J. Fac. Gen. Educ. Sapporo Univ. 25 : 45—66 (September, 1984)

On the Frames of Conrad's "Youth" and "Heart of Darkness"

Keiko Marukawa

(1)

In the very last years of the 19th century, Conrad wrote three stories which had Marlow as narrator. Marlow made his debut in "Youth" (first published Sept. 1898) and appeared successively in "Heart of Darkness" (serialized Feb. -April 1899) and in *Lord Jim* (serialized Oct. 1899-Nov. 1900).[1] To all these three, Marlor lends as the pervading tone his free, conversational, rather bluff seaman's voice, the adoption of which has made it easier for Conrad to deal more freely with materials derived from his personal experiences as a seaman.

Another element which characterizes Marlow's first-person narration is that the narration is conveyed not at first hand, but at second hand, embedded in another unidentified narrator's narration. In other words, all these stories are what is called frame stories. The frame is known to be one of the oldest devices of fiction for providing a plausible, realistic basis that makes the strangest story acceptable. That is, certainly, one function of the frames of the Marlow stories. When 'sea-dogs' generally have a "propensity to spin yarns,"[2] it is quite natural that, of an evening, in a company of old friends, Marlow should indulge himself in long reminiscences about his adventures on

the sea or on some far-away land. But we also notice that the frames of the Marlow stories are not only the frames that enclose and support the stories but also the devices which, corresponding in structure to the main stories, deepen or reinforce their meanings. How Marlow tells his story, to whom, and, in the case of "Heart of Darkness", even when and where, are matters that offer themselves to be taken into account in the interpretation of the stories. To achieve a fuller interpretation of them, it will be necessary not just to read Marlow's narration as a text, but to take it as an act of communication.

In the introductory work which shows ways to analyze fictional prose as a means to a fuller understanding and appreciation of a work of fiction, Geoffrey N. Leech and Michael H. Short, roughly following Halliday's concepts of the textual and interpersonal functions of language, draw a distinction between communication seen as discourse and as text. According to them, "discourse is linguistic communication seen as a transaction between speaker and hearer," while "text is linguistic communication (either spoken or written) seen simply as a message coded in its auditory or visual medium"(3). One of the characteristics of a work of fiction seen as discourse is that it "can contain at least three levels of discourse embedded one inside another, operating at the levels of author and reader, implied author and implied reader, and narrator [either first-person or third-person] and interloctutor."(4) The Marlow stories, then, with Marlow's narration embedded inside that of the first narrator's, have more than three levels of discourse, and what makes them remarkable is that this multi-leveled discourse situation itself is an important part of the message

conveyed by the author to the reader, at the same time that it is a means by which Marlow's message will be accepted and interpreted in an appropriate way.

Looking from the point of view of discourse, we find the first two Marlow stories, " Youth " and " Heart of Darkness ", have exactly the same discourse structure, while *Lord Jim*, having omniscient third-person narration in the first four chapters and Marlow's audience unidentified, is different in discourse structure. If we scrutinize the discourse situations of the two stories, however, we detect some small differences between them, which, together with the differences in the messages, account for the differences in depth and complexity of vision.

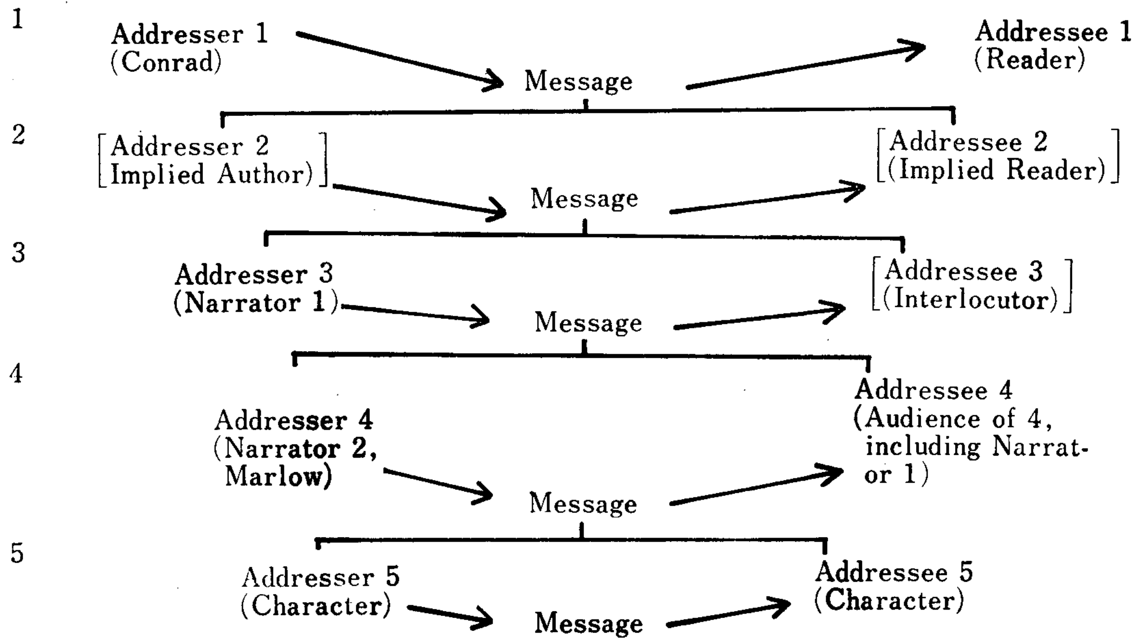
In this essay, we would like to describe and examine the discourse structures of " Youth " and " Heart of Darkness ", paying attention to the correspondences between the frame and the story, and see how Conrad has, in about half a year, learned to make a full use of the device of having Marlow as narrator to represent his vision of the complexity of the world at the turn of the century. We will leave the study of the discourse structure of *Lord Jim*, and for that matter, that of the last Marlow story, *Chance* (1913), which belongs to another period of Conrad's literary career, to another occasion.

(2)

Following the descriptive method shown by Leech and Short,(5) we can describe the discourse relations involved in " Youth " and " Heart of Darkness " as in the figure below.

The Discourse Structure of "Youth" and "Heart of Darkness"

(Levels)



Notes on the figure

1. Theoretically we have to distinguish the implied author in a particular novel or short story from the author himself and the implied reader who cooperates with the implied author in bringing out the meaning of the text, from the actual reader. We also have to presuppose an interlocutor when there is a firsd-person narrator, or an I-narrator, telling his story. In our two stories, however, there seems to be no practical reason to make all of these distinctions and presuppositions. Square brackets around a discourse participant in the diagram indicate that that participant is merged into the equivalent participant in the immediately higher level of discourse situation.

2. In each story, the upper four levels make up the frame, the message given by Narrator 1 being the story itself. Con-

sequently, our chief consideration will be given to these levels of discourse.

3. In either of the two stories, the discourse structure is not always five-leveled as the diagram shows. Level 4 does not come in before Marlow begins his story. When he reports a conversation between characters in his story, we have the fifth level of discourse added to the discourse situation.

The figure shows apparently no differences either in discourse structure or in discourse participants (excepting, of course, the characters in the messages or stories given by Marlow) between " Youth " and " Heart of Darkness ". If we scrutinize the third level of discourse, however, we find a subtle difference in the status of Narrator 1 as well as in the discourse situation between Narrator 2 and his audience, as is reported by Narrator 1.

In the two stories Marlow has the same audience consisting of four ex-seamen, a director of companies, a lawyer, an accountant and the first narrator. We are not told who this narrator is. He is, however, more obscure in " Youth " than in " Heart of Darkness ", for, though he can be classified as an I-narrator, he does not refer to himself as " I " in " Youth ", except for once in parentheses, while in " Heart of Darkness " he refers to himself as " I " six times. Almost as impersonal as a third-person narrator, Narrtaor 1 of " Youth " just sets the scene at the beginning of the story and closes the curtain at the end. This narrator, therefore, can hardly be said to have personality. None the less, he cannot be replaced by an impersonal, objective, third-person narrator. We may designate him as a " we-narrator ", because all that is important about

him is that he is one of the audience. He is their representative and at one with them.

Next we must take a look at the relation between Narrator 2 and his auditors. How is his narration taken by them? W. Y. Tindall says, in an essay discussing the growth and development of Marlow as personality and as author's mask, that in "Youth" old Marlow who indulges in reminiscences of his first voyage as second mate to the East is dramatized and exposed to be an awkward sentimentalist. His argument is intended to justify the rhapsodic insistence on "glamour" of youth and the East, which tends to sound incongruous to the sophisticated reader. According to Tindall, it is not Conrad (or our Narrator 1), but Marlow, who is rhapsodic, and "ironic Conrad, aloof, silent, and listening among men of affairs, lets innocent old Marlow show old Marlow up."(6) In the otherwise very perceptive essay we cannot agree with Tindall on the point that Marlow is thus exposed to irony. Narrator 1 tells us that Marlow's nostalgia is shared with his listeners, between whom and Marlow "there [is] the strong bond of the sea and also the fellowship of the craft" (3). And when Marhow asks them at the end of his narrative, "[W] asn't that the best time, that time when we were young at sea; young and had nothing, on the sea that gives nothing, except hard knocks ... ?" they "all [nod] at him," their old "weary eyes ... looking anxiously for something out of life, that while it is expected is already gone ... — together with the youth, with the strength, with the romance of illusions" (42). In these concluding words by Narrator 1, we do not detect any ironic tone, but see Marlow's sentimental exclamations fully endorsed by the auditors who must have had similar experiences

in their youth. Marlow is, as it were, the spokesman of these middle-aged men's nostalgia. It may be said that the five of them have the same attitude or point of view toward the story of the past.

We have in "Youth", then, a discourse situation where Narrator 1 is as good as a third-person narrator and Narrator 2 and his audience (including Narrator 1) share the same point of view. In the third-person narration form, Leech and Short say, "[t]he lack of an 'I'...invites the reader to collapse the addresser side of the novel's discourse structure, so that implied author and narrator become merged."(7) We may take the voice of Narrator 1 to be almost the voice of implied author.(8) To show that Narrator 1 is merged into implied author or author, we should put another pair of square brackets around Addresser 3 in the diagram.

When author, narrator, and his audience are almost at one, with the discourse levels collapsed, there are no gaps left for irony to break in, for if we follow Leech and Short again, irony is defined for fictional purposes as "a double significance which arises from the contrast in values associated with two different points of view."(9) All the participants on the upper four levels in the figure have almost the same point of view.

It is between the fourth and the fifth levels of discourse that irony comes into the story. Old Marlow, who has since learned much from life, looks back upon the innocence and folly of his over-zealous youth with some affection and no little irony. He remembers how eagerly he courted danger, how he discovered romance in disaster, how blind he was to the old captain's tragedy, what illusions of omnipotence he had of

himself. There seems to be, however, no serious conflict between young Marlow being thus remembered and old Marlow remembering. They are totally separated by more than twenty years' time, and old experienced Marlow is now quite another man from the ignorant second mate. Moreover, in spite of his unique experience, young Marlow is not so much a particular young sailor as a typical young man, or youth itself. And now the foolish youth is truly dead, and even when evoked vividly, does not involve the middle-aged man morally. " The good old time " (42) is long gone, just to be remembered with " the mood of wistful regret, of reminiscent tenderness " (vii) according to the phrases Conrad uses in the Author's Note in reference to the mood with which " Heart of Darkness " was *not* written.

We have seen that the frame of " Youth " is simple in structure, with its only conflict between the ignorant youth and the experienced middle age safely distanced, and with no conflicts at all between the narrators and the listeners. Marlow is not unlike the primitive storyteller by the fireside who tells tales of adventures of old to the entertainment and enlightenment of members of the community. Ian Watt's summarization of an important but often neglected part of Marlow's roles in " Heart Darkness " almost sums up his roles in " Youth " ; he is " the means whereby Conrad incorporates three of the oldest, and predominantly affirmative, elements in storytelling: the narrator as a remembering eyewitness: the narrator as the voice of his author's opinions: and the narrator as a friendly personal presence,"(10) though here he does not voice so much of his author's opinions as his feelings of nostalgia. What is aimed at in " Youth " by the new device of Marlow as narrator is a

straightforward effect of giving the narrative an intimate nostalgic tone and enlisting the listeners', and thereby the reader's, sympathy. In former times the occasion of storytelling used to be a communal occasion to share experiences and enhance solidarity. In reading " Youth ", the reader is offered a similar occasion; he is invited to join the fellowship of the sea and feel assured of its solidarity, while enjoying the vivid story of the heroic misadventures of the simple seamen. The " we-narrator " in the frame with his sympathetic description reinforces the invitation.

(3)

In " Heart of Darkness ", Marlow is again in the primitive storytelling situation, but he no longer seems to enjoy the whole-hearted sympathy of his listeners, nor can Narrator 1, being a little isolated, always be regarded as the representative of the audience. The setting is the same as that of " Youth ", except that in this work the time and the place of the setting, more specified and elaborated, are themselves to become important elements in the narrative. On the deck of the cruising yawl *Nellie*, the group of people are waiting for the turn of the tide, all feeling " meditative, and fit for nothing but placid staring " (46). Marlow is sitting apart from the others, with his sunken cheeks and ascetic aspect. Then he breaks the silence, and Narrator 1 hastens to remark that an ordinary yarn cannot be expected of him. Unlike the others, he still follows the sea, but he does " not represent his class," the narrator says; he is " not typical." His story will not be typical,

either, for, while "[t]he yarns of seamen have a direct simplicity, the whole meaning of which lies within the shell of a cracked nut," to Marlow "the meaning of an episode [is] not inside like a kernel but outside, enveloping the tale which [brings] it out only as a glow brings out a haze..." (48). Marlow's yarn in "Youth" is one of those typical ones, but his tale in "Heart of Darkness" is not destined to be clear and easy to understand, as the words "glow" and "haze" ominously suggest. What makes the other crew of the *Nellie* tolerant of such a yarn is "the bond of the sea" (45). It is, nevertheless, not enough to make them attentive listeners. In the course of Marlow's story, the first narrator more than once suspects that some of the other listeners may be asleep. When the story ends, the audience, instead of nodding with one accord as in "Youth", remain immobile and silent, until the director, as if awaken from sleep or meditation, brusquely makes a practical remark, "We have lost the first of the ebb" (162). We may regard the silent immobility of the audience and the loss of the ebb as the signs of the audience's deep absorption in the story. But the occasional ironical tone which has appeared in the voice of the first narrator makes us suspect that some of the audience have not been very attentive to the story. We may even try an ironical interpretation of the director's words; they have lost not only the first of the ebb but also the meaning of the story. There seems to have been no fully shared understanding between Marlow the narrator and the audience.

Thus "Heart of Darkness" reveals a gap between addresser and addressee on the fourth level which allows irony to slip in. Even in the narrator's report on Marlow, we hear an ironical

tone. Reporting, for instance, that Marlow at last has launched into the story of his journey, he adds, " we knew we were fated, before the ebb began to run, to hear about one of Marlow's inconclusive experiences," and " he began, showing in this remark the weakness of many tellers of tales who seem so often unaware of what their audience would best like to hear " (51). The irony, intended as it is for Marlow on the part of the narrator, is intended to be double-edged, on the part of the author. The author suggests by putting these comments in the first narrator's mouth that the four men are not very eager and understanding listeners. Marlow in turn often challenges the audience's understanding in the course of the story and gets somewhat irritated and ironical at the lack of proper response. In " Youth " Marlow punctuates his tale with the refrain-like exclamations, " O Youth! " " Bankok!" " Good-bye! " and " Pass the bottle " (which four words and phrases, incidentally, epitomize the theme of the story) to evoke the audience's sympathy and heighten their communion. The audience must have chanted the refrains in silent chorus. In " Hear of Darkness ", on the other hand, with a number of questions put to the listeners as well as to himself, he invites them to join in the quest for true significance of his experience. Some of them fail to do so, and either sleep the time away or make such obtuse responses as to call forth from Marlow irritated exclamations. For example, when he admits that there was temptation in the " incomprehensible frenzy " (96) of the yells and dances of the savages in the bush and says that only " a fool, what with sheer fright and fine sentiments, is always safe 〔from such temptation〕", someone grunts, and causes him to retort : "Who's that

grunting? You wonder I didn't go ashore for a howl and a dance? Well, no--I didn't. Fine sentiments, you say? Fine sentiments, be hanged! I had no time" (97). The grunter does not seem to suspect that he might be one of the safe fools. It is more than once that Marlow makes such a retort.

On level 4, then, we have a discourse situation where the participants tend to be ironical with each other. In other words, the discourse situation is dramatized, each participant being given an objective status. One considers the other to be a long-winded talker who forces an incomprehensible story on the patient listeners. For them the story is at best an adventure story. Being unable to understand the whole of the story, they tend to cavil at Marlow's words. This attitude of the auditors anticipates the attitude of some of the readers. F. R. Leavis's famous criticism against Conrad's "adjectival insistence" and his being "intent on making a virtue out of not knowing what he means"(11) may be considered to be one of these examples. His admiration for "Heart of Darkness" is based on "the overwhelming sinister and fantastic 'atmosphere' " which is engendered "by means of [his] art of vivid essential record, in terms of things seen and incidents experienced by a main agent in the narrative. ..."(12) We have to note that though Conrad generally has a tendency to overuse adjectives, here it is Marlow, not Conrad, that is fumbling with heavy adjectives, and his fumbling is objectified by contrast with the uncomprehending insipid responses of the audience. Leavis has failed to notice that how Marlow tells his story — his questionings, his exclamations, his struggles to express what might be beyond words — is no less important than what he tells.

In Roger Fowler's classification of " I-narrators ", he gives Marlow as a classical illustration of his second type which he calls the " storyteller ". His first type of narrators, the " confessional narrators ", including Tristram Shandy, Huckleberry Finn, and others, are those " who claim to be someone entirely different from the author, and who tell their own personal history in an idiosyncratic manner.... Being strongly dramatized, these fictitious narrators are volubly interpersonal, using the I' pronoun frequently, and constantly talking to the reader," while the " storyteller ", though he is " like the confessional narrator, manifestly distinct from the author," " focuses less on his own personal history and experiences than on some train of events which he happens to have witnessed."(13) Now Marlow in *Lord Jim* and *Chance* certainly belongs to the latter type, and even Marlow in " Youth " who tells his own experience is one of this type, in that young Marlow is distinct from the old storyteller. Marlow in " Heart of Darkness " is, on the other hand, more like the " confessional narrator ". He is dramatized, though not strongly, and " volubly interpersonal, using the 'I' pronoun frequently, and constantly talking," not " to the reader," but to his audience, whose responses anticipate the possible responses of the reader.

Marlow in " Heart of Darkness ", then, while retaining the role of the primitive storyteller described in Ian Watt's summarization quoted above, is still an object in the message imparted by Narrator 1 on the discourse level 3, though on the lower levels, of course, he is both subject and agent.

(4)

We have so far lumped the four auditors together as uncomprehending listeners. But if we look more closely, we see the necessity of differentiating our Narrator 1 from the other three, as Seymour Gross does in his short essay. Gross says that the first narrator is the only one of the four listeners that has understood and learned from Marlow's yarn; he even passes through a moral experience analogous to Marlow's own; "[b]oth Marlow and the first narrator, metaphorically speaking, start at the same place, take the same trip, and arrive at the same destination."(14) We cannot be so sure that the first narrator has learned as much as Marlow. To conclude that seems to make too much of the frame of the novel. Still we have to admit that Narrator 1 is different from the others. We can no longer call him a "we-narrator" as we have done in "Youth".

At the beginning of the story, however, Narrator 1 plays the spokesman of the audience, or it may not be too much to say that he plays the spokesman of the bourgeois, imperial England. The composition of the audience, a director of companies, a lawyer, an accountant and the narrator, epitomizes the late 19th century England, whereas in "Youth" it has no other meaning than that they are practical businessmen looking back fondly at romantic young days. The Thames at the decline of day elicits a typical bourgeois response from the narrator; he is reminded of the glorious history of the river which has borne "all the men of whom the nation is proud,"

and "all the ships whose names are like jewels flashing in the nights of time." Those ships and men were "messengers of the might within the land, bearer of a spark from the sacred fire." "What greatness had not floated on the ebb of that river into the mystery of an unknown earth!... The dreams of men, the seed of commonwealths, the germs of empires," (47) exclaims the happy innocent Englishman who believes in civilization and European superiority.

As if to dampen his complacency, Marlow opens his mouth and says that this place of light and greatness "has been one of the dark places of the earth" (48). He goes on to challenge the audience to imagine the fate of a young Roman who came into this heart of darkness; "the growing regrets, the longing to escape, the powerless disgust, the surrender, the hate" (50). The listeners take this challenge placidly. The surprising, or disturbing quality in Marlow's remark is attributed to his peculiarity as a seaman. Watching the busy traffic of the great city going on upon the sleepless river, it is beyond them to imagine the darkness that was there nineteen hundred years ago — or, only yesterday, as Marlow puts it. So far the first narrator has always used "we" to mention the listeners' responses.

By the time Marlow has proceeded to about a third of his story, the first narrator's complacency is shaken. He feels a "faint uneasiness inspired by this narrative" (83). He does not know how the other people feel, because in the darkness they can hardly see each other nor any one speaks. He supposes the others may be asleep. He no longer speaks for the others but for himself, using "I" instead of "we". In the invisible dark-

ness, Marlow has become " no more ... than a voice " (83) to the narrator, just as Kurtz was to Marlow, " very little more than a voice " (115). It is on this parallel that Gross bases his argument that " [h]e [the first narrator], in the frame, stands in the same relationship to Marlow as Marlow stood to Kurtz in the actual experience."(15) This is a slight basis, for we are not allowed to know enough of the first narrator's state of mind to be able to say that he has experienced the same trip as Marlow vicariously. Most of the time he is reticent about himself. Notice that he refers to himself as " I " only six times, when Marlow is full of " I "s, trying his best to impart his subjective impressions.

We must admit, nevertheless, that the narrator *has* experienced a change in his vision through listening to the tale. He has had his complacency slightly shaken. Then the change in his vision is made apparent in the final sentence of the story. He says, "... the tranquil waterway leading to the uttermost ends of the earth flowed sombre under an overcast sky—seemed to lead into the heart of an immense darkness " (162). At the beginning of the story, he described the river in almost the same phrase, " spread[ing] out in the tranquil dignity of a waterway leading to the uttermost ends of the earth " (46-47), and exclaimed, " What greatness had not floated on the ebb of that river into the mystery of an unknown earth! " Now he knows what became of the greatness that had floated out; what the fates of the glorious adventurers were. Whether he has so much shared Marlow's vision as to feel the pervading darkness, the darkness even in the mind of man, we are not told. But he has certainly made some moral progress, while the others seem

to remain at the same place.

Narrator 1 of " Heart of Darkness ", then, has some personality; he arrives at a different point of view from his fellows. Objective and reliable as he is, we cannot merge him into implied author, and consequently we cannot collapse the third level of the discourse structure as we did in " Youth ". Not only between the participants on level 4, but also between the levels 2 (=1), 3, and 4, we find gaps for irony to come in. Then, just as Marlow the storyteller is an object of the first narrator, so the first narrator himself is an object of the implied author. Unlike the simple monolithic frame of " Youth ", the frame of " Heart of Darkness " is a multi-leveled one in which the participants look from different points of view at the message given by Marlow. We do not have to modify the diagram of the discourse structure of this novella.

(5)

The implied author's message, which is the work itself, consisting, for the most part, of Marlow's message, includes at the same time possible responses to it. We are given two of those responses; the first narrator's and the others'. Marlow's message, or tale, is admittedly not clear. For he tries to convey his experience, not in an objective, analytical way, but in a personal, impressionistic, often contradictory way. It is even part of his message that it is impossible fully to understand and, much less, to convey, his experience. Confessing that it seems to him he is "making a vain attempt" to tell his listeners a dream, he concludes that " it is impossible to convey the life-

sensation of any given epoch of one's existence — that which makes its truth, its meaning — its subtle and penetrating essence " (82). The result is that his tale, besides being a " vivid essential record " of his experience, has " the terrific suggestiveness of words heard in dreams, of phrases spoken in nightmares " (144), just as the words exchanged between Kurtz and Marlow in the heart of darkness had. It is left for the audience to make out the meaning of the experience with all the implications that the vague unmanageable words have. Some of the listeners may barely be able to find out the " kernel " of the story, while even those who have managed to be aware of the " haze " enveloping the story are not sure how far the haze extends. Marlow himself may not be sure.

Thus in the frame of " Heart of Darkness ", at least two ways of reading Marlow's message are enacted. If we take Marlow's worn ascetic aspect which the first narrator mentions repeatedly, to be the overwhelming effect of his extraordinary experience, the devastating physical effect and the burden of the past that cannot be calmly retrospected but keeps on demanding intense confrontation, we may say that there is another way of reading the message suggested. The reading of " Youth " is also anticipated in the frame, where the reader is expected to join the community of the seamen and share their nostalgia. There seems to be no other way of reading it, while there may be several ways of reading " Heart of Darkness ". Just as Marlow feels the impossibility of fully communicating the meaning of his lonely nightmarish experience, the implied author seems to express in the structure of the frame his scepticism of the possibility of an authorized, clear under-

standing or reading of his message. He has no longer any firm belief in communicating and sharing experiences as he had in " Youth ". This enactment within the novel of the difficulty of telling, and consequently, understanding the full story is, Ian Watt says, a way in which "'Heart of Darkness' anticipated the unauthoritative, self-reflexive, and problematic nature of such later fiction as Kafka's novels and Gide's *Les Faux Monnayeurs*."(16)

But if Marlow is aware of the impossibility of fully understanding and imparting his own experience, why does he take such pains to tell his story? The reason is that he has a congenial audience before him. Between them there is " the bond of the sea." Though they may follow different occupations and, like Victorian gentlemen that they are, happily believe in progress and civilization, being bemused enough not to be aware of the darkness, they all share the practical social ethic that Marlow endorses. He can rely on them to understand the disgust he felt to see how lazy and greedy Europeans were messing things up in the Congo, or to agree with him when he says, " What saves us efficiency — the devotion to efficiency " (50). Their old bond is further strengthened by the intimacy that the isolation on the immobilized yawl in the darkness ensures. They may not see each other, but feel the physical presence of the others. The old friendly occasion of storytelling is more elaborately established than in " Youth ", which provides a sufficient motivation to Marlow's urge to tell the tale of his painful experience to his friends. And it is also because he has a friendly audience that he can tell it in a subjective, questioning, inconclusive way; he breaks off, retracts, exclaims, gropes

for words, asks questions. For him telling the story is questing for truth, involving his friends in his quest. It is as if he believed in the possibility of communication.

The ambivalence toward the possibility of communication is thus incorporated in the frame of the novella. It is to be expected of its multi-leveled, ironical structure. The ambivalence in the frame, at the same time, corresponds to the ambivalences prevalent in the message of Marlow; he condemns and admires Kurtz; standing aghast at the deluded idealism of Kurtz's Intended, he respects it to save her. There is also Marlow's ambivalent attitude toward work. He generelly has a Victorian faith in work; it is through devotion to work and restraint needed for pursuing work that Marlow is saved from the heart of darkness. He feels "a subtle bond" (119) has been created between him and the savage helmsman who has steered for him, while he is utterly estranged from the indolent "pilgrims". Work also gives you "the chance to find yourself, [y]our own reality" (85), he adds. And yet he says, in other places, that when you are engaged in work, you are only in touch with "the mere incidents of the surface" (93) or "surface-truth" (97) and there will remain hidden "the inner truth" (93) which you will have to meet with your "own innate strength" (116), or you will be crushed by "the powers of darkness" (116). While believing in the Victorian work ethic, he is conscious of its imperfectness and precariousness.

Likewise in the frame, the sense of the difficulty of arriving at shared understanding coexists with the belief in the solidarity to which the artist speaks and "which binds men to each other, which binds together all humanity."(17) From the simple,

unalloyed belief which is shown in " Youth ", it is a big step towards the modern novel where the novelist deals with and incorporates " the problem of the breakdown of a public sense of significance."(18) Nevertheless, making a full use of the device of the frame of the primitive storytelling situation, " Heart of Darkness " manages to keep some of the 19th century positive belief in the possibility of sharing vision.

And that is why, in spite of the teasingly mysterious haze which encases Marlow's story, there emerges with an overwhelming power the essential reality of everything he sees and feels through his journey. Even examined from a somewhat trivial viewpoint of the frame, " Heart of Darkness " has proved to be a work that steps into the 20th century, while " Youth " remains well in the 19th century.

Notes:

(1) As to the dates of publication, see Bibliography 1 in Jocelyn Baynes, *Joseph Conrad: A Critical Biography* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1967).

(2) Joseph Conrad, " Heart of Darkness," in *Youth, Heart of Darkness, The End of the Tether* (1902; Collected Ed. London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1946), p. 48; hereafter numerals in parentheses refer to the pages in this volume.

(3) Geoffrey N. Leech and Michael H. Short, *Style in Fiction: A Linguistic Introduction to English Fictional Prose* (London & New York: Longman, 1981), p. 209.

(4) Leech and Short, p. 269.

(5) *Ibid.*, pp. 262–72.

(6) W. Y. Tindall, " Apology for Marlow," in *From Jane Austen to Joseph Conrad*, ed. Robert C. Rathburn and Martin Steinmann, Jr. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1958), p. 278.

(7) Leech and Short, p. 266.

(8) Tindall, as the above quotation shows, takes for granted that

Narrator 1 is Conrad.

(9) Leech and Short, p. 278.

(10) Ian Watt, *Conrad in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkely and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1979), p. 211.

(11) F. R. Leavis, *The Great Tradition* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1948), pp. 177, 180.

(12) *Ibid.*, p. 176.

(13) Roger Fowler, *Linguistics and the Novel* (London: Methuen, 1977), pp. 83-84.

(14) Seymour Gross, " A Further Note on the Function of the Frame in ' Heart of Darkness,' " *Modern Fiction Studies,* III (Summer, 1957), 167-70, rpt. in *Heart of Darkness,* 2nd ed. Robert Kimbrough (New York: W. W. Norton, 1971), pp. 227-28.

(15) Gross, p. 228.

(16) Watt, p. 211.

(17) Joseph Conrad, " Preface " to *The Nigger of the " Narcissus,* (1897; Collected Ed. London: J. M. Dent & sons, 1950), viii.

(18) David Daiches, *The Novel and the Modern World,* rev. ed. (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1960), p. 6.