The *Other* Ones: Inter-generational conflicts over non-conforming romantic relationships of the 1.5- and second-generation in Vietnamese diaspora in the Czech Republic

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Abstract:

To comprehend how varying levels of acculturation and diverse socio-cultural values generate different forms of otherness within the Vietnamese diaspora residing in the Czech Republic, this article examines two types of intergenerational conflicts: those related to inter-ethnic heterosexual relationships and those related to inter-ethnic same-sex relationships. Drawing on analytical data obtained through in-depth and semi-structured interviews with individuals from the first, 1.5, and second generations, the article posits that the majority of first-generation Vietnamese individuals in the Czech Republic strongly oppose the inter-ethnic heterosexual relationships of the 1.5 and second generations. Members of the first generation believe that such inter-ethnic relationships can disrupt the socio-cultural unity of the family and jeopardise their transnational family business networks. They also exhibit pronounced homophobic tendencies, perceiving homosexuality as a contagious illness, a curse, or a consequence of the parents' bad karma. Nevertheless, to conceal their children's homosexuality from the diaspora and the rest of the family in Vietnam, parents prefer same-sex inter-ethnic relationships over co-ethnic ones.

Keywords: inter-generational conflicts, LGBT+ community, romantic relationships, Vietnamese diaspora.

Classification numbers: 4.1, 4.2, 4.3

1. Introduction

"Oh no, I lost my girl forever" (Huong, female, age late 40s, restaurant owner, Olomouc).

This was the immediate reaction of a female owner of a luxury Vietnamese restaurant upon learning about her 21-year-old daughter's romantic relationship with a Czech boy. The mother urged her daughter to end the relationship and find a Vietnamese partner. However, the pressure only resulted in a prolonged conflict between them, while the daughter continued her romantic relationship. Her husband's reaction was even more direct. He could not fathom the idea of his daughter having intimate relationships and children with a Western man (*người Tây*). The thought of mixed-blood grandchildren was particularly displeasing to him (Dang, male, age late 40s, Olomouc).

At the same time, we interviewed a homosexual Vietnamese-Czech young man who had just come out to his mother, whose reaction was unexpectedly calm. Due to the boy's behaviour, the mother had suspected that her son might be homosexual. Surprisingly, she was prepared to accept her son's sexuality but requested that he not inform his father, who might need more time to come to terms with

the situation. She also advised her son to keep his sexual orientation hidden from the extended family in Vietnam and the community in the diaspora, explaining, "It may cause us a lot of trouble that we (the family) are not ready to face" (Tuan, age late 20s, artist, Prague).

The research indicates that intergenerational conflicts concerning inter-ethnic relationships are common in the diaspora. Parents usually fear that if their children marry a Czech partner, they might lose the ability to communicate with their children-in-law, grandchildren, and the groom's parents. Two additional concerns were also frequently reported. First, the belief that inter-ethnic relationships could jeopardise the participation of the 1.5- and second-generation in the family business, which is supposed to provide the parents with a certain degree of socio-economic security during their old age. Second, the desire to preserve ancestral rituals and ensure the continuation of the patrilineal family line. However, the research revealed that these concerns do not fully explain the complexity of intergenerational conflicts over inter-ethnic and same-sex relationships within the Vietnamese diaspora.

Looking at the existing literature, we see that conflicts within the Vietnamese diaspora have been extensively studied. K.T. Dinh, et al. (1994) [1] show that conflicts in

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migrant families result from generational gaps, different levels of integration, and acculturation among the generations [2, 3], which are often exacerbated by differing visions of the individual's role within the family or kinship network [4]. These issues have been identified among the Vietnamese diaspora living in the U.S [5-10]. However, they appear to be even more pronounced in Australia, Canada, and Poland, where the bicultural identity of the second generation leads to intra- or inter-generational conflicts [11-13]. In the Czech Republic, the various adaptation strategies, work and living conditions, and specific ethnic economy in the diaspora lead to a range of integration problems and feelings of temporality among first-generation Vietnamese migrants, but they indicate very little about intergenerational conflicts [14-22]. Another set of studies revealed that the majority of Vietnamese families in the Czech Republic sent their children to Czech nannies. As a result, the 1.5 and second generations in the Vietnamese diaspora internalised Czech socio-cultural values, leading to different cultural orientations across generations within the diaspora [23, 24]. In this context, language and cultural barriers, combined with the parenting style of the first-generation Vietnamese, contribute to distance and potential conflicts between the 1.5- or second-generation Vietnamese in the Czech Republic [25]. The main intergenerational conflicts seem to be over the education of the 1.5- and second-generation, their romantic or marital relationships, and inter-cultural skills [26]. The underlying reason for these conflicts is ensuring the socio-economic security of family members, both in the country of origin and in the country of destination [27].

However, our data indicate strong homophobic tendencies among respondents from the first-generation Vietnamese community in the Czech Republic. Twenty-one out of thirty respondents consider homosexuality to be a curse, bad karma, or a contagious (but curable) illness. For parents, having a child in a same-sex relationship is a source of shame in the diaspora or back home in Vietnam. They often push their children towards treatments intended to reverse their sexual orientation and try to persuade them to have a family and offspring, regardless of the child's sexual orientation. As such, we expect that these intergenerational conflicts over same-sex relationships and the rejection of LGBT+ children might be much stronger and more emotionally charged than conflicts over heterosexual inter-ethnic relationships.

To better understand these conflicts and the various forms of otherness that produce them, we were inspired by the call of M. Lopatkova, et al. (2022) [25] to conduct "an in-depth study on Vietnamese parents' preferences concerning their children's marital partners". However, our research goes a step further by examining intergenerational conflicts over inter-ethnic heterosexual and same-sex relationships to elucidate the underlying reasons, reactions, and attitudes of parents toward their children's non-conforming relationships.

The article[1] argues that conflicts over non-conforming relationships (whether inter-ethnic or non-heterosexual) are - albeit with varying intensity - essentially about the survival of the diasporic family as a transnational institution providing its members with a certain degree of socio-economic security. Furthermore, it shows that the reasoning of first-generation individuals in opposing non-conforming relationships is based not only on the socio-economic needs of family members but also on traditional cultural values, religious beliefs, and superstitions. In this sense, the intergenerational conflicts over the romantic relationships of the 1.5- and second-generation Vietnamese in the Czech Republic can be seen as a negotiation of new diasporic socio-cultural norms distinct from those in both the host society and the country of origin. Nevertheless, there are some differences: while both types of non-conforming relationships are problematic from a socio-economic and cultural point of view, in the case of LGBT+ children, the religious aspect seems to be more prominent. Additionally, to hide their children's same-sex relationships from other members of the diaspora or to avoid the problematisation of these relationships, parents actually prefer inter-ethnic romantic partners for their LGBT+ children.

2. Theoretical framework

At a theoretical level, the article delves into a discussion focused on the concept of the outlawed wolf-man as reinterpreted by P. Horton, et al. (2019) [28]. In their reinterpretation, the outlawed wolf-man is portrayed as a "paradigmatic embodiment of possibilities for change and multiple becomings" [29], challenging centralised socio-cultural norms within the family and society at large [28]. This article employs a mixed-methods approach to demonstrate how socio-cultural norms can influence the recognition of LGBT+ children by their diasporic families. It argues that the paradigmatic embodiment of the wolf-man skilfully utilises Vietnamese traditional socio-cultural norms to negotiate recognition by family and society.

This article compares homosexual and heterosexual individuals living in inter- and intra-ethnic relationships. In this context, we clarify the core terminology employed in our final analysis. Homosexual individuals are defined here as those who experience enduring romantic, emotional, or sexual attraction to people of the same sex. However, the authors adopt an anthropological understanding of the term - not solely as a universal social category that has historically been subject to pathologisation or criminalisation [30], but also as a dynamic identity shaped by historical, cultural, and political contexts [31, 32]. Heterosexual individuals are understood as those who experience enduring attraction toward individuals of the opposite

sex. The authors recognise that, within dominant biomedical and psychological discourses, heterosexuality is often constructed as the normative or default sexual orientation [33].

At the same time, the inter-ethnic relationships are defined as romantic or sexual partnerships between individuals of different ethnic backgrounds - in this study, primarily between Czechs (or more broadly Europeans) and Vietnamese. These relationships may reflect broader social dynamics, including assimilation processes, cultural boundary negotiation, and racialised power structures [34]. Intra-ethnic relationships, by contrast, refer to partnerships between individuals who share the same ethnic background - here, Vietnamese. Such relationships often function as sites for the reproduction of cultural norms, kinship obligations, and ethnic identity, particularly within diasporic and migrant contexts [35].

The term "inter-ethnic same-sex relationships" is also employed, referring to intimate partnerships between individuals of different ethnic backgrounds who identify with same-sex desire or orientation. These relationships are frequently shaped by intersecting dynamics of race, gender, sexuality, and class, and often challenge both homonormative and ethnonormative structures [36]. In contrast, intra-ethnic same-sex relationships occur between individuals who share the same ethnic background and engage in same-sex intimacy. Compared to their inter-ethnic counterparts, these relationships are often shaped by culturally specific understandings of gender roles, family expectations, and the politics of visibility and respectability within their respective ethnic communities [37].

At the theoretical level, this article engages with the concept of LGBT+ and explicitly refers to individuals as LGBT+ children. We acknowledge that our analysis does not encompass the full spectrum of sexual orientations and gender identities typically included under the LGBT+ umbrella - that is, those identities that fall outside heterosexual and cisgender (i.e., assigned at birth) norms, such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender, or other sexual and gender minorities, including queer, intersex, asexual, non-binary individuals, and more [38].

Throughout discussion, the authors refer to those individuals whose identities, practices, or relationships challenge - or at least do not conform to - dominant binary conceptions of sex, gender, and sexuality that are themselves shaped by the socio-cultural environments of their surrounding societies [39, 40].

Key concepts used in this article include precarity, acculturation, and social location [41]. Existing research indicates that each diasporic generation experiences its own form of migrant precarity. To address this, diaspora members strive to improve their socio-economic status while gaining recognition from society, family, and fellow diaspora members [26, 27, 42]. In the diasporic context, various social agents, such as individuals, capital, and the state, create power relations that produce inequalities and allow political exclusion,

economic exploitation, and social subjection [43-45]. Central to these power relations are class, ethnicity, race, and, in some countries, caste, defined by socio-cultural and economic norms [46-48], slowly changed by the circulation of economic and symbolic capital [49, 50].

In enhancing the social location of migrants, the circulation of material and symbolic forms of Bourdieu's capital through remittances and social support within families is crucial [46, 51-53]. Social location results from presenting oneself within social networks - family and kin - with material support and symbols of success. The younger generation must not only provide material support but also demonstrate a successful life career. However, inter-ethnic and same-sex relationships often conflict with the traditional cultural norms upheld by the mainstream discourse within the Vietnamese diaspora, which is in the Czech Republic dominated by first-generation migrants [54]. Consequently, young diasporic individuals must negotiate relationships with parents who prefer co-ethnic heterosexual partnerships for their children [26, 27, 55]. In this process, LGBT+ representation on social media platforms connected to both Vietnam and the Vietnamese diaspora has played a significant role. These platforms offer spaces where young people express opinions shaped by the comparatively less traditional socio-cultural norms of Czech society, contributing to the reshaping of public consciousness and a reduction of stigma, particularly among youth [56, 25]. In this context, it is important to note that resisting heteronormativity and negotiating strong traditional family values becomes more feasible when social media discourse unfolds within a distinct socio-cultural setting - such as a country more tolerant of LGBT+ identities [57, 58]. However, adopting alternative socio-cultural norms creates intergenerational tensions and conflicts within diasporic families.

The article demonstrates that in diasporic contexts, socio-cultural normativity is not solely controlled by the broader society. Diaspora members transplant, transform, and establish socio-cultural norms from their country of origin, utilising them to challenge the host society's norms, slowly evolving through ongoing intra-diasporic discourse.

The first-generation Vietnamese individuals in our research are primarily those who arrived in the Czech Republic during the 1990s and 2000s. These individuals and their families have been significantly influenced by the exclusion of LGBT+ individuals from Vietnamese society during the 1990s, a response to the HIV epidemic and associated campaigns against homosexuality, prostitution, and drug addiction [59-61]. Isolated from changing social discourse in both their origin and destination countries, they slowly accept more LGBT+-friendly norms, displaying strong homophobic attitudes. They also strongly prefer co-ethnic marriages for their children, considered safe for transnational family cohesion. However, from the research, we see this attitude mixed with older perceptions of homosexuality coming from traditional Vietnamese society. In

pre-colonial Vietnam, homosexuality was broadly tolerated, as in any other Sinicised society. During that time, the main social virtue was filial piety, this concept ruled the children not only to care for their parents when needed, but above all to continue the paternal lineage of their families. Homosexual relationships belonged to socially defined relationships of friend to friend. In this domain, the child fulfilled all the others' social duties toward the family; he was free to do whatever he pleased [62]. Also, in our research, we can see that for the parents of LGBT+ children, the most important request is to fulfil filial duties, especially to produce the family offspring and financially support the other family members. The family will still accept these children despite their nonconforming sexual orientation.

In this sense, the article highlights how LGBT+ children use the host state's socio-cultural norms to lessen the impact of diasporic gender and sex-normative attitudes. While facing various forms of otherness, they remain tied to family power dynamics rooted in traditional Vietnamese ethics. To gain family acceptance of their sexuality, diasporic children employ strategies identified by S. Mathisen (2022) [63]: 1) keeping strategic silence to preserve family reputation; 2) renegotiating gender norms by refusing marriage; 3) excelling academically and pursuing successful careers to prove themselves as model citizens despite their queer identities; 4) invoking familial love and harmony to fight for recognition and acceptance.

In this way, the article illustrates that the outlawed wolf-man, portrayed as challenging centralised socio-cultural norms [28], actually uses Vietnamese traditional norms - especially filial piety - to prove himself as a socially valuable member of his family, seeking acceptance rather than challenging and changing those norms.

3. Methods

This study adopts an ethnographic approach, incorporating interviews with 78 members of the first-generation Vietnamese and their children, along with long-term participant observations conducted in five families over five years (2019-2023). The dataset was further enriched with interviews involving homosexual members of the 1.5- and second-generation Vietnamese Czechs, which were conducted between 2019 and 2024. For the final analysis, comparing two types of intergenerational conflicts: those concerning inter-ethnic heterosexual relationships and those concerning inter-ethnic same-sex relationships, we limited our analytical data to the in-depth and semi-structured interviews of 20 heterosexual and 18 homosexual members of the 1.5- and second-generation Vietnamese Czechs, 30 members of the first-generation Vietnamese living in Brno, Prague, and Olomouc for analysis.

The 1.5- and second-generation Vietnamese Czechs are young individuals who were either born in the Czech Republic or arrived at an early age. Our research follows M. Zhou, et al. (1994) [6] categorisation, which defines the 1.5-generation as those who arrived between the ages of 5 and 12, and the second generation as those who were born in the Czech Republic or arrived before the age of 5.

Twenty heterosexuals comprise ten females and ten males. Eight of these individuals were born in Vietnam and moved to the Czech Republic between the ages of 3 and 7, while the rest were born in the Czech Republic. Eighteen respondents have Vietnamese parents, and two have Vietnamese fathers and Czech mothers. Four interviewees could not speak Vietnamese, but all were fluent in Czech and English. Among the interviewed members of the 1.5- and second-generation, there were five couples (3 of which were married) and ten singles, all with experiences in romantic relationships. The numbers of their ex-partners varied significantly, ranging from 1 to 7 (with girls averaging three partners and boys tending to have 5). The respondents' ages varied from 18 to their mid-30s, with a fairly even distribution across the age range. Twelve people had a university education, at least at the bachelor's level, while the remaining eight did not seek higher education. One-third of the respondents were students, but all had work experience in various fields, such as the service sector, administrative positions, self-employment, and the arts.

The 18 homosexual respondents from the 1.5- and second generations ages ranged from 20 to 31, with 8 having university degrees and 10 with a high school education. All of them had work experience, with 6 still being university students at different levels. Eight worked in administration positions, 3 in the creative industry, and the rest in various service industries. Eleven were in romantic relationships, 4 had been in one, and 3 had never experienced a relationship (although one of the three had come out to his family). Eleven had fully come out to their parents and friends, while three had partially come out (2 to both parents and 1 to close friends, from whom the information leaked to the parents). All respondents either have or plan to have inter-ethnic romantic relationships, with only two dismissing the idea of having a relationship within their own ethnicity.

Among the respondents of the first generation, there were 8 couples and 4 individuals. Three of them came to the Czech Republic before 1989, 8 during the 1990s, 4 in the 2000s, and 5 after 2010. Among these individuals, 4 couples ran convenience grocery shops, 2 sold merchandise in big Vietnamese business centres, 4 owned Vietnamese restaurants, and 3 couples ran shops selling inexpensive clothing. It is important to note that the members of the first generation were not the parents of the respondents from the first- and second-generation.

4. Results and discussion

To help the reader fully grasp the article's arguments, it is structured into three parts. The first part explores why diasporic parents in the Czech Republic strongly oppose their children's inter-ethnic and same-sex relationships. It examines not only economic motivations and socio-cultural norms but also religious beliefs and superstitions that contribute to diasporic heteronormativity and a preference for endogamy. The second

part describes and explains intergenerational conflicts between heterosexual children and their parents over inter-ethnic romantic and marital partners. Finally, the third part analyses the conflicts faced by LGBT+ children regarding their inter-ethnic same-sex relationships. The conclusion recaps the key findings and engages in epistemological discourse with other authors.

4.1. Socio-cultural values and heteronormativity among the first-generation Vietnamese migrants in the Czech Republic

In the Czech Republic, first-generation Vietnamese migrants encounter various forms of migrant precarity, such as indebtedness, socio-cultural and language barriers, and limited access to state-organised social services [14, 42, 64]. To counter their precarious situation, these migrants often establish family-oriented businesses, including restaurants, grocery stores, and convenience shops [14, 27]. In planning for material security during retirement, parents commonly aim to transfer their well-established businesses to their children, anticipating the children's material and emotional support in their old age. To ensure the smooth functioning of the family system, parents need to socialise their children into this family system and ensure a certain degree of socio-cultural homogeneity across the diasporic generations [27].

Since medieval times, traditional Confucian concepts of filial piety (*hiếu* 孝) and loyalty (*trung* 忠) have been instrumental in socialising subjects into the socio-political system [65]. Interestingly, even today, the two main moral imperatives of *hiếu* are still employed to bind children to the family system: 1) to provide one's parents with good care, especially during their old age, and 2) to maintain the paternal family line [66-68], including ancestor worship [67, 69]. *Hiếu* is also a key concept in parental efforts to socialise their children within the diasporic socio-cultural environment [70, 71]. For example, Vietnamese parents often associate affection/sentiment (tình cảm) with filial piety and use shaming to teach children about their various duties towards their parents, family, and kin - not only in Vietnam but also in the diasporic context [26, 65]. The goal is to instil similar family values in the children and prepare them to sacrifice a part of their own individual interests for the well-being of their parents and kin [27]. Parents typically succeed in persuading their children to provide them with material care as they age:

"My mother always told me that when she gets old, she wants to be with her own family. My father passed away a few years ago, and as the eldest son, I know that eventually, I will have to bring my mother into my own family... That's just how it is for us, Vietnamese people. The elderly can't even imagine not passing away at home, surrounded by family... My mother always said that only a good child can be a good person. I am fully prepared to take care of her... I usually date Czech girls, but they are not willing to live with my parents. I hope my future wife will be okay with taking care of my mother; it means a lot to me" (Hung, male, age late 20s, Prague).

The majority of the 1.5- and second-generation individuals (28 out of 38) can envision taking care of their ageing parents if necessary. However, most of the interviewed parents (24 out of 30) view inter-ethnic marital partners of their children, who come from different socio-cultural backgrounds, as a threat to the family's system of social security for the older generation. They are particularly concerned that, due to Czech individualism, they would not be allowed to live with their children's family when they are old. It is also possibly for this reason that they fear losing the cultural roots of the paternal family line (20 out of 30).

In the traditional (Northern) Vietnamese ancestral cult, only male members of the family (typically the eldest son) are deemed capable of properly worshipping the ancestors and providing them with all the necessary offerings for their afterlife [72, 73]. It is believed that through these offerings, the deceased ancestors will safeguard the family and contribute to its prosperity [74]. Our research indicates that the ancestor cult continues to hold significant weight among diaspora members. The majority of respondents from the first generation (26 out of 30) fear that Vietnamese-Czech culturally mixed families will not be able to produce offspring willing to participate in the ancestor cult. However, they usually hope that sending the grandchildren back to Vietnam would suffice to help the child internalise Vietnamese socio-cultural skills necessary for preserving the family's cultural homogeneity, including worshipping ancestors.

Even more importantly, the ancestral cult emphasises the necessity of continuing the paternal family line. Our research indicates that this is the main reason parents view having a homosexual child who does not have offspring as the most unfavourable social reality for the family:

"Homosexuals (Pe De), it's a true disaster. They have no (grand) children. You see, there will be no one to pray for us, and then, we will become wandering souls. Like homeless, cold, and hungry. Nobody wants that to happen" (Duong, female, age early 50s, Olomouc).

Similar to individuals in Vietnam [69], the majority of Vietnamese-Czech parents (21 out of 30) view homosexuality as a contagious and challenging yet treatable illness or affliction [75], a form of bad family karma [76], or a curse upon the family. They typically believe that having a homosexual child is a parental error[2]. When discussing homosexual children, Vietnamese-Czech parents use the pejorative term "Pe De" [77][3].

Interestingly, when asked how to "cure" their children's homosexuality, the majority of parents were unable to provide

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[2]Perceiving mistakes in child-rearing as contributing to the development of homosexual behaviour in children.

[3]French origins transcription of pederasty.

a response (21 out of 30), although hormonal therapy was occasionally mentioned. However, nine respondents suggested that a dutiful and disciplined child should be able to control their behaviour, establish a family, and have children regardless of their sexual orientation. Only by ensuring the continuity of the family line can both the child and the parents fulfil the social obligations dictated by filial piety, and only then would the children be permitted to engage in same-sex relationships without tarnishing the family's reputation [68].

"I understand that he is different [homosexual]. But I truly wish for him to have a family and children. Why can't he do it? Then, he can have someone like him out there. It would be his own affair. We could even go to Vietnam and find a wife for him. There will always be someone willing to come here and become part of our family" (Dung, male, age early 50s, Brno).

At the same time, the parents (28 out of 30) prefer not to disclose a family member's different sexual orientation:

"I really don't want people to know about it. What will people say? That we are cursed, or even worse, sick and wicked. They will fear that it could spread to their own families. If your child marries a Westerner, it's not good for the family. People would already gossip about you. But everyone in the diaspora would understand. They would be compassionate. After all, there are many children like that. But if your child is Pe De, they will think it's your failure that the child turned out that way. There's no mercy; you could lose your closest friends, and they will mock you every chance they get. Every time someone wants to hurt you, they will use it against you" (Hien, female, age late 30s, Olomouc).

The research clearly indicates that keeping the sexual orientation of same-sex children secret is often linked not only to personal shame, as proposed by Q.P. Pham (2022) [69] and P. Horton (2014) [60], but also to upholding the family's good reputation as a whole [66]. Three parents even mentioned that Vietnamese businessmen are typically superstitious, and a business family with an LGBT+ child may be viewed as cursed, potentially complicating business relations with other businessmen in the diaspora. This highlights the main differences in the first-generation perception of heterosexual and homosexual inter-ethnic romantic or marital relationships. While heterosexual inter-ethnic relationships are considered problematic from a socio-economic perspective, strong diasporic heteronormativity is often connected to religious beliefs or superstitions. These are the two main reasons why Vietnamese people often conceal their children's same-sex relationships.

In the subsequent section, to illustrate the broader context of intergenerational conflicts and the negotiation process surrounding nonconforming romantic or marital relationships, the article will delve into the conflicts between parents and their heterosexual children regarding inter-ethnic heterosexual relationships. Subsequently, the negotiation and intergenerational conflicts concerning homosexual inter-ethnic relationships will be analysed and elucidated in comparison with those of heterosexual relationships.

4.2. The conflicts over inter-ethnic heterosexual romantic relationships

The 1.5- and second-generation Vietnamese individuals residing in the Czech Republic have been raised within a socio-cultural milieu markedly distinct from that of their parents' native Vietnam [23]. As a result, these generations exhibit a greater degree of integration into Czech society, characterised by heightened individualism and socio-economic independence [24, 25]. Nevertheless, they still face certain forms of migrant precarity, notably in the realm of identity formation, various manifestations of otherness, and encounter racism [42, 56, 78].

Our research corroborates the notion that identity formation among the children of Vietnamese migrants in the Czech Republic is profoundly shaped by multifaceted experiences of otherness [79] that emerge not only from the broader Czech society but also within the Vietnamese diaspora itself [26]. First-generation migrants frequently refer to members of the 1.5- and second-generation using the term *mất gốc* - literally 'those who have lost their roots' - implying a departure from the traditional Vietnamese socio-cultural environment. Confronted with this dual otherness, these younger individuals often cultivate a unique hybrid identity [79].

The research does not provide a clear consensus on whether members of the 1.5- and second-generation prefer intra-ethnic or inter-ethnic romantic/marital partners. The majority of respondents indicate that the ethnicity of the partner is not a significant factor. Support, emotional understanding, and various personal qualities are deemed more critical (18 out of 20 participants). All respondents acknowledged that a co-ethnic partner might offer a better understanding of their background, yet over half of the respondents from the 1.5-generation expressed a preference for a Czech partner - often citing physical attributes as the reason. Nearly all second-generation respondents have experienced romantic relationships with Czech partners. Concurrently, they are all cognizant of their parents' preference for a co-ethnic partner. The research suggests that these divergent preferences on the ethnicity of romantic/marital partners are a primary source of intergenerational conflict within the Czech diaspora:

"When I told my parents I had a Czech boyfriend, we had a big fight. My mother screamed at me, and my father told me to stop it. They invited all the relatives, and we had a serious discussion about us. They gave me a choice: my boyfriend or the family. Finally, they kicked me out. I slept at the local cemetery for about a month. After a year, when I broke up with my boyfriend and returned home, my parents seemed like they hadn't even noticed. Just imagine, they pretended like nothing had ever happened" (Hien, female, age late 20s, PR assistant, Ceske Budejovice).

This incident was not isolated; two additional individuals reported being expelled from their homes due to inter-ethnic romantic relationships, and ten respondents indicated that they were threatened with expulsion or disinheritance by their parents or family. Sixteen respondents experienced varying degrees of pressure to end their inter-ethnic relationships, including beating. It was common for families to engage in extensive discussions with other members of the family, kin, and diaspora to shame the children involved. In at least one distressing case, a parent threatened to commit suicide if the child continued the inter-ethnic relationship. Only four members of the second generation felt they had the freedom to choose their romantic/marital partners, but their parents expressed a preference for a co-ethnic partner.

Parents also employ a variety of strategies to guide their children into co-ethnic romantic or marital relationships. In the case of daughters, they often attempt to introduce them to a Vietnamese boy, typically from a wealthy family, regardless of the daughter's objections. This approach is less common with sons. The sons' sexual relationships are typically viewed as less serious. Boys are generally advised to "be careful," to avoid impregnating their Czech girlfriends, and to consider the prospect of a Vietnamese wife in the future. Parents blend requests grounded in filial piety with reminders to preserve their children's cultural heritage and concerns over the children's future socio-economic well-being:

"I told him that the beautiful blonde Czech girl was not for him. You know, only someone with a good education and a good job can afford such a beautiful girl. And him? He just finished high school. Now both (sons) work in my shop. We can make good money, but we have to work hard all day. I always told him that she is not for him. Can you imagine her helping him in the shop? Look at her makeup and her dyed hair. She will not stay in the store when he buys goods. A Vietnamese girl, a hardworking one, is what he needs. He used to get angry when I talked to him like this. But now he is more with his Vietnamese friends, and I think he has started to understand what I am telling him" (Manh, male, age 50s, Olomouc).

A majority of the children (13 out of 20) perceive that there is likely to be greater pressure on either the eldest son or an only daughter. However, the study does not indicate pressure directed explicitly towards the eldest sons of the family. Instead, the level of pressure exerted by parents on their children typically hinges on the parents' personalities and adherence to traditional values:

"I am already 51 years old, and this was my only son (before, I had only daughters). Now he is 15, and there is no way he marry a Czech. I want someone to pray for me, he will have a Vietnamese bride... In the worst case, I will send him to Vietnam until he falls in love with someone" (Dat, male, age 50s, Brno).

Even children of very conservative parents typically report that their parents exert power over each child equally. In four cases, children mentioned that, after strongly advocating for a partner of the same ethnicity, the parents ultimately accepted the inter-ethnic partner of their older siblings. Subsequently, the parents displayed more tolerance towards inter-ethnic relationships of the younger children. However, in another five cases, parents exerted even more pressure if they were unsuccessful in convincing the older children.

One of the frequently cited reasons why parents prefer co-ethnic partners is the emphasis on family cohesion and the perception that Czech people are unwilling to care for their elders. According to the parents, Czech people are viewed as too individualistic, and the high divorce rate in Czech society raises doubts about the stability of inter-generational families. While these arguments are respected by the children, they often counter that these views reflect the situation in Czech society from ten years ago and that they themselves share similarities with Czech people. At the same time, nearly all the children express shock at their parents' methods and persistence. In their view, the parents have no right to dictate their life choices (18 out of 20). Eleven respondents firmly stated they would not comply with their parents' wishes, while 5 respondents were unsure if they could resist parental pressure. The remaining 4 individuals ultimately chose a co-ethnic partner (not necessarily due to parental preferences).

In 10 cases, parents eventually accepted the inter-ethnic relationship. In the remaining 6 cases, the children continued to negotiate with their parents while dating either co-ethnic or inter-ethnic partners. The research indicates that neither the children nor the parents desire to permanently sever family ties, but both parties express a willingness to consider contemporary separation as a means to persuade the other. Fourteen respondents mentioned that, if necessary, they would temporarily limit their parents' visits to diffuse tensions. However, obtaining parental approval for their relationship was deemed important by nearly all respondents, particularly the girls.

Overall, parents who have resided in the Czech Republic for a longer period exhibit greater tolerance towards inter-ethnic relationships. However, there are no significant differences observed among parents who arrived after 2010. These individuals demonstrate a stronger determination to encourage their children towards co-ethnic marriages. In cases of inter-ethnic relationships, parents are not hesitant to disclose the situation to other members of the diaspora, who typically offer sympathy and support during the negotiation process.

The study revealed a strong inclination among parents for their children to form co-ethnic relationships. The research indicates that this preference for co-ethnic marital unions arises from a desire to maintain the family as a culturally

cohesive social institution, which is intended to provide elders with a certain level of socio-economic security. This finding aligns with existing research. However, in the following section, we will demonstrate that when navigating their children's homosexual relationships, parents may prefer inter-ethnic romantic or marital partnerships. The reasons for this preference may differ, potentially being more culturally rooted or influenced by religious or superstitious beliefs.

4.3. The conflicts over homosexual romantic relationship

The situation of homosexual children is more complex. Similar to their heterosexual counterparts, they are part of three fundamental social entities: the family, diaspora, and state (more precisely, the society at large in the host state). They also face various forms of exclusion and otherness, leading to the difficult formation of their cultural identity [57, 69, 80]. As in Vietnamese society, non-heterosexual sexual orientation is identified as the most significant source of otherness in the diaspora. Homophobia also exists in Czech society [81], but racism and xenophobia appear to be more prominent sources of otherness:

"Something like phags phooey, do it at home. Yes, people sometimes say that in public. But they usually react more negatively to the fact that I am Vietnamese than to me being gay. It is the same as in the Netherlands. When I lived there, people were more negative about my Asian origin than about my sexual orientation. This surprised me" (Dung, age 30s, PR agency, Prague).

Simultaneously, the research indicates that children utilise state-sponsored sexual norms and ethics to challenge diasporic heteronormativity [63, 82] and strive for acceptance within the family. In our study, (11 out of the 18) LGBT+ respondents disclosed their sexual orientation to their parents and expected the parents' acceptance of their sexual orientation, but they expressed no desire to seek approval from diasporic members and rather aimed to protect their parents' reputation (17 out of 18).

"Have I come out to the diaspora? No, I do not want anyone to know. But I had a trusted Vietnamese friend, a woman from my mother's generation. I asked her for her opinion when I was about to come out to my parents. But she told everything about me to the whole market in Brno. Finally, she told my mother that I was the result of my mother's bad karma and lifestyle. My mother gave her a taste of her own medicine when she referred to her own eldest son who has a boyfriend [...] Since then, I have not spoken to that person [...] No one attacked me in the market, but I am not sure if they said anything to my mother" (Tuan, age late 20s, graphic designer, Prague).

In Vietnamese society, homosexual children often choose to live in major cities to keep their sexual orientation hidden from their families and to safeguard family honour in front of the community and relatives [63, 83]. Similarly, Vietnamese Czech individuals from the 1.5 and second generations who are homosexual frequently maintain a strategic distance by residing in large, anonymous cities. This approach helps prevent the disclosure of their sexual orientation not only to their parents but primarily to the diaspora (17 out of 18), as such revelations could bring shame upon their families. Living in major cities also provides more opportunities to find suitable same-sex partners and access higher-paying job opportunities, which is essential for cultivating a favourable social image within the family and diaspora:

"In order to leave our small town, I enrolled in Charles University in Prague. My parents were proud of my achievements in my studies, but for me, it was freedom. I could do whatever I wanted with whomever I wanted, and no one would question me or tell my parents about it. [...] Later, I stayed in Prague to work for an international company. My salary was high, and my parents were happy. But that was not important to me. While I was studying, they asked me about the girls, especially my mother. One day we were talking and suddenly she asked me about the girls. I was in a bad mood that day. I have no romantic relationship, and I cannot bear her questions. So I told her. Actually, I screamed at her that I had no one and that I did not want a girl. She then asked what I wanted. I just screamed, A guy! She just smiled sadly and told me: I know. I immediately regretted it. But then a miracle happened. We talked about me, and at the end of the day, she told me it was okay but advised me not to tell my father. She promised to prepare him. Since then, he (the father) never asked me about the girls, but acted like he knew everything" (Tuan, age late 20s, artist, Prague).

While residing in major cities, away from the family and diasporic environment, children typically engage more with society at large, and nearly all respondents express a preference for inter-ethnic partners. The research suggests that the preference for inter-ethnic partnerships could be a response to the prevalent diasporic heteronormativity, and also a strategic way for children to demonstrate their alignment with broader socio-cultural norms in society. This alignment may facilitate parental acceptance of their children's same-sex relationships. Additionally, the study reveals that children are not primarily concerned with state recognition. Living in major cities with much more LGBT+-friendly environments provides them with arguments to challenge diasporic heterosexual norms and engage in negotiations for recognition as respected members of the family. When struggling for the parents' acceptance of their sexuality, the children usually point out that "they are not doing anything bad or illegal" and explain that their sexual orientation is not against the socio-cultural norms in the Czech Republic. Simultaneously, they strive to meet other expectations of caring-child or to achieve a high social status. The children often come out to their

parents, sometimes even before attaining the desired high social status (4 out of 18). On the other hand, they maintain a strategic distance from the diaspora. As queer individuals in Vietnam [63, 82], they do not directly challenge diasporic heteronormativity. Instead, by being good children and model citizens, they seek to earn recognition, acceptance, and approval from their family members.

Despite the careful preparation, coming out is always extremely stressful for the parents. One mother of a homosexual boy expressed her experience as follows: "For me, it was a shock. I could not believe it. I felt empty. In fact, I thought I had lost him. I could not sleep for a time, and I did not dare to tell my husband about it." Upon hearing about their children's sexual orientation for the first time, parents typically confront the children. Depending on the circumstances, the parents' reactions vary. Severe disputes with parents, including physical attacks, inheritance, expulsion from home, or permanent breaking contact with the family, were reported. If the information is/or becomes public, parents may arrange large family meetings and councils aimed at addressing or "curing" the children's situation:

"For me, the worst reaction came from my aunt. She asked me if I was sure that I was not missing hormones, but I told her that I do not get sexually aroused when I see women. She replied that I should take some pills and just do it. I felt very uncomfortable with her and ended the conversation. I told the family that this is the way it is. Since then, I have not spoken to her" (Hung, age mid-30s, manager, Brno).

If the child's sexual orientation is not public knowledge, parents may resort to more subtle, persuasive, and less confrontational methods to address their children's sexuality. Parents may discreetly arrange chance encounters for their children with individuals of the opposite sex, typically from the same ethnic group. They may also request that their children conceal their sexual orientation, enter a heterosexual marriage, and start a family. In exchange, the parents promise the child the opportunity to engage in a same-sex extramarital romantic relationship. Surprisingly, the research uncovered a preference among parents for their children to have same-sex partners from different ethnic backgrounds:

"My mother says it is good that my partner is not Vietnamese because of other people. If the family disagrees with his sexual orientation, it can be very difficult for us. Mother also does not want people (in the diaspora) to know about the situation. Otherwise, she does not mind. If it is a Roman, a Muslim, or a black, it might be a little bit of a problem. They would have more questions" (Quang, age 20s, student, Olomouc).

It appears that the preference for inter-ethnic partners is part of a broader strategy aimed at preserving the family's reputation, particularly in the eyes of the diaspora and other relatives in Vietnam. Over time, parents may accept the children's sexual orientation (in 4 cases) but continue

to emphasise the importance of maintaining a family and having children. To uphold the family's reputation, they also hold a certain distance from their children who are in same-sex relationships. Only one of the respondents was working with her parents at the time of the interview. The remaining respondents are employed in distant cities or abroad, often still too young to fulfil their parents' desires for a family and grandchildren. Nonetheless, more than half of the respondents (11 out of 18) express a strong determination to fulfil their parents' wishes for grandchildren and to provide them with good material care.

"My brother does not want children, but I would like to have them. I am only 24, but it would be ideal to have a girlfriend who is more open. Many of my girlfriends are ambitious and working on their careers […] If one of them wanted to take a sabbatical, have a baby, and go back to work, that would be ideal. We would have a child, and she could return to a larger household whenever she needed to. Or adoption [...] This can calm my parents down, and I can be free to live my way" (Dung, age mid-20s, gay, entrepreneur, Prague).

In contrast to O. Tsedendemeberel (2021) [77], the study suggests that LGBT+ members of the Vietnamese diaspora seek to compensate for their sexual orientation by being exceptionally dutiful children rather than exemplary citizens (similar to S. Mathisen (2022)) [63]. Additionally, these individuals primarily seek acceptance from their families as the sole social institution. In the broader society, ethnic or racial backgrounds are perceived as significantly stronger determinants of otherness. It also appears that while state-promoted norms and the mainstream Czech discourse on sexuality are considered LGBT+ friendly, the overall situation remains somewhat ambiguous:

"I am not afraid to walk hand in hand with my girlfriend on the street. Negative reactions are rare, and there are usually people who protect you. The situation is not perfect, but I think people here (in the Czech Republic) are more xenophobic, not homophobic. At least, not like the Vietnamese. It happened a couple of times that a young guy tried to court both of us because he knew we were together. Crazy! (smile) As lesbians, we might be more accepting of those machos who are otherwise homophobic and aggressive, and women are usually less confrontational..." (Hien, age 20s, student, Brno).

Conversely, not only do LGBT+ members of the diaspora, but virtually all respondents from the 1.5- and second-generation (33 out of 38), perceive the diasporic discourse on sexuality as highly homophobic and in direct conflict with the social sexual norms and ethics promoted by the Czech state and its mainstream discourse on sexuality. Consequently, diasporic heteronormativity is generally viewed as inconsequential within the Czech Republic context (29 out of 38). However, in their negotiation for recognition of their sexual orientation by their parents, the children are fulfilling

all the Vietnamese socio-cultural family norms to cultivate a desirable social image. Nevertheless, as indicated in the section focused on first-generation Vietnamese migrants in the Czech Republic, the socio-economic aspect appears to be just one component of the broader cultural values that shape strong heteronormativity within the diaspora. The other, potentially more significant aspect, is rooted in cultural, religious, or even superstitious beliefs. The prominence of these cultural factors in Vietnamese diasporic heteronormativity, along with the preference for inter-ethnic same-sex romantic partners, may represent the main differences observed in the negotiation processes surrounding romantic and marital relationships between the two groups.

5. Conclusions

The research identified frequent xenophobic and heteronormative tendencies (even homophobia) among the members of the first-generation Vietnamese migrants in the Czech Republic. A range of explanations exists for the xenophobic and heteronormative tendencies among first-generation Vietnamese migrants. As mentioned elsewhere in this study, one is socio-economic [26, 27]. In the host country, the migrants are facing various forms of precarity. To resist them, the first-generation migrants establish numerous family business networks. To ensure the smooth operation of these networks, parents strive to maintain socio-cultural homogeneity within their transnational families. As their children become more integrated into the host society, this insistence on socio-cultural homogeneity leads to intergenerational conflicts, particularly concerning the inter-ethnic romantic or marital relations of subsequent generations. Nevertheless, when inter-ethnic heterosexual relationships are disclosed within the diaspora, there is often a display of sympathy and supportive attitudes toward the parents. As the parents enjoy the support of other members of the diaspora, they can exert a strong push for co-ethnic partners in their children. On the other hand, having an LGBT+ child living in a same-sex relationship is often viewed as a curse, bad karma, or a disease of the whole family by other members of the diaspora. Consequently, when a child comes out, the parents are placed in a precarious situation. To protect the family's reputation, they are compelled to keep this information hidden from the diaspora and their relatives in Vietnam. As a strategy to preserve the family's image, parents may permit their child to have an inter-ethnic partner, which reduces the risk of the information being disclosed to other diasporic members. Meanwhile, parents attempt to convince their children that, regardless of their sexual orientation, they should bear children to continue the family lineage.

Echoing the findings of P. Horton, et al. (2019) [28], our research shows that in both cases - heterosexual and same-sex relationships - the pressure to marry is intrinsically linked to patrilineage. Parents of LGBT+ children often harbour hopes of persuading their offspring to produce a male heir and to ensure their descendants uphold the tradition and maintain the family line. However, the strategies employed by LGBT+ youth to normalise discussions about LGBT+ sexuality within the diaspora are particularly intriguing. By maintaining a strategic distance from the diaspora and relocating to larger cities, these individuals safeguard their families' reputations and work to accumulate enough social capital to gain their parents' acknowledgement. However, while trying to earn the parents' recognition of their sexuality, the children are behaving according to the Vietnamese socio-cultural norms, in this case filial piety, ruling Vietnamese families.

In this sense, this article does not view LGBT+ diasporic children as *homo sacers*, who can be killed but not sacrificed for any god [28]. These children appear to be positioned within Agamben's concept of the exception, as the ambiguous status of same-sex marriages in Vietnam places them simultaneously inside and outside the realm of legality [83], but still "anchored in a certain relationship" of power [84]. The article posits that homosexuality was traditionally practised within the framework of the fifth Confucian constant relationship of friend to friend and that the sexual practices themselves may not necessarily be condemned by the family. If an LGBT+ individual fulfils the fundamental duties based on filial piety [66-68], their sexual behaviours may be viewed as part of the realm of erotica [85]. As long as the children fulfil their obligations rooted in the concept of filial piety by maintaining the family lineage, caring for elderly parents, and contributing to the family's well-being, they can still be regarded as integral members of their basic social group in this case, the family. Thus, in theory, the traditional concept of Vietnamese family and socio-cultural norms may not inherently problematize homosexuality [59]. Nevertheless, the majority of our cases proved otherwise.

At the same time, this study follows M. Sinnott (2010) [86] and aims to extend the understanding of complex sexualities in the Vietnamese diaspora through the deconstruction of normativity. The findings demonstrate that LGBT+ children also leverage the traditional Confucian concept of filial piety to earn recognition from their parents and families. As in Vietnam, these children strive to be model children and citizens in order to persuade their families [87]. By doing so, LGBT+ children effectively "fulfil certain filial duties...they are capable of achieving" [63], and they assist their parents in navigating the uncertainty of being migrants by offering them material and social support. Through these actions, they cultivate an image of a respectable, relatively normal, and fulfilling existence (including in terms of sexuality) that they hope will be accepted by their parents and broader families [68].

The article concurs with S. Mathisen (2022) [63] that the "position of LGBTQ youths in society, as well as their strategies for gaining recognition, must be understood in the context of the family". However, contrasting with L. Ly (2019) [88], the article views the potential for future family and legal

marriages as a means to combat queerphobia. Through this process, the legalisation of same-sex marriages could spark a new discourse on LGBT+ individuals, leading to the establishment of new sexual and social norms within the diaspora. The focal point of the diasporic family "can thus be seen as a way of expressing oneself through connections to others, constructing an identity that conforms to social norms of respectability while engaging in non-normative expressions of gender and sexuality in unconventional spaces" [80].

There are several limitations to this research. Due to ethical considerations, the authors were unable to interview both LGBT+ children and their heterosexual parents within the same family. Consequently, only one member of the first generation had direct experience raising an LGBT+ child, while others shared their experiences solely within the diasporic discursive context. To enhance the research findings, future research should better explore the ethnic preferences of the 1.5- and second-generation Vietnamese living in the Czech Republic. Also, to better analyse the role of traditional Vietnamese socio-cultural values, religion, and superstitions in the acculturation of the 1.5- and second-generation Vietnamese should be beneficial to the understanding of the Vietnamese diaspora in the Czech Republic.

CRediT author statement

Filip Kraus: Collecting data, Data analysis, Conceptualisation, Methodology, Writing, Editing; Mai Thi Thu: Collecting data, Data analysis, Methodology, Writing, Editing; Bui Hai Dang: Conceptualisation, Validation, Data analysis, Writing, Editing.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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