Studying the allegorical metaphor and the course of its historical evolution from the perspective of rhetoricians

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ABSTRACT

Allegorical metaphor is a kind of explicit metaphor in which the elliptic tenor as an abstract form of multiple grounds is compared to an explicit vehicle which is an abstract from of multiple grounds either. This figure of speech is a verbal masterpiece of human being and soaring beyond the heaven of the poetic images which has always had many controversies regarding its quality and quantity during its historical course. This descriptive article using content analysis attempts to study and compare the various and different opinions of the scholars of the art of the scheme from commencing of this term to the art of Arabic and Persian rhetoric up to present time to provide the interested readers of the art of the scheme and device of metaphor with a thorough understanding of the historical course and evolution of that figure.

Introduction

Allegorical metaphor, or metaphorical synthetic trope, or allegory on the basis of metaphor, or allegory which once called Momaselet (analogy) had a place in the art of schemes (Badi') and some referred to it as metonymy. It has always been a common way of indirect expression of meanings and concepts among the sons of Adam and the living languages around the globe are replete with this kind of diction.

The heart of the matter is that “Allegorical metaphor is a kind of explicit metaphor in which the elliptic tenor as an abstract form of multiple grounds is compared to an explicit vehicle which is an abstract from of multiple things either and mostly from the common parables, while in order to exaggeration it claims the entering of the tenor into the matter of the vehicle and also has a synthetic ground of analogy and its presumption is always circumstantial. As an instance if we use the parable of “اَبُو ذَرِّ هَارُونَ كُبْرِيْن” – to beat the air – for someone who is engaging with a fruitless endeavor, we compared that engaging person (tenor) to someone who is pestling the water in a mortar – beating the air – (vehicle) and the ground of analogy would be the fruitless endeavor.

Precursors' views

For the first time Ḥāfiz has referred to this kind of metaphor in his book “al-Hayawān”, however, without calling it as allegorical metaphor. He quoted the following verse from ibn-Mayādeh:

واحرى يصبُبُ المجرمين سعىُها نارة; نازُانْ كِلّ مَنْ نفَّغ
Meaning: “He hath two fires, one which warmeth the destitute and one which burneth the criminal by its flame”.

He said that his purpose is a fire on the basis of parable not truth (Jāḥiz, 1996: vol, 5; p. 133). Undoubtedly, his reference to “on the basis of parable” is an indicative that his purpose is this kind of metaphor.

Abu-Hilal Askari named this kind of metaphor as Momaselet (analogy), although in his view the concept of this term includes the comparative allegory. Therefore, he defines that in this way:

Meaning: “Momaselet (analogy) is something that the speaker is willing to refer to a meaning, but he bring forth a word which is denoted for another meaning and when presenting that phrase comes with a context which evokes the connotational meaning”.

Abd-Al-Ghaher explicitly referred to the metaphorical allegory and with an example explained that in this way:

برَأَّهُ النَّملَ اِلَّمَثَّلَ الَّذِيْ كَبِرَ مِنْهُ جَمْهِرُهُ بِأَنَّهُ حَدِيثًا حُكْمًا مُؤَثِّرًا، مَعْلُوٓمَ قَوْلُهُ "الْمَحْرِمُ بِالْنَّارِ رَبِّ أَرْضَى وَلْيَزْرَعَهُ أَخْرَى" (68: 1992).

Meaning: “as for the allegory which is a trope, to the point that fact that you bring it forth to the degree of a metaphor it is like the saying to someone who is hesitant to do a job or not: I see you taking a step forward and then backwards”. His purpose in this example is that the “آرك في تركذاك كمن نقض رجال ونخرح ” "أرمي" and tenor is omitted and the vehicle is explicit and because the tenor, vehicle, and grounds of analogy are extracted from multiple things and are synthetic, he termed it as metaphorical allegory.

Ibn-Athir accounted allegory as a kind of metonymy and regarded it as a simile on the basis of metonymy. Although he didn’t mention the comparative allegory and allegorical metaphor in this kind of metonymy, the examples he presented some of them are metonymy, some comparative allegory, and some others allegorical metaphor. His definition in this part is close to the definition of allegorical metaphor because he says:

"المثل: هو الشبيه على سبيل الكلية، و ذلك أن تراد الأشاره إلى معني، فوضع المعاني نزل على معني آخر و تكره تلك الأفعال و تلك المعاني مثالاً للمعنى، الذي قصده الإشارة إليه، (ابن الأثير، 1375: 157).

Meaning: “allegory is a simile on the basis of metonymy and defined as referring to the connotative meaning, therefore, the words which have connotative meaning are used and those used words are examples of referring to the intended meaning”. One of the examples which is definitely an allegorical metaphor and ibn-Athir expressed it following this definition is the verse
Sakkaki didn’t explain much about the allegorical metaphor and in the end of the discussion about the definite actual explicit metaphor (the first type of his five-fold division of metaphor) mentioned it in a form of example and this is raised a doubt that Sakkaki regarded the allegorical metaphor as a type of singular trope. What is concluded from this explanation of Sakkaki is that the allegorical metaphor is the comparison of an abstraction form of multiple things to other abstraction forms and omitting the tenor and assertion of the entering of the tenor into the matter of vehicle. However, Sakkaki represents the allegorical metaphor in this way:


Qazvini stated the allegorical metaphor with the name of synthetic trope, although in the middle of his discussion he mentioned it as a metaphor on the basis of metaphor. He even said that allegory was named as an absolute form (without any condition). He delved into the discussion with an objection to Sakkaki for including the allegorical metaphor under the rubric of the definite actual explicit metaphor and then he gives his definition by pruning the mentioned inappropriateness of Sakkaki’s view back.

From the fact that Sakkaki put the allegorical metaphor under the rubric of the definite actual explicit metaphor Qazvini construes that he regarded it as a singular trope, therefore, he raise an objection to this and says:

Meaning: “He [Sakkaki] described the metaphor as it mentioned and accounted the allegory on the basis of the metaphor of that kind, while there is inappropriateness in it because as it was mentioned the allegory on the basis of metaphor does not happen synthetically. So, how can it be a part of the singular trope? Although he didn’t confined the metaphor to the individuals and considered it as a trope by which a meaning other than its denotational meaning has been inferred because of the exaggeration in tenor”.

Qazvini after resolving his objection to Sakkaki’s view describes his definition of the allegorical metaphor in this way:

Meaning: “However, the synthetic trope is a word that is used in a meaning similar to its denotational meaning as a form of comparative allegory for exaggeration in simile, that is, simile is an abstraction form of two or more (of multiple) grounds to another, then the tenor is entered into the matter of the vehicle for exaggeration, thus the vehicle is stated without any change”.

The other point that Taftazani expressed in this regard is that because the use of the synthetic trope on the basis of metaphor is prevalent that was termed as parable. That is, he considers parable as an allegory which has become widely used on the basis of metaphor and conventionally termed as Kasir al-estemal (widely used). He said that metaphor sometimes is called as allegoric and sometimes allegory; the reason he proposes for calling this kind of trope as allegory is that its grounds of analogy has been taken from multiple grounds and for listener/reader to differentiate between the allegory and comparative analogy he expresses that the difference between the two is that the comparative analogy is always bound to an allegory or an allegorical provision (his purpose is that in comparative analogy the word of analogy is certainly an allegory or allegorical provision), therefore, it will not be mistaken with the meaning of the allegorical metaphor (ibid).

After stating the definition of synthetic trope from the perspective of Qazvini and describing it, Taftazani, came to this conclusion from the discussion of the allegorical metaphor:

“This conclusion of the discussion of the metaphorical synthetic trope is that it is comparison of one of the two abstraction forms of multiple forms to another one, then it can be claimed that the form of the tenor is of the matter of the vehicle; therefore, the word which is created for the form of vehicle as corresponding implication is attributed to the form of tenor (Taftazani, 2004; p. 604). After this conclusion he quotes the same sentence of Valid-ibn-Yazid as an example which has been described earlier.

The last point that Taftazani wrote about the allegorical metaphor is rejecting the objection of Qazvini against Sakkaki, because from the viewpoint of Qazvini, Sakkaki regarded the synthetic trope as singular for he dealt with that in the discussion about the actual explicit metaphor. Taftazani propounds two reasons for rejecting the objection of Qazvini: his first reason is that Sakkaki put the allegory as an absolute part of the actual metaphor (which includes the singular and synthetic) not a metaphor which is a singular trope. Thus he has said:

Meaning: "وهو الحال عند المثل القصصي، فإن المثل القصصي تحكي قصةً من أصل الاستعاره التجريبي، أما القصصي التي هي مجاز مفرد (النقازدي، بي. ١٠٩)"
And the second reason is that the case of division in Sakkaki’s view was not singular trope, but it includes both singular and synthetic he stated in this way:

“...and metaphor and he confined himself to describe the Qazvini’s kinds: lexical and mental, and lexical is two types: one is about the meaning of the word and the other is about the sentence proposition (the purpose is mental and predicative trope), and the trope regarding the meaning of the word is of two types: without benefit and beneficial, the beneficial one has two types: metaphor and non-metaphor, and the apparent sense of this discussion is that the mental trope regarding the sentence proposition outside of the tropical meaning have the explicit meaning, therefore it is necessary that “regarding the meaning of the word” be considered as both singular and synthetic, accordingly, the delimitation of the mentioned divisions remain true”.

Exeges’ views

Tayyebi in the book “al-bayan va al-tabyn” explains the subject of the allegorical metaphor and analyze it by giving an example. His definition has no apparent difference from Qazvini’s definition except in the matter that from his view the subject of the allegorical metaphor goes back to the aggregation between the Mostaar (borrowed word) and Mostaar Lah (tenor), but he considers that aggregation as a single representation. Therefore, he says on that matter:

“...و هو أن يكون الج adapté غير في حكم الأداة، والذ ي تأخذ وتصرف أحيانًا الصورتين المشتقين من أسمار فاعلة وصف صورة أخرى، ونثأ في صورة مشتقة مثانيه على صورة المشتقة النظفي دائمًا بالعبارة على الصورة المشتقة بها مبادلة في الشنيد” (المغني، 1932، ص 287).

Meaning: “and that (metaphorical allegory) is a metaphor that its aggregation has a single representation and it is in this way that you take one of the multiple forms of abstraction and compare it to another form which shares grounds of analogy then enter the form of tenor into the matter of the form of vehicle”. The other point that Tayyebi (2011) has referred to is the difference between the parable and allegory. In his view if in this kind of metaphor the Mostaar (borrowed word) is a common and widespread speech it is a parable and if it is other than this it would be an allegory. Therefore he says:

“...و إذا أثار الألفاظ التي كان و دسًا مثلاً، لا يغير مثلاً و وحدة كلهما: أسمار المشتقة” (المغني، 1932، ص 287).

Meaning: “whenever the allegorical metaphor takes reputation and widely used, it is called parable and never changes for keeping the metaphor then by means of it, singular and masculine forms and other derivatives of the both are addressed with the same way like this Arabic speech: you both give me the stale date and the bad bushel (you are stinking)”.

Habankhe in his brief definition considered the metaphor in synthesis as allegorical metaphor. He says:

“و أن الاستعارة في المركب تسمى "الاستعارة التالية" (ملف,"1996، ص 265).

After this brief explanation he described it and states: “it is a metaphor in which the borrowed word is a synthetic one and this synthetic word has been used in a sense other than its

2 In this phrase: Mostaar la (tenor) is a person who has been damaged from two sides. Mostaar menh (vehicle) is the synthetic form and Vajh shabah (Jame, shared ground) is the damage received from multiple affairs, and the mentioned sentence is the lexical Mostaar (borrowed word).
denotational meaning, discoursively speaking, because of the existence of the grounds of analogy between the denotational and connotational meaning along with a context that restrain it from the denotational meaning (Habankeh, 1996: p. 265)

Qalqileh delineated the allegorical metaphor in other way that although it has the concept of all the other views, but it is important because of its manner of expression. This is his saying in this respect:

"الاعتارة المتمثلة ضرب من الاستعارات التصريحيه؛ فهي تصرح بالمشتى، بما يذكر في مكانه، و لأرقى بين استعارات: التصريحيه، والتمثيلية، لأن الواحد منهم يجري في المفردا، والأخرى يجري في المركب، نقل للائدة العاد، منصرماً، عن الصنفر إلى غرفية" (قلقيله، 1992: 62).

Meaning: “allegorical metaphor is a kind of explicit metaphor in which the vehicle is explicit and placed in the position of the tenor. There is no difference between the explicit and allegorical metaphors except that in one of them is realized singularly and the other synthetically. For example, we say to a commander who came back victoriously to home: He came back to home with his sword sheathed”. The point that the others didn’t mention it and Qalqileh drew attention to it is that the context of allegorical metaphor because of not changing all the modes is always circumstantial but not lexical or textual. Thus he says:

"ول لا تكون أثرية المتمثلة إلا حالية" (قلقيله، 1992: 63).

Shamisa considers the metaphysical metaphorical trope as a metaphor that its vehicle is a sentence which can be understood through rational contemplation that it was not used in its [literal] meaning, but with a ground of analogy conveys another meaning, like pestling water in the mortar which its meaning by comparison of the ground of analogy is the fruitless endeavor (1374, p. 177). The important point that he proposes is that he says:

“However, it had better use the allegorical metaphor for the cases that the synthetic metaphor has the characteristic of the eršoolmasal (adage) or proverb. So, as it mentioned before the allegorical metaphor is a synthetic vehicle which is realized as a Masāl” (1374, p. 177). There are two important points in this expression. One is that Shamisa has said that the use of allegorical metaphor is in the cases that synthetic metaphor has the characteristic of eršoolmasal or proverb, while the use of the Masal (parable) itself in the speech and it does not signify the Masal as Jorjani in defining it stated that eršoolmasal is that the speaker inserts a famous parable in his speech (Jorjani, 1377, p. 40). The other point is that he argued that the allegorical metaphor is a synthetic vehicle which represents the Masāl which is the same as Masal in his view.

Shafiee Kadkani categorizes the metaphor into two types in the respect that whether it is in the word or in the sentence, and holds that synthetic metaphor encompasses most of the proverb and also the cases that tenor and vehicle are assumed from multiple grounds. Thus he argues:

Metaphor has been categorized into synthetic or allegorical metaphor and singular metaphor. Altogether most of the proverbs are included in the subject of synthetic or allegorical metaphor and also wherever a set of affairs to be considered, that is, transferring a collection of the meaning of a sentence which literally have special concept to something other than its literal concept (1375: p. 116).

Hashemi in the book “Jawer al-Balaghah” introduces the allegorical metaphor in this way:

"المجاز المركب بالاعتارة المتمثلة، هو تركيب استعمل في غير موضع، من لغة شمالة، عم على معة من إرادة عما وضع، بحيث يكون كل من المشتى و المشتمه، به حياة متزعة من متعدد - و ذلك بأن تشبه إحدى صورتين من متزعتين من أمرين، أو أمور باحري، ثم تدخل المشتى في الصورة المشتى بها، مثالاً في الشمالة - و يميز بالاعتارة المتمثلة" (Hashemi, 1367: 346).

Meaning: "synthetic trope to allegorical metaphor: that is a synthesis which is used as something other than its denotational meaning by means of a ground of analogy, and along with a context that refrains the assuming of its denotational meaning. It is in this way that one of the two forms extracted from the two or more affairs be compared to another thing then the tenor be represented in the form of vehicle for exaggeration. That is called the allegorical metaphor”.

Hashemi considers four cases of the differences between the comparative analogy and allegorical metaphor which consisted of: 1. in comparative analogy the tenor and particles of comparison are mentioned, while in allegorical metaphor just the explicit tenor is mentioned and the tenor and the particles of comparison are omitted. 2. It is permissible that comparative analogy be to singular form, while the allegorical metaphor is just between two abstraction syntheses. 3. Comparative analogy does not need a context to refrain the realization of the denotational meaning. 4. Comparative analogy is a kind of truth, while the allegorical metaphor is a trope; therefore it is more exaggerative than the comparative analogy (Hashemi, 1376: p. 350).

Conclusion

There is no existential controversy regarding this metaphor, however, there has been controversies regarding its nomenclature and where it should be discussed. Qazvini assumed that Sakkaki placed it in the lexical singular metaphor because he [Sakkaki] mentioned it under the rubric of the discussion of the actual explicit metaphor, while it was not the case, and as Taftazani and others quoted the purpose of Sakkaki was not that, but he considered the allegory as a an absolute part of the actual metaphor which includes both the singular and synthetic not a metaphor which is a singular trope. However in this respect that some called it as Masal (parable) , it should be said that a parable is called allegorical metaphor which in the manner of a common metaphor be prevalent and widely used.

The most simple and perfect definition can be stated in this way: allegorical metaphor is a synthesis which is used in a non-literal meaning other than its literal denotation because of the existence of the grounds of analogy and along with a context that refrain the realization of the connotational meaning of the speech. That is, the tenor which is an abstraction form of multiple grounds is compared to the vehicle which is also an abstraction form of multiple grounds either. As an instance if we use the parable “pestling the water in the mortar” for a person who is engaging a fruitless endeavor, the person who is engaging a fruitless endeavor (tenor) is compared to a person who is pestling the water in the mortar (vehicle); and the ground of analogy is that fruitless endeavor.

References


