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Tyrus Miller, ed. 2016. *The Cambridge Companion to Wyndham Lewis*. New York: Cambridge UP. 270 pp. ISBN: 978-1-107-05398-4.

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With the institutional and academic status of a *Cambridge Companion*, this volume is a timely step forward in the ever-growing visibility and renewed interest in the work of Wyndham Lewis (1882-1927), the largely forgotten and highly influential figure of Anglo-American Modernist studies, coming as it does so close to summer 2017's largest UK retrospective of Lewis's work at the Imperial War Museum North, and following the 2015 Oxford University Press commission of the complete critical edition of the author's written works. While another recent contribution to the Lewis critical landscape, Andrzej Gasiorek and Nathan Waddell's *Wyndham Lewis, A Critical Guide* (2015), provides a highly selective and in-depth scholarly assessment of Lewis's literary and critical output, accompanied by extensive analyses of his major novels, the *Companion* aims to both inform and stimulate the reader to a re-thinking of Lewis's relevance by offering an overview of his entire oeuvre. This *Companion*, in fact, seems to share more, both structural and didactic, with Paul Edwards's *Wyndham Lewis: Painter and Writer* (2000). By aiming to strike a balance between an account of Lewis's work as a writer and his significant output as a painter, the book is welcome as an updated, more digestible and concise descendant of Edward's monumental monograph. As the editor, Tyrus Miller, clearly states in the introduction, *The Cambridge Companion to Wyndham Lewis* is a "brief and accessibly written" volume (15) aimed at new readers of Lewis. It offers a substantial introduction to Lewis's colossal corpus of work, as well as an up-to-date survey of the fundamental research themes and the main debates within contemporary Lewisian scholarship. Tyrus Miller's editorial vision, exemplified by the subtitle of his introduction, "Janus-Faced Lewis, Avant-Gardist and Satirist," consists of a volume divided into two large sections—a series of seven introductory chapters offering precious critical commentaries from some of the leading Lewis scholars, and a set of five energetic and absorbing contemporary critical chapters. The chapters are also divided into six topical groups—satire, avant-garde and modernism, politics, race and gender, philosophy and cultural criticism.

The first five chapters guide the reader through Lewis's activity in the domains of avant-garde, criticism, visual arts and satire. Chapter one, by Sascha Bru, tries to pin down the intricate nature of Lewis's relationships with the European art world. Although Bru offers insightful quotes and entertaining anecdotes, this chapter is too overarching which results in the rather too sketchy treatment of issues such as abstraction, representation or the object of art, and in the bypassing of the fundamental art theory needed to frame such complex dynamics and highlight more solidly the crucial differences between Vorticist art and its continental counterpart.

The second and third chapters—"Lewis and the Critique of Modernism" and "Lewis as Visual Artist"—respectively by Andrzej Gasiorek and Richard Humphreys, provide a remarkably concise but highly comprehensive analysis of Lewis's multifaceted artistic career. With the aim of tracing Lewis's shift from avant-garde artist to countermodernist critic, Andrzej Gasiorek structures the second chapter around the Vorticist magazine *BLAST* and the First World War as causes behind the development of Lewis's exceptionally complex and dialogical critical method. Gasiorek delivers a most effective summary of Lewis's full-scale cultural critique by illustrating his intricate relationships with contemporary artists such as Kandinsky, Picasso and Roger Fry, as well as writers, such as Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, Ezra Pound and Gertrude Stein. In his conclusion, Gasiorek introduces, briefly but informatively, Lewis's critiques of primitivism and subjectivism, and his compelling commentary on Modernist art as a commodity enslaved to contemporary ideologies. Richard Humphreys manages to briefly but solidly explore the composite and fascinating relation between Lewis's art and writing. Touching on the role of figures influential to Lewis, such as Augustus John, William Rothenstein and Laurence Binyon, Humphreys delivers the background to Lewis's formation and development as a painter in parallel to his writing. Tracing the evolution of Lewis's painterly technique and art theory, from the Omega Centre to The Rebel Art Centre, Group X, and his production as an official war artist, Richard Humphreys offers a specialist's overview of some of Lewis's greatest works such as the illustrations for *Timon of Athens* (1912-1913), *The Crowd* (1915), *Workshop* (ca. 1914-1915), the *Vorticist Sketchbook* (1914-1915), *The Surrender of Barcelona* (1934-1937), the *Tyros* series (1921-1922) and, finally, the watercolours series.

Both chapter four and five focus on Lewis's employment of satire in his various media. In "Wyndham Lewis's Theories of Satire and the Practice of Fiction," Melania Terrazas assesses character creations from *The Wild Body* (1927) to the later novels, engaging, perhaps too briefly, with Lewis's unique satirical practice in fiction. Offering a partial evaluation of the Lewisian externalist method, Terrazas summarises Lewis's own theory of satire, which is examined further in Paul Edwards's contribution: "Lewis, Satire, and Portraiture." Edwards's analysis of the differences between Lewisian satirical literary portraits, and his more detached painted portraits, offers a useful insight into Lewis's views on subjectivity and his divergent artistic treatment of the self, as well as expanding on the topics considered by Terrazas in chapter four.

In chapter six, Nathan Waddell takes on the still controversial topic of “Lewis and Fascism,” producing what is possibly the most comprehensive, compact and dynamic reading of this topic. Waddell exposes the critical neglect to which some of Lewis’s books have been subjected by critics who have often based their dogmatic arguments on the “seemingly offensive titles” (87) and assumptions made about books they had “not actually read” (87). Waddell, undoing this neglect, faithfully reports on the controversial texts in question offering a fresh and impartial critique. Moreover, Waddell contextualises historically and biographically Lewis’s response to fascism, dividing its evolution into three stages and effectively summarising his critiques of democratic systems, crowd behaviour, the role of the intellectual and the function of art in modern societies. With chapter seven—“Lewis, Anarchism, and Socialism”—Alan Munton completes the outline of Lewis’s complex political criticism by illustrating the nature of his engagement with anarchism, feminism and socialism, revealing important, surprising and less explored aspects of Lewis’s assessment of the ideal political environment for arts to thrive.

In conversation with the previous two chapters, chapters eight and nine—“Race and Antisemitism in Lewis” and “Women, Masculinity, and Homosexuality in Lewis”—respectively by Lara Trubowitz and Erin G. Carlston, show great determination in unravelling more controversial material produced by the author. By exploring the treatment of race, antisemitism, sexism and homophobia in Lewis’s fiction and critical writings, the authors offer an engaging analysis of Lewis’s assessments of race and gender as artificially constructed categories exploited for “herding operations” (126) to various political ends. The value of these two chapters resides in their contextualised summary of Lewis’s questionable views on these issues, but more interestingly, on the focus of the two authors on the importance of his own commentaries as compelling theories of these contentious topics.

Chapter ten, by David Ayers, considers “Lewis’s Cultural Criticism” as the author’s own dynamic solution to his pervading preoccupation with the artist’s necessity to create a separate platform, outside the system, in order to engage his audience to counteract the numbing and standardising effects of mass culture. The concluding chapters, by Erik Bachman—“Wyndham Lewis between Philosophy and God”—and Julian Murphet—“Lewis and Media”—both offer a fine analysis of Lewis’s remarkable relevance to contemporary philosophy, criticism and media theory by reconsidering his critiques of Henri Bergson (1859-1941) and Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947), as well as his commentary on media culture which highly influenced Marshall McLuhan’s later work.

To conclude, this accomplished collection of essays is able to offer the reader new to Wyndham Lewis a remarkably concise and full account of what is possibly the most complex intellectual mind in Anglo-American Modernism, as well as the highlights of an extremely extensive corpus of visual and written work. Most importantly, what *The Cambridge Companion to Wyndham Lewis* succeeds in doing is both effectively addressing

the most controversial aspects of Lewis's career and inspiring future scholarship by demonstrating the relevance of the author's theories to contemporary criticism, and the echo of his preoccupations in today's society. It is from our culturally decadent, commodity based, media-led society that, in Murphet's words, "we face an opportune moment to reengage Lewis's crusade" (160) of assigning to art the role of rescuing the modern individual.

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