

Epic Conventions

Invocation of a muse

In medias res opening

Statement of themes (god and mortal)

Identification of hero

Councils of gods about fate of mortals

Descent of gods to sway human efforts

Parade of troops, catalogue of ships, other lists

Great battle

Voyage

Visit to the underworld

Pastoral interlude

Perilous encounters with monsters, witches, river gods, other immortals

Sacrifices and prayers to the gods

Games, tournaments, social rituals

Feast followed by song

Cosmology, astronomy, geography, other sciences

Vision: sometimes of the future, especially of future glory of the race

Return of hero to his home, or arrival at destination, or death

From John Broadbent, *Paradise Lost: An Introduction*

