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ALLEGORY - A MODE OF CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN FABULATION

Very basically, ALLEGORY /Gr. *allegoria*, description of one thing under the image of another < *allos*, other + *agoreuein*, to speak in assembly < *agora*, place of assembly¹/ is the process of encoding meanings. Allegory, as a mode, has been employed in various works of art, including painting and literature. It was the favorite mode of writing, in the Middle Ages, for romances and fables and during Renaissance for pastorals, utopian political satires, imaginary voyages and many other types of literature. It is not the purpose of this paper to present the outline of allegory in a historical perspective. Extensive studies of allegory can be found in works like Fletcher's "Allegory. The Theory of a Symbolic Mode", Honig's "The Dark Conceit. The Making of Allegory", Lewis' "The Allegory of Love" and Bloom's "The Allegorical Principle", to mention just a few. Rather, we shall concentrate on allegory as a mode of writing fiction in contrast to allegory as a genre. When we confuse these two aspects we confront Richter's /Richter, 1974:61-82/ problem of categories. Richter intends to "enlist" "Lord of the Flies" under one of the two categories: "symbolic" or "naturalistic". Northrop Frye's /Fletcher, 1967:8/ general observation that all literature is, from the point of view of its commentary, more or less allegorical, while no "pure allegory" will ever be found, can serve as an answer to Richter's problem. "Lord of the Flies", very much like its American equivalents /"One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest", "Catch-22", "The Last Unicorn", "Snow White", "The Crying of Lot 49"/ is, indeed, a synthesis of the two approaches. "Lord of the Flies" is both "symbolic", in that its characters and its plot symbolize certain attitudes and experiences in the outside world, and "naturalistic", in that the characters behave in the way people do and that the incidents are such as may happen in life. Frye's statement is true in regard to contemporary fiction, at least for the particular reason that allegory is no longer

a genre and has become a convenient mode of writing when the author's aim is to illustrate a certain moral. In other words, allegory is now a convenient mode of writing moral fables.

However, we do remember examples of "pure allegory". For instance, in medieval romances. "Pure allegory" is consequently "naive allegory" and this implies the continuity of allegorical reference. Let "The Romance of the Rose" serve as an illustration of what we mean. The narrative is very simple. The poet has a dream. He is walking along a stream when he encounters a garden surrounded by a wall. There are carvings on the wall representing Old Age, Poverty, Hatred, Villainy, etc. The poet enters the garden and spots a beautiful rose bush; one blossom seems particularly attractive to him. He is wounded by Cupid's arrow and attempts to kiss the Rose. As if by magic, the wall, portraying Shame, Jealousy, and Danger surrounds the Rose. The story goes on, but this description of the narrative should serve as an adequate illustration of the following statement. The working of "naive allegories" rested on a one-to-one correspondence, i.e. there were two levels of meaning; one that Bloom /Bloom, 1951:164/ designates as "primary, or as a literal and figurative surface meaning", and the other as "secondary, or as a meaning of abstract significance; that is, one with penetrating moralistic or didactic intention. It should further be noted that the connotations of the secondary meaning depend for clarity and interpretation upon the primary meaning". Besides, the relationship emphasizes the fact that there is the dependency due to the continuity of allegorical reference. Thus, the interpretation of the above fragment from "The Romance of the Rose" reads as follows: The garden is the kingdom of love, so there is no room there for old age, poverty or hatred. Since the attractive rose blossom stands for a pretty lady, the poet's attempt to steal a kiss from her equals the violation of the code of courtly love. No wonder, then, that he becomes deprived of possibility of any spiritual or physical contact with her.

So far, we have been confined to the primary meaning. To remind once again, the secondary meaning is the meaning of

"... abstract significance ... one with penetrating moral and didactic intention" /Bloom:164/. Thus, the secondary meaning of "The Romance of the Rose" falls short of the following truism: a medieval knight, courting the lady of his heart, must act according to the code of courtly love. The working of this moral has a very restricted range. According to Bloom /Bloom:189/,

"... unlike other writers, the allegorist has elected a literary form that does not readily carry conviction except for those readers who live in a particular era and have at least an inner awareness of those problems with which the allegorist is dealing."

So far, we have discussed allegory in terms of the continuity of allegorical reference and its didacticism under a pleasant disguise. However, didacticism is not the goal of every continuous allegory. Hawthorne's "Rappaccini's Daughter" is a good example of how devoid of any moral an allegory can be.

This is what Hawthorne says in his introduction to "Rappaccini's Daughter":

"We will only add to this little cursory notice that M. de l'Aubépine's productions, if the reader chance to take them in precisely the proper point of view, may amuse a leisure hour as well as those of a brighter man; if otherwise, they can hardly fail to look excessively like nonsense."²

/Pearson, 1937:1043/

Hawthorne is playing with allegory in "Rappaccini's Daughter", which accounts for the possible obscurity of even the primary meaning. Whatever point of view we take, there is no possibility of any consistent allegorical pattern.

Let us now read the allegory of "Rappaccini's Daughter" in terms of a Hebrew creation story. Clearly, the only character with a determined role is Beatrice. She is the only woman that can be taken into consideration, anyway. Giovanni can be cast in the role of Adam and then, probably, Rappaccini would represent God and Baglioni would stand for Satan. However, if Eve is flesh and bone from Adam, then Rappaccini

becomes Adam, Baglioni takes over the role of God, and Giovanni becomes Satan.³ Thus, we could continue playing with meanings.

Contemporary American fabulation, at least some representative cases like "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest", "Catch-22", "The Crying of Lot 49", "V.", and "Giles Goat-Boy", take up this playful aspect of allegory. It is worth noting in passing that the figure of Rappaccini may have inspired Vonnegut in his making of Dr Hoenikker from "Cat's Cradle" and the philosophical paradigm in the fashion: Rappaccini-Beatrice-Baglioni is similar to this that we find in Barth's "The End of the Road". This paradigm is formulated by Jacob Horner as follows:

"Joe was the Reason, or Being /I was using Rennie's cosmos/; I was the Unreason, or Not-Being; and the two of us were fighting without quarter for possession of Rennie, like God and Satan for the soul of Man."

/Barth, 1972:129/

To recapitulate, allegory is one of the elements of writing contemporary fabulation, alongside such other aspects as archetype, myth, black humor, parody. We have borrowed the term "fabulation" from Robert Scholes and now we would like to explain what is meant by it. First of all, fabulation emphasizes the element of storytelling with a particular sense of pleasure in form. Fabulation is a form more serious and engaging than a simple fable, Scholes /Scholes:11-12/ says:

" ... modern fabulation, like the ancient fabling of Aesop, tends away from the representation of reality but returns toward actual human life by way of ethically controlled fantasy. Many fabulators are allegorists. But the modern fabulators allegorize in peculiarly modern ways ... Fabulation ... means a return to a more verbal kind of fiction. It also means a return to a more fictional kind. By this I mean a less realistic and more artistic kind of narrative; more shapely, more evocative; more

concerned with ideas and ideals, less concerned with things."

Speaking about Barth, Scholes observes:

"... he is gently and wittily reminding us that our world and this one are different, different. But at the same time he is working toward mythic connections through which we can perceive the dimensions of our own lives that transcend the individual and personal to partake of something universal." /Scholes:169-170/

Bloom /Bloom:189-190/ divides allegorists into two groups: those concerned with spiritual speculations, Dante, Bunyan, Hawthorne, Melville, and Kafka, and those concerned with temporal speculations, Spenser, Swift, Orwell and Mailer.

Bloom concludes:

"Not only must the great allegorist be endowed with esthetic genius but he must also be intensely sensitive to those human problems which transcend everyday reality and which either aspire to supernal ideals or suggest the need for those ideals."

This has brought us to the principle which organizes contemporary allegorizing fiction. Honig /Honig,1959:14/ calls this principle the *i d e a l*:

"The ideal is, variously or altogether, the theme of the work, the central concept adapted from a system of beliefs, or a subject matter which serves as a principal trope and which the whole work 'proves' or fulfills. In effect the ideal is a pervasively animating force and, like the medieval anagoge, is the end toward which the whole work tends. Thematically and tropically, the ideal activates the purpose of the allegorical fiction."

Richter /Richter:10/ quotes Sheldon Sack's definition, in which Sack's *s t a t e m e n t* equals Honig's *i d e a l*:

"... in an apologue all elements of the work are synthesized as a fictional example that causes us to feel, to experience as true, some formulable statement or statements about the universe. The statement itself can be so simple as 'there is

no happiness on earth or it may be so complex as to require a book-length treatise, a Myth of Sisyphus, for its explication."

And finally, Fletcher /Fletcher,1967:307/ uses the term doctrine, after Elder Olson:

"The allegorical incident happens, not because it is necessary or probable in the light of other events, but because a certain doctrinal subject must have a certain doctrinal predicate; its order in the action is determined not by the action as action, but by the action as doctrine."

Let us quote the example of the allegorical doctrine from Kesey's "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest". At the end of Chapter I, after we have been introduced to the absurd horror of the reality of the lunatic asylum, we are told by Bromden, the narrator, "... it's the truth even if it didn't happen..." /Kesey,1962:13/. To say this is to state that the action of this novel will be a doctrine. And the doctrine is this: the act of compassionate identification with others, of making a perfect sacrifice for them, means destruction. However, the implication is that, in being destroyed, one achieves a kind of sanctity.

Let us now return to our original concern - allegory as a mode of contemporary American fabulation. According to Angus Fletcher /Fletcher:151-161/, there are two fundamental patterns of allegorical writing, labelled Battle and Progress. Progress, real or ideal, is identified with a Quest. Traditionally, the Quest is the organizing element of romance. It is the element that gives romance its literary form. Northrop Frye /Frye,1957:187/ recognizes three main stages of the Quest:

"... t h e a g o n or conflict, t h e p a t h o s or death-struggle, and t h e a n a g n o r i s i s or discovery, the recognition of the hero who has proved himself to be a hero even if he does not survive the conflict... A quest involving conflict assumes two main characters, a protagonist or a hero,

and an antagonist or enemy."

This is the pattern to be found in "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest". The protagonist standing on the one extreme is a vigorous Irishman, Randolph Patrick McMurphy. On the other extreme, we find the antagonist, Big Nurse - Miss Ratched. Forrey /Forrey, 1975:223/ identifies McMurphy with a Christ-figure: "Kesey is also in the tradition of Hemingway and Steinbeck in depicting his hero as a masculine Christ whom the conspiring world of weak-kneed men and bitchy women try to emasculate."

Continuing along the same line, Big Nurse, the representative of the outside of the asylum labelled the Combine, becomes the high priest Caiaphas; Billy Bibbit becomes Judas; and Bromden is Pontius Pilate. The text offers a partial evidence for this kind of speculation. After Billy Bibbit's suicidal death, Big Nurse accuses McMurphy of "Playing with human lives - as if you thought yourself to be a God!" /Kesey:266/. Much earlier McMurphy says, "I couldn't figure it at first, why you guys were coming to me like I was some kind of a savior" /Kesey:166/. Bromden always associates McMurphy with size and power, "He sounds big. I hear him coming down the hall, and he sounds big in the way he walks and he sure don't slide" /Kesey:16/. This image of McMurphy is expressed even more vividly when Bromden recollects the scene of shaking hands with him:

"I remember the fingers were thick and strong closing over mine, and my hand commenced to feel peculiar and went to swelling up out there on my stick of an arm, like he was transmitting his own blood into it. It rang with blood and power. It blowed up near as big as his, I remember..."

/Kesey:27/

Size and swelling is often associated with McMurphy, but Big Nurse is also referred to in terms of size. During one of the scheduled meetings Bromden sees her:

"... puffing up. Her nostrils flare open and every breath she draws she gets bigger... She's already big as a truck ... She blows up a size bigger,

blowing and puffing, roll down everything in her path."

/Kesey:87/

Sullivan /Sullivan,1975:34-44/ designated another, Freudian pattern for the world of Kesey's "Cuckoo's Nest". In his scheme McMurphy becomes Big Papa, Miss Ratched - Big Mama, and the inhabitants of the asylum - their Little Sons. The result is the oedipal triangle where:

"... the oedipal elements revolve around the wish of the sons to love and be loved by adult women and by the women originally closest to them, mother and Big Nurse. They turn to the father, McMurphy, as a role model; he teaches them by anecdote and example how to be men. The anal elements color this pattern because the sons are frustrated in their desires toward a woman so threatening as Big Nurse ..."

According to Sullivan, "Cuckoo's Nest" is a novel about a matriarchy which can never be defeated. In this scheme, Bromden's final euthanasia of McMurphy becomes the case of Freud's projection, "This unknown hostility, of which we are ignorant and of which we do not wish to know, is projected from our inner perception into the outer world and is thereby detached from our own person and attributed to the other..." /Freud,1950:856/.

The text offers evidence of this interpretation as well. Bromden not only looks to McMurphy for protection, but also constantly associates the Irishman with his dead father. Big Nurse becomes the caricature of a mother-figure, but she frequently is referred to as mother. Public Relation, introducing her to his ladies' club, says, "She's, girls, just like a mother..." and ironically, "Not that I mean her age, but you girls understand ..." /Kesey:37/. To Bromden she appears to be "... that smiling flour-faced old mother..." /Kesey:48/. Harding makes a sardonic remark after McMurphy has called her "a ball-cutter", "Our dear Miss Ratched? Our sweet, smiling, tender angel of mercy, Mother Ratched, a ball-cutter?" /Kesey:57/

On the other hand, the theory of the projection of

Bromden's hostile feelings on McMurphy and thus strangling the Irishman finds little if any evidence in the text. This is the moment when Bromden makes the decision:

"I was only sure of one thing: he wouldn't have left something like that sit there in the day room with his name tacked on it for twenty or thirty years so the Big Nurse could use it as an example of what can happen if you buck the system. I was sure of that."

/Kesey:270/

The act of "murder" seems to be one of very rare human reactions in Kesey's dehumanized world.

Olderman /Olderman,1973:35-51/formulates yet another role for R.P.McMurphy. The "wasteland" is the metaphor that has inspired Olderman's book on the American novel of the 1960's, and in his scheme, McMurphy is the Grail Knight in the fashion of Perceval on a mission to cure the Fisher King.⁴ The Wasteland serves only as the background. Conformity is the ultimate expression of the wasteland of contemporary America. Toward the end of "Cuckoo's Nest" McMurphy is leading the patients on a fishing trip. Bromden has not been outside for a long time, and he,

"... could see the signs of what the Combine has accomplished. .. - a train stopping at a station and laying a string of full-grown men in mirrored suits and machined hats, laying them like a hatch of identical insects, half-life things coming pht-pht-pht out of the last car, then hooting its electric whistle and moving on down the spoiled land to deposit another hatch." /Kesey:203/

One cannot resist the analogy to T.S.Eliot's "... lonely men in shirt sleeves leaning out of windows..."⁵, or to F.Kafka's gigantic insect bearing the name of Gregor Samsa. We observe the conformity of the wasteland of California in Pynchon's "The Crying of Lot 49". Oedipa Maas, the heroine, is driving on her mysterious mission toward Los Angeles, "... into a neighborhood that was little more than the road's skinny right-of-way, lined by auto lots, escrow services, drive-ins,

small office buildings and factories whose address numbers were in the 70 and then 80,000's." /Pynchon,1966:14/

Let us now illustrate the allegorical Battle aspect of contemporary American fabulation. "Cuckoo's Nest" abounds in examples. First, it is the "goal" image. "The Big Nurse... reaches up and tears a sheet off her calendar one day closer to the goal." /Kesey:34/ Later on, Bromden is speaking about Miss Ratched, "She's lost a little battle here today, but it's a minor battle in a war that she's been winning and that she'll go on winning." /Kesey:101/ Then there is the "round" image, "She knew she'd lost one big round..." /Kesey:174/ And finally, toward the very end of the novel, just before she exposes the "statue" of McMurphy after lobotomy, Big Nurse "... seemed to be waiting for one more round... And one morning after McMurphy'd been gone three weeks, she made her last play." /Kesey:269/

The allegorical Battle is the fundamental pattern of Mailer's "An American Dream". In this novel, it manifests itself in the splitting of the ego of the protagonist Stephen Rojack into two parts. The Quest is the organizing element of the structure of this novel as well- but the Grail is caricatured in this novel to symbolize evil. In Rojack's terms, death becomes the ultimate expression of evil. Back in his army days, he killed four Germans and this was the first time he "...looked down the abyss." /Mailer,1964:10/ Rojack recognizes two kinds of death: the suicidal death and the death by murder. The difference between the two is that "murder offers the promise of vast relief. It is never unsexual," /Mailer:15/ while "there is little which is sexual about suicide." /loc cit/ First he experiments with the latter type; at a party he is standing on the balcony under a full moon /oddly enough, it accompanies him at his every encounter with evil/ and is contemplating suicide. The formal part of his brain says, "You can't die yet, you haven't done your work" /Mailer:19/. So he goes on to do his work - which is the murder of his wife. Figuratively, the act of murder means, for Rojack, entering into heaven.

These are his sensations:

"But I had had a view of what was on the other side of the door, and heaven was there, some quiver of jeweled cities shining in the glow of a tropical dusk... I was trying to stop, but pulse packed behind pulse in a pressure up to thunderhead; some blackbilled lust, some desire to go ahead not unlike the instant one comes in a woman against her cry that she is without protection ... I could still feel murmuring in her throat, and c r a c k I choked her harder, and c r a c k I choked her again, and c r a c k I gave her payment - never halt now - and c r a c k the door flew open and the wire tore in her throat, and I was through the door ... I was floating ..."

/Mailer:35-36/

The masterful rhythm of the above passage parallels a later description which has a direct sexual context. Rojack is having two-way sexual intercourse /"regular" and perverted/ with his wife's maid, devilishly right after he has left the warm corpse of his wife in her bedroom. The battle within Rojack is here clearly expressed in religious terms:

"So that was how I finally made love to her, a minute for one, a minute for the other, a raid on the Devil and the trip back to the Lord." /Mailer:48/

The latter place is referred to as the "deserted warehouse... empty tomb". However, metaphors change as he goes on:

"It was no graveyard now, no warehouse, no, more like a chapel now a modest decent place, but its walls were snug, its odor was green, there was a sweetness in the chapel, a muted reverential sweetness in those walls of stone." /Mailer:48/

Yet, the walls of stone usually make prisons and in spite of his inner voice which commands him to "Stay here!" he "... could feel the Devil's meal beneath, its fires were lifting through the floor, and I waited for the warmth to reach inside..." /Mailer:49/.

The conflict within Rojack remains unresolved for some time.

The intense thirty two hours of Rojack's life described in this novel abound in events. He meets Cherry, a night-club singer, and hopes he has fallen in love with her. He desperately wants to be in love, to be loved, and to become a father eventually. However, the time comes when the Hip inside of him wins over the Square and although the Square cries out:

"God ... let me love that girl, and become a fether, and try to be a good man, and do some decent work. Yes, God... do not make me go back and back to the charnel house of the moon",

/Mailer:153/

it is too late.⁶ Then comes Rojack's sensation of not belonging to himself:

"... of being owned at my center by Deborah - that emotion which had come on me not five minutes before I killed her-now came back. I felt murder. It frightened me. The possibility that what I felt, when we made love, was a sensation which belonged to me alone left me murderous. For how did one distinguish love from the art of the Devil?"

/Mailer:166/

Rojack's initiation into evil has become complete. There is no escape in testing his courage /looking for trouble in Harlem, or walking on the parapet/. Rojack has sold his soul to the devil and this is when he is "something like same again".

According to Tanner /Tanner,1967:465-471/ Mailer believes in finding psychic health in "... medieval man /who was/ able to live with gods, devils, angels and demons, with witches, warlocks, and spirits." Indeed, in his past, Rojack:

"...had come to believe in grace and the lack of it, in the long finger of God and the swish of the Devil, I had come to give a scientific apprehension to the reality of witches... Yes, I had come to believe in spirits and demons, in devils, warlocks, omens,wizards, and fiends, in incubi and succubi..."

/Mailer:39-40/

Yet Rojack is not living with demons and wizards, etc.; he is living with his madness.

There has been much unfavorable criticism of "An American Dream", but we can agree only with some of it. Aldridge /Aldridge,1966:149-163/ calls "An American Dream", "an unpar-donably ugly book" by conventional standards and, "a profo-undly silly book" in terms of its plot. However, as Aldridge also recognizes, this book cannot be approached in a literal way and Rojack certainly should not be identified with "Every American" /such an interpretation would be offensive, indeed/. Aldridge finds "An American Dream" "a burlesque treatment of the obscene version of the American Dream that possesses the unconscious mind of America at the present time."

This book should definitely be noted for its stylistic efforts - what Richard Chase calls "a profound poetry of disorder".⁷ It should also be praised for the way Mailer carries the Quest theme throughout the narrative. We cannot agree with Wagenheim /Wagenheim,1967:45-69/ when he calls the espionage business, toward the end of the novel, and the action that follows /Rojack's escape to Las Vegas/, a "deus ex machina" device. The end of the novel is consistent with its theme; the journey on the high wave of paranoia into the very bottom of depravity. Until the end of the novel, Rojack's achievements are murder without punishment and a very good orgasm. He gets involved in the very extreme of the incredible; he finds out that the three women /by no means the only ones in his life/ with whom he was, at certain periods, involved sexually were the mistresses of, ironically, his father-in-law. Thus, incest is in question here too. Rojack also finds out that his wife was involved in amateur espionage. There is one of traditional aspects of the American Dream missing from this scheme: money making. And this Rojack accomplishes in Las Vegas.

To end the discussion, we should like to note that we do not expect a fable to meet the demand of verisimilitude. The fable, as Gindin /Gindin,1967:2-3/ observes, gains "... its relevance by more abstract means, is more apt to depend upon

itself, and its own machinery for coherence." Thus, a very frequent artifice, borrowed from the Middle Ages, is the dream-artifice, or "... the inverted presentation of a hypothetical world presenting a dream" /Honig:80/. Let us take as an example the opening of one of the chapters from "Cuckoo's Nest":

"One Christman at midnight on the button, at the old place, the ward door blows open with a crash, in comes a fat man with a beard, eyes ringed red by the cold and his nose just the color of a cherry ... 'Ho ho ho,' he says. 'I'd like to stay but I must be hurrying along. Very tight schedule, ya know. Ho ho. Must be going...' The black boys move in with the flashlights. They kept him with us six years before they discharged him, clean-shaven and skinny as a pole." /Keseey:70/

Let us now quote the opening of Kafka's "Metamorphosis":

"As Gregor Samsa awoke one morning from uneasy dreams he found himself transformed in his bed into a gigantic insect... 'What has happened to me?' he thought. It was no dream..."

/Kafka,1973:7/

There are similarities in the introductions, at the moment that we may call a "seizure". Honig observes that Kafka's heroes:

"... wake from a dream to a world which appears more illusory - more baffling and more demanding of inner consciousness, since it is the dream of 'real life' - than the sleep of the past from which they have just emerged. But the same inclusive relationship /symbol-dreamer-plight/ is present in both the dream induction and its inversion." /Honig:74/

In the case of "Cuckoo's Nest" we are at the center of everything from the very beginning of the novel and without any previous preparations:

"They're out there. Black boys in white suits up before me to commit sex acts in the hall and get it mopped up before I can catch them." /Keseey:9/

Nothing appears familiar in this dream-like /or rather nightmare - like/ world of the fabulator. And even if the opening is as conventional as the opening of "The Crying of Lot 49":

"One summer afternoon Mrs. Oedipa Maas came back home from a Tupperware party whose hostess had put perhaps too much kirsch in the fondue....," /Pynchon:l/
we are soon afterwards confronted with the world of the fabulator which at least on the surface level does not bear any semblances with the world in which we live.

In this paper, we have by no means exhausted the problem of allegory in contemporary American fabulation. Neither, have we attempted at the full explication of the plots or the univocal interpretation of the novels we have dealt with here. However, the problems we have discussed seem to be representative of American fabulation as a literary phenomenon and worth further investigation.

NOTES

- 1 This brief definition is taken from Webster's "New World Dictionary."
- 2 "l'Aubepine" is French for Hawthorne.
- 3 For this and other interpretations of. Ayo, Nicholas, "The Labyrinthine Ways of 'Rappaccini's Daughter'"/Research Studies 42,1974:56-69/.
- 4 Two versions of the Quest are discussed in Jessie L. Weston's "From Ritual to Romance", Chapter II: "The Task of the Hero"
- 5 This brief quotation comes from Eliot's "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock".
- 6 Mailer formulated the philosophy of Hip in "The White Negro" /Stern and Gross;1971:314/:
"... if the fate of twentieth-century man is to live with death from adolescence to premature senescence, why then the only life-giving answer is to accept the terms of death, to live with death as immediate danger,

to divorce oneself from society, to exist without roots, to set out on that uncharted journey into the rebellious imperatives of the self. In short, whether the life is criminal or not, the decision is to encourage the psychopath in oneself, to explore that domain of experience where security is boredom and therefore sickness, and one exists in the present which is without past or future, memory or planned intention.... The unstated essence of Hip, its psychopathic brilliance, quivers with the knowledge that new kinds of victories increase one's power for new kinds of perception; and defeats, the wrong kind of defeats, attack the body and imprison one's energy until one is jailed in the prison air of other people's habits, other people's defeats, boredom, quiet desperation, and muted icy self-destroying rage. One is Hip or one is Square /the alternative which each new generation coming into American life is beginning to feel/, one is rebel or one conforms, one is frontiersman in the Wild West of American night life, or else a Square cell, trapped in the totalitarian tissues of American society, doomed willy-nilly to conform if one is to succeed.

- 7 Cf. Aldridge, John W., "Time to Murder and Create" /N.Y. David McKay Company, Inc., 1966:161/.

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ALEGORIA JAKO ŚRODEK WYRAZU WSPÓŁCZESNEJ AMERYKAŃSKIEJ
FABULACJI

streszczenie

Zadaniem artykułu jest analiza funkcji alegorii we współczesnej prozie amerykańskiej, w jej tzw. nurcie postmodernistycznym.

W początkowych fragmentach pracy omawia się alegorię w historycznym ujęciu, pokazuje jej modyfikacje w historii literatury oraz wykazuje genetyczne powiązania alegorii z elementami fabulacji we współczesnej prozie amerykańskiej na podstawie teorii Frye'a, Scholesa, Blooma, Honiga i Olsona.

Teza artykułu egzemplifikowana jest przykładami prozy Kesey'a /"One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest"/, Mailera /"An American Dream"/, i Pynchona /"The Crying of Lot 49"/. Wyróżnia się dwa podstawowe elementy alegorii: tzw. Battle i Progress /terminy Fletcher/ oraz tzw. Quest /termin Frye'a/.