

Houston Stewart Chamberlain, *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*, 1899

Ranke had prophesied that our century would be a century of nationality; that was a correct political prognostic, for never before have the nations stood opposed to each other so clearly and definitely as antagonistic unities. It has, however, also become a century of races, and that indeed is in the first instance a necessary and direct consequence of science and scientific thinking. ...

To this day these two powers – Jews and Teutonic [Germanic] races – stand, wherever the recent spread of the Chaos has not blurred their features, now as friendly, now as hostile, but always as alien forces face to face. ...

I understand by “Teutonic peoples” the different North-European races, which appear in history as Celts, Teutons (Germanen) and Slavs, and from whom – mostly by indeterminable mingling – the peoples of modern Europe are descended. ... [The Teuton] has proved himself so intellectually, morally and physically pre-eminent among his kinsmen, that we are entitled to make his name summarily represent the whole family. The Teuton is the soul of our culture. Europe of to-day, with its many branches over the whole world, represents the chequered result of an infinitely manifold mingling of races: what binds us all together and makes an organic unity of us is “Teutonic” blood. If we look arounds, we see that the importance of each nation as a living power to-day is dependent upon the proportion of genuinely Teutonic blood in its population. Only Teutons sit on the thrones of Europe. ...

In spite of the broad common foundation, the human races, are, in reality, as different from one another in character, qualities, and above all, in the degree of their individual capacities, as greyhound, bull-dog, poodle and Newfoundland dog. Inequality is a state towards which nature inclines in all spheres; nothing extraordinary is produced without “specialization”; in the case of men, as of animals, it is this specialization that produces noble races; history and ethnology reveal this secret to the dullest eye.

Nothing is so convincing as the consciousness of the possession of Race. The man who belongs to a distinct, pure race, never loses the sense of it. ... Race lifts a man above himself: it endows him with extraordinary – I might almost say supernatural – powers, so entirely does it distinguish him from the individual who springs from the chaotic jumble of peoples drawn from all parts of the world: and should this man of pure origin be perchance gifted

above his fellows, then the fact of Race strengthens and elevates him on every hand, and he becomes a genius towering over the rest of mankind, not because he has been thrown upon the earth like a flaming meteor by a freak of nature, but because he soars heavenward like some strong and stately tree, nourished by thousands and thousands of roots – no solitary individual, but the living sum of untold souls striving for the same goal. ...

Here we begin to understand what nation signifies for race. It is almost always the nation, as a political structure, that creates the conditions for the formation of race or at least leads to the highest and most individual activities of race. ...

... since race is not a mere word, but an organic living thing, it follows as a matter of course that it never remains stationary; it is ennobled or it degenerates, it develops in this or that direction and lets this or that quality decay. This is a law of all individual life. But the firm national union is the surest protection against going astray: it signifies common memory, common hope, common intellectual nourishment; it fixes firmly the existing bond of blood and impels us to make it ever closer.