

# The Chinese Civilizational “Threat” and White Supremacy Construction in Hawaii before Annexation

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**ABSTRACT:** Though Americans had been considering annexing Hawaii since as early as 1851, Hawaii’s conglomerate racial composition was always a hindrance. Obviously aware of Americans’ apprehension, Hawaiian whites, or haoles, took much care to construct themselves as the indisputably dominant race in the islands. One means to that end was inventing and heroically confronting a civilizational threat from the Chinese, the biggest group of foreigners in Hawaii from the 1876 reciprocity treaty to the mid-1890s. In so doing, haoles managed to show that whites could and did overcome formidable obstacles to achieve a flourishing of their race and institutions in the island nation. This maneuver debunked anti-annexation Americans’ logic and concurred with American annexationists’ emphasis on Hawaii’s whiteness and its precariousness in the final stage of annexation debates. It was therefore one part of the Hawaii-U.S. cross-border effort at incorporating the former into the latter.

**KEYWORDS:** Hawaii; Chinese immigration; Annexation; Civilization; White supremacy.

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**RESUMEN:** La “amenaza” de la civilización china y la construcción de la supremacía blanca en Hawái antes de la anexión.— Aunque los estadounidenses habían estado considerando la anexión de Hawái desde 1851, la composición del conglomerado racial de Hawái siempre fue un obstáculo. Obviamente conscientes de la aprensión de los estadounidenses, los blancos hawaianos, o *haoles*, se preocuparon mucho por construirse como la raza indiscutiblemente dominante en las islas. Un medio para ese fin fue inventar y confrontar heroicamente la amenaza civilizatoria de los chinos, el mayor grupo de extranjeros en Hawái desde el tratado de reciprocidad de 1876 hasta mediados de la década de 1890. Al hacerlo, los *haoles* lograron demostrar que los blancos podían superar obstáculos formidables para lograr el florecimiento de su raza e instituciones en la nación insular. Esta maniobra desacreditó la lógica de los estadounidenses contra la anexión y coincidió con el énfasis de los anexionistas estadounidenses en la blancura de Hawái y su precariedad en la etapa final de los debates sobre la anexión. Por lo tanto, era una parte del esfuerzo transfronterizo entre Hawái y Estados Unidos para la incorporación del primero al segundo.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Hawái; Inmigración china; Anexión; Civilización; Supremacía blanca.

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Lying almost halfway between the North American and Asian continents, Hawaii is the hub of trans-Pacific interactions. Americans realized its strategic importance as early as the late eighteenth century. It first served as their way station for Asia trade, then a bastion of religious expansion overseas after American missionaries arrived in 1820 (Pletcher, 2001, pp. 21-23; Davidson, 2009, p. 37). With Americans' steadily increasing presence and interests in the islands, the U.S. government appointed a consul at Honolulu in the same year. Its official interest in Hawaii dramatically intensified after America expanded into the Pacific coast in the 1840s. To deter other powers like Britain, France, and Germany from coveting the islands, the United States not only dispatched navy ships but proclaimed the Tyler Doctrine in 1842, which vowed to maintain American dominance in Hawaii and stop any country from annexing it. American influence received a decisive boost when Hawaii granted the United States exclusive rights to Pearl Harbor in 1887. America finally annexed the islands in 1898, partly because of the fancied Japanese threat to Hawaiian independence and the need to protect the newly acquired Philippine colony (Pletcher, 2001, pp. 23-24, 59).

Simultaneous with America's effort to keep Hawaii within its orbit, Hawaii's haoles, or whites mainly of American origin, were maneuvering in the same direction. As a matter of fact, "annexation by a foreign power seemed imminent" in Hawaii as early as the 1840s, and "annexationists, from the beginning, were to be found among the Americans in Hawaii" (Banner, 2007, p. 151; Johnson, 1995, p. 97). To ensure that the power should be America, haoles westernized Hawaiians' consumption by introducing American merchandise, controlled their economy by dominating the sugar industry since the 1850s, and replaced native beliefs with American values. Taking advantage of their position as advisers to the royal government, haoles also induced the latter to Americanize Hawaiian society in land distribution, education, and other aspects. They greatly curbed natives' political power in the Bayonet Constitution of 1887 before overthrowing the monarchy and establishing an America-leaning provisional government in 1893. Eventually, they realized the dream of making Hawaii a part of the United States in 1898 (Johnson, 1995, pp. 79-111; McKeown, 2001, p. 225; Schulz, 2017, pp. 31-32, 37-38, 57-59).

However, the road to annexation was not smooth. Even though Americans had contemplated absorbing Hawaii in

1851 (Love, 2004, p. 97), they were slow to reach a consensus on the strategic necessity of annexation. In addition, many of them had grave misgivings about Hawaii's racial conglomeration, because haoles never amounted to more than 10% of the entire local population before 1900, with Native Hawaiians, Portuguese, and Asians boasting far bigger percentages (Glick, 1980, Appendix). Americans had always desired their nation to be homogeneously white, avoiding the taking of territories densely populated by allegedly inassimilable non-white races. The theory that whites could only settle and prosper in temperate areas seemed to further prove that Hawaii could not accommodate a dominant white race and was therefore not suitable for annexation (Love, 2004, pp. xii-xiii, 18-24, 116-58; Basson, 2008).

Acutely aware of American concerns, haoles had to prove that whites could and did dominate Hawaii amid formidable challenges. One challenge that repeatedly appeared in haole politicians' communications with the U.S. government was "the creeping Asian hordes" (Love, 2004, pp. 115-16, 135-37). In the late nineteenth century, the "hordes" were actually Chinese and Japanese immigrants. Japanese arrived in significant numbers after Hawaii signed a treaty with Japan to encourage immigration in 1885. Japan's status as "a rapidly and self-consciously modernizing state...a 'great power,'" along with its readiness to assert "the rights of its citizens abroad," prevented haoles from flagrantly contemning Japanese immigrants. They did fear Japanese, but because the latter were "*not* [italics original]" inferior. The most-favored-nation clause regarding Japanese laborers' "privileges" in bilateral treaties served as an additional restraint on any haole attempt at maltreating Japanese (Love, 2004, pp. 134, 145; Jung, 2006, pp. 68-72, 78-84; Nimmo, 2001, pp. 8-10, 23-28).

The large-scale Chinese immigration started in 1876 when America promised to import Hawaii's sugar duty-free in a reciprocity treaty. Chinese came to meet sugar planters' increasing demand for labor. Hawaii did try to import European workers as a substitute. But except Portuguese, most of them left shortly. So did Pacific Islanders (Char, 1975, pp. 59-60; Beechert, 1985, pp. 20, 63-65, 86-90). It was Chinese who remained to become the largest group of foreigners until Japanese outnumbered them in the mid-1890s, as Table 1 shows.

Native Hawaiians were indeed the largest group among all races. But their population was declining rapid-

TABLE 1. Population of the Hawaiian Islands by Racial and Ethnic Groups: 1853-1970. Source: Glick, 1980, Appendix.

Group	1878 (Percentage of Total)	1884 (Percentage of Total)	1890 (Percentage of Total)	1896 (Percentage of Total)	1900 (Percentage of Total)
Hawaiian	44,088 (76)	40,014 (49.7)	34,436 (38.2)	31,019 (28.4)	29,799 (19.3)
Chinese	6,045 (10.4)	18,254 (22.6)	16,752 (18.6)	21,616 (19.8)	25,767 (16.7)
Japanese		116 (0.1)	12,610 (14.0)	24,407 (22.3)	61,111 (39.7)
Portuguese	486 (0.8)	9,967 (12.3)	12,719 (14.1)	15,191 (13.9)	18,272 (11.9)
Haoles	3,262 (5.7)	6,612 (8.3)	6,220 (6.9)	7,247 (6.7)	8,547 (5.4)

ly. To haoles as to whites in every settler society, indigenous people were “inevitably disappearing,” both literally and culturally (Kauanui, 2008, p. 18). They therefore constituted no serious threat. But Chinese were different. Not only were they coming in a steady stream, they carried with them an age-old culture. That is why they were not only feared and hated by working-class haoles as competitors for jobs but by the entire haole community as a challenger to its cultural dominance in Hawaii. That Chinese did not enjoy the protection of a powerful home state or a bilateral treaty in the way that Japanese did, coupled with the stereotypical image of China and Chinese as backward and conservative, freed haoles from any hesitancy in contemning and discriminating against them.

However, scholars studying Chinese in Hawaii only note haoles’ alertness against Chinese rivalry in workplaces. For example, Clarence E. Glick (1980, pp. 5, 8, 11-16) writes that “the relatively small Caucasian population” accused Chinese of staging unfair competition with white artisans and tradesmen outside plantations. This compromised the “security of Caucasians.” Also addressing haoles’ hatred of Chinese competition is Tin-Yuke Char (1975, p. 61). He attributes the hostility to Chinese “acumen in turning to gainful occupations other than plantation labor” as well as their “numbers” and “disproportionate male dominance.” Adam McKeown (2001, pp. 228-231) echoes that haoles resented the presence of Chinese because of the latter’s “economic competition or moral influence.”

Yet besides or even underneath the haole vigilance against Chinese competition for jobs was a deeper fear, the fear of a Chinese civilizational onslaught. This fear stemmed from haoles’ conviction that Hawaii should be dominantly American in culture. In the nineteenth century, being American meant being Anglo-American white. Hence haoles’ attempt at keeping Hawaii under American influence was actually a scheme to promote the supremacy of Anglo-American whites and their values and institutions. This effort well illustrates Steve Martinot’s “machinery of whiteness” theory. According to Martinot (2010, pp. 11-30), whites often thrust non-whites down to “subordinate levels in a dehumanizing process.” They would invent a non-white threat and criminalize it while de-criminalizing themselves. By doing this, whites define themselves as pure, “virtuous, civilized, law-abiding, secure, and superior.” The final result is the consolidation of “white society, white culture, and whiteness itself” as an “inherent” rather than an imposed social norm. Not only did haoles follow these steps to reinforce the supremacy of Anglo-American whiteness, they also used the chance to convince the white community both in Hawaii and America that Hawaii was and could remain white.

I therefore argue that haoles’ condemnation of the Chinese civilizational threat, by proving white supremacy in Hawaii, was a discursive campaign to dispel Americans’ apprehensions over annexation. While only lower-class haoles loathed Chinese rivalry for jobs, generally all haoles, including the sugar planters who needed and imported Chinese labor, despised Chinese in the sense

of civilization. That is why this essay does not attempt to differentiate between the attitudes of haole subgroups. On the Chinese side, those laborers who left plantations and competed with haole workers, especially in Honolulu, were naturally the root cause of haole indignation (Takaki, 1998, p. 147; Beechert, 1985, p. 145). But haoles did not make a distinction between competitors and other Chinese when castigating Chinese from the civilizational perspective. Instead, they took the entire Chinese community to task for the menace that they felt.

In order to illustrate my point, I will mainly cite evidence from three English-language haole newspapers published between the 1876 reciprocity treaty and Hawaiian annexation in 1898: the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, the *Hawaiian Gazette*, and the *Daily Bulletin* (*Advertiser*, *Gazette*, and *Bulletin* hereafter). They are noteworthy because they exerted a “dominant influence upon the history of Hawaii” by actively promoting “American culture and values” and championing Hawaii’s annexation to the United States (Chapin, 2000, pp. 15, 39, 48, 84-85; Chapin, 1996, pp. 2-3, 53-54; “About the Pacific”; “About the Hawaiian”; “About the Daily”). I will first comb through their archives for comments and reports on Chinese immigration. I will then find out the theme that runs through those pieces. A content analysis would follow, which would look into the tones, figures of speech, images, and implications embodied by keywords and sentences. After thus unearthing the in-depth meanings of the sources, I will position them in the context of American expansion into the Pacific in the late nineteenth century to reveal the larger significance of haoles’ condemnation of Chinese. What follows is the finding that I have made in the process.

## CHINESENESS AS THE ANTITHESIS OF CIVILIZATION

To reinforce their position as the indisputably dominant group, haoles lost no opportunity to de-civilize Chinese immigrants, the largest group of non-whites since 1876. This impressive Chinese presence threatened haoles’ claim to supremacy in the islands. To foreground the “danger,” they cast Chinese as uncivilized hordes by playing up the contrast between Chineseness and their own Anglo-American civilization. Without defining Chineseness in any systematic way, haoles just labeled whatever Chinese did and believed in as abnormalities from their own behaviors and beliefs. To them, these differences not simply marked off Chinese as a peculiar people but symbolized Chinese inferiority and lack of civilization.

One “uncivilized” trait of Chinese was their alleged obstinacy, which vaporized their zeal to get “civilized” in the haole way while encouraging them to stick to age-old traditions. To some censors, this proclivity was simply habitual and self-evident. An article in the *Advertiser* of August 30, 1879, charged the Chinese with having “no thought of conforming to our customs or laws.” Instead, he was devoted to “himself and to his race in antagonism to the rules which govern enlightened society.” He thus lacked “moral

character, liberality, charity, pride of country” as well as other qualifications that could make him a good citizen. Because of the “incalculable injury to the interests” of Hawaii, people should resist “the influx of this immoral, polygamous, opium eating scourge” (N.O.M., 1879, p. 4).<sup>1</sup> On December 2, 1887, the haole-dominated Committee on Foreign Relations submitted a report to the Legislative Assembly. Explaining why Hawaii must regulate and control Chinese immigration, the document declared that Chinese did not “easily assimilate.” They were outside “the influence of the civilization which now dominates the country” and were therefore not “desirable for Hawaii,” concluded the report (“The Legislative Assembly,” 1887, p. 11).<sup>2</sup>

Other prejudiced voices attributed Chinese “obstinacy” to their national vanity. On June 10, 1876, a person under the name of “H.” wrote to the *Advertiser*, denying that the Chinese could ever become “a citizen in the true sense of the word, of any country” other than “his Celestial Empire.” He could “never feel patriotism for any country outside of China.” It was based on this assumption that the letter called Chinese “a curse to any and every civilized country” (H., 1876, p. 4).<sup>3</sup> The *Advertiser* repeated the accusation on January 4, 1879. Viewing the Chinese as not “susceptible of Christian civilization,” it held his “national egoism and exclusive training” accountable. The “average Mongolian” could neither understand nor appreciate “the Christian religion in its broad sense, as taught by its Divine founder.” He “never changes; once a Chinaman, always a Chinaman,” the *Advertiser* declared. This alleged stubbornness turned the Chinese into “a moral and material blight” wherever he went outside China (“This Little Kingdom,” 1879, p. 2).<sup>4</sup>

In 1888, two Chinese repudiations of haole prejudice backfired, provoking another condemnation of Chinese egoism. In a letter to the *Bulletin* on September 25, S. H. Chun Sing, an elite Chinese in Honolulu, scolded haoles for depriving Native Hawaiians and Chinese of their “political rights.” Tom Dow, a merchant who would become the treasurer of the Chinese Y.M.C.A. in December, wrote to the same paper, rejecting Anglo-American customs and habits as “inferior and mean” and unworthy of Chinese adoption (“A Letter from a Chinaman,” 1888, p. 1; “Mr. Tom Dow,” 1888, p. 2; “Tom Dow’s,” 1888, p. 1).<sup>5</sup> These remarks incurred the wrath of a haole named Reef Orme. In his letter that the *Bulletin* carried on October 30, Orme denounced Sing’s and Dow’s words as “flings at Caucasian civilization.” He accused the “Celestials” of being “so well satisfied with Chinese habits and customs.” However, Orme continued, Chinese “self-conceit and affected superiority” had never retarded the progress of “the enlightened world.” Rather, they had “arrayed other intelligent nations” against China (Orme, 1888, p. 1).<sup>6</sup>

Equally noticeable was certain haole intellectuals’ attempt to explain Chinese “intransigence” ethnologically. The social scientist M. M. Scott was one example. An immigrant from California in the early 1880s, Scott was a well-known educator in Hawaii. Sanford B. Dole, once the president of the Hawaiian Republic and the first governor of the U.S. Territory of Hawaii, remembered him as

“a very useful man, very public spirited, very quiet unselfish and...blameless” (“Tribute,” 1921, pp. 228-229). Yet even such a highly acclaimed haole was not immune to racial prejudice. In January 1889, the *Advertiser* carried a scholarly paper that Scott read before the Honolulu Social Science Association. He stated resolutely that much like a donkey unable to “come forward again a horse,” Chinese could not adopt “our civilization” and become “like us.” Their “channels” of development, unidentified but “entirely different” from Western ones, destined them to fail. “The internal economy of the Chinaman” also differed from “that of the white man,” the accusation continued. Chinese organs might be “anatomically” identical but must be “functionally...profoundly different.” That was why Chinese had “no assimilative tendency,” Scott argued. No matter how skillfully he adopted “some of our less important tools and machines,” a Chinese could never become “anything else than a Chinaman.” He might ask for “the white man’s wages,” but would have “none” of the latter’s civilization, concluded the paper (“Thoughts on the Chinese Question,” 1889, p. 2).<sup>7</sup>

Yet in fact, Chinese never refused assimilation into Anglo-American civilization. Learning from haoles both in and outside schools constituted one important part of their life in Hawaii. In the petition to the haole-controlled Provisional Government on May 17, 1894, “nearly four hundred Chinese residents” in Honolulu declared that having lived alongside Anglo-Americans “so long commercially, financially and socially,” the Chinese community had “learned your language, manners and customs” (“The Councils in Session,” 1894, p. 1).<sup>8</sup> Goo Kim Fui, the Chinese Commercial Agent in Hawaii for many years, echoed that Chinese, both old and young, had “responded to all calls of the educational and religious missionaries.” He added that to “the workers amongst the Americans for higher civilization,” older Chinese had offered their “heartiest co-operation” while the young and children, their “enthusiastic and earnest and constant attention” (“Chinese to Stay,” 1898, p. 2).<sup>9</sup>

Chinese assimilability even won some haoles’ acknowledgment, which directly contradicted the general denigration of Chinese. One example was Alfred S. Hartwell, an American lawyer and Civil War veteran who served as a cabinet member and supreme court judge in Hawaii beginning in 1868. In the *Advertiser* of January 5, 1895, he contended that if “trained in English-speaking schools,” Hawaiian-born Chinese could “illustrate most happily the effect of [Hawaii’s] national institutions upon inherited tendencies” (Hartwell, 1895, p. 1).<sup>10</sup> In a paper read before the Social Science Club in Honolulu in April 1897, Dr. G. P. Andrews buttressed this belief by reporting a “most interesting and cheering” discovery at Chinese “schools and kindergartens.” That is, if properly instructed, Chinese could become “intelligent, educated and probably patriotic.” What judgmental haoles needed to do was break down “the walls of prejudice and exclusiveness” against Chinese in “the grand sentiment of the American Constitution, ‘All men are born free and equal,’ in Hawaii nei” (“Race Mingling,” 1897, p. 6).<sup>11</sup>

But for the purpose of highlighting the stark contrast between their civilized state and the uncivilized one of the more numerous Chinese, more haoles ignored these signs of Chinese assimilability. Not only did they find fault with Chinese ability to assimilate, they even saw “evidences” of Chinese savagery in daily habits. “Subpar” subsistence was one detail that haoles cited to reinforce the stereotype. Chas. B. Patterson (1885, p. 2), a house painter in Honolulu, did just this in a letter to the *Bulletin* on October 2, 1885. He accused Chinese of living in “filth and pestilence,” huddling together “like so many sheep,” disregarding Hawaii’s “sanitary laws,” and spending “five or ten cents” on rice each day. But that money was hardly enough for a Christian’s decent, civilized life, Patterson professed. It could not “pay for one day’s support, for a Christian family,” not to mention other necessities of “a Christian life.”<sup>12</sup> On September 6, 1888, “E.” (1888, p. 2) wrote the *Advertiser* to reemphasize spending as the sign of civilization. He held that haoles needed money to sustain churches, libraries, lyceums, and “all the appurtenances of civilization.” The daily expense of a Chinese “will not suitably maintain an Anglo-Saxon.” E. therefore charged Chinese immigrants with dragging Hawaiian civilization “below a certain standard” and crippling its “indefinite development.” The islands faced the danger of being “paganized by a deluge of Chinamen,” he announced arbitrarily.<sup>13</sup>

W. A. Kinney was another who denounced Chinese cheapness as a mark of barbarianism. Born of immigrant parents from Maine, Kinney was an attorney and politician in Hawaii. He participated in the drafting of the 1887 Constitution, which greatly strengthened the haole oligarchy’s control over Hawaiian politics and drastically undermined royal powers. He was one of the three Hawaiian representatives who signed the annexation treaty with the United States in 1898. Back on October 22, 1889, his letter to the *Gazette* called the Chinese “a barbarian” because he worked “cheap.” The American, “ten times as much as a man,” must demand more to keep himself above “the level of the homeless street herds of China.” “Human progress shows itself in a fall of prices and a rise of wages,” Kinney asserted, instigating other haoles to resist Chinese immigration “for the sake of republicanism and civilization.” Otherwise, their “political and social future” in Hawaii would suffer “such a fate as swallowed up Roman civilization” (Kinney, 1889, p. 6).<sup>14</sup> It is no surprise that lower-class Chinese always economized. That would be the case with people of any race who were trying to earn a living. That Kinney and other critical haoles described frugality as a uniquely Chinese trait only indicates their intention to dramatize the disparity between Chineseness and Anglo-American civilization.

Insincerity was also taken as a demonstration of alleged Chinese barbarity. On November 12, 1884, “A Farmer” (1884, p. 2) wrote to the *Bulletin*, mentioning Chinese “deception” in land deals to showcase their lack of “civility.” In his narration, Chinese took up lands “at a high rental,” put in “a crop of rice,” and finally sold the lease to other Chinese “at an advance.” Each successive

land holder repeated the process while the original proprietor pretended to have placed his kin in charge. In so doing, the Chinese managed to evade “the ‘not transferable’ clause,” reaping profits “out of high-priced land” instead of “the actual production of the soil.” Not viewing the practice as a mere commercial irregularity, the “farmer” considered it a sign of the “uncivilized” nature of Chinese. No “white man, whose habits of life were formed by Western civilization,” could hope to “succeed under the same conditions,” he said. Chinese “deception” was thus “a barrier to the country’s progress.”<sup>15</sup>

Haoles emphasized Chinese resort to crooked practices too when condemning Chinese “insincerity.” An epistolary exchange that the *Advertiser* carried in 1888 well illustrated this accusation. On May 18, a Chinese named Sam Shue wrote to the paper, demanding people to avoid singling out “the heathen Chinese” when criticizing “ways that are dark and tricks that are vain.” Shue denied that Chinese business was “any more secret” than other people’s dealings. This statement infuriated some haoles. “Justice” was one of them. Writing the *Advertiser* on May 19, he refuted Shue’s conclusion as “unqualifiedly false.” Just because of Chinese immigrants’ “dark and devious ways,” few people would be willing to support that “childlike and bland” contingent,” he declared affirmatively (“Sam Shue,” 1888, p. 2; “Justice,” 1888, p. 2).<sup>16</sup> “V.” (1888, p. 2) denounced the alleged bribing habit of Chinese. In a letter to the *Gazette* of September 25, he called bribery “eminently the Chinese method” that turned Chinese into “a bad lot” both “politically and morally.” This was a “fact... recognized by every civilized government throughout the world,” V. assured the readership.<sup>17</sup>

What V. had in mind was a bribery charge that four native legislators faced in 1888. According to the allegation, they accepted Chinese money to kill an anti-Chinese amendment to the Constitution. The bill was indeed defeated, but there was no firm evidence to support the charge. In the Legislative Assembly hearings in September, witnesses either denied knowing the bribe or based their judgment on hearsay. For their part, the accused legislators denied receiving “anything... from the Chinese... to change vote.” S. H. Chun Sing, the leading Chinese in Honolulu, bolstered their innocence by challenging the investigating committee to substantiate any allegation with evidence (“The Legislative Assembly,” 1888a, p. 3; “The Legislative Assembly,” 1888b, p. 3; “A Letter from a Chinaman,” 1888, p. 1).<sup>18</sup>

By censuring whatever Chinese did and said from the civilizational perspective, haoles not only disregarded anything that contradicted their reasoning but portrayed Chinese as uncivilized. To them, Chineseness was the negation of Anglo-American civilization. Given their inherent “barbarian” nature and obstinacy with it, Chinese were believed to have no chance of being “civilized” in the haole way. While serving as a pressure on the Hawaiian government to restrict Chinese immigration, this maneuver degraded Chinese to highlight white superiority in Hawaii.

## CRIMINALIZING CHINESE IMMIGRANTS

As Chineseness was allegedly barbarian, the continuous arrival of Chinese naturally created a psychological ordeal for haoles. Not only did haoles cast Chinese as an inferior race, they also believed that unregulated Chinese immigration sounded the death knell for their civilization in Hawaii. Chinese were therefore held guilty of breaking the social norm and should be punished accordingly. Having triggered this alarm, Chinese appeared not simply uncivilized, but criminal.

Many haoles played on the trope of civilizational war to highlight Chinese criminality toward American influences in the islands. Some cautioned that Chineseness was already clashing with Anglo-American civilization in a contest to control Hawaii's future. A. Marques (1885, p. 4), who would later become the executive councilor of the pro-annexation Hawaiian government established in 1893, was such an alarmist. Writing to the *Gazette* on October 7, 1885, he reprehended Chinese for superseding all other races "rapidly." "No sensible man" should ignore such a life-and-death struggle that was to determine if "Western or... Asiatic influence" would dominate the islands, alerted Marques.<sup>19</sup> Another agitator, signed as J. E. (1888, pp. 2-3), agreed. He was even more theatrical in saying that the struggle between Chineseness and Anglo-American civilization had already reached the decisive stage. Either the "enterprising" and "progressive" Occident or the "backward" and "conservative" Orient "shall triumph" in the kingdom. There could be no compromise between the "diametrically opposite" Chinese and American "social customs," declared J. E.<sup>20</sup>

Hawaii, for its part, had to cautiously choose sides, urged haole voices. The *Bulletin* gave a reminder to this effect on November 18, 1885. It claimed that with the incessant arrival of Chinese immigrants, Hawaii faced the "great problem" of making a decision on whom to follow. If the nation chose Anglo-Americans, it was advocating "civilized institutions." But were it to follow the Chinese, it offered no "moral support to the institutions of civilization" ("Disturbing," 1885, p. 2).<sup>21</sup> The *Advertiser* of October 7, 1892, repeated the warning. It regarded Chinese immigration as an issue that concerned both Hawaii's "financial interests" and "position as a civilized State." If the nation did not want to become "an Asiatic colony," it "must not throw the doors wide to let the Chinese in," cautioned the paper ("The Labor Bill," 1892, p. 4).<sup>22</sup>

Haoles did not simply dwell on the Chinese "threat" in the general sense but devoted themselves to revealing specific ways in which that threat unraveled. One "discovery" was the quick Chinese "decimation" of the economic foundation of Hawaii's Anglo-American heritage. Though scholars have noted haole restrictionists' construction of Chinese as a financial menace, they did not go far enough to expose the civilizational anguish that those persons underwent due to the rivalry (Glick, pp. 5, 8, 11-16; Char, p. 61; McKeown, pp. 228-231).

To haoles, the thriving of Anglo-American civilization depended on the presence of a well-occupied and

well-fed civilized population. They accused Chinese of making that goal unreachable. In the above-cited letter, Orme warned that Chinese "inferior competition" for jobs damaged the interests of haole laborers, who observed "principles prevailing in... civilized countries." Hawaii was "on the threshold of an irrepressible conflict between a superior and an inferior civilization," the letter continued. In the end, "one or the other must give way." Totally agreeing to this analysis, another correspondent signed as G. called the perceived Chinese menace "a fact" that could "be regarded as a truism by the entire community" of Hawaiian residents (Orme, p. 1; "Another Point," 1888, p. 2).<sup>23</sup> "A large and representative gathering" of haoles in Honolulu reached the same conclusion on the evening of September 23, 1889. They charged that Chinese posed an "unnecessary danger and uncertainty" to Hawaii's Anglo-American heritage by encroaching on the occupations of people practicing "our own civilization" ("The Amendment," 1889, p. 3).<sup>24</sup>

Even when seeking ways to fend off the Chinese "challenge" in workplaces, what haoles had in mind was still the safety of their own civilization in the face of menacing Chinese. They thought of revoking the latter's trade licenses to force them back to plantations or to China. "Anglo-Saxon" (1885, p. 4) made this suggestion in a letter to the *Bulletin* on July 2, 1885. Intending to thus minimize the Chinese "peril," he prodded the Hawaiian government to "by all means attract and encourage civilized laborers" instead. Hawaii could then avoid being "run under by Asiatic preponderance of uncivilized barbarian hordes," believed "Anglo-Saxon."<sup>25</sup> But the government seemed to have not adopted this proposal. To the *Gazette* and the *Advertiser*, both of January 16, 1894, registering each Chinese could be a viable solution, because it would help locate the whereabouts of Chinese immigrants and drive them away from haoles' jobs. "Chinese competition with white labor" would then dissipate, with its "menace to European civilization" disappearing like "a cloud from the horizon," prophesied the papers ("The Immigration Laws," 1894a, p. 4; "The Immigration Laws," 1894, p. 4).<sup>26</sup> Though Chinese registration did not become law until annexation, demands for it spoke much about haoles' eagerness to win the civilization war.

At the same time, haoles characterized Chinese as saboteurs of the political basis of Anglo-American civilization in Hawaii. Adam McKeown (2001, p. 231) mentions their disdain for Chinese "inability" to understand and appreciate democracy. The newspapers did prove that but revealed more. Chinese were portrayed not only as strangers to Anglo-American politics but as a threat to its survival. In a letter carried by the *Bulletin* on December 11, 1888, Hartwell did not yet admit Chinese assimilability as he would in the above-cited letter of 1895. Instead, he believed that since Chinese were not "of our civilization," they could only subvert "free institutions," bringing forth "untold danger to the entire body politic" of Hawaii ("Reply to," 1888, p. 2).<sup>27</sup> On October 15, 1890, another Anglo-American resident, who signed himself as "Chinese Dragon" (1890, p. 3) to stress the abhorrence

of Chinese, warned that unchecked Chinese immigration could “swamp every civilized institution in the country.” Hawaii must take actions and “prevent any such great evil befalling the country.”<sup>28</sup> A petition that the Executive and Advisory Councils of the Hawaiian government received on January 18, 1894, delivered a similar admonishment. The document came from the American League, a racist haole organization devoted to promoting American interests and civilization in the islands. It straightforwardly defined the Chinese population as both “a menace to free labor and a frowning obstacle in the development of a Republican form of Government” (“Session of the Councils,” 1894, p. 5).<sup>29</sup>

Deemed as a “threat” to Anglo-American politics, Chinese naturally could not enjoy political rights. But they kept on demanding suffrage, which sparked more mockeries of their “barbarity.” In May 1894, nearly four hundred Chinese petitioned the President and the Provisional Government for the right to vote. Commenting on this action, the *Gazette* editorialized that suffrage belonged only to people who had “completely assimilated the ideas of the world of western freedom.” Chinese, judging from “everything which makes up the civilized man,” were “essentially aliens” and did not understand “our laws and civilization,” so they could not enjoy the franchise, averred the paper (“The Councils in Session,” 1894, p. 1; “With Us,” 1894, p. 4; “Chinese Citizenship,” 1894, p. 4).<sup>30</sup> On July 27, the *Gazette* reiterated that voters, besides sharing morality and ideals, must embrace “the same political hopes and aims.” Bringing “the Orient with him,” the Chinese was said to have made himself a political misfit in Hawaii. Were he to have suffrage, the nation’s “political community” would cease to be homogeneous, warned the paper. “Fundamentally,” the Chinese was “not excluded, but excludes himself” (“A Vain Attempt,” 1894, p. 4).<sup>31</sup>

Still, those Chinese who decided to remain did not stop striving for political equality with Anglo-Americans. Once they stabilized themselves economically in Honolulu and other areas “better” than plantations in the early twentieth century, especially after achieving “a stable population” with more women coming in, they established more “social and political associations for further assimilation.” In 1930, they had already won “recognition as a minority group” eligible to vote. Hawaii’s 1934 election saw 33 Chinese or part-Chinese seeking offices among a total of 256 candidates (Char, p. 119).

Anglo-American civilization is also heavily religious, with Christianity as one essential pillar. The un-Christian beliefs of most Chinese simply added to their destructiveness in the eyes of haoles. That is how they appeared to the white minister “Mr. Cruzan” (1882, p. 5) in his November 1882 sermon. Either Americans “must Christianize” Chinese, or Chinese would “heathenize these islands,” he warned. The *Advertiser* nodded its approval by saying that Cruzan represented “a great many persons.”<sup>32</sup> There were indeed echoes to this alarmism. For instance, the *Bulletin* of October 30, 1885, called Chineseness and

Christianity “two diametrically opposite elements in society,” with the former tending to ruin “everything better” than itself and the latter ready to promote “the best development of enlightened civilization.” Chinese immigration would therefore destroy Hawaii’s “respectable, industrious transplants from Christian nations” and cripple “every institution constituting... modern civilization,” alerted the paper (“The Great Competition,” 1885, p. 2).<sup>33</sup> D. M. Crowley, who operated a company in Honolulu, sounded similarly pessimistic when addressing a mass meeting on the “Mongolian question” in Wailuku on March 26, 1888. He praised Euro-American immigrants for planting “the seeds of Christian civilization” to “grace and gladden” cottages, but condemned Chinese “human locusts” for bringing forth nothing but an “avalanche of pagandom” (“Mass Meeting,” 1888, p. 2).<sup>34</sup>

Actually, for the purpose of highlighting the Chinese threat, haoles had intentionally overlooked Chinese readiness to convert. As a man signed as “B.” (1887, p. 2) wrote in the *Bulletin* of February 21, 1887, Christianity made “growing success” with the Chinese in Hawaii, “under conditions far more favorable than in China, or in any other country” to which Chinese had emigrated. “Large numbers” of Chinese converts proved that the mission among them did “not look much like a ‘hopeless task.’”<sup>35</sup> Even when denying Chinese susceptibility to “Christian civilization,” the *Advertiser* of January 4, 1879, duly acknowledged the existence of Chinese conversions. Though “extremely rare,” there were always “sincere converts to Christianity among Chinamen,” it “gladly” admitted (“This Little Kingdom”).<sup>36</sup>

Haoles were too convinced of Chinese ruinousness to allow any undermining of their alertness. On the one hand, they brushed aside lofty ideals when approaching Chinese immigration. In June 1888, the *Advertiser* and the *Gazette* denied that Chinese deserved justice. Though justice was “dear to the heart of an Anglo-Saxon,” haoles must abandon “all their love of fairness” in the face of the worsening Chinese “threat,” the papers stated (“The Chinese Question,” 1888a, p. 2; 1888b, p. 4).<sup>37</sup> Neither did haole voices consider humanitarianism applicable. For example, on September 29, 1885, the *Bulletin* alleged that since Chinese destroyed “everything that constitutes good society,” practicing “the humanitarian theory” on them could “more grossly” violate “the rights of society” than “any other process ever known in the history of man.” It challenged skeptics to take “a month’s sojourn” in the Chinatowns of either San Francisco or Honolulu. They would then throw into the dustbin “the biggest theory of humanitarian immigration ever constructed,” predicted the *Bulletin* (“Pauper Labor,” 1885, p. 2).<sup>38</sup> But the paper simply swallowed prevailing stereotypes without elaborating on how those Chinatowns violated “the rights of society.”

On the other, haoles would label sympathizers of Chinese as opponents of Anglo-American civilization. Sugar planters, who hired the most Chinese among white employers, desired continuous but regulated Chinese immigration. The Planters’ Labor and Supply Company, estab-

lished by Hawaii's largest planters in 1882 to coordinate labor recruitment, was the main advocate. When expressing its expectation, it mainly focused on the economics of Chinese laborers rather than their praiseworthy attributes. For example, a report read at a meeting on October 16, 1888, deemed China "the only country" that Hawaii could rely on as "a source of cheap labor." Yet it defined Chinese as "a shrewd clanny race" ("Planters' Labor," 1888, p. 2).<sup>39</sup> At the annual meeting of 1890, company secretary W. O. Smith demanded "sufficient numbers" of Chinese laborers to keep Hawaii's agriculture afloat. Meanwhile, he was much concerned that the nation might be "flooded with an irresponsible and uncontrollable class of Chinese" and become "a Chinese colony" ("The Planters in Council," 1890, p. 2).<sup>40</sup>

But such stances, with all their deep concern over Chinese destructiveness, appeared too weak against the Chinese threat to other haoles. They angrily scolded planters for sacrificing "Anglo-Saxon civilization" and their own "flesh and blood" in importing Chinese labor. Planters were ridiculed as "latter day saints," but the "eternal justice" that they tried to secure for Chinese allegedly harmed the "civilized community" of Hawaii (Hawaii Nei, 1888, 2; Altar Material, 1889, p. 2).<sup>41</sup> W. A. Kinney, the above-cited Anglo-American supremacist, was another critic of sugar planters. On August 16, 1889, he condemned their disregard for the Chinese "threat" to "western civilization." Planters should "make sacrifices...for patriotism" in the face of "a hostile civilization and religion," demanded Kinney ("The Problem of the Hour," 1889, p. 2; Kinney, 1889, p. 5).<sup>42</sup>

Ever since American missionaries and merchants established a domineering influence in Hawaii in the 1820s, the nation had been undergoing a steady process of Americanization. No other group and its civilization could hope to derail that course. But haoles insisted on depicting Chinese immigration as an unprovoked menace. In so doing, they successfully criminalized Chinese and established their own purity and innocence, which formed a crucial step toward confirming their dominance in Hawaii.

Aided by the political influence that haoles had accumulated over the years, the success continuously translated into laws restricting Chinese arrivals and the jobs that Chinese could take. The 1883 regulation, which should be the first Chinese restriction legislation, allowed 2400 Chinese to enter the nation yearly while the 1884 rule changed the quota to 25 per ship. A new act in 1888 permitted at most 300 Chinese to land in one quarter. Starting from 1890, Chinese were explicitly required to engage only in agricultural and domestic service jobs. Violators were subject to punishment in the form of deportation, fines, or imprisonment (McKeown, p. 34; "Foreign Office," 1886, p. 4; "An Act to Regulate," 1888, pp. 1-2; "An Act to Limit," 1888, p. 2; "An Act to Authorize," 1890, pp. 1-2; Chinese Bureau, 1893).<sup>43</sup> As a result of haoles' push to criminalize Chinese, these laws not only confirmed Chinese criminality and haole purity from the legal perspective but further lodged the impression in the public mind.

## HAOLENESS AS THE SOCIAL NORM

Whether degrading or criminalizing Chinese, haoles' purpose was the establishment and maintenance of their supremacy in Hawaii. Few things could more convincingly prove their superior status than other races' unanimous readiness to assimilate into Anglo-American civilization. This is actually what haoles stressed when commenting on the cultural proclivity of Japanese, Portuguese, and Native Hawaiians. By emphasizing their assumed assimilability, haoles not only further quarantined the Chinese threat but presented their Anglo-American civilization as the norm that everyone except Chinese willingly respected.

Japanese did not arrive in large numbers until Hawaii signed the Treaty of 1885 with Japan to encourage Japanese immigration as a substitute for Chinese laborers. For reasons elaborated earlier in the essay, haoles did not disparage them as they did Chinese. Instead, they emphasized Japanese assimilability as soon as Japanese landed on Hawaiian shores. For example, while reporting "the arrival of 948 Japanese" on April 22, 1885, the *Advertiser* praised them as "eminently desirable," "cleanly and industrious." Especially appealing was their eagerness to adopt Anglo-American ways. Upon their arrival, wrote the paper, Japanese "at once abandon their native costume for our western style of garment," which was something that "Chinamen, as a rule, on no pretense whatever will do" ("Hawaiian Affairs," 1885, p. 2).<sup>44</sup> In an article that both the *Advertiser* and the *Gazette* carried in September 1888, one "most prominent" planter considered Japanese "more free-handed," more "impressionable," and "more amenable to training in white men's ways" than Chinese. He hence advocated a "safe stoppage of further Chinese immigration" ("Constitutional Amendment," 1888, p. 2; "Interviews," 1888, p. 5).<sup>45</sup>

Just because of such perceived affinities with Japanese, haoles believed it necessary to tell them apart from Chinese. Characterizing Japanese as "a progressive nation" which had "adopted Western methods" in "almost" every main way, the *Advertiser* of July 16, 1885, refused to bracket them with "Chinese coolies." To avoid "misleading the public," it claimed that Japanese were even "in advance of Western nations" in "many" respects. Therefore, "at all events," they were not "Asiatics," contended the *Advertiser* ("Asiaticising," 1885, p. 2).<sup>46</sup> On August 7, 1888, a report adopted by the Legislative Assembly also refused to identify Japanese with Chinese. The former were "willing to adopt Western civilization," a feature that made them "radically different" from the latter, it went on to say. Such "facts" led the document to view Japanese as "the best partial substitute" for Chinese laborers ("Legislative Assembly," 1888, p. 2).<sup>47</sup>

However, with the Japanese population surging rapidly, Anglo-Americans began to get alarmed again. Ever frequent protests against undesirable working conditions and pays, work stoppages, and desertions greatly dampened their zeal to use Japanese as a substitute for Chinese (Barkan, 2007, p. 68). Adding to their concern were Japan's tough response to Hawaii's rejection of



Japanese immigrants in March 1897 and its subsequent dispatch of a warship to Honolulu, which aroused fears of an imminent Japanese military "invasion or coercion" and strengthened haoles' resolve to plead for "the security of U.S. annexation" (Johnson, pp. 142-143; Jung, p. 81). Still, even when expressing distrust of Japanese, haoles tended to focus on job rivalry rather than civilizational challenge, sidestepping the implication that Anglo-American civilization had lost appeal with that Asian group. They bemoaned that Japanese had proved "dangerous to the interests of free white labor" and would be "far more likely" to force away "white population" than Chinese ever did. Hence, "Chinese and Japanese alike *must be stopped* [italics original] from coming here any more" (Marques, 1888, p. 2; "Correspondence," 1889, p.3; "More," 1894, p. 4).<sup>48</sup>

Not only did haoles refuse to deny Japanese assimilability, they even held it accountable for their alleged threat. For example, in 1897, W. D. Alexander, President of the Board of Education in Hawaii, described the Japanese readiness to "learn new methods" as detrimental to haole interests. This trait, coupled with Japanese versatility, ingenuity, and tenacious allegiance to their "home government," made them "even more dangerous" than Chinese ("Labor Issue," 1902, p. 6).<sup>49</sup> This corroborates Moon-Kie Jung's (p. 82) aforementioned observation that haoles became vigilant against Japanese because they believed the latter to be the same civilized. Haoles therefore displayed the normality of their civilization even in their fears of Japanese.

Portuguese were another group that haoles cited to prove the undesirability of Chinese and the dominance of Anglo-American civilization. Hawaii introduced them also as an offset against Chinese laborers. Since their arrival in the 1870s, they quickly developed into the third-largest contingent of foreign workers, after Chinese and Japanese. Occupying an intermediary position on the hierarchy of plantation labor due to their European origin, Portuguese could hope to become field supervisors in ten to twenty years. But their papist rituals and non-Anglo-Saxon ancestry made them civilizational outsiders in Protestant Anglo-American-dominated Hawaii, depriving them of chances to get further promotion and enjoy full privileges as haoles (Andrade and Nishimura, 2011, pp. 81-86; Glick, Appendix).

Still, to inflate the normality of Anglo-American civilization, haoles were ready to highlight their cultural commonalities with Portuguese. For instance, a letter that the *Bulletin* carried on October 2, 1888, deliberately played down Portuguese immigrants' Catholicity while emphasizing their identity as Christians. Needless to say, it continued, "Christian Portuguese" were preferable to "heathen Chinese" and could solve the labor problem "to the satisfaction of all concerned" (Patriot, 1888, p. 2).<sup>50</sup> On November 27, another letter in the same paper stressed the Portuguese faith in some of the most boasted Anglo-American ideals: "popular government and personal rights, freedom of action and speech." This belief was useful to the "common cause" against "the 'Chinese

Curse,'" the correspondent promised (Bye and Bye, 1888, p. 2).<sup>51</sup>

Because of such shared traits, some haoles straightforwardly took Portuguese into their civilizational camp. They even counted on them to help defuse the Chinese "threat." In the *Gazette* of July 1, 1885, A. Marques (p. 3) included Portuguese in "those disagreeable Anglo-Teutonic devils" whom Chinese were allegedly driving out. To keep Hawaii "under the influence of Western civilization," haoles and Portuguese must join hands to expel the "pigtailed delegate of the Chinese Son of Heaven," declared Marques.<sup>52</sup> Donald McLennan, a physician in Honolulu, expressed a similar expectation in an interview on September 23, 1896. He believed that as members of "the civilised races," Portuguese must also be feeling "the push of the Mongolian horns." Haoles should enlist their help to reverse "the diminishing of the element making for civilization," McLennan stressed ("Talk," 1896, p. 1).<sup>53</sup>

However hard that haoles accentuated the Chinese "threat" to Portuguese, there were reports that contradicted their accusations. Portuguese laborers were indeed leaving plantations or even Hawaii, but not because of Chinese aggressiveness. On November 8, 1887, a letter to the *Bulletin* attributed Portuguese departures to the existence of "very little available fertile land" and the exorbitant price of what remained. Many drifted off to the coast where they could find "cheap homes, fertile lands and pleasant surroundings" (Hawaiian, 1887, p. 2).<sup>54</sup> The *Advertiser* echoed this interpretation in an editorial on November 21, 1888. It even blamed Portuguese themselves for refusing to settle on "small farms scattered over the country." They left the nation because of "idleness among that people" rather than "any Chinese competition," the paper believed ("We Publish," 1888, p. 3).<sup>55</sup>

Other haoles, though not so desperate to view Portuguese as already fully civilized, had confidence in making them so. In a letter that the *Gazette* published on November 26, 1889, Kinney argued that Portuguese immigration could help develop "a population of our own civilization here at the islands." Hawaii would then no longer need the Chinese laborer unless he "accepts our civilization," Kinney assured the readership. Addressing the American League on the evening of March 5, 1894, a speaker named Edward Towse echoed this sentiment by saying that "You can make an American out of a Portuguese, but never out of a Chinaman" (Kinney, 1889, p. 9; "League's Open Meeting," 1894, p. 5).<sup>56</sup> As to how one could reach that end, haole opinions put a special premium on education. At different moments in the late nineteenth century, both the *Gazette* and the *Advertiser* contended that if put "under the influence of our schools" and inculcated "with a knowledge of the English language," young Portuguese could get "thoroughly accustomed to the country and its habits" and become "excellent" citizens ("Editorial, 1888, p. 3; "More Anent," 1894, p. 4).<sup>57</sup>

Yet, no matter how accommodating such voices may sound, haoles had no intention to treat Portuguese as equals. They simply wished to create the impression that American ways held sway over Hawaii. In actual life,

haoles continued to deny Portuguese immigrants cultural and political equality. This situation at least lasted until 1940, when the Hawaiian census for the first time ever removed “the separate nationality or ethnic classification of Portuguese” and began categorizing them as Caucasians (Andrade and Nishimura, p. 84).

Native Hawaiians constituted the third non-haole group that haoles referred to while demonstrating the prevalence of Anglo-American civilization among non-Chinese residents in Hawaii. Ever since their settlement in the islands, haoles had been disappearing indigeneity. They first dramatically, albeit not necessarily intentionally, reduced the native population with the diseases that they carried over, then eroded natives’ political influence in a series of schemes, the most notorious being the one that undermined royal powers in 1887 and the one that overthrew the royal government in 1893. Haoles were also busy assimilating Native Hawaiians, as the essay has mentioned earlier. Judy Rohrer (2016, pp. 3-11; 2010, pp. 1-57) notes haoles’ obscuring of indigeneity in their effort to claim Hawaii as their own. Yet she fails to realize that they took this action not only to politically control Hawaii but to show the normality of Anglo-American civilization despite the perceived challenge from Chinese.

In the same way that they treated Japanese and Portuguese, haoles stressed Native Hawaiians’ assimilability. But like the other two groups, natives never completely gave up their inherent traits. As Jonathan Kay Kamakawiwo’ole Osorio (2002), Noenoe K. Silva (2004), and J. Kehaulani Kauanui (2018) demonstrate in their respective studies, natives adopted Christianity, the English language, and American institutions mainly in the hope of being accepted as civilized to avoid the fate of being colonized. Involved in efforts to preserve indigenous sovereignty, identity, and heritage were not only ordinary Native Hawaiians but Queen Lili’uokalani. When necessary, they would even resort to violence. The two failed coups led by Robert Wilcox, who was of ali’i ancestry, were the most telling examples. He first rebelled against the haole oligarchy in 1889 to reinstate the royal powers which the Constitution of 1887 had seriously weakened. Then in 1895, he headed another armed rebellion, this time against the annexationist Hawaiian Republic. He was later captured and only escaped the death penalty when his sentence was commuted.

But in order to create the fiction that only Chinese stayed outside the bounds of American civilization, haoles deliberately ignored Native Hawaiians’ defiance, portraying them instead as the same Americanized as haoles. For example, the *Gazette* claimed on December 18, 1888, that there existed “a line” between Chinese and “the Hawaiians and white foreigners” who shared Anglo-American values. Having acculturated, especially in their “religious and social practices and...fiscal economics,” Native Hawaiians “cordially accepted the white man’s partnership in the Government.” Hawaii must remain “a white man’s country” dominated by “the white man’s civilization,” concluded the paper (“Journalistic,” 1888, p. 2).<sup>58</sup>

Because they had supposedly adopted Anglo-Ameri-

can civilization, Native Hawaiians were said to face the same civilizational threat from Chinese that endangered haoles themselves. On January 15, 1879, a letter to the *Advertiser* singled out opium smoking as one “baleful” Chinese influence on Native Hawaiians. The *Gazette* of January 3, 1888, substantiated the charge with an imagined nightmarish scene, in which Chinese hushed both natives and haoles to “peace and repose” with their “Opium Band.” Hawaii was then “all in Celestial styles” (“To the Editor,” 1879, 4; “A Mariner’s,” 1888, p. 6).<sup>59</sup> Largely unjustified, such accusations still led the *Gazette* of March 4, 1890, to hold Chinese directly responsible for Native Hawaiians’ possibly bleak future. Because of them, “native Hawaiians and others of western civilization” were falling into desperation, the paper announced. “A speedy extinction...of Western civilization by that of the East” was impending (“Universal War,” 1890, p. 6).<sup>60</sup>

Facing the alleged Chinese threat, haoles gallantly assumed the role of warden of Native Hawaiians and their adopted civilization. They claimed that their forefathers had spent “labors” and “nearly a million dollars” on Christianizing and “civilizing” natives (“To the Editor”; “Labor and Population,” 1879, p. 3).<sup>61</sup> But Chinese immigration was poised to extinguish that spark of hope, haoles warned. So “any advocate of Christian civilization” must act to save “the Hawaiian race” in its “competition with the Mongolian.” They could press for Chinese restriction to stop the Chinese obliteration of “the result of the missionary effort of over sixty years...in an hour” and preserve “Western, that is, Christian civilization” among “the remnant of the Hawaiian people” (“The Chinese Question,” 1880, p. 3; “Another Point of View,” 1885, p. 2; “Chinese Restriction,” 1886, p. 2).<sup>62</sup>

To prove that Native Hawaiians were really concerned about the fate of American civilization, haole newspapers occasionally printed natives’ criticism of the alleged Chinese threat. One such critic was John W. Kalua, whom the U.S. Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to Hawaii John L. Stevens called “the ablest native lawyer in the islands...for annexation” in a letter to the U.S. Secretary of State John W. Foster on February 1, 1893 (*Papers*, 1893, p. 48). In the *Bulletin* of April 30, 1888, Kalua echoed haoles’ attack on Chinese when addressing a mass meeting on the “Mongolian question” in Wailuku. Besides charging Chinese with living cheaply, smoking opium, and “killing off our native people,” he vowed that he wished to “live amongst a clean people and in a progressive country,” injecting an obvious civilizational meaning into his call for Chinese restriction (“Mass Meeting,” 1888, p. 2).<sup>63</sup> At an event in September 1889, Kalua further accused Chinese of robbing Native Hawaiians of “what belongs to the people, what belonged to our forefathers.” They had no “traditions or training to fit them for our institutions,” but were “full fledged heathens” in this land of American civilization, he went on to say (“Native,” 1889, p. 4).<sup>64</sup>

Kalua might represent some Native Hawaiians, especially those favoring annexation to the United States, but did not symbolize the entire native population, not even its

majority. Many actually resisted Americanization, as the above-cited works of Osorio, Silva, and Kauanui testify. Nor was Chinese relationship with Native Hawaiians so dreadful as haoles generally depicted. In October 1889, R. A. Macfie, a plantation manager at Kilauea, Kauai, contended in a letter to the *Gazette* that those Chinese who married native women “make good husbands, treat their wives well, and take good care of them.” He did not believe that they were more immoral than “single white men” (“A Planter’s,” 1889, p. 6).<sup>65</sup> Chinese themselves refuted malicious slander too. For instance, Tom Dow of Honolulu wrote to the *Bulletin* on October 1, 1888, straightforwardly pointing out that “it is not the Chinaman, but the haole that is thrusting the native Hawaiian aside in his own country.” Chinese, for their part, could “always live friendly together” with Native Hawaiians. Many married Hawaiian wives while “nearly everyone of us” could speak the native language, Dow said (“Mr. Tom Dow,” 1888, p. 3).<sup>66</sup>

It is obvious that haoles intentionally amplified Chinese civilizational confrontation with all the three major non-Chinese, non-haole groups. In so doing, they produced the impression that Anglo-American civilization could and did overwhelm every race except Chinese in this tropical kingdom. Hawaii was thus already white in civilization, with American values and institutions serving as the accepted norm. Chinese constituted a challenge, but as they were under increasingly stringent restriction, did not affect the overall picture, so the logic goes. Of course, there were other non-haoles like Filipinos and Puerto Ricans. Yet their size was too small to attract haoles’ attention in the late nineteenth century.

### AMERICANS AS ONE TARGET AUDIENCE

By degrading and criminalizing Chinese as well as exhibiting the popularity of their civilization, haoles succeeded in presenting themselves as the predominant group in Hawaii. They referred to the Chinese threat in the process not only to pressure the Hawaiian government to restrict Chinese immigration but equally or even more importantly, to nourish a pro-American, pro-annexation atmosphere by demonstrating a concern for American worries on the issue of annexation. As stated earlier in the essay, Americans expected their country to be white. To achieve that end, they ostracized non-whites domestically while remaining cautious on taking territories mainly populated by non-white races. No doubt aware of these apprehensions, haoles took much care to turn their Chinese-referenced self-construction into a show of American whiteness. In this sense, they actually kept Americans in mind as one target audience even though the papers may have circulated mainly within Hawaii.

As excluding Chinese was instrumental to America’s effort at keeping itself white, caring for America’s anti-Chinese sentiment was naturally one way for haoles to prove their American-like whiteness. Since the first group of Americans reached China aboard the merchant vessel *Empress of China* in 1784, “Idealized China” quickly gave way to “Uncivilized and Threatening China” in

American imaginations. Idealized China was “a ‘dream-world’ of ancient mystery and exoticism.” But the information that American merchants and missionaries brought back, plus China’s humiliating defeat in the Opium War of 1839-1842, helped construct China as uncivilized. To nineteenth-century Americans who styled themselves as civilized, uncivilized China was undoubtedly “a danger to the United States’ Caucasian foundations.” The massive Chinese immigration starting in 1849 only exacerbated Americans’ fear of an uncivilized and threatening China and its people (Turner, 2014, pp. 40-58).

From then onward, the image of China as a threat became ingrained in American minds, even into the present, though with varying contents. This sentiment, further fanned by politicians for the sake of votes, eventually resulted in the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882, which banned the immigration of Chinese laborers for ten years (Gyory, 1998). Americans kept on agitating for harsher measures until exclusion became permanent in 1904. This policy was only abolished in 1943 when China had become an ally of the United States during World War Two. Obviously, while haoles were condemning the Chinese threat, America’s anti-Chinese movement was in full swing. To show their being of one mind with American whites, haoles unsurprisingly presented their Chinese depiction as an echo to America’s Sinophobia.

For one thing, haole newspapers kept reminding readers that they must be firm in confronting the Chinese threat, for the United States would not like to see Hawaiian benevolence on Chinese immigrants. On October 12, 1881, the *Gazette* wrote that America was “very hostile” to the “continued influx of Chinese” into Hawaii. “Our country” must make “headway” in understanding the liking of “its powerful neighbor,” the paper demanded (“Central Committee,” 1881, p. 3).<sup>67</sup> It reemphasized this point on February 15, 1882. Since “our powerful neighbor over the water” would not view large-scale Chinese immigration “with favor,” the *Gazette* stated, haole planters must take “great care” when importing Chinese laborers. If not, they would commit “a grave political and social mistake” (“In the Matter,” 1882, p. 3).<sup>68</sup>

Other comments straightforwardly called on haoles to mind Americans’ anti-Chinese feeling when resisting the Chinese “intrusion.” The *Gazette* of August 10, 1881, carried a letter from a San Franciscan to convey that message. The letter cited U.S. Senator John Franklin Miller (R-CA) as saying that America would not and should not “allow the Sandwich Islands to come under the government of the Chinese” (“Our,” 1881, p. 8).<sup>69</sup> While delivering the platitude that Chinese constituted a menace to “a Republican form of Government,” the annexationist American League openly announced that haoles’ vigilance was aimed at satisfying Americans’ dislike of Chinese. In a resolution submitted to the Executive and Advisory Councils of Hawaii on January 15, 1894, it explained that haoles must ward off the Chinese threat because Chinese were “dangerous and distasteful” not only to haoles, “but [to] our steadfast friends in the United States” (“Session of the Councils,” 1894, p. 5).<sup>70</sup>

Besides displaying their readiness to care for Americans' anti-Chinese sentiment, haoles even regarded America's Chinese exclusion laws as the criterion of their own conduct. This equaled an erasure of Hawaiian sovereignty in the face of the United States, showing how eager haoles were to prove their affinity with American whites. Characterizing Chinese immigrants as "uncivilized barbarian hordes" in the *Bulletin* of July 2, 1885, "Anglo-Saxon" strongly resented Hawaii's then relative tolerance of those people. He accused the government of committing a "defiance of the laws of our mother country, the United States of America." It needed to curb the coming of Chinese and stop them from "disgusting...every civilized member of the community," he demanded ("Asiatic," 1885, p. 4).<sup>71</sup> On July 10, 1897, just at the height of American debates on annexation, the manager of Hawaiian Commercial and Sugar Company C. A. Spreckels reiterated haoles' intention to deal with the Chinese menace in line with American laws. He reassured Americans that since no new contracts would be signed with Chinese laborers after Hawaii joined the United States, "American laws will apply to the labor conditions" ("Coolies," 1879, p. 3).<sup>72</sup>

Another means for haoles to showcase their oneness with American whites was to define the Chinese threat that both faced as of the same nature. In 1880, Governor George Clement Perkins of California accused Chinese immigrants of knowing "nothing" of America's home culture and having no "respect for law" or "love of freedom." Consequently, they could not become "a useful portion of the political fabric." Perkins made these charges at his inauguration, obviously not thinking of Hawaii's Chinese immigration. But in order to demonstrate haoles' identification with Americans, the *Advertiser* of March 13, 1880, not only reprinted Perkins's condemnation verbatim but called his remarks "well-chosen and strikingly truthful words." They were "as applicable to our case at the islands as to that of our neighbors over the sea," it claimed ("Chinamen," 1880, p. 3).<sup>73</sup> On May 19, 1888, to prove that Chinese were "dark and devious" in character, the haole signed as "Justice" cited "the history of the Six Companies in California" as evidence. Formally established in 1882, the Six Companies was an umbrella organization for the entire Chinese community in America. Because of the "long train of bribery and corruption, slavery, prostitution and murder" under its auspices, Justice claimed, America had just passed a "stringent Restriction Act" (the Scott Act) to ban Chinese from reentering the United States. Hawaii was "quite close to the necessities of the hour," he believed ("Correspondence," 1888, p. 3).<sup>74</sup>

Haoles also stressed that just like Americans' anti-Chinese movement, their castigation of Chinese was aimed at bringing forth a white man's country. For example, on October 2, 1888, the *Gazette* editorialized that the "majority of people" in Hawaii wanted "this country for a white man's country." As Chinese were "undoing the work of more than half a century of white colonization of Hawaii," one must take measures to protect the fruit of "the white man's doing." In this way, Hawaii could remain "different from and superior to the other archipel-

agoes of the Pacific," stated the paper ("We Are," 1888, p. 4).<sup>75</sup> In a letter carried by the *Bulletin* on December 11, Kinney (1888, pp. 1-2) too claimed that haoles had always desired to transform Hawaii into "a white man's country." To "make the white man's civilization dominant at the islands" was just the motive behind their "revolution" in 1887, which effectively curbed royal powers in the Bayonet Constitution. But the increasing "influence and power" of Chinese necessitated "a fresh infusion of white blood," Kinney wrote.<sup>76</sup>

While showing themselves to be as white-hearted as mainstream Americans, haoles did not forget that the latter's hesitance on annexation also arose from their concerns over Hawaii's climate. The islands' tropical locality was widely held unsuitable for large-scale white settlement. To debunk that theory, haoles kept emphasizing that the climate was actually not so hostile as usually depicted. At the open meeting of American League on the evening of March 5, 1894, one speaker forthrightly denounced the contention that white men could not work in Hawaii. To him, Hawaii was "not a tropical country" and its summers were "not as hot as those of Iowa and Illinois." Since "white men work there [in Iowa and Illinois]," they could migrate to Hawaii and replace the Chinese, out of whom "you cannot make a citizen," the speaker encouraged (The League's," 1894, p. 5).<sup>77</sup> E. L. Fitzgerald, the Labor Commissioner of California, corroborated this view on his visit to the islands in 1897. In an interview carried by the *Gazette* on April 27, he claimed to "have taken the temperature in the fields" personally, but "fail to find it higher than in California." White men could surely come and settle, stated Fitzgerald. This finding could help eradicate "any stiff resistance in America" against annexation and ensure that Hawaii continue to be "a white man's country" rather than one of Asiatics, he said ("Now," 1897, p. 1).<sup>78</sup>

Thus by condemning the Chinese threat, haoles not only meant to enhance their status as the indisputably dominant group in Hawaii, but intended to show their American-like whiteness plus their resolve and ability to make and keep Hawaii white. As a consequence, Americans should not worry about the islands' racial composition and climate when considering annexation. Though one does not know exactly how much influence this reasoning had on Americans' approval of annexation in 1898, it certainly fitted in with American annexationists' change of tactic in the final stage of debates. As Love (pp. xi-xii, 144-158) rightly discovers, those people previously avoided placing race at the center of their arguments, choosing instead to emphasize Hawaii's strategic importance to America. But due to opponents' anxiety over Hawaii's conglomerate racial composition and its tropical climate, their drive for annexation was repeatedly thwarted. Realizing where the sticking point was, annexationists changed their strategy by emphasizing the whiteness of Hawaii and its precariousness in the face of the Asian threat. The annexation resolution finally passed Congress as a result. One may reasonably presume that annexationists were much encouraged by haoles' dealings with Chinese when they decided to switch tactics. Or, those

opposed to annexation might have lowered their tone of resistance after learning how hard haoles had been trying to make Hawaii white.

In whatever ways, haoles’ castigation of Chinese from the civilization perspective was not simply a scheme to restrict Chinese immigration and maintain a balance between Chinese labor and labor of other races, but also a means to display white supremacy in the islands and create an atmosphere contributive to annexation. By inventing and battling the alleged Chinese threat, they intended to convince the white community both in Hawaii and the United States that whites could and did prosper in Hawaii. The islands were therefore suitable for American expansion and actually needed annexation to help consolidate the domineering position of whites against Asian challengers, first Chinese and then Japanese after the mid-1890s. Despite the lack of direct evidence to illustrate the exact impact of this discursive campaign on Americans, its relevance to anti-expansionists’ concerns and coincidence with annexationists’ final strategy indicates that haoles’ condemnation of the Chinese threat was actually one part of the Hawaii-U.S. cross-border effort at securing the former’s annexation into the latter.

At the same time, haoles’ Chinese-referenced self-construction miniaturizes Hawaii’s racial hierarchy. After haoles successfully imposed their, that is, American, values and institutions as the norm through various schemes, including the one presented in this essay, each racial group’s position on the ladder would be determined by how thoroughly and willingly it assimilated. While functioning to accelerate the Americanization of the islands, this paradigm engendered two interesting future developments. On the one hand, Asian immigrants, having no need to safeguard an indigenous sovereignty, quickly realized the necessity and desirability of full assimilation. A voluntary Americanization helped change their status from victims of American colonialism to its beneficiaries. As Candace Fujikane (2008, pp. 2-3, 8) puts it, “the overall effect of the Americanization movement was unquestioning Asian settler support of the authority of the U.S. settler state.” On the other, Native Hawaiians’ never-dying attachment to indigenous sovereignty increasingly conflicted with their forced assimilation to Americanism. Once the Americanization movement transformed Asians into haoles’ co-settlers after WWII, natives’ reluctance in acculturation appeared ever more jarring. Haoles gradually stopped taking them as a foil for Chinese and Japanese alienness. Instead, they began to regard natives as a persistent challenger to America’s Asian-supported sovereignty over Hawaii (Kauanui, 2008).

Finally, due to the scope and perspective of this essay, two caveats are worth mentioning. For one thing, by focusing on three major English-language haole newspapers, I have unavoidably bypassed other types of sources. It remains to be seen if haoles negotiated the same identity vis-a-vis Chinese in their minor papers and periodicals, Native-Hawaiian-language press, or non-periodical archives. For another, the essay offers few clues as to how non-haole groups—Chinese, Japanese, Portuguese, Native Hawai-

ians, and others—responded to haoles’ Chinese-referenced push for racial dominance and annexation. Their agency needs to be retrieved in other researches. Still, given the enormous influence of the three newspapers, the analysis as presented here could at least index haoles’ persistence at keeping Hawaii under American influence and appealing to Americans before annexation materialized.

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- 34 "Mass Meeting at Wailuku," *Daily Bulletin*, 30 April 1888.
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