

## MODERNISM, IMPERIALISM, AND THE HISTORICAL SENSE

Modernist art and literature sought to engage with the ideas of different cultures without eradicating the differences between them. In *Modernism, Imperialism, and the Historical Sense*, Paul Stasi explores the relationship between high modernist aesthetic forms and structures of empire in the twentieth century. Stasi's text offers new readings of James Joyce, Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, and Virginia Woolf by situating their work within an early moment of globalization. Combining the insights of Marxist historiography, aesthetic theory, and postcolonial criticism, Stasi's careful analysis reveals how these authors' aesthetic forms responded to, and helped shape, their unique historical moment. Of interest to readers in a range of disciplines, this book will appeal especially to scholars of British and American literature as well as students of literary criticism and postcolonial studies.

Paul Stasi received his Ph.D. from the University of California at Berkeley in 2006. He writes on twentieth-century Anglophone literature and has published articles on T. S. Eliot, Richard Flannagan, James Joyce, Ezra Pound, and Jean Toomer. He currently teaches at the University at Albany.

# MODERNISM, IMPERIALISM, AND THE HISTORICAL SENSE

PAUL STASI

*University at Albany, State University of New York*



CAMBRIDGE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press & Assessment  
 978-1-107-02144-0 — Modernism, Imperialism and the Historical Sense  
 Paul Stasi  
 Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)



CAMBRIDGE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom  
 One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA  
 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia  
 314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India  
 103 Penang Road, #05–06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment,  
 a department of the University of Cambridge.

We share the University's mission to contribute to society through the pursuit of  
 education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)  
 Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781107021440](http://www.cambridge.org/9781107021440)

© Paul Stasi 2012

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions  
 of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take  
 place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press & Assessment.

First published 2012

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

*Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication data*

Stasi, Paul, 1972–

Modernism, imperialism, and the historical sense / Paul Stasi.

pages cm

Revision of the author's doctoral thesis, University  
 of California, Berkeley, 2006.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-107-02144-0

1. Modernism (Literature) – United States. 2. Modernism (Literature) – Great Britain.
3. Imperialism in literature 4. Eliot, T. S. (Thomas Stearns), 1888–1965 – Criticism and interpretation.
5. Pound, Ezra, 1885–1972 – Criticism and interpretation.
6. Joyce, James, 1882–1941 – Criticism and interpretation.
7. Woolf, Virginia, 1882–1941 – Criticism and interpretation.

PS228.M63S73 2012

810.9'112–dc23

2012006479

ISBN 978-1-107-02144-0 Hardback

Cambridge University Press & Assessment has no responsibility for the persistence  
 or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this  
 publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will  
 remain, accurate or appropriate.

Contents

<i>Acknowledgments</i>	page vii
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	ix
Introduction: Imperial structures of feeling	i
1 The persistence of the past: Modernism vs. imperial time	15
2 <i>The Waste Land</i> and the unreal center of capitalist modernity	38
3 Cosmopolitan kulchur: <i>The Cantos</i> as world literature	60
4 Turning consumption into production: <i>Ulysses</i> and the construction of postcolonial agency	82
5 “Moments of Pride in England”: Virginia Woolf and the forms of national subjectivity	108
Coda: The Edwardian lumber room	136
<i>Notes</i>	141
<i>Works Cited</i>	173
<i>Index</i>	187

## *Acknowledgments*

This book began as a dissertation at the University of California at Berkeley under the direction of Charles Altieri, who taught me how to think about art, and Colleen Lye, who taught me how to be a scholar. The ground-work for everything here, and indeed for all of my scholarship, comes from their guidance and formative conversations with Mark Allison, Mike Farry, Kevis Goodman, Omri Moses, and Douglas O'Hara.

I could not have found a more supportive and challenging intellectual environment than the English Department at the University at Albany. Kevin Bell, Bret Benjamin, Patricia E. Chu, Randy Craig, Hernan Diaz, Jennifer Greiman, Kir Kuiken, James Lilley, Barry Trachtenberg, and Laura Wilder have been exemplary colleagues and friends. James Lilley's astute reading of an early draft of Chapter 5 was invaluable. Patricia E. Chu helped me see the stakes of this project much more clearly than I could ever have on my own, reading through the palimpsest of my revisions to excise the ghosts of earlier drafts. Bret Benjamin has been a tremendous resource and friend, happily reading drafts, fielding panicked phone calls, and talking nonsense about Marx, basketball, and peak oil over exactly the right amount of scotch. Hernan Diaz's abdication is an indictment of our profession. Our sessions at 10 South Lake will be sorely missed and I promise to never set foot in Tulsa in their honor. Chris Iannini, scholar of pretty places without history, has been with me from the beginning, as has José Antonio Lucero, whose dream of building an opera house in the Amazon continues to inspire.

I would like to thank Mike Hill and the English department at SUNY Albany for granting me a writing leave to help complete this work, the anonymous readers at Cambridge whose comments made this a much better book, and Ray Ryan. A shorter version of Chapter 3 appeared as "A sane balance of values": *The Cantos* as world literature." *Comparative Literature*, 62 no. 4 (Fall 2010): 361–75. I am grateful to Duke University Press and *Comparative Literature* for permission to reprint.

I thank my family for always encouraging me to pursue my interests, even when none of us knew where they might lead. And finally, there is Megan, my favorite person, who, along with the little girl, makes it all worthwhile.

Extracts from the following works of Ezra Pound are reprinted here by permission of Faber & Faber Ltd., London, and New Directions Publishing Corporation, New York, on behalf of the Ezra Pound Literary Property:

“Epilogue” & “Histrion” by Ezra Pound, from *Collected Early Poems*, copyright © 1976 by the Ezra Pound Literary Property Trust. Reprinted by permission of New Directions Publishing Corp., New York, and Faber & Faber Ltd., London.

“The Tree” by Ezra Pound, from *Personae*, copyright © 1926 by Ezra Pound. Reprinted by permission of New Directions Publishing Corp., New York, and Faber & Faber Ltd., London.

“Canto XLIX,” by Ezra Pound, from *The Cantos*, copyright © 1975 by Ezra Pound. Reprinted by permission of Faber & Faber Ltd., London.

## *Abbreviations*

### Works of T. S. Eliot

- CP*     *Collected Poems, 1909–1962* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1963).  
*KE*     *Knowledge and Experience in the Philosophy of F. H. Bradley* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964).  
*SW*     *The Sacred Wood* (New York: University Paperbacks, 1964).

### Works of James Joyce

- D*     *Dubliners* (New York: Penguin, 1967).  
*P*     *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (New York: Viking Press, 1964).  
*SH*     *Stephen Hero* (New York: New Directions, 1963).  
*U*     *Ulysses* (New York: Random House, 1961).

### Works of Ezra Pound

- CEP*     *Collected Early Poems*, ed. Michael King (New York: New Directions, 1976).  
*LE*     *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*, ed. T. S. Eliot (New York: New Directions, 1968).  
*SP*     *Selected Prose: 1909–1965*, ed. William Cookson (New York: New Directions, 1973).

### Works of Virginia Woolf

- E*     *The Essays of Virginia Woolf*, eds. Andrew McNeillie and Stuart N. Clarke, 5 vols. (New York: HBJ, 1986), referred to as *E* followed by volume number: page number.  
*MD*     *Mrs. Dalloway* (New York: Harcourt, 2005).  
*TTL*     *To the Lighthouse* (New York: Harcourt, 1981).  
*VO*     *The Voyage Out* (New York: Penguin Books, 1992).