

Joseph Conrad: Tyranny and Revolution

Joseph Conrad Society of America (MLA Allied Organization) **MLA 2025 New Orleans**

Conrad was a victim of political tyranny and one of its most trenchant observers in fiction. In a time when regional wars threaten to metastasize into larger conflicts and autocracy is on the rise, this call invites contributors to explore how Conrad's works might lend us insights today. Papers on how Conrad's fiction and non-fiction address political tyranny, or revolution, or both, are welcome. While tyrants and revolutionaries are well-known in such novels as *Nostromo*, *The Secret Agent*, and *Under Western Eyes*, and his most well-known political essay, "Autocracy and War," Conrad was equally interested in the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars, which form the backdrop of "The Duel," *The Rover*, and the unfinished *Suspense*. Broader interpretations of tyranny and revolution in a wider range of scenarios are encouraged, for instance under the auspices of colonial regimes or capitalism, or attention to understudied texts.

Send 250-word proposals & a 3-page CV by March 15th 2024
Prof. Jana Giles < giles@ulm.edu >

Making Visible: Conrad, Poland, and World Literature

Special Session **MLA25 New Orleans**

This year is the centenary of Joseph Conrad's death, and his legacy and continuing relevance extend across Anglophone literary discourses into the broader realms of World Literature. But many of Conrad's texts remain famously surreptitious – or cannily suggest new modes of cultural consciousness and exchange. As with so many of his often-veiled characters and peoples, Conrad's narratives press different cultural or national outlooks into the open, or they critique the social and literary systems by which individuals or traditions might otherwise remain cached. In this regard, texts such as *Lord Jim*, *Nostromo*, *Under Western Eyes* or *The Rescue* provide characters and scenarios wherein human alterities and cultural differences are made visible, or in which they emerge into new discursive spaces. This MLA Special Session proposal seeks papers addressing the discourses of visibility and invisibility in Conrad's works, not least his own troubled relationship to Poland and Polishness, but also in a world literary framework whereby his fictions open unexpected conduits of exchange across national, ethnic, or linguistic lines. Topics might include Conrad's fiction-based legacy in South East Asia, the cross-cultural mosaic of *Nostromo*, or the coded manner in which that author's national heritage inflects his texts.

Send 250 word panel paper proposals and a brief CV by March 16th 2024
Mark Deggan (Simon Fraser University) < mark_deggan@sfu.ca >