

# From Being Displaced to Becoming Deeply-rooted: The Migratory History of the Li Family Between Burma, Macau, and Taiwan

Li, Hao-Tsung

In 1937, the Second Sino-Japanese War broke out. In evasion of the war, my family (the Lis) fled from Xinhui of Guangdong Province, China, to Myanmar and was based in the Chinatown of Yangon, spending more than 20 years there. However, after the 1962 Myanmar coup d'état, the Ne Win administration attempted to establish Myanmar as a socialist state under “the Myanmar Way to Socialism” ideology, implementing a series of “nationalization” policies. Meanwhile, the escalating anti-Chinese sentiment all over Myanmar dramatically impacted the steady life of the Li family, who ended up living in plights. Under the unsettling circumstances, my grandfather Li Xue-Hu planned to send his descendants to their “motherland” Taiwan for their education, hoping they could thereby settle down and get on with their life.

Subsidized and assisted by the U.S. aid program, the ROC government had drafted and enacted many regulations regarding overseas ethnic Chinese students studying in Taiwan since the 1950s, thus laying the sound foundation for the future education system for overseas ethnic Chinese students in Taiwan and also providing the Li family, who was being deeply impacted by the anti-Chinese sentiment in Myanmar and invoking the protection of the “motherland”, with a favorable opportunity at that time. Despite the partial completion of the whole migration plan due to the chaotic background and the decease of Li Xue-Hu, the Lis have currently scattered and been rooted in different places such as Taiwan, Macau, and the U.S.

By scrutinizing the whole migratory history, we can discover that the Lis are a

family with an intense migratory character. Whenever any significant change occurred in the world, compelled by reality, the Li family managed to make the most advantageous decision, with their strategies greatly influenced by Burmese people's attitude to Chinese and the vicissitudes between the PRC government and the ROC government on the policy of overseas ethnic Chinese affairs. Therefore, this dissertation attempts to present the overview and lifestyle of Burmese Chinese in the Chinatown to the Taiwanese public through the study of the Li family's history, further visualizing and understanding the Burmese Chinese community through the exploration of the complex transnational migration.

**Keyword:** Xinhui of Guangdong Province, family history, transnational migration, Burmese Chinese, Burmese Chinese students, policy of overseas ethnic Chinese education, national identity