The novels under consideration will be studied primarily as having their own stories to tell. The emphasis will be on the narrative modes that they have adopted. The endeavour would be to discern the allegorical elements that distinguish each of them, underlining thereby, a simultaneity of quest and of point of view. Each novel will be taken to be representative of itself, of a mode of storytelling that has expediently cut across the frontiers of time and space, and of vastly differing traditions and cultural differences. Chronology has been observed only to the extent of guaranteeing coherence in method and study in order to facilitate insight into a particular mode of perception that has in most cases, been forbiddingly bracketed with medieval scholasticism and renaissance learning. The objective would be to perceive the allegorical mode within the common forms of narrative fiction and to seek to justify its relevance in contemporary fiction.

Gay Clifford in his book The Transformations of Allegory[1] observes that "essentially allegory is, like irony, a mode, and capable of subsuming many different genres and forms." This is a relevant observation that presupposes the allegorical possibilities of all literary genres. It forms an important dimension of one's study of the six novels that employ the allegorical mode of narration. Whilst keeping in mind certain "generic" features of allegory such as "the

extended and extensive use of personification and personified abstractions", one ought not however, allow one's study to be limited by a formalised notion of what to expect from each novel. One has to be aware of the significance of Gay Clifford's observation that although allegory has allowed itself to be transformed extensively, its "formal features" are usually "subordinated to didactic purpose or to the preconceived intellectual structures the author wants to convey"[2]. This element of the didactic determines one's understanding of the "allegoricalness" of each novel. The mode employed in each of them continues a tradition of story-telling that predates the written narrative. It goes back in time to the primal role of the artist as a conscientious chronicler of the "truth". The contemporary artist has however, travelled a long way from his simple task and his role has been constantly redefined to suit the needs of a heterogeneous society. Didacticism has undergone a complex change. It has been put to varied use in the six novels through the employment and co-mingling of a diversity of narrative strains. In the realm of fiction, the traditional allegorist has been replaced by writers such as Rex Warner, John Gardner and R.K. Narayan who are impelled by a zealous desire to educate and teach the reader on the significant allegorical aspects of the novels written by them. The "allegoricalness" of the narrative mode determines the moral

perspective of each novel. In a figurative way, it manipulates reality for a renewed understanding of it. It informs itself through various ways, through characters who sustain a representative identity, through narratives which recreate human reality seen from an angle never seen before as in Golding's Lord of the Flies or through a philosophical framework which imparts a dual relevance to the fiction as in A Tiger of Malgudi. The allegorical mode has to be viewed as being an integral part of the artist's visionary perception of his own world. One's understanding of each novel is dependent upon one's ability to reconstruct the allegorical meanings that ultimately reside in the fiction itself. The allegorical mode thus demands reader participation at two distinct levels: at the level of the story and at the level of symbol and metaphor, significantly allegorical tropes which alludes to a level of insight and a level of reality that goes deeper than the fiction itself.

One usually tends to associate allegory with the Middle Ages and the Renaissance so that one's generic understanding of it is derived from a study of works belonging to these literary eras. In the course of the discussion, however, various definitions of allegory will be referred to for a better understanding of the allegorical mode. Edwin Honig's book Dark Conceit: The Making of Allegory and Angus Fletcher's book Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode

provide a close analysis of the nature of allegory. They have been referred to as guiding references in this study of the allegorical mode used in the six novels. One begins, therefore, with a simple assumption taken from Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode that "allegory says one thing and means another"[3] in order to understand the distinctively allegorical nature of the imagination controlling all the six novels. This has its roots in a "protean"[4] ability to disguise itself for the reader's entertainment; hence the novels are not overburdened with the explicit moral tag that usually comes at the end of each story.

Most of them are either first attempt novels or belong to an early phase of the novelist's writing career. It is interesting to note that these novelists have actually begun their careers by involving the supposedly old-fashioned spirit of morality. Once clothed in the pedantic images of truth, this deeply human propensity to spell out the quintessential nature of life in terms of symbol and metaphor has been reworked into the genre of fiction-writing which has definite leanings towards the realistic rather than towards the romantic. These novels have to be read as being representative of the kind of fiction that continues to be written and which, according to some critics, show a marked tendency to withdraw into the traditional framework of fiction writing; to be "restrictive rather than extensive, to

bring back traditional character and plot rather than to seek the inexpressible; in brief, to return to more self-contained matter while retaining, however, many of the technical developments of the major moderns."[5] In the context of this study, they may be placed within a tradition of writing whose sensibility can neither be regionalised nor particularised for they share a common mode of perception that has defied all social and cultural norms.

The mode of narration that they adopt is clearly linked with the artist's vocational sense of self which presupposes a unique radar for sensing the truth; to objectify and to project it in its full complexity through characters who are morally bound to their own environment. The novels have a broad human perspective which allows for a common identification with and an understanding of the characters and the values depicted within them so that an allegorical correspondence between fiction and reality is plausibly reached.

Importance will be given to each novelist's view on his vocation as artist or writer and to the observations that he makes on his own fiction. There has been a pre-meditated effort to provide, however humble, a broad perspective of the kind of novels that still continue to be written whose narrative mode is guided by a deeply moral impulse to liberate the ideals of the spirit.

The chapter on 'The Allegorical Method' in Rex Warner's book The Cult of Power, traces its efficacy in several literary masterpieces. He finds in it ample scope for the creative elucidation of conventional truths normally hidden from view. He points out the allegorical development of "language" and "thought", for as he tells us, when we "use the words 'God the Father' we are speaking or thinking allegorically" and goes on to say that, "'other-speaking' has become an atmosphere to us."[6] Writing as he did on the evils of totalitarianism during the calamitous war years, Warner sought to communicate himself through the allegorical mode of narration. It sought to dramatise the contradictory nature of contemporary history. His novel The Aerodrome is thus based upon an imaginative restructuring of events which would fictionalise the arena but not the facts and which would replicate both the "grandeur" and the "insecurity"[7] of the human world. The world of The Aerodrome resonates with the loss of values and with the search for a new order. The life of each character is symptomatic of the pressurising changes that have taken hold of both individual and society. Warner traces personal histories and links them with political upheavals in order to point to the inevitable connection that exists between the public and the private. In the midst of the imbroglio there is a definite move on the part of the protagonist towards the ideal of love. The novel has been

structured around representative embodiments of specific values. In order to understand the allegorical mode working within the novel one has first to understand the figurative significance of the title The Aerodrome and its subtitle 'A Love Story', both emblematic of the two world views of village and aerodrome, that separate the characters from each other. Although it has been said that the book is melodramatic and the characters flat, and, though this is a typical feature of allegorical narratives, yet one ought to be able to see the book in its entirety. One has to be able to appreciate it for its sincere attempt to diagnose the bigotry and power lust that dominates the lives of its characters, something that is chronic to humankind in general; and its attempt to suggest the most human antidote to it, that of love and forgiveness. The book functions on an imaginative level that is allegorical because of its ability to infuse the narrative with a dual sense of itself which is at the level of the story and at the "other" level which deals with the political values governing life during the war years.

Following a textual analysis of the allegorical components that make The Aerodrome what it is, a novel whose sustaining interest is the allegorical interplay of ideas within it, the next novel to be taken up would be Alan Paton's book Cry the Beloved Country. In The Allegory of

Love, C.S. Lewis makes a valid observation on the allegorical mode of perception by stating that

> Allegory, in some sense, belongs not to medieval man but to man, or even to mind, in general. It is of the very nature of thought and language to represent what is immaterial in picturable terms. ...[8]

which reveals mankind's natural propensity for sighting the universal in the personal, the infinite in the finite. South Africa's desolation might well be the desolation of any other race in any other country in the world today. The locale of human strife may be constantly shifting in the flux of contemporary life and in Paton's portrayal of South Africa's dilemma we have a figurative statement of the suppressive conditions of life in an apartheid society. More significantly, we also have the most humane resolution that can ever find political sponsorship within the forgiving heart of man. In order to arrive at his vision of life dignified by love, Paton employs a narrative strategy that holds together a diversity of feelings and experiences that portray the qualitative failure of life in South Africa. Entry into the South African milieu of Cry, the Beloved Country would also signify the allegorical voyage that one would have to make with Stephen Kumalo into Johannesburg and into the intractable depths of the human heart. At every turn of the novel one would have to identify the allegorical methods that Paton uses to make his story cohere into an

integrative unity of fiction and allegory, of the South African story and its illimitable origins in the human heart. Ultimately, one would have to attempt to define Paton's mode of story telling as being allegorical because of the symbolic associations that each character, each experience, and each fictional element, has with a host of other experiences and ideas wholly and partially visible to the reader in life itself. The allegorical means towards the achievement of a visionary end within the novel would have to be sought for in the Christian overview that has influenced the style and the overall pattern of the quest which reaches out to a prophetic sighting of the "comfort" to be found in the "dawn" yet to come. The novel has to be studied as one which has fictionalised the events of South Africa, with the intention of drawing parallel observations with the lived reality. This has been achieved through the fusion of different narrative strains and narrative voices which allegorically bear the weight of their discoveries within the fiction itself. In this respect, Cry, the Beloved Country and all the other five novels to be examined possess what Edwin Honig in his book, Dark Conceit: The Making of Allegory, stipulates to be an important dimension of allegorical fiction:

> The fictional creation cannot be one thing and the allegory, the symbolization of a philosophical view, another — as it is in the hands of the moralizer. Fiction and allegory must be simultaneous, a single creation. Both together must

> assert an integrated vision of reality; and this creative authority must be sustained within the work, not by any appeal to a body of doctrine outside of it.[9]

This would be the qualifying criterion for all the six novels to be studied.

Invisible Man has been selected as being a novel that voices issues distinctively Black and significantly American. The quest for self takes the invisible protagonist away from the common patterns of black selfhood into the unfeatured dimensions of a self totally absorbed in remaking personal history. The journey motif has to be closely understood as marking the thematic movement of the book from the south to the north and from innocence to experience. Thus the early process of initiation into the larger American reality, is an allegorical extension of the initiation of the untutored self into the harsh realities of life. In attempting to understand the allegorical dimensions of Invisible Man, one has to be aware of Ellison's unique response to his own identity as a Black American, and as an American individual, in search of the one authentic identity that would give him a wholesome understanding of himself and of his environment. On the one hand, the book has to be studied in terms of the invisible protagonist's symbolic resurrection of the multiple layers of the black personality. This is an aspect of the allegorical replay of the black struggle[10]. It would involve a careful

study of that mythic sense of history that is figuratively represented in the contrapuntal medley of figures and voices rising from a black past. The hitherto hidden vortex of the black self has to be seen as a distinctively richer entity of black self-definition. On the other hand, the mapping out of the protagonist's journey into the self is the allegorical voyage into the subterranean darkness of the unknown self, which has always remained invisible to the world. The move from visibility to invisibility is the figurative move to freedom and to greater depths. The coal cellar which hides the invisible protagonist is the symbolic womb, which will nurture him into full creativity. It must be seen as the emblematic point of vantage from where observations will be made and stored, and brooded upon until such time as the moment is ripe for action. Meanwhile, the state of hibernation that he professes to be in, must be understood as one of the many subterfuges that the invisible protagonist uses, in his voluntary exile from public life into the archetypal depths of the black self, which would provide him with the intuitive feelers necessary to discover his American identity. The mode of narration as such is allegorical in its visualisation of a black reality and a black identity that is perennially linked to a cosmic sense of self. Thus the ultimate question that he puts to the reader must be thoroughly examined in the context of the allegorical search

for self, identifiable only in terms of the radical self newly discovered. To comprehend the workings of the allegorical mode within the novel, one would have to draw upon Edwin Honig once again, to understand how the allegorical mode functions:

> Like the development of a musical theme, the amplified statement based on the trope becomes the mark of the work's allegoricalness: the whole work partakes of it and also fulfills it. The allegorical unit then resounds with innumerable connotations. ... For the meanings of allegory depend, as in poetry, upon the accretion of certain tropes. These tropes make evident a consonance between objective facts and their moral or psychological counterparts, so that the reality ... is ultimately transcended by the total organization of meanings which is the fiction itself. And so one may say that the language of allegory makes relationships significant by extending the original identities of which they are composed with as many clusters of meaning as the traffic of the dominant idea will bear.[11]

The fictional components or "tropes" responsible for extending the "allegoricalness" of the novel have to be sought for in the consciousness of the narrator as it is reflected in a narrative that has been inspired by a metaphoric and therefore, representative sense of the truth.

The next novel, Lord of the Flies, has already drawn attention to its literary status as a fable. It figures as an important novel of the post war years more concerned with the unpopular[12] task of dwelling upon the imperfectibility of

man, than with the technical innovations that then determined fiction. Golding's accompanying essay, 'Fable', makes his position as "moralist" very clear and it is to didactic ends that he fits in the plan of his novel. In a much later book which deals with fiction of the 1960's and after, Robert Scholes points to the characteristic feature of modern fables:

> For the moment, suffice it to say that modern fabulation, like the ancient fabling of Aesop, tends away from direct representation of the surface reality but returns toward actual human life by way of ethically controlled fantasy.[13]

"Ethically controlled fantasy" is a phrase that would be applicable to the nature of the fictive imagination at work within all the six novels. It aims at re-orienting the reader's vision of himself. In Lord of the Flies, Golding manipulates his characters in order to dramatise a particular aspect of man as he found out for himself during World-War II. He plucks out his experiences from life and uses them as representative images of the fable that he sets out to write. In examining the novel as fable one must keep in mind Golding's stricture that, "the fable must be under strict control". Yet, for all that, he himself admits to the split at the seams which is a result of, a "plenitude of imagination".[14] Golding's critical observations of his own work helps one to look forward to a novel whose prolific

imagination communicates itself through the allegorically affiliated tropes of symbol and metaphor, irony and paradox, thus accounting for the allusive nature of the narrative. It imbues the boys' experiences in the island with powerful significance. In attempting to examine the allegorical mode used within the book, one has to tie up the connecting strands of each narrative figure to be able to comprehend the confused ethos of darkness and evil that permeates the novel. The novel as fable covers an important aspect of one's study of the allegorical mode. The important factor to be kept in mind, however, is that one's ultimate responses must be to the characters themselves in order to be able to place them within a framework that is at once real as well as allegorical. This study will attempt to examine how Golding uses his fable to transcend its limitations so as to be able to project a convincing portrayal of evil. The evil inherent in man has been further portrayed in Grendel, a novel differently constructed from all the others. Yet it is similar to them in its desire to probe the hidden depths of the self through a monster protagonist who inhabits the nether world of darkness and confusion. Like Lord of the Flies which broadly speaking, is a satirical replay of Coral Island, Grendel too has its affiliations with the old English epic Beowulf. Grendel is the name of the monster terrorising the ancient world of Beowulf. The similarity ends there

however, with Gardner's modern recasting of a monster, who is both cunning and intelligent, but who is tragically locked within a condition of muteness so severe that it hampers communication with himself and with the world outside.

Grendel is a metaphoric projection of the disgruntled psyche hemmed in on all sides by emotional disabilities. Though his intellect penetrates deep into the heart of things, yet he suffers from an obsessive predilection. He reduces all experiences to the level of the absurd; monster and man resemble each other in a striking way. Both suffer from a debilitating malaise of the spirit which affect their imagination and imprisons them within a world of violence and doubt. The narrative modulates between the subterranean world of the monster and the terrestrial world of Hrothgar; between Grendel's unending metaphysics and Hrothgar's ruthless demonstration of his own power to project the symbolic associations that the two parallel worlds have with each other. There is never an overlapping of the two worlds, only the reflective ability of the narrative to juxtapose the two worlds to trace out through the characters the ethics of brute survival that predominates in both worlds. The allegorical mode has to be understood as an important medium which symbolically heightens man's closeness to Grendel. It sees in man the psychic imprint of the monster. As associations with man and monster build up, the narrative

portrays on a lesser key, characters that are associated with certain patterns of experiences that are charged with positive allegorical significance. The Shaper and Wealtheow attain allegorical depth through their respective claims upon the values that uphold their vision of truth and integrity which sustains life even in Hrothgar's kingdom and confuses the brutish reasoning of Grendel. The transmuting vision of the Shaper's poetry anticipates the fire of Beowulf's imagination. In an allegorically symbolic moment of poetic affirmation, it razes to the ground Grendel's absurdist philosophy. The narrative concentrates upon a symbolic but total expulsion of the kind of values instilled by the Dragon and propagated by Grendel. It moves from Grendel's myopic surrender to the deluded ideals of freedom and existence, to a world that is a symbolic travesty of its own ideals; from the Dragon to the Shaper, from Grendel's mother to Wealtheow and finally, from the inner abrasive conflict within Grendel to a symbolic confrontation of values and personages in Hrothgar's court and in Grendel's mind. This would exact its own price from Grendel who would have to face up to the inevitable consequences that follow his recognition of the absolute ideals of life and death. Gardner communicates through an allegorical mode of narration that qualifies itself through a metaphoric replay of characters and world views, philosophy and vision, all contributive to a

definition of the negative realities of Grendel's solipsistic world and the positive realities of Beowulf's affirming vision of life.

The last novel to be discussed, A Tiger for Malgudi may be read as Narayan expected it to be: a story about a tiger. This is a different tiger, however, calling for a sensitive response from the reader. He has the ability to record his own life and to trace his own spiritual growth from a primal quadruped to a creature mellowed with insight and vision. At the simple level of the fantastic, the novel is an animal fable with literary antecedents in the rich collection of fables to be found in ancient Indian literature. At the profounder level of myth and allegory, the tiger stands for the soul in its quest for eternity. Narayan's introduction prepares the reader for the allegorical nuances to be found in the narrative so that one is well prepared not to take anything at face value. Raja, the tiger-protagonist takes on progressively human dimensions as he moves from one encounter to the next. Each episode unwittingly carries him closer to his saviour and as he details the stressful conditions of his life away from the jungle, one is clearly made to understand that somehow Raja is more human than any of the devious humans who gang up against him. Narayan portrays them from the tiger's perspective who sizes them up according to their professional abilities. This is perhaps a characteristically

animal way of proving or disproving another creature's identity, measuring his worth according to his physical prowess. In the eyes of Raja every human is wanting in basic jungle virtues, such as, the respectful observance of a hierarchical creed that brooks no disturbance. As one is taken deeper into the novel, one begins to empathise with Raja's plight which demands of him total subservience to the humans who manipulate him for profit and self-gratification. The novel relates to the reader in Raja's own terms. One has to be able to accept Raja's validity, his more than human ability to analyse people and situations and to prove his own feelings. The world of Malgudi never changes. The only change lies in its main protagonist who has to be understood as being allegorically representative of all dimensions of the self in its carnal and spiritual forms. The surface comedy of Malgudian life in the novel, is overlaid by Raja's continual sense of embarrassment or shock at the sight of humans ignobly exposing themselves as they really are. And as one follows the story through its very end, one would agree that Malgudi does need its very own tiger, to frighten it, to shame it, to teach it, and to save it from itself. The story about a tiger of Malgudian stock makes for the kind of novel that characterises Narayan. However, in this later novel of his, Narayan lays emphasis upon the ideal of a tiger searching for a spiritual abode and finding it within

himself. The fictionalisation of Raja's life abounds with allegorical significance. It reaches out to the reader at all levels through Raja's encounters with the human world, through his juxtaposition of life in the natural jungle of Mempi and in the human jungle of Malgudi, through his minute observation of Malgudi's do's and don'ts and through his avowed devotion to the Tiger Hermit who represents the elusive Hindu ideal of self-attainment. One must prepare oneself for a dual understanding of Raja's world in A Tiger for Malgudi. This would be in accordance with Narayan's expectation of the reader's understanding of what codifies the tiger's existence.

In the introductory discussions to the six novels, mention has been made of the allegorical mode used in all of them. The significant point to be stressed is that it is inextricably linked with the artist's perception of reality which views what it sees in the representative figures of allegory. It is not that these novels formally take on the characteristics of allegory. It is, that they have been specially selected to show how the allegorical strain permeates into fiction and is a product of the contemporary sensibility. The themes of all the six novels relate in diverse ways to the inner self. Generally speaking, this has emerged as an important concern of the novel and has revolutionised fictional technique. It has challenged the

novelist to cast his story in as innovative a way as possible in order to better understand himself in particular and the human psyche in general. To understand the six novels selected for this study one has to keep in mind the relativity of values in this changing world and its effect upon the individual. The private arena of the self becomes a significant point of entry for the reader into a subterranean world of personal definitions such as the one elicited in Invisible Man. Though each world has been subjectively conceived according to the novelist's singular perception of truth, yet the degree of subjectivity has been evenly controlled to allow for reader identification with and reader participation in a fictional world objectivised by those values that have been found to be integral to human life at whatever cost. These values form the allegorical backbone of all the six novels.

One begins one's study with a pre-determined effort to establish a vital connection with the inner meanings embedded in the novels. In all of them, the novelist uses the simple narrative ploy of creating a credible fictional world; that of South African disharmony in Cry, the Beloved Country, of the malignancy of evil in Lord of the Flies, of the fantastic autobiography of a tiger in A Tiger for Malgudi. Into the fictional world is woven the dualities of the controlling allegorical vision which tells its story at the fundamental

level of the plot whilst aiming all the while to extend its meanings. Even as one finds oneself carried away by the impetus of the plot, one realizes that the process of truly understanding it would depend upon one's total understanding of the entire book:

> A good allegory, like a good poem, does not exhibit devices or hammer away at intentions. It beguiles the reader with a continuous interplay between subject and sense in the storytelling and the narrative, the story itself, mean everything.[15]

There will have to be a close study of each novel in order to understand how characters relate to life or how the allusive nature of the narrative is able to bring up personal and universal associations for the reader. The attempt will always be to view each novel in its entirety, to see how the different parts of each novel work towards bringing together a complex unity of experiences that are characteristically allegorical in the patterning of emotional, intellectual and spiritual truth. One would also have to keep oneself open to the figurative nature of language, which would naturally echo with multiple layers of meaning embedded in a single strata of thought. Cry, the Beloved Country is especially illustrative of this, in the sustaining lyricism that it employs to universalise its tragic experiences.

The allegorical mode used in all the six novels must be understood to be a complex vehicle of the novelist's vision.

It follows the emotional structure of the story and justifies itself through a novel usage of "tropes", of "verbal modes"[16] and of fictional ploys such as character and situation. There are multiple points of contact within each novel to rouse the reader's perception of the underlying truths that prevail. However, the writers that are being dealt with in this thesis are, first and foremost fiction writers and ought to be viewed as such. That their fiction should reflect upon an inbuilt propensity for the intuitive sighting of hidden meanings, illustrate what a vast number of critics have understood to be natural to man. For purposes of clarification, and in order to understand the allegorical mode better, one would have to turn to The Nature of Narrative which divides the narrative form into the empirical and the fictional, and further sub-divides the fictional into the romantic and the didactic. Allegory has been naturally categorised as being didactic because of its "intellectually controlled"[17] nature. The six novels that are to be studied have to be understood as being primarily inspired by the writer's ideational view of human society as in The Aerodrome; by a conceptual understanding of the true heroism of self-integration as in Grendel; by an empirical finding of the nature of man as in Lord of the Flies; by a perception of truth as embodied in A Tiger for Malgudi; by a perception of love as a potent force of change in Cry the Beloved Country

and by the artist's overriding sense of conflict as in Invisible Man. These must not, however, be viewed as rigid pre-conceptions which bind the novels to a particular form. For the purpose of this study they have been isolated in order to see how they are given representational significance. They form the moral sub-stratum of the novels moulding consciousness and rooting it to the ethics of the artist's personal vision. In "Fable", William Golding explains the process of writing according to this inner dictum. R.K. Narayan's introduction, schools the reader in the evolutionary ethics of Hindu philosophy. Alan Paton's meaningful sub-title "Comfort in Desolation" to his novel, Cry, the Beloved Country is an indication of the allegorical direction that it would inevitably take. Rex Warner has amply justified the importance of "The Allegorical Method" in his expression of the realities of the war years in The Aerodrome. Each novel is a sampling of truth in its own way. In observance of the laws of the novel, they fictionalise the characters and their situations whilst successfully tapping areas of experiences remotely hidden from ordinary view. Therefore, Gardner's exploratory descent into the subterranean regions of the old English epic, Beowulf, unearths a figure as dramatic as he is significant to an understanding of the pitfalls of human reasoning. In the epic, Grendel is a monster who fulfills his obligationary

role. In Gardner's novel, he is an allegorical figure who reflects upon the intellectual confusion that reigns within. He vociferously discredits the role of the imagination through his violent ways. He is an ironic figure of doubt. Around him is structured layers of experience that call up a multiplicity of allegorical meanings. The monster without has been internalised to reveal the monster residing within. In a different way, Invisible Man is reflective of the contemporary search for identity. He has been likened to the picaresque hero,[18] living on the fringe of human society, subverting traditional morality for a higher authentic order of self-definition. With his capacity for survival and his instinct for life, the "invisible man" is the allegorical questor in secular terms. He revamps an entire world view and redefines the objectives of American society which are discovered to be the objectives of all societies everywhere.

The allegorical mode works through various ways to attain its moral ends. There is a clear demarcation of values ethical from values unethical, in a manner that evokes a response to both the positive and the negative. Within the moral framework of his vision, the artist dramatises the human situation in its various hues, using all fictional devices to simulate the conflict and the choices that one makes in life. One enters a fictional world that has brought together a number of forces contending with each other; a

microcosm of fermenting confusion that uncoils itself through the artist's manipulation of plot and character. In the same way that one is made to accept the logistics of fairie land in The Fairie Queene so must one submit to the rationale of the six novels in order to apprehend the artists' moral envisionings. The artist is one with his fiction as his fiction is one with the currents of thought and feeling that control it, and are given free play within each of the six novels. In addition, one is always made aware of the hidden significances of the plot, the characters, the fictional appendages that add up to the multiplicity of meanings within the context of the novel. In Lord of the Flies, the events leading up to Simon's confrontation with the Beast will be discussed in all its allegorical significance. The Christ-like figure of Simon confronting the pig's head has deliberate resonances of the confrontation between good and evil. The imagery figuratively evokes the spiritual heroism of Simon as he must combat the forces of evil dwelling in man. The narrative mode in such cases uses the figurative idiom of poetry in order to telescope into a single experience the multiple layers of meaning attached to it. Thus actual experiences are symbolically and metaphorically transcribed into the kind of fiction that one would call allegorical. What defines it as such is the mode of

perception that communicates itself through a narrative mode which exploits the figurative possibilities of language.

> The allegorical unit resounds ... with innumerable connotations. The tension between the theme and its inherent meanings is built up on all levels of connotation so that the reader is drawn into the extended allegory ... the meanings grow naturally out of each action in the narrative ...[19]

Each part is compounded of thought and meaning vital to the establishment of an allegorical pattern within the text. The "invisible man" moves from a one-dimensional view of reality to a multi-dimensional understanding of the experiences that have accrued within his adult years and which give shape to his journey to the centre of the self. The mode of communication that he adopts reflects upon the Black propensity for using music, jazz and the blues, as a medium of self-expression. In the course of inner journeyings he discovers the archetypal symbols of Black self-consciousness. He uses them to enunciate a definable pattern of behaviour. This subscribes to an independent view of life which gathers within it a kaleidoscope of Black experiences that resonate with hidden abilities. Thus for the invisible protagonist at the factory hospital, Brer Rabbit comes alive with all the psychic implications of the black identity which will be the turning point for an understanding of himself. The narrating protagonist identifies himself as the universal questor who transcends the stereotype of the black self. His ultimate

definitions equalise all struggle, thereby allowing for his own experiences to speak in an allegorical way, for others. The link that he forges with other innumerable selves in the Prologue and in the Epilogue, is responsible for that allegorical sense of self imparted through his ability to implicate the reader in his quest, challenging him to accept him in the unconditional terms of the self newly discovered. The narrative mode in the six novels, is a reflection of the thrust of the protagonist's mind which endeavours to sort itself out though the classic ordeal of the metaphoric and the literal fire of pain and suffering experienced by Ralph and Simon in Lord of the Flies in order to arrive at a cleansed view of the universe. By implication the narrative mode reflects upon the allegorical potential of the novel at all levels.

The role of the protagonist in all the six novels is an important one. Needless to say, his significance in proportion to the story, resembles that of the hero of an allegorical narrative. He reinforces the value system of a particular world, whose pattern not easily discernible at first, proves its integrity through him. The protagonist of The Aerodrome is a significant embodiment of the virtues of love tempered by understanding and forgiveness. Roy, however, is not a rigid portrait of an unchanging virtue. His humanity is defined by his erring nature, which ultimately rights

itself through his fearless ability to reorient himself to a less rigid but more spiritual ideal of love in personal and in social terms. The values that he upholds in his own life are a natural counterfoil to the values that abide with the village and the aerodrome. Through his constant searchings he mirrors the ideal norm of life which must effectively embody the quest for spiritual fulfilment. In the end, he arbitrates in an allegorical manner for a universally "clean" world, "most intricate, fiercer than tigers, wonderful and infinitely forgiving".[20] He is the allegorical hero who extends the significance of personal values from a fictional world to the real world. On the other hand, the thesis also has to deal with a protagonist like Grendel who does not by any means embody the elevated ideals of allegorical fiction. In reading Grendel, one has to be aware of the role that Gardner assigns to himself which is the integrated one of moral educator. The methods that he uses to fictionalise his objectives are the innovative ones, characteristic of the varied literature of the twentieth-century.[21] A familiar world order is thus repudiated by a monster who allegorically represents mankind's inverted psyche. He functions as an allegorical link with the dysfunctional values of Hrothgar's kingdom, as an allegorical foil to the positive forces of love and poetry within it and as an allegorical antagonist to Beowulf. Beowulf's significance within the book lies in his

commitment to the truth of the imagination. He is an heroic figure; he is everything that Grendel is not. The allegorical value of the book lies in Gardner's ability to invoke history through a monster's life which encodes the pejorative aspects of human philosophies. Every thought and every action of Grendel's is provocatively paralled in Horthgar's kingdom in order to make the reader understand the inescapable connection that exists between monster and man. Gardner has himself explained how the novel has been woven around some of the misplaced ideals of human civilization. In an inverted way, through the inverted mentality of Grendel and in an inversely allegorical manner, Gardner restructures the story of human civilization. He fulfils his self-professed role of moral educator through his bizarre portrait of the evil genius that lurks behind the human facade.

This brings the discussion to an important aspect of the novels: the definite overtones of the didactic. 'Didactic' is a term that has been disputed by Gardner. However, for want of a better word it has been used in this introduction to point to the irreducibly moral nature of the allegorical imagination. To cite a few examples, we have Golding's adherence to the fable form in Lord of the Flies. The term animal fable has been used to describe A Tiger for Malgudi. Grendel is a parable of the collapse of the human intellect. Invisible Man has been viewed as an allegorical

work of fiction that depicts the contemporary search for identity. All such definitive modes are a variation of the allegorical mode. They conclusively indicate the trend towards moral instruction which forms the mainstay of the allegorical method. The element of the didactic, however, in the allegorical novels that form the subject of this thesis, is an integrative unit of the story. This goes to show that each novel develops an inbuilt "world of fictional reality", resilient enough to determine the "story's figurative meanings all along the way".[22] Nothing may be taken for granted, for each fictional component gears itself for ultimate allegorical meanings, which results in an enhanced view of one's self and of one's understanding of the universe. Each novelist is a self-conscious practitioner of the art of fiction. One good example of the self-conscious artist would be R.K. Narayan-tailoring his art to meet the sensitive demands of a deeply moral imagination that keeps itself in touch with the spiritual needs of the moment.

All six novelists work on an artistic tightrope in which the balance between fiction and allegory has to be maintained. They deploy their talents through the allegorical mode which harnesses fictional creativity in order to make it serve the moral ends of the artist's vision. This is the reason why these novels differ from traditional allegory. They have not been structured around a rigid scheme of values

that need to be closely interpreted. Although they have their sociological and cultural affinities with their own societies and with their own ages, which provides the framework of reference for the reader, yet the characters embody a depth of thought and feeling that reflect upon the dynamism of the novel. All the important characters will have to be evaluated in the living terms of the novel and not as dead personifications. This implies the need to understand the worth of each novel as a fictional entity in itself, complete with its own set of values that have been structured upon a higher, less visible, scheme of values: in other words, the fiction comes first, the allegory later. There is a steady build-up of allegorical meanings in the movement of the plot, in the actions and in the thoughts of the characters as they interact with one another, or as they seek to flout or to fulfil the hidden ideal of the spirit.

The criterion for likening these novels to allegorical works of fiction would lie in another definition of allegory which states that

> An allegory is a fiction which is complete in its own narrative world while simultaneously adducing and reflecting upon another structured world.[23]

The other "structured world" belongs to the ideal plane of the artist's moral envisionings. He works out the ethics of his vision as minutely as possible so that by "the

penultimate page, the primary and secondary levels have become so entwined that they function simultaneously".[24] An important example of it is the juxtaposition of Ralph and the naval officer at the end of Lord of the Flies. It gathers within it an association of meanings that have allegorical precedence in the story.

The allegorical mode used within the novels is a method of narration that sometimes illustrates a particular world view, as in A Tiger for Malgudi. Here Narayan demonstrates his ability to merge the western form of the novel with an older literary form, the animal fable. He expresses himself in understandable terms, the Indian absorption with the illusory world of appearances as it conflicts with another, lesser known, but more vital, world of the spirit. The mode of narration allegorically plays with images taken from the social world of appearances into which is thrown cryptic figures like the Tiger-Hermit who convey the Indian ideal of fulfilment. The method of narration works through a duality of perception that is thoroughly Indian in sensibility. The pattern of Raja's experiences have been fully exploited to render, allegorically, into fiction the final validity of the soul.

There is general agreement that allegory has always been chosen as the obvious literary tool, wielded against any form of oppression. This is especially true of South African

literature and in Cry, the Beloved Country, Paton uses the allegorical mode of narration to portray the immeasurable depths of despair and to trace the heart's journey through hopelessness and pain. In the novel, the allegorical mode is especially effective in portraying the stress under which the individual is placed. In The Aerodrome Rex Warner utilises the allegorical mode for purposes of relaying the truth to a perceptive audience. He does this by exploiting the possibilities of fiction that lie in the portrayal of characters and in the creation of a fictional world that symbolically hypothesises, through village and aerodrome, the truth about a society faced with the imminent collapse of its values. The thrust of the allegorical mode is to enact at the personal level through characters like Roy and the Air Vice Marshal, the crisis of political change that can sweep a society to destruction if it is not founded on the strength of its spiritual envisionings.

In all the six novels, the allegorical mode is synonymous with the artist's enunciation of personal vision. Its strength, and therefore, its acceptability, lies in its ability to diffuse itself in a number of ways, through the narrative. It is not confined to intellectual strictures concerning the advocacy of the artist's moral principles. Its idiom of communication lies in its creative manner of poetic subterfuge whereby literary tropes such as symbol and

metaphor are exploited to enhance meaning and perception of itself. This may be clearly seen in Ellison's figurative and metaphoric manipulation of the Black American realities so as to convey through the flexible nuances of speech, an allegorical sense of the quest. As one reads the novels one must prepare oneself for the onslaught of allegorical meanings that function at all levels of the narrative. It would be delimiting the allegorical mode employed if one were to define it strictly according to a pre-conceived notion of what to expect from it. Although it has its affiliations with allegory, yet it may be differentiated from it in its ability to fuse different realities together. This is why the novels have to be closely studied, meanings worked out in detail in order to determine the underlying theme of the artists' moral observations. The novels form a cross-section of the kind of fiction that still continues to hold sway. They are intimately associated with their own societies, aware of their social relevance and genuinely concerned with the social function of art, that is, to teach a generation split by divisions of its own making.

As one reads all the six novels, one realises that the art of story-telling has been truly internationalised.[25] They form a literary cross-section of the contemporary novel with its own regional characteristics which further suggests however, that the novelists of "British, American and

Commonwealth fiction ... are eager to grow beyond" narrow "national groupings" in order to "confront the aesthetic issues of their times".[26] Especially noticeable is Gardner's concern with the aesthetics of fictional creativity which places his novels in the forefront of the contemporary novel. Narayan's art of story-telling is more conventional in its adherence to the Aristotelian plot. But he uses his Indian sensibility to forge the kind of novel that is suffused with the ethics of the Indian world-view. The western form of the novel has been the standard means for the universal ends of all art, which for Narayan implies the ability to sharpen one's perception of oneself. On the whole, all six novels have to be specially considered as being representative of a mode of narration that ties them up within a unique framework of perception. Though these novels are of British, American, Indian or South African sensibility, they share a common insight into the collapse of institutionalised living. Though they use a common heritage of literary principles, yet they distinguish themselves from one another through the kind of fictional creativity that utilises their differences with regard to their sociological, historical and political backgrounds in a manner that is metaphoric and symbolic, attributes of the allegorical imagination.

In each discussion of the novels, there will be a detailed follow up of the story in terms of plot and

characterisation, so as to discover as one reads the text how the allegorical mode functions. The allegorical mode has to be viewed in its successful relation to the story which would enhance the stature of the novel thus emphasising the truth about it, that the allegorical imagination is never out-dated; rather, it lends itself to a creative metamorphosis of form and expression. The fictional world of each novel serves to enhance the "other" levels of reality. One might prepare oneself for an imaginative induction into a fictive world that allows its latent meanings to evolve with the story and with its characters who are dynamic enough to change themselves and others around them. The allegorical mode transports the reader from the enclosed world of fiction to larger realities through its sustaining concern by bringing home the normative ideals of the truly integrated life. What these are, remain individualistically embedded in a domain of fiction that employs the allegorical mode to draw out their universal significance.

END NOTES

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4. Ibid., p.1.
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13. Robert Scholes, Fabulation and Metafiction (Chicago: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1979), p.3.
14. The Hot Gates, p.97 & 99.
15. Dark Conceit: The Making of Allegory, p.5.

16. Ibid., p.114.

17. Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg, The Nature of Narrative (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), p.106.

18. Joseph F. Trimmer, ed.,A Casebook on Ralph Ellison's Invisible Man (New York: Crowell, 1972), p.210.

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20. Rex Warner, The Aerodrome (London: Oxford University Press, 1982), p.302. All references are to this edition.

21. Donald Heiney and H. Lenthiel Downs, Essentials of Contemporary Literature of the Western World, Vol.II British (New York: Barron's Educational Inc., 1974), p.6.

22. Dark Conceit: The Making of Allegory, pp. 113 & 114.

23. David Hayman, Eric S. Rabkin, Form in Fiction: An Introduction to the Analysis of Narrative Prose (New York: St. Martin's Press Inc., 1974), p.239.

24. Ibid., p.242.

25. Allan Massie, Novel Today A Critical Guide to the British Novel 1970-1989 (London: Longman, 1990).

26. James Vinson and D.L. Kirkpatrick, ed., Contemporary Novelists (New York: St. James Press, 1986). ref. Preface to the third edition by Jerome Klinkowitz, p.xii.

One's study of the six novels leads one to concur with Leslie Fiedler in his essay "No! In Thunder", that "the practice of any art at any time is essentially a moral activity", one in which the artist uses his discriminatory powers to choose and to select, which involves, "a judgement of the experience he is rendering; and such a judgement is, implicitly at least, a moral one". The artist who adheres to his vision desists from portraying man's "inherited" view of himself and of his destiny. Rather, he seeks to define him through his "struggles" and through the questions that he asks of himself. In the words of Leslie Fiedler, the vision of man "shared by our greatest writers involves an appreciation of his absurdity, and the protagonists of our greatest books are finally neither comic nor tragic but absurd."[1] This vision of the absurd would seem to contradict the essential spirit of allegory which has always aspired to maintain an heroic identification with the highest ideals of human civilization, of the material with the spiritual and of the tangible with the intangible. But when one has fathomed the symbolic significance of a monster-protagonist in Grendel or a Jack in Lord of the Flies or an Air Vice-Marshal in The Aerodrome, one would be able to understand the thrust of the artist's vision, which is to reveal the unrevealed and to trace out the absurdly flawed characteristics of a fallen humanity. The six novels have sought to record a vision of

man's potential for self-destruction, to hold up to him a mirror of his unregenerate self. The overriding vision in the six novels testifies to man's fallen nature which is easily prone to the excesses of the ego or of the passions. Simon's ultimate summation of humanity in Lord of the Flies is of it being "at once heroic and sick".[2] This sickness has been diagnosed in all the six novels and has formed an important theme which signifies the negativity and the sense of death surrounding the individual. Metaphors of evil and destruction have sought to express the hidden nature of man which is, however, overlaid by the normalising influences of society. When society no longer acts as the integrative unit of spiritual discipline as in Lord of the Flies, there is a conflagration of values and an alarming fall in behavioural ethics which results in a reversal of identities. The conflict that ensues arises between the newly emerging class of power mongerers and the spiritual caretakers of a society that has already collapsed. Characters such as Simon who is like a Christ figure, are alienated and alone, forced to suffer for their precocious insight into truth. Ralph becomes a victim of Jack's self-styled tyranny. It threatens to overturn all pre-conceived order. Golding makes no attempt to mitigate his vision of truth which is founded on the awful knowledge of man's capacity for evil. The didacticism works

at the figurative level of the plot, it encodes the hidden treacheries that man is capable of.

The allegorical mode may be viewed as being representative of a way of expressing the truth as Golding perceived it, through the fable. There are no compromises in his perception of the evil inherent in man. The quality of goodness on the other hand, has also been presented without ambiguity. The humility attributable to a Simon, must, however, inevitably suffer for its single minded devotion to truth. Golding's vision of humanity holds true for all the six novels that figuratively, and therefore, allegorically perceive the absurdity and meaninglessness of a fallen universe.

The quality of goodness has, in most cases, been overshadowed by the malignancy of doubt, the spiritual and metaphysical kind which has characterised life in Cry, the Beloved Country and in Grendel. The spiritual topography of "man" in the six novels is one of self-delusion. The six allegorical novels start from the initial premise of a fallen universe but do not resolve themselves in any simplistic way. The emphasis is more upon the lowest common denominator of human pride and wickedness than upon the ultimate good which has been the overweening pursuit of all didactic narratives. Metaphorically and symbolically the fictional reality of these novels deliberately masks the truth in order to set the

reader on an allegorical voyage whose possible end is not a full discovery of truth, only dim foresightings of it as in Grendel's vision of life in death. The challenge to the reader lies in his ability to re-orient his vision according to newly discovered patterns of experience that the allegorical mode has been able to formalise. It is a mode which has not formulated itself upon the static rules of literary form. Rather, it is integrative with the novelist's dynamic perception of his own responses to a universe that has visibly uprooted all traditional values. The allegorical imagination is distinctly moral; it seeks to interpret the universe in the language of symbol and metaphor and emulates the allusiveness of poetry in order to probe the universal depths of its themes.

The bedrock of faith in the novels is found upon the artist's affirmation of his personal vision which usually takes conclusive shape only after one has assimilated the allegorical meanings embedded in the fiction. The "invisible man" must struggle to make sense of his life, to jettison a past burdened with worn out rituals and to anticipate a future based upon a personal discovery of his latent humanity. His life consists of a strenuous process of adapting himself to the highest, social good, which is acceptability by white Americans. This in itself proves to be fraudulent and self-defeating. He discovers instead the

essence of being, lying in the hidden creativity of the dark self, invisible and unknown, because neglected and untapped. His self-exploratory ventures into the unknown depths of the self only serve to bring out another past buried deep in the subconsciousness of the American Negro. It communicates itself in an allegorical way through the archetypal figures of black self-consciousness such as Brer Rabbit and Jack-the-bear, and through the idioms of jazz and the blues. A significant sense of history is gathered up with each discovery. Subsequent expulsions from the debilitating clutches of the larger American reality paradoxically brings him closer to the real self which in effect, is the prototypical self that has eluded everyone. Herein lies the basis of the allegorical mode of perception which conceives of the individual in universal terms.

The protagonists of each novel usually personalise the difficult ways of arriving at the truth. In this respect they are no different from the archetypal questors of traditional allegorical narratives. But where society endorsed the struggles of the questing knight who valiantly strove to affirm its ideals, the unorthodox questors of the six novels have to strive alone and unaided to find the authentic means to a moral end. They have been endowed with a personal sense of morality which is divisible from society and which arises from an innate ability to see. They project a vision of life

alienated from what has been accepted as normal, which struggles to maintain itself despite the oppressive forces threatening it. In The Aerodrome, Roy is unable to accept, unquestioningly, the changes that the aerodrome brings with it. He stands apart and alone in his unflinching commitment to a vision of the universe that is "most intricate, fiercer than tigers, wonderful and infinitely forgiving."[3] These are ideals that are expressive of the inherent anomalies to be found in the human world which Roy recognises and accepts as being part of life itself, but which the Air Vice-Marshal refuses to see. This is the reason why Roy is unable to be partisan to the Air Vice-Marshal's dream of the establishment of a clinically "clean" society. Nor is he able to come back to the muddledom of village life. The tangible alternatives available to Roy are a life of freedom without discipline in the village and a life of unlicenced power-mongering, in the aerodrome. He chooses neither, for he has already assumed the iconoclastic habit of the contemporary questor which would be necessary for him to forge a better relationship with the universe. This concludes with an echo of his father's definition of the world, "'That the world may be clean'", upon which he, however, deliberately superimposes his new found definition of a world strengthened by love. He ends his youthful phase with a commitment to love. This is an act of faith affirming his potential for creativity. The book

concludes on a note of expectation, neither assuming that Roy will succeed nor attributing to him the epical role of saviour of human kind. What matters is that Roy has authenticated himself through the kind of love that has been exemplified through his ability to forgive the past. With every character portrayal, with each dramatisation of the philosophy of change, associated with the aerodrome, the allegorical implications gradually build up to reinforce the novelist's hypothetical picture of a world divided from itself. The controlling metaphors serve to extend the allegorical implications of the story. They reflect upon the analogical bent of the novelist's imagination which seeks to qualify that which it perceives through fiction. The framework of the story forms the explicatory medium of the novelist who uses it as an allegorical means to clothe his moral perceptions. The life of his main protagonist is a record of his struggle to embody the emotional value of certain ideas which may or may not be acceptable to the other characters who on a lesser scale, allegorically embody the antagonistic aspects of the novelist's imagination. The momentum of the quest takes Roy through conflicting aspects of reality and further into the unmarked regions of a lesser known but potentially creative self. The allegorical voyage that the protagonist undertakes in all the six novels is backed only by a Jamesian openness to experience. Nothing may

be codified in a universe which has already disproved the homogenous set-up. The contemporary questor is deeply riddled with the contradictions of his own age. He has only his personal experiences to affirm. Protagonists like Roy, the "invisible man" and Stephen Kumalo allegorically work out a very personal conception of love which summons them to be honest with themselves at all times. It is this perennial struggle with dishonesty that makes for the "allegoricalness" of the novels. The contradictions that line the protagonist's path through life form the allegorical theme of the novels. There is no looking forward to fulfilment in another realm of the spirit. The novels allegorically grapple with the problems that confront their protagonists who make an all out effort to seek a way out of the maze that threatens to impede them. The struggle yields itself to the kind of allegorical interpretation that has marked out novels like Invisible Man and A Tiger for Malgudi.

Fulfilment may be found but only in a paradoxical way, in the protagonist's confrontation with the underlying absurdity of human life. The structure of experience within the novels, does not follow the traditional curve of the graph. Although discoveries are made, identities reshaped and perspectives changed, the best part of the novels is not a looking forward to the characteristic resolution of the underlying pattern. The novels take shape only as they follow

the protagonist's allegorical journeyings through the secular world of experience. This is the unorthodox path charted out by the protagonists in their compulsive search for order. They carry the cross of self-exile and an innate inability to submit to the dictates of societal law. Their tentative steps away from the usual marks an arduous journey towards affirmation of a very personal kind. For Raja, the tiger-protagonist of A Tiger for Malgudi, this takes shape in the struggle in his personal life between the spirit and the senses which results in the discovery of an inner self. His path to a partial attainment of a moral understanding of himself has been lined with the novelist's uncanny perception of the "familiar" struggle of "familiar" actors in a "familiar" world. Raja, however, shows himself to be unfamiliar with its ways. Every step which ought to take him closer to it actually takes him away from it, for he discovers only the selfishness of the ego. In actual fact, in the novel, man has been completely devalued in the face of a tiger-protagonist's search for moral sureties. That Raja attains it with the help of another character who has delinked himself from the world is part of the larger allegorical scheme of the book. What indelibly remains, is the picture of Malgudian crassness which is counterpointed by Raja's maturing vision of life. He has already been perceived to be an allegorical reflection of the self searching for its

own soul. He is also reflective of the valorous attempt of the self to authenticate itself without the prior sanction of society. Within the framework of the Hindu world-view, he has been identified several times over as being an acceptable part of its *karmic* philosophy. Within the framework of the novel Raja forms a structural part of the allegorical mode which works on the principle of figurative communication. The novel does not formalise any philosophic concept in the manner of traditional allegory. The reader must continue on his own after Raja has launched him on an eye opening expedition to a higher level of perception. The conclusion in all the novels, merely endorses the protagonist's claim to his own realities. These have been inevitably shaped by the circumstances governing his life and are harnessed to the inner convictions of the self.

These convictions sometimes seem to fail the test as in the depiction of Simon's death in Lord of the Flies. Simon's goodness in contrast to the Lord of the Flies is predictably consistent. Simon proves the steadfastness of his own faith when he decides to return to the other boys with the "news" of his discovery of, the airman's corpse. The allusive details of his death and ultimate burial at sea, however, serve to enhance that underlying level of goodness that allegorically exists on an identifiable plane with Beowulf's heroism in Grendel or with Stephen Kumalo's visionary sense

of life in Cry, the Beloved Country. One must understand that the principle of definition which the allegorical mode employs in the novels, is primarily that of defining the subversive features of a negative world order, hence its marginalisation of traditionally good characters in terms of plot. Some novels begin with the collapse of the social system as in The Aerodrome or Lord of the Flies; some with the collapse of the creative imagination as in Grendel; some deal with the direful consequences of social and spiritual uprootment as in Cry, the Beloved Country. The reality that one is confronted with has already been objectified by the main protagonists of each novel, it is the reality of the absurd for the invisible protagonist, it is the bondage to fear for Stephen Kumalo, to Grendel it is the tedium of monotony that drives him crazy, to Ralph it is his understanding of the darkness of a lost innocence, to Raja it is the overwhelming pressure of Malgudian confusion and to Roy it is the pull of the conflicting realities of political ideology and love. Nowhere do the novelists follow the allegorical convention of a painstaking explication of the higher truths visible only to the perceptive mind. These truths are irreducibly embodied in some characters like the oft mentioned Simon, the Tiger-Hermit or Beowulf; or contained in the protagonist's refining vision of himself and of the universe. Their significance extends beyond the narrow

limits of the novels for they charge reality with their imaginative power. Moreover, these characters are not the petrified embodiments of a particular world view. They attain an allegorical but dynamic depth of significance through their ability to empower the reader's imagination with their moral intrepidity. They challenge the reader to make the invaluable choice in order to determine reality for himself. Gardner makes a ringing proclamation of the moral value of art in The Atlantic Monthly when he says, "Art leads it doesn't follow."[4] This implies that one's reading of Grendel must lead to an affirmation of the values allegorically embodied in Beowulf, just as Invisible Man literally and allegorically influences the reader by the sheer truth of the invisible protagonist's experiences.

In Grendel the human cosmos has been thrown off gear by a monster's distorted interpretation of it. The destructive demons of his mind impose a demonic order of violence and hatred which overrules life. Strangely enough, the human world reflected in Hrothgar's court, is itself branded with similar violence and hatred. Getting to know the monster is also another way of getting to know humanity. The striking resemblance that exists between the two has been repeatedly emphasised and recognised by Grendel himself. The violence that determines Grendel's character seeks to resolve itself through violence. Hrothgar too is imprisoned within the

"walls" of his cruel ambition. The allegorical mode serves as an important conduit of the novelist's perception of man's dark and unrevealed motives. Grendel is the legendary monster. He is also an aspect of the depersonalised self; depersonalised by a spiritual short-circuit that cuts it off from the sustaining virtues of the moral imagination. In Grendel one may see the breakdown of all mental systems. It becomes a contemporary parable of man's loss of vision associated with his capacity for discreputable actions. There has been a remapping of man's personal history to reveal the ideological inconsistencies which have destroyed his capacity for growth. On a muted scale as in Lord of the Flies, there are the positive forces of life which have refused to yield themselves to the disintegrative influences of the intellect. These allegorical embodiments, the Shaper and Wealtheow, pre-figure the final appearance of Beowulf. In a truly allegorical way the stage is set for the confrontation that must take place between the forces of light and the forces of darkness. But the confrontation has not been modelled on the allegorical or the epical pattern which dramatically ensures who the victor is, nor may it be described in physical terms. It transcends the physical and inducts the reader into a metaphysical realm both confounding and challenging to him. Grendel is forced to listen as never before. He is also forced to see, forced to respond to the barrage of poetry and

song affirming the creativity of life. "*Though you murder the world, ... the world will burn green, sperm build again*".[5] His death signifies no defeat for him. Figuratively, Beowulf has propelled him out of the mere which is the dark "cave" of the ego to take him to a death dignified by his acceptance of it. The abyss which faces him in death as it has always faced him in life is now confronted by a newly discovered stoicism so that his "voluntary tumble into death" is marked by "joy".[6] Though he knows that his death is but the result of an accident, a miscalculation on his part, he wishes all a similar, providential accident. Grendel joins the procession of allegorical questors in the other novels, rather late. Nevertheless like them, he undergoes a vital transformation which liberates the powerful tool of the imagination through poetry and song. Though Grendel, the involuntary questor dies, his death becomes an act of faith born of a confrontation with his deepest self which Beowulf was instrumental in bringing out. Grendel is saved by a simple act of faith, which is, to affirm life even in death. The novel concludes with Grendel's typically offensive stance, a challenge thrown out to the reader, "'Poor Grendel's had an accident'," I whisper. "'*So may you all*'".[7] It is also a statement that identifies him with human beings, never enunciated before. The identification may be extended to include Raja, the tiger-protagonist who is a sub-human

manifestation of the soul's evolutionary potential for growth. Grendel's life propagates the unbridled energies of the self. His death spells out the birth of a new self discoverable to the reader only as he too begins to break down his own "walls". The allegorical mode works through the reader's ability to follow Grendel's thoughts upto the moment when Beowulf succeeds in disarming him with his passionate decrial of Grendel's negativity. As the tide begins to turn in favour of his inevitable end, the parable converges upon a meaning of life hitherto obscured by Grendel's solipsism. His death releases him from the constraints of the ego and catapults him downwards into the abyss. Typically, however, he has already assumed the offensive, this time for a meaningful affirmation of his own death. The multiplicity of allegorical meanings attached to Grendel's confrontation with Beowulf, and Grendel's ultimate death would once again depend, upon the reader's ability to affirm the existence of the Beowulf personality deep within himself. Ultimately, the reader is called upon to affirm his own faith in the creativity of life despite his acknowledged similarity to the subterranean monster that threatens to overtake him at any moment. Whether Beowulf has succeeded in ousting the solipsistic tendencies of a Grendel remains to be seen and to be proved, for it lies beyond the ambit of the novel. Meanwhile, in keeping with its allegorical mode of

perception, the novel has worked out its own ethics of moral discovery through an allegorical figuration of a dark universe imprisoned within the mental "walls" of its own making.

The subterranean monster may be understood in the allegorical terms of a parable which inverts the usual for the unusual. It works on the principles of the fable as in Golding's Lord of the Flies for it apprehends reality invertedly, from the underground perspective of a monster who masks reality with specious arguments. Both novels metaphorically exploit the hidden darkness of the self and use it to personalise the illimitable negativity of the human mind, to build up a desolate picture of a universe harnessed to primal energies. In doing so, they allegorically explore the antagonistic dimensions of the human psyche. They create a vision of the universe deeply dependent upon individual faith and individual heroism. In each novel, the allegorical mode has been spelt out in various ways. It has been adapted to the requirements of an imagination whose moral imperative is directed outwards to the edification of the reader. Reader participation in these novels, as has already been observed in Grendel or Invisible Man and Lord of the Flies, is a dynamic part of the allegorical mode for it engages the reader at the gut level of passionate feeling and passionate thought. Important issues are raised but they are never

resolved. Even as the reader is involved in a vicarious participation of life within the novel, the allegorical mode of narration is engaged in the simultaneous creation of a secondary pattern of thought and feeling that searches his moral attitudes and questions the validity of his beliefs. He is forced to undergo a moral test of himself with Ralph in Lord of the Flies, to question his realities with Roy in The Aerodrome and to attempt to grasp the ultimate meanings of the moral issues at stake within the novel with a monster pressurised to transform himself in Grendel. These are issues that the novel may raise as in Cry, the Beloved Country but which may never be resolved for this is entirely dependent upon the reader's ability to integrate a vision of life based upon a dynamic understanding of latent meanings. Although the "dawn" of "emancipation, from the fear of bondage and the bondage of fear"[8] has been mentally construed by the protagonist Stephen Kumalo, and defined in a limited way in his final return to Ndotsheni, the reader is left with an unrequited sense of tragedy. The final emphasis falls upon it remaining a "secret" yet, to the unseeing heart of man so that the anticipatory end note confirms both renewal and despair. The destructive conditions of life in Johannesburg retards the reader's rejuvenative vision of the universe. Yet there has been an underlying sense of love and solace determining reality for some of the characters. The

resolution of discord may remain a "secret" within the context of the novel but for the perceptive reader the reconstructive possibilities of a love-based existence no longer remains hidden to him. He has made the allegorical voyage to the epi-centre of pain and suffering which has brought about a moral recognition of one of life's many ironies: pain may only be transcended by an acceptance of it in a spirit of faith that presupposes love. Cry, the Beloved Country is one of the novels that has most obviously adapted itself to the allegorical framework of narration. The values that it upholds are the theological values of faith, hope and love. They find fulfilment through Stephen Kumalo, a protagonist who is unswerving in his devotion to God and whose world view has been defined by a visionary sense of love. He is a stalwart of the Christian faith and his life has been allegorically constructed around the principles of Christianity. However, the allegorical importance of the book lies in its ability to universalise through the sufferings of South Africa, the search for spiritual order. In comparison to the other novels, the book lends itself to a straight forward allegorical interpretation of its themes. Its protagonist Stephen Kumalo shows the way to spiritual restoration. Like the protagonists of the other novels, however, he is both winner and loser, for like them, he too is steeped in the unabsolving mire of pain and suffering.

Being what he is, he can only put himself against the odds facing him and in the process win for himself a life of faith forged by adversity. The protagonists of the other novels are caught in similar situations. The only option open to them is for them to be able to authenticate themselves as the invisible protagonist does in Invisible Man, to make the right moral choice as Roy in The Aerodrome or to yield themselves to the revelatory insights of the soul as does Raja in A Tiger for Malgudi. The tortuous journey to the self advocated by each protagonist, is riddled with uncertainty and doubt. This is a natural reflection of the mental contradictions that have determined contemporary man. Each protagonist allegorically bears the responsibility of charting out the ideal norm for himself. He stands in direct contravention of all societal laws and assumes the anti-heroic stance of the picaresques hero[9] who must forfeit social legality for individual self-expression in order to have a better insight into a universe made solely explicable through the moral vehicle of the imagination. The allegorical mode propels him through a stark universe totally bereft of love. The only light in the darkness is the imaginative resilience of the protagonist who must take up the metaphysical challenge to his identity. Even in a novel like Cry, the Beloved Country, which upholds the traditional values of the Christian faith, the social universe depicted

has been eroded by hatred and fear. The protagonists are caught in an allegorical universe of anarchical strife but they climb out of it through an irrepressible capacity for life. The following quotation from Invisible Man emphasises the moral calibre of protagonists who tenaciously affirm a personal vision of the universe: "It's 'Winner take nothing' that is the great truth ... of any country. Life is to be lived, not controlled; and humanity is won by continuing to play in face of certain defeat."[10] This is how the protagonists cast themselves on the allegorical path to self-knowledge neither sacrificing their right to learn nor soliciting social approbation. Allegorically, these protagonists are types of the contemporary individual, who finds validity only within himself. The expressive feature of their humanity lies in their overwhelming capacity for love, variously defined in all the six novels.

The conclusion in each novel is a concretion of symbol and metaphor that states on a muted key the full range of allegorical meanings embedded in the structure of experience recorded in each book. The conclusion is an important aspect of the allegorical mode. Meanings cohere in the final pages where the reader is called upon to contribute to the final assessment by his discretionary understanding of newly discovered meanings embodied by the protagonists themselves. In A Tiger for Malgudi the significance of the story lies in

the reader's ability to accept Raja as a veritable part of human life. Communication with him has to be established at the allegorical level. This presupposes the reader's acceptance of Raja's spiritual identity. The novel calls for an all inclusive vision which is a typically Indian overview of life. It challenges the reader to a multiple perception of the truth as a fable which has the sophisticated weaponry of a philosophic imagination. The reader sees not only the tiger at the zoo but is called upon to see beyond the metal bars, beyond Raja's physical presence to the soul within that yearns for freedom. Sympathy for the tiger-protagonist has been well manipulated. So endowed has he been with human qualities, that the reader does anticipate Raja's spiritual fulfilment. As always, the possibilities of life held out to the reader in the sentient form of Raja's soul are never quashed. The conclusion of each novel plays with the reader's perception of the grossness of reality, and reality as it may be transmuted by the living principles of the spirit. Herein lies the essence of the allegorical mode used in all the six novels. It remains an integral part of the artist's vision of a universe heavily tainted with negativity but with a paradoxically inbuilt capacity for regeneration. The thematic focus of the allegorical mode lies upon this dual perception of good and evil, of life and death, and of love and hatred. Characters such as the Tiger-Hermit reflect upon the

novelist's propensity for symbolic figurations of a deeper and nobler form of human existence, which affirms the moral possibilities of the artist's vision. The allegorical mode in all the six novels works with the extensive purpose of relocating morality within the sensitive heart of its protagonist.

The allegorical mode of narration, draws upon the novelist's perception of life's dualities, and works with an evangelising endeavour to convince the reader of the contradictoriness of life altogether. These are the contradictions that undermine the spiritual reality of life in all the six novels. Perception of these contradictions has been the main thrust of all the novels so that the way to knowledge or selfhood has always been gropingly initiated in spiritual darkness. Literally and metaphorically, knowledge of evil before good is the natural consequence of a fallen humanity. The principle of absurdity which lies at the core of life threatens to take over in each of the six novels. Each protagonist is found to be fighting against a personal hell of disillusionment. He is caught in an allegorical darkness of evil and of non-being which surrounds him and confuses him. His proper ability to "see" has also been impeded. In Lord of the Flies, Ralph gropes about for the conventional support of institutionalised morality only to find it symbolically smashed to pieces in the broken form of

the conch. His call to order has been betrayed by civilization itself. Confronting this betrayal is the allegorical challenge that the novels put up for each protagonist who, however, distinguishes himself from the rest of humanity by an intuitive understanding of the creativity of life. It is this deep sighting of the truth that propels the protagonist on his allegorical quest for life which takes him through various experiences. Instead of being pulverised by the contradictions that riddle him the allegorical questor, is further strengthened by them. Paradoxically, he thrives on the external disunity that threatens to consume him for he is then forced to seek moral sustenance from within. The struggle to live allegorically becomes one of overcoming the existential absurdity that characterises life, within the novels, in South Africa or in Malgudi. In all the six novels, the allegorical mode upholds the personal vision of the protagonist whose allegorical sense of self must be reinvigorated by knowledge of the anti-self reflected to him through the antagonistic forces that defy him at each step of his life. The inner vision becomes objectified through the protagonist's ability to wield meaning out of meaninglessness, to establish a pattern out of the chaos, to resurrect life as it were out of the metaphysical absurdity that surrounds him. This might take shape in the invisible protagonist's struggle to understand the creative darkness of

the soul; it might crystallise itself in Roy's vision of love; it might be observed in Ralph's agonising recognition of the human face of the Lord of the Flies; it might be seen in Grendel's final avowal of life or in the spiritual consolidation of Stephen Kumalo.

The six novels establish an allegorical pattern of experience that bespeaks the individual's capacity for rejuvenation even as he might be tainted with his own negativity as in Grendel. Nowhere in the six novels do the main protagonists give in to the anarchical rule of the ego. They all bear the stamp of self-responsibility which sets them apart from others and which endows them with the ability to initiate an honest appraisal of their own selves. They possess an honesty as ruthless as it is radical, for it overhauls the value system that has supposedly built up human civilization. In this respect, the protagonists exemplify the kind of moral integrity primarily required to remake society. They have a special relationship with it. They wish to be defined by it but valiantly struggle to create a meaningful order for themselves. The principles that they affirm chart out the integrated path to selfhood that society must endorse for it ultimately rests upon the democratic principles of spiritual sharing and love easily understandable to all. Raja is a spiritual beneficiary of the Tiger-Hermit's love. It allegorically releases a hidden chord of understanding within

him and makes him a voluntary participant in the evolutionary quest for spiritual freedom. This is a quest that should normally involve all of mankind but society having lost its footing is caught in self-generated confusion. It may yet find hope in the allegorical truth of a tiger's discovery of its own soul.

The self and society are the integral units of the allegorical imagination which is primarily involved in reinstituting the personal values of the self in society. These values have been forged by the disciplinary principles of an honest life-style which sometimes admits to no material gain for the protagonist himself, as has been observed in Grendel and in Lord of the Flies. Such novels, however, allegorically succeed in distilling the essence of the truly integrated self through protagonists who, even in death affirm hope for mankind. As noted earlier, the allegorical mode used in the six novels is a multi-pronged effort to remodel the chronically habituated ways of society. Though its ends amount to the simple one of moral restitution for mankind in general, it uses means that are esthetically innovative and challenging to the contemporary reader who is also way-laid by innumerable traps. It sets the reader on the path of vicarious warfare with the antagonistic elements of life, thus implicating him in a moral campaign with each protagonist who is seeking to restore humanity to itself.

In conclusion one would note that the allegorical mode is dependent upon the novelist's ability to tune the reader's responses to his story in a complex way through a symbolic and metaphoric application of truth. One ought not to overlook the truly allegorical dimension of reality in all the six novels which consists of the two antithetical poles of Appearance and Reality, the Material and the Spiritual. The synthesis lies not as in pure allegory, within the context of the novel itself, but somewhere in an unknown future within the human heart. The inner arena of the heart becomes a dynamic constituent of the allegorical mode in all the six novels. It involves characters who are complexly driven by fate, whose destiny lies in their own hands underlining thereby the urgency of their concern with their own spiritual welfare. The allegorical mode in the six novels humanises the ethical dimensions of truth through characters who live out their lives in full justification of themselves. It objectifies each struggle through its ability to universalise its themes. It establishes hence a dynamic rapport with the contemporary reader who is also allegorically set on testing out values for himself.

END NOTES

1. William J. Handy, Max Westbrook, ed., Twentieth Century Criticism the Major Statements, (New Delhi: Light and Life Publishers, 1976), pp.277-288.
2. Lord of the Flies, p.128.
3. The Aerodrome, p.302.
4. The Atlantic Monthly, "A Conversation with John Gardner", p.44.
5. Grendel, p.149.
6. Ibid., p.152.
7. Ibid., p.152.
8. Cry, the Beloved Country, p.236.
9. A Casebook on Ralph Ellison's Invisible Man, p.210.
10. Invisible Man, p.465.