

## Conrad, a Hundred Years After His Death – 14 Nov. 2024 – One-day conference

Conrad died in 1924 and since then, interest in his *œuvre* or in himself has never abated. Conrad has alternatively been portrayed as a precursor of modernity, announcing the major ideological and political changes or socio-economic evolutions that characterized the 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> century, or vilified as a controversial author who condoned imperialism and colonialism. In any case, he was never absent from people's minds: literary critics, theorists, filmmakers, writers, graphic novelists, or even painters have never ceased to refer to his stories, his characters, his use of the English language, or his personal life, in high and popular culture alike.

Our purpose therefore is to assess his influence and the topicality and relevance of his works in this day and age, as well as to try and determine the directions this influence may take in the forthcoming years. The relatively recent field of ecocriticism has for instance opened new paths in Conradian criticism that are progressively being explored, as postcolonial or women's studies did in the 1980s and 1990s.

On the other hand, we have to take into account questions of reception, the impact of accountability culture and sensitivity reading applied to works of the past. Teaching controversial texts has also become difficult both in secondary and in further education. How does this political context affect the choice of texts commented on or studied? How does it modify Conrad's position within "the great tradition"? Or his reception by new generations? What place does he occupy both in academia and for the general public? Does this positioning acknowledge his complexity, as a multilingual, modernist exile whose use of language foregrounded the ambiguities and contradictions of the nascent 20<sup>th</sup> century? How does Conrad challenge our vision(s) of the world in the first part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century? Why do we still read his works and teach them? To what extent do so many artists and writers throughout the world still consider him as a touchstone? What is it, in other words, that still drives them, that still drives us, to Conrad? Here are some of the questions we would like to explore.

We therefore particularly invite contributions exploring how emerging, newly emerged or not so recent fields of studies influence our approach to Conrad, or how Conrad's works may in their turn throw light on contemporary realities. Papers may for instance explore the following categories:

- *postcolonial studies*
- *gender studies*
- *ecocriticism*
- *Anthropocene/capitalocene studies*
- *subaltern studies*
- *border studies*
- *reception studies*
- *cultural history*

Please send proposals and short biographical notes by May, 30<sup>th</sup> to Nathalie Martinière ([nmartiniere@gmail.com](mailto:nmartiniere@gmail.com)). The conference is co-organised by the Société conradienne française and Ehic-EA 1087 (Université de Limoges).

### Scientific committee

Nathalie Martinière (Université de Limoges); Véronique Pauly (UVSQ), Richard Ambrosini (Roma Tre).

