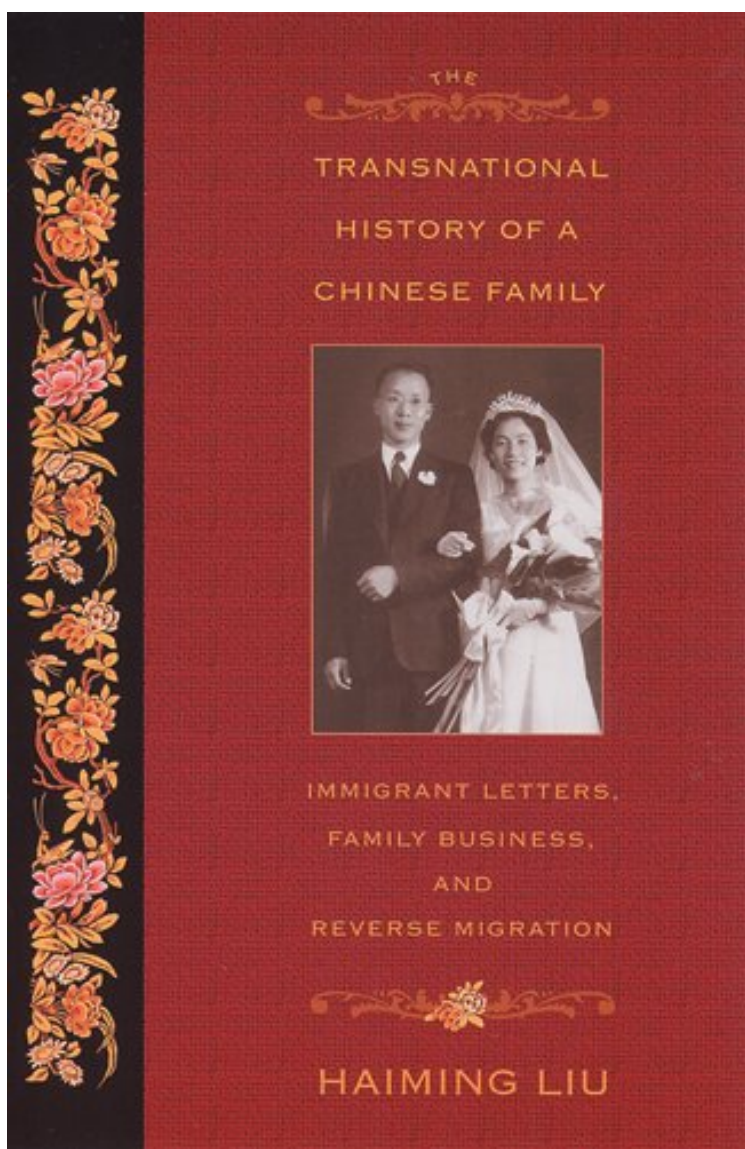


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The Transnational History of a Chinese Family: Immigrant Letters, Family Business, and Reverse Migration

Haiming Liu

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Haiming Liu : The Transnational History of a Chinese Family: Immigrant Letters, Family Business, and Reverse Migration before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised

The Transnational History of a Chinese Family: Immigrant Letters, Family Business, and Reverse Migration:

Family and home are one word in the Chinese language. Family can be separated and home may be relocated, but *jia* remains intact. It signifies a system of mutual obligation, lasting responsibility, and cultural values. This strong yet flexible sense of kinship has enabled many Chinese immigrant families to endure long physical separation and accommodate continuities and discontinuities in the process of social mobility. Based on an analysis of over three thousand family letters and other primary sources, including recently released immigration files from the National Archives and Records Administration, Haiming Liu presents a remarkable transnational history of a Chinese family from the late nineteenth century to the 1970s. For three generations, the family lived between the two worlds. While the immigrant generation worked hard in an herbalist business and asparagus farming, the younger generation crossed back and forth between China and America, pursuing proper education, good careers, and a meaningful life during a difficult period of time for Chinese Americans. When social instability in China and hostile racial environment in America prevented the family from being rooted in either side of the Pacific, transnational family life became a focal point of their social existence. This well-documented and illustrated family history makes it clear that, for many Chinese immigrant families, migration does not mean a break from the past but the beginning of a new life that incorporates and transcends dual national boundaries. It convincingly shows how transnationalism has become a way of life for Chinese American families.