a given signal the women, standing up, row toward the "net" boats and stamp their wooden clogs on the floor boards of the "chasers." The loud staccato noise produced is supposed to chase the fish toward the nets. When the "chasers" approach the "net" boats, the men jump on the levers, raising the nets. Although this is a well-coordinated, organized venture, it is not very productive, the average return for a day's work being about VN$ 40 per boat. Push-lift net fishing takes place in the inland waters of the Thu-Bon river estuary and has been hampered by the recent dam construction. Not only are the catches smaller, but the area of operation has been diminished.

A number of other less important types of offshore fishing methods are utilized in Cam An, but these are generally variations of those described above and depend upon the size of the net meshing. For example, manh ódm, nets of a very fine mesh, are used to catch the tiny cá ódm. 8

3. Fishing Boats. Fishing boats used in Cam An are all of wooden construction and powered either by sail or oar. The best boats are made of sào, a hard wood which is water resistant and known for its durability. Boat builders, of whom there are eleven in Cam An, estimate that it takes about 100 days of skilled labor to build a large three-sail boat. A three-sail boat usually costs from VN$ 60,000 to VN$70,000 but these were selling for as little as VN$ 45,000 at the time of this research because of a decrease in the price of timber. A new boat needs no major repairs for the first four years; after that annual repairs are required. A boat can be used for about 15 years.
Off-shore fishing net. It is lowered for an hour, sometimes two, to trap large fish.
Only the three-sail boats are used for deep sea fishing; the offshore boats have one or two sails and sometimes merely oars. Of the 369 boats registered in Cam An, only 57 are of the deep sea type.

Figure 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hamlet</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Deep Sea</th>
<th>Offshore</th>
<th>Long Line</th>
<th>Net</th>
<th>Fishing</th>
<th>Fishing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An Băng (I)</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tấn Thanh (II)</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phước Trạch (III)</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tấn Hiệp (IV)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>369</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>78</td>
<td></td>
<td>75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C. System of Credit and Problems of Marketing

One of the major problems in developing nations whose economies are based upon primary industries such as agriculture and fishing is that of a system of credit for investment in those industries. In a subsistence economy based upon agriculture, for example, the proceeds from the previous year's crop are spent before the next planting season. The farmer is hard pressed for seed and the means to hire labor to work the fields for the next crop. Furthermore, funds are not available for innovations such as fertilizer, irrigation, weed killers, or insecticides, all necessary for modernization and economic.
development. The only means of overcoming this cyclical obstacle to livelihood, as well as development, is some form of credit so that the farmer can borrow on the following year's crops. Credit is available in most of these societies but the system is usually so usurious that the farmer continually moves further into debt. The same is true of fishermen in a developing country and Căm An is a case in point.

In Căm An only four or five lái chánh (boat owners) are solvent; the remainder, as well as ordinary fishermen, are in debt. The creditors in the village are the storekeepers who act as permanent and ready suppliers of all the fishermen's needs: rice, salt, ropes, hooks, lines, oil, floats, and wine. The amount of debt varies among classes of fishermen. A lái chánh may owe as much as VN$ 30,000, which can include money borrowed to pay a portion of the cost of constructing his boat or credit on provisions for a deep sea fishing excursion. Crew members accept loans of rice, dried fish, or oil which they leave with their families before embarking on a fishing trip.

The storekeepers, of course, collect interest on their loans. This is done in two ways: (1) a 10 percent rate is charged for short one to five-month loans, and (2) the price charged for items sold on credit is higher than that charged in other areas or if bought for cash. For example, 100 kilograms of rice in Hội An may cost only VN$ 600, but on credit in Căm An it may be VN$ 650 or more.

The exact time for repayment of loans cannot be set because of the varied nature of the fishing operations, but generally a fisherman is expected to repay his debts whenever he is able. The respect of
this practice establishes his credit rating and allows him to contract loans in the future. Although the amount each family owes may vary from a few piasters to VN$ 30,000, debt is a universal phenomenon in Cảm An.

The fishermen of Cảm An are well aware of a possible solution to their problem -- easy credit through a fishery cooperative. A cooperative was formed in July, 1959, but, fishermen complain, they have received no benefits. Each share in the cooperative was to cost VN$ 100 and each member could acquire up to five shares. Some fishermen were reluctant to join but about 224 bought shares. Most of them have not yet even received receipt of payment, much less loans. Thus, the cooperative in Cảm An is not yet operative as a credit institution.

The present head of the cooperative is a Hố An businessman who was appointed by the district chief. According to informants, he does not visit the village and has little concern for or awareness of the problems encountered by fishermen. They believe he has swindled them of their hard earned cash; they feel they have no recourse for the injustice. The fishermen must continue to borrow from the storekeepers and they remain in debt.

The failure of the fishing cooperative is disappointing to many villagers, not only because of the organization's inability to make low interest loans available, but also because it has not functioned as a marketing institution. The cooperative was originally conceived
as a multi-service organization with the purpose of improving the living conditions of fishermen through credit and marketing. Present marketing conditions, while advantageous to the middleman (roi), impede the development of efficient fishing practices, especially deep sea operations. This problem is best summarized by a sub-văn chief who is a deep sea fisherman.

"If the cooperative were well organized it would help us very much. It usually takes us from two to four days to market our catch. If the cooperative were ready to buy our catch, it would pay us to sell to them at a lower price than we now sell to the middlemen. We would be able to dispose of our catch in one day, or a half a day, and return to the fishing grounds. Now the marketing process is so cumbersome that it hurts our fishing operation, because it prohibits us from exploiting the good fishing opportunities."

The cooperative idea throughout Viet Nam, as well as in other parts of the world, is not easy to sell. It assumes knowledge on the part of the peasant that he will receive a return on his original investment. It is difficult to entice a subsistence farmer or fisherman to invest in an unestablished, unseen, and unproven organization. He cannot see the advantages of such an investment in contrast, let's say, to a kilogram of rice or a fishing net.

Furthermore, there is a general fear among the peasantry of "government," usually defined as any organization or concept larger than a hamlet or neighborhood grouping. "I would not dare to borrow money on next season's fish (or rice). If I could not pay back because of a poor catch (or yield), I would certainly go to jail." This was a common response to questions on credit institutions on the island of Tân Hiẹp.

In general, however, the fishermen of Cắm An clearly see the need for an efficient, multi-purpose cooperative; they have invested in one,
they seek its benefits. Unfortunately, the operation of such an organization requires skilled administrators, trust, and imagination. But, as one villager said, "the man in charge of the cooperative is in Hội An and knows nothing about fishing. We should have a cooperative geared to our own problems, organized by our own people. But most of the people in Cẩm An are not capable of successfully running the kind of cooperative we need."

D. Economic Activities in Tấn Hiếp.

The economy of the island hamlet of Tấn Hiếp differs from that of the mainland hamlets in that fishing is not the major source of income. Lumbering and agriculture are at least, if not more, important. Cash is scarce and generally people eat what they grow in the fields or catch from the sea. The four small sundry shops sell only candy, candles, rice wine, and cakes. There are two barber shops and no fish supply stores. A new primary school was recently constructed from American aid funds. The hamlet headquarters is located near the school at the small-boat landing. In the valley between two high slopes is a small clearing for paddy fields.

Nearly one-half of the households own small strips of paddy field, and the rest of the people work for their neighbors as farm laborers. The largest land holding in Tấn Hiếp is 3600 square meters (0.36 hectares) and the average is one-tenth of this, or 360 square meters. Seedlings for the first rice crop are prepared in the ninth lunar month, transplanted during the 11th month, and harvested in the third month of the following year. The fields are then plowed, and transplanting for the
second crop is completed in the 10th lunar month and the rice is harvested in the 8th month. Because of the scarcity of water, only one-half of the land is cultivated for the second crop.

Agricultural laborers are paid 15 liters of paddy per day for plowing, transplanting, and harvesting. Meals are also supplied by landowners except during harvest season. It is estimated that a farm laborer only can work up to 15 days per year. Agriculture is preferred in Tấn Hiệp over fishing and lumbering because of the certainty of the yield. Fishing has not developed as an occupation on the island and that which is done is of the seasonal offshore variety. Occasionally, middlemen visit the island to buy fish but the amount sold is negligible. Some timber cut from the forested mountain sides is sold and lumbering activities consume about six months of the year. Most households in Tấn Hiệp engage in all three areas of work -- lumbering, agriculture, and fishing.

The islanders rarely visit the mainland, although marriages are arranged between people of Tấn Hiệp and those of the three mainland hamlets. When weather permits, hamlet officials journey to Cam An to gather information, news, and instructions.

The chief of Tấn Hiệp said the hamlet's two main problems are security and monkeys. Thus far no Viet Cong have been seen approaching the island, but a constant alert is maintained and the beach must be guarded at night. There are no weapons on the island. Monkeys outnumber humans on Tấn Hiệp and the villagers are seeking means to eradicate the animals because of the damage they do to rice and sweet
potato crops. So far, the efforts have been unsuccessful.

E. Van Organization

The fishermen's guild in Căm An is one of the most important social and economic groupings in the village. It is a professional organization which until 1945 had a charter (hướng úc) detailing its functions and activities. These included the definition of relationships between boat owner and crewmen, mutual assistance among fishermen, and the settlement of disputes within the van. The charter, which was approved by the province chief, was destroyed during the war and no attempt has been made since then to rewrite it or to gain official recognition of the guild. The functions of the van remain the same today but it is no longer a quasi-governmental organization.

Van members cooperate in times of danger or distress, such as when shipwrecks or other accidents occur at sea; they loan supplies or money to each other in cases of disaster or loss; members are aided in recovery of wreckage and repair of equipment, and they participate together in religious festivals and related entertainments.

The officials of the van are popularly elected by the residents of the village. Candidates for the office of van trưởng (chief) are nominated by village elders, boat owners, and village officials, past and present. The chief is elected for an indefinite term, the present one having held his position for eight years. He is assisted by a deputy van chief (kiểm van) whom he selects and thôn (hamlet) van chiefs who are elected by van members in each of the four hamlets. Elections are held every three years for the thôn van chiefs. Although the van
chief and his deputy are elected at large from the village, the primary functions of the village are maintained at the than level.

At the time the present hamlets were villages, the village chief was an official advisor to the village chief and village council. He was consulted on all decisions and apparently held as much authority as the village chief since he represented the fishermen, the major segment of the population. At present, while holding no official administrative position, the village chief and the than village chiefs are consulted by the village council and than chiefs. Village officials continue to play a major role in settling disputes and quarrels among fishermen, maintaining equal distribution of the catch, and other occupation-related activities. They also aid the than chiefs in executing instructions and disseminating news and information. Thus, the village chiefs act as unofficial assistants within the than and, according to village officials, are most instrumental in the maintenance of village harmony.

For example, it was estimated that only about 30 percent of the occupation-related disputes within the village are called to the attention of the village council, the majority being successfully settled by village officials.

The village chief receives no salary but he is exempt from taxes, guard duty, and community labor (corvée). His services are required by the village when occasional visits are made to Tan Hib island by government officials. He musters boats and crews, sees to the decoration of boats for the occasion, and arranges all matters pertaining to transportation. In addition to other duties, village chiefs are ceremonial
leaders and play a leading role in certain occupational rites and festivals. (See the section on the whale ceremony in Chapter IV).

The three mainland hamlet van are subdivided into a number of smaller units depending upon the type of fishing activity and the kind of boat operated. The sub-van do not appear to be stratified. For example, the present van chief of Thôn II is a member of a sub-van of small boats (van câu). There are four sub-van in Thôn I, two in Thôn II, and seven in Thôn III. Following is a list of the sub-van in Thôn III, the characteristics of which are similar to those in the other two Thôn:

Văn câu: includes fishermen in the thon who work the three-sail boats or those who engage in deep sea fishing: 33 boats.

Văn lucr hai: consists of those who operate small three-ton boats: 30 boats

Văn câu: includes those operating small boats (one ton with hooked nets: 50 boats

Văn re тро: involves fishermen who use the sweeping net method.

Văn ldôi cuc: consists of fishermen employing the digging technique which necessitates the cooperation of 30 or 40 people per boat.

Văn mơn cơn: includes those who fish for very small fish in three-ton boats.

Văn đà rút: comprises those who operate one to five-ton boats, usually four fishermen to a boat.
The sub-van has no chiefs nor any social or economic importance per se, although fishermen of the sub-van may, and often do, cooperate with each other in numerous ways. The sub-van is simply a convenient administrative and functional sub-division of the van. Occupational disputes are more likely to occur among fishermen engaged in like operations and van officials find that quarrels usually occur within a given sub-van rather than between sub-vans. This breakdown aids in categorizing and solving such problems and also facilitates mobilization for rescue and relief work and the collection of contributions for relief and fees for religious ceremonies, all of which are dependent upon boat size and type of fishing operation.

Unfortunately, limited time in the field precluded the gathering of more intensive information on van organization and functions. Until recently, when the present village of Cam An was created, each hamlet or former village had its own van organization which differed in various particulars from the others. These differences have persisted, and our field workers continually received conflicting information which could ultimately be traced to then variations. Therefore, the major portion of our time in the field devoted to van research was utilized in tracing inconsistencies in data. For these reasons, we are not able at this time to detail some of the more important social and economic functions of the van, such as the relationship between the van and cooperation in fishing, boat repairing, net repairing, labor recruitment, marketing, and interpersonal relations in general. However, we believe that we have established that the van is a type of indigenous cooperative
Tan Hiep and another small island lie just off the coast of Quang Nam in the South China Sea.

As nets are woven or mended they are stretched over bamboo poles, also used for drying.

Deep sea fishing boat outfitted for the opening of the season.

Boats require constant caulking to prevent small leaks from becoming big ones.
organized by the fishermen for their own well-being. Cooperative purchase of nets, thread, hooks, and bait and cooperative selling of the catch are all partial functions of the \textit{van}. It was suggested by one villager, in fact, that the reason for the failure of the fishermen's cooperative was possibly a result of its functions overlapping those of the \textit{van}. It might be noted in this connection that the \textit{van}, unlike the co-op, has important ceremonial functions which are central to the religious life of the community.

We also have abundant "scraps" of data, which we were unable to follow up, that might be of sociological significance. We were told, for example, that the fishermen themselves might change from one \textit{van} to another, but that the fisherman's boat must remain in the \textit{van} of original "registration." The meaning, or symbolic meaning, of this and other such pieces of information remain obscure for the present.

In spite of these deficiencies in data, several observations relative to administration and social organization in Cam An emerge from the available information. Two indigenous, voluntary, non-official, non-governmental institutions which appear to function in the organization and administration of the village have been described: the \textit{xôm} and the \textit{van}, both operating within the context of the local unit, the thôn.\textsuperscript{10} Thus, although administrative and organization functions have been shifted officially to the larger unit, the village (\textit{xă}), primary activities in these areas remain thôn-centered and informal.

The appointed thôn chief is advised by, and seeks consultation with, the chiefs of \textit{xôm} and \textit{van} who assist in relaying instructions,
news, and propaganda; settle disputes and act as consultants on affairs both personal and occupational; organize religious ceremonies as well as economic, mutual aid, and security activities. In short, the xóm and the van are the units of organization around which the people of the village order their lives and participation in the society.

These observations may seem matter of fact but they have broad ramifications which should be considered in a developing society concerned with more efficient administration and faced with the threat of subversion. For example:

1. They indicate that the community is a tightly knit social unit whose organization and administration is based upon local, informal, primary, face-to-face relationships. This is an important consideration for an understanding of the problem of subversion in central Viet Nam. Unlike the south where homesteads are widely scattered, the people of the central hamlets are aware not only of the movement of outsiders in the village, but of the most minute details of the lives of their friends, neighbors, and relatives. It is unlikely that Viet Cong cadres and agents could come into these hamlets or live there without a widespread knowledge of their presence.

2. Appointed government officials at the local level are not overly involved in administration. The village council members in Cấm An are relatively underworked. The village office has few visitors, the village council few problems with residents. The office is quiet except for routine matters of budget, taxation, minor record keeping, and, at the time of our visit, the presidential elections. Primary
problems of administration in Cân An are handled through unofficial channels in the thôn. Information passes from the district office through the village office to the grass roots administrators. The real village leaders are not those in the village office who merely transmit orders and information from above, but are instead the informal xóm and van chiefs in the hamlets.

3. If these observations concerning village administration can be generalized to include a large percentage of Vietnamese villages, then some thought should be given to the advisability of concentrating heavily on technical training, both pre-service and in-service, of village level officials. Decisions of a technical nature as well as the responsibility for carrying out development programs are centered at the district and provincial levels of administration. They are relayed through the village council to the informal thôn leaders for action.

In the light of this study, training at the village level, if it is to be considered at all, should emphasize the necessity of utilizing already existing "leaders" and organizations for the successful implementation of programs.
CHAPTER III
KINSHIP, MARRIAGE, AND THE FAMILY

Whereas the Cám An villager, in his everyday economic, religious, and management activities, participates through such groups as the van, lien gia, or xtm, it is his wide circle of relatives and clan members, with whom he interacts, that influence the more personal aspects of his life and the circumstances surrounding the life crises such as birth, marriage, death and natural disaster. Marriage choice, ascribed social status, occupation, inheritance, residence, and the afterlife are all related to the system of kinship. As in other parts of Viet Nam, this system is undergoing change mainly due to such external influences as war, political turmoil, and modernization. In the pre-French and French eras, the village was more or less a self-contained unit with few outside influences. The majority of the villagers were illiterate; there were few contacts with provincial or national authorities.

Since 1945, however, there has been a conscious attempt, first by the Viet Minh and then by the Republic of Viet Nam, to stimulate changes in these rather isolated villages. Probably the major attention has been focused on evoking political awareness and a feeling of national identity, but, consequently, certain other ideas have filtered down to the peasant. Literacy has spread, schools have been built, some modern health facilities have been introduced, army recruitment and the civil guard have drawn people out of the villages,
and there is more inter-action between villages as a result of improvedoats and fishing techniques. These and other factors have had an ef-
fect on the traditional systems of kinship and marriage.

The changes that have taken place in these areas in Cậm An, how-
ever, appear to be changes only in emphasis or in the degree of adher-
ence to certain accepted principles. The forms of an (assumed) proto-
type still exist but the meanings, understandings, and related behavior
are not near-universally accepted phenomena. The remainder of this
chapter is an outline of the system of kinship and marriage in Cậm An
with emphasis on its changing character.

A. The Clan

A clan consists of people within or without the village who possess
the same surname. Members of a clan claim common descent from an unknown
ancestor and therefore consider themselves to be consanguineously re-
lated. For this reason, ideally, marriage is forbidden between members
of the same clan. There are a number of clan shrines in Cậm An and some
houses contain altars where the clan founder is venerated at an annual
ceremony. There is no clan chief and no hierarchy of families or lineages
within the clan.

Within the main clans are sub-clans. For example:

Trần is a main clan with three sub-clans:
  a. Trần-quang
  b. Trần-tài
  c. Trần-van

There is another main Trần clan completely different from the one
above, also having three sub-clans:
a. Trân-dinh
b. Trân-hiu
c. Trân-dục

The members of the sub-clans recognize a common clan ancestor and marriage between sub-clans is forbidden. Marriage, of course, is permitted between the two different "Trân" clans.

Women do not change their names at marriage so they remain in the clan of their birth throughout their lives. However, since descent is traced through the male, children become members of the fathers' clans.

The primary function of the clan is the regulation of marriage; it is considered incestuous to marry a member of one's own clan. However, an indication of the degree of awareness of clan membership or clan "identity" is reflected in the fact that, according to informants, as many as 10 percent of the marriages in Cam An may be between members of the same clan. Two reasons were given to explain this: a girl may become pregnant by a clan brother, thus forcing marriage, or the partners to a marriage may not know that they are members of the same clan. The latter usually occurs, of course, as a result of a "love" marriage and this is the reason why many elders in the community prefer arranged marriages. Formerly the partners to an incestuous marriage would be severely punished, but now it is overlooked.

In the case of marriage between members of the same clan, rumors and an awkward situation are avoided by temporarily changing the name of one of the partners on the marriage announcements and on the paper lanterns which are carried in front of the wedding procession. For
example, if Trần Van Lam marries a girl called Trần Thị Thuyệt, she may change her name to Nguyễn Thị Tuyệt. The relaxation of punishment and the easy means of circumscribing the incest rules may indicate a change from our (assumed) prototype of strict clan exogamy, but then possible there have always been devious means of breaching the taboo.

B. Lineage

Ideally, a clan is composed of a number of patri-lineages, but, in fact, true lineages do not exist. Although there is a strong patrilineal orientation, relations are recognized on both the paternal and maternal sides. Marriage is forbidden between relatives on both sides and both participate in celebrating the life crises and cooperating on various economic ventures. The patrilineal orientation in Cam An is only a matter of emphasis. For example, relatives on the paternal side are mourned for a longer period after death; more relatives from the paternal side are present at birth and marriage celebrations. The kinship terminology, too, reflects the patrilineal emphasis. The term người (insider), for example, appears as a suffix on a number of maternal referential terms (ông người - maternal grandfather; bà người - maternal grandmother), while paternal grandparents are called ông and bà nội or Mr. and Mrs. "Insider." This may or may not reflect an earlier lineage prototype.

At present, however, a Cam An fisherman lives in a relatively small hamlet surrounded by numerous "relatives." Kinship bonds are close and the relatives undoubtedly give the individual a sense of warmth and security. We were surprised to hear the average villager
list not only the names and relationships of distant relatives and their spouses, but also their occupations and the location of their living quarters. While the recognition of such a wide range of relatives upon whom the individual can rely in times of stress must have certain positive psychological ramifications, it also presents problems in a small and isolated community. Many informants expressed the fear of a son or daughter unwittingly marrying or falling in love with a relative. There is no doubt that the large number of "relatives" seriously limits the range of choice in marriage.

The functions of the kin group have been gradually declining through the years. According to informants, many of these functions have been taken over by neighbors and the van. For example, it was reported that years ago only relatives were invited to marriage ceremonies and relatives carried the coffin to the burial ground. Neighbors now attend these ceremonies and may perform or participate in them as they do in house and boat repair. They may also help in times of stress. In a small community where all of the people are engaged in a single occupation, where interdependency and mutual aid and trust are a necessity for existence, the importance of the kin group gives way to the primacy of the local group. Thus, the social fabric of Cam An is a composite of both familial and neighborhood relationships. The individual's social world consists of a number of "insiders", or relatives, and an even greater number of friendly "outsiders."
C. Marriage Patterns

Marriage in Côm An is contracted in a manner similar to that in other parts of Viet Nam—a mixture of arrangement and free choice. Contrary to our expectations, we did not find a sharp division between the old and the young as to which type of marriage contraction was preferable. Some among both the older and younger generation informants considered arranged marriages preferable, other leaned toward the free choice type.

Most agreed, however, that a combination of the two types is the form most commonly practiced. In all cases, they said, the parents are consulted for approval. A typical case was cited: if a boy sees a girl whom he thinks he would like to marry, he requests his parents to begin negotiations for her. The parents ask a go-between to approach the girl and her parents. If the latter agree, the boy's family brings alcoholic beverages and betel to the girl's house for the lê hoi or engagement ceremony. The boy must then perform groom service at the house of the bride-to-be for about two years. This might consist of house, boat or net repairing as well as fishing and related enterprises. When the service requirement is fulfilled, the marriage ceremony takes place and the bride moves to the house of her husband. Patrilocality is the ideal, but, in fact, residence is dependent upon a number of factors. If the bride is an only child, for example, the couple may live with her parents. In some cases, an eldest son remains with his parents, but in others, elder sons will build new houses and the youngest son will stay in the family home. There
The common lice inspection routine always attracts an audience.
are no clear-cut patterns but patrilocality is preferred in principle.

A widely expressed attitude relative to partner selection was that elders did not want to impose their preferences upon their children. One reason for this is that parents do not want to be blamed for a mismatch that might lead to quarreling and divorce. Thus, it is better for the children to choose their own mates, providing no relationship exists.

A number of people felt that the most important variable in marriage is age. "If the ages are not compatible," stated an old woman, "then the marriage cannot be expected to last." Another woman described the ideal daughter-in-law as "neither beautiful nor efficient, for I am not concerned with these qualities. To me, age is the most important thing in the choice of a daughter-in-law. If the ages of the boy and girl are right, the couple will be happy. I have four children, two boys and two girls, and all are happily married. I attribute this success to the careful selection of ages."

There is a high incidence of village endogamy in Cäm An. While the majority of marriages are between people who reside in Cäm An, it must be remembered that the present village is an amalgamation of four hamlets. In effect, then, marriage between people of Hamlet I and Hamlet II is considered by the people to be exogamous. From numerous interviews we arrived at the following estimates for hamlet or local endogamy:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hamlet</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hamlet I</td>
<td>60-70 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamlet II</td>
<td>60 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamlet III</td>
<td>50-60 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamlet IV</td>
<td>30-40 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The higher frequency of marriage within the hamlet in Hamlets I and II was to be expected since they are older settlements than Hamlet III.

Residents of the island hamlet of Tinh Hiệp (IV), with its small population, have a tradition of arranging marriages with people from the mainland hamlets. A number of marriage exchanges have taken place between Cắm An and the neighboring agricultural village of Cắm Hải. With places more distant, only three exchanges have been recorded: one each in Hợi An and Tam Kỳ in Quảng Nam province and one in Nha Trang in Khánh Hòa province.

Several reasons may account for the relatively high degree of hamlet exogamy. As mentioned earlier, marriage between relatives and people of the same clan is avoided. Age compatibility as determined by the local calendar reader is another limitation imposed on the small populations of the hamlets. Social status is also a factor governing the choice of mate. Generally, offspring of people of the same occupation tend to marry. In Cắm An, of course, since most people are fishermen, this fact may appear irrelevant, but social distinctions, determined by size of boat, type of house, and respect in the community, are maintained.

Divorce is rare but not unheard of in Cắm An. Informants related that sterility and concubinage are the major causes of marital friction. If, for example, a couple is married for two or three years without the wife bearing a child, the husband can return her to her parents. The husband then sends a notice to the village council explaining the separation. In cases where the wife has contributed materially to the household prosperity, she is entitled to half the property. If the
divorce is not due to sterility and there are children, the property is divided into three shares. The house is an exception to the sharing principle and remains with the husband since it is a shrine or center for ancestor veneration as well as a dwelling. Although concubinage is not common in Cam An, it has occurred frequently enough to be listed by informants as a major problem. One source indicated that separation usually results from a desire to avoid friction when the husband wants a concubine. In other cases, wives are willing to allow the husbands the prerogative of a second wife and separation or divorce is unnecessary. Ordinarily, a concubine maintains her own household and does not live with the first wife.

As in many other societies, concubinage is a practice of the wealthy, the poor being unable to support more than one woman or family at a time. According to female informants, concubinage causes disputes and disrupts village harmony. Often the wife goes to the home of a concubine and insults her. Neighbors, elders, and the xóm or van chiefs interfere at this point to attempt a reconciliation between the two women. Male informants defended the concubinage system, stating, "if there is no polygamy how can the society solve the problem of widows and surplus women in the village? Besides, many government officials have many wives--why should they forbid us?"

D. The Life Cycle

This section consists of two parts: (1) a composite view of the life cycle abstracted from a number of interviews, and (2) a brief life history of one villager. Details of child training, weaning, and
The people of Cảm An are born in the village, grow up there, marry another Cảm An resident, and die at the place of their birth. Life is hard and monotonous, the only excitement being an occasional trip to Hội An for a movie, or several months spent on the open sea where fishermen might come into contact with people from other fishing villages. Young people fall in love, get married, have children and fall into the general pattern of the fisherman's life.

A month after a child is born, the parents celebrate Cảm tháng or Khâm tháng (a full month). Both close and distant relatives may attend this ceremony. From the time a child is old enough to walk until he is about eight years old, he is free to roam about the village. At about eight the child begins school and his education continues, sporadically, for several years (see Section E). When boys reach the age of 12 or 13, they begin to learn fishing skills. It is at this time too, that children of the opposite sex stop playing together and become somewhat shy in each other's presence. Girls begin to bleach their teeth at about 17 years, the first indication of an interest in beauty. The ideal marriage age for women is from 18 to 22 and for men from 20 to 24. In practice, however, the marriage age is older—from 25 to 27 for men and from 20 to 24 for women.

It is said that at marriage a couple reaches adulthood. It is then that the never ending quest for food and other manifestations of a decent livelihood begin. Children are born and the couple grows old. Such traditional Vietnamese celebrations at ages 60 (lục tuần) or 70
(thất tuân) are not held because, villagers said, can an people are too poor. Finally, old people fall ill and turn to native medicines and prayer for the elimination of the evil spirits. When a death occurs, the children and other relatives mourn and arrange for the funeral. On the third, seventh, 21st, 49th, and 100th days after death, relatives honor the spirit of the dead family member. Each year, on the anniversary of a death, the family members and relatives gather to venerate and celebrate a feast for the deceased.

The following story was told by the 46-year-old chief of Hamlet I:

"I was born here in this hamlet. My parents were poor fishermen. When I was about 12 years old, I started to learn written Chinese for two years and I studied written Vietnamese for one year. Now, I can only write a few simple Chinese characters. During that time I had to help the family by performing menial tasks such as sweeping the house, boiling rice, and looking after the babies. At the age of 15 I became sick, but fortunately I recovered without taking any medicines except some herbs gathered by my mother. The illness was caused, people said, because my grandfather's tomb was not properly maintained. After that I started going to sea where I met my wife.

"We were married when I was 22 years old. We have had six children, but only two have survived. Our first child was born 17 years ago, and we now have a nine year old daughter who attends the village school. We pay 10 piasters a month for her tuition. The other surviving child is a three year old boy. When we got married my wife came to live in my father's house which is this one. My father was killed by the Viet Cong many years ago. My mother still lives here, but she runs the small shop next door during the day. Before we married, I had to lam re (groom service) at the house of my wife's parents for two years. During this time I could not talk to her or even meet her. I had to help my father-in-law build his house, and we built a new boat, too.

"I courted my wife by talking to her, and exchanging betel and tobacco. We rarely held hands and I did not kiss her before we were married. During the lam re I often watched her to see if she could cook and manage a house. When children were born I did not sleep with my wife for three or sometimes
five months afterwards. (Why?) It is not good to sleep with a woman too soon after she has given birth to a baby. Besides, the sight of a pale, weak, ugly wife after childbirth is repulsive to me. (The wife was present at the interview.)

"We are not afraid of dying, but we are constantly worried about starvation. We hope our children will fare better than we have in the fishing business."

E. Child Training

Because Cam An is a fishing village, the division of labor in the family and between the sexes is not as sharp as it is in agricultural villages or in towns and cities. Men are often seen carrying babies about the village and "sitting" with older children. These men, when asked about their occupation, state they are unemployed; their wives support the family while they take care of the household chores and tend to the children. Women substitute for men in offshore fishing; they mend nets, paddle boats, and help in boat repair. Older children sometimes engage in river fishing, net mending and various household chores such as carrying water and baby sitting. Thus, individuals of both sexes, representing many age groups, generally participate in the same wide-ranging, interchangeable activities.

The lack of adult specialization with regard to sex and age is reflected in the generalized nature of the childhood period. Because adults are busy earning a living, children spend the majority of the working hours in unsupervised play. Space is limited in the village and the open houses are situated close together. With the adults at work and the weather usually fine, the children from a cluster of houses arise in the morning, carry their breakfasts out onto the
streets and plots surrounding the houses and begin the daily play. Interestingly, the play is conducted within the confines of the built up areas and along the river inlet, not on the beautiful, sandy beaches of the South China Sea.

The play groups include children of both sexes from the age of four up to about 11 or 12. There are no divisions by sex and little by age in the schools, and there is no differentiation by dress. Both girls and boys wear shorts, if they wear anything at all, until the age of seven or eight when the girls don white overblouses and sometimes the black, pajama-like trousers.

After weaning, the father spends about as much time with the children as the mother, but neither is with them a great deal except when sleeping. Discipline under these circumstances is difficult. A village school teacher complained: "they aren't too bad in school, but when they get out of class, they don't care about discipline any more. They behave like little devils." On numerous occasions during our time in the village, we had the opportunity to witness futile attempts by adults to control children's behavior. Invariably, verbal advice, instructions, and orders went unheeded. Usually these would be repeated several times and then the adult would either give up or administer a sound beating to the errant child. The child training pattern, as we observed it, appeared to be one of extreme permissiveness sometimes followed by brief periods of severe physical punishment.

Weaning begins relatively late, a fact which may signal the permissiveness of later childhood. In principle, weaning begins at about
18 months but it is common to see a child of three or four years being breast fed by his mother in addition to his regular diet. Usually, a mother stops breast feeding a child when she becomes pregnant again. However, this is not always true. Sometimes she may exercise more care in the diet of her first child and not wean him even while pregnant again. Intermediate children may be breast fed for a shorter period and the last baby for a longer time.

Birth control and the spacing of babies are of little concern to the mothers of Cam An. Children are considered to be "gifts of the gods" which cannot be refused. Modern devices of birth control are, of course, unknown. Although we heard some complaints about too many children, the general attitude of the villager, despite the hard life, is that it is better to have many children than none at all. Furthermore, since the infant mortality rate is high and childhood diseases often fatal because of the lack of medical knowledge and facilities, a woman must give birth to several children to be sure one will survive. Life expectancy is not high and despite the large number of pregnancies, the rate of annual population increase is low. Almost half of the population--3,110 out of a total 6,491--is under 17 years of age.

The period of childhood permissiveness and irresponsibility for both sexes ends rather abruptly between the ages of 12 and 15. During this time, both boys and girls are taught to paddle boats, fish in the river and along the coast, and repair nets. In addition, girls learn to cook and do general household work such as cake making, baby
Babies spend most of the day in hanging baskets where mothers can easily watch them.
sitting and shrimp fishing. The biggest sexual division of labor in the village takes place when the boys begin deep sea fishing at about 15 years of age. The period of adolescence is cut short and boys begin to participate in strictly adult, male work. Adult behavior patterns are learned through direct observation and experience in an adult group. It is at this time too, when the psychological distinctions occur between male and female. Members of the two sexes begin to avoid each other and a reserve and shyness develops in their relationships which continues until marriage when both finally assume their adult roles in the community.

F. Formal Education

The people of Cảm An place little importance on formal education. In recent years, however, they have wanted their children trained to read and write Vietnamese. Illiteracy has long been a problem in Vietnam and a government literacy campaign has been underway for several years. This has increased the villagers' awareness of the problem and, in Cảm An, has resulted in greater attention being paid to reading and writing. However, because of poor school facilities, lack of competent teachers, and most important, because of the need for youth to begin earning a living at an early age, formal education exceeding one or two years is deemed unnecessary. Because of this attitude, school enrollment is not high and absenteeism is prevalent.

Formal education is provided in the thôn or hamlet schools. Thôn III has three elementary schools: a public three-year school, and a semi-public and private school, both of which offer only a
two-year course. The public school is controlled and financed by the village council.

The semi-public school was built by the thôn residents five years ago. The teacher is a 29-year old native of the thôn who has taught at the school since it was inaugurated. He was appointed by the village council and receives VN$ 1,000 per month, VN$ 700 from the village council and VN$ 300 from student fees. As with other local officials, he had not received the portion of his income which comes from the village budget for several months prior to our visit. He, his wife, and his three children depend upon the wife's earnings from a small shop. The teacher has a primary school education (five years), enough to qualify him to teach the first and second grades. The semi-public school is under the supervision of the principal of the Cam An village primary school located in Thôn II. Each month the teacher submits a report to the principal concerning salary, enrollment, and school conditions. He meets twice monthly with the principal and all other thôn teachers for political education and training. He says there are 250 school age children in Thôn III, 85 of whom are enrolled in his school. Two-thirds are boys ranging in ages from six to 11. School hours are from 8:30-11 a.m. and from 2:30-5 p.m. The school is closed Thursdays and Sundays and classes meet only in the morning on Saturdays. First grade students pay VN$ 5 per month tuition and second grade students, VN$ 10.

The private school is operated by a Thôn III resident who received two years of secondary education in Hội An. She supports her
husband who remains at home with the children. The school's fees vary from VN$ 20 to VN$ 30 per student per month and the enrollment, at most, is 80 students in three classes, depending on the season. From the first to the seventh lunar month, school attendance is good but during the remaining months (the offshore fishing season), enrollment and attendance drop. The private school teacher's average monthly income is about VN$ 1,500. This, of course, depends upon student fees which sometimes come in installments or not at all. She confesses that fee collection is a problem but she says nothing to parents for fear of antagonizing them and having the children taken out of school altogether. She holds classes in her home from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. without a break.

One incentive for sending children to school, it was reported, is to keep them out of trouble. Delinquent children are said to have been "playing in the sun too much." While the teacher is an important influence in the training of children who attend school, education is not considered to be the teacher's primary responsibility. This, teachers believe, is the reason for poor attendance and the difficulties encountered in discipline and the learning process.

G. Kinship Terminology

Although there are some differences in usage, kinship terminology employed in Càm An and other parts of Viet Nam is quite similar. Because of the scarcity of data in English on this subject, we have included a listing and discussion of the terminological usages in Càm An. To the reader not interested in this type of reference information, it
it is suggested that he skip the final section of this chapter and proceed to Chapter IV.

Vietnamese kinship terms display certain regularities based upon generation. For example, in the fourth ascending generation, tổ is a common prefix for members of the affinal as well as consanguinal group; in the third ascending generation it is nội, and in the second ông. The term ngoại, "outsider," indicates members of the affinal, and nội, "insider," members of the consanguineal group. The terms are used not only for members of ascending generations, but also might be employed to distinguish cross-cousins on the paternal or maternal sides. Cross and parallel cousins are terminologically distinct.

The following tables and charts are listings of terms collected in Cẩm An. Analysis of the terminological system will appear in later publications. The Chinese characters are listed for possible use in comparison with other East Asian terminologies.

Terms used for the dead and for ceremonial purposes, such as inscriptions on tombs and altar tablets, differ from those in common use:

| FF   | Thành tổ khảo            | 祖考            |
| F    | Hiện tổ khảo            | 廢考            |
| S    | Hiện khảo               | 長子            |
| S (2nd) | Trưởng tử             | 次子            |
| S (3rd) | Thự tử               | 子            |
| S (4th) | Mạnh tử              | 尾子            |
| S (last) | Trọng tử             | 子            |
### TABLE I. VERTICAL TERMINOLOGY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENERATION</th>
<th>CONSANGUINE</th>
<th>AFFINE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>FFFF</td>
<td>Tồ phụ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>FFF</td>
<td>Cố ông</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>FF</td>
<td>Ông nội</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Cha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>EGO</td>
<td>EGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>Con</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>Châu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>SSS</td>
<td>Chát</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE II. HORIZONTAL TERMINOLOGY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generation</th>
<th>Consanguine</th>
<th>Affined</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>FFFF o.B.</td>
<td>Dương Bá</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FFFF y.B.</td>
<td>Dương Thúc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FFFF Si.</td>
<td>Tỗ Cô</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>FFF o.B.</td>
<td>Cô Bá</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FFF y.B.</td>
<td>Cô Thúc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FFF o.So.</td>
<td>Cùng-cô-tì</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FFF y.Si.</td>
<td>Cùng-cô-mũi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>FF o.B.</td>
<td>Ông nội bà</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FF y.B.</td>
<td>Ông nội thục (chú)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FF Si.</td>
<td>Bà cô</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>F o. B.</td>
<td>Bác</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F y. B.</td>
<td>Chú</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F Si.</td>
<td>Cô</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table II. HORIZONTAL TERMINOLOGY (Cont'd)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6th generation</th>
<th>5th generation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S.</td>
<td>EGO o.B. Dong Huy Linh (anh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.</td>
<td>EGO y.B. Dong Huy Linh (em)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.s.</td>
<td>EGO o.Si. Chi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.s.</td>
<td>EGO y.Si. Em</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7th generation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S.s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.s.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8th generation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Chinese counting for 8th and 9th generations.
Fictive kinship terminology is also employed in the village. When it is believed that a child is difficult to rear, for example, father is called dũng (mother's sister's husband), chú (father's younger brother), or tía (a Cham term). Under these circumstances the mother is referred to as đị (mother's sister) or thím (father's younger brother's wife). Following is a list of fictive terms used in Căm An.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anh</td>
<td>Refers to a man older than the person speaking or to whom one gives a nominal kind of respect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chị</td>
<td>The same as above but applied to women.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chú</td>
<td>Indicates someone inferior in age or in social status. It sometimes also refers to someone of one's father's generation, but younger than one's father.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cô</td>
<td>Could be used to refer to a lady younger in age or lower in social status, or to a sister of one's father.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Côu</td>
<td>Refers to a young man but of high birth, learned or appearing learned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ông</td>
<td>Refers to a gentleman, a term of respect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bà</td>
<td>Used to indicate an old lady, or a lady belonging to a high social class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cu</td>
<td>Refers to an old gentleman, a very respectful term.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nghị</td>
<td>An extremely respectful term used to indicate a religious man or a national leader. When used, the proper name is avoided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thầy</td>
<td>A priest (Buddhist), a school teacher, a learned man, master.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Người</td>
<td>A religious man or a national leader.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cha</td>
<td>Used to indicate a Catholic father.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cô</td>
<td>Refers to a very old man, or to a bishop.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In Viet Nam, men usually have three names. For example, Trần could be a surname, Văn the middle name, and Lan the personal name. Sometimes the middle name is a part of the surname and cannot be changed. Trần-Văn, for example, is a sub-clan of the Trần clan. Therefore, Văn is an integral part of the name. Women also have three names. In the name Võ Thị Phúc, Thị indicates a female but there has been a tendency in recent years for women to forgo the female classifier and substitute a name of beauty. Võ Thị Phúc then, might become Võ Hồng Phúc ("Pink Happiness" instead of "Miss Happiness"). Another alternative is to maintain the classifier while adding a name as in Võ Thị Hồng Phúc. Women usually use their own family or clan name after marriage.

Two genealogies were obtained in Cẩm An (see Charts A and B). These not only indicate kinship relationships, but also occupations and localities. On Chart A, the informant recited the information without reference to the gia phả or family book. The first of the
12 generations lived in the 36th year of Câṇh Hùng, or the middle of the 17th century. The informant, Phạm Hiền, was a member of the ninth generation. On Chart A, it should be noted that middle names are dropped or changed but on Chart B, Văn, as the name of the sub-clan, remains the same from one generation to the next.
THE INFORMATION FOR THIS CHART WAS GIVEN BY A BOAT OWNER, AGED ABOUT 54, WELL VERSED IN CHINESE CLASSICS; HE IS AN IMMIGRANT TO CAM-AN AND HAS SERVED AS VILLAGE CLERK. HE NOW LIVES IN HAMLET II. HE COULD NOT REMEMBER THE NAME OF HIS GRAND FATHER'S BROTHER'S WIFE OR THE GRAND MOTHER'S BROTHER'S WIFE. FOR OTHER NAMES HE HAD TO REFER TO THE FAMILY BOOK. BELOW ARE NAMES OF 5 GENERATIONS WITH TWO ASCENDING AND TWO DESCENDING.

1st GENERATION

2nd GENERATION

3rd GENERATION

4th GENERATION

5th GENERATION

N.B. (1) = First wife
(2) = Second wife
REPRESENTATIONAL TERMINOLOGY

- Co'ba
- Co'ong
- Ong bac
- Ong noi
- Ba noi
- Ong ngoai
- Ba ngoai
- Ong
- Boc
- Bac gai
- Chu
- Thim
- Cha
- Me
- Yb
- Ob
- Ong
- Ho ngoai
- Ho noi
- Dao
- Chau
- Con
- Con gai
- Con trai
- Chau noi
- Chau dau
- Chat noi
- Chat dau
- Chut
- Chut doi
- Chut re'

Diagram showing family relationships with symbols for different terms.
Religion and associated beliefs and ceremonies are an integral part of everyday life in Cam An. Therefore, it would be presumptuous to pretend to do more than outline some of the more important features of this aspect of village culture. Some attempt has been made to ferret out and conceptualize the various beliefs and practices for purposes of exposition. For example, we distinguish between Buddhism, or a so-called Great Tradition, and whale veneration, or a Little Tradition; we separate hamlet or territorial ceremonies, such as the dinh rites, from individual ceremonies of exorcising evil spirits. It must be emphasized, however, that these discriminations are the writer’s means of slicing the totality of the religious life of the fisherman for purposes of understanding and clarity. They in no way reflect the world view of the villager who is engaged in a precarious occupation, the success or failure of which depends upon "correct" religious and ritualistic behavior regardless of category.

The peasant lives in a world of natural phenomena—birth, death, sickness, natural disaster; he exists from day to day, continually fighting starvation and death. His world is filled with spirits, ghosts and gods, both evil and benign, who influence the course of natural events and survival itself. It would be incorrect to say that he attempts to manipulate events or control the spirits and
gods. Rather, he worships, venerates or exorcises the latter by practicing "correct" rituals. The fisherman's home contains an elaborate Buddhist altar in its center; he venerates his ancestors, worships the whale and the Goddess of the Elements; he consults a fortune teller to learn auspicious dates for fishing, marriage, and many other tasks and events; he prays to the hamlet genie and clan founders for protection, and he exorcises evil spirits through numerous symbolic acts. Buddhism, animism, ancestor worship, and other such sophisticated classifications are not meaningful distinctions to the villager. In a whale ceremony described below, for example, elements of all of these are found. There are numerous entities from whom protection is sought—the whale, the clan founders, Buddha, the village genie. The world of the unknown is more complex than the realm of the known.

In the discussion that follows, religious beliefs and practices are divided according to their association primarily with the group, the ancestors, or the individual. Catholicism, which has recently been introduced, is treated separately.

A. Group Practices

In Viet Nam, as in other parts of Asia, a rather clear distinction can be made among group, ancestor and individual religious behavior. Group practices encompass the local territorial group—a hamlet or village—whereas the other two center about the family, relatives, and the dead. In Cẩm An, three "cults" exist which are associated with the well-being of the hamlet: The Whale, the Princess of the Elements, and the Đính Genie.