



Chinese in the Woods: Logging and Lumbering in the American West (The Asian American Experience)

Sue Fawn Chung

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Though recognized for their work in the mining and railroad industries, the Chinese also played a critical role in the nineteenth-century lumber trade. Sue Fawn Chung continues her meticulous examination of the impact of Chinese immigrants on the American West by bringing to life the tensions, towns, and lumber camps of the Sierra Nevada during a boom period of economic expansion.

Chinese workers, like whites, labored as woodcutters and flume-herders, lumberjacks and loggers. Exploding the myth of the Chinese as a docile and cheap labor army, Chung shows Chinese laborers earned wages similar to those of non-Asians. Men working as camp cooks, among other jobs, could even make more. At the same time, she draws on archives and archaeology to reconstruct everyday existence, offering evocative portraits of camp living, small town life, personal and work relationships, and the production and technical aspects of a dangerous trade.

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