

# Sugar Cane Labor in Hawai'i: the Imported Grassroots of the Island Life Standards

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▶ **To cite this version:**

Jean-Philippe Ray. Sugar Cane Labor in Hawai'i: the Imported Grassroots of the Island Life Standards. Humanities and Social Sciences. 2021. dumas-03367841

**HAL Id: dumas-03367841**

**https://dumas.ccsd.cnrs.fr/dumas-03367841**

Submitted on 14 Feb 2022

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# Sugar Cane Labor in Hawai‘i: the Imported Grassroots of the Island Life Standards

Academic year 2020 - 2021

Table of Contents:

Introduction & general overview
……..……...pp 1-8

1st Part: Incentive and disruptive: the early American influences in Hawaii……page 8

A - How has sugar cane growing was brought to Hawaii?
……..pp 8-11

B - American colonialism's first drawbacks in Hawaii
……pp 12-14

C - 1835-1872 the proverbial Hawaiian labor supply
……pp 14-15

D - Imported labor: a makeshift arrangement to become earnest
……pp 15-16

E - Retainers to the land: Royal ascent made compulsory upon American initiative……..pp 16-17

F - 1852-1865: the Coolie reinforcement years
…….……...pp 17-18

G - The 1876 Reciprocity Treaty: the sugar industry's metamorphosis
……pp 18-20

2nd Part: Greeting the territorial government: the planters' drive for keeping up with their effectiveness……pp 21-22

A - How labor immigration massively shifted to Japanese?
……pp 22-25

B - 1895: the Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association
……pp 25-29

C - Merits and flaws of racial labor organization
……pp 29-34

D - The 1920 dual strike: Filipino front-lining vs Japanese back-benching
……pp 34-42

3rd Part: Organized labor extended to the Hawaiian Territory: the dawn of equal labor relations……pp 42-43

A - Citizen labor reconsidered: How the Great Depression coincided in Hawai‘i with the end of immigration?……..……..pp 43-44

B - The protracting of America mainland modern labor policies to the Hawaiian plantation scale……..pp 44-49

C - The ILWU coaching of the New Deal incoming changes in Hawai‘i
……pp 49-52

D - Pre-war years and the rise of *Big Unionism*
……pp 52-54

E - The war interlude years: standstill in organization, leap in modernization……pp 54-56

F - 1946, the second variety strike
……pp 56-61

G - The 1958 Aloha strike, a contagion of liberty
……pp 61-66

4th part: The interference of Japanese cultural legacies with the course of the 20th century in Hawai‘i……...pp 66-67

A - How imported Japanese labor principles were to prevail in Hawai‘i?
……pp 67-69

B - A pledging of influence over the Japanese local: Church versus Press
……pp 69-72

C - The language schools controversy: were Japanese expected to remain?……...pp 72-75

Conclusion & *post-scriptum* considerations
……pp 75-80 & 81-82

Bibliography & annexes
……pp 82-84 & 84-90

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So as to complete the historiographical survey of Hawai‘i in which constituted my M1 work, this other essay will concern itself with exposing some of the main traits relevant to the combining of the original field laborers, mostly immigrants to Hawai‘i, into organized work unions. As a result, this sense of presenting the Hawaiian society as an offset, compound one, is also going to contribute to the framework of this M2 work. It had once even a greater relevance, as corporate American interests were making their first attempts at challenging the preexisting social frameworks of the Hawaiian monarchy. Although these were at first considered inappropriate for such ventures, the Hawaiian kingdom would agree to them nevertheless, conspicuously acting in attuning itself with the newly imported American standards. While consistent with the Hawaiian soils' previous use, which were already employed in a modest agricultural fashion; the settlers prospects were far more ambitious, announcing in a nutshell what would become the archipelago's main economic feature within a few decades.

Money from the American mainland also brought to the Hawaiian society a new set of values, that in time drove the ancient system of land tenure no longer praised nor used. Therefore, an agrarian-based, money-rewarded type of labor did succeed there to the old system of compelled tasks dedicated to the benefit of the Hawaiian Crown. Regardless of how appealing the new financial setting was, this concern was not unanimously shared. The Haole ownership of the sugar plantations was once especially unpopular, for its mitigated status was unclear to the Hawaiian natives; so labor immigration gradually became the planters' dent in counteracting the alleged laziness of the Hawaiians.

This lack of interest from the commoners would evolve and allow

the sugar plants development to become more commonplace, once the ranks of the field workers were completed by the first waves of immigration. Thus, labeling the Anglo-Saxon influence in the Hawaiian kingdom of the second half of the nineteenth century as only disruptive would be an exaggerated statement. One is to consider here how the kingship was decaying already, and many authors we are going to depend on in this study, reflect that United States presence has allowed the ancient Hawaiian rule to make an honorable outing, instead of slowly losing most of its age-old hegemony.

Yet, the main share of this work will be dedicated to what has resulted of these miscellaneous schemes that gradually have evolved into a fully-fetched sugar industry. Literature around this period of build-up is abundant, and we will be attempting to present here to what extend this development was salutary to the maintaining of the American presence. But the drawbacks of such an agricultural expansion are numerous also, and we will be presenting them as well, whenever they were damaging to the Hawaiian people, to the planter class, or to the imported field laborers.

In order to present briefly the main sources that will be used during the course of this study, an overall description of the books in concern will follow. It isn't an exhaustive list, as some readings are thorough perspectives of the labor scene in Hawaii, whereas other have narrower perspectives. For this reason, we will first shortly review here only the writings that are addressing the main themes of this dissertation; while the more peripheral titles will appear gradually when required for the purpose of establishing concurring statements. Since this work aims at giving an accurate description of the labor struggle origins and developing in Hawaii, books that are directly describing it will be introduced here, along with some other few, demanding to be presented too; although their inclusion to the study depends more on their sociological analysis of the Hawaiian

society, than on their main theme.

Thus, an array of primary source documents, as well as books only to be quoted briefly will appear as a wholesale only in the bibliography section of this essay. So to begin with, this presentation of the main sources will give some rational elements about each of the major titles to be discussed here.

*Fighting in Paradise*, by Gerald Horn, is a recent publication, and nevertheless it portrays the growing of the left-leaning obedience in the Islands with acute descriptions, seemingly matching with the trail of events as they once occurred.

*Working in Hawaii: A Labor History*, by Edward D Beechert, on the other hand, has a more descriptive approach, relying relentlessly on historical evidence. Also it recalls from beyond the sugar industry's presence in Hawaii, inducing the reader to consider the Hawaiian history from an exclusive labor perspective.

While evoking these wayward yet concurring perspectives, one cannot help but think about the study that was previous to this one. In it already, two books were favoring a conceptual pattern, noticeable on a wide-scale basis within the Hawaiian history. Either *Last Among Equals*, or *Elusive Destiny* would report on the key moments in the state formation process, with both insight and criticism.

Most surprisingly, the same goes as well for the formerly mentioned set of two books, which can be tackled together as addressing the Hawaiian labor history from diverse perspectives, encompassing their analyses within different time boundaries. To that extend, another title addresses the matter of the *Hawaiian labor movement* in a timely manner. *A Brief History* of it was written by Edward Johannessen, and it is aiming at presenting what were the opposing forces in the struggle for labor representation, from

both the labor and management organizing viewpoints. Being written a few years before Hawaii would officially become an American state, it bears a throughout questioning about the interplay of the past events with the contemporary issues of the state formation.

As the M1 work would also replace the Islands within a broader international context, so will this M2 attempt. Another set of two books will allow that, pursuing according to the new theme of this work, what *Hawaii at the Crossroads of the Pacific* did for its forerunner. For one, *Workers on the Waterfront*, by Bruce Nelson, will be evoked, as the International Longshoremen and Warehouse Union (ILWU) played an important role in federating the fieldworkers. Also, *Imingaisha: the Emigration Japanese Companies and Hawaii*, by Alan T Moriyama, will allow us to shed some light on the enrolling of foreign labor when considered from outside Hawaii.

Interestingly, the two books each belong with either M. Horne or M. Beechert narratives; and the former will be invoked to present the *International Longshoremen Warehouse Union*'s early successes unionism, granting them their further efficiency in the islands. As for the later, M. Moriyama's book will allow us to have a more insightful description of how Japanese immigration was handled, as well as what made it notably distinct from other kinds of imported workforces.

*The Japanese in Hawaii: A Century of Struggle*, by Roland Kotami, has relevant descriptions on how a share of the Japanese that were to remain in Hawaii would chose to fight for their rights, so as to maintain legally as well as socially speaking; *From Race to Ethnicity, Interpreting the American Japanese Experience in Hawaii*, by Jonathan Y Okamura contributes the same way to expose what were the challenges of the Japanese, confronted to the dilemma of either resigning into

Americanization over their cultural belongings, or in sustaining them through affirmative action.

While the federated planters were often reported to use racial discrepancies to break strikes, we will see that their representative body, the Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association was also a genuine agricultural compound, intending to actually improve the sugar cane cultivation process. *A History of the Experiment Station of the Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association* expresses most of the HSPA's concerns in being a supportive prospect, instead of solely being the often decried planters' counter-strike executive board.

This later point of view is to appear in *A Spark is Struck*, retracing the achievements of Jack Hall, the ILWU representative in Hawai'i, having paved the way to fairer labor relations, as well as he lead inter-islands rallies throughout the plantations, in spite of the planters' curtailing measures.

So in a first part, we will see how the importation of an agrarian model rapidly conquered the Islands arable areas: the sugar cane plantations. While unfamiliar to the Hawaiians, the plantation work was at once a matter of American resort. The former land tenure arrangement between the king and its subjects was maintained nevertheless; but the monarchy made several assumptions that proved wrong, supposing that their civilization would succeed in remaining aside of the American assets. While their hereditary influence did subsist so for nearly a century, the old labor principles it rested upon where exhausted way before that.

Metaphorically speaking, this two-timed evolution can be overcast and used to comprehend the social changes that undergone the Hawaiian Islands at these times. Already competing in the capitalistic enterprise, the American business partners of the Hawaiians only needed to import their

values to this native feudal society. The Hawaiians instead gradually perceived how imported wealth would eventually bring change to their lifestyle, provided they would comply with the incoming labor requirements.

Their society's principles however became challenged by the capitalistic ones implying the subjugation of natural obedience and belonging, to the earning and ownership of one's means of subsidence. More to this, successive waves of imported epidemic diseases swept a share of the Hawaiian population. In dealing with factors new to them, such as money, illness, working schedules, the Hawaiians were left powerless in maintaining their idle lifestyles. While eager to cope with the new challenges, the Hawaiian kingdom dismay under the outside influences was manifest. A proverbial reciprocity treaty however allowed Island life to avoid the dire straits.

There will begin the second part of our survey. As the sugar market widened and grew competitive with the mainland existing one, the already American-inspired Hawaiian monarchy was switched to a genuine territorial government. Having propelled the move, the federated planters were now looming toward improvement and expansion of their practices. This was achieved through controlling the whole sugar manufacturing process, as well as also by grouping their assets into corporation ventures. Self-conscious that sugar cultivation in the Islands was no longer depending upon royal ascent; the newly appointed planter class moved toward its unification, in the meantime before annexation

In time, as their prospect would concretize, their policy would also dictate them to shun down their workers praises for better wages or living conditions. Therefore, on the occasions of their walking out of their jobs, the planters' strategy consisted in complete ignorance of the laborers' grievances, only granting some of the asked improvements *after* the course

of work was resumed.

While the first strikes occurred thanks to a little organizing fever among the ranks of some of the most represented ethnic groups, it was also because of these racial-bound organizations that the planters found ways to hire strikebreakers of other ethnicities, opening the way to a long legacy of conflicting wages-based labor dissension.

Once Americanized as a Territory, Hawai‘i persisted in labor contract immigration for a decade, before Asian workers were found overcrowding and their entry on the US soil hindered by a nationwide decree. The planters' fears of the drawbacks of Annexation and the beginning of state drive started then to materialize. And this angst would culminate with the arrival in the Islands of the mainland originated wave of labor unrest, embodied by the first dual-race movement in 1920.

From this time on, this third part of this memoir will expose some of the accomplishments of these organized field workers. The incoming of a genuine labor representation was gradually reported among them; and it acquired an official status in 1935, when the industrial workforce was offered representation by syndical means. Extended to Hawaii also, the National Labor Relation Act would officially acknowledge the right to petition as well as to choose to elect some delegates representing a share of the sugar manufacturing workers before their employers.

Mainly to be represented by the International Longshoremen and Warehouse Union (ILWU), the field laborers would have to wait until the war's ending, to see the growth of their official recognition before the managerial and legal institutions. The originally dedicated to sailors' union would nevertheless quickly devote itself to the sugar workers, and would therefore publicly battle for their rights to be represented as a wholesale. It took the war interlude to have the Territorial government update its own version of the NLRA, comprehensive of the field laborers.

Resuming its pre-war setting, the labor scene in the archipelago has gradually managed to maintain its awkwardness in representation. Inspired by the waterfront workers' movement for equal wages on both sides of the Pacific ocean, field workers struggled for and obtained the establishment of a common contract with fixed wages.

The fourth and last part of this work will gather together a set of analyses regarding more especially the Japanese people in Hawai‘i. A particular array of dilemmas that characterized their presence in the Islands will provide us with further understanding of some of the matters evoked previously; as well as they will allow us to also address new ones.

As a conclusion, will be considered how the development of the sugar industry in Hawai‘i has evolved from a small-scale operation, to the Islands' main occupation, allowing in the meanwhile the adjustment of its policies to the succeeding political contexts; and ultimately playing a staring role in the achievement of the drive to American statehood.

*

## 1st Part: Incentive and disruptive: the early American influences in Hawai‘i

### How has sugar cane growing was brought to Hawai‘i?

The frenzied expansion of the sugar cane industry in Hawai‘i cannot be considered as a natural development of one of its regular cultivation pattern. Nor was the pineapple one. Both are instead imported features, expected to meet some success under the subtropical weather of the Hawaiian islands: "Although the Hawaiian Islands were the last important

Pacific island area to be discovered, they have become the first to achieve a modern culture." Therefore, that American settlers would devise on setting up the cultivation of such crops seemed reasonable a prospect. Sugar cane cultivation having spread around the world as an imported practice since the beginning of the 18th century. Beside, while devoted to other practices, the Hawaiian society was an agrarian one already. With its favorable irrigation and climatic standards, a fair share of the archipelago was able to sustain many dedicated agrarian enterprises: "Hawaii's climate makes it possible for crops to be planted on any day of the year."[1]

Recollecting these early times, planters were to put nevertheless the emphasis on the awkwardness of the venture, along with the amount of devotion its pioneers had to worship into it: "Hawaiian farmers were forced by nature, if not by choice, to concentrate on the cultivation of sugar cane. However, these Islands in their virgin state did not, and do not now, afford ideal conditions for sugar cane culture. Their soils were low in fertility, and the very uneven topography of the lands made fields cultivation difficult, rainfalls were extremely variable." The planters associated under the late days of the monarchy are therefore suggesting that giant steps had to be taken in order to sustain the sugar cane's first prospects: "The early farmers of Hawaii recognized these difficulties which could have discouraged many men, but they were determined to grow cane and make sugar despite the many obstacles which had to be overcome. They wrested from the soil the necessary wealth to finance the growth of their industry, for instance, the expensive and intricate irrigation systems which converted deserted lands into luxurious fields."[2] Although the planters are not despising the Hawaiian land, from their contemporary agricultural viewpoint, they put

1*The Hawaiian Labor Movement, A Brief History*, Johannessen, Edward, Part One, Chapter III, page 18; Chapter I, § 1, page 13.
2*A History of the Experiment Station of the Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association*, page 3.

forward that it demanded to be enhanced; and are implying that it still does.

Another appealing trait of the Hawaiian soil was its availability; with the inner uncharted regions of the widest islands being almost deserted: "The land was largely underutilized and was worked with low productivity and little technology. For the most part, this system of production was adequate to the need of the communautary society." However, with its communautary values enforced by a feudal hegemony, the Hawaiian society constituted a controversial element in any schemes of improvement of the existing land tenure system: "The favorable impression of the underutilized natural resources of Hawai'i was coupled with a conversely negative view of the Hawaiian not only as a source of labor but also as an obstacle to gaining access to the land resources."[3] If an agricultural enterprise originated from outside of Hawai'i was to become there, its settlement would certainly mean a degree of compliance with the rules prevailing to the kingdom.

Therefore, the first steps in suggesting an alternative model were made with dedicating some acres to sugar crop: "During the first thirty years of the nineteenth century various attempts were made to raise and manufacture sugar in the Islands, but none of these ventures were of commercial importance."[4]

One of these attempts eventually succeeded, and brought about the questioning of the current land tenure policies, when: "in 1835, an American firm succeeded in obtaining a significant lease for lands on Kauai on which they planned to produce sugar, coffee and silk. Along with approximately a thousand acres of land and water rights, the firm was granted to hire native laborers." Foreshadowing the first legislative move to revoke *in time* the land tenure relations that was to occur in 1839, the

3*Working in Hawaii: A Labor History*, Beechert, Edward, Chapter II, page 29; page 30.
4*The Hawaiian Labor Movement, A Brief History*, Part Two, Chapter VIII, pp 47-48.

agreement read that "these workers were to be exempted from the traditional labor and poll taxes.""[5]

The provision on the "water rights" especially suggests that a bargaining with the planters was at work. According to islands' life standards, nothing was actually to be *owned* so as to speak properly, whether it was land or water. It shows in that the allotment of land was flexible for the Hawaiian people: "The Hawaiian tenant held the land apportioned to him to maintain his family. He owed a portion of his produce to the *ali'i* above him. Commoners were bound neither to the *ali'i* nor to the land or the district. In fact, the commoner had the right to abandon his district and to move to another if he regarded his treatment as abusive or unfair." Stressing the utilitarian value of the water access, its dedication was to be linked with the agricultural intends the commoners were to fulfill: "Water, like land, was governed by use of considerations rather than by possession; neither land nor water could be transferred nor owned in the sense of excluding the others from their use."[6]

While seemingly natural and obvious, the allowance to the use of water clearly indicates that the kingdom of Hawaii intended to prevail by incorporating foreign enterprises in its economy. According to Edward Johannessen, "This was a period of great progress for the Hawaiian and created for him a new and better life on the whole. It is probable that if it could have lasted another hundred years without the intrusion of large scale business with the United States, the Hawaiian people might have been able to survive as a nation."[7] However, the encounter with the western world was to prove costly to the Hawaiians, by weakening its demography on the one hand, and on the other, by diluting its identity within imported cultural

5 *Working in Hawaii: A Labor History*, Chapter II, § Koloa Plantation, page 22.
6 *Ibid*, Chapter I, § Rights and Responsibilities, page 9.
7 *The Hawaiian Labor Movement, A Brief History*, Part Two, Chapter VIII, page 47.

patterns.

## American colonialism's first drawbacks in Hawai'i

Depending on M. Johannessen enthusiastic statement, the Hawaiian people may have long soared, provided their visiting partners would have met lesser compliance in authorizing the fulfillment of their business ideals. That cannot be firmly stated however, for the downfall of the ancient Hawaiian society was brought about by a combination of diseases and poverty; when theoretically, the newcomers were the harbingers of modernization and progress.

One of Hawaii's natural resources, the sandalwood, was to become a valuable entry ticket to the newly imported monetary exchange market. However, neither unlimited nor easy to come by, its gathering was nevertheless urged by the Hawaiian overseers, in disregard of the maintaining of the traditional harvesting processes. Many lives were lost due to both the impracticable areas where sandalwood grew, and also to the shortage in feeding resources: "The selling of sandalwood was certainly one solution in this early period. Using their traditional authority to obtain the necessary labor, the chiefs soon created a crisis by wholesale cutting. Visitors in 1822 reported a shortage on provisions on Oahu: "People for some months past, have been engaged in cutting sandalwood, and have of course neglected the cultivation of the land." Another reported people suffering from the prolonged stay in the cold air of the mountains: "Were they not particularly hardy, many of them would certainly perish.""[8]

But one is also here to witness the resilience of the Hawaiians, in spite of the reckless behavior that was requested from them: "Crops were

8 *Working in Hawaii: A Labor History*, Chapter II, § The Commoners, page 19.

neglected as entire families were forced to labor for their chiefs. Despite their severe treatment, there is no record of any protest action in the working class to improve its status. It is difficult to understand the patience and the docility of the early Hawaiian commoner but perhaps such treatment accounts for its ready acceptance of the ideas and culture of western civilization." To M. Beechert, the awkwardness of the situation was to appear according to another equation: "The transition from a society based upon communal use to one based upon commodity exchange meant that the Hawaiian commoners retained many of the obligations of the former relationship but few of its benefits."[9] In this configuration, the commoner is presented as committed to honor a cemented labor relation, regardless of his own misfortune in doing so.

The other cause of the drop in demography of the Hawaiians was, as mentioned above, when a number of imported diseases would descent on them. Carried overseas by men to which they were benign, they meant something else to the Hawaiian natives: "The common diseases of the western society, measles and influenza, were frequently fatal to the Hawaiians, who had no long-established resistance." Reported between 1806 and 1840, four major waves of epidemics stroke the Hawaiian kingdom with equal severity each time. In fact, all three reigns of successive Kamehameha were plagued by such contagious hazards. According to inaccurate census data: "it would appear that between 1823 and 1850 the Hawaiian population decreased by about sixty percent. By the 1830s, the decline in the Hawaiian population was so severe as to cause general concern."[10] From this time on, may the Hawaiian monarchy have persisted in competing with the American influence by modernizing its

9*The Hawaiian Labor Movement, A Brief History*, Part Two, Chapter VIII, pp 46-47; *Working in Hawaii: A Labor History*, Chapter II, § Accumulation of Wealth, page 17.
10*Ibid*, Chapter II, § Public Health, page 20.

institutions; its representation in terms of population forbade that this would have succeeded. Regaining the upper hand now implied relaying on the sugar planters' new expectations in an imported workforce.

## 1835-1872 the proverbial Hawaiian labor supply

From the planters' viewpoint, arranging a labor-bound immigration meant securing the steady growth of their sugar cane enterprise. Otherwise, the current drawbacks of the initial principles they had to abide to would quickly negate their first meager successes. Although the law of the kingdom was enhanced on several occasions, thus enacting the provisions allowing the laborers to become plantation workers, not all of the Hawaiians were eager to comply with the new setting they were incorporated into: "There is ample evidence to suggest that the Hawaiian commoners asserted themselves in the only manner open to them — by simply not responding to the demands of wage hire at exploitative rates. The social context in which production had taken place in traditional society had now been transformed and was no longer a sufficient reason to move the commoner to the level of activity sought by the westerners and the chiefs. What remained of the communal system would be destroyed by the conversion of the Hawaiian farmer into an agricultural worker on commercial farms."[11]

More factually-based, Edward Johannessen's analysis of the native employment describes it instead in a timely manner: "In the beginning, the industry depended almost entirely upon native Hawaiian workers and this condition prevailed for more than ten years. Despite the fact that the native labor force was inadequate, both in numbers and in attitude, to meet the

11*Ibid*, Chapter II, § Idler or Laborer?, page 34.

demands of the planters and of the expanding industry, they remained the chief source of labor until 1872."[12]

Unable to rely on the most obvious choice for field labor, the planters had therefore to find an adequate substitute. Importing laborers from America mainland was however not an option. Even in the troubleshooting of the first years of exploitation, the Caucasian profile was branded as unsuitable for outdoor agricultural work under Hawai'i's climate: "The spread of European activities in the nineteenth century into Asia, Africa, and the Pacific Islands was accompanied by a rationalizing set of ideas which justified the imperial control by which this spread of authority was accomplished. Important in this rationalization was the notion that the white race could not perform labor under the difficult conditions of tropical and subtropical plantations."[13] With Hawaiians impervious and Caucasians unfit to plantation work, the imperative recourse to a more reliable labor supply became all the more imminent. Insofar, the current workforce had been rewarded according to an American template; therefore, the planter's next move would be the enrollment of outsiders to Hawai'i, provided the monarchy would condone the principles of this attempt.

## Imported labor: a makeshift arrangement to become earnest

With these classical objections against the use of an available pool of workers, the planters' choice soon turned itself toward immigration as a source of potential field laborers. While this appraisal would normally convene with the monarchy's desire to compose with the amounted casualties of first half of the century, planters' interest would have the premium. As M. Beechert puts it: "Efforts to meet the dual requirements

12 *The Hawaiian Labor Movement, A Brief History*, Part Two, Chapter VIII, page 48.
13 *Ibid*, Chapter III, § Racism and Labor Supply, page 40.

posed by the repopulation needs of the Hawaiian government and the labor needs of the sugar planters never ceased. The more pragmatic notion, however, of importing cheap supply of labor always took precedence. The importation had been made possible by the Masters and Servants Act, which provided for the signing of contracts for labor in conformity with the Hawaiian law."[14] Therefore, contract labor became the standard pattern for the establishment of a steady flow of foreigners, coming to Hawaii for the time being of their contractual engagement.

The genesis of this practice was actually a Hawai'i-bound experiment, which successfully stood the test, and was extended to the employment of aliens both to the Crown and to the US flag: "In order to assure some permanence of labor, a system of labor contract similar to those of the shipping industry proved useful to the planters after 1848. These contracts were first applied to the native Hawaiian and usually had a term of one year. This practice became known as "shipping" which was also a carry-over from the seafaring life. The Seaman's Shipping Act of The United States formed the pattern of this contract labor clauses of the Masters and Servants Act of Hawaii's Civil Code in 1850 which, with later amendments, governed the greater part of Hawaii's plantation labor until the year 1900."[15] Immigration, from this time on became commonplace, and contributed to the federating of the Hawaiian kingdom with the American mainland's labor policy under a rationalized ethos.

## Retainers to the land: Royal ascent made compulsory upon American initiative

Nevertheless, plans for an independent Hawaiian stand were still

14*Ibid*, Chapter IV, § Shaping a Work Force, page 61.
15*The Hawaiian Labor Movement, A Brief History*, Part Two, Chapter VIII, page 49.

promoted by the monarchy, which suited itself with a Bureau of Immigration in 1864, “to coordinate labor immigration and to ensure that the needs of the government would be met. The king explained that the move was required by the demands of agriculture, the dictates of humanity and the preservation of our race.”[16] This first attempt in leveling with the planters’ establishment characterized itself by rendering them accountable for their contract labor workers. Any such import of workers would have to be availed by an express license of the Bureau; now proverbially being in charge of immigration handling in Hawai‘i.

Of Chinese origin, the first wave of migrants dedicated to the plantation work satisfied many of the planters’ expectations. Being imported in 1852, they were the ones whose contracts were tailored after the US seamen’s contract type. That the next shipment would only occur in 1865 allow us to consider that on each occurrence, the setting up of a Hawaiian dedicated institution had first prevailed and coached the initiative. While the later, comprising approximately five-hundred workers was prompted by the Bureau of Immigration; the former depended upon the Royal Agricultural Society, founded in 1850 and gathering the next year; then giving shape to the planters’ fancy of calling upon imported labor. In each case, a Hawaiian national feature was created previously, undoubtedly so as to nip in the bud any planters’ wild desire of autonomous venture. By providing its subjects with an agricultural board, the Hawaiian monarchy also intended to ward them against the gold rush appeal on the Californian coast.

## 1852-1865: the Coolie reinforcement years

16 *Working in Hawaii: A Labor History*, Chapter IV, § The Demand for Foreign Labor, page 62.

Sojourners to Hawai‘i, the first penal contract workers were required there for a period ranging from one to four years, and their attendance to work was strictly mandatory. This main feature of the labor contract therefore extended to the further waves of immigration. Gradually, the system bettered, and was several times amended in law until 1872. From the planters' viewpoint, its appliance to a Chinese workforce felt sensible: "China was an obvious source to Hawaii. Aware of the use of Chinese labor in other sugar-producing areas, the planters generally agreed that China was the most likely place to turn." The feedbacks from the plantations where they were dispatched were mostly positive: "Some planters had good results and demanded more workers. The manager urged his colleagues to lose no time in "fitting out a vessel" for the purpose of obtaining more such workers." Bound by different provisions than the Hawaiian natives, these workers also characterized what the planters were longing for: "As Laborers in the field, the Coolies give us perfect satisfaction. They are industrious, skillful and thorough, and one coolie in the field is, in my opinion, three natives."[17] Comforted in their pick, the planters engaged themselves in overseas recruiting, carefully abiding by the international agreements.

## The 1876 Reciprocity Treaty: the sugar industry's metamorphosis

Yet such agreements were still burdensome to the growing Hawaiian sugar market. Penal contracts, before their update were decried because of their conditions identical to slavery or peonage. But what hindered most the sugar cane further developments was the taxation upon its importations to US mainland. The resolving of the later issue would in time precipitate

17*Ibid*, Chapter IV, § The Chinese Worker, page 63.

the fate of the indentured workers employment, for its intensive recourse would expose its weaknesses, as well in terms of perjured workers' rights, than in matters of overflowing immigration figures.

Nothing of the sort however, could have been foreseen at the eve of the *Reciprocal Trade Agreement*. As for other parts of the Hawaiian history, its eventual agreement was tributary to a favorable political context in both Hawaii and American mainland: "This prospect however, raised an obvious question: Why would the United States enter into a reciprocal treaty with minuscule Hawaii?" A combination of factors lead to its ratification, with the most notorious being its openly non-economic, unofficial provision; that its enactment and renewal would be conditioned by clearance for the American Navy to station in the Pearl Harbor area. While sufficiently stalwart, the Hawaiian economy could use such an agreement; therefore, the bargain was thoughtfully considered before its proposal: "In reality, the Hawaiian economy was at a standstill in 1874. The decline of sugar prices in the United States and the duty levied against Hawaiian sugar had depressed the Hawaiian development which had been so eagerly anticipated. Without freedom from U.S. duties, Hawaiian sugar was neither competitive nor profitable. There was no alternative market."[18]

Keeping with its promises, the treaty unlocked the profit rates that the planters used to dedicate to export subsidies. Previously forecast by the existing sugar enterprises, its effectiveness was no lesser than expected: "The planters knew that if Hawaii became part of the protected U.S. market, the amount of the duty they now paid would become a guaranteed profit. This bounty, added to the seemingly unlimited expanse of the American market, promised a bonanza equal only to Hawaii's capacity to produce." When planters used to be mostly casual entrepreneurs,

18*Ibid*, § After Twenty-Five Years, page 78.

depending on their original means of production; they now had a vested interest into industrial sugar production. Not all of them succeeded however, since upgrading to a higher scale operation meant a readily available capital only few could gather by themselves: “In the early phase of the industry, many of the planters were simply people who either had land or access to land. Their competence and aptitude for sugar planting varied widely. The political economy of sugar with its fluctuating market and demands for heavy capital investment would eventually eliminate the less adept and greatly consolidate the planter class.”[19]

This new deal available for those who could attain its prerogatives characterized itself with an outgrowth of the number of plantations over the years. These operations being more industrious complexes, and now having compulsory ties with sugar factor firms that would become quickly their exclusive representatives: “Hawaii’s plantations had become something more than agricultural establishments. They were becoming large-scale financial organizations, with an assured income dependent only upon the volume of production. The capital investment required for large-scale milling, irrigation, labor and transportation to urban markets quickly eliminated the small growers. Before 1876, the plantation manager had been largely an independent figure, frequently the owner of the operation and in full control. Under the impetus of the reciprocity bounty, the once-powerful manager would be slowly converted into an employee of the factoring companies, the so-called Big Five.”[20] By trusting most of Hawai‘i’s sugar facilities into a handful of companies, the plantation owners were now ascertaining their development into the American market.

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19 *Ibid*, Chapter V, § The Impact of Reciprocity, page 79;
§ The Planter’s Response, page 82.
20 *Ibid*, Chapter V, § The Impact of Reciprocity, page 80.

## 2nd Part: Greeting the territorial government: the planters' drive for keeping up with their effectiveness

As the practice of importing hulks of laborers from China expanded, the planters began to fear that depending too heavily on this one source of immigration, could one day amount to an outbreak of labor unrest they would not be able to deal with. Such a paradoxical assumption, however reflected a more general concern about the continuation of the Chinese enrollment in the plantations: "In a pragmatic concession to reality, the Hawaiian cabinet in 1876, agreed to continue the importation of Chinese workers, *while looking for more suitable immigrants*. Not long after this conclusion, the interior minister was reported as suggesting that the sugar industry would need eight hundred workers and the rice growers stated they needed no fewer four hundred new workers." While the Chinese workforce was already decried for having remained in the Hawaiian society after their contracts had expired, the concern extended beyond the government and planters' reach: "The urban community's demand for Chinese exclusion collided with the never-ending demand for cheap labor. By 1883, there was a Workingmen's Party in Honolulu similar to the anti-Chinese organization in California. In 1888, in response to growing resentment of the urban Chinese worker, the legislature formulated a drastic restriction of Chinese immigration."[21] Therefore, the equation was bare simple, to the planters' viewpoint: the no longer suitable importation of Chinese could be discontinued anytime, provided it could be sustained through other means. Therefore, diverting the amounting hatred could be achieved by

21 *Ibid*, Chapter V, § The Chinese, page 92; page 93.

substituting the now unpopular Chinese, with the newly made available Japanese. Japan, they felt, would be a suitable secondary source; its people having a lot in common with the Chinese coolies; yet representing for instance a lesser evil.

## How labor immigration massively shifted to Japanese?

In Japan, either immigration or emigration figures were almost null. More to this, the government had declined on several occasions offers to send its workers abroad. Until 1885, Hawai‘i was no exception. However, since the Hawaiian offer concerned field laborers, the Meiji government decided to reconsider the offer, as the agricultural model was declining in Japan: “The economic condition of average farmer on the countryside had worsened after 1881, and the central government took action. However, before it agreed to allow its citizens to work overseas, it wanted to see if a properly supervised system could succeed over a period of time. This labor convention, which governed emigration from Japan to Hawaii between 1885 and 1894, was signed in Tokyo on 28 January 1886.”[22] Within these boundaries, most of the contract labor emigration was undertook, since the practice was no longer tolerated on the extension of the US mainland that had become Hawai‘i at the beginning of the 20th century. All in all, this “sponsored emigration” as it was called, consisted in sending twenty-six ships to the Islands, carrying an average of 28,500 people, with ships landing three or four times a year during each of these nine years.

From the Japanese side, the experiment quickly revealed itself a success, with returning emigrants telling tales of wages unseen in Japan, and a monetary income of foreign currency significant to the country’s

22 *Imingaisha, Japanese Emigration Companies*, Chapter I, § Requests for Japanese Emigrants, page 10.

commercial balance. Therefore, as a part of the Meiji restoration policy, the government decided to trust the emigration practice into the hands of private companies, or *Imingaisha*[*]. Fifty-one of them operated from 1895 to 1907, thus importing no less than 124,000 Japanese to Hawai'i. However, these individuals met different fortunes than their government assisted counterparts, as workers had to see to various expenses, such as their boat fare; and were sometimes even returning to Japan empty-handed.

Meanwhile the year 1907 put these companies out of business, with the Gentlemen's Agreement terminating Asian labor; another important date in Hawaiian history allowed them to reach a peak efficiency, that was the formal day of annexation, the 14 of June 1900. Since it outlawed any contract labor signed beyond this time, the Organic act worked as a deadline for emigration companies: "Although annexation secured the mainland market for Island sugar, the Hawaiian sugar planters worried that contract labor — the *semi-slave* condition of Hawaii's plantation laborer — would not be tolerated in a country which had outlawed slavery. The sugar companies tried to bring as many contract laborers as possible before the federal government could prohibit the further importation of indentured workers. In 1899, the planters imported 26,103 Japanese contract laborers — the largest number of Japanese immigrants brought to the Hawaiian islands in a single year."[23]

Implemented by the planters, this desperate move to strengthen their indentured workforce reflected their early concerns about Hawaii being annexed by the United States. Whether the freed laborers would be suitable for their purposes remained uncertain: "the Hawaiian republican government and several of the sugar planters had been in disagreement over the issue of annexation. From the point of view of the authorities,

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* 移民会社: Emigration companies in Japanese.

23 *The Japanese in Hawaii, a Century of Struggle*, Chapter II, § The Labor Exodus, pp 35-36.

annexation meant political stability in the islands and protection from a major power. The majority of sugar planters, however, had been opposed to the idea since the early days of the republic. They realized that contract labor system, which was the basis of their plantations, would have to be sacrificed in return for any benefit of annexation. Furthermore they questioned whether a free laborer system would be stable enough to support the plantations if they expanded in order to take full advantage of the prospects of increased sugar exports to the rest of the United States." As far as the temporary government was concerned, the uncertainty amounted otherwise: "The flood of Chinese and Japanese workers after 1894 alarmed the government which had overthrown the monarchy. In March 1899, the Bureau of Immigration notified the agents of the need for caution. The increase demand for plantation labor arising from sugar cultivation could no longer be accepted as a reason for unrestrained importation of Japanese workers. While the bureau's purpose was to afford the plantations reasonable aid in procuring such new labor as may be necessary, the government was also concerned about the need to keep Asiatic labor immigration *down to the absolute requirements*."[24] Here the scope of our analysis shows well the conflicting interests of institutions both belonging with the Hawaiian monarchy's reign, and the new intents of the revolutionary oligarchy.

While the monarchy had adopted a paternalistic attitude toward the plantations; their managers were once only too eager to behave accordingly. Such moderate combination however, felt preposterous to the new planter class, who had a greater use of the Royal allowance, but little care for its original meaning, of allowing the Hawaiians to take their toll in

24*Imingaisha, Japanese Emigration Companies*, Chapter VIII, The End of the Emigration Companies, page 147;
*Working in Hawaii: A Labor History*, Chapter V, § End of the System, page 116.

sugar cultivation. Therefore, the embarrassment on how to tackle immigration prior to annexation can be attributed to the dismissal of the original intend of the monarchy, to provide a suitable agricultural board, designed to live up to the American standards. No longer Hawaiian, the main share of the workforce was no longer expected to be so either. That the *Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association* was formed during these times of uncertainty gives us a clear landmark on the new course followed by the industry of sugar in Hawai‘i, where identity was gradually substituted to productivity.

## 1895: the *Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association*

The drive to productivity, so as to exonerate the planters from the charge of a frenzied development, was lead also in the spirit of a sustained agriculture, which was intended as soon as they would convene together: “However, the establishment of an *experimentation station* was not the spur-of-the-moment decision. At the first convention (1882) of the Planters’ Labor and Supply Company, we find reference to what may be considered a thin entering wedge of science applied to the Hawaiian sugar industry.” The *experimentation station*, which is the overall matter discussed within M. Grammer’s pamphlet was to become reality within a decade. By then, this kind of prospects were getting intricate parts of many agricultural operations on the American mainland, thanks to the Hatch Act of 1887. Therefore, the lagging-behind Hawai‘i considered it most dearly, regardless of the expenses which would not be covered by the federal legislation: “This suggested experimental station is no discovery to our committee. For several years, the establishment of such a station has been spoken of as *a long desired want*.” This accounts for the undertone of the document, where a persistent care can be noticed in the portraying of the

first sugar cane farming enterprises as resilient and obstinate in spite of the harshness of the Hawaiian surroundings. For the sugar cane trustees, changing this setting meant a lot more therefore than to their mainland counterparts: “Thus, experimental station of the HSPA has its beginning in an area when farm science was a theory, separated form farm practice by a great gulf of unbelief. Truly, the founders of the experimental station had a breadth of vision in the necessity for untrammeled research which was extraordinary.”[25]

Designed to promote the sugar industry, the HSPA committed itself with the improvement of every aspects of the sugar plantation management: fertilization, irrigation, workers accommodation, wages policies, statistics; with dedicated subcommittees in each and every fields. As mentioned above, it also was set up in the meanwhile of the temporary government years, in order to compose efficiently with the new rulers’ immigration policy. Under the monarchy, a similar organization existed since 1882, by the name of *Planters’ Labor and Supply Organization*: “The change involved much more than a name, however. The new governmental control achieved in the overthrown of the Hawaiian monarchy was to be matched by a more effective organization of the industry. The sugar industry had been drawn into political lobbying by struggles over the importation of workers and the need to maintain a subsidy or protection from tariffs in the United States market. The new organization would take charge of these continuing needs while expanding into areas of concern. The industry intended to deal with a much broader range of matters than the problems of labor and material supply which had inspired the earlier planter organization.”[26]

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25 *A History of the Experiment Station of the Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association*, pp 4-5; page 4; page 5.
26 *Ibid*, Chapter IX, § Birth of the HSPA, pp 178-179.

While propelled by different necessities, these auxiliary bodies to the sugar companies, had in common to act as the planters' representatives during labor disputes. Depending of the motive, the HSPA was more or less inclined to condone to the workers' grievances: expelling an abusive overseer* or interpreter, the improvement of living conditions were sometimes carried out by the HSPA. However, demands concerning wages directly were almost never even received, the planters' membership to their representative body being their *bona fide* in depending upon a fixed wages policy common to all of them.

Less efficient under the free labor system, the HSPA's univocal stand remained nevertheless their flagship policy: "Although the HSPA was developing a more powerful role in the context of the new free labor force, individual sugar companies continued to follow their own policies and judgment in many aspects of labor relations. So long as the association's assessments were paid regularly, plantations retained a large measure of control over the decision making without losing the services offered by the HSPA. At the same time, however, the plantations were steadily losing their distinctiveness as the agencies absorbed them one by one. It was this consolidation which ultimately shifted power from all but a handful of sugar companies to the "Big Five.""[27]

As the figurehead of the sugar industry in Hawai'i, the HSPA was enforcing the planters' growing hegemony in an unchallenged manner: "Except for a flurry of trade unionism around the end of the century, there was little labor organization." Upon annexation however, this was to change in an unprecedented fashion: "In the year 1900 alone there were more strikes than had occurred in all the previous labor history of the Islands. Not counting the demonstrations or stoppages which occurred

* Luna in Hawaiian

27 *Ibid*, Chapter VI, § Early Attempts at Control, page 134.

immediately following the effective date of the Organic Act, there were twenty strikes in the sugar growing and manufacturing industry involving 8,000 employees." Although moderate, when not symbolic, these demonstrations reflected however the expectations that field laborers had in the incoming change in their status. Beside, through the HSPA, planters may have concerted their interests; the end of the penal contract pattern also did shelter the workers', creating an unprecedented open space for collective bargaining: "After 1900, foreign labor recruitment, supplemented by a modified contract system devoid of penal enforcement, characterized the method of securing and utilizing laborers for the thirty coming years."[28] This sense of an achieved equality in labor relations was going to act as a forlorn hope for the coming upheavals, in spite of the vested advantage the planters had in having organized themselves first.

Meager as well as spontaneous, these first attempts at picketing were not really threatening to the management: "that is to say, these disputes did not reach the level of the organized strike in which all the workers of a particular plantation took part. This improvised quality made it relatively easy for management to deal with the incident either by concessions alone, or more frequently by repression with some concessions." Despite their uncertain features, they were nevertheless representing already most of the characteristics of the further movements; being therefore the forerunners of a decade of labor unrest in the plantations across Hawai'i: "The removal of the coercive power of the indentured contract unleashed a series of demonstrations on the plantation. These isolated incidents served as training grounds for the more comprehensive demands of later and larger actions. In the ten years preceding annexation, scanty reporting revealed a

28*The Hawaiian Labor Movement, A Brief History, Part Two*, Chapter IX, § Plantation Labor, page 60; Chapter VIII, page 57;
Chapter IX, page 59.

total of forty-eight labor "disturbances" involving most of the racial groups employed in the industry."[29] This scattering of the demonstrations along racial groups was primarily due to the language barriers between the various ethnicities. While a certain degree of cooperation could have been achieved however, through the recourse to English, or Pidgin, it was often noted that, although some solidarity was often expressed, the periods of the strikes were not decided unanimously, thus offering the management the opportunity to move within the interplay between them, and therefore to nullify their effectiveness.

## Merits and flaws of early racial labor organization

A first major actor to consider when dealing with the walking off the job of citizens of a given racial group, is the attitude of their government toward them. Since governments were first praised to allow their people to emigrate, they usually were concerned accordingly when these were to demonstrate. The consulate of Japan in Honolulu being responsible for the welfare of the Japanese in Hawai‘i, and would support them; provided they did not create civil unrest: "The government was fairly cooperative about investigating plantation living condition and financial matters because it felt that solving specific, minor complains was a method of preventing serious problems from emerging. However, during labor disputes, it was much more reluctant to take side of the workers. In almost all cases when workers left their jobs, the consulate urged them to return. This was consistent with the Japanese government policy for overseas workers. The Japanese consulate's position on the latter was demonstrated when the first major Japanese strike occurred in 1909, as a U.S. commissioner of labor

29 *Working in Hawaii: A Labor History*, Chapter VIII, § From Demonstration to Organization, page 161.

reported: “The Japanese government representatives in Honolulu gave no support or encouragement to the strikers.””[30]

Another actor in racial combination, with prerogatives similar to the consulate’s, was the Central Japanese League formed in 1903. Eager to assume a role in resolving labor disputes, it did not promote it shall be achieved toward striking either: “The old custom of regarding the Japanese and other laborers as an inferior people as compared to whites still prevailed in many of the actions of overseers and managers. As a mean of self-protection, the Japanese formed the Central Japanese League in 1903. While not a labor organization, it was vitally concerned with labor matters and resembled in some respects a trade-union organization. One of the functions of the league officials was to act as a conciliation board in labor disputes.” But the League met no real success, its action on labor disputes being regarded by the beleaguered Japanese as biased: “Like most of such community conciliation groups, the league tended to be pro-management and oriented toward the business community’s notion of correct industrial relations and behavior. Strikes were to be considered counterproductive in all cases.”[31]

Japanese also, the next structure designed to support the sugar cane field laborers’ expectations was the *Higher Wages Association*, in 1908. It was originally inspired by a young student in law, Motoyuki Negoro, who had devised a plan to have the Japanese plantation laborers’ wages heightened. Being a journalist in Hawai‘i, he had exposed his principles in a dedicated article named “*the Higher Wages Question*”:

“In the article, he called attention to the high profits of the sugar

30*Imingaisha, Japanese Emigration Companies*, Chapter VI, § The Japanese Consulate in Honolulu, page 100.

31*The Hawaiian Labor Movement, A Brief History*, Part Two, Chapter IX, § The Rise of Japanese Unionism, page 60;
*Working in Hawaii: A Labor History*, Chapter VI, § The Japanese Contracts, page 121.

companies in the past year. He pointed out that the taxes levied on the worker and the rapidly escalating price of food had deflated the income of the Japanese plantation workers, already the lowest paid in the industry, to little more than $125 per year. Sugar workers of course had little opportunity for traveling to Honolulu to participate in organized meetings. At a sparsely attended meeting in Honolulu, the merchants and journalists present formed the *Higher Wages Association*."[32]

From its inception, the movement was therefore little connected with the actual Japanese laborers: "As soon as the groundwork for the movement had been completed, a vigorous campaign was waged through the Islands, and during the months that followed, laborers on various plantations also formed higher wage associations. Thus, the first formal labor organization of plantation workers in the history of the Islands was born. It was a racial organization planned and developed by educated Japanese who were not laborers. The Association was not too closely knit together but made collective action on a Territory-wide basis possible."[33]

Beside the setup of the movement, the next phase of M. Negoro's proposal was to present the newly assembled board's grievances to the HSPA. The associated planters' absolute denial of the whole prospect then lingered from the proposal itself in January, to the aftermath of the strike. Despite the unequivocal refusal, the strike was a paramount of Japanese organization: "The Japanese maintained law and order insofar as employers and strikebreakers of other nationalities were concerned, but were not as tolerant toward those of their own race. An elaborate and effective picketing system was maintained and the union supported those on strike until its funds were exhausted." This independent behavior was

32 *Working in Hawaii: A Labor History*, Chapter VIII, § The Higher Wages Association, pp 169-170.
33 *The Hawaiian Labor Movement, A Brief History*, Part Two, Chapter IX, § The Rise of Japanese Unionism, page 64.

also extended to many other aspects of the strike, to which only Japanese on the Island of Oahu would participate: “Its principal weakness was that it was a plea for the Japanese and did not embrace labor in general. Thus it did not appeal to workers of other nationalities. Meanwhile the organization began to collect strike funds. Japanese on the other Islands did not go out on strike but most were in sympathy with it and contributed financially to the cause.”[34]

Considered from its aftermath, the strict obedience to the Japanese ethnicity may well have caused its checkmate. Not that the planters’ response was altered by the racial factor; yet mere solidarity would not allow the industry-wide movement that could have caused the planters to forfeit: “A fundamental weakness of this first organizational effort was that it was, almost of necessity, confined to the Japanese community. No appeals, other than one for general support, were made to other groups of workers. The rhetoric of the leadership was couched in traditional Japanese terms appealing to the spirit of Japanese nationalism: *yamato damashii*[*].”[35]

Yet, the Japanese would have the underside, mainly because the planters had devoted themselves into sustaining each other for the strike duration: “By July it was evident that the strikers were no match for the well-organized Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association and the strike began to collapse. In August, after three months of strike effort, the decision was reached to terminate the strike officially.” Three more months later however, the planters would inaugurate what was to become their recursive strategy, ultimately acknowledging and accessing to a share of the strikers’ expectations: “Following the collapse of the strike, the planters met in November and took a number of steps to remedy admitted faults. Most of

34*Ibid*, page 65; pp 64-65.

* 大和魂: for “Japanese spirit. “

35*Working in Hawaii: A Labor History*, Chapter VIII, § The 1909 Strike, page 175.

the pay demands were met." Yet, behind this paternalistic behavior of admitting one's mistakes, the HSPA comforted its positions in dealing with insurgencies: "The strike established a pattern which would be followed in subsequent disputes. Refusing to negotiate was a standard tactic. The HSPA took the position that "outside agitators" could not speak for "their" workers.""[36]

This mitigated awkwardness would allow them to keep their disappointment to themselves, and not to further discriminate the Japanese: "Whatever hopes were entertained of replacing the Japanese, the industry continued employing them in consistent numbers after 1909. The commissioner of immigration correctly summarized the situation in his report on Hawai'i in 1911 when he argued that the growers "had not recovered from the scarce given them by the strike." They did not have a genuine labor shortage, he claimed, but were trying "to bring large number of Filipinos or other cheap labor to create a surplus, so they would be able to procure the necessary help without being obligated to pay any increase in wage.""[37]

By becoming over the years the other major racial representation in the sugar growing area, the Filipinos will, on further occasions demonstrate a lesser ability than the Japanese in organizing, being far less driven by their national paradigm. While the commissioner to immigration considered the planters were left bewildered by the strike; its labor colleague on the contrary reports a standstill, liable to the management's imperviousness of the grievances expressed: "He observed that a strike conducted on exclusively racial lines can hardly succeed in Hawai'i. Employers are too well organized, disciplined and financed." Having

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36*The Hawaiian Labor Movement, A Brief History*, Part Two, Chapter IX, § The Rise of Japanese Unionism, page 64;
*Working in Hawaii: A Labor History*, Chapter VIII, § The 1909 Strike, pp 174-175.
37*Ibid*, Chapter IX, § Instruments of Production, pp 186-187.

dreaded only labor shortage, the planters on Oahu paid little attention to the strike's ethnic belonging with a Japanese distinctiveness: "If the 1909 strike is viewed as simply an industrial conflict, that conclusion is perhaps justified. The thrust of the Japanese position, however, made it into something more. The Japanese were insisting that plantation work was more than a mere job. In the grievances the workers were presenting to the HSPA, the social demands outnumbered the economic demands. The problem was compounded by the fact that the planters were passing through a stage of transition between coolie labor and free labor."[38]

Petitioners of the *Higher Wages Association* were earnest alright, and thus the overall paternalistic approach of their employers sounded sensible to that respect: "Little in the managers' experience of unchallenged authority over labor and complete dominance of government institutions had prepared them to deal with new situation."[39] Therefore, according to this unprecedented setting, the labor relations in Hawai'i would settle for nearly a decade, before resuming unchanged, that is to say once more convened along racial bridling.

## The 1920 dual strike:
## Filipino front-lining *versus* Japanese back-benching

Ten years later, the planters' stubbornness in ignoring the better wages demands would once more upset the laborers' mood. Considering their too low incomes, when compared to the rise in prices at the end of the 20s, field laborers once more urged their employers to help them cope with the amounting economic crisis: "During the Summer and Fall of 1917, plantation laborers began to feel the pinch of wartime prices and discontent

38*Ibid*, Chapter VIII, § The 1909 Strike, pp 175-176
39*Ibid*, § The New Workforce, page 162.

once again began to grow. Consequently, another movement similar to that organized in 1909 came into being in the form of the *Association for Higher Wages* whose object was to secure higher wages for workers of all nationalities. Demands were submitted to the planters, who denied the requests. Because of the war, the movement was abandoned temporarily."[40] After the war, two major ethnic groups in plantation labor, the Japanese and the Filipinos, were reportedly engaging themselves in creating unions of workers: respectively the *Society of Supporters of Plantation Laborers* (SSPL) and the *Filipino Laborers' Association*. The Japanese alone comprised in December 1919 fifty-eight of their representatives and in a meeting in Honolulu, they combined into the *Japanese Federation of Labor in Hawai'i*.

Having addressed its list of demands to the HSPA, it turned out that, meanwhile they knew about the monetary aspect of a part of the grievance, none of such would be agreed to: "It is clear from the minutes of the 1919 annual meeting that the planters knew living costs and prices had increased and that they tacitly recognized the need for a wage increase. "Besides sound business reasons," they announced, "there is an ethical obligation, that we properly care for those whom we have brought here, and the further obligation that their standard of living and social conditions be such that their descendants will be qualified to become useful American citizens." In other words, the HSPA absolutely refused to recognize collective bargaining with a labor union, no matter what was going on on the American mainland or in the world. As in the past, the planters attempted to deal with the workers in a paternalistic manner."[41]

Although having not issued such demands prior to the planters'

40 *The Hawaiian Labor Movement, A Brief History*, Part Two, Chapter IX, § Return of Racial Unionism, pp 66-67.
41 *The Japanese Conspiracy — the Oahu Sugar Strike of 1920*, Chapter III, page 56.

annual meeting, the Filipinos however decided that, unless the planters would reconsider their statements, then they would be striking: “This action took the Japanese by surprise as they had been reluctant to strike at that time.” Fond of much greater support and preparation, the Japanese would not follow them right away: “Although the Filipinos had issued a strike statement, they had not made any strike preparations. They did not even have a fund to cover food expenses for striking laborers.”[42]

Considering money had been lacking during the Japanese’s previous strike, neither group left the matter awry, and the Filipinos’ leaders went on strike having secured a solidarity agreement with their Japanese counterparts: “The newly formed federation had discussed striking in the late spring of early summer of 1920 when harvesting was at a peak. The time between December and the target date would be devoted to collecting a strike found in order to avoid the weaknesses of the 1909 strike. Indicating one source of difficulty in working with Filipinos, the directors voted that if the Filipinos will carry on the strike peacefully and without violence or threats, the Japanese Labor Unions will assist them financially and otherwise, but if violence and threats are indulged they will have nothing to do with them.”[43] Anxious about the becoming of their demands, the Japanese would not tolerate despicable behavior to interfere, neither would they condone it.

Furthermore, the Japanese could have resented the Filipinos’ participation in a strike by their side, because they once had been hired as strikebreakers against them. This range of deterrent arguments however, used to belong with the HSPA’s official line, and thus was a far cry from

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42 *The Hawaiian Labor Movement, A Brief History*, Part Two, Chapter IX, § Return of Racial Unionism, page 68;
*The Japanese Conspiracy — the Oahu Sugar Strike of 1920*, Chapter III, § “We're Not Working”: The Strike Begins page 63.

43 *Working in Hawaii: A Labor History*, Chapter X, § The Unions Go Out, pp 201-202.

what either nationalities were now aiming at: “Ironically, the Filipino workers had been brought in great numbers to Hawaii as strikebreakers during the first Oahu strike in 1909. They had arrived in Hawaii to control Japanese laborers who were “dangerous and didn't know their place.” At the time, the HSPA noted, “The outcome of this strike movement, while calling for great expense to the Planters' Association and the territory, has the promise of proving a blessing in disguise. Too long have the vested interests of the territory permitted the dominating nationality to insidiously dispossess others in the varied lines of higher grade work.” Ten years later, however, the Filipinos, now the second-largest labor force after the Japanese, were ready to take on the HSPA with all its power.”[44] By referring to the strike as a *blessing in disguise*, the planters were eager to find themselves a designated foe, as they used to do with the Chinese, once the coolie trade had become unpopular. Reemployed in 1920, the argument would once again impair the favorable conditions of this other ethnic upheaval.

Concentrated in Oahu this once also, the strike basically had increased chances of success, thanks to better organization features. Now federated throughout the Islands, the Japanese had restrained their community members from rejoining the strike, so that they could be supportive to the frontline agitation. These improvements however, were to take their toll to the Filipino’s random strategy: “The Filipino Labor Union did not have even complete plans. No plan for rising money from non-striking workers were even formulated by the Filipino leadership. While Filipino contribution came in from other islands during the strike, the methods of collection and distribution were erratic.” In comparison, the Japanese acted less casually, so as not to spoil an eventual success:

44*The Japanese Conspiracy — the Oahu Sugar Strike of 1920*, Chapter III, § “We're Not Working”: The Strike Begins page 63.

“Inexperienced and unprepared, the Federation of Japanese Labor officials were in a dilemma. Their plans were better founded than those of the Filipinos, but the elaborate mechanism of organizing a strike, strike camps, the strike fund collection, and the publicity and communication networks were all still in a formative stage.”[45] Crucial in both cases, the notion of support was felt with the direst accuracy by the Japanese who were families, than by the Filipinos, them single men in their great numbers.

The amounting of discrepancies between the two camps contributed to the strike’s bad start. The early Filipino beginning was resented of the Japanese, who were earnestly expecting their demands to be ratified: “Undismayed by the unyielding position of the planters, who condemned their position as agitators inspired, the Japanese submitted their demands on three occasions. While the Japanese waited for an answer, several thousand members of the Filipino Labor Union on six plantations on Oahu suddenly struck on January 19.” Eleven days would elapse before the Japanese would follow them, meaning they sounded unsupportive in the meanwhile; which did not contribute to a spontaneous rallying to their movement: “pushed by the events, and the fact that the Japanese workers were reluctant to face the Filipino pickets, the Japanese federation decided to proclaim a general strike on all plantations on 1 February.”[46] Restricted to Oahu, the strike gathered 6.000 Japanese, which added to the number brought by the Filipino union, represented 9.000 laborers no longer reporting to work.

Weather, combined to unsupportive press coverage, would nevertheless shatter the idealistic promises of this joint strike bout: “About the time the strike started, rain began to fall quite heavily even on Oahu,

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45 *Working in Hawaii: A Labor History*, Chapter X, § The Unions Go Out, page 202.

46 *The Hawaiian Labor Movement, A Brief History*, Part Two, Chapter IX, § Return of Racial Unionism, page 68;
*Working in Hawaii: A Labor History*, Chapter X, § The Unions Go Out, page 202.

where rainfall was normally less than the other islands. The planters did not have to worry about irrigating the fields, and the sugarcane grew as expected. The striking workers felt that even the weather was in league against them." Yet, another disturbance was to get in the strikers' way; that was the unwelcoming of their movement by public opinion. By labeling once more the Japanese as harmful aliens, a press campaign had revived the old moralistic stand of the HSPA, considering as providential the opportunity to dismiss the Japanese influence: "Once again, this "yellow scare" was used to discredit the Japanese strikers and the strike was condemned as nationalistic by the local press." Although a matter of fact evidence, the nationalistic trend was exaggerated, and eventually employed in coaxing the Filipinos into their temporary withdrawal of the struggle. Yet, the neighboring organizations had seen to this matter *before* the strike, which suggests that most certainly, the HSPA has accentuated the existing amount of unreliability between the new partners: "Despite the differences between the two nationalistic organizations, sincere efforts were made to bridge the gap — a gap created not only by culture and language (…) There was in fact little basis for the development of mutual interests. The Filipinos had only begun to arrive in large numbers, and many had not yet accustomed themselves to the situation. It would have been surprising had the Japanese accept the Filipinos as equal partners, despite the commonality of their work experience."[47] When they would eventually chose to become the cannon fodder of the Japanese age-old crusade, it unbalanced the elaborate fiction that they would petition as equals. Their rogue numbers would strike the planters' minds accordingly, being

47 *The Japanese Conspiracy — the Oahu Sugar Strike of 1920*, Chapter IV, § The Planters' Association Strikes Back, pp 93-94;
*The Hawaiian Labor Movement, A Brief History*, Part Two, Chapter IX, § Return of Racial Unionism, page 68;
*Working in Hawaii: A Labor History*, Chapter X, § The Unions Go Out, page 200.

threatened by the faceless newcomers, reputedly on the verge of replacing the obnoxious Japanese.

Therefore, the earlier portraying of the Filipinos as the brawny laborers the planters were expecting does account for the "Japanese conspiracy" theory spread by the press, and during the strike's recess; by the Filipinos themselves. Based on their recklessness, the statement was therefore an infringing one, suggesting that the Japanese were conspicuously letting them take the blame for the agitation. The reverse became true from the strike's day one, when the Japanese felt threatened of the Filipinos picketing on their way to work: "Many writers on Hawaiian history have concluded that the Oahu strike of 1920 was a revolutionary labor struggle that transcended the bounds of race. But this interpretation is simply wishful thinking based on a current perspective. In actuality, the gears of the Japanese and Filipino sides had not meshed from the start. In particular, Manlapit's* decision to call off the strike deepened the Japanese laborers' contempt for the Filipinos and widened the rift between them. The Federation of Japanese Labor continued to provide the Filipinos with monetary assistance, but they no longer trusted or relied on them."[48] Existing differences that could have been overcome by casual collective demonstrating, became increasingly important, as the Filipinos' leadership was unable to control its rank and file organization; starting and ending the strike on impulse, instead of according to the patterns devised with the Japanese.

Having lingered for five months, the strike was resolved the same way its 1909 precedent had, its participants' resources exhausted, meanwhile their employers had remained faithful to their impervious stand.

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* Pablo Manlapit, the Filipino leader.

48 *The Japanese Conspiracy — the Oahu Sugar Strike of 1920*, Chapter IV, § Can the HSPA's efforts to disrupt the strike using cultural and racial differences be considered a failure?, page 78.

Wouldn't it be for its dual character made possible, the strike had not succeeded in obtaining a thing by itself, since the planters soared at the end, only too happy to surrender a share of the expected betterment to *their* returning workers: "The Japanese strike dragged on. Various proposals for conciliation and mediation were offered to the planters, who still refused to bargain. The most significant aspect of the strike was the initiation to cooperation between racial unions. Although the degree of cooperation proved to be slight, it revealed that industrial unionism on the plantations was becoming more than just a possibility. As on previous occasions, once the strike had been defeated, working conditions on the plantations were improved including the adoption of a new wage and bonus schedule and improvement of perquisites."[49]

The only breach in the planters' overwhelming superiority, was the rebuking of their chief argument considering the new Filipinos as their unlimited recruiting pool of workers. Now running out of options in diverting its immigration policy, the HSPA felt compelled to come back again to the original settings of a Chinese proverbial reinforcement; therefore praising the US federal government for a derogative decree: "The strike had clearly indicated to the planters that neither the Japanese nor the Filipinos could be depended on as "docile laborers" and they embarked upon a determined effort to bring about Congressional action which would permit them to introduce Chinese immigration into the Territory once more. However the Congress did not pass this measure and the planters were obliged to renew their efforts in the Philippines."[50]

Since mainland labor agitation was partially responsible for the onset of this other island wide labor dispute, the becoming of trade-

49*The Hawaiian Labor Movement, A Brief History*, Part Two, Chapter IX, § Return of Racial Unionism, page 69.
50*Ibid.*

unionism in Hawai‘i was now to be capsized by the associations and unions that were getting well represented among the workers’ ranks. This last chapter will be dedicated to how these groups would succeed to their ethnic counterparts, and what were their achievements until way after the second World War, when Statehood was to be promulgated meanwhile the sugar industry would began to unfold.

## 3rd Part: Organized labor extended to the Hawaiian Territory: the dawn of equal labor relations

With both planters and laborers camps now having to cope with their latest matter of fact limitations, no confrontations were to be reported for another decade. As many other things, the 1929 crisis was not influential right away in Hawai‘i: “Although the Great Depression was slow in coming to Hawaii, by 1931 the impact was severe. Offsetting the relative stability of plantation employment was the dearth of opportunities outside the two major industries — agriculture and maritime activities — to which the unemployed could turn.” The reverse however was not true, and losing one’s job in a plantation was the end of the line for imported workers. The high density of the sugar cane employees in Hawai‘i made the scarcity of the salaries a wide spread concern for those having maintained: “All wages deteriorated under the impact of the depression in 1930. Given the concentration of employment in sugar and pineapple, however, the impact was somewhat more visible in Hawaii than on the mainland. Field employment declined steadily, and few urban employment opportunities were available to laid-off plantation workers.”[51] Obvious, while dampened

51 *Working in Hawaii: A Labor History*, Chapter XIII, § Arrival of the New Deal, page 249; § Changes on the Plantations, page 253.

by a relative stability, the effects of the economic crisis were minored in Hawai‘i; and therefore the relief acts were to be there of a striding efficiency. Other drawbacks would nevertheless propel the need for labor organization and representation; according this once, to nation-wide implemented standards.

## Citizen labor reconsidered: How the Great Depression coincided in Hawai‘i with the end of immigration?

Depending on unionism in the post-annexation years in Hawai‘i was a wayward attitude, in comparison to the one expected of the associated sugar cane growers. The so-called welfare management of the later having resulted in the progressive depletion of the eventual labor-management relations. Although a stalemate situation, it was not incompatible either with the economic crisis of the Thirties: “The failure of welfare capitalism in the United States during the depression of 1930 had less effect in Hawaii, where the plantations were insulated against the immediate impact of the industrial and financial collapse. In the next decade, however, the end of the paternalistic system and the basic failure to ameliorate the poor conditions of the plantation life would become a major advantage to the unions in their efforts at organization.”[52]

The 1929 economic crisis therefore, caused an uncommon phenomenon to occur on the Hawaiian sugar cane market: citizen employment. Many time envisioned as a potential remedy to the labor unrest outbreaks, the recourse to the man of the street was always postponed; deemed to be an unreliable and perhaps scarce source of

52*Ibid*, Chapter XII, § Welfare Capitalism: Another Failed Solution, page 244.

laborers. No longer sought as an emergency alternative, but instead as the natural development of the now steadfast sugar industry; the hiring of citizens felt much reasonable to the planters: “One of the effects of the depression was the labor turnover rate on the plantations was drastically low while the numbers of citizen employees in sugar market increased — the long cherished goal of politicians. The stability of employment became a major attraction of the plantation. Citizen employment, which had been only 15.9 percent of the work force in 1930, rose to 31.4 percent in 1936. The uncertainty of securing replacements through the old source of unregulated immigration probably encouraged the plantations to use more caution in the treatment of their workforce.” This last sentence rests also upon the actual dismissal of their immigration policy by the HSPA: “With the advent of the depression of the 1930’s, the plantations came to rely increasingly upon citizen labor and, except for the importation of 6.000 Filipinos in 1846, the eighty year of labor importation in Hawaii came to an end in 1932.”[53] The New Deal relief policies were going to be consistent with the Hawaiian setting also. The plantations now compounded workforce needing overall better wages, and for the remaining resident aliens, improved living whereabouts. Now legally enticed to depend upon labor unions for representation; a whole array of plantation workers were therefore to have their schedules adjusted under the National Industrial Recovery Act codes.

## The protracting of America mainland modern labor policies to the Hawaiian plantation scale

53*Ibid*, Chapter XIII, § Changes on the Plantations, page 253;
*The Hawaiian Labor Movement, A Brief History*, Part Two, Chapter IX, § Decline of Racial Unionism, page 72.

Beside the legal allowance to get represented, the enactment of the NIRA in Hawai‘i did not have the same significance than on the mainland, where independent entities were supporting and organizing workers already. Moreover, the major industry of the Islands, sugar processing, was not to give up an undisputed hegemony, to the hands of potential troublemakers. The matter was discussed in 1937, at the Territorial Industrial Philosophy Conference where of course only had been convened members of the business community: “The tension and conflict associated with mainland labor actions in the early years of the New Deal called for an adjustment in patterns of thought and changes in long-standing practices. While recognizing that unions were certainly a fact of modern economic life, the participants were convinced that labor organization was always imported from the outside and would have never evolved naturally on the native soil. Mainland Unions were characterized as irresponsible, non-accountable; both morally deficient and unaware of local conditions, races, particular needs and concise possibilities.” Reluctant as previously to sit at no bargaining table, the conference’s praxis reflects the HSPA impervious attitude concerning any outside influence. Along with the advent of citizen labor, planters were eager to keep with their paternalistic coaching, now enhanced to live up by the eventual competitive stance of mainland imported unions charters: “The enlightened attitude of the planters developed concurrently with the advance of the Mainland unions in the Territory after the passage of the National Labor Relation Act in 1935. From that time on during the 1930’s, as clearly evidenced in annual reports of the HSPA, greater emphasis was placed on employee welfare and morale. It was during this period that plantation paternalism reached its zenith. This new philosophy of plantation management did not go so far as

to accept plantation unionism, however."[54]

New to this league, the associated planters were hoping that they could fulfill their workers' expectations before they would find the newly made available features suitable. The American law, since its extension to Hawai'i, had always been a mixed bag to their prospects; providing plantation ventures with a vast array of opportunities, meanwhile coercing them into quotas, restrictions, and this once squarely imbuing their personnel into autonomous pleading against their leadership. This new foe however, was expected to disembark any day, waving flags of the established unions. In their home rule intends however, the planters had disregarded that the "particular needs and concise possibilities" would be relevant here: "Outside influences of a sort not understood by the patronizing elite did, however, enter into Hawaiian labor organizing in a very important way. While the newspaper and management were anxiously looking for the arrival of the "outsider", his influence was indeed making an impact on the Hawaiian workers. Ideas were being eagerly absorbed by Hawaiian maritime workers in their sojourns on the mainland and by agricultural workers coming to Hawaii by the turbulent areas of California's "factories in the field." Set to look for strangers, the power structure was unprepared, either organizationally or emotionally, to deal with the fact that it would be the Hawaiian workers themselves who would organize nationally affiliated unions and dramatically change their economic, social, and political status in a manner which would often be termed "revolutionary.""[55]

And revolution patterns were in order. Expectedly a short-run measure, because of its *sunset provision*; the Act and its framework of

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54 *Working in Hawaii: A Labor History*, Chapter XIII, § Arrival of the New Deal, pp 268-269;
*The Hawaiian Labor Movement, A Brief History*, Part Two, Chapter IX, § Paternalism of the 1930's, page 75.

55 *Working in Hawaii: A Labor History*, Chapter XIII, § Arrival of the New Deal, page 269.

codes having completed its guidance purpose, it was succeeded by the National Labor Relation Act, whose administration was to take precedence in its predecessor's fields of expertise: "The pro-labor Roosevelt administration and the passage of the National Labor Relation Act gave organized labor added prestige and power. Although unionization in the Islands lagged behind that of the Mainland, the need for an organization capable of formulating policies and dealing with labor on a Territory-wide basis became increasingly evident." Made well-aware of its prerogatives during the two years of encoding of the American labor scenery, the newly appointed National Labor Relation Board would therefore counteract the first Hawaiian approach of a management organizing appraisal: "The employees, as well as the workers, had been organizing. In August 1935, the newspaper announced the formation of the Industrial Association of Hawaii (AIH), a group of businessmen coming together "to combat radical unions and radical labor leadership." The NLRB investigator described the association as part of a mechanism of intimidation and coercion characterizing labor relations in Hawaii. Now suddenly, the NLRB was in Honolulu armed with subpoena powers and the full force of federal law."[56]

On the long run, this interceding of legal procedure became commonplace, as well as it grew local. Contemplated from its inception in Hawai‘i, the plantation legislative background has changed entirely. Its early phases had in common an overwhelming prevalence in favoring the planters' achievements: "Even when the labor movement was weak it exerted what little influence it had toward the enactment of beneficial legislation and the repeal of laws unfavorable to labor. During this period, 1850-1900, the laws of Hawaii, and particularly the Masters and Servants

56*The Hawaiian Labor Movement, A Brief History*, Part One, Chapter VII "the Organization of Management", page 37;
*Working in Hawaii: A Labor History*, Chapter XIII, § the NLRB Comes to Hawaii, page 257.

Act favored plantations interests and placed workers at a distinct disadvantage." Resilient already, the laborers' attempts to challenge the existing legal framework were pursued in the first quadrant of the 20th century, although still meeting no blatant success: "On the whole, the labor movement in Hawaii during this period faced an unhealthy climate which accounts, in part, for its slow progress over the years."[57]

With the incoming of a federal support designated to ensure equality between labor and management, the convened *status quo* that had prevailed ever since after the 1920 dual strike would rapidly dissolve and release whatever had been left unresolved. On the one hand, the planters were fast at harmonizing their paternalistic care with whatever changes their workers could have expected; on the other, the workers began favoring the organizational opportunity. All in all, the new means of struggle meant that an opportune recourse to legislation would prove decisive in the coming striking bouts: "Since 1937, much of the effort of organized labor has been in the direction of social legislation which would strengthen the position of unions and improve the status of the worker. As a result to this effort and of an administration favorable to labor, labor laws of the Territory have been extended to almost every phase of industrial relation activity. In addition, the attitude of the courts and law enforcement agencies toward labor unions has undergone considerable change (…) Where, in the past, these agencies often operated to the disadvantage of labor, they have gradually assumed a more impartial role in labor-management affairs."[58] Acting as an advisory body to the federal government, the NLRB reported that the litigation of labor disputes in Hawai'i meant a lot more to the local interests than mere adjustment to the new federal labor legislation: "To put this matter into perspective, it should be noted that the behavior of the

57 *The Hawaiian Labor Movement, A Brief History*, Part One, Chapter VI "Labor & the Law", page 33.
58 *Ibid*, pp 32-33.

Hawaiian employers was not substantially different from that of many large mainland corporations. By comparison, the iron fist of the Hawaiian employer was padded with Hawaiian informality; but it was a fist nonetheless. So deeply entrenched was the economic oligarchy of Hawaii that they found it difficult to realize the extend of the changes which had taken place in the United States. George Pratt, the NLRB hearing officer, observed in its report that "the mores of the Territory provide no place for a union or any of its employed inhabitants, and consequently, activity in looking toward such union organization and moves made toward it which are commonplace on the mainland become endowed with portentous and revolutionary significance when seen through island eyes. It is not a healthy situation.""[59] Infamously bashed for the oligarchs, thoroughly maintained for the new foster unions, the concern about social stability was no longer unanimous after the federal inquest and its ruling. This real new deal was to become tangible as soon as the first of the workers' representatives were elected in diverse plantations.

Scattered across the Territory, the mushrooming of these local unions breaded the emergence of much expected labor-management relations, assuming they constituted the better way off to labor unrest. This lasted for a decade; but war having discontinued this straight-on process, the first mainland union supported strike would therefore occur in its immediate aftermath.

## The ILWU coaching of the New Deal incoming changes in Hawai‘i

Tracing back to the early days of the plantations settlement in Hawai‘i, when the contractual form of its designated laborers was drafted

59 *Working in Hawaii: A Labor History*, Chapter XIII, § the NLRB Comes to Hawaii, page 258.

after the American seamen's template; a common vested interest was once more to be shared between the Hawaiian-bound cane growers and their seafaring counterparts. That Hawai'i would necessarily evolve depending upon maritime ties with the outer world was one sure thing; and as unions were allowed to legally appoint their delegates, the newly gathered ILWU* chartered many of its locals outside of the port areas of the Islands. For uncanny, the idea of federating field workers under a maritime union membership was self-evident to the workers themselves. Tales of mainland unionization, brought back by docks workers having originally united the field workers together, their rejoining within the ranks of the ILWU was a likely achievement.

Furthermore, the ILWU leaders were committed to the improvement of working conditions, and they reported having found in Hawai'i remains of a feudal society: "Hawaii was no longer a "feudal colony" according to Harry Bridges, the president of the ILWU. A new force had arrived in Hawaii in the form of unionism, but it would have to undergo a series of attack from various quarters before it was finally accepted." On the eve of the Smith Act trial, discussing the contending issue whether Communism was to be expelled out of the Territory, a sympathizer would realize the ILWU had endeavored in keeping with its original line: "Ray Jerome Baker, a left-leaning photographer who arrived in Honolulu in 1908, mused in 1952 as the Smith Act Trial was launched: "I have seen the feudal conditions" abolished in Hawaii, as "wages increased from about $20 per month to $10 per day." This spectacular rise in wages was largely due to the energic activism of an ILWU that was led by radicals."[60]

Beyond the legal permission given to workers to pick their own

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* *International Longshoremen's and Warehouse Union*

60 *Sabotaging "Soviet" Hawaii*, page 7;
*Fighting in Paradise*, Introduction, page 14.

delegates, organized labor therefore also meant the emergence of a class consciousness. According to imported Communist values, the laborious class was to acknowledge its actual participation in the social struggle. According to such standards, the striking history of Hawai‘i could be analyzed and its botches revised: “In the 1930s the Communist Party did not support the statehood and instead called for independence of Hawai‘i (…) Still, the long term success of the Communist Party was not derailed by the fact that its campaign for Hawaiian independence was ultimately aborted. Rather, its success lay in its antiracist and pro-union crusade, which, despite certain oversights, marked a turning point in the archipelago’s trajectory. For example, during the tumultuous agricultural strike of 1920, management was able to drive a wedge between the two unions, to the detriment of both. This tendency continued until the Communist Party and the ILWU intervened forcefully. What radical labor did was to overcome this barrier.” In the classical Marxist rhetoric, the management always holds the means of production, rendering the worker obedient and easy to curtail from any outside influence. Therefore, the ILWU activists long had in mind to revoke this paternalist influence: “The people were afraid to come to the rallies because the non-partisans and even the Democrats were considered bad people. Back then, it was a sin to not be a Republican in Hawaii. Yet as the strength of radicalization grew steadily, these discriminatory barriers began to crumble.”[61]

Getting involved in organizing, although made legal, could be a discriminatory factor, provided the employers would become aware of it. In this domain also, plantations were a country-mile behind the waterfront, where blacklisting of sailors or longshoremen identified as agitators was commonplace: “Any attempt to use the grievance procedure was an

61 *Fighting in Paradise*, Chapter II, “An Apartheid Archipelago?”, pp 34-35; page 44.

invitation to the blacklist." Companies' unions on the West coast were therefore massively unsubscribed of, upon the enactment of the NIRA: "After the passage of the Act in June 1933, they deserted the company union *en masse* and rejoined the International Longshoremen's Association."[62]

Although not readily holding "company unions", Hawaii's plantation managers were conspicuous about their workers being sensible to the call of unionism: "With respect to the plantations, another important consideration is that in a community as small as Hawaii, undesirable employees from an employer point of view were easily identified. The individual was, therefore, hesitant to take any action which might antagonize management and jeopardize its economic security. In absence of protective legislation and of a strong labor movement, this fact served as a strong deterrent to unionism."[63] But the existing legislation to that effect, could be held responsible for the awkwardness the planters felt they still could wield, for the NLRB's Wagner Act had loopholes in its provisions, exempting agricultural workers from being represented. With only mill workers and mechanics being legally supported in the sugar plantations' union membership; the ILWU local supervisor in Hawai'i, Jack Hall a former sailor, would petition for the endorsement of the agricultural laborers also, himself drafting what was to become the *Little Wagner Act*.

## Pre-war years and the rise of "Big Unionism"

Drawing their strength from the original Wagner Act, the quickly

62 *Workers on the Waterfront*, Chapter IV, "Communists and Longshoremen in San Francisco", page 105.
63 *The Hawaiian Labor Movement, A Brief History*, Part Two, Chapter IX, § Summary and Conclusion, page 91.

growing ILWU was nevertheless to find precarious its appliance to the Hawaiian plantation network. Considering the New Deal was still a work in progress enterprise in the late 30s', attempts at perfecting some of its features would eventually occur. Planters' hegemony was flickering, yet withstanding: "The old system in which the industry was law in itself was disappearing. The fear of management, the trespass law, and hostile police combined to keep organizing activity to a minimum. Nonetheless, ignoring the obstacles, Hall and his small crew of volunteers continued to hold nighttime meetings to persuade the workers to join the union."[64]

Less frugal in their results, daylight rallies authorized under the Wagner Act would comfort the labor in engaging further into legal petitioning: "Labor demonstrated its changing role in an attempt to enact a Hawaii version of the Wagner Labor Act — the Hawaii Employment Relations Act — which would have extended to all workers, including those in agriculture, the right to organize and to bargain collectively."[65]

The prospect was only to be fulfilled into a state law after the war; in the meanwhile, other appointed administrations were to enforce the federal relief policies down to the Hawaiian level: "Because of the use of long-term contracts, the levels were set *minimum average wages* rather than the minimum wage as usually understood. What the Japanese and Filipinos had tried and failed to do in 1920 and 1924 was accomplished by the Agricultural Adjustment Administration in a stroke of the bureaucratic pen."[66] Vested in representing the field workers during these hearings, the ILWU was to become the HSPA archfoe, therefore always securing furthers of the workers assets.

Paradoxically, to its seaside original dedication was succeeding a

64 *Working in Hawaii: A Labor History*, Chapter XIV "the End of Isolation", pp 272-273.
65 *Ibid*, § Organizing Politically, page 273.
66 *Ibid*, § Federal Investigations, page 272.

countryside auxiliary one, conspicuously devoted into directing the relief administration toward the Islands' weak spots: ""Big Unionism" — more specifically the International Longshoremen's and Warehouse Union — had acquired power rivaling and in some instances far exceeding, that of management. The ILWU does not embrace the entire labor force but its control is sufficiently complete and so strategically located that it has become a very powerful influence in the territory."[67]

## The war interlude years: standstill in organization, leap in modernization

At the eve of World War II, the prophecy linked with the coming of American interests in the remote Hawaiian archipelago was to concretize, as the military forces stationed there would spread out over the Territory. Boasted by its increasing successes in industrial and educational domains, the Shōwa* government of the neighboring Japan was then following a nationalist trend which was aimed at ascertaining its supremacy over the Pacific Area. A month before Pearl Harbor was air-raided, a Japanese army had invaded the US protectorate in the Philippines. As an eventual Japanese strike over another prominent American foothold grew more and more tangible, Hawai'i began to shelter itself from this incoming threat of war.

As a result to the jingoistic ambitions of the Japanese, year 1941 was characterized by a military build-up in the Territory: "By 23 January, the military had assumed total control of the government of the territory, replacing all functions of the governor and civilian administration with complete control by the military governor — a title which had no legal definition in American law."[68] Territorial government surrendered its

67 *The Hawaiian Labor Movement, A Brief History*, Part One, Chapter III "the Nature of the Economy", page 23.

* 昭和 in Japanese.

68 *Working in Hawaii: A Labor History*, Chapter XIV, § Military Rule, page 286.

administrative power and suspended civil government; while salutary during the air raids, the enforcement of the martial law was often found questionable, even ultimately hard to revoke.

The wary conditions demanding some leveling for the sugar industry also, opposition between the HSPA and the ILWU went underground for the time being, to the exception of some noticeable attempts at dominating: “The steady drain of workers for military contracts jobs and to the military draft brought an unusual proposition from the Territorial Disaster Committee. It recommended to the governor that plantation workers who had left for the higher-paying defense industries be ordered to return to the sugar plantations, at their old rates of pay to relieve a shortage of labor land and that their place on defense job and stevedoring be taken by military personnel. [Otherwise], the old problem of turnover on the plantations threatened to become a nightmare.” The suggestion was relevant of contemporary plantations concerns, and therefore is traceable back to the HSPA. Other schemes, while not directed against labor, would impair its interest once the war would end; yet being necessary, in allowing sugar to be stored longer instead of being shipped in spite of the ongoing conflict’s uncertain becoming: “On 1 November 1941, ILWU’s San Francisco Headquarters were alerted of a major development in the sugar industry — one which would drastically reduce employment both in Hawaii and at the C & H refinery in California. The Board of Harbor Commissioners had appropriated money to pay for silos on a number of wharves to store bulk sugar and to proceed with experiments at Kahului Harbor, Maui, in the handling of bulk sugar. Bulk shipment would reduce the employment at the plantation mill and on the waterfront where the bags of sugar were loaded.” Such haphazard implying further reductions in terms of workforce requirement would also occur in other domains: “Manpower drains seriously curtailed sugar production and resulted in increased

mechanization on the plantations."[69]

Fortuitous, these improvements were only precipitated by the warfare; the further shrinking in the laborers' numbers that they implied were for instance irrelevant, modernization having been the correlate of a state of emergency: "At first, in view of the desperate situation which existed there was a ready acceptance of the martial law and labor cooperated wholeheartedly. However, as the war moved westward and the threat to the Territory diminished, resentment and opposition to military rule began to grow." Blamable altogether for the downturn in wages and for the recess in associative activity, the presence of the US Army in Hawaii was not outrageous on the long run; hindered or diverted activities would resume more or less the same afterwards: "Labor organization had made a little headway on the plantations prior to the war but all organizational activity came to an abrupt halt after the Pearl Harbor attack. The small advance that had been made was lost, but the resentment of the workers toward the injustices of the military rule steadily mounted. By March 1843, plantation unionism existed in name only. The ILWU position had been upheld. However, the planters had gained the time they needed to prepare for the forthcoming advance of organized labor."[70] Upon returning to its ordinary settings, the existing antagonism between the ILWU and the HSPA was to be fuelled by the successful enhancement of the local labor laws. The subsequent Territory-wide striking was to illustrate how this decisive achievement permitted an extensive contractual bond; allowing for an array of new bargaining tactics to be enacted.

## 1946, the second variety strike

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69 *Ibid*, § War Comes to Hawaii, page 284; pp 284-285;
*The Hawaiian Labor Movement, A Brief History*, Part Two, Chapter X, § Labor Controls, page 100.
70 *Ibid*, § War and Military Rule, page 96;
§ "Labor Controls" and "Labor's Revival", pp 101-102.

In upgrading from minority to majority in representation by the fulfillment of its ranks by the bulk of the agricultural workers, the ILWU became enabled to negotiate the contracts' provisions of the plantations workers. This unprecedented situation meant either the management would comply to their suggestions, or that they would be directing their people toward a strike: "The sugar contract expired August 31, 1946, and the union prepared for either a big gain in sugar wages or a strike. The ILWU asked for a 65-cents-an-hour minimum wage, a 40 hours week and a union shop." Effective by July 1945, the HERA made the challenge by the ILWU of the contract pattern of this year futile. It was nevertheless accepted as a wholesale a month later, meanwhile the remaining elections in union representation were still in progress: "Contract negotiations were begun even before all representation had been completed. The basic contract was agreed to on August 1, 1945. This was, in effect, the first industry-wide labor agreement in Hawaii labor history. By the end of 1945, the ILWU represented nearly all of the eligible plantation and mill employees in Hawaii's sugar history."[71]

By the course of 1946, the ILWU had touched base with its widened labor element, and was contemplating how to confront with its long-scheduled objective: "Preoccupied with establishing a viable union mechanism, consolidating the multiple sugar unions in a manageable format, and signing up the field workers, the ILWU did not regard the 1945 contract as anything more than a symbolic statement. The 1946 contract was the target for significant change. By June 1946, more than twenty thousand of the approximately twenty-four thousand sugar workers had

71*A Spark is Struck!*, Part Two, Chapter XXV "the Battle Plan", page 114;
*The Hawaiian Labor Movement, A Brief History*, Part Two, Chapter XI, § Sugar Industry, page 109.

been signed into union membership."[72] In an effort to keep up with this extended representation, redefining the union's priorities accordingly was therefore of the utmost importance. The grievance for a union shop mechanism was devised to recall to the management its lack of alternatives in handling further negotiations: a workforce represented as a wholesale would mean a complete striking on each occasion.

All in all, would the ILWU be cornered into striking, the action was going to be of an unprecedented kind. Usual planters' tactics were now strongly uncalled for, and they would themselves spontaneously milden their practices somehow.

Irrigation, as well as eviction, which were casually considered by the planters as means to discourage lingering strikes would be this once cautiously codified matters. Concerning the former, meanwhile other aspects of plantation life were maintained, the watering was to be thoroughly neglected on purpose: "This strike, which left mills idle and irrigation ditches dry, along with the high perishability of sugar cane gave the union quite an advantage" The ILWU however, was to be magnanimous in other aspects, implying that only the harvesting was at stake, not the general maintaining of the plantations infrastructures: "Asked whether the ILWU would man the plantations utilities in case of a strike — yes, but they would expect to be paid regular wages. The union would assign the men to the job as part of their picket duty and their earnings would be turned over to the strike committee."[73]

On the eviction constituent, the ILWU were eager to put forward that solidarity would be made premium: "The Union issued a warning prior to the strike that the eviction of a single worker on any plantation would result

72 *Working in Hawaii: A Labor History*, Chapter XV, § the Issues, page 296.
73 *Fighting in Paradise*, Chapter V "Sugar Strike", pp 87-89;
*A Spark is Struck!*, Part Two, Chapter XXV "the Battle Plan", page 115.

in the immediate evacuation of all housing by the workers and subsequent demand on the territorial government for assistance. Management quickly issued instructions to the plantations that the strikers would be permitted to remain in their houses — so long as they remained in the legal status of employees on strike." The formulation, painfully recalling that the HSPA had evicted strikers on various occasions, is accountable in respect of the new balance of power in which paternalism was no longer arguable; therefore wielding expropriation could quickly become a bold move. Beyond the illusory prospect of a general emptying of the housing facilities, the ILWU's asset was the ensuing triggering of the local authorities, who may have just sanctioned the planters for their inconsequence: "The subject of perquisites was particularly important to the union. During the pre-war period, strikers and their families have been evicted from their homes as such perquisites were considered a part of employees' wages. This power has proved to be all too effective strikebreaking weapon. Union leaders had also attacked perquisites as degrading and as a vestige of paternalism."[74]

Shedding some inopportune light over the HSPA customary practices was not however what the ILWU people were aiming at. Their building on precautions reflected more their strategy of restraining whatever issues the planters could substitute to their latest proposal. Otherwise, their behavior was more a compassionate one: "The ILWU was rampaging through the sugar industry, busily organizing sugar workers with pent-up demands. Even before the war concluded, they had won the right to bargain for one-third of the entire industry in the archipelago." Yet growing pervasive, when considered from their opponents' interests:

74 *Working in Hawaii: A Labor History*, Chapter XV, § Strike Preparations, page 298;
*The Hawaiian Labor Movement, A Brief History*, Part Two, Chapter XII, § the 1946 Sugar Strike, pp 120-121.

“There was good reason for management to be angry about the strike, for sugar plantations had been gushing amounts of cash for decades, and from its viewpoint the enhanced strength of the union compromised the reliable source of profit.”[75]

Therefore, the tension accumulated around the 1946 contract’s provisions impaired the chances of reaching an eventual agreement; and a strike was voted instead; “the response was 15,406 in favor of striking with 123 opposed.” Thanks to the careful preparation for its eventual outbreak, it would held its promises, comforting the ILWU and their folks in that they could impose a successful labor shortage: “Negotiations were unsuccessful and on 1 September, 1946, 21,000 sugar plantation employees represented by the ILWU went out on a strike which would last for 79 days, closing down 33 out of the 34 plantations.”[76]

Since the contractual pattern was their highly-prized target, the requested wages were eventually awarded to the laborers; yet the management held firm on other improvements, only suspending the compulsory housing and welfare contribution: “The agreement ending the strike abolished the perquisite system on the sugar plantation. Employees thereafter were obliged to pay for the use of such facilities on the plantations. In addition some fringe benefit were agreed upon but the union was unsuccessful in its demands for the forty hours week and the union shop.” While many expectations had been met, and that the ILWU could congratulate themselves for having gone throughout the strike, this first victory was a bitter-sweet one, for the achievements may have been attained when further expiring contracts would have been discussed: “A number of gains were made by the union, most of which could have been

75 *Fighting in Paradise*, Chapter V “Sugar Strike”, page 85; page 88.

76 *Working in Hawaii: A Labor History*, Chapter XV, § the Strike, page 299;
*The Hawaiian Labor Movement, A Brief History*, Part Two, Chapter XII, § the 1946 Sugar Strike, page 120.

attained without a strike."[77] The move, nevertheless would in time prove insightful, having displayed the union's toughness instead of its bare commitment. Until the next major strike would occur, the ILWU was to depend some more upon this blatant first success. In the meanwhile, as the Territory was to evolve toward statehood drive, sugar industry was to remain a conspicuous landmark in the class struggle background of the Islands.

## 1958 Aloha strike, a contagion of liberty

Depending upon such heightened stirrings was therefore presumably feasible, provided the vested advantage conquered over the planters' hegemony would uphold. Passed the overcoming of the strike itself, the barely ten years old union was not really aware of what should be done to keep up with its practices, neither were the field laborers having resumed working. Would not it be for the remaining organizing drive, many of the returning strikers were puzzled as on how to proceed from there: "The tradition of Hawaii sugar organizing had all been based upon crisis. The rank and file sugar worker had little experience of union organizing and union operation. Caught up in the enthusiasm of the organizing drive in 1944 and the subsequent victory of 1946, the majority of sugar workers were prepared to relax and fade back into their close-knit communities. A union meant little more to the average sugar worker in 1947 than high points of action — such as the 1946."[78]

Furthermore, as strikes were inflicting tremendous losses to the sugar growers, the victorious ILWU was going to be castigated as a rogue element, as previous strike leaders were usually portrayed as seditious and

77 *Ibid, page 122.*
78 *Working in Hawaii: A Labor History*, Chapter XV, § Building the Union Structure, page 309.

inconsiderate of the companies' welfare policy: "Not until 1958, when the industries had changed radically in production methods and financial structure, was the union accepted as a fact of life and dealt with as a normal part of the island economy."[79] Interestingly, just like the previous strike, the 1958 one would therefore occur in the midst of a less conflictual period.

The change in attitude however, was not spontaneous either; the ILWU needing to display an up to date aggiornamento of their progress when so required: "In 1955, the union presented an elaborate analysis of the change taking place in the industry, in order to answer a barrage of attacks by employers. The heads of Big Five had begun to issue public statements decrying the "irresponsibility" of the ILWU leadership, pointing at their wage and benefit demands as threats to the industry. Although such statements had been made from time immemorial, they were usually delivered by lesser figures of the industry."[80]

Among the principal leitmotivs, the gearing of the sugar profits to the workers' wages had recently triggered this outcry by the oligarchs. The now run-down perquisites system that granted to the workers a bonus payment, calculated and added to their incomes sporadically; was now cunningly substituted to raises corresponding with the actual currency of sugar: "Determined to increase the workers' share of sugar profits and to strengthen job security in face of rapid mechanization, the union began in 1950 to win some of these demands step by step. Between the sugar contract of 1950 and the decisive contract of 1958, despite fluctuating economic conditions in the world sugar market, the union's progress was steady."[81]

At the beginning of the 50s', contracts were expectedly greeted by

79*Ibid*, § the Lessons, page 303.
80*Ibid*, § Building the Union, page 316.
81*Ibid*, page 315.

the ILWU, whose best intentions were to render them appropriate to the new industrial era's requirements. Its main challenges being, on the one hand, mechanization, and on the other, lagging behind plantations who could be bankrupted by the contractual wage provisions designed to suit high-scale facilities: "In the 1950 contract, the basic wage was raised to eighty cents per hour and the wage structure geared to the price of sugar. This was the first step in protecting the workers from the erosion of mechanization. For years the industry had required long hours during harvest season or whenever the occasion demanded. To spread the work the union now moved to establish the forty-hour week as the norm for the industry. This 1951 contract marked the most significant change in working conditions and labor relation since the appearance of the first modern union in 1939." Understanding that the relieving by technological means of the workload was not guaranteed until its upgrading was successfully set in motion, the ILWU therefore allowed the contract to be flexible; with wage provisions fixed upon a certain degree of modernization: "A practice growing out of the changing economic status of the sugar industry was also written into this contract. Since the possibility of liquidation represented a constant threat to marginal plantations, particularly those with large investments in new machinery, a new classification, "distressed plantation" was written into the contract. This classification held off some of the contract changes until the plantation could regain a firm base."[82]

That was after nearly a decade of this climate of relative mutual understanding that the last strike in the Territory of Hawai'i would succeed. Although it was to reflect the smothering of the union-management relationship, it was a strike nevertheless; and as such, it could have wrecking consequences upon both camps. Not taking the matter

82*Ibid*, page 316.

lightheartedly, the ILWU hailed its ranks for relent: “Hall said he was worried that a sugar strike was coming and that it would be stupid. “I’m afraid these sugar people are going to break themselves,” he said.” I wish they had some sense. I’m worried about losing jobs through a foolish strike.”” Past this conciliatory statement, the leadership was nevertheless self-conscious that 1958 could be a designated year for striking. Meanwhile technological enhancement had been thoroughly achieved, with an unanimous concern from both sides; ever since the Big Five bosses had reconvened with the legacy of inflammatory statements against unionism, the ILWU had been considering the eventuality of a striking outcome: “The ILWU had warned long in advance that 1958 was going to be a “sugar year.” As far back as 1954 the union began collecting $1 per month per member to start a war chest. By 1958 the sugar units had $835,000.”[83]

Named “Aloha”, in the sense of the Hawaiian greeting, this label was to be eponymous in every of the ways the laborers were to man the strike. The grievances for wages, for example, were coined by taking in account what the planters had in mind: “Thus the union leadership decided to recommend that the workers demand an across-the-board increase rather than the percentage pay raise which the management had been hinting at in off-the-record sessions.” This strategy being wittily inspired by another major labor conflict the ILWU had been tampering with, the 1949 longshore strike, where a: “West Coast dispute encouraged the Hawaii longshoremen to demand an end to the colonial wage pattern which had recently grown much worse. Wages had traditionally been lower in Hawaii for a variety of reasons. Since they unloaded and loaded the same ships for the same employers, the local reasoned, the pay should be similar. The local voted to demand [its leveling] as a long step toward eliminating the

83*A Spark is Struck!*, Part Ten, Chapter LXV “Sugar ‘58: “the Aloha Strike””, page 328.

colonial difference."[84]

Inspired by practices from out of the plantation life boundaries, the ILWU had also in mind the perspective of a coming statehood, and made their prospect sound "Hawaiian borne", thus employing their workers to a wide array of tasks, including plantation tending ones: "In many places, the strike committee put members to work on public improvement projects: cleaning parks, repairing churches, and generally being very visible while improving the general appearance of their communities. As a final strike strategy, the union put some members to work irrigating the sugar cane to prevent serious loss from the crop."[85]

Beside these kind-hearted principles, laid the assumption held by the ILWU leadership, that Hawai'i had once emancipated itself thanks to the sugar cane industry: "In any case, the growing number of ILWU members hinted at a wider metamorphosis of the islands. Another fundamental truth existed said Louis Goldblatt* in early 1958: sugar has built Hawai'i. As Goldblatt surveyed the beautiful office buildings, the sumptuous hotels, and attractive department stores, the lovely homes, the lush parks, and the other accoutrements that captured the eye of a growing flow of tourists, he argued it all was based on sugar fields, or, more specifically, the labor of sugar workers whom the ILWU represented."[86]

In the same timeline, M. Goldblatt was previously exposing how the hourly wage increases demanded were depending upon the shift in production mechanized labor was inducing: "Hourly rates were too low in comparison with the piecework rates which had long characterized the industry. Goldblatt pondered the issue a full year before. He compared the

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84 *Working in Hawaii: A Labor History*, Chapter XV, § the Mature Union: the 1958 Strike, page 319; § the Basic Issues, page 311.

85 *Working in Hawaii: A Labor History*, Chapter XV, § the Mature Union: the 1958 Strike, page 319.

* Secretary-Treasurer of the ILWU.

86 *Fighting in Paradise*, Chapter XVII "Toward Statehood", page 316.

problem to that of the auto industry. In both cases the automation was the source of the trouble. For sugar, the question was whether the great increases in speed of harvesting and labor productivity would end up converting full-time employment into seasonal employment. Hawaii had long enjoyed the distinction of full-time, year-round work."[87]

The strike's issue resembled its 1946's predecessor: hourly wages were upgraded in sixteen cents in the first year and seven in the second half of the three-year contract. It lasted one hundred and twenty-eight days, from February, 1 to June, 15; "it was the first three-year contract without a reopening clause in the history of the Hawaii sugar industry." Beyond the recursive ability of the union to challenge successfully the planters; the *Aloha strike* had embarked the workers into social venture which could only be performed in the years prior to the proclamation of statehood. In April 1959, roughly a month after, the next to be appointed governor of Hawai'i, Democrat leader John Burns would celebrate the achievement at the 13th Biennial Convention of the ILWU in Seattle, expressing his belief that the successful drive to statehood was indeed the sugar workers and the ILWU's realization: "And as we analyze the situation in Hawaii and give proper credit where credit is due, I am going to make a statement that I have made before in Hawaii: That the foundations for democracy in Hawaii were laid by the ILWU, because they freed the working man of the plantations from the economic and political control of management; because they enabled him to realize that they had dignity, that they were citizens who had a right to participate in such little government as we had."[88] But the fate of the Aloha state has not solely been built on the ILWU leaders and members' faith. As the forerunners in the legacy of unionism,

87 *Working in Hawaii: A Labor History*, Chapter XV, § the Mature Union: the 1958 Strike, page 318.
88 *A Spark is Struck!*, Part Ten, Chapter LXV "Sugar '58: "the Aloha Strike"", page 332;
Chapter LXVII "the Glow of Statehood", page 332.

the Japanese also, as their ethnicity still represents nowadays a fair share of the population of the archipelago, were by themselves an important cohesion factor of the island life.

## 4th part: The interference of Japanese cultural legacies with the course of the 20th century in Hawai‘i

Because it had more or less coincided with the free trade agreement that had spurred the Hawaiian sugar market, Japanese immigration’s figures rapidely overcame the decried Chinese’s ones. The same scheme would repeat itself later with the Filipinos; once pictured as an efficient subsidiary to their oriental cousins. Nevertheless, neither them nor the Chinese were to remain in Hawaii the way the successive generations of Japanese did. The reason for the Japanese presence in Hawai‘i was roughly the same as their Eastern neighbors; their purpose abroad, however, was somehow different. Strongly resilient cultural and national traits, combined with a family centered way of thinking, were to stem from the original plantation society and to merge into the American citizenship. Therefore the post-war movements in both Hawai‘i and Japan bear common features, relevant when considering which motives did propel the successive Nippon generations to contribute furthermore to the forming of the Hawaiian state as well as society. Discrepancies between the two countries’ frame of mind would only found their specific resonances in contemporary analysis, having in the meanwhile remained unaccounted for during the American democratic assimilation process.

### How imported Japanese labor principles were to prevail in Hawai‘i?

As we have seen previously in the section covering the recourse to immigration for Hawai‘i’s sugar cane cultivation and harvesting purpose, Japan was in the beginning stalling offers to export its laborers. Upon the eventual agreement of the authorities to revoke this policy however, the designated emigrants were to find the prospect consistent with one of their country’s commonplace practice, the *dekasegi rōdō** one. To counteract the direness of some agricultural periods, families were depending on one of their members to reach out for city employment, so as to temporarily alleviate their burden: “Workers from these families expected to return to their villages when conditions improved on the countryside. This type of *internal migration* relieved the economic pressure by reducing the number of people in each household and increasing the chances of acquiring income outside the farm. Most of them were young, single men, although it was not unusual for heads of families to seek temporary work as well. This option to work away from home was important for farming families particularly in the mid-1880s.” Since the sugar growers in Hawai‘i were looking for field laborers especially, the commutation between the existing legacy and the newly created opportunity occurred in a short while: “The dekasegi rōdō tradition made the transition to overseas emigration easier by attaching a sense of legitimacy to the idea of acquiring temporary work abroad. Emigration became an acceptable option for farming families who were struggling to survive, and another mean of solving economic problems in the countryside.”[89] Fulfillment of the contract implied therefore returning to Japan, which was especially true during the government-sponsored period, notably because it was the government who was assuming the emigration process’ expenses.

While not compulsory, the return trip was befitting the workers’

* 出稼ぎ労働: dekasegi rōdō, posted worker in Japanese.

89 *Imingaisha, Japanese Emigration Companies*, Chapter I, § the Background in Japan, page 6.

wishes best: “The relatively high percentage of returnees (46 percent) among the government sponsored immigrants was due to several factors, the most important being the dekasegi rōdō tradition. Working away in Japan was always seen as a temporary arrangement, although the actual period of separation might be quite long. Still at some point the workers were expected to return home, hopefully with some money. Those who found some financial success in Hawaii often immigrated a second time after a stay in Japan.” While the dekasegi rōdō maintained until the labor contracts were prohibited, the Japanese’s motivations grew more ravenous nevertheless; depending less on sustaining, more on earning, the two traditions of leaving home and emigrating having merged: “As for their motivations, the labor recruits hoped to accumulate sufficient savings from working in Hawai‘i to buy land or pay family debts. Plantation recruits had a saying, “400 yen in three years,” that expressed their overly optimistic goal of saving the equivalent of about $200 while working for the duration of their contracts.” The democratization of the practice diluted the original commitment to the posted worker tradition. With its more liberal principles, free contract erased furthermore what was at stake with the original agreement, influencing the community plantation life reportedly: “The collective identity of the community shifted from that of dekasegi workers who were only in Hawaii to work until they could return with some money to support a better life in Japan, to become a settler community that needed to develop a better life in Hawaii.”[90]

## A pledging of influence over the Japanese local: Church versus Press

90*Ibid*, Chapter II, § Life for the Japanese in Hawaii, page 29;
*Interpreting the Japanese American Experiences in Hawaii*, Chapter II “Struggle and Resistance”, page 19;
*Hawaii's Japanese community in the postwar Democratic movement*, Chapter II, page 22.

Two prominent characters of the Japanese Hawaiian society once fought an influential battle over the becoming of their compatriots within the boundaries of the Americanized Territory of Hawai‘i. Reverend Takie Okumura, on the one hand, and Fred Makino, on the other, had concurring viewpoints and the means to express them to their fellow citizens undecided about whether they should attune to the ambient American values. Atypical because of his Christian confession, reverend Okumura had moved in Hawai‘i in 1894 for evangelistic purposes; Fred Makino, who founded the Japanese language newspaper *Hawaii Hochi* eight years later had brought an off-the-record support to its striking countrymen during the 1909 Japanese-only strike.

Each men's prerogatives would manifest during the first massive Japanese turmoil in the Islands, the 1909 strike, with the reverend spreading the official suggestion not to convene to the picketing; meanwhile Makino was siding with the strike leaders, as he himself used to be sugar cane laborer. Their entrenched positioning would further extend over other issues, related to the Japanese assimilation process in Hawai‘i. The reverend's opposition to striking did not change in the ten years period between the strikes: "No matter how many time we strike, we will have no chance of victory," Okumura predicted in his own newspaper, *The Paradise Times*; because "even a purely industrial dispute" was "bound to become a racial clash" in Hawaii."[91] According to his customary practice to obviate conflicting behavior, Okumura was therefore determined to extend his policy to any further disturbance of the island interests of the Japanese.

To the parochial discourse of the reverend, Fred Makino would substitute the columns of the *Hawaii Hochi* to provide his community with

91 *The Japanese in Hawaii: A Century of Struggle*, Chapter IV, § the New Americans, page 66.

an almost daily tribune, in which he would discuss the matters of concern to his Nikkei* readers. Oppositely to the reverend's, his editorial line would be overtly advocating the prevalence of the hereditary Japanese values within the American society. This set of values being the same as the rev. Okumura's one; yet considered from a concurring perspective. First issued in December 1912, the newspaper had foreseen in its founding editorial, on what grounds the Japanese in Hawai'i would be needing guidance and commitment: "This paper will use its best endeavor to settle differences with fairness to all, to afford an opportunity to [children born here of Japanese parents] to learn all important affairs of the united states and become familiar with its institutions." With Hawai'i's sugar trade depending heavily on Japanese, M. Makino's inaugural marksmanship would therefore target the eventual incoming labor disputes as well: "This paper recognize that the principal industry of Hawaii is, and for a long time will be, the Sugar business; and that the sugar planters rely, and must rely to a great extend upon the Japanese for labor. It will most inevitably follow in the future, that difference in opinion of greater or less importance, will arise between the Japanese on the one hand, and the sugar planters on the other. This paper will do the best in such case, to present the actual fact of the case, from the Japanese standpoint."[92]

Insightful in its purpose, the editor's envisioning of the future disputes was however to meet other fortunes than the ones he expected. Having praised his people to rejoin the early Filipinos demonstrators, the *Hawaii Hochi* later felt into dismay during the course of the 1920 strike, for having questioned the leadership's commonsense: "*The Hawaii Hochi* began openly questioning the actions of the strike leadership. But Makino's

* 日系: Nikkei, term designating the Japanese diaspora, the immigrating Japanese and their descendants as a wholesale.

92 *Ibid*, § the Hapa-Haole Agitator, page 58.

criticisms only brought down the wrath of the union leaders, who accused him to disrupt the unity of the laborers. The 1920 strike saw Fred Makino become almost as unpopular among the Japanese strikers as Reverend Takie Okumura, one of the foremost opponents to militant action."[93]

On other contentious issues, the two men were to oppose again on how act for the benefit of the Hawaiian share of the Nikkei. Repeatedly occurring after the first racial union strikes, public disapproval of the imported labor's behavior was to resurface in 1920: "After the strike, the atmosphere of anti-Japanese bigotry remained. Should the Japanese abandon their ethnic community institution so that bigots would no longer regard the Japanese as threat to Americans in Hawaii. Or should the Japanese defend their ethnic community institutions as the privilege of full-fledged residents in a democratic society?"[94]

The language schools controversy: were Japanese expected to remain?

After the Japanese agitators were no longer pointed out, another issue became the contention bone between the two leagues: the Japanese language schools. Having himself established one of the first such schools in 1896, rev. Okumura was being watchful that they were not offensive to the occidental thought: "In 1915, Okumura was stubborn in his insistence on the independence of all language schools from religious affiliations. He felt that it was wiser to place our schools under the supervision of the Board of Education voluntarily, to dispel misunderstandings and suspicions by Americans who regarded the foreign language schools as a hindrance to Americanization."[95]

93*Ibid*, page 60.
94*Ibid*, § One Language Under One Flag, page 61.
95*Ibid*, pp 61-62.

Secondary matters for the people considering them as such, the schools knew several attempts at being revised, banned or restrained. While the reverend Okumura was wielding what was labeled as his *assimilationist* stance, a share of the public opinion amounted in building a case against them: “With regard to being culturally threatening, Japanese, including the American-born second generation, were considered “unassimilable” because they maintained many of their cultural traditions and values in the islands, particularly their language and religion. They were thus represented as an alien race in Hawai‘i that threatened the primacy of American culture and institutions fostered and followed by haoles. The schools were harshly criticized for retarding the assimilation of Japanese Americans into American culture and for maintaining their loyalty to Japan because their curriculum included not just language, but Japanese culture, history folklore and moral values, using textbooks from Japan.”[96]

To this prosecution, missed a variety of sociological concerns, which did not amount as portraying the Japanese as *unassimilable* aliens; which instead pleaded for their belonging within a boarder context, the one Fred Makino was referring to as a wholesale in his opening statement of the *Hawaii Hochi*: “The purpose of Japanese schools was to bring up children to appreciate their Japanese language and culture. Because the children were expected to go back to Japan with their parents when the parents saved enough money to go home, they had to learn Japanese language and culture. In the early days when Issei immigrants thought of themselves as dekasegi workers who would return to Japan in a few years, the schools established and run by the Issei parents taught very similar classes as the schools in Japan. In the mid-1910s, more and more Issei parents decided to settle down in Hawaii as they realized it would take much longer to earn

96*Interpreting the Japanese American Experiences in Hawaii*, Chapter II § the Anti-Japanese Campaign, pp 44-45.

enough to go home." Emblematic of the Japanese's quest for the sake of their values outside Japan, the decried language schools were eventually greeted in the Hawaiian landscape after the case against them was dismissed by the U.S. Supreme Court. Its ruling confirming the lower court ruling on February 21, 1927 considering the move made by the territorial legislature as "part of a deliberate plan to bring foreign plan to bring language schools under a strict government control for which the record discloses no adequate reason."[97]

In accordance with his prospective habit, Fred Makino found the settlement best suiting the Japanese's interests: "Makino predicted that the hostility generated by the issue would soon be forgotten by the Americans, who accepted controversy and debate as part of the democratic process." The Japanese in comparison, had had the intuition of the democratic controversy mechanisms, by mobilizing 87 of the 146 Japanese language schools as soon as February 21, 1923. Meanwhile striking was familiar to them; civilian protest stemmed from the contact with the society they had to acclimate themselves to: "Using collective power for striking under severely exploited situations was not an unfamiliar measure for Japanese farmers. They had that tradition back in Japan. The fact that the host society tried to place Japanese language schools under government control mobilized the Japanese into the legal fight in court for equality."[98] Owing the motive of their settlement to the enforcement of extended American laws, the Japanese were certainly to find sensible that the principles of their imported educational values could one day require the availing of a

97*Hawaii's Japanese community in the postwar Democratic movement*, Chapter II, § General Community Organization, page 26;
*Interpreting the Japanese American Experiences in Hawaii*, Chapter II § the Anti-Japanese Campaign, page 45.
98*The Japanese in Hawaii: A Century of Struggle*, Chapter IV, § One Language Under One Flag, page 66;
*Hawaii's Japanese community in the postwar Democratic movement*, Chapter II, § Development of Collective Identity and Resources, page 41.

legislative body. Therefore, when 60 percent of Hawai‘i’s Japanese language schools filled a lawsuit with Fred Makino, his praise for affirmative action was being followed at last. This early acknowledgment certainly accounts for the relieved statement he was to utter, knowing for certain the Japanese had been exposing themselves successfully to the American democratic principles: “Individuals and organizations alike must never forget to stand up for their rights and freedom.”

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Representing Hawaii as an offset American society was not a self-evident statement. Furthermore, the role that had played sugar cane industry in the becoming of such society was not obvious either. That the practice was imported from out of Hawai‘i seems reasonable; that a whole society has ripened as the following is a lot more outstanding.

The perspective is enticing if any, considering that the usual say, in matter of annexations of remote territories by the United States, is that citizenship there usually “follows the flag”; reportedly here, one could assume that labor history has followed the sugar cane’s course of evolution instead. Distinct as well as sometimes overlapping, the main eras of the diverse labor ages cannot be considered as corresponding to the sugar market’s main phases either. What they reflect mostly instead, is that the covetous prospect of building a sugar industry required more than the combining of men and means; it demanded at once the combined efforts of two welfare states to have their own set of values patched together.

In enabling the Americans to hire its subjects, the Hawaiian monarchy has set in motion a tremendous mechanism, which allowed it to live by the nineteenth century standards, which would have remained unattainable otherwise. Once the rural exploiting was shifted to industrial

farming, the monarchy's role became more and more that of a figurehead; not on purpose, but because what their allowances had once permitted had become of another trend.

Even from this time on, labor was not to stand alone in Hawai‘i either. The blitz federation of the planters during the short Hawaiian Republic era leaves no doubt about their angst of having their imported labor resources shortened under the enactment of the American federal laws to Hawai‘i. From this time being, the HSPA was by itself one the main motives for labor to organize; the remainder was to be the abolition of the contract labor, as well as the Wagner Act and its sequel. But then again, the allowance was secondary to the need. The earliest attempts at presenting grievances were the Hawaiian natives', and they were directed against the despicable nature of the unfair monetary agreement.

Analyzing the evolution of the two "racial strikes", Edward Beechert states that: "The strikes of 1909 and 1920 had much to do with this shift from necessity to policy."[99] This was true already for these pioneers, who could not grasp the need for policy. Previous in time to the interests of the island society, the American interests there can be portrayed as having always been delayed, yet in a manner that allowed them to prepare themselves steadily to proceed without much hindrance. The planters' calumnious tactic of conceding to agreements after the strikes were defeated reflects this undoubtedly.

As for strength of the Japanese national influence over its people abroad, it is to be found also in their core family values. Naturally organized upon them, they were often reported to find many other means of association less relevant, more possibly responsible of interfering with their ways than enhancing them. Strikes have known them to be rallying to

99 *Working in Hawaii: A Labor History*, Chapter XV, § the Issues, page 296.

the *yamato damashii* ideal of honorable behavior in a way resembling to family values. Ever since, the Japanese themselves have added a degree of understanding of their stubbornness in behavior. Japan being a wide island inside a myriad of others, its inhabitants have long lived by the universal value of this seldom disturbed sense of unity.

Beyond family, duty, the Japanese depend on an *island national mentality*[*], which screens most of the data irrelevant to its codes and landmarks. This contribution to the understanding of the Japanese sense of belonging to something more than a given Asian ethnicity was debated in the course of Masumi Izumi, a professor of American Studies at the Department of Global and regional Studies in the *Doshisha* University of Kyoto: "Listening to my students, I started to see that in their minds the idea of "America" presupposed open access to its land and economic opportunities to people of diverse races and backgrounds, but the idea of "Japan" did not bear such a burden. Regardless of whether they considered America or Japan as an anomaly, they all thought as the two countries as polar opposites, with "America" being a multicultural society and "Japan" being a culturally homogeneous island nation. One of our students referred to the Japanese as having a "*shima gumi konjō*" (island nation mentality) and stated that their limited interactions with foreigners accounted for the lack of English proficiency."[100] Halfway to both American and Japan mainlands, Hawai'i consisted for the Japanese immigrants in something they knew already. With growing numbers of their compatriots remaining, this "island edge of America" was to comprise a Japanese national counterpart. From this *de facto* statement, the Nikkei population settled in Hawai'i was confronted to a two-horn dilemma: were they to relinquish

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* 島国根性: in Japanese *shima gumi konjō*.

100 *Trans-Pacific Japanese American Studies*, § Complicating the Notions of Race in Japan and the United States, page 318.

their original distinctiveness; or could they on the contrary live by their own, impervious to the surrounding American values?

Depending on the "grid" to which are referring Ms. Izumi's students, the Japanese were checking the first box as soon as summoned by the American planters. American values had perspired under the Hawaiian monarchy's era; and meanwhile the Japanese felt they were complying to their sense of economical behavior, they were also witnessing a foreign company's functioning as well.

Their following statement about polarity doesn't apply so well to the further situation; for even polarized, the first Americanized Japanese in Hawai'i were not rejecting their host country either – the question was more whether adjusting to its context was compulsory or not. The answer was to be equivocal, since they found out that maintaining their cultural assets would be best served by exerting their rights to legal representation.

Therefore, the Aloha spirit that arose from the final act of the plantation labor scene, can also be perceived retrospectively. If ethnic barriers existed merely without being instrumental to the sugar consortium; they were evenly deleted soon after the American legal system would permit their dismissal. The sense of freedom pointed out by Ms. Izumi's class, though it needed realization first, was to prevail the same way. The *little Wagner Act* of Jack Hall also belongs with this sort of progressive achievements.

If labor was once imported in Hawai'i as a wholesale and staggering, its overwhelming importance has allowed a thorough development of all of its aspects; so far as eventually authorizing a winning statehood drive policy that was supported by its working class element. Yet the planters' mentality had also evolved reportedly to that of laborers; therefore the successes of the strikes lead by a professional labor union sharply contrasts with the other previous spontaneous strikes' achievements. When

considered apart from its social enhancement, effective labor combining came lastly, emerging only through ages of an unalterable litany of the planters' paternalistic discourse.

One is to consider that, when the planters formed the HSPA, their whole approach of sugar cane business was earnest, as well as pragmatic: that their workers would consider the full extends of issues such as mechanization or research on crops was unthinkable; which accounted then for their simplistic way to address them. Racial labor unions did not get the chance to devise blueprints comprehensive of their fellow workers. And as we noticed, only legal allowance to do so brought some shifts in the planters' contract policies.

So a progression pattern is noticeable also within the planters' attitude. While it took nearly fifty years to strike successfully against their rule, their behavior was not impervious all the way either. What seemed to matter most to them was that they were making the moves. What changes brought the ILWU got underway in a predictable fashion, with the planters readying to face a new opponent. However, the amount of hard determinism that the planter class had displayed so far was no longer suitable, as the maritime union's approach was to counteract it in every ways attainable.

This sense of a reasonable approach to collective bargaining was to remain as a beacon in the later Hawaiian State's legacy of political activism. Jonathan Okamura, in the last part of his book, portrays four *yonsei*[*] characters among the influential Japanese people in Hawaii. One of them, Kyle Kajihiro, was born in Hawai'i little after statehood, and therefore considers militancy according to recursive practices of beleaguered bargaining. He resorts on a quote by Frederick Douglas, to

* 四世, the fourth generation of American-born Japanese.

explain how was passed along the generations this still widespread recourse to a defiance of the establishment: ""If there is no struggle, there is no progress." — I think that has helped some of what I do here. Many times there's an impulse to compromise and harmonize here in Hawai'i. But I think about the quote a lot because if we don't unsettle the normalcy of the oppression, of the violence, and make it strange, make it problematic, then how do we know what we're dealing with?"[101]

Reported to the gap between the uncertainty of the first racial unions, and the credentials of the legally supported ILWU, Kyle Kajihiro's reflection hints us toward the careful preparation that is advisable to have when attempting to challenge the society's frameworks. 1909 and 1920's strikers were no poorer bargaining chips than their latter ILWU fellow leaders; only they could not realize that the entrenchment of the planters was liable above all to their drive for sustaining and improving. Would have they, triggering such levellers constituted no reasonable prospects, for racial unions were only temporary structures, a far cry from their successor's thoughtful development.

Beside the original prowess of taking the planters to their game, the ILWU also proved its worth in terms of Hawaiian historical matters, enlightening in the process that bare confrontation often leads to wreckage; meanwhile a more comprehensive approach allows to bridge many gaps, as well as it rationalizes open conflicts into a mildest form of cooperation. In terms of Hawaiian setting, this can be reckoned as the same intends that once were the sugar interests' manner of dealing with the original royal state. What paved the way for sugar operations to flourish on the Hawaiian soil, more than the early planters' self-determination, was indeed that their degree of compliance with the Hawaiian kingdom was always laced with a

101 *Interpreting the Japanese American Experiences in Hawaii*, Chapter VII, § Discussion, pp 201-201.

great deal of *laissez-faire*, implying that royalty was taking steps for its own sake, instead of simply favoring foreign sugar markets. When annexation, and then statehood were to draw their lines on the horizon, both the Royal Hawaiian and then the HSPA's rules were to take their toll to the newcomers' daring maneuvers.

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Retrospective thoughts about the writing of this essay:

Comparing this memoir to the previous one, I could not find great differences in the process of writing it down. By employing a strictly different set of books as my sources, I had the same overall impression of progressing steadily; having to back out sometimes from my original intends, yet sticking with my original motive remaining more or less the same. Some of the less quoted sources, the books about the NLRB and the seamen were nevertheless of an utmost importance, for they helped me to figure out by myself what did they mean outside of the Hawaiian setting. The same goes for M. Horne's book, for it had some relevance with my subject, yet it is so dedicated to the extensive analysis of the ways and means of the union organizers, it was sometimes delicate to integrate with my subject. The same way, I had access to an interesting document held by the University of Hawaii at Mānoa, discussing the presence of the International Workers of the World in Hawai'i, but it was nowhere to mention in my memoir. The main reason is that the IWW's activity in Hawai'i is uncertain; but furthermore neither the Wobblies or the ILA did there but little informal support to strikes. The ILWU having upheld the lion's share in Hawai'i thanks to its proverbial carrying of the holy word unleashed during the NIRA-NLRA era.

Books dedicated to the Japanese people in Hawai‘i had this in common: at first impression, they would all seem troublesome to come by. More precisely MM. Okamura and Moriyama’s were precious readings, yet the first impression that I had after reading them was not the one I used when completing my survey. M. Johannessen was substituted to M. Okamura in describing the plantation life; while M. Moriyama was to resurface for opening the lead to new considerations, independent of the emigrating process.

Finally, the biography of Jack Hall was enlightening, for it made me realize how precarious used to be the ILWU in Hawai‘i. Other books are not much adamant in presenting the fact that they would succeed in representation because they were way different from the planters, and therefore were inspiring a greater confidence, due to the roughly same level of subsidence they had in common with the people they were to bargain for.

As I was stating in my conclusion, last year’s work was not obvious to present as a whole, and neither was this one; only this year, with a narrower scope, the considerations I was to make were of a different kind. Depending upon sugar cane as a cohesion factor to the whole purpose of presenting the evolution of this given aspect of the Hawaiian society that is labor certainly has prevented me from making too commonplace assumptions or understatements, and to reverberate instead what I though was relevant to my study.

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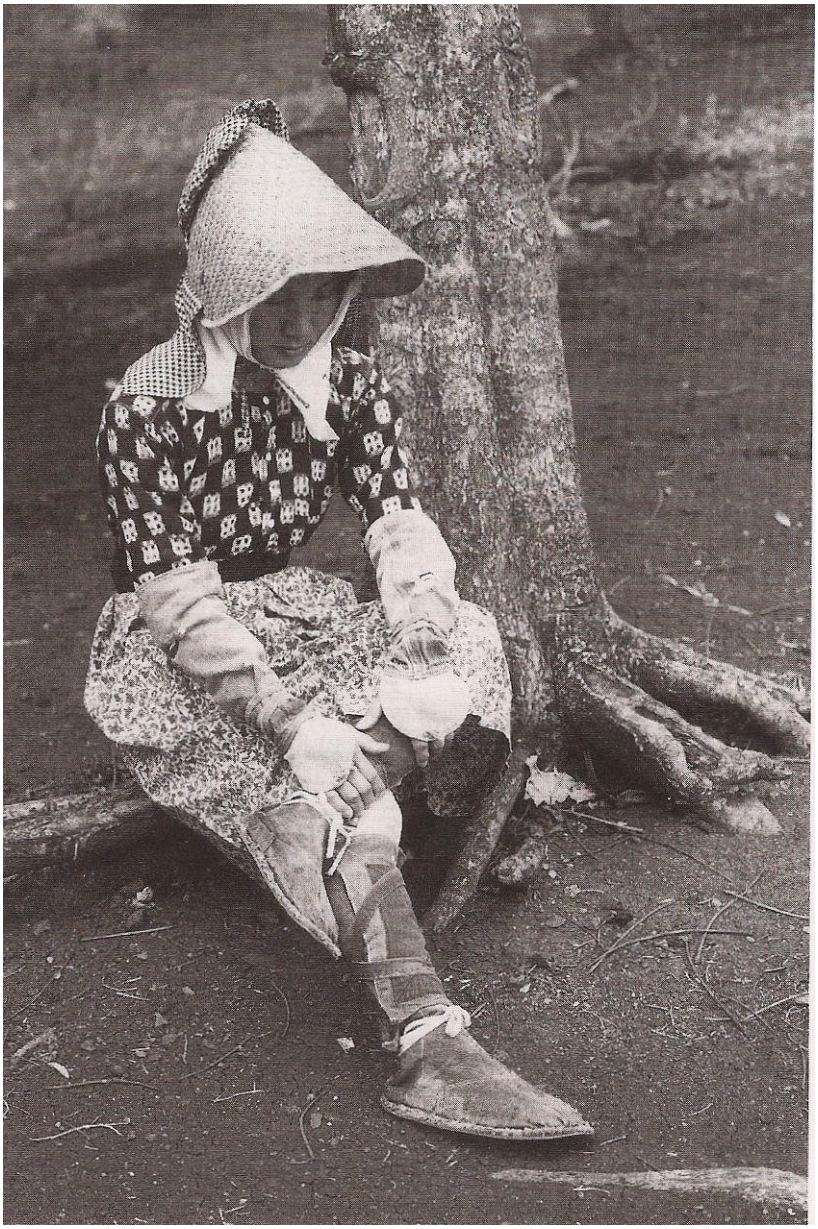
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## Annexes with illustrations:



**Illus. 1:** Japanese women laborers in the Hawaiian sugar cane fields, source: https://www.nvlchawaii.org/



**Illus. 2:** A Japanese woman in traditional working outfit, source: Japanese immigrant clothing in Hawaii, 1885-1941, Barbara F. Kawakami




**Illus. 3:** A dual-strike demonstration during the 1920 strike on the island of Oahu, source: The Japanese in Hawaii, a century of struggle, page 42



**Illus. 4:** Japanese language schools were decried in the 1920s-1930s, source: The Japanese in Hawaii, a century of struggle, page 63




**Illus. 5:** Franklin Roosevelt circled by children with tee-shirts labeled with New Deal agencies' logos, source: https://www.slideshare.net/hannahguam164/chapter-25-the-great-depression-and-the-new-deal



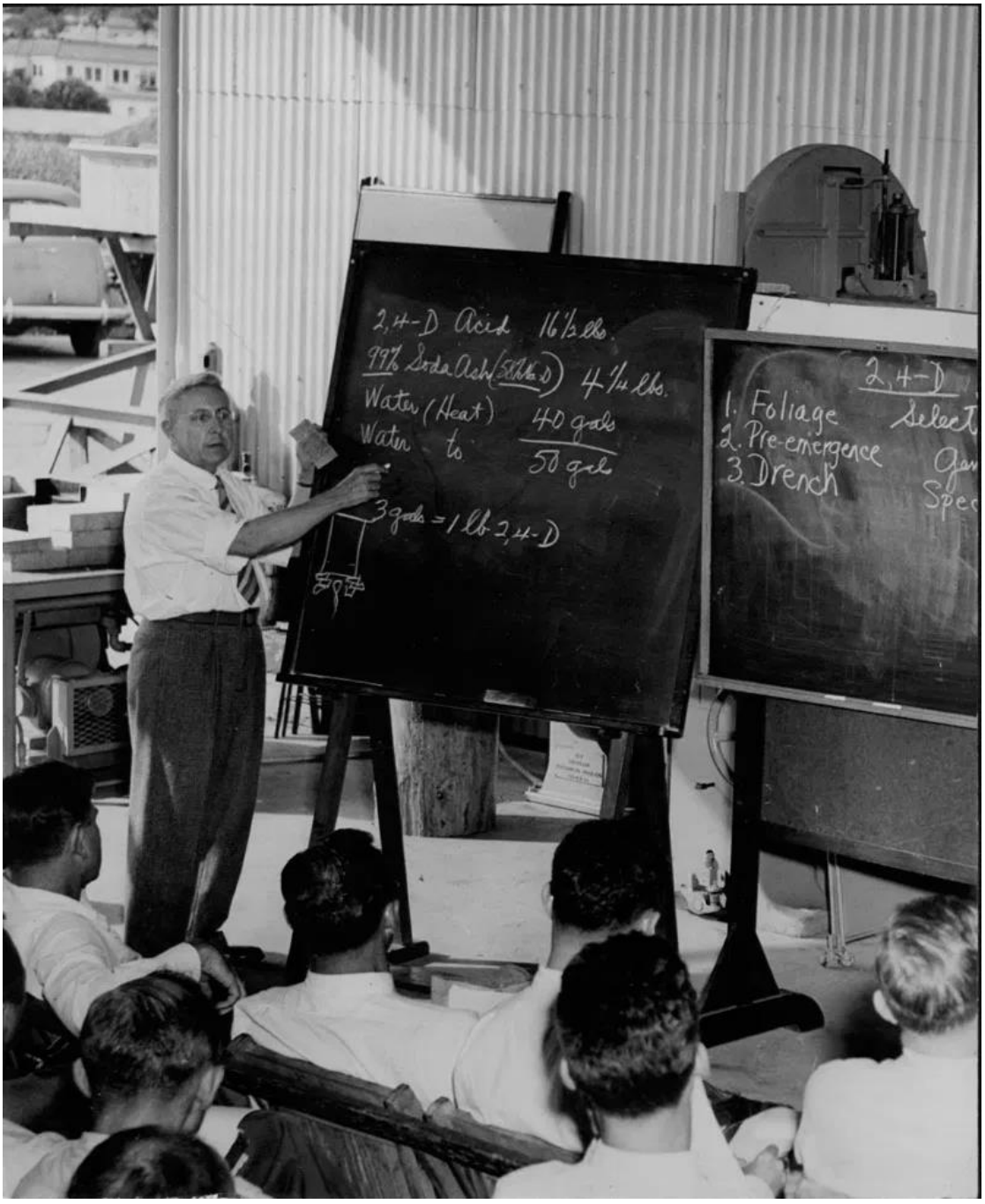
**Illus. 6:** Franklin Roosevelt commenting the World War Two's progress during the 1942 Fireside chat sessions, source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fireside_chats#/media/File:FDR-Map-1942.jpg



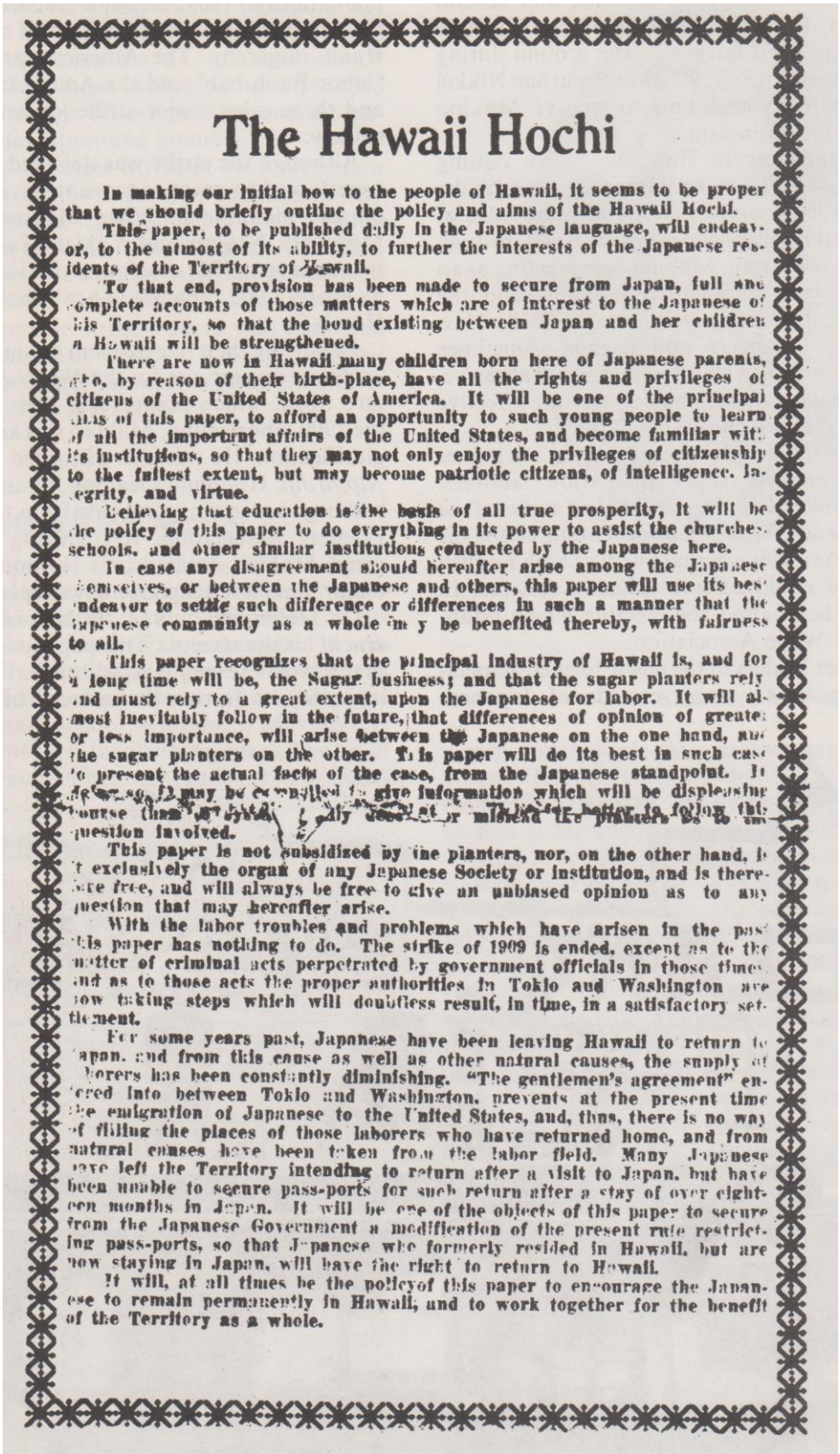

**Illus. 7:** The ILWU delegates organizing the plantations workers, , source: The Japanese in Hawaii, a century of struggle, page 128




**Illus. 8:** 2018 Honolulu festival retraced Japanese emigration to Hawai'i. The exhibition was held the previous year around Japan, source: https://www.honolulufestival.com/en/report/2018/04/gannenmono-2/




**Illus. 9:** Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association Experiment Station, source: http://imagesofoldhawaii.com/hawaiian-sugar-planters-association-hspa/



# The Hawaii Hochi

In making our initial bow to the people of Hawaii, it seems to be proper that we should briefly outline the policy and aims of the Hawaii Hochi.

This paper, to be published daily in the Japanese language, will endeavor, to the utmost of its ability, to further the interests of the Japanese residents of the Territory of Hawaii.

To that end, provision has been made to secure from Japan, full and complete accounts of those matters which are of interest to the Japanese of this Territory, so that the bond existing between Japan and her children in Hawaii will be strengthened.

There are now in Hawaii many children born here of Japanese parents, who, by reason of their birth-place, have all the rights and privileges of citizens of the United States of America. It will be one of the principal aims of this paper, to afford an opportunity to such young people to learn of all the important affairs of the United States, and become familiar with its institutions, so that they may not only enjoy the privileges of citizenship to the fullest extent, but may become patriotic citizens, of intelligence, integrity, and virtue.

Believing that education is the basis of all true prosperity, it will be the policy of this paper to do everything in its power to assist the churches, schools, and other similar institutions conducted by the Japanese here.

In case any disagreement should hereafter arise among the Japanese themselves, or between the Japanese and others, this paper will use its best endeavor to settle such difference or differences in such a manner that the Japanese community as a whole may be benefited thereby, with fairness to all.

This paper recognizes that the principal industry of Hawaii is, and for a long time will be, the Sugar business; and that the sugar planters rely and must rely to a great extent, upon the Japanese for labor. It will almost inevitably follow in the future, that differences of opinion of greater or less importance, will arise between the Japanese on the one hand, and the sugar planters on the other. This paper will do its best in such case to present the actual facts of the case, from the Japanese standpoint. In doing so, it may be compelled to give information which will be displeasing to the planters, and may possibly [illegible] or mislead the planters as to the question involved.

This paper is not subsidized by the planters, nor, on the other hand, is it exclusively the organ of any Japanese Society or institution, and is therefore free, and will always be free to give an unbiased opinion as to any question that may hereafter arise.

With the labor troubles and problems which have arisen in the past this paper has nothing to do. The strike of 1909 is ended, except as to the matter of criminal acts perpetrated by government officials in those times, and as to those acts the proper authorities in Tokio and Washington are now taking steps which will doubtless result, in time, in a satisfactory settlement.

For some years past, Japanese have been leaving Hawaii to return to Japan, and from this cause as well as other natural causes, the supply of laborers has been constantly diminishing. "The gentlemen's agreement" entered into between Tokio and Washington, prevents at the present time the emigration of Japanese to the United States, and, thus, there is no way of filling the places of those laborers who have returned home, and from natural causes have been taken from the labor field. Many Japanese have left the Territory intending to return after a visit to Japan, but have been unable to secure pass-ports for such return after a stay of over eighteen months in Japan. It will be one of the objects of this paper to secure from the Japanese Government a modification of the present rule restricting pass-ports, so that Japanese who formerly resided in Hawaii, but are now staying in Japan, will have the right to return to Hawaii.

It will, at all times be the policyof this paper to encourage the Japanese to remain permanently in Hawaii, and to work together for the benefit of the Territory as a whole.

**Illus. 10:** The Hawaii Hochi's first editorial, where Fred Makino explains in what ways he intends to tackle events in the Islands from a Japanese standpoint, source: The Japanese in Hawaii: a century of struggle, page 58