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The Chinese in the West Indies, 1806-1995: A Documentary History

Walton Look Lai

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In the first seven chapters, nearly all the documents are 'official', generated by government agencies or officers. Colonial Office correspondence and papers, reports of Immigrations Department officials and British agents in South China, reports and papers of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commission in London, Parliamentary Papers these are the main sources from which Look Lai chooses his extracts . . . But in chapters 8 and 9, which deal with the post-indenture Chinese after 1870, and the free immigration starting around 1890, the type of documentation changes. The Chinese were no longer the responsibility of any governmental agency and their arrival and subsequent activities generated little official documentation. In these chapters, Look Lai relies on non-official sources . . . Although the documentary extracts do not go beyond 1950, the family biographies have been updated to the early 1990s. They are based on personal interviews with, or written accounts by, elderly family members.

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