

# "the fall of the house of usher" by edgar allan poe as the mock of transcendental...

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"The Fall of the House of Usher" by Edgar Allan Poe as the mock of Transcendentalism. The 19th century was a significant time for the American literature. At that time two completely different genres had been founded ??? Transcendentalism and Dark Romanticism. While transcendentalism was based on human's consciousness and logical thinking, Dark Romanticism was disparate. For instance Dark Romantic poets used to write about pessimistic people who live in a dark, unfriendly surroundings, while Transcendental works were optimistic and had didactic overtone.

Ralph W. Emerson, as well as Henry D. Thoreau and other representatives of Transcendentalism, told us that intuition is the key to understanding the world. In contradiction to the Dark Romantic characters who act irrationally and usually fail to achieve success. These features were mostly noticeable in Edgar Allan Poe's works. He hated Transcendentalism[1] but it had a strong influence on his creations. Some of Poe's poems and novels had some elements which were deriding Transcendental ideas. In this essay I will try to shed some light on such elements in E.

A. Poe's short story The Fall of the House of Usher and I will prove that it is one of the greatest mocks of Transcendentalism. Roderick Usher, the main character of Poe's The Fall of the House of Usher, shared a special spiritual bond with his twin sister ??? Madeline. We may say that he was "the body" while she was "the brain". [2] Roderick didn't have problems with his physical fitness but he suffered from the mental disorder. Unlike Madeline who mentally was perfectly healthy but her physical condition was bad.

They complete each other so one of them would not manage to live without the other. How does it relate to the one of the main ideas of Transcendentalism which says that "one has to be individual"[3]? Roderick could not be an individual because he was entirely dependent on his sister. He could not live without her. His illness and mental block deprived him of the possibility to think logically and we may assume that Madeline was responsible for it. In this twisted and sublime way, Poe was trying to ridicule probably the most important idea in Transcendentalism which was stated by Emerson.

Transcendental works tell us that there has to be a connection between human body and mind. A human has to be aware of his behavior and should be able to learn from his actions. Due to this ability, people are above the animals in the evolution. Roderick Usher is a complete negation of these rules. His demeanour connected with his appearance may make an impression of an animal. Even narrator "with great effort, could not connect his (...) expression with any idea of simple humanity"[4]. As I mentioned before, Roderick suffered from mental disorder which made him unable to perceive reality as it is.

A reader of *The Fall of the House of Usher* should bear in mind the scene where Roderick had buried his sister, even if he knew that she was alive, and he forgot about it. This may be an evidence that he was not behaving like a human being. By this progress of events, Poe made an implicit mock.

Nevertheless, Madeline Usher, after long struggles, managed to get out of her grave and she came back to her brother. She was so exhausted that she

only managed to fall into Roderick's arms and to die by his side. Before death, she uttered a moan.

One may think that she condemned Roderick's deeds. The death of the Ushers was epic and emphasized. This excerpt exalts death and it fully goes against transcendentalism because for transcendentalists more important than a concern about the afterlife, should be a concern for this life. [5] We may deduce that for transcendentalists life was more important than death. One should not think about the death nor the afterlife because life and deeds are more important. One may notice that Poe used a metaphor to express disapproval of the transcendental idea.

Madeline, who was locked up in her coffin, may represent the past. Roderick wanted to change something in his life, he wanted to become individual, independent ??? that is why he imprisoned his sister when she was still alive. Transcendentalists believed that "being locked up in the past is wrong"[6]. Usher could not escape from his past. Madeline fled from her tomb and she came back to seize Roderick. It proves that Poe was aware that one is not able to escape from the past and all the consequences that follow it.

The scene of Usher's death also proves that Roderick could not live without his sister. She was a part of him, which he could not remove. As a recapitulation, I think it is noticeable that Edgar Allan Poe placed some elements of mockery in "The Fall of the House of Usher". In addition, this short story is not the only one of Poe's works where he is deriding Transcendentalism (e. g. "Never Bet the Devil Your Head"). E. A. Poe had never had any sympathy for Transcendentalism and he was not ashamed of it.

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He didn't seem to understand the ways of politicians nor the manner of dealing with the m[7]. His soul was dark and gloomy and it did not match to Transcendentalism. Bibliography Bickman, Martin. "An Overview of American Transcendentalism". American Transcendentalism Web. 26. 06. 10. Edwards, H. W. , Horton, R. W. "Comparison of Early American Theologies". American Transcendentalism Web. 26. 06. 10 Emerson, Ralph Waldo. "Self-Reliance". Self-Reliance and other Essays, Dover Publications, 1993, (19-39) Poe, Edgar Allan. The Fall of the House of Usher and other Tales.

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