

One Day, One Novel: *Nostramo: A Tale of the Seaboard*

Start date 20 November 2016 **Time** 10:00 – 16:45

Venue Madingley Hall
Madingley
Cambridge

Tutor Dr John Lennard **Course code** 1617NDX017

Director of Programmes Emma Jennings

For further information on this course, please contact Public Programme Coordinator, Clare Kerr
clare.kerr@ice.cam.ac.uk or 01223 746237

To book See: www.ice.cam.ac.uk or telephone 01223 746262

Tutor biography

Born in Bristol, and educated at Oxford and St Louis, Dr John Lennard has taught English, American, and Commonwealth Literature in Cambridge, London, and Jamaica over more than twenty years. He has written two widely used textbooks (on poetry and drama) and monographs on Shakespeare, Paul Scott, Nabokov, and Faulkner, as well as two collections of essays on contemporary genre writers in crime, science fiction and fantasy, and romance. Enthusiastic, discursive, widely knowledgeable, and a demon for punctuation (on which he has also published extensively), he has been a Summer Programme Course Director and Panel Tutor for the Institute of Continuing Education since 1992.

Course programme

It is essential to have read the novel before the course. There is a free etext available through Amazon's Kindle Stores, but it contains many errors. The World's Classics or Penguin editions (also available as etexts) are strongly recommended.

09:30	Terrace bar open for pre-course tea/coffee
10:00 – 11:15	<i>Nostramo</i> : Narrative Structure
11:15	Coffee
11:45 – 13:00	<i>Nostramo</i> : A Sense of Place
13:00	Lunch
14:00 – 15:15	<i>Nostramo</i> : The Cast of Characters
15:15	Tea
15:30 – 16:45	<i>Nostramo</i> : Themes and Motifs
16:45	Day-school ends

Course syllabus

The course is a one-day sequence of four sessions on Joseph Conrad's great novel *Nostramo*. No other text need be read.

Aims:

To (re)introduce students to the novel.

To put the novel in historical and literary context.

To prompt consideration of how unusual a novel it is, not least in its representations of revolution.

Content:

The sessions will consider in turn the novel's narrative structure, sense of place, cast of characters, and themes or motifs. All are unusual by the standards of the canon of English novels, and the oddities are breathtakingly combined to generate one of the greatest political novels in the language.

The course will put the novel and its Polish-born author in historical context before looking at the ways in which Conrad brings to vivid life both his considerable range of characters and his archetypal South American country of Costaguana, with its mountains, seaboard, peoples, turbulent politics, and often oppressive heat. The seeming meanders of the narration, supported by chapters of intense but usually reported action, and the lyrical descriptions and evocations of topography, flora and fauna, weather, and the moods of the sea, also allow the great themes and motifs of the novel to be widely and very subtly dispersed, as well as overtly signalled in the plot.

Students reading the novel in advance should watch for the word 'silver', and be alert to any mention or implication of wealth, for the relations of capitalism and its values to people, and theirs, and to the phenomenon of revolution are at the novel's heart.

Presentation of the course:

In each session I shall have things to say for perhaps 30-40 minutes, followed by open discussion. There will also be some PowerPoint slides to provide illustrations and other data.

As a result of the course, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to:

understand the nature and radical qualities of Conrad's achievement in *Nostramo* ; and (re-)read and discuss the novel with greater insight and literary appreciation.

Reading and resources list

It is essential to have read the novel before the course. There is a free etext available through Amazon's Kindle Stores, but it contains many errors. The World's Classics or Penguin editions (also available as etexts) are strongly recommended.

Listed below are a number of texts that might be of interest for future reference, but do not need to be bought (or consulted) for the course.

Author	Title	Publisher and date
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Jeffery Meyers, *Joseph Conrad: A Biography* (New York: Scribner's, 1991)

J. H. Stape, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Joseph Conrad* (Cambridge: CUP, 2006)

Ian Watt, *Essays on Conrad* (Cambridge: CUP, 2000)

Website addresses

http://www.josephconradsociety.org/scholarly_resources.htm

Note Students of the Institute of Continuing Education are entitled to 20% discount on books published by Cambridge University Press (CUP) which are purchased at the Press bookshop, 1 Trinity Street, Cambridge (Mon-Sat 9am – 5:30pm, Sun 11am – 5pm). A letter or email confirming acceptance on to a current Institute course should be taken as evidence of enrolment.

Additional information

Venue

Details of how to find Madingley Hall can be found on our website:

http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk/who-we-are/how-to-find-the-institute*

Refreshments

Tea and coffee and lunch will be provided. If you have any specific dietary requirements or allergies and have not already advised us, please inform our Admissions Team on ice.admissions@ice.cam.ac.uk or +44 (0)1223 746262.

Information correct as of: 16 September 2016