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Projected mediacy and rendered mediacy in Henry James's notebooks: A cognitive perspective

Abstract: Informed by the conceptual framework of cognitive narratology, this chapter attempts to offer a critical refinement of Franz K. Stanzel's view of narrative mediacy – as well as of its absence – and use it to map out the modes of this phenomenon in Henry James's notebook entries as it takes early shape in them. To this purpose, and after briefly reviewing a number of models of mediacy developed by Stanzel himself, Yacobi, Meister and Schönert, Fludernik, and Walsh, I propose a metarepresentational interpretation of narrative mediacy with an emphasis on its capacity to metamorphose authorial, disembodied facts into mental states ascribed to the storyworld participants. Looking at James's notebook sketches through the resulting theoretical grid uncovers a finer complexity than generally acknowledged by Stanzel's discussion. Two interlocking conclusions suggest themselves – first, the analysis of (emergent) mediacy, as Stanzel conceives of it in his account of the said notebooks, arguably surpasses the mere quantitative dimension related to the perceptual and phenomenological issues of textual salience, thus calling for a further qualitative distinction between what might be understood as *projected* and *rendered* mediacy; second, it is only through the interplay of both qualitative and quantitative axes that a comprehensive description of the modes of early mediacy in James's notebook material can be actually provided.

1 Introduction

In this chapter, and aided by some instrumental notions supplied by cognitive narrative theory, I intend to revisit the topic of narrative mediacy as it emerges from notebook plot outlines and sketches made by authors as memoranda and compositional guides. My point of departure is Franz K. Stanzel's (1986) classical treatment of the concept of mediacy and his qualified contention – later echoed and partially endorsed, for instance, by Monika Fludernik (1996, 28) – that there are three types of texts related to the fictional genre which do not generally present any narrative mediacy or, at most, a residual degree thereof. They are simply bare statements of facts reported in the present tense without any hint at the

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pragmatic structure of narrative embodiment and transmission (Stanzel 1986, 4–21, 22–45). For Stanzel, these three textual types are summaries or synopses of fictional works, chapter headings, and plot outlines or sketches recorded by authors before the fact of artistic composition.

In more specific terms, my object here is to map out the modes of mediacy which arise from Henry James's notebook projects while suggesting that the real issue is not the presence or absence of mediacy in these texts, but rather whether such mediacy, in whatever mode, is *below* or *above* the sensitivity threshold of the registering instruments used by Stanzel in his account of this topic. If one resorts to more discerning notions and analytic methods as those furnished by cognitive narratology, and especially to the metarepresentational ability of real and realistic minds as a vehicle for mediacy, a more nuanced picture can be said to emerge. Focusing on James's notebook outlines for his short fiction, I identify two qualitatively distinct modes of mediacy – *projected* and *rendered* – which in turn diversify in terms of textual salience, ranging from obtrusive artefacts to more or less inconspicuous cases of cryptomediacy which arguably failed to sensitize Stanzel's gauge as he discussed this issue. Following Stanzel's view of mediacy as the hallmark of the narrative text, it seems quite plausible to read some of James's notebook entries as fairly accomplished micronarratives in their own right. But, before I address the peculiarities and shades of mediacy in these entries from an analytic angle, a few key notions should be examined and placed in readiness for use.

2 Setting the stage: Some cases for narrative mediacy

To say that mediacy is a highly elusive concept seamlessly related to the constitutional indirection of the fictional genre is no novelty at all. In his book *A Theory of Narrative*, first printed in German in 1979, Stanzel set up a theoretical framework for the treatment of narrative mediacy that has held out for more than forty years. Apart from proposing the term *mediacy* – originally *Mittelbarkeit* – in place of the less idiosyncratic, though largely synonymous, *mediation*,[1] he characterizes the narrative work as that in which the storyworld is not mimetically ap-

1 Though both terms emphasize the idea that immediate representation is a sheer impossibility, Monika Fludernik (2010) justifies their separate existence, considering that *mediacy* refers to Stanzel's own conception of the narrative text, whereas *mediation* is the more general process whereby a "deep-structural plot" becomes "a medium-related surface structure" (2010, 127); see also Fludernik (2010, 116), and Meister and Schönert (2009, 23n11).

prehended by readers or auditors, but relayed to them by a more or less anthropomorphic intervening stance – a conception which, incidentally, locates narrativity in the vehicle for content rather than in its internal disposition whether temporal, causal, or both. In this general context, Stanzel proceeds to set up and illustrate his influential triad of narrative situations – first person, authorial, figural – which basically represent the three major strategies whereby mediacy can be imparted to narrative content.

Stanzel's seminal approach has been revised and extended in several directions over the years. In her 1987 paper, for instance, Tamar Yacobi spells out her view of narrative mediation as a structural resource whose function either as a bridge or a wedge placed between author and reader, as well as its variable extent, result from triangulating the intratextual speaker's (un)self-consciousness, the concept of fictionality, and his or her claims to reliability. Yacobi's argument turns on the mediator's regular blindness to his or her own fictionality – with odd experimental exceptions such as Unamuno's *Niebla* (1914) – while being often conscious of the fictionality of the storyworld participants, and she concludes that reading and interpreting fiction efficiently mostly consists in defining the mediation gap with the greatest possible precision. Another triangulate ideation of mediacy was proposed in 2009 by Jan Christoph Meister and Jörg Schönert in an attempt to supersede the rigidity of Gérard Genette's (1980 [1972]) binary opposition between voice and mood, narrator and focalizer. This time, the three related dimensions are those of perception, reflection, and mediation, which respectively form the input, processing, and output parameters to what they call the "dynamic narrative system," or DNS for short. Each of these dimensions is organized along three continua that range between the poles of mimesis and diegesis, and differs from the other two in the kind of mental activity and constraints associated with it. For Meister and Schönert, the advantage of their model lies in its dynamism and openness, its refusal to be contained in the "rigid slots of a taxonomy" (2009, 19), and its capacity to characterize mediacy as a scalar phenomenon based on the interplay of three continuous magnitudes.[2] Monika Fludernik, for her part, takes Stanzel's transmissive conception of mediacy and turns it inside out on the basis of experientiality, that is, on the overwhelming presence of human(-like) consciousness at the core of narrative representation. In specific circumstances, such as Stanzel's so-called reflector-mode narrative, she argues her conviction

2 To my mind, Meister's and Schönert's (2009) is the most ambitious and systematic chapter in a volume entirely devoted to narrative perspective and mediation (Hühn, Schmid, and Schönert, *Point of View, Perspective, and Focalization: Modeling Mediation in Narrative*). Also directly relevant to my object here is Herman's chapter on cognitive grammar and focalization theory (2009, 119–142).

that consciousness replaces narration, that this mode is substantially distinct from teller-mode narrative and does not simply entail a quantitative effacement of the narrator correlated with the character's growing presence, but "a different mode of cognitive conceptualizing of character's experience – *telling* versus *experiencing*" (2010, 116), in which the character's mind becomes the central issue and the narrator a peripheral, dispensable concern.

But it is Richard Walsh who has been most vocal in his revision of Stanzel's view of mediacy, to the point that his own conception stems from a set of critical comments on that view which jointly amount to a total amendment. To begin with, Walsh (2007) finds fault with the reliance of Stanzel's model on the vexed dichotomy of story and discourse – content and transmission – and especially with the logical and temporal prioritizing of the story over the discourse that turns the latter into an ancillary, channelling medium just reduced to operate when fed with a successfully finalized story. Using the equivalent terms of *fabula* and *sujet* originated in Russian formalism, Walsh inverts this hierarchy. For him, the "[f]abula is not so much an event chain underlying the sujet as it is a by-product of the interpretative process" (2007, 67), or, in other words, "sujet (discourse) is what we come to understand as a given (fictional) narrative, and fabula (story) is how we come to understand it" (2007, 68). But more substantial than the relative status of story and discourse, and the compositional and interpretive relations that obtain between them as one builds and decodes mediacy, is Walsh's criticism of the narrowness of Stanzel's conception that leads the latter to restrict mediacy to verbal mediacy. "[N]arratives in linguistic media constitute one kind among several in the genus of narrative representation," says Walsh; and he adds that verbal narrative should be considered "in the context of its theoretical continuity with narrative in other media" (2007, 88). To his vision, mediacy is "a property of media," of *any* media, and so "the distinction between (for example) fiction and drama is not a distinction between indirect and direct form," as Stanzel would have it, "but between semiotic means of representation, in one case symbolic [. . .] in the other iconic" (2007, 86). So, for him, mediacy is a free-ranging semiotic phenomenon rather than one confined to verbal narration. This turns the idea of narrative *voice* into little more than an apt metaphor, a mere "figure for agency in narration [. . .] as inherently a part of film and drama as it is of the novel" (2007, 89), and "in no way specific to language [. . .] but semiotic, and relevant across the whole range of narrative media" (2007, 102). As a consequence of the new semiotic latitude of the notion of mediacy, Stanzel's ontological requisite for a narrator, even if wholly impersonal and speaking for a character, becomes pointless in Walsh's system, as this can only accommodate "either a character who narrates, or the author" *in propria persona* (2007, 78) with an explicit ban on the "covert [. . .] uncharacterized [. . .] pure narrative agent" on grounds of its su-

perfluity (2007, 80). The fact that a large number of narrative works have no intratextual substitute speaker posited to preserve the distinction between an author's real-life discourse and the outcome of his or her narrative representations may be thought to impair fictional illusion and inhibit the reader's willing suspension of disbelief. In this regard, however, Walsh is unambiguous. "[D]isbelief," he argues, "is essential to reading a work of fiction as *fictional*" (2007, 70) – an assertion that just stops short of expressly recommending what one might call *a willing enhancement of disbelief*.

One aspect of Stanzel's conception of mediacy is bound with phenomenological issues and contingent on the reader's subjective experience of textuality and his or her sensitivity threshold for the detection and ranking of significant indices of mediacy. Narrative representations can be mediated in two different ways by two different kinds of agents – narrators and reflectors. Narrators are in command of language; they recount events, relay information by linguistic means, and, in certain circumstances, frame all sorts of comments on the told. Reflectors, for their part, silently shape the storyworld to be narrated according to their spatio-temporal, cultural, and mental coordinates by engaging in activities such as *experiencing*, *perceiving*, *thinking*, *feeling*, and so on, which could be loosely described as forms of cognition. Though Stanzel is often explicit about this dual source of mediacy (e.g. 1986, 5, 9–10, 20–21), it is just obvious too that he does not accord them the same importance nor equal functionality. "Whenever a piece of news is conveyed," he writes, "whenever something is reported, there is a mediator – the voice of a narrator is audible. I term this phenomenon 'mediacy'[. . .]" (1986, 4). In principle, for him, mediacy is narratorial mediacy conveyed via the robust, conspicuous expedient of a well-inflected telling voice, while reflectorial mediacy is initially left out of the picture and retrieved only to characterize the figural narrative situation, where "the mediating narrator is replaced by a reflector," "nobody '*narrates*,'" "the representation *seems* to be direct," and "the *illusion* of immediacy is superimposed over mediacy" (1986, 5; my emphasis). We know, however, that Stanzel's model cannot tolerate the ontological absence of a narrator, and so the idea of replacement is simply metaphorical. What actually happens is a contest between what *is* and what *appears* to be. Mediacy is always imparted by a narrator, but this narrator can be more or less personal and speak for himself or herself, or it can be impersonal, featureless, and speak for a storyworld character allowing the latter's conceptualization of the diegesis to permeate the text and thus promote a *faux* illusion of dramatic enactment.[3] It is Stanzel himself who respectively describes narratorial and

3 Other theorists have been equally mesmerized by the immersion in the figural consciousness brought about by radically impersonal, effaced narrators speaking for characters in the story-

reflectorial mediacy as "overt mediacy" and "covert or dissimulated mediacy" (1986, 141), and his later commentators have followed suit with equal or similar terms and precautionary tags such as "impression" (Fludernik 2009, 89); "explicit and implicit [. . .] overt and covert [mediacy]," "laid back, covert, or even seemingly non-existent [narrator]," "pretense of immediacy" (Fludernik 2010, 114, 115); or "openly mediated," "obliquely mediated," "veiled mediacy" (Alber and Fludernik 2014, 310, 311).

This brief overview has sought to describe Stanzel's two modes of mediacy, namely narratorial and reflectorial, correlated with two degrees of mediating obtrusiveness. In particular, when conducted by a personal narrator possessed of a psychology of his or her own and expressly empowered by all signs of traditional omniscience, the teller-mode of mediacy is hard to miss. But when these signs vanish and we only have the smooth, pervasive filtering of narrative content via a storyworld mind, detection, processing, and assessment of mediacy may become a moot affair. It is in this context that much of what follows acquires meaning and explanatory potential.

3 Mediacy, absence of mediacy, and metarepresentational theory

If the first chapter of Stanzel's (1986) *A Theory of Narrative* establishes his conception of mediacy, the second one determines the grounds for its cancellation. Three types of texts, he argues, lack (full) mediacy despite their close association with the fictional work: summaries or synopses of narratives, chapter headings, and plot outlines or sketches intended by authors as guidelines for composition. Given the general thrust of my discussion here, I am especially concerned with the latter. In point of fact, however, summaries or synopses and plot outlines or sketches are often indistinguishable from each other in formal terms, unless we know whether they temporally precede or follow the text they relate to. Stanzel emphatically underlines their equivalence regarding (the lack of) mediacy (1986,

world. Wayne C. Booth calls these characters whose minds are pseudo-dramatically reported "unacknowledged narrators," and argues that "they fill precisely the function of avowed narrators" (1983 [1961], 153). Though more accurate and cautious, Stanzel's account is rooted in the same kind of fascination that lies behind Booth's expansive pronouncement.

22, 43–44), and even refers to them almost interchangeably in the wrong context giving rise to mild solecisms.[4]

Stanzel's contention is that "there is no narrating in a summary; rather, something is being established in a factual or general way" (1986, 24), which essentially means that facts are paraded on the diegetic horizon as pure elements of content often cast in the present tense of gnomic or synoptic statement, isolated from – and unconditioned by – the structure of narrative transmission and its agents, shown as mere authorial *données*, absolute, disembodied, pragmatically unsituated, unmodalized. It follows from this that information in notebook sketches is provided authorially, that is, by the author himself or herself rather than by a substitute speaker embedded in, or inferred from, the text. With reference to Henry James's scenario for *The Ambassadors* (1903), Stanzel insists that "all characters are still introduced authorially [. . .] they are presented by the author" (1986, 36), but, in his characteristic meandering style, he also grants the possibility that a verbal exchange between Maria Gostrey and Lambert Strether, as reported in that scenario, might not be an authorial given, but rather the latter's impression (1986, 34–36). This would contribute a shade of mediacy, he claims, and, despite the prevalent use of the present tense, the fragment in question "would no longer be a synopsis but a narrative" (1986, 36).

As noted above, Stanzel formally admits the existence of two modes of mediacy – narratorial and reflectorial. But, when he relents, his deep-seated partiality for explicit verbal mediation leads him to focus on the narratorial variety to the detriment of the reflectorial one, whose detection and subsequent discussion tends to be far more patchy and haphazard.[5] "[I]t is characteristic of the summary," he writes, "that it says nothing about the form of mediacy, that is to say, the form in which a story is *narrated*," and, in similar fashion, he argues that a summary presents "story-minus-mediacy," or, in other words, "story-without-*narrator*" (1986, 22–23, 24; my emphasis). In these two cases, it seems to me, consistency would have called for an inclusive reference to both modes of mediacy since both are instrumental in imparting it, at least as far as Stanzel's theoretical claims are concerned. However, his account of this issue in chapter 2 of *A Theory of Narrative* appears to be weighed down by the lack of finer instruments and

4 For instance, he submits that a "common element shared by all three kinds of texts is that mediacy has not yet or only partially found expression in them" (Stanzel 1986, 22). Obviously, he is speaking of "all three kinds of texts," but thinking only of *one*, since what he says can only properly apply to plot outlines or sketches noted down *before* the fact of artistic creation.

5 In his *A Dictionary of Narratology*, Gerald Prince also defines *mediated narration* as a purely narratorial phenomenon – that "in which the narrator's presence makes itself felt" (2003 [1987], 50). There is no reference whatsoever to the reflector's mediating role.

tends to be somewhat insensitive to the conceptualizing mind placed within the storyworld and to its mediating role. Reconsidering narrative mediacy in terms of metarepresentational theory can provide more accurate insights into the general nature of this phenomenon and its specific functioning in James's notebook material.

Looking at mediacy as the result of a metarepresentational operation is no outlandish idea. It rather seems a natural development of proposals first made by Fludernik (1996) around the pivotal axis of experientiality as the constitutive feature of the fictional text. If Walsh's criticism of Stanzel's essentially linguistic, vocal, and narratorial model of mediacy led the former to exploit the broader semiotic aspects of this phenomenon, Fludernik emphatically contributes the cognitive edge. For her, what characterizes a narrative work is not the overtly transmissive figure of a narrator, but rather the occurrence of "a human (anthropomorphic) experiencer of some sort at some narrative level" (Fludernik 1996, 9), and she insists on the "mediation through consciousness," on the fact that "all narrative is built on the mediating function of consciousness," as well as on "the projection of consciousness" as the foundation for all narratives (Alber and Fludernik 2014, 311, 317). In this chapter, and especially in the remainder of this section, an attempt will be made to show that the general principle of experientiality, whereby mediacy becomes a function of the intervening mind, is best channelled in the narrative text via metarepresentational operations.

One of the defining characteristics of thinking minds, whether human or human-like, is their capacity to construct representations of the world. If I think or say "Oxygen plays a fundamental role in combustion," I am representing a state of affairs, making it part of my subjectivity, assimilating it into my inner life for a variety of purposes. But if I think or say "Lavoisier believed that oxygen plays a fundamental part in combustion," I am *meta*representing, that is, I am wedging another consciousness between my mental processes and external reality, or, put more technically, I am thinking about thinking, representing a mind engaged in representing the world, or acknowledging the existence of another mind – or another level of the same mind, as in introspective thought – and ascribing propositional attitudes to it (e.g. a belief) – in sum, I am performing a set of operations which are only accessible to human beings and, rather controversially, to some species of apes. What is more, since metarepresentation is a recursive process, nothing keeps me from thinking or saying "Late eighteenth-century scientists wondered why Lavoisier believed that oxygen plays a fundamental part in combustion," and so continue to add successive mental embeddings until complexity wholly hinders comprehensibility.

There is, however, another key aspect to the metarepresentational ability. In a world of contingent information, where most of what we know derives from

communication rather than direct experience, it is vital to discriminate between true and false pieces of intelligence. According to some accounts,[6] the architecture of the human mind has developed a specialized protective adaptation that allows us to store and process content along with the circumstances in which it was acquired. It all happens as if our mental databases had two fields for each register, one in which we place the fact that oxygen plays a fundamental part in combustion and another in which we enter, for instance, the source of such information, or, more exactly, whom we hold responsible for its truth value. For chemists working in late eighteen-century France and still supporting the phlogiston theory, the role of oxygen in combustion carried a screaming tag pointing to Lavoisier. That tag has weakened and even been dropped over the years, and nowadays most people for whom oxygen is essential to combustion could not name Lavoisier as the source of this piece of intelligence. All precautions originally taken to constrain its scope and interacting capacity as the basis for inferential thinking are superfluous now, as the role of oxygen in combustion has become uncontested fact. In this context, to *metarepresent* information is to be explicit about the circumstances of its acquisition and, especially, about its provenance, while the term *metarepresentational dynamics* denotes the shifting status of its truth value as reflected by source tags. Needless to say, failure of the metarepresentational ability can be severely disrupting, as when real and fictional information is indiscriminately stored in our mental databases, and then inadvertently used to make inferences and pilot real-life behavior.

The dual emphasis of the metarepresentational endowment constitutes an invaluable tool to read and interpret fiction. On the one hand, it enables both readers and characters to recognize (other) storyworld minds, figure out their contents, and experience fictional reality through their representations of it; on the other, it allows them to decouple the paths of propagation of intelligence from one another and thus prevent the informational structure of a narrative from growing into a perplexing tangle. In fact, one could even argue that an efficient reading of a narrative work is that in which, at a given stage of development,

6 To the best of my knowledge, the reference paper in this respect is "Consider the Source: The Evolution of Adaptations for Decoupling and Metarepresentations" (Cosmides and Tooby 2000); additional notes on the handling of contingent information can be found in Sperber (2000, 135), and an experimental approach to how readers of narrative texts keep track of *who* said *what* and *who* knew *what* is offered in Graesser, Olde, and Klettke (2001). The most thorough application of Cosmides's and Tooby's system to narrative theory is to be found in Zunshine's 2006 book *Why We Read Fiction*. More compact critical analyses carried out within the metarepresentational frame have been contributed by Iversen (2011), Phelan (2017, 160–177), Marsh (2018: especially 1336–1338), and Álvarez-Amorós (2018, 2021).

every bit of content has been acceptably tagged and tracked down along a minimally describable path of propagation. All of this, of course, is directly relevant to a metarepresentational view of narrative mediacy.

As we know, Stanzel's argument is that unmediated content, whether in plot outlines, summaries, or chapter headings, consists of a set of facts sourced from the authorial position and immune to the relativizing potential of the narrative transaction. In cognitive terms, however, the idea of verbal transmission is superseded by that of experientiality, that is, by the shaping presence of a human(-like) consciousness at the core of the narrative work. From this it follows that building mediacy is the process whereby *fact* becomes *mental state* via the attribution of lumps of content to thinking minds within the storyworld, that is, by metarepresenting them. Retrieving the Lavoisier example as the generating cell of a possible narrative, one could argue that, as soon as the fact that oxygen is fundamental for combustion is attributed to the French scientist, now a storyworld character, it ceases to be a fact and becomes a metarepresented belief or conviction. It may clash with other beliefs or convictions on the same plane of epistemic precedence, for, in very real terms, it is Lavoisier who must answer for its veracity within the fictional universe – discounting in this case, as is natural, the hindsight provided by historical knowledge. Likewise, the statement "Lisa's voice is sweet" may count as a fact, while "Lisa's voice is sweet to me" denotes a mental attitude, a metarepresented state of affairs which may be true or false in the fictional world. No wonder, then, that mediacy, thus understood, tends to compromise the authenticating potential of a narrative text, especially in a case such as James's where artistic execution often amounts to finely slicing a lump of content and attributing the resulting segments to "experiencers," that is, to epistemic positions located within the storyworld. That a large body of Jamesian annotations have survived allows for comparison and contrast between the informational structures of sketches and finished works, or, in plain words, between how readers come to be apprised of the central concern of a narrative in the narrative itself and in its antecedent. Results, however, are not uniform. It is not a question of notebook sketches displaying pure disembodied fact, and final narratives a mediated, *executed* version thereof. James's notebook entries rather alternate between authorially factual, neutral accounts following Stanzel's conception, and *semi-executed* micronarratives where cognitive, experiential mediacy is actually there to be described and assessed. But this leads us back to the phenomenological issue of sensitivity thresholds.

Language provides a significant array of structures and pointers enabling readers to discriminate between mediated and unmediated content, between mental states and monolithic fact, even if such structures and pointers differ substantially

in their textual salience. Consider, in this regard, the following passage taken from the notebook sketch for James's tale "The Lesson of the Master" (1888):

> So it occurred to me that a very interesting situation would be that of an elder artist or writer, who has been ruined (in his own sight) by his marriage and its forcing him to produce promiscuously and cheaply – his position in regard to a younger *confrère* whom he sees on the brink of the same disaster and whom he endeavours to save, to rescue, by some act of bold interference – breaking off the marriage, annihilating the wife, making trouble between the parties. (James 1987, 43–44)

As is well known, the central concern of both entry and tale is the deleterious effect of marriage on artistic production. James might have chosen to present this concern as an authorial given, unmediated, unquestionable – after all, this is the earliest possible stage of his idea, in which, according to Stanzel, mediacy has not yet set in. But James decided to append a tag to the alleged toxicity of marriage – "(in his own sight)" – indicating who holds this belief within the storyworld, that is, metarepresenting it, attributing it to one of the projected characters, and thus dissociating himself from that view – note that the meaning dramatically alters if the tag is omitted. What seems decisive to me is not the presence of this source tag in the notebook sketch, but rather Stanzel's categorical denial of the existence of *any* narrative mediacy in this particular entry. "The first note about the basic situation in 'The Lesson of the Master,'" he states, "contains no information whatsoever as to how the recorded situation could be narrated" (Stanzel 1986, 30). Considering that mediacy for him – at least in formal terms – has both narratorial and reflectorial aspects, and that his idea of an *Erzählsituation* is an acknowledged combination of both, his dismissal calls for some reflection. In my view, it can be best explained by the hypothesis that tags of this kind lie below the threshold of his registering instruments. They fail to sensitize his critical apparatus as they do not fit in with the overriding mental schema that mediacy, at rock bottom, can only be the narratorial mediacy imparted by an essentially overt anthropomorphic voice, and that the mediacy of consciousness is a mere form of words, a parasitic phenomenon deprived of independent existence.

Verbal signals of cognitive mediacy, indicative that a metarepresentational operation is under way, can be disconcertingly subtle, almost invisible. Given their role in denying a piece of content the status of pre-narrative fact and emphasizing its mental dimension, I propose to give them the collective label of *defactualizers*. On a continuum of textual salience, they can range from semantically loaded words, which can arguably condense tiny cognitive systems, to unmistakable descriptions of mental attributions cast in the standard format of

grammatical embedding.[7] The term *imputation* in "The defendant would not submit to the imputation of a hate crime" is a case in point. If analyzed and expanded, it reveals the underlying structure of a metarepresentation ("The defendant would not submit to the fact that someone thinks he has committed a hate crime"). What is more, if part of a narrative, one could even presume the existence of an additional layer of mind ("The narrator assumes that the defendant, etc."). At the other end of this continuum, we find full propositional descriptions built on metacognitive lexis (*know*, *guess*, *believe*, *think*, *suppose*, *presume*, and so on), which not only reflect the general foregrounding of subjectivity, but also the specific nature of the mental operation involved. And between these two poles of minimal and maximal obtrusiveness, there runs the whole gamut of intermediate degrees instanced by distancing expressions (e.g. "in his opinion"), words of estrangement (e.g. "as if," "apparently," "presumably"), impersonal or defective attributing structures which defactualize a piece of information, but remain silent on the metarepresentational source (e.g. "there is the belief that"), etc. All of these indices point out, with differing degrees of explicitness, to the existence of cognitive mediacy, that is, to the removal of information from the idealized condition of synoptic fact and to highlighting its contingency on a fictional consciousness.

4 Projecting and rendering mediacy – the qualitative dimension

To explain any lapse in the detection and assessment of mediacy on a quantitative basis is a plausible way to address this issue. It is undeniable that linguistic pointers of mediacy can vary from veritable protrusions on the textual surface to more or less cryptic signals subject to debate and interpretation, and James's notebook sketches, in my view, can furnish evidence of both. The whole issue, however, grows in complexity when one closely examines these sketches in the light of what Stanzel understands as mediacy in them. Consider now these two

7 Zunshine (2015) takes one step further along this line, and argues that there are two types of mind-embedding or mind-nesting (for her, the units of meaning in fiction): (a) explicit nesting of mental states, which are textually described, and (b) implicit nesting of mental states, which are not textually expressed but rather identified inferentially by readers on the strength of contextual clues, expectations about the functioning of realistic minds, and, in general, *a priori* (folk-) knowledge on cognition. Therefore, sociocognitive complexity does not reside only in the text, but rather in the context and especially in the ability, training, and sensitivity to mind of readers and critics. See also Zunshine 2011, especially 350–353.

notebook entries, chosen among similar ones because they are compact enough to be quoted without unreasonable ellipses:

> [T]he story of the young children (indefinite number and age) left to the care of servants in an old country-house [. . .] The servants, wicked and depraved, corrupt and deprave the children; the children are bad, full of evil, to a sinister degree. The servants *die* (the story vague about the way of it) and their apparitions, figures, return to haunt the house *and* children [. . .] So long as the children are kept from them, they are not lost: but they try and try and try, these evil presences, to get hold of them. It is a question of the children "coming over to where they are." It is all obscure and imperfect, the picture, the story, but there is a suggestion of strange gruesome effect in it. The story to be told – tolerably obviously – by an outside spectator, observer. (James 1987, 109)

> A young girl, unknown to herself, is followed, constantly, by a figure which other persons see. She is perfectly unconscious of it – but there is a dread that she may cease to be so. The figure is that of a young man – and there is a theory that the day she falls in love, she may suddenly perceive it. Her mother dies, and the narrator of the story then discovers, by finding an old miniature among her letters and papers, that the figure is that of a young man whom she has jilted in her youth, and who therefore committed suicide. The girl *does* fall in love, and sees the figure. She accepts her lover, and never sees it again! (James 1987, 10)

These sketches respectively stand behind the composition of "The Turn of the Screw" (1898) and "Sir Edmund Orme" (1891), two "grossly and merely apparitional" tales – to borrow James's own expression (1987, 189) – that have been read and discussed by critics in wildly different terms. If we stipulate that the typical Jamesian notebook entry normally consists in the retelling of an inspirational (real-life) anecdote followed by the ideation of a fictional project somehow based on that anecdote, we must recognise that none of the above entries conforms to the general pattern – in fact, they deviate from it on account of the radically different treatment pre-textual material receives in each of them. Except for the closing sentence, the plan for "The Turn of the Screw" is but the literal retelling of a story which James heard from the Archbishop of Canterbury; apparently, he saw no need to rework it to fit his purposes and transcribed it *verbatim* into his notebooks. "Note here," he writes, "the ghost-story told me at Addington [. . .] by the Archbishop of Canterbury" (1987, 109). On the contrary, the entry for "Sir Edmund Orme" has no anecdotal pre-text whatsoever. It is a pure, unalloyed fictional project, without the slightest hint at any inspirational antecedent. In plain words, one could even say that the former is an anecdote without an ensuing project, while the latter is a project unmotivated by any explicit anecdote.

But what really counts here is a different question. Much discernment is not needed to notice that these entries respectively illustrate two substantially distinct modes of mediacy, which we may call *projected* or *discussed* mediacy, on the one hand, and *rendered* or *implemented* mediacy, on the other. The plan behind

"The Turn of the Screw" is an instance of projected or discussed mediacy. Here James openly describes what he holds to be the most effective method to insert the fictional content in the pragmatic structure of narrative representation by making it contingent on a specific epistemic position – in this case, that of "an outside spectator, observer," who, as is well known, soon relinquishes his or her outsideness and becomes heavily embroiled in the unfolding course of events. The final sentence is itself a project, *not* an actual implementation of mediacy. In this entry, it takes the form of a glaring protrusion standing out from the immediate context, and it is this kind of projected mediacy what Stanzel probably expected when he missed information about "how the recorded situation could be narrated" (1986, 30) in the entry for "The Lesson of the Master." In the note for "Sir Edmund Orme," however, the situation seems quite different. The term "narrator" occurs once, but the nature of this figure is not discussed beyond its mere mention. Despite its conciseness, this note encodes considerable mental density, mainly focused on the young girl's obliviousness of her circumstances, which creates the differentials of knowledge customarily related to the selective sighting of supernatural apparitions. But there are two defactualizing expressions that make all the difference – "there is a dread that" and "there is a theory that." By using both in rapid succession, James effectively dissociates himself from the portions of content made contingent on them ("she may cease to be so [i.e. "perfectly unconscious" of the apparition]" and "the day she falls in love, she may suddenly perceive it"). These cease to be authorial facts – as is, for instance, the unchallenged depravity of the servants in the previous entry – and become (impersonal) states of mind by virtue of metarepresentational operations defectively described on the textual surface. Readers thus know that some inhabitant of the fictional world has a dread, has a theory, but they are denied the means to know *who*, whether it is a single person, or, more probably, an intermental unit, the social mind of the community where they lead their lives. The point I wish to make is that the "Sir Edmund Orme" entry does not contain any explicit, textually differentiated project of mediacy to be mapped out, via execution, on the full-blown narrative, but *actual cases* of mediated information, in which verbal resources are mobilized to indicate that responsibility for its truth-value is authorially disclaimed and attributed to thinking minds within the storyworld.

Instances of projected mediacy in Henry James's notebooks are by no means rare. Since the notebooks became widely available in 1947, his fumblings to impart narrative shape to his material have formed – along with the more accomplished and systematic prefaces to the volumes of the New York edition of his novels and tales (1907–1909) –a fundamental body of theoretical and critical reflection underpinning Anglo-American narrative theory for decades. Such instances of projected mediacy range from brief references – "I must tell the story as an eye witness"

(1987, 44), "The thing had much best be told by a witness of her life [. . .] in the 1st person" (1987, 49), "And told *impersonally*, as an anecdote of *them* only – not, that is, by my usual narrator-observer" (1987, 195) – to fairly copious methodological discussions to be found, for example, in the entries for "The Coxon Fund" (1894) on how to represent a leading character as an impression (1987, 95), "The Next Time" (1895) on whether to employ a conscient, semi-conscient, or unconscient narrator with growing degrees of resulting irony (1987, 110, 123), and "The Way It Came" (1898) on whether to settle for a "first-person" character narrator – a "'3d person' narrator" in James's idiosyncratic terms – or for an "impersonal form" (1987, 144), and the compositional benefits provided by each option.

Considering the type of narrative favored by James, it is not surprising that his projects of mediacy should focus on narrative forms that tend to regulate the amount of intelligence available for representation according to verisimilar standards. For this reason, he often discusses the storyworld observer whether embodied by his characteristic "first-person" narrator-witness or in association with an impersonal, "third-person" speaker. In this regard, while groping for the most effective narrative strategy, James comes up with two insightful, non-technical definitions *avant la lettre* of Gérard Genette's internal focalization and Stanzel's figural narrative situation. As he ponders on the "compensating" effect that an impersonal, "third-person" speaker can contribute to "The Way It Came," he explains, "I might 'impersonally' include the 3d person [i.e. the diegetic observer] and his (or her) feelings – tell the thing even so from his, or her, point of view" (James 1987, 144), which basically means that he can deploy an impersonal, "third-person" narrator to verbalize the experience of a storyworld consciousness. Even more transparently, he insists in another entry that the "thing is from a point of view – some old woman (a non-narrator) as in 'Miss Gunton of Poughkeepsy.' She is the observer, recipient, confidant" (1987, 196). Since "Miss Gunton of Poughkeepsy" (1900) is actually recounted by a "third-person" teller, there is little doubt that the narrating procedure envisaged by James as he combined this type of narrator with a non-narrating observer is what came to be theorized, many decades later, as internal focalization or figural narrative situation.

In James's notebook material, projected mediacy of the kind just reviewed occurs alongside cases of rendered mediacy even if both phenomena remain substantially distinct, placed on unrelated existential planes. In rendered mediacy, James metaphorically takes a step backwards, grants the fictional participant a cognitive emancipation of sorts, and allows the central thematic concern to be represented from within the storyworld in the making – it is, in fact, the type of mediacy one expects to find in standard narrative texts. Take, for instance, the notebook outline for "A Diary of a Man of Fifty" (1879). Four characters emerge in it, two men and two women, who become entangled in a minor drama born of

love, experience, and eagerness to exert control under the guise of protection. The older man, Mortimer, "sees a certain situation of his own youth reproduced before his eyes" (1987, 8). In his twenties he fell in love with Contessa G., and this "episode of his youth comes back to him with peculiar vividness" (1987, 8) when he sees a "young English man" courting Contessa G.'s daughter (1987, 9). On this basis, Mortimer's analogical mind draws two key parallels – first, between the two women; second, between himself and the young man. For him, the deceased Contessa "had been a dangerous woman [. . .] an unscrupulous charmer [. . .] an imperious Circe," endowed with "abysmal coquetry," and responsible for her husband's death in a duel with her lover; the daughter, for her part, "is a strange, interesting reproduction of the mother [. . .] strongly resembles her [. . .] is a beautiful dangerous coquette" (1987, 8–9). Even if the characterization of the two women is clearly embedded in Mortimer's mind and thus represented from within the storyworld, James *in propria persona* authorizes it – that is, *factualizes* it – and prevents it from becoming a state of mind with uncertain relations to fictional reality. At a given point in the entry, James himself bursts in unequivocally claiming the analogy as a fact for the incipient storyworld of this tale ("But her daughter, *as I say*, strongly resembles her and stirs up in Mortimer's mind the depths of the past" [1987, 9; my emphasis]). The second parallel, however, is another story. Rather than endorsing it, James indeed disowns it via metarepresentational mediacy and makes it contingent, without reserve, on Mortimer's frame of mind. The young man "*seems* to Mortimer a sort of reproduction of himself at twenty-five – the image of his own early innocence – his own timid and awkward passion," and "the progress of his relations with the lady [. . .] *seem* to him to correspond at all points with his own relations with the mother" (1987, 9; my emphasis). To hypothesize the motive behind such different treatment of the two analogies is a risky endeavour. But given Mortimer's authorial characterization as a cautious, suspicious individual, wholly prepared to give up his love for Contessa G. rather than compromise his mental ease, it is just possible that "his own early innocence – his own timid and awkward passion," allegedly held in common with the young man, can only survive as his own representation of himself rather than as an authorially-sourced, pragmatically disembodied fact.

If in the "Diary" entry the verbal signs of metarepresentational activity take the form of aestheticized allusions to Mortimer's memory patterns and of more simple defactualizing phrases ("seems to Mortimer," "seem to him"), evidence of cognitive mediacy in the sketches for "The Special Type" (1900) is open to debate, for it lies in the interpretation of three semantically loaded terms – "his virago of a wife," "preferred woman," and "hated wife" – to be found in two of the four scattered brief notes James jotted down for the composition of this tale:

> [. . .] his engaging the *demi-mondaine*, in Paris, to *s'afficher* with him in order to force his virago of a wife to divorce him. (1987, 145)[8]

> [. . .] arrangement with *cocotte* to cover real preferred woman and enable hated wife to bring divorce suit – subject. (1987, 182)

In "The Special Type," a man seeks to be sued for divorce by his wife so that he can wed his paramour, and for this reason he asks a third woman to pose publicly as his mistress to provoke his wife without tainting the name of his true lover. To my vision, the two quoted passages, and the entries at large, are effectively mediated by the male schemer's consciousness, for it is only from his mental standpoint that terms such as "his virago of a wife," "preferred woman [i.e. his true lover]," and "hated wife" can make any sense. This is surely what Russian theorist Boris Uspensky used to call *phraseological point of view* (1973, 25–32), that is, how the use of specific naming betrays whose mind represents a given state of affairs, and, in this regard, loaded words amount to highly condensed metarepresentational systems. That the finished tale encodes a different worldview and an adverse ethical judgement of the man's course of action does not mean that the entries present unmediated fact, but rather that James reconceived the whole enterprise as he moved on to the stage of execution.

Two additional examples of more limited scope will contribute to rounding off the characterization of this type of mediacy. They relate to the conspicuous occurrence of the distancing phrase "as if" in a context of authorially endorsed fact. Studied by Uspensky as a "word of estrangement," along with similar expressions such as "apparently," "supposedly," or "it seemed," it is a modal operator that naturalizes, via conjecture, the access to (fictional) consciousness (1973, 85–86), and, therefore, introduces degrees of mediacy as it foregrounds the possibility that content is being represented from within the storyworld. If found in a notebook outline, the statement "Lisa turns her eyes from him *in deep regret*" counts as an authorial fact, or, at least, nothing in it subverts its factuality, whereas "Lisa turns her eyes from him *as if in deep regret*" denotes some kind of mental operation resulting in a (plausible) conjecture that denies Lisa's disposition the status of unassailable fact within the storyworld in the making. The entries for "The Bench of Desolation" (1909) and "The Jolly Corner" (1908) contain one "as if" clause each in the following contexts:

8 Only the terms "preferred woman" and "hated wife" occur in the fictional project of this entry; "virago of a wife" is part of the inspirational anecdote supplied by the notorious Vanderbilt divorce case in 1895.

> She *sees* him suffer – sees him burdened and collapsing – sees him pay for what he has done to her; and she measures and follows this, as if determined to let it go a certain time. (1987, 201)

> He breaks open the door and the trouble ceases – as if the spirit had desired to be admitted, that it might interpose, redeem and protect. (1987, 10)

In the first passage, James is final about the woman's mental processes; he constructs her mind as of his own authority and leaves little room to doubting that he is recording a string of facts for his own compositional guidance. But he concludes this chain of factuality by disclaiming responsibility for the woman's determination, which becomes a curious protruding conjecture against a backdrop of certainty. The second case, it seems to me, is less remarkable for two reasons: first, because the spirit's alleged desire is an isolated mental attribution rather than the culmination of an authorial process of mind-construction, and so its relative textual salience is lower; second, because ascribing a human-like mind to a disembodied supernatural entity and describing its content in factual fashion is a tricky affair, and a conjecture, in these circumstances, appears to be a more natural course of action.

The projected and rendered modes of mediacy just discussed and briefly illustrated must not be taken to form the ends of a quantitative continuum; as suggested above, they rather exist on different qualitative planes. If pressed for conceptual accuracy, one could even say that projected mediacy is *not* actual mediacy, for it has not yet materialized in the narrative text. It is rather a descriptive plan for the treatment of factuality, which tends to occur as an identifiable textual bulge, a methodological appendage for the author's compositional benefit, a deliberate testing ground for future developments. Rendered mediacy, for its part, is the *genuine* article. It is based on the operation of the metarepresentational ability, on the capacity of processing content in relation to storyworld minds and thus of metamorphosing fact into mental state. Its tendency is to be a more elusive phenomenon, often subject to interpretation and controversy just as it happens in standard narrative texts. When he discusses mediacy in his notebook entries, James is a scholar, theorist, or critic; when he renders mediacy, he is an artist – he does not talk of mediacy, but rather imparts it to his materials as they spring from his mind. And if we consider that Stanzel proposed mediacy as the constitutive feature of narrativity, we may be experiencing rudimentary instances of fictional art when we approach his notebook sketches.

In my view, therefore, a unidimensional typology can hardly do justice to the complexity of this phenomenon in James's early notes. The dichotomous planes of projected and rendered mediacy are, in turn, diversified by what I previously called the axis of textual salience, which accounts for the different levels of visibility or prominence of the signs of both modes of mediacy. While this axis is basically

quantitative, scalar, or transitional, the duality between projected and rendered mediacy is binary, qualitative – both types being indeed modulated by issues of textual salience. The prevailing trend is that projected mediacy is more obtrusive than rendered mediacy, which may explain why Stanzel mostly expected, and focused on, the former instead of the latter. But this is just a statistical regularity, not an ontological necessity. Invoking a term popularized by Tamar Yacobi (2001), there is no *package deal* here – in other words, no type of mediacy inevitably entails a higher or lower degree of visibility. It is true that most of James's projects of mediacy are rather bold and hard to miss; likewise, rendered mediacy tends to be more tenuous and elusive, as I suggested above in relation to semantically loaded terms. And yet counter-examples exist that further discredit the *package deal* association. Alongside terms like "preferred woman" or "hated wife" and their cognitive implications, one can find full verbal descriptions of how storyworld minds relate to each other and to represented content cast in the formal grammar of indirect discourse, such as "She knows he knows her views and efforts" or "He is overwhelmed with melancholy and regret – which [his] fiancée sees as jealousy and resents" (1987, 34, 182). Rendered mediacy, therefore, need not be a cryptic procedure. Similarly, not all cases of projected mediacy are bulging artifacts which cannot be overlooked. In his sketch for "The Great Condition" (1899), James prescribes an ironic treatment for the execution of this tale. "I see the thing, at any rate, as distinctively *ironic*," he writes (1987, 172). But the term *irony* and its derivative *ironic* are by no means cognitively neutral, especially in their dramatic sense, for they imply an uneven distribution of intelligence across storyworld minds. In this sketch, James's conception of an ironic treatment leads him to outline three unnamed characters, one male and two female, and create differentials of knowledge between them that place one woman at the bottom of the cognitive ladder, while the other woman and the man – and of course the reader – are placed at the top, for they share behind her back a piece of information which she utterly ignores, even if it is crucial to her own fulfilment and happiness. If my reading is sound, then James has adroitly managed to pack a full mediacy programme into the very limited compass of a single word.

5 Conclusion

Prompted by a rereading of Franz K. Stanzel's views on the nature of narrative, I have attempted to frame a more focused account of the emergence of mediacy in Henry James's notebook material. From a speculative angle, the essential move has been to foreground and describe the metarepresentational component of me-

diacy, especially its role in transmuting authorially-sourced facts into states of mind attributed to storyworld inhabitants – a process that leaves behind a set of variably perceptible linguistic traces which, for obvious reasons, I have called defactualizers. From a more analytic perspective, a direct engagement with James's notebook entries rather reveals that the idea of mediacy in them amply exceeds the mere quantitative dimension related to perceptual or phenomenological issues. The interplay between what Stanzel understands as mediacy in the notebooks and the evidence from the notebooks themselves suggests the existence of a further binary, qualitative distinction between what I have called projected and rendered mediacy, which, in combination with the quantitative axis of textual salience, forms a bidimensional space that best reflects, I think, the complexity of this emerging phenomenon in James's notes. What is surprising is that Stanzel customarily bundles both modes of mediacy together,[9] thus cancelling the crucial qualitative distinction projected/rendered and coming up with a heterogeneous construct that proves hard to tackle unless analyzed into its constituents. This is, precisely, the task that the present chapter has sought to accomplish.[10]

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9 Comments such as "[M]ediacy has not yet or only partially found expression in them," "It is characteristic of the summary that it says nothing about the form of mediacy [. . .] the form in which a story is narrated," and "An author's first outline of the plot of a narrative usually shows the story in a form still lacking narrative mediacy" (1986, 22, 23, 30) are indistinctly used by Stanzel, even if they clearly refer to either mode of mediacy.

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