CHAPTER IV

FABULA - SUJET AND RETRACTATIO

The third mode of analysis leans on the relation between the fabula and the sujet. For that, we need to rip the surface structure to reach the deep structure of the narrative. As poetics approaches the generating instance of narrative discourse, so does it find the course rather tough. This generating instance is the same as narrating or enunciation. The latter term is more acceptable. The narrating instance does not remain identical and invariable even in the course of a single literary work like Paradise Lost and Adhyatma Ramayanam. Narrative analysis here must obviously take charge of the study of these modifications, or of these performances in each work. Some of these aspects with regard to Paradise Lost and Adhyatma Ramayanam are being discussed here in this chapter. Some similar aspects have been dealt in another chapter too where mediacy in these works is handled.

When a narrating situation in these works is noted, it may be seen that every such situation is complex. A mere analysis will fail to unravel its complexity. Connections among the narrating acts and the protagonists in them, and relationships among narrative situations involved in the same narrative are to be discovered after a lot of digging. In the narrating act generally two aspects are important: the place and tense are not to be left unmentioned. The tense cannot be left out. It is inevitable in a narrating act. It must be told either in the past, present or future tense. "This is perhaps why the temporal
Determinations of the narrating instance are manifestly more important than its spatial determinations. The chief temporal determination of the narrating instance is obviously its positive relation to the story. It seems evident that the narrating can only be subsequent to what it tells. But the obviousness has been belied for many centuries by the existence of "predictive" narration in its various forms. Predictive narration includes prophetic, apocalyptic, oracular, astrological and oneiromantic. Though their origin is lost in the darkness of time, their use in epic like Paradise Lost and Adhyatma Ramayanam is easy to the perception of the reader and can be easily illustrated from these works.

The temporal relation between the narrating of Paradise Lost and Adhyatma Ramayanam and the events narrated in them becomes a valid example of a certain kind of narration with some common characteristics. The incidents are all records of the past. In the case of the former, the incidents narrated are events already told in the Old Testament. Hence Paradise Lost is a retelling, or a transcreation. Whatever be the name used, one thing is certain. This narrating in Paradise Lost takes place after the events happened. The events of Adhyatma Ramayanam, its author admits, are occurings of the past, narrated time and again by gods like Brahma, Siva and Narada and men like Valmiki. This prolusory information provided at the outset of the poem is an illustrative proof of the type of narrating. Gerard Genette calls it "subsequent" narrating. Shlomith Rimon-Kenan calls it "ulterior" narration. The appellation ulterior is more appealing and befitting. It refers to the classical position of the past.
tense of the narrative. It is the most frequently used mode of narration.

In Paradise Lost, in Books XI and XII angel Michael reveals to Adam future events to befall on mankind. The angel denounces the departure of Adam and Eve from Paradise. He then sets before Adam in vision what shall happen till the flood. He further proceeds the narration telling what all will happen even after the flood. In the mention of "Abraham" the angel describes everything: His incarnation, death, resurrection, and ascension, and the state of the Church till the second coming.

This mode of predictive narration is common in Adhyatma Ramayana. In Bala Kanda, Dasaratha holds Putrakamesti Yaga, a rite to Gods, to get children, as often the infertile couples do. Blessed by the God of fire, all the three wives of Dasaratha become pregnant. At length, Kausalya, the eldest among them gives birth to Rama in the divine appearance of Lord Narayana. Kausalya offers Him hymns. Rama's words to his mother in this scene contain the whole story of Ramayana. On many occasions the divine characters relate the story of Ramayana yet to happen as they have powers to see things happening in future. They are omniscient characters.

These are the narratives the events of which precede the events in the fabula of the story being narrated. Except in a few modern novels, seldom is it found as a technique used by a narrator in the treatment of a full narrative. But this is a frequently used device in epics: not as the main narratives, but as mini narratives embedded in the main. The narrator uses this device of admixing the short narrative externalized in the main
narrative frame. In these narratives the narrator postdates their narrating instances making them implicitly subsequent to their stories. Predictive narrative does not appear on the first level of narration. It does not fit into the literary corpus except on the second level. The common characteristic of most of these second narratives is obviously that they are predictive in relation to the immediate narrating instance but in relation to the final instance. The narrator uses future tense in the employment of this technique of narration, sometimes the present. Examples abound in Biblical prophecies, curses or dreams. This technique is "anterior" narration to Kenan and "prior" narrating to Genette.

Milton in *Paradise Lost III* narrates the events in Heaven having shifted his venue of the scenes of narration from Hell to Heaven. God sees Satan flying towards the world, then newly created. Sitting on his throne God shows to the Son who is then sitting at his right hand the motion of Satan:

> Only begotten Son, seest thou what rage
> Transports our adversary, whom no bounds
> Prescribed, no bars of hell, nor all the chains
> Heaped on him there, nor yet the main abyss
> Wide interrupt can hold, so bent he seems
> On desperate revenge, that shall rebound
> Upon his own rebellious head

>(PL III 80-8)

This narration is more or less a running commentary. The commentator here has of course an added advantage. He is the omniscient. So he can pass remarks which will never be deemed erroneous. Certain adjectives used in the live commentary may bear slight prejudice too, of the commentator. It so appears that the commentator, effects the orientation of the hearer's
perspective to suit his own. The commentary does not end there.

"And now

Through all restraint broke loose he wings his way
Not far off heaven, in the precincts of light
Directly towards the new created world,
And man there placed, with purpose to assay
If him by foxe he can destroy, or worse,
By some false guile pervert; and shall pervert
For man will hearken to his glozing lies
And easily transgress the sole command,
Sole pledge of his obedience."

(PL III 86-95)

More examples can be drawn from Paradise Lost.

Ezhuthachan employs this mode in many parts in his epic, as
in Hanuman’s mission in Lanka and its chaotic finale. As Hanuman
meets Sita, the demoness-attendants guarding Sita wake up from
sleep. They start chattering about Hanuman’s conduct in the
garden. One of them asks Sita who this strong beast is and
narrates what he does. Another demoness wants to know why he has
come there to meet Sita in misgitude and talks to her for a long
time(Sundara Kanda 769-80). Some of them go and meet their lord
Ravana to appraise him of the occurring events(Sundara Kanda 783-
90). Ravana instructs one hundred thousand trained demon-warriors
to face Hanuman(Sundara Kanda 793-96). The demons start
approaching Hanuman. At once they are astonished to hear the
thunderous noise produced by Hanuman. This narration continues to
the scene when he is taken under physical custody to be brought
before Ravana(Sundara Kanda 911-1114) and the scene of burning
Lanka (Sundara Kanda 1115-1272).

This mode is "simultaneous" narration. Both the
narratologists Genette and Kenan agree to call it the same. In
this type fabula and sujet run parallel to each other. While one
action occurs, the reporting is also simultaneously done. This
produces tremendous effect in perception on the part of the reader or auditor. By contrast in principle simultaneous narration is the simplest: "the rigorous simultaneousness of story and narrating eliminates any sort of interference or temporal game."

The blending of the instances can function here in opposite directions, depending on the emphasis on the story or on the narrative discourse. The narrator can at least create sense of more objectivity in this type of narration.

Adam and Eve live an ideal life in Paradise. A mere discourse between Eve and Satan "enlightens" Eve. This is a small incident. This leads to the loss of Paradise and the cause of all ills in the world. This incident triggers a proliferation of events taking place later on. Similarly among all angels in heaven Satan alone feels bitter against God. This bitterness growing into enmity leads to a series of major events leading to the eventualities including their ouster from heaven.

In *Adhyatma Ramayanam*, the narrator wants to send Rama to forest immediately. That alone can give a momentum in the story. For that, in an abrupt step, Kaikeyi's story of boons is introduced. It is skilfully done through the interception of the main stream of story with the episode of Manthara (Ayodhya Kanda 461-596). Consequently Rama opts to go to forest voluntarily and Ramayana begins. Manthara's intervention. Kaikeyi's maternal instinct and at the bottom the divine interference through Sarasvati's indulgence in Manthara's tongue—all upset the applecart of Dasaratha to crown Rama and to bless his people with a benevolent rule. This is a small event. But this results in a very long chain of happenings. A similar example is found in the
curse of the old parents of the youth: "you die of sorrow from your son!" (Ayodhya Kanda 2308), killed by Dasaratha quite unawares in his youthful days. In Ayodhya Kanda, when Dasaratha is almost on his deathbed, Kausalya sits beside him and mildly pricks his heart. Dasaratha wants to convince Kausalya that everything was fate. This short event narrated here ending with a curse cast at Dasaratha is the one that triggers a proliferation of events forming the bulk of Ramayana. (Adhyatma Ramayanam Ayodhya Kanda 2201-2310).

The narrator in each case given above uses a technique of narrating the story. This type is a priori the most complex. It involves narrating with several instances. The story and the narrating can become entangled in such a way that the latter has an effect on the former. This type of narrating can also be the most delicate, indeed, the one most refractory to analysis. By this device the storyteller narrates an event and consequently triggers an event or series of events in the imminent future. One event is used for another event, or for another series of events. The short one that is used results in the narration of a pretty long one. The short one has the function, here of a catapult resulting in a long far-reaching eventuality. This technique helps the narrator to hasten the narrative movement rather abruptly. Genette calls this type "interpolated" and Kenan calls it "intercalated". Kenan’s term is more acceptable as the former is more commonly used.

With this background in store that the chief temporal determination of the narrating instance is obviously its positive relation to the story, many types of study are possible. In
chapter II and III the analyses were simple and direct, as the
NS, NF relations in Paradise Lost and Adhyatma Ramayanan have
been observed, findings of parallels drawn, and contrast noted.
But here the modus operandi shall be different. The reason for
this rests with the common factor that these works are
retellings. The FS relation in each work is a development of an
earlier FS relation. The FS of Paradise Lost owes its being to
that of the genesis narrative. Between these two many
intermediaries also creep in. The study should then become the
study of the transference of the FS of genesis narrative to the
FS of Paradise Lost narrative through several intermediary
stages. The changes occurred in the transference are due to the
changes in enunciation of each story. As the first happened in
antiquity and the second in seventeenth-century and many
intermediaries ranged between these two enunciations of the
narrative, the study compass becomes rather very vast.

As both Paradise Lost and Adhyatma Ramayanan are retellings,
their study demands a definition of retelling. Retelling is a
transference from one version of a narrative to another. In the
process changes occur to the narrative triangle, NFS. The first
version of the narrative is Source Version (SV) and the second
Target Version (TV). The SV is telling or primary narration and
TV is retelling or secondary narration. On retelling the
narrative triangle gets transformed from NFS to N'F'S'. This
process is made out on close examination as one of transformation
too. An ideal retelling is possible only in an ideal condition
when telling and retelling shall be indistinguishable. Then
retelling becomes an unwarranted exercise. With regard to the
Retelling of Genesis story in *Paradise Lost* and Rama’s story in *Adhyatma Ramayananam*. It has been a successful, meaningful and useful literary exercise due to several different reasons. Retelling is always related to SV. The study here lingers around the fabula-sujet relation in the SV and TV and *Paradise Lost* and *Adhyatma Ramayananam*. In each case the comparative study between SV and TV should reveal the significance of this transference. That eventually will provide some revelation of comparative features between *Paradise Lost* and *Adhyatma Ramayananam*. In the process some technique of narration employed in either of the works may be noted. Common features identified and contrasts observed.

The study here never attempts at the conventional hunting for sources. It should only expose how the transformations of FS of original narrative of antiquity in each case of *Paradise Lost* and *Adhyatma Ramayananam* gets transmuted into the texts for analysis. The original narrative of *Paradise Lost* appears in the Bible. With it, it has an intimate relation. Quite naturally the Scriptural allusions in many individual passages have long been editorial stock. The Bible to Milton is the Bible glossed by commentators. James H. Sim in *The Bible in Milton’s Epics* (Gainesville, Fla. 1962) provides a number of new parallels, echoes and allusions. Arnold William in *The Common Expositor* (Chapel Hill N.C. 1943) indicates the interest and relevance of this neglected body of writing. Andrew Willet’s *Hexapla* on *Genesis* is a helpful commentary on the Bible, as it summarises a fairly broad spectrum of contemporary and earlier opinion. Sister M.I. Corcoran gives a new opening to this study. (Milton’s *Paradise With Reference to the Hexapleral Background*, Washington.

The transfer of the genesis narrative to the *Paradise Lost* narrative, as noted above, passes through many stages in two major series, each may be considered as a tradition: retelling in the genesis tradition and retelling in the classical tradition. This analysis leads to the view that the poem is "...a development and a fulfillment of the classical epic tradition, a synthesis of the pagan and the Christian epic." Milton uses common ground throughout the poem and there is no conflict between classical and biblical sources. More or less each of them is complementary to the other. *John Milton and the Transformation of the Classical Epic* (Surry Hill: Croom Helm, 1986) is a key in which Martindale shows two ways: "the classic and the Christian tradition". With regard to the latter, Eavan’s phrase "Genesis tradition" appears more acceptable. Coleridge comments: "...there is not perhaps one page in Milton’s *Paradise Lost* in which he has not borrowed his imagery from the Scriptures." It seems that Milton regarded the Bible as the spring of truth, but he found classical poetry more alluring aesthetically.

In *Paradise Lost* the SV is only a tiny narrative of the Genesis story in the Old Testament. This becomes a massive poem of 10569 lines in *Paradise Lost*. Valmiki’s *Ramayana* of 24000 stanzas (24000 x 4 lines) is reduced to a comparatively mini *Adhyatma Ramayanan* with only 15680 lines. This quantitative
reduction is due to redaction. So the main narrative process in each can be summed up as: *Paradise Lost* is a retelling of expansion and *Adhyatma Ramayananam* is a retelling of condensation. Both expansion and condensation form the original cause of a panoply of narrative technique called "retractatio". The term here owns greater significance than what has been attributed to it by Blessington. He uses it only in a narrow restricted sense of reworking of a specific scene from an early epic. Here it bears greater suggestion: reworking of a scene, of a character and of a whole fabula. Retractatio is followed by contaminatio leading to the conflation of several scenes which underwent retractatio.

Modern Biblical scholars are agreed that the story of the Fall began as straightforward aetiological myth. "It was designed to explain why a man cleaves to his wife and why he is the senior partner in the union, why he has to labour in the fields and she in her childbirth, why we wear clothes, why we dislike snakes, and why they crawl in their bellies."

An inquiry into the history of the story of the Fall helps us in the understanding of *Paradise Lost* as a poem. The retractatio process is important as a main part of the subject-matter of this study. That is explored here. The poem was not conceived in a complete vacuum. It is not possible to alienate it from environment, both past and present. The poet teaches us nothing at all if the poem is studied in clinical isolation. The uniqueness in its treatment is definable only in terms of its relationships to the landscape out of which it grew.

The imagination of the Westernman has never been lured by
any other theme than the story of the Fall. A dominant theme of theology, literature and art of the West, its vitality is due to 12 its nature as a myth. C.S. Lewis defines "myth" in the vague poetic sense as a narrative sequence with a "value in itself--a value independent of its embodiment in any literary work". The presence of this myth makes the poem numinous, the characters remote, the events preternatural. But we feel as if something of great moment had been communicated to us. The "something" is formulated and reformulated in particular values until the story's something eventually acquires an outstanding relevance.

The story has humble origins. St. Paul asserted that Adam's digression resulted in Christ's mission. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." The myth was expected to provide the answer to questions rather profound than those of reptilian locomotion and domestic authority. It (the myth) revealed the ultimate source of human misery and became the focus of doctrinal scrutiny. Slowly the narrative started expanding. The expansion was facilitated by interpretations. It was all due to the flexibility of the myth. The flexibility had two reasons for its existence. The external reason was explained by Adam's disobedience, the evidence of evil's existence. It is widely accepted that each culture conceived of evil differently. Everyone conceived of the myth differently. The internal reason was owing to its puzzling nature. In order to solve the puzzles in the myth, more questions cropped up. More interpretations to solve them started pouring in. They were sometimes far-reaching innovations into the original biblical myth. These elaborations
of the original have led to the making of *Paradise Lost*. They come out on interpretative, narrative and metaphysical demand.

The Renaissance saw the revival of the exegetic tradition of the myth. Literary traditions of the myth too were active when Milton embarked on the composition of *Paradise Lost*. Biblical commentaries preserved these two traditions. The scholarly tradition of the Bible employed them. Du Bartas's *Sepmaine*, Joseph Beaumont's *Psyche*, and Samuel Fordage's *Mundorum Explicatio* contained them. "*Paradise Lost* is in every sense the culmination of the myth's development".

*Paradise Lost* is known for its immense richness of its intellectual and poetic content. The allegorical, typological, and literal interpretations were freely incorporated. It is a harmonious blending of Rabbinic Commentaries, apocryphal documents, Christian-Latin Biblical epics, medieval legends, and plays, poems and tracts in the subjects. They were knit into an artistic whole. Though they are heterogeneous elements, this frame work of the poem comprising them is a coherent narrative structure.

How far Milton is imitative and how far he is creative is illustrated with an instance from the poem. As tempter, Satan has his own reasons to conceal himself as a snake. Both Ambrose and Augustine gave much thought to this problem. Satan chose a shape which, "being slippery and moving in tortuous windings", conformed to his own devious nature. This stance has been discussed in detail in Chapter III in *Paradise Lost and Genesis Tradition*. But in Book IX of *Paradise Lost*, on the other hand, Satan considered every creature:
Most opportune might serve his wiles, and found
The serpent subtlest beast of all the field.
Him after long debate, irresolute
Of thoughts revolved, his final sentence chose
Fit vessel, fittest imp of fraud, in whom
To enter, and his dark suggestions hide
From sharpest sight: for in the wily snake,
Whatever sleights none would suspicious mark,
As from his wit and native subtlety
Proceeding, which in other beasts observed
Doubt might beget of diabolic power
Active within beyond the sense of brute.
(PL IX 84-96)

The basis of the argument here is the patristic explanation. It does not abide by the traditional conception and account of the behaviour of the devil. In Milton's hand the "moral extrapolation" becomes "a pragmatic manoeuvre". This fusion of old and new again and again marks Milton's one of the main techniques of narration. He employs it to meet the particular demands of his own interpretation of the story. Most of the constituents of the narrative may have stemmed from a wide variety of possible antecedents. Milton's is Mida's touch. It makes the poem a whole that is unique. "In the final analysis Milton's version of the fall is distinguished not by its indebtedness but its profound originality".

Hence another significant instance is worth noting. In Book IX Milton's treatment of Satan's disguise is a kind of transformation, which many other common place features underwent during the poem's composition. Milton manipulates the mass of extra-Biblical amplification. It is essentially literary. Milton throughout the rest of the story gave concern to bring the Biblical myth to life, to portray the characters, circumstances, and events in such a way that they seemed not only fateful but
credible. The theological reconciliation of fore-knowledge with free will worked out in Book III is not very convincing. But the poetical reconciliation in Book IX is welcome. Milton carefully handles the situation that in the crisis, God's omniscience has had the slightest effect on Adam and Eve's decision to eat the forbidden fruit.

On analysis, it is noted that some of the Jewish interpretations went into the making of Paradise Lost. The Book of Jubilees (C.153-105 B.C.) a Pharisaic work contains the fullest account of the Fall story. In it some of the difficulties in the Biblical narrative are solved, gaps filled, dogmatically offensive elements removed, and the genuine spirits of later Judaism infused into the primitive history of the world. In Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament, R.H. Charles handles this topic in detail. The Genesis narrative posed for orthodox Judaism many problems. The Book of Jubilees solves many of them. Many alterations made to the story of the Fall were done to reconcile the Jahwist's account of God's action with the Priestly writers. Some difficulties in narration were also solved. According to the Genesis, Adam's duty was to guard the garden. Nothing was mentioned what he had to guard it against. Jubilee complemented the Genesis with the addition that Adam was commanded to protect it from the birds, beasts and cattle. Genesis did not explain how Satan could talk. Jubilee attributed it to the gift of speech given to all beings till "condemnation". L. Jung demonstrates that in the Old Testament Satan was a kind of celestial prosecutor. His function was to test Man's virtue. He should accuse Man when he was found wanting. Nowhere was the
portrayed as acting independently of, or contrary to, the wishes of God.

The author of the Book of the Secrets of Enoch was behind the spectacular development in the history of the Devil which took place in both Judaism and Christianity, and culminated in the celestial warfare of Paradise Lost. The Book of the Secrets of Enoch came from a different intellectual background from that of the Book of Jubilees. It is more of Hellenic rather than Pharisaic. The narrative got a new look with the advent of St. Paul. He refined and developed doctrinal synthesis which apocalyptic Judaism had achieved just before.

The treatment of the debate between the Father and Son in Book III is considered by many critics as the weakest part of the poem. The previous Council in Hell (Book II) eclipses the rhetoric of Heaven. Satan undertakes to corrupt Man in Book II. The son offers to save Man in Book III. The former eclipses the latter. God's self justification is found wanting. The Son's pleas on Man's behalf shows the father's unyielding severity. "The whole scene seems calculated to present God in the worst possible light". Milton may have introduced the scene to provide a Christian equivalent to the argument between the gods, characteristic of classical epic. The allegorical version of the debate in the third dramatic draft shows that the episode was an integral part of Milton's scheme long before he decided to cast the story in epic form.

The real key to the episode is found in the long standing tradition of the debate of the four daughters of God. This had its origin in the rabbinic tractates. In them God's foreknowledge
of the Fall and its consequences was reconciled with His omnipotence by the invention of a dispute between His four daughters, Love, Truth, Righteousness and Peace. Before Adam's creation, Love and Righteousness urged that Man should be created, but Truth and Peace urged that Man should not be created. The medieval Christian treatments of the subject transferred the debate to some occasion after this Fall and realigned the four contestants. In them Peace and Love (Mercy) defended Man while Truth and Righteousness (Justice) accused him. By the Renaissance, this medieval version developed along the same lines as the rabbinic. The four conflicting parties were thus reduced to two, Justice and Mercy. In the Renaissance treatments, much of the points of medieval version was lost. Against this background, the distinctive features of the scene in Paradise Lost stand out.

The draft (iii) of Milton's tragedy reveals that Milton had intended to introduce the debate into the story with two crucial modifications. Firstly, along with Justice and Mercy, a third figure Wisdom is introduced. This completes the three persons of the Trinity. Secondly, Milton's treatment of the debate is placed between the rabbinic and the medieval. The Son in the scene has most of the attributes of the Holy Ghost. God and Christ in Milton are literal rather than allegorical characters. There is a possibility to equate God with Justice and Christ with Mercy. But Milton avoids a direct equation. It may be with the intention that it should not direct our sympathies away from the Father on to the Son. Justice and Mercy are described as two aspects of the Father as He says:

in Mercy and Justice both.
Though Heav’n and Earth, so shall my glorie excel,
But Mercy first and last shall brightest shine.

As the debate is over, the angels address the Father:

He to appease thy wrath, and end the strife
Of mercy and justice in thy face discern’d,
... offered himself to die Of mans offence.

The Father and Son still preserve the characteristics of their
allegorical predecessors. But Milton professes to the contrary.

The demands of Justice are voiced by the Father:

Die he or justice must; unless for him
Some other able, and as willing, pay
The rigid satisfaction, death for death.

The arguments of Mercy are given exclusively to the Son. The
Father may assert that His Mercy will eventually triumph and that
Man find grace, but it is His Son that: "Divine compassion
visibly appeared/Love without end, and without measure Grace". (PL
III 141-2). This "heavenly parliament in Paradise Lost is based
upon the legend of the four daughters of God, what is more; upon a
medieval version of that legend." The scene is a product of
Milton’s power of retractatio using materials from poetical
interpretations of the event.

The seventeenth-century in general and Milton in particular
regarded knowledge inevitable to man’s spiritual well-being. So
humanist declaration of human rights is reflected in Paradise
Lost. This shows Milton’s affinities with gnostic and Manichaean
reading of Genesis story. Genesis represented the Fall. It was
due to this that the acquisition of knowledge of good and evil
was possible. Milton the humanist believed that Man could be
truly virtuous only by the possession of this knowledge. Eve
falls "in good faith as a Humanist, whose proper business is to search out knowledge the pre-requisite of true virtue", and this is the theory of paradox of the heart of the poem. Empson goes too far to use the dictum that God is the villain and Satan is the hero of the poem. Lovejoy rediscovers the perilous doctrine of the 'felix culpa'. Christian thinkers seriously thought about the tree of knowledge. Augustine wrote: The Tree of Knowledge was so called "to signify by this name the consequence of their discovering both what good they would experience if they kept the prohibition, and what evil if they transgressed it".

Other Christian thinkers like Gregory the Great, Bede, Alcuin, and Raban Maur in the Dark Ages repeated the argument.

Milton believed in the idea of Eve's dependence on Adam. It was not original with him. Calvin had observed that the "moste sweete melodie should reigne in wedlocke: because the man should have respect unto God, and the woman should be a helper of his forward there unto:..... and for this case the woman is given to the man to be an helpe, that he may shewe himself to be a head and guide". All these Milton takes into account when he brings this state into the "retractatio". When the unfallen pair first appears Milton likewise states explicitly that they are:

"Not equal, as their sex not equal seemed:
For contemplation hee and valour formed
For softness shee and sweet attractive Grace,
H ee for God only, Shee for God in him".

PL IV 296-99.

The treatment of dream in Paradise Lost is important in the poem. The dream is crucial to the narrative integrity of the episode as it is recounted. Its presence, besides being a
narrative factor, has behind the brief vision a long and curious history. The reason is that Adam's dream is not Milton's invention. In Genesis there is no such dream. Adam is only put to sleep. The sleep is divinely induced. This slumber is a phenomenon to rabbinic and patristic commentators. The rabbinic interpreters hold that God does not want to allow Adam to see his wife's creation and to avoid the eventual repulsive feeling. The fathers instead have treated this incident less literally. The standard interpretation says that the creation of Eve from Adam's rib pre-figured the birth of the Church from the wound in Christ's side as He hung on the Cross. This is the most popular parallel drawn between the Old and the New Testaments. The inevitable corollary reads: Adam's waking words about man's relationship with his wife are in fact a prophecy of Christ's future relationship with His Church.

Unless one lives for years with the epics of Homer and Virgil, and other epic writers, the full sharing of experiences with Milton in Paradise Lost is out of question. Homer's Iliad, Virgil's Odyssey, the Aeneid, Ovid's Metamorphosis, and Lucan's Pharsalia falling in line with many others as the classical predecessors of Paradise Lost are to be invoked. The dynamics of Milton's relations with them are vital for an appreciation of the poem. He uses them lavishly. From them he extracts some insights into the nature of man and God. He gleans from Homer truths, philosophical and theological. In the introduction of his monumental work, Blessington comments: "Milton built his epic out of those of Homer and Virgil, like a Cathedral erected out of 31 Pagan temples whose remains can still be seen". As it has been
seen, the Bible helps Milton’s mind to shape God and the heaven. But it is the classical epic that helps him mould the hero. God and heaven merge into the heroic world of Homer and Virgil in Paradise Lost. Milton’s debt and response to Renaissance answers the question on his historical indebtedness. John M. Steadman gathers abundant materials about it in Milton and the Renaissance Hero, and Epic and Tragic Structure in Paradise Lost. Charles Grosnover Osgood in The Classical Mythology of Milton’s English Poems provides substantial information about the subject. David F. Harding in The Club of Hercules: Studies in the Classical Background of Paradise Lost analyses these aspects in detail. Douglas Bush, C.M. Bowra, C.S. Lewis and E.M.W. Tillyard have much explored this field. While Milton’s attitudes towards the classics are better handled by Bush and Tillyard, his theory of epic is treated by Steadman. Blessington, however, jars a discordant note with regard to one concept of classical influence in Milton. The critics, he says, project in his works what Milton would never like them to. They attribute to his work: (1) parallel between good and evil, and Christian and pagan elements respectively; (2) Satan as a recreation of the old hero of the classical times. This type of understanding of Milton is unacceptable to Blessington. He focuses on the classical background in the Father, the Son, Adam and Eve, structure of the poem and the narrator. What he would like to say is condensed here. Every aspect of the poem gains by being set beside the Homeric-Virgilian tradition. The Iliad, the Odyssey, and the Aeneid appear in many ways behind Milton’s epic comparison, contrast, imitation, illustration of pagan insight and pagan
error, and extension in history, literary tradition, and epic dignity—but they are, as a unit, the most important literary context for *Paradise Lost*, outside of the Bible.

Raphael's descent to earth originates from Mercury's visit to Aeneas (Aen. IV 219-80). Herme's visit to Troy in the *Iliad* (XXIV 333-470) during which he guides Priam safely through the Greek camp to Achilles' tent to obtain the body of Hector has a similar function. There is another scene in the *Iliad* (Od.V, 28-148) in which Hermes is sent to spur the resumption of Odysseus's journey back to Ithaca. But Hermes does not meet Odysseus, but only Calypso, who is not morally instructed like Aeneas and Adam. Both these scenes of Homer neither in form nor in content, affect Milton much. The visit of the three angels to Abraham (Gen.XVIII) is a biblical source: Both Abraham and Adam are in the doorway when the celestial messenger arrives. Both learn of judgments to follow. Both hear of their future. Adam hears about the Last Judgment and Abraham the Judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah. Both speak to their celestial visitors. James H. Sims points out this in *The Bible in Milton's Epics* (Gainsville: University of Florida Press, 1962), pp 201-4. In Virgil, Jupiter sends Mercury to warn the hero not to prolong his stay in Carthage and reminds him of his Roman destiny. The scene is brief. Milton takes the atmosphere of the scene. He christianizes it. In the process the scene undergoes amplification. Like Mercury, Raphael is sent by the godhead to warn a hero against lethargy and the presence of enemies and to remind him that his destiny lies elsewhere. The two visitors are signs of divine favour and dispensers of moral instruction. Hence the classical source is
more prominent than the biblical. It is through retraction in style, structure, allusion and episode that Milton develops Raphael.

Milton's handling of the epic journey, one of the epic conventions adhered to by him, has been influenced by the classical writers. The account of Odysseus' wanderings relates a series of adventures, giving illustrations to the full picture of the hero's mental and physical powers. In this case Homer's narrative is still unique. The type of wandering that caters to Odysseus's taste does not suit the temper and style of Aeneas. The obstacles in Aeneas's way must be psychological. The Virgilian hero should achieve an orientation of the self from a Trojan past to a Roman future. It is difficult for Virgil to desire a compelling narrative that fulfills his conception of the journey and its significance. Milton, on the other hand, devises a literal journey. It is, of course, new. It is congenial to the new subject of his epic. It is capable of bearing moral and theological implications. "... unlike Virgil Milton is not tied to Homer's apron-strings." The literary ancestor of Satan's voyage through the abyss is carefully signalled to the reader so that he should never miss the point.

...... more endangered, than when Argo passed
Through Bosporus, betwixt the jostling rocks:
Or when Ulysses on the larboard shunned
Charybdis, and by the other whirlpool steered.

PL 1007-1010

God Himself is more solidly linked to the classical epic tradition. Sometimes the allusions are indirect as in the case of the architect of Pandemonium, described as Mulciber, or Hephaistos. Johnson stresses that "of all the borrowers from
Homer is perhaps the least indebted being "naturally a thinker for himself, confident of his own abilities and disdainful of help or hindrance." In the passage given here he does so with something of a flourish.

"Nor was his name unheard or unadored
In ancient Greece, and in Ausonian land
Men called him Mulciber, and how he fell
Fom heaven, they fabled thrown by angry Jove,

With his industrious crew to build in hell".

The lines of Iliad I 589-94 are closely resuscitated here in lines 740-6. Hephaistos (Latin Vulcan or Mulciber) intervenes in a quarrel between Zeus and Hera. He persuades his mother to yield to her husband's greater power:

For hard is the Olympian to oppose
Fell in Lemnos, and little life was still in me.
There me the Sintian men immediately cared for when I fell.

Milton forgets the context. He likes the idea of a divine being thrown out of heaven. The Mulciber passage enlivens the famous lines on the fall of Satan: "Him the almighty power/Hurled headlong flaming from the ethereal sky...." I 44ff. Milton's reworking of the lines is more self-consciously poetic than the original. His art is revealed in the emphatic positioning of the two key verbs "hurled" (I 45) and "fell" (I 75). The verse movement enacts the fall of Hephaistos, as Milton engages in emulous rivalry with Homer, particularly in the superb placement, mimetically, of the verb "dropped". Milton moves the warmly human touch with which Homer ends. But he enlarges the sense of cosmic drama. He introduces "a linguistic opulence" and "wistful romantic lyricism" not in Homer - "crystal battlements", "noon to dewy eve,/ A summer's day". Having imitated Homer so beautifully,
Milton contemptuously dismisses the story as pagan falsity: "erring" in its emphatic position comes as a hammer blow to shatter the mood of frail beauty and there is then a marked change of tone for the dismissal. Here Milton's technique reminds us of two Homeric formulae, the first is a motif used, to create an effect of irony and sometimes pathos, about the minor victims of war, the second is a corrective one which Homer uses when a character is acting in ignorance of the reality of the situation, and which is always introduced by the word "neipos" ("fool") emphatically at the beginning of the time like Milton's "erring" (e.g. Iliad 463-9) The two motifs are combined in Iliad II 872-75: "who (Nestor) came to war dressed in Gold like a girl, /fool, but in no way did this avail to keep dreadful destruction from him,/but he was conquered beneath the hands of the swift-footed son of Aeacus (Achilles)/in the river, and wise hearted Achilles carried off the gold". The effect of using Homeric rhetoric against Homer himself is unnerving. Milton's use of retractatio using classical models is complex. There are many similar examples discovered in the poem. Some of the Homeric similes noted give added justification to the retractatio technique in Milton. The voice of the wise counsellor Nestor is sweeter than honey (Il I 249). But Milton produces an ingenious, faintly parodic variant for Belial: "his tongue/Dropped manna" (II 112-13). Adam has "hyacinthine locks" (IV 301), which recall the curly hair of Odysseus "like a hyacinth flower (Od VI 231). After the creation of vegetation "earth now seemed like to heaven, a seat where gods might dwell,/or wander with delight and love to haunt/Her sacred shades" VII (328-31). The phrasing
recalls some lines from the great primary source for the locus amoenus (the description of a spot of idyllic in Odyssey V), the description of Calypso's island, at whose soft meadows blooming with flowers "even an immortal if he came would wonder as he looked and be delighted in his heart". (73-6). In IX 892 Adam drops the garland he has woven for his new sinful life. Here Milton may be reworking on a similar situation in Homer's Iliad XX VI 447ff when the gestures of Andromache in dropping the shuttle and then casting off her head dress in grief at Hector's death at a similarly climatic moment.

"The style of Paradise Lost is often regarded as Virgilian. The language of Paradise Lost "is of course not Virgilian but Miltonic." Here an attempt is made to recapitulate how far Milton uses Virgil in reworking the theme of genesis in Paradise Lost. A few examples are discussed and among them reworking with the help of similes from Virgil are important. To study Virgilian similes compared with Miltonic, the background knowledge of Homeric simile is useful. Homeric similes have only single point correspondence with the narrative. Milton's have multiple correspondence. "The key to fundamental difference between complex simile as found in Homer and in Milton lies in Milton's predominant method of exact homologation". Detailed homologation is characteristic of Virgil's similes and so in this respect Milton is Virgilian. David West has conveniently shown that the similes of the Aeneid are marked by multiple correspondence with the enclosing narrative. In order to integrate his similes as carefully as possible in the texture of his poem, Virgil resorted to a mosaic of contrived verbal
correspondences. But it is difficult to say in general that Milton's similes are more Virgilian than Homeric. They are obviously literary. There is more homologation than in Homer.

Several of them are proleptic or "they have a moral dimension that Homer's lack". A pair of balanced similes in Aeneid XII (684 ff; 701 ff) is designed to show the moral differences between Aeneas and Turnus; Turnus a rolling stone, Aeneas resembling a mountain in strength and fixity. In the Iliad both similes are employed to qualify Hector. In an earlier pair of similes we have water boiling in a cauldron for Turnus, light reflected from the ruffled surface of water in a basin for Aeneas (VII 463ff, VIII 18ff). Similarly the Leviathan simile in Paradise Lost I 192ff is not just about size, but points to Satan's deceitfulness and the danger of relying on appearances where it is discerned.

Raphael describes (PL VIII 240-4) how he and a squadron of angels were sent on a mission to the gates of Hell. They found all shut. They heard groans and torture within. This is reworking of the powerful moment when Aeneas turns to see Tartarus and hears with the dread the sounds of torment, but it does not match its power. Milton used Aeneid VI for material for Christian hell: Aeneas' descent into Hades.

Milton owes much to Virgil for the organization of the epic with respect to time, its incorporation of flashback and prophecy. The openings of Raphael's narrative (V 563-4) "High matter thou enjoinest me. O prince of men, / Sad task and hard", gestures gravely towards the words with which Aeneas begins his tearful account of the last hours of Troy (II 3). Since Raphael
recounts the victory of good or evil there is no place for the full plangency of the lines echoed, but his words clearly signal the structural debt to Virgil.

The reading of Ovid has left its mark on Milton. In Book IV, 4.4.9ff, Eve describes how on first working she saw herself in a pool, but was then warned by a divine voice to shun her reflection and seek Adam. "Unexperienced thought" (457) is the keynote of the whole sequence: to Eve’s innocent, enquiring mind, water is like sky, and her ignorance requires education. Her turning from shadow to substance makes her story balance Adam’s account in VIII 452 ff of how he dreamed of Eve.

In Metamorphosis, Narcissus scorns the love of Echo and many others. Then he falls in love with his own reflection in a pool. Eventually he realizes his mistake. He wastes away and dies. In Paradise Lost, Milton works on a scene in the story with the verbal echoes of Ovid: the voice warns Eve that she is looking at a reflection of herself(467-9).

What thou seest
What were thou seest, fair creature, is thyself;
With thee it came and goes.

Ovidian original Metamorphosis III (434-6) states: What you see is a show and a reflected image, and has no substance of its own, with you came and stays, with you will go away, should you be able to go away.

The description of chaos in Paradise Lost (II 891-916) is a work of retractatio owing much to Metamorphosis (I 5-20). Many details in Uriel’s account of the ordering of Chaos at the creation (III 708-21) derive from Ovid (I 21-31). Raphael’s different version in VII 232-42 looks indebted to Ovid. Milton’s
exuberant elaboration of the narrative in Genesis of the six days of Creation is based on Ovid. A comparison between PL VII 267-71 and Metamorphosis I 30-1, PL 276-82 and Met I 417-21, and PL VIII 288-89 Met I 43-4 is desired. Ovidian feeling is diffused throughout *Paradise Lost*, though illustrations given above are only very few.

The Columbia index to Milton's works contains only seventeen references to Lucan's *Bellum Civile* or De *Bello Civili* or the *Pharsalia*. Under Virgil, it has six and a half columns. It spends more than four each under Homer and Ovid, and two under Horace. The less number of references to Lucan there, is not the criterion of assessment of Lucan’s influence on Milton. There are certain broad similarities of poetic strategy in *Paradise Lost* and the *Bellum Civile* which in some important respects differentiate the poems from the mainstream epic tradition. "The *Pharsalia* is properly an historical poem because the subject is known true story...". It is often described as "mythological narrative". The poem purports to tell the truth about what Lucan regards as the most important event in Roman history, the loss of liberty. The subject is not myth but fact. Lucan omitted the traditional mythological trappings of epic, including the divine machinery. Lucan refuses to invoke the Muse or Apollo (I 66), while in number of passages he is openly cynical about "fabulae", mythological series (e.g. III 211-3). History outdoes myth, truth is literally stranger than fiction. The story of the Libyan snakes is told because none better is available, but its falsity is stressed (IX 619ff). Myth is abandoned and truth found in history. It is discerned here as a link between Lucan and
Milton. Both tell a story, in spite of some fictional additions, in essence held to be true. A second link is that both Lucan and Milton want to establish a relevant relation with the reader. To make the relation explicit, each poet intermittently intervenes in the narrative. In an epic of ideas, the poet serves as both narrator and interpreter. In Book I and II of *Paradise Lost*, where the speeches of the Fallen Angels are continually intercepted by authorial comments this kind of Lucan's technique is obvious. Addison draws our attention to the similarity: "If the poet, even in the ordinary course of his narration, should speak as little as possible, he should certainly never let his narration sleep for the sake of any reflections of his own..."

Lucan, who was an injudicious poet, lets drop his story very frequently for the sake of his unnecessary digressions. Milton's complaints of his blindness, his panegyrick on marriage, his reflections on Adam and Eve's going naked, of the angels eating, and several other passages in his poem, are liable to the same exception, though I must confess there is so great a beauty in these very digressions that I should not wish them out of his poem". Lucan's Caesar, like Milton's Satan, has aroused admiration, so that we encounter, in some digressions of the *Bellum Civile*, something not unlike a version of the Satanist heresy.

Some of the instances when Milton seeks assistance in shaping his style and technique are noted here. In *Paradise Lost* X, Satan returns to Hell to announce his success. Before he can enjoy the fruits of his triumph, he and the other fallen angels are changed into snakes and forced to eat bitter ashes(410 ff). *Bellum Civile*
IX contains the "locus classicus" for snakes in Latin Literature. After the defeat at Pharsalus Cato, who commands the Senatorial forces in Africa, marches his men through the Sahara, and, as the last of a series of trials, they are attacked by a host of venomous serpents (607 ff).

Milton's list of snakes comes from Lucan too: (Book X 521-2). "The whole episode in Paradise Lost X, for all the tremendous actuality of the description, has allegorical significance. Lucan's snakes too can be seen as part of an extended allegory.

All these show that classical works always have been a cause of inspiration and influence in the reworking of Genesis story into the narrative Paradise Lost.

Adhyatma Ramayanam has been, till recently, deemed as a mere translation of the Sanskrit poem, Adhyatma Ramayana. The terms, retelling, transcreation and rerendering were not common till recently. On giving more thoughts to the techniques in narration employed, a correction to the appellation (translation) is desired. A current definition of translation by the noted critic N.Krishna Pillai may be considered as a standard. Pillai defines the formation of an ideal translation: "Letting no leakage or loss to the subject matter of the original, letting no entry into it of either an exotic idea or emotion, letting the author never forget that the work belongs not to himself but, on the contrary, to some one else, and maintaining throughout the spirit and atmosphere of the original, the translator has to engage in his work." In this sense Ezhuthachan is no ideal translator. In this context, propriety demands an understanding of the shaping of the poem. It will reveal what the poem is, in lieu of a
translation. K. N. Ezhuthachan, a critic and scholar of Ramayana literature, has offered his findings in these lines. He says that from "Bala Kanda" to the final part of "Sundara Kanda", Adhyatma Ramayana owes to the Sanskrit poem Adhyatma Ramayana. The atmosphere abruptly changes in "Yudha Kanda". The beginning of the Kanda, of course, is the same as an earlier one. But on the commencement of War, the tone changes. It persists till Ravana is killed. There are only connections, rather stray ones. with the earlier work/works. Some similarities with the corresponding Kanda of Valmiki’s Ramayana are noted. Ezhuthachan goes beyond these two Sanskrit works and fetches materials from other sources too for the composition. Some of them are Kannasa’s Ramayana and Ramacarita, both in Malayalam, Kamban’s Ramayana in Tamil, the Telugu Ramayana and a host of stories of Rama’s life. To get all these source materials mixed and moulded into his work. Ezhuthachan employs a twin technique: "retractatio" and "contaminatio" the latter complementing the former as it has been seen in Paradise Lost.

Adhyatma Ramayana has 15840 lines in the place of 3420 stanzas in Adhyatma Ramayana (13680 lines).

How Ezhuthachan effects the recasting of the earlier works is noted here. This is evident from the first line of the poem after the prefatory hymns to Gods and gurus. The hymn in the earlier Sanskrit poem is:

Jeyati reghuvamsatilaka:
Kausalyananda Vardhana Rama:
Desavadananidhanakari
Desaradh: pundarikaksha Adi l. 1

This stanza swells into a hymn of ten lines in Adhyatma Ramayana.
adding to the first one many hymnic units. After "adding", the poet used "dropping". Both these are two processes of retractatio. In "dropping", 62 stanzas have been omitted. These stanzas relate the spiritual significance of the poem. The 64th stanza is retained in the poem re-rendered. It is hence more or less a "translation". The line "Sri Ramayanam pura Virincha Virachitan/ Nurukotigrendhamundu" (cited earlier in Chapter II) is considered by K.N. Ezhuthachan as Ezhuthachan's contribution. But it is seen that the line is borrowed from another source, Nabhaji (c. 16th century) in his Bhaktamala has used a similar phrase. Ezhuthachan's reading of Hindi or understanding of these lines may have helped him in the recast of the story: "Treta kavya bibandle karib sat koti ramayan". The verses of the Ramayana composed in the Tretayuga are a hundred crores in number.

As the poem abounds in abundant materials of instances of retractatio, only a selected band of examples is examined. At the outset of this exercise how the narrating instance of the poem undergoes retractatio is noted. In Adhyatma Ramayana Suta tells the story. In Valmiki's version it is Narada who initially narrates the story in a nutshell. But in the re-rendering by the Sanskrit composer, Narada meets Brahma, laments over the pathetic state in the world and wonders whether there is any way out from this state. He seeks Brahma's advice too. Brahma recreates a situation: Parvati asks Siva the same question and what transpires between Parvati and Siva is narrated. Here retractatio takes place even in the very narrating instance. when the anonymous author of Adhyatma Ramayana amalgamates two conceptions together. Suta, the narrator of Puranas and Siva, the narrator of
Sastras, both merge into the narrator of Ramayana in a similar situation. How the bird replaces Suta and functions as narrator, and how Siva does his role as narrator have been explained in Chapter III on Mediaecy.

A textual analysis reveals that there are about 15840 lines in Adhyatma Ramayanam as against 3420 stanzas (3680 lines) Adhyatma Ramayana, of which about 20% belongs solely to Ezhuthachan. Only about 80 lines, mostly of Yudha Kanda have been dropped in the process of retelling. In Adhyatma Ramayanam about 7%, in "Ayodhya" 2%, "Aranya" 7%, "Kiskinda" 4%, "Sundara" 6% and "Yudha" 43% have been discovered as the break-up of Ezhuthachan's contribution. The analysis shows that narrative restraint is observed by the narrator when he retells the story. Narrative restraint is triune: a process of (i) concealing, (ii) dropping, and (iii) remodelling incidents. The narrative restraint is applicable to both Milton and Ezhuthachan as their works under consideration are retellings. It is the discretion of the narrator that demands of a good reteller in dropping, concealing, adding and remodelling incidents.

At the outset, in the narrative given by Siva to Parvati, we are given an embedding also. Rama asks Sita to narrate his story to delight Hanuman. In the process thirty two lines are used by Ezhuthachan in linking the text of what Sita says to Siva - Parvati dialogue. This is a sequence parallel in twelve lines. Quantitatively and qualitatively this part does not appear to be a translation. The word-pictures of Rama and Hanuman are noted. The analysis of these lines (Bala Kanda 163-194) shows how many words and phrases are used by Ezhuthachan to achieve a marked
change in externalization. "Sitting on the gold throne studded with pure gems, with Sita, the goddess Maya in mirth, Rama shined like a cluster of a crore of Suns. Seeing the devotee Hanuman beside with folded hands, Rama beamed a smile and told Sita...." Many more instances are noted at a mere glance in the composition.

In Bala Kanda hearing Ramahrdaya, the more delighted Parvati wants to hear in detail the whole Ramayana, in all details. In the earlier work Parvati has only one desire. She wants to hear Rama's story. But in Adhyatma Ramayanam, Parvati externalizes her deep love, intense affection, confidence, love and humility. How happy and elated she is to hear her husband, is more explicit in Ezhuthachan.

Ezhuthachan provides some characters and situations with certain human touches which make them more acceptable to the average reader. Rama and Lakshmana are on the way to the forest. In Adhyatma Ramayana Sumitra bids them farewell in a casual presentation. Ezhuthachan here follows the earliest narration of Adikavi Valmiki and transforms Sumitra and the occasion more touching. Sumitra advises:

Thou shalt with pleasure
Deem Rama thy father,
Like me Sita shall be
Thy own mother.
Consider the forest
Thy native land.
As I pronounce thou abide by.
Proceed and safe return.

Ezhuthachan injects new meaning and meaningful figures to dull parts in the original, not dropping them but reworking them.

In Adhyatma Ramayana, Tataka's death is described in all detail. It is re-presented in Adhyatma Ramayanam. But here and there
Ezhuthachan uses certain changes which add to the beauty and life to otherwise dull detail of the original. It is relevant to note how "Mekhavat" describing Tataka’s size gives way to Ezhuthachan’s narration: "The demoness, like a "wing-chopped" hill fell". It is of course a new figure of speech, but it looks more proper to the context.

The study of a scene, of Ahalya’s deliverance is attempted here. In all the five epics examined, Valmiki’s Ramayana, Kamban’s Ramayana, Adhyatma Ramayana, Tulasi’s Ramacarita Manasa, and Adhyatma Ramayanam, the placing of Ahalya’s story is similar; though the presentation and the events are different. The recast story in the later versions of Valmiki’s Ramayana will tell us how it is recast in each retelling. The story of Ahalya was an old myth widely prevalent even before Valmiki’s time. Valmiki borrowed this myth and reworked it. Some of the scenes were different from what the story had been in earlier myths. As an embedding in the main fabric of Ramayana this story owned a significance. But the later retellers conveniently manipulated a variation of this significance. So the embedded narrative underwent transformation.

In the Vedic literature, 52 Ahalya’s story is a metaphor. It is subjected to various interpretations. The Ahalya Earth (the Virgin, unfurrowed earth) and the Rain God (Indra) had relations they alleged. Valmiki accepted the story from various sources, it seems. He used retraction and related it in Ramayana. Here Valmiki makes it part of the story as an embedding and at once part of the main narrative flow. Reason demands introduction of a learned sage Visvamitra, the knower of past myths. Besides, in
Valmiki’s Ramayana, Ahalya is not transformed into a stone by the curse of Gautama, so also in Adhyatma Ramayana. In Kamban, in Tulasi and in Ezhuthachan, Gautama’s curse turns Ahalya into a stone. The retellers used Puranas in their retellings of the scene in Valmiki. This transformation is noted in the presentation of this episode in Reghu Vamsa, Padma Purana, Satyapakhyana, Nrisimha purana, Skanda purana, Kadhasaritasagar and Vahni purana. There is no reworking at all in the placing of the story in the five Ramayanas. Rama is on the way to Mithila. The venue of narration is Gautama’s asrama. Except in Kamban’s in all other four stories, description of Nature in the asrama precedes narration of events. It is the scene that prompts Rama ask Visvamitra questions on the oddities visible in nature in the part where this asrama is situated. In Kamban, the narration follows an accidental happening: Rama’s touch resuscitates Ahalya lying on earth in the form of a stone. Visvamitra’s narration becomes an answer inevitable to the questioning minds of Rama and Laksmana. Visvamitra here explains only the reason why Ahalya had been transformed. The state of arrival before Rama’s appearance is different in each version. In Valmiki, Ahalya was cursed by Gautama and she lost powers of perception. She was thus exiled from all living beings. According to Adhyatma Ramayana she was cursed to sit on a slab of stone. In Tulasi she was cursed to become a stone. In Adhyatma Ramayanan she was fully transformed into a stone. Again, in Valmiki, Rama blesses Ahalya to get emancipation. On the touch of Rama’s feet Ahalya is freed. In Tulasi only a mention of this story is made, no narration of the whole story. In Kamban as soon as Ahalya gets transformed into
human form. Visvamitra narrates Ahalya's past. The difference between Kamban and Ezhuthachan is mainly in the narrating instance. There is another marked difference noted between Valmiki's and the rest of the versions. The story of Indra has been dropped in the later tellings. There is variation in perspective too. Ahalya of Valmiki commits adultery. In Ezhuthachan, adultery is thrust upon her. Tulasi avoids such a narration in the divine atmosphere of Ramayana. Indra is the culprit of the whole commission in Ezhuthachan. Soon after the narration, Ahalya does not hymn Rama in Valmiki. In the Sanskrit rendering, there is only a mention of the prayer. The real hymn verbatim is given in Adhyatma Ramayanam with concluding comments after the hymn on the usefulness of chanting the hymn.

Most of the parts have been subjected to word for word translation, but many excel the original. Ezhuthachan has created an original work of art using the following technique: he has not let slip relevant parts of the original, he has got rid of dry matter, he has employed condensation and expansion wherever necessary, he has not bothered to rely on works of the past. Valmiki's Ramayana, Renghuvamsa, Bhujacambu, Bhasa Ramayanam Cambu, Kanasa's Ramayana, "he has fished out gems and corals out of the ocean of his own imagination and purified them, and he, occupying the seat of a philosopher, has professed profusely using aesthetic discourses."

Regarding explicative and symbolic function, physical portraits and descriptions of clothing and furnishings tend to reveal and justify the psychology of the characters. The description is often a product of reductio. It here offers an
expository function, resulting in the reinforcement of narrative. Description by virtue of this of this evolution has, doubtless, lost in autonomy where it has gained in dramatic importance. The explicative and symbolic function of description may be noted in most of the figures used in the work. An example is being discussed here in order to substantiate the reworking of an imagery of an earlier work in Ezhuthachān.

Comely Maithili of complexion golden
With glittering gold ornaments laden
Holding a gold garland
In her hand
Slowly paced with reverence
To Rama whose eyes like lotus.
Her blue eyes garlanded him first,
Then she offered him the wedding chain gold.

(ARM Bala Kanda 1117-22)

Here the description is explicative and symbolic. It is interesting to examine it. The complexion of Sita is "golden"—that which looks like gold. This appeals to the eye; the reader's eye sharing the experience with the narrator's. The second image relates to "gold" ornaments, they are not "golden", they are gold. When the first metaphorical use of "golden" provides the description of the natural beauty of Maithili(Sita), the second image, "gold" in the adjectival form, is an artifice which adds to the natural beauty of Sita. While the first word (golden) is suggestive of artifice golden—it gives the sense of original beauty. The second word (gold) is suggestive of something original, but it has an ornamental function and adds to the natural beauty of Sita.

The complexion of Sita ] = The complexion of Sita is golden ] = looks like that of gold

Here it refers to the colour of gold. It signifies original
beauty of the colour of gold. But when she wears gold ornaments, these ornaments give additional beauty to the natural beauty of Sita. Then the first adjective "golden" is of aesthetic value. The second adjectival noun gold is of both aesthetic value and material value. The third usage of "gold" in "gold chain" has, besides the aesthetic, material values another "social" value—a symbolic suggestion of wedlock. The repetitive use of gold acquires more and more significance as the description moves on. It steps out of the perception "eye" to higher planes. So far "the eye" affects only the perception of the narrator and the reader. The "eye" imagery catches hold of characters slowly. Eyes of Rama like the lotus are mentioned then to suggest Rama's beauty. Then the eyes of Sita like the lotus garland Rama. The metaphor affecting the eye thus becomes the metaphor of the eye. Then the working of the metaphorical eye demands the reader's attention. Sita garlands Rama and marries him first using the eyes like the lotus. Then only she garlands him using the gold chain. This suggests that true marriage is marriage of the minds and then only comes the rite of marriage, a social approbation of the marriage of minds.

How retraction is employed in description, a textual unit, is noted here. This textual unit is "continuous or discontinuous but a relatively autonomous expansion, characteristically referential." It is interchangeable with, and in certain conditions equivalent to a word (a common or proper noun, a name) or deictic pronoun (him, this, that . . . . .). The unit has overall semantic autonomy, independent of its stylistic setting and of the meaning of its constituent element (a description
thus is a hierarchy); and it can, as the level of utterance, have a single, collective function (actant collectif). The anonymous author of the main source, Adhyatma Ramayana used in the Ahalya Episode the briefest possible description of beautiful Ahalya and also the lust-laden Indra: (a) "kanyamahiyam loka sundarim" (the virgin world-beauty) Balakanda, Sarga 5, 20 and (b) "Sakrasthu tam dharshavitumantharam prepsuranwitham" (Indra, waiting for an opportunity to gratify his lust with her). Ezhuthachan’s descriptive dexterity is explicit in these lines:

Indra fell a prey to arrows from Cupid’s bow
In Ahalya’s all world-luring charm
And yearn’d to cool his heat of lust
With (her) ruby lips, creamy breasts and tempting hides.
Blinded by the lascivious crave
He whiled away the time in her thoughts.

(ARM I 1001-3)

The description here is a relatively autonomous expansion. It is characteristically referential too. The description of Ahalya is substitution for the original’s phrase ‘lolasundarim’ and of Indra is substitution for ‘Sakrasthu tam dharshavitumantharam.’

As a fundamental process of amplification with its principal effect of either praise or blame, it is used by Ezhuthachan here. The description’s grandeur grows slowly when the contrast is drawn from the beauty of Ahalya to the some-what obscene portrayal of her bodily beauty and also the lust of Indra. The principal effect of praise is showered upon Ahalya and blame is cast upon Indra. The contrast is at once overt and covert: overt in the good virtue possessing beauty (Ahalya) and craving for (Indra) sexual enjoyment of another’s wife. Then the covert contrast is that the beauty in Ahalya becomes the beauty of her physical charm inviting other’s lust for sensual satisfaction of
the charm. The study above of the various kinds of retractatio explains the conception and genesis of the works under discussion. They provide the process of production revealing the genetic deep structure.
NOTES

3) Ibid, 216.
4) Ibid, 220.
10) Francis Blessington, *Paradise Lost and the Classical Epic et bassin.*
12) C.S. Lewis *An Experiment in Criticism* (London: O.U.P. 1942), p. 44.
18) Ibid, p. 221.
21) L. Jung “Fallen Angels in Jewish Christian and Mohamedan Literature” FORN XV (1924) 489-94.


(b) J.B. Broadbent Some Graver Subject (London : Chatto & Windus. 1960).


24) J.M. Evans, Paradise Lost and the Genesis Tradition p.231.


29) J.M. Evans, 17 as quoted from Augustine.


31) Blessington, 1979 "Introduction".


34) Davis F. Harding. The Club of Hercules: Studies in the Classical Background of “Paradise Lost” (Urbana: Univ. of Ill. 1982).


36) C.M. Bowra From Virgil to Milton. (New York: St.Martin’s, 1945).


44) Charles Martindale, p. 131.


47) Ibid.


49) N.Krishna Pillai Tiranjedutha Prebandhanga Selected Essays (Kottayam: SPCS,1986).

50) K.N.Ezhuthachan Adhyatma Ramayanaam Oru Patanam (Trichur: Convent Books, 1976)

51) Ibid.
52) Keith-Mac Donal VEDIC INDEX
   a) Sathapatha Brahmanam 3.3., 4.18
   b) Jaimineeya Brahmanam 2.79
   c) Hudvamsa Brahmanam 1. 1. 24.
   d) Harivamsa Purana I, 32, 28-32
   e) Matsya Purana
   f) Visnu Purana


54) P. Hamon, "What is a Description?", p.152.