

PATRICIA ALVAREZ

The Battle for Wai'āpuka School: One Round of an Epic Contest

THE SMALL, REMOTE VILLAGE of Wai'āpuka, situated serenely on the mountainside of Kohala's north shore, was the unlikely venue for an important educational struggle of the nineteenth century. That struggle pitted American Congregationalist missionaries and politicians against French Catholic missionaries. The school skirmish mirrored a larger battle being waged in Honolulu and elsewhere, with Catholicism staking out a place for its ideal of church-state equality against the progressive, nation-building forces of modernizing Christianity. Inadvertently or not, these forces, whether in Europe, the United States, or the Hawaiian kingdom, were subordinating religious authority to political leadership. The Catholic Church and its priests hoped to carve for their religion an independent sphere from which to pass on their distinctive values and serve as ballast against aggrandizing governments. Instead, they witnessed on all fronts a succession of defeats for their institutionalized, hierarchical religion.

In the Hawaiian Islands, the priests were at a great disadvantage beginning with their attempts, as early as 1819, to create a following. Congregationalists arrived in larger number, and their success in converting the Hawaiian chiefs led to a constitutional monarchy and compulsory schools for the dissemination of literacy, science, and enlightened religion. Initially, the priests treated compulsory school laws as inconveniences and coached their followers in civil disobedience.

Patricia Alvarez is a lecturer in history at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and Kapi'olani Community College.

The Hawaiian Journal of History, vol. 33 (1999)

ence. When this strategy failed, they applied to receive the same support as their competitors. From this effort sprang such village schools as Wai‘āpuka that bought survival at the expense of government supervision.

The school battle began during the reign of King Kamehameha III, whose Protestant mentors induced him in 1837 to issue a decree “Rejecting the Catholic religion.” The ordinance prohibited the few Islanders baptized in this faith from practicing their religion¹ and provoked retaliation from the French government. Anxious to acquire influence in the Pacific at the expense of other Western powers, the French made common cause with members of a Catholic congregation whose mother house was in Paris. In July 1839, the French gun ship *l’Artemise* entered Hawaiian waters for the sole purpose of testing the kingdom’s resolve to enforce the anti-Catholic ordinance. The vessel’s commander, Captain C. P. T. LaPlace, threatened to bombard Honolulu if the kingdom did not grant religious freedom to Catholics, and he extracted a treaty and large indemnity against the government’s failure to follow through. But mere apprehension at the French approach had been sufficient inducement for the king to add religious freedom to his Declaration of Rights.² Taking advantage of the opportunity thus afforded for founding a permanent Catholic mission in the Islands, four priests of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary disembarked at Honolulu on May 15, 1840.

THE SCHOOL LAW OF 1840

The monarch’s advisers, known collectively as the “missionary party,” moved quickly to modernize the kingdom’s framework with the adoption of a constitution on October 8, 1840. Only a week had elapsed before the Council of Chiefs enacted a comprehensive school law. Modeled on a Massachusetts ordinance of the seventeenth century, the School Law of 1840 created a vernacular school system mandating attendance for children aged four to fourteen. Wherever fifteen or more young boys and girls could be easily brought together, village fathers were to elect three of their members as a committee of *huna kula* (trustees). With the assistance of the local Protestant missionary, the committee would appoint a teacher from among the can-

didates certified at Lahaina Luna Seminary, the Protestants' higher school, or approved by *kahu kula* (local school agents or inspectors).³ Exercising a prerogative formerly reserved for chiefs, the trustees could command parents to work on *'auhau Pō'ahua*, Tuesdays set aside for forced labor, to build a schoolhouse/church or cultivate the teacher's land.

The Sacred Hearts fathers objected strenuously to the school law because it effectively established Protestantism as the state religion.⁴ Furthermore, it subverted religion by transforming education—for them a family and religious prerogative—into an instrument of public policy. With French naval forces never far off the horizon, the king's government offered concessions in a new law promulgated on May 21, 1841. Its provisions removed the appointment of teachers from the province of missionaries and gave it solely to government agents. In place of certification by Lahaina Luna Seminary, teachers simply had to meet specified skill levels.⁵

Having come to show Hawaiians “the way to heaven,”⁶ the priests now found themselves enmeshed in an effort to organize schools and prepare teachers from among their converts, drawn in the main from among the *maka'āinana* (commoners). Prizing loyalty above academic virtuosity, the priests chose prospective teachers from among their adherents, as Catholic communities formed not only at Wai‘āpuka but also at such disparate locations as Hāna on Maui, He'eia on O'ahu, and Kōloa on Kaua'i. Their efforts to educate these followers were often thwarted by inspectors such as John I'i, *kahu kula* for O'ahu, who rejected twenty-three of thirty teacher candidates in one official examination.⁷

FRENCH ASSISTANCE

Cognizant of the fragile position they occupied, the priests continued to seek support from their French patrons. In August 1842, Captain S. Mallet of the French warship *Embuscade* arrived in Hawaiian waters with instructions to see that the government protected Catholics from the exactions of Protestant clergy and bestowed on priests whatever benefits Protestants received. Thus, he demanded a land grant for a Catholic high school, Catholic inspectors for Catholic

schools, the right of priests to appoint temporary teachers, and the exemption of Catholics from the requirement to build Protestant schools.⁸ These provisions would have created institutional arrangements in the Islands similar to those in several European nations yet totally unacceptable to the king's American advisors.

King Kamehameha III officially rejected Captain Mallet's demands, but Father Louis Maigret, soon to head the Catholic mission as its bishop, found the visit of the *Embuscade* "efficacious." To his superior he happily reported, "The government is going to give us land for a high school. Moreover, after the departure of the French corvette, we presented a dozen of our students for the teachers' exams and they were all accepted."⁹ The priests credited their success no less to the presence of French warships than to the skilled diplomacy of French consul Jules Dudoit.

While the priests were confident of their prospects to convert the Hawaiians to Catholicism, they were not sanguine. Everywhere they looked, they saw the legalistic spirit of American Puritanism, in particular, said one, in the "ill-willed people who surround" the king and chiefs.¹⁰ One such man was the Reverend Richard Armstrong, pastor of Kawaiaha'o Church in Honolulu. Armstrong's annual mission-station reports and the newspaper he published reveal that the native control enacted by the 1841 revisions served primarily as a facade for Protestant ministers, who maintained firm control over the educational system. Armstrong's newspaper, *Ka Nonanona* (The Ant), printed examination results, school statistics, and information on physical layouts for schools interspersed with invective against the French treaty of 1839 and the theological errors of Catholicism. The eventual appointment of Armstrong as minister of public instruction would place the fate of Wai'āpuka in the hands of the man the priests considered their "greatest enemy."¹¹

As Armstrong directed nearby government schools from Kawaiaha'o, so the Reverend Elias Bond would direct the school at Wai'āpuka from Kalāhikiola Church at 'Iole. Bond conducted the routine correspondence between North Kohala district and the education ministry throughout the 1840s and 1850s and sent annual reports to his mission board concerning the number of students and schools in the ostensibly Hawaiian-run system.¹² While the priests periodically visited Kohala from their mission station at Kailua as often as their

sparse numbers allowed, Bond's abiding presence gave him the advantage that longevity imparts.

The Congregationalists secured even greater political influence in the kingdom with passage of the Organic Act of 1845, creating a Privy Council and cabinet. Two of the cabinet's original members were former Congregationalist missionaries. The mission required its members to resign in order to serve as government officials, but its spirit manifested itself unambiguously in the new arrangements. The Organic Act centralized school functions in a Ministry of Public Instruction and replaced elected village trustees with an appointed *luna kula*, thus depriving parents such as those at Wai'āpuka of the chance to appoint their own teacher. Nevertheless, William Richards, the first education minister, publicly instructed the inspectors to give "a square deal" to the king's Catholic subjects.¹³

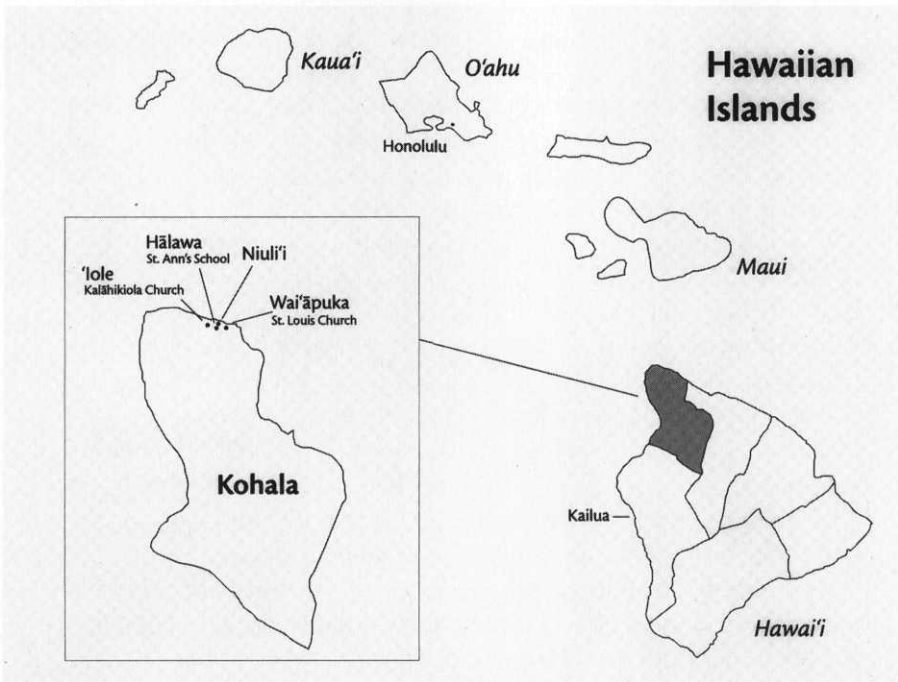


FIG. 1. Map of the Hawaiian Islands showing the location of Wai'āpuka and neighboring villages in North Kohala in the mid-nineteenth century.

WAI'ĀPUKA SCHOOL

The school at Wai'āpuka appeared in the first annual report of the minister of public instruction, issued for the year 1847. The report drew a distinction between the developing systems, using the pointed descriptor *Na Kula Ho'ole Pope* or *Ku'e Pope* (Schools without a Pope or Against the Pope) as against *Na Kula Katolika* (Catholic Schools). Of the 624 schools in operation, about 20 percent were Catholic, although the 3,116 students attending their classes constituted only 11 percent of the student population.¹⁴ While the proportion of Catholics in the Islands rose as high as 25 percent by the end of the century, the proportion of students in Catholic schools never increased beyond the fraction secured in these early years.¹⁵

Nothing in particular seemed to single out Wai'āpuka for the battle that was to ensue, nor indeed was its short and precarious existence significantly different from that of numerous other village schools, all of which had perished before the century was out. However, the school loomed large in the correspondence of both diplomatic and education ministries due to the resilient antagonism of the actors on both sides and the longevity of the robust population from which the school drew its student body. Kohala trailed only Hilo and Kona as a center of population on the Island of Hawai'i, itself the most populous of the archipelago's islands until the late 1860s.¹⁶

A Protestant mission census of 1835 counted fifty children at Wai'āpuka and double that number of adults.¹⁷ Catholic priests arriving six years later, in the manner of the time, probably converted the whole village to their side. Yet by 1853, the Reverend Bond, counting conservatively, found only 328 Catholics in the entire district of Kohala, one in every ten residents.¹⁸ Counting expansively, the priests identified many more adherents despite the universal population decline the Islands were experiencing. The school opened with and over the next twenty-five years consistently enrolled about twenty students, five more than the School Law of 1840 required. They met in a thatch-roofed building, serving the dual function of church and school. Commanding a magnificent view of the ocean and neighboring Maui, the edifice sat along the Waikama Stream on a quarter-acre plot donated by the king from his broad, as yet undivided, domain.¹⁹

Enforcement of government policy, whether of school or other

laws, lay with Native Hawaiian officials dedicated to their Protestant mentors. David Malo on Maui subjected recalcitrant Catholic parents to forced marches if, as he said, their children did not "attend school on our side." Some overeager agents denied parents their rights of subsistence.²⁰ Paku, North Kohala's school agent, would evince a similar dedication. He received his commission shortly after Wai'āpuka school opened and oversaw the Catholic institution throughout most of the next decade while serving simultaneously as deacon of the Reverend Bond's church at 'Iole.²¹

Despite Minister Richards's avowals of cooperation, the government's policy allowed a *kahu kula* such as Paku to delay teacher hiring by claiming that the priests' appointees fell short of the required age or level of expertise. This justified the placement of Catholic children with the nearest eligible teacher, usually a Protestant one. But taking Richards up on his promise of equity, the priests asked and received permission to lower the age and proficiency requirements for their preferred teachers in exchange for a reduced wage, as monetary compensation had by this time replaced village labor.²² Kua, Wai'āpuka's long-time teacher, must have been just such an inexperienced young man, for he earned \$.06¹/₄ per day, well below the top rate of \$.25.²³

Kua's job was to teach his charges the basic elements of reading, writing, geography, arithmetic, and religion in the Hawaiian language, and classes met more or less frequently according to his dictates. If his schoolhouse lacked the most basic of instructional materials, it was entirely typical of early Hawaiian schools, some of which even lacked roofs. Kua probably copied the priests' methods of inculcating ideas through group recitation or chanting,²⁴ in contrast to the more individualized and analytical approach that educational authorities favored.

ARMSTRONG AND DILLON

The appointment of Richard Armstrong as minister of public instruction in 1848 and the arrival of Guillaume Dillon as French consul that same year portended renewed wrangling between the two contending parties. Armstrong was determined, he said, "to carry into effect the provisions of the law relating to my department."²⁵ Such lit-

eral-mindedness struck the priests as an example of how he and his agents hoped to sabotage their efforts. Unlike Richards, Armstrong had little sympathy for Catholic attempts to soften the government's exactions. For example, he allowed individual Catholics to commute the law's Tuesday work obligation, the *'auhau Pō'aluā*, when that entailed building a church for the Protestants, but he found nothing repugnant in the requirement itself. On the contrary, Armstrong noted, "The law does not recognize any difference in the form of religion in the performance of any work on Tuesdays."²⁶

During his twelve years of educational leadership, Armstrong expressed little but disdain for Catholic education. He derided the priests for their limited educational vision, being men who "only value the schools as means of imparting a knowledge of their own doctrine, and not as a means of increasing general intelligence among the people."²⁷ Although securing good teachers was not a problem limited to Catholic schools, Armstrong singled out their teachers as those "whose qualifications meet the demands of the law, lowered down to the lowest point." In the same vein, he reported that "the children, even the older of them, in the Catholic schools, do not read well." This alleged inferiority of the schools he blamed on priests who "provided for them no books beyond a few doctrinal primers."²⁸

Minister Armstrong began his administration with a tour of the island of Hawai'i. At Kohala, as at his other stops, he met separately with the district's two denominations. The local Catholic assemblage took advantage of the opportunity to voice its hopes for better wages, improved school houses, and the creation of a fourth district school.²⁹ Armstrong was little moved by the group's requests, except to approve an additional school. Concerning the low pay of Kua, who asked for higher compensation, the minister might have cited Richards's concessionary policy as justification. Rather, Armstrong announced that, henceforth, a teacher's salary would depend both on classroom numbers and the *kahu kula's* assessment of his "efficiency." The despised district agent would remain in charge.

In the event, Kua was fortunate, for during the remainder of his tour, Armstrong declined to license some proposed teachers for the Catholic schools and assessed their scholars as generally below par.³⁰ Following the minister's lead, School Agent Paku turned down several teacher nominees for Kohala. In response to this challenge,

Father Gregory Archambaux abandoned Kailua in 1849 to take up actual residence in the district, where, on successive weeks, he conducted classes in the villages of Hālawā, Kamano, and Kukuipahu. Archambaux's fellow priests regarded his remedy as heroic and certainly within the spirit of the law, but Paku predictably worked to terminate it. Reporting to the ministry, the agent noted that during the weeks when the priest was teaching in one village, children in the other villages "run here and there in mischief, and this disturbs the [other] schools."³¹ Using his power to enforce attendance, Paku coerced the miscreants into attending the Protestant school.

Meanwhile, in the kingdom's capital, French Consul Guillaume Dillon's brash and determined advocacy of the priests' position precipitated a diplomatic crisis. Following Armstrong's return from Kohala, Dillon wrote the kingdom's foreign minister, Robert Wyllie, to charge that the anti-Catholic credentials of the education minister were precisely what recommended him for his position in the cabinet. He condemned Armstrong for his "envenomed and systematic attacks . . . against France in a public organ" and his "political ostracism" of Catholic teachers and students on his recent tour of inspection.³² In matters concerning the priests, Dillon demanded the creation of a separate Catholic school system administered by the resident bishop without Protestant involvement.³³

Dillon's critical letter evinced a stance more aggressive than that of his predecessor and created "alarm" in Foreign Minister Wyllie, a Scotsman whose initially conciliatory attitude had won appreciative words from the Catholics.³⁴ Wyllie began to fear that any concession to Dillon might result in total surrender on all the consul's demands. At the same time, Armstrong heard the ceaseless urging of the Reverend Bond, his former colleague, to remain firm against the Roman church. Acceptance of separate school inspectors would lead inevitably to separate finance officers, Bond said, and would allow "the viper" to fasten on to Armstrong. He warned, "You won't be able to shake it off."³⁵

Following Wyllie's lead, Armstrong now withdrew a plan already discussed with the Privy Council that would have given Catholics freedom to form their own district boards of trustees, hire teachers, repair school houses, and superintend "the general interest of education of their denomination."³⁶ The education minister accused Dillon of

“making the religion and education of the King’s native subjects, a matter of Diplomatic interference.”³⁷ The government would not allocate public funds, Armstrong said, to persons “who neither owe allegiance to the King of the Islands, nor contribute in a pecuniary way to the support of those schools.”³⁸

Negotiations between French and Hawaiian authorities, entailing a variety of questions including tariffs, became so heated that the Hawaiians asked for Dillon’s recall, and Rear Admiral Legoarant de Tromelin of the French warship *La Poursuivante* finally took the type of punitive action long feared. In August 1849, he loosed his troops on government buildings near Honolulu’s harbor, causing considerable damage.³⁹ Yet coming as it did after years of threats, the captain’s angry display revealed French policy to be little more than a paper tiger. The incident engendered no discernible response and seemed rather to steel the kingdom’s resolve to concede even less in the future. Dillon ignominiously lost his post and left the Islands.

THE FRENCH RETREAT

Determined to restore its tarnished image, the French Foreign Ministry sent a new representative, Louis Perrin, who arrived in December 1850 with modifications to its school policy.⁴⁰ Perrin dropped the demand that the bishop administer Catholic schools, but continued to request a separate system and an equitable division of funds between Catholic and Protestant schools. Living up to the purport of his name, Foreign Minister Wyllie parried this thrust by asserting that Catholic students already enjoyed an enviable position. His statistics demonstrated that under the current arrangement Catholic schools, as a result of the relatively low student/teacher ratios in schools such as Wai‘āpuka, received three cents more per student than their Protestant counterparts.⁴¹

The French warship *Serieuse* remained menacingly in port for several months into 1851 while Wyllie and Perrin discussed these and other differences. Meanwhile, the Hawaiian government had appealed to the United States for protection, and the timely arrival of an American warship forced the hand of French officials. Conceding the true interests of its government lay elsewhere, the French vessel retreated from the Islands and consigned them irredeemably to the

American sphere of influence. In exchange for the ship's departure, the king agreed to refer the school question to his legislature.⁴²

The effectiveness of gunboat diplomacy having played itself out, the priests next turned for protection to those with secure positions of power in the Islands, a strategy that resulted in a few more partial victories typical of the battle. Taking up their cause in the legislative session of 1851 was Godfrey Rhodes, a Catholic convert from Hanalei, *Kaua'i*. Much later, as president of the Legislative Assembly, Rhodes would be of great assistance to their schools. Here, however, he was part of a distinct minority. As a member of the Committee on Education, he called attention to several letters of complaint from Catholic constituents. Although his committee declined to investigate these matters, the legislature as a whole responded by empowering village trustees once more to select their own teachers, thus reducing the power of agents such as Paku.⁴³ But that was as much as Catholics could secure in a still hostile environment.

While Congregationalists had seemingly advanced the power of religion in the kingdom by criminalizing acts that once were merely considered sinful, they actually reduced its influence to that of a mere tool of government, expendable when its usefulness had been exhausted. Minister Armstrong demonstrated this reality when he modernized the educational system in the 1850s. By that time, a series of epidemics had reduced the youthful population and forced one-third of the small, vernacular schools to close. In addition, newly arrived Mormons began asking for their own teachers. Armstrong secured adoption, in 1854, of "mixed schools" that excised religion from the curriculum, once and for all, and combined small schools to maximize enrollment. He also terminated religion instruction but agreed that trustees might continue to accommodate the community's dominant faith in the selection of teachers.⁴⁴

While the education minister portrayed the new arrangement as the solution to a failed experiment in sectarian schools, the Catholic Bishop, Louis Maigret, mourned the impending loss of a system he had worked so assiduously to create. In his eyes, the minister's move was a return to the spirit of the School Law of 1840. Because Catholics were a minority in most places, Maigret anticipated the creation of purely "Puritan schools where everything will be Protestant, the teachers as well as the books."⁴⁵ Even worse, he feared the minister's

actions ultimately would create truly secular schools where values inimical to organized religion would proliferate.

A compliant Hawaiian legislature endorsed Armstrong's proposal for mixed institutions, while Bishop Maigret's objections found little support outside his own community. Protestants expected the educational system to continue serving their interests, as indeed it did initially. In the aftermath of consolidation, which purported to be neutral to religion, Catholics in North Kohala found themselves once again at the mercy of the Reverend Bond, the most powerful force in the district. Reporting jubilantly to Armstrong in early 1855, Bond noted, "We have closed two Catholic and one Protestant school under the order," leaving the district with 666 students in twenty-two schools.⁴⁶ Among the casualties was Wai'āpuka, its seats emptied, its students transferred to nearby Niuli'i. By 1864, the number of Catholic vernacular schools in the kingdom had fallen from more than one hundred to only fifteen.⁴⁷ It was small consolation to the priests that the days of all the vernacular schools were similarly numbered.

WAI'ĀPUKA REVIVED

The official suppression of Wai'āpuka school did not go unanswered, as its pastors and several sympathetic officials worked assiduously to keep it alive for another twenty years. Its resurrection began in 1856, when the Catholic bishop, although always shorthanded, once more assigned a priest to reside permanently at the station and, despite a shortage of funds, made sure the community received a new church.⁴⁸ The small frame structure, dedicated to St. Louis, boasted such decorative European features as a steeple and Romanesque window frames. Upon taking up his post, the new pastor, Father Eustachius Maheu, asked Paku for a teaching certificate. True to form, Paku declined, claiming that the certificate would merely protect an "ignorant assistant" who would act as teacher.⁴⁹

Paku's refusal set the priest and his community into action. In February 1857, Wai'āpuka parents petitioned Armstrong, challenging the closure and decrying the religious discrimination their children experienced at the new school. They claimed enrollment at Wai'āpuka had exceeded that at Niuli'i, a charge made credible by an 1853 report indicating that the student body of the shuttered school stood at

twenty-five and thus met the new minimum requirement. Meanwhile, the enterprising Father Maheu secured a court order from Makuaole, a sympathetic district judge, for a new election of trustees among the Catholic parents.⁵⁰ French Consul Perrin weighed in one last time, charging in a letter to Foreign Minister Wylie that the closure of eight Catholic schools on the island of Hawai'i alone was hardly a coincidence.⁵¹

Ultimately, however, the law's minions prevailed. When the newly elected trustees chose Kua as their teacher, Paku denied him a license and Armstrong invalidated the election. But the officials did agree to release parents from the \$2 annual school tax that commuted their labor obligation, directing that their money go instead to pay the salary of whomever they hired. Paku warned the parents, though, that he retained authority over their children, an authority he exercised when this private school experiment subsequently failed.⁵²

If the affair at Wai'āpuka had been a battle of personalities, the unexpected demise of both Maheu and Armstrong in 1860, not to mention that of Perrin in 1862, would have concluded the affair.⁵³ But philosophical principles played too great a role for the drama to



FIG. 2. St. Louis Church, Wai'āpuka, North Kohala, built by Father Eustachius Maheu in 1858. This wooden structure replaced the thatched-roof church-school in use since the 1840s. (Damien Museum Archives)

end merely with the exit of its major protagonists. What ultimately did produce a reversal was the policy Alexander Liholiho adopted following his accession to the throne as King Kamehameha IV in 1854. The new king managed to distance himself from the missionary party by embracing the Church of England, and he diluted the powers of the minister of public instruction by eliminating the position from his cabinet and naming the former minister president of a less powerful Board of Education. Armstrong's successor was the king's father, Mataio Kekūanao'a, a man whose world travels had not led him far from traditional values. No sooner had Armstrong begun to emphasize English instruction than Kekūanao'a reverted to a Hawaiian focus.⁵⁴ His was the type of local control the missionary party would not long tolerate.

Without an advocate on the board, the priests' adversaries were disadvantaged but not silenced; newspapers such as the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* carried their insistent call for more vigorous educational leadership.⁵⁵ In response, the legislature instructed the board to appoint an inspector general with authority to examine and supervise the schools. The board gave outward compliance yet asserted its independence by appointing Abraham Fornander as the first inspector, a choice guaranteed to foment further controversy. Fornander had edited the *Polynesian* and written for other newspapers that regularly lambasted the missionary party's educational policies.⁵⁶ A Swede married to a Hawaiian woman of high lineage, Fornander, as a Freemason, was perhaps an odd ally for the priests, yet his sympathy for his wife's people, so amply demonstrated in his three-volume *Account of the Polynesian Race*, placed him among those standing in opposition to the modernizers.

A FORMIDABLE ADVOCATE

Beginning his tenure as inspector in 1865, Fornander announced his intention to rectify the department's discriminatory policy. By way of illustration, he deplored the fact that Wai'āpuka's school had been "left out in the cold" by his predecessors as he returned it and several other Kohala schools to government sponsorship.⁵⁷ This pleased Father Damien De Veuster, the youthful new pastor of St. Louis Church, later to become famous as minister to leprosy victims on

Moloka'i. When the reopening of his school after a two-year hiatus elicited Bond's public condemnation, Damien reckoned it a small price to pay for such a substantial gain. Rather than respond in kind, he would "leave it to God to defend the innocent."⁵⁸

Fornander chose North Kohala as one among several places to implement yet another legislative request, the creation of gender-specific schools. Even Armstrong had earlier concluded that coeducational schools were not teaching Hawaiian girls the essentials "of modesty, cleanliness and industry."⁵⁹ Now, combining the school populations of Niuli'i and Wai'āpuka, the inspector sent the girls to the former and the boys to the latter. Concurring with Paku on one matter—the deficiency of the Catholic school teacher—he hired for the distaff side a recent graduate of Sacred Hearts Convent School.⁶⁰ The convent, opened in Honolulu in 1859 by European sisters affiliated with the priests of that congregation, was one of the Islands' few institutions dedicated exclusively to female education. Fornander had earlier revealed his regard for the convent by choosing it for his own daughter.⁶¹

The Reverend Bond did not share the inspector's positive assessment of the convent school and charged Fornander's new teacher with being unable "to take children through four chapters in mental arithmetic." He accused Fornander of working to further the papist agenda and "to overturn our best schools."⁶² Niuli'i was, in his words, "our 'crack' Apana [district] for enterprise" as demonstrated by the recent construction there of the first wooden schoolhouse in the Islands.⁶³

In the pages of the *Advertiser*, Bond launched an assault on the inspector in particular and on gender separation in general. At the same time, Niuli'i's villagers petitioned the Board of Education for a return to the coeducational system, estimating average attendance at their school as a mere five girls. Drawing from Paku's standard critique, they condemned the "incompetent" teacher who smoked her pipe during school hours and denounced the inspector's decision not to permit corporal punishment. Moreover, they noted, without a *lunapaipai* (truant officer), the children often "roam[ed] at large." Bond wrote the board in support of the petition and to criticize the lack of hearing it received.⁶⁴

Fornander's riposte was to rub more salt into Bond's wounds.

Consistent with the board's preference for vernacular education, he terminated Bond's English school subsidy because it was not "absolutely necessary." Then, in defense of "the educational rights and interests of His Majesty's subjects in Waiapuka," Fornander pronounced them "as much entitled to my consideration and assistance" as others and promised to supply them with lumber for a new schoolhouse—to be located on church property, no less.⁶⁵

But such setbacks were temporary for the missionary party, whose annexationist goals surfaced every day more clearly. Its members soon recovered leadership on the Board of Education. The board forced Fornander from office in 1870 and replaced him with H. R. Hitchcock, whose Hilo school, like Bond's, had suffered at Fornander's hands. Inspector Hitchcock evened the score and permanently closed the doors on Wai'āpuka's eleven boys and twelve girls in 1873. In the absence of Father Damien, recently departed for Moloka'i, no public outcry followed, but the silent opposition of parents, manifest in Niuli'i's enrollment of only sixteen students, soon brought an end to that school as well.⁶⁶ An uninitiated observer might reasonably have assumed that the epic contest was over.

WAI'ĀPUKA'S SUCCESSORS

In fact, the struggle continued on another front, visibly manifesting itself westward a few miles on the grounds of the Catholic church in Hālawā, where the opening of St. Ann's School with forty students coincided with Wai'āpuka's demise.⁶⁷ By offering instruction in English, the school hoped to qualify for financial assistance that the popularly elected legislature was consistently offering to private institutions. The board, guarding its resources for institutions it directly controlled, often turned a deaf ear to requests for aid, as it did now with St. Ann's. Yet neither a shaky start nor inspectors' reports that pronounced it "inferior" inhibited the school's roster from swelling briefly to 111 over the next two decades, as Kohala's burgeoning sugar industry brought large numbers of Portuguese workers and their children to the district.⁶⁸

St. Ann's epitomized the priests' determined response to their putative defeat, as they focused efforts on government-aided rather than government-run schools. Bracing for this round of the contest,

Maigret's successor, Bishop Herman Koeckeman, placed a call to the United States for professional teachers. Two religious congregations, the Society of Mary (Marianists) and the Sisters of St. Francis, responded in 1883. The mission concentrated these teachers in a few urban schools in Honolulu, Hilo, and Wailuku and reenforced existing schools in Lahaina and He'eia. St. Ann's and the other small rural schools, lacking aid and professional instructors, eventually expired.

The urban Catholic schools, along with sectarian schools such as Punahou and 'Iolani, experienced a heyday in the 1880s, when the legislature, guided by Godfrey Rhodes as Assembly president, doled out handsome subsidies to its favorites. Prime Minister Walter Murray Gibson, concurrently president of the Board of Education, heaped plaudits on the Marianists' St. Louis College, which in one year alone received a \$10,000 allotment, and even hard-nosed inspectors murmured words of praise.⁶⁹

The heyday ended abruptly in 1893 when annexationists wrested the reins of power from both monarchy and legislature, denouncing the latter's distribution of spoils.⁷⁰ Leaders of the Republic of Hawai'i, ignoring their descent from early missionaries, eagerly embraced strict church-state separation in exchange for the economic benefits of annexation. In the ensuing territorial period, the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) developed an extensive network of high schools, capped by a university. Despite the loss of public funds, the schools of the mission kept pace in a similar expansion. The Marianists, Sacred Heart Sisters, and Franciscans all added parallel institutions, up to the highest level. In addition, the mission solidified its elementary-school base by opening American-style parochial schools staffed by mainland sisters from the Maryknoll and St. Joseph's congregations. The low stipends paid to its teachers enabled the mission to educate the same proportion of students it had during the Wai'āpuka era.

Government pressures, however subtle and indirect, rarely abated. The normal school and university asked that incoming students be equipped with science and mathematics courses the mission's schools previously had slighted. The DPI's teacher certification program forced the brothers and sisters to abandon their informal apprenticeship methods as well as their monastic insularity to acquire addi-

tional credentials. Congregations reeled under the attendant financial burden and loss of community life. No less a challenge came from the confrontation between progressive and traditional curricula.

This phase of battle, ending in early statehood, again produced a government victory as religious congregations and the priesthood itself lost members in large numbers. Schools of the mission—now elevated to a diocese—had to hire lay teachers for their specialties more than their loyalty and to raise tuition dramatically to cover these and other costs created by unfunded federal and state mandates.

When, in 1858, Armstrong and Paku permitted Wai‘āpuka parents to substitute private school tuition payments for their school taxes, the officials tacitly acknowledged the power the priests wielded. By the time of statehood, that power was insufficient to extract a comparable tax concession. The priests earned no holiday from their efforts to maintain an alternative to the well-endowed, state-sponsored message.

NOTES

- ¹ Reginald Yzendoorn, *History of the Catholic Mission in the Hawaiian Islands* (Honolulu: Honolulu Star-Bulletin, 1927) 121–22.
- ² Ralph S. Kuykendall, *The Hawaiian Kingdom* (Honolulu: U of Hawaii P, 1938) 1: 159–64.
- ³ Benjamin O. Wist, *A Century of Public Education in Hawaii* (Honolulu: Hawaii Educational Review, 1940) 50; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom* 1: 347.
- ⁴ Wist concurs with this assessment. *Century* 66.
- ⁵ Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom* 1: 348–49.
- ⁶ Louis Maigret quoted in Hawaii, *Report of the Minister of Foreign Affairs* 1847, 57.
- ⁷ Barnabe Castan, Nov. 15, 1844, “Lettres Lithographiees,” Sacred Hearts Congregation (ss.cc.), BPBM.
- ⁸ Yzendoorn, *History* 166; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom* 1: 349–50.
- ⁹ Maigret, Sept. 22, 1842, “Lettres,” ss.cc.
- ¹⁰ Maigret, *Annales de l’Association de la Propagation de la Foi* XXVII (1855): 373, BPBM.
- ¹¹ Maigret to Prefect, L, OCT. 20, 1851, Oceania Bk 4, 940, Propaganda Fide, Rome. *Ka Nonanona* and mission station reports for Kawaihae‘o and Kohala are located at HMCS.
- ¹² See Bond’s frequent letters to Armstrong in Boxes 261-1 to 261-7, DPI.
- ¹³ Quoted in Yzendoorn, *History* 171.
- ¹⁴ Compiled in Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom* 1: 357.

- ¹⁵ Robert C. Schmitt, *Historical Statistics of Hawaii* (Honolulu: U P of Hawaii, 1977) 35; Patricia M. Alvarez, "Weaving a Cloak of Discipline: Hawai'i's Catholic Schools, 1840-1941" (Ph.D. diss, U of Hawai'i, 1994) xvi-xvii.
- ¹⁶ Schmitt, *Historical Statistics* 11.
- ¹⁷ Robert C. Schmitt, *The Missionary Census of Hawaii*, Pacific Anthropological Records No. 20 (Honolulu: BPBM, 1973) 28.
- ¹⁸ Bond, "Mission Station Reports" 1853, 3.
- ¹⁹ In the Great Mahele of 1848, the king awarded the land surrounding the church-school to Mataio Kekūanao'a. Number 7712, Royal Patent Book 18, 449, HBC.
- ²⁰ "School Inspectors Report," TD, Apr. 1, 1841, Box 262-1, DPI; Yzendoorn, *History* 179.
- ²¹ Ethel M. Damon, *Father Bond of Kohala: A Chronicle of Pioneer Life in Hawaii* (Honolulu: The Friend, 1927) 118-19.
- ²² Richards to Lota Maui, L, July 29, 1847, Box 261-43; Kalolo Pouzot to Armstrong, L, Oct. 2, 1849, Box 261-81, DPI.
- ²³ Agents' Reports, 1847, Box 262-1, DPI.
- ²⁴ Yzendoorn, *History* 161.
- ²⁵ Armstrong to Wyllie, L, Nov. 18, 1848, Box 261-1, DPI.
- ²⁶ Armstrong to Kamakea, L, Aug. 19, 1848, Box 261-43, DPI.
- ²⁷ Limaikaika (Armstrong), AMs, Apr. 30, 1851, PCR.
- ²⁸ Limaikaika, AMs, Apr. 30, 1851, PCR.
- ²⁹ Armstrong, "Journal of a Tour around the windward islands," Oct-Nov 1848, Box 261-1, DPI.
- ³⁰ Armstrong, "Journal."
- ³¹ Kalolo Pouzot to Armstrong, L, Oct 2, 1849; Agents' Reports, 1849, Box 261-81, DPI.
- ³² Dillon to Wyllie, L extract, Oct. 7, 1848, Box 261-1, DPI.
- ³³ Hawaii, *Foreign Affairs* 1851, 37; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom* 1: 358.
- ³⁴ Maigret, *Propagation de la Foi* XXVII (1855), 373.
- ³⁵ Bond to Armstrong, L, [rec'd Aug. 16, 1848], Box 261-81, DPI.
- ³⁶ "Change in School Law," [Armstrong], typed trans., Feb. 1848, Box 262-81, DPI; Hawaii, *Foreign Affairs* 1851, 105; Wyllie to Armstrong, L, Nov. 16, 1848, Box 261-1, DPI.
- ³⁷ Hawaii, *Foreign Affairs* 1851, 104-05.
- ³⁸ Armstrong to Wyllie, L, Dec. 1, 1848, Box 261-1, DPI.
- ³⁹ Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom* 1: 391-94.
- ⁴⁰ The opinion of Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom* 1: 358.
- ⁴¹ Hawaii, *Foreign Affairs* 1851, 103.
- ⁴² Robert Aldrich, *The French Presence in the South Pacific, 1842-1940* (Honolulu: U of Hawaii P, 1990) 93; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom* 1: 401-03.
- ⁴³ P May 10, June 14, June 21, 1851; William Lee to Armstrong, L, June 20, 1851, Box 261-81, DPI.

- 44 Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom* 1: 358–59; Hawaii, Report of the President of the Board of Education 1858, 8.
- 45 Maigret, *Propagation de la Foi* XXVII (1855): 377.
- 46 Bond to Armstrong, L, Jan. 3, 1855, Box 261-6, DPI.
- 47 Hawaii, *Board of Education* 1864, 13.
- 48 Robert Schoofs, *Pioneers of the Faith: History of the Catholic Mission in Hawaii (1827–1940)*, rev. Fay Wren Midkiff, ed. Louis Boeynaems (Honolulu: Louis Boeynaems, 1978) 173; Maigret to Propaganda Fide, L, June 24, 1861; Lucien Vaessen to Sup. Gen., L, Apr. 24, 1857, ss.cc. Archives, Rome.
- 49 Eukakio (Eustachius) to Armstrong, L, Dec. 11, 1856; Paku to Armstrong, Feb. 16, 1857, Box 261-81, DPI.
- 50 Armstrong to Makuaole, L, June 5, 1858; Makuaole to Armstrong, L, June 18, 1858, Box 261-7; Petition (27 names) to Armstrong, trans., Feb. 29, 1857; Petition (31 names) to Armstrong, trans., Apr. 20, 1857, Box 261-81; School Agents' Reports, 1853, Box 262-2, DPI; Maheu to Sup. Gen., L, July 15, 1859, ss.cc. Arch.
- 51 [Perrin] to [Wyllie], L, Mar. 22, 1858, Box 261-81, DPI.
- 52 Inspector General's Reports 1858, Box 262-1, DPI; DPI Minutebook, Mar. 14, 1857, Apr. 13, 1858, July 20, 1858.
- 53 Maheu is buried at Wai'āpuka. Schoofs, *Pioneers* 173.
- 54 George Hu'eū Sanford Kanahale, *Pauahi: The Kamehameha Legacy* (Honolulu: Kamehameha Schools P, 1986) 14, 68; Hawaii, *Board of Education* 1864, 12.
- 55 Henry Whitney, a missionary son, bought the *Advertiser* in 1856. Helen Geracimos Chapin, *Shaping History: The Role of Newspapers in Hawai'i* (Honolulu: U of Hawai'i P, 1996) 53.
- 56 Chapin, *Shaping History* 48.
- 57 Fornander to Editor, *HG* Apr. 7, 1866.
- 58 Damien to [Sup. Gen., ss.cc.], Jan. 10, 1867, micro., Hamilton Library.
- 59 Hawaii, *Board of Education* 1855, 11–12.
- 60 Inspector General's Report 1865, Box 262-1, DPI.
- 61 Eleanor Harmon Davis, *Abraham Fornander: A Biography* (Honolulu: U P of Hawaii, 1979) 181.
- 62 E.B., "Ins. Gen. of Schools Reviewed," *PCA* Mar. 14, 1868.
- 63 Bond quoted in Damon, *Father Bond* 121.
- 64 Petition to DPI, [1866], Box 262-1; Bond to DPI, L, 7 July 1866, Box 261-9, DPI.
- 65 Fornander to Dr. J. Wight, L, 27 Sept. 1869, Box 261-11, DPI.
- 66 Inspector General's Report, 1873, Box 262-1; Davis, *Fornander* 181; School Agents Report, 1873 and 1875, Box 262-4, DPI.
- 67 Inspector General's Report, 1873, Box 262-1, DPI.
- 68 Hawaii, Report of the Minister of Public Instruction 1896, 60–61; Schoofs, *Pioneers* 176.
- 69 Hawaii, *Board of Education* 1884, 43; 1886, 27–60 *pass.*; 1888, 10–60 *pass.*
- 70 Hawaii, *Public Instruction* 1894, 4–5.