

WYNDHAM LEWIS AND THE DIFFERENT FORMS OF CENSORSHIP

Yolanda Morató Agrafojo
Universidad Pablo de Olavide

Abstract

Wyndham Lewis (1882-1957), a contemporary of T. S. Eliot, Pound and Joyce, made his name in a particularly fruitful period for Literature written in English. Before he became an implacable critic who dissected his society with his satirical novels, his essays and two volumes of memoirs, *Blasting and Bombardiering* (1937) and *Rude Assignment* (1950), Lewis was a painter and a draughtsman, published short stories, poems and even two plays; edited three magazines and managed to become an insightful cultural historian of the time through his fictional and non-fictional work. However, his sharp critiques, the violent language of his avant-garde writings and his personal enmities with influential writers and editors of his time triggered continuous threats of litigation, which many times led to censorship—more or less visible—of his writings and paintings. This article not only analyses these conflicts during his lifetime but it also examines the repercussion of his polemics to this day.

Resumen

Wyndham Lewis (1882-1957), contemporáneo de T. S. Eliot, Pound y Joyce, adquirió su reputación en unas décadas particularmente fructíferas para la literatura en lengua inglesa. Antes de convertirse en un crítico implacable que diseccionó a la sociedad en sus novelas satíricas, en sus ensayos y sus dos autobiografías, *Estallidos y bombardeos* (1937; trad. 2008) y *Rude Assignment* (1950), Lewis fue pintor y dibujante, publicó relatos, poemas e incluso dos obras de teatro; editó tres revistas y consiguió convertirse en un profundo historiador cultural de su época a través de su obra de ficción y no ficción. Sin embargo, sus afiladas críticas, el lenguaje violento de sus escritos de vanguardia y su enemistad personal con influyentes escritores y críticos de la época desencadenaron continuas amenazas de litigio, que en muchas ocasiones tuvieron como resultado la censura —más o menos visible— de sus escritos y su pintura. En este artículo no solo se analizan estos conflictos a lo largo de su vida sino también la repercusión que han tenido hasta nuestros días sus antiguas polémicas.

Key Words: Wyndham Lewis, censorship, *The Little Review*, *Cantelman Spring-Mate*, The Royal Academy, *The Apes of God*.
Palabras clave: Wyndham Lewis, censura, *The Little Review*, *Cantelman Spring-Mate*, The Royal Academy, *The Apes of God*.

Painter and writer Wyndham Lewis (1882-1957), enfant terrible of British Modernism but also one of the scapegoats of contemporary studies and criticism, has a copious record of affidavits, threats of litigation and accusations of obscenity. In different times and for different reasons, Lewis has been found objectionable by an important number of fellow writers and critics who have considered him a misogynous, fascist and obscene author. However, as biographers Meyers (1980a) and O’Keeffe (2000) have pointed out, more often than not Lewis’s private life has been misjudged and the characters of his literary works identified with personal accounts. A notable illustration of this is the chapter that John Carey devoted to Lewis in *The Intellectuals and the Masses* (1992) where, as part of his exacerbated criticism (1992:232), he passed off a quotation from a character of Lewis’s great satirical novel, *The Apes of God* (1930), for a statement from one of his essays, *Paleface* (later turned into a book), with the sole purpose of proving Lewis’s racism.

As Munton (1997) and Terrazas (2001) have argued, some critics have made use of Lewis’s work to support their own theses about the political, masculine and obscene side of Modernism.¹⁰⁹ Terrazas (2003:11) followed specialist Alan Munton to confirm a misrepresentation of Lewis’s writing and thought during the last two decades of the twentieth century: “The implications based on the arguments of these scholars have been obnoxious in many occasions because they aim to fulfil their particular, often distorted, desires rather than to illuminate Lewis’ production.” The result of this approach has been an assortment of often unfair interpretations of Lewis’s visual and literary production and the consequent difficulties to promote and republish his work for more than half a century.

The climax of this type of criticism, chiefly based on accusations of Fascism, was reached in the 1990s –only few years after the Berlin Wall had fallen but almost fifteen years after Fredric Jameson had published *Fables of Aggression: Wyndham Lewis, the Modernist as Fascist* (1979). Among the publications featuring similar interpretations, which rather look like accusations, are those by Bonnie Kime Scott (1989), David Ayers (1992),

¹⁰⁹ Geoff Gilbert analysed fragments of *Joint*, a novel Lewis never published, and concluded that “[a]part from the affect, it is not clear what these passages are meant to achieve” (2004:16). These fragments are available for scholarship at the Wyndham Lewis collection in Cornell University archives and have been already studied by specialists on Lewis (see Edwards (2000:317-21)).

Andrew Hewitt (1993), Vincent Sherry (1993), Andrea Freud Loewenstein (1993), Scott Klein (1994), Sharon Stockton (1996), Paul Peppis (1997) and Anne Quema (1999). With the exception of the books published by Black Sparrow Press in the United States during those years, whose editions and introductions were carried out by Lewis scholars, his works were profusely attacked and, therefore, difficult to obtain for the unbiased reader. The awareness of a real prejudice against his work has come to be analysed by scholars. As Brighton (1996:169-70) explains,

The distaste for Lewis is a complex symptom, a meld of both aesthetic and ideological assumptions. [...] [h]e questioned or opposed some of the fundamental assumptions of establishment culture, he was a class traitor, he [sic] an anti-progressive and rejected humanist aestheticism. From the point of view of the British cultural establishment the distaste for Lewis is well founded.

Lewis certainly sported a rebellious behaviour for many years, showing off about his lower rank in class and entering too many enmities with personalities of his time. The result of his early defiant behaviours was the dismissal from the prestigious Slade School of Art in London at the end of the 19th century, where he had entered with a grant. It was the beginning of almost a decade touring Europe. From Holland and France to Germany and Spain, Lewis stayed in every country looking for artistic inspiration and new cultural modes. In the 1910s, he became a member of some of the most influential artistic circles in London and formed important friendships with painters and sculptors, among them, Gaudier-Brzeska, Frederick Etchells and Edward Wadsworth. However, the most significant moment of this period was the year Roger Fry “stole” him a commission. The polemics with Roger Fry had started when, in 1913, an envelope addressed to Lewis, sent to the headquarters of the artistic grouping, the Omega Workshops, was opened by Fry, who never passed the message to its addressee. The letter was an invitation to curate the design of a space at The Ideal Home Exhibition. As a result, Lewis wrote a vindictive *epistle*, known as the “Round Robin”, which circulated in wealthy circles of patrons and artists provoking another scandal.¹¹⁰

In *Modern English Painters*, John Rothenstein stated that the “Round Robin” was a sort of “trailing of a coat” (1962:292), with the only goal of provoking libel action from Fry. Nevertheless, this is something that never occurred. Fry had real reasons to let the problem peter out, since it was proved

¹¹⁰ As Victoria Rosner (2005:10) has pointed out, the Omega Workshops had a quarrelsome spirit: “Artists at the Omega painted large-scale murals, made and decorated pottery and furniture, designed rugs and other textiles, and scandalized the British press, which found their work threatening and borderline obscene”.

he had stolen the letter and appropriated the commission.¹¹¹ Despite his prominence in the London art scene, Fry was a rather discreet public person who resolved his differences with others by forcing them to resign from their jobs or affiliations. After a quarrel with Fry, Lewis left the Omega Workshops with three other artists, Frederick Etchells, Edward Wadsworth and Cuthbert Hamilton, and founded the shortly-lived Rebel Arts Centre. This party was the germ of Vorticism, baptised by Ezra Pound in 1914 and the only autochthonous historical avant-garde movement in Great Britain. Fry's veiled form of censorship took place again when Lionel Cust and More Adey had to leave their posts as joint editors of the *Burlington Magazine* in 1919 because of a strong disagreement with him (Elam 2003).

For a beginning of institutional censorship in Lewis's literary production we have to look at his work in two journals. The first of them, *Blast* (1914), where he contributed to many sections but also performed most editorial tasks, did not succeed in keeping censorship at bay. Although Lewis had the "naïf determination to have no 'words ending in -Uck, -Unt, and -Ugger'" printed in his oversize magazine (Rose 1963:67), *Blast* finally ended up with three lines (the first and the last two) deleted from Ezra Pound's poem "Fratres Minores" (1914:48). Despite the three thick black lines, words could be still read, and the magazine was distributed—and censored—as follows

FRATRES MINORES

████████████████████ [With mind still hovering about their testicles]
 Certain poets here and in France
 Still sigh over established and natural fact
 Long since fully discussed by Ovid.
 They howl. They complain in delicate and exhausted metres
 ██████████████████████ [That the twitching of three abdominal nerves]
 ██████████████████████ [Is incapable of producing a lasting Nirvana.]

The second instance of censorship came within three years in the famous journal *The Little Review*, which had published Lewis's short story "Cantelman's Spring-Mate" in October 1917. The bright pink cover of the issue and the fact that Pound was the London editor gave this number a strong Vorticist flavour, whose language seemed to match the violent excesses of the period. The scandal provoked by this piece accounts for the delayed publication

¹¹¹ As has been proven (see Rose 1963:49 n3), Fry stole the letter, opened it, answered saying Lewis was not interested in the commission and left him out of the project, which had been created especially for him and Spencer Gore. In the writing of his "Round Robin" Lewis made, notwithstanding, a big mistake: instead of exposing the facts in plain English, he resorted to his "enemy" rhetoric. Attention to the real problem was distracted by his fierce language and the situation was read as a turbulent argument between two artists.

of James Joyce's early chapters of *Ulysses*.¹¹² Pound, who appreciated Lewis's story as much as Joyce did, informed his Irish protégé about the inherent problems in publishing his novel. Since the US Post Office had seized the November issue because of Lewis's prose fiction in the previous number, it did not seem the best moment for innovative fiction.¹¹³ In fact, despite *The Little Review* ideals ("making no compromise with the public taste", as its subtitle advanced), when Pound was to edit Joyce's instalment "Calypso", he deleted about twenty lines, thus compromising on censorship.

"Cantelman Spring-Mate" deals with the encounter and sexual relationship between a soldier and a village girl during the Great War in France. It has been considered one of the best stories by Lewis (Kenner 1954). The parallel worlds of War and Nature, their hypocrisy upon humankind, or, in Edwards's words (2000:182) "the biggest assault that life can make on transcendent values", constitute the core of this tale of survival. Cantelman is faced with two extreme and brutal impacts from Nature: Stella, his seducer, becomes pregnant while his life is most likely at risk with the embryonic war.

Kenner (1954:55) regarded Lewis's brutality in his general fiction as a self-defence mechanism that had already started in "the 'Cantelman' prose; a rich enough medium for sexual themes to make D. H. Lawrence sound philosophical." In fact, obscene and satirical language would become a trade mark in Lewis's private and public life. In a sense, it was part of the persona that he had created during the war years. As a result, in addition to the problems originated in the US Post Office, Lewis was also banned by the Irish Board of Censorship (Moi 2009:58).¹¹⁴

¹¹² After Pound brought Joyce's manuscript to editor Margaret Anderson, who was highly impressed, the serialised chapter began its distribution in March 1918. 14 of the 17 parts had been serialised when, in 1919, the Society for the Suppression of Vice banned its circulation. In addition, editors Anderson and Jane Heap were arrested with charges of obscenity. As was the case with the "Cantelman" issue, four issues were confiscated by the US Post Office. In Great Britain the situation was not much better. D. H. Lawrence novel *The Rainbow* was suppressed in November 1915, invoking the 1857 Obscene Publications Act. For an accurate account of the Anglo-Saxon world of literature and censors see Adam Parkes (1996).

¹¹³ For a detailed account of the problems with *Ulysses* after "Cantelman", see Forrest Read (1967).

¹¹⁴ The presence and abuse of lewd language and obscenity have been criticised in many Modernist writers and interpreted as a misogynist element, though lately some specialists have reinterpreted this attitude against Nature and Humanism as a symptom of repudiation and disgust before the threats of their society (see Paul Sheehan 2002). Elegant T. S. Eliot usually concealed this type of attitude in his writing, whereas it was a commonplace in his personal life. Lewis did, in fact, prevent his friend from publicising this approach in his writing (see Rose (1963:68), where in a letter to Pound from 1915, Lewis stated: "He told me he had written a lot of filthy sexual verse, which, if he sends it, I shall hang in the W.C."). Eventually, the publication of

The geographical component of censorship was responsible for many writers publishing their works in other countries. James Armstrong (2000) analysed the fact that many authors, fearing severe editing or suppression for obscenity in Britain and the United States, had their fiction published in Paris. And some of them benefited indeed from these circumstances:

those concerned were sometimes conscious that interference from American or British Customs could generate publicity that would act as a useful spur to sales. *Jam To-Day: A Novel* (1930) [...] was intercepted by British Customs officers just as the author and publisher had planned, and it indeed subsequently sold well. The novel is of further interest for the inclusion of *roman-a-clef* elements that might have provoked libel actions if it had been published in London. Firminger was acquainted with the artist and writer Wyndham Lewis (1882-1957) and both she and *Jam To-Day* provided inspiration for a character in Lewis's own novel *Snooty Baronet*. (1932)

In the French capital, small presses such as Sylvia Beach's Shakespeare and Company, Nancy Cunard's The Hours Press and the Imprimerie Vendôme at 338 rue St-Honoré, with the imprint "Herbert Clarke", provided a shelter for fiction likely to be prey of censorship in Great Britain and the United States. Under a new partner and director, British writer Kahane (1936:1) established the Obelisk Press at Clarke's premises with a clear *principle* on any work to be published: "it must be good and cannot be bought in England and America." Lewis's writings, on the contrary, were published with no exception in Great Britain and North America and, as a result, libel actions threatened to fall on every satire he wrote.

Taking into account that, as a rule of thumb, Lewis satirised well-known personalities of his time, he began to pay frequent visits to the King's Bench Division of the London High Court of Justice. *The Apes of God* (1930) was the novel which caused the biggest stir, since it satirised the bourgeois society of London. The Sitwells, the Wadsworths, the Schiffs, elitist clans and coteries who had helped him in the past paid now a high price for their ingenuity and dilettantism. On the grounds that Lewis's criticism was directed towards people alive it is easy to see why his books were frequently an issue for libel. Furthermore, the fact that many of his novels were clearly following the pattern of the *roman à clef* made some people very nervous, to the point of even identifying themselves with characters that had already provoked libel action from another person. But, on the contrary to what Armstrong describes as a

Eliot's "notebook" *Inventions of the March Hare: Poems 1909-1917* (1996) caused a scandal –it actually provoked a big debate in *The New York Times*. The anti-Semitic and male-chauvinistic language of his poems showed T. S. Eliot had much in common with the men of those decades (see Sarah Lyall 1996). Lyall reproduces T. S. Eliot's 1922 words to John Quinn: "I beg you fervently to keep them to yourself and see that they are never printed."

best-selling effect, Lewis's books did not arouse that interest nor was Lewis's intention to achieve that effect proper. His prose was difficult and both his publishers and readers were from England. Therefore, it is evident that his works were not written to become pot-boilers or to provoke any kind of scandal in a foreign country.

Lewis interpreted and used satire in its traditional sense; it was for him a means to purify the world. Contrary to what is commonly thought of this genre, in his case it had little to do with revenge. As O'Keeffe (2000:254) has pointed out: "Sydney Schiff discovered that being a friend of Wyndham Lewis did not necessarily spare him from the sort of venom usually reserved for an enemy." The responses to these attacks varied, of course, from person to person. James Joyce, the most attacked writer in Lewis's fiction and non-fiction writing, understood his method and provided his own creative response instead of suing Lewis. As Dirk Van Hulle (2007:322) has pointed out:

He rather pushed Lewis's point to the limit by using the very vocabulary of Lewis's "Analysis" in *Finnegans Wake*, deliberately scraping together odd phrasings and recombining them in his last work. This way, he neutralized the criticism and immunized his work against it on the principle of vaccination.¹¹⁵

Others, such as writer Dick Wyndham, took offence and sought to ridicule Lewis in public, resolving to "retaliate with an advertisement in the agony column of *The Times* offering two large Lewis paintings for sale at insultingly low prices" (O'Keeffe 2000:254).

The customary practise of suing Lewis resulted in many famous people finding possibility of litigation where it was actually not very clear to prove. Other times, it was used as a business weapon, as with the publishing house Chatto and Windus, when attempting to get rid of Lewis from their list of authors. For this purpose they opted for Alec Waugh's case, who had accused Lewis for satirising his homosexuality in a Chatto and Windus edition and whose lawyers were friends of the publishers. At the end of the process, Waugh and Lewis came to a double agreement: Waugh was made to produce in writing his apologies for being mistaken in his charges and Lewis had to withdraw an

¹¹⁵ The chapter "An Analysis of the Mind of James Joyce" in Lewis's literary and philosophical book essay *Time and Western Man* (1927) was the first extended piece analysing James Joyce's *Ulysses* in detail. Lewis's "analysis" of Joyce as a craftsman and the relation he established between Joyce's masterpiece and Marcel Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu* did not please the Irish writer. However, some of the critical points enumerated by Lewis did put Joyce in a favourable position: whilst criticising his Bergsonian vision of time, Lewis stated his literary method had been copied by others, mainly accusing Virginia Woolf of stealing too many Joycean techniques.

entire chapter from his book *Doom of Youth* (1932), a book that was finally pulped in 1934 and put an end to all contracts with this press.¹¹⁶

What was the outcome of so many literary problems to be solved at the lawyers' office? The delays in publication of Lewis's novels, as was the case of *The Revenge for Love* (1937), confirm Kenner's arguments. As Edwards clarifies (2000:443), in this case "the novel was not published until 1937 owing to Lewis's by now customary quarrels with publishers: frequent libel suits were making him a liability". Originally titled *False Bottoms* and written in 1936, this novel about the Spanish Civil War suffered several deletions and amendments stipulated by publishing house Cassell before they finally agreed to have it published.¹¹⁷ Edwards (2000:567 n20) have catalogued a long list of these quarrels between Lewis and publishing houses. A summary of the main actions includes Chatto suing Lewis for failing to complete *The Childermass*; withdrawals of Lewis's books after publication for libel suits –*The Doom of Youth* for libelling Alec Waugh and *Filibusters in Barbary* for libelling a British resident of Agadir–; and *Snooty Baronet* banned for its obscenity in most major commercial lending libraries. The long list gives an idea of the time Lewis spent in court.

Armstrong (2000:312) remarked that "Lewis had himself suffered several forms of censorship, notably the over-printing of text in *Blast* and the refusal of the United States Post Office to distribute an issue of the *Little Review* in 1917" as described at the beginning of this article. However his masks and rebellious poses, Lewis did not interpret censorship as a personal crusade but he also advocated for those suffering the same path as his. As Armstrong points out, in his article "****!!-...?****!!", published in the *Daily Express* (25 October 1929, p. 10), Lewis "had protested in a newspaper article about the substitution of

¹¹⁶ There were two editions of this book released that same year: *The Doom of Youth* (American edition, Robert M. McBride & Company) and *Doom of Youth* (English edition, Chatto & Windus). Lafourcade and Morrow (1978:63-65) described in detail all the process between the date of release and the final withdraw of the book (after March, 1934, there were 550 copies extant out of the initial 1518). O'Keeffe (2000:331) also questions the possibility of publishing house Chatto and Windus plans behind Lewis's back.

¹¹⁷ *The Revenge for Love* was written in 1934-35 and initially titled *False Bottoms*, which had to be changed at the request of the publisher. As Morrow and Lafourcade (1978:83) indicate "As late as February 23, 1937 Lewis was still being asked to alter potentially libellous passages." This is very likely to be the first novel about the Spanish Civil War written by a foreign author, before Hemingway's and Malraux's fictions. Reed Way Dasenbrock reconstructed the text for an edition of the novel in Black Sparrow Press, "probably as close to Lewis's intentions as can now be constructed" (Edwards, 2000:567). In Spain, the novel was translated from the censored version but maintaining its uncensored title, *False Bottoms* (*Dobles fondos*, trad. Miguel Temprano, 2005).

asterisks and blanks for words and passages in the British edition of Richard Aldington's novel *Death of a Hero*."

Unlike Marjorie Firminger, who was at the other side of this experience, Lewis did in fact have many problems in dealing with libel.¹¹⁸ The continuous services from lawyers worsened his already bad finances. In addition, as the manuscripts in the Department of Rare Books at Cornell University and in The Poetry Room at the State University of New York at Buffalo (SUNY) demonstrate, he made profuse revisions in his manuscripts on many occasions, ensuring the deleted passages were illegible to others. Whereas Lewis's *The Apes of God* had little repercussion abroad, an article by Wambly Bald (1931:5) in the *Chicago Daily Tribune* in Paris referred to Firminger's novel as "the official dirt book of 1931", notably highlighting the effect of the *roman à clef*: "It tells everything about her old friends. The book was published and Chelsea exploded."

Another book of that period, in a similar vein, was *The Roaring Queen*. Published posthumously in 1973, though offered to his editors as early as June 1930, it is the closest Lewis was to the effect caused by Firminger. Edwards (2000:433) has defined it as a "gossipy travesty of a detective novel, intended as a satire on the publishing world and its prizes"; Charles Prentice, of Chatto and Windus, had considered it in 1930 as:

one of the best things of its kind [...] too risky for Chatto to do. Too many heads are cracked, & the result would be that the wounded would take it out on us, which means not only the partners in Chatto's, but their authors also. (Lafourcade and Morrow 1978:112)

The lawyers at Jonathan Cape also regarded the manuscript as libellous in 1936 and recommended not to publish it. Two copies of the suppressed set-up proofs can be found at Cornell University since the book was withdrawn just before publication.¹¹⁹

Lewis's paintings also ended up being a target of censorship. In 1938, Augustus John, one of the members of the Royal Academy of Arts, announced that he was leaving the board after Lewis's portrait of T. S. Eliot had been rejected. In fact, as pointed out by Edwards (2000:468), "[r]ejection of the painting by the Academy did not become front-page news until Augustus John resigned." The 1930s had proven problematic for modern art at the Royal

¹¹⁸ Eventually, Firminger's husband, a lawyer, helped Lewis with the lawsuit from Alec Waugh and waived his client most of his fees when the end of the case resulted in each part paying for their own lawyers.

¹¹⁹ Box 93, (folders 16 and 17), at Cornell University, contains letters from Jonathan Cape concerning *The Roaring Queen*. C. H. Prentice's original letter is in Box 96, Folder 80.

Academy. Sir Stanley Spencer, an Associate Member, had resigned in 1935 after two of his paintings were rejected by the Hanging Committee. Painter and Slade School of Art professor Walter Sickert also abandoned the board that same year when the Vorticist-styled statues by sculptor Jacob Epstein were censored. The dismissal of the famous painting by Lewis, celebrated today as one of the masterpieces of portraiture of the 20th century, caused a scandal and reached the headlines of national newspapers in England.¹²⁰ On April 26th, *The Times* published the news about Lewis's rejection and John's resignation, summarising in its editorial that "A rebuff to one single portrait by a younger painter has roused the great heart of Mr. Augustus John to action" (Rose 1963:255). During four issues the newspaper printed letters and a two-part article in relation with the negative response from the "Unacademic Academy." Even an old-time enemy from Bloomsbury, Clive Bell, wrote an article in favour of Lewis playing with these polemics in *The New Stateman* and *Nation*.

Lewis's response in *The Times* (May 4th) illustrates that Churchill's reaction was likely to be one of the most infuriating for him. As published in an article from May 2nd, the future Prime Minister commented on the issue, stating that "no large organisation can long continue without a strong element of authority and respect for authority" (Rose 1963:255). The reasons for this open admission of censorship policies had to do, surprisingly enough, with the sparse symbolism placed at Eliot's back, interpreted as a depiction of sexual organs. A bird in its nest, supposed to embody the female organ, and the phallic shape of a totem, on Eliot's left and right hand side, respectively, allegedly represented the grounds for the rejection of this portrait. This had been the most harsh form of censorship he had experienced in painting, though it should not be forgotten that fifteen years before, Lewis's contributions to the magazine *The Sketch* were withdrawn because the public wrote letters of complaint about their "modernity" (Edwards 2000:249).

Both Kenner and Edwards believed Lewis's "Cantelman" prose and themes were recurrent in other novels such as *Tarr* and *Snooty Baronet*. Perhaps it is not an exaggeration to state that Cantelman shines under the carapace of every Lewisian character detached from reality as the only possibility to survive it. In *Wyndham Lewis*, a monographic study on Lewis, Kenner (1954:26) pointed out that his best works from the first period, which date from 1917 and 1918 ("Inferior religions", "Cantelman's Spring-Mate" and "The Code of a

¹²⁰ For Lewis, this was a period of great activity in the media. During the first months of 1938, he had received positive reviews on a solo exhibition at the Leicester Galleries [*Apollo*, XXVII.157 (January 1937): 44; Thomas McGreevy. *The Studio*, LXV.84 (March 1937): 154-155] and now he was back with an exchange of letters because of the opinions printed in *The Times* during several days [Thomas Dobkin, Edmund Dulac, W.R.M. Lamb, Sir William Nicholson] but also in other national newspapers such as *The Daily Telegraph* and *Morning Post*.

Herdsmen”), did change the author’s perspectives on fiction, “because instead of consolidating their gains, Lewis diverted his richest energies for twenty years into polemic.”

The ghost of censorship did haunt Lewis’s work to such an extent that, more than ten years after his death, when his autobiography *Blasting and Bombardiering* (1937) was to be re-published, his wife, Anne Wyndham Lewis, took charge of this task and suppressed significantly problematic paragraphs, as if the idea of censorship were still casting a shadow over her husband’s writings. As Munton (1997) and Terrazas (2001), Ollivère (2008:67) has recently remarked that:

it is paramount to consider that for each new undergraduate cohort whose contact with the work of Wyndham Lewis is coloured by myopic critical attitudes, the opportunities to bring more just assessments of his work into the academic mainstream diminish in proportion. In this situation, it would seem naive to question the persistent vilification found in contemporary references to Lewis [...]. Since commercial criticism functions, increasingly, as a barometer for the future of academia, its consequences would [sic] best be observed with caution, and some concern.

In recent years, some cases of censorship in Lewis’s work have been analysed in more detail. *The Apes of God* (1930) is receiving much of the attention, mainly due to the interest in the genre of *roman à clef*. An illustration is “The Novel at the Bar. Joyce, Lewis, and Libel” (2009), by Sean Latham, where the ambiguities and constraints of libel laws are examined in both modernist authors. Rowland Smith had previously focused on another instance of the impact of libel in “Snooty Baronet: Satire and Censorship” (in Meyers 1980b). However, if we take into account Wyndham Lewis’s large contribution to Modernism, a more comprehensive view of the matter is necessary. My goal has been to represent a full range of forms of censorship in Wyndham Lewis’s writings and paintings. He suffered them all throughout his life, indeed, some of them based on political fears, others on personal interests. His paintings were dismissed, *accidentally* lost or damaged; his novels and short stories banned, withdrawn, out of print. In Spain, the first translations of his books (2005, 2008, 2010) have become available only recently. What seems astonishing is that, almost one hundred years after his first works were published, there is still reticence to study an author who greatly contributed to the history of British Literature and Painting during the first half of the twentieth century.

REFERENCES

- Armstrong, James. "'On Account of Literary Indiscretions': Wyndham Lewis and the Publication of Marjorie Firminger's *Jam To-Day: A Novel* (1930)." *The Library. The Transactions of the Bibliographical Society* 1.3 (2000): 308-321.
- Ayers, David. *Wyndham Lewis and Western Man*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992.
- Bald, Wambly. "La Vie de Boheme (As Lived on the Left Bank)." *Chicago Daily Tribune* [Paris edition] (26 August 1931): 5.
- Bell, Clive. "The Unacademic Academy." *Nation* XV.378 (1938): 870-872.
- Brighton, Andrew. "Post-War Establishment Distaste for Wyndham Lewis: Some Origins." *Volcanic Heaven. Essays on Wyndham Lewis's Painting and Writing*. Ed. Paul Edwards. Santa Rosa: Black Sparrow Press, 1996: 169-183.
- Carey, John. *The Intellectuals and the Masses. Pride and Prejudice among the Literary Intelligentsia, 1880-1939*. London: Faber and Faber, 1992.
- Daniels, Mary F. *Wyndham Lewis: A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscript Material in the Department of Rare Books, Cornell University Library*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Library, 1972.
- Edwards, Paul. *Wyndham Lewis. Painter and Writer*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000.
- Elam, Caroline. "A More and More Important Work: Roger Fry and the *Burlington Magazine*." *Burlington Magazine* 145.1200 (2003): 142-152.
- Eliot, Thomas S. *Inventions of the March Hare: Poems 1909-1917*. New York: Harcourt Brace, 1996.
- Firminger, Marjorie. *Jam To-Day*. Paris: Vendôme Press, 1930.
- Freud Loewenstein, Andrea. *Loathsome Jews and Engulfing Women. Metaphor of Projection in the Works of Wyndham Lewis, Charles Williams, and Graham Greene*. London and New York: New York University Press, 1993.
- Gilbert, Geoff. "Words, flies, Jews, Joyce, *Joint*: Wyndham Lewis and obscenity." *Critical Quarterly* 46.4 (2004): 1-21.
- Hewitt, Andrew. "Wyndham Lewis: Fascism, Modernism and the Politics of Homosexuality". *ELH* 60.2 (1993): 527-544.
- Jameson, Fredric. *Fables of Aggression: Wyndham Lewis, the Modernist as Fascist*. Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1979.
- Joyce, James. *Ulysses*. Paris: Shakespeare and Company, 1922.
- Kahane, Jack. "The Legion of the Banned." *Obelisk Notes and News* 3 (1936): 1.
- Kenner, Hugh. *Wyndham Lewis*. Norfolk, Connecticut: New Directions, 1954.

- Klein, Scott. *The Fiction of James Joyce and Wyndham Lewis: Monsters of Nature and Design*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- Lafourcade, Bernard and Bradford Morrow. *A Bibliography of the Writings of Wyndham Lewis*. Santa Barbara, CA: Black Sparrow Press, 1978.
- Latham, Sean. *The Art of Scandal. Modernism, Libel Law, and the Roman à Clef*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Lewis, Wyndham. *Blast No. 1*. London: John Lane, 1914.
- _____. "Cantelman's Spring-Mate." *The Little Review* IV.6 (1917): 8-14.
- _____. *Tarr*. London: The Egoist, 1918.
- _____. "****!!-...?****!!!" *Daily Express* (25 October 1929): 10.
- _____. *Time and Western Man*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1927.
- _____. *The Apes of God*. London: The Arthur Press, 1930.
- _____. *The Doom of Youth*. New York: Robert M. McBride & Company, 1932.
- _____. *Doom of Youth*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1932.
- _____. *Blasting and Bombardiering*. London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1937.
- _____. *Snooty Baronet*. London, Toronto and Melbourne: Cassell, 1932.
- _____. *Blasting and Bombardiering*. Ed. Gladys Anne Lewis. London: Methuen, 1970.
- _____. *The Roaring Queen*. New York: Liveright, 1973.
- _____. *Dobles fondos*. Trad. Miguel Temprano. Madrid: Alfaguara, 2005.
- _____. *Estallidos y bombardeos*. Trad. Yolanda Morató. Madrid: Impedimenta, 2008.
- Lyll, Sarah. "40 Poems that Eliot Wanted to Hide, Including Some on the Bawdy Side." *The New York Times*, 23/09/1996.
URL: <http://www.nytimes.com/1996/09/23/books/40-poems-that-eliot-wanted-to-hide-including-some-on-the-bawdy-side.html>. 06/06/2011.
- McGreevy, Thomas. "Paintings and drawings by Wyndham Lewis." *The Studio* LXV.84 (1937): 154-155.
- Meyers, Jeffrey. *The Enemy: A Biography of Wyndham Lewis*. London: Routledge, 1980a.
- _____. *Wyndham Lewis: a Revaluation. New Essays*. California: University of California Press, 1980b.
- Moi, Ruben. "Bordering Binarities and Cognitive Cartography: What on Earth does Literature Have to do with Border Transactions?" *Nordlit* 24 (2009): 53-64.
- Munton, Alan. "'Imputing Noxiousness': Aggression and Mutilation in Recent Lewis Criticism." *Wyndham Lewis Annual* 4 (1997): 5-20.
- n.a. "Paintings and drawings by Wyndham Lewis." *Apollo* XXVII.157 (1937): 44.
- O'Keefe, Paul. *Some Sort of Genius: A Life of Wyndham Lewis*. London: Jonathan Cape, 2000.
- Ollivère, Maria. "'The Game of Labelling': Lewis in Academia Today." *Wyndham Lewis Annual* 13 (2008): 54-67.

- Parkes, Adam. *Modernism and the Theater of Censorship*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.
- Peppis, Paul. "'Surrounded by a Multitude of other Blasts': Vorticism and the Great War." *Modernism/Modernity* 4.2 (1997): 39-66.
- Quema, Anne. *The Agon of Modernism: Wyndham Lewis's Allegories, Aesthetics, and Politics*. Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 1999.
- Read, Forrest, ed. *Pound/Joyce. The Letters of Ezra Pound to James Joyce, with Pound's Critical Essays about Joyce*. New York: New Directions, 1967.
- Rose, W. K., ed. *The Letters of Wyndham Lewis*. London: Methuen, 1963.
- Rosner, Victoria. *Modernism and the Architecture of Private Life*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2005.
- Rothenstein, John. *Modern English Painters I. Sickert to Grant*. London: Arrow, 1962.
- Scott, Bonnie Kime. "Jellyfish and Treacle: Lewis, Joyce, Gender and Modernism." *Coping with Joyce: Essays from the Copenhagen Symposium*. Eds. Morris Beja and Shari Benstock. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1989: 168-79.
- Sheehan, Paul. *Modernism, Narrative and Humanism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Sherry, Vincent. *Ezra Pound, Wyndham Lewis and Radical Modernism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- Stockton, Sharon. "Aesthetics, Politics, and the Staging of the World: Wyndham Lewis and the Renaissance." *Twentieth Century Literature* 42.4 (1996): 494-515.
- Terrazas, Melania. "Intercambio de Recursos en la Ficción de Percy Wyndham Lewis." La Rioja: Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad de La Rioja, 2003.
- Van Hulle, Dick. "Modernism, Consciousness, Poetics of Process." *Modernism*. Eds. Astradur Eysteinnsson and Vivian Liska. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins and Association Internationale de Littérature Comparée, 2007: 219-232.

How to cite this article:

Morató Agrafojo, Yolanda. "Wyndham Lewis and the Different Forms of Censorship." *ES. Revista de Filología Inglesa* 32 (2011): 231-245.

Author's contact: ymoragr@upo.es