HE KAAO NO KEKAHI MAU KEIKI ALII

OR

PYRAMUS AND THISBE IN PARADISE

Robert J Newman
University of Hawaii at Manoa.

The years following the accession of Kamehameha IV in 1854 saw an increased opening of Hawaii to European ideals and culture. This movement away from American domination was spearheaded by the Anglophilism of the king, and was supported by the minister of state, Robert C. Wyllie. This heightened interest in Europe gave a greater impetus to intellectual and cultural activities in Hawaii. An important outcome of this shift was the establishment of Ka Nupepa Ku `oko `a by Henry M. Whitney in October 1861. The broad scope of articles in this newspaper, mostly reported in the Hawaiian language, reflected the new interest which the average Hawaiian had in foreign lands and cultures. Whitney himself, in the first issue of the paper (October 1861, p.2) stated that, among other things, his paper was devoted “to a dissemination of foreign ideas, both as regards mode of life, habits, business and industry; with a view to improve, expand and elevate the native mind; that the natives may rise to an equality with foreigners.” Whitney’s newspaper filled an important need in Hawaii by providing important information and interesting stories about Europe and other parts of the world to the native Hawaiians who could not afford books.

1 I would like to thank Prof. Nicklaus Schweizer of the European Languages and Literature Department and Prof. Rubelita Johnson of the Indo-Pacific Language Department of the University of Hawaii for their invaluable advice and help. I would also like to thank the anonymous reader for Prudentia whose suggestions were very helpful in revising this paper. Finally I would like to thank my wife, Anna Newman, for her patient reading and sound advice, without which this paper would not have materialized.

2 The desire of Kamehameha IV and Queen Emma for closer ties with England, which were viewed as necessary for strengthening the monarchy, resulted in the establishment of the Anglican Church in the Hawaiian kingdom; the king himself translated the Prayer Book into Hawaiian. As a sign of the friendly relations between England and Hawaii, Queen Victoria agreed to be the godmother for the Prince of Hawaii. Cf. R. S. Kuykendall, The Hawaiian Kingdom 1854-1874 (Honolulu, 1953) 78-99; R.S. Kuykendall and A.G. Day, Hawaii: A History (revised edition, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1961) 130-2.

3 N. Schweizer, Hawai‘i und die deutschsprachigen Völker (Bern, 1982) 201: “In diesem Sinne diente Ka Nupepa Ku `oko `a einem höheren Zweck. Es ist bewegend zu hören, wie alte Hawaiier die Ungeduld und Vorfreude ihrer Eltern und Grosseltern beschreiben, welche die Ankunft der neuesten Ausgabe kaum erwarten konnten. Die meisten hatten nicht genug Geld, um die wenigen damals erhältlichen und sehr teuren Bücher zu kaufen, sodass ihr
The interest in European culture, sparked by the Hawaiian political atmosphere of the middle of the 19th century, elicited newspaper articles including translations of Grimm fairy tales, stories about Frederick the Great, Napoleon, and Mary, Queen of Scots, among others. Recent history and culture were not the only subjects, however; interest in Europe also meant interest in Europe's classical heritage, Greek and Latin. Among the several articles which appeared in *Ka Nupepa Ku 'oko* dealing with ancient topics, I have chosen to investigate a story from p. 1 of the April 5th, 1862 edition entitled "He Kaao no Kekahi mau Keiki Alii" ("A Legend about some Royal Children") as an example of native Hawaiian interest in classical antiquity. This story is an adaptation of the Pyramus and Thisbe story from Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 4. 55-166. Although the translator recorded only his initials, G.K.K., his familiarity with Hawaiian culture and attitudes, which are clear from his adaptation of Ovid's story, indicate that he was probably a native Hawaiian. Beyond this assumption the identity of the translator cannot be ascertained.

Although the decision to translate and adapt the story of Pyramus and Thisbe from the *Metamorphoses* is obvious, simply because of its popularity, the story of the unhappy young lovers provided the perfect source to fuel the Hawaiian love of...
story-telling. The Hawaiian translation of the Pyramus and Thisbe story, however, played a far more important role than simply as a good narration. Even though a closer inspection of the Hawaiian, however, reveals that the author actually translated Ovid's text, the translator did not simply give a literal rendition of the original, but transformed it into a traditional Hawaiian Romance story, adapting it by incorporating settings and practices familiar to his readers without significantly changing the original story. This new type of Hawaiian literature was spearheaded by the work of Haleole, who published the Hawaiian kaʻao, or tale, of Laieikawai as a serial in the same paper at about the same time, in the early sixties. The translation and adaptation work together as a whole, allowing the author to communicate the tragic love story in Ovid's words, while, at the same time, transforming the terse and carefully constructed poetry of the original into the lush and full poetry of the Hawaiian language. In order to illustrate the new type of Hawaiian literature which grew out of the new interest in European and classical culture, I will first investigate the parts of the Pyramus and Thisbe story which the Hawaiian author translated directly from Ovid's text. This step will be followed by an analysis of the changes and adaptations which were made, and the tension

7 Although a close investigation of the Hawaiian text shows that Ovid's Latin text itself served as the model for the translation, still we cannot rule out that the translator used an English translation. If he did, the translation was extremely literal, taking absolutely no liberties. Such a translation would have probably been a private production, no doubt done at the request of the translator himself. The existence of such a translation, then, does not invalidate the main argument, that native Hawaiians were interested in stories from classical antiquity and, even if they themselves may not have taken the time to learn Latin, at least they wanted as close a reproduction of the original text as possible on which to base their adaptations.

8 For a discussion of the romance of Laieikawai, with a text and translation, see The Hawaiian Romance of Laieikawai, with introduction and translation by M.W. Beckwith (Bureau of American Ethnology, Washington, D.C. 1917). The publishing of this romance was intended as a spur for the creation of a native literature that could be respected by Europeans but at the same time remain loyal to its native culture. "It was put into writing by a native Hawaiian, Haleole by name, who hoped thus to awaken in his countrymen an interest in genuine native story-telling based upon the folklore of their race and preserving its ancient customs -- already fast disappearing since Cook's rediscovery of the group in 1778 opened the way to foreign influence -- and by this means to inspire in them old ideals of racial glory" (Beckwith, 293).

9 Tragic love stories were popular among Hawaiian traditional tales, e.g. Pele and Hiʻiaka; cf. N.B. Emerson, Pele and Hiʻiaka (Rutland and Tokyo, 1915); and K. Luomala, Voices on the Wind (Honolulu, 1986) 34-40.

10 The following analysis will reveal that our translator has used the traditional techniques of the Hawaiian Romance in retelling the story of Pyramus and Thisbe. These techniques include the aristocratic status of the characters, the use of allegory, especially natural allegory and repetition. For a discussion of these techniques, see Beckwith (above, note 8) 311-30; and, S. Elbert, "Hawaiian Literary Style and Culture," American Anthropologist 53, No.3 (July-September 1951) 345-54.
between old and new which constitutes such an important part of this new Hawaiian literature.

We first meet a sign of dependence on the original text when Pyramus and Thisbe station themselves on either side of the wall before they begin speaking to each other. Ovid stresses the separation of the lovers with his usual compressed style, using directional adverbs *hinc* and *illinc*, further reinforcing the impression by chiasmic word order (71): "ubi constiterant hinc Thisbe, Pyramus illinc" ("when Thisbe had stood here, Pyramus there"). This same stress is reproduced in the Hawaiian translation by the repetition of the indefinite pronoun *kekahi*, by the use of directional demonstrative pronouns *keia* (this one here) and *kēlā* (that one there), and by the typically Hawaiian expansion of the description which emphasizes the separation of the lovers by repetition: "la Pyramus na'e e kū ana ma kekahi `ao `ao o ka pā, a `o Thisbe ma kēlā `ao `ao o ka pā, ua lohe ia nāe ko lāua mau leo e kekahia a me kekahia, kāhea ae la lāua, o kekahi ma kēlā `ao `ao o ka pā, o kekahi ma kēia `ao `ao o ka pā" ("however, the aforementioned Pyramus was standing on this side of the enclosure and Thisbe on that side of the enclosure. Nevertheless their voices were heard the one by the other; they called out, the one on that side of the enclosure, the other on this side").

As in Ovid (78-80), the lovers converse until sunset, when they finally part, each pathetically kissing a side of the wall. "talia diversa nequiquam sede locuti/sub noctem dixere 'vale' partique dedere/oscula quisque suae non pervenientia contra" ("having spoken such things in vain in their separate locations, at sunset they said, 'farewell' and each gave kisses to his own side, kisses which did not go through to the other side"). The Hawaiian text (except for an interpolated description of the sunset not quoted here) follows Ovid's text closely: "When their conversing came to an end, they thought that they were near each other since they heard other's voices, therefore they stood at the place, until the setting of the sun... then, they began the one to say goodbye (*aloha*) to the other; they brought together their lips on the marble stone wall, because of the impossibility for them to draw near, since there was a stone wall in between."11

After an interpolation, the translator returned to Ovid's text for the next two lines (81-2): "postera nocturnos Aurora removit ignes, solque pruinosas radiis siccaverat herbas" ("afterwards Aurora removed the nightly fires, and the sun dried the dewy grass with its rays") which he translated as: "In the early morning, at the time when Aurora makes the power of the stars vanish, when the sun announces the day on the surface of the earth." Ovid announces the arrival of the new day in epic manner, mentioning the Latin goddess of the dawn, Aurora. The Hawaiian text preserves the name of this goddess, even though the contemporary English

11 Due to exigencies of space, I have had to omit the longer quotations from the Hawaiian text. I regret any inconvenience this omission may cause the reader interested in the original text. I would be glad to help out any reader interested in the Hawaiian text.
translations seem to substitute the personification with the normal term "dawn." By keeping the name Aurora, the Hawaiian author also preserved a little of the original "classical" ambience.

After another interpolation, in which the translator dramatized the meeting of the lovers and their plan for escape, he turned again to translate Ovid's text (93-98):
callida per tenebras versato cardine Thisbe / egreditur fallitque suos adopertaque vultum / pervenit ad tumulum dictaque sub arbore sedit. / audacem faciebat amor. venit ecce recenti / caede leaena bom spumatis oblita rictus / depositura sitim vicini fontis in unda; ("Thisbe cunningly opened the door and left through the darkness and deceived her own people and, with her face veiled, she came to the tomb and sat under the aforementioned tree. Love was making her bold. Behold! A lioness came with her mouth dripping with the gore from a recent slaughter of cows to slake her thirst in the water of a neighboring fountain." While keeping close to Ovid's text, the Hawaiian translator emphasized Thisbe's haste to reach the trysting point: 'When sunset was near, Thisbe ran away secretly from the sight of the guards and the maidens, her head was veiled by a woven cloth when she came into the garden and emerged outside the enclosure, she ran quickly and came to the place which is called the watchtower of Ninus, it was also there, the white mulberry tree, the place of which they spoke, where Thisbe arrived, she sat at the trunk of the tree awaiting Pyramus, thereupon when it was dusk, she was staying all alone at the truck of the tree, behold; (there was a spring near the tree) she saw a lioness lapping the water because she was thirsty." Instead of leaving at sunset, the Hawaiian Thisbe leaves before sunset and waits at the tree until dusk. The translator also added color to Ovid's plain pervenit by translating it holo kiki ... a hiki, where kiki implies the swiftness of a jet of water. The translation of the exclamation ecce (96) by aia ho'i provides another indication of the translator's reliance on the original text, since the address to the reader is part of Ovid's style, which often falls out in translations.

In Pyramus' speech when he finds Thisbe's bloodstained garment the Hawaiian translator shows his skill in keeping the thought and even the words of the original, but altering it to produce greater pathos. Ovid's Pyramus first considers what he did to cause Thisbe's death and then, in his guilt, calls on the lions to come and devour him (110-114): "ego te, miseranda, peremi,/ in loca plena metus qui iussi nocte venires / nec prior huc veni. nostrum divellite corpus / et scelerata fero consumite viscera morsu, / o quicumque sub hac habitatis rupe leones! ("I have destroyed you, o pitiable one, I who ordered you to go at night to a place full of fear and I did not go here first. Rend my body and consume my criminal bowels with your fierce fangs, o you lions who live under this cliff!"). The Hawaiian Pyramus, rather, immediately regrets the plan he had made by wishing he had

13 Aia ho'i is the normal translation of the Latin ecce or the Greek idou (Behold!) in the Hawaiian version of Scripture, e.g. Kinohi (Genesis) 1.29 and passim.
arranged things otherwise and had gone first; he realises that, by right, he should now be dead, and not Thisbe. The translator has transferred Pyramus' wish for death to these lines from the apostrophe to the lions, which he now relates to Thisbe's death: "Alas! O unfortunate maid. I have found the image of your corpse here, is not the price of your life greater than that of mine? I should not have followed you, I should have gone there in your place, and in your place there should be the same death for me. Truly, you lions came here and tore her body to pieces with your cleaving teeth." By preserving Pyramus' apostrophe to the lions, even while transferring the thought itself to Thisbe's body, the translator again indicates his reliance on the original Latin text, since such a detail would have probably fallen out of a paraphrase or adaptation.  

Thisbe's final address to the mulberry tree also reveals a direct dependence on Ovid's Latin. In Ovid's narrative (161), Thisbe calls the now dark fruit of the mulberry "gemini monimenta cruoris" ("the monument of our double blood"). The Hawaiian translator rendered this line as: "O kāu hua ho`i, ke Kia Ho`omana`o no kō māua koko" ("Your fruit is also the monument of the blood of the two of us"). A kia is a post or pillar; a kia ho`omana`o is literally a "pillar of remembrance," and, in its transferred meaning, a grave stone or grave monument. The Hawaiian translator, then captured the double meaning of monimenta: the dark color of the berries is to be a remembrance of the lovers' death; and serve as a temporary grave marker for their bodies. The Hawaiian text also preserves the literal sense of cruor (blood, gore) as koko (blood) and keeps the sense of gemini (twin) by the dual possessive pronoun māua.

Since the preservation of such details from Ovid's text in the Hawaiian translation shows that the translator probably used the text of Ovid, the adaptations and additions he made to the text are significant. These changes reflect the translator's desire to transform the story into a traditional Hawaiian Romance. First of all, Pyramus and Thisbe, who received no social status in Ovid's story, become "keiki ali`i," royal children, since the circumstances of the story make better sense in an Hawaiian context if the young lovers are of high rank. The playmates which are

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14 Shakespeare, for example, does not include the mention of more than one lion, cf. A Midsummer Night's Dream 5.1. It is possible that the shift in reference from Pyramus' body to Thisbe's body resulted from a misunderstanding of the phrase nostrum corpus as "the body of our (beloved)." Such a mistranslation would then unmistakably point to the translator's reliance on the Latin text.

15 Thisbe had already connected the tree with a grave in lines 159-60: "...corpus / nunc tegis unius, mox es tectura duorum" ("now you cover the body of one, soon you will cover the body of two").

16 Cf. Beckwith (above, note 8) 308: "Polynesian romance reflects its own social world -- a world based upon the fundamental conception of social rank." The commoners of Ovid's tale would have no place in a Hawaiian romance; cf. Elbert (above, note 10) 350: "commoners enter with much less frequency than tricksters. Their roles are either to illustrate a virtue,
gathered around the two lovers reflected the custom of providing high ranking companions for the young children of chiefs.17

The enclosures erected to separate Pyramus and his companions from Thisbe and her companions as well as their various activities resemble the kings' ancient accommodations and pastimes: "The kings lived in affluence in large mansions of wood or stone, in the midst of walled grounds adorned with fruit and shade trees and other attractive forms of vegetation. The grounds also contained many other smaller buildings for the accommodation of guests, retainers, attendants, servants and guards. They were attended by their high-priests, civil and military advisers, such as hospitality, or to wait on or applaud a chief." Thus, in order for Pyramus and Thisbe to play important roles in this romance, they must be assigned an aristocratic rank.

17 Cf. S M Kamakau, Ka Po`e Kahiko (The People of Old) (Honolulu, 1964) 6. The normal term for the intimate companions of the children of the ali`i is aikane. Our translator has emphasized the youth of the young lovers by calling their companions instead hoa pa`ani or playmates. The idea, however, remains the same. We find the same seclusion, especially of young virgins in order to protect them for a proper union, in the Laieikawai story (cf. Beckwith, above, note 8, 309). Beckwith (309, note 3) also quoted Kraemer, Samoa Inseln, 32 et seq., who told that "in Samoa the daughter of a high chief is brought up with extreme care that she may be given virgin to her husband. She is called taupo, 'dove' and, when she comes of age, passes her time with the other girls of her own age in the fale aualuma or 'house of the virgins,' of whom she assumes the leadership. Into this house, where the girls also sleep at night, no youth dare enter." The children also wore some token as a mark of their friendship, although, due to a misprint, the nature of this token is not clear from the text: "ua apo ia lakou a pau i ke apo gula, a me ka Eiki Haka i hoopaa ia ma ka aoao hema, i hoailona no ka noho aloha pu ana iwaena o lakou" ("they were all encircled by a gold band and [a badge?] which was bound on the left side, as a sign of having friendly relations together among themselves"). The problematic reading eiki haka could be a misprint for eki haka, "the ace of hearts," perhaps referring to the design on their badge. The original phrase could also have been keia haka, "this crested helmet," which would have been the distinctive headdress of the ali`i in old Hawai`i; or, the eiki could also have been keiki "child," indicating that the crested helmet was meant for the children to indicate their rank. Professor Rubelite Johnson has suggested that this attachment, which was bound on the left side of each of the children, may have been some sort of badge, since it indicates that they all belong to the same group. A further possibility is that the apo gula, the "circle of gold," was a gold band worn across the chest, like the order bands common among European royalty and used by the Hawaiian monarchy as a mark of rank and honor. This explanation best fits the one other occurrence of this golden band, when Pyramus, having heard Thisbe's confession of love, weeps on his left side, and the golden band breaks as a result of his heaving chest: "Then, the tears of Pyramus dripped down and fell on his left side and the golden circle broke by which his chest was fixed, because his breast was swollen." Thus, Pyramus, Thisbe and their companions would have been dressed not as ancient Babylonians or Greeks, but in the style of the royal court in the early 19th century. If this interpretation is correct, then the translator clearly tried to relate his story to the contemporary Hawaiian court; there is no evidence to indicate that the opposite phenomenon would have been true, i.e. that the Hawaiian court attempted to identify itself with Greek or Roman figures, as had been the practice in earlier times in European courts.
and a retinue of favourite chiefs, and spent their time, when not employed in war or affairs of state, in indolent and dignified repose."18

The separation of the young lovers, due to their parents' objection to their marriage in Ovid's text, is left in the Hawaiian version without explanation, since they first present their wedding plans to their parents after the separation; the kapu system, which separated the young sons of the ali'i from the women at an early age, 19 and prohibited men and women from eating and working together, 20 however, would provide a natural explanation which would not need to be further explained in the text. The reason why the parents of the young lovers refused to allow them to marry remains as unclear as it is in Ovid's narrative, although marrying those of correct geneological background was of extreme importance among the ali'i in order to maintain the superiority of their stock and provides adequate motivation for the refusal.21

The tomb of Ninus, the symbol Ovid used to overshadow the lovers' escape plans, becomes a watchtower in Hawaiian, since the Hawaiians were not buried in tombs.22 The guards (custodes) which keep Pyramus and Thisbe from seeing each other, probably the ianitores, the slaves employed to guard the house door, become real guards, nā kia 'i who would be part of the entourage of an ali'i. 23

When Pyramus returns from his first encounter with Thisbe, the Hawaiian text introduced an amusing anachronism. His companions wait for his return in order to enjoy the nightly entertainment which they perform for their chief. Among these activities the translator mentions two: "hookani Piano, hula" ("playing the piano, dancing the hula"). Although such activities were unlikely to have been part of the entertainment of Pyramus in ancient Babylon, our Pyramus was certainly enjoying the regular pastimes of a young ali'i in 19th century Hawaii.

The greater emphasis on nature is the Hawaiian version's most striking departure from Ovid, who generally avoids references to nature. By interpolating long natural descriptions, the Hawaiian translator actually made nature the context and

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18 His Hawaiian Majesty King David Kalakaua, *The Legends and Myths of Hawaii* (original edition, 1888; reprinted by Tuttle, Japan, 1972) 54.
19 Cf. Kamakau (above, note 17) 27.
20 Cf. E.S. Craig Hill Handy and E.G. Handy, *Native Planters of Old Hawaii* (Honolulu, 1972) 301.
22 The old Hawaiians generally buried their dead in secret caves or pits, so that the bodies could not be found and defiled or used in magic; cf. Kamakau (above, note 17) 38-43. The connection of this structure with death was not entirely suppressed in the Hawaiian, since Pyramus and Thisbe are later buried in the area.
background against which the story unfolds. Ovid's dichotomy between the safety within Semiramis' brick city and the wild areas outside the walls becomes in Hawaiian a cosmic unity in which the lovers partake of the general joy of nature. 24

The translator based this shift in emphasis on the difference in construction and use of houses between the ancient Mediterranean area and Hawaii. Hawaiian houses were freestanding structures (thus precluding common walls), originally covered with thatch and without high side walls. Because of the nearly constant pleasant weather in Hawaii, houses were generally used only for eating and sleeping; most other activities occurred outside. 25 Because of this difference, the translator transferred all the important actions of the story from the two adjoining houses to the two adjoining gardens. 26

The beauty of nature, a common theme in Hawaiian poetry and song, provides the setting for love and also becomes a symbol for that love. 27 On the first day of the story, the day on which the young lovers in Ovid's narrative converse for the first time, the translator introduced a long digression describing the special nature of the day: "On a certain day, the air was very calm. Nothing was seen which was blocking the sky; the sun was shining and was really quite dazzling. In the midst of the water dipped the heavens and also the birds of the sky displayed their great happiness because of that day rejoicing in their songs; the voice of the land shell arose and the land shell singing in the mountain ridges. What a great deal of happiness there was of all the things of the earth! And all the animals of the field underneath all the dark trees were stilled, and all the bloodthirsty animals of the earth came, and lay down at the edge of the rivers, and were moistening their tongues in the chilly water of the rivers, and the air was stuffed full with the joyful voice of the living and breathing things and all the creeping things of the earth."

The kiss with which the lovers regularly end their nightly trysts in Ovid's text (cf. 71 saepe) becomes in the Hawaiian version a singular event which takes on an

24 For example, see the conclusion of the lovers' complaint to the wall: "'oiai e piha ana māua i ka hau 'oli, a me nā mea a pau o ka honua, i keia la 'ano 'e" ("while we are filled with happiness and all the things of the earth on this unusual day").

25 E. Bryan, Ancient Hawaiian Life, (Honolulu, 1938) 21: "The ancient Hawaiian house was architecturally not beautiful. It was probably hot and stuffy: but it was only occupied at night or during inclement weather."

26 By transferring the action to the open air, the Hawaiian translator did away with Ovid's chink in the wall, necessary for Pyramus and Thisbe to communicate. Pyramus and Thisbe in the Hawaiian story hear each other's voice over the garden wall.

27 Nature as a metaphor for the emotions, especially for love, is common in Hawaiian poetry. Cf. Craighill Handy and Handy (above, note 20) 23-5 Beckwith (above, note 8) 306: "Strange and fairylike as much of the incident appears, allegorical as it seems, upon the face of it, the Polynesian mind observes objectively the activities of nature and of man as if they proceeded from the same sort of consciousness," also 323-5; and Elbert (above, note 10) 346-7.
added mystical feeling by its connection with the exceptional nature of the day and its ending: "until the setting of the sun, at that time when the darkness spread out, the singing of the birds ceased, and the voice of all things hushed greatly, and the land was also quiet; there was no murmur of any thing heard on the earth, as if the earth was weary from the many labors, the day rested." By connecting the kiss with the processes of nature the Hawaiian translator has raised it to the same cosmic significance, thus drawing special attention to its importance in the development of this fatal love affair.

Ovid has his lovers return to their usual meeting place on the next day (83: ad solitum coiere locum), i.e. they meet once again at the usual chink in the wall. The Hawaiian version preserves Ovid's meaning by bringing both Pyramus and Thisbe out in their gardens where they had heard each other's voices on the previous day. Once again details of natural description are closely connected with their love; this time the flower garden itself becomes a symbol for their love: "Pyramus was awake beforehand and walked in the fragrant flower garden, looking for his beloved among the fragrant flowers of the garden." The translator continued this image: Pyramus finds his beloved standing among the flowers of her garden: "She ran from among the beautiful flowers standing in the path."

As Thisbe approaches, Pyramus compares her beauty to the flowers of her garden, expressing in words the metaphor which the translator had been developing in this passage: "It is true indeed, your beauty, it surpasses a hundredfold indeed more than that of the flowers of your garden." Thisbe confesses her love for Pyramus, and, in his answer to her, Pyramus extends the flower metaphor to include the final product of the flower, namely honey. "Behold; your words are like honey dripping from your lips; it is pleasant in the sight when it is seen, it is sweet also on the tongue when it is tasted." Thus, the Hawaiian translator accompanied the gradually increasing tension of the love scene, beginning in the separate gardens and ending with the mutual confession of love, with parallel metaphors drawn from nature and, in particular, from flowers; the beauty of these metaphors contrasts sharply with the unlucky plan which ends the scene.

Two other nature symbols in particular, however, overshadow the striking beauty of the others. The first is the presence of the white mulberry tree. This important tree first appears in Ovid's narration as Pyramus and Thisbe plan their escape (89). In the translation, however, the tree frames the love scene; as Pyramus goes to Thisbe's garden, the mulberry tree is the only witness of his secret escape: "Only

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28 The Hawaiians became familiar with honey through the Bible, since the Hawaiian word for honey, meli, was transliterated from the Greek meli. This passage may have been inspired by a similar passage in Ke Mele a Solomona (The Song of Solomon) 4.11: "O kou lehelehe, ē ka 'u wahine, ua ha 'ule ka meli malaila iho; Aia malalo iho o kou elelo, ka meli a me ka waili" ("From your lips, O my woman, flows down honey; there under your tongue, are honey and milk").
the white mulberry tree standing nearby." The white mulberry tree appears again (as it had in Ovid's text) as part of the plan for escape: "'There is the white mulberry which stands there.'" The first mention of the tree, then, looks forward to the second, and provides a counterweight to the lush flower symbolism which accompanies the love scene. Thus, the positive and negative natural symbols reflect the double nature of the love between Pyramus and Thisbe: their love is beautiful and, at the same time, will prove to be deadly.

The second nature symbol which the translator used to increase the tension of the second love scene between Pyramus and Thisbe is Pyramus' comparison of Thisbe's motions to those of a female deer fresh from bathing: "'And your whole appearance is like a female deer which arrives from bathing.'" This beautiful simile puts Thisbe in the role of a common prey for lions, once again looking forward to her later encounter with the lioness by the mulberry tree.

The translator used this same device of foreshadowing to frame the whole story. In the long passage of cosmic harmony which precedes the first meeting of Pyramus and Thisbe and which sets the special mood for that meeting, the translator included predatory animals, literally bloodthirsty animals, among the creatures which are influenced by the magic of the day: "And all the bloodthirsty animals of the earth came." These animals lie down at the riverbank and drink: "And lay down at the edge of the rivers, and were moistening their tongues in the chilly water of the rivers." The mention of these bloodthirsty animals drinking from the river anticipates the later appearance of the lioness who also drinks from the nearby spring. Thus, the first mention once again foreshadows the second and adds an unsettled feeling to the otherwise glorious nature of that special day.

The increased attention which the Hawaiian version pays to natural symbols and descriptions is matched by an absence of unnecessary references to blood.29 The lioness's bloody mouth (97-8) and the simile comparing Pyramus' spurring blood to water escaping from a burst pipe (121-4) are both missing; only the passages where blood has a direct bearing on the story are included. Thus, the Hawaiian version retained the blood left by the lioness which Pyramus takes as proof of Thisbe's death (107): "ua loa `a koko mai la na `a-a kōkō" ("he discovered the blood from the woven cloth") as well as Pyramus' blood which flows into the root system of the mulberry tree and stains the fruit red (126-7): "A kahe aku la ke koko a puni ke kumu la `au..." ("And the blood flowed around the tree..."). These two occurrences could not have been omitted without altering the story; the translator,

29 The same delicacy was practiced by the Hawaiian translator of the Snowwhite fairy-tale, where the Hawaiian stepmother or makauhinekolea did not have her cook prepare the supposed lung and liver of Snowwhite to be eaten; cf Schweizer (above, note 4) 289. This avoidance resulted from the impurity attached to shed blood; cf. V. Valeri, Kingship and Sacrifice (Chicago and London, 1985) 85: "Along with menstrual blood, all shed blood is impure to different degrees. This is indicated, for instance, by the statement that the gods 'despised (ho `o pailua) all bloody things' (Kamakau 1961, 3)."
however, saw fit to dispense with the other passages in which Ovid seems to have had an almost perverse fascination with blood.

The treatment of Thisbe's veil also exemplifies the Hawaiian translator's method in adapting Ovid's text. Ovid did not specify what sort of veil Thisbe carried on that fateful night; he simply mentioned that she went with her face covered (94: "adopertaque vultum"). The later occurrences of the cloth which Thisbe drops at the approach of the lioness do not necessarily refer to the same veil, since Ovid used only the words *velamina* (101, 115), *amictus* (104), or *vestis* (107, 147). The Hawaiian translator assumed that both pieces of clothing were the same and used the same term in each occurrence. He also specified the material of the cloth, calling it 'a `a koko. The `a `a, according to the Pukui and Elbert Hawaiian Dictionary, is "the clothlike sheath at base of coconut frond," and can then be extended to mean cloth in general, as in the phrase `a `a haole or foreign cloth (certainly not made from coconut fronds). The veil is also described as koko, which the same dictionary says refers to "a carrying net, usually made of sennit." The ancient Hawaiians did not weave, but rather made their clothing by beating the inner bark of the paper mulberry tree, a cloth called *tapa*;30 Hawaiian women did not wear veils, and the familiar *tapa* cloth would not have been an appropriate material for a veil which would have covered the whole face and yet would not have impeded the vision. The translator, therefore, approximated Thisbe's woven veil by using the image of coconut fibers woven together to make a fine sennit.31 He probably chose this material in preference to others because of Ovid's description of the cloth in 104 as *tenues*. The net-like construction of Thisbe's veil in the Hawaiian text, therefore, corresponds both to its original woven quality and to its lightness. In this way, the Hawaiian translator was able to make this unfamiliar concept clear to his readers.

Although the Hawaiian version of the Pyramus and Thisbe story has been thoroughly adapted to an Hawaiian context, the translator sometimes added details to or retained details from Ovid's original in order to give his story the necessary "classical" ambience. As in Ovid's narrative, the story takes place "ma ka aina o Babulonia" ("in the land of Babylon").32 But, unlike the original city, which was

30 Malo (above, note 21) 48-50.
31 Sennit nets were regularly made from the material at the base of the coconut fronds; cf. Bryan (above, note 25) 133.
32 Ovid does not directly mention Babylon as the setting for his story, although his audience would have recognised his paraphrase, *Semiramis urbem* (58), and Thisbe is once called *Babylonia* (99). Since the Hawaiian translator could not rely on audience recognition, he introduced the name of the city immediately. It is interesting to note, then, that the Hawaiian translator did not use the form of the name which occurred in the Hawaiian Scripture in the Book of Revelation, *Babulona*, which the missionaries had adapted directly from the Greek *Babulon* (the only change was the addition of the -a at the end of the word, since Hawaiian words cannot end in a consonant). Instead, our translator used the Latin form of the name,
made of brick (57-8: "ubi dicitur altam coctilibus muris cinxisse Semiramis urbem"), the translator has made the wall which separates the two gardens into marble: "Ὁ Piremusa, α μή καὶ γιὰ keiki Αλί του ka `aina, na pa` a kō lākou wahi a puni i ka pāpōhaku mabala ki `eki `e" ("In order to secure Pyramus and all the noble boys of the land [they put up] a high marble wall around the place"). No marble exists naturally on Hawaii; the translator was most probably inspired by the occurrences of marble in the Bible. Although the word mabala does not occur in the Hawaiian translation of Scripture, the few mentions of marble, ke `oke `o, all associate it with the Near East. In particular, marble is associated with Babylon in Ka Ho `ike `Ana a loane ka Haipule (The Revelation of John the Divine) 18.12, "α me ka pōhaku ke `oke `o" ("and marble"), in a list of goods which the kings of the earth will no longer have, since Babylon has fallen. Our translator, however, substituted the derivative from the English marble rather than the native periphrasis. Perhaps mabala was a commoner word and more understandable by the readers of the newspaper. The other two occurrences of marble in the Bible, both in Estera (Esther) 1.6 (ke `oke `o), again connect marble with the ancient Orient.

The subtle interplay of translation and adaptation which constitutes the Hawaiian version of Pyramus and Thisbe reveals some important aspects of mid 19th century Hawaii. The Hawaiians of this period were beginning to take their place in a world dominated by European culture and its classical antecedents. The present translation of Ovid's story of Pyramus and Thisbe, along with translations of other stories and works on ancient history which appeared in the columns of a popular newspaper, 33 attest to the Hawaiian interest in the classical roots of European civilization and their ability to adapt them without being overwhelmed by it. The story of Pyramus and Thisbe shows how such adaptations could become living and meaningful, absorbing the beauty of the Hawaiian language and poetry and expressing the content in terms of Hawaiian practices, while at the same time remaining faithful to the classical original.

The tension in "He Kaao no Kekahi mau Keiki Alii" between the classical original and the Hawaiian adaptation added to it is also typical of most of the stories published in Ka Nupepa Ku `oko `a. This tension reveals a drive toward the creation of a native Hawaiian literature after the model of European literature, a

of the name, ending in -ia, perhaps adapted from Thisbe's epithet in 99 or because he was familiar with the alternate form from another source.

The "He Kaao no Kekahi mau Keiki Alii" was not the only translation from an ancient author published in Ka Nupepa Ku `oko `a. Although only a few years of the newspaper have been investigated, two other translations have already been found: "He Wahi Nane ma Aesopa: Ka Alapeka me ka Waina" ("A Bit of Aesop's Fable: The Fox and the Grapes") from August 23, 1862; and, "Ke Kaao o ke Keiki Phaeton" ("The Legend of the Boy Phaeton") from May 16, 1863. Two historical series also appeared, one covering the history of Greece (January 20, 27, February 3, 10 and 17, 1866) and one covering the history of Rome (February 24, March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, April 7, 14, 1866). We hope that further investigations will uncover other translations and adaptations.
drive furthered by the newspaper's policies. Just like the Romans, the Hawaiians began their literary activity by recording their own oral traditions and by translating and adapting the literature of a culture which was perceived to be superior. The Hawaiian genius, like the Roman, was to transcend the simple act of translation and, by recreating the older stories in an Hawaiian context, to produce something entirely new.