The Epic Narrator in Milton's *Paradise Regained*

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Although, of all non-dramatic poetry, epic can most allow its characters their own voices in orations, meditations and dialogues, epic is still not drama. Unlike a playwright, an epic poet keeps secondary speakers under the direct control of a narrator who places his poem in historical epic context and guides the reader's view of his characters' values, not only through interpolated dialogue and monologue, but also through his own direct control of the narrative. Unlike dialogue, however, an epic poem, even a brief epic, presents a story in which different characters assume major roles as observers, supplicants, lamentosa, chorus, protagonist, heralds, antagonists, songsters, victims, guides, eirons, alazons, nuntii, heroes, and antiheroes. Since a poem is not played on a stage, the narrator must fix the historic import of the work as well as describe the setting, the characters, and the time of season or day. We can see only words, nor personifications of these words on the stage. We are told what to think about each character and each event more directly than a play could tell us.

Thus the epic poem is more directive and didactic than the stage because the reader's point of view is controlled by the narrator. As Anne D. Ferry explains,

We cannot simply respond to the characters directly because in the poem without the aid of the inspired narrator we could neither see nor hear them; it is his vision which determines ours and we listen only to what he recites for us . . . we can understand that world only as it is interpreted to us by the narrator. What would appear to us true without his guidance often turns out in reality to be false, and what is acted out in the poem must always be explained by the speaker. So that when we find complexity in our response to the behavior or speech of a character to the statement of the narrator which interprets it, we must judge the

character by the interpretation, not the interpretation by the character's words or acts.¹

According to Ferry, when a correction to a character's speech is necessary, the narrator plays an active role. Any literary gesture that attracts attention to itself implies the narrator; a series of such gestures is the narrator's attitude.² When the narrator holds these entrances to a minimum, he is directing attention away from himself and towards his characters. He does, however, make such gestures to give continuity to his poem and to increase the import of the poem's actions. He maintains continuity and provides intensification in two ways.³ First, he makes explicit statements concerning the relationship of episodes. Implicitly, he achieves continuity by modulating the narrative tone and attitude. Although the intensity of tone rises and falls in any narration, the modulation of the narrator's voice fluctuates to a lesser extent than that excited by the characters. The narrator corrects the tone, and thus sets up a continuum that allows for the return to a calmer voice after epic *agon*.

A character can partially replace the verbal functions of a narrator, of course. There are several ways to accomplish this, and all such methods make narrative more dramatic. One is to minimize the narrator's dramatic role and have him assume the roles of the characters and speak for them, as Aristotle praises Homer for doing. Odysseus takes control of the narrative throughout Books IX, X, and XII of *The Odyssey*; likewise, Aeneas tells his story to Dido's court in Books I and II of *The Aeneid*. In both cases, the character who most controls the narrative is the hero. The more a character controls the poem, the more likely we are directed to admire his virtues, to sympathize with him, and to see him as a "better than average man." As one can see by noting the tables in the Appendix of this article, the Son progressively takes control of *Paradise Regained*.⁴

In any epic, the narrator is needed more in the beginning to set the poem in motion. Immediately following the invocation, however, Milton, in good Aristotelian fashion, lets his characters take over the narrator's function of introducing: Satan's oration introduces the Father's; the angelic hymn introduces the Son's meditation which allows for a multiplicity of feeling the debate cannot. Didactic comment such as that found in the debate is expressed in a language of statement where allusiveness and the evocation of a multiplicity of conflicting feelings are avoided.⁵ This is exactly the Son's role in debate. Thus, if the narrator spoke in the debate, he would unnecessarily repeat the tenor of the Son's speech. The corrections of the

narrator are useful as narrative contrast to the doubts and fears of the Son in meditation, but are unnecessary in the longer debate. Indeed, the figure of the narrator seems to recede and grow smaller until we are barely conscious of him, and thus the poet allows our sympathies with the Son to grow. Then the narrator returns to conclude the poem.

The characters, as well as the narrator, form new wholes by connecting events. While the ordinary man's experience is chaotic, irregular, and fragmentary, a hero, god, or narrator can connect meaning and events.⁶ Unlike Milton's earlier epic, *Paradise Regained* does not repeatedly call attention to the identity of the narrator's voice except in the invocation.⁷ There is a humility, a self-effacing quality, about the narrator of Milton's brief epic, for his hero, even more than Odysseus and Aeneas, can be trusted to control the poem and the Son, more than any classical hero, does control it.⁸

As H.W. Legget suggests: "It is indeed true that the reader . . . identifies himself with the author . . . rather than the characters"; however, when the narrator largely removes himself, as Milton's narrator does in Books III and IV of *Paradise Regained*, the reader does take on some of the same sympathies which that observer would have during the play.⁹ The reader is forced to reestablish his system of identification in favour of the hero to an even greater extent than he would if the narrator had remained in more obvious control of his characters. The result in a poem that takes Christ for its hero is a meditative pattern that becomes more and more centered upon the Son as he moves from doubt to declaration.

There is a thematic as well as structural reason for the narrator's removal of self in *Paradise Regained*. He, like the hero, is practising a meditative lesson in self-removal. The devices the narrator usually uses to intensify formality by reminding the reader of the poet's artistry are largely missing in *Paradise Regained*. When the hero takes on the authoritative language of statement, begins to control the evaluative commentary, and concentrates almost uninterruptedly on dialectic, the narrator is not needed to complete an extended transition to another place, another character, or another time.¹¹ When the main character is less reliable, like Adam in *Paradise Lost*, then the narrator is forced to remain conspicuous as a corrector to both the ironic voice and the low mimetic hero.¹² Homer's narrator has to enter the poem to provide a corrective when the hero Achilles mistreats Hector's body.¹³ No such entrance is necessary in *Paradise Regained*, since the hero

is the Son of God. Milton thus illustrates that the Son is "above heroic" (I.15); by allowing him to function that way in narrative.

The higher the *mimesis*, in short, the less the narrator is necessary to control the poem; the lower the *mimesis*, the more control the narrator must exert.¹⁴ It is difficult for a poem to have a central figure more morally trustworthy than the Son as he joins his will to God's. Thus, like the drama, the poem responds to the increasingly high mimetic quality of the main character as he moves from interrogative meditation to declarative debate. The higher the *mimesis*, the less the narrator is needed to control the poem's moral perspective. The central character simply does not need to be corrected by Book III. The narrator need not condemn Satan, since the Son is perfect in the debate sequence and able to comment directly upon Satan's ironic voice:

I never lik'd thy talk, thy offer less. . . .
Get thee behind me; plain thou now appear'st
That Evil one; Satan for ever damn'd.

(IV. 171-194)

Time and time again, the narrator bows to the superior corrector as the Son explains and corrects the ironic statement and adds to the complexity of our response (IV. 285-326 and IV. 486-498).¹⁵

Milton illustrates the Son's journey toward understanding not only by allowing him to take over the narrator's role as corrector and moral moderator, but also by restricting the changes of character, the variety of interpolated narrative strategies, and the movements of time and space in the final sequence. Even earlier, when the debate begins, the narrator takes a more modest role: his normal tasks of stagesetting, describing time and place, correcting the ironic point of view, summarizing emblematic tales, and emphasizing ritualistic description are largely given over to his characters.¹⁶ While the Son clarifies meaning and corrects the ironic point of view, Satan describes the time and place, summarizes events, and observes characters:

Look once more ere we leave this specular Mount
Westward, much nearer to Southwest, behold
Where on the *Aegean* shore a City stands . . .
There thou shalt hear and learn the secret power
Of harmony in tone and numbers hit
By voice or hand, and various measur'd verse,
Aeolian charms and *Dorian Lyric* Odes,

And his who gave them breath, but higher sung,
 Blind *Melesigenes* thence *Homer* call'd,
 Whose Poem *Phoebus* challeng'd his own.¹⁷ (IV. 236-260)

There is another structural reason for the narrator's self-removal in the dialogue: dialogue occurs because the narrator's third voice is absent. Breaks and changes in either the scene or interpolated device generally imply the narrator, but when those breaks follow long segments of extended dialogue such as the debate in *Paradise Regained*, the narrator has moved our identification with him onto one of the characters, as in a play.

A poet can begin a structural change in several ways. When the deific oration is concluded, the narrator, rather than self-consciously taking over the narrative for an extended time, uses the angelic chorus to make the transition (I. 173-181). When Satan finishes a temptation, the Son provides a rebuttal.¹⁸ Very seldom in the poem are we reading the story so much as listening to it. Exploits are not being directly narrated, but interpolated words are the foreground action. Nonetheless, change of narrative device, even from the deific oration to angelic chorus, does necessitate some brief entry by the narrator:

So spake the Eternal Father, and all Heaven
 Admiring stood a space, then into Hymns,
 Burst forth, and in Celestial measure mov'd
 Circling the Throne and Singing, while the hand
 Sung with the voice, and this the argument. (I. 168-172)

However, as the poem begins to use the dialogue as the main narrative device, the narrator, time after time, limits his entrances to one line beginning with "To whom" and then identifying the speaker: (I. 335-336; I. 357; I. 406; III. 43; III. 108; III. 121; III. 181. 203; III. 386; IV. 109; IV. 154; IV. 170; IV. 195).

Early in the poem, the narrator does correct the ironic voice. Immediately after the council of demons, Milton uses the narrator to reinterpret Satan's speech:

So to the Coast of *Jordan* he directs
 His easy steps, girded with snaky wiles,
 Where he might likeliest find his new-declar'd,
 This man of men, attested Son of God,
 Temptation and all guile on him to try,
 So to subvert whom he suspected rais'd

To end his Reign on Earth so long enjoy'd:
 But contrary unweeting he fulfill'd
 The purpos'd Counsel pre'ordain'd and fixt
 Of the most High, who, in full frequency bright
 Of Angels, thus to *Gabriel* smiling spake.(I. 119-129)

However, these lines function more as a transition between the demonic and deific voice than as a corrective. Milton thus moves Satan to the place where the Son is and introduces God. There is almost no interpretation in this speech. Rather, the entrance of the narrator functions to set the stage of the next three interpolations: the Father's oration, the Son's meditation, and the first temptation. The kind of corrective that the Son will make even in his first answer to Satan is more direct:

Think'st thou such force in Bread? is it not written
 (For I discern thee other than thou seem'st)
 Man lives not by Bread only, but each word
 Proceeding from the mouth of God, who fed
 Our Father here with Manna? In the Mount
Moses was forty days, nor eat nor drank
 And forty days *Elijah* without food
 Wander'd this barren waste; the same I now:
 Why dost thou then suggesting to me distrust,
 Knowing who I am, as I know who thou art? (I. 347-356)

Since this is the Son's first corrective, it must not be as declarative as the later ones, yet we see the movement of the Son towards the Father's declarative tone. The speech is filled with questioning that is as close to the meditation it immediately follows as it is to the later answers of the Son. Nonetheless, it is more direct than the narrator's interpretations. The Son has begun to assume his role as the corrector of Satan.

Even a self-effacing narrator uses certain devices to control the poem's rise and fall and to imply the importance of the heroic exploits. These generally include epic conventions such as invocations, epic similes, formal *proemiums*, catalogues, epithets, repetition of formulaic reviews, and descriptions of ritual action. Critics agree that some of these elements, such as invocations and epic similes, are comparatively rare in the poem. Nonetheless, Milton often uses the less obvious and less ornate conventions of narrative intensification. The demands of narrative force themselves on the poet, once he decides to present the story as an epic rather than as a play.¹⁹ As we shall see, the blind seer meets those demands in a less ornate fashion

than he did in the greater epic; nonetheless, the demands are met. The methods Milton uses in creating this insistence reveal much about the poem.

The sparsity of epic simile has been noticed.²⁰ The heavy use of epic simile by any narrator implies omniscient narration and a great deal of direct control by the narrator. The epic simile used repeatedly in dialogue or in any delegated narration would militate against the more limited observations of the restricted voice.²¹ The reduced use of epic simile would suggest a deliberately more restricted role for the narrator.

The narrator so limits his role in *Paradise Regained* that one might think of Milton, like the Son, as attempting "an ordeal of absolute obedience and complete trust" in his removal of self.²² Although the brevity of description in the poem has been attributed to its Hebraic style, such brevity also suggests a more modest role for the narrator as well as a generic necessity in the brief epic. However, despite his limited role, the narrator must generally, though not exclusively, describe the regions of supernatural wonder where demonic and deific forces conflict, and from which the hero comes back with the power to bestow boons on mankind.²³ Through the meditations, the hero takes over the telling of separation and departures – such as those at the Temple, the flight into Egypt, the journey into the desert – as well as moments of return. In *Paradise Regained*, the hero must also set the scene for the passage into the realm of night. Thus regions of the unknown – such as deserts, forests, and wilderness – are described by the narrator, and then these regions, perfect fields for the projection of unconscious content, are used by the narrator either to reflect or to oppose the internal state of the Son.²⁴ Before the Son's first meditation, the narrator describes the setting. Like the fearful thoughts the Son vocalizes in meditation, the setting is fraught with danger:

One day forth walk'd alone, the Spirit leading
And his deep thoughts, the better to converse
With solitude, till far from track of men,
Thought following thought, and step by step led on,
He entr'd now the bordering Desert wild,
And with dark shades and rocks environ'd round,
His holy Meditations thus pursu'd.²⁵(I. 189–195)

At later points in the poem, however, the narrator opposes the setting to the Son's internal state (IV. 401–412). By then, the narrator is illustrating how the Son can now oppose the Satanic manipulation of nature and still have an "untroubled mind" (IV. 401).

Although the narrator occasionally describes the setting, he rarely uses the catalogue descriptions for which he gained such fame in *Paradise Lost* and which further the sense of trial. Indeed, the catalogues are scarce, and, as in *Paradise Lost*, are often used to describe the world under the control of demonic forces.

In epic poetry, the most important entries of the narrator are the invocations. Milton's poem opens with the conventional statement of story and theme, but there is only one formal invocation in *Paradise Regained*. Twice in the poem Milton calls attention to the identity of the narrator's voice, but only once, in the formal invocation in Book I, does he explain the relationship of his two epics and relate the importance of the events of the brief epic to human existence:

I who erewhile the happy Garden sung,
By one man's disobedience lost, now sing
Recover'd Paradise to all mankind,
By one man's firm obedience fully tried
Through all temptation, and the Tempter foil'd
In his wiles, defeated and repuls't,
And *Eden* rais'd in the waste Wilderness.

Thou Spirit who led'st this glorious Eremite
Into the Desert, his Victorious Field
Against the Spiritual Foe, and brought'st him thence
By proof th' undoubted Son of God, inspire,
As thou art wont, my prompted Song, all else mute,
And bear through height or depth of nature's bounds
With prosperous wind full summ'd to tell of deeds
Above Heroic, though in secret done,
And unrecorded left through many an Age,
Worthy t' have not remain'd so long unsung. (I. 1-17)

The dominant devices in the invocation are repetition of phases and the telling of ritualistic tales. The second book opens without formal invocation, but Milton does suggest the presence of the narrator (II. 1-12). Indeed, the poet continues with simile and rhetoric of the sort he will allow Satan in Books II and IV (II. 13-27). The narrator's entrance at the opening of Book II not only provides transition from the temptation of stones to the meditation of the disciples, but also functions to intensify the importance of the Son's quest. Any epic introduction creates and defines the narrator. There are no invocations to Books III and IV because such an entrance by

a self-conscious narrator would interrupt the debate and the extended meditation on the Son.²⁶

While the Son's meditations always signify a division between major temptation sequences, the opening of a new book illustrates only minor divisions. Thus the brief epic pulls against its own structure in an interesting fashion. We come to expect the Son's temptation after his meditation and thus his meditation becomes, in our minds, preparation for heroic psychic battle. The introduction to the third book is so brief that at first one wonders why Books II and III were divided at that point. While the end of the second book is a retort by the Son to Satan, the third book commences in a brief transition between the Son's reply to the temptation to wealth and Satan's commencement of the first temptation to glory and fame:

So spake the Son of God, and Satan stood
A while as mute confounded what to say,
What to reply, confuted and convinc't
Of his weak arguing and fallacious drift;
At length collecting all his Serpent wiles,
With soothing words renew'd, him thus accost. (II. 1-6)

These words separate the temptation of wealth and Judah's throne from the temptation to glory and fame; these two temptations of the world are hardly major divisions, but only two segments of the long temptation.²⁷

The opening of Book IV functions to divide the temptation of Parthia from the temptation of Rome. The beginning of Book IV is different from those of other books: although there is no invocation, the language of the narrator emphasizes this opening section far more than that of Book II (See IV. 1-24). The famous "wine-press" simile occurs in the first twenty lines.²⁸ The narrator repeats in brief (IV. 4-6) the emblem story of the Jordan that he first told in the invocation to Book I. He uses the simile of the overmatched wrestler (IV. 10-14) to characterize Satan as a Marlovian "Overreacher." Indeed, the narrator must provide a lengthy opening of Book IV because there is a change of scene to the "high mountain" where Satan will show Rome to the Son (IV. 25-43). Here the narrator returns to his special language, but only in a limited manner.²⁹

The longest intrusions of the narrator follow the meditations. The reason for this becomes apparent on studying the patterns of contrasting narrative strategies in the poem. The didactic quality of the narrator's language of statement is a useful contrast to the fears and doubts that the Son faces in the self-interrogating meditations. When the Son, early in the poem, uses

the interrogative, the entry of the narrator is necessary to return the poem to the descriptive and then the declarative.³⁰

Where Milton uses the Father for contrast, a narrator's lengthy introduction of the Son's following interpolation is unnecessary. The Father's language of declaration already presents a contrast to the Son's self-interrogation. The Father, like the narrator and the Son in debate, avoids the allusiveness and the evocation of a multiplicity of conflicting feeling that characterize both the human and the demonic perspectives. Thus the narrator's didactic, declarative answers would unnecessarily repeat the tenor of the Son's role in the debate, although they are useful contrasts to the doubts and fears of the Son in meditation.

Immediately following the first meditation (I. 196-293), the narrator enters to intensify the importance of the Son's fearful journey by noting that no other mortal has walked this road (See I. 294-318). At the same time, he illustrates that man, even an inspired narrator, cannot know exactly where the Son is: "whether on hill . . . or Cedar . . . or harbor'd in one Cave, is not reveal'd." Finally, as another intensification of the Son's dangerous position, the narrator introduces the fierce, dangerous beasts that surround the Son yet do not harm him. The narrator associates the physical danger that the presence of these beasts suggests with Satan's entrance. Throughout *Paradise Regained*, he introduces Satan's entrances through the alliteration of "w's": "wild . . . walking . . . walk . . . worm . . . weed . . . which . . . wither's . . . winters . . . wild . . . warm . . . wet" (I.310-318). After the narrator uses eleven such words in nine lines, he completely abandons the use of "w's" in his speech. He introduces Satan and at first also avoids any such usage, only to remind us who the arch-fiend is by the sound patterns that the antagonist uses when he says "... for wee sometimes / Who dwell this wild, constrain'd by want come forth; (I. 330-331; italics mine). In Satan's preceding speech to the demons, the only alliterative patterns were in the lines "Nor force, but well couched fraud, well woven snares" and "Will waft me; and the way found prosperous once . . ." (I. 104 and 97; italics mine). In *Paradise Regained*, Milton allows his narrator to use alliterative sound patterns that he generally associates with Satan's speech to foreshadow and connect what is naturally separated by interpolation.

Like the first meditation, the second (II. 245-295) is also followed by a lengthy entry of the narrator. Probably most famous for its much-discussed pun on "ravenous," this section parallels the ravens' mission to nourish Elijah with the Son's mission to nourish man before beginning the

comparison of Elijah and the Son. The allusion to the bringers and receivers of food unites the temptation of stones that has just ended to the banquet temptation that is about to begin.³¹ Like the ravens, the Son must abstain from food that could be had for eating (see II. 260-297). Like Christ, the ravens are bearers of that which will rejuvenate man, but, like them, he himself cannot eat that food, although he hungers. Then the focus of the understood simile changes. The Son seeks a vision of the prophet Elijah, to whom the ravens bring food. Like the Son, Elijah is dreaming under a tree: "The Son . . . laid him down / Under the hospitable covert nigh of Trees" (II. 260-263), and "The Prophet . . . fled / Into the Desert . . . there he slept / Under a Juniper; then how awake / He found his supper . . ." (II. 270-274). Unlike the dream during the storm, this dream of the Son's is calm, but there is an immediate danger. The Son has dreamed first of Elijah and then of himself being presented food by the angel. Like Elijah, the Son will be awakened and offered food, but not, as the dream suggests, by God's messenger. Elijah is awakened and offered food by the ravens; the Son will awaken and be offered food by the fallen archangel Satan.

However, there is a qualification to the dream of eating. The Son's dream emphasizes with whom he eats. In the dream, ravens bring food to Elijah (II. 267) and the angels bid the Son to "rise and Eat" (II. 274). His company at such a repast was hardly demonic: "Sometimes that with Elijah he partook / Or as a guest with Daniel at his pulse" (II. 277-278). The careful reader understands through the symbolism of the dream that, although the Son hungers, his equal concern is who brings the food, the angels, God's messengers, or Satan, and who joins his repast, Daniel, Elijah, or Satan.

Milton's narrator uses the language of analogy, which is usually rich in similes comparing the world of literature and experience, but as in his telling of the story of the ravens, he often presents potential analogies as disconnected statement. Until the final lines, he uses the language of statement more often than the language of analogy. Nonetheless, he uses this language of statement as analogy that the reader must actively interpret. The reader is thus forced ever so carefully to make parallels or not, as Satan's multitudinous false analogies illustrate the dangers of the incorrect paralleling of two dissimilar events.³²

In the language of statement, references to concrete facts are made without the explanation of potential parallels to be drawn. The ravens who brought food to Elijah did not eat that food, although they could have. Elijah received food from God's true messengers and ate. The spiritual meanings

and potential analogies are not drawn by a self-consciously literary narrator through literal epic simile, but the potential meaning is presented by a modest language of parallel through the levels of exegesis and through moving the parallel from the ravens to Elijah. An epic simile traditionally gives us a sense of the enormous battle, the size and strength of the hero and the antihero, the importance of the trial or struggle. The narrator's telling of the story of Elijah does the same, for it is understood analogy at its most dangerous to the unobservant reader.³³

Thus the narrator illuminates, to the capacity of the fallen reader's mind to understand, the connection between what happens in one interpolation and what happens in another. The narrator intensifies meaning as well as the respect the reader has for the hero and the heroic quest. Through parallel devices, whether literal similes or implied parallels, the narrator connects time, past and present, and place. In similes the narrator claims his relationship to a wealth of tradition.³⁴ When the hero of the poem is to deny the non-Hebraic aspects of that tradition, the narrator must do so too.

Since the Fall, the reader and all men corrupted by that fall need a guide to correct even a reading of a poem. Traditionally, unless the reader remains sensitive to the corrective role of the narrator's voice, that reader is in danger of misinterpreting the ironic and declarative meaning. As Ferry notes, Milton uses many epic stylistic devices in *Paradise Lost* to lessen the narrator's role because the reader is less fallen and the hero is that reader's trustworthy saviour.

This imitation of the Son is part of the seventeenth-century meditative tradition. What better method of imitation of Christ could there be than this concentration of the Son and denial of the eminence of the narrator. As the narrator gives over larger and larger sections of his poem to Christ, in interpolated concentration he is literally imitating Christ, just as the Son at the end of Book IV imitates the style of the Father's oration in Book I.

In *Paradise Regained*, there is no interesting probability in expectation; we do not especially wonder what happens next, but we do care. Thus the virtuosity of the narrator does not serve this end. The more we are concerned with the successful outcome of the heroic quest, the more the narrator must self-consciously prove that virtuosity. Milton demonstrates that this virtuosity does not have to illustrate itself in obvious narrative control, although it may appear in interpolative construction.

The abbreviated, modest use of the narrator and his traditional devices implies a view of man. That view is meditative and self-regulatory through

concentration on the ideal and removal of self toward that ideal. As A.P. Woodhouse suggests, *Paradise Regained* is "a dialogue set in a framework of narrative."³⁵ This is true only because the narrator regulates his entrances and conforms to a pattern of control more self-effacing than usual. The same motive that inspires the epic also threatens it here: the sense that the great literature of the past, even Milton's own earlier epic contribution, conveys only a partial, limited, hence fallen and misleading evaluation of man's fate.

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Notes

- 1 Ferry, *Milton's Epic Voice* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1963), p. 14.
- 2 Goodman, *The Structure of Literature* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1954), p. 119.
- 3 Once a dialectic begins in *Paradise Regained*, the hero gives continuity. Nonetheless, even then every interpretation of time and space, whether by describing an empty stage or a speechless character before or after a narrative interpolation, strongly implies the narrator and takes us into the underlying narrative structure.
- 4 See Tables in the Appendix. The edition of the poems used is John Milton, *Complete Poems and Major Prose*, ed. Merrit Y. Hughes (New York: Odyssey, 1957).
Goodman, in *Structure*, p. 158, uses "The Solitary Reaper" as his example of this second method, lyrical narrative. The poet can also expand the narrator's dramatic role to allow his fears, thoughts, and memories dramatic inclusion as a counterbalance to the protagonist's closeness in voice of the epic hero and the narrator. Likewise, one might compare Dante's movement through *The Divine Comedy* and certain structural movements in *Paradise Regained* in terms of the narrator's meditative, self-regulatory concentration on the ideal and removal of self toward that ideal.
- 5 Didactic comment such as that found in the debate is expressed in a language of statement where allusiveness and evocation of a multiplicity of conflicting feelings are avoided (Ferry, p. 65). Ferry is not the only useful critic to consider here. Roger H. Sundell has made a great contribution to Milton studies in his excellent article "The Narrator As Interpreter in *Paradise Regained*," *Milton Studies*, II (1970), 83-101. I owe much to his article.
- 6 Campbell, *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1968), p. 14.
- 7 There is, however, a single use of "I" in Book II. This is as much as Homer uses to introduce his narrator in *The Odyssey*: "At the time when I begin . . ." Book I of *The Iliad* opens no more self-consciously: "An angry man - There is my story." See W.H.D. Rouse, trans., *The Odyssey* (New York: The New American Library, 1937); W.H.D. Rouse, trans., *The Iliad* (New York: The New American Library, 1983).
- 8 The demands on the narrator decrease the more the poet follows Aristotle's dictum that the characters disclose themselves. Thus it is easy to see how Stein could suggest that *Paradise Regained* is a "morality play," and this is the main thesis of his entire study. Lewalski's brilliant rebuttal can hardly be bettered here.
- 9 H.W. Legget, *The Idea of Fiction*, p. 188. Legget's use of the word 'author' here is troubling.
- 10 See Tables in Appendix.
- 11 There is, however, the temptation of the Kingdoms where Satan moves the Son to the mountainside. As in *The Iliad* and *The Aenied*, Milton uses dawn and the fall of night to suggest opening and closing of scenes. Homer uses the personification of Dawn to open

Books XI and XII of *The Iliad*; Virgil uses Dawn in Book II of *The Aeneid* as a device to change the place of action as well as the characters from the dead Pallas's father to Aeneas. Milton, likewise, uses dawn and the coming of darkness as transitions between interpolations, generally temptation and meditation.

- 12 Frye's scheme of high and low *mimesis* is a bit simplistic in a poem where the hero grows into a high mimetic figure. See Frye, *The Anatomy of Criticism* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1957), pp. 82-84, 214-215.
- 13 Rouse, ed. *The Iliad*, Bk 22, p. 263. The Angels as well as the narrator perform many corrective roles in *Paradise Lost*. They are not allowed this function in brief epic, however.
- 14 The more an epic concentrates on the life of the hero, the more he is able to control the poem.
- 15 Intellect cannot rejuvenate the spirit in Milton's poetry. Later, in his speech, the Son denies the Greek philosophies by pitting them against the Hebraic scriptures.
- 16 Under most conditions there is a physical limit to the amount of experience that one man can have. The biological limitations are the memory of the past, the understanding of the future, the basic limits of time and space. Evolution in thought and feeling can, however, be expressed in a biological or historical sequence. By the end of *Paradise Regained*, there is a physical limit to the experience of the Son, and the laws of limited understanding of human narration no longer apply. Any new scene or movement of the time and space involves a new partial beginning, and Milton must use the narrator's changes of time and space to draw the curtain on one temptation and open it on the next.
- 17 If the Son takes over certain roles from the narrator, he also changes his interrogatory tone of the meditations to the declarative. Ferry refers to "the language of statement" as the language of the narrator (Ferry, p. 116). This is also the language of the Son in the dialectic and the Father in the oration. Traditionally, the narrator invokes the authority of the divine light which his poem reflects. "Thou Spirit who led'st this glorious Eremite . . ." (I. 8) opens the invocation. The narrator invokes the aid of the Holy Spirit who led Jesus into the wilderness. The understood analogy is between the narrator and the prophet who went into the wilderness, but the protagonist is also about to venture into such a desert. The analogy ties the narrator and the protagonist to the same literary allusion in Book I. Likewise, the Son evokes the authority of divine mission: "The authority which I deriv'd from Heaven" (I. 289). The language of statement which the narrator uses in the opening of the poem is replaced first by God and then progressively by the Son.
- 18 Interestingly enough, there is one reply by the Son which takes on Satan's flowery Ovidian rhetoric, only to parody and deny it (IV. 112- 153). There is the final answer to the temptation to learning, and the Son returns to the calmer, clearer, simpler language that epitomizes his rhetoric and that is more trustworthy discourse. A study of the progressive changes in the Son's speeches reveals a linguistic movement that follows the pattern of intellectual development.
- 19 Ferry, p. 20.
- 20 Daiches, *Milton* (1957; New York: Norton, 1966), pp. 216-248.
- 21 Green, *The Descent from Heaven* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1963), p. 50.
- 22 Woodhouse, "Theme and Pattern in *Paradise Regained*," *UTQ*, 25 (1956), 173. The phase in his. This would hardly be the first time that Milton has illustrated an ordeal of obedience and self-removal. In his sonnet "On His Blindness," the speaker moves from the self-centered world of "I" "my" "My" "me" "My" "I" to the sestet's "God" "His" "His" "Him" "His" "His." See Ferry's similar study of Eve.
- 23 Campbell, *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*, p. 30.
- 24 Campbell, *Hero*, p. 76.

- 25 Perhaps the best argument that this journey in the desert is both a literal and an epistemological quest is found in this very line: "Thought following thought, and step by step led one" (l. 192).
- 26 Catalogues such as those found in *Paradise Lost* and *The Aeneid* (Book VII) do occur, particularly in the temptation of the Kingdoms. Verbal repetition and formulaic review, however, are more frequent.
- 27 Throughout *Paradise Regained*, the narrator uses a subtler tone of humility. He does, however, use created language in the opening of the second book, and the style of this section is not unlike the higher style of *Paradise Lost*. The narrator uses the musings of Simon and Andrew to insert the Old Testament matter on the disappearance of prophets as possible parallel to the Son's leaving his disciples.
- 28 The longer introductions correspond to the two books (Books I and II) in which the Son's narration is largely absent. There is no epic introduction to Book IV.
- 29 See Lewalski's excellent study of the iconographic significance of this simile: *Milton's Brief Epic* (Providence: Brown Univ. Press, 1966), Chap. 4.
- 30 The introductions to the poem do create and identify for the epic voice as well as establish relationships among the narrator, his characters, and the reader. All the main characters go through a recreation of roles since they are characters of the greater epic. Satan has changed drastically; the Son appears to have changed. The Father remains the same.
- 31 See Tables in Appendix.
- 32 For the first time, but not the last, the narrative associates the meditation (II. 266-269) with the dream (II. 260-282).
- 33 For the student of debate, argument from analogy is a form of false argumentation. The language of statement is used in the didactic to comment on the narrative or to draw abstract judgments. Whenever the language of analogy appears, it represents our fallen world. As Ferry notes, "Metaphor is needed only after the fall to reunite the fragments of truth" (p. 116).
- 34 Only in the final section of the poem does the narrator briefly return to such drawn, open analogy, and such a return reunites us with our fallen world, where truth is fragmented and analogy required.
- 35 Ferry, p. 68.
- 36 Woodhouse, "Theme and Pattern in *Paradise Regained*," p. 168.

Appendix

TABLES SHOWING PERCENTAGE OF INTERPOLATION
IN *PARADISE REGAINED**Book I*

Satan	44-105	61 lines
God the Father	130-167	37 lines
Angelic Hymn	172-181	7 lines
Son-(Mary)-Son	195-293	93 lines
Dialogue between Son and Satan	320-496	169 lines
Total Number of Interpolated Lines:		273
Total Number of Lines:		502
Percentage of Interpolated Narration:		54-1/2%

Book II

Andrew and Simon	30-57	28 lines
Mary	66-105	40 lines
Satanic Oration	121-146	25 lines
Satan and Belial Dialogue	153-234	81 lines
Son's Meditation	245-249	15 lines
Dialogue between Satan and Son:		
Satan	302-316	15 lines
Son	317-318	2 lines
Satan	319-321	3 lines
Son	321-322	1 lines
Satan	322-336	14 lines
Satan	368-377	10 lines
Son	379-391	13 lines
Satan	393-401	9 lines
Satan	416-431	26 lines
Son	433-486	54 lines

Total Number of Interpolated Lines:	336
Total Number of Lines:	486
Percentage of Interpolated Narration:	69%

Book III

Satan	. 7-42	36 lines
Son	44-107	64 lines
Satan	109-121	13 lines
Son	123-144	22 lines
Satan	150-180	31 lines
Son	182-202	21 lines
Satan	214-150	47 lines
Satan	267-309	43 line
Satan	347-385	39 lines
Son	387-440	53 lines

Total Number of Interpolated Lines:	369
Total Number of Lines:	443
Percentage of Interpolated Narration:	83%

Book IV

Satan	44-108	65 lines
Son	110-153	44 lines
Satan	155-169	15 lines
Son	171-194	24 lines
Satan	196-284	88 lines
Son	286-364	78 lines
Satan	368-393	26 lines
Satan	451-483	33 lines
Son	486-498	13 lines
Satan	500-540	41 lines
Satan	551-559	9 lines
Son	560-561	2 lines
Angels to Son	596-617	22 lines
Angels to Satan	618-632	15 lines
Angels to Son	633-635	3 lines

Total Number of Interpolated Lines:	496
Total Number of Lines:	639
Percentage of Interpolated Narration:	79%

Paradise Regained

Total Number of Lines:	2,070
Total Numbers of Interpolated Lines in Poem:	1,477
Percentage of Interpolated Narration:	71%

Comparison of Interpolated Narration in the Epic

<i>The Odyssey</i> :	16%
<i>Paradise Lost</i> :	20%
<i>Paradise Regained</i> :	71%