

📖 Topic Page: [Lewis, Wyndham Percy \(1882 – 1957\)](#)

Summary Article: **Lewis, (Percy) Wyndham (1882–1957)**

From *The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide*

English writer and artist. He pioneered Vorticism, which, with its feeling of movement, sought to reflect the age of industry. He had a hard and aggressive style in both his writing and his painting. His literary works include the novel *The Apes of God* (1930); the essay collection *Time and Western Man* (1927); and an autobiography, *Blasting and Bombardiering* (1937). In addition to paintings of a semi-abstract kind, he made a number of portraits; among his sitters were the poets Edith Sitwell, Ezra Pound, and T S Eliot.

Through Vorticism, a variant of cubist and Futurist ideas, Lewis opposed the ‘everyday visual real’ and favoured machinelike forms. He edited *Blast* from 1914 to 1915, a literary and artistic magazine which proclaimed the principles of the movement. Both in his paintings and in his numerous written works – including the novels *Tarr* (1918) and *The Childermass* (1928) – he was an intellectual independent, and one of his later literary products, *The Demon of Progress in the Arts* (1954), was an attack on formalized extremism. His painting *The Surrender of Barcelona* (1936; Tate Gallery, London) applies mechanistic treatment to an imagined scene of the past.

Life Lewis was born off the coast of North America, on his father's yacht, and studied art at the Slade School, London, and in Paris. Although he has been assessed by some as a leading force of the early 20th century, his support in the 1930s of Fascist principles and of Adolf Hitler alienated most critics.

Written works In *The Art of Being Ruled* (1926), he developed an authoritarian philosophy. He wrote many other polemic and critical works, full of intellectual vigour and discontent. The novel sequence *The Human Age* began with *The Childermass*; the sequels, *Monstre Gai* and *Malign Fiesta*, both published in 1955, were commissioned by the BBC (a broadcast version was produced the same year). Among his other publications are *Paleface* (1929), *The Diabolical Principle* (1931), *Snooty Baronet* (1932), *Men Without Art* (1934), *The Revenge for Love* (1937), *Count Your Dead* (1937), *The Mysterious Mr Bull* (1938), and *The Hitler Cult* (1939).

quotations

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