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### Contemporary American Migrant Writers

Migrant experiences in the United States have been expressed in various forms. One of the most popular types of art depicting problems faced by migrants is fiction. *Vietnamerica* written by GB Tran is one of such pieces of art, which reveals the story of a young Vietnamese-American artist living in the U.S. Born and raised by immigrants who preferred to forget the past, the artist grows up indifferent to his history and culture (Tran 35). This paper examines the role of the family and history in the graphic novel *Vietnamerica*.

The main character of the biographical novel *Vietnamerica* is portrayed as a talented artist and storyteller who ignores his origins and background until he discovers an extraordinary story of his family which makes GB travel to his homeland. To adapt to the American lifestyle and values, GB's parents, who had fled Vietnam during the Fall of Saigon, decided to focus on the future and forget the turbulent past. Moreover, the author depicts the problem of disconnected migrant families who were separated when leaving Vietnam (Tran 40). Family separation, as well as its impact, is prevalent in the novel. For example, one of the characters describes the evacuation process when parents were forced to leave their children behind.

In addition, there are multiple graphic aids in the novel which enable the author to illustrate those migration tendencies. In particular, there is a map that shows different territories in the USA where Vietnamese immigrants could settle. The author illustrates the U.S. government's attempts to prevent too many refugees from settling in the same locations. Being

torn apart, Vietnamese immigrants found it difficult to adapt to a new lifestyle in a completely different culture and environment. Some of them moved across the USA in order to reunite with their families, which was a no mean feat due to the risk of losing their sponsors (Tran 56). Their bravery and decisiveness show the fundamental importance of family in the immigrants' lives.

Unlike some families who managed to reunite, GB's family lost hope and started a new life in America, which made them forget their story and values. It is GB who gets inspired by an unforgettable story of his parents and grandparents and reveals it to the readers.

To sum up, literature of American migrant writers is a significant contribution to understanding migrants' feelings and values. GB Tran's graphic novel *Vietnamerica* is a story of family reconnection which shows the importance of family as a core value of human life.

Work Cited

Tran, Gia Bao. *Vietnamerica: A Family's Journey*. New York: Villard Books, 2012.