

My God, They Stink! on Wyndham Lewis Collected literary works - Perry (LRB)

The passing notice in the Seamus Perry article linked here to Wyndham Lewis's early collaborations with Ezra Pound gives no indication of the closeness of their relationship, which began in their twenties (when they collaborated on the Vorticist (Futurist-cum-Dada) journal Blast (doomed to short-life due to its madcap épater la bourgeoisie antics appearing in England during the nationalistic fervor of WW I) and lasted until Lewis' death in 1957.

That relationship is discussed at some length in the Hugh Kenner study Perry alludes to (Wyndham Lewis, 1954) and in Kenner's magisterial The Pound Era (1971). (While we're on secondary sources, another indispensable study Perry alludes to but doesn't cite is Fredric Jameson's Fables of Aggression: Wyndham Lewis, The Modernist as a Fascist, 1981)

Neither Pound nor Lewis, though knowledgeable about the history of ideas, was a philosopher; both might better be tagged critic of culture. But unlike Pound, Lewis wrote a great deal about philosophy per se and he was good at the jargon and stylistics. As Perry notes, Lewis's main work in that vein is the sprawling Time and Western Man, and his main focus the vitalist philosophy of Henri Bergson.

Because Lewis was close to Pound in their formative twenties, and in touch with him for decades (Kenner calls him Pound's "sparring partner"), I quote and refer to him several times in my Pound Laundry as critic at large and of EP in particular.

Attached from my website (michaelgregoryaz.net) are the following four Lewis-related pieces, with page numbers for those who have the book and prefer hardcopy:

- Seven years before Armageddon, p.116

<https://michaelgregoryaz.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Seven-years-before-Armageddon-24dec25.pdf>

- Of no interest whatever, p.146

<https://michaelgregoryaz.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Of-no-interest-whatever-24dec25.pdf>

- The sudden shift from something to nothing, p.214

<https://michaelgregoryaz.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/The-sudden-shift-from-something-to-nothing.pdf>

- The melodramatic chopped bitter tone, p.223.

<https://michaelgregoryaz.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/The-melodramatic-chopped-bitter-tone-24dec25.pdf>

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