**Recognising Taiwan**

**1949 Migration and Development of Taiwan Society (1949-1996)**

By Ph.D. Huai-jen WANG

Abstract

Generally speaking, people think that the living conditions of the new area will be better, and then they decide to migrate there to live or to work. Overall, in the theory, the factors of migration could be divided into individual factors and structural factors. However, no matter which part, the evolution of post migration in the society should be seen as one of the effects on the development of immigrant society.

Around the year of 1949, there were over 1.2 million of the Chinese people who migrated from Mainland China to Taiwan. In general, most of the cases in this moving behavior were caused by the structural, political and civil-war factors which pushed these people to carry out “the great migration”. Due to these immigrants who moved into Taiwan accounted for a considerable proportion of the population, they formatted an ethnic group so-called “mainlanders” after they settled down in Taiwan society.

Before recognising Taiwan, it would be helpful to understand the recent history of this island first. Therefore, this paper attempts to focus on the post migration of Taiwan around 1949 to review and explore the development of Taiwan society in the second half of the 20th century. It also discusses the roles of immigrants in the political, economic, and social development of Taiwan. The time frame of this research is limited between the year of 1949 when the Nationalist government shifted to Taiwan and the year of 1996 when the direct presidential election was the first time held in Taiwan, Republic of China.

**Keywords：migration, Taiwan, immigrant, ethnic group, mainlanders**

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