



Research Article

Vietnamese cultural identity view from the cultural adaption and integration of the Vietnamese community in Australia

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ABSTRACT

The cultural identity of a community is always formed and developed in association with the historical context and residence space of that community. Over half a century, Vietnamese people in Australia have created a unique identity of the community on the basis of four dimensions, which are origin, economic background, education level, and direct political experience. continue to migrate. On the basis of secondary data analysis method, interdisciplinary approach to research works on cultural identity and Vietnamese community in Australia of authors Bui Huy Khoat, Nguyen Van Tiep, Ho Bao Uyen, Tran Thanh Giang, Danny Ben-Moshe, the article focuses on analyzing the community and cultural flexibility of the Vietnamese community in Australia based on the results of interpreting the network of resident cultural structures - culinary culture - educational culture.

Keywords: *Identity; Vietnamese People in Australia; Vietnamese*

1. INTRODUCTION

According to (Liu, 2017), Ethnicity differs from race in that the former is based on cultural characteristics and the latter is based on biological characteristics. The point is that membership in an ethnic or cultural group doesn't always translate to identity. Skin color does not automatically guarantee cultural identity. For some people, ethnicity, culture and national identity are all the same. For others, national and ethnic identities may be separate. Second generation migrants would be one such example. Tension can exist between a person's ethnic background characteristics and their sense of ethnicity and the values they hold dear. Many scholars agree that cultural identity is more subjective than objective; The complexity of identifying two cultures lies in the dynamic nature of identity. When an individual is exposed to a multicultural environment, it is likely that the individual will develop a multicultural identity because the context requires the person to function as a multicultural individual. However, this does not necessarily mean that everyone in a multicultural environment will develop a multicultural identity since cultural identity has components of value and resilience. The value component refers to the criteria people use to judge appropriate or inappropriate behavior; Respect for cultural identity refers to the power of identification with a cultural group. A sense of belonging indicates the resilience



of cultural identity. Thus, people can come into contact with many cultures but still function as culturally independent individuals. This argument is supported by acculturation-oriented models: identifying with both home and host cultures while others adopt non-cultural assimilation, separation, or identification. homeland as well as host culture (Berry, 1997).

Australia or Vietnam not only does not pose a challenge to the interests of security and development stability in Southeast Asia, but also contributes to tightening the model relationship of cooperation between the two countries, increasing stability. development cooperation in the region. Therefore, strengthening development cooperation on the basis of equality, mutual respect and mutual benefit will still be the main development trend of the relationship between Vietnam and Australia (Giang, 2021). In which, Australia's multicultural society not only contributes to promoting people-to-people relations between the community of about 300,000 Australians of Vietnamese descent and the society of more than 90 million people in Vietnam, which is increasingly close. also contribute to shaping to a certain extent the identity of immigrants of Vietnamese origin. Economic - political - social activities between the two countries also contribute to strengthening trust, maintaining and improving the quality of economic - education - science and technology cooperation programs (Sang, 2022). In addition, the culture of the Vietnamese people in Australia in particular and the Vietnamese community in Australia in general is a relatively popular topic that is of particular interest to Australian and Vietnamese scholars, who conduct cross-sectional research. throughout the period from 1975 to present. Although the reunification of the Vietnamese people has passed nearly half a century, the ethnic and cultural development policies of Vietnam and Australia have not completely abolished the existence of the Yellow Flag of the Republic of Vietnam. as well as social conflicts between the first generation Vietnamese in Australia and the Vietnamese community in Australia today. More and more Vietnamese students choose Australia as an ideal destination to study and live for a long time. It is a fact that many researchers only focus on the formation and adaptation of the original Vietnamese diaspora in Australia, or the development of the current Vietnamese community in Australia. Therefore, there is almost no research on the origins of the decline in the existence of the Yellow Flag, as well as the social conflicts between the early and current Vietnamese diaspora in Australia. In order to study the origin of this phenomenon from the perspective of the corollary of cultural identity, this article focuses on secondary data analysis of discourses, resident cultural life – culinary culture and educational culture of two groups of Vietnamese in Australia who immigrated to Australia before and after Doi Moi.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

To Duy Hop defines a community as a group of people that has their own values, norms, relations, roles and is organised as a collective group where people own and obey to shared regulars. This implies that to consider as a community, their own shared values, norms, regulars, that everyone accept and practice, is necessary. Thus, the members' values, norms, and regulars must be preserved when they maintain and develop their community. Furthermore, according to To Duy Hop, a community is structured by the complex of four

factors, including residential area, occupation, ethnic/nation, and ethnical/national psychology/personality. It can be explained that the community of Vietnamese refugees who migrated to Australia in the period of April 30, 1975 - 1990s has their own residential area, occupation, and psychology different from the Vietnamese overseas students and professionals who migrated to Australia after 1990s respectively. On the other hand, MSJ Keys Young Planners Pty Ltd, Bui Huy Khoat, and Le Thi Khanh Ha explained the success of cultural adaption and integration of Vietnamese refugees' children on the basis of family education as a socio-cultural capital. In the context of social and ideological conflicts between Vietnamese refugees and Vietnamese overseas students and professionals in Australia, the works of MSJ Keys Young Planners Pty Ltd, Bui Huy Khoat, and Le Thi Khanh Ha imply that the children who already have family members in Australia according to the Family Union visas, although do not influenced by the experience within the war, still perhaps have negative sense toward the current Vietnamese government because of their family education. Meanwhile, the crucial viewpoint of Hawthorne, Hugo is that the cultural adaption and integration of Vietnamese diasporas in Australia not only be influenced by family education but also affected by the cultural and ethnical policies of both the Australian and Vietnamese governments. They describe the cultural adaption and integration of Vietnamese diasporas as a two-way process. On the one hand, the children of the early Vietnamese refugees are affected by their family education which aim at maturing the hatred to the current Vietnam government and maturing the motivation to reach the new height in their social status, to become the members of multicultural middle-class (MMC) in Australia. On the other hand, they also are affected by the communication to Vietnamese Television's shows, and the current Vietnamese overseas students and professionals as well. It is clear that these two-way communication, which improves the experience on the contemporary Vietnam, is affected mostly by the cultural and ethnical policies of both Vietnamese and Australian government. It gives more opportunities to reducing the gap, and conflicts between the children of the early Vietnamese refugees and the current Vietnamese overseas students and professionals in Australia. In the context of Vietnamese diasporas in Australia, Tran Thi Thanh Giang, Gardner, Coughlan imply that, according to the habitus theory of Bourdieu, each group of people has its own characteristics depending on their age, their gender, their qualifications, and their homeland culture. Thus, there is no longer the cultural adaption and integration of Vietnamese diasporas in the whole world, there are only the cultural adaption and integration of the communities of Vietnamese refugees, Vietnamese refugees' children, Vietnamese overseas students and professionals. However, their argument is not enough. Although the cultural adaption and integration of Vietnamese diasporas in Australia has been studied for a four-decade time, a few studies focus on the cultural adaption and integration of the current Vietnamese overseas students and professionals in Australia in relation to the early Vietnamese refugees and their children. Most studies only included the research on Vietnamese refugees or Vietnamese overseas students and professionals. Nevertheless, only one side of the coin was investigated since the cultural adaption and integration of Vietnamese overseas students and professionals in relation to Vietnamese refugees' children were not included in their studies. This article look forward to providing a unique contribution to the literature regarding the phenomenon. It embraces the

cultural integration of Vietnamese overseas students and professionals in relation to Vietnamese refugees and their children, whereby their adaptation and integration as well as that of Vietnamese overseas students and professionals and Vietnamese refugees are studied. Last but not least, this article hopes to providing a unique viewpoint from not only previous studies but also the data was collected from the Vietnamese overseas students and professionals.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION CONCLUSION

3.1. OVERVIEW OF THE VIETNAMESE COMMUNITY IN AUSTRALIA

A community is a group of people with specific values, norms, relationships, and roles, organized into a social structure where groups of people in which they interact with each other, gather together and share common rules of social behavior among members of the community. It is that social basis that is an important premise for social links in the community to be strengthened and creates the collective strength of the community. In addition to community solidarity, the community also has other constitutive components, which are the domain (consciousness of the domain), economy (occupation), ethnic group, religion - belief, value system. culture, typical values and standards of psychology - morality. (To Duy Hop; Luong Hong Quang, 2000, pp. 26-32) Before 1975, only a small group of Vietnamese were officially recorded living in Australia, they were the wives of diplomatic officials, military advisers who fought in Vietnam in the late 60s and early 70s of the 20th century. After completing their missions, these officers returned to their homeland and brought their families with their wives and children. settled in Australia. At the same time, there was also a small group of Vietnamese who came to Australia by accident and were not officially recorded. It was a French ship carrying 38 Vietnamese planters that was washed ashore by a storm in Townville, Queensland in 1920 (The, 1999, page 17).

Besides, there is also a small number of Vietnamese international students who come to Australia to study and research, and after graduation they find a way to build a career and family in this rich land. Thus, in the first stage, although there were many reasons why Vietnamese people were present in this land, it was still not considered the cause of Vietnamese migration. Because it is not general, characteristic of a community, but mainly due to the circumstances or unintentional of a group of people. Besides the reason of looking for a more prosperous life, the reason to find a peaceful land as a place to settle down is one of the dreams of immigrants. The reality has also proven that politics is a factor that has a large influence on migration and immigration in countries, after every war, change of government, regime, or there is instability or national political upheaval. immigration is more common. The profound political changes in Vietnam in 1975, the flow of immigrants from Vietnam to Australia was very large and this is considered as a milestone marking the real presence of the Vietnamese in the land of kangaroos. The events of April 30, 1975, when the Saigon government was completely overthrown, the people of the US-Wei regime were confused and afraid under the new regime. Moreover, at that time, the country faced severe economic difficulties and social turmoil, so many people had to leave their homeland to bury their umbilical cords and move to a foreign

country to find a new life. The arduous journey began, the exodus of the Vietnamese to mainly the US, Canada, Australia, they found every possible way to go abroad to escape life under the new anxiety-ridden regime. The main means of transportation during this period of the migrants were boats, they were called boat people. But in the years 1975-1976, the Labor Government led by Prime Minister Whitlam issued a law restricting Vietnamese people to Australia. They only accept families of Vietnamese alumni in Australia, Vietnamese staff working with the Saigon embassy, the rest of the members absolutely cannot emigrate to Australia. So at this time there were a lot of people drifting and living in refugee camps in Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines. Others traveled by land through Cambodia and took refuge in Thailand, others went through China to Macao or Hong Kong. Therefore, about 80% of Vietnamese born in Australia are of refugee origin. In about 15 years from 1975-1990, the Vietnamese community has grown to over 150,000 people (The, 1999, page 33). Two decades after the reunification of Vietnam, the Vietnamese population in Australia increased rapidly, due to the high number of Vietnamese immigrants and their subsequent natural increase. These immigrants came in two main overlapping waves. The first was in the late 1970s and early 1980s, with the arrival of selected people in the Australian Government's Humanitarian Migration and Refugee Program from Southeast Asian refugee camps, and the second in the late 1980s and early 1990s, largely under the Family Reunion category of the Immigrant Program. Vietnamese people immigrated massively to Australia starting in 1975 and by 1981, 41,000 people of Vietnamese origin had settled in Australia. As a result, the Vietnamese community in Australia grew from a small number of people to more than 162,207 first and second generation members by 1993. When assessing the impact of immigration to Vietnam, the focus of the study was. tend to be their adjustment to life in Australia and it is often overlooked that such immigrants do not sever ties with their home countries, establishing networks through which flows are worthwhile. There is an association between Australia and their former homeland (Flasherty, 1996, p. 2).

By 2000, Vietnam had become the fourth country in the world in terms of immigration rates to Australia. Despite its relatively short history, the Vietnamese community is recognized by friends around the world as a young but very active, positive community and has gone through hardships to achieve excellent results. . This is also one of the outstanding successes of Australian society when implementing the multicultural policy. It is worth noting that many Vietnamese immigrants to Australia come from the South of Vietnam. As a result, their ideology tends to be more liberal and individualistic. They may hold negative views towards the Communist Party and State of Vietnam and have particular insights into the brutality of the War against America (Uyen, 2014, pp. 33-34; Tiep, 1999, pp. 72).

With such a long time, the development of the Vietnamese community in Australia is a topic that has been extensively researched under many different angles, from the works of Australian scholars such as (Ltd, 1980; Hawthorne, 1982; Gardner, 1988; Coughlan, 1989; Hugo, 1990; Flasherty, 1996; Carruthers, 2008; Ben-Moshe, 2012) to the works of Vietnamese scholars such as (Van, 1981; Van, 1991; The, 1999; Tiep, 1999; Thao, 2003; Uyen, 2014; Giang T. T., 2018; Giang T. T., 2019). Thereby, it can be seen that the basic characteristics of the Vietnamese community in Australia are:

Firstly, it is a densely populated community associated with famous Vietnamese settlements including Footscray, Springvale, Sunshine, North Richmond in Melbourne, Cabramatta, Bankstown in Sydney. In particular, each zone is often associated with a Vietnamese community with the same origin and hometown in a certain cultural region in Vietnam. For example, Springvale area has a concentration of Ben Tre people, Ba Ria Vung Tau area, North Richmond area has a concentration of Hue people (Jiang T. T., 2019, page 685).

Third, familism is linked to almost every aspect of the study of the Vietnamese community in Australia, from the role of community cohesion, maintenance of homeland culture, preservation of languages and traditions. other, preserving community memories, especially war memories among the first generation Vietnamese who settled in, to the role of improving the social position of the Vietnamese in Australia through educational measures, study and invest in the second and third generations of Vietnamese to settle in Australia. The domination of familism is closely associated with the migration context of Vietnamese in Australia, most of whom migrate as family reunification or the whole extended family migrates as boat-people. When they come to Australia, they have the need to settle down, live together, and live together for a long time to support each other and stabilize their livelihoods. Therefore, although there are no traditional symbols such as bamboo ramparts, village gates, wharfs, communal houses, each residential area of Vietnamese people in Australia can also be considered as a village gathering large families with the same surname, from the same hometown, migrated together. Familyism is also seen as a product of the process of adaptation and cultural integration of the Vietnamese (who are more attached to communityism) in Australia (which are more attached to individualism). At the same time, it is familism that becomes a catalyst to help the process of adaptation and cultural integration of Vietnamese people in Australia become easier and more favorable without causing unnecessary disturbances, conflicts and disputes between the Vietnamese and the Anglo-Saxon communities in Australia, as well as between the first generation of Vietnamese and the second and third generations of Vietnamese who settled in Australia (Giang T. T., 2018; Giang T. T., 2019).

In general, most of the above characteristics are only true in the context of each Vietnamese community group in Australia. In fact, neither multiculturalism nor familism can completely erase the conflict and difference between the first generation of Vietnamese who immigrated to Australia in the early period after 1975 and the Vietnamese who migrated to Australia in the post-Doi Moi period.

3.2. THE VIETNAMESE COMMUNITY IN AUSTRALIA AND VIETNAMESE CULTURAL IDENTITY FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF CULTURAL ADAPTATION AND INTEGRATION

The most prominent feature in densely populated areas of Vietnam are Vietnamese commercial centers, including markets, shops, and service offices of Vietnamese people. There, almost nothing is missing. Pho, Hue Beef Noodles, Quang noodles, from bottles of fish sauce, seasoning to salted eggplant, pickles, duck seeds, durian, jackfruit, basil, cinnamon, mango, guava, etc. People from Vietnam come to praise the goods in those

markets are richer and more diverse than those in Vietnam. Vietnamese people also show community and flexibility in the process of spreading and promoting traditional Vietnamese cuisine in Australia. should be beautiful and solemn, simple but beautiful, especially in terms of style and color according to the concept of white Anglo-Saxon people (Anh, 2009). In terms of resident culture, the community is also reflected in the tradition of living in the suburbs of the city, often focusing on upholding the spirit of solidarity, mutual affection, and the tradition of living together in the hometown. can be considered as a product mark of the cultural traditions of Vietnamese villages, which are preserved by the class of Vietnamese immigrants, and at the same time, it is also one of the effective ways for the community to commit to community. suffering, sharing and helping each other, reducing costs and saving a lot of spending (Nguyen, 2014, page 48). In such a concentrated living situation, many people, especially the elderly and women who work from home, do not need English at all. Almost every service has Vietnamese speakers. Therefore, after living in Australia, English is not only not developed, but also worse than when they first came to Australia. In return, the Vietnamese in Australia are considered to be the best mother tongue protection community in Australia. The second generation, who were born and raised in Australia, still speak Vietnamese at home. Therefore, although there are only 159,850 people born in Vietnam, the number of people who speak Vietnamese at home in Australia is quite high: 194,855 people (Ben-Moshe, 2012).

Vietnamese-Australian adults in the current study tend to use Vietnamese (more than English) with Vietnamese-speaking mothers, fathers, siblings, grandparents, relatives in Vietnam, and Vietnamese friends. However, they use both English and Vietnamese with English-speaking partners, children, siblings and grandparents. They use English and Vietnamese equally on social media, but they often speak English more when working, studying and watching TV, which is not surprising since English is the only official language of Australia. The most important reasons to maintain the Vietnamese language are: maintaining the connection with relatives and maintaining the cultural identity of Vietnam. Language maintenance practices include conversations in Vietnamese and personal activities that require access to Vietnamese books, magazines, news, movies, radio, and music. Competent multilingual speakers often have stronger community ties, a greater understanding of cultural values and practices, and act as cultural mediators between family communities. themselves and the wider society (Nguyen, 2020).

Multilingualism enhances social cohesion by reinforcing cultural identity, facilitating resilience, self-esteem, and belonging. Participants indicated that family and community networks play an important role in supporting multilingualism and maintaining home languages, corroborating previous research. The availability of resources (e.g. books, movies) in the native language is also reported to facilitate the retention of the native language. Time and financial support for development and access to multilingual resources will promote the maintenance of home languages (Ben-Moshe, 2012).

The Vietnamese in Australia have overcome considerable difficulties and promote their dynamism in making a living, in contributing to jobs in their forte fields as well as in activities towards their homeland. country. They have played an important role in improving and developing the cooperation relationship between the two countries

Vietnam - Australia over the years. According to the Vietnamese tradition, the most glorious way to progress is the way of education, so parents always encourage their children to study. Vietnamese people in Australia also have a sense of protecting their families from harm. lost root. In this direction, there have been appropriate activities not only to ensure that their children do not forget their mother tongue, but also to contribute to the spread of Vietnamese language and culture in Australia, and to promote cultural exchanges between Vietnam and Vietnam. and Australia (The, 1999, page 23).

The flexibility of the Vietnamese in Australia in preserving traditional cultural values is also reflected in the regular maintenance of community activities, typically in religious institutions; organize activities on Lunar New Year and Mid-Autumn Festival; Teaching Vietnamese language and Vietnamese culture to children. In Australia, Vietnamese people often go to Catholic churches. Besides, the Vietnamese also built many different large and small temples in their cities of residence such as Melbourne, Sydney or Brisbane. Churches and pagodas are not only places for Vietnamese to perform religious ceremonies, but also to connect and maintain community activities. This is also the place to organize strong activities in the field of youth education such as Phat Tu Family, Vietnamese Language School, Vovinam martial arts classes and Vietnamese festivals in the area. Vietnamese classes here usually take place on weekends. The curriculum is divided into 12 levels from grade 1 to grade 12. Classroom teachers are teachers who used to teach or work in the education field in South Vietnam before 1975. Students attend this course. Here, most of the children of Vietnamese families living in Australia are sent to practice Vietnamese communication. Thus, it can be seen that, despite living and growing up in this country, the Vietnamese language is still quite strong in their lives (Ben-Moshe, 2016).

While refugee participants said the best way for children to uphold their values of harmony and solidarity is to unite with their relatives living in Australia, most skilled migrants have no relatives living in Australia. Their extended family members often live abroad. Nearly all come to Melbourne on their own to study. After graduation, they settled in Australia and got married. For this group, social media is used as an effective tool to communicate with the extended family in Vietnam. So they say they encourage their children to stay in close contact with their loved ones by using these means. For a variety of reasons, not all children maintain close relationships with their siblings. However, most consider maintaining closeness between siblings an important value in their family, even if they themselves cannot do so. The above results show that harmony and solidarity in terms of siblings harmony and mutual support are considered important values by most participating children from both refugee and skilled migrant families (Giang T. T., 2018).

4. CONCLUSION

Firstly, preserving cultural identity, especially community and flexibility in both classes of Vietnamese immigrants before and after Doi Moi is an inevitable rule in the process of cultural adaptation and integration. culture of an immigrant community like the Vietnamese community in Australia. Although communalism tries to distinguish between Vietnamese immigrants who migrated to Australia before Doi Moi and Vietnamese immigrants who migrated to Australia after Doi Moi, it is flexibility that helps to bridge the

other gap. distinguishing between two classes of Vietnamese immigrants, through the creative use of communication and mass media such as festivals (Mid-Autumn Festival, Lunar New Year, ...), religious activities – beliefs (Buddhist birthday, Christmas, ...), social networks (Viber, Instagram, ...).

Second, the process of adaptation and cultural integration of Vietnamese people in Australia is heavily influenced by their own political experience before migrating to Australia, their level of foreign language ability, specifically English, and their personal financial capacity. These are also key factors that determine their effectiveness, as well as the type of family education strategy they choose, their adaptation strategy and their cultural integration into Australia's multicultural society.

Third, the second and third generations of Vietnamese immigrant families who immigrated to Australia before Doi Moi tend to be more connected with Vietnam and with Vietnamese immigrants who immigrated to Australia after Doi Moi. , which three typical evidences are shown in the article, through the survey results of (Ben-Moshe, 2012) is the increase in participation in socio-political activities related to Vietnam, the increase increasing economic investment activities in the Vietnamese market, and increasing use of Vietnam-related media. The cause of this phenomenon is the flexibility and community in the culture of the Vietnamese people, along with the decline in political ideological conflicts with the current government in Vietnam due to the decline in the relationship between the Vietnamese and the Vietnamese people. experience with the wars in Vietnam in history, along with the increasingly attractive Vietnamese market, facilitated by the Australian government than ever before.

In general, although there is still a difference between the Vietnamese immigrants who migrated before Doi Moi and the Vietnamese immigrants who migrated after Doi Moi (for example, Vietnamese immigrants who migrated before Doi Moi have a rather negative experience). with Vietnam because of the war and economic difficulties, they are also mostly poor manual laborers who are not good at English, so they often encourage the type of strategic choice that is linked in areas and groups that settle in the countryside. Vietnamese immigrants who migrated after Doi Moi did not actively integrate into the Australian labor market and had little contact with Vietnam, while Vietnamese immigrants who migrated after Doi Moi did not have a negative experience because of the war in Vietnam. Most of them are intellectual workers, highly skilled and good at English, so they often actively integrate with the Vietnamese immigrant class who immigrated before Doi Moi, as well as encourage their children and grandchildren to maintain contact with the extended family. in Vietnam), but the overall Vietnamese community in Australia today has been actively nurturing the Vietnamese people's sense of preserving cultural identity, promoting activities to preserve and promote the community and flexibility of Vietnamese people while adapting and integrating into the natural and social environment in Australia such as Vietnamese language teaching and learning activities, summer retreats, etc. summer, community activities on the occasion of Lunar New Year, Mid-Autumn Festival.

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