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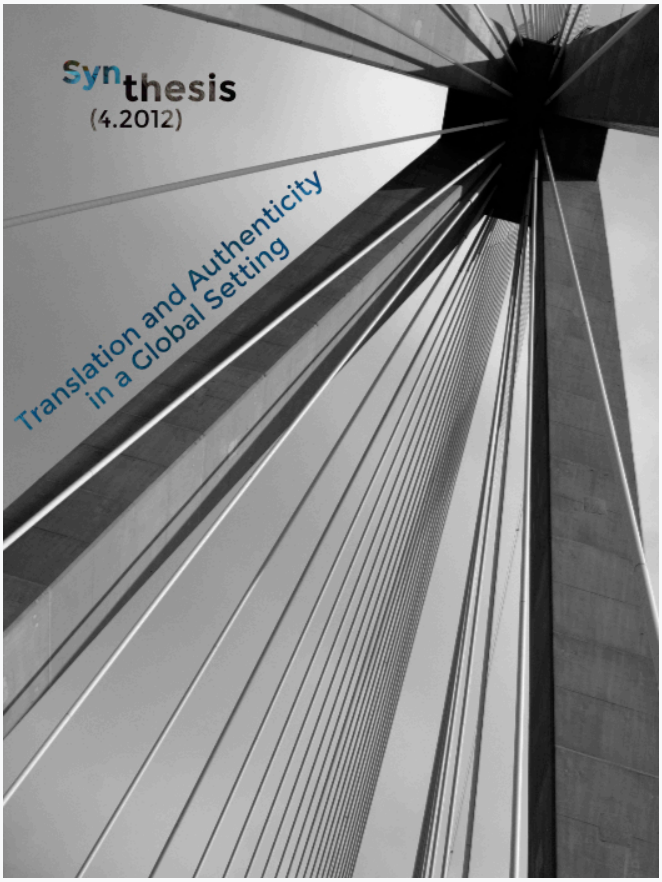
Translation and Authenticity in a Global Setting



Introduction Knowing Oneself, Untranslatably: Paradoxes of Authenticity in an Age of Globalisation

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Introduction
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In Don DeLillo's novel *Cosmopolis* (2003), which is set in New York City on the cusp of the twenty-first century, self-understanding and the communal sense of identity depend upon the possibility of translation. People speak "in accented voices" or "first languages" (10), while even some of the everyday words they use seem "aged and burdened by [their] own historical memory" (54). There is a want for new names, new equivalences between the physical and the technological, or, in DeLillo's words, for the discovery of "cross-harmonies between nature and data" (200). The protagonist Eric Packer's ability to think and speak in such a new language has helped him amass a mythical fortune as an asset manager. Yet in the course of one day, he loses it all in a bravura of self-destruction which leaves him feeling "blessed and authenticated" (136). Authenticity, DeLillo seems to suggest, involves a turning away from the quest for such harmonies, an understanding of "the importance of the lopsided, the thing that's skewed a little" (200). The novel contrasts the futuristic symmetry of capital and information flows with the vulnerability and ultimate "non-convertibility" of the human body. Eric Packer finishes the day physically wounded, having "come *to know himself, untranslatably*, through his pain" (207; emphasis added).

DeLillo's novel shows how the notions of translation and authenticity are interwoven into each other, and form a nexus of associations with what people hold as personal and collective values. Based on a peculiar but topical understanding of translation as convertibility (of the natural into the mechanical, of the archaic into the futuristic, of the experiential into the digital), DeLillo argues that authenticity begins precisely where translatability ends. It is the unreadable element —that which "is not susceptible…to computer emulation" (207)— which constitutes the irreducible bit of the self and of the shared identity. This account has the advantage of situating the theme of translation at the heart of the problematic of socio-economic globalisation. But it also avoids the nostalgic approach to authenticity as the longing for purity, for a lost beginning. It is rather the Cosmopolis— the spectacular, self-justified global city— that is messianic, in its pursuit of fluid symmetries. Being authentic, on the other hand, begins by recognising the discordances and asymmetries that interrupt the supposed continuum between the particular and the universal.

DeLillo updates the terms of the discussion on translation and authenticity, but his conclusion — effectively that authenticity is what is lost in translation— reflects an older and characteristically modern concern. It is worth briefly contrasting this conclusion with the way a long tradition of translation scholarship, which has its roots in German Romanticism, has elaborated the relationship between translation and authenticity. In his seminal lecture "On the different methods of translating," delivered in 1813, Schleiermacher dismissed all conventional translation strategies as either "paraphrase" or "imitation," that is, as inauthentic forms of translation. To these, he opposed an alienating and "disturbing" form of translation that remains "conscious of the difference of the [foreign] language from [the] mother tongue" and retains "the feeling of foreignness" (44, 46). Schleiermacher located authenticity in the positive act of representing, rather than suppressing, the asymmetry that exists between the foreign language and the translator's mother tongue. In his study of this essay, Antoine Berman insists on the resonances of the term "authentic" (*eigentlich*) in Schleiermacher's text. He concludes that to authentically represent the foreignness of the original text (as opposed to keeping the appearance of purity of the mother tongue or of the transparency of the translation process) is a choice that the translator has to make. He then adds that

> it is the merit of Schleiermacher to present this choice as that of *authenticity*, by confronting it with another possible choice, that of *inauthenticity*, since these two concepts bring together the ethical dimension and the ontological dimension, justice and justness. (241; my translation)

The reference to the ethical and the ontological dimensions of the choice of authenticity are of especial interest here. This choice is ethically and ontologically "just" because it restores both the distance that separates the native from the foreign language *and* the diversity of points of view that emerges from their contact. As Berman is keen to point out (241), this choice is "just" also because systematic

translation activity in a cultural-linguistic community, creates a space for "plural" relations with other communities —that is, relations that are not based on essentialist perceptions of the nation or the country's soil, but on an "open and dialogical" idea of culture and cosmopolitanism (240-241). [1]

Thus for the German Romantic, authenticity is not connected with the hypothesis of the purity of the native, but suggests a positive recognition of the native's vulnerability. The analogy with the concept of authenticity in *Cosmopolis* becomes clear if we think that in both cases notions of domesticity, properness and autonomy attached to the mother tongue are being questioned at the moment of the encounter with another language. For both writers, the authentic attitude involves exposure to this other language and refusal to either appropriate it or be appropriated by it. The difference between them is that, while Schleiermacher discusses translation as a movement between two local languages and cultures, for instance French and German of the early nineteenth century, DeLillo describes a generalised process of translation, from a familiar language and culture to the language of global technology, mobility and geopolitics. The question of translation and authenticity needs therefore to be formulated in two interrelated ways. Firstly, how are we to understand the modern contention that authenticity defines the limits of translatability? Conversely, does the translatability of culture and language necessarily entail a loss of authenticity? Is it possible to understand authenticity in a less exclusive way, so as to do justice to what is untranslatable in a local identity and still allow for this identity's transformation as a result of cultural, social or linguistic encounter? Secondly, how does the contemporary direction from an intercultural and interlingual situation to a global setting stretch the significations of translation and authenticity? How is the interface between them reconfigured when the local is translated into the global?

The paradox of authenticity

In his interview in this volume, Michael Cronin observes that authenticity "has been very much a target of the hermeneutics of suspicion." Before engaging with the questions outlined above, it is worth emphasising further the paradox of conflicting significations of authenticity. For some, authenticity marks a choice of plurality and creative recognition of distance, while for others, it is an uncritical notion implying a presumption of purity and an essentialist attachment to inherited values that are deemed to be beyond questioning.

It is the first signification that has been crucial for continental thinkers and especially for a series of existentialist philosophers. Characteristically, in his essay on anti-Semitism in post-War France, Sartre sharply dissociates his positive concept of authenticity from what he criticises, not without sarcasm, as the "true Frenchman's" belief in the value of ancestral tradition, wisdom and customs (23). To this mystified attitude, Sartre opposes the "choice of authenticity" (138), which requires assuming one's social and historical condition and abandoning both the presumption of purity and the "myth of the universal man" (136). For Sartre, then, the possibility of authenticity relies on the distance between the self and what lies beyond it, and consists in the radical exercise of freedom that this distance makes possible.

Similarly, for Heidegger, authenticity is not an essential feature of the subject in general, but a formal possibility without specific content that pertains to each human personally. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger goes to great lengths to argue that *in*authenticity, that is, the existential state of homelessness, dispersion and distance from the self, is a prerequisite for the development of self-consciousness and the wake-up call of authenticity. [2] For him, as for Sartre, authenticity relies on distance and, at least in principle, eschews metaphysical determination. At the same time, however, Heidegger's insistence on the individual's ability to interiorise and transcend distance regardless of social-historical conditions made his notion of authenticity susceptible to criticism. Adorno, for whom the interiorisation of distance in the Heideggerian subject (the *Dasein*) displayed all the signs of the

artificial suppression of difference in reified social relations, was unambiguous in his condemnation. In *The Jargon of Authenticity*, he argued that "The societal relation, which seals itself off in the identity of the subject, is de-societalized into an in-itself" (115). In other words, insofar as existential authenticity implies the self-sameness of the subject, it violently divests the relation between humans and the world of its social character and becomes tautological and essentialist. [3]

The charge of essentialism continued to be levelled against the notion of authenticity in the second half of the twentieth century. In the context of the critique of Western political and philosophical modernity, the quest for authenticity was predominantly seen as a late symptom of the West's nostalgia for originality and centredness. As Linda Hutcheon wrote in 1988:

> In postmodern psychoanalytic, philosophical and literary theory, the further decentering of the subject and its pursuit of individuality and authenticity has had significant repercussions on everything from our concepts of rationality to our view of the possibilities of genre ...The move to rethink margins and borders is clearly a move away from centralization with its associated concerns of origin, oneness and monumentality that work to link the concept of the center to those of the eternal and universal. The local, the regional, the non-totalizing are re-asserted as the center becomes a fiction – necessary, desired, but a fiction nonetheless. (58)

Postmodern recognition of the periphery thus challenges the autonomy of the centre and delegitimises any claim to authenticity, be it existential or cultural. This criticism does not apply only to the centre and to its connotations of hegemony and radiance; the postmodern decentring of the subject also discredits the hypothesis of the authenticity of the peripheral. Iain Chambers notably wrote that "such a decentring" leads to the "break-up and undoing of the dualism of centre and periphery, and with that of the associated poles of 'falsity' and 'authenticity'"(81). In the postmodern context of "contamination and hybridity in the circulation of cultures" (81), there is no room for any claim to authenticity, whether of local or metropolitan provenance. As Chambers explains:

> To talk of authenticity has invariably involved referring to tradition as an element of closure and conservation, as though peoples and cultures existed outside the languages of time... It has been to refuse an understanding of the contingent formation in which a tradition, a history, a language can become 'an element of freedom', a moment of active *redefinition*, that opens up the world to other claims on its destiny. (82)

This is an accurate summary of the contemporary critique of authenticity, understood in the sense of purity and timelessness. Still, it must be qualified by the proviso that authenticity is not at all as 'invariable' a notion as Chambers asserts in the above quotation —hence the 'paradox' of authenticity. As this notion continues to inform not only the philosophy of existence, but also public debates on identity, society and culture, it takes on diametrically opposed significations of distance and centredness, freedom and attachment, open-endedness and closure. [4]

These significations of authenticity, ambivalent as they are, testify to the persistent need for distinctiveness and recognition of both individual selves and local histories. Thus, for postcolonial writers, the concept of authenticity has been both empowering and debilitating. Its empowering agency is strongly felt, for instance, in the militant references to "our authenticity," in Bernabé, Chamoiseau and Confiant's *Éloge de la Créolité/In Praise of Creoleness* (78, 85, 104). In that manifesto, originally written in 1989, the three Martinican writers lay claim to a distinct type of authenticity as Creoleness and announce the coming into consciousness of their "authentic Culture" (96) and authentic aesthetics (89), beyond "folklorism and doudouism" (97) and "against the current of usuries, clichés and deformations" (103). [5] At the other end of the spectrum, Wole Soyinka despaired that African writers and artists were "compelled to surmount one of the most vulgar frontiers ever raised against the creative impulse —namely, Authenticity— capital letters!" (219). Soyinka's loud protest is directed against the Manichaeism implicit in the concept of Negritude and

the essentialist content of "Black authenticity" (126). However, as Mpalive-Hangson Msiska has argued, Soyinka's protest should not be construed as a renunciation of the self and a withdrawal of the identity claim. Rather, it should be understood as part of an effort to broaden and reconfigure the concept of authenticity:

> For [Soyinka], the challenge for a radical African cultural practice begins with a fundamental reconceptualisation of the relationship between Self and Other, searching for a concept of cultural authenticity that does not pander to the fiction of purity or, indeed, to the self-proclaimed supremacy of the colonial Other…[A]uthenticity has to do with the privileging of the local perspective, but in full cognisance of and articulation with the universal and external. (xxix)

Despite Soyinka's dismissal of the ideology of authenticity as racial and cultural essentialism, the concept itself survives in a critical, non-ontological mode that, in one move, undercuts this ideology and rises above the antagonism between coloniser and colonised. In fact, it is possible to argue that the usefulness of the concept of authenticity in identity discourses lies precisely in its double and unsettled reference to the ahistorical longing for purity and the historical fact of impurity. The unceasing quest for authenticity in self, society and culture seems to reflect modernity's need for such a notion that makes room for both a conscious metaphysical residue —and its ironic negation. This is potently reflected in the above definition of authenticity as a privilege accorded not only on the basis of local attachments, but also on that of the ability to be critically conversant with foreign and global realities and vocabularies.

Nikos Papastergiadis also diagnosed the persistence and unsettledness of the notion of authenticity. He specifically detected an "unresolved anxiety over authenticity":

> The contemporary theoretical debates have not resolved whether authenticity is bound to the 'roots' of traditional forms of attachment, intimacy and proximity, or whether the multiple 'routes' of modernity are the only pathways to freedom, criticality and innovation. Does authenticity demand stillness? Does innovation require restlessness? To what degree do the physicality of place and the experience of the journey play a critical role in the achievement of these states? Is it possible to have authentic attachments to a place and develop a form of cultural identity that is influenced by movement? Is a critical and innovative perspective available from the confines of the home? (124)

These questions are left open —an indication that there is no fixed answer and no necessary contradiction between the two poles, "roots" and "routes." If this is so, then the question of authenticity points to a theoretical opening, which is not necessarily marked by "anxiety." For there is anxiety insofar as these polarities are understood as contradictions that fail to be synthesised into universal values. But if the contemporary challenge is to configure new spaces for negotiation between the local and the global away from the pull of universalism, then the problematic of authenticity and the unresolved questions that it raises are central to this task. The quest for authenticity today can take the form of the renegotiation of the meanings and forms that local attachments, traditions and practices assume against a horizon of globality.

Authenticity, Translation, Globalisation

It is now possible to return to the double question that we asked earlier, namely how the pursuit of authenticity tests the limits of translation, and how the tension between authenticity and translation plays out in the current moment of globalisation. In the present volume, Esperança Bielsa argues that the intermingling of cultures and societies involves processes of transformation of local identities that take the form of translation. The re-interpretation of local traditions and institutions that follows socio-cultural interaction of a large scale creates a cosmopolitan space in which new political claims are made. This is a reciprocal process that affects both the Self and the Other, those at 'home' as well as those who have travelled. While Bielsa, in her article, strongly contests the critical potential of

authenticity, it is still possible to argue that "local authenticities" (Chambers 75), however discursively constructed, are as much at stake in such processes of translation as social interests and investments. The persistence of these local authenticities, as they get involved in processes of negotiation and help formulate new political and culturalclaims, pushes the limits of these societies' translatability.
The idea of the translatability of societies and cultures partly originates from Delanty's theory of critical cosmopolitanism(2009) and helps to explain how modern societies re-constitute themselves through processes of creative transformation as a result of their encounter. As Papastergiadis explains in his commentary on critical cosmopolitanism, transformation involves a double process of translation, between local cultures and between the local and the global:

> Transformation occurs at the level of the particular, as one culture is translated with another, and at a general level, as local culture translates into the third space of global culture. This model of critical cosmopolitanism can be read as a counter to the apocalyptic vision of globalization as a totalizing system that is characterized by its ruthless disregard for boundaries and its pursuit of unfettered mobility... (145)

Following this account, the double translation from one culture to another *and* from local place into cosmopolitan space is not a theoretical experiment but a process that continues to inform the state of modernity. Importantly, the fact that this approach avoids the "apocalyptic vision of globalisation" in no way implies that the process of double translation is a peaceful one; on the contrary it can and does involve struggle and conflict. Therefore, as far as the discussion of translation and authenticity in a global setting is concerned, the challenge today is to understand the pressures, negotiations and conflicts that occur as local perspectives, identities and attachments are translated into a third space of cosmopolitanism.

It is a similar challenge that Eric, the main character in *Cosmopolis*, is faced with and which he fails to measure up to. As mentioned above, the novel begins with Eric being a fully translated man —from his downtown origins to the abstract globalised city of fluid symmetries that he inhabits. [6] In the course of the day over which the novel extends, he realises that his absolute translatedness has stifled his authenticity. He understands the latter as the opposite of his vision of global economics, that is, as the importance of the past, of the ability to doubt, and of the lopsidedness of things (85-86). Losing his fortune and getting mortally wounded are as many ways for him to reclaim that lost authenticity. His spectacular fall is a prompt to read *Cosmopolis* as a moral tale. DeLillo suggests, firstly, that the question of authenticity remains central for the self and for the polis as a whole. Secondly, that the particular challenge authenticity faces today is that of its translation from the place of locality to that of globality. And, thirdly, that the possibility of this translation depends on our understanding of the global as a changing field of processes and discourses that allow for the creative transformation of identities, rather than as an abstract futuristic system that replaces these identities with new ones or annuls them altogether.

The contributions

The authors contributing to this volume discuss these ideas from a variety of perspectives and test them against their theoretical models and case studies. Their responses come from the fields of sociology, translation studies, comparative literary criticism, psychoanalysis, feminism, transgender theory, and post-colonialism. Topics include translation of autobiography, translation of peripheral poetry, bilingual poetry and the Internet, translation and rewriting of fairy tales, and translation as a trope for analysing contemporary art and understanding social conflict.

In the opening article, "Beyond Hybridity and Authenticity: Globalisation, Translation and the Cosmopolitan Turn in the Social Sciences," Esperança Bielsa argues that translation can serve as an empirical tool for understanding how otherness is internalised in dynamically intermingling societies. Bielsa suggests that cosmopolitanism theory, and especially Beck's "cosmopolitan realism" and

Delanty's "critical cosmopolitanism," offers new conceptualisations of the interactions between the global and the local, while recognising the role of translation in both enabling and interrogating these interactions. Such conceptualisations leave no room for the discourse of authenticity, which Bielsa entirely dismisses as essentialist, focusing instead on the concepts of pluralism, hybridity and transculturation. Crucially, these concepts are supplemented with the notion of multiple modernities, which emphasises interaction and interdependency –rather than simple connectedness- between Western and non-Western societies. It is in this context that we can understand "the contemporary transformations of citizenship as processes of translation, through which others reinterpret and appropriate our institutions and cultural traditions in different ways." Bielsa concludes by discussing the banning of the wearing of the scarf by Muslim girls in French schools as an example of how internalisation of otherness leads —through choice or force— to "self-reflexive transformations of citizenship in a cosmopolitan direction."

Maria Filippakopoulou offers a dense and detailed example of how translation —now in its standard, interlingual sense— can be proactively used to reposition local/marginal writing within a globalised literary geography. In "Putting Peripheral Poetries on the Map: Helen of Troy Rewritten by Helias Layios," Filippakopoulou translates into English a classically inspired poem published in 2002 by the Greek poet Layios, and annotates her translation, drawing comparisons with two "poetry retellings" of the *Iliad*, by H.D. and Christopher Logue. Filippakopoulou argues that the global literary relevance of the Greek poem expands and confirms itself through its translation from a minor to a major language. Keenly aware of the "asymmetries in global literary trade," Filippakopoulou contends that the distinction, in terms of poetic preoccupation, between aesthetic experimentation and cultural concreteness directly reflects an unequal geopolitical division between central and peripheral poetic traditions, and can be challenged by means of the translation and commentary of peripheral poetry. Her close reading of Layios's poem suggests that recognition and global resonance of peripheral poetry have nothing to do with the presumption of the authenticity of the local/parochial, and everything to do with the transgressive aesthetic of the peripheral poem that, crucially, is brought under sharp focus with the poem's annotated translation.

In "Lost in (Trans)lation: The Misread Body of Herculine Barbin," C.J. Gomolka also looks at the ways translation exposes the source text not just to another language but to a new hermeneutic environment. However, in the case of the autobiography of Herculine Barbin, the nineteenth-century French transgender person who is discussed here, translation into English led to misappropriation and misreading. Gomolka explains how, in the source text, the gender of the author/narrator resists clear-cut classification into male/female or heterosexual/homosexual taxonomies, through the careful use of linguistic gender markers, such as suffixes of French adjectives. At the same time, since the English language offers little room for gender variation, the English version of the autobiography "strips the narrative of any possible narrative trans-subversiveness." As Gomolka shows, forcing the transgender subject into a recognisable sexual identity and social role is not simply a side effect of the target language's grammar; rather, it is a translational choice that is further supported in the Introduction to the English edition by its editor, Michel Foucault. As a consequence of these choices, both the body and the identity of the trans-narrative subject are mis-recognised, and finally, as Gomolka forcefully argues, "lost in (trans)lation."

Autobiography is equally the field of Paola Bohórquez's contribution, but this time the problematic of authenticity is at the heart of the discussion. In "The Question of Authenticity in Migrant Self-Translation," Bohórquez looks at the translingual memoirs of two migrant writers, Smaro Kamboureli and Ariel Dorfman, and traces the ways in which subjectivity in their work is formed in the liminal space between two languages —a space heavily fraught with psychic attachments and cultural/political pressures. Kamboureli's journal is read as a narrative of self-translation, which neither fully mirrors nor fully produces the self. It rather engenders a "non-discursive remainder," where the migrant self comes to being. In the case of Dorfman, a perfectly bilingual writer, who chose to write his

autobiography in English and then translated it into Spanish, subjectivity emerges through a double process of translation: between traumatic experience and self-narration, on the one hand, and between English and Spanish, on the other. Bohórquez's important contribution to the question of authenticity is that she confronts, articulates and provides evidence for the paradoxical status of this concept. The ineluctable desire for authenticity effectively grounds the project of self-narration and is itself based not on the presumption of immediacy, but on the sheer impossibilities of narrative representation, linguistic referentiality and translational fidelity.

The diverse, often contradictory significations of the concept of authenticity inform Mayako Murai's essay, "Voicing Authenticities through Translation: Framing Strategies in the Multicultural Fairy Tale Collections of Andrew Lang and Angela Carter." Murai first refers to the strategies of selection, re-writing and translation of oral tales employed by Romantic folklorists, who prioritised "authentic national identity" over "the authenticity of the informants' voices." The storyteller's "voice" is thus implicitly identified by Murai as a carrier of authenticity, especially when compared to the editor's single voice of authority. A similar authoritarian pattern is discerned in Andrew Lang's collection of translated fairy tales (1889-1910), which "homogenises stories from different cultures into a single framework, smoothing out cultural differences in the service of a supposed universalism." This "Victorianising" move is then contrasted with Carter's feminist editorial agenda in *The Virago Book of Fairy Tales* (1990-1992). Carter's concern is to resist unification of storytellers' styles, "to tune in to each 'unofficial' voice" and, ultimately, to restore "different kinds of authenticities to individual cultures." In this way, Murai explicitly contrasts the notion of plural/local authenticities with that of the single, universal authenticity of the normalised fairy tale.

In "Anton Kannemeyer's Tactics of Translation as Critical Lens," John Tyson looks at how cultural translation has been used as a strategy aiming at the critical interrogation of various imageries of authenticity that populate collective memory in South Africa. The South African artist Kannemeyer works with existing material such as press articles, photographs and comics —for instance *Tintin*— that are generally associated with ideas of national purity, cultural authenticity and male or racial supremacy. Tyson argues that through the subtle transformation or provocative misappropriation of this material, Kannemeyer effects a kind of translation at the levels of language, aesthetic form, and the experience of viewing. Freud's notions of the *unheimlich* and translation as treason, as well as his notion of archive as reworked by Derrida, outline the conceptual framework of Tyson's analysis. Through a close reading of two series of Kannemeyer's works, and supported by detailed references to South Africa's political and social history, Tyson shows how Kannemeyer's translations evoke the traumas of colonisation and Apartheid, creating "a potential to jar the viewer into critical awareness."
Laura Pfeffer's informative piece "Challenging Tongues: The 'Irreducible Hybridity' of Language in Contemporary Bilingual Poetry" looks at the under-researched field of bilingual poetry from two distinct perspectives. On the one hand, Pfeffer argues that bilingual (or indeed multilingual) poetry's disorienting effect on the reader is not so much a result of abstract experimentation, as it is a wish to recount the contemporary experiences of cultural fissure and multiple linguistic allegiance. Pfeffer examines bilingual poems by Gwyneth Lewis, Gloria Anzaldúa and Anne Tardos, and shows how they operate as sites of translation beyond "traditional demarcations of 'original' and 'translated' text." Bilingual poetry thus creates non-hierarchical places that propose new democratic ways of co-existence. Another such place —and this is the essay's second analytical perspective— is the Internet. As Pfeffer suggests, "the destabilization of body, place, hierarchy, and order that electronic media creates closely reflects the cultural and political interests of contemporary writers and artists." Pfeffer's discussion of a number of bilingual poetic hypertexts and other types of hypermedia work emphasises the close affinities between bilingual poetic or artistic forms and the Internet as their platform. Noting the proliferation and dynamism of bilingual poetry, Pfeffer concludes by arguing for further recognition of this genre, especially in the publishing market.

Michael Cronin, interviewed by Dionysios Kapsaskis, discusses translation's vital, if often neglected, role in the history of globalisation, and argues that translators act as agents mediating between global forces and local realities. It is the mediating role of translators, in conjunction with what Cronin terms "the taboo about…the mediated nature of our existence," that accounts for the limited part that translation has played in cultural debates. The recognition of translation's agency in historical and ongoing processes of change requires a better understanding of cultural and linguistic complexity. As Cronin explains, complexity is not a modern privilege of global metropolises, but has always been embedded in the histories of local communities —an idea powerfully encapsulated in Cronin's concept of micro-cosmopolitanism. Thus, translation has always been both a necessity, because it ensures exchange with other communities, and a vulnerability, in so far as it requires exposure to the other. The embeddedness of translation has further consequences on our ontological understanding of human experience. Cronin explains that trade, technology and translation are inseparable from each other and central to "the emergence of the human." However, if the human is necessarily co-defined by the non-human, as the centrality of translation in history seems to indicate, then how can humans ever aspire to be authentic? In answering this question, Cronin sums up the responses of several contributors to this volume; he argues that translation is an unending process of authentication of values that echoes the sense-making needs of a community, even as older values are discredited in the process. In Cronin's words, "translation is so important to us [because] it shows us how experiences of authenticity are most authentic when they are inauthentic. It is that moment when one is least faithful to the source that you realise just how authentic [an] act of translation is."

The essays collected in the fourth volume of *Synthesis* show how translation as a practice and a concept complicates existing perceptions of authenticity. The form and gravity of this complication depend on each thinker's theoretical angle and investments. For some, translation, relativises the content of authenticity and gives rise to alternative conceptualisations, such as those of multiple and local authenticities; for others, translation points precisely to the critical vacuity of authenticity as a metaphysical construct. This wide range of evaluations applies to an equally wide variety of inquiries into ethnic, cultural and sexual identity, social and political engagement, and linguistic and narrative representation. The quest for authenticity seems to be widespread, profound and persisting.In our age of globalised exchange and translation, there is an urgent need for theory and societies alike to decide on the legitimacy or otherwise of this quest.

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[1] On this point see also Lamy, 597.

[2] See, for instance, the discussion in *Being and Time* §40, 233-35.

[3] On Adorno's critique of existential authenticity see also Bielsa's essay in the present volume.

4 See for instance, Jacob Golomb (1995), where the author explains in nuanced detail the various significations of the concept of authenticity in Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Sartre and Camus. More recent important resources on authenticity include Ferrara (1998), Guignon (2004), and Vannini and Williams (2009).

[5] The concept of authenticity in a postcolonial context is of course far more complex and charged than it can be discussed here. For one thing, through its association with Creoleness, authenticity in Bernabé, Chamoiseau and Confiant's manifesto has very little to do with the hypothesis of ethnic essentialism and cultural purity. This is

made abundantly clear in the text: "Creoleness is an annihilation of false universality, of monolingualism, and of purity;" and further down, "complexity is the very principle of our identity." (90)

[6] The much-discussed metaphor of the "translated man" is from Salman Rushdie's novel *Shame,*(1983), where the author uses the word 'translation' in the etymological sense of *translatio*-carrying across: "I, too, am a translated man. I have been *borne across*." (29)

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