

The Racial Worldview of H. P. Lovecraft, Part 1

H. P. Lovecraft

from <http://www.counter-currents.com/2010/09/the-racial-worldview-of-h-p-lovecraft-part-1/>



Edited by A. Trumbo

Editor's Note:

The purpose of these writings is to provide a genuine look into the racial *Weltanschauung* of Howard Phillips Lovecraft (1890–1937). I have drawn my data from the five volumes of *The Selected Letters Of H. P. Lovecraft*, published by Arkham House in 1965. The authors who compiled this great collection—August Derleth, and Donald Wandrei—were friends and correspondents of Lovecraft's. The preface (*Selected Letters*, vol. 1) states: “We have made no alteration or changes in the text reproduced. We present them as he (H. P. L.) wrote them.” Here I present the racial intellect of Mr. Lovecraft in his own words, written by his own hand.

Nov. 25, 1915

I can sympathize with Morton in many ways. I am not an orthodox disciple of religion, but I deem it dangerous to tamper with any system so manifestly beneficial to morality. Whatever may be the faults of the church, it has never yet been surpassed or nearly equalled as an agent for the promotion of virtue. And the same thing applies to our present social system. It has its defects, but is evidently a natural growth, and better fitted to preserve an approximate civilization than any Utopian scheme conjured up over night by some artificially thinking radical. As to races, I deem it most proper to recognise the divisions into which nature has grouped mankind. Science shows us the infinite superiority of the Teutonic Aryan over all others, and it therefore becomes us to see that his ascendancy shall remain undisputed. Any racial mixture can but lower the result. The Teutonic race, whether in Scandinavia, other parts of the continent, England, or America, the cream of humanity, and its wanton and deliberate adulteration with baser material is even more repulsive to consider than the elaborately staged racial suicide now being conducted, wherein Germanic and Britannic Teutons are striving to annihilate each other instead of uniting against the Mongol-tainted Slav or menacing Oriental.

Sometimes I think of racial combinations as chemical reactions; for instance, I believe that certain stocks have greater assimilative powers than others. The Gallo-Basque stock with Latin [Roman] infusion, which constitutes the bulk of the French population, is much more receptive to alien blood than is our colder and more Teutonic stock.

Dec. 6, 1915

And the more I study the question, the more firmly am I convinced that the one supreme race is the Teuton. Observe the condition in the British Isles. The English are wholly Teutonic, and therefore dominant. The southern Scotch and eastern Irish are also of that blood—they certainly surpass their fellows to the north and west. The Welsh, who have no Teutonic blood, are of little account. Had it not been for the Teutonic infusion at the beginning of the Dark Ages, southern Europe would have been lost. Who were these early French kings and heroes that founded French civilization? Teutons, to a man! . . . Who were the Normans? Teutons of the North. It is pitiful to me to hear apostles of equity pipe out that other races can equal this foremost of all—this successor to the Roman race in power and virility.

June 4, 1916

The Providence Journal has virtually declared war on Germany, and has well-nigh exhausted *Roget's Thesaurus* in looking for adjectives wherewith to denounce th' embattled Goth; but the editor scarce dares breathe a word against the slippery sons of Saint Patrick who violate American neutrality just as flagrantly as any German ever did, and who have been consistently doing so for many century. These migrated Micks have not scrupled to use the United States so far as they can as a weapon against their lawful King and Empire, and the "Sinn Fein," revolt is not the only one financed largely with American-gathered capital.

Dec. 23, 1917

As the general situation, it seems very encouraging just now. It may take a second war to adjust things properly. I tremble to think of the possibilities of the Russian collapse which may open resources of a vast country to the enemy. If the predicted Western drive of the Huns succeeds, the war is virtually lost. There is something the matter with the morale of the more polished nations—they need a little more brutality of the old Teutonic sort. No army can win without a certain savage lust of combat, and this spirit is being undermined with the current cant about democracy, idealism, and all that sort of rot. The issues should be made clearer—the first fight is not in the interests of a coming millenium of social reform; it is for the hearth and home—for existing institutions against a perilous invasion of an unnatural culture. Racial factors are also united against us. For all our Roman civilization, the enemy has a preponderance of superior blood. If all the Allied nations were as thoroughly Teutonic as Prussia, the end would be nearer and happier. Nothing can withstand the might of the Teuton—he is the logical successor of the Roman in power. Teutonic blood snatched Britain from the Celt and made England the greatest force in all civilization. Teutonic blood conquered the Western wilderness and gave America an instant place amongst the great nations of the globe. But this blood has become so extensively and tragically diluted, that the non-German Teutons may well look with concern to their future. The grotesque fallacy of the "Great American Melting Pot" may yet be brought home to the people in one of the most tear-stained pages of their history. Germany herself has set a truer valuation on the importance of unmixed blood, but may yet come to grief through the absorption of Slavic elements. The course of Germany during the last half-century has been one of curiously mixed merit. Certain scientific and philosophical developments have been marvellous, yet they have been conjoined to a brutality and narrowness of vision which threaten the development of civilization. The pan-Teutonic ideal, attainable only by a complete and amicable co-operation between Anglo-Saxon and Germanic races, has been fallaciously subordinated to a petty pan-Germanic ideal which is bringing about the

virtual suicide of the Teutonic race, and driving the Anglo-Saxons and Germans into equally unnatural alliances with alien races. The Saxon has his Hindoos and Moors, and the German his Turks. Progress is at a standstill, and everything human is lost in a mad scramble for a material victory. Even a recurrence of the Dark Ages is not possible—a recurrence which will leave the Teutonic race so depleted numerically that the world's future is seriously threatened. Wilhelm, Wilhelm! What has thou wrought?

The Racial Worldview of H. P. Lovecraft, Part 2

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Ed. A. Trumbo

Editor's Note:

Lovecraft had a rather unbecoming tendency to judge other branches of the Indo-Aryan racial family from a very chauvinist, Imperial, pro-English perspective. Despite his derogatory remarks about Slavs and Celts, if he were alive today there could be little doubt that he would embrace the ideals of Pan-Aryanism. I would also like to state that the many oddly spelled words and incorrect grammar are Mr. Lovecraft's and not mine: "When I was ten I set to work to delete every modern word from my vocabulary, and adopted an old Walkers Dictionary (1804) which was for some time my sole authority. All the Queen Ann authors combined to form my literary diet."

Sept. 30, 1919:

No one else in filmland can duplicate his delineation of stark, hideous terror or fiendish malignancy. Hayakawa excels in tragical pathos, and would soar high if he were a white man. I would not at all be surprised if he had a dash of white blood somewhere. Both Walthall and Hayakawa are too good for films—they ought to be known more widely.

. . . Orientals must be kept in their native East till the fall of the white race. Sooner or later a great Japanese war will take place, during which I think the virtual destruction of Japan will have to be effected in the interests of European safety. The more numerous Chinese are a menace of the still more distant future. They will probably be the exterminators of Caucasian civilisation, for their numbers are amazing. But that is all too far ahead for consideration today.

Jan. 23, 1920:

Eroticism belongs to a lower order of instincts, and is an animal rather than nobly human quality. For evolved man — the apex of organic progress on the Earth—what branch of reflection is more fitting than that which occupies only his higher and exclusively human faculties? The primal savage or ape merely looks about his native forest to find a mate; the exalted Aryan should lift his eyes to the worlds of space and consider his relation to infinity!!!!

Oct. 6, 1921:

At heart I despise the aesthete and prefer the warrior—I am essentially a Teuton and barbarian; a Xanthochoric Nordic from the damp forests of Germany or Scandinavia, and kin to the giant chalk-white conquerors of the cursed, effeminate Celts. I am a son of Odin and brother to Hengist and Horsa . . . Grr . . . Give me a drink of hot blood with Celtic foes skull as a beaker! Rule, Britannia . . . GOD SAVE THE KING!

May 18, 1922:

The illumination is unique and extensive, but neither superlatively impressive nor in any sense truly artistic. At the elevated station at 6th Ave. and 42nd St. I lost my fellow Anglo-Saxon, whose home is far to the north in the semi-African jungles of Harlem; . . . Kleiner proceeded to lead us into the slums; with “Chinatown” as an ulterior objective. My gawd what a filthy dump! I thought Providence had slums, and antique Bostonium as well; but damn me if I ever saw anything like the sprawling sty-atmosphere of N.Y.s lower East Side. We walked—at my suggestion—in the middle of the street, for contact with the denizens, spilled out of their bulging brick kennels as if by a spawning beyond the capacity of the places, was not by any means to be sought. At times, though, we struck peculiarly deserted areas these swine have instinctive swarming movements, no doubt, which no ordinary biologist can fathom. Gawd knows what they are . . . a bastard mess of stewing mongrel flesh without intellect, repellent to the eye, nose, and imagination would to heaven a kindly gust of cyanogen could asphyxiate the whole gigantic abortion, end the misery, and clean out the place. The streets, even in the centre, are filthy with old papers and vegetable debris—probably the street-cleaners dislike to soil their white uniforms by visiting such infernos.

Feb. 10, 1923:

Anent the Fascist problem—assuredly we approach it from radically different directions. Galpinus and I have been discussing democracy a lot lately, and we agree that it is a false idol—a mere catchword and an illusion of inferior classes, visionaries, and dying civilisations. Life has no ultimate values, and our proximate values can be little more than what we like to see or possess. “Right” and “Wrong” are primitive conceptions which cannot endure the test of cold science. Now Galpin and I maintain that, logically, man of taste should prefer such things as favour strong and advanced men at the expense of the herd. Of what use is it to please the herd? They are simply coarse animals—for all that is admirable in man is the artificial product of special breeding. We advocate the preservation of conditions favourable to the growth of beautiful things—imposing palaces, beautiful cities, elegant literature, reposeful art and music, and a physically select human type such as only luxury and a pure racial strain can produce. Thus we oppose democracy, if only because it would retard the development of a handsome Nordic breed. We realise that all conceptions of justice and ethics are mere prejudices and illusions—there is no earthly reason why the masses should not be kept down for the benefit of the strong, since every man is for himself in the last analysis. We regard the rise of democratic ideas as a sign of cultural old age and decay, and deem it a compliment to such men as Mussolini when they are said to be “XVth century types. We are proud to be definitely reactionary, since only a bold repudiation of the word “liberal” pose and the progress illusion can we get the sort of authoritative social and political control which alone produces things which make life worth living. We admire the old German Empire, for it was a force so strong that it almost conquered all the combined forces of the rest of the world. Personally, my objection to Germany in the late war was that it formed a menace to our English Empire—an empire so lamentably split in 1775-83, and so regrettably by effeminate ideas of liberty. My wish was that we English reunite into one irresistible power and establish an (sic) hegemony of the globe in true Roman fashion. Neither we nor Germany will ever be really strong till we have unified imperial control.

Our modern worship of empty ideals is ludicrous. What does the condition of the rabble matter? All we need do is to keep it as quiet as we can. What is more important, is to perpetuate those things of beauty which are of real value because involving actual sense-impressions rather than vapid theories.

“Equality” is a joke—but a great abbey or cathedral, covered with moss, is a poignant reality. If (it) is for us to safeguard and preserve the conditions which produce great abbeys, and palaces, and picturesque walled town, and vivid sky-lines of steeples and domes, and luxurious tapestries, and fascinating books, paintings and statuary, and colossal organs and noble music, and dramatic deeds on embattled fields—these are all there is of life: take them away and we have nothing which a man of taste or spirit would care to live for. Take them away and our poets have nothing to sing—our dreamers have nothing to dream about. The blood of a million men is well shed in producing one glorious legend which thrills posterity and it is not at all important why it was shed. A coat of arms won in a crusade is worth a thousand slavering compliments bandied about amongst a rabble.

Reform? Pish! We do not want reform! What would the world be without its scarlet and purple evil! Drama is born of conflict and violence . . . god! Shall we ever be such women as to prefer the blond-bearded warrior? The one sound power in the world is the power of a hairy muscular right arm!

Yah! How I spit upon this rotten age with its feeble comforts and thwarted energies—its Freuds and Wilsons, Augustines and Heliogabali—rabble and perversions! What these swine with their scruples and problems, changes and rebellions, need, is a long draught of blood from a foeman’s skull on the battlements of a mountain fortalice! We need fewer harps and viols, and more drums and brasses. The answer to jazz is the wild dance of the war-like conqueror! Don’t complain of the youth’s high-powered motor-car unless you can give him an horse and armour and send him to conquer the domains of the neighboring kings! Modern life my gawd! I don’t wonder that literature is going to hell or chaos! What is there to write about now? Before we have literature we must have life—bold, colourful, primitive, and picturesque. We must change a George V for a Richard Coeur de Lion—a Platagenet!.

May 3, 1923:

Nothing must disturb my undiluted Englishry—God Save The King! I am naturally a Nordic—a chalk-white, bulky Teuton of the Scandinavian or North-German forests—a Viking, a berserk killer—a predatory rover of Hengist and Horsa—a conqueror of Celts and mongrels and founders of Empires—a son of the thunders and the arctic winds, and brother to the frosts and the auroras—a drinker of foemen’s blood from new picked skulls—a friend of the mountain buzzards and feeder of seacoast vultures—a blond beast of eternal snows and frozen oceans—a prayer to Odin and Thor and Woden and Alfadur, the raucous shouter of Niffelheim—a comrade of the wolves, and rider of nightmares—aye—I speak truly—for was I not born with yellow hair and Blue eyes—the latter not turning dark till I was nearly two, and the former lasting till I was over five? Ho, for the hunting and fishing in Valhalla! Who knows . . . ? The Phillippses come from the borderlands of Wales, that mystic Machenian land. May there not be in them some trace of blood from some Roman praetor of Britannia Secunda, whose capital was Isca Silurum with its walls, its noble amphitheatre, its Etruscan-columned Temple of Diana, its Pons Saturni, its tessellated pavements, its inscriptions of the Septimii Severi, its Via Nympharum and Via Julia, . . . Io triumphe! S.P.Q.R.!! . . . Yes, Sonny, the Mediterranean world isn’t so bad when one goes back to Pelagic times and takes the Graeco-Roman races! After all, I have dark hair and eyes now, no matter what I used to have; and it is quite as good to be a sanguinary Roman consul as a Norse pirate. Long live the Pantheon! Vivat M. Agrippa! By being a Roman, I can quite logically prove a good grandfather to such as my small boys Belnapius and Alfredus . . . Latins all! But as a classical and ancient Latin, I enjoy cheese, which was a leading feature of the Graeco-Roman diet. Therein our souls are separated by the impassable gulf of the Dark Ages, O Francisco Borgia, Prince of Arsenic-Sharks and Stiletto hounds!

The Racial Worldview of H. P. Lovecraft, Part 3

H. P. Lovecraft

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Ed. A. Trumbo

Editor's Note:

Chalk-white Nordicks, Imperial Romans, and Hercynian Woods, are but a few of the topics touched upon in this Lovecraft letter. It contains a collection of thoughts founded more on fantasy than fact, but very interesting thoughts nonetheless. The letter does, however, contain enough racist diatribe to send the average lemming, or "conventionally limited" Lovecraft fan into a pallid state of shock. For those of you who have already attained racial enlightenment, and are Lovecraft fans as well, our journey into the arcane depth of Lovecraft's worldview continues.—A Trumbo

Dec. 11, 1923

. . . I do not claim to be 100% Teuton. My dark hair and eyes forbid me that honour. But when I reflect on the fact that hair and eyes are the first things to be chang'd in a blond race upon the least infusion of southern blood, and gold-and-blue scheme being very unstable and liable to revert to the more primitive and deeply hereditary brown or black scheme; I am content to survey my ample height and pallid complexion (bleach'd by the deep Saxon forests and Scandinavian snows) and pronounce myself 99.9% Teutonick. This supposition is borne out by my coarse features—the rough-hewn physiognomy of a Viking warrior—and by my enthusiastick response to warlike and imperious stimuli. .

. .

As to the artistick capacity of the Nordick in general, I will freely admit that it does not take the most obvious and characteristick forms. The masses of a Nordick race are not so aesthetically responsive as the Mediterranean masses—though even here we have to reckon with the acute musical sensibility of the Germans. But having made all concessions, I now pause to inquire why artistick capacity is any proper measure of value for race-stock? To my simple old mind, art is merely a more or less unsatisfactory substitute for real life; and when we consider life and action, deeds and conquests, governments and administrations, what race since the Romans can compare with us? Did we not pour down out of our native forests and reclaim a degenerate Europe where civilisation, under effete Mediterranean dregs, was dying out? My God! The very name of France comes from our huge yellow-bearded Franks, and in Spain they call a gentleman a *hidalgo*—hijo del goda—son of the Goth—the huge blue-eyed, conquering

Nordick! Fancy a world without Clovis—or its Charlemagne—the Teuton Karlomann, and the Vikings and the Norsemen . . . ho for the frozen seas and the epick* of sleet and blood, strange lands and far wonders! Greenland, Iceland, Normandy, England, Sicily—the world was ours, and the mountainous billows heaved with the Cyclopean rhythm of our barbarick chants and shouts of mastery! Art? By Woden, were not our deeds and battles, our victories and empires, all parts of a poem more wonderful than aught which Homer cou'd strike from a Grecian lyre? Ho! Yaah! We are men! We are big men! We are strong men, for we make men do what we want! Let no man balk us, for our gods are big gods, and our arms and our swords are tough! Hrrrr! The stones of towns fall down when we come, and crows love us for the feast of dead men we give them. The lands shake with the thump of our feet, and hills grow flat when we stride up and down them. The floods are dry when we have drunk them, and no beasts are left when we have killed and gorged. By day we kill and seize, at dusk we feast and drink, by nights we snore and dream big dreams of strange seas we shall sail, old towns we shall burn, stout men we shall slay, wild beasts we shall hunt, deep cups we shall drain, fat boars we shall tear limb from limb with our hands, and gnaw with our sharp teeth. Great Thor, but this is life! We ask no more! We know the cool of deep woods, and the spell of their gloom and the things void of name that lurk or may lurk in them. Bards sing them to us in the dark with great hoarse voices when the fire burns low and we have drunk our mead. Bards sing them to us, and we hear. Great, gaunt bards with white beards and the old scars of good fights. And they sing things that none else have dreamed of; strange, dim, weird things that they learn in the woods, deep woods, the thick woods. There are no woods like our woods, no bards like our bards.

Puritanism? I am by no means dispos'd to condemn it utterly in the pageant of the world, for it is not life an art, and art a selection? The Puritans unconsciously sought to do a supremely artistic thing—to mould all life into a dark poem; a macabre tapestry with quaint arabesques and patterns from the plains of antique Palaestina . . . antique Palaestina with her bearded prophets, many gated walls, and flattened domes. The fatuous floundering of the ape and the Neanderthaler they rejected—this and the graceful forms into which that floundering had aimlessly blunder'd—and in place of slovenly Nature set up a life in Gothick design, with formal arches and precise traceries, austere spires and three interesting little gargoyles with solemn grimaces, call'd the father, the son, and the holy ghost. On shifting humanity they imposed a refreshing technique, and an aimless and futile cosmos supply'd artificial values which had real authority because they were not true. Verily, the Puritans were the only really effective diabolists and decadents the world has known; because they hated life and scorned the platitude that it is worth living. Can you imagine anything more magnificent than the wholesale slaughter of the Indians—a very epick—by our New-England ancestors in the name of the lamb? But all aside from that—these Puritans were truly marvelous. They did not invent, but substantially developed the colonial doorway; and incidentally created a simple standard of life and conduct which is, no apart from some extravagant and inessential details and a few aesthetic and intellectual fallacies in all truth the most healthy and practical way of securing happiness and tranquillity which we have had since the early days of Republican Rome. I am myself very partial to it—it is so quaint and wholesome. But not alone in Puritanism is the Nordic's beneficent influence to be found. Who else could, after the decay of Rome, have revived the aesthetic of strength which in antique days reared to the heavens the colonnades of the Capitolium, the dome of Vesta, the splendours of the Palantine, the walls of the Colisseum, the balconies of the Septizonium, the altitudes of the Pantheon, the colossi and arches of conquering despots, and countless other stone and marble ecstasies of ebullient domination? True, we have never equalled those breathless marvels, for we own ourselves no match for the world-overtopping ROMAN CITIZEN; but alone of all races we have revived—in our master-achievement ENGLAND—that that resistless sway which gave them birth, and have enabled the modern world to share in that delirium of artistic excitement and surging pride which must fill'd every true ROMAN when, looking back from some crest in the road at sunset, he saw limned in flame the gold the domes

and columns, vast, prodigious, multitudinous and induplicable, of earth's supreme apotheosis of dominion — THE IMPERIAL CITY.

“Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento; Hae tibi erunt artes: pacisque imponere marem, Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos.”

So, Sonny, your old Grandpa is pretty well satisfied to be a Nordick, chalk white from the Hercynian wood and the Polar mists, and stout arm'd to wield the mace, the broadsword, and the javelin. Nordics can buy dark foreign slaves cheap in the market-place—sharp, clever little Greeks and Alexandrians who will decorate our walls and chisel our friezes well enough when tickled with the lash of a Nordic overseer. Our province is to found the cities and conquer the wilderness and people the waste lands—that, and to assemble and drive the slaves, who tell us stories and sing us songs and paint us pretty pictures. WE ARE THE MASTERS.