CHAPTER III
NARRATOR-FABULA AND TRIANGULATION OF MEDIACY

The narrator and the fabula develop a bundle of multi-tier relations, based on the stance of the narrator at various levels, in the process of externalization of the fabula. To study these relations, a preliminary knowledge of the conception of story is required. Story is one of the most widely explored fields of literary study and research. "Narration of the story," till recently, was the source of inspiration and topic of discussion in narratological studies. "Narration in the story" is another phrase identical to "narration of the story." It may be conveniently used to mean narration in a different context. The narrative's world is one of characters and its objective is narration of their actions. A character in such a narrative can also engage in narrating a story. Within his story, in turn, one more may be embedded, aided by another character in the story and so on, forming an infinite regress. It may be noted that there is a stratification of levels in narration. Each narrative is subordinate to the narrative within which it is embedded. In short, a hierarchical structure of narrative is discovered in a complex form of narrative.

In other words, there is difference in level in the position of the narrator in the story. This difference is defined as follows: "...any event a narrative recounts is at a diegetic level immediately higher than the level at which the narrating act producing this narrative is placed." The extra-diegetic narrator describes events at the intra-diegetic level. At the
intra-diegetic level, sometimes a character may tell a story as an embedding in the main narrative. Then the narrative becomes extra-diegetic and the events narrated meta-diegetic the second narrative level. If a character narrates another story at the meta-diegetic level, that narrative will become meta-meta-narrative. "These terms designate, not individuals, but relative situations and functions." Milton in Paradise Lost is in the extra-diegetic level as narrator. Ezhuthachan/the Bird/Siva is also an extra-diegetic narrator. "The narrative level to which the narrator belongs, the extent of his participation in the story, the degree of perceptibility of his role, and finally his reliability are crucial factors in the reader's understanding of and attitude to the story." The criteria given above are not mutually exclusive. They allow for cross-combinations between the different types. Both extra-diegetic and intra-diegetic narrators may be absent or present in the story they narrate. If a narrator participates in the story, he is called "homo diegetic," and if he does not, he is called "hetero-diegetic." Using this terminology, the narrator-fabula relations of Paradise Lost and Adhyatma Ramayanam may be measured. As mentioned earlier, Milton is in the extra-diegetic level. That he should be as he is composing an epic poem. But there is criticism against this epic requirement. Milton the person is discovered everywhere in the poem though he is both extra-diegetic and hetero-diegetic in the narrative. The criticism is due to the following points: He has an affinity towards christian humanism. He has close familiarity with the Bible. He is well-versed in the classical Greek and Latin
literature. He has wide knowledge in history, mythology, human geography, geographical discovery and astronomy. The traces of all these personal qualities are found in the poem. The narrator Milton is thus discovered in the narrative. So, as a narrator, there is a swing from the extra-diegetic level to the intra-diegetic, and also from the hetero-diegetic level to the homo-diegetic.

Raphael, Adam and Michael are characters in the intra-diegetic level of narration. But they engage in narration. Their narratives are in hypo-diegetic level. In Book V Raphael comes to Adam and Eve to tell of the War in Heaven. Arms and armour, courageous deeds with weapons, spectacular warfare, attacks, woundings, advances and retreats are all described with great technical assurance in the dialogue between Raphael and Adam. This retrospective description of conflict falls in line with the established epic tradition of Homer. Raphael concludes his account, which is like a warning to Adam of the dangers of rebellion against God.

In Book VI, Raphael continues to relate how Michael and Gabriel were sent forth to battle against Satan and his angels. The first fight is described: Satan and his powers retire outright: he calls a council, invents devilish engines, which put Michael and his angels to some disorder, but they at length pull up mountains and overwhelm both the force and machines of Satan. Yet the tumult does not end. God on the third day sends Messiah his son, for whom he has reserved the glory of that victory: Messiah returns with triumph to his father.
In Book III Raphael at the request of Adam relates how and wherefore this world was first created. God, after expelling Satan and his angels from heaven, declared his pleasure to create another world and other creatures to live therein. He sends his son with glory attended by angels to perform the work of creation in sixty days. The angels celebrate with hymns the performance thereof and his reascension to heaven.

In Book VIII when Adam detains Raphael, he details to him what he remembered since his own creation, his placing in Paradise, his talk with God about solitude and fit society, his first meeting and nuptials with Eve, and his discourse with the angels thereupon.

In Book XI God sends Michael with a band of cherubim to dispossess them and to reveal to Adam the future things. Michael comes to Adam and Eve and denounces their departure. Eve laments over the views. The angel leads Adam upon a high hill and sets before him in vision what shall happen till the Flood. The angel Michael continues the narration about what shall succeed since the Flood. In the mention of Abraham, Michael comes by degrees to explain what that seed of the woman shall be. His incarnation, death, resurrection, ascension, and the state of the Church till the second coming. All these are narrations in the hypo-diegetic level. Milton's technique of narration does not go beyond this level in Paradise Lost.

In the case of Adhyatma Ramayana the narrator is obviously Ezhuthachan. He remains above the intra-diegetic level. As he requests the bird to narrate and listens to the bird's act of narration, together with Ezhuthachan the bird also is placed in
the extra diegetic level. The bird at the outset tells Ezhuthachan that she narrates what she has overheard from a dialogue between Siva and Parvati, in which the narration part of Ramayana was performed by Siva to the auditor Parvati. So, as a narrator, Siva also gets a place at the extra-diegetic level. There are now three extra-diegetic narrators. They may be distinguished as extra-diegetic narrator 1 (Ezhuthachan), extra-diegetic narrator 2 (the bird), and extra-diegetic narrator 3 (Siva).

In the intra-diegetic level, one gets the real narration. Here in Adhyatma Ramayanam the author starts his narration with a hymn to Rama the protagonist-godhead. Soon he finds another narrator in the extra-diegetic level, the bird, and entrusts the narration to it, which readily obliges the poet. Ezhuthachan in the extra-diegetic level I, as the poem reads, uses only 60 lines in the first six Kandas. In the Bala Kanda, he sings a hymn (1-10), invokes the bird (11-12) and reports the act of narration of the bird (13-14). In Ayodhya Kanda he entrusts the bird to resume the telling (1-4) and concludes the Kanda with a single line note (3183). Aranya Kanda begins with an earnest desire from the poet to hear the story (1-12) and the Kanda concludes in a couple of lines (2039-40). As usual, the request for narration forms the beginning (1-2) and the couplet comment marks the conclusion of the Kiskinda Kanda (2284-85). In Sundara Kanda an octet (1-8) is sung as a request to the bird and a couplet (1473-74) as conclusion. In Yudha Kanda a quartet hymn (1-4) to Lord Narayana, a sestet hymn (5-10) to Rama, a couplet (11-12) as request to the
bird and reporting of the act of bird's narration form the share of the poet.

Perched on the extra-diegetic level the bird starts her narration in *Adhyatma Ramayanam*. In the Bala Kanda there are 105 lines in extra-diegetic level II, when the bird offers hymns to many major and minor deities, elders, brahmins and gurus (15-74), she states the Ramayana mahatmya—the eminence of Ramayana (75-104)—and it reports the question raised by Parvati to Siva (105-109) and the answer offered by Siva (137-140), again another extra-diegetic level. Then two lines (341-342) are used to link Parvati's speech with Siva's. Again a quartet is used to link the interrogation of Parvati to the detailed narration of Siva (361-384). Since then the extra-diegetic narration has been closed and it gives way to try intra-diegetic narration.

Siva and Parvati remain at the extra-diegetic level-3. Their narration is in intra-diegetic level. Parvati starts her narration in the Bala Kanda (111-136). Responding to questions of Parvati, Siva narrates the Ramayana briefly and takes her to a scene where Rama, Sita and Hanuman are sitting together after the Ramayana is over (141-184). Lines 197 and 198 form a commentary of what happens in Siva's narration of the scene cited above. On the completion of Sita's discourse to Hanuman, Rama takes it up to offer a homily to Hanuman. Later Siva tells Parvati the whole of Rama's story in detail from lines 377. Siva remains in the extra-diegetic level III and the narrated events fall in the intra-diegetic level.

While Siva narrates the Ramayana story in a nutshell at the request of Parvati, he uses a very convincing method: he takes us
to Ayodhya where the scene is set for Rama and Sita to narrate their story and homiletics to Hanuman. Sita narrates Ramayana here in the briefest possible way (Bala Kanda 129-296). There are many embeddings into the main fabric of which all of them are in this level. In Bala Kanda Visvamitra takes Rama and Laksmana to the forest. Rama and Laksmana guard the conduct of the yaga. Visvamitra then leads them to Mithila. On their way they come to Gautama’s ashrama. Visvamitra then narrates the pathetic story of Ahalya (898-1068). Later in Ayodhya Kanda, Rama, Laksmana and Sita in the course of their life in the forest reach the ashram of Valmiki. Valmiki narrates to them his autobiographical past in 105 lines (Ayodhya Kanda 1994-2108). In the same Kanda when Dasaratha’s death is near, he tells his wife Kausalya about an incident in his past youthful days. This story relates to his hunting and killing the only son of the blind old sages (Ayodhya Kanda 2193-2310). Rama and Laksmana meet Sugriva. Sugriva gives his reasons why he wants to get his brother Bali killed with the help of Rama. So he narrates his story of enmity between himself and Bali (Kiskinda Kanda 219-270). All these narrations are in the hypo-hypo narrative level.

If an attempt is made to note why there are embeddings and why hypo-diegetic narratives are included in Paradise Lost, the following conclusions may be arrived at. In Book III God foretells the success of Satan in perverting mankind. This narration to the Son is made by God when he sees Satan flying towards this world. This hypodiegetic narrative advances the action of the first narrative by the sheer act of being narrated. With regard to the contents of the narrative, its contribution to
the major narrative is not that great. Some other hypodiegetic narratives help the narrator maintain the action of the first narrative. This type of function is called "actional".

Raphael in Book V and VI of Paradise Lost tells Adam of the War in Heaven. In Ayodhya Kanda before his death Dasaratha narrates the curse on him owing to his commission of sin--though quite unawares--of killing the only son of the blind old couple. Such embeddings through the hypodiegetic level of narration answer questions as "What were the events leading to the present situation?" In this case the story narrated is important. The act of narration is not of primary importance. This is called "explicative" function.

Michael in Book X and XI of Paradise Lost gives a description of the future awaiting mankind. Visvamitra tells Rama and Lakshmana the story of Ahalya in Bala Kanda of Adhyatma Ramayanam. In Michael's description Milton wants the readers to find the similarity and contrast between the life of Adam and Eve before their fall and the life waiting for them after the fall. In Adhyatma Ramayanam the author wants through Rama and Laksmana learn through Visvamitra's narration more about the relations between man and woman: the beauty of woman, marriage, the lust in man, the forced adultery on Ahalya, and the curse followed by punishment and atonement.

II

Mediaacy Complex in Paradise Lost and Adhyatma Ramayanam.

He is ethereal, bodiless, omni-present, not subject to distinctions of here and there. . . . So spiritual is the
spirit and so abstract, that grammatically one can only speak of him in the third person. . . . And yet he can also draw himself together to a person, namely to the first, and can embody himself in someone who speaks in the first person. . . . "It is I. I am the spirit of narration, who, sitting in his present place, namely in the library of the monastery of St. Gall in Allemannenland, . . narrates this story. . . . I am Clemens the Irishman, ordinis divi Benedicti, a visitor here who has been brotherly received and envoy of my Abbot Kilian of the monastery of Clonmacnois, my house in Ireland."

(Thomas Mann, Introduction to The Holy Sinner)

In the introductory chapter, three modes of analyses were proposed. Among them, one appertained to the relations between narrator and fabula. It demanded further exploratory investigation and it has led to this chapter on mediacy complex. It is worthwhile to note how the employment of mediacy looks less complex and less multi-layered in Paradise Lost, whereas that in Adhyatma Ramayanam looks more so. There is a world inside the narrative and there is one outside. In the study undertaken here, the first question being answered is: where does the narrator belong to; does he belong to the world inside, in the fabula; or, does he abide in the world outside, the other postulated realm of existence, beyond the fabula? In regard to Paradise Lost and Adhyatma Ramayanam the answer appears rather simple. The narrator does not belong to the world inside. He abides in another. But, this answer is not satisfactory as it appears. The discussion here provides thoughts complementary to the "simple" answer given above. Milton is outside the realm of characters in Paradise Lost. In the actual process of narration in Adhyatma Ramayanam, Ezhuthachan's stance is physically outside the narrative's world. To convey the story to the reader, he employs a unique technique in epic narrative tradition, the employment of
the bird and Siva as narrators, which later discussions will throw light upon. Besides, some of his characters become narrators in the later part of narration. Sometimes he filters the story through the consciousness of one or several of the characters. The treatment of Milton is somewhat similar in technique to that of Ezhuthachan. Anyway, both the works relate the occurring in antiquity. So the mode of narration of direct telling shall be more congenial. The narrator in both the works offers a perspective each, of the narrated sequence of events. Sometimes the perspective provides an external view of the events. At times the narrator intrudes into the narrative, or a narrator-character is introduced to provide an internal perspective. The attempt here is to study, with a knowledge of all these traits concerning the narrator and fabula, the story each in Paradise Lost and Adhyatma Ramayanam and how each of them is being told. It is an endeavour to know how the narrator externalizes the fabula. It throws light on the fundamental possibilities of narrative mediation. This mediation is termed mediacy.

A general survey is also helpful to know these possibilities. In narrative theory there are two basic forms of narration. The distinctions between the two are generally accepted. In the former, the narrator appears before the reader as an independent personality. In the latter, the narrator withdraws behind the narrated events and he becomes practically invisible to the reader. Otto Ludwig, Percy Lubbock, Friedman and Stanzel have used the terms of binary opposition to describe the distinction. The basic one is personalized form of narration.
It is not ambiguous at all. The latter represents scenic presentation. It conflates two techniques together. The distinction between these two techniques is only theoretical: one is dramatized scene, consisting of pure dialogue, dialogue with brief stage notes, or with very condensed narratorial report. The other is the reflection of the fictional events through the consciousness of a character in the story without narratorial comment.

As a general characteristic of narration, mediacy is the basis for a typology of narration. For its understanding, the triad constituents are to be isolated theoretically, breaking the mediacy complex. To study epics, the critical strategies applied here perhaps appear new, as they are generally centred around the study of novels. But the contours of the constituents of these mediacy-concepts may be traced in the mediacy in classical epics. Here, the attempt is to apply a theory of narrative to a comparative study of the mediacy in two Renaissance epics of two different cultures. On breaking up, "mediacy" yields three constituent elements: person, mode and perspective. (i) "Person" is based on the relations between the narrator and fictional character. (ii) "Mode" is the product of various relations and reciprocal effects between the narrator or reflector and the reader, and (iii) "Perspective" directs the reader's attention to the way in which he perceives the fictional reality. Each of the constituent elements admits a number of actualizations. Each can be represented as a continuum of forms between two extreme possibilities, based on the concept of "binary oppositions." As narrative texts profusely exhibit modifications and modulations
of certain basic forms, the formula of binary opposition is congenial. The following table shows the nature of the possibilities mentioned.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Formal Continuum</th>
<th>The Binary Opposition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Person</td>
<td>Identity-nonidentity of the realm of experience of the narrator and the characters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perspective</td>
<td>Internal Perspective</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>External Perspective</td>
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The identification of the binary opposition in each of the constituent in the mediacy triad (person, perspective and mode) in *Paradise Lost* and *Adhyatma Ramayanam* is being done here.

In *Paradise Lost*, Milton's conception centres around authorial mediacy. It has its limitations. He is aware of them. He knows he has to sing about God, the Son, Man, Satan and other fallen angels. He has to relate the happenings in heaven, hell, paradise and earth. The human limitations won't reach his poetic flights there. He has to sing on "things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme." He seeks help from Urania, the Muse. The Muse supports him in narration. In *Paradise Lost* the authorial mediacy is constituted by "non-identity", external perspective and narrator. The complexity of the mediacy is only due to the self-transformation of the authorial into the superhuman when it is propped by Urania. So Urania's help is "Prop Mediacy."

In *Adhyatma Ramayanam*, the mediacy does not belong to the realm of fiction. It suggests non-identity with the fictional world. There are many reasons to account for the non-identity.
The teller of the story uses ulterior narration. The spatio-temporal relations refer to antiquity. Moreover, Adhyatma Ramayanam is a transcreation or retelling of an early work. The narrative’s subject-matter has already been subjected to narration time and again. Considering all these a viable proposition of mediacy in it shall consist of the three constituents: third-person, external perspective and narrator. Here, Siva tells the story. The author is only an auditor. There is no link between the author and Siva. The mediacy of Siva is re-rendered by a bird. The author purposely introduces the connecting link between himself and Siva through the bird mediacy. The poem Adhyatma Ramayanam begins with an authorial invocation to the bird to start the narration. The bird obliges the request. But in the process, she only re-renders Siva’s rendition of the story which she has heard. All these three forms of mediacy, the author, the bird and Siva, are outside the realm of the narrative. They are in the extra-diegetic level. They form an extra-diegetic mediacy complex. On a further enquiry, the ontology of the complex may be explained with the following rationale. Ezhuthachan externalizes the fabula of "Ramayana" into a narrative. He presumes that he is not the right mediacy to do so. The sociological milieu of Kerala in the seventeenth century won’t permit a non-Brahmin to communicate divine knowledge. The brahmans were the only “custodians” of vedic logos. Forbidden by the social ethos to perform the act of rendering mediacy, he effects a replacement in the authorial narrative situation with a "substitute mediacy." This reinforces the authorial mediacy. Hence the bird’s mediacy in Adhyatma Ramayanam is termed
Reinforcement Substitute Mediacy I. This bird seeks Siva’s mediacy. It is also a substitution process almost similar to the one noted above. Siva’s mediacy is the Reinforcement Substitute Mediacy II. One more factor worthy of note is this: the reader hears the author’s voice; he hears the bird’s voice; and also he hears the voice of Siva. To put it differently, the reader perceives the author’s mediacy through the bird’s, and the bird’s through Siva’s. The contrast between the authorial mediacy to prop mediacy in *Paradise Lost* on the one hand, and the authorial mediacy of reinforcement substitute mediacy in *Adhyatma Ramayanam* on the other may be noted. The initial position in *Paradise Lost* is easy to comprehend. The authorial narrator seeks assistance from a “Prop mediacy”, the Muse/Urania. The author Milton starts his narration indeed by the Muse. The mediacy triad in *Paradise Lost* has a constitution of elements contrasted with the triad in *Adhyatma Ramayanam*. Here the three constituents are third-person reference, external perspective and narrator. The diagram(p.141) represents the mediacy concept in *Paradise Lost*. In contrast, the initial position in *Adhyatma Ramayanam* looks different. The third-person narrator in *Adhyatma Ramayanam*, Ezhuthachan is replaced by the “Reinforcement Substitute Mediacy I”, the bird, and she is further replaced by the “Reinforcement Substitute Mediacy II”, Siva. The mediacy, here, anyhow remains outside the fictional world. So it has third-person reference. The mediacy enjoys external perspective. The narration is beyond doubt in the narrator mode. This mediacy triad is represented by diagrammatic representations(p.144).
Binary oppositions in *Paradise Lost* and *Adhyatma Ramayanam*

"The teller of a story is primarily, none the less, the listener to it, the reader of it, too."

Henry James, Preface to *The Princess Cassamassima*

While examining the first binary opposition in *Paradise Lost* and *Adhyatma Ramayanam*, the following points are observed. Milton is the narrator in *Paradise Lost*. His stance is outside the fictional world. He narrates the happenings in antiquity. The non-identity of the narrator is rather very evident. It demands no illustrations to substantiate the non-identity. But Milton's prefatory pronouncements confuse the reader. Once one gets into the corpus of the narrative, the light of narration deepens and dispels the darkness of confusion. Many things contribute to the initial confusion. The first-person voice is strong in the initial part of the poem. In his invocation Milton exhorts the Muse: "I thence \Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song" (*Paradise Lost* I 12-13); he seeks her help: "Instruct me," (*Paradise Lost* I 19) he admits his ignorance: "What in me is dark Illumine" (*Paradise Lost* I 22-23); and he makes his intention known: "I may assert eternal providence first" (*Paradise Lost* I 25). Milton is an auditor too: "Say first, for heaven hides nothing from thy view" (*PL* I 17). Here Milton is a listener to the story that he narrates. But as he starts the operation of both reporting and narrating, he keeps himself outside the fictional world of the narrative and so the "I" and the identity of the narrator with the fictional world fade away and instead a third-person narrator with non-identity with the fictional world appears. Thereafter seldom does Milton step into the narrative's
realm to speak. That too looks congenial. One instance is given here. Milton demands from the Muse assistance in narration: "Say, Muse, their names thou know who first, who last (PL I 376)." But for a few instances like this, Milton the narrator remains outside the fictional world. In other words in the main mediacy, the binary opposition between the identity and non-identity of the narrator with the fictional world is not relevant in an epic. But this study of binary opposition is mandatory as the narration proceeds and as the main mediacy embeds within subsidiary mediacy.

In Adhyatma Ramayananam, Ezhuthachan is a listener first and a later-turned-narrator. The poem itself states that he is an auditor to the narration of the bird. The bird too is a listener to the dialogue between Siva and Parvati. So the identity of the narrator with the fictional world is ruled out. In the invocation, it is the voice of Ezhuthachan that is heard. The authorial narrative voice is at times audible in its intrusions into the narrative. At the beginning and end of every Kanda the author's presence is felt. But in all the diversity there is one unity: the narrator is outside the fictional world. The binary opposition in Adhyatma Ramayananam with regard to the main mediacy is very feeble. As the narration progresses the binary opposition gets stronger and stronger. More and more embeddings demand the presence of more instances of embedded mediacy too. The binary opposition perceived then is detailed at the end of this chapter when typological circle is discussed. Both Paradise Lost and Adhyatma Ramayananam defy transposition of the third-person narrative into the first-person narrative in the main story line.
In case an attempt is made to dispense with the services of the narrator situated outside the fictional world and to introduce a union between the main character and narrator, it will lead to difficulties in credibility. The fictional reality in both is beyond the comprehension of human mind. The opposition here is further confirmed by Kate Hamburger in *The Logic of Literature*.

"Epic fiction" is third-person narration produced by an impersonal "narrative function." So both these works according to her theory cannot undergo any change to cross over the boundary to each the other end of the opposition axis. In this way it is easy to detect a connection between experience and narration. This connection is given by the identity of the realms of the narrator and the represented reality. It cannot be represented without seriously interfering with the structure of the meaning of the work. The employment of third-person narration in these works is further noted as the mode of transmission of a story is manifested most distinctly at the beginning of a narrative. This is so because the process by which the reader's imagination is attuned to the actual mode of narration begins with the first word of the narrator.

The opposition of internal perspective—external perspective can be illustrated with the aid of two extracts from *Paradise Lost*. The first is Beelzebub’s reply to Satan and the other the omniscient narrator’s account thereafter.

I

Leader of those armies bright,
Which but th' omnipotent none could have foil'd,
If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge
Of hope in fears and dangers, heard so oft
In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge
Of battle when it rag'd, in all assaults
Their surest signal, they will soon resume
New courage and revive, though now they lie
Grovelling and prostrate on yon lake of fire,
As we erewhile, astounded and amaz’d.
No wonder, fall’n such a pernicious light
(Paradise Lost I 271-82)

II

He scarce had ceas’d when the superior friend
Was moving toward the shore, his ponderous studd
Ethereal temper, massy, large and round
Behind him cast, the broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb
Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views
At ev’ning from the top of Fesole,
Or in Valderno, to destroy new lands,
Rivers or mountains in her spotty globe.
(Paradise Lost I 283-91)

Generally a hermeneutic problem is involved in the
interpretation of the perspective in a narrative. It is due to
the presence of both internal and external perspective in the
same. It is then difficult to decide whether it is internal
perspective of the fictional character or the external
perspective of the authorial narrator. But these extracts are
exceptions. Both of them relate to Satan. The first one shows
Beelzebub’s point of view of Satan’s status among the fallen
angels. The second one gives the omniscient author’s assessment
of Satan’s stature. The extracts thus provide examples of two
positions of the binary opposition. Beelzebub’s words reverberate
his philosophy of life, and his ideology. Lodge “postulates a
close connection between narrative perspective and philosophy of
life.” Beelzebub’s perspective results in a restriction of the
kind and degree of knowledge (limited point of view) of his words
with the function of a filler-character and the reflector-
character. In the second extract the omniscience of the author
works. "Omniscience always presupposes the external perspective
of an Olympian authorial narrator." The narrator of the second extract has at his disposal unlimited insight into the thoughts and the feelings of the characters. Whereas the first passage presents an inside view of Beelzebub's mind, his thoughts and emotions, the second gives those of the authorial narrator. In the first the orientation of the reader's mind is materialized by Beelzebub's perspective. In the second, the reader's mind's orientation is effected by the perspective of the narrator. The notable feature in the extracts is the alternation of external and internal perspectives. This alternation is more often parallel. It is generally accompanied by the alternation of the degree of knowledge needed in narration. It is further noted that though in the initial part of this discussion it was mentioned that there was no ambiguity in keeping these two passages at the poles of the binary opposition of perspective, there is meaning in the criticism that the external perspective of the omniscient narrator is limited by Milton's internal perspective when a transposition is attempted. So the difference in perspective is a matter of structure rather than style.

This binary opposition in *Adhyatma Ramayanam* is observed by examining two instances, one of internal perspective and the other of external perspective.

Tumults and shouts are heard at the back door of Ravana's palace. What is it? Hanuman wants to know. It is better to hide himself behind the tender leaves of the branches of trees and peep out to see what is going on. A wonderful sight! The King of demons is proceeding to the garden in a procession, accompanied by the choicest beauties among Suras and Asuras. Ravana is foppishly clad in gaudy garb.

*Adhyatma Ramayanam*, Sundara Kandam 271-78.
II

Ravana thought: When shall I lose this corporal frame? Blessed am I to see Visnu incarnate before me. Blessed am I if he kills me. Blessed am I to be shot at by his arrows. Blessed am I to get salvation in this manner. It's a golden chance. It's for that only I lifted Sita away. But the godhead Rama didn't react to it. I know my death is near. It's imminent. It's my fate.

Adhyatma Ramayanam, Sundara Kandam, 279-98

In the first passage above, Hanuman reconnoitres Lanka. He is a reflector-character. He directs the reader's attention to the way in which he perceives the fictional reality. The mode of this perception depends essentially on the point of view according to which the reflection is oriented. It gives orientation of the reader's imagination within the time of his arrival there and space of the narrator. In the Lankan garden, he regulates the spatio-temporal arrangement with respect to the centre or focus of the reflected events. This passage cannot be transposed into a first-person narration, whereas it can easily be transposed into a third-person narration using the services of a narrator. This is an acid test for the external perspective.

In the second passage the situation is the opposite. This passage provides a direct insight into the mental state of Ravana. He is in an extremely tense state of mind. The thoughts that creep into his mind are not externalized. The internal perspective of Ravana will give us a representation of his inner world.

He recollects a dream. Between the actual dream and the somewhat externalized consciousness of Ravana, the reader gets the reflection of Ravana's mind. It reveals the reactions of the dream. Ravana is even ready to experience what he dreamt. If one
were to put the content of this passage into the mouth of a narrator-character, its meaning gets distorted. The emphasis of the altered passage would be different. The dream reflected and the hopes of fulfilment of the dream recorded will be different. From this it is clear that a reflector-character like Ravana has here an internal perspective only. Any transposition between external perspective and internal perspective would be possible only if the reflector is replaced and it would result in a decisive change in the narrated statement. Thus the opposition external perspective-internal perspective signifies structural opposition.

Mode is the basis of the third binary opposition. The reflector and narrator, occupy the two extreme ends of the opposition. Two illustrations given here represent reflection and narration respectively:

0 thou that with surpassing glory crowned
Look’st from thy sole dominion like the God
Of this new world; at whose sight all the stars
Hide their diminished heads; to thee I call,
But with no friendly voice, and add thy name;
O sun, to tell thee how I hate thy beams
That bring to my remembrance from what state
I fell, how glorious once above thy sphere;
Till pride and worse ambition threw me down
Warring in heaven against heaven’s matchless king:
(PL IV 32-41)

II

He scarce had ended, when those two approached
And brief related whom they brought, where found,
How busied, in what form and posture couch’d.
To whom with stern regard thus Gabriel spake:
(PL IV 374-377)

In the first passage Satan functions as a reflector-character. It is the externalization of a dialogue in Satan’s mind. The reflector-character, Satan himself, presents the
duologue between the better-self and the worser-self of Satan: a repartee identical to the one of good and evil angels in Marlowe’s Doctor Faustus.

In the second passage the authorial narrator who is omniscient narrates the events. The function of a teller-character is common to an authorial narrator of all kinds. That is evident in this passage also. During narration the pendulum constantly swings back and forth. If one were to put the content of the first passage into the mouth of a narrator-character, its meaning would be significantly changed. The emphasis of the altered passage would never create the subjective impressions produced by Satan’s reflections. In the same way the second passage defies transposition. Substituting a teller-character for a reflector-character will alter the sense of the narrative statement. This also proves that the opposition narrator- reflector signifies structurally opposite forms.

The following passages are quoted as illustrations for the binary opposition, reflector-narrator, in Adhyatma Ramayanam.

I

I know my death is near.
It’s imminent. It’s my fate. Who knows God’s ways!
Even Brahma doesn’t. It was when Ravana indulged in such thoughts that Hanuman visited Lanka.

(Adhyatma Ramayanam Sundara Kanda 295-98)

II

Ravana dreamt the arrival of a monkey in Lanka at Rama’s instance. A monkey with magical powers: to assume shapes as he likes to drift around the city unnoticed. He would meet Sita cooped up under the Simsupa tree. He would leave with Sita Rama’s word and ring as a token. Then he would go back. Dreams, to some at last, may come true, thought Ravana. Now, if I approach Sita . . . if I abuse
her... if I evoke in her sorrow... Hanuman the nuncio would narrate everything to Rama. That would quicken Rama’s steps, his plunge into the battlefield and also my death.

(Adhyatma Ramayanam, Sundara Kanda 299-314)

In the first passage given, both a reflector and narrator are discovered. Till the lines reach "Even Brahma doesn’t," the reflector has been at work. As this reflection ends the narrator who has been lying latent till then for long resumes "It was when Ravana indulged in such thoughts that Hanuman visited Lanka." Here the narrator is resuscitated. The omniscient’s voice is heard.

Ravana is a reflector-character in the second passage given above. Ravana considers the previous night’s dream full of memorabilia. The incidents are reflected in his consciousness as he proceeds to the garden, a peculiar analysis of the dream. If one were to put the content of this passage into the mouth of a narrator-character, its meaning would be very significantly changed. The emphasis of the altered passage would no longer be on the subjective impressions which the dream creates in the consciousness of the reflector-character, Ravana, but it is rather on the actual dream. The substitution of a teller-character can result in a decisive change in the narrative statement. That is the discovery of this experiment in transposition. In a narration, the opposition narrator-reflect character signifies structurally opposite forms of the rendition of mediacy.

Once the mediacy is identified, its constituents are easily detected. The positioning of these constituents to judge the binary opposition is important. Stanzel’s stance has put up a
strategy for this. His theory of narrative is based on narrative situations. It distinguishes itself as it projects a triadic system with the three constituents of mediacy. Stanzel in a diagram systematically arranges narrative situations in a circle. This arrangement is according to the correspondences existing among them. The opposition axes belonging to the narrative situations intersect this at regular intervals.

On identification of mediacy, the identifier is reminded of the deviation theory. Both Paradise Lost and Adhyatma Ramayanam are deviations as they move away from the existing literary norms and aims of epic mediacy. In each case the historical prototype of the narrative situation is modified. The modifying shift is towards a new narrative situation of an ideal type in each case. Each work here is an example. "Deviation from the prototype, however, may be interpreted as the conscious reaction of the author to the most common narrative model in popular literature."

In Paradise Lost Milton in his authorial narrative situation is outside the world of the characters. Here too, the process of transmission originates from the external perspective. Milton begins his epic as if it were a first-person narration. He is much involved in his work and proclaims that he would embark upon something "unattempted yet in prose or rhyme." But the first-person narrator in course of time fades into oblivion and, it may be due to the classical epic convention which he would like to abide by that he bids adieu to the fictional world. But the shadow of the first-person narrator always follows the authorial narrator of Milton. "The presence" and "absence" of Milton could
help one define the peculiar authorial narration in Paradise Lost.

In Adhyatma Ramayanam the initial investigations have been fruitful to derive an equation regarding the narrator in authorial situation of narration: Ezhuthachan = the bird = Siva. Henceforth, Ezhuthachan is deemed as the narrator in this part of discussion. Neither the author, nor the bird, nor Siva belongs to the world of characters. In such a situation, "the process of transmission originates from an external perspective." In the work, there are indications of the fictional characters' perceptions and feelings. But they are subordinated to the authorial narrative situations. What ultimately prevails in Adhyatma Ramayanam is the authorial external perspective. Usually, the qualification of the authorial narrative situation "as the most lazy approach" is not applicable to Adhyatma Ramayanam. The bhakti cult and the consequent demand of re-rendering have transformed the authorial narrative situation into something enterprising. The traces of focalization, localization, and personalization that have crept into the authorial narrative situation confirm the presence of the absent author who had withdrawn and absented himself since the exordium.

Milton in Paradise Lost appears before the reader as a narrator projecting his self as a poet. Soon he discovers that he uses a genre that forbids such a treatment. He switches over to an objective handling of theme. He goes behind the narrated events. In spite of his disappearance, elements of personalization, focalization and localization creep into the corpus of the narrative. All of them give it a personal tinge.
While he drifts away to the second form of narration, of scenic presentation, he profusely indulges in the use of dialogues and reflection of fictional events through the consciousness of his characters. The narrative profile made in Chapter II gives a proportional difference. In his narration, Milton follows Classical and Christian treatment of his theme. This can tell how Milton is ratiocinating between two kinds of creative process: adhering to the classical, but mixing it with the romantic; abiding by the Christian, but revelling with the pagan; justifying God, but sharing thoughts with Satan; and following the "epic" objectivity but sporting with his idiosyncracies.

In *Adhyatma Ramayana* the authorial narrator appears before the reader. Soon he withdraws behind the narrative. He is invisible to the reader except (1) in the beginning and end of every Kanda and (2) during the authorial intrusion. Though Ezhuthachan yearns for the objectivity of an ideal epic composer of the classical tradition, he falls short of its accomplishment because of the impact of the Bhakti cult. In *Paradise Lost* and *Adhyatma Ramayana* the main mediacy exists in the authorial narrative situation. It means that this situation is distinguished primarily by the dominance of an external perspective and secondarily by the narrator on the one hand and non-identity of the realm of existence on the other. As the epics are long narratives, they embed in them other short narratives.

In the epics under study the word "omniscient" is polysemic. It distinguishes itself in three contexts. The authorial narrator is an "omniscient narrator." He stands outside the fictional world, views and narrates as if he were omniscient. God is "the
omniscient." In both the epics "the omniscient" directly and indirectly plays his role. The reader learns that the omniscient's will prevails. But there are many characters in these narratives who have omniscience. Narada, Brahma, Agastya and Siva are all omniscient. Michael foretells future. It is a sign post to his omniscience. Whatever be those meanings attributed to the word, "omniscience" is an exaggerated term when it is applied to modern extra-diegetic narrators. Nevertheless, the characteristics connoted by omniscience are many and relevant. The characteristics include the familiarity with the characters and their innermost thoughts and feelings, knowledge of the past, present and future. An omniscient narrator can be present in locations where the characters are supposed to be unaccompanied. He knows of what happens in several places at the same time. In *Paradise Lost* Milton acquires omniscience with the Muse's assistance.

The discovery of mediacy may pose some problems. Some are credible, some incredible and some are reliable and some unreliable as narrators. The "credibility of a narrated statement exists for the readers depending on whether this statement is made in the third-person or in the first-person form." Both *Paradise Lost* and *Adhyatma Ramayanam* relate events beyond the scope of spatio-temporal comprehension of the concerned poet. As it exceeds his capability, he seeks assistance from external agency to get the fabula rendered into a narrative. In *Adhyatma Ramayanam* it is worth noting how Ezhuthachan cautions himself in his choice of mediacy. He himself dares not plunge into narration. He acknowledges his limitations. He admits his incapabilities. To
overcome them, he is relying upon the bird, a representative incarnation of goddess Sarasvati. Even the bird only narrates what transpired between Siva and Parvati, Siva being the teller. The choice of the narrator is apt. Siva, as one of the Trinity, is unquestionable as a knower and narrator. His veracity is undefiable. So for the narration of "Ramayana" the employment of a third-person narrator like Siva is the right choice. The problem does not end with this. Within the fictional world, a number of first-person teller-characters appear to render mediacy of narration. Even they are more reliable, and their narration credible. Visvamitra, Agastya, Gandharva, Narada and a host of similar characters have this narratorial function. This argument shatters Booth's dictum that the first-person is by definition an "unreliable narrator."

The narration in Paradise Lost is ulterior narration the mediacy of which rendered by a human narrator is incredible to any reader. So the poet devises a method by which the incredibility is erased and reliability established. Milton introduces a Muse. The Muse is omniscient. The "knower" Muse helps the "teller" Milton to narrate. Thus the narrator aided by the Muse steers the narrative out of the impediments of incredibility and unreliability. But this technique is reduced to a mere generalization in Achyutama Ramayanam. In it the first-person narrators and third-person narrators have the same function. Some of such first-person narrators are as reliable as the third-person narrators. They have the very same omniscience. They do own full perception and knowledge of everything. Naturally, the reliability and credibility factors become
outstanding features in the *Adhyatma Ramayananam*.

The conception of a typological circle of narrative situations is not new. Perhaps, it was first conceived by Stanzel. Aided by this, he is not for any narrative prescriptions. He professes no schematization, either. This idea, however, has been conveniently manipulated in the study of fiction. What fiction is today is but a host of short stories and novels. But here, the narratological investigation is steered towards the study of two epics, *Paradise Lost* and *Adhyatma Ramayananam*. The study eventually reveals that all types of narrative situations in fiction today are but variations of the types already found in epics. An epic is, in fact, a treasure-house of narrative types and situations. The approach here is to discover them, name them after the terms of present-day narratology, and study a few of them.

The study so far has helped to discover the three oppositions -- person, perspective and mode -- which form the constitutive basis of the narrative situations. It has also contributed to know their relation to one another in the system of narrative forms. The representation of the three oppositions as poles of the three main axes of the typological circle reveals which element dominates in the determination of a narrative situation. It also tells us which elements play a secondary role. Besides, the typological circle is used to explain the nature and function of a narrative in twin ways, which are discussed in Part I and Part II below.

I

The mediacy triad represented in the circle is understood as
follows. The three basic elements of mediacy are placed in a circle. The binary oppositions are noted in the diagram. Mediacy has its being when all the three constituents combine to form a triad form among the binary oppositions. There are eight different possibilities. These can provide varied examples of mediacy. On every occasion when mediacy matures, these three constituents are combined, and the triad is formed. This triad is represented by a triangle. In the course of narration either person may change from "identity" to "non-identity" and vice-versa, or perspective from internal perspective to external perspective and vice-versa, and narrator to reflector and vice-versa. In all these occasions triangles change from one to another. The study of mediacy becomes the study of these triangles. The study of these triangles may be called the study of triangulation of mediacy. The ontology of mediacy and the process of its triangulation explain the functioning of the narrative. The triangle shifts from one position to another. As changes occur in triangle, the narrative moves. In drama, dialogues, dramatic presentation complementing literary production, and the change in perspective leading to the change in mediacy cause narrative movement. In description narrative movement does not occur. It is due to non-shift in mediacy and corresponding stasis of the narrative.

A few lines of Paradise Lost are examined here. The diagrams and the triangulation of mediacy should explain the narrative movement, followed by an examination of a few lines of Adhyatma Ramayanam in a similar way.

Diagram I  
Narrator-External Perspective-Non-identity
The diagram shows the mediacy in *Paradise Lost* I 1-5: Milton uses the opening "to give us the sensation that some great thing is about to begin." ABC gives the locations of the triad constituents in binary oppositions.

\[ \text{ABC} = (\text{N}) \quad (\text{EP}) \quad (\text{NI}) \]

where \((\text{N})\) = narrator
\((\text{EP})\) = External Perspective
\((\text{NI})\) = Non-Identity

Diagram II Reflector - Internal Perspective - Non-Identity

There is shift in mediacy triad in line 6. when Milton invokes the heavenly Muse to sing the song of *Paradise Lost*. Here ABC changes to CDE.

Diagram III Narrator - External Perspective - Non-Identity

Lines 6-10 again bring the mediacy back to the same in diagram I. The authorial narrator narrates events of the past.

CDE \quad ABC

Diagram IV Reflector-Internal Perspective-Identity. Lines
10-26 give us the reflection of the poet on what he is going to narrate and the type of help he solicits in the process. Whatever that strikes his mind in the context is reflected.

Diagram V  Reflector - internal Perspective - Non-identity

In lines 27-75 the reflection relates to the author's mind but it reflects what all things flash back in his mind.

Diagram VI  Narrator-External Perspective - Non-identity

In lines 76-84 the poet starts his omniscient's narration

Diagram VII  Narrator - Internal Perspective - Identity

Lines 85-124 form the utterance of Satan. His narration gives us his internal perspective. He is orienting the hearer's mind to his thinking. His identity with the fictional world is
Shift representation -- Mediacy in Paradise Lost

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Shift-representation  
ABC  CDE  ABC  DEF  CDE  ABC  AEF

Adhyatma Ramayanam

Diagram I  Narrator - External Perspective - Non-identity

The diagram represents the mediacy in Bala Kanda 517-526.  

ABC shows the locations of binary oppositions: person, perspective and mode. The lines provide an account of Dasaratha's state as a virtuous king, a great administrator, and a truthful preserver of dharma. Yet, he is not happy. Despite the power and self he enjoys, the problem of infertility has been haunting him. Dasaratha approaches Vasista, touches the preceptor's feet and desires to sound him of his mind to know what he should do to solve the problem of infertility.[A verbatim translation will consume a large space and so a brief summary is given].
ABC = (N) (EP) (NI) where (N) = Narrator
(EP) = External Perspective
(NI) = Non-identity

Diagram (II) Narrator - Internal Perspective - Identity.

The diagram here represents the mediacy in the same Kanda 527-530. It marks a shift from the diagrammatic representation of lines 517-526. The shift from ABC to AEF. The lines represented here stand for the speech of Dasaratha addressed to Vasista.

AEF = (N) (IP) (I)
where (N) = narrator
(IP) = internal perspective
(I) = identity

Here the shift from diagram I to II is noted. In the traditional sense the conception of mediacy should be thought of quite differently. As no narrator is needed in a dialogue in the traditional sense, mediacy does not exist. Instead immediacy prevails.

Diagram (III) Narrator - External Perspective - Non-identity.

The lines 531-532 present a return of Narrator - external perspective - non-identity triad. There is a shift from AEF to ABC. This authorial narration functions as a link between
Dasaratha’s and Vasista’s words. Here the shift-back from diagram II to III is noted.

Diagram (IV) Narrator - Internal Perspective - Identity.

Vasista gives his opinion to Dasaratha (533-536) on the king’s enquiry. Here ABC changes to AEF.

A rendering of some lines of Adhyatma Ramayanam is given to support the illustrations:

Dasaratha, the King of Ayodhya, is an embodiment of virtues. He is pure at heart, morally perfect, truthful, kind, in glory equalling Indra, and handsome like Kamadeva(Cupid). Dasaratha is living with his first wife Kausalya, more endearing Kaikeyi, and the third wife Sumitra. With able ministers to discuss and decide the problems of the country, he reigns supreme over the whole of earth. Despite all these, he has a vexing problem: no issue to fondle, none to succeed him. He approaches Vasista, the preceptor, touches his feet, and sounds him for his advice to get himself relieved of this mental agony: "Tell me what I should do to get children. Being childless I am mentally ill in spite of all weal and wealth." "You will have four children. Dasaratha, remember you are the King, it is not expected of a king like you to grieve over this. Send for Risyasringa, the seer. You are so virtuous a king that you can perform the yaga-putrakameshti, consoled Vasista with a smile.

Balakanda 517-536
Diagrams (I) to (IV)

Diagram (V) Narrator - External Perspective - Non-identity

Lines 537-548 form an authorial narration of what happens in
Ayodhya soon after the advice has been rendered to Dasaratha.

AEF changes to ABC.

Diagram (VI) Narrator - Internal Perspective - Identity.

God of Fire blesses Dasaratha (549-50). The ABC changes to AEF.

Diagram (VII) Narrator - External Perspective - Non-Identity.

In forty-three lines (550-592) the authorial narrator describes of what happens as the God of Fire blesses Dasaratha. AEF changes to ABC.

Diagram (VIII) Reflector - Internal perspective - Identity.

Lines 593-606 change the mediacy to another triad DEF. It is a reflection what Kausalya perceives.
Diagram (IX)  Narrator - External Perspective - Non-identity

In the course of the reflection of Kausalya the authorial narrator intercepts. Lines 607-612 give comments on Kausalya's reflection.

Diagram (X)  Reflector - Internal Perspective - Identity

Kausalya's reflection continues with the hymnic outbursts rendered (612-656)

Shift Representation--Mediacy in Adhyatma Ramayanam

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<td>592</td>
<td>606</td>
<td>612</td>
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Diagram  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

Shift representation: ABC  AEF  ABC  AEF  ABC  AEF  ABC  DEF  ABC  DEF

II

As shifts take place in the mediacy triad, and the onward movement of the narrative occurs, some corresponding changes happen outside the circle. Certain notable “influence fields” are observed there which are rather analogous to the formation of a
magnetic field. Beyond the polar position of External Perspective, authorial narrative situation field is formed. Similarly First-Person narrative situation field lies beside identity of the realms of existence and figural narrative situation lies beside Reflector-Character. The fields between External Perspective and Reflector-Character, Reflector-Character and Identity of the realms of existence and Identity of the realms of existence and External Perspective are fields of transitions. The main positions of transitions are noted in the typological circle. A few will be discussed later with illustrations from Paradise Lost and Adhyatma Ramayana. Still beyond these fields of influences of the mediacy constituents, boundaries are marked between first-person/third person, and internal perspective/external perspective. All these in the diagram with illustrations are self-explanatory.

The earlier narratology called epic a narrative and the presence of dialogue in it was considered a deviation. The model norm is deviation. "Link's distinction between a normal type of epic discourse, and an epic discourse defamiliarized by dialogue is also based on the deviation model..." Strictly speaking, this distinction comprises several oppositions: third/first person narration, reflector/teller character, and the like. This concept is replaced by a closed continuum of transformationally generated form. In them there can be no norm and no deviation from norm. There can be only a continuous motion from form to form in either direction. The continuum of forms results from the variation of the three narrative situations. They lead to a large number of intermediate and transitional forms. "The mobility of
dynamics of this continuum is twofold: the system itself has no categorical borders, only transitions: also, the narrative situation of the individual work is not a static condition but a dynamic process of constant modulation or oscillation within a certain sector of the typological circle.

With this background of the typology of narrative situations, the narrative movement in *Paradise Lost* and *Adhyatma Ramayana* is examined. In *Paradise Lost* as the poem progresses, the authorial narrator withdraws. The narrative elements decrease and the dialogue parts of the text increase. Till I 83 there is continuous narration. But as Satan starts his utterance, the narrator disappears. In other words, the role of the narrator is somewhat reduced merely to link the parts of dialogue. This does not subscribe to limit the authorial narration to that much. At times, the narrator’s role is crucial and inevitable as in the long and descriptive authorial narration in *Paradise Lost* I 283-315. Here the dialogue part may fail to carry the goods. But for the inclusion of this long passage of Miltonic similes, Satan’s stature would not have as much impressed the reader. Then again in *Paradise Lost* I 331-621, the authorial narrator has his long say. In contrast to these situations, in *Paradise Lost* Book II more dialogues replace the narration and this keeps the author’s role on the wane. Another phenomenon is also noted: the authorial reportorial narrative of events of the outerworld disappears and in its place the figural presentation of events of the inner world appears as in the soliloquies of Satan. At times another replacement too is noted. In lieu of the reportorial narrative of events, the reflection of events of the outerworld in the
consciousness of a figural medium or reflected character finds place. This character can assume the transmittal function of the authorial teller-character as in Satan’s reflections in Paradise Lost I.

Slightly different is the state of affairs in Adhyatma Ramayanam. The whole narration initially is attributed to the revelation of "Ramayana" in a dialogue between Siva and Parvati. As a dialogue, it does not carry the relevance in the narrative. It is more or less a technique in externalization. The narrator Siva keeps the auditor Parvati mute till the end. Whatever be the technique used, the careful reader can recognize the authorial narrator behind all of them. Here the withdrawal of the authorial narrator is a three-tier process. First, Ezhuthachan, the author withdraws behind the scene. Soon the bird-narrator disappears. Not much later Siva, the narrator also toes the line of the other two. Then the omniscient narrator starts the narration. It does not last long. All other possible narrative situations due to transitions too are employed in the narration. Some of them will be discussed in the course of this study.

Kausalya muttered: my lord, King Dasaratha gave Kaikée two boons. It was long back. Why? He could have given her his kingdom too. To Kaikée, his ‘darling’ O my God! What have I done? Sending my son to the wild forest! It is the king. The king has done all these. Now he weeps. Now what is it that makes him weep?" (Adhyatma Ramayanam, Ayodhya Kanda 2194-99)

The above exposition of Kausalya’s self records a characteristic feature of the quasi-autobiographical first-person narrative situation. It shows the internal tension: between the self as a loving mother and the self as a disgruntled wife as reflector. The reflectorial "I" contains both the phases of the
"experiencing self" and "reflecting self." Between these two phases there is a measurable distance. This reflecting distance may be measured spatially, temporally and psychologically. This gives us the intensity of the process of experience. It also provides education of the reflecting self. This measurable distance gives room for interpretation of the work. In Adhyatma Ramayana varieties of these may be noted. Some of them identify the reflecting and the experiencing self. Some of them lead to the estrangement between them. The shorter the reflective distance, the closer the narrating self stands to the experiencing self. The horizon of knowledge and perception of the experiencing self become narrower and the effect of memory as a catalyst capable of clarifying the substance of experience is correspondingly limited. Here a problem comes up before sceptics. Is Kausalya a reflector-character or a narrator-character? She belongs more to the reflector-character. The reasons are obvious. She mirrors events of the outer-world in the consciousness. She perceives them. She registers them. She does not "narrate" them. She verbalizes her thoughts and feelings. But this verbalization is not intended for communication. She does not want the dying Dasaratha to hear it. Though her verbalized thoughts are "silently" muttered, the mutterings are slightly audible to the readers and the inner ears of Dasaratha. Here another narratological problem confronts us. How far this narrative situation is away from free indirect style? A free indirect style in the first-person narrative has been considered as a means of rendering thoughts and perceptions, it can also be considered for the rendition of speech.
If an attempt is made to transpose the quasi-autobiographical to a pure first-person narrative situation, Kausalya should approach Dasaratha and utter these words. The words then would become those of indignation at her husband’s acts. Narratologically, it makes only a minor change. But what follows is a major variation, in which case Kausalya would appear to the reader a cruel woman unkind to the dying old man. All these words then should form an utterance unseasonably spoken.

I

Dasaratha hears Kausalya’s indistinct words. He guesses what they will be. He intercepts: “My heart is already sore. Why stir it with a red hot rod? I am dying. . . . Once a great hermit before his death cursed me. It’s due to that I’m fated to suffer now. Dear Kausalya, I’ll let you know how it all happened. Hermit’s, you know, are gods in earthly frames’ . . .

Adhyatma Ramayana, Ayodhya Kanda,

II

"I was armed with bows and arrows. I was standing on the river bank, rather tired after a long hunting spree. . . ."

III

"Upon a request from his old parents, hermits, a boy came to fetch water in a pot from the river in the thick darkness of night. The boy was filling the pot. Water rushed into the pot through its narrow neck with sounds ‘dhum dhum’. I thought they were sounds of water rushing into the trunk of an elephant drinking water on the river bank. To the spot where the sound was heard, I sent an arrow. . . ."

The narratorial "I" is on the death-bed. The narrator tries to effect the intimate self-presentation of the thoughts and feelings of the dying person. This narration is crucial. But for this, narrative transmission the reader’s comprehension of the dying person may be incomplete. The internal perspective, presented in the last example of the narrative given, changes the
external perspective of the main story line. The whole narration could have been substituted with reflection. In which case the exposition of events would be complicated. So here what would have been an ideal reflection has been "reduced" to a narration. The ideal reflection in this context is possible only with an authorial assistance.

The first part of the text above describes the state of Dasaratha's mind. He presumes that whatever Kausalya states may be indicative of his action, of conceding the demand of Kaikeyi to send Rama in exile and to crown Bharata. An intuitive mind of Dasaratha foresees death. Now he unravels the mystery of his life and the secret of his sorrow at the time of death. He narrates. When the narration is autobiographical, he uses the first-person. He shifts from first-person to third-person, and resorts to the function of an omniscient narrator. In the above given examples, some of the subtle shifts in mediacy and their effects in narration have been examined. The study, however, has been limited to only a few instances as the poems under scrutiny are very long. That way the study is found wanting to provide specific conclusions. But, for an understanding of mediacy as a window to the world of technique of narration the attempt here is useful. It is also worth noting that on full narrative analysis of mediacy relying on this method, the technique of the composers of these two epics may be noted and a narrative theory comprising all techniques in employment of mediacy of any narrator may be thereby inducted.
NOTES


2) Ibid. p. 229. The same narrator can assume two identical or parallel narrative functions at different levels. Valmiki in Valmiki’s *Ramayana* is a narrator in two levels.

3) Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction*, p. 94.


6) Norman Friedman, "Point of View in Fiction: the development of a critical concept", *PMLA*, 70 (1955), 1160-84.


