

post-print version of an article published in Poetics Today 39:1 (2018), pp. 17–39

<https://doi.org/10.1215/03335372-4265047>

Exceptionality or Exemplarity? The Emergence of the Schematized Mind in the Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Novel

Maria Mäkelä

University of Tampere, Finland

Abstract The article challenges both cognitive-universalist and unnatural-exceptionalist approaches to fictional minds by analyzing how the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century novel merges the premodern poetics of exemplarity with emergent modern techniques of representing consciousness. It focuses on the “immature” forms of free indirect discourse in Madame de Lafayette’s *Princesse de Clèves* (1678) while also briefly digressing to some relevant European novels in the eighteenth-century sentimental tradition. In these novels the negotiation between the socially shared and the imaginatively constructed is tangibly inscribed in the narrative discourse. The article argues, first, that the heterodiegetic narrator’s epistemic and psychological authority is narratively located not far from the gossip and social scheming (“naturally occurring storytelling”) within the story world. Second, rather than outrightly replacing the representation of exemplary minds and dispositions with an individualizing rendering of subjective consciousness, these novels transform the code of exemplum into an internalized strategy for the characters—and a case for self-reflection for the amateurish heterodiegetic narrators. The theoretical framework draws from Monika Fludernik’s (1993) pioneering cognitive-narratological theory of schematic speech and thought representation, suggesting that this linguistic theory should be modified to encompass a pertinent theme in the Western novelistic tradition.

Keywords: exemplum, consciousness representation, diachronic narratology, schematic language representation, Madame de Lafayette

Roland Barthes’s definition of *écriture classique* (classical writing) is inspiration for Jonathan Culler’s discussion of convention and naturalization in his *Structuralist Poetics* (1975). According to Barthes (1972: 42), the French novel from the seventeenth to the early nineteenth centuries was dominated by a peremptory referential logic. As an institutional practice, *écriture* was grounded on an understanding of a shared world model to which it could unambiguously refer. As Culler (1975: 134) sums up the rhetorical and stylistic manifestations of this referential concord, “Language need only gesture towards the world.” As an example, Culler (*ibid.*) takes up Madame de Lafayette’s story “La Comtesse de Tende”

(1664), in which the count, upon learning that his wife is pregnant with another man's child, thinks "everything that it was natural to think in such circumstances" (Culler's translation from the French). Here *écriture* takes for granted the contemporary audience's shared understanding of a cuckolded husband's experiential repertoire. Yet Culler's discussion leaves out the illustrative context for this referential nod: "Agité et affligé, comme on peut se l'imaginer: il pensa d'abord tout ce qu'il était naturel de penser en cette occasion; il ne songea qu'à faire mourir sa femme" (Lafayette 1825 [1664]: 289).¹

In the courtly and sentimental novels of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, extreme emotions caused by love and jealousy are typically both *exemplary* and at the same time so unique and transgressive that they cannot be translated into language. A vague and yet apparently exhaustive reference to a schematic emotion can be accompanied by the heterodiegetic narrator's commentary on the ultimate inexpressivity and unreadability of such extraordinary feelings. Peculiarly enough Culler's example, displaying full confidence in referential conventions, is also preceded by a lamentation that seems to cancel the subsequent schematization of the cuckolded husband. Here we have a failed attempt to describe the husband's immediate reaction to his wife's confessional letter: "Mais que ne pensa-t-il point après l'avoir lue! S'il eût eu des témoins, le violent état où il étoit l'auroit fait croire privé de raison, ou prêt de perdre la vie. La jalousie et les soupçons bien fondés préparent d'ordinaire les maris à leurs malheurs; ils ont même toujours quelques doutes: mais ils n'ont pas cette certitude que donne l'aveu, qui est au-dessus de nos lumières" (ibid.: 288).² As noted by several Lafayette scholars, in the early modern courtly life from which Lafayette draws her plots, personages, and other cultural codes, emotion was grounded on social maxims and was supposed to follow authoritative exempla (see, e.g., Lyons 1989: 217–36; Muratore 1994: 94–95). Even rage and jealousy had legitimate models that were formed in, for example, letter writing, either fictional or nonfictional. The case of Gabriel Joseph de Lavergne de Guilleragues's *Lettres portugaises* (1669) proves that fictionality made no difference in this respect. Even after being revealed as not written by "Sister Mariana" but by the Count de Guilleragues, the letters continued to be the ultimate model of expression for passionate love (Bray 2003: 29–32; Kauffman 1986: 92–98). If emotions were mere performatives that follow a coded logic of representation, one would expect them to have been easily communicable. However, as is already apparent in the passage cited from "La Comtesse de Tende," the sentimental novel contains a countertradition to schematicity—the convention of the unprecedented and inexpressible experience. This conventional foregrounding of

unprecedented experience in “La Comtesse de Tende” does not, however, cancel out Barthes’s and Culler’s notions of *écriture classique* and its consensual reliance on unambiguous referentiality. Rather, it demonstrates how, paradoxically, even experiential idiosyncrasies can be harnessed to serve *vraisemblance* (probability) (see Culler 1975: 138–60; Genette 1968). The sentimental hero’s or heroine’s extraordinary emotions are typical and recognizable (in Culler’s [1975: 137-8] terms, “naturalizable”) precisely because they have a “natural” place in the consensual, classical world order.

How does this oscillation between exemplarity and uniqueness affect the relation between character experience and narratorial knowledge? Let us look again at the Lafayette example. Emblematic of early novelistic narration, the negotiation between the socially shared and the imaginatively constructed is tangibly inscribed in Lafayette’s narrative discourse. The count’s reaction is evoked through an interrogative interjection (“que ne pensa-t-il point!”) only to dissolve into a kind of sociopsychological speculation that anyone knowledgeable about the prevailing social maxims could indulge in. Lafayette’s heterodiegetic narrator, while pioneering in its psychological depth of vision and its ability to reinvent courtly chronicles as fictions, is still a draft. Its epistemic and psychological authority is narratively located not far from the gossip and social scheming (“naturally occurring storytelling,” Fludernik 1996: 10) within the story world. The above quoted example displays a recurring rhetorical figure in Lafayette’s prose—an attempt to imagine a character’s state of mind through sociocultural exempla and maxims followed by a construction of a hypothetical courtly focalizer, a witness position (*témoin*) from which to attribute a mental state to the character. Why this recourse to social mind attribution once the narration has already stepped into the realm of fictional invention?

The late seventeenth century and the eighteenth century present narration that is in many senses a *novel in progress*, with its chronicler and witness narrators gradually transforming into novelistic authorities and inventors of verisimilar social realities and with its characters wavering between individual psychology and collective maxims. These novels balance between the premodern tradition of romance and the growing readerships’s lust for the private. At this moment in the history of the European novel, the so-called omniscient, heterodiegetic narrator takes its first fumbling steps and makes its first experiments with extensive representations of fictional minds.³ At the same time the juncture between “natural” social exchange and the specifically literary means for rendering private consciousness is at its most visible, and I would go as far as to claim that this joint is *thematized* in some of the

pioneering modern novels, as the literary mind-reading game is usually only a short step away from—or only on a *slightly* higher diegetic level than—the gossipy mind-reading games taking place in the storyworlds.

In this essay I will show how this developmental stage of the novel, by exposing intriguing parallels and discrepancies between social, embodied (“natural”) intersubjectivity and literary (“unnatural”) modes, may affect our theoretical understanding of the nature of fictional minds. My specific theoretical goal is to demonstrate that attention to this technical “immaturity” manifested in the early sentimental and psychological novel opens new dimensions of the ongoing narratological debate between the proponents of unnatural narratology and those of cognitive narratology. The controversy is outlined by David Herman in his introduction to *The Emergence of Mind* (2011), where he criticizes the “exceptionality thesis,” by which he refers to the unnaturalizing approach to fictional minds represented by Dorrit Cohn, Brian Richardson, and others, including myself (Herman 2011: 11). Exceptionalists, for Herman, are narratologists on the lookout for specifically literary modes of consciousness representation and who, consequently, highlight the expressive and thematic potential of such features as the nonreferentiality of fiction and the epistemic accessibility of the fictional mind (Cohn), incommunicability (Henrik Skov Nielsen), textuality (Maria Mäkelä), and antimimetic elements of fiction (Richardson). Herman counters the exceptionality thesis from two directions, first by making an “accessibility argument” (ibid.: 18) for the actual human mind, grounding it on the contemporary anti-Cartesian notion of the mind as “readable” from embodied interaction, and second, through his “mediation argument,” (ibid.) claiming that the cognitive repertoire with which we make sense of the workings of actual and fictional minds is universal. The context for Herman’s critique is a very comprehensive volume on the diachronic evolution of consciousness representation, which, for all the writers in the volume, is inseparable from the general cognitive and cultural changes in the human mind. Thus this field-shaping contribution to the diachronic study of fictional minds by the cognitive-narratological camp ranges pronouncedly against both unnatural narratology and the classical study of the linguistic modes of consciousness presentation of the Cohn type (critiqued by the cognitive narratologist Alan Palmer [2004: 30–31] under the rubric of the “speech category approach”).

Unimpeded by the cognitivist critique of discourse centeredness, I will mainly deal with the early, emergent forms of free indirect discourse in Lafayette’s *Princesse de Clèves* (2005 [1678]) with some digressions into exemplary European sentimental novels of the

eighteenth century to discuss the clash between the premodern poetics of exemplarity and modern consciousness representation. I argue that the seedbed for those novelistic conventions considered to provide a maximum amount of figural subjectivity and a maximum amount of novelistic invention is the *schematization of consciousness*. The embryonic free indirect discourse—still bearing traces of its early epistolary prototypes (see Bray 2003; Mäkelä 2011)—is the ultimate locus for schematized consciousness representation. Its alleged origin lies ambivalently between the not-yet-omniscient narrator, the character as an incomplete individual, and the almost all-knowing society—all in search of inimitability but finally driven to settle for schematicity. Rather than straightforwardly replacing the premodern representation of exemplary minds and dispositions with an individualizing rendering of subjective consciousness, these novels transform the code of exemplum into an internalized strategy for the characters—and a case for self-reflection on the part of the amateurish heterodiegetic narrators.

With this reading I hope to challenge both cognitive-universalist and unnatural-exceptionalist approaches to novelistic consciousness representation as I seek to deconstruct the limit between social and novelistic imagination. In the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century novel, the emergent consciousness representation grounded on narratorial privilege materializes the process whereby “natural” enactment of fictional emotions gets “unnaturally” complicated in the novelistic process of verbalization and invention. For the purposes of textual analysis, I draw my theoretical framework from Monika Fludernik’s (1993) pioneering cognitive-narratological theory of schematic speech and thought representation, a contribution that merits more critical attention than it has hitherto received. According to Fludernik, the linguistic consequence of our prototype-oriented ways of sense making is that a reproduced speech or thought is not, by definition, faithful to the original utterance but is instead a schematized approximation (a “fiction,” as Fludernik ventures) drafted according to situational and narrative frames. In other words, when we want to evoke a discourse within discourse, we end up communicating utterances that would have been *typical*, *likely*, and *plausible* in the evoked discursive context. Fludernik does not look into the thematic potential of the schematized representation of another voice in fiction, which opens a critical gap that I have tried to fill in some of my previous studies (Mäkelä 2006, 2011) and will target with this essay as well.

As the primary test case, *La Princesse de Clèves* provides a refreshing recontextualization of “exceptionality” in contrast to the notion Herman advances in his

critique of classical and unnatural approaches to fictional minds. The novel's narration, its plot, and the very personality of its heroine are all established as both *exemplary* and *exceptional* in the Western canon. As maintained throughout modern Lafayette scholarship and famously demonstrated by Gérard Genette (1968) in his essay on *vraisemblance*, *La Princesse de Clèves* is the indisputable point in the development of the early novel at which it turns away from the universal and toward the particular. This struggle finds its culmination in the princess's extraordinary confession to her husband of her love for the Duc de Nemours and her final retreat to a monastery after her husband has died of jealousy, moral actions that the contemporaries of Lafayette condemned outright as *invraisemblable* (ibid.: 8). A canonical interpretation of the princess's social nonconformity turns her moral actions into an allegory of emerging individuality and thus of the birth of individuated novelistic interiority (see, e.g. François 2008: 84–85).

Consequently, my rationale for the selected examples is also a synthesis of exceptionality and exemplarity. I wish to respond to Fludernik's (2003) call for a diachronic narratology, but instead of managing to offer an exhaustive account of the development of the fictional mind in the European novel, I choose to concentrate on what I believe narratology is in fact best suited to do—the analysis of exemplary passages of narrative discourse that can, in their language and structure, encapsulate diachronic change. I refer to this potential when characterizing especially *La Princesse de Clèves*—but also to some degree the emerging modern novel of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries at large—as a *work in progress*. From the point of view of a twenty-first century reader, many narrative situations balancing between classicist regularity and romanticist irregularity of emotion (cf. François 2008: 85) exemplify the diachronic movement in their very synchronic form precisely because they are not completely at home in either of these traditions. Thus any straightforward account of linear, imminent evolution in literary forms will fail to do justice to this irresolvable tension between the schematicity and fidelity models at work in renderings and interpretations of fictional consciousness—all the more so, as much of the research I have done on consciousness representation points to the fluctuating presence of such a tension *throughout* the history of the novel (e.g., Mäkelä 2006, 2011).

Another available literary-historical narrative besides the formalist-evolutionary trajectory is the reciprocity model adopted, for example, in Herman's *Emergence of Mind*. This perspective views the history of the novel as an exchange between novelistic conventions and the culturally prevailing models of subjectivity. It seems evident to me that

precisely this contextualizing model is the truthful description of literary-historical change. It is, however, another thing to construct a model of historical causality that would authorize a method called “diachronic narratology.” Brian McHale’s (2012: 123) astute critique of *The Emergence of Mind* exposes the inherent methodological vicious circle in the reciprocal-externalist approach to literary consciousness representation: “The evidence of historical changes in consciousness is being adduced from the very same textual sources that are then explained *in terms of* those historical changes.” In the following I will have some recourse to general notions of the social and cultural codes of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries with regard to subjectivity and emotions, especially those of courtly life, but only as they are characterized in the literary-historical scholarship. My ultimate aim is to analyze the history of the novel in the light of the synchronicities of form.

***La Princesse de Clèves* I: Ballroom Mind Attribution**

I like to envisage Robert Alter sharing my interest in emblematic textual occurrences of diachronic change when he suggests that the celebrated ball scene in *La Princesse de Clèves* marks the birth of modern novelistic techniques. The fateful scene, singled out by Alter and dozens of other scholars before and after him, presents the first meeting between the princess and Nemours, but it also marks the beginning of fictional invention, as thus far the narrative has mainly followed the referential conventions of a chronicle, relying on actual events and the personages of the sixteenth-century French court of Henry II.

Le bal commença et, comme elle dansait avec M. de Guise, *il se fit un assez grand bruit vers la porte de la salle, comme de quelqu’un qui entrait et à qui on faisait place.* Mme de Clèves acheva de danser et, pendant qu’elle cherchait des yeux quelqu’un qu’elle avait dessein de prendre, le Roi lui cria de prendre celui qui arrivait. Elle se tourna et vit un homme qu’elle crut d’abord ne pouvoir être que M. de Nemours, qui passait par-dessus quelques sièges pour arriver où l’on dansait. Ce prince était fait d’une sorte qu’il était difficile de n’être pas surpris de le voir quand on ne l’avait jamais vu, surtout ce soir-là, où le soin qu’il avait pris de se parer augmentait encore l’air brillant qui était dans sa personne; mais il était difficile aussi de voir Mme de Clèves pour la première fois sans avoir un grand étonnement. (Lafayette 2005 [1678]: 34; my emphasis)⁴

As Alter (1989: 185–88) notes, from a literary-historical point of view, a striking change of mode takes place as the princess’s moment-to-moment perceptions become the

focus of narration. Up until now Lafayette's narrator has restricted herself to the role of a courtly observer—a position that the actual author herself held at the court of the Sun King, Louis XIV. The scene emblemizes the beginning of the modern psychological novel for generations of scholarship because the only person to “be taken aback” is the princess, as everyone else in the ballroom is already acquainted with Nemours's good looks. Thus the scene can be read as internally focalized, the perspectivization being signaled by a description of the princess's sensory and epistemological stance: the noise at the door, “someone” coming, the delicious detail of Nemours bouncing athletically over the chairs, and the emotional shock that, in terms of early modern psychology, undoes rational judgment (see, e.g., McClure 2007).

However, are we in fact moving from external to internal focalization? The narrator reports that “it was difficult *not to be taken aback on seeing him when one had never seen him before,*” which, in terms of courtly sentimental education, is an educated guess, since presumably everyone besides the princess is already familiar with Nemours's looks. Is this point of view not simply a construction by the *société* (society), whose members are all anticipating this encounter between the two most attractive characters in the court, with the king actually staging the whole scene by making the couple dance together? In terms of contemporary narratology, the encounter is not only internally focalized, it actually embeds two levels of focalization. We get the court's perception of Nemours's and the princess's perceptions of each other. Paradoxically, it is exactly this multilayered system of focalizations that *naturalizes* the narrative setup, since no omniscience and no invention is needed to attribute mental states to characters. The narrator could just as well be an observant member of the court, like the jealous Chevalier de Guise, registering the external signs of emotions—and even more importantly, constructing the psychology of the scene with the help of courtly romantic codes:

Le chevalier de Guise, qui l'adorait toujours, était à ses pieds, et ce qui se venait de passer lui avait donné une douleur sensible. Il le prit comme un présage que la fortune destinait M. de Nemours à être amoureux de Mme de Clèves; et, soit qu'en effet il eût paru quelque trouble sur son visage, ou que la jalousie fit voir au chevalier de Guise au-delà de la vérité, il crut qu'elle avait été touchée de la vue de ce prince. (Lafayette 2005 [1678]: 35)⁵

Such evidence of naturally occurring courtly mind attribution behind a seemingly internalized novelistic scene could easily be used to argue against the exceptionality thesis. If

already the emergence of the psychological novel is firmly grounded on embodied intersubjectivity (“Whether her face had really betrayed”) and sociocultural scripts—such as the classical notion of desire, dictated by (public) myth rather than (private) individual psychology (“fate meant M. de Nemours to fall in love” [see Greenberg 1992: 24–26])—then why adhere to the modern “fidelity” model, which insists on privileged narratorial access to the private mind? Indeed, this reading lends support to both Herman’s accessibility argument and his mediation argument. The “courtly mind” appears just as readable in the diegetic story world as at the extradiegetic level of narration, and it makes sense to conclude that the members of the court, the chronicler narrator, and the implied contemporary (in all probability courtly) reader would share the frames and scripts with which to interpret the scene. Furthermore, if expressions of both real-life and literary experience lack origin and authenticity, both are formed by previous examples, and the available examples may just as well be fictional as real, then what is left to constitute the privileged domain of knowledge for the emergent omniscient narrator? From a premodern perspective, the scene between the princess and Nemours, in all its apparent extraordinariness, is but a rehearsal of a classical setup anticipated by the court.

The fact that not only one’s conduct but also one’s experiential domain in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century courtly life was dominated by *exemplaires*—and thus based on an imitation of superior examples—renders any classical narratological approach based on subjectivity markers insufficient. The inherent external-internal binary nature of classical narratological reasoning has been reworked not only by first- and second-wave cognitivists concentrating on the distributed and the embodied mind but also by “diachronists” who have been efficient in ferreting out extracanonial test cases from centuries ignored by previous narratological scholarship. The premodern evidence does not, however, seem to unconditionally support the enactivist paradigm and its ahistorical claim for cognitive universals (see, however, Fludernik 2014). Eva von Contzen (2015) challenges the universality of Palmer’s (2010) “social minds” theory by demonstrating how collectives in medieval texts form primarily functional, not “intermental,” units and how the exemplarity of a character translates into a shared experience among readers and not among the characters in the storyworld. A mere diachronic expansion of the corpus reveals the underlying (modernist) internalist logic of cognitive narratology’s seemingly externalist approach to narratives. Although Palmer concentrates on the externally “readable” signs of cognitive mental functioning, the ultimate object of knowledge is the modern mind within the text, not

collective subjectivity in action (von Contzen 2015).⁶ Much the same critique could be presented based on the evidence from the early modern novel, since neither in the courtly romance nor in the later forms of the sentimental novel does the private mind provide a genuine counterpoise to social life, as it later did in the bourgeois novel, in spite of the fact that in these novels a considerable amount of energy is invested in maintaining appearances and disguising one's reactions.

Von Contzen's (ibid.: 149) juxtaposition of exemplarity with cognitivist mind attribution theories is also valuable in the context of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century novel: "The concept of exemplarity implies that a character who functions as a model is both very much alike the group or category to which she belongs and at the same time different because outstanding." *La Princesse de Clèves* is a genuine embodiment of this medieval category. The novel ends with the narrator stating that "her life"—meaning primarily the famously unlikely acts of confession and retreat—"left inimitable examples of virtue" (Lafayette 2008: 156). However, as duly noted in Lafayette scholarship (see, e.g., Brooks 1993: 31–32; Muratore 1994: 99–101; Prince 1992: 49), the princess is ultimately capable of escaping exemplarity and becoming an *individual*—if not in her mentality then at least in her actions. She even shows self-awareness of her pioneering role. When discussing the rumors about her confession of her love for Nemours, her husband suggests that she may have mistaken some other virtuous woman for herself in some exemplary confessional story she had heard circling around the court. However, the princess replies: "Il n'y a pas dans le monde une autre aventure pareille à la mienne; il n'y a point une autre femme capable de la même chose. Le hasard ne peut l'avoir fait inventer; on ne l'a jamais imaginée et cette pensée n'est jamais tombée dans un autre esprit que le mien" (Lafayette 2005 [1678]: 135).⁷ The protagonist's remark is ironically metafictional, because another effort to overcome preset psychological parameters takes place on the extradiegetic level of narration. The fact that the princess and her psychological profile are indeed the only products of pure invention and imagination in the novel makes her an *exemplum* of the narrative struggle to find a verbal expression for emerging modern individualism. I propose that this struggle between exemplarity and exceptionality—as well as between "natural" mind attribution and novelistic representation of consciousness—manifests itself at the level of narration as agential indecision.

The first type of agential indecision relates to perception and is exemplified by the ballroom scene. Ambivalence in focalization is created both horizontally, between diegetic agents (who is focalizing when—the princess, Nemours, the court as a collective, Guise?),

and vertically, between the intradiegetic and the extradiegetic levels (courtly mind attribution vs. the privileged internal perspective of the omniscient narrator, an interpretation that Alter and many other scholars maintain). Von Contzen (2015: 149), in arguing that the reading of medieval texts is not about social minds, suggests that exemplarity relocates experience in the reading audience, since the hero's singularity is interpreted as being representative. *La Princesse de Clèves* dramatizes the characterological, narratorial, and readerly ambivalence between medieval exemplarity and novelistic experientiality by mirroring readerly activities within the storyworld. In the ballroom scene the Chevalier de Guise occupies the place of the seventeenth-century courtly reader both by adhering to the socially shared, classical and mythical script of desire and by trying to read the singular workings of the princess's mind.

Another famous scene depicts Nemours spying on Mme de Clèves, while a nobleman recruited by M de Clèves is in turn stalking Nemours. This perspectival setup thematizes the similarities and differences of characterological and narratorial mind attribution. The privileged positions of the spies, with their nonreciprocal gazes, mimic the privileged positions of the novelistic narrator and her audience, while the narrator, again overwhelmed by the inexpressibility of Nemours's sensations ("It is impossible to express what M. de Nemours felt at this moment" [Lafayette 2008: 128]), adheres to a schematization of his experience through linguistic impersonation ("To see a woman he adored in the middle of the night . . . to see her, without her knowing he was there" [ibid.]). The concluding remark about how unprecedented this experience is ("What lover has ever enjoyed or even imagined such delight?" [ibid.]) then reverts to the impossibility of verbalizing the experience.

What no one has ever experienced or even imagined before cannot be expressed, because there is no ready emotional and expressive schema for it. Again, the heterodiegetic narrator is only a small step ahead of the epistemological stance of an intradiegetic agent (a spy or a *témoin*), albeit here the modern problem of the narrator *knowing* the thoughts of her character is much less pertinent than the problem of *verbalization* reflecting the early modern contradiction between exemplarity and exceptionality. Lafayette's narrator is not *withholding* information on the character's experience (in the sense originally theorized in Sternberg 1978) but instead wavers between shared, classical codes of emotion and the new novelistic individuality. The narrator's relation to her character's interiority is more a matter of recognition and frame application than of faithful representation of a "knowable" content.

On many occasions the story-internal "readers" of interiority in Lafayette's narration remain hypothetical constructs, or a hypothetical perceiver is erected alongside an actual

focalizer, as when the princess learns from Mary Stuart, the unrivaled court gossip, that Nemours has rejected marital negotiations with the queen of England, Elizabeth I:

Le moyen de ne se pas reconnaître pour cette personne dont on ne savait point le nom et le moyen de n'être pas pénétrée de reconnaissance et de tendresse, en apprenant, par une voie qui ne lui pouvait être suspecte, que ce prince, qui touchait déjà son cœur, cachait sa passion à tout le monde et négligeait pour l'amour d'elle les espérances d'une couronne? Aussi ne peut-on représenter ce qu'elle sentit, et le trouble qui s'éleva dans son âme. Si Mme la Dauphine l'eût regardée avec attention, elle eût aisément remarqué que les choses qu'elle venait de dire ne lui étaient pas indifférentes; mais, comme elle n'avait aucun soupçon de la vérité, elle continua de parler, sans y faire de réflexion. (Lafayette 2005 [1678]: 68)⁸

The narrator, by convincing her audience that careful enough attention paid in the storyworld would have yielded similar knowledge about the princess's emotions as she herself possesses, is simultaneously setting up and tearing down the epistemological barriers between the members of the court and herself as the privileged heterodiegetic narrator. Again, the hypothetical focal position within the storyworld functions as an intermediary between intra- and extradiegetic perception, suggesting that both are ultimately formed by the same framing cognitive and cultural schemata. As Daniel Hostert (2015: 175–76) notes in his reading of early modern English narratives, hypothetical focalization, as originally defined by Herman, may suggest a collective experience. As such, it is a narrative device that can, for example, relativize some knowledge about the storyworld without compromising the authority of the external narrator. Hostert's "diachronized" interpretation of Herman's theory is supported by evidence from *La Princesse de Clèves*. The hypothetical perceiver, someone capable of "regarder avec attention," is indeed everyone and anyone in the storyworld, verifying those schematic sketches of the characters' interiorities that nevertheless come into existence through privileged novelistic consciousness representation. All in all, the hypothesis of focalization in narrative constellations that would allow a personified, perceiving agent points toward the schematization of another person's consciousness at work both in the court and in the emerging novelistic discourse. These imagined or actual story-internal perceivers smooth over the literary-historical transition from social to novelistic mind attribution, but at the same time they also increase perspectival ambivalence and hence contribute to an anachronistically modernist feel.

***La Princesse de Clèves* II: Schematic Free Indirect Discourse**

Although intersecting perceptions and suggestive appearances form the core action of the novel, the narrator's most groundbreaking move away from social mind attribution toward novelistic invention concerns the verbalized consciousness, as it grows out of both the perspectival positioning of the narration with respect to the characters' deictic coordinates and the characters' keen surveillance of each others' reactions within the storyworld. Thus the second type of agential indecision that I consider central to the celebrated "modernity" of *La Princesse de Clèves* finds its revolutionary expression in the undeveloped, roughly schematized free indirect discourse. A transition from a mere perspectivization to an imitation of inner discourse can already be perceived in the above quoted passage describing Mme de Clèves's reaction to Mary Stuart's gossip, albeit in a linguistic form that seems to suggest hypothesis: "Le moyen de ne se pas reconnaître" ("How could she not recognize herself"). The expression "Le moyen de" is an archaic version of the interjection "Comment!" or "Combien!" ("How [much]!") that later became a conventional marker of free indirect discourse in French, yet here it still retains a sense of hesitancy, as if the narrator were rhetorically hypothesizing the exact amount and quality of the princess's emotional tumult. At the same time the interjective expressivity of the description suggests the presence of a *figural* voice—though only in an anachronistically modern reading attuned to detecting subjectivity markers in novelistic discourse. The same literalized reading of the subjunctive interjection, combined with an impression of double voicedness, applies to the opening example from "La Comtesse de Tende," where we find the narrator perplexed by the simultaneous schematicity and unimaginability of the cuckolded husband's feelings: "Mais que ne pensa-t-il point après l'avoir lue!"

When Lafayette's narrator repeatedly declares of her personages that "no one has ever experienced such pain" or when she emphasizes the inexpressibility of their feelings, she is not merely exaggerating, because in terms of the history of the novel, the verbal and narrative form given to these sentiments is indeed unprecedented. Fludernik (1996: 153–59), when tracing the evolution of consciousness representation within the framework of natural narratology, singles out Aphra Behn—not Lafayette—as the pioneering figure, since Behn's novelistic strategy was to internalize the dramatic monologue, a long-standing conventional technique for displaying a character's hidden intentions onstage. Yet if we wish to trace emergent modern narrative modes that thematize their double origins in exemplarity and

exceptionality, Lafayette's half-chronicler, half-inventor narrator figure and her half-schematic, half-individual characters set an even better example than Behn.

However, instead of adhering to the mainstream of free indirect discourse studies—a subdiscipline of narratology emphatically dominated by readings of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century novel—we are better equipped to approach the undeveloped variants of free indirect discourse if we do so by way of Fludernik's (1993) theory of schematic language representation. The latter appears in a massive, linguistically oriented study of free indirect discourse that predates her natural narratology, explaining how the constructivist logic of frame application in reading and the corresponding strategies of schematization and typification in texts build interpretations atop previous experience and knowledge. With regard to the novel of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, one particularly interesting linguistic move in Fludernik's theory is the renunciation of an "original utterance" of which a free indirect discourse rendering would be a stylized, double-voiced repetition (as maintained by many a canonical free indirect discourse study based on the "translatability" of speech categories from direct to free indirect and indirect [see, e.g., McHale 1978]). For Fludernik, free indirect discourse, both in fiction and in naturally occurring storytelling, is an ostensible reproduction of an utterance that has never existed. The representation of another's speech in one's own discourse is always an approximation that conforms to communicative expectations framed by prototypical discourse schemata, a fiction that produces a sense of expressivity and thus the presence of the other's voice through a "linguistic hallucination" (Fludernik 1993: 453).

Fludernik's approach, emphasizing the lack of original verbalized interiority and treating the represented consciousness as an approximation built on narrative and discursive schemata, captures the essence of the early modern "mind" much more accurately than the internalizing and psychologizing "speech category approach." Thus Fludernik's linguistic theory ought to be reformulated to encompass a prominent *theme* in the history of the novel. Schematic language representation is not merely a structural reconstruction of the effect of language use but also a formal instantiation of a thematic problem, suggesting a particularly literary concept of subjectivity that rests on the tension between uniqueness and schematicity, between the particular and the universal.

The most illuminating example of free indirect discourse growing out of "natural" hypotheses and sociocultural framing—as well as of the peculiarly self-reflexive stance Lafayette's princess appears to be taking vis-à-vis her groundbreaking role as a novelistic

mind—is in Mme de Clèves’s reaction to a letter she mistakenly believes is addressed to Nemours.⁹ The letter, written by an unidentified lady, circulates around the court as the ultimate *exemple inimitable* (inimitable example) of passionate expressivity *as textualized*, much like the letter writing manuals popular at the time.

Mme de Clèves lut cette lettre et la relut plusieurs fois, sans savoir néanmoins ce qu’elle avait lu. Elle voyait seulement que M. de Nemours ne l’aimait pas comme elle l’avait pensé, et qu’il en aimait d’autres qu’il trompait comme elle. *Quelle vue et quelle connaissance pour une personne de son humeur, qui avait une passion violente*, qui venait d’en donner des marques à un homme qu’elle en jugeait indigne et à un autre qu’elle maltraitait pour l’amour de lui! *Jamais affliction n’a été si piquante et si vive. . . . Enfin* elle pensait tout ce qui pouvait augmenter son affliction et son désespoir. *Quels retours* ne fit-elle point sur elle-même! *quelles réflexions* sur les conseils que sa mère lui avait donnés! *Combien se repentit-elle* de ne s’être pas opiniâtrée à se séparer du commerce du monde. . . . *Enfin*, elle trouva que tous les maux qui lui pouvaient arriver, et toutes les extrémités où elle se pouvait porter, étaient moindres que d’avoir laissé voir à M. de Nemours qu’elle l’aimait et de connaître qu’il en aimait une autre. Tout ce qui la consolait était de penser au moins, qu’après cette connaissance, elle n’avait plus rien à craindre d’elle-même, et *qu’elle serait entièrement guérie* de l’inclination qu’elle avait pour ce prince. (Lafayette 2005 [1678]: 90–91; my emphasis)¹⁰

The English translation does not wholly capture the cumulative sense of urgency in the development of the princess’s unwarranted judgment. The interrogative-looking interjections (“*Quelle vue et quelle connaissance*,” “*Quels retours*,” “*Combien se repentit-elle*”), already familiar from previous examples, can be interpreted as markers of typification and schematization (Fludernik 1993: 398–414). The summarizing “*Enfin*” is also a schematization marker, indicating that whatever extraordinary anguish the princess feels, it nevertheless rests on experiential schemata shared by the narrator and her audience. Paradoxically, the accumulation of expressivity in this passage lures the reader into reading the apparently objective declaration “*Never has pain been so piercing and sharp*” as a product of the heroine’s misguided mind, all the more so since it cancels out the previous schematization of the princess as “*such and such a person*,” thus creating sufficient ambiguity in the discourse to produce a double-voice effect. A figural reading finds its ultimate proof in

the closing sentence of this passage (“she would be wholly cured”), presenting Mme de Clèves’s fallacious, self-deceiving epiphany as a fact.

Furthermore, an intriguing rhetorical complication is provided by the expressive discourse of the letter preceding the representation of the heroine’s emotional upheaval, for it appears as if the princess were appropriating the art of the letter writer to model her own interiority according to its normative aesthetic:

Jamais douleur n’a été pareille à la mienne. Je croyais que vous aviez pour moi une passion violente; je ne vous cachais plus celle que j’avais pour vous et, dans le temps que je vous la laissais voir tout entière, j’appris que vous me trompiez, que vous en aimiez une autre et que, selon toutes les apparences, vous me sacrifiiez à cette nouvelle maîtresse. . . . Je crus que si quelque chose pouvait rallumer les sentiments que vous aviez eus pour moi, c’était de vous faire voir que les miens étaient changés; mais de vous le faire voir en feignant de vous le cacher, et comme si je n’eusse pas eu la force de vous l’avouer. Je m’arrêtai à cette résolution; mais qu’elle me fut difficile à prendre, et qu’en vous revoyant elle me parut impossible à exécuter! (Lafayette 2005 [1678]: 88–89; my emphasis)¹¹

Not only the apparent situations of the two ladies learning about the liaisons of their loved ones but also the discourse reflecting these situations are parallel through and through. The exclamatory interrogatives and subjunctives (“comme si je n’eusse pas,” “qu’elle me fut difficile”), the accumulation of expressivity accompanied by a reference to “passion violente,” and most strikingly, the assertion “Jamais douleur n’a été pareille à la mienne” followed immediately by “Jamais affliction n’a été si piquante et si vive,” as if the two superlative expressions of pain neutralized each other and turned uniqueness into schematicity. This stylistic contagion gives rise to an interpretation of the princess as reliving the shame and the jealousy of the letter writer, which in turn makes the emergent free indirect discourse appear more like stylistic schematization than privileged narratorial access to the heroine’s private mind. Again, the boundary between the figural and the narratorial is blurred but in a way distinct from the stock functions of empathy and irony conventionally attributed to free indirect discourse. The juxtaposition of epistolary and heterodiegetic narration materializes the fact that not only the narrator but also the protagonist is using external models to create expressivity and experientiality. Thus it is somewhat surprising that Lafayette scholarship, while paying exhaustive attention to the functioning of embedded courtly romance narratives as exempla for the princess’s conduct and sentimental education,

remains reticent on this discursive mirror relation between the letter and the reaction (cf. Lyons 1989: 219–20; Campbell 1996: 158–9).

Who is representing whose consciousness, then, if the expressive discourse has no psychological origin but is based on imitation and approximation? A brief look at some eighteenth-century classics narrated by self-reflexive character narrators attests to the fact that the schematization and typification of one's *own* interiority was a recurrent strategy for coming to terms with otherwise “inexpressible” experiences and emotions. Samuel Richardson's (2001 [1740]: 83) Pamela in *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded*—famous for her artfulness in being able to craft, through letter writing, a narrative that turns her captivity into a prosperous marriage—is an example of how the apparently immediate rendering of consciousness in the poetics of the eighteenth-century novel is still prone to schematization:

“The unparalleled wickedness, stratagems, and devices, of those who call themselves gentlemen, yet pervert the designs of Providence in giving them ample means to do good, to their own everlasting perdition, and the ruin of poor oppressed innocence!”

Pamela's writing is fraught with conventional expressivity markers, but instead of enhancing a sense of immediacy, they rather promote the exemplarity of her experience as the ultimate trial of “poor oppressed innocence.” While the early modern heterodiegetic narrator hardly has any epistemological privileges over her characters, the epistolary homodiegetic mode in turn flaunts authorial insight as the character narrator verbally crafts her own interiority. The juxtaposition of letters with heterodiegetic narration and free indirect discourse, a recurring compositional motif in the novels of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (for example, in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* [1813], Aleksandr Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin* [1832], Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Elective Affinities* [1809]), materializes the emergence of the novelistic third person alongside the epistolary first person and allows stylistic exchange between the apparent psychological authority of the narrator and the seemingly innocent immediacy of the character's verbalized experience (see also Bray 2003). Comparably to the case of Mme de Clèves and the letter, Pamela's schematization of her own experience reflects an earlier moralistic commentary by the (occasional) authorial heterodiegetic narrator of *Pamela*: “And the Whole will shew the base Arts of designing Men to gain their wicked Ends; and how much it behoves the Fair Sex to stand upon their Guard against their artful Contrivances, especially when Riches and Power conspire against Innocence and a low Estate” (Richardson 2001 [1740]: 92).

What is more, the sentimental convention of the unique, hence inexpressible experience almost runs into its own impossibility in novels that also in other respects strain the verisimilitude of their communicative situations with loquacious character narrators endowed with implausibly good memories (diagnosed as “mnemonic overkill” by Cohn [1978: 162]). Abbé Prévost’s (1971 [1731]: 58) *Manon Lescaut*, to take yet another example from the sentimental tradition, presents the Chevalier de Grioux reminiscing over his reaction to yet another good-bye letter left behind by the wanton Manon, who has—again—found a better life with a well-to-do elderly gentleman:

Je demeurai, après cette lecture, dans un état qui me serait difficile à décrire car j’ignore encore aujourd’hui par quelle espèce de sentiments je fus alors agité. Ce fut une de ces situations uniques auxquelles on n’a rien éprouvé qui soit semblable. On ne saurait les expliquer aux autres, parce qu’ils n’en ont pas l’idée; et l’on a peine à se les bien démêler à soi-même, parce qu’étant seules de leur espèce, cela ne se lie à rien dans la mémoire, et ne peut même être rapproché d’aucun sentiment connu. Cependant, de quelque nature que fussent les miens, il est certain qu’il devait y entrer de la douleur, du dépit, de la jalousie et de la honte. Heureux s’il n’y fût pas entré encore plus d’amour!¹²

The experience of rejection leaves not only the experiencing but also the narrating of Grioux perplexed and ostensibly “wordless.” Paradoxically, the sentimental conventions for verbalizing unprecedented and inexpressible emotion develop into a ready-made schematic apparatus for consciousness representation in both homodiegetic and heterodiegetic narration—an apparatus, moreover, that is just as available to the characters inside the story world as it is to novelistic narrators trying to fabricate idiosyncratic fictional minds and experiences. The fact that the fictional mind *is* a product of language and nothing more finds its somewhat pathetic expression in de Grioux’s list of extreme emotions (“la douleur, du dépit, de la jalousie et de la honte”). This novelistic condition—the ultimate discrepancy between language and experience—was to find its well-known pathological culmination in Gustave Flaubert’s *Madame Bovary* (1999 [1857]: 97): “Et Emma cherchait à savoir ce que l’on entendait au juste dans la vie par les mots de *félicité*, de *passion* et d’*ivresse*, qui lui avaient paru si beaux dans les livres.”¹³

Conclusion and an Attempt at Synchronization

A narratological analysis of the anxiety of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century characters in their quests for internalized, idiosyncratic language reveals to the twenty-first century reader the ultimate conventionality of our modernist reading practices attuned to individuating emotions and experiences. Yet the typicality model, foregrounded by the early psychological and sentimental novel, can be argued to still function in the production and interpretation of novels alongside the fidelity model, just as Fludernik maintains is happening when an embedded vocal position occurs in language use. Although Fludernik's theory of schematization and typification shares the same cognitive-theoretical principles of prototypicality and frame application as subsequent cognitive-narratological theories that contest the exceptionality thesis, the argument I have developed in this essay does not lend unequivocal support to Herman's accessibility and mediation arguments. It seems that the narratological scholarship on literary minds, when discussing the force of literary conventions, recognizes only the fidelity model, which, as such, can be too easy a target of cognitive approaches.

To my mind, the most astute critical response to Herman's mediation argument is made by Stefan Iversen (2013: 147), who, while expressing his approval for the accessibility argument and its foundation in contemporary anti-Cartesian philosophy of mind, remarks on the different phenomenologies of social interaction and the reading of fictional minds: "Real life offers [actual] persons but metaphorical readings, while written texts offer literal readings but no actual persons." Iversen rightly points out that Herman's logic of argumentation self-contradictorily foregrounds both the immediate ease with which we construct thoughts and intentions for other people in everyday exchange (accessibility) and the similarity of our interpretative efforts (mediation) to make sense of literary and actual people alike. If inferring real minds is usually as effortless and automatized as contemporary philosophy of mind claims it is (e.g., Hutto 2008), how apt is the metaphor of "mind reading" after all? The mechanisms of schematic consciousness representation analyzed in this essay have their roots in universal cognitive principles but take shape inseparably from the textual, narrative, and thematic conventions of producing and reading literature.

Furthermore, Iversen's remark on the artificiality of agency ("no actual persons") ties in with the problem of the "empty center" or the "missing original" in the theory of schematic language representation, a linguistic metaphor that finds its material, ontological, and epistemological manifestation in fiction. The phase of the early psychological and

sentimental novel with its amateurish narrators and inexpressible and unprecedented feelings and the simultaneous copying of and resistance to moral exempla passed, but the problem of the missing original experience or mental “utterance” remains at the heart of all literary representations of consciousness and experience. *La Princesse de Clèves* and all the other novels discussed in this essay display cultural and narrative generators of experientiality at work around this empty center. This generator consists of the courtly social maxims and exempla, the sentimental and self-fashioning register of letter writing, and the new, modern pull toward novelistic invention. A diachronic emphasis on the lack of original “raw feels” or qualia (as Herman [see, e.g., 2009: 152–53] and other cognitive narratologists would put it) in consciousness representation effectively challenges any straightforward distinction between naturally occurring and invented minds. Yet the dialogic relation between the mental history of Western culture and the diachronies of literary form is—and has to be—a complex object of analysis, and it should not be reduced to a mere mirror relation. After all, precisely the discrepancy between literary models and real life became the hallmark theme of many realist and modernist novels in the wake of Lafayette, Richardson, Prévost, Goethe, and Austen, a theme that generated ever more singular fictional minds struggling to overcome emotional and experiential clichés.

References

Alter, Robert

1989 *The Pleasures of Reading in an Ideological Age* (New York: Simon and Schuster).

Barthes, Roland

1972 *Le degré zéro de l'écriture* (Paris: Seuil).

Bray, Joe

2003 *The Epistolary Novel: Representations of Consciousness* (London: Routledge).

Brooks, Peter

1993 *Body Work: Objects of Desire in Modern Narrative* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press).

Campbell, Joseph

1996 *Questions of Interpretation in La Princesse de Clèves* (Amsterdam: Rodopi).

Cohn, Dorrit

1978 *Transparent Minds: Narrative Modes for Presenting Consciousness in Fiction* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press).

Culler, Jonathan

1975 *Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism, Linguistics, and the Study of Literature* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul).

Dawson, Paul

2013 *The Return of the Omniscient Narrator: Authorship and Authority in Twenty-First Century Fiction* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press).

Flaubert, Gustave

1999 [1857] *Madame Bovary* (Paris: Librairie Générale Française).

2003 *Madame Bovary*. Translated by Geoffrey Wall (London: Penguin).

Fludernik, Monika

1993 *The Fictions of Language and the Languages of Fiction: The Linguistic Representation of Speech and Consciousness* (London: Routledge).

1996 *Towards a "Natural" Narratology* (London: Routledge).

2003 "The Diachronization of Narratology," *Narrative* 11, no. 3: 331–48.

2014 "Collective Minds in Fact and Fiction: Intermental Thought and Group Consciousness in Early Modern Narrative," *Poetics Today* 35, no. 4: 689–730.

François, Anne-Lise

2008 *Open Secrets: The Literature of Uncounted Experience* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press).

Genette, Gérard

1968 "Vraisemblance et motivation," *Communications* 11, no. 1: 5–21.

Greenberg, Mitchell

1992 *Subjectivity and Subjugation in Seventeenth-Century Drama and Prose: The Family Romance of French Classicism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

Herman, David

2009 *Basic Elements of Narrative* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell).

2011 “Introduction.” In *The Emergence of Mind: Representations of Consciousness in Narrative Discourse in English*, edited by David Herman, 1–40 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press).

Hostert, Daniel

2015 “Certain Tales in Sundry Fashions: Social Minds and Hypothetical Focalization in Early Modern Narratives,” *Narrative* 23, no. 2: 169–82.

Hutto, Daniel D.

2008 *Folk Psychological Narratives: The Sociocultural Basis of Understanding Reasons* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press).

Iversen, Stefan

2013 “Broken or Unnatural? On the Distinction of Fiction in Non-conventional First Person Narration.” In *The Travelling Concepts of Narrative*, edited by Mari Hatavara, Lars-Christer Hydén, and Matti Hyvärinen, 141–62 (Amsterdam: Benjamins).

Kauffman, Linda S.

1986 *Discourses of Desire: Gender, Genre, and Epistolary Fictions* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press).

Kukkonen, Karin

2014 “The Minds behind the Mask: Reading for Character in the Masquerade,” *Neophilologus* 98, no. 1: 161–76.

Lafayette, Madame de [Marie Madeleine Pioche de la Vergne]

1825 [1664] “La Comtesse de Tende.” In *Œuvres complètes* (Paris: Moutardier).

2005 [1678] *La Princesse de Clèves* (Paris: Gallimard).

2008 *The Princesse de Clèves, The Princesse de Montpensier, The Comtesse de Tende*. Translated by Terence Cave (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

Lanser, Susan Sniader

1992 *Fictions of Authority: Women Writers and Narrative Voice* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press).

Lyons, John D.

1989 *Exemplum: The Rhetoric of Example in Early Modern France and Italy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press).

Mäkelä, Maria

2006 “Possible Minds: Constructing—and Reading—Another Consciousness as Fiction.” In *Free Language, Indirect Translation, Discourse Narratology: Linguistic, Translatological, and Literary-Theoretical Encounters*, edited by Pekka Tammi and Hannu Tommola, 231–60 (Tampere, Finland: Tampere University Press).

2011 “Masters of Interiority: Figural Voices as Discursive Appropriators and as Loopholes in Narrative Communication.” In *Strange Voices in Narrative Fiction*, edited by Per Krogh Hansen, Stefan Iversen, Henrik Skov Nielsen, and Rolf Reitan, 191–218 (Berlin: de Gruyter).

McClure, Ellen

2007 “Cartesian Modernity and *The Princesse de Clèves*,” *Seventeenth-Century French Studies* 29, no. 1: 73–80.

McHale, Brian

1978 “Free Indirect Discourse: A Survey of Recent Accounts,” *PTL* 3, no. 2: 249–87.

2012 “Transparent Minds Revisited,” *Narrative* 20, no. 1: 115–24.

Muratore, Mary Jo

1994 *Mimesis and Metatextuality in the French Neo-classical Text: Reflexive Readings of La Fontaine, Molière, Racine, Guilleragues, Madame de La Fayette, Scarron, Cyrano de Bergerac, and Perrault* (Geneva: Droz).

Nelles, William

2006 “Omniscience for Atheists; or, Jane Austen’s Infallible Narrator,” *Narrative* 14, no. 2: 118–31.

Nünning, Vera

2012 “Voicing Criticism in Eighteenth-Century Novels by Women: Narrative Attempts at Claiming Authority.” In *English Past and Present: Selected Papers from the IAUPE Malta Conference in 2010*, edited by Wolfgang Viereck, 81–107 (Frankfurt am Main: Lang).

Palmer, Alan

2004 *Fictional Minds* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press).

2010 *Social Minds in the Novel* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press).

Prévost, Abbé

1978 [1731] *Manon Lescaut* (Vanves, France: Brodard and Taupin).

2004 *Manon Lescaut*. Translated by Angela Scholar (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

Prince, Gerald

1992 *Narrative as Theme: Studies in French Fiction* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press).

Richardson, Samuel

2001 [1740] *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

Sternberg, Meir

1978 *Expositional Modes and Temporal Ordering in Fiction* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press).

von Contzen, Eva

2015 “Why Medieval Literature Does Not Need the Concept of Social Minds: Exemplarity and Collective Experience,” *Narrative* 23, no. 2: 140–53.

This article was written during a research period in my postdoctoral project “Voice as Experience: Life-Storying in Contemporary Media, 2014–2017” (no. 276656), funded by the Academy of Finland. I wish to thank the special issue editor Paul Dawson and the anonymous reader for their invaluable comments on the manuscript and Dawson especially for coining the term fidelity model, which I immediately appropriated to support my own argument in this essay and will continue to use in future contexts.

1. “Agitated and afflicted, as one can imagine: he thought everything that was natural to think in such circumstances; all he could think of was murdering his wife” (Lafayette 2008: 203).
2. “It is difficult to imagine the thoughts that came into his mind at that moment. The violent state he was in would have led anyone who had been present to believe that he had lost his reason or was about to die. Jealousy and well-founded suspicions ordinarily prepare husbands for their misfortunes; it may even be that they always have their doubts; yet they are spared the certainty afforded by an open confession, which it is beyond our capacity to comprehend” (Lafayette 2008: 203).

3. As several studies on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century heterodiegetic narrators attest, there is of course no straightforward diachronic trajectory from unknowing to all-knowing narrators. See, e.g., Kukkonen 2014; Lanser 1992; Nelles 2006; Nünning 2012. Strategic limitations in narratorial “omniscience” continue to be an important compositional and rhetorical means in contemporary fiction as well. See Dawson 2013.

4. “The ball began and, as she was dancing with M. de Guise, *there was a loud noise over by the door* of the ballroom as of people giving way to *someone* coming in. Mme de Clèves finished dancing, and while she was looking round to find someone she intended to take as a partner, the King called to her to take *the person who had just arrived*. *She turned and saw a man* she felt at once could be no other than M. de Nemours stepping over a chair to make his way to where the dancing was. *He had such presence that it was difficult not to be taken aback on seeing him when one had never seen him before*, especially that evening, when the care he had taken to dress elegantly added still more lustre to his appearance; but it was also difficult to see Mme de Clèves for the first time without being amazed” (Lafayette 2008: 23; my emphasis).

5. “The Chevalier de Guise, who still worshipped her, was at her feet, and what had just taken place caused him the sharpest pain. He took it as an omen that fate meant M. de Nemours to fall in love with Mme de Clèves. Whether her face had really betrayed some inner turmoil or whether jealousy had caused the Chevalier de Guise to see more than was there, he believed that she had been affected by the sight of the prince” (Lafayette 2008: 24).

6. See also Iversen 2013 for a similar critique of Herman’s mediation argument **{au: Please provide a citation. Not needed anymore, citation provided in the body text}** and the unproblematic pairing of mind reading and the reading of a text.

7. “There could be no other story like mine in the world, no other woman capable of doing such a thing! Chance cannot have made someone invent it; no one has ever imagined it, the thought has never come into anyone’s head but mine” (Lafayette 2008: 110).

8. “How could she not recognize herself as the person whose name no one knew? How could she fail to be overwhelmed with gratitude and tenderness on learning, by a route which could not be suspect to her, that M. de **{au: Correct, as elsewhere? That’s right}** Nemours, who had already touched her heart, was hiding his passion from all the world and neglecting the prospect of a crown because he loved her? Thus it is impossible to describe what she felt, the confusion that arose in her soul. If Mme La Dauphine had looked at her carefully, she would easily have perceived that the things she had just said were not indifferent to her; but, as she had not the least suspicion of the truth, she went on talking without giving the matter any thought” (Lafayette 2008: 53).

9. I present a parallel analysis of this passage in “Masters of Interiority: Figural Voices as Discursive Appropriators and as Loopholes in Narrative Communication” (Mäkelä 2011) to demonstrate how the rhetorical intention and artfulness of epistolary self-expression translate into modern heterodiegetic narration through the expressivity markers of free indirect discourse.

10. “Mme de Clèves read and reread this letter several times without, however, understanding it at all. She only saw that M. de Nemours was not in love with her as she had thought and that he loved other women whom he deceived as he was deceiving her. *For a person of her temperament*, who was in the grip of a *violent passion*, who had just betrayed signs of it to a man she judged unworthy of being loved and to another whom she was ill-treating for his sake—*for such a person*, to see and to know such things was terrible indeed. *Never has pain been so piercing and sharp*. . . . Her mind fastened to everything, *in fact*, that could possibly

increase her distress and despair. *How severely she judged herself, how painfully she recalled her mother's advice! How she repented* of her failure to insist on removing herself from society. . . . She became convinced, *in short*, that all the evils that might be driven were as nothing compared to the fact that she had allowed M. de Nemours to see she loved him, and to the knowledge that he loved another woman. Her only consolation was to reflect that, now she knew the truth, she at least had nothing else to fear from her own feelings, and that *she would be wholly cured* of her inclination for Nemours" (Lafayette 2008: 72–73; my emphasis).

11. "*Nothing can match the pain I have endured. I believed you were violently in love with me; I ceased to hide my own passion from you, and then, at the very moment when I revealed it without reserve, I learnt that you were deceiving me, that you were in love with another woman, and that, to all appearances, you were sacrificing me to your new mistress. . . . The only way to rekindle your feelings for me, I thought, would be to make you see that my own had changed, while at the same time pretending to conceal the fact from you, as if I lacked the courage to confess it. I determined upon this course of action; but how difficult it was for me to adopt, and, when I saw you again, how impossible it seemed to carry through!*" (Lafayette 2008: 70–71; my emphasis).

12. "After reading this letter I was in a state of mind it is not easy to describe, for I do not know, even today, what the feelings were that caused me such agitation. It was one of those unique situations, the like of which one has never before experienced. You cannot explain them to others, because they can have no idea of them; and you can hardly fathom them yourself because, being the only ones of their kind, they correspond to nothing in your memory, and cannot even be compared with any other feeling you have known. And yet, whatever the precise nature of mine, it is certain that grief, resentment, jealousy, and shame all played their part. If only the greatest part of all had not been played by love!" (Prévost 2004: 47–48).

13. Emma sets out to "find out exactly what was meant in real life by the words felicity, passion and rapture, which had seemed so fine on the pages of the books" (Flaubert 2003: 33).