

Veranstalter:	Dr. Stefan Schenk-Haupt
Modul:	H. P. Lovecraft and Neo-British Tradition [ENG-6/a, AA-V3a/b, ENG-12, AA7, AA-10, LAA9, LAA12, AA-MA3, AA-MA4, MAST-A5, AA-W, AA-WB]
Art der Veranstaltung:	Seminar II
Veranstaltungsnummer:	53-550
Zeit:	2st., Tuesdays 16-18
Raum:	Ü35-01047
Beginn:	October 17th, 2017

H. P. Lovecraft (1890-1937) was a prolific American weird fiction writer. But he considered himself a 'New Englander', regarded the US as a British colony (on the loose) and ended lots of his many letters with the exclamation 'God save the King!'. In his writings he emulated the Augustan poets (Pope, Gay, Prior) and his concept of horror widely circumvents American traditions of this mode of writing. Consequently, Lovecraft gained considerable posthumous attention first in Europe, especially France, Spain and Italy. All this suggests a specific take on national identity that I call 'neo-British tradition'. We will dissect Lovecraft's views on this post-colonial view of his own country and trace it through his texts as well – including his racist and neurotic tendencies.

Moreover, Lovecraft's most advanced texts contribute to a specifically British vein of science-fiction which is pre-occupied with the evaluation of where human beings stand in the evolution of things (on a cosmic scale).

While being a pulp writer during his lifetime, Lovecraft's texts demand their own way of reading. His prose takes on the rhetorics and stylistic devices of poetry, archaic vocabulary as well as a decidedly materialist, even mechanistic world view. Inclusion of the latter leads to a series of fundamental paradoxes in literary composition that pose less of a problem, surprisingly, but a means that Lovecraft was able to exploit.

Topics: horror, neurosis, the uncanny, New England topicality, stylistic analysis, myth-making, inversion of theology, the US and British colonial history, gentleman topos

Screenings (18-20): *The Thing* (J. Carpenter), *The Whisperer in Darkness* (S. Branney)

Books to buy (optional – Lovecraft's texts are public domain, a reader will be provided):

Lovecraft H. P. 1999. *The Call of Cthulhu and Other Weird Stories*. Ed. by S. T. Joshi. New York.
 Lovecraft H. P. 2000. *The Annotated Supernatural Horror in Literature*. Ed. S. T. Joshi. New York.
 Lovecraft H. P. 2001. *The Thing on the Doorstep and Other Weird Stories*. Ed. by S. T. Joshi. New York.
 Lovecraft H. P. 2004. *The Dreams in the Witch House and Other Weird Stories*. Ed. by S. T. Joshi. NY.
 Cuddon, J. A. ⁴1998 or ⁵2014. *The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms*. London, revised edition.

Course requirements:

Teilnahme: protocol, thematic preparations of texts, active participation, one essay (5 pp.)

Studienleistung: presentation (ca. 10 min.)

Prüfungsleistung: term paper, ca. 15 pp., to be handed in by February 28th, 2018

Sprechstunde Vorlesungs-, vorlesungsfr. Zeit	per appointment
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Syllabus (preliminary)

- I 17.10. Introduction to Lovecraftian horror; How to write a term paper
- II 24.10. Lovecraft and the Lovecraft Circle; *The Tomb*
Biography and Gentleman topos (presentations)

Getting rid of Gothic traditions

- III 31.10. *The Rats in the Wall*; [*The Outsider*]
Supernatural Horror in Literature (essay – presentation)
- IV 7.11. *The Hound*
Narratology (recapitulation); stylistic analysis

Merging fantasy with ‘supernatural horror’

- V 14.11. *The Nameless City, The Other Gods, The Festival*
New England topicality
- VI 21.11. *Nyarlahotep – The Fungi from Yuggoth* (sonnets) – *The Book* (fragment)
Revision and rewriting

Merging ‘supernatural horror’ with science fiction

- VII 28.11. *The Color Out of Space*
- VIII 5.12. *Dagon; The Call of Cthulhu*
Inversion of theology
- IX 12.12. *The Whisperer in Darkness*
British science fiction versus American horror writing (King, Koontz)

Screening: *The Whisperer in Darkness*
- X 19.12. Lovecraft’s artificial mythology; mechanistic materialism
- XI 9.1. *At the Mountains of Madness*

Screening: *The Thing*
- XII 16.1. *The Shadow Out of Time*

Eldritch Horror!

- XIII 23.1. *The Shadow Over Innsmouth* – post-colonial and racist aspects
- XIV 30.1. *The Shadow Over Innsmouth*; wrap-up

Agora-room (texts, materials, events): “Lovecraft and neo-British tradition”
pass: “Lovecraft” (adjust your standard e-mail to the one you actually check regularly)