

standing but about to collapse' which links directly to analysis that Poe was writing to highlight that reason could not provide a stable, unified identity. Thus far, this essay has sought to discuss the theme of double/duality in Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher*, with particular emphasis on the psychological and religious elements. However, what has been demonstrated is that although both psychological and religious conceptions of duality are identifiable in the text, they are unlikely conscious and more likely a product of Poe's context, namely, the Enlightenment period. Given this context and use of duality, it has been argued that it is more likely Poe was interested in portraying the unsuccessful nature of reason in regards to human identity.

Given that Poe uses duality to display the inadequacy of reason it is unsurprising that the mental state of the narrator deteriorates throughout the story. To elaborate, throughout the text the narrator is depicted as a rational, reasonable character that Roderick calls on to most likely provide some advice and guidance to his own current mental state. When character Roderick is 'listening to some imaginary sound' with 'mad hilarity in his eyes' the narrator is presented as rational, the one who leads him away from this disillusion 'with a gentle violence'³³. However, the narrator, to whom the reader identifies, appears increasingly unstable, such that Carr notes that the twins' illness had begun to 'infect' him and he becomes overwhelmed with 'a thousand conflicting sensations, in which wonder and extreme terror were predominant'³⁴. As Carr notes, the narrator begins to recognise the greatest threat to order, the uncanny. Each time the narrator becomes aware of the uncanny, it is demonstrated by 'a moment at which the narrator surrenders to a panicky distrust of reason, returning to rationality only as a refuge from the grotesqueness of the 'facts''³⁵. Walker also comments that;

'On the night of the catastrophe the narrator experiences the same depression and terror which had oppressed Roderick throughout the tale, and it becomes

³³ Edgar Allan Poe, "The Fall of the House of Usher".

³⁴ Edgar Allan Poe, "The Fall of the House of Usher".

³⁵ Annabel Carr, "The Fall of the House of Usher", 168.

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