

# In the Midst of Western Imperialism: Japanese-Hawaiian Relations during the Mid-nineteenth Century<sup>(1)</sup>

Roy S. Hanashiro

During the mid-nineteenth century, the Pacific Ocean area became deeply entrenched in imperialism due to the thrust of various western nations. In the middle of the Pacific, an island nation under the rule of a king was caught in the midst of this imperialistic game. This was the Hawaiian Kingdom. On the western fringes of the Pacific Ocean, another island nation (theoretically a monarchy) also found itself embroiled in western imperialism, and at the same time, it faced insurmountable political problems. This was the nation of Japan. As both nations responded to the impact of imperialism, the global circumstances would bring these nations closer together and as a result a treaty would be formed.

In examining Japanese-Hawaiian diplomacy, much attention has been given to the 1880's and 1890's, for during these years a convention (1886) was signed between these nations to import Japanese laborers to Hawaii, and Hawaii was annexed by the United States in 1894.<sup>(2)</sup> These are indeed significance developments and the literature devoted to these two events are

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(1) I would like to thank Kenneth West for suggesting number of works on US diplomatic history as well as sharing his thoughts on this subject. I wish to acknowledge Faculty Development and Awards Committee at the University of Michigan-Flint for its assistance.

(2) There were concerns in the United States Congress that Japan might also be interested annexation, and Japan had repeatedly stated that it had no such interest. For discussion on the convention and annexation see Ralph S. Kuykendall's *The Hawaiian Kingdom* vol. III (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1967) and Thomas J. Osborne's *Empire Can Wait: American Opposition to Hawaiian Annexation, 1893-1898* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 1981).

considerable. What has not received adequate attention is the treaty of 1871 called Treaty of Friendship and Commerce Between the Kingdom of Hawaii and the Empire of Japan.<sup>(3)</sup> This marked the beginning of official relationship between Japan and Hawaii. This article will examine the long and complicated steps in the founding of this treaty by discussing not only the role of Japan and Hawaii, but also by discussing the involvement of Britain.

In 1853, when Commodore Matthew C. Perry arrived at Uraga and got the Japanese officials to accept a letter by President Filmore that demand Americans be allowed in Japan, one of the pillars of Tokugawa bakufu (1600-1868) was broken. This was the Sakoku policy; a policy that restricted foreign trade only to the Dutch and Chinese, and only at the port of Nagasaki. The Sakoku policy also prohibited Japanese from traveling abroad. Breaking this prohibition was death upon return regardless of the circumstances. There were, however, many Japanese who took to the sea---the fishermen and sailors. Some of these men were lost at sea and drifted to distant lands, while others were rescued by foreign vessels. Knowing the outcome of their return, they chose to seek life abroad. Indeed, the early Japanese visitors to Hawaii drifted to its shores or were brought to the islands after being rescued in the high seas. In fact, during the 1840's, three Japanese were naturalized and became citizens of the Hawaiian Kingdom.

The Hawaiian government was fully aware of Tokugawa Japan's foreign policy and acquired information on Perry's progress. When Japan's foreign policy changed after Perry, the Hawaiian government saw the possibility of establishing an official relationship with Japan, but the opportunity for diplomacy did not come until 1860. And, this was quite by

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(3) The only source that I have been able to locate that provides a lengthy description on this treaty is Hilary Conroy's *The Japanese Frontier in Hawaii, 1868-1898* (New York: Arno Press, 1978). Hereafter cited as *Japanese Frontier*. His focus is mainly on the activities of Hawaiian, Japanese and American officials.

<sup>(4)</sup>  
accident.

In 1854, Treaty of Kanagawa was signed between Japan and the United States. On 13 February 1860, Japan despatched its first embassy to the United States, but not having a vessel that could cross the Pacific, the embassy took passage on an American vessel U.S.S. *Powhatan* under the command of Commodore Josiah Tattnall. Few days out at sea, *Powhatan* encountered a severe storm that damaged the vessel badly. Due to the damage and the strong headwinds, Commodore Tattnall concluded that it was impossible to reach San Francisco and took a southward direction toward Hawaii. Here, Tattnall hoped to repair the vessel and also to take on necessary supplies, especially coal. *Powhatan* arrived at Honolulu on 5 March. Thus, the first Japanese officials to reach Hawaii arrived in a manner similar to their predecessors---unexpectedly.<sup>(5)</sup>

The arrival of the Japanese officials in Honolulu proved to be a diplomatic opportunity for the Hawaiian government, but for the Japanese, it was an unprepared two-week stay as representatives of Japan. Upon learning from the United States commissioner in Hawaii, Robert Borden, that the leaders of Japanese mission (Shinmi Buzen no Kami, Muragaki Awaji no Kami and Oguri Bungo no Kami)<sup>(6)</sup> were ambassadors, Hawaiian Foreign Minister Robert Crichton Wyllie decided to take advantage of their stay. Although this was an unscheduled visit, it was the first time persons of ambassador level had ever come to Hawaii,<sup>(7)</sup> and Wyllie wanted to use this visit as a "showcase" for the world to see. The ambassadors would be wined and dined, but Wyllie had another item on the agenda. He was intent on arranging a treaty of friendship and commerce with these ambassadors.

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(4) Ralph S. Kuykendall, *The Hawaiian Kingdom: 1854-1874, Twenty Critical Years* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1953), p. 66-67. Hereafter cited as *Twenty Critical Years*.

(5) *Ibid.*, *Japanese Frontier*, pp. 1-2.

(6) Wyllie was a Scottish physician and merchant who came to Hawaii in 1844 after an extended stay in Latin America. He was a foreign minister from 1845 until his death in 1865. *Japanese Frontier*, n. 8, p. 2.

(7) *Ibid.*, pp. 2-4. Also see Masao Miyoshi's *As We Saw Them: The First Japanese Embassy to the United States (1860)* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979).

It appears that intense enthusiasm got the best of Wyllie on the treaty issue. He wrote a letter to the ambassadors that King Kamehameha IV realized fully that they were not empowered by the Japanese government to form a treaty with Hawaii. Nevertheless, Wyllie pushed forth with a suggestion that the ambassadors should give their approval to a Japanese-Hawaiian treaty that was identical to the treaty between Japan and United States. The ambassadors' response was what one would expect; that is, treaty matters would absolutely require shogunal consultation and an answer could be given only after this was done. Wyllie concluded that the ambassadors would discuss the Japanese-Hawaiian treaty with the shogun upon returning to Japan.<sup>(8)</sup> Much to Wyllie's chagrin, on 15 November 1861, a correspondence was received in Hawaii from Japan indicating that it had no intention of forming a treaty with Hawaii.<sup>(9)</sup>

Although Wyllie understood that ambassadors could not conclude treaties without consulting their home government, why was he so eager to conclude a treaty with Japan? To comprehend his actions, it is necessary to examine the international situation that surrounded Hawaii during the mid-nineteenth century. One major issue that Wyllie and others in the Hawaiian government saw was maintaining its independence, and during this period, they saw the United States as a real threat. They were concerned with annexation. On 3 November 1849, Wyllie wrote, "Nevertheless, my opinion is that the tide of events rushes on to annexation to the United States."<sup>(10)</sup> Indeed, Wyllie had reasons to be concerned as there were voices in the United States and Hawaii that called for annexation and eventual statehood. For example, a newspaper in New York called the *Northern Journal* carried an editorial in May 1849 calling for such action. Furthermore, the developments in Texas and California provided examples to the Hawaiian government of what American settlers were capable of conduct-

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(8) *Ibid.*, p. 4.

(9) *Twenty Critical Years*, p. 69.

(10) Ralph S. Kuykendall, *The Hawaiian Kingdom: 1778-1854, Foundation and Transformation* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1938), p. 383.

<sup>(11)</sup> ing. Also, there was a group of Americans in Hawaii (who were foreigners) that strongly favored annexation for economic reasons, meaning they wanted duty-free access to the American market. In fact, a British consul <sup>(12)</sup> general to Hawaii William Miller wrote, "I do think the tide of Emigration, now setting so strongly Westwards from the United States, will extend to these Islands, & in the course of time thereby endanger their free action, especially as the Western Settlers cannot, at all times, be controlled either by the Local Authorities, or their own Government."<sup>(13)</sup> It is apparent that those living on the islands clearly felt the American influence and saw that annexation was a strong possibility.<sup>(14)</sup>

Thus, when King Kamehameha IV came to the throne in 1855, the issue of autonomy and security remained as one of the major concerns for the Hawaiian government. It was evident that annexation was supported by both the owners of the sugar industry and those Americans who were driven by the so called "manifest destiny" and their supporters in Hawaii.<sup>(15)</sup> In other words, there were economic (capitalism) and ideological (imperialism) reasons for annexation.

Another diplomatic problem that Hawaii faced was with France. The Hawaiian government had wanted to revise its 1846 treaty with France, because it included clauses for extraterritoriality and unchangeable tariff. The Hawaiian government saw these clause as shackles that prevented Hawaii to act freely as a nation-state.<sup>(16)</sup>

To address these foreign relations issues, immediately upon coming to the throne, King Kamehameha IV developed a foreign policy with his cabinet that contained three major objectives. They were 1) to resolve the annexation crisis, a reciprocity treaty would be formed with the United

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(11) Ibid., pp. 383-384.

(12) Ibid., p. 397.

(13) Miller to Addington, 2 Sept. 1847, British Public Record Office, Foreign Office [hereafter cited as FO] 58/56. Quoted in Ibid. p. 384.

(14) For a full discussion the issue of Hawaiian annexation by the United States, see Ibid. Chapter XIX.

(15) *Twenty Critical Years*, pp. 33, 37.

(16) Ibid., pp. 47-48.

States; 2) revise the existing unequal treaty with France with an equal treaty; and 3) form a tripartite or quadripartite treaty with Great Britain, France, the United States, and possibly with Russia that would guarantee autonomy and security of Hawaii<sup>(17)</sup>. Unfortunately, during the 1850's these objectives were not met, and the concern over Hawaii's autonomy lingered on. In 1857 Wyllie stated, "If we be left to struggle for political life, under our own weakness and inability to keep up an adequate military and naval force, in the natural courses of things, the Islands must sooner or later be engulfed into the Great American Union, in which case, in time of war, the United States would be able to sweep the whole Northern Pacific."<sup>(18)</sup> The Hawaiian government's aim to secure independence through identical equal treaties with all nations proved to be a difficult task.

The 1860's would see changes in Hawaiian leadership. King Kamehameha IV died on 30 November 1863 and Wyllie on 19 October 1865. Their successors, King Kamehameha V and Charles de Varigny,<sup>(19)</sup> were quite familiar with the various issues that Hawaii faced including those in foreign affairs---security and autonomy. They saw that the independence of Hawaii had to be protected, especially from American imperialism. In fact, prior to the reign of Kamehameha V, Varigny, Wyllie and Synge were in communication with each other, and they agreed that only the United States and Americans in Hawaii posed a threat to the independence of Hawaii.<sup>(20)</sup> Also, another issue that carried over from the 1850's was the relationship between economic prosperity and political autonomy, meaning that security and autonomy for the islands rested on its economic strength. This became a pressing issue from the late 1850's as the sugar industry developed into one

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(17) *Ibid.*, p. 38.

(18) Wyllie to Admiral Thomas, 4 Nov. 1857. Quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 54.

(19) Varigny was a Frenchman residing in Hawaii since 1855 as the secretary to the French consul commissioner. From March 1862, he would become the acting consul. In 1865, he succeeded Wyllie as the Hawaiian foreign minister. *Ibid.*, p. 197.

(20) William W.F. Synge was an Irishman married to an American who stayed in Hawaii as British commissioner/consul general from 1862-1865. *Ibid.*, p. 197.

of Hawaii's major industries.

In 1859, Hawaii exported more than 1.8 million pounds of sugar, and it was well on its way of becoming a multimillion-dollar industry.<sup>(21)</sup> This industry however faced a serious labor shortage problem. In fact, when censuses were taken in 1860, 1866 and 1872, the population of Hawaii was on a steady decline, from 69,800 in 1860 to 56,897 in 1872. The trend would have been detrimental to the sugar growers, for without laborers the industry clearly could not expand. There were discussions on this problem among both the government and private sectors, and various suggestions were brought forth, including bringing people in from the Pacific islands and Malaysia. In the final analysis, the Hawaiian government decided to recruit in Hong Kong, and in 1865, 522 Chinese came to Hawaii as laborers.<sup>(22)</sup>

It was in this domestic and global framework that Wyllie pursued a treaty with Japan. Indeed, the economic factor played an important role when the Hawaiian government sought to establish a relationship with Japan not only from a perspective of opening a new market for its goods but also from the perspective of securing labor. Although Wyllie was not successful in securing a treaty with Japan in 1860, it appears that he never abandoned hope and gave it a second attempt in 1865. During this attempt, the Hawaiian government had hope the treaty would secure three objectives: "(1) it would expand the scope of Hawaii's foreign relations; (2) it would open a new market for Hawaii's products; and (3) it might open a new source from which to obtain laborers for the plantations."<sup>(23)</sup>

To carry on the negotiation with the Japanese government, King Kamehameha V appointed an American businessman Eugene M. Van Reed as Hawaii's consul general in Japan on 7 April 1865. Van Reed would be in Hawaii for three weeks during early 1866 to meet with government officials

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(21) *Ibid.*, pp. 140-141.

(22) Among the 522 Chinese, 95 were women and 3 were children. *Ibid.*, pp. 178-182.

(23) *Ibid.*, pp. 233-234.

and return to Japan. He would negotiate with the shogunal officials from fall 1866 to winter 1867.<sup>(24)</sup> Apparently Wyllie's successor, Varigny was pleased with Van Reed's work and appropriated \$1,925 to him in March 1868 so that laborers could be placed under contract for service in Hawaii. Van Reed had indeed made progress in dealing with the Japanese government, and the bakufu was ready to sign a treaty similar to the one it had formed with Italy. At this crucial moment, Van Reed had no choice but to inform the bakufu that he was not able to sign the treaty, because he had not yet received official notice from King Kamehameha V giving him to power to conclude the treaty. This was not Van Reed's fault as he asked for such correspondence in fall 1866. The document was sent in January 1867 but was lost. The document giving Van Reed full power to sign the treaty reached him in late summer 1867, and he informed the bakufu on 26 September 1867 that he was prepared for the signing. On 20 October 1867, Van Reed received a correspondence from the bakufu indicating that it did not see him fit to sign the treaty. The reason given was that he was also carrying on commercial activities in Japan, and that the Japanese government would deal only with full-time diplomats.

Thus the treaty signing hit a snag. Quickly, Van Reed asked a fellow American General Robert V. Van Valkenburgh, who was the United States minister to Japan, to step in. Varigny did not see problems with Van Valkenburgh's involvement and commissioned him on 7 December 1867 for the purpose of signing the treaty for the Hawaiian government. Everything appeared in order.<sup>(25)</sup>

Things did not unfold as Van Reed and Varigny had expected. Van Valkenburgh refused to sign the treaty. It has been suggested that Van Valkenburgh's refusal came from his "growing dislike of Van Reed," and "a feeling that such a treaty would be disadvantageous to the United States."<sup>(26)</sup>

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(24) *Ibid.*, p. 234.

(25) *Japanese Frontier*, pp. 15-18.

(26) *Ibid.*, p. 18.

Clearly, in 1867, the political climate between Hawaii and the United States was rather cool, because the Congress did not confirm the reciprocity treaty that was ratified by the Hawaiian government. Whatever the reason Van Valkenburgh avoided the treaty and left Japan in November 1869 without ever revisiting the matter. The excuse Van Valkenburgh gave Varigny was that due to the political turmoil in Japan the treaty issue could not be presented to the Japanese government.<sup>(27)</sup>

Would the Meiji government have been receptive to the treaty if it was presented by Van Valkenburgh? The answer appears to be no, and this position was firmly established by the summer of 1868 as the Meiji leadership saw no benefit in this treaty.<sup>(28)</sup> In fact on 29 July 1868, British consul Mitford was informed by the Meiji government that it had no intention of signing a treaty with the Hawaiian government, but did not wish to harm the “free intercourse between the people of two countries, and did not wish to close Japan to respectable men of whatever nation.”<sup>(29)</sup> The concern for the Japanese government was what jurisdiction would Hawaiian subjects be under should they come to Japan without a treaty between two nations. Mitford suggested that the King of Hawaii make an arrangement with one of the nations that already had a treaty with Japan, and let Hawaiian subjects fall under the jurisdiction of that nation. Under such arrangement, Mitford pointed out that the Japanese government would not be obliged to any nation, and the King of Hawaii could simply provide protection to the Japanese subjects.<sup>(30)</sup>

The Hawaiian-Japanese treaty was derailed by Van Valkenburgh from the perspective of the Hawaiian government, but Van Reed pushed forth to secure laborers for the sugar industry. He would work with several

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(27) Ibid., p.19. This is partly true as the Tokugawa regime was replaced by the Meiji government in January 1868. The Meiji leaders however would quickly establish control of Japan and were addressing diplomatic issues promptly.

(28) Mitford to Parkes, 25 June 1868; Mitford to Parkes, 1 July 1868, FO 262/157.

(29) Mitford to Parkes, 1 July 1868, FO 262/157.

(30) Ibid.

Japanese recruiters in Yokohama, but the main figures were Kimura Hanbei, Yonezō and Kumehachi. According to the agreement formed in April of 1868 between Van Reed and these men, they were to contract 350 men as laborers for three years service at four dollars per month including medical attention and to receive ten dollars in advance. Van Reed also obtained 350 passports from the Tokugawa bakufu (of which 170 would be returned), and for passage to Hawaii, he chartered a British vessel *Scioto*.<sup>(31)</sup>

Again, all appeared to be in order, but like the treaty negotiation, unexpected surprises awaited Van Reed. The Meiji revolution was in full swing by April 1868, and on 9 May, the Meiji officials took over the administration of Yokohama. *Scioto* was prepared to sail for Hawaii on 10 May, but with recent development, Van Reed decided to exchange the 180 Tokugawa passports for new Meiji passports.<sup>(32)</sup> A common interpretation is that Van Reed received a stunning response at this time. His request was denied, because there was no treaty between Hawaii and Japan. Van Reed at first pleaded with the Meiji officials, but finally threaten that *Scioto* would depart. Meiji officials decided to issue the passports if one of the treaty nations would act at Van Reed's guarantor, but he balked at this suggestion. Finally, on 17 May 1868, *Scioto* set sail for Honolulu without passports from the Meiji government.<sup>(33)</sup>

British consul at Kanagawa Fletcher, however, paints a slightly different picture. He states that the Governor of Kanagawa under the Tokugawa regime gave his approval for the departure of Japanese without giving it much thought, and he did not make any inquiry on the travel arrangements or working conditions. When the governor was informed that Van Reed might be involved in coolie trade, he withdrew his approval.<sup>(34)</sup> The person who brought this to the governor's attention was British minister plenipotentiary

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(31) *Japanese Frontier*, pp. 21-22.

(32) Van Reed had actually requested for 350 passports from the Meiji government.

(33) *Japanese Frontier*, pp. 23-24.

(34) Fletcher to Parkes, 12 June 1868, FO 46/94.

to Japan Harry Parkes.<sup>(35)</sup> A few days later, when the Meiji officials took over the administration of Kanagawa, they agreed that the Japanese should be prohibited from leaving.<sup>(36)</sup> True, the Meiji officials were willing to allow the Japanese to leave if Van Reed could find a treaty power to guarantee their return to Japan after their term of service had expired. Van Reed did approach Harry Parkes to serve as his guarantor, but Parkes refused. Parkes wrote, "...I declined to engage Her Majesty's Government in any responsibility of this nature."<sup>(37)</sup>

Van Reed's action was severely attacked in Japan. Meiji officials indicated that 1) treaty did not exist between Hawaii and Japan; 2) no passports were issued, meaning that the Japanese abroad *Scioto* departed illegally; and 3) the vessel *Scioto* did not receive clearance from the Japanese government to set sail. Also, Van Valkenburgh joined the attack and accused Van Reed of engaging in actions similar to the Chinese coolie trade, which was outlawed in the United States in 1862. Van Valkenburgh also indicated that he was not able to prevent the departure of *Scioto*, because this was a British vessel.<sup>(38)</sup> Following Van Valkenburgh's argument, if Van Reed was guilty of coolie trade, so were the British as *Scioto* was a British vessel.

Did the Japanese on *Scioto* depart illegally from Yokohama? The answer is yes regardless of Van Reed's arguments,<sup>(39)</sup> because the Meiji government had legitimacy, and this government did not issue new passports to the Japanese abroad *Scioto*. Did Van Reed engage in coolie trade, and did *Scioto* depart without proper clearance? The answer is no, because as the contract between Van Reed and the Japanese recruiters illustrates, the employment of Japanese took the form of contract laborers. Furthermore, in April 1868, the British consulate at Yokohama took proper

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(35) Parkes to Lord Stanley, 12 June 1868, FO 46/94.

(36) Fletcher to Parkes, 12 June 1868, FO 46/94.

(37) Parkes to Lord Stanley, 12 June 1868, FO 46/94.

(38) *Ibid.*, pp. 24-25.

(39) *Ibid.*

measures to inspect *Scioto* once it learned Van Reed had chartered the vessel for transporting Japanese to Hawaii.

Apparently, the British consul Fletcher informed Van Reed that the vessel had to comply with British regulations, because the *Scioto* was registered under the British flag. On 6 May, Van Reed wrote to Fletcher, "I shall be most happy to comply with all sanitary regulations you may require in the case of the 'Scioto' carrying the Japanese passengers to Honolulu, and to give you all aid in the furtherance of the object in view."<sup>(40)</sup> To confirm if proper measures were taken to make *Scioto* fit for transporting people, Fletcher wrote to William McDonald, surveyor for Lloyd's Agent, the following:

It has been brought to my knowledge that the British Ship *Scioto* is engaged to convey about 350 Japanese emigrants to Honolulu. In such case it is particularly desirable that the ship be carefully surveyed in order to ascertain that there is sufficient proper accommodation for so many passengers, and also to see that the sanitary arrangements, supply of fresh water, provisions, medical stores, anti-scorbutics, etc, etc, required for a passenger ship in such a case as this, are adequate for the number of passengers and the probable length of the voyage.

I have therefore to request you to make a careful and minute survey in regard to the several matters referred to above, and also as to any others which you may know to be important, and to report thereon to me as soon as possible in order that the departure of the Ship may not be unnecessarily delayed.<sup>(41)</sup>

McDonald heeded to Fletcher's request rather quickly and indicated

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(40) Van Reed to Fletcher, 6 May 1868. FO 46/94.

(41) L. Fletcher to McDonald, 11 May 1868. FO 46/94.

that *Scioto* was a solid vessel with necessary provisions to make the voyage. McDonald was detailed in his inspection and reported that there was 8,000 gallons of "good sweet water" which was enough for 48 days at gallon per day per person. Furthermore, besides meeting the medical needs which included a surgeon, McDonald found that *Scioto* carried rice and salted vegetables for the Japanese passengers. McDonald concluded his report with the following sentence: "I consider the ship to be fully found in every way to carry 350 Japanese from this port to the Sandwich Islands and that every attention is being made to their comfort."<sup>(42)</sup>

Van Reed appears to have willing to accommodate the British as much as possible, for when the departure of *Scioto* was delayed, the vessel's Captain Reagan believing that being confined for eleven days was too much for the Japanese passengers demanded that they be taken off. This occurred on 16 May (day before the vessel's departure), when Van Reed was prepared to send *Scioto* off without obtaining the proper papers from the Japanese officials. This cost Van Reed 31 laborers and the *Scioto* departed with 149 passengers. It appears that Van Reed did not hold the captain accounted for losing these men.<sup>(43)</sup>

From the British perspective, it appears that there were no reasons to hold *Scioto* from departing. British consul Fletcher indicated that the Japanese authorities did not raise any objection at any time to the consulate, and that Captain Reagan received his clearance from the Custom House without any difficulties. This clearance along with the names of passengers were presented at the consulate first, and then proper British papers were issued for the vessel. Fletcher pointed out that although the exact relationship between Van Reed and the Japanese passengers was not clear, there were no reasons to suspect that their departure was involuntary. Thus Fletcher saw that his major concern "...was to see that the vessel should be in every respect suitable for carrying the intended number of

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(42) McDonald to H.B.M. Consul, Kanagawa, 16 May 1868, FO 46/94.

(43) *Japanese Frontier*, p. 27.

passengers---keeping in view the Chinese Passenger Act in this respect.<sup>(44)</sup> As already discussed, Fletcher received a favorable report from McDonald who inspected the vessel. Thus, Fletcher stated that he had "...no reason to suspect fraud or violence to have been practised in the collection or embarkation of the passengers, or that there was anything connected with the transaction, as far as I could judge, to give it the character of slavery or traffic in coolie labor in the worst sense of the word,<sup>(45)</sup>...."

There could be no doubt that Van Reed was at fault when he allowed 149 Japanese to leave without passports from the Meiji government. Nevertheless, the attacks he received from the Japanese press and Van Valkenburgh accusing him of dealing in slave or coolie trade appears to be somewhat harsh. With *Scioto* fitted for 350 passengers but carrying only 149, food supply (included items such as *miso* and soy sauce) and space must have been adequate. Once in Hawaii, the Japanese did receive a pleasant<sup>(46)</sup> welcome.

Van Reed's problems would continue in Japan as attacks on him persisted, the Meiji government demanded the return of Japanese, and the treaty went nowhere. Van Reed would not remain idle during this period, for he would work on the Meiji government to send an official to Hawaii to investigate the conditions of Japanese passengers. Perhaps, unknown to Van Reed, the British officials in Japan began to take interest in various matters that stemmed from Van Reed and gave their views to the Meiji government.

Concerning the dispatch of Japanese laborers to Hawaii, a British consul A. Bertram Mitlford wrote,

I took the opportunity this afternoon of talking to the Prince of Uwajima upon the subject of the scheme of Mr. Van

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(44) Fletcher to Parkes, 12 June 1868, FO 46/94. Parkes also told Van Reed to be certain "...that the comfort and health of the passengers were properly considered, in case they should be shipped in an English vessel." Parkes to Lord Stanley, 12 June 1868, FO 46/94.

(45) Ibid.

(46) *Japanese Frontier*, pp. 27-28.

Reed, an American Merchant at Yokohama, for transporting Japanese Emigrants to the Sandwich Islands. I pointed out to the Prince how ill Japan could spare the labour of peasants who are doubly valuable to a Country where so large a proportion of the population is too proud to work.....

The Prince thanked me for the information, which I told him was communicated by your desire [Harry Parks], and he said that orders should be given to the authorities at Yokohama not to allow the Emigrations of labourers.<sup>(47)</sup>

At around the same time, Van Valkenburgh informed the Parkes that the US law prohibiting coolie trade in China would be applied in Japan, and Van Valkenburgh placed such notice in an English-language newspaper at Yokohama.<sup>(48)</sup> Perhaps, Van Valkenburgh's intention was to inform Parkes that Van Reed might be arrested for his activities, which would in turn bring into question the involvement of *Scioto*.<sup>(49)</sup>

Parkes was an influential minister who was respected by many foreign diplomats. He would in fact take on the role as the leader of the foreign diplomatic corps in Japan. He was also in close communication with Meiji officials at the highest offices. Thus by the time Van Valkenburgh sent his correspondence to Parkes, he was well informed about the *Scioto* incident and was obtaining facts from the Japanese government. Parkes was not quick to label Van Reed's action was one of coolie trade. Parkes had contacted the Meiji government several times by early June concerning the departure of Japanese laborers to Hawaii and asked for the Meiji government's understanding of the terms of their engagement. Furthermore, as Parkes knew that this was the first time the Japanese government had dealt with such issue, he suggested that if "emigration should be sanctioned by the

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(47) Mitford to Parkes, 28 May 1868, FO262/256.

(48) Van Valkenburgh to Parkes, 2 June 1868, FO 46/94.

(49) Van Reed was truly concerned, and he did apply for Hawaiian citizenship and took his name off from the registry at the US consulate. *Japanese Frontier*, p. 25.

Japanese Government care should be taken by the latter to protect the interests of the emigrants by careful supervision of the contracts made with the emigrants and of the mode of conducting the emigration.”<sup>(50)</sup> Here, Parkes was clearly informing the Japanese officials that emigration had to be under Japanese government supervision. Furthermore, Parkes provided these officials with a copy of a Convention of March 1866 between China, England and France that dealt with emigration in China. Parkes stressed the involvement of these governments over the welfare of Chinese emigrants.<sup>(51)</sup>

Parkes also responded to Van Valkenburgh’s letter and stated that should emigration become active, it was the duty of the Japanese government to not only enforce strict supervision but also to maintain control of the conditions and mode of emigration.<sup>(52)</sup> It appears that Parkes was indicating to Van Valkenburgh that applying the United States’s anti-coolie law was fine, but in the final analysis, the Japanese government had to look after the welfare of its emigrants. There was, however, a suggestion by Fletcher that the treatments of Japanese laborers in Hawaii should be investigated, and if the findings were unsatisfactory, he recommended that the act for the regulation of Chinese passenger ships also be applied to Japan.<sup>(53)</sup>

The treatment of the Japanese passengers abroad *Scioto* was fine, and they also received a warm welcome in Honolulu when they arrived on 19 June. Captain Reagan suggested to the Board of Immigration that the Japanese receive few days rest as the voyage was long and exhausting. Thus the new arrivals attended a reception, were presented new clothes, and took a tour of Honolulu before they were shipped to various sugar cane plantations.<sup>(54)</sup>

Agricultural work at these plantations was demanding, but the working

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(50) Parkes to Higashi Kuze Chiiyo and Hizen Jijiu, 10 June 1868, FO 46/94.

(51) Ibid.

(52) Parkes to Van Valkenburgh, 10 June 1868, FO 46/94.

(53) Fletcher to Parkers, 12 June 1868, FO 46/94.

(54) *Japanese Frontier*, pp. 26-27.

conditions, including rules and regulations, varied from one plantation to the next. Soon, complaints were heard at the Board of Immigration from both the planters and laborers. The initial complaints were lodged by the owners who wanted to board to be responsible for the laborers who were sick or unable to work. The Japanese laborers complained about the working conditions and their pay, which resulted in discussions over their contracts. Within a month of their arrival, all parties were involved in a contractual dispute. Clearly, the importation of Japanese laborers did not work well, and board decided to abandon this venture. A letter was sent to Van Reed stating that it was “...undesirable to receive any more Japanese laborers at the present time.”<sup>(55)</sup> Thus the emigration of Japanese laborers to Hawaii was plugged at both ends--the Meiji government was not going to allow any more of its subject to depart and the Hawaiian Board of Immigration had no desire to continue recruiting in Japan.

It would appear that the “*Scioto* incident” reached a conclusion, and undoubtedly the Hawaiian government would have wanted to put this affair behind them. From the Japanese government’s position, there was much more at hand. Reports that came into Japan on the treatment and conditions of the laborers were exaggerated and negative.<sup>(56)</sup> Furthermore, the Japanese government had insisted from the very beginning that the laborers left Japan illegally and demanded their return. From the Meiji government’s perspective, it had no choice but to follow-up on this affair as this would leave a sour mark on its diplomatic record if left unattended. In other words, this newly formed government had to prove to the international community that it was capable of handling crisis in foreign affairs. For the Meiji government, it was a matter of saving face.

To settle the “*Scioto* incident,” the Meiji government decided to send its officials to Hawaii and to discuss the matter with the Hawaiian government

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(55) Ibid., pp. 29-31; Phillips to Van Reed, 4 December 1868, FO Letter Book 48, p. 53. Quoted in Ibid, p. 31.

(56) Ibid., p. 30.

directly.<sup>(57)</sup> Ueno Kagenori was selected as the head of this mission, and his main purpose was to bring the “*Scioto* incident” to a close. He was accompanied by Miwa Hoichi whose purpose was to discuss the treaty issue.<sup>(58)</sup> The Meiji government informed the American and British ministers concerning this mission and asked that they contact their counterparts in Hawaii to provide Ueno and Miwa assistance if necessary. In a letter to Parkes, the Meiji officials indicated that they saw departure of Japanese on *Scioto* to be illegal and their situation was similar to that of slaves. These officials stated that they were fully aware that contract made between Van Reed and the Japanese laborers had been violated many times, and the Japanese “suffered great hardships from the oppressive labour they were put to.”<sup>(59)</sup>

Parkes responded favorably and quickly, and despatched a letter to Major James Hay Wodehouse, who was the British commissioner and consul general to Hawaii. Parkes outlined the Meiji government’s reasoning for the mission and informed Wodehouse that Ueno would have a letter of introduction from him. Thus Parkes asked that Wodehouse provide Ueno with proper assistance. Parkes informed Wodehouse that he should not interfere with Ueno’s mission and should provide assistance only when he was asked to do so. As for degree of assistance, Parkes stated the Wodehouse had to judge for himself. Parkes took a personal interest in this mission as he ended his correspondence by requesting that he be furnished with any information pertaining to Ueno’s mission.<sup>(60)</sup>

Ueno’s mission arrived in Honolulu via San Francisco on 28 December 1870. Discussion between Ueno and the newly appointed Hawaiian Foreign Minister Charles C. Harris started on the 31 December, and the purpose of these talks were well known to the foreign representatives in Hawaii. On 3

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(57) This measure was recommended by Van Valkenburgh. Sawa and Terashima to Parkes, 19 October 1869, FO 262/492.

(58) Wodehouse to Lord Clarendon, 3 January 1870, FO 331/16.

(59) Sawa and Terashima to Parkes, 19 October 1869, FO 262/492.

(60) Ibid.

January 1870, Wodehouse wrote to Earl of Clarendon (British foreign minister) that Ueno's assignment was to settle the matters surrounding the Japanese emigrants who arrived in 1868, and Miwa had plenary power to negotiate a treaty with Hawaii. Furthermore, Wodehouse indicated his willingness to aid the Japanese mission if asked. Indeed, Wodehouse and his <sup>(61)</sup>American counterpart Henry A. Pierce would play an important part in the negotiation between Ueno and Harris.

A major stumbling block came at the meeting held on 12 January when the phrase "if said men so desire" was introduced. Concerning the return of the Japanese laborers, Harris wanted to state that the Hawaiian government would return the laborers to Japan only if they wished to do so. His argument was that the Hawaiian government could not force anyone to leave the country against one's will. Ueno disagreed, since Van Reed <sup>(62)</sup>promised these laborers they would be returned to Japan when their contracts expired. Ueno insisted that the Harris adhere to this promise, <sup>(63)</sup>meaning that the laborers would not have a choice over this matter.

Wodehouse and Pierce were invited to the meeting on the 12th. When the discussion over the phrase "if the said men desire so" appeared to hit a deadlock, the Japanese mission requested a feedback, preferably approving their position, from Wodehouse and Pierce. It was Wodehouse who wrote a <sup>(64)</sup>statement that was satisfactory to both Ueno and Harris. The statements issued by them took the following form:

Department of Foreign Affairs  
Honolulu, January 11th, 1870

On the part of His Majesty's Government, I do hereby

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(61) Wodehouse to Earl of Clarendon, 3 January 1870, FO 331/16; *Japanese Frontier* p. 36.

(62) *Japanese Frontier*, p. 38.

(63) Wodehouse to Earl of Clarendon, 9 February 1870, FO 58/119.

(64) *Ibid.*

agree that the Japanese Laborers, who are now in this Country, under contract dated 1st day, 4th month, Keio 4th, Yokohama (Japan); and who may remain in this Country, after the departure of the number now agreed upon to be received by His Imperial Japanese Majesty's Ambassadors or their Agents, shall, at the expiration of their agreed term of service, be returned to Yokohama. The expense of their transportation to Yokohama to be borne by the Hawaiian Government.

I further agree that, in case any persons, who from illness or any other unforeseen causes, shall be unable to embark at the time when their companions do, the Hawaiian Government will properly care for them, and shall ultimately send them forward, at the expense of the said Government. And H.H.M's Government will duly communicate to the Japanese Government the causes which may have prevented such persons from embarking with their companions.

Chas C. Harris

H.H.M's Minister of Foreign Affairs

Honolulu, January 11, 1870

It is perfectly understood that the promise, on the part of the Hawaiian government to return to Yokohama the Japanese laborers remaining in this Country until the expiration of their time of Service, is limited by the General Law of all Nations, and of this Country, by the fact that should any desire to remain, the Hawaiian Government has no authority to compel them to go.

Wooyeno Kantoe no Kami [Ueno Kagenori]  
His Imperial Japanese Majesty's Special  
Ambassador to the Hawaiian Islands<sup>(65)</sup>

Ueno's mission to Hawaii was a success. The "*Scioto* incident" was brought to a close,<sup>(66)</sup> and he found forty laborers who requested immediate return home. He also was able to tour various plantations on the island of Oahu and was pleased find decent working condition for the Japanese laborers.<sup>(67)</sup> Furthermore, he got the Hawaiian government to provide additional protection over the Japanese laborers who decided to stay.<sup>(68)</sup>

The second part of the Japanese mission to Hawaii concerned a treaty. It is clear that the Meiji government had a change in heart from several months earlier, as it was now prepared to examine the possibility of a treaty seriously. Ueno and Miwa made their intentions known very early. In their first communication to the Hawaii government and in their address to King Kamehameha during the reception, they used the following expression: "... it is the desire and purpose of the Government of Japan to live in terms of friendship and good neighborhood with the Hawaiian Nation, and to the end will be pleased to entertain Treaty relations between the two nations."<sup>(69)</sup> However, it was made clear to the Hawaii government that Ueno and Miwa had the authority to set the terms of treaty, but had no authority to sign a treaty. Harris understood that the treaty had to be ratified by the Japanese government, but remained optimistic as Ueno and Miwa were certain that it would be. During this negotiation, the earlier treaty (one handled by Van Reed/Van Valkenburgh) that was identical to the Japanese-Italian treaty

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(65) Harris, 11 January 1870; Wooyeno, 11 January 1870, FO 58/119.

(66) In 1871, when the contracts for the laborers was about to expire, 19 decided to return home, 37 decided to remain and 36 expressed interest in relocating to the United States. *Japanese Frontier*, pp. 39, 43.

(67) Wooyeno to Harris, 19 January 1870, FO 331/40.

(68) *Japanese Frontier*, p.39.

(69) Harris to Parkes, 9 March 1870, FO 58/119.

was dropped. Harris found the treaty written by Ueno, Miwa and himself to be much more simpler.<sup>(70)</sup> Harris had no difficulties with the treaty to be signed in Japan and knew that Van Reed would not be acceptable to the Meiji government as King Kamehameha's representative. Furthermore, Harris appeared to have been reluctant to ask assistance from the United States. The person Harris approached to be the king's representative and was prepared to commission him for the purpose of signing the treaty was the British minister Harry Parkes. Harris understood the influence of Parkes in Japan.<sup>(71)</sup>

Harris lost no time. Even before receiving a response from Parkes as to whether he would accept the proposition, Harris sent him 1) an official letter from King Kamehameha appointing and commissioning him envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary; 2) copy of a letter from the king to emperor of Japan stating a desire to form a treaty and that Parkes had been commissioned for that purpose;<sup>(72)</sup> and 3) a draft of the treaty. Few days later, Parkes received "...a Blank Ratification of whatsoever Treaty..." that could be signed by him.<sup>(73)</sup>

Parkes was willing to take on this assignment, but saw several problems. One, he found that powers commissioned to him was general and that he would need an instrument from the king for the specific purpose of concluding a treaty. Two, he was not certain if the Japanese government would accept him as representative of the Hawaiian government. Three, he would need approval from the London government. On the second point, Parkes indicated that the Meiji government "...invariably demanded that the Power contracting with them should be represented in Japan by a Diplomatic Agent of its own, or by the minister of a friendly state, and

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(70) Ibid.

(71) Harris to Wodehouse, 12 March 1870, FO 58/119.

(72) Harris to Parkes, 9 March 1870, FO 58/119.

(73) Kamehameha V to All Who Shall See These...Greeting; Kamehameha to Emperor of Japan, 9 March 1870; Treaty Draft, FO 262/202.

(74) Harris to Parkes, 12 March 1870, FO 262/202.

(75) Parkes to Harris, 4 May 1870, FO 262/204.

should provide full & complete exercise of civil & criminal jurisdiction over all its subject in Japan.”<sup>(76)</sup>

These issues were addressed promptly. It appears that Harris prepared papers accrediting Parkes the necessary power to conclude a treaty. Parkes discussed his pending role with the Meiji government and was informed that he would be accepted as plenipotentiary of the Hawaiian government. And, Parkes despatched a letter to the London government to obtain its approval. Furthermore, Parkes had reviewed the draft of the treaty, and found Article 4 to be ambiguous and recommended that it be replaced with the commonly used most favored nation clause.<sup>(77)</sup>

On 20 May 1870, Lord Clarendon of the British Foreign Office sent a letter to Parkes stating that the British government sees:

... serious objections to one of Her Majesty's Representatives in an Eastern Country being called upon to act in the capacity of negotiator of a Treaty for a foreign Power; and I shall accordingly instruct Her Majesty's Commissioner to inform the Government of the Sandwich Islands that Her Majesty's Government regret that they are precluded by their recognized practice from empowering you to carry out the proposed negotiation, but that you will be authorized to afford your good offices to any properly accredited Envoy who may be sent for the purpose from the Sandwich Islands, .....

This decision was a blow to the Hawaiian government. Harris saw that if Parkes's services could not be secured, the Hawaiian government would have no choice but to ask the United States to represent Hawaii. Harris

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(76) Ibid.

(77) Parkes to Wodehouse, 4 May 1870, FO 331/26; Clarendon to Wodehouse, 6 May 1870, FO 58/119.

(78) Parkes to Harris, 4 May 1870, FO 262/204.

(79) Parkes to Granville, 4 May 1870, FO 262/187.

(80) Clarendon to Parkes, 20 May 1870, FO 262/184.

wanted to avoid this as much as possible, because he wanted to illustrate to the Japanese government that the statement made by the United States minister to Japan De Long was incorrect. De Long stated that the Hawaiian islands were under the protection of the United States.<sup>(81)</sup> Thus from the summer of 1870 right up to the signing of the treaty in August of 1871, Harris would send a number of correspondences to various British officials requesting that Parkes be allowed to represent the Hawaiian government. In fact, all of the papers that Harris sent to Parkes appears to have been kept at the British consulate until August 1871.<sup>(82)</sup>

The Hawaiian government reached a conclusion that it could no longer hope for a change in position by the British government concerning Parkes and decided to approach a nation it had been avoiding--the United States. On 13 August, the British consulate in Japan was informed that De Long had received "...Full Power to negotiate to conclude a Treaty with Japan on the part of the Hawaiian Govt."<sup>(83)</sup> The Treaty of Friendship and Commerce Between the Kingdom of Hawaii and the Empire of Japan was signed on 19 August 1871 at Tokyo, Japan.

It was truly a long and winding road with full of ups and downs before the treaty was signed between Japan and Hawaii. Who would have guessed that Van Reed would create such a turmoil in Japan, and that the "*Scioto* incident" would result in a treaty. The events experienced by Japan and Hawaii illustrates much more than a lesson in treaty making. Despite being relative newcomers to a period of intense global contacts, these two nations understood that the nineteenth-century world was dominated by western imperialism, and to survive in this atmosphere, they knew that western mechanism had to be employed. In terms of diplomacy, one of the key instruments was the treaty system.

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(81) Wodehouse to Clarendon, 22 July 1870, FO 58/119.

(82) Van Reed to Adams, 1 August 1871, FO 262/220.

(83) Adams to De Long, 14 August 1871, FO 262/220.

There were various reasons why Hawaii wanted a treaty with Japan, and why Japan initially rejected the idea. Regardless of the reasons, both nations displayed to powerful nations looming over them that they understood the workings of a treaty. Through a treaty with Japan, Hawaii had not only hoped to show its national flag globally, but also wanted to curb the sentiment of those who wished for annexation by the United States. Thus in this respect, the Hawaiian government did not ask for the United States's assistance until the last moment. From the Japanese government's perspective, this treaty was an outcome of saving face internationally. In this process, Meiji officials illustrated they understood what the treaty system entailed.

What this diplomatic history between Japan and Hawaii depicts also is the position of Great Britain during the nineteenth century. Indeed, Britain played a major role in this diplomacy, as its officials in Japan advised the Meiji government from the onset. Furthermore, it could be stated with some confidence that Van Reed was not arrested for coolie trade due to the proper steps taken by the British consulate regarding the vessel *Scioto*, and at the critical moment during the treaty negotiation at Honolulu, it was the British consul general who proposed a compromise. Finally, there was Parkes who would have had the treaty signed a year earlier had it not been for the objection by his home government. He found pitfalls in the arrangements presented by the Hawaiian government and took steps to correct them, including Article 4 of the treaty. In its final form, Article 4 of the treaty was changed.<sup>(84)</sup>

(University of Michigan-Flint)

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(84) Treaty Draft, FO 262/202; *Japanese Frontier*, p. 146.

## 西欧帝国主義のさなかで —19世紀後半における日・布（ハワイ）関係—

ロイ S. ハナシロ

19世紀後半、世界は西欧の帝国主義に囲い込まれていた。この展開に対する反応は国家によって様々であり、時として諸国は協調して帝国主義に立ち向かったのである。本稿の事例においては、アジアの一国である日本と太平洋上のハワイ王国が長期永続的な関係を形成しようとしていた。本論文はこの二国間で締結された1871年の日本ハワイ修好通商条約へ導いていった諸段階に焦点をあてることによって、19世紀後半における日布関係を明らかにするものである。その過程の中でロバート・ウイリー（ハワイの外務大臣）、ユージン・ヴァン・リード（在日ハワイ総領事）、ハリー・パークス（駐日英国全権大使）および日本政府の役割を検証する。本稿ではまた、この時期にハワイが直面していた経済的および国際的環境の見地からこの条約について検討する。そこでは、以下の疑問点を取り上げることによって、Scioto号事件と条約締結との関係を分析している。

- 1) Scioto号の日本人は不法に出国したのか。
- 2) ヴァン・リードは日本人入夫貿易に従事していたのか。
- 3) Scioto号は正式な許可なしに日本を出港したのか。

さらに駐日英国全権大使のかかわりについては、ハリー・パークスが、いかにして、また何故にハワイ政府から1871年の条約調印において顕著な役割を演じることを依頼されたのかについて明らかにしている。

（ミシガン大学フリント校）