

ALLEGORY AND ITS MEANING IN MODERN LITERATURE

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Annotation:

Literary allegories typically describe situations and events or express abstract ideas in terms of material objects, persons, and actions.

Keywords: modern allegory symbol, allegory, types of Allegory, **historical** Allegories, Conceptual Allegories.

ABSTRACT

First attested in English in 1382, the word allegory comes from Latin *allegoria*, the latinisation of the Greek *ἀλληγορία* (*allegoría*), "veiled language, figurative", [1] literally "speaking about something else", [2] which in turn comes from *ἄλλος* (*allos*), "another, different" [6] and *ἀγορεύω* (*agoreuo*), "to harangue, to speak in the assembly", [3] which originates from *ἀγορά* (*agora*), "assembly". [4]

Modern allegory. Since meaningful stories are nearly always applicable to larger issues, allegories may be read into many stories which the author may not have recognized. This is *allegoresis*, or the act of reading a story as an allegory. Examples of allegory in popular culture that may or may not have been intended include the works of Bertolt Brecht, and even some works of science fiction and fantasy, such as *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C. S. Lewis.

The story of the apple falling onto Isaac Newton's head is another famous allegory. It simplified the idea of gravity by depicting a simple way it was supposedly discovered. It also made the scientific revelation well known by condensing the theory into a short tale. [5]

INTRODUCTION

Allegory Definition. An allegory (AL-lih-gore-ee) is a story that has a hidden moral or political message. The characters and plot often symbolize real-life people, events, and ideas, but the comparison isn't explicitly stated. Allegory comes from the Latin *allegoria*, which means "speaking to infer something different."

Types of Allegory

There are many varieties of allegory, but most fall under these two categories: historical and conceptual.



Historical Allegories

Allegories of this category use symbols to represent historical figures or events to obscure the subject of the written work or help explain and simplify an event so readers can better understand it. A great example is *Animal Farm* by George Orwell. This story uses farm animals to symbolize different figures from the Russian Revolution. This way, Orwell was able to give his opinions on the event without explicitly stating them and creating problems for himself in the real world.

Conceptual Allegories

These allegories include stories with a spiritual or moral meaning rather than an allusion to a real-life event. Examples include biblical parables, poems, and religious morals. C. S. Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* falls under this category, as it parallels Jesus dying on the cross with Aslan the lion dying by the White Witch's hand. The story has many symbols, including Edmund as Judas and the White Witch as the devil, and overall, it teaches kindness, bravery, and the importance of fighting against evil.

Allegories can also be a single aspect of a story rather than its whole point. In *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, Hermione uses a book called *The Tales of Beetle the Bard* to determine what the three Deathly Hallows are. They're revealed in one of the stories, "The Tale of the Three Brothers," in which a figure represents death, and three brothers each represent power, love, and humility.

Why Writers Use Allegory

Allegories are a useful device for two reasons: sensitivity and clarity. Writers use allegories to distance themselves from subject matter that may be touchy or dangerous to speak of frankly. Instead of approaching the topic directly, they allude to it through the guise of a storied metaphor, which makes it easier and safer to discuss.

Additionally, allegories can aid understanding if the concept being conveyed is too abstract. The symbolism used in the story can give readers a concrete character to latch onto that might represent a conceptual idea in an understandable way.

Allegory and Related Terms

Allegory Versus Symbolism

An allegory is a complete story, while symbolism is a singular object that can assist an allegory. For example, in *Moby Dick*, the whale is a symbol of meaning, and the captain chasing after him is a parallel to mankind seeking after the meaning of life or religious understanding.



Allegory Versus Fable and Parable

Fables and parables are both subcategories of allegory—every fable and parable is an allegory, but not every allegory is a fable or parable. The latter are generally short stories with hidden meanings. However, fables tend to anthropomorphize objects and animals, while parables are more realistic and describe everyday occurrences.

The popular fable The Tortoise and the Hare has human-like animals competing in a race. It's easy to determine that the tortoise symbolizes a patient and consistent work ethic, while the hare symbolizes an impatient, inconsistent work ethic. The message, then, is that being methodical and dedicated to a task, rather than relying on bravado and no plan, is the winning strategy.

A parable is a story that can have several meanings, and it's often difficult to decipher them without an explanation. The Parable of the Sower is a realistic story about a farmer planting seeds that might have several meanings—for example, it could be about the care with which someone does their job. Jesus explains, however, that the seeds represent the Gospel and the four soils in which the seeds do or don't grow represent people's different responses to the Gospel.

Allegory Versus Metaphor

Both terms reference an idea that's not explicitly stated, but an allegory is a complete story, while a metaphor is a figure of speech. "His love was my anchor to this world" is a metaphor that describe someone's love as crucial to this person's existence. While metaphors aren't a means for telling a story, they can appear or be alluded to several times in a written work to flesh out the idea being told; this is known as an extended metaphor or conceit.

Allegory Outside of Literature. Anything can be an allegory, including songs, movies, poems, television shows, and plays.

CONCLUSION

The thesis examines the place of allegory in the literature and intellectual culture of sixteenth-and seventeenth-century England, especially in its complex and contested relationship to the notion of the period's (early) modernity. What is modernity's quarrel with allegory? Why does it run so deep in Western thought, and why has it remained with us to the present day? What specific forms does this quarrel assume in the literary culture of the period now commonly designated as "early modern"? Why has allegory, under its many names, remained a point of differentiation and dispute between various sets of ancients and moderns even into our – some would



say “postmodern” – times? Even as scholarship on allegory grows increasingly comprehensive and sophisticated, commentary on these issues has remained sporadic and inconclusive, and the thesis seeks to provide a more focused and comprehensive examination of the subject than has thus far been available.

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