CHAPTER IV

DEVELOPMENT OF STORY
IN PARADISE LOST AND
THE RAMAKIEN, HEROISM
AND CONFLICT
4.1 DEVELOPMENT OF STORY IN PARADISE LOST

Milton's epic, *Paradise Lost*, consists of twelve books, which can be divided into three parts: (i) Books I-IV, (ii) Books V-VIII, and (iii) Books IX-XII. The tripartite aspect of the epic may be shown as follows:

1) Books I-IV deal mainly with Satan and his adventure. The scene is laid in hell.

2) Books V-VIII deal with God, heavenly council, creation and so on. The scene is laid mostly in heaven.

3) Books IX-XII deal with the theme of Fall of Man and his expulsion from Paradise.

The following account is based on Milton's Argument of each Book (I-XII) of *Paradise Lost*.

Book I: Milton, it should be noted, begins with a cryptic statement of the main theme of his epic, namely, man's disobedience and the consequent loss of Paradise in which he was lodged. He develops the subject matter by touching the prime cause of his fall, and that cause is Satan in the serpent, who, because he rose in rebellion against god, was driven out of heaven into the great deep. The poem then hastens into the midst of things, in that, it presents Satan with his followers (fallen into hell) in a place, which is utterly dark. Satan is shown lying in a burning lake. He is thunderstruck and astonished. However, after sometime, he recovers and calls up the one lying next to him. They discuss their miserable fall. Satan awakens all his legions who rise up at the call of their master. Like an eloquent orator, Satan addresses them all and comforts them with the hope of regaining heaven. He informs them of a new creature to be created, according to a new prophecy in heaven. To find out the truth of this prophecy as well as to decide on the next course of action, he calls a full council session. Pandemonium, the palace, rises and the infernal peers sit there in council.
Book II: In the consultation that follows Satan debates whether another battle should be hazarded to win the heaven back. Some advise it, while others dissuade it. A third proposal is preferred, mentioned before by Satan - the proposal to seek the truth of prophecy concerning the creation of another world and another creature - perhaps, already created. After a short deliberation, Satan undertakes alone the journey. He is lauded and applauded. The council comes to an end. Satan's comrades want to engage themselves in some employment till Satan's return from his journey. Satan sets out on his journey, finds the gates of hell closed and meets the guardian, Death, who, at length, opens the gates. Satan discovers the great gulf between heaven and hell. With much difficulty he passes through, directed by Chaos, to the sight of the new world, which he is after.

Book III: God, reigning supreme on his regal throne, happens to see Satan scurrying towards the new world. He shows Satan to the Son who is seated next to Him. He foretells the success of Satan in corrupting mankind. He also informs the Son that He has created man free and able enough to withstand the tempter. He thus clears His own justice and wisdom from all imputation. At the same time, He declares that He would bestow his grace upon man provided man does not fall out his own malice, as Satan did, but by him seduced. The Son sings songs in praise of the Father for His gracious gesture towards man. But God, once again, declares that grace will not be extended towards man without the satisfaction of divine justice. As man aspired to Godhead, he with all his progeny has brought death upon himself and his descendants. Therefore, man and his progeny must be prepared to answer Him through suffering as a sort of punishment. The Son of God offers himself as a ransom for man. The Father accepts, ordains his incarnation. He announces the Son's exaltation above all names in heaven and earth and commands all the angels to adore him. The angels play on their harps hymns in praise of the Father and the Son. In the meantime, Satan, who is on his voyage, "alights upon the bare convex of this world's outermost orb" (PL. III. The Argument). He first notices a place called the Limbo of Vanity and the people who haunt that place. He then goes to the gates of heaven from where he
passes on to the orb of the Sun. On finding Uriel there, he transforms himself into a meaner angel. Pretending a curious desire to know about the new creation, he asks of Uriel to give him all the details. Uriel gives him the direction and Satan alights on Mount Niphates.

In the first three Books, Milton establishes a close link between Satan, God's adversary, and God. The council in hell is paralleled by the council in heaven. Satan's intention to spoil God's new creation is paralleled by God's intention to restore Man to Paradise, when the latter goes through the punishment for his transgression of God's decree— a punishment which takes the form of intense suffering which absolves man of all his sins. The two prominent episodes, which adorn the epic, are naturally as well logically connected with Satan and help in the gradual development of one of the basic themes of the epic. The episode of Sin and Death finds vital link with the consequence of the fatal taste of the fruit of the forbidden tree. Thus the theme, which is briefly stated in the opening lines of Book I swells in size, besides giving all the details that are needed to narrate the history of the secular world.

Seated on Mount Niphates, Satan has an extensive view of the site he wants to get into. So in Book IV as he is very close to Eden, he thinks that he must launch on the audacious enterprise, which he has undertaken alone, against God and man. But he is plagued with doubts. He is overcome with many passions—fear, envy, and despair. Nevertheless, he is resolved to carry out his diabolical purpose, and so he proceeds towards Paradise. Overleaping the bounds, he transforms himself into a cormorant and sits on top the Tree of Knowledge— the tallest in the Garden of Eden. He sees Adam and Eve for the first time; their angelic form rouses his sense of wonder and admiration; but still with resolute mind he thinks of the way he can work out their fall. As he overhears their conversation, he comes to know that they cannot taste the fruit of the tree of knowledge for fear of God's Wrath, which will cause their death. Satan is happy that he knows how to devise their fall: he must somehow make them transgress God's decree. Meanwhile, Uriel, who becomes suspicious, calls on Gabriel to inform him of the entry of an evil spirit into the Garden of
Eden. Gabriel alerts his night watchmen who, somehow, are able to see Satan in the form of a venomous toad trying his best to whisper into the ears of Eve and tempt her in her dream. Though unwilling, he is led to Gabriel who questions him. His attempts at resistance are spoiled by a sign from heaven and he has to flee from Paradise.

A close link is established between Book IV and Book V. Eve who has been agitated by her vexatious dream, narrates to Adam the whole incident. Adam is unperturbed and he advises Eve not to worry about her dream. And as usual, both Adam and Eve sing their morning hymn and go about the task assigned to them by God. Meanwhile, God in order to protect man against the temptation of his adversary – Satan – sends Raphael to Paradise. Raphael is expected to admonish Adam of his obedience to God, of the free and happy state in which he is, and also of his enemy who is biding his time to tempt him and thus turn him against the Almighty. Raphael is also asked by God to give a detailed account of his enemy. Raphael reaches Paradise and meets Adam at the door of the latter's bower. Adam proffers the hospitality that befits a heavenly angel. Raphael promptly performs his mission of conveying God's message to Adam. He tells Adam of his enemy, that is, who he is, how he has been reduced to the wretched condition in which he is for revolting against God. Thus in Book V, all the three realms, namely, heaven, paradise, and hell are referred to and the reader is informed of the precarious circumstances in which man is placed. It is as if Man is placed between heavenly God and the infernal evil spirit.

The whole of Book VI is devoted to the description of the battle in heaven. The war ends on the third day, with the Son of God driving Satan and his host out of the gates of heaven. Satan and his supporters leap down with horror and confusion, into the infernal region where they will be punished forever.

The link between Book VI and Book VII is established when Adam requests Raphael to tell the story of creation by God after the expulsion of
Satan from heaven. Raphael tells Adam that soon after Satan was pushed into hell, God declared His pleasure to create another world and fresh creatures to inhabit that world. God assigns the work of this creation to his Son. The creation of the New World is over in six days. Angels sing hymns of praise by way of celebrating the work of creation.

Book VIII, once again, finds logical connection with Book VII when Adam entreats Raphael to narrate to him the facts connected with celestial motion. Raphael gives rather ambiguous answers and exhorts Adam to find out answers himself by looking for things worthy of knowledge. Adam agrees. He wants Raphael to stay with him for some more time. He tells Raphael all that he remembers since the time of his own creation: his being placed by God in Paradise, his talk with God regarding solitude and society and his marriage to Eve. Thereafter, he discourses with Raphael who, after warning Adam about the likely danger, leaves for heaven.

In Book VIII Adam is admonished about the likely temptation by Satan. This admonition actually foreshadows the actual temptation successfully exercised on Eve and Adam in Book IX.

Book IX actually begins with the author’s statement of the theme of his epic and goes on to narrate how Satan, after encircling the earth, comes back, in the form of a mist, to Paradise. He is careful, this time, to enter it by night so that he might not be seen by anyone. He enters into the body of a sleeping serpent.

Early in the morning Adam and Eve decide to go about their daily routine, which Eve proposes to divide in several places, each working separately. Adam refuses to give his consent to Eve’s proposal, for he is afraid of danger from the adversary of God. The enemy might tempt Eve, if found alone. Eve is rather irritated to be told that she is infirm. She feels that she is sufficiently armed to resist the temptation, if there be any. She is rather desirous of making a trial of her strength. After much argument, Adam gives
in. The serpent finds her alone. He approaches Eve in a very subtle way. He resorts to flattery and extols Eve above all other creatures. Eve is astonished to hear the serpent speak. She asks him how he attained to human speech. The serpent tells her that by tasting of the fruit of a certain tree in the garden he attained to both speech and reason. Eve tells the serpent to bring her to that tree. The serpent now grows bolder and, with many wiles and arguments, he finally succeeds in persuading Eve to taste the fruit of knowledge. Eve relishes the taste of the fruit. For a moment she deliberates within herself whether she should or should not make Adam also taste it. Adam is at first amazed; but when he perceives that Eve is lost, he resolves to taste the fruit and perish along with his wife whom he loves with all his heart. There is a sudden transformation in both Adam and Eve. They want to cover their nakedness. Then they fall into a violent argument in which each accuses the other.

Book X begins by relating that when the guardian angels come to know of man's transgression, they leave paradise. They return to heaven to inform God that, in spite of their vigilance, the devil somehow entered Paradise. God approves of their vigilance, and declares that Satan's entrance could not be prevented by them. God then sends his Son to judge the transgressors. The Son comes down to Paradise and passes judgment on Adam and Eve. Then overcome with pity, he covers Adam and Eve with clothes and leaves for heaven.

Sin and Death who were, till then, sitting at the gates of hell, sympathetically view the success of Satan. They come to know of the sin committed by man. They resolve not to confine themselves to the gates of hell any more. They follow Satan up to the place of Man. In order to make the way easier from hell to man's world, they make a broad highway or bridge over chaos in accordance with the track that has already been made. They prepare themselves to go to earth. They meet Satan and congratulate him on his success.
Satan arrives at Pandemonium and boasts of his brilliant success. He is greeted not with applause but with hisses for all his followers have been transformed into serpents. Suffering from a hallucination of the presence of the forbidden tree of knowledge, they try to reach it and taste its fruit, but they find themselves chewing dust and bitter ashes. The book then describes the proceedings of Sin and Death. God predicts the final victory of his Son over them. He also proposes to renew all things. But for the present He commands his angels to make several changes in heaven.

And on seeing his fallen condition Adam bitterly bewails. He rejects the condolements of Eve. Eve, however, persists and finally appeases Adam. To avoid the curse, which is likely to befall their progeny, she proposes violent ways, which Adam disapproves of. Then putting Eve in mind of the late promise made to them that her children should be revenged on the serpent, he exhorts her to make peace with God, by repentance and prayer.

Book XI shows the Son of God presenting to his Father the prayers of repenting Adam and Eve. Being compassionate, he pleads with the Father, on behalf of the parents of mankind, to forgive them. God accepts the pleas of His Son, but says that Adam and Eve can no longer stay in Paradise. Accordingly, He sends Michael with a band of heavenly angels to dispossess Adam and Eve. He instructs Michael that he must first reveal to Adam and Eve all that is in the womb of future. Michael descends from heaven and proceeds towards Paradise. Adam sees some ominous signs. He is able to make out Michael's approach. He goes to meet Michael. Michael denounces the departure of Adam and Eve. With tearful eyes, Eve sends out cries of lamentation. Adam pleads, but submits. Michael leads Adam to the top of a hill, shows him, in a vision, all that is going to happen till the time of deluge.

Book XII begins where Book XI stops, in that, Michael continues to tell Adam what shall succeed the deluge. Then, in the mention of Abraham, Michael comes by degrees to explain the advent of Jesus Christ - His incarnation, death, resurrection, and ascension. Michael also tells Adam what
the state of the church will be like till the second coming of Jesus. Adam is supremely satisfied and recomforted with Michael's relations and promises. He goes down the hill, with Michael. He wakes up Eve, who has been sleeping all this while; she is, however, blessed with gentle dreams; she is composed to quietness of mind and submission. Michael, in either hand, leads them out of Paradise, "the fiery sword waving behind them, and the cherubim taking their stations to guard the place" (PL.XII. The Argument).

4.2 DEVELOPMENT OF STORY IN THE RAMAKIEN

The genesis, growth, and development of the plot of the Ramakien follows the evolution of the world since the appearance of the white, wild boar the story of which is told in Indian Puranic literature. The concept of time implied derives from the cosmic scale of time popularized in Indian mythological stories. The authors respond to one of the basic characteristic features of the Purana, namely, creation, destruction, and recreation as evidenced in the story dealing with the incarnation of Phra Narai as the white, wild boar, with the specific purpose of restoring the creation destroyed by the demon Hirantayak.

The story of the incarnation of Phra Narai as the white, wild boar sets the tone of the epic, in as much as it points to a specific beginning or starting point. The plot of the epic, then, can, be expected creatively to adapt the idea of evolution in what is called the Śvēta-varāhakalpa in the classical Indian cultural tradition. This adaptation is meant to impart unity to the entire work, which is made up of a number of episodes (to be specific 138, according to Ray A. Olsson who has translated the Ramakien into English prose, 1968).

Episodic Nature of the Epic, Ramakien: The episodes as they are arranged in the Ramakien show continuity of plot structure in various ways. There are both perceptible and imperceptible types of continuity. The perceptible type can be illustrated from the way Phra Isuan, the supreme god orders and supervises the entire action of the epic and for this purpose he is made to appear on the scene from time to time. For instance, at the beginning
of the epic it is Phra Isuan who grants a boon to the demon, Hirantayak. However, when the demon becomes powerful and uses his power for destructive purposes, Phra Isuan orders Phra Narai to kill him. Again, in the middle of the epic, Phra Isuan grants a boon to Nontok who, on account of it, misuses his power by making the denizens of heaven suffer. Therefore, Phra Isuan calls Phra Narai, once again, to put an end to the demon. Furthermore, at the end of the epic, it is Phra Isuan who brings about a reconciliation between Phra Ram and Sida who were separated from each other, for a long time, on account of a quarrel they had. In this way, Phra Isuan, who supervises the whole action, acts as a link between the various strands of the plot and serves to impart unity to the work through the gradual development of not only the main plot but also various episodes.

The imperceptible type of continuity of plot is effected through the time-honoured way of acquainting the reader with the background of the protagonist before his birth, first (in this case, however, Phra Narai who will incarnate as Phra Ram, the hero of the story), and then, immediately, with the background of the antagonist. Thus if first Ayutthaya is described, next the city of Longka is described. Ayutthaya can be said to be the centre of good, and Longka can be regarded as the centre of evil. This suggests the main theme of the epic, namely, the conflict between the forces of good and those of evil, which has already been foreshadowed in the first episode, which deals with the story of Hirantayak. This device helps in portraying the gradual growth and development of the entire plot of the epic.

Yet another method effectively used to show the gradual growth and development of plot consists in narrating as well as describing the previous lives and deeds of the main characters of the epic, by strictly adhering to the time sequence, creating the impression of chronological sequence of time, which justifies the main purpose of the epic, namely, narrating the history of the universe from beginning to end.
As the Ramakien seems to be an ocean of stories, readers may look upon the epic as consisting of many episodes, by treating the main story as the central episode with which all the other episodes are vitally connected. Ray A. Olssons's book, The Ramakien: A Prose Translation of the Thai Ramayana looks upon the epic as made up of 138 episodes. It is possible to study and classify these episodes from a critical perspective. For the present purpose, it may be said that there are five different categories of episodes:

1. Seemingly independent episodes (13),

2. Episodes which deal with Phra Ram and his family (46),

3. Episodes which deal with Thotsakan, his family and friends (45),

4. Episodes which deal with Hanuman (24),

5. Episodes, which deal with the monkeys (10). [The titles of all the episodes are given in Appendix B.]

Seemingly independent episodes such as (i) the Asura Hirantayak rolling up the tapestry of the earth, (ii) Sahamaliwan leaving the Underworld, (iii) the Downfall of Triburam, (iv) the childless Khodom conjuring a wife, (v) the thunder god, Rammasun, chasing the lightning of Mekkhala, (vi) a toad becoming a beautiful maiden, Montho, (vii) the battle of the snakes and the demons in the Underworld, (viii) transformation of Nonthakan into a buffalo, (ix) change of kings in the Underworld, (x) distraction of the deer-faced hermit, Kalaikot, (xi) the ungrateful buffalo, Thoraphi, killing his father, (xii) Maliwarat judging the case of Thotsakan and Phra Ram, (xiii) Khonthannurat capturing the Kingdom of Kaiyaket.

Each one of these episodes is connected with the main story, which gradually develops into an organic whole, which is suggestive of the vital connection which exists among the various sects and races in the universe to which they belong. It also serves the purpose of highlighting the importance of
the protagonists of the main story, particularly, Phra Ram who has come down to Earth to save the creatures of the world from the onslaught of hostile forces.

Of all the One Hundred and Thirty-Eight Episodes in the Ramakien, three seem to be prominent: (i) The Episodes of Phra Ram, (ii) The Episode of Thotsakan, and (iii) The Episode of Hanuman. For each one of these episodes is capable of being treated as an independent book by itself in so far as the reader gets a complete view of Phra Ram from the episode dealing with Phra Ram, a complete view of Thotsakan from the one dealing with Thotsakan, and a complete view of Hanuman from that which deals with Hanuman. However, the artistry of the Ramakien is such that the authors seem dexterously to establish a link among all of them, by treating Thotsakan as the powerful adversary of Phra Ram whose main goal is to kill Thotsakan and by treating Hanuman as one who establishes a link between the protagonist (Phra Ram) and the antagonist (Thotsakan). For it is mainly due to Hanuman’s meeting with Phra Ram in the forest, when Phra Ram is desperately in search of Sida - who had already been abducted by Thotsakan - that Hanuman introduces Sukhrip to Phra Ram who gets Sukhrip’s help for the battle in Longka. The link that is established does not seem to be forced, but something that appears to be natural, as the kidnapping of Sida by Thotsakan amply illustrates. Moreover, Phra Ram’s roaming in the forest after the abduction of Sida brings him to the banana orchard nearby Khitkhin (Kishkindha), where Hanuman performs meditation. Hence it is quite natural as well as reasonable that Phra Ram and Hanuman happen to meet each other. The text of the epic reinforces this argument by narrating how Phra Isuan’s purpose behind the birth of Hanuman was to give Phra Ram a great soldier, who would be of immense help in the decisive war in Longka.

Each of the ten episodes dealing with the monkeys provides the reader with a full history of each monkey and so each of them can be treated as a separate story. However, the main purpose of these episodes seems to be to give information regarding the army that Phra Ram needs during his epoch-making fight with Thotsakan. The ten episodes, then, can be said to give a
detailed description of each one of the soldiers. And though they hail from different places and contexts, they are brought together in Khitkhin, which becomes their safe habitation under the protection, first, of Phali and, then, of Sukhrip. As in the case of the Hanuman episode, these episodes are also linked with the episode of Phra Ram. The most important point to be noted here is that these episodes are, first of all, connected with one another and secondly with that of Phra Ram as well as with that of Hanuman, and through those of Phra Ram and Hanuman, with that of Thotsakan. The Phali episode, however, finds a connection with that of Thotsakan even before the advent of Phra Ram. Thus the gradual growth and development of the entire epic forming the final product (that is, the epic), as has been shown so far, is well understood by a careful classification of episode into five categories.

Thai scholars, in their critical study of the epic, seem to be of the opinion that the Ramakien can, for purposes of academic study, be divided into three parts: (i) Pre-War, (ii) Great War, and (iii) Post-War.

The first part, Pre-War, describes the creation of all beings, human, demoniac and simian. It begins with the third incarnation of Phra Narai. The story goes on to describe the birth of King Anomatan, the first king of Ayutthaya who was succeeded by his son Atchaban who in turn was followed by his son Thotsarot, father of Phra Ram. Next is described the birth of Phra Ram, his brothers and Sida. Then is taken up for description the origin of the demons, their kingdoms, their families, and their conflicts. This is followed by the description of the creation of Longka, the birth of Thotsakan, his heroic deeds as well as philandering instinct, and his marriage to Montho and the birth of simian characters. After describing the origin of different characters, the Ramakien begins to unfold the main story: the sending away of Phra Ram and Phra Lak to the forest to save the hermits from the trouble caused by the crow-demoness Kakanasun, the marriage of Phra Ram and Sida, Phra Ram’s banishment, Phra Phrot’s going to meet Phra Ram in the forest and persuade him to return to Ayutthaya, Phra Ram’s meeting with many hermits, Phra In erecting the huts for Phra Ram, Phra Lak and Sida at Khothawari River, Phra
Ram’s encounter with Sammanakkha and her demon-brother’s armies, Sida’s abduction, Phra Ram’s meeting with Hanuman and Sukhrip and the death of Phali.

The second part deals with the preparations for the battle with Thotsakan, Hanuman’s visit to Longka and his exploits therein, the building of the causeway to Longka, Phiphek’s joining Phra Ram, Benyakai’s being forced to be the dead Sida and floating in the river, Phra Ram’s encounter with Maiyarap, the fight with Kumphakan and his defeat, Phra Lak’s battle with Inthorachit and the latter’s death, the fight between Phra Ram and Thotsakan, the episode of Maliwarat, Montho’s performance of a certain ceremony to get the magical elixir to help Thotsakan in war, Thotsakan’s death at the hands of Phra Ram and Hanuman, and the handing over by Phra Ram of the throne of Longka to Phiphek.

The third part of the Ramakien describes the quelling of an insurrection in Longka by Phra Ram’s brothers, the banishment of Sida, the birth of her two sons, Phra Ram’s fight with his sons, Phra Ram’s attempt to win Sida back and the intervention of the gods to bring about a reconciliation of the estranged couple (Phra Ram and Sida). The story goes on to describe the exploits of Phra Ram’s sons and ends with the peacefulness and joys of the people in the three worlds under the rule of Phra Ram.

4.3 COMPARISON

In Paradise Lost, Milton, first, deals with Satan and his adventure. Secondly, he deals with God, heavenly council, creation and so on, and, thirdly, he treats of the theme of Fall of Man and his expulsion from Paradise. The development of the story of the epic thus goes through three stages, and the movement can be explained as from Satan and his adventure through God, heavenly council, creation and so on to treatment of the theme of Fall of Man and his expulsion from Paradise.
The **Ramakien** also divides itself into three parts, namely, Pre-War, Great War, and Post-War. The Pre-War part of the epic extends from the beginning to the time of Sida's abduction and Phra Ram's meeting with Hanuman and Sukhrip and the death of Phali. The second part (Great War) begins with preparations for the battle with Thotsakan and comes to an end with the death of Thotsakan and Phra Ram's handing over of the throne of Longka to Phiphek. And the third part (Post-War) begins with the description of the quelling of an insurrection in Longka by Phra Ram's brothers and ends with the description of the exploits of Phra Ram's sons and mention of the peacefulness and joys enjoyed by the people in the three worlds under the rule of Phra Ram.

It looks as if both Milton and the authors of the **Ramakien** had the same wavelength as far as the development of the story of their respective epics is concerned. Both seem to make provision for the division of the plot into three neat artistic parts.

### 4.4 HEROISM

In his "The Hero As Poet, Dante; Shakespeare", Thomas Carlyle says, "The hero as Divinity, the Hero as Prophet, are productions of old ages; not to be repeated in the new. They presuppose a certain rudeness of conception, which the progress of mere scientific knowledge puts an end to. There needs to be, as it were, a world vacant, or almost vacant of scientific forms, if men in their loving wonder are to fancy their fellow-man either a god or one speaking with the voice of a god. Divinity and Prophet are past" (H.M.Buller ed. *English Literature for Schools* 95).

That these pronouncements by Carlyle seem to point to the type of hero that existed in primitive times is amply proved by the use of such phrases as "a certain rudeness of conception" (irrational conception); "loving wonder", and "if men ... are to fancy their fellow-man either a god or one speaking with the voice of a god." For it was customary among primitive people to look upon the
one who saved them from serious calamities, with awe, love and affection as they would upon god.

Primitive bards responding to popular practice used to lift a character, who had isolated himself by some extraordinary feat, out of his historical context and put him into a timeless, legendary world, where he acquired superhuman qualities of courage, strength and skill. The hero was invariably a product of a tribal society. Perhaps, dramatic representations of the life of such a hero, with their recurring themes – trials of strength and courage, the slaying of dragons and monsters, death and re-birth and so on – once played a part in tribal rites of initiation. But in their later and more sophisticated literary forms these stories seemed to fulfil a fundamental need in human nature. The hero stands in a special relationship with the gods and offers a link between them and mankind. It does not matter whether he is called by this or that name; he remains a kind of assertion of the divine element in man. Such a hero is the legendary, primitive Gilgamesh.

The main concern of primitive people was the perennial conflict between the forces of good and those of evil and the ultimate triumph of the good over the bad. As this was a moral issue, the hero who used to suppress evil had to be an embodiment of virtuous qualities, a semi-divine figure who, with his physical as well as mental qualities, could almost cast a spell on the people around him. The hero was not only a daring person, but also an incarnation of wisdom, nobility, compassion, patience, brilliance, fortitude and a connoisseur of all that was both lively and lovely. In other words, a real hero was a saviour of mankind, with both military prowess and moral uprightness, which itself was considered to be an inward strength always reinforcing physical power. Therefore, he was regarded as one who had supernatural power, which were beyond the reach of ordinary people. He was, so to say, a veritable god descended to the world to give a lift to those who were in dungeons of despair and also to restore the forces of good, which had been suppressed, for a long time, by monstrous characters who were variously called by such appellations as demons, devils, fiends and dragons. The
qualities attributed to heroes as well as those attributed to monsters, devils and so on led, in later times, to the creation of stereotype characters in the history of both heroes and their antagonists.

Thus, all the evidences that are available in the form of later archetypal heroes, who belong to the heroic age of kings and warriors, lead to the conclusion that the primitive heroes and anti-heroes, represented the conflict between the forces of good and evil – the heroes fighting for the sake of the good against the anti-heroes who were bent upon disturbing the cosmic order and causing confusion all over the world. It cannot then be maintained that primitive heroes stood only for martial heroism, because they were looked upon as gods as well as with "loving wonder", as Carlyle says. In paragraph 10 of his lecture III entitled "The Hero As Poet, Dante; Shakespeare", when Carlyle says "The Hero taken as Divinity; the Hero taken as Prophet ..." etc, he is tracing the evolution of the hero in order to tell us that in the remote past (that is, in primitive times), the hero was treated as a god, with all the virtuous qualities that a god possesses, but later he was regarded as a prophet or as one sent to this world by god. If we take the Ramayana and the Mahabharata of India, Rama and Krishna are not gods themselves (in fact, Rama says to Hanuman he is only a man) but heroes with divine attributes. Except for Vidura, Bhishma and one or two other characters in the Mahabharata, nobody looks upon Krishna as god himself. In this context, it is worth noting that even Arjuna tells Krishna, in canto XI of the "Bhagavadgita" that he thought of him as a friend, Yadava, and merely as Krishna and not as Vishnu himself (41). And it is also well to remember that, according to historians, Rama and Krishna came to be worshipped as gods only in later times, perhaps around second century B.C.

The heroism of primitive society seems to have acquired a certain degree of sophistication with the kings and warriors of the heroic period when they started studying martial arts and acquiring physical strength through necessary exercise. Constant application to the practice of the arts, too, appears to have led to the refinement of those arts resulting in the skill and dexterity
with which the heroes could wield various weapons and missiles. All this became part of the subject matter of epic poetry, especially in the written tradition. It should also be noted that one of the main functions of epic poetry “in the heroic-age appears to have been to stir the spirit of the warriors to heroic actions by praising their exploits and those of their illustrious ancestors, by assuring a long and glorious recollection of their fame, and by supplying them with models of ideal heroic behaviour.” Thus Alexander is said to have carried along with him a copy of Homer’s epic, when he launched on a campaign of conquering the world at large. It is also worth noting that “one of the favourite pastimes of the nobility in heroic ages in different times and places has been to gather in banquet halls to hear heroic songs, in praise of famous deeds sung by professional singers as well as by the warriors themselves” (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*. <www.britannica.com/bcom/eb/article/printable/8/0,5722,119368,00.html>).

In India, recital of epic poem has been in vogue for centuries and both the Ramayana and the Mahabharata have been recited and explained in social and religious assemblies before a huge audience. Great warriors in the past had the habit of singing heroic songs before a battle, and such recitations had a tremendous impact on the morale of the combatants. Martial heroism was very popular among kings and warriors and with all their devotion to their art they could show undaunted courage in the battlefield by taking a firm resolution not to show their back to their enemy or to take to their heels, especially, at a moment when victory appeared to be rather uncertain. Many of them were connoisseurs, looking upon the battle itself as a game of dice and not bothering about either victory or defeat but only about courageous display of heroism for the sake of a righteous cause. The greatest heroes of the heroic age had cultivated qualities such as equanimity, equivalence and equipoise.

There were instances of noblemen going out in quest of adventures. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* has recorded one such example. It says, “Among the Fulani (Fulbe) people in the Sudan…, whose epic poetry has been recorded, a nobleman customarily set out in quest of adventures accompanied
by a singer (mabo), who also served as his shield bearer. The singer was thus
the witness of the heroic deeds of his lord, which he celebrated in an epic poem
called baudì” (Encyclopaedia Britannica. <www. britannica. com/ bcom/ eb/
article/ printable/ 8/ 0, 5722, 119368, 00. html>). In India, the Mahabhārata
gives the example of both Bhishma and Arjuna setting out on an expedition in
which they single-handed defeated many outstanding warriors of the day and
brought plenty of wealth to their kingdom, Hastinapura. In this context, a
stanza, which appears in Bhāravi’s Kirātārjunīya, is worth quoting:

Vijitya yah prājyam-ayacchad-uttarāṃ kurūn-akupyaṁ vasu
vāsavōpamaḥ/ (I. 37).

In this sloka, Draupadi, the wife of the Pandavas, tells Yudhisthira (the eldest
brother of the Pandavas) that Arjuna conquered all the kings, whose kingdoms
lay to the north of the Kuru kingdom, and brought plenty of gold to Hastinapura. She also says that Arjuna is equal to Vāsava, that is, Indra.

Rama I of the Chakri Dynasty of Thailand went on a military expedition
to Laos and brought the precious Emerald Buddha image which still adorns the
royal temple in Bangkok.

These aristocratic heroes hailed from a family of illustrious heroes, a
link in a long chain of great heroes, all of whom were well-versed in martial
heroism. The Mahabhārata goes to the extent of classifying three categories
of heroes: (i) Mahā-Ratha, (ii) Atiratha, and (iii) Rathin. A Mahā-Ratha hero
was one who could alone face any number of soldiers on the opposite side. An
Ati-Ratha was a hero who could fight alone with ten thousand soldiers on the
enemy-side, and a Rathin was one who could alone oppose one thousand
soldiers. These heroes, unlike their counterparts in Greece and other Western
countries, combined martial heroism with moral heroism. In Achilles, Hector,
Julius Caesar, Pompey, Anthony and such other heroes what we see is only
martial heroism, which was given utmost importance in the heroic age in the
west. In the post Renaissance West we see only moral heroism (as in Dante
and Milton) and the total absence of the martial heroism of the ancient heroic
age.
The period of martial heroism had come to an end before Dante wrote his Divine Comedy. In Milton, however, what we see is pure moral heroism. According to P.B. Shelley, Satan displays moral heroism as opposed to martial heroism. Shelley says, “Nothing can exceed the energy and magnificence of the character of Satan as expressed in Paradise Lost” (P.B.Shelley. A Defence of Poetry 245). In Book II of Paradise Lost, Satan rejects the idea of having an open, martial confrontation with God because, according to him, the battle that he and his followers had with God has already proved that there is no question of defeating the king of heaven in the battlefield. But he perseveres in his enmity and so resorts to the devious method of spoiling God’s new creation and thus taking revenge on Him. To quote Shelley again, “It is a mistake to suppose that he [Satan] could ever have been intended for the popular personification of evil. Implacable hate, patient cunning, and a sleepless refinement of device to inflict the extremest anguish on an enemy, these things are evil; and although venial in a slave, are not to be forgiven in a tyrant”(245).

Satan is looked upon by God as a totally helpless victim. It looks as if God seems to take sadistic pleasure in inflicting torments upon Satan and his followers. Once again Shelley puts forth a forceful argument to uphold the nobility that lurks behind Satan’s sense of revenge and thus point out the moral heroism that is inherent in him. Shelley’s argument goes as follows:

“Milton’s Devil as a moral being is as far superior to his God, as one who perseveres in some purpose which he has conceived to be excellent, in spite of adversity and torture, is to one who in the cold security of undoubted triumph inflicts the most horrible revenge upon his enemy, not from any mistaken notion of inducing him to repent of a perseverance in enmity, but with the alleged design of exasperating him to deserve new torments. Milton has so far violated the popular creed (if this shall be judged to be a violation) as to have alleged no superiority of moral virtue to God over his Devil. And this bold neglect of a direct moral purpose is the most decisive proof of the supremacy of Milton’s genius. He mingled as it were the elements of human nature as colours upon a single pallet, and arranged them in the composition of his great picture according to the laws of epic truth, that is, according to the laws of that principle by which a series of actions of the external universe
and of intelligent and ethical beings is calculated to excite the sympathy of succeeding generations of mankind” (245).

Vain wisdom, deceitfulness, however, spoil the true heroic nature of Satan. But he has the capacity to retain his intellectual vigour. A. A. Manavalan says,

“Unlike his followers, Satan seems to be able to retain his intellectual vigour even after the fall. In spite of losing his former ‘form’ and ‘glory’, he keeps his wits about him. He reveals his power of intellect in discovering the use of arms as a means of revenge, and in plotting a deceptive scheme for the seduction of Man in Eden. It is he who suggests this through Beelzebub. Again in Eden his soliloquy at the beginning of Book IV reveals “an astonishingly candid and exact self-knowledge, and this insight into the motives of his own revolt enables him to judge rightly of the weakest points in Adam’s and Eve’s defences” (Epic Heroism in Milton and Kamban 120)

Adam, the hero of Paradise Lost also is made to display moral heroism when through repentance, prayer, contrition and forbearance he qualifies himself to receive the grace of God.

The idea of heroism as conceived by Rama I and his colleagues is almost the same as the reader finds either in the Valmiki Ramayana or in Kamban’s Iramavataram. Phra Ram is, first and foremost, a Dhira, that is, one who is capable of keeping up equanimity and equipoise and boldly facing any adverse situation with undaunted courage. He is bent on fulfilling his father’s promise to Kaiyakesi (Kaikeyi in the Ramayana) by boldly accepting the ordeal of living in the forest for fourteen years. He thinks that it is his moral responsibility to see that there is no stain on his father’s character. The Ramakien repeatedly highlights the martial heroism displayed by his unequalled skill in archery. At the same time, in his initial battle with Thotsakan he reveals his moral heroism by refusing to fight with his adversary when the latter is weaponless.

One of the important things about the character of Phra Ram as portrayed in the Ramakien is that of his being an incarnation of god Narai (Narayana). Narai has descended to this world as Phra Ram in order to
suppress the evil forces represented in the characters of Thotsakan and his followers. Therefore, Phra Ram is a virtuous as well as a noble hero – one who always upholds the cause of Dharma. The very purpose of his avatara is to protect the Dasarajadhamma (Ten Virtues or Duties of a king) as enumerated in Buddhism (Dictionary of Buddhism 285). Therefore, a deeper study of his character reveals that his main concern is moral heroism with all its pre-requisites such as Dāna (charity; liberty; generosity), Sila (high moral character), Pariccāga(self-sacrifice), Ājīva (honesty; integrity), Maddava (kindness and gentleness), Tapā (austerity; self-control; non-indulgence), Akkodha (non-anger; non-fury), Avihisā (non-violence; non-oppression), Khanti (patience; forbearance; tolerance), Avirodhana (non-opposition; non-deviation from righteousness; conformity to Dhamma). Portrayal of such heroism as this is likely to make – as it has, indeed, made – a modern indological critic say that this is ideal or exaggerated heroism. But it is well to remember that the history of Asia provides many examples of such heroism even in later times. Porus, for example, displayed such heroism in his confrontation with Alexander and was, in the end, highly rewarded by his opponent.

The kind of heroism displayed by Phra Ram is an instance of practical reality of what is said at the end of the Bhagavad-Gita:

Yatra yōgēsvārah krṣnaa yatra pārthō dhanur-dharah/
Tatra śri vijayō bhūtir-dhruvā nītir-matir-mama//

Literally translated, the sloka means, wherever is Sri Krishna, the lord of yoga, wherever is Arjuna, the wielder of the bow, assured are there prosperity, success, glory and righteousness; this is my firm conviction. (XVIII.78)

The implications, however, are that a hero (like Arjuna) must unite in himself yogic vision (balanced views) and the ability to fight with weapons. The hero should not allow the former (that is, yogic vision) to degenerate into madness or the latter (that is, the ability to fight with weapons) into savagery. The great centralities of righteous and cultured life are the seeking after spiritual guidance through worship, sacrifice and active participation (by fighting for
noble causes) in the furtherance of the cosmic plan. In other words, moral considerations and physical fight should go together, and Phra Ram, as a hero, illustrates this.

Christianity ushered in as an antithesis to the previous dispensation in which aristocracy ruled. The aristocracy of the pre-Christian era was characterized by frequent wars as a consequence of hatred, jealousy, envy and such other evil qualities, which governed the lives and conduct of many kings who were power-crazy. Jesus’ idea was to put an end to bloodshed by providing the people of the world with a new order of life with love, reason and peace as its strong foundation. For this reason he strongly recommended the cultivation of such benign qualities as love, affection, compassion, mercy, patience, and repentance — qualities such as will lead to a different kind of heroism called moral heroism. In the older Judaic order, God is represented as one who goes by the idea of justice and is merciless towards those who deviate from the path paved by Him. In the order propagated by Jesus justice is replaced by mercy and compassion. According to Jesus, in the New Testament, one can emerge as a hero by abject surrender to the will of God, self-abnegation and by accepting suffering as part of God’s scheme in one’s life. Thus in Paradise Lost, which is a typical, Christian epic, we see Adam sticking to these virtuous qualities and finally emerging as a hero for he has accepted suffering which ennobles him. Such a hero has no need for martial heroism.

Adam is a hero on the human side and if he loses paradise on account of his disobedience to God, the Son of God, who figures in Paradise Lost (and becomes the hero of Paradise Regained), regains the lost paradise out of compassion for man. The devil appears as the anti-hero, who becomes an apostate and thus falls from the grace of God, without ever hoping to be able to regain the lost heaven. Thus, man falls only to be lifted and restored to the blissful seat. Jesus never falls and restores man to paradise; and Satan falls never to be restored to heaven.
Pagan heroism, on the other hand, is a combination of martial heroism and moral heroism. In pagan religious systems, the divine and the mundane co-operate, always bringing about a balance between the two. The hero must display martial heroism, because he has the task of suppressing evil for the sake of protecting the people of the world. As this task of suppressing evil needs violence in the form corporeal punishment, the hero must display martial heroism. The hero must also know where and when to use martial heroism.

In the Ramakien, the martial heroism of the hero, Phra Ram, is highlighted in more than one context, but the authors do not, at the same time, close their eyes to his moral heroism; for example, in his encounter with Kumphakan (Kumbhakarna), when he is told by Phiphek (Vibhishana) that Kumphakan is basically good and joins hands with Thotsakan with the sole intention of helping his elder brother, Phra Ram has Phiphek tell Kumphakan to go back to the palace. This act of Phra Ram's points to the presence in him of qualities such as kindness, sympathy, compassion, so much so that when he is forced to fight with the adamant Kumphakan he displays a happy combination of both martial and moral heroism. As opposed to Phra Ram, Hanuman seems to resort to tricks in many contexts. Thotsakan, the anti-hero, has more martial heroism than moral heroism. This is evidenced by his praise of unrighteous fights and by his use of many tricks to hoodwink his enemies in the battlefield.

In Paradise Lost, both Satan and Adam seem to be lacking in martial heroism, and they seem to display moral heroism in two widely different ways. Satan's moral heroism, however, is implied in Book I of the epic, though romantic critics (as has already been observed) seem to see the presence of moral heroism in him throughout the epic. Adam's moral heroism is found in his acceptance the punishment meted out to him as well as in his repentance leading to his ultimate restoration.

In the Ramakien, Phra Ram displays the martial heroism sanctioned by the tenets of the Law (Dharma), whereas Thotsakan displays the martial
heroism characterized by unrighteous conduct, though it cannot be said that he is totally devoid of righteous conduct in the battlefield. Phra Ram displays moral heroism too, as has already been observed, in his encounter with Kumphakan in the battlefield.

4.5 CONFLICT

There is a striking pattern for a number of epic traditions. This pattern can clearly be seen in “a so-called tripartite ideology or trifunctional system of the Indo-Europeans. The concept was based on the discovery of the remarkable philosophy of a prehistoric nation that survived as a system of thought in the historic Indo-European civilizations and even the subconsciousness of the modern speakers of Indo-European tongues” (Encyclopaedia Britannica. <www.britannica.com/eb/article/printable/8/0,5722,119368,00.html>)

This philosophy recognizes the existence of three basic principles that are realized by three categories of people: Priests, Warriors, and Producers of riches. In the Rg-Veda X.90 these three categories are described as the limbs of the Cosmic Man – that is the anthropomorphic form of the universe – who stands for the essential unity of universal life. Thus the priest is described as the head of the cosmic Man; the kings as the arms, and the producers of the riches as the thighs; “Brāhmaṇōṣya mukham-āsīt/Bāhu rājanyah kṛtah/Ūru tadasya yad-vaiṣyaḥ” (X.90.13). The dominant metaphor of the hymn is the concept of One Man and the implication is that absolute collaboration aided by mutual thinking among these three classes is a sine qua non for the stability of the life of humanity. In conformity with this philosophy, many Indo-European epics have as their central theme interaction among these three principles or functions which are; (i) religion and kingship; (ii) physical strength, and (iii) fecundity, health, wealth, beauty and so on. In other words, for the successful functioning of worldly life priesthood, kingship (administration) and material production must move hand in hand. Therefore, the last hymn of the Rg-veda exhorts mankind “to move together; to speak alike, and to think alike: “Saṅgacchadhvam saṁvadadhavam saṁ vō manānsi jānatām” (1028).
In the most voluminous Indian epic, the Mahabharata, for example, the central protagonists—the five Pandava brothers, together with their father Pandu, their uncles, Dhrtarastra and Vidura, and their common wife, Draupadi, correspond to the traditional deities presiding over the three principles or functions of the Indo-European ideology.

As opposed to these guardians of the good, there are incarnations of evil, representing demoniac or diabolical forces, in the figures of Duryodhana and his ninety-nine brothers ably assisted by their uncle Shakuni and their Vassal, Karna.

During the former part of their career, the Pandavas are made to suffer constantly from the persistent enmity and jealousy of their cousins, that is, Duryodhana, his brothers, uncle and ally. Demons as Duryodhana and his brothers are, they, at first, snatch the kingdom from the Pandavas and exile them. The conflict between the two ends in a devastating war (Mahā-Bhārata-Yuddha) in which almost all the renowned heroes of the time take part. The Pandavas survive the massacre and establish on earth a peaceful and prosperous kingdom.

The conflict between the forces of good and evil seems to have been recognized as a perennial conflict, which describes the nature of creation. In ancient cultures and natural religions this conflict is expressed in terms of a conflict between the gods and demons, whereas in Semitic religions it is looked upon as a conflict between God and the Devil (variously called Shaitan, Satan, fiend and so on).

In Homer's Iliad the conflict is between the Trojans, who are considered to be evil by the Greeks, and the Greeks who are regarded as good. In Greek mythology, the conflict between the Titans and Olympians stands for the concrete expression of the conflict between good and evil. As this conflict is eternally set in creation, the epic poet takes it up as the basic theme of his epic to develop the plot of his work. This conflict can be said to be archetypal
because it is this conflict that sets in motion the various stages of universal life from beginning to end. So if Milton says that he will trace the history of universal life in his *Paradise Lost*, he cannot be looked upon as a boastful author; he can, on the other hand, develop the plot of his epic in the light of the way life evolved, according to the Bible, namely, God’s creation, its destruction by the Devil, and its final restoration. Milton seems to have looked upon the initial integration, the medial disintegration, and the final reintegration, which characterize the evolution of cosmic life, as providing him with the clue he needed for the development of the plot of his epic. And in the conflict between God and the Devil he saw a useful guide to write his epic.

In the *Ramakien*, the same conflict is seen as the perpetually recurring conflict between the gods and the demons. The *Ramakien* depicts it in the majority of the episodes, which, in a sense, is a repetition of the same basic idea, but it is not a meaningless repetition; instead, it is an instance of emphatically highlighting it by giving a kaleidoscopic picture of it. The conflict between good and evil becomes a highly convincing structural aspect of the epic. This is an important point to be noted because the central story, namely, the story of Phra Ram has as its basic theme the conflict between Phra Ram (an avatar of Narayana) and Thotsakan (an incarnation of the Asura Nonthok). The same conflict developed as the basic theme in the majority of the episodes thus find a vital connection with the main story, though a few of them seem to be apparently independent and, therefore, disconnected. Every episode, which treats of this theme, seems to spring from the same centre and go back to it.

Thus both *Paradise Lost* and the *Ramakien* deal with the same basic conflict – conflict between good and evil. The authors of both epics highlight the ultimate triumph of good. God and the Devil who figure in *Paradise Lost* are concrete embodiments of good and evil. In the same way, Phra Ram and Thotsakan, in the *Ramakien*, are projected as personifications of good and evil. In both evil is suppressed in the form of punishment meted out to the Devil (in *Paradise Lost*) and the demon king, Thotsakan (in the *Ramakien*).
It must also be said that Milton, following the Semitic tradition, portrays the conflict between God and the Devil (that is, between good and evil), whereas Rama I, following the Dharmic tradition of Asia, sees the conflict as a conflict between the righteous and the unrighteous (that is, good and evil).