

British Abolitionists' Attempts to Prevent the Immigration of Chinese to Brazil in the Late Nineteenth Century

Os esforços dos abolicionistas britânicos contra a imigração de chineses para o Brasil no final do século XIX

HENRIQUE ANTONIO RÉ¹ <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-9527-495X>

¹Universidade de São Paulo

Avenida Professor Lineu Prestes, 338, Cidade Universitária,
São Paulo, SP, 05.508-000, Brasil

henrique.re@usp.br

ABSTRACT The article explores the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society's attempts in the 1870s and 1880s to stop the Brazilian government's 'scheme' to bring Chinese workers to the country. These efforts indicate that the question of slavery extrapolated national boundaries and confirms that Britain acted directly against Brazilian slavery until its final moments.

KEYWORDS Chinese immigration; Mission to China; British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society

RESUMO O artigo explora a atuação da British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, entre as décadas de 1870 e 1880, contra o "esquema" do governo brasileiro para introduzir trabalhadores chineses no país. Essa atuação indica que a questão escravista extrapolava os limites nacionais e confirma que a Grã-Bretanha agiu diretamente contra escravidão brasileira até seus últimos momentos.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE imigração chinesa, Missão à China, British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society

Received: 19 Apr. 2018 | Reviewed by the author: 24 June 2018 | Accepted: 10 July 2018

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/0104-87752018000300010>

Varia Historia, Belo Horizonte, vol. 34, n. 66, p. 817-848, set/dez 2018



Between the end of the 1870s and the middle of the following decade, due to the reduction in the number of slave workers and the perception that slavery was inexorably reaching its end, the Brazilian government, supported by groups of plantation owners, tried to introduce Chinese immigrants as a form of supply the insatiable labor market. For this reason, a 'China Mission' was dispatched with the aim of negotiating a treaty to allow these workers come to the country.

Chinese immigration was far from being a consensus in Brazilian society at the time. A large part of the press fought against the idea, as well as some politicians, writers, and even plantation owners. Machado de Assis, for example, on the occasion of the visit of a Chinese representative to Rio, wrote two columns mocking the introduction of the Chinese. According to him, recent experiences had proven that the chimpanzee had been shown to be a better substitute than the Chinese and would not contribute to racial bastardization, since they did not cross with any other races (Assis, 1997, vol. 3, pp.419-422). Numerous factors therefore appear to have competed to frustrate the introduction of Chinese workers. Indeed, Brazilian historiography has already looked at this question from various angles.

This article intends to point to the efforts of British abolitionists, especially the members of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society (BFASS), to combat the introduction of Chinese workers to Brazil.

Becoming aware of the subject, BFASS pressurized the Chinese and British authorities to adopt measures aimed at preventing the arrival of these immigrants. It also denounced in its official periodical, the *Anti-Slavery Reporter* (hereafter the *Reporter*), the Brazilian government's 'scheme,' in addition to divulging the principal actions which its Committee had adopted to frustrate this traffic of workers.¹

1 On various occasions, BFASS used the word *scheme* to refer to the Brazilian government's actions to import Chinese workers. According to the Cambridge dictionary, *scheme* refers to an officially organized plan with *devious* objectives. Since this definition suits the Brazilian government's actions, it will be used to designate them. Cf. *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary*. Third Edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008. (electronic version).

In exploring BFASS's actions against the introduction of Chinese, the principal objective of the article is to help fill a historiographic gap, since the efforts made by this organization in this episode are practically unknown. Although contemporaries knew that BFASS was fighting the introduction of Chinese, and this was divulged in the Senate and the press, the historiography only mentions these passages, but it never duly explains the actions carried out by British abolitionists.

The principal sources used were the reports published in the *Reporter* and the letters which the Secretary of BFASS received from foreign correspondents, currently preserved in Rhodes House Library, in Oxford.² Also drawn on are the letters sent by the head of the China Mission, Eduardo Callado, to the Brazilian Mission of Foreign Affairs, recently published by the Alexandre de Gusmão Foundation.

These episodes demonstrate that the British anti-slavery movement, through BFASS, combated Brazilian slavery until its final moments. They also indicated that Brazilian decisions about slavery were not exclusively taken based on the domestic political and economic context. Clearly, as it is hoped that the following passages demonstrate, this was a question of a global nature, which involved American, European, and Asian interests.

THE CHINESE ALTERNATIVE

The replacement of slave or servile labor was a constant concern in Brazil since colonial times. While the allocation of indigenous peoples and Africans was practicable, the preference was to use these two groups. In the nineteenth century, with the rise of the British anti-slavery policy and a series of internal factors, Brazilian authorities and owners began to consider the possibility of also using Asian labor, especially Chinese.

2 The author would like to thank Lucy MacCann, archivist at the Bodleian Library, for the kindness and swiftness with which he was helped.

In Brazil, *Chins*, as the Chinese were referred to, first arrived in the reign of João VI. It was intended to develop the cultivation of tea through techniques brought from China. Although this was a failure, due to its objectives it cannot be considered a test of the introduction of Asian labor to replace African slaves. Nevertheless, there are records of other arrivals of Chinese, especially in the 1820s. Travelers' descriptions from the middle of the century record the degrading situation of these immigrants and suggest that the number of Chinese arriving in Brazil at this time was not insignificant.³ The historiography has already mapped these arrivals and calculated the number of Chinese immigrants who arrived in the country in the nineteenth century (Yang, 1977, p.421; Conrad, 1975, p.42; Dezem, 2005, p.48-51; Neves; Guimarães; Ferreira, 2010, p.66-75; Peres, 2016, p.86-89).

However, only with the end of the Transatlantic slave trade in the 1850s did Chinese immigration really present itself as an alternative for the replacement of African slave labor. Between 1855 and 1856, Brazilian introduced some shipments of these workers. Official reports attribute the failure of this initiative to those responsible for recruitment, who were not concerned with the quality of workers, concerning themselves solely with "gathering the individuals necessary for shipment." Blame for the failure also fell on employers, who treated these Chinese "as if they were African slaves".⁴

The fiasco of the initiative did not dishearten those interested in bringing Chinese to Brazil, amongst other reasons because they had no other option, since the ill-fated attempts to establish partnerships with European immigrants had practically closed doors to this alternative at

3 RIBEYROLLES, Charles. *O Brasil pitoresco*, vol. 1. Belo Horizonte; São Paulo: Itatiaia; Edusp, 1980. p.207; SANTOS, Luiz Gonçalves dos. *Memórias para servir à história do Reino do Brasil*, vol. 1. Rio de Janeiro: Zélio Valverde, 1943. p.331.

4 *Relatorio apresentado á Assembléa Geral Legislativa na segunda sessão da Decima-Quarta Legislatura pelo Ministro e Secretario de Estado dos Negocios da Agricultura, Commercio e Obras Publicas Diogo Velho Cavalcanti de Albuquerque*. Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Universal de E. & H. Laemmert, 1870, p.10.

that moment. Chinese immigration thus came to be debated in newspapers, books, in parliament, and in technical institutions, such as the Auxiliary Society of National Industry. At this epoch there also emerged a proposal to organize private companies to import *Chins*, while the government in Rio de Janeiro asked the British diplomatic delegation for a report about the difficulties and limits of Chinese immigration (Dezem, 2005, p.55; Costa, 1998, p.184-188).

In the 1860s and the beginning of the following decade, public and parliamentary debates would not let the question lie. In 1870 there emerged the first legislative act referring to the introduction of Asian labor, granting Manoel José da Costa Lima Vianna and João Antonio de Miranda e Silva authorization to bring Asian workers to Brazil. However, this did not prosper. It is important to register that in 1873, British and afterwards Portuguese authorities prevented the departure of *coolies* from the ports of Hong Kong and Macau.⁵ Nevertheless, there still remained Canton, which was the region considered by Brazilian authorities between the end of the 1870s and the beginning of the following one (Dezem, 2005, p.48-60, p.62).⁶

At the end of the 1870s, in light of the worsening of the shortage of labor, it became necessary to find some solution to replace slave laborers. Although it was not hegemonic, there seemed to be some agreement about the convenience of bringing in European labor, principally from Italy and Spain, as they were Catholic countries. However, this predilection ran into a series of factors, ranging from the refusal of these countries to export their subjects to the contradiction between the objectives of the immigrants and those of the plantation owners.

It was in this scenario that the then President of the Council and the Minister of Agriculture, João Lins Vieira Cansansão de Sinimbu,

5 Originally, the word *coolie* or *kuli* was applied only to Hindus, because, in addition to meaning a day laborer, it also referred to a particular caste only existing in Hindustan. However, the term came to be used by Europeans to designate Chinese immigrants, calling the Chinese *coolies*.

6 BOCAYUVA, Quintino. *A crise da lavoura*. Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Perseverança, 1868.

decided to organize the 1878 Agricultural Congress in Rio de Janeiro. At that moment the two principal themes which left the plantation owners unsettled were the difficulty of obtaining agricultural credit, since the banks refused to accept slaves as guarantees, and the lack of labor, which dwindled everyday due to the non-replacement of slaves.

This congress has been widely studied in the historiography. For the purposes of this article, it is enough to highlight that the discourse and manifestations of the participants does not allow the identification of a consensus among plantations owners about how workers should be brought to Brazil, nor if it was convenient to introduce Asian immigrants. Strictly speaking, there was no unanimity about the need for immigration, since Candido Barreto de Souza Faria defended that there was sufficient Brazilian labor, with a law to regularize labor being all that was needed.⁷

However, the opinion of the São Paulo Commission in this congress argued for the introduction of *Chins*, even if only as an expedient for the transition between slave and free labor; the joint Commission of Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais, and Espírito Santo was more frankly favorable to the Chinese immigration. It was agreed that Brazil would send a diplomatic mission to China with the aim of establishing an agreement with that empire to permit Chinese immigration to Brazil: “The only thing which the plantation owners ask of Your Excellency is that the Imperial Government, through the means which are most appropriate, make a treaty with the Chinese Empire, so that the same workers can come to this country”.⁸

Sinimbu was enthusiastic with the idea of bringing the Asians, but the divergences with between sectors of Brazilian society caused him to obtain more precise ideas about Chinese behavior in the United States. He charged Salvador de Mendonça, then Brazilian consul in Baltimore,

7 *Congresso Agrícola, Rio de Janeiro, 1878*. Introd. e notas de José Murilo de Carvalho. Rio de Janeiro: Fundação Casa de Rui Barbosa, 1988. p.33.

8 *Congresso Agrícola, Rio de Janeiro, 1878*, p.72-79, p.229.

with investigating the results of the work done by Chinese immigrants in that country, especially in California (Costa, 1937, p.316-317). Salvador was concerned with collecting data, but also did not neglect to 'philosophize' about the role that belonged to the peoples of 'superior race':

A Christian people should not find repugnant the idea of being an instrument of progress for another inferior race; if at the end of some centuries we had only served as a mold for the primitive population of Africa and we had helped the work of the perfection of humanity with a hundred million educated men, dignified by education and by liberty, although of a color different from our primitive white element, we would have perfectly filled our role according to the scriptures.⁹

The corollary of the reasoning was obvious. If the 'superior race' contributed to the progress of Africans, it could equally help with that of the Asians. Mendonça thus responded to the criticism of immigration, who saw in the 'historic race' of Chinese an element of backwardness. It was necessary to leave 'patriotism' aside and transform the vast uncultivated territory.¹⁰

Based on the Brazilian consul's report, Sinimbu's doubts — if they had existed — dissipated. In 1879, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Moreira de Barros, requested funding from the Chamber of Deputies to send a diplomatic mission to China. The question caused a bitter debate, with Joaquim Nabuco speaking various times against the introduction of the *Chins*. According to the neophyte deputy, the pro-immigration policy of the Sinimbu cabinet had no other interest but "mongolizing the country" and meeting the interests of plantation owners (Nabuco, 1983, p.165, 226).

9 MENDONÇA, Salvador de. *Trabalhadores asiaticos*. New York: Typographia do "Novo Mundo", 1879. p.16.

10 MENDONÇA, Salvador de. *Trabalhadores asiaticos*, p.16-20.

The attacks of Nabuco and others inside and outside parliament came to nothing. On 18 October 1879, the law was sanctioned granting the Ministry of Foreign Affairs the sum of 120 *contos de réis* for the China Mission. At the end of the same year, a Brazilian delegation met in Paris and on 14 March left for the Celestial Empire in the Brazilian corvette, *Vital de Oliveira*. The mission was led by Eduardo Callado and Arthur Silveira da Mota, also part of it were the naval attaché Luís Felipe de Saldanha da Gama, the aide-de-camp Alexandrino Faria de Alencar, and the secretary Henrique Carlos Ribeiro Lisboa. Although the Brazilian government stated that the specific objective of the mission was to establish a treaty of friendship, commerce, and shipping, the priority subject was the immigration of Chinese workers.¹¹

Before the Brazilian mission embarked for China, the Brazilian minister in London, Barão de Penedo, had already been negotiating with the Chinese minister, accredited in the Court of St. James, the terms of the treaty which Brazil intended to establish with China. Moreira de Barros, then Minister of Foreign Affairs, warned the members of the mission that for now, it would be difficult to achieve anything more than establish a “treaty of friendship, commerce, and shipping,” but that the Imperial government deemed it convenient to make an “attempt to achieve that end [Chinese immigration].”¹²

Moreira de Barros’ warnings about the possible difficulties to be faced in the establishment of a treaty aimed at the importation of Chinese were due to the fact that other actors had decided to fight the intentions of the Brazilian government.

11 LISBOA, Henrique Carlos Ribeiro. *A China e os chins*. Recordações de viagem. Rio de Janeiro: Fundação Alexandre de Gusmão/CHDD, 2016. [edição original, 1888]; LISBOA, Henrique Carlos Ribeiro. *Os chins do Tetartos*. Continuação d’a China e os Chins. Rio de Janeiro: Typ. da Emp. Democratica Editora, 1894; *Cadernos do CHDD*, ano XI, n. 20. Brasília: Fundação Alexandre de Gusmão, Centro de História e Documentação Diplomática, 2012. p.23-157.

12 Dispatch n. 2, Dec. 6, 1879. *Cadernos do CHDD*, 2012, p.27.

THE BFASS AND THE FIGHT AGAINST THE 'SCHEME' TO INTRODUCE CHINESE WORKERS

In some way BFASS became aware of the Brazilian government's plans for the importation of Chinese *coolies*. Unfortunately, it was impossible to discover how this information reached the anti-slavery body in 1879, but it is not unreasonable to suppose that it was through *The Rio News*.¹³

What is known is that since the 1840s BFASS had always denounced and criticized in its newspaper the use of contracted labor from Chinese and Indian *coolies* by European colonies in the Caribbean and other parts of the world. Initially, BFASS criticism was limited to the form in which the workers were enlisted, transported, and maintained in the colonies; it believed that these stages had to be regulated and inspected to function adequately. Later, the institution understood that the system of contracted labor (Chinese or Indians) was essentially wrong. BFASS' concern with the trade of *coolies* was not surprising, since current estimates indicate that from 1840 to 1875, approximately one million Chinese had left the province of Guangdong in direction of the Americas — not to count the other Chinese provinces (Heartfield, 2016, p.335; Temperley, 1972, p.126; Yun, 2008, p.15).

This change of opinion also perhaps reflected, in part, the change of British policy towards *coolie* traffic. Great Britain, from the 1860s onwards, stopped being one of the greatest promoters of this trade and became its greatest adversary. Probably, this directive was due to diminution of its participation in the labor market in the Americas and the production of plantation crops.

13 This periodical, according to a historian "began in the Imperial capital in April 1874, being published in English three times a month — on the 5th, 15th, and 24th. In 1879, when parliamentary debates about abolition began again, it was under the direction of O. C. James and Andrew Jackson Lamoureux. However, after 1882, Lamoureux, who was American, became its sole owner and editor" (ROCHA, 2009, p.95).

At the end of the 1870s, since BFASS was concerned with the degrading situation of the Chinese who had been transported to Peru and Cuba, as soon as it became aware of the Brazilian government's plan to also introduce these workers it rapidly took actions to pressurize the Chinese and British authorities and prevent any treaty from being signed between Brazil and China which would allow the coming of immigrants to replace Brazilian slaves.

On 2 August 1879, the BFASS Committee sent a letter to Marquis Tseng, Extraordinary Envoy and Plenipotentiary Minister from the Court of Peking to the Court of St. James:

The Committee now beg to inform your Excellency of the fact that Envoys from Brazil are now on their way to England with a view to negotiate with your Excellency, and, through your Excellency, with a Chinese Government, a Convention for the importation of Chinese into the Brazils.

The Committee feel it to be their duty to represent to your Excellency that Brazil is unfortunately a country holding more than a million of slaves; and they would, therefore, earnestly impress upon your Excellency the fact, which has been confirmed, not only by history but by their own experience, viz, that in any country in which slavery exists neither Treaty provisions nor laws will prevent imported and contracted labour from becoming a virtual slavery; and therefore any Treaty between China and Brazil for the importation of Chinese must infallibly result in the virtual enslavement of the unfortunate immigrant.¹⁴

BFASS' position was: the introduction of laborers contracted by slaveholding countries undoubtedly involved the enslaving of these workers. This was the idea defended by BFASS during its campaign against the Brazilian government scheme.

¹⁴ *Reporter*, Aug. 1879, p.226.

Six days after sending the letter, Halliday Macartney, an employee of the Chinese Legation in London, answered the BFASS missive:

[...] I am to state that his Excellency knows nothing about the envoys who are said to be on their way to London in order to conclude a convention with him. The Brazilian Government has made overtures to that of China with the view of concluding a commercial treaty between the two countries, but it is extremely improbable that in the event of these overtures being entertained the negotiations would be carried on in London.¹⁵

The follow-up to the Chinese Legation's reply to BFASS indirectly suggests that the Marquis was accompanying the unfolding of the question of slavery in Brazil. Indeed, he also asked the opinion of the British entity:

It has been reported to the Minister [Tseng] that in virtue of a law passed by Brazil in 1871, making the importation of slaves into that country illegal, and giving to the children of existing slaves all the privileges of freeborn Brazilians, the extinction of slavery throughout Brazil is a matter of comparatively short time. The Minister would like to know whether in the opinion of the Anti-Slavery Society this statement be well-founded.¹⁶

In the following issue, in December 1879, the *Reporter* returned to the subject and published part of the speech given by Joaquim Nabuco in the Chamber of Deputies on 1 September of that year against the introduction of *Chins*. However, more importantly, the *Reporter* also published part of the speech which Sinimbu had given in Senate a month later. This final speech helped to clarify some evasive points in

¹⁵ *Reporter*, Oct. 1879, p.263.

¹⁶ *Reporter*, Oct. 1879, p.263.

the reply of Marquis Tseng to the BFASS letter, since it explained that the Brazilian government, through Barão de Penedo, was in direct contact with the Chinese representatives in London.

[...] we addressed ourselves to our legations in London and in the United States. As there were Chinese embassies of the first order in those countries, we thought it well to sound the feelings of the Ministers of China, to find out if it would be an easy matter to open relations there. From both these embassies we have received hopeful communications.

The one in London went further. From a hint from our minister, it took upon itself to consult the Chinese Government as to whether a mission from Brazil would be received, and in reply a telegram came saying that that Government would not refuse to receive a mission sent by the Government of his Majesty the Emperor of Brazil.¹⁷

BFASS also used Sinimbu's speech (which it reproduced from *The Rio News*) to explain the reasons for the Brazilian preference for Chinese immigrants: "The Chinese labourer being more temperate, receives a smaller salary and so leaves a broader margin of profits to the proprietor, or to his employer. And this is exactly one of the reasons why we should desire him for our country." According to Sinimbu, in addition to the low wages received by Chinese workers, they were also the most appropriate for the current stage of Brazilian agriculture: "In a position like ours, in which agricultural methods are still so imperfect, in which, we may say, main strength must supply the lack of intelligence and the imperfection of methods employed, we want labourer's on small salaries; and this is what we have in the Chinese".¹⁸ By publishing these passages from the Brazilian minister's speech in the *Reporter*, BFASS pressurized the Chinese authorities and warned about the precarious conditions to which their subjects would be submitted to in the South American empire.

¹⁷ *Anais do Senado*, Session Oct. 1, 1879, p.5.

¹⁸ *Anais do Senado*, Session Oct. 1, 1879, p.5.

Another important point in Sinimbu's speech was the criticism he directed at BFASS for its fight against the importing of Chinese workers. This demonstrates the influence of the entity and the capacity of the *Reporter* to spread information.

The noble senator from Paraná has asked whether I felt uneasy about the intrigues which have been carried on, especially by the Anti-Slavery Society, to bring Brazil into discredit in the matter of this immigration. I would say to the noble senator that to me that it is no strange document which this Society addressed to the Chinese ambassador in London, in which it warned him that he should not facilitate negotiations with the Brazilian Government because slavery exist in this country.

But, Mr. President, I have no fears on this heads [...].

I say further, that if the Anti-Slavery Society were inspired by sentiments of humanity, it should rather lend its aid to hasten this immigration, because, gentlemen, it is my opinion that those who most earnestly desire to hasten the end of slavery among us are those who endeavour most to introduce labourers to substitute the element which is generally condemned [...]

I do not believe though that the Anti-Slavery Society can frustrate the end we have in view.¹⁹

Finally, Sinimbu's speech is also important to understand the condition in which Chinese immigrants were to be admitted to Brazil, as well as the scheme proposed for their transport:

I may, however, say at once, that the Government does not wish to take directly upon itself the introduction of these labourers; what it wishes to accomplish by the mission is merely to facilitate it.

[...] The action of the Brazilian Government, then, is only with the view of overcoming obstacles which may embarrass immigration. The manner of transporting these labourers, the conditions of embarkation,

¹⁹ *Anais do Senado*, Session Oct. 1, 1879, p.5-6.

the places of their residence and their transportation to the interior, will all be determined by regulations, while the indispensable agents will be appointed to fiscalize the execution of these conditions.

This is the base upon which the Government stands; leaving it, however, to private enterprise, and for the most part, to the planters, to establish methods for themselves for bringing this immigration about.

[...] I am told that the planters wish to effect this importation on their own account.²⁰

These declarations were printed in the *Reporter* and, later, whenever there was a need, they were remembered as a form of pressurizing the Chinese authorities. The sincerity with which Sinimbu outlined the government's plan and justified their preference for the Chinese was perhaps due to the conviction that the Anti-Slavery Society would be unable to interfere in the negotiations between Brazil and China.

In the same issue of the *Reporter* which published the speeches of Nabuco and Sinimbu, BFASS also published another letter which it had sent on 4 November to Marquis Tseng, calling his attention to the Brazilian minister's speech and adding: "if Chinese immigration is to take place into Brazil let it be exempt from all the restrictions of indentured and forced labour, though then we fear it will not meet the views of the Brazilian planter". In addition to warning the Chinese minister, BFASS did not hesitate to advise him to establish legal impediments to protect Chinese immigrants: "The immigrant should always be free to come and go as he may feel inclined; for should he be bound down for a term of years, his condition will be little removed from that of the actual slave". Finally, the anti-slavery organization used its prestige and politely asked for the Marquis to interfere to prevent the establishment of the Treaty: "we trust that your Excellency will use your influence with the Chinese Government to prevent the conclusion of a treaty with Brazil until slavery has ceased to exist in that country"²¹

²⁰ *Anais do Senado*, Session Oct. 1, 1879, p.6.

²¹ *Reporter*, Dec 1879, p.276-277.

Also in the same issue, the *Reporter* reproduced the reply of the Chinese Legation in London to its second letter. This missive stated that

[...] that his Government are quite at one with them regarding the unadvisability of sanctioning any kind of emigration which would in the slightest degree restrict the independence of the emigrant. The Committee appear to be under the impression that the Chinese Government are about to enter into a Convention with Brazil, having for its object the importation into that country of Chinese labour; but His Excellency begs to assure them that such is not the case, and that his Government have, in replying to the overtures of the Brazilian Government, resolutely declined to entertain the discussion of that subject in any form. This does not arise from the existence of anything which is peculiar to Brazil, but partly on account of the representations which the Committee have at various times made to the Chinese Minister, and partly, in consequence of the result of inquiries which the Chinese Government have made into the condition of Chinese labourers now fulfilling their contracts in foreign countries, the Government have resolved on discountenancing overtures for the supply of Chinese labour, irrespective of the quarter whence they may emanate.²²

I would like to apologize to the reader for the long citations, but they are necessary to provide a good overview of the actions of the Brazilian government, BFASS, and the Chinese authorities. Through these citations it can be perceived, in first place, that the choice of Chinese immigrants aimed exclusively to meet the economic anxieties and the need for labor of the plantation owners, and that the Brazilian government used its diplomatic agents to start the attempts at an agreement, without any concern about the possible actions of British abolitionists. Second, it can be seen that the Chinese authorities in London, although they denied it, demonstrated a certain appreciation for some type of agreement. This is corroborated by the letters sent by Brazilian negotiators to

²² *Reporter*, Dec. 1879, p.277.

the Minister of Foreign Affairs, informing him that they had met at the end of 1879 with Marquis Tseng in Paris — who as well as the Chinese representative in Great Britain, was also representative in France — to be instructed about the best manner of proceeding with the Chinese authorities. The Brazilian representatives, still on French soil, also communicated with their superiors the satisfaction of being able to count on the “good offices of the United States,” with letters of recommendation from French diplomacy and Marquis Tseng, who “has given us here the most significant proofs of his good will in relation to the favorable result of our mission.”²³ In China, the Brazilian mission perceived that it would be impossible for a series of motives to obtain the help of the United States and France.²⁴ Finally, and reaffirming what has been said above, BFASS presented strictly objective reasons to criticize the introduction of Chinese workers, considering that they would be treated as slaves once they had been accepted in Brazilian territory. At no moment did BFASS use any racial or moral type argument, as happened with many Brazilians who opposed the coming of the Chinese.

However, after the final reply of the Chinese Legation, BFASS calmed down and, apparently, left to one side the question of the introduction of the Chinese to Brazil. During 1880 the *Reporter* no longer returned to the subject. In 1881, the periodical produced only two articles originally published in *The Rio News*, in which was discussed the convenience of bringing Chinese workers to Brazil.²⁵

During these years, the silence of the *Reporter* about the subject was probably due more to the absence of information than a lack of interest. However, it was at the same time that the Brazilian negotiators made efforts in China to achieve their objectives, which can be accompanied through the letters they sent to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

23 Letters Jan. 10 and Feb. 10, 1880, *Cadernos do CHDD*, 2012, p.39-41, p.44-45.

24 Letter Sept. 15, 1880, *Cadernos do CHDD*, 2012, p.78.

25 *The Rio News*, Jul. 5, 1881, p.1-2; *The Rio News* Aug. 15, 1881, p.1-2; *Reporter*, Aug. 15, 1881, p.140-141; *Reporter*, Sept. 15, 1881, p.161-162.

MISSION TO CHINA

At the first opportunity which the Brazilian representatives had to be received by the Chinese authorities, they soon perceived the sagacity of their hosts and outlined the 'principle' objective of the mission:

On our part, during that diffuse interlocution, we maintained the purpose we had agreed to: to demonstrate that the advantages which the Imperial Government hoped to obtain from direct trade between the two countries had been the principal motive of our mission and, only incidentally, among the resulting benefits which could arise out of the treaty, we observed that it would be important for us to induce the industrious Chinese to seek our country, which so much needs population.²⁶

On 15 September, the head of the mission, Eduardo Callado sent another official letter stating that on the fifth of that month a treaty had been signed with Viceroy Li, in the city of Tien-Tsin. The document also mentioned that, given the circumstances, "a project of a treaty containing clauses about immigration was out of the question." The strategy consisted of inserting these clauses in the amendments. However, also according to this letter, the Chinese commissioners had received explicit orders from their minister, "not to admit a single word about emigration in the treaty".²⁷

Following this, the commissioners warned the Brazilian minister than the intention of the Chinese of excluding any clause from the treaty related to immigration "indicated that in our negotiations the offensive prevarications had prevailed against our country, which a private English society (the Anti-Slavery Society) sought to create in the memorial sent to Marquis Tseng and published in the European press." BFASS' actions had fulfilled their purpose, in other words, that of suggesting

²⁶ Letter Jul. 19, 1880, *Cadernos do CHDD*, 2012, p.54-55.

²⁷ Letter Sept. 15, 1880, *Cadernos do CHDD*, 2012, p.70.

that the Brazilians had the design of wanting to “perpetuate with *coolies*, the slavery of blacks which would soon be ended in Brazil”.²⁸

Despite these divergences, the Treaty of Friendship, Trade, and Shipping with China was signed on 5 September 1880, as mentioned above. Shortly afterwards, Silveira da Mota — one of the negotiators — received authorization to leave that country. Callado, however, remained there to “collect data which will enable me to inform Your Excellency about the most efficient means that we can use to introduce Chinese workers in Brazil”.²⁹ This point is important to understand the future developments of the question. Since China had restricted the departure of *coolies* to Peru and Cuba due to mistreatment, Callado was concerned with consolidating in the ‘guilds’ of Chinese workers the idea that Brazil would respect the Chinese who emigrated. Moreover, it was also his concern to establish a regular form of transport of these workers. It was at this moment that a Chinese shipping company came into view:

The China Merchants’ Steam Navigation Company is establishing a line of steamers between China and Brazil and, undoubtedly, it will perform the enterprise satisfactorily. I have often talked with their directors and they show themselves willing to undertake the venture, understanding that it will be with the Imperial Government or any private society. [...] Due to the fact than many powerful mandarins are shareholders in the company, I have the profound conviction that, adopting the suggestion which I have taken the liberty to indicate Your Excellency, the obstacles will be removed, and the resistance of local authorities to the embarkation of emigrants will cease, and we can thus supply ourselves in China with the arms we need for agriculture and other needs.³⁰

28 Letter Sept. 15, 1880, *Cadernos do CHDD*, 2012, p.70.

29 Letter Nov. 28, 1880, *Cadernos do CHDD*, 2012, p.102.

30 Letter Dec. 14, 1880, *Cadernos do CHDD*, 2012, p.107.

While the negotiations with the company were underway, the Brazilian government diverged from some of the stipulations of the first version of the treaty, principally about the inviolability of the residences in which consular representatives and Brazilian traders could live in in the future and asked the Brazilian negotiator to contact the authorities of that country to proceed with the corrections before the ratification of the treaty. The negotiation of these alterations took several months, finally on 3 October 1881 a new treaty was signed more in accord with Brazilian interests; its ratification occurred on 3 June 1882.

The Brazilian negotiator did not manage to insert any clause which would allow the establishment of an emigration by contract system, as other countries had done previously. However, it was quite skillful in achieving the consent of the Chinese authorities to the possibility of guaranteeing the free circulation of subjects from one empire to another.

Art. 1. There will be perpetual peace and constant friendship between the Empire of Brazil and the Empire of China, as well as between their respective subjects. These can move freely from one state to the other of the two contracting parties and live there. In each country they will obtain full and entire protection of their persons, families, and goods, and they will enjoy all the rights, advantages, and freedoms conceded to the subjects of the most favored nation.³¹

This was what the Brazilian government wanted. Through this disposition, Chinese *coolies* could be convinced to emigrate supposedly at their free and spontaneous choice, which would preserve Brazil from a series of inconvenient international criticisms. In an unprecedented manner, the Brazilian government had found a way of guaranteeing the immigration of Chinese workers, without the need to establish any prior contract.

31 *Coleção de Leis do Império do Brasil*, 1882, vol. 2, p.207-213. The Treaty was reproduced in *Coleção de Leis do Império do Brasil*, on the occasion of Decree 8651, from 24 August 1882, through which the Brazilian Senate promulgated the treaty.

What remained was to advance the discussions about establishing the company responsible for the transport of these workers. Between the signing of the Treaty in October 1881, and its ratification in March the following year, Callado concerned himself with negotiating the terms by which the company directed by Tong King Sing would be responsible for transporting Chinese workers to Brazil.

[...] I have had various interviews with the directors of the China Merchants' Steam Navigation Company and, as a result of these, I received yesterday the proposal, the original of which is attached, in which Your Excellency will see that the company in question is ready to establish, between China and Brazil, a regular line with steamers of 3000-4000 tons, capable of transporting from 1000-1200 passengers and making six round trips per year, under the following conditions: an annual subvention of \$100,000 for a period of three years, and enjoying the advantages granted in Brazil to the packet ships of the French *Messageries Maritimes* and the English Royal Mail. The company will facilitate the passage of emigrants, according to the possessions of each one, and they will be able when they reach their destination port of destination to freely contract their services without those who employ them having to make the slightest disbursement for the expenses of the voyage, etc., etc.³²

The proposal presented by the company to Callado thus allowed for a subvention of \$100,000 (obviously paid for by the Brazilian government) for the period of three years, plus \$116 dollars per emigrant landed in Brazil. According to Callado, the plan had the advantage of freeing Brazil from the possibility of being accused by China or by other countries of mistreating the emigrants during the voyage.³³

32 Letter Jan. 11, 1882, *Cadernos do CHDD*, 2012, p.140.

33 Letter Jan. 11, 1882, *Cadernos do CHDD*, 2012, p.141. In relation to the formal proposal by Tong King Sing, director of the shipping company, to the Brazilian delegation in China, see: Annex 1 of Letter Jan. 11, 1882, *Cadernos do CHDD*, 2012, p.142-143.

This last point needs to be explained better. In previous cases, the *coolies* had left China with signed labor contracts and were sent to the countries or colonies which practically dominated the entire recruitment circuit — their enlistment or capture in China, sea transport, and allocation on plantations or large construction sites. This procedure facilitated the criticism and identification of those responsible for the mistreatment or enslaving of workers. In the Brazilian case, in theory the *coolies* would supposedly emigrate out of their spontaneous free will. By contracting a Chinese company for the transport, Brazil also exempted itself from any responsibility for mistreatment during the sea voyage. All of this, plus the fact that the contracts of the Chinese emigrants would be signed in Brazil instead of China, prevented a reckless investment of capital.

In October 1882, after the ratification of the Treaty and the delivery of commendations and presents by the Brazilian negotiator to the Chinese authorities, as was the practice in that Empire, Eduardo Callado, received authorization to leave the Celestial Empire and return to Brazil.³⁴

BFASS COMES INTO PLAY AGAIN

While these negotiations were underway in China, coffee planters in São Paulo opened another flank to try to introduce Chinese labor. In 1881, *The Rio News* stated that *Paulista* plantation owners had sent José Custódio Alves de Lima to the United States to hire three thousand Chinese for their crops. This venture was not successful, and the *Reporter*, in publicizing the report of the Carioca newspaper, demonstrated its ignorance about the subject of the Brazilian mission to China by stating that British abolitions were “glad to learn that the Brazilians find they have no chance of obtaining emigrants from the British ports in China, owing to the action taken by the English authorities in discouraging

34 Letter Oct. 2, 1882, *Cadernos do CHDD*, 2012, p.154.

emigration to Brazil”.³⁵ In other words, BFASS believed that the Brazilian government’s Chinese immigration plans had been frustrated. For instance, between December 1879 and April 1883, the *Reporter* mentioned the theme just three times and did so in relation to reports reproduced in *The Rio News*.

However, in May 1883, the *Reporter* returned to the question of the introduction of Chinese laborers to Brazil and published a letter (obviously without mentioning the name of the correspondent) presenting details of the Brazil plan to introduce *coolies*. The text stated that a Brazilian consul had been nominated for Shanghai, but that his earnings were insufficient for the position. The same person had been authorized by the Brazilian government to receive £2000 annually from a company importing *coolies*, whose president was Sr. Callado. It was expected that the transport company would send 400,000 to 500,000 *coolies* to Brazil. The denunciation letter also asserted that the Chinese would not receive a fair wage, nor proper treatment from landholders and, worse, could not count on Chinese diplomatic help, since there was no Chinese consular agent in Brazil. The denunciation letter stated this in a dramatic manner:

No indentured labourer ought to be permitted in the interior of Brazil for the simple reason that there does not exist the necessary judicial machinery nor police for protecting the labourers; but here we have the one international guarantee possible, the passport, suppressed, and a Consul of the importing country allowed to accept pay from private persons obviously to complete the missing link in the scheme, which is to wink at and countenance the enormities in the shape of kidnapping, crowded shipments, & c., which will take place in China.³⁶

35 *The Rio News*, May 4, 1881, p.4; *The Rio News*, Sept. 15, 1881, p.4; *Reporter*, Jan. 1882, p.15.

36 *Reporter*, May 1883, p.132-133.

In September, the *Reporter* stated that it had sent the denunciation and the attachments to the letter to the Foreign Office in the expectation that its representatives in Brazil would have to investigate the question. In fact, they were already closely accompanying the developments of the case, so much so that Edwin Corbett, then British Minister in Rio de Janeiro, personally met Tong King Sing, when he came to Brazil, to pressurize him to verify the conditions to which Chinese workers would be subjected in Brazilian plantations.³⁷ The report also said that the subsidy which the Brazilian employee would receive from the transport company was £1000 and not £2000, as had been reported in May. In this report, it was stated that

A deputation from the *Anti-Slavery Society*, consisting of Mr. Arthur Pease, M. P., Mr. Edmund Sturge, Mr. J. V. Crawford (late-Vice Consul for Cuba), Mr. James Long, and Mr. Chas. H. Allen, Secretary, had two interviews with Mr. Tong King Sing, to whom they explained the extreme danger which Coolies would incur of becoming mere Slaves in the coffee plantations of Brazil. Mr. Tong King Sing, who seemed to know very little about Slavery in that empire, listened with marked attention to the representations and suggestions of the deputation, and promised emphatically that unless he could obtain material guarantees for the protection of Chinamen in Brazil, the scheme proposed for introducing Coolie labour into that country should not receive his.³⁸

After the BFASS deputation met the representative of the transport company, the Committee of the antislavery entity contacted the Foreign Office once again to pressurize the British consuls in Rio de Janeiro

37 Edwin Corbett to the Foreign Office, Oct 13, 1883, MSS.Brit.Emp.s.G.22+G79. Rhodes House Library, Oxford. The existence of copies of various of Corbett's letters to the Foreign Office in the BFASS archives demonstrates that this institution had privileged information about how the British state dealt with the question.

38 *Reporter*, Sept. 1883, p.222-223.

and Peking to alert Chinese authorities about the dangers to which their subjects would be exposed when they were forced to cultivate the “sugar plantations of the Slave-Holders of Brazil.” In reply, the British minister asked BFASS to give it copies of the information which it had about the subject.³⁹

In November, the *Reporter* returned to the subject and stated that in the August meeting between the BFASS deputation and Tong King Sing, the anti-slavery entity had given him a letter of recommendation to the editors of *The Rio News*. In addition, the *Reporter* also took advantage to praise the US editors of the Carioca periodical, which courageously took a position against the immigration of Chinese laborers, and republished a passage from *The Rio News*, which criticized Tong King Sing:

It is not to be supposed that the manager of a steamship company, which has no other object in view than the making of a profitable contract, will be troubled with any great scruples about the character of the servitude before his people, but at the same time it is quite possible that when he is made fully acquainted with all the certainties and probabilities which this enterprise has in store, he may feel called upon to redeem his promise to the British Anti-Slavery Society [sic] not to be the instrument of leading his countrymen into a miserable and helpless servitude.⁴⁰

In December, the *Reporter* unusually decided to tell its readers that it had a debt of gratitude to a gentleman who lived in Rio de Janeiro who was providing detailed information about the scheme to introduce Chinese laborers to Brazil. Obviously, the name of this gentleman was not mentioned. Although the *Reporter* never revealed the identity of its informant, research in the BFASS archives, kept in Oxford, revealed that it was an English man called Valentine Walbran Chapman, who was

39 *Reporter*, Sept. 1883, p.223.

40 *Reporter*, Nov. 1883, p.276.

probably an employee of the English Bank of Rio de Janeiro, according to the headed paper used in one of his letters.⁴¹

In the same report, the *Reporter* also stated that its informant had provided assistance to Tong King Sing when he had visited Rio de Janeiro. In addition, it published a letter which Charles H. Allen, then Secretary of BFASS, had sent to the Secretary of the Foreign Office, Earl Granville, stating that the attempt to bring Chinese to Brazil had failed:

This gentleman [Tong King Sing] returned from Rio on 4th inst., and the next morning he requested me to call upon him to hear the result of his mission. He then stated that the scheme had fallen through, and that I was at liberty to inform your lordship of what has occurred. Mr. Tong King Sing stated that, to his surprise, he found that the large subsidy which was to be paid to his Steam Navigation Company was not payable by the Brazil Government, but by the planters. He immediately put the very pertinent question, "How are you gentlemen going to recoup yourselves for the money advanced?" The reply was what might have been naturally expected, "Out of the labour of the coolies". Mr. Tong King Sing then said, "This scheme must fall through. I will be no party to bringing Chinamen here except as free immigrants."⁴²

This passage is primordial to understand the failure of the scheme. Undeniably, Tong King Sing was interested in his company participating in the transport of Chinese immigrants to Brazil. However, when the British — BFASS and the Foreign Office — came to pressurize him,

41 V. Walbran Chapman to Charles H. Allen, Mar. 20, 1883, MSS.Brit.Emp.s.G.22+G79, Rhodes House Library, Oxford. In addition to the correspondence for the British Minister in Rio de Janeiro, Edwin Corbett, and Chapman's correspondence, it is probable that BFASS was also receiving other privileged information, since it had in its archives a copy of two letters from Tong King Sing to Eduardo Callado, head of the Brazilian mission in China: one discussing the wages of Chinese workers; another with an official proposal from the China Merchant's Company for the transport of *coolies*. MSS.Brit.Emp.s.22+G80a, Rhodes House Library, Oxford.

42 *Reporter*, Dec. 1883, p.301.

demanding that he investigate the conditions under which his countrymen worked, he rapidly perceived that the Brazilians would force the Chinese to work in a regime very similar to that of African slaves. This was even clearer when he found out that the plantation owners — and not the Brazilian government — were to be responsible for the costs of transporting the Chinese, and that the latter would be obliged to repay the plantation owners the money invested until then in the cost of their transport.

If the Brazilian government had financed the entire cost of transport, or at least part of it, there would have been an expectation that Chinese workers could negotiate with plantation owners in a minimally satisfactory manner about their working conditions and, eventually, their return to their native land. However, since the plantation owners were solely responsible for funding the transport from China to Brazil, the *coolies* would be irremediably tied to them even much after the latter had cleared their debts. Given this situation, the managing director of the Chinese company clearly perceived the problems which he would have to face later. He had been warned and pressurized both by BFASS and the Foreign Office and knew that any more decided involvement of the British government in this question, based on the allegation that the *coolies* were being enslaved in Brazil, could cause him considerable harm.

In fact, BFASS had already announced in the *Reporter*, in 1882, that the Brazilians had discovered that there was no possibility of obtaining *coolies* from British ports in China. On their part, the Brazilian mission also informed the Minister of Foreign Affairs that in the port of Macau, the Chinese authorities had been influenced by the English and imposed at the last minute embargoes which prevented the departure of a ship full of immigrants.⁴³ Given these episodes, Tong King Sing certainly evaluated the risks that the enterprise would run if the British decided to effectively combat the coming of *coolies* to Brazil and declined to carry the project forward.

⁴³ *Reporter*, Jan. 1882, p.15; letter Jun. 27, 1880, *Cadernos do CHDD*, 2012, p.48-9.

In January 1884, in a section which highlighted the 'achievements' of the Antislavery Society in 1883, the *Reporter* recapitulated the episodes and said that BFASS would remain attentive to any moves by the Brazilian plantation owners to impose contracted labor. In the same issue a note from *The Rio News* was warmly reproduced announcing the closing of a Brazil company which had been created in 1882 for the introduction of Chinese in Brazil:

In an official notice of the 14th instant the shareholders of the *Companhia Commercio e Imigração Chinezã* are invited to meet at the assembly room of the Banco Predial on the 29th for the purpose of winding up its affairs. This step, it is explained is due to the failure of the negotiation with the China Merchants Co. for the introduction of Chinese into this country.⁴⁴

After this report, the *Reporter* only returned to the subject of the coming of Chinese laborers once more, in March 1884, when it reproduced a text from the *London and China Telegraph*, which praised BFASS for having called the attention of Tong King Sing to the dangers to which the Chinese brought to Brazil would be submitted.⁴⁵

BFASS AND BRAZILIAN SLAVERY

In the specific case of Chinese immigration to Brazil, there is no known proof that the British abolitionists had acted with second intentions, in other words, that they had left their anti-slavery zeal in the background with the aim of favoring the foreign policy of the British state. BFASS' efforts to frustrate the Brazilian scheme for importing Chinese workers have thus to be understood in relation to their actions against Brazilian slavery.

This is related to the foundation of BFASS. It was created in London in 1839, with the aim of internationalizing the British anti-slavery

⁴⁴ *Reporter*, Jan. 1884, p.4, p.19.

⁴⁵ *Reporter*, Mar. 1884, p.63.

movement. In its *Statutes* Brazil already figured as one of the principal places to which it had to give its attention.⁴⁶ However, at that moment, British abolitionists were divided about the strategy which this internationalization should adopt. Some, led by Thomas Fowell Buxton, and congregated in the Society for the Extinction of the Slave Trade and for the Civilization of Africa, thought that the focus of the anti-slavery struggle should be the slave trade and for this reason they believed that the best alternative would be to discourage Africans from selling their contemporaries. Other abolitionists, such as the followers of Joseph Sturge, the founder of BFASS, believed that attention should be concentrated on slavery itself; only with the extinction of demand would the offer of slaves be eliminated. As Buxton himself recognized, the two diverging groups were not rivals: they complemented each other (Huzzey, 2012, p.67). Late developments, however, showed that the strategy adopted by BFASS was more promising. The entity organized by Buxton, although it had grandiose projects, had a relatively ephemeral life and came to an end in 1843; in turn, BFASS, although it has changed name, still exists and is considered the oldest institution in defense of human rights (Temperley, 1972; Temperley, 1991; Huzzey, 2012; Heartfield, 2016).

Since its foundation in 1839, until the formal ending of Brazilian slavery in 1888, BFASS continually paid enormous attention to Brazil. The first proof of this was the secret mission it organized to Brazil at the end of 1839, with the aim of collecting information about slavery and the Brazilian slave trade, as well as encouraging anti-slavery feeling. In the following decade, BFASS was also indirectly associated with a mission which visited Brazil to deliver to the Emperor and other authorities a Address against slavery and the slave trade (Ré, 2016, p.69-100; Ré, 2017, p.293-317).

46 British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society for the abolition of slavery and slave-trade throughout the world. *Address*. London: Johnston and Barret, [1839]. p.2.

In the following decades, in 1860 and 1870, BFASS established an agreement with agents of the Brazilian government. While it acted internally to repeal the Aberdeen Law and to facilitate the reestablish of diplomatic relations between Brazil and Great Britain, broken off because of the 'Christie Question,' the Brazilian government committed itself to undertake some emancipationist measures.

Also well known are BFASS' efforts in the 1880s to help Joaquim Nabuco strengthen Brazilian abolitionism. Moreover, throughout this period, the BFASS Committee, responsible for defining its guidelines for action, sent Addresses to the Emperor, to the members of the imperial family, and to the Brazilian government, calling for the adoption of measures against slavery (Bethell; Carvalho, 2008; Rocha, 2009).

Involvement in all these events indicates that Brazil was a country in which BFASS acted strongly during the nineteenth century. The fight against the introduction of Chinese laborers to Brazil was another of these episodes.

On the other hand, since its foundation, BFASS also became known for criticizing and fighting against the hired work of Indian and Chinese *coolies* in the Caribbean and other regions, both within and outside the British Empire. However, while in previous decades BFASS used moral and prejudicial arguments to criticize the bringing of these workers, even condemning them for supposed sexual practices and vices, in the Brazilian case the institution did not present a single argument other than the question of slavery.⁴⁷ For BFASS, *coolies* were not to be brought to Brazil solely and exclusively because they would be submitted to conditions as degrading and miserable as that of slaves. In their condemnation neither moral nor racial questions were raised.

Brazilian historiography has already been concerned with the question of the bringing in of Chinese labor and the support and repulsion it attracted, and did this in various forms (Elias, 1971; Costa, 1999; Lima,

⁴⁷ *Reporter*, 1 Mar. 1848, p.36.

2005; Conrad, 1975; Dezem, 2005; Neves, Guimarães, Ferreira, 2010). However, where it was possible to investigate, only Gilberto Freyre has pointed to the relevance of BFASS in the failure of the attempt to bring Chinese laborers to Brazil. Nevertheless, since the aim of Freyre was to discuss the 'human aspect' of the introduction of foreign labor, he looks at the theme only collaterally and credited the failure of the Brazilian plan to the power of internal 'public opinion,' which, according to him, was strongly against the objectives of the government and some groups of plantation owners (Freyre, 1971, p.115).

Certainly, for a series of reasons, principally racial ones, a representative part of Brazilian public opinion positioned itself against the introduction of Chinese immigrants, as was clear in the 1878 Agricultural Congress, held in Rio de Janeiro. The interventions of Joaquim Nabuco and other representatives in Parliament and discussion in the press also went along this path. However, even against strong opposition, the Brazilian government sent a mission to China to negotiate the introduction of these immigrants to Brazil, something which was successful until the refusal of Tong King Sing.

Although other elements contributed to the frustration of the scheme to bring Chinese laborers to Brazil, the role played by the BFASS abolitionists has to be acknowledged. The principal aim of this article has been to highlight this.

Translation from Portuguese into English by:

Eoin Paul Oneill

eoinandirene@gmail.com

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- ASSIS, Machado de. Balas de estalo. In: _____. *Obra completa*. vol. 3. Rio de Janeiro: Nova Aguilar, 1997.
- BETHELL, Leslie; CARVALHO, José Murilo de (orgs.). *Joaquim Nabuco e os abolicionistas britânicos*. Correspondência, 1880-1905. Rio de Janeiro: Topbooks, 2008.

- CONRAD, Robert. The Planter Class and the Debate over Chinese Immigration to Brazil, 1850-1893. *International Migration Review*, vol. 9, n. 1, p.41-55, Spring, 1975.
- COSTA, Craveiro. *O Visconde de Sinimbu*. São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1937.
- COSTA, Emilia Viotti da. *Da senzala à colônia*. 4ª ed. São Paulo: Editora da Unesp, 1998.
- COSTA, Emília Viotti da. *Da monarquia à república*. Momentos decisivos. 6ª ed. São Paulo: Editora da Unesp, 1999.
- DEZEM, Rogério. *Matizes do "amarelo"*. A gênese dos discursos sobre os orientais no Brasil (1878-1908). São Paulo: Humanitas, 2005.
- ELIAS, José Maria. *Os Debates sobre o trabalho dos chins e o problema da mão de obra no Brasil durante o século XIX*. In: *Anais do VI Simpósio Nacional dos Professores de História*. Goiania: ANPUH, 1971, vol. 1, p.697-715.
- FREYRE, Gilberto. *Novo mundo nos trópicos*. São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional; Edusp, 1971.
- HEARTFIELD, James. *The British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, 1838-1956*. A history. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.
- HUZZEY, Richard. *Freedom burning*. Anti-slavery and empire in Victorian Britain. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012.
- LIMA, Silvio Cezar de Souza. *Determinismo biológico e imigração chinesa em Nicolau Moreira*. 1870-1890. Dissertação (Mestrado em História das Ciências da Saúde) – Casa de Oswaldo Cruz – Fiocruz, Rio de Janeiro, 2005.
- NABUCO, Joaquim. *Discursos parlamentares*. Brasília: Câmara dos Deputados, 1983.
- NEVES, Lúcia Maria Bastos Pereira das; GUIMARÃES, Lucia Maria Paschoal; FERREIRA, Tânia Bessone da Cruz. O Império do Cruzeiro do Sul e a Corte Celeste de Tien-Tsin: apontamentos sobre as relações sino-brasileiras no século XIX. *Navigator*: Rio de Janeiro, vol. 6, 2010, p.66-75.
- PERES, Victor Hugo Luna. Os chins no Brasil e suas histórias. *Leste Vermelho*. Revista de Estudos Críticos Asiáticos, vol. 2, n. 1, p.84-106, abr. 2016.
- RÉ, Henrique Antonio. "Missão nos Brasis": a BFASS e a organização de uma missão abolicionista secreta ao Brasil no início da década de 1840. *Revista de História*, n. 174, São Paulo, p.69-100, jan./jun., 2016.

- RÉ, Henrique Antonio. Uma missão abolicionista britânica no Brasil e as relações entre a British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society e a Sociedade contra o Tráfico de Africanos e Promotora da Colonização e Civilização dos Indígenas. *Almanack*. Guarulhos, n.15, p.293-317, 2017.
- ROCHA, Antonio Penalves. *Abolicionistas brasileiros e ingleses*. A coligação entre Joaquim Nabuco e a British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society (1880-1902). São Paulo: Editora da Unesp, 2009.
- TEMPERLEY, Howard. *British Antislavery, 1833-1870*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1972.
- TEMPERLEY, Howard. *White Dreams, Black Africa*. The Antislavery Expedition to the River Niger, 1841-1842. New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1991.
- YANG, Alexander Yuan. O comércio dos “coolie” [1819-1920]. *Revista de História*, n. 112, p.419-428, 1977.
- YUN, Lisa. *The Coolie Speaks: Chinese Indentured Laborers and African Slaves in Cuba*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2008.