

# The Role of Mataio Kekuanaoa in Directing and Challenging the Curriculum for Hawaiian Schools during the Nineteenth Century

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## Abstract

During the Westernization of Hawai'i, curriculum helped support the spread of an American hegemony. This study focuses on the role played by Mataio Kekuanaoa, who as President of the Board of Education, directed and challenged the curriculum for Hawaiian schools during the nineteenth century. His sponsorship of policies that challenged this inexorable "progress" towards Americanization offers a view of the curriculum history of Hawai'i not previously reported.

## Introduction

Even before the advent of Western explorers, Hawai'i was a differentiated society based upon competing chiefdoms and a stratified social system within each chiefdom. The diversity of Hawaiians' identity prevented a united front in resisting the encroaching colonizers. Moreover, the changes wrought by the forceful uniting of the island chain under one ruler and the legal erasure of the traditional Hawaiian culture when that ruler died led to further schisms among Hawaiians. This lack of unity among Hawaiians weakened their resistance to the development of a Western-style hegemonic structure that was largely delivered through the establishment of schools and a curriculum that enabled the colonizers to successfully bring Hawai'i into the global orbit of an American empire.

The purpose of this study is to demonstrate that in spite of the powerful American forces involved in spreading an

American hegemony over Hawai'i during the nineteenth century there was some coherent and organized resistance from one Hawaiian leader. While the history of Hawaiian curricular innovations throughout two periods of time moved steadily towards the state where schools helped support the spread of an American hegemony, for eight years during the second period under the Presidency of Mataio Kekuanaoa, the Kingdom's Board of Education sponsored policies that challenged this inexorable "progress" towards Americanizing and preparing Hawaiians to be citizens of the United States. Agreeing with the contention made by Bernard Bailyn (1960) that research should provide a critique of previous studies and the call by Hayden White (1999) that history is about retrieving the past in order to grasp the present, this study focuses on the role played by Kekuanaoa in directing and challenging the curriculum for Hawaiian schools during the second period of extending an American hegemony. This approach is taken in order to offer a view of the education for Hawaiians not previously reported and provide a means to challenge the perspective that Hawaiians readily accepted the goals of the dominant class of Americans. In order to provide the context for Kekuanaoa's role, this study presents the extension of American hegemony, utilizing curricular innovations over two time periods: the first 20 years of introducing a Western curriculum and the last 40 years of the nineteenth century.

The theoretical framework that provides the direction for this paper is the theory of hegemony. According to Antonio Gramsci (1971), hegemony is power achieved through a combination of coercion and consent. He argued that the ruling classes achieve domination not by force or coercion alone, but also by creating subjects who willingly submit to rule. “Spontaneous” consent is given by the masses to the dominant group. In the hegemonic system, democracy exists through shared decision making. Nevertheless, the intellectual and moral leadership of members of the dominant group enable them to acquire the consent of the masses. Consent itself derives from the prestige (and consequent confidence) of the dominant group. With this consent the dominant group is able to control the political economy (a state whereby political and economic organizations function together in a society).

### **Mataio Kekuanao’s Background**

Mataio Kekuanao was born to *kaukau ali’i* status. During the traditional Hawaiian culture, the *kaukau ali’i* were the server class of chiefs who were high enough in status to have contact with the *ali’i nui* (high chiefs) but not high enough to intermarry with them (Beckwith 1940; Handy 1927; I’i 1959; Malo 1951). In 1819, the *‘āinoā* era replaced the *kapu* system when the traditional culture was terminated. *‘Āinoā* is a Hawaiian metaphor involving adopting Western ways in order to preserve Hawaiian sovereignty. As a term, it originally referred to freedom of choice or literally free eating. From freedom to choose one’s life style, including one’s religious practice, the *‘āinoā* metaphor eventually evolved to include any efforts relating to preserving Hawaiian freedom or sovereignty. During the *‘āinoā* era there was a mixture of thinking and practices, melding the

traditional Hawaiian culture with Christian teachings. One example of this hybridization was the end of close-relation marriages among the chiefs. The consequence of this change was the marriages of *ali’i nui* to *kaukau ali’i*. In spite of this new role, the *kaukau ali’i* continued to serve the *ali’i nui*. Kekuanao was one of the many *kaukau ali’i* who adopted this new role during the *‘āinoā* era. They were educated by the missionaries, and expected to both sustain the traditional and incorporate the best of the new ways (Kame’eleihiwa 1992). He was allowed to marry high chieftess Kina’u, daughter of Kamehameha I. The offspring of this marriage were the last two Kings of the Kamehameha lineage, Alexander Liholiho (Kamehameha IV) and Lota Kapuāiua (Kamehameha V). Even before his marriage, he was given important positions in the Kingdom, serving as Commander in Chief of the Kingdom’s army and Governor of the island of O’ahu. Under the Constitutional government, he served as a member of the House of Nobles. The constitution delegated absolute powers to the sovereign and the premier; it established a bicameral parliament, consisting of a hereditary House of Nobles made up of chiefs, and an elective House of Representatives; it ordained that all new laws were to be in tune with God, passed by a majority of both houses, and signed by both the King and the Premier (Kuykendall, 1966). Kekuanao’s most important role for this study was serving as the President of the Board of Education from 1860 to 1868.

### **Forging a Collaborative Relationship**

Before Westerners arrived, the Hawaiian culture was a series of competing chiefdoms where the leaders’ primary responsibility was to provide *pono* (a balanced, peaceful life) for all of its members. Hawaiians were an intelligent people who used varying forms of education to

inculcate members into their culture. Between 1778, when Captain James Cook made contact with Hawaiians, and 1820, when the American Protestant missionaries arrived, Hawaiian society was already undergoing transformation caused by the collision of external and internal forces. Kekuanaoa was one of the key Hawaiian chiefs that provided a peaceful transformation of Hawai'i from chiefdom to modern nation. In 1823, he accompanied Kamehameh II to England where he experienced first-hand the advances made by Western science and technology (Kanahale 1986). When the missionaries arrived, they immediately began to collaborate with him and other Hawaiian chiefs to transform the Kingdom into a modern state.

Western education arrived in the Islands when the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) sent their first company of missionaries in 1819. The American Protestant missionaries, who arrived in Hawai'i in 1820, were the primary curriculum developers who introduced Western education. For the missionaries from the ABCFM, Hawai'i was one of many frontiers for their religion and culture. Their adherence to an aggressive brand of Calvinism and New England values led to the following two-fold mission: 1) converting Hawaiians to Christianity and 2) remolding the Hawaiian society into the image of New England. Connected to this mission was the need to help the Kingdom remain sovereign.

### **First Period of American Hegemony**

During the nineteenth century, there were two periods of hegemonization involving educational innovations. The first period was when the missionary educators, working with Hawaiian leaders, strove to use education in the formation of consciousness, which involved getting Native students to accept the superiority

of white culture and the inferiority of their own culture. As the result of their collaboration with Hawaiian monarchs, the missionaries developed as the intellectual and moral leaders through their work in creating a modern Christian Hawaiian state. Working with Hawaiian leaders, the missionary educators strove to use education in the formation of consciousness, involving getting Native students to accept the superiority of white culture and the inferiority of their own culture. This mirrors Gramsci (1994), who emphasized that hegemony is the exercise of ideological power. Education, especially teaching in the vernacular, was important in providing active consent of Natives through mass democratic organization. Gramsci (1971) stated that "ideology is crucial to creating consent, it is the medium through which certain ideas are transmitted and more important, held to be true" (29).

The missionaries preferred to teach all classes of Hawaiians equally. But from the beginning, the first pupils were the chiefs (Alexander 1902). According to missionary historians, over the next twenty years, missionaries implemented an educational program in five steps (Alexander 1902; Alexander and Atkinson 1888; Bingham 1847; Dibble 1909; Westervelt 1911). The first step was developing English schools for chiefs because they had not yet translated any reading materials into the Hawaiian language.

The second step was to translate reading material into the Hawaiian language once it became clear how difficult it was to teach literacy in the English language (Westervelt 1911). The third step was to send the best students from the school for chiefs to act as teachers at schools for commoners throughout the district. This system involved some training of the chiefs by bringing them together from all parts of the

district to the district school for a period of several weeks or months (*Annual Report* 1832). Between 1824 and 1827, nearly the entire adult population of the Hawaiian Islands went to school. This missionary educational system reached the peak of its development in 1832, when more than 52,000 pupils were enrolled in 1,100 schools, the equivalent of 40 percent of the total Hawaiian population (Kuykendall, 1966).

Hawaiians saw education as beneficial to preserving their culture. They were fascinated with the idea of being able to convey thought and meaning through the use of symbols. In her investigation of the first Hawaiian language newspaper, Noenoe Silva (1999) discovered that the editors used the printed word to celebrate Hawaiian culture. Lilikala Kameeleihiwa (1992), also a contemporary Hawaiian scholar, reported Hawaiians, chiefs and commoners alike, were thrilled with the *palapala* (learning to read) “because it allowed them to extend their great intellectual and poetic tradition” (142).

Because the education process helped to prepare leaders, voters, and consumers, it also met the goals of Hawaiians. Teaching in the vernacular was an important part of the education process since by providing literacy in their language, mass education was realized quickly. Once Lāhaināluna High School was established, learning in the vernacular allowed Hawaiian elites to receive an academic education (Lecker 1938).

The establishment of Lāhaināluna High School as a teacher-training center resolved the dilemma posed by inadequately prepared teachers. This was the fourth step in the development of an educational system by the missionaries during the early years. The purpose of the school was to prepare young men to become teachers in the common schools or assistant teachers of religion. It was also determined that the school would use the manual

labor system and a common school curriculum (Frear 1920; Westervelt 1911).

An appeal to the American Board for more mission helpers satisfied the fifth step. Between 1831 and 1849, ten mission parties arrived and most were sent to teach or help at the schools. Even though all of the recruits were connected spiritually to the mission’s goals, many were not trained for missionary work. However, they were a very skilled group and quite adaptable to the needs of the schools (Anderson 1872).

During the second decade of the missionaries’ presence in Hawai‘i, they reorganized their educational endeavors by shifting from adult to child education and by improving the training of teachers. However, by 1840, the missionaries were obliged to turn the common schools over to the government. Bernard Wist (1937), the premiere scholar on public education during the nineteenth century, speculated that the cuts in financial support from the American Board due to the economic depression in the United States led to the missionaries’ encouragement of the government’s actions regarding the schools. While the schools were a valuable adjunct to the mission, the only course of action was to surrender the schools to the government because of insufficient funds to build schools and pay teachers.

In 1840 and 1841, the first school laws were passed whereby the government assumed charge of the common schools and gave general sanction to what had been previously only local edicts of the governors. Under these laws, a superintendent supervised school agents from each of the islands. Attendance at school became compulsory for all children between the ages of 4 and 14, and local communities were organized to cooperate with the resident missionaries in the selection and support of the teachers (Wist 1937).

The agents organized the parents in each community to provide for teachers and schoolhouses through a labor tax. Over the next 20 years, the public school system was reorganized with the cooperation of the government. In 1846, Kamehameha III began this process by establishing the Department of Education, headed by the Minister of Public Instruction. Reverend William Richards, who had already resigned from the mission and was an advisor to the King, was the first to assume this post. The Kingdom was divided into 25 school districts with an appointed school agent in charge of each district's schools (Wist 1937).

In 1833, when the school system for adult Hawaiians began to fall apart, the missionaries at most of the stations began to create select schools. Select or station schools were day schools developed for the best students from the district common schools. When the government took over the common school, most of the select schools joined the common schools to form the public school system. Coinciding with the development of select schools was the beginning of the special schools. Special schools were those select schools receiving sufficient financial support to remain independent from the public school system and boarded their students (*Extract* 1835). The rationale to create these boarding schools was to provide an education for students under the continuous influence of the missionary educators. As a result, it was agreed to board students at the Hilo select school, begin a boarding school for girls at Wailuku, Maui, and shift from educating adults in a day situation to children as boarders at Lāhaināluna High School. All these innovations were considered to be experimental. By this time Reverend Richard Armstrong, a missionary on the island of Maui, replaced Reverend William Richards as the Minister of Public Instruction. The impetus for

these changes was the arguments of Reverends David Lyman, the Principal of Hilo Boys' Boarding School, and Richard Armstrong in favor of more practical, character-oriented education for Hawaiians. Both Lyman and Armstrong had chosen to ply their missionary training at educating Hawaiians. They believed that boarding was deemed essential to obfuscate the bad influences from family members and other whites. Since only Lāhaināluna educated students beyond the age of 14, the best students at Hilo School for Boys, who were generally younger, finished their education at Lāhaināluna High School. Meanwhile, the girls at Wailuku School for Girls were groomed to become wives of Lāhaināluna High School graduates (*Extracts* 1836).

Initially, all three schools had a common school curriculum in addition to the manual labor and/or manual training curriculum. When Armstrong and Lyman spoke about wanting a "practical" education at all the select schools, they were referring to the use of manual labor and/or manual training curriculum. Both Lyman and Armstrong were prepared for their preference for a practical curriculum because they received manual labor training at the American seminaries they attended. Consequently, it was hoped that the select schools would also implement this meaning of "practical" into their curriculum. Even though the curriculum at the Lāhaināluna High School included manual labor, in time, its academics became formal. In contrast to a common school curriculum, a formal school curriculum was at this time the equivalent of a high school or academy curriculum. Eventually, students desiring to enter into the ministry were provided training in the classics after they had finished the required four-year course of instruction (Wist 1937).

## Second Period of American Hegemony

A second period of hegemonization involving educational innovations began during the last 40 years of the nineteenth century. This period differed from the previous era due to the fact that politically and economically Hawai'i was now internationally connected. There was also a real threat of force behind the emerging dominant Americans through the presence of American military as the result of the leasing of Pearl Harbor by the Kingdom for an American naval base in 1876. The economy became international due to the success of the sugar plantation industry, which necessitated that the government aid in providing markets and a labor supply. Gramsci (1971) postulated that "the more the immediate economic life of a nation is subordinate to international relations, the more a particular party will come to represent this situation and to exploit it, with the aim of preventing rival parties from gaining the upper hand (176)." As second generation missionaries came to adulthood, their determination to protect the political economy their fathers had developed led them to apply coercive force in 1887 and 1892, ultimately leading to their assuming total governmental control. The success of coercion by whites led to policies, including curricular ones, which were often antithesis to the best interests of the independent Hawaiian nation. Whereas, in the previous period, Hawai'i was treated as a sovereign nation, during this period it was already considered a part of the American empire. As a result, curricular innovations were undertaken based upon assimilating Hawaiians into the political and economic structure of America. This required educating Hawaiians for low-skill positions in the economy, which led to an inferior status that would last for generations.

The imposition of American hegemony occurred because underlying the collaboration

between missionaries who wanted to transform Hawai'i into a Christian civilization and the Hawaiian chiefs who wanted to preserve the Kingdom's sovereignty was a contradiction. Both missionaries and Hawaiians needed to be considered partners for this collaboration to lead to the success of both parties' goals. In the early years of the missionaries' development of an educational system as well as the transformation of the political system and economic structure both goals were achieved and there was a semblance of partnership. Increasingly, especially as a second generation of missionaries came into power, missionaries and other whites began to exert a more overt superiority over Hawaiians. Mataio Kekuanaoa was the most prominent Hawaiian to resist the conferring of an inferior status by the dominant class on Hawaiians. Nevertheless, he still believed that through collaboration Hawai'i was capable of achieving Hawaiian and missionary goals.

Historians of Hawai'i have chosen to ignore Kekuanaoa's role in resisting the curricular goals of the dominant whites, particularly the American Protestant missionaries. In fact, the historians (many of them missionaries or their descendents) portrayed Kekuanaoa as a pawn for his son, Kamehameha IV. However, when one reads the voluminous speeches made by Kekuanaoa, it is easy to see that he was an intellectual and quite clear that his son was the pupil while he was the teacher. During his eight year tenure as the President of the Board of Education, he was prominent in providing a Hawaiian response to the following two reforms proposed by the American Protestant missionaries: the establishment of private female seminaries and the acceleration of replacing Hawaiian with English as the language of instruction.

## **Mataio Kekuanaoa's Contribution to Female Education**

Although the new *Mo'i* (monarch), Kamehameha IV, was less friendly to the missionaries, he did support innovations in education just as his predecessor had done. In spite of his distrust of the American missionaries, he had a great deal of respect for Richard Armstrong, the Minister of Public Instruction. No doubt, Armstrong's support of reforming education through female education was influential (Armstrong 1858). When Armstrong died in 1860, Mataio Kekuanaoa, the King's father, was appointed President of the Board of Education (a change in the title of the position was made at this time). Based upon the way Kekuanaoa took charge of implementing this reform, it was the father who was making policy rather than the son.

The first experiments in female schools occurred during a period of little interest in educating girls. Kuykendall (1932) explained that Hawaiian parents were less interested in the education of their daughters than of their sons. He cited the lower number of females enrolled in the English language select schools as evidence. During late 1850s, there was much interest in female education as evinced by discussions in periodicals. The journal, *The Friend*, initiated a journalistic challenge to the *Advertiser* and *The Polynesian*, the other prominent English language journals of that time period, and chided both the government and the ABCFM for not promoting female education (Female education 1857). In 1860, the other papers responded, generating more interest in female education. These discussions were especially concerned with the conditions of the ordinary Hawaiian home, suggesting that girls be removed to boarding schools (Report of Education 1866).

Kekuanaoa's first effort to influence the curriculum for Hawaiian females began on January 16, 1860, when he authorized the charter for the Makiki Family School, a school for girls. This was the first new school in 20 years. The closing of Wailuku School freed Maria Odgen, its former Principal, and she was called upon to establish this school (*Kawaihāo* 1885). At Kekuanaoa's recommendation, the legislative assembly of 1860 amended the Civil Code, giving specific authority to the Kingdom's Board of Education to establish family schools for Hawaiian girls and also made it lawful for the schools to be aided by the government even if private organizations or individuals operated them (Kamehameha IV 1860). He devised a government aid formula based upon capitation fees paid per child on the following scale: for every child in a family school (later to include female seminaries) for 6 months, \$10; for 1 year, \$20; for 2 to 3 years, \$25; and for 4 years or more, \$30 (Government support 1865). In 1865, Kekuanaoa led the Board of Education to adopt special rules for the governance of these schools. Schools were required to teach reading and writing in either English or Hawaiian, arithmetic, the elements of grammar and geography, and some branch of industrial work. The internal arrangements of the schools had to be conducive to the physical and moral well being of the pupils. The schools were to be conducted on Christian principles, but each set of board of directors or trustees was given full discretion as to the form of Christianity they might choose to inculcate (Kekuanaoa 1860).

At the start of this period of female education, the driving force was still the intent to train Hawaiian females to proper domestic habits. More concern was also expressed about providing the graduates of female schools with the means of a livelihood as well. Besides training the girls to

produce household goods or domestic skills they could sell, some missionary voices called for the training of Hawaiian females as either missionaries or public school teachers (*Annual reports* 1863).

Although Kekuanaoa was willing to have the government financially support female seminaries, it was still up to independent organizations or individuals to establish these schools. The American Protestant missionaries again took the lead as in the past. Reverends Poque and Andrews, officials of Hawaiian Evangelical Association (HEA), the organization that governed all American Protestant missionary activity in Hawai'i, sent a circular to various missionaries throughout the Hawaiian Islands asking several questions. The answers to these questions helped to fashion policies for a series of new seminaries. The responses to this circular indicated that the following were the most pertinent questions (the letter containing the original questions was not found in the HEA archives). Should there be the establishment of female seminaries? Should the seminaries be like Wailuku Female Seminary? At what age should the education begin? How should the seminaries be financed? The consensus of the responses included the following goal statements: establish seminaries using the earlier Wailuku Female Seminary; attract young girls and keep them at the seminary until they married or found employment; make boarding compulsory at the seminaries in order to keep students away from corrupting influences; locate seminaries away from major port cities where the bad influences were greatest; charge parents or guardians for the expenses of the girls; employ at least two instructors, one for academics and one for household arts, and offer a salary high enough to attract competent teachers; and provide a manual labor and common school curriculum taught in

the English language to help defray the costs and prepare girls for life after school (Alexander 1858; Clark 1858; Johnson 1858; Paris 1858).

In some ways, the efforts to educate females at the missionary schools were really meant to impact Hawaiian men. Noenoe Silva (1999), in her translations of Richard Armstrong's government paper, *Ka Hou Hawaii*, illustrated this idea. Armstrong reported that "in enlightened/civilized lands, women work at sewing, taking care of children, cleaning, and teaching school. Then, life is comfortable. If their bodies and their houses are clean, their husbands do not look for other women" (98-99). Silva surmised after translating an editorial in this paper that Armstrong thought female education "was a way to encourage the use of English language schools toward socializing the population in white ways, with the emphasis, however on men – women were to be the tool whereby men would learn" (99).

The missionaries appeared in concert with Kekuanaoa's goal for educating Hawaiian females when they announced that they wanted the Natives to become teachers or adept in some industrial skill. The missionaries borrowed the structure of the female seminaries from the United States to accomplish their goal (Beyer 2003). The reality was that since the missionaries believed Hawaiians to be inferior the curriculum for Hawaiian girls was different from that for white girls. Reverend Nathan Emerson (1884) explained why this was true:

The educational needs of the Hawaiian girls are greater than those of the girl born of enlightened white parents. In the case of the Hawaiian girls there is almost total lack of home-education to begin with. Morals and manners, habits of industry, thrift and economy – plants of slow growth – together with the

necessary book-knowledge, which I am far from despising, have to be imparted to her all at once. (32)

He proposed that the curriculum for Hawaiian girls “consist of a thorough and systematic training in all the essential or closely allied branches of housekeeping” (Emerson 1884, 33).

Kekuanaoa envisioned schools for Hawaiian girls as a means to prepare them for citizenship in a sovereign Hawaiian Kingdom. As adults, he expected Hawaiian females would influence their children and husbands to value education and act responsibly. He also believed that the curriculum at the seminaries would prepare them to be teachers or use the industrial skills they learned to become productive member of society. By contrast, the American Protestant missionaries were intent on inculcating an acceptance on the part of the Hawaiian girls to an inferior status in the Kingdom. The curriculum at the female seminaries was meant to pave the way for whites to eventually control the entire Hawaiian political economy. Consequently, as English language replaced Hawaiian as the language of instruction, Hawaiian females were less likely to be employed as teachers even when their education was provided in the English language. American teachers were imported to provide both instruction and indoctrination to an American hegemony.

### **Mataio Kekuanaoa’s Resistance to English Language Instruction**

Another reform proposed by the American Protestant missionaries during Kekuanaoa’s term as President of the Board of Education was the move to replace instruction in the vernacular with English. All factions, Hawaiian, missionary, and anti-missionary whites, were involved with this issue. The missionaries were adamant that teaching commoners in their own language was

preferable to teaching them in English. Primarily, the missionaries began schools, teaching in the vernacular because they believed students learned in their own language at a more rapid rate. After translating the Bible, they discovered how much better the words of the Bible sounded in the Hawaiian language. Many of the teachers at the special schools for Hawaiians were reluctant to abandon the Hawaiian language for this reason. Ralph Stueber (1964), whose dissertation focused on the way language helped to create a unique multicultural community in Hawai‘i, had a different explanation for their behavior:

The missionaries understood the value of the Hawaiian tongue as one of the few remaining binding forces in the Hawaiian community and consequently became fluent in it as quickly as possible. It was this consideration as much as any thing else that won for them a high degree of respect and friendship of the Hawaiian people. (42)

It also was apparent that more advanced topics were learned when Hawaiians were taught from translations of Americans texts than was accomplished if the students were taught entirely in the English language (*Minutes of Hawaiian* 1854; Report of Waioli 1860).

Conflict arose between missionaries and the majority of the anti-missionary white community when the latter strongly favored teaching Hawaiians in the English language. Prior to the 1850s, the anti-missionary white strident voices attacked the missionaries for teaching in the vernacular. The critics of the missionaries contended that teaching in the vernacular enabled the missionaries to control the Hawaiians and ensured the success of their proselytizing mission. After the governmental and economic changes of the 1840s and 1850s, the missionary commitment

to the Native language was challenged by the necessity of Hawaiians to communicate in English due to the increased demands of commercial centers, marriages between Hawaiian women and other races, and the increased size and influence of the English speaking foreign community (Stueber 1864).

As the result of the push to institute English instruction, the Minister of Public Instruction, Richard Armstrong, encouraged those select schools with the ability to teach in English to switch languages for instruction. These English select schools would require that the parents pay \$25 towards the tuition (later it would be half of whatever was the tuition cost). The common schools continued to be free and taught in the vernacular. Over the next 40 years, Hawaiian parents continued in increasing numbers to pay the extra tuition. Just before the Constitution of 1887, 54 out of 131 public schools were English select schools. These schools tended to be larger, so they represented about two-thirds of the public school population (Gibson 1886). While English language instruction predominated in the commercial centers, vernacular schools were still thriving in rural and remote areas. Hawaiians who were living closer to traditional ways populated these communities; as a consequence, they tended to prefer instruction in the Hawaiian language. After the new constitution in 1887, the effort to switch to teaching in English increased (Bishop 1892). By the eve of the Revolution in 1892, only 5 percent of the Hawaiian public school population was still educated in the vernacular. After the Revolution, the last remaining vernacular schools were closed and English was made the language of schools and all government transactions. In 1895, legislation made it illegal to use the Hawaiian language in any public transaction, including education (Castle 1896).

Even though missionary evidence substantiates the support of Hawaiian parents for English language schools, the actual transition was slow until whites had control of the government under the Constitution of 1887. It may be that Hawaiian parents were becoming aware of how the political and economic changes made English proficiency more and more essential. However, support for the transition to English was not universal. Mataio Kekuanaoa questioned its merits throughout his reports as the President of the Board of Education. He felt that “the way to destroy the Hawaiian Kingdom and the feelings and attitudes in favor of it is to allow the people to acquire contempt for their native language” (Kekuanaoa 1861). In his 1864 Biennial Report, he criticized the education provided at the English select schools:

The result of experience warrants the assertion, that the attempt to give Hawaiian children, whose language out of school, in the play-ground, and at their homes, is exclusively Hawaiian, an education in *day school*, through the medium of English text books only, has not met with success enough, when compared with the advantages to be derived from a common school education in their own language, to warrant the change in favor of the English, even were the expense not so enormously disproportionate. (6)

The expenses were higher for these English language schools than for the vernacular schools because of the need to provide housing and pay higher salaries for the predominantly American teachers in these schools. For example, in 1886, the total cost of education per year for the 4,262 student enrolled in the common schools was \$68,198.37 (\$16/pupil); the total cost of education per year for the 8,974 students enrolled in the

English language schools was \$233,333.14 (\$26/pupils) (Gibson 1886). Kekuanaoa warned that if the Hawaiian language were lost, dire consequence would befall the independence of the Hawaiian Kingdom. He was not suggesting abandoning English instruction. Instead, he called for a bilingual approach. Over the next four years, a few schools were listed in Biennial Reports as practitioners of bilingual instruction, but no details provided regarding their success (Kekuanaoa 1866, 1868). Because the teachers at the English select schools were usually whites from the United States, the public schools would have to find teachers competent in both languages. Graduates of Lāhaināluna Seminary, Hilo Boys' Boarding School, and the female seminaries were capable of doing the job. However, by then, Charles R. Bishop was the President of the Board of Education.

Although Bishop was not a missionary, he was considered to be a member of the pro-missionary faction. Even his marriage to a Hawaiian did not alter his taking actions that supported missionary rather than Hawaiian interests. Whenever he was faced with the decision to use educated Hawaiians to teach in schools other than common schools, he declined to do so. In a book on Bishop, Harold Kent (1965) implied that Bishop's concern about the morality of Hawaiians kept him from placing them in teaching positions. An example of this occurred when Charles King, a graduate of Kamehameha School for Boys and Oswego Normal School, applied to teach at the Kamehameha School. Bishop denied his employment. This action precipitated a policy at the Kamehameha Schools that would last for over 50 years of not employing a Hawaiian as a teacher or administrator. Furthermore, Bishop's commitment to English becoming the language of

the nation also precluded his acceptance of bilingualism.

Walter Murray Gibson was the next President of the Board of Education after Bishop. Gibson had been a part of the anti-missionary white community ever since he arrived in Hawai'i. It was due to this relationship with the missionary faction that King Kalakaua, who was attempting to wrest control away from the dominant Americans at this time (Kuykendall 1968), appointed him to his position. Gibson, like Kekuanaoa, was supportive of preserving the Hawaiian language. However, by the time that Gibson took over as President of the Board of Education in 1884, the spread of English instruction was well advanced. Nevertheless, he called for hiring a Hawaiian language instructor for the larger schools in order to give instruction for two or three hours per week to Hawaiian children (Gibson 1886).

There were other practical reasons for the increase in English instruction among the schools of Hawai'i. One reason was that as immigrant workers of other races began to increase after the Reciprocity Treaty with the United States, their children were required by law to attend the neighborhood school. Teaching in the English language made more sense than in the vernacular. From 1880 to 1894, non-Hawaiians increased from 8 to 36 percent of the population (Schmitt 1968). A second reason was that the missionaries switched to English instruction in their special schools because their curriculum demanded it. As the special schools began to turn to a form of manual training, English instruction became necessary to recruit teachers skilled enough to teach either the academic or manual training courses. After the late 1880s, the increased emphasis on manual training among the public schools would also require hiring more foreign teachers conversant in the English language and

knowledgeable in the skills of manual training (Beyer 2007). By the end of sovereignty, the percent of English-speaking foreign teachers was nearly 70 percent of the teaching force at the independent schools and nearly 50 percent at the government schools (Castle, 1896).

## **Conclusion**

During most of the nineteenth century after the traditional culture was terminated, Westerners working with Hawaiians prepared Hawai'i to become a modern sovereign nation. While the relationship to make this a reality between American missionaries and Hawaiians were outwardly collaborative, both groups had agendas that were in conflict. Hawaiians wanted their nation to be independent and sovereign. They envisioned the relationship necessary to make this happen was a partnership whereby Westerners provided advice and Hawaiians controlled and directed the nation. The missionaries' agenda was to transform Hawai'i into a "civilized" and Christian nation. However, their belief that Hawaiians were inferior led to them imposing an American hegemony whereby missionaries and other whites served as the dominant class and Hawaiians as the subordinate class.

During the 1860s, when Kekuanaoa served as President of the Board of Education, two reforms were transforming the education of Hawaiians. The first reform was the sponsorship of female private education. Mataio Kekuanaoa provided the leadership and helped to ensure success through government funding. His efforts to guide the curriculum for female education established the means for an alternative path whereby educated Hawaiians would lead the continued modernization of the Hawaiian Kingdom. When the American Protestant missionaries took the lead in establishing female

seminaries, they instituted different plans. For the members of the dominant class, educating Hawaiian females was a way to subordinate Hawaiians.

The second reform was replacing the Hawaiian language with English as the language of instruction. Mataio Kekuanaoa was the most prominent voice in the Hawaiian government to understand the danger it posed to the survival of Hawaiian sovereignty. After Kekuanaoa died, Charles Bishop became President of the School Board. Bishop was a long-time ally of the missionary faction. Upon assuming control of the school system, he accelerated the goal of the dominant class to prepare Hawaiians to become American citizens. Of course, this citizenship was to be subordinate to whites. Thus, the dominant class of whites embarked on a concerted effort to Americanize education for Hawaiians by replacing the Hawaiian language with English, employing more American instructors, and utilizing a common school and manual training curriculum. When they needed to convince the people of the United States to support annexation, they emphasized the dominance of American institutions in Hawai'i, particularly the use of the English language.

The replacement of Hawaiians by missionaries and other whites as the dominant class relegated the true people of Hawai'i to secondary status. Since education was the means for which this secondary status was accomplished, this study provides contemporary educators with an understanding of the past that may help them improve education for Hawaiians today. Particularly, it provides research goals that include a critique of previous studies and retrieves the past in order to grasp the present. By focusing on the role played by Kekuanaoa in attempting to direct and challenge the curriculum of Hawaiian schools, this research accomplishes these goals.

This approach is taken in order to offer a view of Mataiao Kekuanaoa not previously reported and provide a means to challenge the perspective that there were no Hawaiians who challenged the goals of the dominant class of Americans during the nineteenth century.

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