

Jeremy Hawthorn (1942 - 2025)

Jeremy Hawthorn died peacefully in Trondheim, Norway, on 28 October 2025. His passing marks the loss of a leading Conrad scholar of his generation.

Jeremy was born in Beckenham, London, in 1942, and the war and its aftermath became a formative experience for him. After having completed his studies at the University of Leeds, he was a lecturer in English literature at various British universities. In 1981 he was appointed Professor of Modern British Literature at the University of Trondheim, a position he held until his retirement in 2012.

Jeremy took a strong interest in Conrad's fiction over the course of his whole academic career. His first monograph on the author, *Joseph Conrad: Language and Fictional Self-Consciousness* (1979), gives a detailed discussion of five of Conrad's major novels. It demonstrates that a self-conscious concern with language and fiction is a key aspect of these fictional texts.

The insights of this book are elaborated in his second monograph on the author, *Joseph Conrad: Narrative Technique and Ideological Commitment* (1990). This important study posits, and then explores, a productive interaction between Conrad's narrative technique and his moral and ideological consciousness. A main concluding point is that, for Conrad, narrative technique is not enough; his aesthetics is coupled with his narrative ethics.

Jeremy's third monograph on Conrad, *Sexuality and the Erotic in the Fiction of Joseph Conrad* (2007), shows that the comprehensiveness of Conrad's fictional vision does not exclude a concern with the sexual and the erotic. The study argues convincingly that these elements contribute to, rather than reduce, Conrad's achievement as a writer of narrative fiction.

Jeremy's three monographs are original studies of Conrad's unique combination of language and narrative technique on the one hand and public and political inquiry on the other. While the studies are influential in themselves, their significance is further augmented by the ways in which they are related to Jeremy's many articles and book chapters on Conrad. The monographs' lasting importance for Conrad studies is also strengthened by the references Jeremy makes to Conrad in books that do not primarily deal with his favourite author. These include *Cunning Passages* (1996), *A Glossary of Contemporary Literary Theory* (4th edition, 2000) and *Studying the Novel* (8th edition, 2023).

Jeremy took a particular interest in the modernist period (ca. 1890–1940), and his work on Conrad shows convincingly how strongly Conrad's fiction contributed to the development of British and European modernism. That his interest in modernism was not limited to Conrad is illustrated by the fact that his first monograph was a perceptive study of Virginia Woolf, *Virginia Woolf's 'Mrs Dalloway': A Study in Alienation* (1975).

Under Western Eyes, and he also edited the Cambridge edition of *The Inheritors: An Extravagant Story* and *The Nature of a Crime*.

Jeremy was an active member of the Joseph Conrad Society (UK) for many years. He also made notable contributions to the international Conrad community, not least at Conrad conferences in many countries. He will be remembered for the way in which he encouraged young Conrad scholars, not only by generously offering to read their work but also by making constructive criticisms and giving valuable suggestions. While many young scholars were introduced to Conrad and Conrad studies via Jeremy's books on the author, his work has proved, and will continue to prove, important for several generations of Conradians. As the responses to the news of his death show, many of his students and colleagues around the world are grateful for his contribution – and valued him as a friend too. Jeremy Hawthorn was a brilliant Conrad scholar, and his work has a large following.

Jakob Lothe