International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation
ISSN: 2617-0299 (Online); ISSN: 2708-0099 (Print)
DOI: 10.32996/ijllt
Journal Homepage: www.al-kindipublisher.com/index.php/ijllt

IJLLT
AL-KINDI CENTER FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

| RESEARCH ARTICLE

"The Politics of Paranoia": Wyndham Lewis's Critique in Left Wings Over Europe: Or, How to Make a War About Nothing (1936) Based on Richard Hofstadter's Ideologies

MOHSEN GHOLAMI
Faculty of Literature, Humanities and Social Sciences, Islamic Azad University (Science and Research Branch), Tehran, IR.
Corresponding Author: MOHSEN GHOLAMI, **E-mail**: holami.m1357@gmail.com

| ABSTRACT
The current paper explores Wyndham Lewis's critique of left-wing ideologies in his 1936 work Left Wings Over Europe: Or, How to Make a War About Nothing, through the analysis of Richard Hofstadter's concept of "the paranoid style in politics." Hofstadter's theoretical framework provides a practical structure for understanding Lewis's vehement opposition to socialism and communism. In Left Wings Over Europe, Lewis represents leftist ideologies as destabilizing forces responsible for inciting conflict and navigating Europe toward needless war, particularly in the context of rising tensions leading to World War II. Not only does this research analyze how Lewis's paranoid narrative aligns with Hofstadter's insights, highlighting how Lewis's portrayal of leftist movements reflects broader fears of subversion and ideological warfare in 1930s Europe. but also explores how Lewis's personal experiences and political anxieties shaped his critique, offering insight into the role of political paranoia in shaping intellectual and cultural discourse during times of upheaval. Ultimately, the paper contributes to a deeper understanding of how paranoia influences political thought, particularly in moments of crisis.

| KEYWORDS

Wyndham Lewis, The Politics of Paranoia, Left-Wing Ideologies, Left Wings Over Europe, Richard Hofstadter

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

ACCEPTED: 12 October 2024 **PUBLISHED:** 05 November 2024 **DOI:** 10.32996/ijllt.2024.7.11.12

1. Introduction

The most consequential, and yet embattled, painter and the moving spirit of Vorticism, Wyndham Lewis was notorious for his provocative and controversial remarks on political issues and art. Wyndham Lewis's politically-based novel *Left Wings Over Europe: Or, How to Make a War About Nothing* (1936) offers an objective assessment of left-wing ideologies during a period of significant political upheaval in Europe. Written in the shadow of growing tensions that would soon end in World War II, the political text portrays Lewis's deep suspicion of socialism and communism, ideologies he believed were pushing Europe toward unwanted conflict. Lewis's polemic represents leftist movements not as forces for social progress, but as harbingers of chaotic situation, subversion, and war. His fierce argument is rooted in a deep-seated paranoia, which functions as both a defensive mechanism and a lens through which he interprets political events. This paranoia manifests in Lewis's exaggerated depiction of left-wing ideologies as existential threats to European stability, a perspective that aligns with what historian Richard Hofstadter famously termed "the paranoid style in politics."

In the light of such considerations, Hofstadter's political concept, prefaced in his essay *The Paranoid Style in American Politics* (1964), elaborates a form of political school of thought featured by conspiracy theories, grossly exaggerated fears, and the strongly-held belief that one's opponents are actively engaged in a deliberate and sinister plot to demolish the existing social order. Although Hofstadter primarily focused on American politics, his framework is highly relevant to analyzing Lewis's portrayal of leftist ideologies in 1930s Europe. Lewis's depiction of socialism and communism as malevolent forces driving Europe toward war fits neatly into Hofstadter's model of the paranoid style. Lewis's anxieties about political subversion, his distrust of intellectual

and political elites, and his conviction that Europe was being manipulated into conflict all exemplify the key features of political paranoia.

This research paper, to put it into perspective, illuminates how Wyndham Lewis's evaluation of left-wing ideologies in *Left Wings Over Europe* can be digested through Hofstadter's paranoid style. By dissecting the ways in which Lewis builds up his political narrative, the paper seeks to unravel the broader implications of his work in the context of 1930s political thought. Furthermore, it will investigate how Lewis's personal experiences—particularly his disenchantment with, modernism/modernity, his deep-seated fear of war, and his complicated relationship with Fascism—molded his paranoid infrastructure of socialism and communism. In doing so, this study leads to a deeper analysis of the role of political paranoia in shaping intellectual and cultural discourse during times of crisis, as well as the enduring impact of such ideologies on political thought. In other terms, Lewis's position in *Left Wings Over Europe* is in parallel with his broader political trajectory during this period, in which he was sympathetic to fascism as a counterbalance to communism. His critique of left-wing political ideologies often included warnings about the potential threats of totalitarianism, but his position on fascism would later transform. The book showcases Lewis's sharp, satirical style, and his use of wit and irony to attack what he saw as the absurdities of political ideologies steering Europe to war.

2. Background of Study

The political domain of 1930s Europe was pinpointed by the advent of totalitarian regimes, growing conflicts between fascist and communist movements, and international fears of another world war. Against this backdrop, Wyndham Lewis published *Left Wings Over Europe: Or, How to Make a War About Nothing* (1936), a book that mirrored his growing disenchantment with left-wing ideologies and his concern over the political trajectory of Europe. Lewis, a British modernist writer and vorticist artist, had a convoluted relationship with politics, often shifting between different ideological positions. Initially sympathetic towards fascism, he considered it as a vital scale to communism, which he believed was destabilizing/immobilizing Europe. However, by the mid-1930s, his standpoints became more conflicted, and his criticism of both leftist and right-wing movements expanded.

> If you are a socialist, you regard the prospect of a new Great War, apparently, without misgiving — even with a certain stern anticipatory relish. But, whereas there is only one sort of communist, there arc many different sorts of socialist: so this last statement has to be qualified considerably, to allow for that fact. There arc many socialists who would welcome a new Great War as little as would the extremist of the 'right'. (Lewis, 1936, p. 50)

In this fashion, *Left Wings Over Europe* was a product of Lewis's fear that left-wing ideologies, particularly socialism and communism, were leading Europe toward a needless war. His critique was not merely political but also deeply influenced by his personal experiences, including the trauma of World War I, which left him vehemently opposed to further conflict. In this work, Lewis portrays leftist movements as irrational and manipulative forces that were sowing discord across the continent. His rhetoric is marked by a sense of paranoia, as he attributes vast, conspiratorial power to socialist and communist factions, which he believed were orchestrating Europe's descent into chaos. To better grasp the significance of Lewis's critique of left-wing ideologies in *Left Wings Over Europe*, Richard Hofstadter's socio-political concept of "the paranoid style in politics" lays the foundations for a useful analytical framework. Hofstadter, in his 1964 essay *The Paranoid Style in American Politics*, scrutinizes how political paranoia is characterized by exaggerated fears, conspiratorial thinking, and the deeply-held belief that political opposition groups are involved in a covert plot to deconstruct the existing order. While Hofstadter concentrated mainly on American political movements, his fresh insights are applicable to the ideological atmosphere of 1930s Europe, where fears of communism and socialism, as well as concerns about the advent of fascism, fueled widespread anxiety.

> But the fact that movements employing the paranoid style are not constant but come in successive episodic waves suggests that the paranoid disposition is mobilized into action chiefly by social conflicts that involve ultimate schemes of values and that bring fundamental fears and hatreds, rather than negotiable interests, into political action. Catastrophe or the fear of catastrophe is most likely to elicit the syndrome of paranoid rhetoric. (Hofstadter, 2012, p. 63)

3. Methodology

This research paper employs a qualitative, interdisciplinary approach to analyze Wyndham Lewis's critique of left-wing ideologies in *Left Wings Over Europe: Or, How to Make a War About Nothing* (1936) through the lens of Richard Hofstadter's concept of "the paranoid style in politics." The methodology is divided into three key stages: textual analysis, historical contextualization, and theoretical application.

First, a close textual analysis of *Left Wings Over Europe* will be conducted, focusing on Lewis's rhetorical strategies, language, and argumentation. The study will scrutinize how Lewis constructs his critique of socialism and communism, emphasizing the conspiratorial and exaggerated nature of his portrayal of left-wing ideologies. Specific passages where Lewis shows paranoia and fear of political subversion will be identified and analyzed to understand how he frames leftist movements as existential threats to European stability.

Second, the research will contextualize Lewis's work within the political and historical landscape of the 1930s. Archival materials, historical accounts, and secondary literature on the interwar period, the advent of totalitarianism, and Lewis's political narratives will be utilized to provide a broader understanding of the socio-political forces that shaped his critique. This step is vital for grounding Lewis's arguments in the specific anxieties and tensions of pre-World War II Europe, particularly the fear of communism and socialism that permeated the era.

Third, Richard Hofstadter's theoretical structure of the paranoid style in politics will be applied to Lewis's text. Hofstadter's detailed analysis of political paranoia, which highlights the role of deep-seated fears and conspiracy theories in molding political discourse, will be used to elaborate Lewis's portrayal of left-wing ideologies. By applying Hofstadter's socio-political theories, the present research will explore how Lewis's critique matches within the broader tradition of political paranoia, appraising how his fears of left-wing subversion and ideological conflict align with Hofstadter's insights on the paranoid style.

This interdisciplinary methodology, combining literary analysis, historical context, and theoretical application, will allow for a comprehensive examination of the ways in which paranoia influenced Wyndham Lewis's critique of left-wing ideologies. Ultimately, the study will contribute to a deeper understanding of how paranoia shaped political thought and cultural discourse in 1930s Europe, particularly in relation to the fear of socialism and communism.

4. Discussion

4.1. Conspiracy of war

In *Left Wings Over Europe: Or, How to Make a War About Nothing* (1936), Wyndham Lewis's critique of left-wing ideologies is deeply intertwined with a sense of paranoia, fear, and suspicion, elements that align closely with Richard Hofstadter's concept of "the paranoid style in politics." Hofstadter's framework helps us understand how Lewis constructed his argument against socialism and communism, portraying these movements as not just misguided or incorrect, but as dangerous conspiracies designed to undermine European stability and provoke another global conflict. As Lewis asserts that Mr. Baldwin, in his speech, strongly rejected claims made by Daudet that Britain's involvement in the dispute was driven by two main motives:

> 'Fear to lose the sources of the Nile, and (2) the desire to defend parliamentary government, of which Mussolini has got rid,' were the two causes actuating Mr. Baldwin in this dispute, Daudet declared. Both of these motives Mr. Baldwin hotly repudiates; but to hear the second of them mentioned particularly incenses him. 'It is spread about in some places abroad,' he told his audience, in his Bewdley speech of October 19th, 1935, 'that one of the main objects in the line of action taken up by this country is to fight and overthrow fascism in Italy. That is a lie of a dangerous kind. What government Italy has is a matter for Italy alone.' (Lewis, 1936, p. 72)

Lewis's paranoia is evident in his depiction of left-wing movements as malevolent forces acting behind the scenes to manipulate governments, provoke wars, and destabilize Europe. He consistently casts socialism and communism as existential threats, much larger and more insidious than they were in reality. This conspiratorial worldview, which fits Hofstadter's model, is rooted in an exaggerated fear of political subversion. According to Hofstadter, political paranoia involves seeing enemies not as rivals, but as "agents of some vast and sinister conspiracy" that is working behind the scenes. Lewis's portrayal of left-wing ideologies as orchestrating war, chaos, and social upheaval clearly reflects this mindset.

> The central image is that of a vast and sinister conspiracy, a gigantic and yet subtle machinery of influence set in motion to undermine and destroy a way of life. One may object that there are conspiratorial acts in history, and there is nothing paranoid about taking note of them. This is true. All political behavior requires strategy, many strategic acts depend for their effect upon a period of secrecy, and anything that is secret may be described, often with but little exaggeration, as conspiratorial. The distinguishing thing about the paranoid style is not that its exponents see conspiracies or plots here and there in history, but that they regard a "vast" or "gigantic" conspiracy as the motive force in historical events. (Hofstadter, 2012, pp. 55-56)

One of the key elements of Lewis's critique, and where Hofstadter's theory proves particularly insightful, is in the way Lewis dehumanizes the political opponents he is criticizing. Lewis's writing often attributes almost superhuman powers to left-wing movements, implying that they have control over media (propaganda), governments, and public opinion to a degree that verges on the fantastical. This portrayal resonates with Hofstadter's description of the paranoid style as one that attributes "vast conspiratorial networks" to one's enemies, exaggerating their power and reach—the existence of a vast, insidious, preternaturally effective international conspiratorial network designed to perpetrate acts of the most fiendish character (Hofstadter, 2012, p. 44). In *Left Wings Over Europe*, socialism and communism are depicted as being not only intellectually flawed but fundamentally deceptive and threatening to the very fabric of European civilization.

However, Lewis's critique is also informed by his personal experiences and disillusionment with the modern world, particularly his trauma from World War I. His fear of a second war heavily influenced his opposition to left-wing ideologies, which he saw as catalysts for future conflict. In this context, Lewis's paranoia can be understood as a defensive reaction to his own experiences of violence and political instability. The First World War had disintegrated his strong belief in progress, and his political narratives in the 1930s manifested a deep fear of repeating the same mistakes. In line with Hofstadter's paranoid style, Lewis's disillusionment about the political climate of the 1930s led him to witness the ideological conflicts of his time in apocalyptic terms. As Lewis directly contributed the abstract ideas of nineteenth-century liberal ideology to the current situation:

> The abstract conceptions of nineteenth-century liberalist ideology have directly led to this situation. It is a situation in which, busy with theory, we have lost touch with the concrete and the real. We have freed with one hand and enslaved with the other. We have one-sidedly, and superficially, applied our principles: to-day our principles, since we do not 'move with the times', cause us to be terribly unjust. (Lewis, 1936, p. 316)

At the same time, Lewis's critique of left-wing ideologies also reflects his broader skepticism of modernity and progress. For Lewis, socialism and communism were emblematic of a modern world that he believed was becoming increasingly mechanized, homogenized, and detached from individual genius and creativity. In *Left Wings Over Europe*, Lewis positions left-wing movements as part of a larger process of dehumanization, aligning them with the forces of industrialization and bureaucratization that he detested. This perspective dovetails with Hofstadter's analysis of how paranoia often emerges as a response to modernization and rapid social change.

Interestingly, despite his fears of socialism and communism, Lewis's critique in *Left Wings Over Europe* is not entirely consistent. His own political views were fluid, and at different points in his career, he expressed admiration for aspects of fascism and authoritarianism, ideologies that also relied on forms of political paranoia. This contradiction marks the complexity of Lewis's political mindset and offers that his critique of left-wing ideologies originated more by personal anxieties and ideological confusion than from a coherent political philosophy. Hofstadter's paranoid style can help explain this fluidity, as paranoia often thrives in environments of uncertainty and fear, leading individuals to adopt contradictory positions as they attempt to make sense of a chaotic world.

In fact, Wyndham Lewis's *Left Wings Over Europe* provides a powerful example of how the paranoid style in politics can shape intellectual discourse. By using Richard Hofstadter's political concept of paranoia in Lewis's writing, we can better grasp the significance how deep-seated fears of left-wing subversion enlightened his critique of socialism and communism. Lewis's work, narrated in the aura of war and political turmoil, demonstrates a wider cultural anxiety about the direction of Europe in the 1930s, as well as a deep-seated fear of ideological conflict. This political analysis also pinpoints the importance of personal experience in molding political paranoia, as Lewis's own trauma and disenchantment played a significant role in his manifestation of left-wing ideologies as malevolent forces. As Lewis lamented the fact that,

> Is it possible that any British conservatism, however liberal, or left-wing, in its complexion, should contemplate another war to end war, in which great numbers of Englishmen would be condemned to death or mutilation in battle — apart from the spectacular slaughter to be expected on the 'home front' —all to help forward 'world-revolution' — this bloodstained 'rationalization' of human society we call communism? (Lewis, 1936, p. 191)

4.2. The Threat of Communism and Socialism

In the 1930s, Europe found itself at a crossroads, with growing tensions between fascism on the right and socialism and communism on the left. For intellectuals like Wyndham Lewis, the ideological and political stakes were high, and the specter of socialism and communism was looming on the horizon. These left-wing ideologies, particularly communism, were perceived as existential threats to Western civilization, national identity, and individual freedom. This fear was not unique to Lewis but was shared by many conservative and reactionary thinkers who viewed communism as a global force seeking to demolish the traditional-based social order. According to this perspective, Communism, in particular, represented a radical shift from the past. It was associated with the 1917 Russian Revolution, which had ousted the tsarist regime and established the Soviet Union. To figures like Lewis, the spread of communism threatened to dissociate the nation-state and impose a collectivist, authoritarian regime across Europe. Lewis saw communism not only as a political and economic system but as a cultural threat that could eliminate individuality and creativity—core elements of his intellectual philosophy. As Lewis contends that,

> If you destroy (at enormous cost in life and treasure) 'fascism' in Europe, what then? Shall we all live happily ever after? And along with that question it must be your duty to ask: 'If you are prepared to take such terrible risks to destroy "fascism", why have you worried so little about Russian communism?' For if the Germans are aiming at a totalitarian, a State Church, the communists want no Church — 'no God. (Lewis, 1936, pp. 129-130)

Socialism, although less radical than communism, was also seen by Lewis as a dangerous ideology. In Britain and across Europe, socialist parties were gaining influence, advocating for workers' rights, economic equality, and the expansion of the welfare state. To Lewis, these goals, while ostensibly noble, were part of a broader movement that could undermine the freedom of the individual and lead to the homogenization of society.

To forcefully drive home this point, Richard Hofstadter's analysis of the "paranoid style" in politics helps contextualize Lewis's fear of communism and socialism. Hofstadter argued that political paranoia arises when individuals or groups see their opponents not merely as rivals but as conspiratorial forces that seek to destroy their way of life. Lewis's portrayal of communism and socialism fits this pattern, as he viewed these ideologies not just as political alternatives but as apocalyptic threats to European civilization. This sense of ideological warfare is evident in *Left Wings Over Europe*, where Lewis expresses deep anxiety about the influence of left-wing movements on Europe's future stability.

> Now, socialism differs from communism, on this national issue, rather as the Church of England differs from the Church of Rome. Socialism, in the last analysis, must be internationalist too: it can draw no distinction between the coolie and the British Workman. But in practice it is possible to forget this too-exacting brotherhood. Some latitude is left for *Blutsgefuhl*. (Lewis, 1936, pp. 244-245)

Lewis's fear of left-wing ideologies also mirrors the broader anxieties of conservative intellectuals in the interwar period. Historian Tony Judt highlights how the 1930s was a time of great ideological polarization, with communism and socialism on one side and fascism and nationalism on the other. The rise of totalitarian regimes in the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany further exacerbated these fears, creating a political climate in which intellectuals like Lewis were forced to choose between competing extremes —that 'real existing Socialism' was a barbaric fraud, a totalitarian dictatorship resting upon a foundation of slave labour and mass murder (Judt, 2006, p. 559).

In this fashion, in his critique of socialism and communism, Lewis also echoed the sentiments of his contemporary T.S. Eliot, who similarly feared the homogenizing tendencies of modernity and collectivism. Eliot's conservative cultural critique, though more focused on the decline of religious and moral order, shared Lewis's concern that left-wing ideologies threatened to dissolve the traditional structures of European society (Eliot, 2010, p. 10). With this end in view, Wyndham Lewis's portrayal of communism and socialism in *Left Wings Over Europe* reflects a broader political paranoia rooted in fears of collectivism, modernity, and the destruction of individual freedom. These left-wing ideologies were seen not as mere political movements but as existential threats to the very fabric of Western civilization.

4.3. The Politics of Paranoia in Lewis's Thought

Wyndham Lewis's political writings, particularly *Left Wings Over Europe: Or, How to Make a War About Nothing* (1936), demonstrates a deep-rooted involvement with what could be termed the "politics of paranoia." This political theory, widely related to the work of historian Richard Hofstadter, especially in his seminal essay *The Paranoid Style in American Politics* (1964), mirrors a mode of political school of thought featured by deep-seated fears of conspiracy, traitorous act, and hidden enemies. In Lewis's case, the politics of paranoia is clear in his evaluation of left-wing ideologies, his fear of communist subversion, and his widely-held belief in the manipulation of public opinion by hidden forces.

Lewis's critique of left-wing ideologies in *Left Wings Over Europe* reflects a paranoid fear of the destabilizing effects of communism and socialism on Western civilization. Like Hofstadter's analysis of American politics, Lewis's writing is imbued with a sense that these ideologies were not merely political alternatives but existential threats to the fabric of European society. Lewis presents communism as a monolithic force that seeks to undermine traditional values, national sovereignty, and individual freedoms. His opposition to communism was deeply intertwined with a broader fear of modernity and its perceived erosion of cultural and moral standards.

In *Left Wings Over Europe*, Lewis represents left-wing intellectuals and short-sighted politicians as part of a vast conspiracy to drag Europe into unwanted war under the guise of ideological progressivism or expansionism. His rhetoric matches with Hofstadter's elaboration of the paranoid political style, where the enemy is seen as both omnipotent and omnipresent. Lewis believed that left-wing forces were manipulating the masses and sowing discord across Europe, leading to unnecessary conflict and upheaval. His paranoia is most evident in his depiction of international socialism as a sinister plot to destabilize European nations, particularly through the use of propaganda and misinformation.

Lewis's anti-communism was not unique in the 1930s; many intellectuals and politicians of the period expressed similar concerns about the spread of Soviet influence. However, what distinguishes Lewis's thought is the intensity of his distrust and his perception of communism as an almost supernatural force. His fears mirrored those expressed by Hofstadter in the American context, where the "paranoid style" often involved the belief that political adversaries were engaged in secret conspiracies to

overthrow the existing order (Hofstadter, 2012, p. 8). For Lewis, communism was not simply a competing ideology but a destructive force that sought to erase individualism, national identity, and the cultural achievements of Western civilization.

Lewis's belief in the power of propaganda to control public opinion and fuel left-wing agendas further aligns his thoughts with the politics of paranoia. He often portrayed the media, intellectual elites, and politicians as complicit in this manipulation, suggesting that they were deliberately misleading the public to advance socialist or communist goals. This distrust of the media and intellectual establishment is a hallmark of paranoid political thinking, as described by Hofstadter. In Lewis's view, the true motives behind political movements were always hidden beneath layers of deceit, and only a select few, including himself, could perceive the reality of the situation.

To forcefully drive home this point, one of the central elements of paranoid politics, according to Hofstadter, is the fear of subversion by hidden forces. This fear is clearly reflected in Lewis's writings, where he frequently alludes to secretive plots and conspiracies aimed at undermining Western civilization. In *Left Wings Over Europe*, Lewis suggests that left-wing ideologies were being propagated through covert means, with communist agents infiltrating governments, universities, and media organizations. This belief in subversion by external forces is a key component of paranoid political thought and reflects a broader anxiety about the fragility of social and political institutions.

Lewis's anxieties also extended to his worldview perception of international politics. He believed that Britain was being sucked into war by left-wing pawns, who were using the threat of fascism as a pretext to advance their own agenda/plans. This reflects Hofstadter's observation that the paranoid style often involves the belief that the nation is on the brink of break-up, manipulated by hidden and shadowy forces from within and without. Lewis's conviction that war was being organized by communists and socialists reflects this worldview, where every political development is explicated through the lens of conspiracy and betrayal.

> If it were announced to-morrow on the wireless that an act of war had been committed by Italy against Great Britain, and that Great Britain was putting herself in a posture of legitimate defence, not a murmur would be raised — no questions would be asked, or, indeed, could be asked. Great Britain would be at war, and there would be an end of the matter. (Lewis, 1936, pp. 106-107)

In addition to his fears of political subversion, Lewis's politics of paranoia were also driven by a deep-seated anxiety about the decline of Western culture. Like many modernist intellectuals, Lewis viewed the rise of mass culture, technology, and political collectivism as a threat to the individuality and creativity that he valued. He feared that left-wing ideologies, particularly communism, were eroding the cultural and intellectual achievements of Europe by promoting conformity and mediocrity. In the broadest sense, this fear of cultural decline is central to Lewis's critique of left-wing politics in *Left Wings Over Europe*. He witnessed socialism and communism both as political threats and existential hazards to the very fabric of Western civilization. His paranoia about cultural homogenization showed a wider concern among modernist writers of the time, who often became alienated by the mass politics and cultural shifts of the early 20th century.

Moreover, Wyndham Lewis's critique of left-wing ideologies in *Left Wings Over Europe* is deeply rooted in the politics of paranoia. His deep-seated fears of communist subversion, his belief in widespread conspiracy theory, and his deep-rooted anxiety about cultural collapse all demonstrated the hallmarks of paranoid political thought as described by Richard Hofstadter. Lewis's narration is a witness to the power of paranoia in constructing political discourse during the interwar period, particularly in the face of rapidly changing social and political landscapes.

In many respects, Lewis's politics of paranoia can be seen as a reaction to the uncertainties and upheavals of the 1930s, as Europe teetered on the threshold of war. His fears of conspiracy and subversion, while often exaggerated, reflect the broader anxieties of his time, as intellectuals and politicians coped with the advent of totalitarianism, the decline of liberal democracy, and the threat of global conflict.

4.4. Fascism vs. Communism

The ideological conflict between fascism and communism was one of the distinguishing battles of the 20th century, with both regimes representing diametrically opposed visions of society. To resuscitate this aspect of Fascism, rooted in ultra-nationalism (Fascism is a genus of political ideology whose mythic core in its various permutations is a palingenetic form of populist ultra-nationalism (Griffin, 2008, p. xii)) and authoritarianism, this political ideology looked for establishing a hierarchical, state-controlled society that glorified the nation and the leader, while communism, based on Marxist theory, targeted to create a classless, stateless society through the overthrow of capitalist systems. Wyndham Lewis, in his political writings from the 1930s, including *Left Wings Over Europe* (1936), wrestled with this ideological confrontation, ultimately witnessing both systems as potential threats to individuality and Western civilization, but with a clear preference for fascism as a bulwark against the perceived dangers of communism.

More abstractly, it can be stated that Fascism appeared in post-World War I Europe as a reactionary opposition to the perceived failures of liberal democracy and the growing influence of socialism and communism. For thinkers like Lewis, fascism

suggested a path to confront the spread of left-wing ideologies, which they believed threatened either to dissociate national identity or to disorganize social order. Fascism, with its emphasis on strong, centralized leadership and opposition to communism, appealed to those who feared that the prevalence of communism would contribute to chaos and the deconstruction of Western cultural values. Lewis, like other conservative intellectuals, was particularly alarmed by the advent of the Soviet Union and its revolutionary ideology, which searched for exporting communist revolutions across Europe.

Lewis's early sympathy toward fascism, as evident in *Left Wings Over Europe*, was grounded in his belief that fascism could serve as a bulwark against the radical leveling tendencies of communism. In his critique of left-wing ideologies, Lewis often contrasted the order and stability promised by fascism with the disorder and violence associated with communist revolutions. According to historian Robert Paxton, fascism's appeal lay in its ability to mobilize mass support against the twin threats of communism and liberal democracy, presenting itself as a "third way" between these two systems (Paxton, 2005, p. 163).

In this light, for Lewis and many other modernist scholars in the interwar period, communism represented the most significant ideological danger to European civilization. Communism looked to abolish private property, deconstruct capitalist structures, and eliminate class distinctions—all of which were seen as essential to Western social and economic systems. Furthermore, communism's internationalist outlook, with its accentuation on class solidarity over national identity, was viewed as a direct challenge to the sovereignty of nation-states. Lewis was anxious that the prevalence of communism would contribute to the erasure of national cultures and the imposition of a homogenized, collectivist society. In *Left Wings Over Europe*, Lewis's critique of communism aligns with the broader conservative reaction to the spread of left-wing ideologies during the 1930s. In Britain, the Communist Party achieved influence, particularly in labor movements, resulting in fears that the country could follow in the footsteps of the Soviet Union. Historian Tony Judt states that during this period, communism was viewed by many conservatives not only as a political threat but also as a cultural and existential one. Communism's rejection of religion, tradition, and hierarchy made it anathema to intellectuals who valued Europe's cultural heritage (Judt, 2006).

4.5. The Totalitarian Mirror

Despite his early leanings toward fascism, Lewis eventually came to see both fascism and communism as products of the same totalitarian impulse. In *The Hitler Cult* (1939), Lewis began to distance himself from fascism, recognizing that it shared many of the same dehumanizing and authoritarian tendencies as communism. Both ideologies, in Lewis's view, were products of the modern "Machine Age," (Lewis, 1939, p. 45) which sought to subordinate the individual to the collective will. This critique echoes the analysis of Hannah Arendt, who argued that both fascism and communism are forms of totalitarianism, driven by the desire to reshape society through mass mobilization and ideological conformity (Arendt, 1973, p. 279).

While Lewis's critique of communism remained central to his thought, his disillusionment with fascism reflected a broader trend among conservative intellectuals who initially supported fascist movements as a defense against communism but eventually recognized the dangers of authoritarianism. According to historian Richard Overy, many in the British intelligentsia who had flirted with fascism in the 1930s became disillusioned as the brutality of Nazi Germany and fascist Italy became impossible to ignore.

> He recalled in his memoirs that the left-wing intelligentsia were obsessed by the outcome of the war and the defeat of 'fascism', but the concern was more universal than that, and not necessarily left wing; Annan himself acknowledged that 'my generation was overwhelmingly on the side of the Republic', and this included many who were, or had been, politically unaligned. (Overy, 2009, p. 320)

Indeed, the confrontation between fascism and communism was emblematic of the polarized political climate of the 1930s, where moderate political positions seemed increasingly untenable. Lewis's writings during this period reflect his own intellectual struggle to navigate between these extremes, initially supporting fascism as a counterweight to communism but later recognizing that both ideologies represented dangerous threats to the individual and to European civilization. More broadly, Lewis's journey from an initial fascination with fascism to a rejection of both totalitarian systems parallels the broader intellectual trajectory of the period. His critique of left-wing ideologies, rooted in fears of collectivism and chaos, was ultimately overshadowed by his realization that the authoritarianism of the right could be just as destructive as the revolutionary zeal of the left.

4.6. The Fascist/Nazi Politics

Wyndham Lewis's *Left Wings Over Europe* (1936) provides the foundations for a striking critique of left-wing ideologies, which he asserted were navigating Europe toward unwanted conflict. Through the lens of Richard Hofstadter's socio-political concept of the "paranoid style in politics," Lewis's work can be viewed as embodying a reactionary structure of political paranoia, where socialism and communism are framed not as legitimate political movements but as conspiratorial theories bent on destabilizing/immobilizing Western civilization. Lewis's assessment aligns with Hofstadter's detailed analysis of how political paranoia is responsible for exaggerated and conspiratorial thinking, often framing ideological opponents as existential threats to

societal order. In other words, in *Left Wings Over Europe*, Lewis portrays left-wing movements, particularly socialism and communism, as major culprits responsible for escalating tensions in Europe, thereby pushing the continent toward war. His paranoid critique suggests that these ideologies were working in the background to undermine political stability, manipulate governments, and stir up unnecessary conflict. This view reflects Hofstadter's notion of the paranoid style, where political adversaries are not seen as rivals, but as insidious forces plotting to overthrow societal structures.

Lewis's critique of left-wing ideologies also reveals his broader fear of modernity and the loss of individual freedom. He saw communism and socialism as forces of collectivism that threatened personal liberty, creativity, and national identity. His fear of left-wing ideologies was deeply intertwined with his broader rejection of modernity's homogenizing tendencies—a theme consistent with his fascist sympathies during the 1930s, which he initially saw as a bulwark against communism. However, Lewis's critique, while deeply rooted in the paranoid style Hofstadter identifies, is also characterized by its inconsistencies. His initial support for fascism and later renunciation of Nazi ideology in *The Hitler Cult* (1939) demonstrates his shifting views as the political landscape changed. By 1936, Lewis was still advocating for appeasement and neutrality, but his fear of left-wing ideologies dominated his thinking, pushing him toward reactionary positions. He used his critique of left-wing politics to express a broader anxiety about Europe's future, aligning with Hofstadter's depiction of political paranoia as a response to perceived threats of subversion and chaos.

In the fascist view, Fascist and Nazi politics appeared in the 20th century as extreme right-wing ideologies; featured by authoritarianism, nationalism, and totalitarian sovereignty. Fascism, conducted by Benito Mussolini in Italy, and Nazism, led by Adolf Hitler in Germany, both followed to establish centralized states ruled by dictatorship-based leaders. These movements were deeply opposed to democratic governance, liberalism, and left-wing ideologies like socialism and communism, which they saw as feasible threats to national unity and strength. Wyndham Lewis, a British modernist writer and artist, was involved with these political ideas during the 1930s, especially in his controversial works like *Left Wings Over Europe* (1936). His fascination and admiration for fascism and critique of left-wing politics demonstrate the complex and often contradictory intellectual landscape of the interwar period.

Fascism, at its extreme, develops the potential idea of a strong, centralized state led by a single, charismatic leader. Benito Mussolini's Italy set the ground for the blueprint of fascism, amalgamating ultra-nationalism, a militaristic regime, and a rejection of democracy in order to run Fascism across Europe. Fascists believed that liberal democratic systems were weak and incapable of addressing the crises of modernity, particularly the threat posed by communism. According to Robert Paxton,

> Fascism may be defined as a form of political behavior marked by obsessive preoccupation with community decline, humiliation, or victimhood and by compensatory cults of unity, energy, and purity, in which a mass-based party of committed nationalist militants, working in uneasy but effective collaboration with traditional elites, abandons democratic liberties and pursues with redemptive violence and without ethical or legal restraints goals of internal cleansing and external expansion. (Paxton, 2005, p. 267)

Fascist regimes, therefore, emphasized the importance of a unified national identity, often rooted in racial or ethnic superiority. In fact, Lewis, in *Left Wings Over Europe*, expressed concern about the spread of communism, which he saw as a destabilizing force in Europe. His initial attraction to fascism stemmed from its anti-communist stance, which aligned with his fear of societal chaos and the destruction of traditional European values. For Lewis, fascism appeared to offer a way to preserve the cultural and social structures threatened by left-wing ideologies.

Nazism, while dividing many attributes with fascism, introduced a more radical racial ideology, revolving around the abstract concept of Aryan supremacy. Hitler's far-sighted vision of a "pure" Germanic race contributed to the persecution and genocide of Jews, Roma, immobilized individuals, and other ethnic groups deemed "inferior" by the Nazi regime. The Nazi stress on racial purity was inextricably bound up with its expansionist ambitions, as Hitler followed to establish a Greater Germany by conquering and invading Eastern Europe and subjugating its peoples. Ian Kershaw claims that Hitler's political agenda was steered by the deeply-held belief that "life was a struggle in which the strong crushed the weak" (Kershaw, 2010). In this regard, Lewis initially viewed fascism and Nazism as possible bulwarks against communism, but he became disenchanted with Nazism as its brutality became clear. By the late 1930s, Lewis had distanced himself from Nazi politics, especially as he witnessed the growing persecution of Jews and other minorities in Europe. In his later works, such as *The Hitler Cult* (1939), Lewis criticized both fascism and Nazism for their totalitarian tendencies and their dehumanization of individuals.

To this extent, both fascist and Nazi political ideologies were featured by a glorification and idealization of the leader, whether it was Mussolini or Hitler. These authoritarian regimes depended heavily on propaganda, mass rallies, manipulation, and a cult of personality to balance control over the populace. Leaders were shown as the embodiment of the nation, infallible and beyond reproach. Hannah Arendt, in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951), describes this phenomenon as "the general climate in which the rise of totalitarianism takes place," (Arendt, 1973, p. 333) where the state governs all elements of life, such as culture, education, and even personal beliefs. In this respect, Lewis, who had admired aspects of Mussolini's leadership, eventually became critical of the fascist and Nazi obsession with authoritarian control. He recognized that both fascist movements, while opposing communism, had a dangerous tendency toward the suppression of individual liberty and thought. Lewis's assessment mirrored

that of other intellectuals of his era, who, like George Orwell, began to see fascism and communism as two angles of the same totalitarian parts.

> But the undeniable benefits of such an 'authoritarian5 regime as that of Hitler or Mussolini can be secured without anyone being aware of the change! It is, in fact, quite surprising how totalitarian you can be without anybody so much as guessing that they are a whit less free than they were before! (Lewis, 1936, p. 62)

4.7. The Cult of the Leader

In retrospect, in November 1930, during a trip to Germany, two months after the elections where the Nazi party garnered over six million votes (a significant increase from the May 1928 election where they received 2.6 percent of the vote, rising to 18.3 percent in the September 1930 election and securing the second highest number of seats in the Reichstag), reflections on Hitler were featured as magazine articles in 'Time and Tide' in January and February 1931. In March 1931, a book titled *Hitler* was published, serving as a tribute to fascism and its adherents. It portrayed Adolf Hitler, the mysterious leader, as a figure of peace and exceptional organizational skills. The book emphasized the perceived threat faced by members of his party from communist street violence. It also captured the tense atmosphere of the era, akin to the charged ambiance depicted in "Babylon Berlin." Through wit and humor, it analyzed the country on the brink of what was dubbed as 'the most bloodless revolution on record,' (Lewis, 1936, p. 163) Lewis contends in *Hitler* that his endorsement of Nazism stems from pragmatic considerations rather than ideological conviction. He suggests that under present urgent circumstances, Hitler might genuinely represent the most viable choice for the German people. Lewis expresses this viewpoint by stating:

> Really the point is, I think, that we 'Aryans,' or whatever we are, are faced with extinction. We cannot afford just now to be philosophers, nor yet humanitarians. No one will be philosophical, nor yet humanitarian, with us. Yes, the above argument of Hitler's is an argument for an emergency. Everything now almost, since the War, seems a matter of life and death. It is not an argument for the scientific mind, but for the political mind. (Lewis, 1931, pp. 127-128)

In *Wyndham Lewis and Western Man* (1992), David Ayers highlights Lewis's assertion that the mythologization of Hitler can be attributed to the mass media. This phenomenon, according to Lewis, serves the purpose of reinforcing racial and psychological identities while contributing to the decline of individual consciousness, all in service to entrenched power structures (Ayers & Hanna, 1992, p. 209). In general, Lewis examines the fundamental traits of the Nazi movement, including its racial ideologies, methods of persuasion and propaganda, economic policies, and hierarchical structure centered around the *Führer*, with the aim of making Nazism understandable to the ordinary British citizen (Lafferty, 2009, p. 117). Lewis's 1931 work on *Hitler* seeks to offer additional insight into the significance of Hitler's consistent long-term policies for Europe. It also aims to criticize the British government for neglecting to acknowledge Germany's rightful claims to rearmament (Trubowitz, 2016, p. 114). A considerable portion of the book focuses on Lewis elaborating on both the Nazi doctrine of *Blutsgefühl*, or "Blood-feeling" (the notion of mystical unity that all Germans are expected to share, serving as a cornerstone of National Socialism), and Hitler's unquestionable stature as a remarkable and authentic figure. To endorse this widely-held view, Lewis quotes a few lines from a typical article on this subject (*Nationsozialistische Briefe*, November 15, 1930): "*Der Nationalsozialismus predigt das Zeitalter des Blutes. Aus dem Blutsgefühl heraus soll sich ein neuer Wille zum Nationalismus und Sozialismus gebaren, aus dem bewussten Blutsgefühl*." ("National Socialism teaches the Age of Blood. Out of the blood-feeling a new will to Nationalism and to Socialism shall be born. Out of the conscious blood-feeling.") The ideological/philosophical doctrine of *Blutsgefühl* seeks to unify individuals of a particular ethnic group with shared cultural traditions through a profound sense of bodily connection, solidarity, and strong social bonds, as described by Lewis in his work on Hitler (Lewis, 1931, p. 104).

From Lewis's political perspective, he suggests that the Hitler *Bewegung* (Movement), commonly known as German National Socialism or Hitlerism, should be understood and utilized by the intelligent Anglo-Saxon population. He argues that this understanding is crucial for comprehending this significant and unprecedented phenomenon in global affairs. By doing so, it can effectively penetrate the highly organized structure of German consciousness and evoke stronger waves of emotional intensity. This, in turn, could serve to counteract revolutionary forces emanating from both the political right and left, thereby advocating for the advancement of German intellectualism and nationalism, as depicted in "The Dritte Reich" and "The Weimar Republic." The administrative unit of the Hitler Party aimed to overthrow the current Socialist Government of Prussia to attain a decisive majority in the Prussian Parliament, viewed as the initial step. The saying "Whoever holds Prussia holds the Reich!" underscores the strategic importance of controlling Prussia in gaining influence over the entire nation. Lewis holds the belief that Hitler and his circle might possess a genuine vision within their doctrine for a form of nationalism that surpasses the scope and intellect of movements like Charles Maurras's "Action Française" (French: "French Action") or Mussolini's (Lewis, 1931, p. 45). In other words, Adolf Hitler's politically pragmatic blend of extreme nationalism embodies the fervor of a mobilized peasant populace rather than the traditional

militarism associated with a displaced aristocratic elite. Adolf Hitler, who took office in a Bavarian regiment during the war, rose to lead a faction of 107 deputies in the Reichstag, establishing the Hitler Movement. This movement gained widespread attention through extensive coverage in the English press, which highlighted key aspects of its agenda. Even the Berlin correspondent of the *Völkischer Beobachter*, (German: "People's Observer", *VB*) noted this phenomenon in December 7:

> Something comparable only to a national-religious upheaval has taken deep root in the people's minds… Adolf Hitler… caused Germany's ex-enemies, her present creditors, to sit up and take notice. He gained more publicity for his views abroad in as many days than the Nationalists of the old school in as many years.

In this context, the integration of the German Youth Movement (German: *Die deutsche Jugend Bewegung*) into the Hitler Movement is noteworthy. The German Youth Movement, established in 1896, encompasses a cultural and educational initiative. In a broader sense, it can be interpreted as symbolizing a generational conflict, often depicted as a struggle between youth and authority figures, as evidenced by articles titled "Agewar" and youth-centric propaganda advocating for youth leadership. The Hitler Movement comprises young individuals who align themselves with Hitler's ideology. According to Wyndham Lewis, the Fascists or National Socialists either exploit youth for their own political gains or manipulate them as political pawns. In response, Lewis satirically asserts that he does not endorse Hitlerism or Italian Fascism, 'I am not an advocate of Hitlerism, nor yet of Italian Fascism.' (Lewis, 1931, p. 98) In this respect, one factor that sharply contrasted with other segments of German society was the idealistic, principled, ethical, and moral nature of the Youth Movement. Consequently, its members were more inclined to take bold risks in adhering to and acting upon their convictions. This perhaps explains why significant figures from the Youth Movement can be found on both sides—among the supporters of Nazism and within the *Widerstand*.[1] In fact, the Hitler Movement is commonly viewed as a liberation effort aimed at breaking free from the perceived injustices imposed by the Treaty of Versailles and restoring Germany's former greatness. Additionally, it is seen as an elite force, superior to the more unsophisticated Nazis, with the potential to significantly influence global political dynamics (Lewis, 1931, p. 99).

Essentially, according to the *Führerprinzip* (German: Leadership principle) ideology, Adolf Hitler's cult of personality was considered essential for achieving Nazi political objectives and served as the foundational source of political authority in the governance of Nazi Germany (1933–1945). This cult was perpetuated through relentless Nazi propaganda efforts and bolstered by Hitler's perceived successes in addressing Germany's economic challenges and unemployment crisis, as well as his efforts to restore German military strength by remilitarizing and rearming in the midst of the global Great Depression, and reinstating Germany to its previous status of military and political dominance in Europe. This objective eventually became a pivotal element of Nazi authority over the German populace, as Hitler pledged decisive measures and an ideology of revitalization, aiming to "to seize the big bull of Finance by the horns, and to take a chance for the sake of freedom." (Lewis, 1931, p. 202) In a very real sense, in the current context, "Germany" and "National Socialism" are synonymous with "Herr Hitler." The National Socialist regime's existence is inextricably linked to him, and it would not have emerged or endured without his leadership (Lewis, 1939, p. 39). In practical political terms, "the Führer's word supersedes all written laws," and governmental policies, resolutions, and regulations are formulated and enforced to ensure adherence to the principles of leadership at every level of society's hierarchy, including executive, judicial, and legislative branches of power. The 'Leader principle' established an authoritarian regime where authority flowed from the top, demanding unwavering obedience to a charismatic leader, characteristic of political fascism. In a broader context, according to Nazi ideology, Adolf Hitler is portrayed as a charismatic demagogue, embodying and molding the German populace, revered as an iconic savior capable of rescuing Germany and a formidable defender against its adversaries, as outlined by Kershaw:

> Hitler stood for at least some things they [German people] admired, and for many had become the symbol and embodiment of the national revival which the Third Reich had in many respects been perceived to accomplish. He had evoked in extreme measure and focused upon himself many irrational, but none the less real and strong, feelings of selfless devotion, sacrifice, and passionate commitment to a national ideal—emotions which had developed enormous, elemental force during and after the First World War. (Kershaw, 1987, p. 171)

5. Conclusion

5.1. Overview

Wyndham Lewis's *Left Wings Over Europe: Or, How to Make a War About Nothing (1936)* offers a sharp critique of left-wing ideologies, which, when examined through the lens of Richard Hofstadter's "paranoid style," reveals a deep-seated anxiety about socialism, communism, and their influence on European politics. Lewis's writings reflect a modernist skepticism of mass movements and a preoccupation with the perceived erosion of individualism, national sovereignty, and cultural integrity in the face of

[1] Opposition. Political, religious, and military resistance to Hitler and the Third Reich. (Michael & Doerr, 2002)

collectivist ideologies. In doing so, he expresses a paranoid fear of the left-wing as not just political adversaries, but as conspiratorial forces capable of reshaping society through revolution, chaos, and manipulation.

Hofstadter's framework helps to contextualize Lewis's exaggeration of the threats posed by communism and socialism, showing how Lewis's critique emerges from a broader intellectual tendency to frame political opposition in apocalyptic and conspiratorial terms. Lewis, much like the figures Hofstadter discusses, taps into a cultural fear of radical change and the undermining of established power structures. His characterization of left-wing movements as existential threats highlights the era's anxieties over cultural and political instability, as well as the uncertainty brought about by economic depression and the rise of fascism and communism.

In conclusion, Lewis's critique of left-wing ideologies in *Left Wings Over Europe* illustrates how the "politics of paranoia" permeated intellectual thought in the interwar period. His paranoid framing of political adversaries, along with his fears of ideological warfare and cultural destruction, reflects both the personal traumas of his time and the broader intellectual currents of resistance to collectivism. Through this lens, Lewis's work stands as a significant contribution to understanding the intersection of politics, culture, and modernist thought in a period marked by profound global transformation.

5.2. Study Limitations

While the current paper evaluates Wyndham Lewis's *Left Wings Over Europe: Or, How to Make a War About Nothing* (1936) through the lens of Richard Hofstadter's abstract concept of "paranoid" political ideologies, several limitations influenced the depth and generalization of its findings.

Firstly, Hofstadter's theoretical framework, developed in his essays on the "paranoid style" in American politics, was mainly centered around American ideologies in the mid-20th century. Applying these basic concepts to Lewis's critique of European leftist movements during the 1930s requires adaptation and interpretation, as Hofstadter's detailed analysis may not entirely capture the unique historical and social context of interwar Europe. Thus, while Hofstadter's ideas on paranoia offer valuable comprehension into Lewis's hyper-vigilant style and political anxieties, the direct applicability of Hofstadter's framework is somewhat limited.

Secondly, *Left Wings Over Europe* is a polemical and satirical narrative with scattered ambiguities and exaggerations, making it challenging to point to firm conclusions about Lewis's actual political ideologies and the specific ideological positions he critiques. Lewis's satirical tone blurs the line between sincere evaluation and rhetorical flourish, complicating endeavor to apply a strict ideological analysis. This ambiguity necessitates a cautious interpretation, as certain passages may reflect rhetorical strategies rather than consistent political views.

Lastly, this paper's concentration on *Left Wings Over Europe* limits a broader examination of Lewis's changing political beliefs throughout the 1930s and his eventual denunciation of fascism and authoritarianism. A comprehensive study of Lewis's political ideology would need a wider examination of his entire body of work, as well as the evolving political landscape of the 1930s, to fully contextualize his critique of leftist movements.

5.3. Suggestions for Future Research

Future research into Wyndham Lewis's critique of left-wing ideologies in *Left Wings Over Europe* could discover several unexplored dimensions. One avenue would be to investigate how Lewis's political thought transformed during and after World War II, particularly in relation to his earlier fascist sympathies and later denunciations of Hitlerism. Examining Lewis's writings within a broader comparative framework, alongside other modernist figures like Ezra Pound or T.S. Eliot, could further illuminate the extent to which modernist aesthetics and paranoia shaped political attitudes during this period.

Moreover, scholars could analyze how Lewis's critique matches with the broader intellectual trends of the 1930s and 1940s, especially in relation to Hofstadter's "paranoid style" and the advent of Cold War political tensions. A detailed comparison of Lewis's outlooks toward communism and fascism with those of other conservative intellectuals of the time could provide deeper comprehension into how fear of left-wing ideologies impressed the intellectual landscape of the interwar period. This research could also extend to scrutinizing how these dynamics played out in the art and literature of the era, particularly in modernist movements that similarly coped with the political upheavals of the time.

Finally, further research could benefit from a more interdisciplinary approach, integrating political theory, psychology, and cultural studies to explore how paranoia and suspicion of ideological subversion have continued to shape political discourse. Such an approach would provide not only a richer understanding of Lewis's work but also a broader appreciation of how intellectual paranoia has persisted across different historical contexts, influencing both political rhetoric and cultural production.

Funding: This research received no external funding.
Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1029-6971
Publisher's Note: All claims expressed in this article are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of their affiliated organizations, or those of the publisher, the editors and the reviewers.

References

[1] Arendt, H. (1973). *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich;.
[2] Ayers, D., & Hanna, A. (1992). *Wyndham Lewis and Western Man*. Palgrave Macmillan.
[3] Eliot, T. S. (2010). *Notes towards the Definition of Culture*. Faber & Faber.
[4] Griffin, R. (2008). *A fascist century: Essays by Roger Griffin*. Palgrave Macmillan.
[5] Hofstadter, R. (2012). *The paranoid style in American politics*. Vintage.
[6] Judt, T. (2006). *Postwar: A history of Europe since 1945*. Penguin.
[7] Kershaw, I. (1987). *The "Hitler Myth": Image and Reality in the Third Reich*. Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press.
[8] Kershaw, I. (2010). *Hitler: A biography*. WW Norton & Company.
[9] Lafferty, D. W. (2009). *Wyndham Lewis's kulturkampf* Carleton University].
[10] Lewis, W. (1931). *Hitler*. Chatto & Windus.
[11] Lewis, W. (1936). *Left wings over Europe, or, How to make a war about nothing*. Jonathan Cape.
[12] Lewis, W. (1939). *The Hitler Cult*. London: Dent.
[13] Overy, R. (2009). *Morbid Age,The: Britain Between The Wars*. Allen Lane.
[14] Paxton, R. (2005). *The Anatomy of Fascism*. Vintage.
[15] Trubowitz, L. (2016). Race and Antisemitism in Lewis. In *The Cambridge Companion to Wyndham Lewis* (pp. 113 - 124). Cambridge University Press.