

The Study of the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association of Washington, D. C., 1951-2000

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The Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association (CCBA) is “the supreme organization” of Chinese American society around the United States over one hundred years. In the situation of racial discrimination and segregation, it had protected Chinese from the outside world and administrated Chinese as a government. The leadership of CCBA is usually controlled by Cantonese who is the earliest arrival of all Chinese groups of the United States. The composition of Chinese which changes with the conditions of politic, society, law and so on influences each CCBA with time. Some of them decline and some stop working, but the CCBA of San Francisco and New York City, two most notable of all CCBA, still keep running and controlled by Cantonese. However, there is a special one called “Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association of Washington, D. C.” which have little attention of scholars. It is not only younger than others, it was established in 1950s, but also have some non-Cantonese Chinese members who join the leadership.

From the perspective of Washington’s Chinese history, this study will discuss that why Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association of Washington, D. C have different history. First of all, this study argues that Washington’s special political and social conditions which affect by the Federal Government lets “Tong,” the secret society, modernize so that is able to control the leadership of Washington’s Chinese, and had delayed the established time of CCBA. Second, CCBA retain the Tong’s property, so it is not only have well-educated leaders but able to follow the development of Chinese American history to admit other Chinese group to its leadership.

Keywords : Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association, Washington, Chinatown, Chinese Association