceremonies differ, all Vietnamese couples arranged to have a reception lunch or dinner to celebrate their marriage. Usually these affairs were organized at local Vietnamese or Chinese restaurants, and all family members and friends were invited. The wedding ceremony in Vietnam was primarily for the families, and the reception party was the appropriate place to entertain nonfamily guests. This pattern of the wedding being a private concern between two families has continued in Oklahoma City.

After considering the range of observed marriage ceremonies, it becomes apparent that many Vietnamese do not strictly follow the wedding traditions. Several factors were cited as contributing to these changes. In Vietnam the engagement and wedding were family activities and these were

also occasions for the displays of wealth. Without family members to organize and conduct the ceremonies and without their financial assistance, it is no longer feasible for some Vietnamese to continue elaborate wedding traditions.

For my son we had the ceremony at the bride's house at ten A.M. and then we had a tea or brunch. We then came to my house and had the wedding ceremony at twelve noon. After this we had another reception and served a lunch. Then we went to the restaurant for a big dinner and a reception. We had three receptions for one wedding.

For my family I did the wedding ceremony almost exactly like they do in Vietnam. But most Vietnamese families cannot follow all the procedures as in Vietnam, because it is so complicated and difficult to organize the many ceremonies and parties necessary for the Vietnamese way. It is also very expensive. It is also difficult to organize a traditional wedding when the other family lives in another city like Dallas or Houston and you must change the ceremony.

For Vietnamese in Oklahoma City, a variety of engagement and wedding ceremonies were observed. These varied from virtually traditional to American civil ceremonies. The less complicated engagement ceremony continues to be very common among Vietnamese families. The groom and his family are required to simply bring gifts to the girl's family and request an engagement. Families can drive from other cities for this less complicated ceremony, and a groom, without family in America, can ask a friend to accompany him to call on the girl's parents. The traditional Vietnamese wedding requires much more elaborate preparations, multiple ceremonies, and multiple receptions. For this type of wedding it is also necessary that the girl's family live in the same area. This complexity and the great

financial burden of a traditional wedding are both prohibitive factors in the continuation of Vietnamese weddings. Although most Vietnamese parents would prefer to have a traditional wedding for their children, the actual realization of this ideal is very difficult in Oklahoma.

Funerals

Unlike Vietnamese weddings which were observed to sometimes conform to the traditional ceremonies, funerals resembled those of the host society. The significance of the funeral as a family ceremony is well described in the literature (Hickey 1964; Crawford 1966; Hammer 1968). In Vietnam the death of a family member necessitated elaborate preparations for food and drink to accommodate visiting family, neighbors, and even the whole village. It was preferred practice for the person to die at home. After this the family would prepare the body; send for a coffin; entertain visitors; organize a wake; and conduct the funeral ceremony.

In Vietnam at a funeral all the family comes to the house. All the neighbors will also come to the house to see the family. They would cook and bring food, and they came and brought money to give to their neighbor to help them. In Oklahoma City they do nothing like this.

When my father died in Vietnam, we bought a cow and a pig and killed them and made a big party for the whole village who attended the funeral. It was busy because the whole family had to discuss about organizing the funeral. We kept the body at home for one week. Then we had the funeral. Everyone came to eat, drink wine and have a party. Some brought money, flowers, incense, candles and other things. We put the coffin in the house in front of the altar and set up a small altar in

front of the coffin. It was like a small table with a picture of the dead, candles, incense container, incense, some fruit, and some food like one bowl of rice. Usually they put one boiled egg on top of the rice with only one pair of chopsticks around the egg. In Vietnamese if you say 'I almost ate the egg in the rice bowl' it means I almost died. Everyday we had a ceremony at the altar and everyone who came had to lai. In Vietnam after three years my family dug up the coffin, washed the bones with wine and put them in a smaller ceramic coffin and reburied them in another place forever.

As Cronin (1970: 66) indicated, one must adhere to the laws of the land in certain aspects of private sector behavior. The Vietnamese must follow the larger state laws concerning embalming and exhumation. According to these laws, embalming is a required procedure, if burial is not within twenty-four hours. The practice of the family digging up the remains in three years for reburial is no longer possible for Vietnamese in Oklahoma. In addition to the regulations that govern the treatment of the dead, the Vietnamese preference to die at home is not shared by the host culture. In America people are usually not allowed to die at home, and are primarily taken to the hospital when they become gravely ill. In Vietnam people were rushed home from the hospital as they approached death (Crawford 1966: 124).

Keeping a sick or dying person home could now result in charges of neglect by family members. Vietnamese must also follow the American practices for the treatment of the ill. Many of the Vietnamese preferences concerning death and dying are prohibited by law. The majority of Vietnamese now also die in the hospital in the U.S. The hospital then

sends the body directly to a funeral home, where routine procedures are followed. The Vietnamese family is more excluded from the death of family members in the United States, and they closely follow the established American patterns.

In the United States the Vietnamese funeral practices are just like the Americans, with only one thing different, the religion. If you are a Buddhist, the monk will come to hold the prayer ceremony at the funeral home. If you are a Protestant, then the minister will come. If you are Catholic then the priest will come. In Vietnam it was very different. They never go to the funeral home and they don't embalm the dead.

The Vietnamese accept the American way for the funeral. The family comes to the funeral home and everyone else comes there to pray for the dead and to see the family. The Buddhist monk will come to the funeral home to pray for the funeral ceremony. Then they take the body to the cemetery for burial. After one week we had a ceremony at the pagoda to pray for the dead.

The Vietnamese must do like the Americans because we come to this country and we must follow the customs and laws about the funerals. When someone dies some families still make an altar in the home but the coffin is in the funeral home. After the funeral they take down the altar. Then about forty days after the death they bring the picture of the dead to the pagoda and leave it there.

Catholic and Protestant Vietnamese follow the established church procedures in their funeral arrangements. The Catholics have a rosary at the funeral home and a funeral mass the following day. For Protestants, the minister conducts the service at the mortuary or at the church. Traditionally, Buddhists' family members wore white robes or mourning clothes during the funeral in Vietnam. In Oklahoma this has also been modified. During the Buddhist prayer

service at the funeral home or at a memorial service at the temple, immediate family members were observed to only wear white cloth head bands. After the ceremony the cloth strip was removed and discarded. Very little variation from the American funeral practices were found among the Vietnamese.

At the first Buddhist funeral I attended, I noticed that the funeral director was quite uncomfortable and unaccustomed to Vietnamese practices. This was his first Vietnamese funeral and he had never seen a Buddhist monk burning incense and chanting prayers before in Oklahoma City. The most outstanding occurrence of minor difference in behaviors was observed at a later funeral. Two of my students were hit by a train on their way home after night school, and both were killed instantly. The same funeral director now had a double Vietnamese Buddhist funeral to contend with. The second time he was more experienced and knew what to expect at a Vietnamese Buddhist funeral. At the grave sites he quietly stood by the hearses and watched the eldest sister conduct the ceremonies. She burned incense and assisted each family member to pray (lai) at the foot of each coffin.

As the coffins were lowered into the graves the crowd of almost one hundred mourners began to tear flowers from the arrangements and throw them into the graves. I distinctly remember watching the director panic and try to quietly deter the Vietnamese from doing this. Finally, he gave up and watched all the flower arrangements torn apart

and thrown into the graves. Shortly after this the family produced a big tray of Vietnamese stuffed dumplings from a nearby car. The oldest sister began to serve food and drink to all the mourners. Other American teachers were also unaccustomed to this behavior and didn't know how to respond. Excluding these few observed differences, Vietnamese follow the dominant American etiquette for funerals. In Oklahoma City, Vietnamese funerals no longer resemble those elaborate and festive occasions which were common in Vietnam.

For the Vietnamese family, death and burial were only the beginning of a continuous series of ceremonies and observances throughout the mourning period. After this time, the death anniversary became an important day for the entire family. According to the Vietnamese tradition of mourning, the seventh day, the forty-ninth day and the one hundredth day after death required observances by the family. Offering food and prayers for the dead and then having a large meal for the living family members were the components of these Vietnamese ceremonial events. After one year a more elaborate celebration was organized to mark the end of the first year (Hickey 1964: 129).

In Oklahoma City mourning periods of two or three years are still observed by immediate family, and weddings and most social activities are avoided during this time. Some surviving sons choose to indicate the mourning period by wearing a black armband or a patch of black cloth pinned

to their clothing for one year. Following the mourning period, it becomes the duty of the eldest son or daughter to continue the annual ceremonies for the dead. Catholic families reported to have differed little in their observance of the traditional Vietnamese practices. Saying a rosary at home or attending mass before the family dinner on the seventh, forty-ninth, one hundredth day and the death anniversary were reported. In Vietnam almost all families celebrated the death anniversary of their family members. This practice was solemnized through centuries of tradition and is important for the family system.

Even distant kin appear to have had continuing involvement with each other, despite physical separation. Visits at Tet and the joint celebration of death anniversaries serves as important occasions for the maintenance of solidarity among extended kin (Haines 1981: 16).

A necessary element for the observance of death anniversaries and Tet ceremonies was the family altar in the home. According to Hickey (1964), altars were found in Buddhist, Catholic, Confucian, and Cao Dai homes in Vietnam. At these altars family heads conducted the ceremonies which were attended by all family members. The traditional altar in the home has changed for the Vietnamese since their arrival in Oklahoma City.

In Vietnam almost all families had an altar at home. Even the Catholic families always had an altar with a crucifix or a holy picture. Catholics had simple altars with pictures, candles and maybe some flowers. In Oklahoma City my wife has a picture of the Sacred Heart and two small candles on the mantle in the living room. (Catholic informant)

Most Vietnamese families in Oklahoma City no longer have an ancestor altar at home. The Vietnamese family in the U.S. usually does not have the altar in the home. I do, but very few people make a special altar at home. They are Buddhists or Ancestor Worshipers, but they don't do that any more. I would say that ninety percent of the Vietnamese don't have an altar in their home. (President of Buddhist Association)

We don't have an ancestor altar in our home. We did in Vietnam but not in Oklahoma. My father has a picture of his father on a book shelf with a small incense container, but we don't have an altar. We don't pray to the dead or observe the anniversary days since we came to the U.S. (Vietnamese Baptist)

We don't have an altar in our home any more. In Vietnam we did and we observed the death anniversaries of our family. I don't know why, but it is just different here. We changed this when we came to the U.S. Now we take the picture of the dead person to the pagoda and pray there on the anniversary.

In Oklahoma City few Vietnamese reported having the traditional family altar in their homes. When questioned about this, most commented that they changed this practice when they came to the U.S. Brass candle holders and incense are available at the local Asian markets, but altars are not common in Vietnamese homes. American apartments and houses do not have a special room which is designated for the altar as in Vietnam. Informants reported that the traditional Vietnamese home had three rooms and the central room always contained the altar. The physical difference of American housing was cited by some Vietnamese informants as a cause for discontinuing the family altar. Death anniversaries continue to still be observed among some Vietnamese families; however, these ceremonies now take a variety of forms.

My family observes the anniversary day of the dead relatives. We set up a small altar at home when we organize

this. We read out of the Buddhist scripture and then we have a party and eat. After the anniversary we take down the temporary altar.

In Oklahoma not many Vietnamese observe the death days. I only observed the forty-ninth and one hundredth day at home. In the Buddhist temple they have a big altar in the back. It is like a big table with pictures on it. There are over one hundred pictures at the temple now. Each picture has a frame with the name and the date of their death. The family puts it there with some flowers and incense.

Every family, if they have someone die, they bring the picture to the pagoda and they can come there to pray on the seventh, forty-ninth, one hundredth day or the anniversary day. After my mother's funeral I took her picture from home to the temple.

I am the oldest son and it is my duty to organize the death anniversary. Before in Vietnam I would invite all surviving family and we would go to mass. After this we would go to the cemetery and clean up the grave and then everyone would come to my house for a big party. Now in the U.S. it is too difficult. Sometimes the day is on a workday and I observe this on Sunday. I also have family in California and Texas and they cannot come for the anniversary day. So I send them a letter every year to remind them about that day. (Catholic)

Very few even put up a temporary altar for the anniversary. They just ask people to come to their house and read the Buddhist scriptures. Some Catholics only go to church, others only ask their family to come to the house and read the Bible and eat dinner. The Buddhist maybe will go to the pagoda. Not many Buddhist go to the pagoda on this day. Some Vietnamese have only a party at home and others do nothing at all on the anniversary. Last week we had a death anniversary and we did nothing. We just forgot it. (Vietnamese Counselor)

The preservation of the family calendar and the celebration of death anniversaries has historically been carried on at the home of the eldest son. According to Confucian principles, it is his duty and responsibility to maintain this family practice which honors the dead and reunites all living family members. The household altar was the focal

point for these commemorative services. In addition to death anniversary rituals, paying homage to the ancestors was also included in the Vietnamese new year (Tet) ceremony. Traditionally the first act of the new year was for the family to pray before the altar in their homes, make offerings to the dead, and invite them to celebrate with the family (Vuong 1976: 40). Changes have also been observed in this family ritual in Vietnamese homes in Oklahoma City.

My family had a ceremony on new years at my house at midnight. This year I had to do it myself because my wife had to sleep because she has to go to work early. She lit up the candles and incense and prayed the next morning before she left for work. We must go to work and we cannot do the same as we did in our country. In Vietnam everybody would be off for three days, but here you must go to work.

In Vietnam we did a lot for Tet. We had to prepare everything for one week, but now we do little here at home. Sometimes we go the festival downtown on Sunday and on Tet we go to the pagoda in the evening to pray for the new year. Tet comes on workdays and my wife and I must go to work every day.

A few families put up an altar for Tet, but I know that among the population here, most families don't do that, not even a temporary altar. In Vietnam most families would ask the children to pray before the altar in the home, but in the U.S. many families don't do that any more Don't be so surprised It depends on the individual families. It is easy to understand, because they have a new life and everything changed: new job; new house; everything new so they change too.
(Vice-president of Buddhist Association)

The home has been the customary place for Vietnamese to observe engagements, weddings, death anniversaries, and Tet. This preference reflected the Confucian ideals of primary concern for the family and all its members, living and dead. The essential item in the family ceremonial

activities was the household altar. Most Vietnamese families, Buddhist, Catholic and Protestant, no longer maintain an altar in their homes. It is now acceptable for Buddhist families to take the pictures of their dead to the temple and place them on a communal altar. Catholic families also continue to observe death anniversaries. Some families go to mass or pray at church for their dead relatives, and no longer keep an altar at home. There is a variation in the adherence to the Vietnamese tradition of family ceremonies.

Among the Vietnamese in Oklahoma City, it was observed that the family ceremonies for death anniversary and Tet may range from traditional to nonexistent. Informants commented that it was too difficult to continue these practices because the family had to work and other family members lived in other states. In many instances it is impossible to reunite all the family on these occasions. The Vietnamese family or private sector rituals have been modified. Influence of the public sector in work schedules and residence patterns have been identified as significant factors that affect these changes. However, the preference to continue some form of these ceremonial observances or to completely forget them is a choice for each individual family.

Conclusion

The family system in Vietnam was an intricately

organized institution in which each member knew his position and duty. The linkage of the individual households into one network enabled the family to function as one entity. The Vietnamese family has been described as a: "mini-commune; a maternity center; a funeral home; a religious place; an adoption agency; a court room; a welfare center; a hospital; a nursing home; an educational institution, and a bank" (Vuong 1976: 21). These many functions were carried out through the cooperation of the many members. Mutual assistance and linkage with other component households were necessary for the continuation of this family system. When the first Vietnamese came to the U.S. in 1975, some arrived with large extended families, but the majority were accompanied by individual nuclear households. By leaving Vietnam, the individual families were dramatically separated from the large family system. Within the individual households the traditional concepts of behaviors, role expectations, and obligations were transplanted practically intact. The preference for each household was to continue a primarily Vietnamese life at home. In spite of this, public sector involvements of work and school were observed to influence the maintenance of this ideal Vietnamese household.

Vietnamese women began to work and children went to American schools. The traditional family roles and behaviors had begun to change. Children learned English and became familiar with American attitudes and behaviors. The

presence of young children was identified as a significant influence in affecting change within the family. When children are small, usually Vietnamese is only spoken at home. After the children begin school, more English is gradually spoken in the home. Many Vietnamese children have lived in the U.S. for the majority of their lives. It is common for children under age thirteen to speak Vietnamese but not read or write this language.

In addition to changes in roles and language usage for family members, traditional family ceremonies were also observed to differ. The factors of expense, distance from family members, and conflicting work schedules were indicated to contribute to these changes. Engagement procedures, marriage ceremonies, and observances for the dead have been modified, abbreviated, or even eliminated in Oklahoma City.

Vietnamese parents openly discussed their experiences and ideas about the operation of the family. Sometimes differences between the ideal and actual behavior were observed; however, the values of the parents continue to dominate the household and determine acceptable behaviors and appropriate changes for family members. The least area of change was in the ideas and values of parents who prefer to keep a Vietnamese life within the home. The important issue for Vietnamese is not the continuation of the complex extended family system, but the maintenance of individual households and their Vietnamese home life.

CHAPTER IX

GROUP ORGANIZATION

The final portion of this study is concerned with the development of group organization among Vietnamese in Oklahoma City. The process of "intergroup bargaining" is understood to be related to the development of ethnic group organizations, which must compete with other existing ethnic groups within the host society. This development has been identified as contingent upon the "rise of elites that press new strategies upon fellow members of their group" (Banton 1981: 42). A brief discussion of the formation of the Vietnamese American Association, other Vietnamese organizations in Oklahoma City, their leaderships, and strategies is presented to facilitate a comparison of ideal and observed patterns. This approach will allow the evaluation of the utility of the concepts of "group bargaining" and "group development".

The Vietnamese American Association traces its origins back to the refugee camp at Fort Chaffee, Arkansas. Following their arrival at the camp, some of the later VAA members began to teach English classes. In 1975, a

temporary organization in Oklahoma City, Americans for Refugees, resettled the first three hundred Vietnamese in Oklahoma City. Two influential people in this resettlement process were Brigadier General Clyde J. Watts and his son Charles Watts who had served in Vietnam in 1969 and 1970. Brigadier General Clyde J. Watts is reported to have used his personal airplane to fly the first Vietnamese to Oklahoma City and to have recruited other sponsors. Sharing their son's initial concern for evacuating friends whom he had made in Vietnam, the Watts family became significantly involved in Vietnamese resettlement in Oklahoma City.

When the Vietnamese first arrived there were no actual projects exclusively for them. The established programs of other existing ethnic groups had to be utilized. The primary concern was for Vietnamese to learn English and to acquire career development skills. At this time the Adult Institute in Oklahoma City had a non-intensive, non-job oriented program and served some Vietnamese and other ethnic groups of Blacks, Indians, and Hispanics. The Mexican American Center was primarily for Hispanics, and approximately one-third of the Vietnamese who applied were accepted in their ESL program. This pattern of utilizing existing services and cooperation with other ethnic groups in Oklahoma City continued through 1977. At this time federal funds became available to establish service providers for Indochinese Refugees.

Up to this time, there had only been some grouping of Vietnamese for religious services. Vietnamese Catholics had a Vietnamese priest who made arrangements for a Vietnamese mass at the cathedral. Buddhists also held occasional services, but the lack of a place of worship and a Buddhist monk made this very difficult. The Buddhists and Catholics together organized the first Tet festival for the Vietnamese in Oklahoma City on February 1st, 1976. It was a very small affair compared to the large festival held this year. Since then, the Tet festival has become an annual event for Vietnamese in Oklahoma City. Each year the leadership of the VAA, the Vietnamese Buddhists, Catholics and Baptists organize this event and also play important roles in the actual festival programs. American Tet is quite different from that experienced in Vietnam. In their homeland it was a family holiday which was observed at home with other relatives. In the United States

It is above all an occasion when the displaced elites of a vanished social order gather together to pledge loyalty to heritage and homeland solemnly vowing to preserve their national and ethnic allegiance in exile (Kleis 1981 no. 16: 3-4).

The small religious enclaves and the annual Tet celebration were the extent of Vietnamese group development in Oklahoma City until federal funds became accessible in 1978. The availability of funds as well as other factors contributed to the development of the Vietnamese organizations currently found in Oklahoma City.

Although Brigadier General Clyde J. Watts had died by 1978, his family maintained contacts with Vietnamese whom they had sponsored. It was a coincidence that Charles Watts was a lawyer and had made his services available to the Vietnamese in Oklahoma City. Also at this time an ESL teacher at the Mexican American Center became interested in developing a program to serve Vietnamese students who were attending her classes. When the federal government announced that it was accepting proposals for Vietnamese service providers, the teacher met with Vietnamese leaders and agreed to write a proposal which included her as ESL director. The lawyer also encouraged the Vietnamese leaders to incorporate and volunteered to serve on the advisory board.

It was desirable and necessary that the Vietnamese form a non-profit corporation to qualify as a service agency which could be recognized by the government. The incorporation of the VAA met the requirements necessary to receive government funds and established an American democratic model of government among the Vietnamese people. Resembling other American ethnic groups, the Vietnamese were required to reorganize according to the American pattern before they could qualify for federal money. Fundamentally the government dictated the manner and form of organization which Vietnamese could develop. Following the established American pattern, the organization had to select a president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, etc.; establish a set

of purposes and by laws; and follow the American democratic process of operation. On April 19, 1978, the Vietnamese American Association registered as a non-profit corporation with the state of Oklahoma. Two of the main purposes for the incorporation were:

To promote the mutual understanding and friendship between the Vietnamese and Americans.

To assist the Vietnamese refugees in adapting to the new way of life in the United States of America and in becoming meaningful members of the community.

From these small beginnings in 1978 the VAA has continued to receive federal grants and has administered over one million dollars in various programs through the Department of Health Education and Welfare and the Office of Refugee Resettlement.

For the first two years, 1978-1979 and 1979-1980, there were two separate projects, an ESL and Manpower Program and a Mental Health Project. In 1980 these projects were combined under ESL, Manpower, and Social Adjustment Services, and this program has continuously been funded for the past five years. Within a few years the VAA's progress was noted to be exceptional.

The Vietnamese American Association in Oklahoma City is a Mutual Assistance Association which has 'made it'; in this respect it is an exception and might serve as a model for success" (Bui 1980: 6).

After these very positive endorsements, the VAA applied for additional grants as Technical Assistance Provider for other refugee programs in the region. Federal Region VI includes

Oklahoma, Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, and New Mexico. Assistance has been provided in ESL, Manpower, Mental Health and Business Development.

The rapid success and acclaim of the VAA is better understood through an analysis of the available leadership and government policies that were in effect. A Vietnamese physician was paramount in the development of an acceptable Vietnamese leadership. He previously attended medical school in Oklahoma City, possessed excellent English abilities and was a licensed medical doctor. His bilingual abilities and professional skills were invaluable in establishing an acceptable Vietnamese leadership and project that could better qualify for government funds. The Vietnamese physician could better evaluate and more easily treat Vietnamese with limited English, and as a member of the same culture, he was experienced in the adjustments required to live in the U.S. Another leader lacked American professional credentials, but he had previously been awarded government construction contracts in Vietnam. He possessed some previous experience in handling American government funds. This man also had contacts with Vietnamese who worked for the Department of HEW in the regional office. A combination of these factors was significant in the VAA presenting a qualified leadership and professional project to receive their first grant. Achieving rapid national acclaim was the result of other external influences at that

time.

In 1978, the majority of the federal projects for Vietnamese were awarded to American agencies that had previously resettled Vietnamese in 1975. The vast majority of projects were administered by the United States Catholic Conference (USCC) programs in most cities with refugee populations. Only four ESL and Manpower Development Projects were awarded to Vietnamese organizations in the U.S., and the VAA was the only group to also receive a mental health grant. Being the only Vietnamese operated program with both ESL and Mental Health projects and having the excellent resources of a few Vietnamese professionals, the VAA was a rare and attractive "model" program which could attest to the government policy of ethnic self-determination.

Shortly after the VAA was formed and received its first grants, the Vietnamese Catholic Association and the Vietnamese Buddhist Association were also incorporated. The leaders of these organizations were also members of the VAA leadership. The benefits of being a non-profit corporation were now obvious to the Vietnamese in Oklahoma City. In the following years other ethnic organizations like the Lao Family Association were formed and attempted to secure their own government funds. The small population, lack of professionals in their leadership, and recurrent factionalism can be identified as factors that have impeded their continued development.

When one investigates the leadership of the Vietnamese organizations in Oklahoma City, it becomes apparent that there is a limited core of "elites" within the Vietnamese groups. I have observed that there are approximately twenty-five families that occupy leadership positions in the existing Vietnamese organizations, which include the VAA, the Vietnamese Catholic Association, Vietnamese Buddhist Association, and the Vietnamese Baptist Association. Other Vietnamese are members of each association, but the officers in these four groups are limited to a handful of men. Each association has the necessary four or five positions of president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, etc.

Synchronic observation of the VAA leadership structures provide little insight; however, when other organization leaderships are also viewed through time another pattern becomes apparent. When the VAA was first formed in 1978, eight men occupied the elected offices. Within a few years some of the same leaders would also organize the Buddhist, Catholic, and Baptist Associations. These men would continue to hold offices in one or two organizations each year. Eventually the limited available leadership had to occupy officer positions simultaneously. For example, the vice president of the VAA would be the president of the Buddhist Association; the president of the VAA would be the vice president of the Vietnamese Catholic Association; and

the secretary of the VAA would also be the president of the Vietnamese Baptist Association. The VAA also has an annually elected board of directors who sometimes occupy minor leadership positions in the VAA and other organizations. From this perspective one sees that there are only a few Vietnamese who occupy leadership positions in the four Vietnamese organizations in Oklahoma City.

The strategy of Vietnamese organizations is to help other Vietnamese to achieve success in Oklahoma City. For the Buddhists, this means having a temple, a monk and regular religious services. During 1979, Vietnamese Buddhists utilized the counseling center also for a temporary place of worship. A Buddhist monk was brought to Oklahoma City to conduct services two times each month. After one year the congregation grew and was able to buy an old church for their place of worship. The Baptist and Catholic associations have similar goals for their members and have more easily found churches to conduct their activities. Instead of religious concerns, the primary goal of the VAA is to assist the Vietnamese in adjusting to their new life. Adjustment can be understood in terms of successful public sector participation. Through English classes and employment services Vietnamese can find jobs and become self sufficient members of the host society.

When many new arrivals chose to take welfare instead of finding a job, there was much concern at the Office of

Refugee Resettlement. Before the federal government extended the three year policy for refugee benefits, the leaders of the VAA spoke out in favor of limiting eligibility to only eighteen months. Under the current program, Vietnamese can receive cash assistance for the first eighteen months in the U.S. if they also attend ESL classes. A sixty-five percent minimum attendance is required to maintain one's welfare benefits. When a cash recipient's monthly attendance falls below this level, the VAA must indicate this in the monthly reports to the State Department of Human Services. It is then the department's responsibility to cut the benefits. This more active involvement of the VAA in getting Vietnamese off welfare and to work came after some allegations that the Vietnamese were abusing the welfare system.

In a newspaper interview one USCC official accused Boat People of only wanting to come to the U.S. to get welfare. She said that some Vietnamese ask for their welfare check when they get off the plane, and others go directly to the welfare office from the airport. To circumvent this potentially scandalous situation, the VAA and the Department of Human Services responded to the charges of abuse. In a series of newspaper articles, the VAA stated that there was no welfare system in Vietnam, and it was impossible for Vietnamese to arrive with a "welfare mentality". Since that time the VAA has been more concerned with enforcing

government regulations and has been working closely with the state welfare office to monitor welfare cases (Crowden 1982).

In addition to increased involvement with government and the Vietnamese in Oklahoma City, the VAA has also acted as an adviser for Vietnamese throughout the region. Shortly after the "Sea Drift Incident", the regional office in Dallas rushed VAA leaders to the Texas gulf coast area to meet with local Vietnamese. The VAA advised Vietnamese to relocate to other areas to avoid conflicts, and offered to assist families to move to Oklahoma City and Houston.

Since their first arrival in 1975, Vietnamese have relocated along the gulf coast and have shown a preference for working in the fishing industry. American fishermen have also complained about the Vietnamese invasion of their industry (Starr 1981). The VAA has become involved in trying to change this preference for Vietnamese business. Through a Technical Assistance Business Development Program, the VAA has traveled throughout the region and held meetings for Vietnamese business development. Fellow Vietnamese are encouraged to forget the fishing industry and to stop catering only to the limited Vietnamese population. The VAA program encourages Vietnamese to follow the mainstream in their business ideals. Oriental groceries and restaurants have been the common forms of Vietnamese business. This has resulted in many similar businesses competing for the same

limited clientele. Vietnamese are encouraged to expand into businesses that include the larger American population. Favorable businesses such as convenience stores, liquor stores, laundromats and anything that would appeal to the American as well as Vietnamese customer are proposed. Currently the VAA project is assisting in the development of new Vietnamese business in New Orleans, Houston, Dallas, Little Rock and Oklahoma City. A sewing factory, a vegetable farm, a video arcade, and a chicken ranch are among these projects. The goal of the Technical Assistance Program is to diversify Vietnamese business to reduce intense competition among existing Vietnamese businesses, and to firmly establish Vietnamese in the American business sector.

Following the approach of Banton, it was postulated that there emerges a nucleus of elites which organizes their ethnic group to successfully compete with other existing ethnic groups. To accomplish this they "press new strategies upon fellow members of their group The position of such elites resembles that of a trade union leader" (Banton 1981: 42). The development of group organizations among Vietnamese in Oklahoma City well illustrates the validity of this approach. In Oklahoma City a small group of leaders emerged. Some of these leaders were highly educated, had previous contacts with Americans before 1975, and were elites in Vietnamese society. These few men were greatly responsible for the incorporation of the VAA, the

Vietnamese Buddhist Association, the Vietnamese Catholic Association and the Vietnamese Baptist Association.

Vietnamese leadership in Oklahoma City was observed to be limited to approximately twenty-five Vietnamese men.

Through the principal organization, the VAA, leaders have made English language training, job placement, and job upgrading available to all Vietnamese in Oklahoma City. One of the main purposes listed by the VAA was to insure successful adjustment for Vietnamese in Oklahoma. This goal has been greatly realized through improving English ability and acquiring job skills. A considerable effort was organized to "mobilize" Vietnamese who receive cash assistance. These Vietnamese were encouraged to attend English classes and avoid the threat of sanctions from the Department of Human Services. The VAA policy actively discourages new arrivals from taking welfare and encourages them to secure employment soon after arrival. Living on welfare is not an acceptable strategy for the leaders of the Vietnamese ethnic group. This can be tolerated only if a Vietnamese is learning English, new job skills or is incapable of working. The VAA encourages fellow Vietnamese to actively participate in the public sector of work, education and business for the benefit of the individual and the Vietnamese ethnic group.

Originally the VAA, its programs, and influences were limited to the Oklahoma City area. Being the "model" project for the federal government, the VAA was asked to advise

other Vietnamese groups in surrounding states. Through regular meetings and workshops, several projects have been carried out in Region VI. Other Vietnamese in surrounding cities have also been organized and mobilized under the impetus of the VAA. The continued goal is to assist other Vietnamese in "successful adjustment" to American life in Oklahoma, and with the help of the federal government these influences have been spread to surrounding states.

This strategy for adjustment included observing the host culture's standards and Vietnamese entry into the public sector areas of work, education, residence and business. Conflicts with other Americans and negative publicity, which can be detrimental to the image of the Vietnamese ethnic group are to be avoided. Rather than striving to maintain Vietnamese enclaves, the VAA encourages participation in the host society. Fellow Vietnamese are advised to undergo changes which are needed for self-sufficiency and economic success, but to also "preserve Vietnamese culture".

CHAPTER X

SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

It has now been ten years since the fall of South Vietnam and the first massive exodus of Vietnamese to the U.S. During that evacuation and immediate resettlement in camps, the Vietnamese received much popular attention in the media. Realizing the uniqueness of this situation some scholars became interested in documenting this experience. Unfortunately, continued investigations have been limited, and the majority of studies about Vietnamese in America have focused exclusively upon this first segment of an ever increasing Vietnamese population in the United States. The 1975 Vietnamese were followed by a second and larger group, the Boat People, who arrived during 1978, 1979, 1980, and 1981. Some boat People are still admitted to the U.S.; however, most Vietnamese arrivals now come through the Orderly Departure Program. In 1975 approximately 140,000 Vietnamese came to the U.S., and during the boat period another 250,000 Vietnamese were admitted (Liu 1979; Lanphier 1983). According to recent reports in Time Magazine (April 15, 1985: 39) there are another half million Vietnamese

currently waiting to come to the U.S. through the ODP program. The continuing flow of Vietnamese to the United States has demonstrated that the 1975 Vietnamese are only a portion of the total population, and that it is important to also consider Boat People and ODPs in investigations of Vietnamese in America.

This study has identified types of changes that Vietnamese have undergone following their arrival in the U.S. Documentation of first generation experiences within the context of existing concepts of change was the goal of this research. To accomplish this it was desirable to adopt an approach which acknowledged the significance of the individual as well as the group in the examination of change. The method for this investigation of Vietnamese change in Oklahoma City followed the ideas of Cronin and Banton. Their concepts of "immigrant change" (Cronin 1970) and "ethnic change" (Banton 1981) were similar and complementary.

Both acknowledged the relevance of the pre-emigration culture for the study of change and perceived change to be significantly an individual process which involved adjustments made by persons. "... Cultures or societies do not immigrate Individuals or at most families immigrate, taking with them their values, beliefs, and a few material possessions" (Cronin 1970: 9). Banton also considered change "as resulting from the choices of individuals when faced with alternatives generated by social structures

and situations" (1981: 33). The acquisition of some new cultural patterns and the resistance to others exemplified individual change which was understood to consist of modifications of values as well as behaviors. Cronin and Banton agreed that behaviors and values change at different rates among immigrants.

Discerning the pattern for individuals to accept certain changes and resist others, Banton postulated a bargaining process to be the selective mechanism for change. This allowed for the adoption of some cultural patterns "that helped them earn a living" and were beneficial to the success of the immigrant (Banton 1981: 33). Earlier, Cronin had made similar observations and distinguished individual change into the public sector of work, school, and residence, and the private sector of family home life. The subdivision of these two general categories into specific areas for investigation facilitated the consideration of complex individual change.

Cronin's model of change was sophisticated and useful in organizing and analyzing individual data; however, it did not consider group development in the host society. Ethnic organizations were observed to exist in the host culture, but Cronin noted that these were ". . . never identical with prior institutions" (1970: 9). The formation of ethnic group organizations was acknowledged; however, the process of this development was not significant in her approach to

the study of change. Although Banton's concept of bargaining was less specific in identifying areas for investigating individual change, the bargaining process was considered to operate on both the individual and group levels. An "inter-group" bargaining process was identified as the mechanism for ethnic groups to organize and change their group position in the host society (Banton 1981: 42).

A synthesis of the views of Cronin and Banton resulted in the present model for considering Vietnamese change. Utilizing Cronin's typology of individual changes and Banton's concept of bargaining, individual and group change were investigated. On the individual level it was postulated that there were habit changes in the public and private sectors and little or no value changes in the private sector. On the group level it was postulated that Vietnamese organizations developed "elite" leaderships that attempted to mobilize ethnic group members to improve their group position and better compete with other ethnic groups in the host society.

The Individual

To be in a position to accurately identify changes in behaviors and values, it was necessary to first establish a "cultural baseline" for the measurement of change. A brief Vietnamese cultural background was presented to meet this requirement. Additional detailed individual accounts of pre-emigration and emigration experiences supplemented the

general cultural information. This approach adequately demonstrated Vietnamese culture and facilitated the distinction of changes in behaviors, values, and traditions which have occurred since emigration.

In the pre-emigration narrative it was noted that Vietnamese had a well established Confucian tradition, which regulated individual behaviors and placed importance upon the family rather than the individual. The preferred pattern for Vietnamese was to live in multigenerational extended households which were closely united into a larger family system. Obedience, respect for elders, and honoring deceased family members were integral in the Vietnamese family. An individual's life was understood to revolve around the family. One's personal duties, obligations, and behaviors were well defined within the family system.

Children continued to live with their parents until marriage, and usually a son brought his wife to live with his parents. All family members worked for the benefit of the family and contributed individual earnings to the common household fund. Members depended upon family approval in making individual expenditures. Husbands were considered "boss" of the households and expected to provide financial support for the family. Women were always subordinate to men, and usually remained at home operating the household. Children were expected to always be obedient to their parents and respectful of their elders. Vietnamese had a

high regard for education and viewed it also as a method for family advancement. Children were encouraged to study and excel in school. The family also played a significant role in the engagement and marriage of the children. Weddings, funerals, and death anniversaries were important family events which reunited all members for ceremonial celebrations. When the Vietnamese came to America, they were separated from this traditional family system into individual households. Acknowledging the Vietnamese world view of the individual being inseparable from the family (Vuong 1976; Phung 1979), this study focused upon the individual within the context of existing family.

The examination of individual change followed the public-private approach and organized these two areas into additional subunits for study. The public sector was divided into categories of work, school, residence, and public sector associations. The private sector was separated into topics of language, food, recreation, family, roles of family members, family values, and traditions.

It was perceived that Vietnamese change was primarily toward the host culture, and there was no significant incorporation of Vietnamese patterns into American culture. The observation of individual change revealed that English language ability was a most important factor in successful public sector participation. Reliance upon welfare and cash assistance was noted to delay and inhibit adult public

sector activity. When Vietnamese studied English or job skills and received welfare, their entrance into the job market was delayed. However, these people made faster economic advancements than those who went directly to work without English or job skills. Vietnamese who accepted welfare and stayed home had very few public sector contacts and exhibited the least habit changes in both the public and private sectors.

Adult involvement in the public sector was primarily associated with work, and public sector participation for children was mainly limited to school. In the areas of work and school, English was spoken and some American habits were acquired. Learning to drive a car was an important habit change which facilitated public sector activities. At work and school some adults and most children became familiar with American eating habits and acquired tastes for American foods. Changes in eating habits among Vietnamese women were slower and many preferred to bring Vietnamese food to work. In neighborhoods around their homes, Vietnamese had little contact with other Vietnamese or Americans. There was no significant participation in American organizations, and the family continued to be the focal point for Vietnamese life in Oklahoma City.

In the private sector of Vietnamese home life, fewer habit changes were observed. At home the majority of families continued to prepare Vietnamese food. Within the

home Vietnamese was the dominant language spoken. Nuclear households were the most common type of Vietnamese families. Informants commonly characterized other relatives as providing less assistance to family members in the United States than in Vietnam. Within the family, men's roles changed less than women's roles. Many Vietnamese women had begun to work outside the home; however, they continued their former duties inside the home. Parents expected their children to behave the same way that they would in Vietnam. Children were characterized as watching the most television, preferring American music, speaking English well, and liking American food. Most Vietnamese informants reported to stay home with the family in their spare time. Television was a common form of family entertainment, and increasing numbers of Vietnamese households were acquiring cable T.V. and video recorders.

The family was perceived to continue to dominate the lives of individual Vietnamese in Oklahoma City. Parents expected children to live at home until marriage, and some preferred that their children should continue living at home after marriage. All parents wanted their children to attend college and usually had decided what their children would study. Boys were allowed more freedom than girls outside the home, and the traditional Vietnamese preoccupation with protection of daughters showed no change. Most parents expected to play an important part in the selection

of a spouse, the engagement, and the marriage of their children. In the areas of dating, engagement, and marriage there were some behavior changes observed, but no changes in values were indicated. Some Vietnamese have divorced since their arrival in the U.S., but there was no change in attitude concerning the acceptability of divorce.

Among Vietnamese household heads adaptive changes were most commonly identified with public sector activities of work, school and residence. Within the home some behavior changes were observed; however, traditional role expectations and values predominated. In many Vietnamese homes it was noted that the usual pattern of maintaining a family altar had been abandoned, but families still valued the remembrance of ancestors. Some continued the observance of death anniversaries in a variety of forms, and others reported to have dispensed with these celebrations completely. Many informants spoke of the dual nature of life in America and of their hopes of keeping the "Vietnamese way" in the home. From an external or public sector perspective, it would appear that Vietnamese have undergone many changes; however, investigating life within the home revealed that there have been limited changes in individual behaviors and no significant changes in Vietnamese values.

The Group

This study confirmed the hypotheses that immigrants leave their cultural institutions behind and develop new

immigrant organizations in the host society (Cronin 1970; Banton 1981). Interest was upon investigating the establishment of Vietnamese group organizations in Oklahoma City. It was postulated that Vietnamese associations developed "elite" leaderships that attempted to mobilize group members to improve the position of their ethnic group in the host culture.

On the group level it was observed that a small nucleus of elites assumed leadership positions among the Vietnamese in Oklahoma City. The same group of leaders were mainly responsible for the development of the Vietnamese American Association (VAA), the Vietnamese Buddhist Association, the Vietnamese Catholic Association, and the Vietnamese Baptist Association. Through the programs of the VAA, other Vietnamese were able to study English, find jobs, and make advances in public sector areas of work and school.

Following government guidelines and utilizing federal funds the Vietnamese American Association formulated a strategy to mobilize the Vietnamese. Individual group members were encouraged to: get off welfare; go to work; study English and succeed in the public sector of American life. The impetus of the VAA to affect successful Vietnamese adjustment was not only limited to Oklahoma City. Through continued assistance from the Office of Refugee Resettlement, the VAA was able to spread its influence and facilitated the development of other Vietnamese organizations and

programs throughout Oklahoma, Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas, and New Mexico. The Office of Refugee Resettlement also utilized VAA leaders from Oklahoma City to advise other ethnic group members in the settlement of disputes between Vietnamese and Americans. In these emergency situations the role of the Vietnamese American Association more closely resembled that of negotiator for the Vietnamese in the region.

Conclusion

From the beginning, Vietnamese have been brought to the United States through government agencies and have been assisted by other American institutions. The initial involvements in 1975 were less organized and only provided for the short range emergency needs of the Vietnamese. The subsequent immigration of large numbers of Vietnamese beginning in 1978 and continuing through 1981 precipitated the development of the Indochinese Refugee Assistance Program of 1978 and the Refugee Resettlement Act of 1980. These two legislative acts formalized the government programs for Vietnamese to change toward American culture. The host government has provided cash assistance to individual Vietnamese and has made funds available for projects of Vietnamese development.

The Office of Refugee Resettlement presently has the responsibility of administering programs for Vietnamese and others admitted to the United States as refugees. Although services for refugees are well organized, many new

Vietnamese arrivals now come through the Orderly Departure Program which usually requires that family members in the U.S. provide for all the needs of their immigrant relatives. Within this context of changing governmental policies individual Vietnamese have left their homeland, entered the United States and undergone some changes. Vietnamese were observed to want to improve English language skills and employment positions but to prefer to maintain traditional ideas of home life. Changes in behaviors which related to economic advancement were more readily accepted while changes in values and traditional roles were resisted.

Some Vietnamese informants characterized their existence in America as a dual experience and identified with the public and private distinction of their daily lives. The public and private approach has proven to be an effective means for organizing data and analyzing complex individual change. However, it was also observed that lines separating the public and private sectors were not always clearly defined and that public sector activities influenced life in the private sector. The opportunity to observe individual Vietnamese adjustments through the years has shown that involvements with the public sector increased through time and these changes had the potential to affect additional changes in the private sector. After arrival individuals commonly studied English, improved employment, learned to drive a car, and made accomplishments in the

economic area of the host society. These public sector changes were cumulative in effect and were perceived to be the beginnings of continued changes. This study has identified some changes which were experienced by Vietnamese during their first years of life in America. Further monitoring of the areas of Vietnamese life which were examined in this study would result in the documentation of the rate of additional changes and promote increased understanding of the relationship between public sector activities and continued changes in Vietnamese family life.

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APPENDIX

Sample Questions Initially Employed of Vietnamese
Persons in Oklahoma City.

(Part One)

1. Birthdate
 Mo. Day Year
2. Birthplace in Vietnam _____.
3. How many people live in your household?

 Sex (M,F) Age Relationship Occupation
a)
b)
c)
d)
e)
f)
g)
h)
4. What was your age when you arrived in the United States?
5. When and where did you arrive in the United States?

6. How did you come to the United States? (Escape Account,
camps, etc.)
7. Who and where was your sponsor?
8. Why did you leave Vietnam and come to the U.S.?
9. Did you talk to other people in Vietnam about your deci-
sion to leave? Who?
10. Who did you live with in Vietnam in your household?
11. Did you leave relatives in Vietnam? Who?

12. Did you plan to stay permanently in the U.S.?
13. How did you find life during your first year here?
14. What was your greatest difficulty in settling down in the United States?
15. What do you think are the main differences between the American way of life and the Vietnamese way of life?
16. Do you think you have a Vietnamese or an American way of life now?
17. Are you a naturalized U.S. citizen?
18. Will you become naturalized?
19. Do you think that becoming naturalized is just a legal formality or does it mean changing your loyalty?
20. What do you think is the attitude of the Americans toward the Vietnamese?
21. Do you think that the U.S. is a land of opportunity?

WORK

22. What kind of work did you do in Vietnam? (jobs)
23. What kind of work did your spouse do in Vietnam?
24. What was your first job in the U.S.?
25. What was your spouse's first job in the U.S.?
26. How did you find your first job in the U.S.?
27. How did your spouse find their first job in the U.S.?
28. Were you (or your spouse) trained for that job?
Spouse _____
29. Were most of your fellow workers Vietnamese or American?
Spouse _____
30. Do you prefer to work with Vietnamese or Americans?
31. Was the pay good on your first job? Spouse _____

32. How long did you work there on your first job?

Your spouse? _____

33. And then where did you and your spouse work?

JOB	PAY	TRAINING	HOW FOUND	WHY LEFT	TIME THERE
(YOU) A					
(YOUR SPOUSE)					
(YOU) B					
(SPOUSE)					
(YOU) C					
(SPOUSE)					
(YOU) D					
(SPOUSE)					

34. Are you satisfied with your present job? With the pay?

35. If you had a choice would you stay in this job or would you change?

36. Do you have any long range plans for the future? Explain.

37. Have you taken any special job training here? What?

38. Do you plan to or expect to take job training?

39. In your opinion, what is a successful man?

RESIDENCE

40. Where did you live when you first arrived in the U.S.?

41. With whom?

42. Where did you go then? How long? Why did you move?

List Residence Place How found With whom Time Why changed

A.

B.

C.

43. Do you own your house? (If yes answer #44, 45, 46 and go to #52; if no go to question #47, 48, etc.).

44. (If Yes) When did you come here?

45. (If Yes) Why did you buy in this part of Oklahoma City?

46. (If Yes) How did you finance the purchase of your house?

Did friends or relatives help you? _____

47. (If No) When did you rent this house?

48. (If No) Why did you rent in this part of the city?

49. (If No) Are you planning to buy a house?

50. If you are planning to buy a house how will you finance your house?

51. What kind of house do you want?

52. Are there other Vietnamese around here? On this block?
In this neighborhood?

53. Do you think it is important to be near other Vietnamese?

54. Are any of your relatives living nearby?

55. Are you planning to stay in the same area of Oklahoma City?
In what part of Oklahoma City would you prefer to live?

56. Do you think it is important to live near relatives?

57. Have you lived with relatives?

58. Do you think it is important to live near Vietnamese?

LANGUAGE

59. What languages do you speak?
60. What language is used at home?
61. Did you know any English before coming here? (THE U.S.)
If yes, where and for how many years did you study English?
 where years
62. Have you studied English in the U.S.?
If yes, where and for how long did you study English?
 where months
63. Do you plan to study English?
64. How have you learned to speak English?
65. Do you think it is important to know how to speak the language of the country?
66. Would you like to speak English better? Why?
(Circle one)
Do you speak English: Very well; Well; Average;
 Below average
67. Would you like to speak Vietnamese better? Why?
68. What languages do your children speak?
69. What language do your children speak at home?
70. Do you prefer that your children speak English or Vietnamese?

FOOD AND MEDICINE

71. What type of food do you eat at home?
What type of food do you eat at work? Your spouse?
72. Has your food or style of eating changed since coming here?
If yes, explain how.
73. What kind of food do your children prefer?

74. Do you ever go out to restaurants?

If yes, what kind?

EDUCATION

75. How many years did you attend school in Vietnam?

Public School _____

College _____

76. How many years did your spouse attend school in Vietnam?

Public School _____

College _____

77. Why did you stop school in Vietnam?

78. Have you or your spouse attended school in the U.S.?
(If yes, what schools)

you

your spouse

79. What school do your children attend?

80. Do your children like school?

81. What do you want your children to do when they finish school?

82. Do you think it is important in the U.S. for a person to go on in school?

83. Is this true for both boys and girls?

84. Have any of your relatives been to the university?
(If yes, who)

ASSOCIATIONS

85. What church do you attend?

86. What church did you attend in Vietnam?

87. At your church do you attend any social gatherings there other than religious services?

88. Do you belong to any Vietnamese associations or clubs?
If yes, please list them.

Does you spouse belong to any Vietnamese associations
or clubs?
If yes, please list them.

89. Do you or your spouse belong to any American associations or clubs?
If yes, please list them.

90. Is there any organization for parents at your children's school?

91. Do your children belong to any American or Vietnamese organizations?
If yes, please list them.

SOCIAL

92. What do you usually do for entertainment in Oklahoma City? With whom?

93. What type of movies do you like? (Names of movies)

94. What type of television shows do you like? (Names of TV shows)

95. What type of sports do you like?

96. What type of dancing do you like?

97. What type of music do you like?

98. What type of TV shows do your children like? (Names of TV shows)

99. What type of music do your children like? (Names of music)

100. What newspapers and magazines do you read?

Your spouse?

101. Where do you go on your vacation and with whom?

102. Do you ever go out with American friends from work?

103. Do you ever go out with Vietnamese friends from work?

104. What about holidays? What do you do on Christmas?

- 105. What do you do on New Years, January 1?
- 106. What do you do on Tet?
- 107. Are the holidays (religious) here as they were in Vietnam?

If they are different please explain how they are different.
- 108. If you were to win a lot of money in a lottery, say \$100,000.00 what would you do with the money?

(Part Two)

1. Who would you say is your best friend?
2. Are most of your friends Vietnamese or Americans or others?
3. Can an American friend be as intimate as a Vietnamese friend?
4. Do your children have more American or Vietnamese friends?
5. Can you trust a friend as much as a relative?
6. How did you meet your spouse? Did you go out alone together (dates)?
7. How did you become engaged? Explain procedure.
8. Who else had to be consulted?
9. Have your children followed the same procedure? Explain.
10. Do you think that the parents and relatives must approve or disapprove of the marriage?
11. What would happen to a young person who went against their parent's wishes concerning their marriage?
12. Do you know of any such cases? Explain.
13. Would you prefer your children to marry Vietnamese, American or other? Of the same religion?
14. Where do the married children live? (With the son's parents or in another house)?
15. Is your daughter considered only part of the husband's family after marriage?
16. If your son wanted a divorce what would you think?
17. If your daughter wanted a divorce, what would you think?
18. For this family do you think it is as united here as in Vietnam?
19. Would you say that you spend more or less time with your family in the U.S. than you would have done in Vietnam?

20. In your house who does? In Vietnam who did these?
- a. cooking
 - b. washing dishes
 - c. caring for the yard
 - d. the shopping
 - e. makes tea or coffee
 - f. gets up at night when the child cries out
21. Do you ever do any of these? If yes, what?
22. In your family:
- a. Who chose this house?
 - b. Who picked out the furniture?
 - c. Who picked out the cars and how many do you have?
 - d. Who buys the clothing?
23. Who decides about the children's schools?
24. Who keeps the most in contact with relatives? Here?
In Vietnam?
25. Who takes care of the money coming into the house?
Does the business?
26. Do you have a checking account?
- In whose name?
- A savings account? Whose name?
27. Who does the budgeting for the family?
28. Who pays the rent, bills, or makes payments?
29. Do your children give their paychecks to the family or
keep it themselves?
30. Who commands inside the house? (If husband, then the
wife has no authority?)
- (If both, does that mean their authority is equal for
all things?)
31. Do you think women have more freedom in the U.S.?
32. Is this freedom a good thing for the women or the
family? Why?
33. If a woman has independence and the ability to work
while her husband stays home (unemployed/laid off/
other) does that mean her husband is weaker than she?

34. Are you glad your children are growing up in America?
35. Do children respect and obey their parents more or less here in the U.S.? How?
36. To what age must children obey their parents?
37. Should children listen to their parents in everything or is it good for them to make decisions on their own?
38. Do (did) your children always have to obey you and your wife about:
 - a. if they can go out;
 - b. what time they should be home; girl boy
 - c. who their friends are;
 - d. how far they will go in school;
 - e. what job they will take?
39. Do you allow your children to stay up at night? What time?
40. When you and your spouse go out to a party or visiting do the children always come with you?
41. Would you say that your children have their own lives independent of the family?
42. Do you think children should be trained to be independent or is it better for them to refer all their problems to the family?
43. Do you think you are closer to your children than your parents were with you? How?
44. Do your children receive a weekly allowance?
45. Do your children work? Where?
46. Do you think working children should give all their pay to the parents?

(If yes) American children keep their own money. Have you ever thought about changing your mind about this?

(If no) Most Vietnamese families do this. Have you changed your mind about this since you came to the U.S.?

47. Do you allow your daughter to go out:
 - a. during the day with other girls;
 - b. during the night with other girls;
 - c. to a party, or movie etc. with boys and girls;
 - d. with a boy (on a date)?
48. Would you let your daughter go away from OKC to study at college if that was the only opening?
49. Is there anyone who most people go to when they want advice (in the family)?
50. Who do you go to when you need advice?
51. Who do you go to when you want to borrow money?
52. Have you ever tried to borrow money from a relative? A friend?
53. Do you ever send packages to Vietnam? To whom?
54. Do relatives help each other as much as they should?
55. Do relatives change when they come to the U.S.? If yes, how?
56. Are relatives as united here as in Vietnam?
57. If a young person does something shameful, such as a boy stealing a car and going to jail, or a girl goes to live with a man, is the whole family shamed or dishonored?
58. Are all family members responsible?
59. Suppose a sister or brother is well established here in the U.S., and other family or relatives are struggling, must they help their poorer relatives?
60. If a man (woman) lost everything in a fire and he needs help to start again would it be best if he:
 - a. depended on his relatives to help him as much as they could; or
 - b. tried to raise money on his own without depending on anybody?