TIME AND WESTERN MAN:

WYNDHAM LEWIS AS CRITIC

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Dissertation Abstract

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Among modern critics, Wyndham Lewis stands out not only because of his equal powers as a novelist and a painter, but also because of his energetic and dramatically personal insistence that "the independent critical mind . . . is still the supreme instrument of research." As Eliot wrote on Lewis's death in 1957, "We have no critic of the contemporary world at once so fearless, so honest, so intelligent, and possessed of so brilliant a prose style." In Lewis's career, Time and Western Man occupies a central place. This massive critique of modern Western culture is, I believe, at once his best and his most representative work of criticism. It embodies with special clarity the most important of his distinguishing characteristics as a critic of the arts and of his culture.

My dissertation is a study of Time and Western Man and what it reveals about the principles and applications of Lewis's critical intelligence. It is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 discusses the critical persona Lewis adopted in the late 1920s. The multicolored, armored knight on horseback who decorates the cover of his one-man outlaw journal The Enemy symbolizes the doubleness of his Enemy stance: Lewis saw himself both as a knight defending good

against evil and as a Quixote championing lost causes. As he describes it, his function as a critic was to restore cultural balance by insisting--as loudly as possible--on currently unpopular truths. By thus defining himself as society's Enemy, he simultaneously anticipated and exploited the rejection he expected--and received. This persona satisfied his love of satiric self-dramatization; but more importantly, it self-consciously personified his serious critical principles.

My second chapter explores these principles as Lewis declared and defended them in the Enemy "Editorial" and in Time and Western Man. He argues that a writer's personality--his idiosyncrasies and biases--should be admitted and displayed rather than hidden beneath the pretence of "scientific" impersonality. Yet this procedure, he realizes, avoids solipsism only when it is based on a shared "common sense." Lewis's use of this phrase encompasses several ideas central to his thought: his "common sense" refers to vision, the physical sense which makes possible our belief in reality; to ordinary, everyday perception; and to intersubjectivity.

In Chapter 3, I analyze the philosophical position which Lewis takes in his attack on what he calls the "time-philosophy." By combining vision with intellect, he believes, we experience a static, spatial reality, not the ever-changing reality of relativity physics and modern thought. I examine his arguments against the time-

philosophers Samuel Alexander and Alfred North Whitehead and his place in the philosophical tradition as it is revealed by his relationships with Bergson and Berkeley.

Chapter 4 continues my analysis of Lewis's specific arguments against the modern time-cult by examining his long critique of Joyce as a "time-artist." The strong--and for many critics, unreasonable--bias of this attack dramatizes Lewis's commitment to deliberately personal criticism; more importantly, his specific arguments about Ulysses illustrate the kinds of aesthetic judgments into which he was led by his allegiance to vision, common sense, and the stability of space.

Finally, in Chapter 5, I examine Lewis's attempts to construct a model of cultural unity and change which would give the desired primacy to stasis and independent intellect. His discussions of the nature of a Zeitgeist, I think, show us some of the tensions fundamental to Lewis's work--tensions which reflect his very personal ways of dealing with the complexities of his culture.

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Introduction

Among modern critics, Wyndham Lewis stands out not only because of his equal powers as a novelist and a painter, but also because of his energetic and dramatically personal insistence that "the independent critical mind . . . is still the supreme instrument of research."[1] As Eliot wrote on Lewis's death in 1957, "We have no critic of the contemporary world at once so fearless, so honest, so intelligent, and possessed of so brilliant a prose style."[2] Yet despite such praise, Lewis's work is still very little known.[3] Certainly in many respects he is a difficult critic to read; with his frequent repetitions and self-contradictions, his often heavy-handed sarcasm, his frequently offensive political statements, he is as likely to infuriate us as to please. But even when he exasperates us most, when he seems most wrong-headed, his vigorous intelligence always challenges us to think. One of Ezra Pound's remarks exactly fixes this effect: "Wyndham Lewis," he said, "the man who was wrong about everything except the superiority of live mind to dead mind; for which basic verity God bless his holy name."[4] Both Pound and Eliot are right, I think, about their longtime friend, whose failings as a critic are often the obverse of his strengths, whose "intractable independence of mind"[5] is at the same time his vice and his virtue.

This dissertation is a study of Time and Western Man and what it reveals about the principles and applications of Lewis's critical intelligence. This massive critique of modern Western culture is one of his best-known books--partly because of its initial favorable reception, partly because of its attacks on more frequently studied figures like Stein, Pound, and Joyce, and partly because of the opinions of critics like Hugh Kenner, who has called it "one of the dozen or so most important books of the twentieth century."[6] When it appeared in 1927, Lewis was in the midst of one of his most productive periods; in the five years surrounding this book, he also published "The Dithyrambic Spectator" (1925), The Art of Being Ruled (1926), The Lion and the Fox (1927), The Childermass (1928), Paleface: The Philosophy of the Melting Pot (1929), "The Diabolical Principle" (1929), and The Apes of God (1930)--all parts of a single extended analysis of the similarities and influences connecting the art, science, politics, and philosophy of his culture.[7]

Time and Western Man itself contains two books: Book I, "The Revolutionary Simpleton," finds in modern literature the concrete evidence of a time-obsessed Zeitgeist; Book II, "An Analysis of the Philosophy of Time," traces parallel characteristics in modern philosophy. Accompanied by a number of Lewis's drawings and an "Editorial" announcing his critical position, "The Revolutionary Simpleton" appeared some seven months

ahead of the whole volume as most of the first number of The Enemy (1927-29), Lewis's three-issue "Review of Art and Literature."[8] Like Blast (1914-15) and The Tyro (1921-22), this was largely a one-man journal; unlike Blast, but like The Tyro, it was intended from the first not as a mouthpiece for a movement or a forum for contemporary criticism but as a vehicle for Lewis's own ideas.[9] Moreover, it was designed, I think, to introduce his new project as dramatically as possible. With the first issue's cover, its opening "Editorial," and the criticism in "The Revolutionary Simpleton," Lewis created the Enemy, a public personality whose distinctive voice could focus and unify his analysis of modern culture.

Time and Western Man thus occupies a central place in Lewis's career. I have chosen it as my focus, though, primarily because I think it at once his best and his most representative book of criticism. It embodies with special clarity the most important of his distinguishing characteristics as a critic of the arts and of his culture. Its subject matter, first, is typical. Ranging from advertising to theoretical physics, ballet to phenomenology, feminism to communism, the book's analyses illustrate Lewis's life-long fascination with the hidden ties among apparently unrelated phenomena--a fascination supported by his conviction that "to understand the time he lives in at all, and to take his place as anything but a lay-figure or infinitely hypnotizable cipher, in that world, [a person]

must make the effort required to reach some understanding of the notions behind the events occurring upon the surface."[10] Second, its style--its tone, its rhetorical procedures, its organizational patterns--shows us Lewis's personal voice and his usual ways of approaching critical problems. And third, its specific arguments about philosophy and literature reveal both Lewis's basic critical and philosophical principles and his abilities as a practical critic.

My study is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 discusses the Enemy persona Lewis adopted during the late 1920s and early 1930s. The multi-colored, armored knight on horseback who decorates the cover of The Enemy's first issue symbolizes the doubleness of this role: Lewis saw himself both as a knight defending good against evil and as a Quixote championing lost causes. As he describes it, his function as a critic was to restore cultural balance by insisting--as loudly as possible--on currently unpopular truths. By thus defining himself as society's Enemy, he simultaneously anticipated and exploited the rejection he expected--and received. This persona satisfied his love of satiric self-dramatization; but more importantly, it self-consciously personified his serious critical principles.

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Introduction: Notes

[1]Time and Western Man (London: Chatto and Windus, 1927), p. 11. The pagination in this edition is not the same as that of the American edition of 1928 (Harcourt Brace), which has a different preface.

[2]T. S. Eliot, "Wyndham Lewis," The Hudson Review, 10 (Summer 1957), p. 170.

[3]There is only one full-length study of Lewis's criticism, Geoffrey Wagner's Wyndham Lewis: A Portrait of the Artist as the Enemy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957). In addition, there are two recent anthologies of his criticism, C. J. Fox's Enemy Salvoes: Selected Literary Criticism (New York: Barnes and Noble Books, 1976), and Walter Michel and C. J. Fox's Wyndham Lewis on Art: Collected Writings 1913-1956 (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1969). Both of these books have very good introductions and notes (the introduction to Enemy Salvoes is by C. L. Sisson). Timothy Materer's Wyndham Lewis the Novelist (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1976) and William H. Pritchard's Wyndham Lewis (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1968) also have good discussions of Lewis's criticism. Fredric Jameson's Fables of Aggression: Wyndham Lewis, the Modernist as Fascist (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979) is indirectly concerned with many of the issues I will address; I will return to it in my conclusion.

[4]Ezra Pound, quoted in Shenandoah, Vol. 4, Nos. 2-3 (Summer-Autumn 1953), p. 17, from a private letter.

[5]John Rothenstein, Modern English Painters: Lewis to Moore (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1956), p. 17.

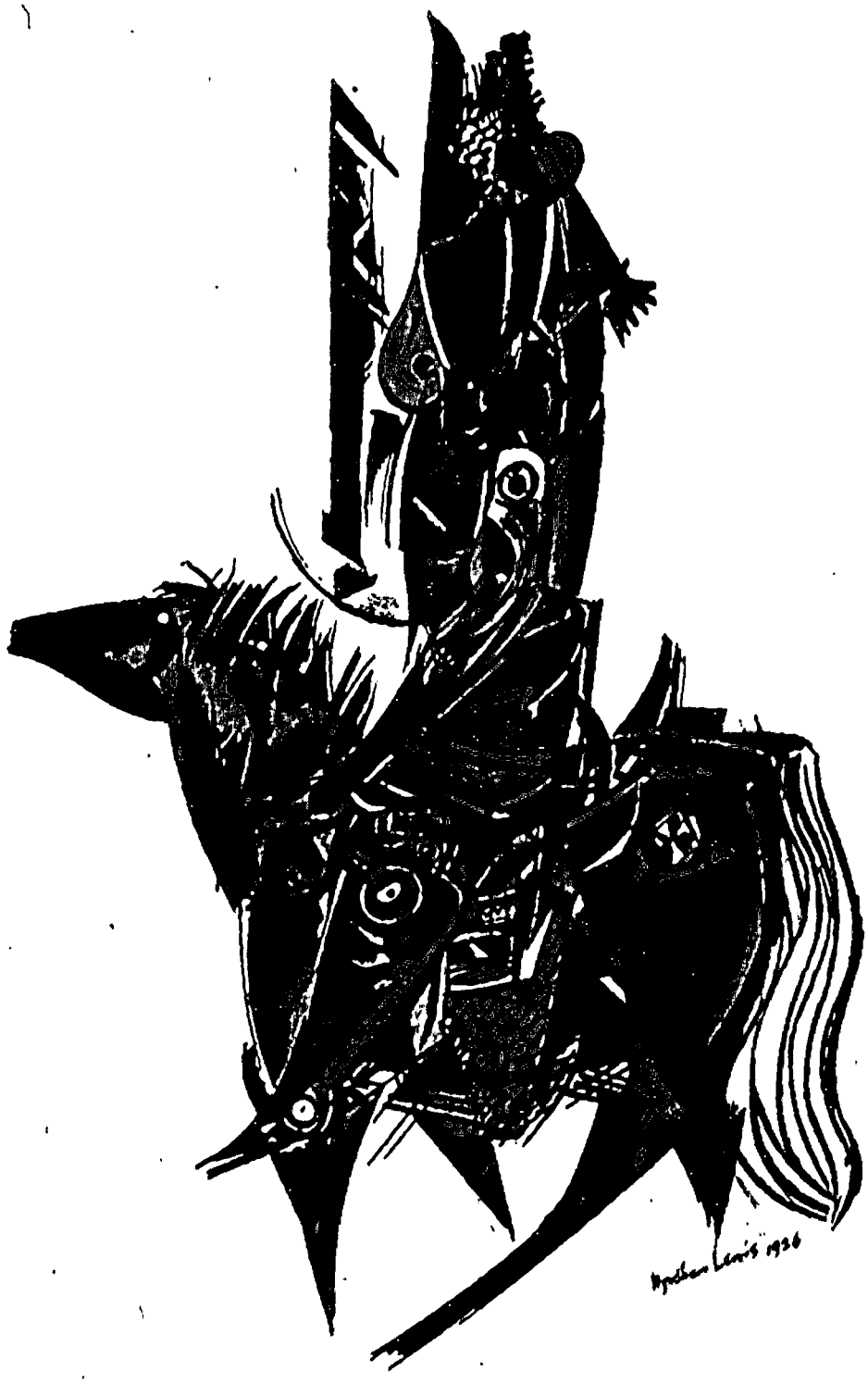
[6]Hugh Kenner, Wyndham Lewis (Norfolk, Conn.: New Directions Books, 1954), p. 74.

[7]"The Dithyrambic Spectator" and "The Diabolical Principle" appeared together as a book in 1931. During these five years Lewis also published, among other shorter pieces, a revised version of Tarr (1926) and a collection of reprinted and revised short stories, The Wild Body (1927). According to Lewis's letters, much of this analysis was originally conceived as one extended work to be called The Man of the World.

[8]Parts of Book II, most importantly the section on Spengler, were also included in this version of "The Revolutionary Simpleton." Number 2 (1927) carried the first version of Paleface; most of Number 3 (1929) was "The Diabolical Principle."

[9]In the first issue of The Enemy, for instance, only seventeen of some two hundred pages are not Lewis's work.

[10]Time and Western Man, p. 149.


Wyndham Lewis 1926

Chapter 1: The Enemy

An armored "Horseman," flamboyantly colored and ominously helmeted, announces the hero of Wyndham Lewis's one-man outlaw journal.[1] Defiant, solitary, alone in his space, the Enemy advances into action, raising his sword and readying himself for belligerent attack and counter-attack.

The rider's upper body dwarfs his mount and dominates the drawing. From the turn of his hip to the tip of his helmet, he is as tall as his horse, from its tossed head to its tapering hoof. His massive torso seems stolid and ponderous in its rigidity and its uprightness; the plates of armor which cover his chest do not move. Their dull brown, punctuated only by the red and white disk marking his shoulder, is cut vertically by the rider's left arm reaching down to the horse's reins. Of his right arm we see nothing except the trace of its motion, a thin curving line at the height of his waist. Out of this curve rises the blade of a sword; in a visual pun, the Enemy's arm of flesh has become an arm of steel.

Arms and bulk alone would suffice to make any warrior formidable, but what distinguishes Lewis's Enemy is his head. Resting directly on the torso which it equals in size, this is not the head of an ordinary man but something

more or less than human. Unlike the rest of his body, it seems more abstract than representative, more surreal than real. Like one of those Renaissance paintings in which fruit or vegetables combine to form a man's face, the Enemy's head, when we look at it closely, dissolves into shapes and colors little resembling human features or a soldier's headgear. Yet altogether its impact is unambiguous--outlandish, grotesque, and menacing.

Below this head and torso, the rider's leg and horse seem gaudy and mobile. While in the upper half of the figure, dull blues and browns overwhelm the few touches of color, in the lower half, brighter reds, greens, and oranges triumph. Where they are mixed with these colors, the same blues and browns look more vivid: decorated by the emblem on his horse's hip, the zigzags of his saddle blanket, and the kaleidoscopic fragments of his leg, the heavy brown of the Enemy's armor becomes the rich chestnut of his mount. Because these bright patches are smaller than those above them, they seem to weigh less, to bounce and jangle with the horse's gait. And because the horse's legs disappear into points, never really landing on the ground, its motion, too, is light.

Yet all this volatile color rests on a careful structure of force and counterforce. The forward thrust of the horse's longest leg parallels that of the Enemy's forearm and leg; the other three legs of the horse, and the lines which trace his neck and flank, point in the opposite direction. This

scaffolding of crossed diagonals repeats itself in much of the detailing--the pattern of diamonds in the horse's decorative emblem, the cross-hatching under its belly, the tiny zigzag of the saddle blanket. Even the horse's tail swings out, then in, then out and in again. In the bottom half of this drawing, though the parts move, the whole does not.

In the top half, traces of this grid recur, but as a controlling structure they yield to the horseman's emphatic uprightness. Just as the rider commands his mount, the solid weight of his head and torso brakes the brisk motion of his leg and his horse, and the vertical mass of the upper part of the drawing dominates the opposing vectors below. While we look at this figure, its apparent motion stops. All its energy is contained, its only outlet the slight forward tilt of the sword. Lewis's Enemy rides with a tight rein, imposing stasis on motion, compelling conflicting forces into a precarious equilibrium.

i

In opening my criticism with the "Horseman," I am following Lewis, who chose this drawing to launch The Enemy. It was a particularly happy choice for his new journal's cover, not only because its bright colors and white background would catch a potential reader's eye, but also because, like a good portrait, it captures a personality.

This figure, I think, shows us a good deal about Lewis's Enemy, the persona he created to dramatize his role as a critic of modern Western culture.[2] Most obviously, the Enemy is flamboyant--"bedizened," as Lewis later wrote;[3] of the many small figures he drew in the late 1920s, this one is almost alone in being in color rather than in black and white. At the same time, his flamboyance is controlled; beneath the color and costuming, the figure's formal skeleton has been carefully constructed. And in this underlying structure, a single decisive direction dominates a mass of conflicting opposites. Altogether, in this portrait of the Enemy, decoration is ruled by structure, lightness by solidity, kinetic by potential energy, motion by stasis.

Iconographically, the drawing is similarly suggestive. Stripped of his individual traits, the horseman is a knight--mounted, armored, helmeted, sword-bearing. Like one of King Arthur's men, he rides to protect good from evil, right from wrong. (Lewis even named his own small press--established to print The Enemy--The Arthur Press.)[4] Like Don Quixote, he rides to preserve a past, fighting as if he did not know he must inevitably lose, against enemies he may be exaggerating, distorting, even inventing. But if the "Horseman" is both chivalric and quixotic, he is also modern and grotesque. His outlandish face--the bestial yellow protuberance--tells us that Lewis the Enemy sees himself and his world not romantically but satirically.

As we will see in this and the next two chapters, these same qualities characterize Lewis's critical stance, his critical principles, and his philosophical beliefs. For in addition to the "Horseman" drawing, Lewis also gives us several written descriptions of the Enemy which demonstrate that he carefully shaped this persona to embody his intentions and his perspective both vividly and accurately. From these descriptions, we may discover how central to his project as a critic were the Enemy's functions and their ramifications.

Most conspicuously, the Enemy served as advertisement. The name itself, particularly as a title for a journal (suggesting by contradiction Coleridge's publication, The Friend), would attract attention: an enemy has a great deal more dramatic potential than an ally or protector. Characteristically, Lewis exploited this potential, using his special talent for exaggeration, caricature, and satire to create a figure who walks, talks, and even eats like a professional antagonist. Thus in 1932 he described "What it Feels Like to Be an Enemy":

> After breakfast, for instance (a little raw meat, a couple of blood-oranges, a stick of ginger, and a shot of Vodke--to make one see Red) I make a habit of springing up from the breakfast-table and going over in a rush to the telephone book. This I open quite at chance, and ring up the first number upon which my eye has lighted. When I am put through, I violently abuse for five minutes the man, or woman of course (there is no romantic nonsense about the sex of people with an Enemy worth his salt), who answers the call. This gets you into the proper mood for the day.

When he walks, he "swaggers," "eyeing all and sundry as if they were trespassing on the pavement," keeping a look out for a foe to attack with "a few broadsides of 'vitriol' or of 'invective.'" His only real worry (a distorted version of Quixote's difficulty) is the scarcity of worthy opponents--"the poor quality of his enemies."[5]

Naturally, this Enemy speaks with a flamboyantly hostile voice--a voice which allowed Lewis to indulge without restraint his talent for tongue-lashing. Always casual, loosely organized, and vigorous, his prose during his Enemy years is also often very gaudy. He sees all game as fair, and satirizes the minds and products of artists he had never met and those of his closest friends with equal glee. Moreover, despite his protest that he does not criticize people,[6] frequently he seems to attack the artist as much as the art. As the Enemy, Lewis delights in name-calling, caricature, and blatant sarcasm.

When he colors his criticism with name-calling, Lewis identifies himself as an Enemy eager to offend. Sometimes, his insults are witty: Gertrude Stein, for instance, "may be described as the reverse of Patience sitting on a monument--she appears, that is, as a Monument sitting upon patience."[7] But just as often, I think, his humor is heavy-handed: Stein, again, writes "like a child--like a confused, stammering, rather 'soft' (bloated, acromegalic, squinting and spectacled, one can figure it as) child" (65).[8] Comments like these--both literally parenthetical--seem to

be gratuitous, intended wholly to decorate, to entertain, and to shock.

Other more elaborate insults fill more complicated functions. For example, Lewis structures his criticism of Pound around two extended metaphorical insults which make several points at the same time. Pound, first, is a "revolutionary simpleton," a propagandist and "impresario." "Ezra is a crowd; a little crowd," Lewis says; "his mind [moves] in grooves that have been made for it by his social milieu" (86). And second, he is a "parasite," albeit a "great intellectual" one, and a "'big bug' in his class" (87, 86). One effect of these epithets is to devalue the previous collaborations between the two men, by characterizing Pound as a parasite on Lewis's originality: Pound "is the consumer . . . It is we who produce; we are the creators; Ezra battens upon us. And he is the most gentlemanly, discriminating parasite I have ever had, personally . . ." (85). This effect, as we will see later in this chapter, is one of the major functions of Lewis's attack on this poet. More directly, these metaphors embody Lewis's serious criticism of Pound--while tempering that criticism with praise for his formidable talent for interpreting the past:

> By himself he would seem to have neither any convictions nor eyes in his head. There is nothing that he intuits well, certainly never originally. Yet when he can get into the skin of somebody else, of power and renown, a Propertius or an Arnaut Daniel, he becomes a lion or a lynx on the spot. This sort of parasitism is with him phenomenal. (86)

Pound's strength, Lewis argues, is his ability to imagine

himself as another person, especially a dead one; his weakness is that at the same time he cannot deal directly with his own immediate world. In both of these metaphors, Lewis implies that Pound operates too much through other people and too little on his own--that he is "that curious thing, a person without a trace of originality of any sort" (85). He explains,

> The particular stimulation that Pound requires for what he does all comes from without; he is terribly dependent upon people and upon 'atmosphere'; and, with a sensationalist of his type, in the nature of things little development is possible, his inspiration is of a precarious order, attached as it is to what he regards as his rôle, handed him by a shadow to whose authority he is extremely susceptible, a Public he despises, is afraid of, and serves. So he is easily isolated, his native resources nil. (57)

This kind of name-calling is anything but casual. Rather, it becomes one of Lewis's most versatile satirical structures.

Caricature is the second of the Enemy's distinctive rhetorical tactics. In "The Revolutionary Simpleton," the clearest example of this kind of satire through exaggeration is perhaps his indirect imitation of Stein's literary style. Complaining that her Composition as Explanation is "sham" because "the explanation is done in the same way as the examples that follow it," Lewis offers this analogue to Stein's prose: "FugfuggFFF-fewg:fugfug-Fug-fugue-fffffffuuuuuuG" (66). Yet he makes most use of caricature not in the criticism but in the novels of his Enemy years, The Childermass and The Apes of God. In these satires, the characters grotesquely portray real people (or groups of people),

and their speech ruthlessly parodies the literary language of the works Lewis scorned.

In Time and Western Man, Lewis's third satirical weapon is his strongest. For the Enemy's most characteristic voice is sarcasm. His remarks about Ernest Walsh and his review This Quarter are typical--remarks that are aimed indirectly at Pound, who, Lewis explains, has supported this review in his role as "revolutionary simpleton." Walsh and his contributor Robert McAlmon are damned directly, Pound by association. First, Lewis reproduces some of Walsh's remarks about McAlmon:

> "I can't wait (howls W-sh). I can't wait any longer to say that Bud Macsalmon is one of the most astonishing writers since the fathers of English literature. If you care for Conrad, you will care more for Macsalmon. He is colossal without being dull. He has the deep smile and the hidden laughter of Indian women pounding maize without caring at all who is to eat it. The world eats maize. The world eats bread. Very well. Pound maize. Somebody eat by and by. Everybody got to eat sooner or later. Pound maize. Macsalmon write. He write a great deal, etc., etc." (61)[9]

Lewis's eye for the ridiculous is good enough that he rarely needs to follow his quotations with any commentary, but as the Enemy he cannot resist.

> [Walsh] goes on to say of Bud and his friends that they are 'the school that writes by instinct.' And he illustrates this by quoting their spelling--they spell tries as trys, he exultantly points out. They are true primitives. All these primitives have had, like children, the same difficulty: they have not been able to spell! And yet how expressive their little faults of orthography can be! What a nice archaic feeling it gives one to see tries spelt trys! (61)

And a page later he continues:

> You get the full flavour of the breathless hurried confidential lisp of the little baby girl, rushing to its mother's knee and pouring out coyly its winsome chatter, do you not, with our Mr. W-sh? . . . 'Told oo all that me have, oo naughty mammie oo' is at all events the type of his main line of writing. 'Belly well. Pound maize. Somebody eat by and by,' is a side track. (63)

This is the voice that Lewis's critics have called strident and hysterical. Certainly it is a far cry from the cool, careful prose of contemporary critics like Eliot or Richards. Lewis slings mud at his targets; he mimics them and jeers at them. As the Enemy, he speaks with a voice anything but measured, detached, impartial. Vivid and virulent, this persona guaranteed--at the very least--that Lewis's criticism would be conspicuous.

ii

Like the "Horseman," the Enemy persona is more than just a flamboyant surface. All the Enemy's swagger and blustering reflects the structure of Lewis's critical stance--his view of his own position in relation to the things and persons he writes about. In the Enemy "Editorial" and the "Preface to Book I" of Time and Western Man, he outlines for his readers his reasons for calling himself an Enemy.

Lewis begins each of these essays with a classical analogy to his own role as social critic. For the journal's epigraph, he uses a passage from Plutarch's Moralia:

> 'A man of understanding is to benefit by his enemies. . . . He that knoweth that he hath an enemy will look circumspectly about him to all matters, ordering his life and behaviour in better sort . . . therefore it was well and truly said of Antisthenes, that such men as would be saved and become honest ought of necessity to have either good friends or bitter enemies. But forasmuch as amity and friendship nowadays speaketh with a small and low voice, and is very audible and full of words in flattery, what remaineth but that we should hear the truth from the mouth of our enemies? Thine enemy, as thou knowest well enough, watcheth continually, spying and prying into all thine actions.[10]

As an Enemy, Lewis can say things no friend could or would say. Enemies need not--indeed must not--flatter, nor need they concern themselves with making or keeping friends. Expected to offend, to slander, to libel, an Enemy may yet tell the truth because he is free from the restraints of civility. As Lewis explains, his "observations will contain no social impurities whatever"[11] since in his new role he will have no social contact with the artists and authors about whom he writes.

Certainly many other critics could make this same claim of social distance from their subjects. What is remarkable about Lewis's position as he states it in The Enemy is that he chooses his targets largely from his own artistic circles. Most of them were acquaintances; many of them were good friends. In declaring himself an Enemy, he publicly disassociates himself from his own kind, and sets himself to criticize the weaknesses he sees in the arts of his time. The change in his relationship with Pound again illustrates this new position most dramatically: after collaborating with Pound for many years on various

projects and accepting Pound's generous help in selling his written and graphic works, Lewis is willing--indeed eager--to make this old friend a major target. To explain his step, he writes:

> When a person, whatever his past services in the cause of art may be, reaches such a state of decay that he can support such enterprises as the Q. Review [This Quarter], it is time to cut loose, if you have been formerly in his company. The end with Pound cannot be long delayed. So it will be evident, I hope, already that my action as regards the estimably Ezra is by no means premature; that there was in fact not a moment to be lost. (64)

His reasons for breaking with Pound, he insists, are aesthetic. But even an aesthetic break expressed in the Enemy's typically violent language would, of course, have social ramifications. Lewis recognizes that consequence, and offers it to his readers as an advantage of his position: "there will be nobody with whom I shall be dining to-morrow night (of those who come within the scope of my criticism) whose susceptibilities, or whose wife's, I have to consider."[12]

To Plutarch's portrait of the enemy, Lewis adds a description of the Cynics. This second analogy, he explains, is "against himself" and should not be taken too literally. He quotes from Caird's The Evolution of Theology in the Greek Philosophers:

> "When some aspect of thought or life has been for a long time unduly subordinated, or has not yet been admitted to its rightful place, it not seldom finds expression in a representative individuality, who embodies it in his person and works it out in its most exclusive and one-sided form, with an almost fanatical disregard of all other considerations--compensating for the general neglect of it by treating it as the one thing needful. Such individuals produce their effect by the very disgust they

> create among the ordinary respectable members of the community. . . . Their criticism of the society to which they belong, and of all its institutions and modes of action and thought, attracts attention by the very violence and extravagance of the form in which they present it. And the neglected truth, or half-truth, which they thrust into exclusive prominence, gradually begins by their means to gain a hold of the minds of others, forces them to reconsider their cherished prejudices, and so leads to a real advance of thought." (4, original ellipses)

The Enemy's outlandish behavior attracts attention not only to Lewis but also to the ideas he wishes to spread. When one's ideas are unpopular or unfamiliar, they require some kind of advertisement; and for publicity, notoriety serves as well as fame. Like the Cynic, the Enemy may goad his society into thinking differently. By throwing all of his weight onto one side of the scales, Lewis hopes to restore a proper balance.

These two Classical comparisons make clear how essential it is to Lewis's position that he be recognized as "a solitary outlaw" whose attitude is "vigilant" and "hostile."[13] The Enemy role defines him as a critic who will fight with any weapon he can devise, and who will not hesitate to hit below his opponent's belt if it will help his cause. Unmistakably, Lewis sees himself as standing alone against dominant forces and hoping he can make enough noise that those forces will have to recognize him. To this role, the exact identity of the critic's opponent is relatively unimportant; what is necessary is that the opponent be more firmly established--and consequently more powerful--than the critic. Lewis's own choice of a foe could hardly be

more extreme: in the books of his Enemy years, he takes on his own friends, how own society, his own culture--in short, his own "Time."

Yet in what we will come to recognize as a characteristic pattern, Lewis completes his sketch of the Enemy with a rhetorical twist that expands his idiosyncrasy into universality. On the one hand, he stands alone against his time; on the other hand, he is "by no means alone." "No individual to-day is our enemy," he explains, "but rather our time that of each of us severally, in our capacity of individual--in some cases of energy."[14] He opposes himself to individuals less than he feels himself opposed by his "time"; as we will see in Chapters 3 and 5, he sees the "Zeitgeist" as threatening the very principle of individuality and consequently each individual person. Years later, describing his Enemy stance, Lewis commented again on this paradox:

> The particular note of solitary defiance . . . is not to be traced, oddly enough, to love of the ego, but to a sense of typicalness: to a type out of place. I have never felt in the least alone. . . . Certainly there were not many people who thought as I did about anything. I did not look upon myself as 'a rare type,' however. I could not understand why most of my acquaintances looked at most things as they did, and as I did not. . . . I would like to lay stress on what is the essence of this paradox: namely the originality in question did not seem peculiar to me as an individual.[15]

If only because he is an individual, he is necessarily solitary. But there is nothing to stop others from recognizing that they, too, must stand alone.

In his society, Lewis believes, antagonists like himself are rare--far more rare than they ever should be. For we are mistaken if we behave "as though to be a 'critic' at all were not to be an 'enemy'; or as though it were possible, or would even occur to anybody, in any time, to criticise, if he did not wish to change."[16] Characterizing himself as a "solitary outlaw," Lewis the Enemy at the same time insists that all other critics--which is to say all thinking persons--should share his exile.

iii

One of the major effects of the Enemy role is to isolate Lewis from his contemporaries by exaggerating the differences rather than the similarities between himself and others. In the first two paragraphs of the Enemy "Editorial," he refers to himself (either directly or by metaphor) as "a solitary antagonist," "a solitary outlaw," an outsider, an exile, and one in "solitary schism."[17] And one of the most obvious things about outlaws and exiles is that they are defined as opposites. In the preface to Time and Western Man, Lewis himself writes: "But how can we evade our destiny of being 'an opposite,' except by becoming some grey mixture, that is in reality just nothing at all?" (6). Depending for their identity upon the society they oppose, opposites exist less as positive than as negative forces. Enmity does not define an independent position; it defines a relationship between at least two

positions. In Lewis's case, he alone (or nearly so) opposes the rest of his society (or at least its most visible members). Such an opposition can take one of two basic forms: the exile may stand as a figure of good against an evil or degenerate society; or he may indeed be an outlaw--in the ordinary sense of the word--breaking society's rules either because he is incapable of living within them or because he enjoys defiance for its own sake. While, as we will see, Lewis's critical work as a whole clearly indicates that he saw himself in the former position, the predominant thrust of his Enemy stance is to place him in the latter.

The negativity of the Enemy's attitude is perhaps clearest when Lewis seems to be most confident. When he disclaims any literal likeness between himself and the Cynic, he says that he sees himself in "such a position as Socrates might occupy in a world of such people as the Cynics and Megarians" (4). As a Socratic figure, Lewis would represent wisdom against ignorance and misconception. But as he explains in an essay written a few years later called "The Physics of the Not-Self," he sees Socrates as a satirist, a "supreme market-place performer": "Socrates was pulling the leg of the Greek exoletus . . . as much as he was pulling the leg of 'the great market-asses' . . . He knew his public only too well. . . ."[18] Similarly, in The Childermass, he characterizes the figure whose ideas most closely resemble his own, Hyperides, as a very

disagreeable man, despite his role as truth-sayer.

One might argue that the combination of disagreeableness and truth-telling typifies the satirist's role. But as Lewis embodies it in the Enemy, the balance is uneasy. The potential for dramatic hostility in the figure of the Enemy occasionally seems to seduce Lewis into overemphasizing his delight in outlandish behavior. And that emphasis, in turn, suggests that Lewis is himself a little uncomfortable in his role. He dwells, for instance, too often on his rejection by other members of his society. Explaining the analogy between himself and the Cynic, he writes, "I 'create disgust,' that I have proved, 'among the ordinary respectable members of the community'" (5). And in the Enemy "Editorial," he argues that if he were attacking persons (rather than their works), "it would be certain that the number of words we expended against them in public would be immeasurably out-numbered by those flung against us in private."[19]

The sense of mutual enmity demonstrated by these remarks functions, for Lewis, both destructively and constructively. It is destructive insofar as it resembles paranoia; and as Lewis's career progressed, his conviction that he was the victim of persecution became more and more pronounced. One characteristic of paranoia--at least in its twentieth-century literary form--is that to fear persecution is also to invite it.[20] In Lewis's case, not surprisingly, his virulent attacks on important literary

figures did eventually contribute to his difficulties in finding financial backing and publishers; hiding behind his Enemy mask did not protect him from making real enemies, or giving real offense. We can see both his paranoia and his awareness of its two faces in a poem published in 1933, "If So the Man You Are," where the "outlaw" has become an "outcast." The Enemy speaks:

> And still and all, we know the invisible prison
> Where men are jailed off--men of dangerous vision--
> In impalpable dark cages of neglect,
> Invisible walls by self-protective sect
> Or cabal against the Individual built,
> (At best with honorifics and lip-service killed).--
> Well understanding tactics such as these,
> Conversant with historic instances,
> You can hardly blame an "Enemy' who forestalls
> Such treatment and puts up his own high walls.[21]

This Enemy builds his own walls in anticipation of the walls he fears others will build: in either case, he loses his liberty.

In The Enemy and Time and Western Man, though, if Lewis does anticipate rejection, he also exploits it. We have already seen him do this in the matter of dinner invitations from the artists whose work he criticizes: knowing--or fearing--that the Enemy's behavior will cause his exclusion from certain social activities, he argues that this very exclusion privileges his criticism. "If the public is not aware of the advantages it derives from such circumstances as these," Lewis writes,

> it is time it awoke to its true interest. Why does it not exact of its chosen servants some such social or unsociable, guarantee?--on the principle of the treatment of the Chinese painters of the great period,

> who, when their talent became noticeable, were at once exiled to a beautiful wilderness, more suitable than the city to the confinement, or rather the delicate metaplasis, expected of them. [22]

As the exile of the Chinese artists signified their greatness, the Enemy's exile will prove his worth. The larger effect of the Enemy's characterization is similar. As the analogy with the Cynics suggests, Lewis sees himself as a sort of scapegoat, whose role, though it may involve personal sacrifice, is essential to the survival and progress of civilization. If the whole truth is to be spoken, someone must voice unpopular ideas.

iv

Like outlaws or exiles, I have suggested, enemies are defined by opposition. On the whole, Lewis keeps this aspect of his role in front of his readers and exploits its potential for advertisement. He is happy to announce that he has designed his position to negate what he sees as the dominant trends of the Zeitgeist, and he reminds us again and again that his main purpose is to oppose the time-cult, not to detail a positive alternative. If we look in more detail at his critique, though, we find that Lewis is not always equally frank. Sometimes his very boisterousness distracts us from noticing how he also defines himself as an opposite in more sutle--and perhaps more fundamental--ways.

As my examples have implied, Ezra Pound is one of the

Enemy's major targets. In many respects, the two short chapters devoted to this poet epitomize Lewis's Enemy criticism--with its energetic rhetorical excesses, its strong polemical bias, and its blatantly one-sided judgments. As he does with his other subjects, who are, he says, "for the most part strongly established leaders, of mature talent" (131), Lewis focuses on only those aspects of Pound's work which most clearly reveal the time-cult's weaknesses,[23] even remarking at one point that the passages which "represent Pound the artist at his worst" show us "the true Pound" (90). In none of these characteristics is this attack exceptional. At the same time, though, a closer look reveals several features which suggest that something more is at stake than a disinterested demonstration of Pound's participation in the time-cult. In Time and Western Man, it seems, this old friend is for Lewis a very personal opponent.

Through the metaphors of the revolutionary simpleton and the parasite, Lewis attacks Pound as a man who sees through other eyes better than through his own, a "man in love with the past" who fails to live in the present. To illustrate these accusations, of course, Lewis offers concrete evidence, both from Pound's current enthusiasms, especially his support of This Quarter, and from his current poetry, the early Cantos. Individually, many of Lewis's exhibits are convincing, particularly those illustrating Pound's enthusiastic promotion of the literary humbug of This Quarter, and so his criticism seems to some extent

justified. In his descriptions of Pound's poetry, moreover, Lewis is in reasonable agreement--his rhetoric aside--with other contemporary critics, both hostile and friendly, who also find Pound to be at his best in dealing with the past, not the present.[24] But in contrast with these other critics, there are a couple of significant omissions from Lewis's remarks. Unlike a friendly critic such as Eliot, Lewis does not concern himself with Pound's sophisticated versification. He does comment on some specifically formal features of the poems, but only to illustrate his arguments about the quality of Pound's mind; he cares less here about the poetry as poetry than about what it reveals of the poet's personality. On the other hand, Lewis conspicuously differs from most of Pound's detractors in that he never complains about the obscurity of his work--surely an obvious target for an attack on this poet. And, of course, there is also the significant addition of the Enemy's rhetoric. Lewis's virulence, I think, disguises the gap between his particular pieces of evidence and his major argument about Pound's lack of originality. If he is persuasive in detail, he is surely unjustified on the whole; his view is too extreme to seem reasonable.

But the attitude toward Pound in Time and Western Man is also inconsistent with Lewis's other remarks about his friend's work. Both before and after this attack, Lewis's published criticism is largely positive, emphasizing his respect for Pound's genius and his feeling that the two

artists want many of the same things in the arts. In a defense of "Homage to Propertius" in 1920, for instance, Lewis vigorously attacked a hostile critic:

> It is part of the same blind conservatism, hatred of a living thing, that men of letters, 'true and honest' ones, painters and musicians, of this community have to bear with when attempting to break through the hybrid social intellectual ring to something that is a matter purely of the imagination or intelligence, and not mixed with officialdom of social attitudes.[25]

Here he allies himself with his friend--who loved the past no less in 1920 than he did seven years later--as artists dealing with the "living thing," operating with "pure" imagination and intelligence. Similarly, in remarks published not long after Time and Western Man, Lewis praises Pound and explicitly revokes part of his earlier criticism. In Blasting and Bombardiering he writes, "I still regard him as one of the best . . . poets," and, "Once, in a moment of impatience, I used the word 'simpleton': and--in addition to everything else--I am again impatient. Of course he is not that. But he demands perfection in action, as well as in art."[26] Even more strikingly, he describes Pound's creativity both as an impresario and as a poet:

> . . . the dynamic rôle of his critical sympathy: in every fact a creative sympathy. . . . I have never known a person less troubled with personal feelings. This probably it is that has helped to make Pound that odd figure--the great poet and the great impresario at one and the same time. Also, he is the born teacher; and by his influence, direct and indirect, he has brought about profound changes in our literary techniques and criticism: changes, in both cases, for the better.[27]

These remarks--not those in Time and Western Man--typify

Lewis's life-long attitude toward Pound and his work.

All these inconsistencies suggest that Lewis intends the attack in this book to serve some special purpose, but they do not reveal what that purpose might be. We come closer to understanding it when we notice further that in several instances Lewis attacks Pound for doing something that he does himself. For example, he accuses Pound of seeing people "only as types": "There is the 'museum official,' the 'norman cocotte,' and so on" (86), he says. But in the same pages Lewis himself writes of the "time-child" and the "revolutionary simpleton." Again, Pound is censured for his current role as "impresario" and his love of drama: "It is disturbance that Pound requires; that is the form his parasitism takes" (56). Yet of course these remarks appear in the journal announcing the Enemy, who is clearly also an impresario of sorts, and who is undeniably dramatic. Similarly, Lewis argues that Pound's only important contribution to Blast had been the skill and energy of his "fire-eating propagandist utterances" (55). Such an accusation blatantly ignores the fact that a large part of Lewis's own contribution--and, indeed, of Vorticism itself--was equally propaganda and fireworks. When Lewis remarks that "from the start, the histrionics of the milanese prefascist [Marinetti] were secretly much to [Pound's] sensation-loving taste" (58), he is criticizing in his friend something which he might equally well criticize in himself.

Now Lewis does not acknowledge these resemblances. If

he did, I think, he could defend himself against the charge of hypocrisy by arguing that he sees the seemingly fine distinctions between the two artists as reflections of important matters of principle. Pound's character types are conventional; Lewis's are new. Pound seems to present these clichés unself-consciously; Lewis displays his as critical weapons and deliberately satirical simplifications. At issue, he might say, is the difference between originality and parasitism--often, certainly, a subtle difference, but one that is crucial nevertheless. Separating Pound's propagandizing from the Enemy's is an even clearer line: Pound puts his energies into advertising for others while Lewis advertises only himself. Pound's readiness to spend his time on other, less talented artists rather than on his own work seems to Lewis a serious mistake--one that leads directly to Pound's inability to create by himself. The personality which Pound's propagandizing reveals is "considerable and very charming," but it is also characterized by "the habit of unquestioning obedience and self-effacement" (87). Lewis's dramatics, in contrast, are self-aggrandizing, dogmatically individualistic, defiantly idiosyncratic. The difference again is that between the parasite and the true artist; in this case, what matters is the use to which one puts one's energies--and, as we will see in the next chapter, the value one assigns to the individual personality.

But, of course, Lewis does not make this defense or

point out the principles that are at issue. To do so would also be to reveal the similarities between himself and Pound. As it is, only if we remember who is writing this analysis do we recognize Lewis's sleight-of-hand. Juxtaposed with the noisiness of the Enemy's insults, this silence tells us that these chapters function in two ways: on the surface, they criticize Pound's capitulation to the cult of time; beneath the surface, they embody Lewis's role of opposition. Without making his intentions explicit, Lewis defines the Enemy persona by treating the many similarities between his friend and himself as absolute oppositions. To prove that he stands alone in opposition to his time, he must exaggerate his differences from this figure who might seem to resemble him too closely. Early in his discussion, Lewis suggests as much: "Pound's name and mine," he writes, "have certain associations in people's minds. For the full success of my new enterprise it is necessary to dispel this impression" (54).

Pound's support of This Quarter, then, serves as an illustration of the folly of group activity. All too often, Lewis implies, groups function mainly to disguise the creative dullness of their individual members.[28] Certainly in this journal Lewis found an easy target; the passages he quotes and his sarcastic comments successfully expose its absurdity and pretentiousness.[29] Pound loses credibility by association; regardless of how good one's own poetry might be, one should also have the critical acumen to recognize and

repudiate "humbug." Furthermore, we gather, no one who could thus "innocently" endorse such humbug could have the intelligence Lewis would expect in a first-rate artist. By damning Pound through This Quarter, Lewis demonstrates that his own self-exile has been wise--even necessary.

Pound further serves Lewis as a symbol of his past--or at least that part of his past which could undermine the credibility of the Enemy's stance. "I will start," he writes, "by giving the briefest possible account of how, in the past, we came to work together" (54). But what follows is a transparently biased version in which Lewis minimizes Pound's role and implicitly appropriates for himself the credit for the creative achievement of Vorticism. Pound, he explains, had nothing to do with the real artistic innovations of the Blast group except to supply "the Chinese Crackers, and a trayful of mild jokes, for our paper; also much ingenious support in the english and american press; and, of course, some nice quiet little poems--at least calculated to vex Signor Marinetti with their fine passéiste flavour" (55-56).[30] Pound's literary efforts, according to Lewis, were not especially experimental, unlike the works of the painters who dominated the group; and "His poetry, to the mind of the more fanatical of the group, was a series of pastiches of old french or old italian poetry, and could lay no claim to participate in the new burst of art in progress" (55). While he attributes these opinions to his other collaborators, Lewis clearly offers them as his own

assessment of Pound's role; and indeed, this is a judgment Lewis continued to repeat in later years.[31] Now I would agree that many--though not all--of Pound's Blast poems were "antiquarian and romantic," at least in contrast with the Vorticist graphics or Lewis's play, "The Enemy of the Stars," and that a large part of his role in the venture probably was his energetic propaganda. But if this description seems, on the whole, accurate, it is hardly fair. For one thing, it ignores the revolutionary nature of Pound's early poems (the Blast pieces aside), especially his experiments with Imagism. And furthermore, as I have said, it ignores Lewis's own considerable propagandizing and fireworks. The effect of all of this is to characterize what might be seen as a balanced collaboration of two innovators as a parasitic relationship in which Lewis provided all the important creative energy.

Thus Lewis disassociates himself from his rabble-rousing activities by condemning Pound's and distances himself from his own past membership in a group of revolutionary artists by reminding us about Blast in a way that minimizes the importance of its other contributors. Moreover, he explains, his Blast period is over: "its object has been achieved" (55). In the twelve years that have passed, the artistic circumstances have changed radically, and what the young Lewis had good reason to do would no longer serve any purpose. Now, as he says in the Enemy "Preface," he has left the "nearest big revolutionary

settlement" behind to act alone, as the new situation demands.[32] By reminding his readers of his Vorticist years (when he was in the middle of the "revolution") at the same time as he defines his new situation (which, he tells us, follows a "long period of seclusion and work"), Lewis makes it clear that his isolation is self-imposed, that he has chosen to reject the alternative of group activities deliberately. The contrast with Pound, again, dramatizes how important it is that Lewis's Enemy be a solitary outlaw.

It is for the same reason, it seems to me, that Lewis begins his analysis of Pound with an account of their association--an account which, moreover, by mentioning the help which Pound had given him, suggests Lewis's personal indebtedness. He refers to the "personal regard" in which he holds Pound, and explains, "Once towards the end of my long period of seclusion and work, hard-pressed, I turned to him for help, and found the same generous and graceful person there that I had always known; for a kinder heart never lurked beneath a portentous exterior than is to be found in Ezra Pound" (54). Even in these friendly remarks, though, the Enemy's tongue is barbed.[33] Again coloring what could be a neutral statement, he continues, "For some time it has been patent to me that I could not reconcile the creative principles I have been developing" not simply with "Pound," but "with this sensationalist half-impresario, half-poet." Later, similarly, he remarks, "it is a question

if his support is at any time more damaging or useful" (56).[34] Lewis tells us first of his personal regard for Pound, and then begins his series of metaphorical insults. Precisely because he is Lewis's real friend, Pound serves the Enemy as a symbol of all friendship.

So Lewis chooses to criticize Pound not in spite of their long personal friendship but because of it. As he announces in the epigraph to The Enemy, he wishes to set himself against friendship, to defy the obligations of personal social relationships, as a way of asserting both his isolation and his freedom. Friendship has abandoned its responsibilities out of social cowardice, Lewis feels, and has replaced honest criticism with meaningless flattery; enmity must then assume the entire burden of truth-telling. His critical hostility towards Pound advertises his seriousness about being an Enemy. If he will attack in public even this old friend, he will not easily be daunted by any lesser social pressures.

V

One of the practical problems which sometimes results from Lewis's negatively defined persona is a troubled relationship with his audience. To whom does the Enemy speak? For whose benefit are his sarcasm and ridicule? Like a politician, he has only a few possible audiences. He may address his foes--those who have rejected and scapegoated him. He may address his allies--the others of his own

"type" who have remained silent. Or he may address the undecided--those who have shirked their responsibility to declare their allegiances. These are the choices a politician would have, and like a politician, Lewis must adapt his rhetorical strategy to fit each audience's attitude.

But the Enemy's personality, as we have seen, is anything but politic. His flamboyant hostility and emphatic solitude exacerbate the difficulties about audience any writer would have to face. Lewis's problem here has two aspects: on the one hand, he must try to keep his readers' interest and engage their sympathy; on the other hand, he must take care not to undermine his own chosen role as an enemy to everyone and everything. The virulence of his attacks on his opponents may widen the gap between them; the Enemy's forays are less likely to command the attention of his foes (as his comparison to the Cynic assumes) than to alienate them permanently. At the same time, that virulence is essential to his dramatic personality. An Enemy does not court his foes with flattery. Similarly, his lack of restraint may offend those who might otherwise agree with him; his violent sarcasm may overwhelm the ideas it is intended to decorate. One may dislike Stein's prose, for instance, without wishing to call it "bloated, acromegalic, squinting and spectacled." Moreover, when he speaks to his silent allies, he implicitly contradicts his fundamental insistence that he is a <u>solitary</u> antagonist. And the

Enemy's relations with his third possible audience suffer from similar difficulties. As Lewis had already made clear in The Art of Being Ruled, he has nothing but contempt for those he sees as the unthinking masses; consequently, when he addresses the audience of the undecided, he is likely to alienate it as he does his declared opponents. And as with the audience of allies, the Enemy's advertised isolation inhibits communication with the undecided: to gain, as to acknowledge, support would be to destroy his role as a lone outlaw.

Like his fear of rejection, Lewis's difficulty in clarifying what kind of audience he expected became more serious later in his career. In Time and Western Man, the problem is present only in embryo, appearing occasionally where he seems to confuse or conflate his different attitudes towards different readers. Some ambiguity appears, for instance, in this explanation of his reason for analyzing Spengler's Decline of the West:

> I do not know if it will appear to every reader worth while detecting and exposing the almost insane inconsistencies of such a writer as Spengler: but I think that it is so because this kind of sham does take in a great many people, and it does have a far-reaching and extremely poisonous effect. The swallowing of such inconsistencies means that people are being taught not to reason, to cease to think. So it has appeared to me worth while to expose it at some length. (303)

On the whole, Lewis suggests, he addresses his essay on Spengler to those who "are being taught not to reason," those who have not recognized Spengler's faults; but here he speaks to those who must agree with him, since presumably

no single reader would acknowledge his or her own failure to think.

When Lewis's tone is serious, the conjunction of these attitudes--his appeal to some readers and his attack on others--is not especially disturbing. He even offers an explanation of the apparent contradiction:

> I am not here superciliously underrating the intelligence of the majority of readers. Most non-professional readers of such a semi-popular book as Spengler's (which proved actually the greatest highbrow best-seller of the last ten or twenty years) have very little leisure for reading. They never read such a book as Spengler's unless it is thrust under their nose. Most of the things it treats of, even commonplaces of philosophy or criticism, appear to them as marvellous and arresting discoveries--for it is the first time that they have made acquaintance with them. If educated people, as students they were far too busy enjoying themselves or cramming for an exam. to attend to such austerities or luxuries of the intellect. So they are totally unprepared for such a reading, and certainly unqualified to arrive at an informed opinion. This is not a question of intelligence or of aptitude so much as one of training. (263-64)

Yet even in this explanation, where his attitude should be clearest, there is a problem of tone. This passage is full of casual insults to Lewis's own readers. For Spengler's audience is actually much the same as Lewis's; as Lewis says over and over, he writes for the "general educated person." In patronizing Spengler's readers, consequently, he also patronizes his own. While to be told that one does not lack intelligence or aptitude is not unflattering, one may well not enjoy being classed with those who must be forced to read and who, because of frivolity or laziness, are wholly ignorant of even the commonplaces of informed

opinion. The readers about whom Lewis speaks in this passage are the uncommitted or easily swayed, and the implication of his explanation is that he writes to educate that third audience. But the explanation itself seems to be addressed to a different audience--one which already shares Lewis's own perspective. The result, I think, is confusion.[35]

On the whole, though, Lewis successfully avoids the dangers his chosen voice creates. In Time and Western Man, his strategy is primarily to play one of his audiences against another, alternating between addressing a reader who must be persuaded and one who has already joined him. When it works, this strategy effectively forces, or wins, the reader's agreement. We are won when Lewis associates our opinion with his own; we are forced when he associates our opinion with his target's. Both of these tactics appear, for example, in this passage from his attack on the "historical relativism" of Bergson, Croce, and Carr:

> You are supposed to burst into rapturous song at the mere thought that you are co-operating, in one 'great' (very great) communal work (of art), with a toiling, joyous crowd of forbears and descendants. (You know that in cold fact you have nothing much yourself to be joyous about; you are aware that the generations behind you, could you visit them, would scarcely be found so romantically situated as in this Santa Claus dream for good little 'proletarians.' But no matter. Do not let us spoil the picture.) It is tremendously exciting to think that we are actually making history with our own hands--and--just think of it! 'History' is all there is! So we are all there is, too! . . . We look round, and there is Julius Caesar, with a cheery smile, in blue overalls and sandals, come to give us a hand! It is all so glorious and splendid, when you come to think of it, that it makes one happy to be alive, and at the same time quite ready to die. . . .(236-37)

Inside the parentheses, Lewis addresses the reader sensible enough to join with him in seeing the implications of these philosophers' views. Outside the parentheses, he vigorously ridicules the reader foolish enough to agree with them. If only on this one issue, and regardless of our general view of Bergson or Croce, the Enemy's rhetorical strategy leaves us little choice but to ally ourselves with Lewis.

vi

I have been describing the Enemy as a "persona." This is a term, though, which needs to be carefully circumscribed because of its association with other writers. Although its meaning--and that of related words like "mask"--changes from one artist to another, in general it implies a discontinuity between the real person and the fictional entity. Wilde, for instance, writes that "Man is least himself when he talks in his own person. Give him a mask, and he will tell you the truth."[36] For Yeats, similarly, a mask or persona is in part an "anti-self," "the opposite of all that I am in my daily life."[37] And Pound explains, "In the 'search for oneself,' in the search for 'sincere self-expression,' one gropes, one finds some seeming verity. One says 'I am' this, that, or the other, and with the words scarcely uttered one ceases to be that thing. I began this search for the real in a book called Personae, casting off, as it were, complete masks of the self in each poem."[38] To these artists, the way to truth is through a persona clearly

distinct, and probably very different, from one's own ordinary self. But to Lewis, for reasons we will explore in the next chapter, truth lies in the idiosyncratic and biased perceptions of our everyday personalities.[39] In this respect, I think, the Enemy is not a persona like Yeats's or Pound's.

Yet most of Lewis's critics use the term because in other respects it seems to be entirely appropriate. The Enemy is certainly a dramatic fiction: the real Lewis would not have breakfasted on raw meat, blood-oranges, ginger, and vodka. Moreover, because Lewis's novels are filled with characters who seem to speak for him through similarly exaggerated and satirical masks, the Enemy can be seen as one of a series of disguises. Hugh Kenner calls the Enemy "Lewis's most famous persona"[40] and describes his whole career as a sequence of personae who together form a kind of "personality." And Wagner, reminding us that "Nearly all the figures in Lewis' early drawings, especially those on the title pages of chapters or books, are masked," asserts that Lewis adopted "at least six such personalities himself" and calls the Enemy "Lewis' most recurrent mask."[41] But for both of these critics, all these personae must be carefully distinguished from their creator--and, consequently, their opinions from his. Kenner opens his book with a warning that we must not mistake this "personality" for "the London resident of the same name who created that personality and may be inadequately

described as its business manager and amanuensis";[42] Wagner argues that by adopting these masks, "Lewis makes it hard to take much of his criticism directly."[43] For the characters in his fiction, such warnings are justified--Lewis's "spokesmen" never bear more than a partial resemblance to him, and frequently embody characteristics which his non-fictional pieces explicitly attack. But for the Enemy, who appears not in a novel or a satire but in serious criticism, the distinction is misleading. As I hope to establish in this study, the Enemy's characteristics are entirely consistent with beliefs and opinions that are certainly Lewis's own.

The difference between the Enemy and Lewis seems to me to be largely one of voice. The Enemy's insults and satire dramatize the distance Lewis senses between himself and his contemporaries; his views are Lewis's, exaggerated and caricatured, stated flamboyantly but not falsified. Where the rhetoric is especially strident or sarcastic in Time and Western Man, the Enemy is speaking; but he says little Lewis would contradict. Instead, I think, Lewis uses this "bold discordant voice"[44] to remind his readers of the solitude into which he has been compelled by his Zeitgeist. And since he regards that solitude as paradoxical--as both idiosyncratic and universal--he is free to abandon the Enemy's stridency when he wishes. In Time and Western Man, he does so very frequently. The Enemy can attract attention to Lewis, and he can entertain Lewis's readers;

but when publicity and entertainment matter less than persuasion, Lewis normally replaces or blends the Enemy's voice with a more sober one. Moderating the Enemy's flamboyant self-dramatization, Lewis also speaks directly from his serious critical and philosophical principles.

I have retained the term "persona," then, in part because it is usual, and in part because it does indicate the dramatic function of the Enemy. But more importantly, I have used it because of its kinship to "person" and "personality." As we will see in the next chapter, these words are central to Lewis's work. The one time in Time and Western Man when Lewis uses "persona," in fact, is to point to this kinship: "Persona for the Roman, meant a free person only; a slave was not a person, but a res or thing" (317-18). If the Enemy is a persona, he is so because he represents Lewis's true personality, his freedom, and his responsibilities.

Chapter 1: Notes

[1]The Enemy, A Review of Art and Literature (London: The Arthur Press, 1927 and 1929; rpt. London: Frank Cass and Company Ltd., 1968), Vol. 1, 1927, p. vii. All further references to The Enemy will also be to Vol. 1. The color print of the "Horseman," the cover of this first issue, is reproduced from the cover of Agenda, Wyndham Lewis Special Issue, Autumn-Winter, 1969-70.

[2]See below, pp. 42-45, for more about the term persona and the relationship between Lewis and the Enemy.

[3]Rude Assignment: A Narrative of My Career Up-to-Date (London, New York: Hutchinson & Co., Ltd., 1950), p. 198.

[4]Lewis explains elsewhere that he chose "Arthur" as the name for his press because it remained the same in many languages.

[5]Daily Herald, 30 May 1932, in Wyndham Lewis on Art, p. 267.

[6]The Enemy, xiv.

[7]Time and Western Man, p. 78. All further quotations will be referenced parenthetically or noted as TWM. All parenthetical page references will be to this book. For my quotations from "The Revolutionary Simpleton," I use the version and pages of TWM. This metaphor comes from Twelfth Night.

[8]Lewis is clearly speaking here of Stein's style, not her personality. He says, "Miss Stein you might innocently suppose from her naïf stuttering to be, if not a child, simple, at least, in spite of maturity. But that is not so; though, strangely enough, she would like it to be thought that it is" (65).

[9]The original passage is almost, but not quite, the same as Lewis's version:

> I can't wait any longer to say that Robert McAlmon is one of the most astonishing writers since the fathers of English literature. If you care for Shakespeare, if you care for Dickens, if you care for Conrad, you will care more for McAlmon. He is colossal without being dull, an unusual merit. His prose has the irregularity of hand-made Persian rugs and scarves,

> the hard rooty color of the rugs woven by the American Navajo Indians, and the earthy freshness and purity and organic character of their Indian pottery that no machine can make. And he has the deep smile and the hidden laughter of Indian women pounding maize and pounding maize without caring at all who is to eat it. The world eats maize. The world eats bread. Very well. Pound maize. Somebody eat by and by. Everybody got to eat sooner or later. Pound maize. McAlmon writes. He writes a great deal. . . .

Lewis edits Walsh's words without distorting his meaning, and also changes "writes" to "write" in the last sentences to emphasize Walsh's primitivism.

[10]_The Enemy_, iv. Original ellipses.

[11]_The Enemy_, ix.

[12]Ibid.

[13]Ibid.

[14]_The Enemy_, x.

[15]_Rude Assignment_, p. 197. Lewis's emphasis.

[16]_The Enemy_, x.

[17]_The Enemy_, ix.

[18]"Physics of the Not-Self," in _Enemy of the Stars_ (London: Desmond Harmsworth, 1932), p. 59.

[19]_The Enemy_, xiv.

[20]Lewis's "paranoia" is the subject of some critical disagreement. I think the following explanations indicate the necessary qualifications to this label. T. S. Eliot writes, "Many people may have thought of Lewis as 'tough' and aggressive,with a tendency to persecution mania. He was rather, it now seems to me, a highly strung, nervous man, who was conscious of his own abilities, and sensitive to slight or neglect" ("Wyndham Lewis," _The Hudson Review_, p. 169). And Timothy Materer says, "If Lewis was indeed tinged by paranoia, it was of the kind Thomas Pynchon calls 'operational paranoia.' Like Pynchon or Normal Mailer, Lewis sees a conspiracy behind every manifestation of modern culture" (_Wyndham Lewis the Novelist_, p. 16).

[21]In One-Way Song (London: Faber & Faber, Ltd., 1933), p. 61. In this book of poems Lewis also calls the Enemy "A great professional Outcast of the Pen" (44); the Enemy himself says, "'Outcast' is good, in a system of shark and gull, / Where all that's 'illustrious' is also Untouchable! / A solitary honour" (56); and Lewis announces, "You must salute this outcast Enemy-- / Outcasted for refusal to conform / To the phases of this artificial storm" (77).

[22]The Enemy, ix.

[23]I examine the issues raised by Lewis's criticism of literature as a sign of the time-cult in Chapter 4 with the example of Joyce's Ulysses.

[24]Two comparisons should make the similarities clear--one with a hostile critic of Pound, John Gould Fletcher, and one with a friendly critic, T. S. Eliot. Fletcher, in a review of 1920, argues, just as Lewis does, that Pound lives better in the past than in the present:

> Pound, you feel sure, might quite easily have lived with Bertran de Born, or even Villon, held rhyming bouts and drinking bouts with them, and broken their pates if necessary. . . .
>
> Pound has never been at home in twentieth-century Europe. He can only get life out of books--from the life about him, he can obtain nothing. Something prompts him, therefore, to mock the world he sees, because he hates it; and when he mocks, the vividness utterly abandons him. The smile becomes a leer, the attitude a pose, the dependence on other men's work assumes the dimensions of intolerable pedantry.

Lewis's remarks, because they are illustrated with acutely chosen quotation, are slightly more detailed than Fletcher's--as well as slightly more positive in their greater stress on Pound's genius in dealing with the past--but the points are the same. In a second article, written after the publication of Time and Western Man, Fletcher incorporates Lewis's argument into a restatement of the same view. Again he claims that Pound's grasp on the present is weak and explains the nature of the Cantos in terms of Lewis's description of the fragmented, temporalized self:

> In these translations he not only had material that was congenial to work upon, but a structure already laid down from which his mind could not go astray. With the limits of form already marked off in his mind, he could happily transmute detail into something that was his and yet not entirely his. But when he has been obliged to set up limits for himself, in his own

> experience, the deficiencies of his purely aesthetic and non-moral sensibility immediately betray themselves.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Such a mind rapidly becomes dissociated from everything except time; it lives in a sort of 'continuous present' formed of a number of bygone pasts; and Mr. Pound logically took this step towards the goal he had unconsciously been aiming at from the first, when he began writing his Cantos.

But Fletcher goes further than Lewis, claiming that Pound fails even to recreate the past in his translation poems; he calls Pound a "failure as a poet."

Lewis's attack on Pound is also remarkably consistent with the most favorable criticism. The difference between his views and Eliot's is in their attitude, not their observation. What Eliot priases, Lewis criticizes. Again, we can compare two essays of Eliot's--one before and one after Time and Western Man. In an essay of 1918, "A Note on Ezra Pound," he writes that "it was his historical sense, his perception of 'what they have that we want', which made Pound's work so important for contemporary poetry" (this is paraphrased by Eric Homberger). Of course Lewis focuses on the same aspect of Pound's work, but condemns it by juxtaposing it with his awkwardness in other areas. In 1929, in his introduction to his edition of Pound's Selected Poetry, Eliot makes the same argument again--this time, undoubtedly, with Lewis's counterattack in mind:

> Now Pound is often most 'original' in the right sense, when he is most 'archaeological' in the ordinary sense. It is almost too platitudinous to say that one is not modern by writing about chimney-pots, or archaic by writing about oriflammes. . . . If one can really penetrate the life of another age, one is penetrating the life of one's own.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> He is much more modern, in my opinion, when he deals with Italy and Provence, than when he deals with modern life. When he deals with antiquities, he extracts the essentially living; when he deals with contemporaries, he sometimes notes only the accidental. But this does not mean that he is antiquarian or parasitical on literature. . . . Time, in such connexions, does not matter . . .

Implicitly accusing Lewis of "platitude," Eliot defends his own--and Pound's--use of the past. The terms of Lewis's and Eliot's disagreement are the same, as is their observation of the evidence in the poetry. The differences are largely polemical; Lewis would have to include Eliot's fascination with tradition as one of the signs of the time-cult.

See Eric Homberger, ed., Ezra Pound, The Critical Heritage (London & Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972), pp. 173, 214, 235, 237, 235, and 13. For the last passage from Eliot, see his "Introduction" to Ezra Pound: Selected Poems (London: Faber & Faber Limited, 1918), pp. xii, xiii.

[25]In Homberger, pp. 168-69.

[26]Blasting and Bombardiering (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1937), pp. 271, 279.

[27]Blasting and Bombardiering, p. 280.

[28]In a different context, Lewis says, "The effect of that form of organization [the movement], to start with, is, inevitably, to advertise the inferior artist at the expense of the better" (41).

[29]Lewis was also a personal friend of McAlmon. Behind the attack on This Quarter seems to have been a personal dispute as well as an aesthetic one. See The Letters of Wyndham Lewis, ed. W. K. Rose (Norfolk: New Directions, 1963), pp. 156-160.

[30]Lewis rarely capitalized names of nations used adjectivally.

[31]In 1953 he wrote to Hugh Kenner: "In editing Blast I regarded the contributions of Ezra as compromisingly passéiste, and wished I could find two or three literary extremists." See Letters, p. 552. Lewis's judgment of this balance of power between himself and Pound may well not be inaccurate (even if it is unfair), and is still a matter of some debate. In any case, the function of the attack in Time and Western Man remains the same.

[32]The Enemy, ix.

[33]One of Lewis's critics calls this analysis of Pound "amiable"; this, I think, tells us more about the virulence of the rest of the Enemy's attacks than about the mildness of this one. See Pritchard, p. 90.

[34]Noel Stock, in his biography of Pound, writes:

> Lewis's criticisms were sometimes unfair but often brilliant and perceptive . . . In Pound's case there was no sharp break in their friendship but a further

> cooling in a relationship which had been strained for several years . . . Pound's patience was remarkable in the face of some of Lewis's statements in Time and Western Man, especially as Lewis had placed his finger on a weak spot which had worried Pound himself only a few years before. Lewis maintained that there was still a gap between Pound's feeling for the past and his fire-eating utterances on contemporary affairs . . .

See Noel Stock, The Life of Ezra Pound (New York: Random House, 1970), p. 270. And many years later, in a letter to T. S. Eliot, Pound called his friend Lewis his only real critic:

> Now as to ole Wyndham whose address I have not, to thee and him these presents. While I yet cohere, he once sd/a facefull. & apart from 3 dead and one aged [word] who gave me 3 useful hints. ole W is my only critic -- you have eulogized and some minors have analysis'd or dissected --
>
> all of which please tell the old ruffian if you can unearth him.

See Lewis, Letters, p. 394n.

[35]In The Art of Being Ruled, Lewis describes his audience as follows:

> A book of this description is not written for an audience already there, prepared to receive it, and whose minds it will fit like a glove. There must be a good deal of stretching of the receptacle, it is to be expected. It must of necessity make its own audience; for it aims at no audience already there with which I am acquainted. I do not invent . . . a class of esprits libres, or 'good Europeans,' as Nietzsche did. I know none.

Later, he describes this audience of Nietzsche's:

> Many great writers (and Nietzsche was of course a very great one) address audiences who do not exist. Nietzsche was always addressing people who did not exist. To address passionately and sometimes with very great wisdom people who do not exist has this disadvantage . . . that there will always be a group of people who, seeing a man shouting apparently at somebody or other, and seeing nobody else in sight, will think that it is they who are being addressed.

See The Art of Being Ruled (London: Chatto and Windus, 1926), pp. xii, 123-24.

[36]Oscar Wilde, "The Critic as Artist," in Intentions, in The Artist as Critic: Critical Writings of Oscar Wilde, ed. Richard Ellmann (New York: Random House, 1968, 1969), p. 389.

[37]W. B. Yeats, quoted by Wagner, p. 20.

[38]Ezra Pound, "Vorticism," Fortnightly Review, XCVI, 573 (Sept. 1, 1914), 463-64.

[39]When Lewis is describing Stein's sham, he says, "That is only the old story of people wanting to be things they are not; or else, either as strategy or out of pure caprice, enjoying any disguise that reverses and contradicts the personality" (65). Such remarks suggest that Lewis does not in this book approve of that kind of persona--as, too, does his attack on Pound for borrowing other personalities than his own.

[40]Kenner, Wyndham Lewis, p. 12.

[41]Wagner, pp. 22, 23.

[42]Kenner, Wyndham Lewis, p. vii.

[43]Wagner, p. 22.

[44]Rude Assignment, p. 198.

Chapter 2: Principles

In one of the more remarkable passages in Time and Western Man, Lewis tells us how he makes decisions. In fulfilling "our destiny of being 'an opposite,'" he explains, we must take care that our "fixation" be "upon something fundamental, quite underneath the flux."

> Yet how are you going about this fixation, you may ask; how will you tell offhand what is essential and what is not, for the composing of your definite pattern; and, even among essential things, how do you propose to avoid the contradictory factors of empirical life; since every one includes, below the possibility of change, dispositions that war with one another? Well, the way I have gone about it is generally as follows. I have allowed these contradictory things to struggle together, and the group that has proved the most powerful I have fixed upon as my most essential ME. This decision has not, naturally, suppressed or banished the contrary faction, almost equal in strength, indeed, and even sometimes in the ascendant. And I am by no means above spending some of my time with this domestic Adversary. All I have said to myself is that always, when it comes to the pinch, I will side and identify myself with the powerfullest Me, and in its interests I will work. And luckily in my case the two sides, or micro-cosmic 'opposites,' are so well matched, that the dominant one is never idle or without criticism. It has had to struggle for supremacy first with critical principles within, and so it has practised itself for its external encounters. This natural matching of opposites within saves a person so constituted from dogmatism and conceit. If I may venture to say so, it places him at the centre of the balance. (6-7)

Several things suggested by this passage are central to my view of Lewis. Like the "Horseman" drawing, for instance, this description reveals the two structures of opposition

and dominance. There, they underlie the gaudiness of horse and rider; here, they characterize the kind of thinking that underlies the Enemy's flamboyance. We have seen how this private drama of conflict and dominance parallels the structure of Lewis's public critical activity: these mental disputes are like those the Enemy forces on us by being our opposite. As we continue, we will see further evidence of these patterns in Lewis's opinions--and some of the consequences of their uneasy juxtaposition.

What particularly interests me now are the ways in which this passage itself indicates the center of a balance. I have argued that the Enemy persona is distinguished largely by his voice. But the language of this description combines Lewis's apparently sincere tone with the Enemy's typically combative vocabulary. Speaking as the Enemy, Lewis regards ideas as warring factions; speaking about the Enemy, at the same time, he recognizes the strength of opinions other than those for which he will finally fight. Moreover, as I have suggested, Lewis thought of his critical position as paradoxically both idiosyncratic and universal. With the Enemy, he emphasizes his isolation while only hinting at his sense of community. But here, again, speaking about the Enemy, he characterizes the core of his idiosyncrasy--his "most essential Me"--in terms that point to a kind of detached, non-personal universality. Lewis suggests that by collapsing the "contradictory factors" which cause disagreement into the terms of his own private argument, he moves

away from the danger of solipsism; the "critical principles within" allow him to balance his uniqueness with his common humanity.

In our search for these balancing principles, we are helped by Lewis's own awareness of his responsibility to announce his premises to his readers. As he wrote in his autobiographical Rude Assignment,

> Indeed, all people who set themselves up as critics should be obliged, before they begin, to provide a statement of first principles, to which their criticism can be referred: just as in politics one is generally aware of the specific theory of the State favoured by the writer.[1]

In Time and Western Man, I think, Lewis presents these first principles through two pairs of terms--pairs whose paradoxical structure echoes that of the Enemy himself. On one side of his internal scales, Lewis urges a criticism which is highly personal, even idiosyncratic; on the other side, as his explanations of this "personality" indicate, he believes that criticism must also be based on the universality of a non-personal intellect or "mind." Similarly, on the one hand, naming his ideas a "philosophy of the eye," Lewis proposes a criticism based on "vision"--particularly the painter's special vision; on the other hand, he argues that we can and must avoid solipsism only by staying in touch with what he calls "common sense"--the "ordinary" experience of reality he believes we all share. These two pairs of principles--personality and mind, vision and common sense--will be my concern in the two sections of this chapter.

i

Among the reasons Lewis gives for naming his journal The Enemy is that no one expects an enemy to attempt a judicious objectivity. "So named," he explains,

> it publicly repudiates any of those treacherous or unreal claims to "impartiality," the scientific-impersonal, or all that suggestion of detached omniscience, absence of parti-pris, which is such a feature of our time (in which every activity, even the least amenable to exact method, apes positive science) that it has become, indeed, the stock-in-trade of any fairly knowing critic . . .[2]

Such claims are "treacherous" and "unreal" because impartiality is impossible. Criticism is a human, not a mechanical, activity, and none of us, no matter how hard we try, can free ourselves from our most basic prejudices and preferences. "None of us," he says, "can lay claim to the possession of this perfect instrument of truth--we are all only dealing in different degrees of falsity."[3] Inevitably, our judgments result from our particular experiences and circumstances. For Lewis, the limits set by individuality--by the intimacy between our reactions and our personality--are not a prison from which we should wish to escape, but the ground of all the intellectual integrity and freedom we can have.

Few of us would argue that a critic can wholly avoid bias. The question is whether or not we should try to minimize our prejudices. T. S. Eliot--who in this respect can be considered a spokesman for the dominant kind of modern criticism--argues that we must do what we can to approach

an ideal impartiality:

> The critic, one would suppose, if he is to justify his existence, should endeavour to discipline his personal prejudices and cranks--tares to which we are all subject--and compose his differences with as many of his fellows as possible, in the common pursuit of true judgment.[4]

For Eliot, moreover, critics who cease to attempt objectivity also abandon all principles:

> For . . . those who obey the inner voice . . . will not be interested in the attempt to find any common principles for the pursuit of criticism. Why have principles, when one has the inner voice? If I like a thing, that is all I want; and if enough of us, shouting all together, like it, that should be all that you (who don't like it) ought to want.[5]

Lewis disagrees. For him, Eliot's kind of impartiality is both impossible and undesirable. As the exaggeration which characterizes the Enemy illustrates, for Lewis all principles begin from personality. In Men Without Art, Lewis expands on his differences with Eliot by calling him the figure who "stands for the maximum of depersonalization":[6]

> The personality is not, I think, quite the pariah it becomes in the pages of Mr. Eliot: I do not believe in the anonymous, 'impersonal,' catalytic, for the very good reason that I am sure the personality is in that as much as in the other part of this double-headed oddity, however thoroughly disguised, and is more apt to be a corrupting influence in that arrangement than in the more usual one, where the artist is identified with his beliefs.[7]

In Lewis's eyes, "true judgment" cannot result from disguise, however well meant.

Lewis rejects impersonality on ethical grounds: for him, both honesty and liberty depend on partiality. Because we have no choice but to write as individuals, he

argues, our judgments can be honest only when we openly publicize not only our critical conclusions but also their bases in our own interests and predilections. When we pretend to objectivity, moreover, we lie not only to others but also to ourselves. Self-deception is always to be avoided, of course, and this particular kind of lie seems to Lewis especially dangerous:

> This delusion of impersonality could be best defined as that mistake by virtue of which persons are enabled to masquerade as _things_.
>
> A simple belief in the 'detachment' and 'objectivity' of science, the anxiety of a disillusioned person to escape from his self and merge his personality in _things_; verging often on the worship of _things_ . . . of such experiences and tendencies is this delusion composed.[8]

Because it masks our errors and uncertainties, the objective approach to criticism--as to science--allows us to evade our responsibilities. At the same time, it robs us of our intellectual freedom--the kind of freedom Lewis cares about most. As he says when he reminds us that the Roman _persona_ meant a free person, "We shall not deny that human freedom is also, in our opinion, bound up with this personality" (318). To our liberty and our humanity, our responsibilities are essential; if we are to be persons rather than things, we must always judge as openly independent individuals. Making a virtue of necessity, then, Lewis asserts that intelligent and ethical criticism actually _depends_ on our partiality. "For the whole virtue of accurate observation," he writes, "is that it is a _person_ observing . . ."[9]

This conviction informs Lewis's criticism in several

ways. Most spectacularly, of course, it underlies the Enemy's personality. In that role, the critic is not only free to speak flamboyantly, he is compelled to do so, to advertise the individuality of his opinions. The very outrageousness of the Enemy's pronouncements proclaims his independence. Indeed, when he speaks most offensively, when he insults and calls names, he is most "personal." By exaggerating, he forces us to realize that both he and his targets must take responsibility for their statements. "The ideas discussed are held by people after all," Lewis reminds us; "the works under review have names attached to them."[10] On the other hand, by exaggerating, he simultaneously underlines the freedom his principles allow. A person, the Enemy shows us, can do or say anything. Furthermore, by over-emphasizing the differences between the critic and everyone else, the Enemy dramatizes the essential uniqueness of personality. If our quirks help distinguish us from others, then even our quirks are essential to our originality and our intelligence. Again his essay on Eliot clarifies Lewis's position: "If there is to be an 'insincerity,'" he announces,

> I prefer it should occur in the opposite sense--namely that "the man, the personality" should exaggerate, a little artificially perhaps, his beliefs--rather than leave a meaningless shell behind him, and go to hide in a volatilized hypostasization of his personal feelings. . . . the man is thus 'most himself' (even if a little too much himself to be quite the perfect self, on occasion) . . .[11]

And, as he argues in an essay called "'Detachment' and the Fictionist," such exaggerations paradoxically lead to an

increased detachment and decreased subjectivity:

> . . . as a fiction writer, and in handling the contemporary scene . . .In order to get the maximum of drama out of it you must 'in the destructive element immerse'; allow it to bring into play your personality . . . You must not be afraid to say, 'In this, I am a partisan!' . . . Further, you will find that the more you use your personality in this deliberate fashion, the less notice you will take of it--the less it will interfere with you. . . . You will find you will achieve more true 'detachment' that way than by playing at Mr. Fair-Play . . .[12]

As the Enemy, Lewis artificially exaggerates his biases in the interests of honesty. "You play at being yourself," he concludes, "and so you are yourself."[13]

But the Enemy persona is only the most dramatic illustration of Lewis's principle of personality. That principle also requires that his style be casual and colloquial. Lewis consistently writes in the first and second persons, reminding us always that we are people reading the words of another person. Nearly every page is thickly sprinkled with you's and I's, I believe's and to my mind's. And nearly every chapter of Time and Western Man opens with Lewis's personal voice:

> Next after the Russian Ballet I propose to range, for analysis, an old associate of mine, Ezra Pound. There are some obvious objections to this, chief among them the personal regard in which I hold him. Since the War I have seen little of Pound. Once towards the end of my long period of seclusion and work, hard-pressed, I turned to him for help, and found the same generous and graceful person there that I had always known . . . (54);

> The work of Mr. Joyce enters in various ways as a specimen into the critical scheme I am outlining. What I have to say will not aim at estimating his general contribution to contemporary letters. I prefer his writing to that of Miss Stein, that may as well be set down at once (91);

> I have advanced throughout this essay a carefully constructed body of criticism against various contemporary literary and other modes of thought and expression. . . . This hostile analysis in its entirety has been founded upon those wider considerations that I shall now at least adumbrate (131);
>
> In this chapter I am going to discuss the nature and extent of the unanimity which I have said I believe to be one of the most peculiar things about the present time . . . (244).

He tells us what he has been doing, what he will do next, and how he feels about what he is doing. If those explanations call for personal anecdotes or statements of preference, he does not hesitate to offer them. To a reader accustomed to an impersonal critical style, or to a writer accustomed to minimizing personal references, this prose is surprisingly loose, perhaps even sloppy. But it is a deliberate looseness. It denies the illustion of objectivity, forcing us to read as if we were in conversation with Lewis rather than as receivers of facts he has merely organized.

This colloquial style further allows Lewis easily to fill the most important requirement of a personal criticism--to keep one's reader aware of one's premises. Rather than try to hide or underplay them, Lewis tries to keep his biases on the surface of his analyses. Thus he begins both books of Time and Western Man by stating his position and his motives for writing, and he returns again and again to explain how the issues he criticizes matter to his work as an artist and a writer. Because, he tells us, his deepest beliefs--aesthetic, ethical, political--are contradicted by those he characterizes as the "time-philosophy," and are

threatened by the "time-cult's" ascendancy, he feels it his responsibility to destroy, if he can, his adversaries' credibility and offer an alternate philosophy. Furthermore, Lewis insists, it is our responsibility to recognize and act upon our own deepest beliefs, just as he has done. In this sense, his criticism is as much an example as an argument: he offers us his ideas--both his premises and his conclusions--as an example of independent thinking. To convert us to his "space-philosophy" is only half of his project; equally, he wishes to show us how to think for ourselves by making us see how important it is that we know and accept our own motives and principles.

Certainly Lewis does not argue that such self-knowledge comes easily. We hide our prejudices and purposes from ourselves as often as from others. And those prejudices are almost never uncomplicated; our interests usually contradict and qualify each other. Issues are rarely clear, and decisions rarely simple. As we saw in the passage I quoted at the beginning of this chapter, Lewis does not underestimate the confusions we may face, nor does he undervalue the conflicts those confusions create. He believes that the contradictions in our minds should force us to think more clearly and teach us to argue more vigorously. Still, he insists, we must decide which things matter the most, and keep those things before us as the main criteria for our judgments. Just as in the "Horseman" drawing the conflicting vectors of the horse are dominated by the single vertical of

the rider, so we too must subordinate the warring particulars to the essential patterns. Moreover, in Lewis's eyes, compromise and mediation--like the pretense of objectivity--confuse intellectual and ethical issues by allowing us to evade our responsibilities. If seeing both sides of every question is natural to an active mind, we can neither criticize nor act effectively until we choose which side we will support. As he argues in "'Detachment' and the Fictionist," "the only important thing is to be on the side to which you belong, if you understand me. There is no right side or wrong side. That is nonsense. Sub specie aeternitatis both sides are equally right. But what is unalterable is that there is a right and a wrong side for you."[14] And in Time and Western Man, he writes, "What is suggested here, is that, in such a crisis, all the weight of our intelligence should be thrown into the scales representing our deepest instincts" (187). We must fix "upon something fundamental, quite underneath the flux."

Yet as the language of these statements suggests, Lewis does not intend that we should base our decisions on our emotions. Personality, for him, does not imply emotional distortion. In their dislike for unreasoned and unreasonable criticism--"If I like a thing, that is all I want"--he and Eliot agree. While Eliot sees personality as irresponsible and emotional, though, Lewis means by this word something essentially rational. His personality is individual, certainly, rather than communal, but it is also external,

public, and sharable, not internal and private. As he explains in Men Without Art, the "'self' or 'personality' . . . is merely a living adequately at any given moment."[15] The Enemy exaggerates Lewis's understanding of this "self":

> . . . of course I am not using a 'personality' in the Ballyhoo sense--I do not mean an individualist abortion, bellowing that it wants at all costs to 'express' itself, and feverishly answering the advertisement of the quack who promises to develop such things over-night. I mean only a constancy and consistency in being, as concretely as possible, one thing--at peace with itself, if not with the outer world, though that is likely to follow after an interval of struggle . . .[16]

So far as the Enemy persona behaves like an "individualist abortion," it may seem to falsify Lewis's principles by its very exaggeration. We must take care that its dramatics do not obscure the principles it is intended to embody.

Lewis sees his principle of personality, I think, as a sort of balancing term between objectivity and subjectivity; his stance is both more subjective than the modern critic's stance of scientific objectivity, and less subjective than, say, the psychological or stream-of-consciousness writing of some modern novelists. He is concerned to distinguish his personality from subjectivity--the kind of personal involvement he admires from the kind he hates--but it is a difficult distinction both to make and to maintain. For his readers the difficulty is increased because in this matter (as in many others), he fails to use his terms consistently. In one place, he will use a word in a special way--often, his main terms reverse ordinary usage or

connotation--while elsewhere he will revert to the common use of the same word. Sometimes, these apparent contradictions can be easily resolved by reference to their immediate context; for instance, when he describes criticism as "objective," he is attacking, but when he describes the material world as "objective" he is praising.[17] But contextual fluctuations do not account for all of the difficulty with these terms. Underlying his argument, I think, is a paradoxical definition of personality as an individualized, even idiosyncratic, intellectual force, simultaneously private and public.

In an essay of 1932, Lewis tries to define a "principle of the not-self," which seems to be identical with his principle of personality. The essay is among his most ambiguous pieces--distinguishing his serious from his ironic statements is almost impossible in many places--but it does spotlight the paradox underlying his terminology. The "not-self"--like the "personality"--is both "ultra-human" and "inhuman"; it is the "intellect" and the "truth"; but it is not emotional, and it is not impersonal.[18] He writes:

> The man who has formed the habit of consulting and adhering to the principle of the not-self participates, it is true, in the life of others outside himself far more than does the contrary type of man, he who refrains from making any use at all of this speculative organ. But he is not, for that reason, more like other people. He is less like them.[19]

"It is," he concludes, "an enemy principle."[20]

The "not-self" is not the "other"; it is the intellectual core of the "self." Because thought distinguishes

persons from animals and things, the "not-self" is consequently the essence of personality, and personality the essence of intelligence. Insofar as we transcend emotion through reason, then, judgments may be simultaneously personal and disinterested. Many years later, Lewis offered a simpler--and clearer--explanation which abandons some of his special terms:

> Let me agree, then, to the word 'detached', in the limited sense of habitually reserving judgement, and not expressing oneself by action, and, in perhaps the most important things, holding to the deliverances of reason.--Impersonal detachment is another matter.[21]

A political candidate, for example, must stand as an individual with his own reasons for wanting office, his own opinions about his opponents, and his own political principles; but that kind of frank individuality does not require that he replace reason with emotion.[22]

In Time and Western Man, Lewis calls the other side of personal idiosyncrasy the "mind." Like the "not-self," "mind" is the underlying structure of the self, the non-emotional part of our personality that makes us individuals capable of independent thought. The importance Lewis assigns to this term--like that he gives to personality--shows very clearly in his language. Frequently, as we saw, he punctuates his comments with reminders of his presence; one of the most common of these phrases is "to my mind." More importantly, two of his main classifying terms are "time-mind" and "space-mind"; he characterizes writers and artists as having one or the other. And when he speaks of other

people, he consistently and casually refers to the type or quality of their mind. "Miss [Jane] Harrison's mind," for instance, ". . . is a perfect time-mind" (240, emphasis Lewis's); Pound's "mind can be best arrived at, perhaps, by thinking of what would happen if you could mix in exactly equal proportions Bergson-Marinetti-Mr. Hueffer (with a few preraphaelite 'christian names' thrown in), Edward Fitzgerald and Buffalo Bill" (54). Many of these references--especially those occurring in his more flamboyant attacks--seem to be uncalculated, but frequently Lewis obviously intends to direct our attention to an artist's mind as the central factor in his or her creativity. In Stein's Composition as Explanation, for example, "we have, I believe, one of the clues to this writer's mind. It tells us that her mind is a sham, to some extent" (66). Similarly, Lewis calls his long essay on Joyce--the most important chapter of "The Revolutionary Simpleton"--"An Analysis of the Mind of James Joyce."

As language like this suggests, quality of mind is for Lewis an entirely proper basis for judgment.[23] From it comes all our personal power; it alone enables us to transform chaotic impulses into controlled and useful energy--and to transform our isolation into community. This essential energy is simultaneously creative and intellectual. Thus Time and Western Man, Lewis says, "is among other things the assertion of a belief in the finest type of mind, which lifts the creative impulse into an absolute region free of

. . . 'history' or politics" (18). And the "supreme instrument of research" is, as it has always been, "the independent critical mind" (11). Just as the gaudy surfaces of the "Horseman" and the Enemy reveal their rigorous structures, we find that Lewis's principle of personality is supported and balanced by his conservative emphasis on intellect.

ii

"Whatever I, for my part, say," Lewis explains, "can be traced back to an organ; but in my case it is the eye. It is in the service of the things of vision that my ideas are mobilized" (7-8). So, he says, in Time and Western Man he offers us a "philosophy of the eye" (418). In statements like these, I think, he uses "vision" and "eye" metaphorically to bridge the gap--again--between the isolation of his "powerfullest Me" and the intersubjective universality which he believes is grounded in "common sense."

When we describe our own biases, we indirectly describe our community. As we might expect, by identifying himself as a painter criticizing literature, politics, science, and philosophy, Lewis emphasizes how he differs from other critics. His activity is "partisan" and "spcialist," and its slant toward vision is personal. "My occupation," he writes, "is not one that I have received by accident or mechanically inherited, but is one that I chose as responding to an exceptional instinct or bias" (7, my emphasis). Later

in the book he explains further: "no doubt what made me, to begin with, a painter, was some propensity for the exactly defined and also, fanatically it may be, the physical or the concrete" (129). He writes as one man whose personality has found its proper expression in the graphic arts. For him, painting is a calling, not a job; his visual work, he argues, has shaped his critical perspective.

By emphasizing his experience as an artist, though, Lewis also implicitly claims community with the larger group of all visual artists. His responses, he says, are specifically those of an artist, and would be shared by many others. "The definiteness of those instincts, those of a plastic or graphic artist, make his responses to the philosophic tendencies around him more pointed than if he were a scholar mainly, or if he approached them from some political position, or as a professional of philosophic thought" (7). Every now and then, throughout the book, he refers casually--and usually cryptically--to the relationship between his profession and the purpose of his criticism. But while he does seem to think he speaks in some special way for artists as a group, he never really develops that aspect of his criticism, and he even tries occasionally to deny his similarity with other painters. "There are artists and artists," he reminds us, "and it is certainly true that many would take opposite [not merely different] views to those of the present writer" (7).

Rather than emphasize the middle ground of his community with other artists, he chooses instead to stress, on the one hand, his isolation, and on the other hand, his universality.

Most often, when he describes the larger community he wishes to speak for in Time and Western Man, Lewis draws his boundaries on other grounds than occupation. Like all philosophies, he says, his "could perhaps more exactly be described as the expression of the instincts of a particular kind of man, rather than as an artist among men of other occupations" (7). Of course this qualification undercuts his remarks about the artist's special sensibility; he loses the precision of his identity as a painter to a more vaguely-defined category and a potentially larger group of people. But this definition, I believe, corresponds much more accurately to Lewis's real position and real concerns.

What matters most to Lewis about artists is not their ability to draw or paint, but their inevitable intimacy with vision. As he remarks in an essay of 1922, "The Credentials of the Painter," "The fundamental claim of the painter or sculptor, his fundamental and trump credential, is evidently this: that he alone gives you the visual fact of our existence. All attachment to reality by means of the sense of sight is his province or preserve."[24] One of his main purposes for writing Time and Western Man is to convince his readers that they too are creatures of vision;

he speaks for and to those who value sight as the most important of the five senses. This community is one that he would like to make as large as possible. Vision, he believes, should be recognized as a supreme universal value.

As he did with his definition of the critic as an enemy, Lewis uses his references to "the eye" both to define his own position as exclusively as he can and to claim that his personal biases are in some basic way universal. Late in his argument, when he thinks it necessary to qualify his terms, Lewis clarifies the connection he has assumed between the artist and other people:

> . . . if by 'philosophy of the eye' is meant that we wish to repose, and materially to repose, in the crowning human sense, the visual sense; and if it meant that we refuse (closing ourselves in with our images and sensa) to retire into the abstraction and darkness of an aural and tactile world, then it is true that our philosophy attaches itself to the concrete and radiant reality of the optic sense. That sensation of overwhelming reality which vision alone gives is the reality of 'common-sense,' as it is the reality we inherit from pagan antiquity. And it is indeed on that 'reality' that I am basing all I say. (418)

Lewis thinks his painting makes him especially able to recognize the nature of things, yet at the same time he firmly believes that the reality he thus discovers is not idiosyncratic. Lewis consistently refers for his authority to what he believes are shared principles and sentiments--shared, he presumes, by all intelligent and sensible persons. By basing his judgments on vision, he makes his intensely personal criticism simultaneously private and

public when he assumes a visually-based "common sense."

Lewis uses the phrase "common sense" to mean several different things at the same time. The passage I have just quoted suggests the first of these: our common sense is sight. These two key terms--common sense and the eye--intersect when Lewis wishes to remind us that we share an ability to see things; that if only because our eyes and our brains are physiologically similar to others', we see similarly; and that our notion of the world derives largely from what we see and perceive of it. He emphatically does not mean that we know through our retinal impressions alone; he cautions us to remember that our perceptions depend on the interaction of all our senses--and our minds. He opposes the "isolation" of the eye, particularly from the sense of touch (418-19), and he distinguishes our "sensations" from our "perceptions."

> The traditional belief of common-sense, embodied in the 'naïf' view of the physical world, is really a picture. We believe that we see a certain objective reality. This contains stable and substantial objects. When we look at these objects we believe that what we are perceiving is what we are seeing. In reality, of course, we are conscious of much more than we immediately see. For in looking at an orange lying before us on the table, we are more or less conscious of its contents, we apprehend it as though we could see all round it, since from experience we know it is round, of the same colour and texture, from whatever position it is examined, and so forth. (408)

When Lewis refers to our visual sense, he means not pure visual sensations but those sensations after they have been screened and categorized by our minds--our visual Gestalt, in other words. "For we are not conscious of this inrush,

but only of its accommodation to the waiting forms of cognition" (414).[25] Moreover, and consequently, he also does not mean that we all see identical things; because our minds and our memories work with our sense, our perceptions differ. The similarities in vision which constitute common sense are the ground from which our individual creativity--our individual vision--develops. Yet despite these qualifications, Lewis does mean that sight is our most important sense. In this context, we can understand more clearly his claim for an artist's special privilege: painters, by inclination and by training, are more aware of the primacy of the eye. An artist, or anyone with an artist's instincts, sees more self-consciously--and therefore more vividly, more directly, and more accurately--than others can.

The second meaning of Lewis's "common sense" is our ordinary sense of the world--those experiences of reality on which we base our everyday lives. For Lewis, it is important that we also base our judgments--both critical and philosophical--on these direct experiences. Generally, he believes, by relying on the ordinary we discover truths which are immediate and concrete; we avoid constructing sophisticated but abstract theories which completely lose touch with the physical world we live in. Lewis is well aware that this common sense can change. Indeed, his whole project in Time and Western Man could be called an attempt to halt such a change. He writes, for instance,

> The material world continues to be dealt with in a masterly fashion on the assumption of the 'material'

> postulates of 'common-sense,' and that is the end of it. This would be ignoring, however, the fact that these conceptions of the external world are intended to supersede those of the classical intelligence and of the picture of the plain-man: that it is proposed to teach Relativity-physics and the relativist world-view everywhere in our schools: and that vast propaganda is carried on by popular treatises and articles to impose this picture upon the plain-man and the simple common-sense intelligence. In other words, the 'common-sense' of to-morrow, it is proposed--the one general sense of things that we all hold in common--is to be transformed . . . And, of course, there is nothing at all that once people are familiarized with it and taught to take it as a matter of course, does not seem natural, and that would not therefore assume the authority of a 'common-sense.' (432-33)

So his appeals to our common sense are to the traditional or classical sense--that of the "plain-man." And he wishes always to persuade us that this traditional world-view is more to our advantage than the artificial, mental world which scientists and philosophers construct. As he explains:

> By this proposed transfer from the beautiful objective, material world of common-sense, over to the 'organic' world of chronological mentalism, you lose not only the clearness of outline, the static beauty, of the things you commonly apprehend; you lose also the clearness of outline of your own individuality which apprehends them. (175)[26]

As his language shows, Lewis conceives of this common sense in visual terms; what we know of the physical world through sensory evidence is more important than anything we could deduce about what might lie beneath its surfaces.

By asserting the primacy of familiar experience, Lewis establishes a standard against which things can be judged. Just as we might say it is only common sense to use an umbrella in the rain, without needing to explain why we ordinarily prefer staying dry to getting wet, Lewis can

counter an argument simply by saying that it violates common sense--the kind he believes is most natural to us. This tactic may seem like cheating: to more rigorous thinkers than Lewis, the appeal to common sense may simply beg vital questions. But to Lewis, it is the best authority. Beneath his assumption that his appeals to his readers can succeed lies the belief that all communication is grounded in just that ordinary and traditional sense of familiar things which philosophers find so difficult to delimit.

In Lewis's eyes, "common sense" is finally, and most importantly, our shared sense of things, the source of intersubjectivity. Only because we share certain perceptions do we escape solipsism; only his faith that he and his readers have the same basic experiences in living permits him to maintain his individuality and still understand and be understood by others. Each of us, he argues, lives in "the physical world that we all share in common . . . our common world in which we all meet and communicate" (191). Some, whose minds have been "debauched with learning," may have already lost touch with this physical world;[27] Lewis would remind these people of what they have forgotten. In the light of this view of "common sense," we can see what kind of audience Lewis imagines for his book. Those who know that they share his basis are the readers he addresses as allies; those who have lost that awareness are the readers he wishes to convert.

At bottom, the three meanings for Lewis's central

phrase "common sense" merge. To Lewis, the world we share is identical to the everyday world and to the world we know through vision. Because it is, our deepest personal interests will not be idiosyncratic but communal, not private but sharable. The world in which we can live by recognizing these relationships, Lewis wishes to convince us, is the best world. He promises:

> . . . this concrete and 'material' world--which is all that is common to us, and which is therefore justly named the 'world of common-sense,' as opposed to the 'mental' world--is a truly fantastic paradise . . . (186)

If, on Lewis's example, we are faithful to our own principles, if we stay in touch with the vivid reality embodied in personality and the visible world, we can share the artist's vision--and resist those modern forces which would destroy that "truly fantastic paradise."

Chapter 2: Notes

[1]*Rude Assignment*, p. 55.

[2]*The Enemy*, ix-x.

[3]*Men Without Art* (London: Cassell, 1934), p. 71.

[4]T. S. Eliot, "The Function of Criticism" in *Selected Essays* (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1951), p. 25.

[5]Eliot, *Selected Essays*, p. 29.

[6]*Men Without Art*, p. 72.

[7]*Men Without Art*, p. 91. Lewis is speaking here of the artist (referring to Eliot's view of the artist as catalyst in "Tradition and the Individual Talent"), but the essay as a whole makes clear that in this issue he sees the artist and critic as closely related. Moreover, of course, Lewis's criticism--like Eliot's--is explicitly that written by an artist.

Lewis also suggests an explanation for Eliot's position: "Mr. Eliot . . . has allowed himself to be robbed of his personality, such as it is, and he is condemned to an unreal position. I see his difficulty of course, and understand that in the first instance he was moved by a desire to effect a *total* separation between what he regarded as fine in his personality from what he regarded as unsatisfactory. And he has always been particularly alive to the sensation which has found a theological expression in the doctrine of original sin." *Men Without Art*, p. 88.

[8]*The Art of Being Ruled*, p. 27.

[9]*Rude Assignment*, p. 70. In all of this, I am in disagreement with Wagner, who argues that "In nothing is [Lewis's criticism] more neoclassical than in its pretensions to impartiality" (18), and that "Only occasionally does this mask of detachment slip off . . ." (19). Wagner's understanding of Lewis's personae would lead him to this view (since he sees Lewis as always speaking from behind one impersonal mask or another); more importantly, I think, it is an almost automatic corollary to his belief that Lewis is the quintessential English neoclassicist (18). Where Wagner stresses Lewis's detachment, I stress his involvement; but, as I will argue below, these two attitudes are at bottom combined in Lewis's own definition of personality.

[10]The Enemy, xiv.

[11]Men Without Art, p. 91.

[12]"'Detachment' and the Fictionist," The English Review, Dec. 1934, pp. 570-73; in Enemy Salvoes, pp. 264-65. Here, too, Lewis explicitly contrasts his procedure against Eliot's.

[13]Ibid., p. 265.

[14]Ibid., p. 264.

[15]Men Without Art, p. 74.

[16]Men Without Art, p. 75.

[17]Two more examples: "It is in non-personal modes of feeling--that is in thought, or in feeling that is so dissociated from the hot, immediate egoism of sensational life that it becomes automatically intellectual--that the non-religious Western Man has always expressed himself, at his profoundest, at his purest" (TWM, 271). And: "It's very difficult indeed, of course, / To show that this is not a personal force" (One-Way Song, p. 65). Both of these passages make sense in the light of the paradoxical identification of personality with detachment.

[18]"Physics of the Not-Self," p. 54.

[19]Ibid., p. 53.

[20]Ibid., p. 54.

[21]Rude Assignment, p. 70. I have already quoted what follows: "For the whole virtue of accurate observation is that it is a person observing." Described in these terms, Lewis's position seems much closer to Eliot's. A remark of Eliot's on The Lion and the Fox shows that he recognized this affinity underlying the radical difference in manner between Lewis and himself: "So far as I can see, Mr. Lewis is defending the detached observer. The detached observer, by the way, is likely to be anything but a dispassionate observer; he probably suffers more acutely than the various apostles of immediate action." (Eliot, Twentieth-Century Verse, Wyndham Lewis Double Number, Nov-Dec 1937, p. 111). In this review, Eliot describes Lewis's criticism as detached; in Men Without Art Lewis argues that Eliot's criticism is far more personal than he admits. Both are right.

[22]Of course, many politicians do abandon reason for emotion. The difference between detachment and impersonality, subjectivity and personality, is no easier to maintain in action than it is to describe in words. As we will see, Lewis sometimes fails in this respect to practice what he argues as principle.

[23]Lewis is quite open about the political implications of this principle. He explains, for instance, "We live a conscious and magnificent life of the 'mind' at the expense of this community. . . . But in sympathy with the political movements to-day, the tendency of scientific (in which is included philosophic) thought is to hand back to this vast community of cells this stolen, aristocratical monopoly of personality which we call the 'mind' (318). And a few pages later he comments that "'Mind' is an artificial, pumped-up affair--just as the 'male' is a highly unstable and artificial mode of life" (324). In The Art of Being Ruled, he explains that he is writing on behalf of the intellectual; but he argues there that "there is nothing 'aristocratic' about the intellect" since anyone from any social or economic class may have a good one. See p. 431.

[24]"The Credentials of the Painter," in Wyndham Lewis on Art, p. 218. In this essay Lewis also says, "the painter participates more in life itself in one way than any other artist; but in another sense he is the most removed from it" (221). From this paradoxical perspective, the Enemy is a logical persona for the artist.

[25]Lewis describes these cognitive forms with the same metaphor he will use later in explaining his agreement with Berkeleyan idealism: they are "our drove of 'objects'" and "our static drove within" (414). See below, pp. 132-138. But Lewis's use of "vision" is clearly not that of Berkeley's "Essay Towards a New Theory of Vision." Berkeley argues that vision must be distinguished from touch; Lewis deliberately uses the word to signify our entire perceptual apparatus, beginning with but not limited to the eye.

[26]What Lewis means by this "transfer" will become clear in Chapter 3.

[27]This phrase, Lewis says, is Berkeley's. See TWM pp. 424, 425.

Chapter 3: Philosophy

Lewis, we have seen, begins Time and Western Man by identifying his critical position as that of a visual artist. At the same time, he explains how he sees himself as a philosopher. Lewis never pretends to be what he is not--a trained, professional philosopher. On the contrary, with a characteristic swagger, he defines himself in part as opposing that position. "I do not feel at all impelled to explain myself when I am examining a mere philosopher," he says confidently: "he speaks my language, usually with less skill, but otherwise much the same as I do" (10). Instead, he writes as an individual who sees no reason "why a person should refuse himself the right to use his wits" just because he is not a specialist (11); for him, "a philosophy is always a thing that helps a man to live and to enhance his powers" (364).

In Time and Western Man, Lewis's personal philosophy--his own "something fundamental, quite underneath the flux"--plays an essential role as the ground from which he criticizes the "time-philosophy." Insisting that he intends primarily to attack the time-cult, not to offer an independent philosophical treatise, Lewis constructs his critique of modern thought upon one central opposition: the "time-mind" and "time-philosophy" versus the "space-mind" and "space-philosophy."[1] These are "the poles of the human

intelligence"; always, they are "confronted, eternally hostile to each other, or at least eternally different" (103, 102). And while he uses this dichotomy mainly to expose the weaknesses of various modern philosophers, inevitably (just as the Enemy, though he is defined by difference, still has his own distinct personality) Lewis's own principles, beliefs, and values emerge as a philosophical and practical alternative.

In this chapter, I will examine Lewis's "philosophic position." I will begin in section i by presenting the main terms of his space-philosophy. These terms, we will see, follow directly from those we dealt with in the last chapter: beneath his allegiances to vision, common sense, personality, and mind, we find him asserting the primacy of space over time, stability over flux, and living mind over dead matter, and arguing that the individual human personality in its capacity for thought is the ultimate reality. In section ii, I will look more closely at his criticism of the time-philosophy, using as representative examples his analyses of Alfred North Whitehead's Science and the Modern World and Samuel Alexander's Space Time and Deity. In sections iii and iv, I will discuss Lewis's place in the philosophic tradition, first through his relationship with Bergson, whose influence Lewis denies, and second through his relationship with Berkeley, whose influence Lewis embraces.

i

The first thing we must establish is Lewis's working definition of "space." For the most part, I find, it is accurately described by a statement of Alexander's: "We then formulate the two conceptions, one of a Time which flows uniformly on and the other that of a Space immoveable: what are commonly known as Absolute Time and Absolute Space, and, so far as I can judge, the ordinary or 'common-sense' notions of Time and Space."[2] Thus Lewis says that "Time . . . is merely change or movement" (167); and "The exterior world is where 'Space' is" (435). Yet these statements tell only part of the story, for in Time and Western Man, Lewis very often uses these terms metaphorically, much as we have seen him use "vision" and "common sense." To him, "Space seems . . . by far the greater reality of the two, and Time meaningless without it" (445), not because one concept is philosophically "better" than the other, but because of the more practical consequences with which he associates them.

For Lewis the painter, the first practical advantage of space is its association with vision.[3] The equivalence between his "philosophy of the eye" and a space-philosophy results from our intuitive, common-sensical agreement that space is accessible to vision while time is not. No one can see minutes passing, but most of us can see objects filling spaces. Like his attitudes toward personality and mind, this view of the kinship between vision and space is

immediately evident in Lewis's language, which is consistently permeated by spatial and visual metaphors. The time-mind manifests itself on the parallel social and philosophical planes and there are time- and space-views; personalities and thought-systems are patterned; we must look below the surface of ideas to discover what is at the bottom; "it is impossible in practice to say where 'abstraction' begins and 'concreteness' leaves off (172, emphasis mine). In part, of course, this usage results simply from the prevalence of such naturalized metaphors in our language; but Lewis's particular bent is unmistakable in his more studied images. What we see in the world of common sense is a "picture" which the Bergsonians would replace with a "moving picture" (408); and his task, Lewis says, is to

> prop people's eyes open for half a minute, and my point would be perfectly clear to them: for the landscape I am describing lies all round them: or rather, the main feature of it, to which I am drawing attention, it is impossible to escape from: it is as ubiquitous as Fujiyama in a japanese print. (239)

Occasionally, he even spatializes time. For example, he writes:

> The world in which Advertisement dwells is a one-day world. It is necessarily a plane universe, without depth. Upon this Time lays down discontinuous entities, side by side; each day, each temporal entity, complete in itself, with no perspectives, no fundamental exterior reference at all. (28)

All of these metaphors function as a reminder that in our ordinary, shared picture of reality, we are surrounded by visible space. Even the prevalence of spatial images

in English would itself affirm the primacy of vision and space in our common-sense world.

But Lewis wishes also to call our attention to a similar intimacy between space and mind.[4] Where Bergson complains that the "intellect 'spatialized' things" (168),[5] Lewis agrees and rejoices. For him, when we stop "spatializing" things, when we stop seeing theoretical issues visually, we also stop thinking about them. As we have discovered, Lewis does not mean by his emphasis on vision to isolate the senses from the mind; rather, he insists, mind and sense always act together in our perception of the world. And that perception--both visual and mental--is timeless: "We have overriden time to the extent of bestowing upon objects a certain timelessness. We and they have existed in a, to some extent, timeless world, in which we possessed these objects, in our fastness of memory, like gods" (412). So, for Lewis, the mind too is timeless (see 444). Again, a remark of Alexander's clarifies Lewis's meaning: discussing universals, he explains that they are "not timeless or eternal as being out of time, but as being free from limitation to a particular time."[6] We will examine this conjunction of space and mind more closely later in this chapter and in Chapter 5; here we need only recognize that for Lewis, thought, as much as vision, operates in a spatial world.

Beneath both of these associations, I believe, lies Lewis's conviction that it is more to our advantage to

emphasize stability than change. The time-philosophers, he tells us, believe that "space-time possesses no quality at all, except motion" (441);[7] "For all practical purposes, 'time' and 'motion' are identical, as we find them applied in the philosophies under consideration" (213). For them, flux is the essence of reality. Our world constantly changes, they say; if we think things are ever stable, we are deceiving ourselves. Lewis offers the example of Bertrand Russell, who argues that the fading of our wallpaper proves that every day the paper itself is <u>essentially</u> different, more different than the same: "'the assumption,'" Russell writes, "'that there is a constant entity, the wall-paper, which 'has' these various colours at various times, is a piece of gratuitous metaphysics'" (427). But for Lewis, on the contrary, that assumption is entirely appropriate, and the notion that our ordinary consciousness is of an all-encompassing flux equally gratuitous.

"As a <u>realist</u>," Lewis asks, "in the most sensible acceptance of the word, and as of course we all are, whatever we are merely called, what is the strongest impression you receive from the external world, or nature?" The answer should be obvious: "Certainly stability, I, as a realist, should say: decidedly not one of change. For change you have to look, to wait for, you have to detect it" (211). Ordinarily we are not aware of our pulse-beat or the insidious aging of our bodies; while we do not expect our surroundings to remain self-identical, we are

rarely conscious of gradual changes and often notice sudden differences with surprise. In holding that our wall is covered with the same paper in January as in December, Lewis reminds us, we are not denying that change exists:

> Everyone knows that the wall-paper on their wall will fade . . . It has just as much 'permanence' ascribed to it by common-sense as indeed it is likely to have. There it is, after all, day after day . . . It is 'permanent' in the sense in which we meta-physicians of the mere world of 'common-sense' mean permanent. (428)

When he opposes stasis to flux, Lewis does not posit an absolute permanence, but he does argue that stability is more important than change.[8] The difference between Lewis's view and the time-cult's is one of emphasis: just as we can call a glass half-full or half-empty, we can value either stability or change. Where the time-philosopher holds that change negates permanence, Lewis sees permanence--or, as he frequently calls it, continuity--as enclosing and dominating change. Any mind aware of its own direct experience, he believes, must admit the priority of its perception of stability.

Stability matters so much to Lewis partly because he sees it as the necessary condition for belief, which in turn is the only basis for any sense of reality. Following Hume, he argues that belief depends on habit or custom; we believe in cause and effect, for instance, only because certain sequences of events repeat themselves over and over.[9] We believe the sun will rise because it always has; we believe our dining-room chair will hold us because it

customarily does. In the context of common sense, furthermore, this kind of belief is identical with reality. "Reality," Lewis explains, "is in fact simply belief. What you 'believe in' is a thing's 'reality': that is the realistic, not of course the logical, account of it" (374). So, he concludes, "'reality' is a sensation arising from and depending on the phenomenon of endurance, and so familiarity" (379). Even if a rigorous logic may support the time-philosopher's view that everything is always changing, ordinary belief impels a space-philosophy; a mind "debauched with learning" may value flux over stasis, but a mind recognizing its ground in common sense must value stability.

We should not be surprised that even in his definition of reality, Lewis's final appeal is to common sense. Like his critical principles, his philosophical preference for stability is firmly grounded on the practicalities of ordinary, everyday life, which always matter more to him than do logical abstractions. He writes,

> Regarding mind as Timeless, it is more at home, we find, with Space. And as stability is the manifest goal of all organic life, and the thing from which we all of us have most to gain, we see no use, in the first place, and in the second see no theoretic advantage, in this fusion [of space and time]. For the objective world most useful to us, and what may be the same thing, most 'beautiful,' and therefore with most meaning, and that is further to say in a word with most reality, we require a Space distinct from Time. (444)

And it is just a paragraph later that he concludes, "Space seems to us by far the greater reality of the two, and Time meaningless without it. Time as change was the 'Nothing'

of the Greek, and it is ours" (445). Lewis firmly believes that our affirmation of stability is vital to the meaning of our daily lives: stability saves us from nothingness.

One of the most important results of this stable spatial world, according to Lewis, is that in it we can maintain a clear distinction between a dead material world and living mind. Two of Lewis's chapter titles indicate his attitude: "The object conceived as king of the physical world," and "The subject conceived as king of the psychological world." In one way or another, he argues, the time-philosophers have sought to dissolve this distinction and destroy the autonomy of both matter and mind. The "disintegration of the world-picture of 'common-sense,'" he explains, has been

> effected by the introduction of private and subjective time-systems, by the breaking up of the composite space of the assembled senses into an independent space of touch, a space of sight, a visceral space, and so forth: the conversion of 'the thing' into a series of discrete apparitions . . . (426).

Thus, for example, Russell's wallpaper becomes a "temporal succession of objects" (429); "this simple object hanging on our walls has to be turned into a very complex temporal 'event'-series of discrete and rigidly dissociated 'appearances'" (430). The simple but vivid perceptual object of common sense disappears, dissolved by time. To Lewis the painter, far more is lost than gained by his conceptual change. He prefers an external world of dead, relatively changeless matter--"the ordered picture of the classic world, and equally the instinctive picture we inherit

from untold generations of men" (426).

Similarly, Lewis argues, modern philosophy has done its best to replace the "conscious life of will and intellect" with "some sort of unconscious life" (318). In language that reminds us of his Enemy role, he explains what has happened:

> . . . a long time ago a battle was engaged between the Unconscious and the Conscious: and we have been witnessing the ultimate triumph of the Unconscious of recent years. The Individual and that part of him that is not individual, also joined issue: for the civil war was taken up, in the interior economy of the personality, sympathetically, at once. Inside us also the crowds were pitted against the Individual, the Unconscious against the Conscious, the 'emotional' against the 'intellectual,' the Many against the One. So it is that the Subject is not gently reasoned out of, but violently hounded from, every cell of the organism . . . (320).

In insisting that change is the primary characteristic of reality, the time-philosophers--either through the "impressionistic disorder of contemporary psychology or the cheerless mechanism of the Tester" (325)[10]--deny the identity of self as surely as they destroy the identity of the paper covering a wall. For the single self, they substitute a series of "distinct, intermittent selves" (364)--selves which, moreover, are controlled by unconscious forces. Lewis, of course, as the champion of the individual personality, deplores this kind of fragmentation as both contrary to common sense and ethically destructive. According to Lewis, while we all know that we change--just as we know that wallpaper fades--we still primarily think of ourselves as continuous, as single entities. As he explains elsewhere,

"Continuity, in the individual as in the race, is the diagnostic of a civilized condition. If you can break this personal continuity in an individual, you can break him. For he is that continuity."[11] Lewis, we have seen, requires personality, and "'personality,' as we use that term, is nothing but stability" (365).

But even more is at issue in this opposition between stability and flux than any single person's wish for a distinct identity. Lewis asks,

> In a man's way of regarding himself, it is socially of capital importance that he should regard himself as one person. Is it not? That is surely beyond any possible question. It is only in that way that you can hope to ground in him a responsibility towards all 'his' acts. (364)

Just as he believes that the critical stance of impersonal objectivity encourages irresponsibility, so too he believes that by emphasizing changes rather than continuities in individual personality and character, we tend to undermine our feeling of direct responsibility for our ideas and actions. If a person is encouraged to see himself as a "different person" every day, Lewis fears, he may not feel it necessary to behave today as if he will be held accountable tomorrow for what he has done.[12] The time-philosophers' emphasis on flux encourages ethical disorder, Lewis firmly believes, while his valuing of stability promotes a sense of individual ethical responsibility.

The way in which all these philosophical values come together for Lewis can be seen most clearly in his definition

of God. In his "Conclusion" he writes:

> The sense of personality, of being a person, is, according to us, the most vivid and fundamental sense that we possess: sharper and more complete than sight, built up like sight with reminiscence, though belonging to an infinite rather than a finite memory, so much so indeed that some philosophers have thought that this sense was memory only: and it is also essentially one of separation. In our approaches to God, in consequence, we do not need to 'magnify' a human body, but only to intensify that consciousness of a separated and transcendent life. So God becomes the supreme symbol of our separation and of our limited transcendence. . . . It is, then, because the sense of personality is posited as our greatest 'real,' that we require a 'God,' a something that is nothing but a person, secure in its absolute egoism, to be the rationale of this sense. (463)

With this, I think, we can understand the meaning of an earlier passage: "In these difficult new adjustments that I am here proposing to you," he has explained, "our definition must be sought in the rigidity of the principle at the base of all our arguments; a rigour as though there, at the base of the necessary dialectical instability, there were planted a God" (257). In Lewis's space-philosophy, the God-principle--the "greatest real," the "ultimate truth-bearing vehicle"--is always the thinking human being.

ii

Lewis's desire for a clearly maintained distinction between subject and object, mind and matter, is, I think, at the core of his objection to modern philosophy. In this section, therefore, I will examine more closely the arguments he brings against specific philosophers on this one issue.

Of the thinkers who figure prominently in his analysis (aside from Bergson and Berkeley, whom we will consider below), Samuel Alexander and Alfred North Whitehead best exemplify the time-philosophy; consequently, in Lewis's opposition to their positions on subject and object we can see most clearly the characteristics of his philosophical criticism.

He opens this line of attack by setting up a paradox much like those we saw in the last chapter. For the traditional categories of idealism and realism, Lewis substitutes two new ones: the abstract and the concrete.

> Behind all the various pictures or notions of the contemporary schools which we shall henceforth be examining . . . there is one issue more than another that is fundamental. It can be described as the problem of the 'abstract' versus the 'concrete' at the base of the various world-pictures to be discussed. For what I have called the time-school, time and change are the ultimate reality. They are the abstract school, it could be said. And almost every contemporary philosopher of any prominence may, in the really important issues, be included in that great school . . .
>
> So, under whatever form it takes, the position we are attacking is the abstract one, as against the concrete of, say, such an 'idealism' as that of Berkeley, Bradley or Bosanquet. [13]

He realizes, he says, that such a statement may be "without very much meaning to the general reader," but insists upon its importance to an understanding of his entire argument:

> If [the reader] attends to it at all, he will perhaps think that it is a strange thing that 'absolute idealism' should stand for the concrete, the non-abstract, whereas contemporary thought, which is surely highly 'realistic' and positivist, should stand for the abstract or the non-concrete. . . . But that is a paradox that it is extremely important to lay hold of at the outset. (168-169)

What has happened, Lewis explains, is that in trying to describe the fundamental reality of the world in accordance with the new theories of relativity physics, philosophers like Whitehead and Alexander have pushed that reality "infinitely far away, and the severance between it and us is complete" (170). "All the various different types of effort to discover a scientific absolute--something that could be shown to be objective and self-existent, have resulted in the production of a new race of things-in-themselves . . . [which are] exceedingly abstract and, according to the general use of the term, non-physical" (169).[14] Finally, and most damningly, Lewis argues, "The creation of these exceedingly abstract transcendent entities has observed universally the condition of a suppression of the traditional subject or mind" (169-170).

This is the general argument; Lewis is more specific about Alexander and Whitehead, "the best-known exponents, of philosophers writing in English, of these doctrines" (102). For evidence of the metaphysical destruction of the material object and its replacment by an abstract absolute, Lewis depends more on Whitehead's Science and the Modern World (1925) than on Alexander's Space Time and Deity (1920), but against either his case would be equally strong. For Alexander, "Space-Time is the stuff of which all things, whether as substances of under any category, are made" and "point-instants . . . are the elements of Space-Time"; "a point-instant is in its very nature a movement, not

something statical"; and point-instants "must be regarded not as physical elements like the electrons, but as metaphysical elements."[15] The time-philosopher, according to Lewis, brings matter "to life, by pumping it full of 'time,' until it is a quicksilver beneath his hand" (170); and Alexander writes, "there is nothing dead, or senseless in the universe, Space-Time being itself animated."[16] Alexander, who identifies himself as a realist, does not deny the existence of matter; but in defining it as "a complex of motion," he changes the traditionally dead, stable substance beyond recognition.[17]

The position of Whitehead--who acknowledges his special debt to Alexander's "great book"--is somewhat more complex, and seems to Lewis even more revealing.[18] Whitehead replaces matter by organism. He conceives "each primordial element as a vibratory ebb and flow of an underlying energy, or activity"; for him, "a primary organism [is] the emergence of some particular pattern as grasped in the unity of a real event." His "nature is a structure of evolving processes. The reality is the process."[19] The system Whitehead builds upon these elements, these events, "is nothing at any instant. It requires its whole period in which to manifest itself"; and again, the "name 'event' given to such a unity, draws attention to the inherent transitoriness, combined with the actual unity."[20] As Lewis points out, the "advertisement" of this doctrine is that it "is <u>life</u>, as

contrasted with the mechanical 'deadness' of materialist science" (174); Whitehead's organisms evolve and create, because they are seen in the perspective of the inter-relatedness of things and the process of perception. Even "the atom is transforming itself into an organism," in Whitehead's world.[21]

Now for Whitehead, these conceptual changes are all to our human advantage; but for Lewis, their "considerable sentimental appeal" is "a false view of [Whitehead's real] position" (174). If, on the one hand, Whitehead offers "organism" in place of "mechanism," on the other hand, he calls his doctrine "the theory of organic mechanism."[22] And indeed, as Lewis argues, there is a good deal of mechanism behind Whitehead's descriptions. Organisms change, for instance, according to an "evolutionary mechanism."[23] "All that the 'organic mechanism' tells you," Lewis concludes,

> is that the machine is alive--which is not such an agreeable belief, constituted as we are, as to believe that it is partially inert. It is preferable to believe that our tables and chairs are matter, than to believe them animated in some way, on the face of it. And, secondly, it informs you that the machine (very slowly) transforms itself. But that is obvious, and required no 'organic' theorist to show it to us. (182)[24]

As the language of this conclusion shows, Lewis does not finally object to the accuracy of Whitehead's descriptions so much as to their usefulness. We already know that things change; it is not "preferable" to think of them also as alive. Significantly, Lewis does not say that we are "constituted" to believe that matter is wholly inert, but

that it is partially so, as if to argue that Whitehead's description leaves little room for stability, but that his own space-philosophy does allow for change.

Up to this point, I think, Lewis's analysis of Whitehead's and Alexander's time-philosophy can be considered accurate and fair. But his argument becomes slightly more problematic where he considers their sins against the autonomy of the thinking subject and the concept of mind. In this matter, Whitehead's position is again more complex than Alexander's. In Science and the Modern World, Whitehead does not directly address the question of mind; so Lewis draws his evidence from a series of quotations which together form a sort of definition. First, Whitehead writes that "A colour is eternal. It haunts time like a spirit." "That," Lewis responds, "is certainly abstract enough!" Second, Whitehead explains that "the whole concept of materialism only applies to very abstract entities, the products of logical discernment."[25] At this point Lewis makes his own logical leap: if color is eternal, spirit-like, and abstract, he concludes, "the only kind of thing that can be described as 'matter,' then, is such a thing as his 'eternal' entity colour." Moreover, he comments, "Such 'abstract entities' are the nearest approach to 'spirit' in [Whitehead's] system."[26]

Having established this resemblance between matter and spirit, Lewis next examines what Whitehead says about organism. First, as we have seen, a "primary organism"

is "the emergence of some particular pattern as grasped in the unity of a real event." Second, the "intrinsic essence" of such an "event"--here Lewis shifts Whitehead's meaning by substituting "organism" for "event"--is "the property which we may call indifferently retention, endurance or reiteration. This property amounts to the recovery, on behalf of value amid the transitoriness of reality, of the self-identity which is also enjoyed by the primary eternal objects. The reiteration of a particular shape occurs when the event as a whole repeats some shape which is also exhibited by each one of a succession of its parts." This definition completes Lewis's demonstration: "To repeat certain mannerisms--which others recognize as 'you,' and without which they would be at a loss to distinguish you from another--that is to possess something in a very small way like the 'eternality' of a colour, is it not? Your personality is like a colour or a smell; only, unlike things that have 'eternality,' you die." In this roundabout way, Whitehead destroys the subject: "thanks to 'organism'" Lewis argues, "you become a sort of ephemeral understudy of 'matter.'"[27]

Once we have recognized the sleight-of-hand involved in this demonstration, we must go on to ask whether Lewis does justice to Whitehead's real attitude towards personality and mind--at least insofar as it is evident in Science and the Modern World. The answer, I think, must be both no and yes. He does not insofar as he fails to credit the

importance Whitehead's doctrine does assign to human perception. As far as Lewis is concerned, Whitehead's claim to move away from materialism "in the direction of 'life' and 'mind'" (174) is mere sentimentality; but his account of perception--of "prehensive unification"--does tend to put the human perceiver at the center of events. This emphasis is suggested, for instance, in the analogy Whitehead himself offers: "For Berkeley's mind," he explains, "I substitute a process of prehensive unification."[28] To invoke Berkeley is not to devalue mind. Similarly, though Lewis is right that Whitehead does not concern himself in this book much with either spirit or human personality, he does, in at least one place, offer a description with which Lewis might partially agree. "In a sense," writes Whitehead, "the self-identity of a human being is more abstract than that of a crystal." To this, of course, Lewis would retort that a person ought to be considered more concrete than the inanimate, unthinking crystal. But Whitehead continues:

> It is the life of the spirit. . . . the changing circumstances received from the environment are differentiated from the living personality, and are thought of as forming its perceived field. In truth, the field of perception and the perceiving mind are abstractions which, in the concrete, combine into the successive bodily events. The psychological field, as restricted to sense-objects and passing emotions, is the minor permanence, barely rescued from the nonentity of mere change; and the mind is the major permanence, permeating that complete field, whose endurance is the living soul. [29]

Despite his insistence on the unity of rather than the

distinctions between objects and minds, Whitehead does in this passage endorse Lewis's final values: endurance and the mind.

At the same time, though, Lewis's account of Whitehead is justified insofar as Whitehead does repeatedly assert that mind has no inherent privilege over matter. He may compare his prehensive unification with Berkeley's mind, but that comparison becomes a contrast when he says that "this total bodily event is on the same level as all other events, except for an unusual complexity and stability of inherent pattern." Again, he writes, as an "objectivist" he "holds that the things experienced and the cognisant subject enter into the common world on equal terms." And he does explicitly deny the autonomy of the subject: "The subject-object relation takes its origin in the double role of these eternal objects. . . . Thus no individual subject can have independent reality, since it is a prehension of limited aspects of subjects other than itself."[30] Now this last comment appears in the context of Whitehead's defense against solipsism, and indicates his way of accounting for intersubjectivity; but as we have seen, Lewis thinks it essential that this defense be accomplished without eroding the concrete identity of individual persons.

The philosophical center of Lewis's argument with this time-philosopher, I think, is with his belief that subject and object "enter into the common world on equal terms." Certainly his criticism of Alexander's view of mind focuses

on this same belief. Again Lewis disregards Alexander's own kind of emphasis on mind; Alexander says, for instance, that the difference between consciousness and materiality is "one of kind or quality and not of degree" and insists that those qualities which are creations of mind are not less real than those which belong to space-time.[31] But Lewis does accurately represent Alexander's primary assumption that "In respect of being or reality all existences are on an equal footing." One passage he quotes from Space Time and Deity very exactly states both Alexander's position and Lewis's opposition:

> The empirical method in metaphysics [Alexander's own] is seriously and persistently to treat finite minds as one among the many forms of finite existence, having no privilege above them except such as it derives from its greater perfection of development . . . prima facie there is no warrant for the dogma that, because all experience implies a mind, that which is experienced owes its being and its qualities to mind. Minds are but the most gifted members known to us in a democracy of things. 32

For Lewis, as we will see more clearly below, everything does finally owe its being and qualities to mind. So he is in fundamental philosophic disagreement with both Whitehead and Alexander on this point, and many of his specific arguments against them stem from this one difference.

In keeping with his conviction that philosophies are plans for living, though, Lewis also has more practical reasons for his disagreement with these two thinkers. First, as I suggested at the beginning of this section, he

objects to the extreme abstraction of their accounts of reality--an abstraction he sees as a direct result of their attempt to account for the sophisticated mathematical abstractions of relativity theory. Among the things Lewis means when he insists that we should rely on common sense is that even technical philosophy should remain in constant touch with the concrete phenomena of our daily experience, even when those experiences are at odds with scientific theory. Whitehead and Alexander agree that their descriptions are "at a high degree of abstraction from that experience."[33] Whitehead's explanation of this problem illuminates the difference between Lewis and the time-philosophers. He (like Alexander) acknowledges that the categories of the 17th and 18th centuries are those of our ordinary common sense, but he also argues that we can no longer consider those categories adequate to our knowledge of the world. "Of course," Whitehead agrees, "substance and quality, as well as simple location, are the most natural ideas for the human mind. It is the way in which we think of things, and without these ways of thinking we could not get our ideas straight for daily use. There is no doubt about this." But at the same time we must recognize the consequences of such discoveries as Einstein's, which issue "a direct challenge to common sense, because the earlier science had only refined upon the ordinary notions of ordinary people." Because of new scientific thought, Whitehead thinks, "Time, space, matter,

material, ether, electricity, mechanism, organism, configuration, structure, pattern, function, all require reinterpretation."[34] Now Lewis would not disagree with this description of modern science; but he strongly believes it is best that we limit such conceptual changes to science rather than recast our common sense to accord with them. Even if the 17th century notions of space and time, mind and matter, no longer seem scientifically accurate, Lewis argues, they are still the best basis for a practical philosophy.

Accordingly, Lewis points out two kinds of consequences he sees implicit in Whitehead's and Alexander's doctrines. In both cases, it is important to remember, his objections are less to Alexander and Whitehead themselves than to others who follow their example but lack their capabilities.[35] The first consequence is suggested by Alexander's comment that "Minds are but the most gifted members known to us in a democracy of things."[36] By placing mind on the same level as matter, Lewis believes, these philosophers encourage people to undervalue the creative powers of the human intelligence, to allow themselves to be controlled by the technology of applied science, and, as I said above, to abandon any sense of individual--rather than communal--ethical responsibility for their thoughts or their actions.

Here, again, Whitehead's ideas are an illuminating contrast to Lewis's. Against Lewis's insistence that it is ethically best to hold to traditional categories, even

though they may be scientifically outdated, Whitehead avers that "To acquiesce in discrepancy is destructive of candour, and of moral cleanliness. It belongs to the self-respect of intellect to pursue every tangle of thought to its final unravelment." In a different context, we might well find Lewis saying the very same thing. Even more significant is Whitehead's direct criticism of a position much like Lewis's. The conception following Descartes, he explains, "of bodies and minds as independent individual substances, each existing in its own right apart from any necessary reference to each other . . . was very concordant with the individualism which had issued from the moral discipline of the Middle Ages." But, he continues,

> the bad effects of these doctrines have been very fatal. The doctrine of minds, as independent substances, leads directly not merely to private worlds of experience, but also to private worlds of morals. . . . Accordingly, self-respect, and the making the most of your individual opportunities, together constituted the efficient morality of the leaders among the industrialists of that period. 37

Lewis agrees, it is clear, with Whitehead's condemnation of the morality of nineteenth-century industrialists--and with his association of that morality with traditional materialism--but he would argue that these effects were abuses rather than necessary consequences of a dualistic view of the world. Moreover, he could say with some justification, these abuses stemmed from <u>equating</u> mind and matter, not from separating them; if everyone were to recognize that mind is superior to matter and responsible for it, Lewis believes,

the practical results of such individualism would be a public, not a private, sense of ethics.

There is a similar conflict between these two men concerning the second kind of practical consequence Lewis worries about--the effects of these philosophies on the arts. In this case, more clearly than in the last, Lewis makes the stronger argument. Whitehead devotes a chapter to examining the relationship between 19th century science and poetry. Tennyson, he explains, suffered from his recognition that the world described by science contradicted the world of aesthetic perception; on the other hand, the Romantic poets (especially Shelley) triumphed by recognizing the sterility of the scientific view of matter and by rejecting it in favor of an organic view. In traditional materialism, says Whitehead, "Nature is a dull affair, soundless, scentless, colourless," while "For Shelley nature retains its beauty and its colour."[38] But, Lewis correctly counters, "What poet ever 'seriously accepted the abstract materialism of science'?" (207). This nature "was never the business of the artist or the poet at all" (205). "Of course [the nature described by science] is unbelievable," he exclaims; "It always has been unbelievable. But, from certain aspects, and if kept in its own province, it can be extremely useful" (206). Whitehead wishes to reconcile these two visions--that of science and that of art--so that artists can incorporate or accept the insights offered by scientists. Lewis wishes to keep the two visions separate.

Whitehead writes, "Both Shelley and Wordsworth emphatically bear witness that nature cannot be divorced from its aesthetic values"; Lewis answers, "it not only can be, but must be so divorced, for the purposes of science: and that part that is cut off by science for its especial purposes has to be left out--by the poet, for his business" (208). Colour and sound are the artist's business, and electrons and quantum mechanics are the scientist's.[39]

The consequence Lewis fears (and indeed detects) is that artists, like these philosophers, will feel themselves limited by scientific discovery--that the scientific and philosophic emphasis on time will induce even the best artists to surrender what is stable in their imaginative worlds to the destructive powers of time and change. Lewis makes it quite clear that this danger is his primary interest in these philosophical questions: "What I am concerned with here, first of all, is not whether the great time-philosophy that overshadows all contemporary thought is viable as a system of abstract truth, but if in its application it helps or destroys our human arts" (129). In the next chapter, we will see how Lewis develops this concern.

iii

"Bergson's doctrine of Time is the creative source of the time-philosophy," writes Lewis. "It is he more than any other single figure that is responsible for the main

intellectual characteristics of the world we live in, and the implicit debt of almost all contemporary philosophy to him is immense" (166). In substance, not surprisingly, Lewis's objections to this philosopher follow those we have already seen him bring against Alexander and Whitehead; and, on the whole, his analysis of Bergson's views is similarly accurate. Bergson, Lewis demonstrates, hates the intellect and all it stands for--space, stability, clarity of both objects and ideas. He values time over space, feeling over thought, flux over stability, instinct and intuition over intellect; he too would dissolve the clear outlines of mind and matter. Again, Lewis sees two kinds of evil consequences to these values. Like Darwin's biological theories, Bergson's creative evolution can also be used to justify social and political violence: Georges Sorel, for example, was "a disciple of Bergson."[40] And, more immediately, Bergson's doctrines are in Lewis's eyes aesthetically destructive. In his ideas about poetry and in his preference for music over the visual arts, Bergson stands for the "cloudy idea" against the "clear idea," the "dynamic idea" against the "static idea."[41]

Now if this were the whole story, there would be little point in devoting a special section to Lewis's relationship with Bergson, since it manifests the same mixture of accurate and reasonable criticism and polemical bias we have already seen. But it is not the whole story. If in

its substance Lewis's attack on Bergson is the same as that on the other time-philosophers, in its style it is curiously different.

The difference is partly a matter of the greater distance Lewis keeps from this opponent. Despite identifying him as the source of the time-cult, Lewis directs very little attention specifically towards Bergson in Time and Western Man.[42] Where he usually quotes abundantly from the works he criticizes, he quotes this writer only a handful of times. He does devote a short section to Bergson's "time-theory" late in the book (in the chapter entitled "Space and Time"); there he explains in general terms what Bergson understands by space and duration. Again, this section is unremarkable in as much as it follows the pattern of his criticism of Whitehead and Alexander. What is unusual about this criticism is that Lewis fails to identify his source. Here as elsewhere, his main exhibits come from Creative Evolution; but Lewis never tells us so. In fact, that title appears in Time and Western Man only once and then merely to gloss a remark made by William James.

Most of the time, moreover, Lewis deals with Bergson only indirectly through other philosophers, chiefly Alexander and Whitehead, who, he demonstrates, owe their central conceptions to Bergson. For example, he reproduces two of Alexander's comments about Bergson. First:

> "At the present moment the special question of the exact relation of Time to Space has been forced into the front, because Time has recently come into

> its full rights, in science through the mathemathical physicists, in philosophy also through Professor Bergson, who finds in Time conceived as durée . . . the animating principle of the universe."

And second:

> "We are, as it were, to think ourselves into Time. I call this taking Time seriously. Our guides of the seventeenth century desert us here. Besides the infinite, two things entranced their intellects. One was Space or extension; the other was Mind. But, entranced by mind or thought, they neglected Time. Perhaps it is Professor Bergson in our day who has been the first philosopher to take Time seriously." 43

These quotations serve several purposes for Lewis. They illustrate the importance for Alexander both of Bergson's doctrines and of the problem of time, and they substantiate Lewis's claims that this philosophic concern is intimately related to Einstein's discoveries. They also very neatly endorse Lewis's opposition between time on the one hand and space and mind on the other.[44] But as part of a critique of Bergson, they are curiously distanced from their target.

In a couple of places, Lewis separates himself from this target even more explicitly. "The influence of Bergson," he explains,

> went down beneath the wave of formal enthusiasm that immediately preceded the War. In the arts that movement brought imagination back once more, banishing the naturalist dogmas that had obtained for fifty or sixty years. Impressionism was driven out and the great ideals of structure and of formal significance were restored, to painting and sculpture, at all events. . . . There was a very powerful reaction in France against all that Bergson represented. But the War and einsteinian physics have turned the scales once more. There is naturally no question of reinstating Bergson; there are plenty of others of the

> same sort, but with a more up-to-date equipment, without having recourse to him. (156)

Here Lewis reminds us that he is a painter, and that as one of the leaders of this formal reaction away from impressionism and towards imagination, he judges with authority. In the context of the arts, Bergson becomes a figure from the past, a dead figure who is "naturally" not to be brought back to life. But even as a philosopher, Lewis tells us a few pages later, Bergson is dead: "By students of philosophy Bergson is still read, but by no one else. Even by these he is read as little as possible, I should imagine. Until I began my scrutiny of the contemporary time-philosophy I knew him very little" (167). This statement--which introduces a discussion of Bergson's influence on Whitehead and others--is even more personal than the last. Lewis unambiguously labels Bergson as a writer who is of limited and purely historical interest.

But if with these remarks Lewis dismisses Bergson as insignificant, at the same time he assails him with invective at every opportunity. In his analyses of Whitehead and Alexander, Lewis's tone is generally serious, moving only occasionally into mild sarcasm. When he refers to Bergson, though, we hear the unrestrained voice of the Enemy. Bergson "is the perfect philosophic ruffian, of the darkest and most forbidding description: and he pulls every emotional lever on which he can lay his hands" (174). He "discovered nothing; he interpreted science; and he

gave it an extremely biassed interpretation, to say the least" (161); his metaphysic is "pretentious" (27) and insincerely optimistic (344). Bergson was a "popular purveyor to the enlightened Everyman" (309). "Until the coming of Bergson, [the vulgar mercantile class] could not have found a philosophical intelligence sufficiently degraded to take their money and do, philosophically, their dirty work. The unique distinction of that personage is that he was the first servant of the great industrial caste-mind arriving on the golden crest of the wave of scientific progress" (214).[45] And this is just a sample. Whenever Lewis's analysis draws near to Bergson or the "sickly ecstasies of élan vital" (216), the Enemy emerges to kick what Lewis has told us is a dead horse.

Now we can only wonder what it is about Bergson that has provoked such behavior. Of all the important philosophers he criticizes, Bergson is the only one whose seriousness, sincerity, and occasional virtues Lewis refuses to recognize. This situation is reminiscent of his critical attitude towards Pound, who also arouses the Enemy's ire. And indeed, the more closely we look at Lewis's relationship with Bergson, the more we begin to see a similar intimacy between these two philosophical opponents.

We find the key to what is going on in a remark I have already quoted, where Lewis says, "Until I began my scrutiny of the contemporary time-philosophy I knew him very little."

But this at least is certainly a sham, for early in those pre-war years when Bergson's influence was giving way to a new spirit of formalism, Lewis lived in Paris and attended Bergson's lectures. In a letter written over twenty years after Time and Western Man, Lewis describes this period:

> Paris, where I went soon after Rugby, was my University. There I followed Bergson's lectures at the Collège de France, and shared the philosophical studies of friends of mine then at the Ecole Normale. . . . . Bergson was an excellent lecturer, dry and impersonal. I began by embracing his evolutionary system. From that I passed to Renouvier and thus to Kant. When one is young on fait des bêtises, quoi! 46

Lewis wrote this letter to explain his qualifications to teach a philosophy course based on Time and Western Man; as he recognizes, such first-hand experience does increase his authority as a critic of philosophy. But in Time and Western Man itself, as we have seen, no mention of such authority appears.

It has been noted that Lewis's theory of satire comes directly out of Bergson's ideas on comedy. But what has not been demonstrated is quite how much his space-philosophy owes to this "perfect philosophic ruffian."[47] When we look at Bergson in Lewis's light, his Creative Evolution emerges as a hidden model--a model Lewis mirrors, inverts, and tries to conceal throughout the philosophical arguments of Time and Western Man. As I have said, aside from his straightforward summary in "Space and Time," Lewis spends little time directly scrutinizing Bergson, but he does do

so in three significant passages: three places where Lewis allows us to pass through his argument into Bergson's and thus begin to see the relationship between the two. He handles each one differently; the less he has to hide from us, the more openly he engages his opponent. Though each seems at first glance simply to be an apt illustration for Lewis's point, these passages turn out on closer examination to be traces of an anxiously obscured influence. They show us where the two texts touch, where the model breaks through the surface of the Enemy's apparently autonomous antagonism, and Bergson is revealed as the opposite against whom Lewis has defined himself.

The first of these passages--first in order of complexity, though last in the book--has to do with the nature of art. Lewis is analyzing the aesthetics of the time-cult through the example of Henri Brémond's La Poésie Pure. Brémond quotes Bergson as his authority, so Lewis reproduces for us two of the passages Brémond uses. These come from the Essai sur les données immédiates de la Conscience, not Creative Evolution, and their source is identified, so that while Lewis does distance himself from Bergson by working through Brémond, he also confronts him openly. Lewis dissects these two passages in exactly the same way as he does his specimens from other time-minds. Here is the first passage:

> "The word which is sharply outlined, the brutal word, which the receptacle of all that is stable, all that

> is common, and consequently impersonal, in human experience, crushes or at all events covers over the more delicate and fugitive impressions of our individual conscience." (190, emphasis Lewis's)

And the second:

> "(The object of art) is to send to sleep the active or rather the recalcitrant forces of our personality, and thereby to induce in us a condition of perfect docility, in which we realize the idea suggested to us, in which we sympathize with the sentiment expressed. In the methods employed by the artist you will discover, in an attenuated form, refined and in some way spiritualized, the methods by which in a general way the hypnotic trance is induced. (191)

For Bergson, Lewis points out, the clearly defined word is brutal, "and whether you are a man or a word, to be called 'brutal' is not the nicest thing that can happen to you; and it is quite certain that Bergson is aware of that, and that he uses it to prejudice us against the word he is attacking." Moreover, Lewis objects that Bergson contradicts himself on the role of personality: in the first passage he seems to wish to rescue the personality from the brutal, stable word; in the second passage he wants to put that personality to sleep in the interests of more intense experience. Lewis assumes that the "more delicate and fugitive impressions of our individual conscience" can only be the same as "the recalcitrant forces of our personality," for surely, he says, the "essence of a personality, or of an 'individual consciousness,' is that it should be stable" (192). And in any case, Lewis argues, to send that stable force to sleep can hardly enhance our "individuality": "If it is reduced to 'a condition of perfect docility,' in which

anything that is 'suggested' to it it accommodates, in which it sympathizes ecstatically with its dear hypnotist--that may or may not be very agreeable for it; but we certainly cannot claim, except with our tongue in our cheek, that, if we are the hypnotist, we are liberating it from oppression, or that we are enhancing its 'individuality'" (192). These passages, Lewis concludes, have enabled him to give us "a sidelight on the particular system of intellectual fraud practiced by Bergson" (193).

In this argument, I think, we see Lewis's characteristic mixture of misrepresentation of details (for Bergson, the "individual conscience" is not the same as the personality) and justice to the total argument. What we must notice now, though, is how far Lewis goes in agreeing with Bergson in this instance. For once, Lewis himself admits the similarities in their views: "It is art that relieves this oppression of the crushing weight of the 'stable' world; breaks it up and uncovers the intense reality. That is M. Bergson's account of art, and it would also in effect be mine. But he goes on to explain that its function is to 'send to sleep' the resistance of the active personality. Again I think he is quite right . . ." (191-92). Even this degree of agreement is a little surprising in light of Lewis's usually vitriolic treatment of Bergson, but then in this matter Lewis is in his home territory: as a novelist and a painter, he knows more about art than does Bergson,

so he can confidently show us how far Bergson is right and then point out where he goes wrong.

But their agreement goes even further, as the language of Bergson's passages makes clear. These statements make good examples for Lewis precisely because his own terms are so nearly the same as Bergson's. For Lewis, too, language is stable and impersonal and belongs to "our common world in which we all meet and communicate." It is not brutal, of course; in Lewis's eyes, as we have seen again and again, these qualities are virtues. Aside from the disagreement implied by this value term and their different ideas about personality, then, Lewis comes close to echoing his old teacher. Certainly he has adopted Bergson's assumption that language and stability, impersonality and the personality (remember how Lewis associates the two through the paradox of the not-self)--that these qualities form a natural family belonging to the world of common sense. Their difference here is simply that Lewis embraces what Bergson has rejected.

We see the same kind of relationship even more clearly in the next passage, the first in Lewis's text, which appears immediately after Lewis has called Bergson the chief source of the time-philosophy and explained that until recently he had known him very little. Mentioning that it is indexed as "the apogee of the sensible object," Lewis quotes a long passage of Bergson's which, he says,

"will give a hint at least of what my argument signifies where it relates to him":

> "For the ancients, indeed, time is theoretically negligible, because the duration of a thing only manifests the degradation of its essence; it is with this motionless essence that science has to deal. Change being only the effort of a form toward its own realization, the realization is all that it concerns us to know. No doubt the realization is never complete; it is this that ancient philosophy expresses by saying that we do not perceive form without matter. But if we consider the changing object at a certain essential moment, at its apogee, we may say that there it just touches its intelligible form. This intelligible form, this ideal, and, so to speak, limiting form, our science seizes upon. And possessing in this the gold-piece, it holds eminently the small money, which we call becoming or change. This change is less than being. The knowledge that would take it for object, supposing such knowledge were possible, would be less than science.
>
> But, for a science that places all the moments of time in the same rank, that admits no essential moment, no culminating point, no apogee, change is no longer a diminution of essence, duration is not a dilution of eternity." 48

This passage comes from Creative Evolution, but significantly, Lewis neglects to tell us so. He is frequently careless about his citations, but this is the only time he fails to identify one of his major exhibits with more than a remark about how it is indexed. Such a lapse is indeed "a hint at least" of the relationship between Lewis and Bergson.

What this passage signifies as it relates to Lewis's argument is that once again Lewis has taken over Bergson's categories, accepting what Bergson discards, rejecting what Bergson endorses. This time the issues are the familiar ones of change and stability, subject and object. Lewis

follows Bergson in regarding as central this opposition between the modern and the classical world views based on their scientific and metaphysical attitudes towards time and change. Like "the ancients," Lewis regards change as negligible; his "rounded thing of common-sense" is the "apogee or perfection" of "classical science" (168).[49] This description of Bergson's clearly illuminates for us what Lewis means when he claims to stand for the classical world: if he insists on a number of occasions that this kind of opposition is inaccurate, that "the age of Plato swarmed with empirical, sensationalist philosophers, from Protagoras downwards" (158), he nevertheless consistently adopts Bergson's generalization as his working definition. At one point, for example, Lewis argues that "The world of classical 'common-sense'--the world of the Greek, the world of the Schoolman--is the world of nature, too, and is a very ancient one" (186). Moreover, Bergson's description suggests that Lewis means by space and stability much the same thing as Bergson means by the classical ideal; if time and change stand against this idea, space and stability stand for it.

When we look further in Creative Evolution to see how Bergson would prefer to describe this classical "object," we find him offering what turns out to be a very revealing metaphor--revealing not only because of what it shows us about Bergson, but also because both Alexander and Lewis use similar but significantly different metaphors.

According to Bergson, the natural "mechanism of our ordinary knowledge"--of "perception, intellection, language"--"is of a cinematographical kind." "Suffice it to say that the intellect represents becoming as a series of states, each of which is homogeneous with itself and consequently does not change." Ordinarly, he believes, the way we conceive of movement is by breaking it into individual static states: "We take snapshots, as it were, of the passing reality." In this tendency, we are like the Greeks, who, Bergson explains, "trusted to nature, trusted the natural propensity of the mind, trusted language above all"; consequently, like them, "we end in the philosophy of Ideas when we apply the cinematographical mechanism of the intellect to the analysis of the real." And finally, he argues, the difference between ancient philosophy and the procedures of modern science (we must remember that for Bergson modern science is still nineteenth-century mechanism) is one of degree, not kind:

> It is the same cinematographical mechanism in both cases, but it reaches a precision in the second that it cannot have in the first. Of the gallop of a horse our eye perceives chiefly a characteristic, essential or rather schematic attitude, a form that appears to radiate over a whole period and so fill up a time of gallop. It is this attitude that sculpture has fixed on the frieze of the Parthenon. But instantaneous photography isolates any moment; it puts them all in the same rank, and thus the gallop of a horse spreads out for it into as many successive attitudes as it wishes, instead of massing itself into a single attitude, which is supposed to flash out in a privileged moment and to illuminate a whole period. (emphasis mine)

But even a cinema necessarily leaves unrecognized the flux between frames; for Bergson, this limitation is the failure which is shared alike by the intellect, ordinary perception, modern science, and classical metaphysics. Neither the sculptured image of classical art nor the succession of images in film is for him an adequate vision of the true nature of change. Instead, he believes, we must place ourselves inside the moving reality to grasp its essence.[50]

In a different context (describing the "singular universal"), Alexander offers a metaphor which is similar enough to point to the blind spot in Bergson's analogy. Where Bergson treats the snapshot and the sculpture as images of the same kind, Alexander emphasizes the difference between a photograph and a painting:

> We may next take a more highly organized individual, say a person whose life may be regarded as arranged on a certain plan. . . . It is such a plan of a man's personality which an artistic portrait endeavours to express, whereas a photograph gives only a picture of the man at a passing moment, unless by artistry of technique the hardness of the momentary outlines may be softened and the photograph approximate to a portrait. 51

To portray the essence of a personality, a painter combines all changing moments into a single unmoving image. The art image, the sculptured horse, is not the same as a film or a frame of film; both may, as Bergson says, remove time from their object, but they do so in significantly different ways.

Both of these metaphors lead straight into Lewis's strongest suit, since he wishes to maintain that his

philosophy is that of a visual artist. Through their choice of images, Bergson and Alexander implicitly confirm Lewis's view that the art image and the artist's vision are natural metaphors for personality, timelessness, the classical essence, and the natural tendency of the human perception and intellect--all the things Lewis sees himself as defending. In this instance, again, Lewis chooses not to quote Bergson or Alexander directly; instead, he silently adopts their images and revises them to make his own metaphorical comments on the time-philosophers' vision.

Three examples will illustrate Lewis's perspective. First, he describes how Bergson's view would change the classical sculpture of the Parthenon. After noting that "Marinetti . . . was a pur-sang bergsonian" (213), he tells us that "one of the tasks he set [for the Futurists] was to start making statues that could open and shut their eyes, and even move their limbs and trunks about, or wag their heads" (216). Elsewhere, describing the philosophical implications of the time-cult, Lewis writes, "the notion of the transformed 'object' offered us by this doctrine is plainly in the nature of a 'futurist' picture, like a running dog with a hundred legs and a dozen backs and heads. In place of the characteristic static 'form' of greek Philosophy, you have a series, a group, or, as Professor Whitehead says, a reiteration" (181). In both of these comments, Lewis damns the time-philosophers by association; the Futurists were old enemies of Lewis's, and in Time and

Western Man he further claims that they were the natural forerunners of the Italian fascists. The second of these metaphors is particularly clever, I think, because it perversely collapses the successive images of a film into a single image. Such an analogy spatializes movement even more emphatically than does Bergson's cinema. Moreover, Lewis here implicitly reminds us that with a few historical exceptions like the Futurists, the graphic arts have always portrayed movement by suggestion rather than by attempting to spell it out with multiple and superimposed images.

Finally--my third example--Lewis recasts Bergson's description of the "cinematographical mechanism." He explains, "The traditional belief of common-sense, embodied in the 'naïf' view of the physical world, is really a picture [informed by what we know from experience] . . . . And it is this picture for which the cinematograph of the physics of 'events' is to be substituted. . . . people are to be trained from infancy to regard the world as a moving picture. In this no 'object' would appear, but only the states of an object" (408).[52] If for Bergson the cinematographic perception of reality has too little movement, for Lewis it has far too much. Lewis inverts Bergson's blindness: in Bergson's eyes, the static image of classical art and the successive images of film are essentially of the same kind; in Lewis's, the film and Bergson's preferred vision of continual, unbroken flux are indistinguishable.

The metaphor of the cinema suggests to Bergson all that has been left out of the reality. But to Lewis it suggests only the disintegration of the stable image of reality: "With the thousand successive pictures we thus obtain," he argues, "we shall have--only successively, nothing all at once, except a punctual picture and momentary sensation--the perceptual picture of common-sense" (409).[53] Once again, the space-philosopher adopts the time-philosopher's description of the metaphysical alternatives and alters it to argue the opposing view.

This example of a shared metaphor and the two long passages Lewis quotes from Bergson about art and the classical world view are, I think, not isolated resemblances but parts of a larger pattern of relationships. The key to this pattern lies in a casual remark Lewis makes about Bergson when he is introducing Whitehead. This is the third passage I have called especially significant; it is the least direct and most revealing of the three. Again, Lewis does not identify the source as Creative Evolution, and again, he distances himself from Bergson by working through another philosopher. In this case, he does not even quote Bergson's words. He writes:

> The greater part of Professor Whitehead's analysis, in his Science and the Modern World, turns on what, as he starts by announcing, was the main objective of Bergson's criticism. Bergson had said that the intellect 'spatialized' things. It was that 'spatialization' that the doctrinaire of motion and of mental 'time' attacked. It is that, too, that Whitehead is busy confuting; only he acquits the intellect of this villainy, where Bergson pursues it with his hatred and abuse. (168)

Throughout his argument, Lewis continues to refer occasionally to this idea of Bergson's, always separating himself from it by enclosing "spatializing" in quotation marks. But he never stops to examine this aspect of Bergson's argument--the aspect Whitehead regarded as its "main objective." Even in the chapter on "Space and Time" he does not clearly explain what Bergson means by the intellect or its spatializing tendencies. What we find when we look at Creative Evolution, though, is that in this matter Lewis's distance from his former teacher is again more apparent than real. His quotation marks imply that he questions Bergson's view of the intellect, but in fact, that view is basic to Lewis's own philosophy.

When Bergson says that the Greek "framework marks out the main lines of a metaphysic which is, we believe, the natural metaphysic of the human intellect," he means no compliment. According to him, the intellect is only half of consciousness--and the less interesting half at that. He explains: "Intuition and intellect represent two opposite directions of the work of consciousness: intuition goes in the very direction of life, intellect goes in the inverse direction, and thus finds itself naturally in accordance with the movement of matter."[54] Intuition, or instinct, is the "natural direction" of the mind, and leads to "progress" in the form of tension, continuous creation, free activity."[55] Its natural sphere is durée or lived time. Intellect, on the other hand, inverts this natural

direction, and leads to "extension, to the necessary reciprocal determination of elements externalized each by relation to the others, in short, to geometrical mechanism."[56] Intellect is at home in space. In short, we could say, for Bergson intuition is to intellect as time is to space; and his "main objective" in Creative Evolution is to persuade us that intuition and time are not only more natural but also more productive and life-enhancing than their counterparts.

Consequently, Bergson is more interested in exploring the potential of intuition than in defining the limitations of intellect. Still, he does fully describe both sides of this central opposition. What is interesting to a reader of Lewis is the terms Bergson associates with intellect and space. A selection of quotations will indicate their character. First, he links intellect, space, and matter:

> Thus, concentrated on that which repeats, solely preoccupied in welding the same to the same, intellect turns away from the vision of time. It dislikes what is fluid, and solidifies everything it touches. We do not think real time. But we live it, because life transcends intellect.
>
> . . . intelligence is, before anything else, the faculty of relating one point of space to another, one material object to another . . .
>
> The more consciousness is intellectualized, the more is matter spatialized. 57

Second, he associates intellect with language, perception, and the senses:

> We take snapshots, as it were, of the passing reality . . . Perception, intellection, language so proceed in general.

> The aspect of life that is accessible to our intellect--as indeed to our senses, of which our intellect is the extension--is that which offers a hold to our action. 58

And finally, he adds to these terms distinctness, clarity, and stability:

> So intelligence, even when it no longer operates upon its own object, follows habits it has contracted in that operation: it applies forms that are indeed those of unorganized matter. It is made for this kind of work. With this kind of work alone is it fully satisfied. And that is what intelligence expresses by saying that thus only it arrives at distinctness and clearness.
>
> It must, therefore, in order to think itself clearly and distinctly, perceive itself under the form of discontinuity. Concepts, in fact, are outside each other, like objects in space; and they have the same stability as such objects, on which they have been modeled. Taken together, they constitute an "intelligible world," that resembles the world of solids in its essential characters, but whose elements are lighter, more diaphanous, easier for the intellect to deal with than the image of concrete things: they are not, indeed, the perception itself of things, but the representation of the act by which the intellect is fixed on them. 59

In all its major characteristics, Bergson's world of space and intellect is Lewis's--the sensible, intelligible world of clear, distinct, stable objects and ideas. And the world of time which Lewis himself pursues with his hatred and abuse is Bergson's preferred intuitive, instinctual world of interpenetration and constant flux.

These two oppositions are the same in their major characteristics, but they are not identical in every particular. Not surprisingly, Lewis and Bergson have different uses and interpretations for certain value terms. Both, for example, claim to preserve continuity

against discontinuity. Bergson, to whom change is essential, believes that the intellect sees reality as discontinuous because it is blind to flux; Lewis, to whom the essence of reality is stability, believes that Bergson's vision of change blinds him to continuity. Lewis would agree with the accusation that he sees objects and ideas as discontinuous in space, but he would call them clear and distinct and insist that he preserves the more important continuity of stable self-identity. In this case, Lewis and Bergson simply mean different things by the same word; each chooses to emphasize a different kind of continuity.

Similarly, both Lewis and Bergson claim to describe the natural human tendency. Bergson argues that the intellect inverts the natural direction of consciousness which intuition follows; Lewis argues that the view of common sense he supports is the natural view of the world. In this case, Bergson actually supplies Lewis with justification for his claim. If at one moment he calls the intellect "unnatural," at another, as we have seen, he explains that the classical world of unchanging essences is the natural world: "The Greeks trusted to nature, trusted the natural propensity of the mind, trusted language above all, in so far as it naturally externalizes thought. . . . In spatial movement and in change in general they saw only pure illusion."[60] With this description Lewis agrees: if his world-view is natural to the senses, the intellect, and language, it is better than any alternative Bergson could

offer. Again, each appeals to one aspect of human nature and rejects another.

A third difference between Lewis's and Bergson's oppositions is a little more complex. This is the value each puts on the terms "action" and "life." In general, Bergson sees himself as opposing action and endorsing life. "The essential function of our intellect, as the evolution of life has fashioned it," he explains, "is to be a light for our conduct, to make ready for our action on things . . ." Or again: "Our intellect has been cast in the mold of action. Speculation is a luxury, while action is a necessity." Against this limited function he places the unlimited potential of intuition to create. If intellect means work, then "the more we study the nature of time, the more we shall comprehend that duration means invention, the creation of forms, the continual elaboration of the absolutely new."[61] In other words, Bergson devalues the intelligence by associating it with action, and praises the intuition by associating it with life. But in Lewis's eyes, as we saw in his criticism of Whitehead and Alexander, both of these claims are fraudulent: "there is no serious question at all that on the score of life-value, and as far as the advertisement of this particular warm and, with Bergson, ecstatic, appeal is concerned, the boot should be on the other leg" (174). This refutation comes in the same paragraph where Lewis calls Bergson a "perfect philosophic ruffian" who "pulls every emotional lever on which he can lay his hands."

For Lewis, as for Bergson, "action" is a term of disapproval, but Lewis argues further that the time-philosopher's "life" is nothing other than action for its own sake despite its pretense of creativity.[62] In a chapter entitled "The Popular Counters, 'Action' and Life," he argues (with supporting evidence from Russell) that Bergson's philosophy was a practical one, suited to the "man-of-action," not the "man-of-peace":

> An immense snobbery centering around the counter 'life' had been built up to the bursting point when the War began; and at the end of four years of that few people could have been found to exclaim any more about 'life' for the moment. For it was then plain to the meanest intelligence for a month or two, that what that sort of 'life' signified was death. All the sickly ecstasies of élan vital were drugs on the market. It was on the ecstatic 'life' cry that Bergson was allowed formerly to provide the first (continental) wave of the High-Bohemia with an appropriate philosophy, showing it plainly that it was the roof and crown of things, and that the contemptible 'intellect' was less than the dust beneath its chariot-wheels. (216)

Lewis is right, I think, that one of the implications of Bergson's doctrine is that activity is more alive--and hence more desirable--than contemplation. Moreover, Lewis's corollary argument that this doctrine implies an enthusiasm for even violent activity is not as extreme as it may initially seem. Bergson does use metaphors of violence with disturbing frequency in speaking of the life-force. For example, he characterizes the implications of his world-view thus:

> . . . all organized beings, from the humblest to the highest, from the first origins of life to the time in which we are, and in all places as in all times,

> do but evidence a single impulsion, the inverse of the movement of matter, and in itself indivisible. All the living hold together, and all yield to the same tremendous push. The animal takes its stand on the plant, man bestrides animality, and the whole of humanity, in space and in time, is one immense army galloping beside and before and behind each of us in an overwhelming charge able to beat down every resistance and clear the most formidable obstacles, perhaps even death. 63

In the context of Lewis's values, such a description damns itself. An "immense army" is not a happy metaphor for the life force. So Lewis allows Bergson his claim that intuition means life, but uses that term so that it is not praise but an insult.

The one important value term which both Bergson and Lewis wish to appropriate for their side of the opposition between intellect and intuition is creativity. Each believes that his view reveals the sources of true creativity and that the other subverts those sources. Bergson will say, for instance, that "the intention of life . . . is just what the artist tries to regain, in placing himself back within the object by a kind of sympathy, in breaking down, by an effort of intuition, the barrier that space puts up between him and his model."[64] But once again, he also supplies the terms with which he can be refuted. Bergson writes, "suppose we let ourselves go and, instead of acting, dream. At once the self is scattered; our past, which till then was gathered together into the indivisible impulsion it communicated to us, is broken up into a thousand recollections made external to one another.

They give up interpenetrating in the degree that they become fixed. Our personality thus descends in the direction of space."[65] Lewis quotes this passage (omitting the description of the scattered self[66]) and comments only that for the time-philosopher, "This 'dreaming' is to be very much reprehended" (436). But, Lewis would counter, we create only in this state--when we dream rather than act. "The production of a work of art is, I believe, strictly the work of a visionary" (198), he explains. Moreover, such creation can only take place in the kind of world Bergson so dislikes:

> And I suppose that no one would deny that for the greatest achievements of the intellect, whether in art or in science, tranquillity and a stable order of things is required . . . if you say the contrary, you are merely asserting, like a good little egalitarian, that people should not be philosophers, men-of-science, or artists--that they should give up all those vain things, and plunge into the centre of the flux of life--live and not think . . . (164)

Of course this avowal is a little disingenuous, since Lewis knows full well that not everyone would agree that art, like science, is an achievement of the intellect; but at the same time, Bergson is equally disingenuous in his apparent conviction that intelligence always moves in the opposite direction from art. Here again, we see Lewis and Bergson agree on everything but a value term. For both, this time, creativity must be regarded as belonging to their position alone.

In each of these matters, we find that Lewis's position is a sort of mirror image of Bergson's. Silently, he

appropriates Bergson's categories, constructing his central dichotomy of time and space to agree in almost every respect with Bergson's. Noisily, at the same time, he reverses Bergson's values. If Creative Evolution argues that intellect inverts the more natural intuition, Time and Western Man implies that Bergson and his followers invert--and pervert--everything that is valuable to our human experience, everything that results from our senses, our thoughts, and our dreams.[67] Now to emphasize these resemblances might seem to trivialize the differences between the two writers--and indeed I think it likely that Lewis feared his readers would take his argument less seriously if he acknowledged his considerable debt to his opponent. From this perspective, Lewis is not unjustified in hiding that debt by distancing himself from his old teacher in every way he can. An autonomous space-philosophy, after all, might seem to have more authority than one defined almost entirely by negating the time-philosophy it attacks. And, of course, contradictory values are in themselves a crucial difference--certainly one that Lewis sees as more significant than any structural similarity could be. Perhaps, moreover, Lewis's treatment of this philosopher stems from his insistence that one of the time-cult's chief failings is its unanimity. Arguing throughout his book that modern philosophers agree with each other far more than they ought--that it is Bergson "more than any other single figure that is responsible for

the main intellectual characteristics of the world we live in, and the implicit debt of almost all contemporary philosphy to him is immense"--Lewis would have a considerable vested interest in disguising his own implicit debts. We know, after all, that Lewis's emphatic individuality--his hostile opposition to the majority, his Enemy role as the solitary outlaw--is central to his critical project and to his philosophical insistence on the primacy of the individual personality.

iv

If Lewis prefers not to point out his resemblances to Bergson, he is happy to acknowledge his debt to Berkeley. Both at the beginning and at the end of his philosophical criticism he explicitly claims a place in the tradition of Berkeley's absolute idealism. He calls Berkeley's discussions "wonderfully fertile" (172), and tells us that his "is one of the best of all possible philosophic worlds" (480). Of course he does not agree in every detail with this philosopher, and several times explains his differences: Berkeley allows too little inference from concrete data, his world "is too dim in its mentalism, and dark, definitely, sometimes--and the disproportion of his theologic bias is a great obstacle ultimately" (172, 480). But he finds in Berkeley's Principles of Human Knowledge the strongest statement of a crucial aspect of his own

views--an aspect we must recognize before our understanding of Lewis's philosophical position can be complete.

At the base of the philosophical dispute he is examining, Lewis has told us, is a paradoxical contrast between the abstraction of the "realist" time-philosophers and the concreteness of "such an 'idealism' as that of Berkeley, Bradley or Bosanquet." This contrast itself derives from Berkeley's own argument against the notion of abstract ideas and in favor of the perception of particulars; when Lewis calls it a paradox, he also obliquely refers to Berkeley. Lewis writes, for instance, "If I added, as is indeed the case, that such an extreme idealist doctrine as that of Berkeley . . . stood even fanatically for the concrete . . . the reader who had not given much attention to philosophy would be completely mystified, no doubt, as indeed Berkeley foresaw would be the case when he first launched his doctrine. But that is a paradox that it is extremely important to lay hold of at the outset" (169). For Berkeley, on the one hand, nothing exists without the mind:

> . . . all those bodies which compose the mighty frame of the world, have not any subsistence without a mind . . . their being is to be perceived or known; that consequently so long as they are not actually perceived by me, or do not exist in my mind, or that of any other created spirit, they must either have no existence at all, or else subsist in the mind of some Eternal Spirit. 68

In this, he is an idealist. But at the same time, on the other hand, he insists that such idealism implies a vivid,

concrete, and particularized world--the world which we are directly given by our senses. "Whatever we see, feel, hear, or any wise conceive or understand, remains as secure as ever, and is as real as ever," he explains. "We are not for having any man turn sceptic, and disbelieve his senses; on the contrary, we give them all the stress and assurance imaginable." The world Berkeley sees is not an imaginary one, in spite of its dependence on mind: "The ideas of sense are more strong, lively, and distinct than those of the imagination; they have likewise a steadiness, order, and coherence, and are not excited at random, as those which are the effects of human wills often are . . ." So in this, Berkeley's idealism is concrete. The two aspects of this argument may look contradictory to some--as they did, for example, to Samuel Johnson--but to Berkeley they go hand in hand. "Some truths," he says, "there are so near and obvious to the mind that a man need only open his eyes to see them."[69]

Quoting this last remark, Lewis suggests how he has adopted Berkeley's vision: Berkeley

> clings, and I think successfully, to his paradox: thus 'a man need only open his eyes to see' that there is nothing there except what his mind puts there; and so forth. This last scrap of quotation will serve to show the reader, I think, how berkeleyan idealism is by no means incompatible with the kind of vivid realism that is being advocated in these pages. (474)

Lewis sees Berkeley as a model for preserving what Lewis once calls a "purer duality" (209)--not simply the distinction between mind and matter, but that between live,

causative mind and dead, unthinking, and consequently unreal matter. For both, mind only is alive and creative and real. And for both, matter is by contrast and in itself unreal. Lewis, I think, alters Berkeley's emphasis slightly when he speaks of the unreality of matter: for Lewis, matter is unreal insofar as it is unthinking, not insofar as it is unthought or unperceived. He explains that he shares the view of Berkeley and of traditional science that matter is "a collection of 'unthinking things.'" But, he asks, "What is so unreal as a collection of 'unthinking things,' of dead, inanimate matter?" (473). "In this sense it is argued here that the entire physical world is strictly unreal"; the "deadness" of things "is the guarantee, as it were, of its unreality; nothing so thoroughly as that secures the ascendancy of 'the mind'; that 'mind' that so entranced, as Whitehead says, the 'century of genius,' as he calls it" (184). Like Berkeley, in these beliefs Lewis is an idealist. And at the same time, like Berkeley, he sees his idealism as concrete--as paradoxically describing a solid, vivid, sensual world. In his comment on Berkeley's paradox, Lewis continues:

> For he implores you merely to 'open your eyes' and to see that the world is not real in the sense you had thought: the wider you open them the more you will perceive that this is the case. And yet in another sense for that very reason the more real it will be. (474-75)

In the unreality of the material world lies its own kind of reality. Again, Lewis juxtaposes the two terms:

> If there is one thing more than another that is essential to provide a 'sense of reality'--our sheer sensation that there is something real there before us--it is the deadness, the stolid thickness and deadness, of nature. . . . What is most sensationally 'real' (as ultimately it is, perhaps more than anything else, demonstrably unreal) is the deadness of nature, once more. (212)

Only by regarding mind as live and matter as dead--mind as real and matter as unreal--Lewis believes, can we maintain both the creative supremacy of our intelligence and the vivid concreteness of the perceptual world. In contrast with the fluctuating, evolving worlds of the modern abstract realists, a conceptual world like Berkeley's is stable and intelligible. Only an idealist philosophy seems to Lewis to allow the "vivid realism" of the classical vision.

Lewis's endorsement of Berkeley seems to me not only--or even most importantly--a philosophical conviction. It is also an aesthetic choice--a preference for a world view which most persuasively expresses his vision of life. Several of his most direct statements of his own beliefs show us in their uncharacteristically poetic language how his idealism coincides with his artistic sense of our place in the world. He writes, for example:

> To make things endure (to make something solid, relatively indestructible, like a pyramid) is of course, as well, a sort of magic, and a more difficult one, than to make things vanish, change and disintegrate (though that is very remarkable too). Of these opposite functions of magic we daily perform one, in our sense-perception activity, better than magic could. This function we justly call 'creativeness' . . . . The objects of our perception, with their mystifying independence and air of self-sufficiency . . . are far more uncanny than the unity we experience in our subjective

> experience. These strange things, that stand out against a background of mystery, with their air of being eternal, and which really appear to be 'caused' by nothing that we can hold and fix, and from which we can see them being actually produced, are far stranger than we are, or more brutally and startlingly strange. . . . But these 'objects' are the finished product of our perceptive faculty, they are the result, as we are accustomed to explain it, of the organizing activity of our minds. (372-73)

Like an artist, each of us creates our own world. And yet, Lewis also believes, "The illusion must . . . be our 'real'" (403). For "we are surface-creatures only, and by nature are meant to be only that, if there is any meaning in nature." Through perception and imagination, we create the surface of the things around us, and those surfaces are more significant to our lives than anything we did not create could be. "We are surface creatures," Lewis insists, "and the 'truths' from beneath the surface contradict our values. It is among the flowers and leaves that our lot is cast, and the roots, however 'interesting,' are not so ultimate for us" (402). Modern science and realist philosophy may be right in their way--our chairs and tables may indeed be made of invisible, constantly moving particles, and our images of them may indeed change at every instant--but the less exact vision of everyday perception is still our native vision. Berkeley's "gimcrack world of facades" is "an extremist philosophy for surface-creatures" (480)--and so it is an appropriate philosophy for us.

This kind of statement makes it clear, I think, how much Lewis sees a philosophy as something to live by rather than as an attempt to describe reality accurately. "So," he says, "with bridle and bit we ride the phantoms of sense, as though to the manner born. Or rather it would be more descriptive of our actual experience to say that, camped somnolently, in a relative respose of a god-like sort, upon the surface of this nihilism, we regard ourselves as at rest, with our droves of objects--trees, houses, hills--grouped round us" (473). His philosophy of space, stability, and vision is a description not of the nihilism he believes the time-philosophers explore, but of the dream-like surfaces of our common sensory experiences and of artistic expression.

Chapter 3: Notes

[1]Lewis explains, "Since the one mind, in this issue, can be called a 'spatializing' mind, or a 'space-mind', there can be no objection to the other sort of mind being called a time-mind. That is a better description of it than a space-time mind would be" (181).

[2]Samuel Alexander, Space Time and Deity (London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1920, rev. 1927), Vol. i., p. 82.

The closest Lewis comes to defining his terms for himself is when he says, "Kant's conception of Space is about identical with the popular or 'common-sense' view: it is a datum we cannot get behind, installed in the very centre of our perceptive faculty. It is independent of its content" (435). Though he never says so, I think we would agree to a similar description of Time. Both, to him, are mental, not material; neither is "fully real." "Space and Time," he cautions, "are mere appearances . . . riddled with contradictions that bar them from anything but a relative reality" (444). This view is consistent with his idealism; see section iv of this chapter.

[3]Here, as always, Lewis means by vision the whole of visual perception, explicitly including touch.

[4]This association, too, shows in Lewis's metaphors. For example, he writes, "When . . . we were introduced to that extraordinary Aladdin's Cave, that paradise . . . our minds: or when the magnificent private picture gallery of its stretched-out imagery was thrown open, and we were allowed to wander in it in any direction, and to any private ends we pleased . . ." (401).

[5]See section iii below.

[6]Alexander, i., 222.

[7]For Lewis, the notion of "space-time" is virtually identical with that of "time" alone.

[8]Traditionally, he points out, the question has been whether "there was anything besides, behind, or over and above the Flux, or whether, on the other hand, there was nothing but that" (247).

[9]In a similar context, Lewis also acknowledges his agreement with William James. See p. 162.

[10]The tester is the behavioral psychologist, whom Lewis sees as the logical extreme of positivism.

[11]The Art of Being Ruled, p. 229. Just before this, Lewis writes: "The more highly developed an individual is, or the more civilized a race, this discontinuity tends to disappear. The 'personality' is born."

[12]"The optimism-to-order of 'Every day and in every respect I grow better and better,'" Lewis comments, "is of the same kind as the political optimism-to-order of democratic politics" (30).

[13]With the first ellipses, I have omitted the following: "always simplifying those notions as far as that is possible, and avoiding such detail as, in such a comprehensive survey, would make our exposition increasingly intricate and perhaps meaningless to the general reader" (168).

Lewis also includes the new idealists like Croce and Gentile among the abstract philosophers.

[14]Both Alexander and Whitehead use the terms abstract and concrete in ways that would support Lewis's paradox. Whitehead, for example, says, "The paradox is now firmly established that the utmost abstractions are the true weapons with which to control our thought of concrete fact." Alfred North Whitehead, Science and the Modern World (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1925), p. 32. For Alexander, see below, note 32.

[15]Alexander, i., 341, 325, 272, 325.

[16]Alexander, ii., 69.

[17]Alexander, i., 8; ii., 50.

[18]Whitehead, p. viii.

[19]Whitehead, p. 35. He continues with an explanation of his term "event":

> It is nonsense to ask if the colour red is real. The colour red is ingredient in the process of realisation. The realities of nature are the prehensions in nature, that is to say, the events in nature.
>
> Now that we have cleared space and time from the taint of simple location, we may partially abandon the awkward term prehension. This term was introduced

> to signify the essential unity of an event, namely, the event as one entity, and not as a mere assemblage of parts or of ingredients. It is necessary to understand that space-time is nothing else than a system of pulling together of assemblages into unities. But the word event just means one of these spatio-temporal unities. Accordingly, it may be used instead of the term 'prehension' as meaning the thing prehended.

[20]Whitehead, pp. 103, 72, 35, 93.

[21]Whitehead, p. 102.

[22]Whitehead, p. 80.

[23]Whitehead, p. 111.

[24]Lewis goes on: "Tennyson is for ever consoled by being assured that, although it is true that the molecule blindly runs (as he put it), nevertheless it runs according to a pattern. (For instance: 'The electron blindly runs either within or without the body; but it runs within the body in accordance with its character within the body . . .' . . . This may be true; but it is difficult to see how it is cheerful.)" (182-83)

[25]Whitehead seems to contrast abstract entities and concrete enduring entities or organisms; Lewis implies that these two are equivalent.

[26]TWM, 176; Whitehead, 87, 79.

[27]TWM, 177-78; Whitehead, 103, 104 (italics in both).

[28]Whitehead, 69.

[29]Whitehead, 201.

[30]Whitehead, 73, 89, 151.

[31]Alexander, ii., 69, 244.

[32]TWM, 456; Alexander, i., 6.

[33]Alexander, i., vi-vii. In the same sentence, though, Alexander himself invokes the authority of common-sense.

The whole phrase is: "my own account in terms of common-sense experience, though at a high degree of abstraction from that experience . . ."

[34]Whitehead, 52, 116, 16.

[35]This qualification is appropriate, really, to all of Lewis's arguments against these philosophers. Their attitude towards mind, for instance, seems to him the tip of an iceberg; below the water lies the behaviorist's substitution of "the body for the mind." Lewis's attack on such psychologists as Watson and Yerkes (341-352) is in many ways a logical extension of his attack on Alexander and Whitehead, and he sees their excesses as implicit in the beliefs of these more respectable writers.

[36]Lewis immediately responds, "The language of progressist politics breaks out at once. It is indeed almost impossible for any of the philosophers engaged in the task of putting the mind in its place, to express themselves without political analogy and phrasing" (456). Lewis does, I think, collect an impressive array of casual political metaphors from the books he is examining. For example, he catches William James writing, "'I am so enthusiastic as to have said only two days ago . . . I thank heaven that I have lived to this date . . . that I have witnessed the Russo-Japanese War, and seen Bergson's new book appear . . . the two great modern turning-points in history and thought'" (393). We will examine more closely in Chapter 5 how Lewis interprets these metaphors; on the whole, though, he is concerned to demonstrate the parallels between the philosophers' erasing of distinctions and hierarchies and the various levelling tendencies of modern politics, both democratic and Marxist. See Jameson on Lewis's politics.

[37]Whitehead, 194-96.

[38]TWM, 205-208.

[39]Lewis also points out that both Alexander and Whitehead go to Romantic artists for their illustrations--appropriately, he believes, since their philosophies are equally romantic.

To Whitehead's statements about Shelley, Lewis also answers: "But the naïf materialist is discredited long ago (and a far more insidious type of materialist has taken his place, as it is time we recognized, without wasting our energy in beating that dead donkey, the 'materialist,' pure, simple and unadorned)." (205) Whitehead's doctrines, Lewis wishes to convince us, are insidiously materialist,

and are capable of damaging the arts just as much as Whitehead says the traditional materialism did.

[40]See 213-217. In The Art of Being Ruled, however, Lewis uses Sorel as one of his own sources.

[41]See 190 ff. In The Art of Being Ruled, Lewis says, "Bergson is indeed the arch enemy of every impulse having its seat in the apparatus of vision, and requiring a concrete world. Bergson is the enemy of the Eye, from the start; though he might arrive at some emotional compromise with the Ear." (391)

[42]Lewis does devote a chapter to Bergson in The Art of Being Ruled, pp. 387-391. But he does not mention Creative Evolution in those pages.

[43]TWM, 220; Alexander i., 36, 44. The ellipses in the first passage are Lewis's; he italicizes the entire sentence. The emphasis in the second passage is also Lewis's.

[44]I suspect, in fact, that this statement of Alexander's may even have suggested to Lewis the terms for this central opposition. Certainly he mines this quotation for all its gold, letting Alexander further the contrast between the time-philosophy and Lewis's traditionally based space-philosophy.

[45]But, Lewis concedes--in as positive a statement as he ever makes about this writer--"perhaps that is unfair to Bergson, after all: the truth about him may be that he is in reality simply a very common but astute intelligence--naturally, and without other inducement, on the side of such a society, instinctively endorsing its ideals" (214).

[46]Letters, 488-489, written in 1949.

[47]Wagner does mention that Lewis has borrowed from Bergson, but does not go into detail.

[48]TWM, 167; Bergson, Creative Evolution, trans. Arthur Mitchell (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1911), pp. 343-44. Lewis quotes this accurately but adds two commas.

[49]Earlier in TWM, Lewis has suggested the same metaphor and pun: "Time for the bergsonian or relativist . . . is the glorification of the life-of-the moment, with no reference beyond itself and no absolute or universal value; only so much value as is conveyed in the famous

proverb, Time is money. It is the argent comptant of literal life, in an inflexibly fluid Time" (27).

[50]Creative Evolution, 306, 163, 306, 314, 315, 332, 308.

[51]Alexander, i., 209-10.

[52]My bracketed interpolation comes from the preceding paragraph in Lewis's discussion.

[53]A painting is also, appropriately, more solid than a translucent strip of film.

[54]Creative Evolution, 326, 267.

[55]Creative Evolution, 223. Bergson usually, though not always, uses "mind" for the combined intellect and intuition. Mind, for him, "overflows" intellect, as Lewis notes (436).

[56]Creative Evolution, 223.

[57]Creative Evolution, 46, 175, 189 (italicized in original).

[58]Creative Evolution, 306, 162.

[59]Creative Evolution, 160-61 (emphasis original).

[60]Creative Evolution, 314.

[61]Creative Evolution, 29, 44, 11.

[62]For Bergson, action = work; for Lewis, action = movement; for both, action is opposed to creativity and contemplation.

[63]Creative Evolution, 270-71.

[64]Ibid., 177. T. E. Hulme repeats this passage almost verbatim (without quotation marks) in his essay "Bergson's Theory of Art," included in Speculations: Essays on Humanism and the Philosophy of Art (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., 1924, 1936), p. 144. Lewis of course, would also have seen this essay.

[65]Creative Evolution, 201

[66]Lewis would argue that the true self coheres even in this dream-state.

[67]Lewis also says, "But it is not only on account of the intellect that I adopt this attitude. I am just as concerned for 'instinct,' which I do not regard as being quite at its best in ants, bees and Bergson" (239).

[68]George Berkeley, "A Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge," in Theory of Vision and Other Writings by Bishop Berkeley, ed. Ernest Rhys (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd.; New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1910, rpt. 1914), VI.

[69]Berkeley, XXXIV, XL, XXX, VI.

Chapter 4: Literary Criticism

If a philosophy is something to live by, then it also underlies artistic creation. And indeed, Lewis says, "What I am concerned with here, first of all, is not whether the great time-philosophy that overshadows all contemporary thought is viable as a system of abstract truth, but if in its application it helps or destroys our human arts" (129). For most of the artists he attacks in "The Revolutionary Simpleton," his argument that it has destroyed more than it has built is clear and convincing. But his most important exhibit, the work of James Joyce, has caused Lewis's readers some difficulty. Geoffrey Wagner, for example, comments that "Few if any critics, however unfriendly to Joyce in the intention . . . have chosen the basis of 'time' on which to arraign Joyce's oeuvre. Most critics realize the reverse to have been true."[1] Yet Lewis not only includes Joyce among his targets as one of the "strongly established leaders, of mature talent," but features Ulysses as a quintessential "time-book."

The questions raised by Lewis's attack on Joyce may be identified in the range of other critics' comments about it. Wagner concludes that "calling Joyce a 'time-philosopher' was a deliberate misunderstanding," and that "unless we allow for the idea of malice, Lewis' criticism of Joyce

as a 'time-philosopher' is almost inexplicable."[2] Hugh Kenner, whose recent Joyce's Voices derives in part from Lewis's ideas, refers to his "near misses," and calls him "the most helpful of devil's advocates"; Kenner's earlier Dublin's Joyce asserts even more emphatically that Lewis's is the "most brilliant misreading in modern criticism."[3] And Joyce himself admitted that Lewis had written "by far the best hostile criticism that had appeared," but also added, "Allowing that the whole of what Lewis says about my book is true, is it more than ten per cent of the truth?"[4] These judgments disagree about the fairness, the accuracy, and the adequacy of Lewis's view; but they agree, though obliquely and variously, that his criticism is somehow extraordinary.

My own primary interest is in examining Lewis's attack on Joyce in the context of his larger analysis of the time-cult. His criticisms of Joyce are not "almost inexplicable," though for various reasons they have invited misunderstanding. His argument may be difficult to follow because his prose is so digressive; as he does so often, Lewis hedges his specific points with brief, unsupported assertions and long, rambling asides, rather than explaining himself directly, so that we must, in a sense, reconstruct his reasoning and conclusions for ourselves.[5] More importantly, though, the difficulty in understanding his argument stems from the degree to which it depends on the rest of the book. Read as one part of the whole of Time and Western Man,

Lewis's criticism makes good sense. And, after all, he quite explicitly intends only a partial and partisan analysis. He begins by cautioning us, "What I have to say will not aim at estimating [Joyce's] general contribution to contemporary letters" (91); and he later explains, "Had I undertaken to write a general criticism of Joyce I should not have passed on this impression uncensored--in its native sensational strength--but have modified it, by associating it with other impressions more favourable to the author" (118-19). Instead, Lewis insists, "It is as the critic of [the time-doctrine] and of that school that I have approached the analysis of his writings up to date" (106). What Lewis wants to do is make his "ten per cent of the truth" as visible as Fujiyama in a Japanese print--to prove that even the best modern books, even those which might appear to be most "classical" or most "spatial," have not escaped the insidious influence of the time-philosophy.

I will begin this chapter, consequently, by examining what Lewis criticizes in Ulysses and how he sees in its flaws traces of the time-cult. In section ii, I will place his remarks in the context of other Joyce criticism, especially that contemporary with Time and Western Man, as a way of determining how far Lewis's biases make his judgments idiosyncratic.

i

"I regard Ulysses as a time-book," Lewis states; "and by that I mean that it lays its emphasis upon, for choice manipulates, and in a doctrinaire manner, the self-conscious time-sense, that has now been erected into a universal philosophy" (100). As we have seen, Lewis means by "time" a whole complex of things. In his critique of Joyce, I think, these things fall into three general categories. First, Lewis says, Ulysses subtly manifests one of the main effects of the time-cult, the substitution of a simulacrum for a real thing--in this case, a simulated Irishness for real cultural differences. Second, it shows a certain obsession with time in its usual sense--an obsession much like that Lewis sees in modern philosophy and theoretical science. And third, it illustrates the tendency of the time-philosophy to dissolve the distinctions between subject and object.

Joyce, Lewis explains, "has a very keen preoccupation with the Past, it is certain" (106); Ulysses "is a masterpiece of romantic art: and its romance is of the sort imposed by the 'time' philosophy. Whimsically, but like much romantic art, it is founded on a framework of classical antiquity--about which its author is very romantic indeed" (132). Exactly what he means by these accusations is not self-evident; particularly in contrast with someone like Pound, the "man in love with the past," Joyce does not

seem especially interested in history. He does, of course, develop a Homeric parallel--the "framework of classical antiquity"--but on the whole Lewis himself dismisses this parallel as "only an entertaining structural device or conceit" (121).[6] What matters more to Lewis is the character of Joyce's Dublin--the Dublin of 1906 which plays so large a part in Ulysses. Lewis argues that

> the local colour, or locally-coloured material, that was scraped together into a big variegated heap to make Ulysses, is--doctrinally even more than in fact--the material of the Past. It is consciously the decay of a mournful province, with in addition the label of a twenty-year-old vintage, of a 'lost time,' to recommend it. (100)

As the editors of transition pointed out in their defense of Joyce, the events of the novel were not much more in the past when Joyce began writing in 1914 than the novel's publication was in the past for Time and Western Man.[7] But this objection clearly misses Lewis's point: Joyce's Dublin belongs to the past "doctrinally even more than in fact."

As this qualification tells us, Lewis's criticism here is less of Ulysses itself than of a more general tendency he thinks it reflects. The world Joyce depicts is of the past because the kind of national identity his Dublin possesses is an archaic survival. Real national differences have virtually disappeared from the modern world, as Lewis explains:

> The romantic persons who go picking about in the Arran Islands, Shetlands, the Basque Provinces, or elsewhere, for genuine human 'antiques,' are to-day on a wild-goose chase; because the sphinx of the Past,

> in the person of some elder dug out of such remote neighbourhoods, will at length, when he has found his tongue, probably commence addressing them in the vernacular of the Daily Mail. (99)

So Joyce's Irishness, or that of Ulysses, is a kind of sham. At best, it portrays a piece of the past which has unaccountably outlived its time. And, Lewis believes, Joyce knows this as well as he does. The clue to Joyce's self-awareness is in the contradiction between his personal feelings about Irish nationalism and his exploitation of Irishness in his novel. As Lewis points out, Joyce had no use for such nationalism, especially in its politically militant forms--and indeed, he had no use for Ireland itself insofar as he chose to live abroad--yet at the same time, he "is ready enough, as a literary artist, to stand for Ireland":

> It is at this point that we reach one of the fundamental questions of value brought out by his work. Although entertaining the most studied contempt for his compatriots--individually and in the mass . . . it will yet be insisted on that his irishness is an important feature of his talent; and he certainly also does exploit his irishness and theirs. (95)

This inconsistency seems fundamental to Lewis not so much because he thinks it points to a failure on Joyce's part,[8] but because it so neatly illustrates a wide-spread political situation--which, in its turn, parallels the structure Lewis discovers in every aspect of modern culture.

Joyce's equivocal Irishness adumbrates "the problem set throughout the world to-day by the contradiction involved in (1) a universal promotion of 'nationalism,' which seems to take, even in great cosmopolitan states, an ever

more intolerant form, and (2) the disappearance of national characteristics altogether as a consequence of technical progress." These two occurrences, Lewis believes, are two sides of the same coin:

> Everywhere the peoples become more and more alike. Local colours, which have endured in many places for two thousand years, fade so quickly that already one uniform grey tint has supervened. The astonishing advances in applied science and in industrial technique made this inevitable. Simultaneously, and in frenzied contradiction, is the artificially fostered nationalism rampant throughout the world since the War. So while in reality people become increasingly one nation (for the fact that they are fanatically 'nationalist' does not prevent them from approximating more and more closely to the neighbours against whom, in their abstract rage, they turn), they ideologically grow more aggressively separatist, and conscious of 'nationality.' (95-96)

So the rich local color of Ulysses is a kind of romantic fake. Perhaps, in 1906, before the War, Dublin did have its own cultural identity; but that world has so nearly been destroyed that it now makes a proper setting only for historical novels. The years that have passed between the day of Ulysses and Lewis's present (or, equally, the date of the novel's appearance) have brought about such changes that Joyce's Dublin is now "doctrinally" of the past. "The diffraction of this lump of local colour for the purposes of analysis will in the end isolate the time-quality, revealing the main motive of its collection" (100). In this respect at least, Lewis has demonstrated, Ulysses is a time-book.

Now if we allow that there is some justice in this view of things, there are still questions to be asked.

Even if Ulysses is a kind of historical novel, in what way is this a criticism? Lewis implies two answers. One, as the passage I have just quoted suggests, is political: novels which emphasize nationalism may endorse unsavory and potentially violent political tendencies, even if they do so inadvertently.[9] Certainly we can agree that the literary or cultural identity of a nation or a group is not unrelated to its political identity. The position of Joyce's novel in this matter, as Lewis recognizes, is complicated; one could argue that Joyce undercuts his nationalism more than he endorses it. Ulysses does seem to thrive on its Irishness. But at the same time, its two heroes both seem, at least sometimes, to reject the national feelings that surround and oppress them. The novel's ambiguity about Irish nationalism has occupied more than a few critics, at any rate; Lewis here identifies one of the major critical issues, or, as he says, "one of the most obvious critical traps, and at the same time one of the main things requiring a decisive reply, in his work" (95). Lewis's own reply, I believe, is that Joyce contradicts himself, and that the resultant confusion compromises rather than enriches the novel.

Lewis's second objection to the historical nature of Ulysses is more specifically aesthetic--and, at least in its implications, more problematic. The best modern artists, he asserts, ought to create new materials, not rely on things that are past. "How these remarks apply to

what we are discussing will be obscured for some readers at first by the fact of the challenging novelty of the work in question" (99), he explains. Ulysses is everywhere hailed as a great original work of art; but Lewis wants to demonstrate that beneath its dazzling surface it is in its own way highly traditional. Insofar as it is about the Dublin of 1906, it is about something no longer real, something that belongs only to the past and that is therefore the material of romance. Now to point out this underlying concern with the past and to label it romantic is not unreasonable criticism, but Lewis goes further. "There is nothing for it to-day," he insists,

> if you have an appetite for the beautiful, but to create new beauty. You can no longer nourish yourself upon the Past; its stock is exhausted, the Past is nowhere a reality. The only place where it is a reality is in time, not certainly in space. (99).

In this kind of statement Lewis seems to be saying that no artist who deals with materials from the past can be properly creative or original. He brings the same argument against Pound. But clearly this is inadequate: as Eliot pointed out in his defense of Pound, "It is almost too platitudinous to say that one is not modern by writing about chimney-pots, or archaic by writing about oriflammes . . . If one can really penetrate the life of another age, one is penetrating the life of one's own."[10]

Here Lewis goes too far in the interests of his polemical attack on the time-cult and its wide-spread interest in things of the past. The weakness of Lewis's

position shows in his own inability to state his idea of true creativity in positive terms:

> To create new beauty, and to supply a new material, is the obvious affair of art of any kind to-day. But that is a statement that by itself would convey very little. Without stopping to unfold that now, I will summarize what I understand by its opposite. Its opposite is that that thrives upon the time-philosophy that it has invented for itself, or which has been imposed upon it or provided for it. (110)

By begging the question in this way, Lewis reveals his primary reason for criticizing Pound's or Joyce's use of the past--to expose the pretensions of the time-cult to being revolutionary or absolutely creative. "I am not therefore suggesting that where art is concerned other periods, races and countries should be banished," he has explained earlier in the book; but "Let us call a spade a spade; let us call what the spade digs up old, very old; not new, very new" (53, 52).[11] Far too much contemporary art, Lewis believes, involves some kind of return to the past--Pound's historical past, Picasso's or Lawrence's primitivism, Stein's or Matisse's or Proust's interest in childhood and the child-like. And far too often this art is advertised as the "new." Even Ulysses, Lewis wishes to prove, participates in the same return, despite all its apparent involvement in the present and its undeniable formal innovativeness.

But none of these related criticism of Ulysses--explicit or implicit--is finally of more than secondary interest to Lewis. What he most wishes to impress on us,

I believe, is that all these things--Joyce's Irishness, the "newness" of modern art, the endemic artificial nationalism--share the same structure. And their structure, as I suggested above, seems to Lewis to characterize every aspect of the modern world. "That sort of contradiction is paralleled throughout our life," he explains.

> There is no department that is exempt from the confusions of this strategy--which consists essentially in removing something necessary to life and putting an ideologic simulacrum where it was able to deceive the poor animal, who notices it is its usual place and feels that all is well, but which yet perplexes and does not satisfy him. (96)

Everywhere Lewis sees "that trap of an abstraction coloured to look concrete, and placed where once there was something but where now there is nothing" (99). Now Lewis moves from these statements into a brief summary of the argument of Book II of Time and Western Man--where, as we have already seen, he will echo the contrast between the abstract and the concrete.

In part, then, Joyce is valuable to Lewis because he supplies the occasion for the image of the simulacrum. In The Enemy, which did not include the theoretical Book II, this image and the following summary had to suggest the corollary philosophical argument; in the complete Time and Western Man, they introduce that argument and give the reader a schematic framework with which to begin the more complicated analysis of modern philosophy. So for Lewis the issue of Joyce's Irishness provides what he calls elsewhere a sort of "skeleton key" to his whole argument--

a key, moreover, which is appropriately visual. Once we have seen in what sense the Dublin of Ulysses only simulates what it appears to be--how this novel is romance pretending to be realism--we should be able to recognize how often the same pattern recurs in the more theoretical doctrines of the time-philosophers.

Lewis's second major reason for calling Ulysses a time-book has more specifically to do with the novel itself. He believes that Joyce is more concerned than he ought to be about time itself--and about time's closest corollary, flux. When he writes that Joyce "has a very keen pre-occupation with the Past," he goes on to say that "he does lay things down side by side, carefully dated; and added to that, he has some rather loosely held notion of periodicity" (106). These traits, though, mean less in Joyce's work than they might in another artist's, Lewis explains: "But I believe that [what] all these things amount to with him is this: as a careful, even meticulous, craftsman, with a long training of doctrinaire naturalism, the detail--the time-detail as much as anything else--assumes an exaggerated importance for him" (106). What is more important than such details is the way Joyce collapses time into a kind of timelessness. The "All-life-in-a-day scheme," Lewis argues, constitutes a "fanatically observed" the "barbarous version" of the classical unities of time and place (100).

Lewis does not say what he might, that this aspect of Joyce's work distorts our everyday or truly classical

sense of time both by compressing and expanding it. Because we learn so much about the characters' pasts through their thoughts, this one day and one place expand temporally more than spatially; Bloom's and Stephen's whole lives are present in the novel more vividly than, say, the rest of Western Europe. The "adventures" of the Circe chapter, Lewis admits, "take us still further from the ideal of the Unities, and both Space and Time temporarily evaporate. But on the whole the reader is conscious that he is beneath the intensive dictatorship of Space-time" (100). In one sense the world of Ulysses arrests time by gathering it all into one moment--the moment of one day. But to Lewis, the effect of this way of understanding time is finally equivalent to its apparent opposite, an emphasis on the constant passing of time--since in both cases time itself is the important thing.

To make clear how the timelessness of Joyce's novels is not the same as his own, Lewis quotes from Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man a statement which ties Joyce's timelessness with flux and impersonality: "'So timeless seemed the grey warm air, so fluid and impersonal [Stephen's] own mood, that all ages were as one to him'" (128). But for Lewis, of course, time, not timelessness, is fluid; space is static.[12] Like Pound, Joyce seeks to arrest time by collapsing the distinctions between past and present--in much the same way that Bergson sees the past as eating into the present and future. Joyce's timelessness is as

psychological as Bergson's--as the quotation from Portrait demonstrates. "So," Lewis concludes,

> we arrive at the concrete illustrations of that strange fact already noted--that an intense preoccupation with time or 'duration' (the psychological aspect of time that is) is wedded to the theory of 'timelessness.' It is, as it were, in its innate confusion in the heart of the reality, the substance and original of that peculiar paradox--that so long as time is the capital truth of your world it matters very little if you deny time's existence . . . or say there is nothing else at all . . . (128)

The very quality of Joyce's work that leads most critics to call it timeless, and sometimes to emphasize its spatiality, leads Lewis to identify it as just as much a time-book as any of Stein's or Proust's more obvious ones. Lewis's judgment here seems to me accurate, given his special perspective--Ulysses does concern itself with time.[13] Moreover, as he demonstrated in Finnegans Wake (which was, of course, still in progress), Joyce certainly had a strong interest in temporality in the guise of motion. All the rivers in that book, after all, share a symbolic reference to the Heraclitean flux; and Joyce's "rather loosely held notion of periodicity" there becomes a major structural principle.

Lewis's final major argument against Joyce as a time-artist is the most complex of the three, and its relationship to the rest of his critique of the time-cult the most difficult to see. It is really two separate arguments--or, more accurately, two families of points--joined, once again, by what Lewis offers as a kind of paradox. He discovers a

contradiction of sorts between the main characteristics of Ulysses. On the one hand, this novel is progressive technically--as few would deny. Yet in Lewis's view, this trait gives rise both to the novel's greatest strength and to several of its major weaknesses: if Ulysses is a "considerable achievement of art" (95), it is also the "very nightmare of the naturalistic method" (108) and the "sardonic catafalque of the victorian world" (109). On the other hand, he believes, it is conceptually conventional, all too full of clichés of one kind or another. In detailing these accusations, Lewis offers two kinds of explanations for the presence of such flaws in Joyce's work--one in relation to the artist's personality, one in relation to the time-philosophy.

About Joyce's technical sophistication there has never been much critical disagreement. Because in this respect Ulysses is so evident a triumph, Lewis can simply assert Joyce's stylistic innovativeness as a given for his argument, and then focus not on the strengths of that quality but--in his capacity as critic--on its weaknesses. As he does with Pound's ability to recreate the past, Lewis turns praise into a description of the artist's limitations; if Joyce is professional in his work (strong praise from Lewis), he is "certainly very 'shoppy,' and professional to a fault, though in the midst of the amateurism of the day it is a fault that can easily be forgiven" (106). The key to Joyce's technical virtuosity, we are told, is that

he is essentially a craftsman: "What stimulates him is ways of doing things" (106).

The evidence for this judgment, of course, is the proliferation of different styles in Ulysses: "The Dubliners is written in one style, Ulysses in a hundred or so" (112). And, as we might expect, what interests Lewis about this proliferation is the degree to which it is imitative rather than original. Consequently, most of his comments about Joyce's linguistic achievements center on his resemblances to other writers--or what Lewis sees as Joyce's "unorganized susceptibility to influences" (91). Of writers from the past, Joyce echoes Rabelais (in manner, not matter), Stevenson (in his character as "sedulous ape"), Sterne (in his genial and comic temper), Dickens (in "the clowning and horseplay of english humour" and the stream-of-consciousness point-of-view), and Nashe (in his energetic appetite for word play, imitated by Joyce in Work in Progress) (92, 121-23). Of contemporary writers, Joyce shows the influence of Lewis himself (especially his pre-war play "The Enemy of the Stars"), Eliot and Pound (both for their "classical, romance, and anglo-saxon scholarly enthusiasms"; Pound for his idiosyncratic epistolary style), Stein (for her exploration of the "unorganized word-dreaming of the mind"--her "gargantuan mental stutter"), and Freud's school of psychology (121, 123, 127).

Now these comparisons, I think, are both accurate and fair. The fairness of the conclusions Lewis draws from

them is more difficult to decide. The least tenable of his conclusions is that the presence of so many influences in Joyce's work indicates that his "susceptibility" is "unorganized"; certainly we could argue that Joyce knew exactly what he was using and why--that his susceptibility was deliberate and organized. Similarly vulnerable is the corollary conclusion that these influences demonstrate a failure of originality--the same judgment he makes about Pound's work. Lewis suggests that "The virtuosity [could] be deduced from the fact of the resourceful presence of a highly critical intellect, but without much inventiveness, nor the gift of first-hand observation--thriving vicariously, in its critical exercises, upon the masters of the Past" (113); but again, the use of materials from the past certainly need not signify creative failure. On the other hand, the less negative conclusion that Joyce's stylistic accomplishments are not as new as they might appear to be is easier to endorse. Even if we want to argue that his use of all these styles is what matters most--and what is most original about his work--we have to agree that he did not invent them all.

As Lewis well knows, though, nobody invents a new language, and so the significance of these general conclusions about Joyce's styles is inevitably limited. To a large extent, accordingly, Lewis focusses on the specific consequences of specific kinds of influence. One of his concerns is how easily technical sophistication can become

an end in itself. He suggests this danger through the comparison with Nashe. Joyce's new book, he says (and he illustrates his point with passages), "altogether almost, employs the manner of Nash" (122, sic). But, Lewis continues,

> As to the Nash factor, when read in the original, the brilliant rattle of that Elizabethan's high-spirited ingenuity can in time grow tiresome, and is of a stupefying monotony. What Nash says, from start to finish, is nothing. . . . But Nash is a great prose-writer, one of the greatest as far as sheer execution is concerned, and in that over-ornate bustling field. Yet his emptiness has resulted in his work falling into neglect, which, if you read much of him, is not difficult to understand. (123)

Nashe, Lewis argues, obliterates substance with style (unlike Chapman, Donne, or Shakespeare, he says, who combine the two). The result is a dazzling monotony. Without saying directly that he thinks Joyce shares Nashe's weakness as well as his skill, Lewis raises the question as something Joyce's readers and Joyce himself might consider.

Unquestionably, though, what bothers Lewis most about Joyce's style is his use of stream-of-consciousness. On the much-acclaimed newness of this technique Lewis comments by comparing to some of Bloom's thoughts a passage from Pickwick Papers describing Mr. Jingle's thoughts.[14] The similarity also makes Lewis's point that this is indeed a technique--rather than a translucent portrayal of the way people really think. In fact, he points out, as a tool of naturalism or realism, stream-of-consciousness has clear limits. The idea is to photograph the "unorganized

word-dreaming of the mind when not concentrated for some logical functional purpose" (121). The flaw is that people do not think with words only. "In Ulysses," Lewis explains (quoting from his discussions about this issue in The Art of Being Ruled),

> a considerable degree of naturalism being aimed at, Mr. Joyce had not the freedom of movement possessed by the more ostensibly personal, semi-lyrical utterances of Miss Stein. He had to pretend that we were really surprising the private thought of a real and average human creature, Mr. Bloom. But the fact is that Mr. Bloom was abnormally wordy. He thought in words, not images, for our benefit, in a fashion as unreal, from the point of view of the strictest naturalist dogma, as a Hamlet soliloquy. And yet the pretence of naturalism involved Mr. Joyce in something less satisfying than Miss Stein's more direct and arbitrary arrangements. (121-22)

Joyce's portrayals pretend to be complete and accurate images of mental content, but simply because they cannot include visual images they are inevitably inadequate. In this observation, I think, Lewis is entirely accurate--enabled by his sensitivity to the visual to pinpoint this essential limitation in the "internal" method as a device of realism. Inevitably, no literary technique can produce exact realism: neither our minds nor the world is constituted by words alone.

Moreover, the use of stream-of-consciousness embodies for Lewis much of what he dislikes in the time-cult as a whole--its interest in the sub-conscious, unconscious, or pre-logical rather than the conscious; the emotional rather than the intellectual; the inside rather than the outside; the process rather than the product of thought. Lewis attacks

Joyce's involvement in these matters as a way of attacking their prevalence in other modernist works--as he did with the question of Joyce's nationalism. His comparison of Joyce with Stein is this kind of indirect thrust, as is his observation that Joyce's characters would think far differently without the influence of Freud. We have seen that as a matter of principle, Lewis wants the outsides of things to be most highly valued, not their insides. The everyday, common-sense, visual characteristics of things, or in the case of people, their public personalities, interest him more than anything below the surface.

Joyce, Lewis argues, who has naturally a "highly-developed physical basis," has fallen prey to the dangers of the psychological approach by adopting the "telling from the inside" method: "the method of Ulysses imposes a softness, flabbiness and vagueness everywhere in its bergsonian fluidity" (120). Such a description may well seem almost nonsensical, particularly since it has become so evident that Ulysses is actually very highly structured--perhaps even over-structured. We must remember, though, how little of this structure had been noticed when Lewis was writing. William Chace even suggests that one of the results of Lewis's attack was Stuart Gilbert's exegesis. "Gilbert's book," Chace writes, "composed with Joyce's own help and in reaction to Lewis's attack . . . offers a picture of Joyce as one wholly consumed in organization and pattern . . . Not flux, but mastery and control."[15]

More importantly, I think, Lewis did not mean that Joyce had no structure in mind; rather, he judges, the total effect of the novel's structures was something too fluid--in a sense, too abstract--to be as clear and concrete to a reader as Lewis would wish. In Satire and Fiction, Lewis summarized his difference from Joyce more precisely:

> As developed in Ulysses, [the internal method] robbed Mr. Joyce's work as a whole of all linear properties whatever, considered as a plastic thing--of all contour and definition in fact. In contrast to the jelly-fish that floats in the centre of the subterranean stream of the 'dark' Unconscious, I much prefer, for my part, the shield of the tortoise, or the rigid stylistic articulations of the grasshopper. . . . The ossature is my favourite part of a living animal organism, not its intestines. [16]

In part, Lewis makes clear, this judgment is a matter of personal preference; in part, it is also an impersonal opinion of the concrete results of the modern interest in the unconscious.

Despite his metaphors, moreover, Lewis also does not mean that he would prefer the novel to have the form of a sculpture--to be static and spatial in the way the visual arts can be. Just after he has contrasted the ideal stasis of the plastic arts with the fluidity of music, he explains,

> If a definition were attempted of the position of literature among the arts, it would turn out to be in some sense a kind of half-way house. A piece of prose or poetry is not music; it does not, on the other hand, convey images with the definiteness of the plastic or graphic arts; it is less abstract than architecture, yet less defined; it is not so static as some, but more static than others. (188)[17]

Lewis does not oversimplify the distinctions among the

various arts in terms of space and time; he knows that everything participates in both. A jelly-fish, after all, is as spatial as a tortoise, but it is not as clearly defined. And a sculpture by Rodin, Lewis argues several times, is much too fluid in spite of its physical presence. He knows perfectly well that a novel must be experienced through time like a piece of music, that it cannot be seen all at once like a painting--and, on the other hand, that it can be conceptualized and thus (remember his philosophical arguments) moved out of time into the "timelessness" of intellect. What concerns Lewis is just the quality of the reader's experience of Joyce's novel.

Ulysses, Lewis says, lacks "linear properties." Joyce has an acute eye for detail--another of his craftsmanlike virtues. But in this novel, we are told, that eye has led Joyce into a "fanatic naturalism" in which details overwhelm "all contour and definition":

> The amount of stuff--unorganized brute material--that the more active principle of drama has to wade through, under the circumstances, slows it down to the pace at which, inevitably, the sluggish tide of the author's bric-à-brac passes the observer, at the saluting post, or in this case, the reader. It is a suffocating, moeotic expanse of objects, all of them lifeless, the sewage of a Past twenty years old, all neatly arranged in a meticulous sequence. (108)[18]

Joyce may do a better job than anyone else of capturing the material details of everyday life--an accomplishment that Lewis would certainly in principle admire--but, in part because he does so to such an extreme, Lewis argues, Joyce simultaneously makes the whole endeavor look "obsessional."

A highly skilled and meticulous craftsman, Joyce has spent his massive energies in the service of an outdated idea--"nineteenth-century naturalism." And the result is a novel too stuffed with details to maintain clear outlines or to support the "more active principle of drama" appropriate to the "half-way house" of literature.

Again, the terms of this difference between Lewis and Joyce--an aesthetic difference--are clarified by an explanation Lewis gives in Rude Assignment, where he is recalling the attack in Time and Western Man. He remembers a conversation between himself and Joyce about the elaborate facade of the cathedral at Rouen:

> I had said I did not like it, rather as Indian or Indonesian sacred buildings are a fussy multiplication of accents, demonstrating a belief in the virtue of quantity, I said. All such quantitative expression I have at all times found boring, I pointed out. I continued to talk against Gothic altogether, and its "scholasticism in stone": the dissolving of the solid shell--the spatial intemperance, the nervous multiplication of detail. Joyce listened and then remarked that he, on the contrary, liked this multiplication of detail, adding that he himself, as a matter of fact, in words, did something of that sort.[19]

In Ulysses, Lewis argues in Time and Western Man, "the newspaper in which Mr. Bloom's bloater is wrapped up, say, must press on to the cold body of the fish, reversed, the account of the bicycle accident that was reported on the fated day chosen for this Odyssey" (108).

The accuracy of these descriptions is surely beyond question, as is Lewis's argument that the novel's details will impress at least some readers as claustrophobic.

Typically, though, Lewis embellishes his criticism with his unrestrained Enemy rhetoric. As many critics would do, he does not say that some readers will agree with him, but implies that every reader should agree with him: "At the end of a long reading of Ulysses you feel that it is the very nightmare of the naturalistic method that you have been experiencing" (108, emphasis mine). And, more importantly, unlike most critics, he offers a number of vivid and insulting metaphors:

> It is like a gigantic victorian quilt or antimacassar. Or it is the voluminous curtain that fell, belated (with the alarming momentum of a ton or two of personally organized rubbish), upon the victorian scene. So rich was its delivery, its pent-up outpouring so vehement, that it will remain, eternally cathartic, a monument like a record diarrhoea. No one who looks at it will ever want to look behind it. It is the sardonic catafalque of the victorian world. (109)

In cases like this, I think, Lewis's rhetoric may do more harm than good by obscuring the validity of his judgments. The same problem arises elsewhere, to a lesser degree, as we have seen, in his description of Pound as a parasite, and more obviously in his vitriolic attack on Gertrude Stein. To write a vivid and personal kind of criticism, one need not abandon restraint; and Lewis, it is clear, does not always maintain a balance between exaggeration and excess.

Among the things that may be lost in the fray are the more subtle connections between Lewis's individual criticisms of a work. Reading these metaphorical attacks on Ulysses, we might well not notice that Lewis does not stop with this

description and the judgment it carries, but that he further suggests how Joyce's obsession with detail results in part from his use of stream-of-consciousness. On the one hand, he explains, Ulysses is the logical end of nineteenth-century naturalism; "On the other, you have a great variety of recent influences enabling Mr. Joyce to use it in the way that he did" (108). Joyce's use of the "psychological" method of "telling-from-the-inside . . . lands the reader inside an Aladdin's cave of incredible bric-à-brac in which a dense mass of dead stuff is collected . . . An immense nature-morte is the result. This ensues from the method of confining the reader in a circumscribed psychological space into which several encyclopaedias have been emptied" (107).[20] As the metaphor implies, Lewis finds this aspect of the novel especially claustrophobic: he dislikes being placed inside the characters. "And the fact that you were not in the open air, but closed up inside somebody else's head, will not make things any better. It will have been your catharsis of the objective accumulations that obstinately collect in even the most active mind" (108). So the "naturalistic nightmare" is also in this sense the logical end of stream-of-consciousness as a point of view--another reason, I believe, that Lewis devotes so much of his attention to this literary technique. He explains more fully how he thinks Joyce's readers experience this novel:

> The author . . . takes you inside his head, or, as it were, into a roomy diving-suit, and, once down in the middle of the stream, you remain the author,

> naturally, inside whose head you are, though you are sometimes supposed to be aware of one person, sometimes of another. Most of the time you are being Bloom or Dedalus, from the inside, and that is Joyce. Some figures for a moment bump against you, and you certainly perceive them with great distinctness--or rather some fragment of their dress or some mannerism; then they are gone. But, generally speaking, it is you who descend into the flux of Ulysses, and it is the author who absorbs you momentarily into himself for that experience. That is all that the 'telling from the inside' amounts to. All the rest is literature, and dogma; or the dogma of time-literature. (120)[21]

We can see, I think, the justice of such a description. Remember that Bergson argues that "the intention of life . . . is just what the artist tries to regain, in placing himself back within the object by a kind of sympathy, in breaking down, by an effort of intuition, the barrier that space puts up between him and his model."[22] We are encouraged by the stream-of-consciousness technique to enter into the mental worlds of Joyce's characters--as the contrasts between the sections of Ulysses where this technique is employed and those where it is not would suggest. What we know about Bloom or Stephen depends no less on their author than does what we know about any other fictional character; but certainly among the functions of stream-of-consciousness writing as opposed to other points of view is the breaking down of the inevitable distance between character and reader. The author may still invite us to judge the characters--in Ulysses, we surely judge Stephen both through his own thoughts and through his impression on Bloom--but we do so with more intimacy than we might otherwise possess.

It is when Lewis comes to examine Joyce's characters in themselves that he discovers what he considers the novel's conceptual inadequacy--the second half of his third major argument against Joyce. In the same way that he demonstrates the elements of tradition beneath Joyce's technical innovations, Lewis argues at length that Ulysses is everywhere vitiated by its underlying conventionality. For this judgment he offers evidence on two levels--style, again, and, more importantly, characterization.

First, though he praises Joyce's overall awareness of "purely verbal clichés," Lewis still detects in both Portrait and Ulysses various "tell-tale" lapses into triteness. "Buck Mulligan," he remarks, "'turned abruptly his great searching eyes from the sea,' etc. Great searching eyes! Oh, where were the great searching eyes of the author, from whom no verbal cliché may escape, when he wrote that?" (115). Similarly, in Portrait, Joyce describes Uncle Charles as "repairing" to the out-house, having "brushed scrupulously" his hair; here, too, Lewis says, Joyce has slipped into the prose of "works of fiction of the humblest order or . . . newspaper articles" (126). In his Joyce's Voices, Hugh Kenner works from this observation into an argument that Joyce deliberately manipulates his language to reflect the characteristics of the figures being described; he calls this idea the "Uncle Charles Principle," and credits Lewis with discovering but failing to understand this crucial--though certainly subtle--aspect of Joyce's art.

Kenner also points out that Lewis's examples of this kind of cliché in Ulysses come only from the first chapter (as Lewis himself says) and explains that they are part of the whole chapter's parody of precisely those conventions Lewis criticizes. Although they are, perhaps, a bit too ingenuous, Kenner's explanations appropriately modify Lewis's complaints. But as Kenner himself recognizes, Lewis's primary interest in these verbal clichés is that they are "tell-tale."

One of the things they betray is the novel's more serious underlying clichés of character. Here, again, much of Lewis's evidence comes from the first chapter--Buck Mulligan, the "stage Irishman," and Haines, the "stage Anglo-Saxon" (113)--and can be explained as Kenner explains the language in which these figures are described. But Lewis's major argument is that Stephen and Bloom are equally conventional--and this argument certainly extends beyond the opening chapter. "But if [Haines and Mulligan] are clichés, Stephen Dedalus is a worse or a far more glaring one. He is the really wooden figure" (113-14).[23] While Stephen comes in for the bulk of Lewis's abuse, Bloom too is "an unsatisfactory figure . . . but of an opposite sort and in a very different degree. He possesses all the recognized theatrical properties of 'the Jew' up-to-date . . . but such a Jew as Bloom, taken altogether, has never been seen outside the pages of Mr. Joyce's book" (117-18). Lewis dilates very little on Bloom's specific flaws, except

to note that he derives directly from Flaubert's Bouvard and Pécuchet (121); like most subsequent critics, though, Lewis sees Bloom as the representative of sensuality in the central contrast between the novel's two major characters.

In fact, it is this central contrast that really exacerbates Lewis's distaste for Stephen and reluctance to praise the much more likeable Bloom. He finds Stephen a "frigid prig," a "mean and ridiculous figure" (116), but recognizes that Stephen represents the intellectual principle in the novel. At the same time, though, the sensual Bloom seems to Lewis to win "the reader's sympathy every time he appears" (117). Whenever the two come into conflict, Dedalus loses, thus, "to the dismay of the conscientious reader, betraying the principles he represents" (117).[24] Naturally, given his avowed support for the intellectual, Lewis wants Stephen's principles to triumph over Bloom's, but finds Stephen himself far less admirable than his misdirected counterpart.

There are at least two ways in which these criticisms could be developed into a kind of praise--or, at least, neutralized. Lewis adopts neither. One is Kenner's solution: he agrees with Lewis that Stephen is a prig, but goes on to argue that Joyce intended him to be one, that Stephen's characterization is ironic. Lewis recognizes this possibility, but rejects it as an inadequate excuse: "From this charge Joyce would probably attempt to escape by saying that with Dedalus he was dealing with a sentimental young

man. But that unfortunately does not explain his strange fondness for his company, nor his groundless assumption that he will be liked by us" (126). Moreover, of course, such an explanation leaves untouched Lewis's objection that Stephen represents and betrays the intellectual--or the classical--principle. The second option is the now-common view that neither character alone represents an adequate vision of life, and that the coming-together of the two during the novel is a deliberate combining or balancing of the two sets of characteristics. To this explanation, I think, Lewis would object, with some justification, that the balance is uneven: Stephen is far too "mean and ridiculous" to hold his own against his opposite. We must remember, moreover, that Lewis is limited by the context he has defined in Time and Western Man: "in such a crisis, all the weight of our intelligence should be thrown into the scales representing our deepest instincts." As a direct result of his deliberate polemical bias, Lewis is restrained from suggesting that Joyce might successfully stand on both sides of the scales at the same time.[25] Lewis's commitment to defending intellect leads him to find fault with Joyce's characterization of Stephen but prevents him from accepting any compromise between mind and sensuality.

Instead of trying to see such flaws as Stephen's priggishness positively, Lewis derives from them a general judgment about Joyce's abilities--one that leads him into his tentative explanations for all the characteristics of

Ulysses he has examined. Like Pound, Lewis suggests, Joyce cannot really see, and so must fall back on mechanical and lifeless structures:

> This inability to observe directly, a habit of always looking at people through other people's eyes and not through his own, is deeply rooted with Joyce. Where a multitude of little details or some obvious idiosyncrasy are concerned, he may be said to be observant; but the secret of an entire organism escapes him. Not being observant where entire people (that is, people at all) are concerned, he depicts them conventionally always, under some general label. (118)

And again, he concludes, "It is in tracking this other sort of cliché--the cliché of feeling, of thought, and in a less detailed sense, of expression--that you will find everywhere beneath the surface in Joyce a conventional basis or framework. And until you get down to that framework or bed, you will not understand what is built over it, nor realize why, in a sense, it is so dead" (126). As these comments imply, Lewis sees Joyce's limitations and the flaws of Ulysses both as functions of Joyce's individual personality and as signs of the kinds of influence exerted by the time-cult on modern artists.

To explain his view of the contrast between Joyce's technical sophistication and his conceptual naiveté, Lewis proposes a parallel description of the artist's personality. "Two opposite things were required for this result," he explains. "Mr. Joyce could never have performed this particular feat if he had not been, in his make-up, extremely immobile; and yet, in contradiction to that, very open to new technical influences. It is the craftsman in Joyce

that is progressive; but the man has not moved since his early days in Dublin" (109). The other side of Joyce's craftsmanship, his interest in "ways of doing things," is a lack of interest in "things to be done" (106-07). As in Pound's case, Joyce's strength is simultaneously his limitation: "there is not very much reflection going on at any time inside the head of Mr. James Joyce. That is indeed the characteristic condition of the craftsman, pure and simple" (106). Referring to his "reading of the riddle" (113), Lewis suggests that perhaps this conjunction is not a coincidence--that the strength implies the weakness: "Daring or unusual speculation, or an unwonted intensity of outlook, is not good for technical display, that is certain, and they are seldom found together. The intellect is in one sense the rival of the hand, and is apt to hamper rather than assist it" (112). As a technician, Joyce is unlikely to be a thinker.[26] Lewis carefully qualifies this opposition, and does not call it inevitable. But he is confident of its application in Joyce's case.

Moreover, Lewis believes, the particular way in which this opposition applies to Joyce's work accounts for Joyce's susceptibility to the time-cult and his usefulness as an exhibit for Time and Western Man. "The craftsman is susceptible and unprotected":

> He is become so much a writing-specialist that it matters very little to him what he writes, or what idea or world-view he expresses, so long as he is trying his hand at this manner and that, and displaying his enjoyable virtuosity. Strictly speaking, he has none at all, no special point of view, or none worth

> mentioning. It is such people that the creative intelligence fecundates and uses; and at present that intelligence is political, and its stimuli are masked ideologies. He is only a tool, an instrument, in short. That is why such a sensitive medium as Joyce, working in such a period, requires the attention of the independent critic. (107)

As Lewis says in Men Without Art, he hopes as a critic to lead his readers "to an understanding of the absolute necessity which is not evident to the casual eye, and which yet has to be dragged out into the light if we are to understand what any work of art is about. For that it is about something is an axiom for me, and art-for-art's-sake I do not even trouble to confute."[27] Joyce's work, he argues, is far too much about the world-view offered by modern politics and the time-philosophy, and far too little about the ideas of an independent artist. Because Joyce doesn't especially care what metaphysic he uses, he adopts that offered by others like Einstein, Freud, or Bergson.

This situation seems to Lewis lamentable partly because of his antipathy towards the time-cult and partly because he thinks it is every artist's responsibility to know what world-view underlies his or her creative work. If Joyce were more aware of his own true interests, for instance, he would never allow Stephen Dedalus to betray the intellectual and aesthetic principles which Joyce and his character seem to share. Instead, Joyce has inadvertently allowed his novel to become infused with fashionable doctrines. "And I am sure," Lewis says, "that he would be put to his trumps to say how he came by much of the time-

machinery that he possesses" (106): "So though Joyce has written a time-book, he has done it, I believe, to some extent, by accident" (109-10). We have seen how Lewis sees the time-cult's influence in such things as Joyce's treatment of nationalism, his interest in time and timelessness, and his explorations of pre-logical thought through his characters' consciousness. Even the conjunction of empty characters and rich details reflects the time-philosophy.

Lewis doesn't elaborate on this last connection between Joyce and the time-cult, since the chapter on Joyce precedes most of his philosophical criticism, but he does point to the explanation he would give. He explains:

> The inner meaning of the time-philosophy, from whatever standpoint you approach it, and however much you paste it over with confusing advertisements of 'life,' or 'organism,' is the doctrine of a mechanistic universe; periodic; timeless, or nothing but 'time,' whichever you prefer; and, above all, essentially dead. . . . Or in the exact mixing in the space-timeist scheme of all the 'matter' and all the 'organism' together, you get to a sort of vegetable or vermiform average. (110)

The characters in Ulysses are too lifeless; the things that surround them are too much alive. The vivid distinction between mind and matter that Lewis desires is broken down from both directions in Joyce's work. Continuing his account of Joyce's inability to see "entire people (that is, people at all)," Lewis writes,

> For it is in the fragmentation of a personality--by isolating some characteristic weakness, mood, or time-self--that you arrive at the mechanical and abstract, the opposite of the living. This, however, leaves him free to achieve with a mass of detail a superficial appearance of life . . .(118)

Joyce tends to see personality (in his minor characters even more than his major ones) not as a whole but as a series of fragments or events. Because he sees the material world in much the same way, he ends up with a novel that represents the changing reality of the time-philosopher much more than it does the static classical reality which Lewis would preserve.

All in all, then, Lewis uses Joyce's work to demonstrate how the time-cult affects even the most serious and innovative recent literature. Most of the weaknesses in Ulysses, he argues, parallel or reflect weaknesses in other aspects of modern culture--despite Joyce's natural "elasticity and freedom" (91), his admirable "highly-developed physical basis" and essential sanity (107), and his largely classical aesthetic principles. On the whole, I think, Lewis's argument is convincing. Even if we do not entirely share Lewis's biases, we can agree with many of his specific judgments and with his larger analysis of Joyce's resemblances to other modern thinkers and writers; even if we do not regard them all as weaknesses, we can follow Lewis's identification of the parallels between the time-cult and Ulysses. Both in itself and as part of the extended analysis of Time and Western Man, Lewis's criticism of Joyce is sufficiently powerful to surpass the limitations of its partisanship.

ii

In his 1948 introduction to the collection James Joyce: Two Decades of Criticism, Seon Givens dismissed Lewis's analysis as one among "the personal diatribes which supply little except curiosity value."[28] But if on a cursory reading, Lewis's criticism may look like a personal diatribe, as we have seen, a closer and more sympathetic reading reveals a systematic, intelligent, and insightful analysis of certain important aspects of Joyce's work. We have still to see, though, how Lewis compares to Joyce's other critics. We find when we look at what has been written about Joyce--both by Lewis's contemporaries and by more recent writers--that the Enemy's ideas remain highly individual at the same time as they are echoed and paralleled with remarkable frequency. We find, indeed, that his place in the tradition of Joyce criticism very neatly endorses Lewis's axiomatic faith that an aggressively personal criticism need not be solipsistic or irresponsibly idiosyncratic.

We might expect that Lewis would resemble other early unfavorable critics of Joyce's work, especially of Ulysses. After all, as Robert Deming says in the introduction to the Critical Heritage volumes on Joyce, Lewis's was "the first major and significant blow at Joyce's rising reputation."[29] Surprisingly, though, he has as little in common with Joyce's attackers as with his partisans. Both in what it says and in what it does not say, Lewis's "Analysis of the Mind of James Joyce" stands largely alone in the

criticism appearing before 1930. There is one important exception to this generalization. Lewis's charge that Ulysses is monotonous appears again and again in early reviews and analyses, expressed usually in terms of the critic's own boredom or Joyce's failure to discriminate which details to include in his fictional encyclopedia. To the complaint of monotony Lewis adds some vivid metaphors; more importantly, he is unusual in trying to account for the flaw of excessive, undigested detail. His particular explanations, both of Joyce's personal make-up and of the destructive conjunction in Ulysses of Victorian realism and the time-philosophy, are distinctively Lewis's own.

Of his major complaints about the novel, though, this is the only one echoed by others. Oddly enough, very little is said in early criticism about the merits of Stephen and Bloom as characters. On the whole, Joyce's admirers call them remarkably faithful and complete portraits of human nature and consciousness; his detractors call them libels on humanity, blasphemous and obscene. But perhaps because, as Herbert McLuhan comments, most of Joyce's critics "approach their subject in an awkward and diffident spirit,"[30] Lewis's comments are unusual in their mixture of confidence and relative emotional detachment. If he dislikes both Stephen and Bloom, he is not shocked or disgusted by them. On the more general issue of Joyce's intellectual originality and rigor, he is equally isolated, though there are some who agree with him in part. Rebecca West, for instance,

another critic Givens dismisses with Lewis, detects occasional sentimentality in Joyce's conception of his subject. But again, Lewis is set apart by his effort to place his criticism in a larger philosophical and cultural context.

Equally individual are the things Lewis doesn't say about Joyce--or the things he mentions only to dismiss as trivial. He gives only one short paragraph to "the scandalous element in Ulysses, its supposed obscenity" (110)--an aspect which, of course, concerned many others: "it is surprising how very little 'sex' matter there is in his pages. . . . It is the fault of the reader if that page or two dealing with it assume, in retrospect, proportions it has not, as a fact, in Joyce's pages" (110-11). Similarly, he does not even mention the difficulty or obscurity of either Ulysses or Work in Progress. These two omissions alone make Lewis's attack vitally different from nearly every other negative view of Joyce.

In their general outlines, his views associate him with conservative critics who were apparently too old-fashioned to value or understand experiment in the arts. But as we found with his critique of Pound, Lewis's neglect of the most obvious ways in which he could attack this subject points to his special motives and criteria. Because he believes Joyce's work is important, Lewis thinks its flaws must be taken seriously, not simply deplored; because he believes artistic experiment is vital to cultural health, he devotes himself to analyzing in detail the

kind of experiments Joyce is making. For all his hostility, this fundamental seriousness brings Lewis far closer to Joyce's admirers than to his detractors.

Yet in other respects, of course, Lewis's views do not much resemble those of Joyce's positive critics. The most revealing comparisons are with his two other friends and fellow classicists, Eliot and Pound, both of whom had praised Ulysses in print before 1927.[31] Lewis deliberately disassociates himself from their positions, not by challenging them directly but by casually dismissing their ideas among those he regards as trivial or incorrect. As I have noted, he shrugs off with a single sentence one of the main concerns of Joyce's admirers--most notably, at that time, Valéry Larbaud and Eliot: "As to the homeric framework, that is only an entertaining structural device or conceit." Unlike these critics (and so many of those who have followed), Lewis had no interest in explication. We would never find Lewis writing what Eliot does at the beginning of his 1923 essay, "Ulysses, Order, and Myth": "All that one can usefully do at this time, and it is a great deal to do, for such a book, is to elucidate any aspect of the book . . . which has not yet been fixed."[32] While Lewis, I am sure, would agree that this is a useful task, he understands the role of the critic as that of pointing out things that should be changed. Of course, Eliot criticizes in Lewis's sense in other essays; he calls his 1923 piece on Joyce an "appreciation." Beyond this basic difference in purpose, though, Lewis

also has a kind of vested interest in discrediting a view of Joyce that would value his return to the past, while Eliot clearly had a personal interest in promoting the use of myth. Lewis hints at this difference when he includes Pound's and Eliot's historical concerns among the things that have influenced Joyce. Eliot praises Joyce's "mythical method" as "a step toward making the modern world possible for art," a step toward classic order and form;[33] Lewis, by dismissing this very method as trivial, points to the major difference between his vision of the classic--and of the best direction for modern art--and the vision of his contemporaries.

Lewis differs from Pound in a similarly indirect way. "Another writer with whom [Joyce] has been compared, and whom he is peculiarly unlike, is Flaubert" (92), Lewis writes. But just this comparison had been the main theme of Pound's praise of Joyce for some ten years. In a published "Paris Letter" of 1922, for example, Pound had written, "Joyce has taken up the art of writing where Flaubert left it. . . . in Ulysses he has carried on a process begun in Bouvard et Pécuchet; he has brought it to a degree of greater efficiency, of greater compactness . . . Ulysses has more form than any novel of Flaubert's."[34] Even earlier, in 1917, he had said about Portrait and Lewis's Tarr, "I would say that James Joyce produces the nearest thing to Flaubertian prose that we have now in English, just as Wyndham Lewis has written a novel which is more

like, and more fitly compared with, Dostoievsky than is the work of any of his contemporaries."[35] So when Lewis dismisses the similarity between Joyce and Flaubert, he is implicitly denying Joyce his half of Pound's praise and leaving his own half intact--in the kind of undercover Enemy maneouvre we have seen before. He continues this denial in two other brief remarks: "Contact with any of [Joyce's] writing must, to begin with, show that we are not in the presence of a tragic writer, of the description of Dostoievsky or of Flaubert" (92), he says; and "All you have got to do is to compare the frigid prig [Stephen] . . . with one of the principle heroes of the russian novels, and a spiritual gulf of some sort will become apparent . . ." (116). Lewis turns Pound's comparison into a contrast--in this case, I think, one that enriches his argument about Joyce's unsatisfactory characters. The heroes of nineteenth-century Russian novels are in a class of their own; even if his own character Kreisler had not been compared to these figures, Lewis would be able to use this contrast to support his criticism of Joyce for creating stock characters.[36] Lewis similarly inverts Pound's praise in two other ways. Pound argues in several pieces that Bloom continues and improves on Bouvard and Pécuchet and calls him "l'homme moyen sensual":[37] Lewis writes, "Where Bloom is being Bouvard and Pécuchet, it is a translation, nothing more"(121). Lewis also adopts and inverts Pound's vision of Ulysses as the culminating product of nineteenth-

century realism in his own argument that Joyce was the extreme version of Zola-like naturalism. By comparing him to Zola rather than Flaubert, Lewis emphasizes Joyce's tendency toward obsessively detailed description, and, again, revises Pound's praise into criticism.

Despite all their apparent differences, though, Lewis and Pound ended up in general agreement about Joyce. In a curious kind of testimonial to the power of Lewis's arguments in Time and Western Man, in the following years, Pound echoed more and more of Lewis's views. In 1931, he wrote that he preferred The Apes of God to Finnegans Wake, which he did not like at all;[38] in 1933, repeating his comparison of Bloom with Bouvard and Pécuchet, he joined Lewis in dismissing the Homeric parallels as "mere mechanics" which "any blockhead can go back and trace."[39] In the same essay, Pound quoted a remark of Lewis's and modified it:

> Mr Wyndham Lewis' specific criticism of Ulysses can now be published. It was made in 1922 or '23. "Ungh!" he grunted, "He [Joyce] don't seem to have any very new point of view about anything." Such things are a matter of degree. There is a time for a man to experiment with his medium. When he has a mastery of it; or when he has developed it, and extended it, he or a successor can apply it.
>
> Ulysses is a summary of pre-war Europe, the blackness and muddle of a "civilization" led by disguised forces and a bought press, the general sloppiness, the plight of the individual intelligence in that mess! Bloom very much is the mess! [40]

And at about this time, according to Forrest Read, "Joyce became a focus for Pound's impatience with passéism and the stream of consciousness."[41] Apparently, Pound was finding that the things he did not like about Finnegans Wake were

much the same as those Lewis had not liked about Ulysses--and about what Ulysses revealed of "the mind of James Joyce." In one of his war-time radio talks, following Joyce's death, Pound returned to these matters in what seems to me a very perceptive account of his praise, Lewis's criticism, and Joyce's achievement. "And I went out with the big bass drum," he said, "cause a masterwork is a masterwork, and damn all and damn whom wont back it, without hedgin."

> Well Mr Lewis made the BOUNDARY line, DEFINED the limit of Mr. J's Ulysses. (I said HUSH, at the time) I said wait till they see it.
>
> After the tree has grown you can begin prunin the branches.
>
> Well old Wyndham grumped: as follows, he said about J's Ulysses "Don't seem (Meaning Mr Joyce doesn't seem) to have a very NEW pt. of view about anythin". In the old style of painting, say Rembrandt or Durer or Carpaccio, or Mantegna when a painter starts painting a picture he damn well better NOT git a new point of view till he has finished it.
>
> Same way for a masterpiece of lit. new pt. of view shd BE either before a man starts his paintin: his recordin contemporary Anschauung, contemporary disposition to life, or AFTER he is thru his portrayin.
>
> That was Ulysses LIMIT, it painted a dying world, whereof some parts are eternal.

Joyce, Pound agreed, "had no philosophy, not so you would notice it"; Lewis, on the other hand, had "philosophical views," however "wrong headed."[42] Pound, of course, shared a great many of Lewis's quirks, and so we must read his agreement partly in the light of their mutual biases. But he is right, I think, both about the merit of Lewis's criticism and about its circumstantial limits.

Critics who agree with Lewis are not, moreover, limited to his friends. We find his judgments echoed even by some

of his enemies--with the differences in attitude we would expect. Seon Givens, for example, who dismisses Lewis in 1948, agrees with him in 1963: Joyce, he says,

> was the very first to put on paper a creative expression of twentieth-century time. . . . He was the first creative writer of the age of space long before the daily papers knew it could exist. He had a grasp of time in the psychoanalytic sense--no beginning or no end, a palimpsest of emotion and reconditioning; he speculated about the physicist's time; he had an uncanny grasp of his own time. It was fragmented; it was nightmarish. [43]

Givens does not mention Lewis in this praise of Joyce (in fact, in the 1963 edition of the collection, this passage immediately follows the earlier introduction where Givens says Lewis is of no interest), but certainly the idea is the same as the Enemy's. Givens merely regards as a strength what Lewis had seen as a weakness. Harry Levin's James Joyce: A Critical Introduction does much the same thing, as Lewis points out in Rude Assignment. In one instance, Levin calls Lewis malicious at the same time that he repeats his point: Bloom's "staccato diction, as the malice of Wyndham Lewis did not fail to observe, makes a startling appearance in the very first novel of Charles Dickens."[44] More subtly, Levin echoes Lewis's view of Joyce's characters and conceptual clichés; but this time he does not acknowledge that Lewis made the point first. "Characterization in Joyce," he says, "is finally reducible to a few stylized gestures and simplified attitudes"; and again, "The substance of what Joyce has to communicate is easily reduced to a few stock attitudes and recognizable postures. It is his

technique of communication which is really worthy of the prolonged attention it demands."[45] Conceptual conventionality and technical sophistication--this was Lewis's judgment fourteen years before it was Levin's. Once again, Levin simply chooses to focus on Joyce's strength and minimize his weakness, while Lewis does the opposite.

If these examples hint at Lewis's influence on Joyce criticism, Hugh Kenner's work embodies that influence. As he says in the acknowledgments to Dublin's Joyce, "But it is to Wyndham Lewis's chapter in Time and Western Man that I owe the challenge of incontrovertible facts that would square neither with the received image of Joyce nor, as he interprets them, with my own conviction of the value of Joyce's work."[46] Kenner's pattern, generally speaking, is to begin from one of Lewis's specific criticisms, point out its limitations, and then incorporate it into a positive interpretation of Joyce's work. Usually, this new interpretation depends on reading Joyce as ironic or parodic; Joyce, says Kenner, does all the things Lewis accuses him of doing, but he does them all deliberately. "James Joyce's central technique," in Kenner's view, is the "parody of the once vital to enact a null apprehension of the null"[47]--a positive restatement of Lewis's claim that Joyce's Dublin is a simulacrum of the no-longer-real.

Kenner agrees with Lewis about Joyce's characters, especially Stephen, but from a different perspective. "All his characters are walking clichés, because the Dubliners

were";[48] and Stephen Dedalus is "the egocentric rebel become an ultimate." Repeating Lewis's observations, Kenner suggests that

> The Stephen of the first chapter of Ulysses who 'walks wearily', constantly 'leans' on everything in sight, invariably sits down before he has gone three paces, speaks 'gloomily', 'quietly', 'with bitterness', and 'coldly', and 'suffers' his handkerchief to be pulled from his pocket by the exuberant Mulligan, is precisely the priggish, humourless Stephen of the last chapter of the Portrait . . .[49]

As Richard Deming puts it, "Wyndham Lewis and Hugh Kenner founded the 'Stephen-hating school' wherein Stephen Dedalus's callowness and sentimentality, as well as Joyce's irony, were established."[50] Lewis, we might say, identifies the problem that Kenner redefines as evidence of Joyce's sophistication.

In another instance of the same pattern, Kenner points to the basic contrast between his views and Lewis's. After agreeing with Lewis that Ulysses is "at one level" a "huge and intricate machine clanking and whirring for eighteen hours . . . Its characters walking clichés, as Wyndham Lewis had the want of tact to point out . . . Its psychological insights dry, hard, somehow obvious, devoid of Freudian romance," Kenner suggests that

> If you were to project an auctorial personality behind Ulysses, you would find it mechanical and craftsmanlike and unreflective . . . You would find, in fact, if you insisted on feeling for a personality, just the personality sketched by Wyndham Lewis in his brilliant misreading of the book: 'not so much an inventive intelligence as an executant': a thinking-machine, in short, the incarnation of quasi-industrial 'know-how'. Joyce has been at great pains to build up this persona behind his book.

But, Kenner says, Lewis erred by mistaking this "mind that informs Ulysses" for "the mind of James Joyce."[51] (Curiously, this solution echoes Kenner's view of Lewis's personae that we saw in Chapter 1: both Lewis and Joyce, he insists, must be seen as separate from their authorial voices.) Such a solution, it is clear, depends on a kind of subtlety foreign to the aggressive boldness of Lewis's Enemy criticism. In Time and Western Man, Lewis's unambiguous purpose is to demonstrate the parallels between traits of individual works and a larger cultural complex--not to explore Joyce's virtues. As Kenner says, "With these master-keys in his hand, Lewis might have written the definitive exegesis. It pleased him however to use Ulysses rather than seek to reveal it."[52] The pattern of Kenner's analyses shows us rather clearly how Lewis's specific critical purpose limited his flexibility--and also, I think, how that purpose sharpened his eye for Joyce's flaws. Lewis cannot suspend his censure of Joyce's conceptual framework to appreciate his technical accomplishment, but he does see through that dazzling surface to the possibility of an underlying conventionality; he cannot accept irony, but he does recognize the boundaries of Joyce's characters; he cannot write "the definitive exegesis," but he does offer to other critics "the challenge of incontrovertible facts." Certainly, to succeed in issuing such a challenge is an important achievement--one that might well content Lewis in his capacity of gadfly or Cynic or Enemy. Even if a critic like Kenner ends up thinking Lewis

was wrong, Lewis has still provoked Kenner to think.

Now all of these critics--Pound, Levin, Kenner--show us the kinds of influence Lewis has had on later criticism. We have still to see how Lewis's views compare with those of critics not directly influenced by him. Rather surprisingly, nearly all of Lewis's observations can be found, in one form or another, in the much more favorable analyses of other major critics.[53] Despite his Enemy stance, what Lewis finds of interest about Joyce is consistently of concern to others. Of course, his ideas rarely sound the same when they are divorced from his rhetorical hostility. On the whole, things that Lewis describes as Joyce's failings are seen by others as neutral or as positive achievements; and, quite frequently, differences in context or in purpose allow others to examine these matters in more careful and balanced detail.

A characteristic instance is an early (1945) piece by Frederick Hoffmann about Joyce's interest in psychoanalytic theory and his experiments with stream-of-consciousness writing. Like Lewis, Hoffmann deals with this kind of writing as a technique with various possibilities and limitations; unlike Lewis, Hoffmann details these possibilities, both in general and in Joyce's writing, and relates them to psychological theory. His basic premises about Joyce and about Ulysses closely resemble Lewis's: he quotes Eugene Jolas as saying that "'Joyce had a passion for the irrational manifestations of life'";[54] and he explains that

although "Ulysses is not a document of the Unconscious," still "the salient esthetic fact is its emphasis upon the psyche rather than upon externality."[55] Two of the corollaries to this emphasis which Hoffmann examines are--as in Lewis's critique--the fragmentation of personality and the disintegration of traditional categories of time and space. Stream-of-consciousness writing, according to Hoffmann, is "based on the assumption that personality is not static," that, in David Daiches' words, "'personality is in a constant state of unstable equilibrium, that a mood is never anything static but a fluid pattern, "mixing memory with desire."'"[56] In distinguishing among the "levels" of stream-of-consciousness, Hoffmann observes that "each has its own system of references to space and time"--as one moves deeper into the unconscious, one finds the "rational space-time continuum" being gradually obscured and replaced by private systems of different kinds.[57] In Ulysses, he says,

> The demands of such intensity of narration . . . are so great that space and time are subjected to the pressure of the psychic world. Space values are often completely suspended, and simultaneity takes the place of conjunction. Time subserves interest, expands and contracts in accordance with the demands of the moment--until it is completely suspended in the hallucination of the nighttown scene.[58]

Lewis, of course, says exactly the same things.

Now Hoffmann finds all these matters interesting and important, and so he gives them a kind of sympathetic--though not uncritical--attention Lewis refuses. His

article may well be more useful to Joyce's readers as a consequence; it is certainly more useful as a source of information about the analogies between Joyce's experiments and psychoanalytic theory. And yet Lewis's very refusal to focus on the merits of these elements in Joyce's work can itself raise an important question that does not arise with a critic like Hoffmann: unlike most modern writers, Lewis does not take for granted the value of exploring the unconscious. Hoffmann contributes to what is by now the received wisdom about psychoanalysis and stream-of-consciousness in modern literature. But Lewis--again--challenges us to question and possibly to reevaluate that wisdom.

A second critic whose resemblances to Lewis are especially illuminating is Edmund Wilson. In his discussion of Ulysses in Axel's Castle (1931), Wilson covers much of the same ground Lewis does, and, like Lewis, finds things to criticize in Joyce's work. The major differences between the two readings of Ulysses are that Wilson regards the Homeric parallel as relatively important, and that he finds Joyce's characters amiable, attractive, and worthy of respect. Moreover, he argues that a major strength of Ulysses is its "psychological truth," and that Joyce's success in this matter makes his novel "a feat which has hardly been equalled in the literature of our time." "With Ulysses," Wilson affirms, "Joyce has brought into literature a new and unknown beauty"[59]--a direct contradiction of Lewis's more extreme assertions that the products of the

time-cult are the opposite of new beauty. But beyond these disagreements, Wilson's and Lewis's understandings of Ulysses are similar enough to endorse the Enemy's claim to universality--though, of course, their terminology and their attitudes differ. Both, for instance, argue that the realistic, external setting in the novel tends towards dissolution under the pressure of the psychological; Wilson, like Lewis, compares this aspect of Ulysses to Proust's relativism.[60] Wilson, though, approves of such relativism as a part of the novel's psychological truth, while Lewis deplores it as yet another sign of Joyce's capitulation to the fashionable time-cult. More importantly, the two men agree that Ulysses embodies the "new phase of the human consciousness," in Wilson's words, or the "time-mind," in Lewis's. Wilson compliments Joyce in terms that closely parallel Lewis's condemnation:

> Joyce is indeed really the great poet of a new phase of the human consciousness. Like Proust's or Whitehead's or Einstein's world, Joyce's world is always changing as it is perceived by different observers and by them at different times. It is an organism made up of "events," which may be taken as infinitely inclusive or infinitely small and each of which involves all the others; and each of these events is unique. Such a world cannot be presented in terms of such artificial abstractions as have been conventional in the past: solid institutions, groups, individuals, which play the parts of distinct durable entities--or even of solid psychological factors: dualisms of good and evil, mind and matter, flesh and spirit, instinct and reason; clear conflicts between passion and duty, between conscience and interest. Not that these conceptions are left out of Joyce's world: they are all there in the minds of the characters; and the realities they represent are there, too. But everything is reduced to terms of "events" like those of modern physics and philosophy--events which make up a "continuum," but which may be taken as infinitely small.[61]

But again, Wilson's conclusion about all of this is quite unlike Lewis's: in his view, these "events" add up to "a picture, amazingly lifelike and living, of the everyday world we know."

These two critics also come very close to agreeing about the flaws of Ulysses. "Ulysses suffers from an excess of design rather than from a lack of it," Wilson argues: "Joyce has as little respect as Proust for the capacities of the reader's attention; and one feels, in Joyce's case as in Proust's, that the longueurs which break our backs, the mechanical combinations of elements which fail to coalesce, are partly the result of the effort of a super-normally energetic mind to compensate by piling things up for an inability to make them move." In too much of the book, he believes, Joyce has "half-buried his story under the virtuosity of his technical devices."[62] Though Wilson sees as an excess of design what Lewis sees as an excess of "unorganized brute material," both find the texture of detail in Ulysses uncomfortably dense. In Wilson's words, "There is tremendous vitality in Joyce, but very little movement"; in Lewis's, the novel is made sluggish by "the amount of stuff . . . that the more active principle of drama has to wade through." So far, Wilson's judgments are much like Lewis's--even if his critical voice does not sound like the Enemy's.

The significant difference between the two--or the one that becomes significant in subsequent Joyce criticism--

is in the metaphor with which Wilson associates this flaw in Joyce's novel. The positive aspect of Joyce's lack of movement or drama, Wilson thinks, is that Ulysses (at least on re-reading) seems "something solid like a city which actually existed in space and which could be entered from any direction." Joyce's "force, instead of following a line, expands itself in every dimension (including that of time) about a single point."[63] Following Wilson's lead, as William Chace points out, other critics like Harry Levin and S. L. Goldberg have seen Ulysses as static and, consequently, essentially spatial--in what regularly looks like a direct contradiction of Lewis's identification of the novel as a time-book. But this contradiction, I believe, is more apparent than real.

Critics' reasons for seeing Ulysses as spatial fall into two general categories. Some critics focus on the reader's experience of the novel. Joseph Frank has argued this view most clearly in his discussions of spatial form in modern literature. Along with other major modernist artists, he believes, Joyce attempted to create a work that would reach its full meaning all at once in the reader's mind; Ulysses, in other words, shares the same aesthetic as Pound's Imagist poems.[64] Lewis, I think, might well agree with most of what Frank says about the intentions of modern writers; his own statements about the ideal half-way house of literature imply a view of how readers should experience literary works that is much like the view Frank attributes to Pound and Joyce. But when Lewis calls Ulysses a time-book,

he is simply not talking about the same thing. Lewis, it should be clear by now, is not arguing that a reader's experience of Ulysses is temporal where it should be spatial. (The closest he comes to addressing this issue, in fact, is his complaint that Ulysses moves too slowly--that Joyce has too little sense of dramatic movement.) Instead, he is arguing that Joyce's work shares the metaphysic of the cultural complex he calls the time-cult.

Other critics focus on the attitude towards time within the world of the novel. This view is expressed, for instance, by Anthony Burgess: "The 'Wandering Rocks' episode of Ulysses is a reminder that the whole book has a spatial scheme in which time has been divested of its bullying hurry-along authority . . . Time is the great enemy, and books like Ulysses and Finnegans Wake triumphantly trounce it. Time has to be put in its place."[65] Others, like Harry Levin, make the same point by saying that the world of the novel is "timeless." Lewis himself, we have seen, counters this argument by pointing out that Joyce's kind of timelessness simply means an obsession with time--that the timelessness of Ulysses and other modern works is thoroughly bound up with relativist and psychological theories of time. Burgess and Levin implicitly endorse Lewis's view; both describe Joyce's timelessness or spatiality as the result of his concern with time. Frank Kermode, similarly, comments that Frank "cannot rid himself of the notion that whatever is not temporal is spatial"[66]--a

statement Lewis would happily endorse. Yet Lewis's place in this issue is complicated by two things. The context of Kermode's remark points to one difficulty: Kermode's proposal that Joyce's work be called "intemporal" rather than spatial would surely seem to Lewis just another sign of the modern hatred of the spatial (as Frank, indeed, argues in his reply to Kermode).[67] And second, we could certainly say that Lewis's own Time and Western Man manifests an obsession with time equal to Joyce's. Burgess' phrase makes this problem clear: for Lewis, certainly, as for Joyce, "Time is the great enemy." I will return in the next chapter to consider the significance of this kind of internal contradiction in Lewis, which has, I think, much more to do with Lewis than with Joyce.

The disagreement about Joyce, as even Frank and Kermode now seem to agree, is primarily one about terminology and the judgments carried by terminology. Lewis, like these two later critics, has his own reasons for using space and time as descriptive and evaluative terms. But to a surprising degree, critics after Lewis agree with him about the important characteristics of Joyce's novel--that it is concerned with time and timelessness and spatiality, and that its ways of dealing with these things have much in common with the conceptual changes occurring in modern science and philosophy. Some, like Frank and Burgess, focus on Joyce's reaction to these changes. Joyce, they suggest, uses the new concepts to construct an escape from time.

Others, like Kermode and Lewis, focus on Joyce's participation in these changes, pointing out that to escape from time, Joyce has chosen to use the new concepts. I think it is possible that the long critical debate on this one issue has helped to distort readers' understanding of Lewis's total arguments, both about the time-cult and about Ulysses. Because critics like Frank and Kermode--and there are many others--have given their attention to time and space in modern literature, Lewis's analysis has come to seem like a contribution to the same debate. But this is a misleading perception; only a very small part of his view of Joyce has to do with Joyce's use of time and space proper. That his concerns are much wider, and that he uses these terms as shorthand, anyone who reads the whole of Time and Western Man can see. But the chapter on Joyce read alone leaves Lewis's larger context unclear, and so in a sense invites misunderstanding. Even Geoffrey Wagner, who certainly does not read this chapter out of context, seems to have fallen in this trap. Knowing how many things Lewis usually means by "time," Wagner yet understands Lewis's attack on Joyce too literally, and so, as we saw at the beginning of this chapter, is perplexed at his apparent perversity.

The importance of reading Lewis's criticism in context has led to more general problems as well. Most obviously, it has kept him out of critical anthologies. His analysis of Joyce does appear in edited form in the Critical Heritage collection, but these volumes are exceptional. Since Time

and Western Man is not readily available, Lewis's contributions to the critical tradition have been obscured for this reason alone. William Chace's comment in his introduction to the Twentieth Century Views volume on Joyce is one of the more favorable references to Lewis's criticism: "The most important of the early iconoclasts was Wyndham Lewis, whose boisterous and overwritten attack on what he thought was the formlessness of Joyce's work is not now much read." Chace goes on to summarize Lewis's argument very briefly and to indicate its importance for other critics; but he does not include Lewis in his collection. And he cannot be blamed for this. Not only does Lewis's "Analysis" lose much of its coherence when it is removed from Time and Western Man, but because it is also packed with digressions having little to do with Joyce though much to do with the time-cult, it would also need to be substantially edited to make clear sense. In this respect, Lewis's obscurity results both from his own patterns of argument and from the importance of anthologies and consequently of self-sufficient essays in modern criticism.[68]

Much the same thing can be said about the effect of Lewis's polemical slant--and the extent to which his critical judgments are Enemy attacks. As C. H. Sisson remarks, "The relative obscurity of Lewis's critical writing . . . is due partly to the fact that the immense success of Eliot's apologetics has turned people's minds away from other methods of criticism."[69] The dominant tone of twentieth-century

critics has been far different from the Enemy's flamboyant exaggerations and gaudy insults. Consequently, we are more likely to echo Chace's "over-written"--or even Leavis's "brutal and boring"--than to enjoy what Kenner calls Lewis's "epithetic sparkle." The inadequacy or inappropriateness of our expectations is not Lewis's fault. But at the same time, his analysis of Joyce makes it clear that his critical stance also has significant inherent limitations. Because he throws his weight so enthusiastically on one side of the balance, he frequently seems to see only one side of the issues he is arguing. He may--indeed, certainly does--think that many aspects of Joyce's work are admirable, but because he refrains from talking about them and focusses so exclusively on his objections, he may seem to a reader to be throwing out the baby with the bath water. Or--to use a different metaphor--he insists that his medicine be taken straight, while a critic like Edmund Wilson mixes his reservations with praise, his medicine with honey. Lewis alienates many readers with his rhetoric, it is clear, and consequently fails to convince them of the same things another critic may argue more moderately and with more success.

Yet at the same time, Lewis can also succeed in his own way. For some readers, Lewis can offer a challenge--sometimes one of "incontrovertible facts" that do not square with other impressions, sometimes simply one of uncommon and powerful arguments that demand either agreement or refutation. Lewis's role as an Enemy is all the more

important because it is so unusual in modern criticism. As a critic, I think, Lewis is finally strongest as an opposite--not as the opposite of those he analyses, but as an opposite against whom we, in our turn, can define our own judgments.

Chapter 4: Notes

[1]Wagner, p. 176.

[2]Wagner, pp. 176, 177.

[3]Hugh Kenner, Joyce's Voices (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), pp. 69, 23; Dublin's Joyce (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1956), p. 362.

[4]Richard Ellman, James Joyce (N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 1959), p. 608. The first remark was made to Harriet Weaver, the second to Frank Budgen. According to Ellman, Joyce's feelings were hurt by Lewis's attack.

[5]Kenner, discussing one of Joyce's imitations of Lewis in Finnegans Wake, remarks: "Jones' prose is like Lewis' without the epithetic sparkle: heavily parenthetical, digressive, quarrelsome, constantly promising the future ordering of vast tracts of material, syntactically loose and locally rapid. Striking configurations of image abound, with little indication of a main line of argument." Dublin's Joyce, p. 368.

[6]Of course, Lewis wouldn't approve of this kind of return to the past or collapsing of past and present--as he doesn't approve of Pound's use of the past.

[7]Eugene Jolas, Elliot Paul, and Robert Sage, editors, "First Aid to the Enemy," transition, No. 9 (December 1927), p. 170.

[8]In fact, Lewis thinks that Joyce deliberately "exploits" the contradiction. "Joyce, like a shrewd sensible man, will no doubt encourage" those who would admire him "for his alleged identity with what he detached himself from and even repudiated, when it took the militant, Sinn Fein form" (95). He does, though, think that it can be a "critical trap" because it can obscure for many readers the book's real significance--by encouraging the substitution of "orthodox political reactions to the idea of fanatical 'nationalism' . . . for direct reactions to what is in his work a considerable achievement of art" (95). Now this fear of confusion may well be exaggerated; but it is true that a good many early reviews and analyses of Joyce's work do concern themselves with this issue. And Lewis himself seems to consider it a side issue, since he moves quickly on to his more general argument about modern nationalism.

[9]Such a criticism may seem particularly ironic in light of Lewis's own political sentiments. But Lewis is consistent in opposing nationalistic politics throughout his life. Bridson discusses this matter fully.

[10]Eliot, "Introduction" to Ezra Pound: Selected Poems, pp. xii, xiii.

[11]Elsewhere, even in Time and Western Man, Lewis treats Joyce as one of the few modern artists who are truly innovative--another clue that the accusation of creative failure must be read in its polemical context.

[12]Lewis calls his version of timelessness a pure or classical present. Erich Auerbach's description in Mimesis of the Homeric perspective seems to be close to Lewis's ideal.

[13]See below, pp. 166-168, 198-201, for more about time and space in Joyce.

[14]Lewis argues that portraying Bloom through stream-of-consciousness results in a highly conventional figure:

> So by the devious route of a fashionable naturalistic device--that usually described as 'presenting the character from the inside'--and the influence exercised on him by Miss Stein's technique of picturesque dementia--Mr. Joyce reaches the half-demented crank figure of traditional english humour. (122)

[15]William M. Chace, "Introduction," Joyce: A Collection of Critical Essays, Twentieth Century Views (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1974), p. 2. This volume will be cited below as Chace.

[16]Satire and Fiction (London: The Arthur Press, 1931; rpt. London: Folcroft Library Editions, 1972), p. 47. Lewis also offers a list of occasions in which he thinks stream-of-consciousness can be appropriate: "In dealing with (1) the extremely aged (2) young children, (3)half-wits, and (4) animals, the internal method can be extremely effective. In my opinion it should be entirely confined to those classes of characters. For certain comic purposes it likewise has its uses (cf. The Childermass) especially when used in conjunction with a full-blooded Stein-stutter."

[17]I think this understanding of the different arts may explain why Lewis identifies himself as a plastic artist, not a writer, in Time and Western Man, in spite of the fact

that he was doing relatively little work in painting or drawing during this period of his life (so little, in fact, that he declined to write an art review of Eliot's Criterion because he felt so out of touch). As a visual artist, he stands for one extreme, where as a writer, he would stand half-way.

[18]In describing Lewis's contradictions, Geoffrey Wagner writes, "With one hand he throws off the idea that Joyce, being 'not so much an inventive intelligence as an executant,' cares little for matter: 'He is become so much a writing-specialist that it matters very little to him what he writes.' Two pages later Lewis affirms that Joyce possesses 'an appetite that certainly will never be matched again for the actual matter revealed in his composition'" (Wagner, p. 174). But Wagner is mistaken: Lewis clearly means different things by 'matter' in these two kinds of comments. Joyce doesn't care about ideas; he does care about things.

[19]Rude Assignment, p. 56.

[20]This kind of deadness is a constant accusation in Time and Western Man. About Pound, for instance, Lewis writes: "But his field is purely that of the dead. As the nature mortist, or painter essentially of still-life, deals for preference with life-that-is-still, that has not much life, so Ezra for preference consorts with the dead, whose life is preserved for us in books and pictures. He has never loved anything living as he has loved the dead" (87). And about Stein, Lewis says, "My general objection, then, to the work of Miss Stein is that it is dead. . . . The weight, then, that is characteristic of the work of Miss Stein--like the sluggish weight of the figures, or the sultry oppressiveness of the chocolate-cream tropics in which they move, of Conrad; or of the unintelligent, catastrophic heaviness of Zola--is, to me, of a dead order of things. But this kind of doll-like deadness, the torpid fatal heaviness, is so prevalent, in one form or another, as to dominate in a peculiar way the productions of the present time" (79-80). But at the same time, of course, Lewis also wants art to be dead in a particular way. This is one of the words he uses in opposite ways at various times, depending on whether he is praising or criticizing. Its meaning depends on another Lewisian paradox: "What is dead," he explains, "should be well dead."

[21]Lewis qualifies these statements: "I say, 'naturalism interpreted in this way' has that result, because there are so many varieties of naturalism. Some scientific naturalism does deal with things from the outside, indeed, and so achieves a very different effect--one of hardness, not of

softness" (120). Lewis never says what he thinks of the chapters near the end of Ulysses that seem to parody this external scientific naturalism.

[22]See Chapter 3, p. 129 and note 64.

[23]Lewis contrasts Dedalus to the heroes of nineteenth-century Russian fiction, See below, p. 186 and note 36.

[24]Wagner comments that Lewis ought to have recognized how close to his own aesthetic Stephen's ideas come: "the idea of Stephen standing for the Hellenic, the intellectual, the artistic, as against Bloom, the Hebraist, the sensualist, the scientific, should by rights have made Lewis far friendlier toward Stephen then he was, unless indeed he was incensed by their very merging." (p. 178) Certainly Lewis did recognize the similarity; his objection is to the character Joyce develops to express those ideas.

[25]Wagner, with justification, remarks that in the parable of the Ondt and the Gracehoper in Finnegans Wake, "for our purposes the lesson of the fable is once more that Joyce, in the Gracehoper, can see Lewis' point of view, but Lewis, in the Ondt, refuses to see his. Joyce seems to have understood his 'Windy Nous' rather well." (p. 181)

[26]This conclusion not only encloses very neatly much of Lewis's view of Joyce. It also repeats the trick we saw in his Pound criticism of turning a superficially neutral comment into both a criticism of another artist and also an implicit defense of Lewis's own work. Certainly one of the most common--and accurate--complaints about Lewis's books is their lack of technical polish; but in the light of this opposition between hand and mind, that very roughness would signal their intellectual vigor, their "daring or unusual speculation," their "unwonted intensity of outlook."

[27]Men Without Art, pp. 7-8.

[28]Seon Givens, ed., James Joyce: Two Decades of Criticism (N.Y.: The Vanguard Press, Inc., 1948, 1963), p. xii. This volume will be cited below as Givens.

[29]Robert Deming, ed., James Joyce: The Critical Heritage (N.Y.: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1970), Vol. 1, p. 24. This volume will be cited below as Deming.

[30]Deming, quoted on p. 2.

[31]Lewis met Joyce through Pound and in the company of Eliot. He tells the story of this meeting in Blasting and Bombardiering.

[32]Selected Prose of T. S. Eliot, ed. Frank Kermode (N.Y.: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1975), p. 175. Incidently, in this essay, Eliot also compares Portrait with Tarr as examples of the end of the novel form proper.

[33]Ibid., p. 178.

[34]Pound/Joyce: The Letters of Ezra Pound to James Joyce, with Pound's Essays on Joyce, ed. Forrest Read (N.Y.: New Directions, 1967), p. 194. Pound does not italicize his titles in this passage.

[35]Ibid., p. 89. Also in Deming, p. 83.

[36]Isaiah Berlin describes Tolstoy's world in terms that, I think, would endorse--or at least explain--Lewis's contrast between Joyce and the Russians:

> The celebrated life-likeness of every object and every person in his world derives from this astonishing capacity of presenting every ingredient of it in its fullest individual essence, in all its many dimensions, as it were; never as a mere datum, however vivid, within some stream of consciousness, with blurred edges, an outline, a shadow, an impressionistic representation: nor yet calling for, and dependent on, some process of reasoning in the mind of the reader; but always as a solid object, seen simultaneously from near and far, in natural, unaltering daylight from all possible angles of vision, set in an absolutely specific context in time and space--an event fully present to the senses or the imagination in all its facets, with every nuance sharply and firmly articulated."

See The Hedgehog and the Fox: An Essay on Tolstoy's View of History (N.Y.: Simon and Schuster, 1953), p. 40.

[37]Pound/Joyce, pp. 145, 194.

[38]Ibid., p. 240.

[39]Ibid., p. 250.

[40]Ibid., p. 251.

[41]Ibid., p. 255.

[42]Ibid., pp. 267-68.

[43]Givens, p. xv.

[44]Harry Levin, James Joyce: A Critical Introduction (Norfolk, Conn.: New Directions, 1941), p. 92.

[45]Quoted in Chace, p. 5; Deming, p. 694.

[46]p. vii. Kenner also acknowledges the influence of Pound's early criticism of Joyce. Kenner's book on Lewis followed his dissertation on Joyce but preceded his book on Joyce.

[47]Dublin's Joyce, p. 19.

[48]Ibid., p. 11. Kenner adds, "Yet Bloom, the bag of clichés, is not a cliché." (p. 22)

[49]Ibid., p. 112. Kenner quotes Budgen quoting Joyce as saying, "Stephen no longer interests me to the same extent [as Bloom]. He has a shape that can't be changed."

[50]Deming, p. 12.

[51]Dublin's Joyce, pp. 166-68.

[52]Ibid., p. 364. Kenner summarizes Lewis's criticism as follows: "Lewis' critique had the disturbing merit of being neither impressionistic nor irrelevant. He took a few quick sights at the object, extracted from their living tissue with a surgical eye four or five salient facts which no one else had been able to see--a mole, a cheekbone, an ear--set them down on his canvas in abridged relationship, and turning away from the model (since he knew more than he could see) filled in the composition brilliantly with the sallow planes of a plausible parchment mask: a Portrait of the Artist as Susceptible Drudge." (pp. 362-63).

[53]I have limited myself to a few kinds of agreement. Others can be found. For instance, in the Givens collection, Vivian Mercier says that Joyce's Dublin is the Dublin of the past; in Chace, Trilling discusses Joyce's concern about being a gentleman; in his book The Stream of Consciousness and Beyond in Ulysses, Erwin R. Steinberg works from Lewis's observations.

[54]Frederick Hoffmann, "Infroyce," in Givens, p. 398. Jolas, incidently, was a target for a later Enemy attack.

[55]Ibid., p. 413.

[56]Ibid., p. 405.

[57]Ibid., pp. 403-05.

[58]Ibid., pp. 415-16.

[59]Edmund Wilson, in Chace, p. 64.

[60]Ibid., p. 58.

[61]Ibid., p. 65.

[62]Ibid., p. 62.

[63]Ibid., p. 59.

[64]See Joseph Frank, The Widening Gyre: Crisis and Mastery in Modern Literature (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1963), and Critical Inquiry, Vol. 4, No. 2 (Winter 1977), pp. 231-252.

[65]Anthony Burgess, ReJoyce (N.Y.: W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1965), p. 178.

[66]Frank Kermode, Critical Inquiry, Vol. 4, No. 3 (Spring 1978), p. 587. See also The Sense of an Ending: Studies in the Theory of Fiction (N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 178.

[67]See Frank, Critical Inquiry, p. 233.

[68]The Joyce criticism is an especially clear instance of this aspect of Lewis's problem because of the interrelatedness of all parts of Time and Western Man. The criticism in Men Without Art is on the whole much more self-sufficient.

[69]Sisson, "Introduction" to Enemy Salvoes, p. 12.

Chapter 5: Culture and Contradictions

In the Preface to Time and Western Man, when he is explaining his temerity in dealing with matters outside the arts, Lewis writes:

> It has been suggested . . . that I should be better advised to ignore such things [as mathematical physics], and only attend to what happens in my own field. Now that I should be delighted to do if these different worlds of physics, philosophy, politics and art were (as, according to my view, they should be) rigidly separated. (9-10)

But in the modern time-cult, of course, these worlds are not distinct; in fact, as he points out over and over, they are so full of parallels and influences as to seem not only unified but uniform. And so, Lewis finds, his analysis of the state of the arts must expand into an analysis of a culture. In such an analysis, questions inevitably arise about the nature of the cultural unity under study: how it has come to be, whether the similarities are parallels or influences, whether the changes in one field anticipate or cause the changes in others, and so on. While Lewis is always mainly concerned to demonstrate the existence of the uniformity he finds, he does occasionally touch on such general or theoretical questions, sometimes just in passing, and sometimes in criticizing the ideas of someone else who more deliberately offers a theory of culture. Indirectly (even more indirectly than with his space

philosophy), Lewis develops his own explanations of cultural unity and cultural change--explanations which for him function primarily to place the time-cult within the context of other cultures.

In this chapter I wish to consider some of the things Lewis says about the ties among the "different worlds of physics, philosophy, politics and art." I have reserved these matters for my final chapter partly because Lewis's ideas about culture evolve through his individual analyses of philosophers and artists. More importantly, though, these ideas raise some questions about Lewis's work that seem to me crucial. His notions of the Zeitgeist point us to a whole network of internal contradictions in Lewis's thinking--contradictions that remain largely beneath the surface of Time and Western Man itself, but that nevertheless provide a constant undercurrent of self-criticism.

In section i, I will look at Lewis's critique of one writer who suggests an explanation of modern culture--Alexander Moszkowski, Einstein's friend and biographer. This short critique reveals all the characteristics of Lewis's longer analyses of the more important accounts offered by Whitehead and Spengler. Then in section ii, I will briefly summarize Lewis's own ideas about the structure of cultures and examine some of the problems implicit in these ideas. In section iii, I will discuss similar and more pervasive problems apparent elsewhere in Time and Western Man and in the rest of Lewis's work.

i

In his critique of the time-cult, Lewis considers the theories of culture given by three writers: Spengler, Whitehead, and Moszkowski. Spengler, with whom Lewis deals at length, and whom he calls the "philosopher of the Zeitgeist," sees politics as the basis of culture; Whitehead, as the title of his book implies, sees science as the source not only of the modern world but of all cultures; Moszkowski, in his praise of Einstein's genius, indirectly suggests that philosophy (which is itself sometimes political) lies beneath even scientific theories. Each of these men, then, serves Lewis as the spokesman for the primacy of one of the three main aspects of what he calls culture's "theoretic plane"--politics, physics, and philosophy. By examining their views, Lewis suggests and questions several different explanations of the ties among these fields. In each case, he finds himself in partial agreement at the same time that he recognizes the inadequacy of any simple solution to a highly complex problem. And in each case, consequently, he hints at what his own account would be but backs off from any direct statements.

The discussion of Moszkowski comes first in the book, but is quite possibly the last Lewis wrote. It appears in the Preface to counter criticism of Lewis's interdisciplinary approach--as a tentative justification for speaking of a scientist like Einstein as if his ideas were on the same

level as those of a philosopher or an artist. So in a sense it encloses the critique of the time-cult. Although it is short (much shorter than the chapters on Spengler's world-as-history), and although Lewis does not regard Moszkowski (unlike Whitehead) as of much real importance, still this discussion introduces all of the major issues Lewis will confront every time he considers the nature of cultures. It also raises many of the questions Lewis will find impossible to answer in his own tentative solutions.

Moszkowski is not himself especially interested in the sources of the Zeitgeist, although he tacitly assumes its existence in his book about Einstein. But he does make a few comments Lewis finds useful in dealing with the relationship between scientific discoveries and contemporary political and philosophical theories. The question is this: Suppose we should find that a scientific theory significantly parallels a philosophical or political system current at the time of the discoveries on which that theory is built. Does such a parallel suggest that the scientist's work has been somehow directed by non-scientific concerns? If so, to what extent does the role of these external influences undermine the validity of the discoveries or of the theories? The answer Moszkowski suggests in the case of Einstein seems to Lewis simultaneously compelling and repellant: he finds he must agree with Moszkowski's description of the situation, but is torn between agreeing and disagreeing with his interpretation.

According to Moszkowski, Lewis tells us, scientific discovery and philosophy "'are intimately interwoven with one another, and are only different aspects of one and the same process.'"[1] Bergson's philosophy and the discoveries of Planck and Einstein, Moszkowski thinks, are so similar not by coincidence, but because they result from "'a demand of the time, exacting that the claims of a new principle of thought be recognized.'"[2] Moreover, science parallels politics:

> "[Einstein's] principle of relativity is tantamount to a regulative world principle that has left a mighty mark on the thought of our times. We have lived to see the death of absolutism: the relativity of the constituents of political power, and their mutability according to view-point and current tendencies, become manifest to us . . . the world was far enough advanced in its views for a final achievement of thought which would demolish the absolute also from the mathematico-physical aspect."[3]

To Moszkowski, these similarities apparently mean that a certain kind of scientific idea can best succeed when society is ready for it, or as he says, when "the time is ripe." He clearly does not think that science is made any less "true" by its affinities with less exact disciplines. On the contrary, he seems to regard the analogues to relativity theory as evidence of Einstein's genius. For Moszkowski, science, philosophy, and politics simply progress together.

Now certainly Lewis agrees that Einsteinian physics parallels contemporary political and philosophical constructs: Book II of Time and Western Man is based on their

similarities. And he agrees that Bergson's philosophy somehow prefigured relativity theory. But if on the whole he accepts Moszkowski's descriptions of the state of affairs, he is much less sanguine about its implications. The general thrust of the analogies Moszkowski sees, Lewis thinks, is to undermine any claims of science to truth. "If Moszkowski's reading of Relativity could be shown by some competent person to be true," Lewis says,

> then immediately we should know that the Relativity physics we had been taught to admire was not an achievement of the first order, and that we had been taken in, however much amused in the process. For such an ad hoc universe as would result from a desire to 'banish absolutism,' or equally on the other hand to 'establish absolutism' and impose terrestrial politics upon the stars, would indeed be scientifically a farce, however intelligent a one. (17-18)

"But," he concludes, "so many eminent men of science have accepted Einstein's theory, that Moszkowski, as far as Einstein is concerned, must be wrong." Where Moszkowski is happy to see the similarities between Einstein and Bergson as an illustration of the united front of progress in the modern world, Lewis views them suspiciously as signs of an insidious influence on a field that ought properly to be impervious to such forces. Moszkowski offers his views as praise of Einstein; Lewis would consider them a kind of insult. And so he concludes his discussion of Moszkowski by rejecting his ideas.

Yet he is far from rejecting these ideas out of hand; in fact, he finds himself in so much agreement with

Moszkowski (or with his interpretation of Moszkowski) that this final dismissal comes to seem as much a gesture of faith as an intellectual decision. For one thing, of course, he welcomes Moszkowski's view of the ties between science and philosophy as an endorsement of his own attack on the tyranny of the time-cult over modern thought. Moreover, in light of his thorough dislike of the time-complex, we should not be surprised to find him taking advantage of this way of questioning Einstein's authority as an independent, objective thinker--and consequently the authority of philosophers and others who have built upon Einstein's theories. In this respect, I think, we can read Lewis's section on Moszkowski as a rhetorical manoeuvre which allows him to suggest a point of view he does not want to endorse openly himself. With Moszkowski as his foil, Lewis can raise but not answer a question about the credentials of relativity physics, and thus undermine one of the time-cult's premises--without actually attacking either Einstein or his mathematics. Similarly, he can suggest that the time-cult may be based on a science which in turn may be politically and philosophically motivated--without directly arguing this view, and without implying that all cultures and all sciences must be motivated in the same way. With one hand, he disassociates himself from Moszkowski on the grounds that "many men of science have accepted Einstein's theory"; with the other hand, he allows Moszkowski to argue a point that is much in line

with the substance of his own book.

But Lewis also has more disinterested reasons for leaning towards Moszkowski's relativistic point of view. He not only agrees with Moszkowski's description of the modern situation, but also allows that he is right that earlier scientific paradigms have resembled the politics and philosophies contemporary with them. Both men use the example of Newton, with whose theories Lewis is of course in more sympathy than he is with Einstein's. Generally speaking, Lewis argues, "It is mere superstition to suppose 'a mathematician' to be a sort of divine machine. In any reasonable, and not romantic, account of the matter, we must suppose the mathematical physicist not entirely unaffected by neighbouring metaphysical thought" (13-14). So, he concludes, "With the Moszkowskis and Spenglers we reach the point at which the system of the mathematical physicist becomes suspect, in exactly the same way as for long now we have been accustomed to regard with suspicion the system of the philosopher" (18). Lewis goes further here than Moszkowski, it is clear, by pointing out that Moszkowski's own logic would require that scientific discovery and theory be regarded not as wholly objective or empirical but as partly determined by the scientist's preconceptions and biases. By extending Moszkowski's argument, Lewis makes it seem more extreme than it really is. While this is not an unusual kind of Enemy move, in this case, I think, Lewis exaggerates not so much to

attack an opponent as to try to clarify a possible explanation of cultural resemblances.

Lewis's interpretation of Moszkowski allows him to raise some difficult theoretical questions. Can we cast doubt on a scientific theory by attacking its philosophical premises? Or can we only discredit a theory through empirical testing? On the whole, Lewis would answer that indeed a scientist's work can be vitiated by his personal presuppositions. He certainly thinks motives matter in such applied sciences as behavioral psychology, as his long attacks on Watson and others demonstrate. And he is inclined to think they also matter in the more pure or abstract sciences as well. After all, physicists are no less subject to preconceptions than anyone else; and, Lewis points out, in so metaphysical a field as relativity theory or quantum mechanics, the data are likely to be open to multiple interpretations. In this belief, Lewis aligns himself with the "relativist" side of the debate over another question: In what way (if at all) can scientific theories be refuted or proven? This question and its implications have occupied philosophers of science throughout this century; that Lewis was aware of the initial terms of the debate is clear in his scattered references to Pierre Duhem, who with Quine first argued that there can be no crucial experiments--experiments which establish the validity of a theory beyond all doubt.[4] Significantly, Lewis's appeal to Duhem in the discussion about Einstein

is encased in a paraphrase of Moszkowski: "Some of the 'intuitions' don't come off, owing to the unfortunate prevalence of the negative instance, but some do, like Relativity, though all subject, Moszkowski energetically does not think, to Duhem's law of reversal, whereby any physical system can be knocked over, and can rely on no experiment, however 'crucial'" (16-17). Lewis would remind us that like Ptolemy, Copernicus, or Newton, Einstein can himself be improved on or overthrown by someone else's theory.

Now this line of thought, of course, is consistent with Lewis's emphasis on personality. The belief that we cannot divorce an idea from its source is a sort of converse of Lewis's often-stated opinion that people must be held responsible for their ideas. And his argument that an impersonal and wholly objective criticism is impossible would extend logically enough into a similar argument about a wholly objective scientific theory. But at the same time, these views are decidedly at odds with Lewis's equally fundamental beliefs in the essential disinterestedness of the individual mind and in its access to some stable truth. With his interpretation of Moszkowski and his appeal to Duhem, Lewis places himself in the awkward position of implying that complete independence and authority are impossible even for a thinker in a field as "pure" as mathematical physics--a position which would destroy Lewis's faith in the purity of the not-self and the

potential universality of mind.

And so in a number of direct and indirect ways, he backs off from a position with which he seems substantially to agree. He encloses his reference to Duhem in a kind of double negative, for instance; rather than simply explaining Duhem's ideas, he disagrees (through his sarcasm) with Moszkowski, who would disagree with Duhem. And, I think, he realizes that he is on shaky ground in attacking physics with philosophy--particularly since he is no scientist. Thus he concludes by bowing to the greater authority of other scientists--although even in this concession he avoids saying that Moszkowski's general view of the relationship between science and other disciplines is incorrect. He says simply that "Moszkowski, as far as Einstein is concerned, must be wrong." Lewis's own conclusion about the time-cult--or as close as he comes to such a statement--is that it results from Einstein's work. As he explains, "A great many effects, a whole string of highly characteristic disturbances, come out of einsteinian physics, then. . . . The cause, if a cause we must have, is einsteinian physics" (12). He chooses to regard Einstein's work as the basis of his culture, I believe, because if anyone can approach pure disinterested thought, it is more likely to be a mathematician than a politician or a philosopher: of all the people Lewis sees as involved in the time-cult, Einstein would seem to be the least affected by preconceptions or inappropriate motives. Before Lewis

brings Moszkowski into the discussion, then, he states his faith that "the physical investigations as to the structure of our universe which culminated in Einstein, were, for all any one need suppose to the contrary, as innocent as that . . . of any arrière-pensée. Nor, further, were they necessarily at all metaphysical in origin" (13). Yet even in this attempt to "make his position clear," he is strangely ambivalent. If he brackets his relativistic argument with disclaimers, his disclaimers will carry less conviction than does the argument they seek to deny.

Lewis does not explicitly recognize the fundamental self-contradiction in these remarks about Einstein. But he does realize that he has argued two opposing views, and he does what he can to reconcile them. At the end of this introductory foray into the problem of the Zeitgeist, he offers a tentative resolution of the conflict:

> It is only by fully accepting the evident fact that many men of science, or philosophers, are politicians, and their supposed 'pure' theoretic mind in reality merely a very practical one . . . that we can show that all theory and all theoretic men are not involved in those proofs and arguments. . . . . there are no doubt good and bad times: in the bad ones these influences may be more powerful. The immense influence exerted on our lives by these 'discoveries' cannot leave us indifferent to the character of the instruments that are responsible for them--namely, the minds of the discoverers. But it is only the less fine instruments that can be influenced in that way and lend colour to spenglerism, that is our argument. This essay is among other things the assertion of a belief in the finest type of mind, which lifts the creative impulse into an absolute region free of spenglerian 'history' or politics. (17-18)

This is a solution we see over and over in Lewis's speculations about cultural unity. There are good times and bad times; there are first-rate and second-rate minds; and all cultures need not be like the time-cult. If he is not certain about the quality of Einstein's mind, he has no doubt that the modern world is dominated by the second-rate. As I have said, this position is quite clearly a statement of faith--"the assertion of a belief in the finest type of mind"--as much as it is a recognition of the imperfection of reality. As such, it oddly parallels his position in another matter--his philosophical affirmation of surface truth over the complications under the surface. Consistently, Lewis chooses beliefs he himself recognizes as idealistic. In this instance, he goes further in trying to devise an explanation that will accommodate both what he sees as the reality and what he desires as the ideal. The model of culture that results will be my subject in the next section.

ii

To control the contradiction between the reality of intellectual influences and the ideal of intellectual independence, Lewis develops a model of culture that is simple but flexible enough to allow the two extremes of a Golden Age and the degraded time-cult. There are three levels in any culture, he implies.[5] At the bottom is the

"social plane"; in the middle are the "middlemen," those who have "second-rate" minds; on the top are the "first-rate" minds in whom the "pure speculative impulse" lives. What changes in different cultures is the balance of power among the levels.

The social plane consists of common men and women who are generally uniformed about the ideas they receive and use. It is a rather vaguely defined group. At times, it seems to combine the mindless masses, for whom Lewis has only disdain, with the purveyors of what we might call popular culture--such artists as Anita Loos who in Lewis's eyes do nothing but exploit the work of more serious and innovative creators. But most often, Lewis conceives of this level much more generously, as including his audience of "general educated persons" and almost all artists. Thus in Time and Western Man, he divides his subject into the "literary, social and artistic plane" and the "philosophic and theoretic." When in his Preface he expresses his wish that different fields should remain rigidly separated, he explains how he sees the role of the artist in the social plane:

> To receive blindly, or at the best confusedly, from regions outside his own, all kinds of notions and formulae, is what the 'creative artist' generally does. Without knowing it, he receives into the central tissue of his work political or scientific notions which he proceeds to embody, if he is a novelist, in his characters, if he is a painter, or a poet, in his technique or emotional material, without in the least knowing what he is doing or why he is doing it. But my conception of the rôle of the creative artist is not merely to be a medium for

> ideas supplied him wholesale from elsewhere, which he incarnates automatically in a technique which (alone) it is his business to perfect. It is equally his business to know enough of the sources of his ideas, and ideology, to take steps to keep these ideas out, except such as he may require for his work. When the idea-monger comes to his door he should be able to tell what kind of notion he is buying, and know something of the process and rationale of its manufacture and distribution. (10)

As this passage indicates, the difference between the good times and the bad on the social level is one of self-awareness. In the good times, artists (and ordinary people) go to the trouble to inform themselves about ideas and ideologies; in the bad times, they simply accept them without question. This is why Lewis has embarked upon his critique of his culture; and this is why he criticizes Pound for being a fashion-follower and Joyce for being more concerned about his craft than his metaphysics.

The second level consists of the "idea-mongers," those with essentially practical minds who deliberately use ideas for their own purposes--and, in the process, usually distort them. At its most innocent, this group includes those in industry who exploit scientific inventions. But it also includes people motivated by politics and religion, "the influences that are most able to distort and cancel the pure speculative impulse" (248). These middlemen are strong in the bad times and weak in the good. Comparing science and magic, Lewis writes,

> 'Science gives as much power as was formerly given by magic,' we started by saying. But it does not give it to the true magician, to the maker of the spells and the engineer of the machinery. Nor,

> still less, does it give it to the Everyman who handles the machinery and magical properties. There is a third character in the plot: and he alone is invested in all the marvellous power of Science. (311)

In these times, Lewis thinks, the power lies in the wrong hands--neither those of the thinkers nor those of the workers, but those of the manipulators. Again, he explains,

> The finest creations of art or of science, to-day as ever, only more so, reach the general public in a very indirect fashion. If that contact could be more direct it would be much more sanely 'stimulating' . . . It is upon the essentially political middleman, the imitative self-styled 'revolutionary,' that I direct my main attack. It is he who pollutes on the way the prime issue of our thinking, and converts it into a 'cultural' or 'scientific' article, which is a masked engine of some form of political fraud, which betrays the thought of its originator. (150)

In a culture with fewer middlemen, those on the social level will receive ideas more directly, before they have become diluted or polluted; the responsibility of the artist and the general public to know about ideas will be easier to meet, and there will be fewer hidden political motives to entrap them.

In the time-cult, of course, Lewis includes most philosophers in the group of middlemen. As he explains, "by 'politics' to-day we must understand something very much wider than what was formerly meant" (163). "Politics and philosophy in Europe are traditionally a little too close together" (261-62), he writes; thus his enemy Bergson is "the first servant of the great industrial caste-mind"--or at best, "simply a very common but astute intelligence--naturally, and without other inducement, on the side of

such a society, instinctively endorsing its ideals" (214). Not all modern philosophers seem to Lewis as political as Bergson, but he does think that they are far too dependent on science; and as we saw in his remarks about magic, he understands modern science as a source of corrupt power. Furthermore, he believes, the uniformity of the time-cult stems from these ties:

> When I speak of an 'orthodoxy of thought,' therefore, or a philosophic orthodoxy, I refer to this strict uniformity that ensues from the scrupulous following of the datum provided by the instruments of research, by philosophy and by all speculative thought. And the identity of philosophy or of speculative thought with politics is largely owing to the fact that both depend more and more absolutely upon machines of greater and greater precision, on machines so wonderfully complex and powerful that they usurp to a great extent the functions of independent life. But philosophy and speculative thought is, further, an emotional interpretation, and not entirely a soulless imitation, of technical discovery. (165) 6

In the years following Time and Western Man, Lewis increasingly refers to the members of this middle group as the "Zeitgeist" (or he personifies the "Zeitgeist" as if it were one of these politicizing middlemen) because they seem to him responsible for the uniformity of his age. In The Doom of Youth, for example, he remarks that "Zeitgeist [is] the term we employ to indicate whoever it may be possessing the political power and wealth necessary to compel us to believe and do what he wants, and so make of our 'Time' whatever he desires it to be."[7] And as his critics have noted, these same people are the controlling "they" of

Lewis's occasional paranoic sense of a conspiracy--the "third character in the plot."

The level of pure thought, finally, is made up of the true revolutionaries, those who originate all really new ideas of all kinds. "Revolution is first a technical process" (138), Lewis believes. This group is most likely to include scientists--chemists, mathematicians, and physicists, but not psychologists or behaviorists.[8] Consequently, Lewis is inclined to place scientists at the basis of any culture: "The ideal basis for an epoch would certainly be the instruments of research, invented for the advancement of the common good; and certainly the impulse behind all 'revolution'--the will, that is, to pass from one epoch to another and better (of course)--is the work of the man of science" (160).[9] Ideally, philosophers also belong on this level: "In order to be humane and universally utilizable, philosophy must be abstracted from these special modes and private visions. There must be an abstract man, as it were, if there is to be a philosopher" (332). But of course, since philosophy is so much less technical and so much more personal than pure science, philosophers are less likely to attain this degree of abstraction--especially, Lewis argues, in the modern world. Again, the uniformity of philosophic thought in the time-cult demonstrates its failure. Pure thought is individual, and so ideal philosophers would necessarily resemble each

other much less than do those who base their work on relativity physics.

This third level also includes true artists. "Art is not dependent on fortuitous technical discoveries," Lewis explains. "It is a constant stronghold, rather, of the purest human consciousness" (39). "In art, as in everything else," he continues, "all revolutionary impulse comes in the first place from the exceptional individual" (41); "From this point of view the true man-of-science and the artist are much more in the same boat than is generally understood" (199). Lewis places artists in this group--or the best artists--partly because of the large role technical problems play in the arts (as in the sciences), and partly because he sees artistic creation as "a trance or dream-state" (219). Art, too, is like magic: "The production of a work of art is . . . strictly the work of a visionary" (198). So, ideally, an artist can remain free from impure motives and impulses and maintain what Lewis calls a direct access to reality. In the good times, of course, this group of scientists, philosophers, and artists--the level of the first-rate--is strong; in the bad times, it is dominated by the impure thought of the middlemen. When it is strong, culture is diverse since it evolves directly from individuals; when it is weak, culture is uniform since the work of individuals is diverted into narrow practical channels.

This three-level model presents a couple of immediate problems. It contradicts itself on the role of art and artists in a culture--not an insignificant difficulty given Lewis's insistence on his own artistic identity. Lewis seems to see the artist as both the beginning and the end of a culture--as both the source and the result of the spirit of an age. In the Appendix to "The Revolutionary Simpleton," Lewis explains the difference between politics and art in a way that makes this problem clear:

> If you want to know what is actually occurring inside, underneath, at the centre, at any given moment, art is a truer guide than 'politics,' more often than not. Its movements represent, in an acuter form, a deeper emotional truth, though not discursively. The Brothers Karamazov, for example, is a more cogent document for the history of its period than any record of actual events. . . . So if art has a directer access to reality, is truer and less artificial and more like what it naturally grows out of, than are politics, it seems a pity that it should take its cue from them. (137)

As the truest historians of their period, artists respond to what is around them; they are susceptible to influences. But then they cannot at the same time be as free from influences and as independent of their Zeitgeist as Lewis wishes them to be.

A further and related problem complicates the ideal role of the scientist. Lewis wishes the scientist to represent pure speculative thought; yet as we saw in his vacillations about Einstein, he has serious doubts that such purity is possible. As an idealist, Lewis believes that we create our world through perception, thought, and

memory--not that there is a real world we can hope to experience without these aspects of personality. He asks about the scientific discoverer: "Is he not directed to some extent in that by what he wants to discover? Has he not often a blind eye for what he does not want; and does he not always interpret what has been discovered, by himself or other men, as he wants to understand it, or as somebody else requires him to?" (161). His own answer, we have already seen, is that "It is mere superstition to suppose 'a mathematician' to be a sort of divine machine. In any reasonable, and not romantic, account of the matter, we must suppose the mathematical physicist not entirely unaffected by neighbouring metaphysical thought." Even in his own terms, this statement tells us, the basis for Lewis's ideal culture is superstitious and romantic.[10] And in Time and Western Man, "the 'romantic' is the opposite of the real" (22, emphasis Lewis's).

The difficulty in Lewis's cultural model extends even further than these internal contradictions, which can, I think, be seen as symptoms of the fundamentally self-contradictory nature of the model itself. Not only is his ideal culture highly unlikely; more importantly, if it did exist it would hardly be a culture at all in our usual sense of the word. It would be strongly individualistic, and consequently very diverse; there would be almost no influences among its creative members, since each would work independently of everyone else. It would be a culture

with little or no unity. Moreover, it would be ahistorical. Its members would be no less influenced by their predecessors than by their contemporaries. It might change as its individual members changed, but its perspective, ideally, would be that of the static pure present, not a historical perspective. So Lewis's principles of personality and stasis lead him to create a model based on the timelessness of mind and the independence of individual genius; they do not allow him to embrace either cultural unity or cultural change as anything other than symptoms of disintegration and decadence. Again, Lewis himself seems to recognize the inflexibility of his scheme. He remarks, at one point, that "When you get well into the centre of the consciousness of any time (and we have just illustrated this by the greek consciousness), there is certainly a unity there, for, if for no other reason, it is after all a time" (256); and he cautions us, "So we must in this investigation remember . . . that, although a 'new thing in philosophy,' nevertheless some and indeed a great deal of merging and interpenetration is to be found everywhere in the thought of any time whatever" (257). These statements appear right in the middle of his critique of the unity of the time-philosophy, and we must recognize them as important qualifications of his judgments of both the modern and the ideal cultures.

Despite all the serious flaws in Lewis's model as an explanatory tool, though, it nevertheless serves him in

a couple of ways.[11] It works fairly well as a critical yardstick, particularly in contrast with Spengler's "world-as-history" vision of cultural unity and change. "All the types and genera that Spengler describes have occurred in every period--the 'faustian' age is full of 'classical' men . . . and Greece was packed with ill-disciplined 'faustians'" (282); and Spengler's vision of the Renaissance as a reactionary phenomenon suggests "that the soul of the West was not so purely 'gothic' and musical as all that: that it certainly was not all gothic and musical: that it differed from district to district and man to man, as anybody would expect, who had not a Destiny-theory of history, or who had not history on the brain or an 'historical complex'" (300). If Lewis ends up agreeing in large part with Spengler's description of the modern world, his ideal of an ahistorical and individualistic culture allows him to pinpoint the fatalism and determinism in The Decline of the West--and, despite his own kind of oversimplification, to recognize the artificiality and inadequacy of Spengler's cultural categories. Similarly, I think, Lewis's own uncertainty about the purity of scientific discovery helps him to become all the more aware of the issues raised by Moszkowski's casual discussion of the parallels among politics, philosophy, and Einstein's physics.

Lewis's view of culture is also remarkably consistent with his conception of his own role as a critic, and so it

can be seen as a successful extension and justification of that role. To attack the spirit of one's age as he does, one must argue that any Zeitgeist is secondary to individual achievements. Thus his continual sense of difference from the rest of his culture leads Lewis to oppose the concept of a Zeitgeist and to insist not only that it is possible to think without being pressured by cultural fashion, but also that independent thought is essential to culture. The person who acts alone will be the one responsible for real change; "all revolutionary impulse comes in the first place from the exceptional individual" (41). Particularly in an age of uniformity like ours, this person will look like a heretic. "Truth," Lewis proclaims, ". . . is always 'heretical': and it is always the truth of a minority, or of an 'isolated mind' . . . the truth-bearing individual is always ahead of the rest of the world, although no one could claim that they willed him, and strained towards him, in order to reach his higher level. Rather he drags them up by the scruff of the neck" (467). With this, Lewis-the-Enemy becomes Lewis-the-"truth-bearing individual": his very opposition to the dominant thought of his time proves him not wrong but right.

Yet, of course, even this neat self-justification can also be seen as evidence of Lewis's own uncertainty about his role and his awareness of the inconsistencies in his position. His vision of an ideal culture may endorse his authority as a solitary outsider; or his sense of being

opposed by his own real culture may force him to imagine an ideal where he would feel at home. The coexistence of these two possibilities parallels the ambiguity we found in the Enemy stance itself: to keep others from imprisoning him as a man "of dangerous vision," Lewis builds his own walls. As we will see in the next section, contradictions of this kind are everywhere in Lewis.

iii.

Lewis bases his vision of culture on an ideal of pure thought--an ideal that he clearly does not believe possible. He describes himself as defending the view of common sense; yet he realizes that this common sense is rapidly becoming a part of the dead past, and that the views he attacks are the common sense of those who believe them. He thinks that each of us creates our own world through our perceptual faculties; yet he denies the relativistic vision of his contemporaries. He sees the world he chooses to believe in as an illusory surface disguising the abyss which is revealed by the metaphysic he denies; quite clearly, he explains that he chooses to live in an illusion and to act as if he does not recognize the reality that illusion contradicts. And he admits that "Western Man" is "the completest myth," but then, asking "whether you should not erect that myth into a reality," he devotes himself to its defense.

He insists that he abhors violence, that his primary desire is for peace. Yet he chooses the persona of the Enemy, who fights battles, snipes at his foes, arms himself against and for attack. And all of his novels explore the workings and consequences of violence--often violence for its own sake, gratuitous violence. He defines himself as the defender of human individuality and of the complexities of personality against the mechanizing and levelling forces of modern society; but the characters in his novels are machines, and even his Enemy "Horseman" has a bestial mask instead of a human face.

As a critic, Lewis regularly attacks in others his own characteristics. He criticizes Pound for being an impresario and for loving dramatics, while he is himself self-consciously flamboyant and is always engaged in advertisements for himself. He attacks Joyce for being obsessed with the problem of time and for being romantic about his classical framework; but he writes the very long Time and Western Man to explore the same problem, and his own proposed solution is a rather romantic notion of a pure classical present. He opposes Bergson for distinguishing between clock time and lived time, and yet he bases his own position on Bergson's distinction. He accuses Bergson of polarizing the intellect and instinct, space and time, and then he constructs his philosophy around the same poles. He objects to Spengler's view that the modern world is unified, essentially political, and fundamentally decadent;

but his own diagnosis of the time-cult follows Spengler in almost every detail. He even argues against Stein that the least mannered, most translucent prose is the language of the liveliest, most acute intellect--in the midst of his own highly individual and decorative style.

Now certainly these are not isolated phenomena, but parts of a pattern, signs of a central structure in Lewis's work. All of these contradictions, I think, show us exactly what Lewis means when he describes how he makes decisions in the midst of the "contradictory factors of empirical life." I have given the whole passage in Chapter 2; but I think it important enough to repeat here in part:

> I have allowed these contradictory things to struggle together, and the group that has proved the most powerful I have fixed upon as my most essential ME. This decision has not, naturally, suppressed or banished the contrary faction, almost equal in strength, indeed, and even sometimes in the ascendant. And I am by no means above spending some of my time with this domestic Adversary. . . . And luckily in my case the two sides, or micro-cosmic 'opposites,' are so well matched, that the dominant one is never idle or without criticism.

This is the pattern of opposition and dominance that we found in the "Horseman": the Enemy's enormous head and torso dominate but do not destroy the grid of crossed diagonals that structure the horse on which he sits. The drawing represents a kind of equilibrium of tensions, not an absence of them. What this passage tells us is that Lewis is himself aware that the interests of his "most essential ME" are not his only interests--that his dominant

position is never free from the criticism offered by his own internal opposite.

If we look in some detail at one of the contradictions a close reading discovers, we can see more exactly how this undercurrent of self-criticism functions. Central to Time and Western Man and to much of his other work, as I have insisted many times, is the emphasis on individual personality and mind. But even this emphasis is countered by traces of criticism. Casually, here and there, sometimes in commenting about someone else's beliefs, sometimes in explaining his own, Lewis gives us the arguments we would need to counter his own central principle.

What we call the "mind," he says, is a "stolen, aristocratical monopoly of personality" (318); and it "is an artificial, pumped-up affair--just as the 'male' is a highly unstable and artificial mode of life" (324). Lewis does not only reveal his own social and sexual politics in such comments. He also calls the basis for his position artificial and unstable--terms of condemnation throughout his criticism. Elsewhere, he describes this basis as being artificial in the same way an optical illusion is unreal: "When you analyse the notion of the 'self,' it is true, it falls to pieces. But the means you use to effect this disintegration are of the same nature as those you would employ to demonstrate the unreality of an optical illusion" (420). Just after he makes this analogy (an odd one for someone who insists that he stands for the physical world), Lewis

admits and then sets aside one of the main philosophical weaknesses of his position: "These regions, I am aware, are guarded over by the hideous problem of self-evidence and subjective truth: but if we stopped to settle accounts with every traditional dragon that we encountered, we should prolong this essay indefinitely." One suspects that Lewis recognizes this as one dragon he could not handle.

He is equally clear, though less direct, about the dark underside of the personality as such, which he calls at one point "a vein of picturesqueness, an instinct for the value of the person in the picture" (92). He cautions: "The less you are able to realize other people, the more your personality will obsess you, and the more dependent upon its reality you will be. The more you will insist on it with a certain frenzy. . . . Your 'individualism' will be that mad one of the 'one and only' self, a sort of instinctive solipsism in practice" (24-25). While the point of this passage is to distinguish this solipsistic individuality from "political 'individualism'" which "expresses belief in the desirability of many individuals instead of one," certainly it also reminds us that if anyone insists on the reality of his personality, it is Lewis. And the corrolary to that insistence in his case does seem to be some difficulty in realizing other people as something other than the enemy. In another context, he remarks that "The insistence on sensation-at-all-costs, then, like the incessant emphasis upon 'virility,' or 'sex,' or

'stimulation,' suggests an unaccountable consciousness rather of an absence than of an abundance of life" (382). Again, Lewis's insistence on the self and on the "masculine" principle of mind may suggest exactly the same interpretation.

Lewis offers similarly double-edged diagnoses of the time-cult elsewhere--diagnoses which together suggest how he may see his own simultaneous participation in and opposition to his culture. On the whole, he decides, the time-cult is a logical product of an ailing society, a dying world. Speaking of the "cult of childhood," he writes that he would

> trace this impulse to its source in the terrible and generally hidden disturbances that have broken the back of our will in the Western countries, and have already forced us into the greatest catastrophes. Whether these great disturbances are for the ultimate good of mankind or not, no one can claim that they are pleasant, or that they do not paralyse and weaken the system they attack. Many complaints break out in consequence in the midst of our thinking; and the instinctive recoil of the stricken system makes it assume strange shapes. (69)

Later he asserts that "all 'creative' or 'emergent' life doctrines we must regard as semi-magical prescriptions for the power we have lost, like a sort of stimulant for the impotent" (315). And he agrees with Spengler that "there is a fearful state of chaos throughout the world"--but observes it "with far more anguish than does Spengler" (307). Such descriptions reveal Lewis's belief that he and his contemporaries share a sense that their world has been paralyzed by "terrible and generally hidden disturbances." He sees the time-cult as a reaction to cultural chaos; and

he sees himself as the defender of culture against the chaos he fears has already triumphed. From this perspective, Lewis's own role would seem to be a sort of finger-in-the-dike operation, similar to what he condemns in Proust and Joyce as "the ardent recapitulation of a dead thing--though so recently dead, and not on its own merits a very significant one" (101).

That Lewis himself realized his participation in this "instinctive recoil of the stricken system"--later in his career at least--is clear in his remarks in Rude Assignment, where he wrote,

> I have confessed how I have not been free of vacillation. I saw a culture I was born into being dissolved or picked to shreds by an ant-like process. I have had romantic rebellions. It seems to me that I should have forgotten the Past entirely. . . . The place occupied by Western culture is being rapidly filled by something else. Is 'Time and Western Man', therefore, only of historic value--as a technique for the defense of Western culture, had that not been past help? 12

With its cult of the individual and its claim that an artist has a more direct access to reality than do others, Time and Western Man is indeed a romantic rebellion--or, as the defense of a culture of the past, a romantic reaction. On a larger scale, we could say, Lewis's work is to the books of the time-cult as his pure present is to Joyce's timelessness. Over and over again, Lewis offers a kind of mirror image of the visions he criticizes. All are responses to a "fearful state of chaos"; all are "prescriptions for the power we have lost." He proposes an

especially suggestive explanation of the role of personality in such a world:

> But the transition society of to-day, no doubt inevitably, is essentially an actor's world. The successful personality of the moment is generally an actor-mind (Mussolini): with all the instincts bred behind the footlights, the apotheosis of the life-of-the-moment, of exteriorality, display and make-up; and of an extreme instability, fundamental breaks and intermittences, the natural result of the violent changes of, and the return of great chaotic violences into, our time. In the arts themselves this tendency issues in the form of prodigious virtuosity. The work of one person will consist of the schematic juxtaposition of a series of disconnected stylizations . . . (365)

Though of course he does not intend this as a self-portrait, it comes very close to being one. Even the symptom of prodigious virtuosity has its counterpart in Lewis's remarkable productivity in painting and drawing, in fiction, and in social, political, philosophical, literary, and art criticism.

Perhaps the clearest sign of Lewis's hidden kinship with the time-cult is in the metaphor he offers to describe the "sort of contradiction [that] is paralleled throughout our life." As we saw in Chapter 4, he sees everywhere in the modern world the "strategy" of "removing something necessary to life and putting an ideologic simulacrum where it was able to deceive the poor animal" (96). Pointing out that "Everywhere the peoples become more and more alike," Lewis observes that in reaction to the reality, aggressive nationalism arises. Surely we could make the same analysis of the Enemy's aggressive individualism and

personality. Again, he seems to realize this implication; with the example of the uproar over shorter skirts, he explains that "To 'develop the personality' is an alluring invitation, but it invariably covers some process that is guaranteed to strip a person bare of all 'personality' in a fortnight" (97). (He even continues, "This does not seem to me necessarily a bad thing.") But of course Lewis cannot make a clear distinction between this fraudulent personality and his own; he can only call one real and the other a sham.

What is even more interesting is the wording of his summary of this pervasive modern structure:

> It is headlong into this sheer delusion . . . that we are running, every time that we essay to found our view of things upon some harmonious and precise picture. We fall immediately into that trap of an abstraction coloured to look concrete, and placed where once there was something but where now there is nothing. (99)

What is Lewis's stable classical world but such a harmonious and precise picture? "The traditional belief of common-sense," he says, "is really a picture." And what is his choice of the serene world of traditional common-sense over the nihilistic world of modern philosophy but a deliberate effort to found his view of things upon some harmonious and precise picture? He knows that his ideas of the self, of the personality, of individuality, of the mind are artificial constructs; he knows that his dream of an ideal world depends on an illusory purity of thought. Yet he insists that these things should shape our lives as if they were not abstractions, but concrete actualities.

The time-cult, he laments, mistakes simulacra for real things. In Lewis's mirror image, we read that "the illusion must be our real."

In one way or another, many of Lewis's critics have responded to this network of contradictions and self-criticism. Perhaps the most common observation is that despite his classicism, Lewis's bases are largely romantic. Bridson writes that Lewis chooses authoritarian politics because they represent classical order, then comments, "Indeed, the more one considers it, the more 'romantic' the conception of authoritarianism begins to seem in itself."[13] Materer, among others, has noted that "The ultimate source of [Lewis's] roles was the romantic conception of the artist."[14] Frye, much less sympathetically, remarks, "In Lewis, as in others of the neoclassical group, antiromanticism seems to be a late romanticism fouling its own nest."[15] More significantly, I think, a number of critics have recognized that Lewis is in his own way as much of a modernist as those he attacks with the comment that "'Modern' or 'modernity' are words that have come literally to stink" (150). In Kenner's words, Lewis "had not so much opposed as dramatized the history of his time."[16] Pritchard, similarly, writes, "He was as a man and a writer very much of his time; and perhaps that is why he devoted so much energy to dispraising it."[17] And Jameson has subtitled his book Wyndham Lewis, the Modernist as Fascist.

The responses to this aspect of Lewis's work can be grouped into four categories. Many readers have found the inconsistencies in his books simply exasperating, and view them as evidence of Lewis's inability to write or think coherently. One of the most responsible of this group is Frye, who cites several of Lewis's failures to do as he preaches and concludes,

> What is one to make of a writer who hates everything, with the unvarying querulousness of a neurotic, that his own writing represents? The easy way out is to decide that Lewis must be some kind of a phony. . . . The better solution is to take all Lewis's theories as projections, realizing that he is an almost solipsistic writer, whose hatreds are a part of him because he understands nothing of what goes on outside his own mind. 18

Readers in the second group, which includes most of those who have written books about Lewis, note his contradictions when they arise, but on the whole set aside the questions they raise. In the context of Lewis's general reputation, there is good reason for this response. Lewis is too often blamed for inconsistencies that are not really inconsistencies, and many critics seem to feel that before focussing on his weaknesses they should try to clarify his positive achievement. Wagner's Foreword suggests this point of view: after citing Pritchett's comment that the first and last sentences of Lewis's paragraphs are unlikely to have any logical connection, Wagner writes, "The present study attempts to discover that logical connection." Noting his own ambivalence, he explains why he has undertaken such a study. "Because of the heat of controversy

that has always surrounded Wyndham Lewis, for better or worse, we needed, I felt, more light on him. . . . But exactly what he said, and when, these are questions that need honest and impartial answering, and for that reason much of what follows here is expository as well as critical."[19] My own reason for leaving these questions for last is similar.

A third and much smaller group of critics responds to Lewis's doubleness by regarding it--roughly speaking--as a strength. Tempering his irritation with Lewis, Frye suggests this perspective: "Such books as The Apes of God or The Human Age can hardly be written without a personal descent into the hell they portray, and Lewis has made that descent, and taken the consequences of making it, with a perverse but unflinching courage."[20] Writing about The Childermass, I. A. Richards sees the book's contradictions as signs of Lewis's deliberate indeterminacy: "Platonic, Socratic care is taken not to pin anything down, not to let any speech sum up, answer any question or merely put it fairly."[21] Such care seems to him a virtue; rather than reading this novel as a tract against modernism, as many critics do, Richards admires it for raising and rightly refusing to answer some very complicated questions. On a larger scale, John Holloway begins from the premise that "Lewis's fiction draws on more of his mind than his polemics; and it tells a different story,"[22] and then reads his novels as an extended critique of violence and other problems of the

modern world. I find these visions of Lewis especially interesting. They begin from something many critics find almost impossible to accommodate, and are thereby enabled to incorporate more of the facts without denying Lewis's special kind of power. Their weakness, I think, is that they do not explicitly recognize that they are tacitly assuming a solution to a crucial problem; thus Jameson chooses the adjective "disingenuous" to describe Holloway's reading.[23]

The fourth group--smaller still--consists of Jameson himself, the only major critic of Lewis's work who has foregrounded its contradictions. Jameson calls his study "an immanent analysis of Lewis' works, disengaging the self-critique always structurally implicit in them," and he suggests "that Lewis lived a grinding contradiction between his aggressive critical, polemic and satiric impulses and his unwillingness to identify himself with any determinate class position or ideological commitment." His contradictory relationship to modernism, Jameson argues, "is to be understood as just such a protest against the reified experience of an alienated social life, in which, against its own will, it remains formally and ideologically locked." And the absolute contrast between Lewis's novels and his non-fiction, Jameson thinks, should be seen as the result of this ideological imprisonment:

> It will become abundantly clear that one part of Lewis' mind--the political and journalistic--is powerfully locked into the ideological closure of

> ethics and has become a virtual machine for issuing judgements and anathemata. The narratives, on the other hand, may be seen as the experimental or laboratory situation in which the very problem of making such judgements is itself foregrounded, and in which the impossibility of the ethical becomes itself the implicit center of the text, whose operations systematically and critically undermine this older "habit," this henceforth historically outmoded system of positioning the individual subject. 24

Jameson's argument is very powerful--probably the most powerful one yet offered, in large part because he alone both recognizes and takes seriously the problematic conjunction of Lewis's powerfully energetic intelligence and the maddeningly frequent perversity of his thinking.

Yet Jameson is limited, I think, by his own ideology, which leads him to see the "structural center" of Lewis's work "in his implacable lifelong opposition to Marxism itself" and to locate his "artistic integrity . . . in the very intransigence with which he makes himself the impersonal registering apparatus for forces which he means to record, beyond any whitewashing and liberal revisionism, in all their primal ugliness." From this perspective Jameson can really only see Lewis's criticism as reaction, his ethics as "the sign of an intent to mystify."[25] And he can allow Lewis very little self-awareness. What to Holloway seems Lewis's deliberate fictional exploration of the effects of violence and mechanism, an exploration consistent with the beliefs he states in his non-fiction, thus seems to Jameson an almost wholly involuntary and unconscious outpouring of Lewis's own powerful "global hostility," the hostility his

non-fiction tries but fails to contain.

My own choice of a critical work like Time and Western Man as a focal point for reading Lewis's work would tend to align me more with Holloway's than with Jameson's interpretation of Lewis's doubleness. Like Jameson, I see the many underlying contradictions in his thinking as the most interesting aspect of Lewis's work. Lewis's own participation in the world he deplored seems to me the key both to his expression of his culture and to his insight into its fundamental structural weaknesses. Certainly, I think, Lewis's strengths as a critic of his society depend directly on his simultaneous position within and without that society: Lewis would not have recognized so clearly the assumptions of the time-cult if he did not in part share them, nor would he have seen what he did about the implications of these assumptions if he had not explored them for himself and recognized the danger they posed to traditional values. To be torn, as Lewis was, between the old ways of seeing and the new would seem not only a reasonable but an intelligent response. His power lies in the wholeheartedness of his attempts to explore the complexities of his changing world; his integrity lies in his willingness to let us see how this exploration has involved him in an interior struggle between "micro-cosmic opposites." Beneath the surface of the arguments in Time and Western Man, we hear the voice of Lewis's "domestic Adversary," his own Enemy opposite; in the arguments themselves, we hear the voice of the "self" Lewis has chosen to regard as his "most essential ME."

Chapter 5: Notes

[1]Alexander Moszkowski, Einstein, The Searcher, trans. Henry L. Brose (N.Y.: Dutton, 1921), p. 89. TWM, p. 15.

[2]Moszkowski, p. 87, TWM, p. 16.

[3]Moszkowski, p. 89, TWM, p. 15, Lewis's ellipses.

[4]The debate between Kuhn and Popper, of course, is one of the major exhibits in this controversy.

[5]This model is nowhere explicit. I have pieced it together from scattered remarks in Time and Western Man and others of Lewis's books, especially The Art of Being Ruled.

[6]The context of this passage is Lewis's agreement with Whitehead: "Professor Whitehead says that an 'age' is simply its instruments of research. And that is what the philosophy of our age is, too, as it exists to-day. And just as politics follows technique, a technique that is uniform throughout the world, and as it gets a considerable uniformity therefrom--for at any one time throughout the world there is only one type of perfected industrial technique--so philosophy tends to become more and more uniform, since the instruments of research on which it attends are in the same position to it as is the technique of industry to politics." (164-65)

[7]The Doom of Youth, p. 135.

[8]See TWM, pp. 261, 10-11.

[9]Lewis continues: "But unfortunately the best-organized and most powerful minorities will a different thing to the common good; and the more irresponsible power they obtain, the more their chosen interpreters (who are not, however, the great and inventive minds, but rather the opportunist and interpretative) expound the discoveries of science in a sense vaguely favourable to that power."

[10]Elsewhere, Lewis offers a couple of further explanations of the relationship of pure to impure thought. First, he suggests, "I believe that it requires a really very foul or else very fanatical person to live with ideas, and consistently to betray them: and secondly, the ideas themselves are apt to be refractory, and to have some say in the matter. The material of theoretic thought, at least, is not 'personal,'

if its manipulator is" (262). And again, he writes that "What it is really essential to press upon the attention of the reader is this: that the least distraction on the part of a great intelligence from his task of supplying pure thought, is fatal; its result is the same as in the case of a plastic or other artist when he allows himself a similar distraction" (309-10).

[11]I have by no means mentioned all the flaws of this model. Not the least of the others is the impossibility of identifying any real people who are pure thinkers or middlemen as Lewis describes them. Bridson explores this difficulty in The Filibuster with reference to the political "they" responsible for the state of Britain implied by Lewis.

[12]Rude Assignment, p. 193. He answers his own question: "It is, I believe, far more than that, and its techniques possess a permanent usefulness. All the arguments seem to me just as valid now as the day they were written. The group of thinkers upon which I delivered an assault--'Time-philosophers' I named them--represent a type of thinking common to all ages."

[13]D. G. Bridson, The Filibuster (London: Cassell and Co., Ltd., 1972), p. 68.

[14]Materer, p. 12.

[15]Northrop Frye, "Neoclassical Agony," The Hudson Review, Vol. 10, No. 4 (Winter 1957-58), p. 596.

[16]Kenner, Wyndham Lewis, p. 142.

[17]Pritchard, p. 19.

[18]Frye, p. 598.

[19]Wagner, pp. ix, xi.

[20]Frye, p. 598.

[21]I. A. Richards, "A Talk on 'The Childermass'" in Agenda (Autumn-Winter 1969-70), p. 17.

[22]John Holloway, "Wyndham Lewis: The Massacre and the Innocents," The Hudson Review, Vol. 10, No. 4 (Winter 1957-58), p. 185.

[23]Jameson, p. 4.

[24]Jameson, pp. 184, 17, 14, 56-57.

[25]Jameson, pp. 18, 21, 56.

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