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# From Canton to California: The Epic of Chinese Immigration

*Corinne K. Hoexter*

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**Corinne K. Hoexter : From Canton to California: The Epic of Chinese Immigration** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised From Canton to California: The Epic of Chinese Immigration:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Very informative bookBy J. CheeI learned alot from this book. The author did a great job of providing descriptive accounts of how Chinese Immigrants experience in California.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Why did the Cantonese come and not the Malaysians, etc?By Mary MekkoIt is almost forty years since this book was published.The city of San Francisco is now close to 50% Chinese ethnics and the mayor is Ed Lee, uncle of the woman who owns Uber. Could anyone have foretold this transformation in 1800's? Indeed they did. They already numbered close to 5,000 men in the 1850's. There were many Americans and Europeans and Chileans and Australians alarmed at their ever increasing immigration and subsequent depression of wages for working people. They were considered a danger to the morals and sanitation and cultural integrity of this new American city. Many wrote against them and predicted that the entire west coast of USA could be inundated with the sheet numbers of them in Asia. So the future was clear.Full of details about the real life of the male chinese peasants who came to the new world port of San Francisco to escape the misery of the tai ping rebellion back in Canton, the story of their struggles and alienation in a European Christian rough and tough environment is well told. Their determination to work and save and live as cheaply as possible so that they could eventually return home to their real world put them at a big advantage over other ethnic groups. They came as single men, whether married or single,

and did not intend to stay and raise families. Women were not brought along except those captured for the concubine industry rampant in every American Chinatown. Their main vices were gambling and opium smoking yet they mainly avoided the law and trouble by using their fong and tong organizations for protection. They lived within high wooden walls of old Chinatown to avoid getting attacked. Yet their ongoing perseverance in the face of hostility won the day. They were recognized by the middle and upper class homeowners and business owners as good and sober workers. The working class's may have resented them as competition for wages. They worked for less and were very quick and reliable in performing duties. Much of the resentment against them was determined by the outside person's class level. Black labor was pushed out as well as European immigrants' labor by their downward push on wages. House servants in particular were pushed out by cheap chinese male labor as seen in old movies. What is missing somehow in this book is the real chinese point of view. The author is a good historian and researcher but it is of course written by and for the nonChinese. What we need to hear more of these days is the real chinese voices of California. Yet they remain wise in keeping their heads down and true opinions to themselves in dealing with big noses. I would too! The book almost has a more naive and historical feeling to it at this point in time as China rises up as a nation. I do recommend it for those interested in gold rush history and railroad building.

A history of the Chinese in the United States from their early days in California to the present, including the biography of Dr. Ng Poon Chew, who, as editor of the first Chinese language newspaper in the United States became a leader of all Chinese Americans.