



THE MOTIVE OF MADNESS IN THE NOVELS OF EDGAR ALLAN POE

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Abstract: E A Poe called romantic and rationalist. He miraculously combines thin and romantic soul, with all its experiences, feelings and longing, and strict logical mind that does not believe in inspiration, it calculates every move in advance and contemplating the effects of which should make an impression on the reader. The personality of Edgar Allan Poe is built on contradictions. It is natural to assume that in his work will also be viewed by connecting the rational and the irrational. This article is devoted to the analysis of one aspect of the philosophy of art of the American writer - motivated by madness, which is the basis of a much more complex and, in our view, the fundamental concepts of Poe's creativity - duality is realized through the motif of the border.

Keywords: Edgar Allan Poe; the motive of madness; the motive of border; romanticism; short stories; literary criticism.

Along with the traditional romantic motifs of art, time, loneliness, fear, death, we highlight Poe's specific motifs of intoxication and boundaries, connected in one way or another with the depiction of an altered state of consciousness. It is known that the writer was particularly interested in the study of the "basements" and "attics" of human consciousness, which was embodied in a number of short stories, the key motive of which was the motif of madness. The close connection of this motif with the border motif and its inclusion in the system of motifs of Poe's philosophy attracted our attention.

The motif of madness is generally characteristic of romanticism and many authors turned to it in their works. And most often it was presented in the usual interpretation for romantics - "the sublime madness of the artist." U E. But the concept of "madness" turned out to be broader, because In addition to the classical approach to depicting this motif, we noticed several more varieties of it and tried to analyze them.

In this work, the texts of the short stories "The Oval Portrait", "The Fall of the House of Usher", "The Tell-Tale Heart" and "The System of Doctor Smol and Professor Perrier" were used.

In the short story "Oval Portrait" the reader learns a story about the artist. The reader is presented with the image of a romantic creator, an Artist who "was already married to his Art." This Artist enters into an alliance with a beautiful girl - a union between the Artist and Beauty, which should give the world something ideal. The author repeatedly emphasizes the mental state in which the artist is at the moment of creation: "... he put his whole soul into this work», "...he was a passionate man, absorbed in his dreams," "he devoted himself to work with mad passion and did not take his eyes off the picture." It is clear that the artist was obsessed with Art, his dream was to create and understand the Ideal through art. "This is life itself!" - he exclaims, fascinated by his creation. It seems that in the end he is no longer struck by the death of his beautiful wife, but by the strength and power of his Genius, his talent.



Here we see an image of an Artist close to the characteristic of German romanticism, striving to comprehend the secrets of existence, to come to Truth, to touch Beauty. To achieve this, he needs to overcome reality, step back and move away from the material into the ideal. Poe's obsession and fascination with Art and Fantasy help Poe's artist achieve his goal. Here we can talk about the classical romantic interpretation of the motif of madness, about the high madness of the artist, where the result of his activity is the creation of beauty.

And yet, E. Poe is more characteristic of a realistic depiction of various painful states of consciousness (this point is also manifested in the short story just discussed - in the image of a narrator intoxicated with opium).

As an example, consider "The Fall of the House of Usher" - this is a novella that raises many questions to which it is useless to look for answers. What was Asher's illness? Why did the house have such a strange effect on its inhabitants and the narrator? We will not find any cause-and-effect relationships in the text. Simply because everything here is based on an insane perception of reality.

The story includes elements of psychologism (depicting the painful state of the human psyche) and elements of Gothic, with its inherent predominance of fear and horror.

In Poe, psychopathic madness leads to the disintegration of the human personality. Although it can be noted that the madman Roderick had a passion for music and painting. In most cases, deviations in the consciousness of the heroes of Poe's "terrible" short stories lead to the commission of terrible acts, to self-destruction and destruction. Asher due to his illness, which is described as "severe nervous excitement" [4; 222], buries his sister alive, and the hero of another short story, "The Tell-Tale Heart," who, unlike Asher, does not recognize himself as sick, kills his neighbor for no reason. In this short story you can see how Poe "infects" his hero with a disease such as monomania (excessive concentration of attention on any subject). Berenice's teeth, a white spot in the shape of a gallows on a black cat. And now the old man's glass eye. Along with monomania, the "non-contradiction" also awakens (one can recall the short story of the same name). And here madmen cannot control their sick consciousness, so they are on the border of the real and the unreal, reality and sleep, truth and fiction, life and death. As a result, they always find themselves outside the boundaries of the surrounding reality, and the reality that their sick mind generates is the basis for the actions they commit. The above options for implementing the madness motive are not unique. The artist's high madness is characteristic of romanticism, and the depiction of a hero with mental disabilities is not so original. They are quite common in the literature, in contrast to the following interpretation.

The novella "The System of Doctor Smol and Professor Perrier" is interesting because the theme of madness and insanity is literally turned on its head. The narrator arrives at a psychiatric hospital, attracted by talk of a new and unique treatment system. He talks with the hospital staff, discovering a lot of new things, but it turns out that the patients who spoke to him were those who escaped from custody and took the places of doctors. Doctors find themselves in the shoes of their patients.

Here Poe raises the interesting theme of the difficulty of distinguishing between sick and healthy consciousness. All the patients, led by Mr. Malyar, embody both an insane consciousness and an adequate view from the outside, because Over lunch they calmly talk about their own illnesses, analyze them and evaluate them. The narrator, the embodiment of a naive consciousness, is generally unable to distinguish the sick from the healthy. And even after all the madmen have returned to their chambers, the narrator does not realize what



happened, and then he begins to search for references to a treatment system invented by a madman, believing that this is a serious scientific work. And as an instruction from the mad Mr. Malliar, we hear the phrase: "... when a madman seems completely healthy, then you should put a straitjacket on him" [4; 764]. Thus, the author raises the question of whether it is even possible to confidently distinguish between these states. One can be so similar to another. Madness here is presented as a game. It implies the presence of rules, presupposes logic, although at the same time the game personifies a certain freedom (freedom to create your own world). Doctors and healthy people play by these rules. Madmen with their consciousness do not fit into the given framework; they are called upon to break the rules, personifying irrationality. But even in this irrationality, in turn, there are rules. Thus, logic and chaos collide in the short story, and in this collision one of the main principles of Poe's work is realized - duality. A combination of logic and reason with the depiction of elemental human nature. We can find the roots of this idea in the German romantics, and a comparison of the views of the Jenes, as the leading philosophers of romanticism, with the views of Poe will help to more clearly define the originality of the writer's work.

It is impossible to deny the influence of the Jena romantics on Poe's views and work. In order to see how the concepts of "logic", "madness", "border" interact on both sides, we turned to the essays of E. Poe, the theoretical works of Berkovsky and "Fragments" by Fr. Schlegel and Novalis.

A special love for nebulae and uncertainty unites the Germans with Poe. Berkovsky: "Where everything is made known, there is no freedom." Freedom is beyond the boundaries of the known, and true creativity is also there. In his short stories, Poe often crosses boundaries, both physical and mental, to build his own picture of the world. Other aspects of understanding the border are similar. "According to the romantics, even a contour is despotism," and "Characters are unacceptable, because they constrain the personality and set limits for it." Likewise, Poe does not endow his heroes with any character or a certain type. He adheres to the same position in relation to space and time.

But there are things that are radically different. Poe often tries to combine the rational and the irrational. This logic, clarity of presentation, the ability to trace the path of creation of the work distinguished him from the Jena people, who argued that "The poet truly creates in unconsciousness, which is why everything in him is conceivable" (Novalis). Poe notes that many writers prefer not to show how they really work, but to create a myth about some kind of crazy creative impulse. He sees the author's goal, first of all, in achieving a certain, pre-thought-out effect.

Of course, a certain system was also characteristic of the Germans, but it was important only as a reason to go beyond its borders to the chaos that remained outside the system, in search of novelty and development. Thus, it can be argued that Poe, somewhat guided by the Jenes, builds a clear coordinate system in his work, where the creative process is subordinated to logic, including in this system both play and chaos, both creative and destructive. He makes attempts to systematize, master this chaos and at the same time leave it in a pristine free state. Hence, the madness itself in his short stories becomes logical, as in "The System..." and "The Tell-Tale Heart": this is not a way of understanding the world, like the Jenes, but the only possible logical way of describing it. Such duality is the direct embodiment of Poe's concept of the border, where we can denote logic by the formula "seeing the border", and chaos by "violating the border". The bizarre interweaving of these diametrically opposed phenomena lies at the basis of all the work of E. Poe.



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