Revealing The Term Allegory And Examples Of Allegorical Novels

Allegory:

First use of the word 'allegory 'in English was in 1382, the origin of this word is taken from Latin word 'allegoria', the latinisation of the Greek ????????? (allegoría), 'veiled language, figurative' (Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott).

Allegory is considered as a literary device; allegory is a figure of speech called “metaphor” in which a particular character, place, time or event is used to convey a broader meaning about the matters or problems in the real-world. Allegory (in terms the use or apply of allegorical devices) can be applied generally throughout history in the most art forms, mostly since it can easily explain and express a lot of complex ideas and thoughts in different methods to be more understandable or remarkable to its readers, viewers, or listeners (Stephen A. Barney, 1989).

In general, a lot of authors or speakers applied allegories in their works, to be as literary or metaphorical devices, which can mean hidden or complicated meanings by using symbolic events, figures, imagery, or simile, that can work together to produce meaning carries an objective morally, spiritually, politically, as the writer wants to convey (Wheeler, L. Kip, 2018).

The article in Center for Hellenic Studies in Harvard University (2018) writes that for many centuries, allegories have been applied in different works from different cultures. Authors used them to teach lessons, clarify the concepts of morality, and sometimes to express their views about a specific issue.

An allegory is considered a special type of any story, because it should reflect truth to the meaning for the whole of the story. Therefore, allegories can be difficult to master, as they can be pedantic when done poorly, because some literary works that can be read allegorically will get much strength from their deeper meanings.

To make any work more effective and able to add a lot on the meaning, the writer needs to convey particular idea or concept, allegory achieves this purpose.

Allegory does not only give lessons, it also illustrates the state of mind. In this stage, the mind can understand our different thoughts or feelings that are facing each other such as love against hate and passion against reason.

The Meaning of Allegorical literary texts.

Allegorical literary text means a story inside another story. It shows two stories, but one of them is a “surface” and another one is “hidden underside”. For example, if the surface story talks about two neighbours throwing rocks at each other’s homes, there is another meaning in the hidden story, which talks about war between two countries. Some writers used very subtle allegories in their works, while there are a lot of allegories (like the rock-throwing) can be easy

understandable and more obvious to the readers.

Most of literary texts that contain allegory, its hidden story related to something political, religious, or morality, and the majority of them are complex issues and difficult to be understood directly. Several authors suppose that these issues can be easier to think about them through transferring them into allegorical form, which make them easier to understand and fun to read than complicated philosophical arguments.

Allegory in literary texts is extremely helpful and expressive device, because it is used to deliver secret messages easily and to say things that writers could not say them any other way (Glossary of Literary Terms).

According to Kirszner and Mandell (2016), they said: Allegory in literary texts used to communicate a set of guidelines, messages, ethical or moral principles through combining it in the narrative in which the characters, events and places symbolize particular ideas, values, traits and other abstractions. In other words, we can say it is one literary work, novel or story, but it has two similar and consistent types of meaning – one of them will be literal and the other one is figurative.

Literary texts can contain two types of allegory:

- Allegorical figure: when the author uses a character, object, place, or event to reflect the allegory. For example: the character Faith reflects religion in “Young Goodman Brown”.
- Allegorical framework: when the author use set of ideas in his work to convey the allegory’s message.

Allegory texts are complete stories that include characters and events to stand for an abstract idea or an event (Davis, 2014).

Situations of these allegories normally have been used to show how objects, persons, and actions can represent deeper purpose that writer wants to convey in a story. Such a lot of early authors as Plato, Apuleius, Cicero and Augustine added allegories in their works (James, J. 2016).

Examples of novels which are allegorical:

1- Animal Farm novel

Animal Farm is considered one of popular allegorical novels which describe the history of the Soviet Union from 1917, it was written By George Orwell during World War II. Through this fictional story, the events represent real ones, but on a smaller scale. Orwell has portrayed the original ideals of the revolution, gave a close example of domination and submission, and he also exposes the main idea of political corruption.

Allegory is reflected in the novel obviously. Firstly, Animal Farm represents Russia/USSR, and the other characters (pigs, animals and people) represent leaders, commands, kings, etc. For example, Old Major is the oldest boar in the farm; his dream to make all animals equal and do not live to serve humans. Old Major represents Karl Marx and his dream presents the evils of

capitalism and communism. Snowball is a leader pig and wanted to spread the word 'Animal Farm' to the neighboring farms. Snowball represents Leon Trotsky and he had the same function, to spread the word 'communism' to other nations. Finally, Squealer is the pig who spreads messages to support the leader's goals. It is not a symbol for a particular person, but an embodiment of hypocrisy in general.

Next, humans in this novel such as, Mr. and Mrs. Jones are the cruel and incompetent owners of the farm; they represent the czar of Russia and his wife, Nicholas II and Alexandra, who were unpopular. Mr. Pilkington, the neighboring gentleman farmer, is a symbol for the U.S. and the U.K. Mr. Frederick, the shrewd neighboring farmer represents Hitler. Mr. Whymper acts as a mediator between Animal Farm and the humans to get money. He represents the naive westerners who spread the communist message for personal profit.

Also, all events of the revolution in the farm describe the beginning of the revolution in Russian; for example, an expulsion of the humans after the farmers forgot to put food for the animals is an allusion to the Russian Revolution which led to the removal of the Czar. The sequence of events in the novel continue as the stages of that revolution. For example, the argument between Napoleon and Snowball about the rule in Animal Farm, it is similar to Stalin wanting 'Socialism in one country' and Trotsky's theory of 'Permanent Revolution.'

2- The Pilgrim’s Progress

The Pilgrim’s Progress story in a book which written by John Bunyan, it has been published in 1678. He was the main character in his book which its subject about a journey of Christian from the City of Destruction to Celestial City which stands for heaven. The Pilgrim’s Progress includes a lot of forms which represent allegory in different aspects of the plot, the names of the characters, events, objects, and even its circumstances.

The Pilgrim’s Progress is well-known allegorical story, it had two meanings, surface meaning and hidden meaning. The surface is reflected in an adventure of Christian full with different actions scenes. The other hidden meaning express an essential message, it conveys moral principles about the sedulity of a human being in trying to find his soul’s salvation to get God’s grace. Christian’s journey is not similar to any normal adventure, because it is considered a reflection of Human's spiritual journey since his birth until death comes to take his soul for an endless life.

Bunyan has put as an allegory name of the central character, Christian. A burden in his back appear in the story to represent his faults and sins, also the book in his hand used to refer to Bible. Events contain a lot important allegories. For example, there is a form of allegories lies in Vanity town where Christian and his pilgrim reject to be interested in the merchandise that are displayed and they decide to buy truth. In this scene, there is a representation of worldly and carnal desires which are successfully defeated by the strength of Christian and Faithful.

There is no part in the Pilgrim’s Progress story does not contain allegory. Bunyan intended to provide a lot of allegories in order to mention some serious matters and issues, by using personification, metaphor, allegory and different figures of speech, which allow the reader to realize the moral values and general conceptions which are related to one’s spiritual journey and helped to gain soul’s salvation.

3- The Little Prince

The Little Prince is written by Saint-Exupéry during World War II, after Germany's infestation of France when it has obliged him to leave his homeland to flee to New York and give up aviation, his childhood dream. These events which affected the writer make him use allegory in 'The Little Prince' to express cruel thoughts and memories because of the European War, that made him forced to leave his dream and homeland. The story talks about childhood, this is a clear indication to the narrator's nostalgia for his childhood, and it means that Saint-Exupéry has a desire to return again to France and hope of living in a peace.

The clearest allegory in this novel is its glorification of childhood like innocence, and an accusation of the spiritual decay. Other allegories appeared gradually because some events in the story used to represent events that have been taken from Saint-Exupéry's own life and his circumstances of war in his childhood, also Saint-Exupéry may sees himself in both characters as the narrator and the little prince.

The similarity in his narrator, Saint-Exupéry was a pilot, crashed in desert, and a kind of mystical revelation applied there. In addition, The prince character contains different aspects of Saint-Exupéry character, this similarity absolutely used by Saint-Exupéry to reflects his philosophy and aspirations. Also, in the beggining of the story, the prince was explorer and traveler of the skies; this is one of the common traits that is shared between the prince and the narrator.

Allegory can appear obviously in The prince's relationship with the rose, because it is fairly representative of Saint-Exupéry's relationship with his wife. Accordingly, this story can be read as a allegory for something else, it is process of introspection itself, because there are two halves of the same person, meet together and learn from each other. You may notice repeated allegories of death and evil in The Little Prince, the predominant explanation say it is as indications to Nazi Germany, which undoubtedly was influenced this story by the tenor of World War II.

4- The Faerie Queene

The Faerie Queene is one of most important English epics, it is written by Edmund Spenser. Book I and II published in 1590, and then republished with the whole collection in 1596. In The Faerie Queene, Spenser applies an allegory: The characters of his far-off, fanciful 'Faerie Land' have an allegorical meaning used to reflect characters in our real world.

The characters and events are allegorical. For example, the poet talks about the journey of two knights, they called Redcrosse and Britomart, and in the story the narrator wants to examine the two virtues which are considered very essential and important in Christian life 'Holiness and Chastity'.

Redcrosse, the knight who represents Holiness, he is allegorical character in the poem because he means the Apostle Peter: In his eagerness to serve his Lord. In the other side, Britomart, he is also another allegorical character which reflects the virtue of Chastity. it already has inside strength to resist lust, which is what Spenser thinks as true Christian love: moderation.

Spenser has a list contains set of evils is the Catholic Church, and this enmity contains allegory

because it represents political purposes to the poem, since the religious conflicts of that time were closely related to politics. This epic relies deeply on Italian romantic sources, and classical works. When Spenser blended diverse sources with allegory, this blending led to produce a unique and remarkable poem. Also, his ability to add images from superficial romances, courtly love stories, and tragic epics alike, all of these factors give more significance for the context of the poem and show reality.