

It is with shock and great sadness that we report that Josiane Paccaud-Huguet passed away in September 2023. The Conrad community has lost a bright spirit, who always illuminated the many conferences to which she contributed with her clarity of thought and beautifully poised expression, her elegance and her kindness. She brought with her from Lyon, where she was Professor Emeritus at the University of Lyon-2, an inimitable note of French intellectual life that will be much missed and a unique personality which touched those who met her. She published articles in *The Conradian* from its earliest days, and regularly in *L'Époque Conradianne*, which have left a highly recognisable imprint on Conrad studies, both in English and in French. We print below the tribute read at Josiane's funeral in Lyon by her close friend, university colleague and Thomas Hardy scholar, Professor Annie Ramel.

Josiane Paccaud-Huguet
September 12, 2023

We all felt immensely sad when we heard that Josiane Paccaud-Huguet had passed away, from a long illness against which she fought with all her strength. She was borne along by her passionate love of life, she battled against death with a courage that aroused every one's admiration. Without ever complaining, or renouncing anything, she continued life as before, she achieved extraordinary feats, like standing on a stage for over two hours, playing the mandolin, at a traditional dance where our band was playing last June, while she was undergoing chemotherapy.

Josiane was professor of English Literature at Université Lumière-Lyon 2, she has published extensively on English modernist literature, especially on Joseph Conrad. She played an essential part in the studies of Joseph Conrad. In collaboration with her colleague and friend Claude Maisonnat, she published a monograph on Joseph Conrad for Les éditions de l'Herne (2014). She has also written on James Joyce, D.-H. Lawrence, Malcolm Lowry, Katherine Mansfield, Oscar Wilde, Will Self, Virginia Woolf. She has left her mark on Woolf studies in France. We owe her the remarkable translation of *Between the Acts* for the Bibliothèque de La Pléiade, in a collection directed by Jacques Aubert, in collaboration with Adolphe Haberer and Michèle Rivoire.

Oriented towards psychoanalysis by a colleague in Lyon 2, Michel Cusin, she took over from him when he retired and was in charge of his seminar on "discours, parole" ("discourse, speech"). Renamed "Letters, language, psychoanalysis", the seminar was under her supervision for fifteen years. It was a meeting-place for PhD students, teachers, researchers, and also psychoanalysts. Michel Cusin and Josiane, as well as Jacques Aubert, have succeeded in bridging the gap between literary studies at University and psychoanalysis. Thanks to them a whole generation of English language specialists turned to Lacan to throw a light on their work. Josiane Paccaud-Huguet's article on « Psychoanalysis after Freud », published in *Literary Theory and Criticism, an Oxford Guide*, by Patricia Waugh (2006), contains in a nutshell all that psychoanalysis can bring to the reader of literary texts.

Josiane Paccaud was also head of the department of English studies at our University, I was deputy head, “*assesseur*” in French, I helped her as best I could, and sometimes I asked her “*suis-je assez sœur pour toi?*” (“am I sister enough for you?”). That was how our friendship began, a friendship that supported her till the very last hours of her life, and which will never die out. Later she was dean of the Faculty of Languages for five years.

But Josiane was before all a teacher, who knew how to listen, give, encourage, inspire, advise, without ever placing herself in a position of mastery. We receive innumerable expressions of gratitude, from colleagues whose thesis, or “*habilitation*” thesis, she supervised. All say that she was intellectually stimulating, rigorous, and also full of benevolence and generosity. Something like a transference took place, and friendship was born. Above all Josiane knew how to create links, she knew how to love, and how to make herself lovable.

Once one has tried to relate Josiane’s University career, one has only gone half-way, for she had two other lives which mattered immensely to her, and where her presence dazzled us. A member of the “*Association de la Cause Freudienne*”, she started a career as a psychoanalyst when she retired. When she spoke at the “*Section Clinique de Lyon*,” what she said was always admirable, judicious, clear-sighted, sharp and subtle, it invariably aroused the admiration of her colleagues, who were psychoanalysts. Josiane’s third life was music: a mandolin player, she played in a band specialized in traditional music, making people dance on crowded dance-floors. Josiane’s daughter Clémence, a professional violin-player, sometimes joined us, an invaluable addition to the band.

Josiane, to speak *of* you, a non-person, and not being able *to* speak to you, is unbearable. So let us suppose that you are somewhere, that you can hear us, even if “the vault of the heavens no longer exists.”¹ Your demise leaves a void, an abyss. Try as we may, we will never find the words to say it, we will never fill the void. All we can do is turn around it, as the potter gives a shape to the void. We will have to create *ex nihilo*, to become artists, since “all art is characterized by a certain mode of organization around this emptiness.”² Your very dear friends, moved by the pain that they feel, they will no doubt write poetry, in many different ways. And all that they will be able to write, they will have written it in ink drawn from your dark eyes (“*tout ce qu’ils pourront écrire, ils l’auront puisé à l’encre de tes yeux*”: Francis Cabrel). Your friends, the musicians of your band, they will go on composing music and playing in balls, so that the dancers may never cease to turn around what cannot be said. You used to love dancing, sometimes you enjoyed dancing with your grand-children. You put your heart and soul in dancing, and your soul, I know that it is still dancing now, and that it will go on dancing, always.

¹ Lacan, *The Seminar VII*, “The Ethics of psychoanalysis”, Abingdon: Routledge, 1992, p. 151.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 160.