Empathic Encounters: Negotiating Identity in 9/11 Fiction and Translation

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In the wake of the unprecedented and totalizing, visual narrative of 9/11—the singularity of the event—the novels that chronicle the attacks on September 11 2001 are defined by their commitment to, and "engagement with, alterity" (DeRosa, 157). In literary translation, a pervasive form of this alterity divides source and target domains, establishing an irreconcilable difference that the polarized strategies of domestication and foreignization consolidate and exacerbate. This approach risks perpetuating a reductive view of 9/11 novels as nothing more than fictionalized accounts of a conflict between the fundamentally disparate binary of the American Self and Terrorist Other. These terms are here understood as the totalized forms of identity taken up in post-9/11 discourses on conflict and difference, particularly in the mediatized aftermath of the 9/11 attacks. American 9/11 fiction refigures this alterity. Don DeLillo's 2007 novel *Falling Man*, and Marianne Véron's French translation *L'homme qui tombe*, seek to secure a dislocation of the "nature of consciousness" (Sumner 1) from the stable, visual referents to which identity is tethered, and the jarring before and after that bookend the traumatic event.

Informed by Dominick LaCapra's framework of empathic unsettlement, I will demonstrate how 9/11 fiction re-sites identity in spatial, temporal and psychological terms, in proximity to the visual singularity of an event that transcends the limits of cultural disparity in translation. By conducting a translation-oriented analysis of linguistic deixis in the source and target versions of *Falling Man*, I hope to underline the significance of empathic encounters in the negotiation, relocation and anchoring of the posttraumatic identities of 9/11 fiction. It is with this view of reciprocity in mind that I will proceed, with a view to emphasizing the hermeneutic value of translated literature as a destabilized, literary terrain that makes visible the multitude of possible empathic encounters and pathways in the source text.

DOMESTICATION AND FOREIGNIZATION

The polarized strategies of domestication and foreignization have, in recent years, come to the fore of literary translation theory. This binary framework for the translation of linguistically and culturally-specific elements in foreign literature was catalyzed by the 1990s surge in postcolonial literature and criticism.[1] These strategies expose perceived power differentials and inequalities, whether between emergent and dominant national literatures, standardized and regional languages, or between cultures historically divided by postcolonial politics. Domesticating and foreignizing translation approaches operate on the assumption that source and target cultures, and by extension their literary works, are fundamentally irreconcilable on the basis of stylistic, linguistic or ideological differences. Domestication prioritizes "inscribing [translated texts] with linguistic and cultural values that are intelligible to the specific domestic domain into which they are assimilated" (Venuti, "Scandals" 67). These translations prioritize fluency and intelligibility, whereby the foreign origins of a work are hidden from view, allowing the target audience to read the work as if it were an original piece of literature produced within their own cultural-linguistic domain. In contrast, foreignizing strategies "signify the difference of the foreign text […] by disrupting the cultural codes that prevail in the target language" (Venuti, "Reader" 340), and stand

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[1] For comprehensive overviews of translation studies developments, and the place of domestication and foreignization therein, see: Munday, Jeremy. *The Routledge Companion to Translation Studies.* London: Routledge, 2001. Print; Venuti, Lawrence. *The Translation Studies Reader*. London: Routledge, 2004. Print.

testament to the origins of the text by challenging target-reader comprehension, through the preservation of cultural, ideological or linguistic elements from the source text.

Translation scholar Haidee Kruger conceptualizes the oppositional nature of these strategies as "a mutually exclusive dichotomy" (Kruger 120) that hinges on the assumption that, beyond the discursive content of the work, there is a wider framework of linguistic, cultural and stylistic codes and values to which a translation must respond. From this perspective, literature offers an insight into the idiosyncrasies that divide and differentiate the implicit cultural domains present in literary translation processes. Crucial to this distinction is the co-dependency of source and target domains within the framework of literary translation and the extent to which a translation approach conceals or reveals the cultural identity (or identities) of the source text domain to the target reader.

Recent revisions and adaptations of domesticating and foreignizing strategies have made much of the potential for translator intervention in this binary relationship. Scholarly attention has neglected to challenge the homogenous labels taken up in much literary translation, and instead favors the wider social and subjective elements of translation as instigated and driven by the agency of a translator. To this end, domesticating approaches have been reframed as "a type of ethnocentric violence, [capable of] excluding or reducing cultural difference to sameness" (Kruger 15), while foreignization has been advocated as a potential "form of resistance against [the] ethnocentrism and racism, cultural narcissism and imperialism" (Kruger 15) that the dominance of English-language translations, as a percentage of all literary translations published worldwide, could be seen to represent.[2]

The question of how far translation might function as a socially, ethically and politically-driven process, catalyzed by the agency and motivation of an individual translator, has led to a reappraisal of domesticating and foreignization strategies. From this translator-oriented perspective, these strategies function as the practical tools of a wider minoritizing or resistant translation approach. For many translation scholars, this extrapolation of the conventional domestication-foreignization dichotomy underlines the increasing significance of the perceived agency of literary translators, as well as the potential for translation to destabilize English-language dominance in world literature. For translation theorist Lawrence Venuti, "good translation is minoritizing…cultivating a heterogeneous discourse, opening up the standard dialect and literary canons to what is foreign to themselves, to the substandard and the marginal" (Venuti, "Scandals" 11). In a bid to champion heterogeneity in translated literature, Venuti encourages translators to exercise their agency over both source text selection and the strategies implemented in the translation process. In the first instance, the translator may select a foreign-language text from genres or bodies of national literature that, crucially, he or she considers as underrepresented in, or suppressed by, the target domain. Alternatively, texts may be chosen for their destabilizing properties once translated and dissimilated into the receiving culture. Proponents of this theoretical shift see these "interpretative choices as largely determined by a wide range of social and cultural institutions" (Gentzler 37), to which the translator, perhaps unknowingly, is bound, and which contemporary translation theorists have only recently expressed in methodological terms.

Yet the essential difference between minoritizing and resistant translations remains unclear. While minoritizing translations seek to challenge linguistic homogeneity, resistant

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[2] A total of 4982 translations were available for sale in the US in 2004; of these, only 874 were adult literature or fiction titles. While English-language translations dominate the European market, only 52 new works of French fiction were translated into English and made available to the US market between 2000 and 2006. From: Allen, Esther. "Translation, Globalization and English", PEN/IRL Report on the International situation of Literary Translation, *To Be Translated or Not to B.* Barcelona: Institut Ramon Llull, 2007. Print.

translations actively "resist ethnocentric attitudes [by] defying target language expectations and stereotypes" (Myksja 17). By refusing the existence of homogenized canons and literary forms other to their own linguistic and cultural domains, resistant translations actively seek to exert their dominance over the translation divide. In the case of DeLillo and Véron, however, translation bridges the divide between two dominant literary languages —— English and French — which do not fit the postcolonial hierarchy that minoritizing and resistant approaches project onto the translation process. Here, the translation process must acknowledge the degree of cultural familiarity between the source and target domains, particularly in the case of translation from American English to French. Yet more crucial still is that this language pairing challenges the assumption that English is the dominant and default language of translation. Shifting focus onto a close reading of foreign target-language texts, then, not only weakens this historically conventional hierarchy, but also encourages a retroactive form of literary analysis, from target to source, that highlights the gaps, potential shifts and susceptibilities in the novelistic form and construction of the source text.

However, the restrictive dichotomy and co-dependence maintained by the continued influence of domestication and foreignization in literary translation remains stubbornly present in minoritizing and resistant translation approaches. While the introduction of these new terms does represent a shift from target-reader oriented translation towards prioritizing the structure, values and idiosyncrasies of the foreign literary text, the framework still relies on the perpetuation of perceived differences across the source-target divide, as well as the construction of a homogenous Self and opposing Other, separated by a cultural void. Moreover, the model provides a dubious assessment of the success of a translation, or what might constitute a "good translation", and does so based on how effectively an individual translator develops a resistant or minoritizing effect.

Venuti himself has sought to tackle the criticism of domestication and foreignization as essentially reductive and oppositional approaches:

> "The terms 'domestication' and 'foreignization' do not establish a neat binary opposition that can simply be superimposed on 'fluent' and 'resistant' discursive strategies. The terms 'domestication' and 'foreignization' indicate fundamentally ethical attitudes towards foreign text and culture, ethical effects by the strategy devised to translate it, whereas terms like 'fluency' and 'resistancy' indicate fundamentally discursive features of translation strategies in relation to the reader's cognitive processing." (Venuti, "Scandals" 19)

Venuti here attempts to clarify his stance by differentiating between the illocutionary and perlocutionary forces of translation; that is, what the translator seeks to achieve in line with his or her code of ethics, and how the reader assimilates or (mis)understands these intentions. However, this perspective still risks reducing the ethics of translation to a clear-cut, translator-instigated, decision between two conflicting approaches which, independent of the individual translation techniques therein, are inevitably affiliated with wider domesticating and foreignizing intentions, as well as conveniently-homogenized notions of culture and language, and the identities therein.

Beyond what I consider to be the limited scope of translator-oriented analysis, Venuti's ethical stance is arguably difficult to exercise and maintain in relation to literary fiction, as his position assumes that these works are somehow indicative of the canon, genres and languages from which they emerge. Moreover, translations of 9/11 literature require a divisive, potentially-subversive and fundamentally "American" event to be culturally and linguistically uprooted and re-sited in an exterior target language. 9/11 is consistently expressed —— whether in media, public, or political discourses ——, commemorated and historicized in reference to the fiercely-defended values and beliefs of the American nation. As Jürgen Habermas points out, "the attackers did not just cause the highest buildings in

Manhattan to collapse…they also destroyed an icon in the household imagery of the American nation" (Borradori 28). This is not to say that postcolonial readings of 9/11 literature are without merit. Failing to recognize the postcolonial*ized* divide between domestication and foreignization, however, risks perpetuating the simplified perspective of the terrorist attacks of 9/11 as a conflict between the very binaries of Self and Other that 9/11 novels seek to destabilize.

EMPATHIC UNSETTLEMENT

The shift away from a polarized conceptualization of source and target domains —— and the static notions of identity that such a binary opposition fosters —— has been pursued beyond the field of translation studies by literary-based theorists seeking to accommodate reciprocal and negotiable modes of identity into an autonomous framework for literary analysis. Empathic unsettlement is one such parallel branch of study, crystallized by the inevitable body-swapping experience observed in the attempts made by 9/11 novels to grapple with, and fictionalize, the nature of posttraumatic identity and consciousness.

Developed by trauma theorist Dominick LaCapra, empathic unsettlement may be defined as,

> "feeling for another without losing sight of the distinction between one's own experience and the experience of the other...it involves virtual not vicarious experience —— that is to say, experience in which one puts oneself in the other's position without taking the place of – or speaking for —— the other, or becoming a surrogate victim who appropriates the victim's voice." (LaCapra 135)

By distinguishing between virtual and vicarious representations of identity and victimhood, LaCapra opens up the possibility for a methodological framework built upon the transient notions of identity and consciousness in 9/11 fiction that conventional literary translation approaches struggle to accommodate. Empathic unsettlement is a particularly useful, critical model for unpacking the homogenous labels and totalizing narratives dominating contemporary representations of the event. A strong case for 9/11 as cultural trauma has been made elsewhere, the "sudden, comprehensive, fundamental and unexpected" (Sztompka 9) nature of the attacks not only challenging contemporary modes of interpretation, but "culminating [in a] sense that American identity had been altered fundamentally" (Smelser 267). Indeed, the immediacy with which New Yorkers—and, indeed, Americans—became synonymous victims led to something of a catch-all sense of victimhood in the wake of the attacks, with which LaCapra's model contends. For many Americans, "9/11 is woven inextricably together with the visual representation of the event, and *we* all therefore to some extent took part in the event" (Andersen 1), wherein, voyeurism seems to infiltrate the boundaries of this perceived victimhood.

It is precisely this glossing of identity that empathic unsettlement, and indeed 9/11 fiction, challenges in its preoccupation with the posttraumatic instability and interconnectedness of selfhood. The physical structure of the towers as an anomaly on the New York skyline — their unrivalled twinning existing as something of a feedback loop of simulacra — created an unprecedented absence that itself needed to stand for *something*. Here, "all that howling space" (DeLillo "Ruins") that DeLillo attempts to find meaning for in *Falling Man*, exists as a destabilized signifying terrain, where the absence of any signifier opens up the possibility for new empathic encounters and the renegotiation of identities that were tethered to the physical, and symbolic, image of the towers themselves.

Within this space, empathic unsettlement offers a rendering of the various lenses and fictional identities through which the traumatic experience of 9/11 is focalized: across boundaries between fictional identities within the world of the text; for the author straddling

both real-world and fictionalized versions of the event; and across the dissipating proximity from the event, to author, to translation. This deictic model for mapping the proximity of identities, both in terms of how they are negotiated, or even created, within the world of the text in relation to 9/11, as well as to other relative identities and positions, becomes increasingly significant when this literary analysis expands to include translated texts. By mapping these target identities and positions around an event that occupies a fixed position — or that exists as a visual singularity — in both source and target systems, a direct comparison of shifts between the texts becomes possible, providing insight into how translation, as a form of empathic unsettling, might function as a retroactive means of literary analysis.

Equally significant here is the inherent culpability that LaCapra recognizes in the practice of empathy — the same virtual body-swapping that the translation, too, must secure — allowing for proximity to be reframed in relation *to* the traumatic event, rather than *from* the position of the first-person empathizer to that of the perceived victim, or from source to target text. This virtual experience, the simulation of otherness, is distinguishable from "crude empathy… [which] appropriates the experience of the other, reduces it to familiar frames of reference and therefore violates its singularity" (Craps 195–6). This simulation of otherness is where domestication and foreignization are ill-equipped as translation solutions for contemporary 9/11 novels. By constructing seemingly irreconcilable boundaries between source and target domains, these translation strategies struggle to accommodate a reciprocal model for the creation and negotiation of fictional identities in proximity to the singularity of an event such as 9/11. Just as domestication and foreignization are conceptualized as opposing poles on a sliding scale of cultural difference, resistant and minoritizing approaches require some kind of radical opposition across the source-target divide to be observed, if their political motivations and intervention in the translation process is to be justified. What empathic unsettlement produces, is a lens through which a complex network of shifting and reciprocal identities might be negotiated via fiction, when pinned down to a singular narrative-event that functions as a fixed, visual referent across source and target domains. Simply put, empathic unsettlement preserves the singularity of literary identities, independent of their real-world counterparts, thus allowing those literary identities to be interrogated as theoretical, translatable values around a spatially and temporally-fixed narrative event.

LaCapra's framework provides a crucial vision of empathy as "a dual structure, a movement both towards and away, which forms a simultaneous gesture of proximity (identification, subjectivity) and distance (objectivity, critical understanding)" (Ward 3). Event, space and subject, unsettled from the stability of their pre-traumatic positions, are here simultaneously refigured and re-sited, allowing for new empathic encounters across dilating and contracting boundaries. Similarly, this shift from derivation to reciprocity between identities has the potential to be mapped onto the overarching relationship between original texts and their translations, re-imagining the conventional hierarchy of original text and foreign-language version as a reciprocal, and mutually-beneficial, exchange. This reciprocity is essential to deciphering the empathic encounters in Don DeLillo's 9/11 novel *Falling Man*, and its French translation, Marianne Véron's *L'homme qui tombe*. In both novels, empathic encounters are experienced by the characters as attempt at proximity to, or a connection with, an event and a city from which the individual is spatially and temporally dislocated in the wake of trauma. The back and forth of this movement intensifies in translation, where the totalizing nature of the event endures across source and target domains, yet the tenuous links drawn between now-disparate identities and spaces are further destabilized by the uprooting of the translation process.

EMPATHIC ENCOUNTERS IN *FALLING MAN* AND *L'HOMME QUI TOMBE*

DeLillo's *Falling Man* "demonstrates an ethics of embodiment that focuses on how trauma affects the individual, and how individuals need to connect with the people and places around them in order to heal and to create a stable identity" (Harack 304). Understanding identity as a reciprocal construct, particularly in relation to physical surroundings and the influence of community, becomes increasingly pertinent as these otherwise static points of reference are destabilized by the traumatic event. For Whitehead, "the collective memory of city dwellers", and the referents to which these groups anchor a universal sense of identity, "is affected far more by a disturbance in their physical surroundings…than by the most violent national upheavals that leave buildings intact" (137). The fall of the twin towers, then, may not be best understood in terms of its symbolic meaning, but in terms of the repercussive effects of physical and geographical absence on the identity of individuals inhabiting those spaces. In the case of 9/11 fiction, the overlaps between fictionalized and real-world events makes the origo of the event easily definable: in *Falling Man*, "the city of New York is specific, targeted and localized" (Harack 316) and, perhaps most importantly, recognizable as a real-world space. The result is a pressing "crisis of proximity, in which the events are too close, both in time and, in space" (Carroll 109), visible in the tension between the city and its fictional counterpart, and for DeLillo himself, inextricably connected to the historicization of his native New York in fiction by his previous works, such as *Players* (1977), *Underworld* (1997) and *Cosmopolis* (2003). These shifting definitions of time and space are situated in direct contrast to the literary translation strategies of domestication and foreignization, which traffic in static and temporally-specific notions of space and place, and which therefore struggle to accommodate the crisis of identity and representation that starts with the city itself in *Falling Man*. Indeed, these spaces take on a renewed significance when we consider how identities, via traumatic experience, might be negotiated and relocated in relation to a physical space that is itself forcibly disconnected from the stability of its former identity for its inhabitants. Furthermore, this simultaneous renegotiation of identity in relation to the real-world event is blurred by its fictionalization and translation, particularly if the derivative foreign-language text (the conventional product of domesticating and foreignizing translations) is expected to somehow capture what is hoped will be the essential "authenticity" of the event.

This tension between the indeterminacy of identity in the original text, and the practical requirements for the translation process to locate a geographical, temporal or ideological constant in the source domain, is most pronounced in the opening and closing stages of Don DeLillo's *Falling Man* and Marianne Véron's French translation of the novel, *L'homme qui tombe* (DeLillo 3–13, 239–246; Véron 9–13, 308–317). In these excerpts, which reverse-engineer Keith Neudecker's escape from the north tower from the moment of impact to the fall of the tower, the consistent use of deictic language is instrumental in charting the physical, temporal and empathic dislocation of the individual in the wake of significant trauma.

I. Temporal Deixis

"The temporal structure of the novel…relocates the event that stands at its center" (Carroll 114) to bookend the main body of the text, as the closing moments of the narrative bleed into the novel's opening. Just as the fall of the towers was repeated, almost incessantly, on television, the end of the novel leads back to its start, and the cycle of traumatic experience is seemingly doomed to repetition without resolve. While DeLillo's language mimics this "non-teleological" (Carroll 127) structure, the French translation of the text includes a number of additional deictic markers — namely prepositional and pronominal phrases — that introduce

a sense of temporal specificity and a subsequent chronological sense of narrative progression into this otherwise cyclical novel.

Having escaped the chaos of downtown Manhattan in a state of near-somnambulism, Keith flags down a truck and, when prompted by the driver, automatically gives the address of his former marital home, now occupied by his estranged wife and their young son. In a fleeting moment of clarity, Keith "understood where he'd been going all along" (DeLillo 6). The duration of Keith's physical journey back to his wife and son remains non-specific and becomes increasingly indeterminate as this physical reunion marks something of a midway point from which the temporal structure of the novel moves outwards, charting the entirety of their relationship and reconciliation, with equal parts nostalgia and inevitability. The French translation introduces a clear sense of teleology in its suggestion that Keith «comprit où il allait *depuis le début*» (Véron 13, own emphasis). While the use of the imperfect tense omits the duration of Keith's journey, the phrase *depuis le debut* (or *since the start*) ascribes his actions a definable starting point: a moment that, by definition, serves as a catalyst for his present state. Moreover, a beginning infers an ending, and it is this sense of resolution, or simply the completion of an emotional state, that the trauma-induced, cyclical structure of the novel resists.

The somewhat-blanket use of «c'est alors» (Véron 12; 305) as a translation solution for various temporal phrases in the source text provides a telling insight into how the translated text attempts to relocate Keith into a linear timeline of experience; a level of coherence that is inaccessible to both the traumatized victim, and the narrative itself, which has come to exhibit the symptoms of trauma through repetition and a preoccupation with the visual realm. In the first of these examples, *c'est alors* effectively captures the disjuncture of the original text's jarring use of a present-past-present grammatical structure that is indicative of the protagonist's complete temporal and spatial dislocation at the moment of impact in the north tower. "This is when he wondered what is happening here" (DeLillo 237) marks an uneasy blurring of the lines between the protagonist's thoughts and the omniscience of the narrative voice at the epicenter of the traumatic event itself. The French translation, too, is pulled in different directions by the present tense voice of the protagonist, and the objective distance of the narrative voice, that is here rendered in the definitive simple past, rather than imperfect, tense: «c'est alors qu'il se demanda ce qui se passait là» (Véron 305). Here, *alors* (to mean *then* or «a ce moment là») is used as a temporal marker to allude to the wider "crisis of proximity" (Carroll 109) beyond the protagonist's individual experience and trauma, effectively capturing the moment when the objective distance of the narrator — and the sense of narrative structure or chronology — is in direct conflict with Keith's overwhelming proximity to the event.

«C'est alors» is not always used with such accuracy. . Elsewhere, this phrase, alongside the addition of further demonstrative and deictic pronouns, attests to the more temporally-rigorous and chronological narrative of the translated text. Time loses its linearity as Keith flees the north tower, and he experiences a disorienting kind of synesthesia, where "the noise lay everywhere they ran, stratified sound collecting around them, and he walked away from it and into it at the same time" (DeLillo 4). Yet despite reaching the fresh air beyond the suffocating streets of lower Manhattan, Keith struggles to secure any sense of cognitive clarity. The chronology and causality of the events remain inaccessible to both the protagonist and narrative structure at this stage. Accordingly, while the phrase "in time he heard the sound of the second fall" (DeLillo 5) gestures to an event somewhere outside of himself, the crucial lack of temporal specificity in the prepositional phrase used by DeLillo, imbues the narrative structure with the same sense of temporal dissonance that plagues Keith at this early stage in the novel. In contrast, this narrative structure becomes much more temporally accurate, and teleologically-structured, with the French translation of the phrase:

«c'est alors qu'il entendit le bruit de la seconde chute» (Véron 12). Although this *alors* is not indicative of a specific moment in time, the translated phrase does introduce a sense of causality, and functions here as the English 'then'; a signifier of some kind of progression or consequential action, rather than the indeterminate nature of "in time".

The lack of temporal specificity in the English novel does pose a challenge for the more grammatically time-bound French language, wherein, deictic and temporal prepositions must correlate to the given tense. In this case, the given sense is the closed and determinable timeframe of the French simple past. Yet in the opening and closing scenes of DeLillo's text, the overall indeterminable nature of temporality "makes time stand still; one arrested moment stands in metonymically for the whole horror" (Kauffman 652): a suspension of time that the French translation seems unable to maintain. Rather than compensating[3] for this temporal specificity by accentuating ambiguity elsewhere, Véron's text consistently manipulates the proximity of notions of identity, particularly in relation to the spaces in which those identities are anchored to the event itself, in a move that clarifies the dissonance between the individual, time and space. In this sense, the deliberate confusion of deixis in the source text is appropriated into a conventional, linear structure, in line with the temporal-specificity of French grammatical structures in comparison to the English language. This conventional structure reduces traumatic experience to the "familiar frames of reference" (Craps 163) indicative of crude empathy.

II. Spatial Deixis
Of the deictic markers in the novel's descent through the north tower and onto the streets of lower Manhattan, the description and translation of space marks a sense of deictic cohesion for the source and target texts. The French text, however, is not without its own deictic additions. The translated novel consistently distinguishes between a relatively-defined 'here' and 'there', and a subsequent sense of a 'before' and 'after', that reinstates "inside and outside [as] exclusive and opposite spatial categories" (Carroll 113). In the opening pages of the novel, Keith is struck by the revelation that "maybe this is what things look like when no one is here to see them" (DeLillo 5), where 'here' and 'this' gesture to the current scene as an apocalyptic version of New York — a parallel *other* world— in which Keith equally has no place. The overlap between a virtual New York as an empty, post-apocalyptic city and the scenes of death and destruction that Keith faces both inside and beyond the towers, imbues the protagonist's surroundings with the same cognitive dissonance that makes a connection between the dislocated individual and his city, here, impossible.

While the somewhat verbose translation of this statement into French — «peut-être est-ce à quoi ressemblent les choses quand personne n'est là pour les voir» (Véron 12) — does maintain the inherent vagueness of «choses» (*things*), it also infers a clear distinction between a definitive 'here' (*ici*) and an imagined 'there' (*là*). The narrative rendering of proximity shifts away from the blurring of a present-day New York and an imagined, uninhabitable alternative, and is dilated to indicate a clear distinction between the exclusive spatial domains set forth by Carroll (113). This newly-assigned narrative distance also suggests an untethering of the protagonist from the chaos of his surroundings, and assumes he possesses the ability to objectively locate a definitive 'there' that is distinct from the 'here' in which he is fully immersed. If "traumatic status is attributed to real or imagined phenomena…because these phenomena are believed to have abruptly, and harmfully, affected collective identity" (Alexander 9–10), then the event might here be considered

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[3] Compensation, in translation theory, may be defined as "the technique of making up for the translation loss of important ST features by approximating their effects in the TT through means other than those used in the ST" (Hervey and Higgins 248).

traumatic based on the severance of the link between the individual and the physical identity of the city to which he belongs. DeLillo's New York is not the "symbolic capital…of the Western world itself" (Doran 3) adopted by post-9/11 political and historical discourses, but the familiar, everyday world to which Keith's identity as 'New Yorker' is no long tenable.

Elsewhere in the text, deictic markers indicate Keith's fleeting awareness that *something* is wrong in this off-kilter version of the familiar urban landscape. However, in translation, the recasting of these grammatical elements again contributes to a level of awareness and distinction between spatial domains that otherwise remains inaccessible to the traumatized consciousness. "Things inside were distant and still, where he was supposed to be" (DeLillo 3), signals the eerie sense of distance between the chaos of the streets and the calm beyond the glass-fronted shops. The jarring structure of this sentence in DeLillo's text interrupts a stream of consciousness that is reinstated in the French construction, «à l'intérieur les choses étaient lointaines et immobiles, *là* où il était censé être» (Véron 10, own emphasis). The introduction of the deictic pronoun *là* may seem a minor addition here, but it secures a recapitulation of the distance between interior and exterior spaces as signaled in DeLillo's text. The nature of this translation shift contributes to an increased sense of surety in the translation of these sections as a whole, in relation to where Keith might be positioned, or positions himself, in proximity to the spatial reconstruction of his once-familiar city. Accordingly, the vagueness of his observation that "things did not seem charged in the usual ways" (DeLillo 5), is transposed as a definitive statement that «les choses n'avaient plus la même intensité que d'habitude» (Véron 12). The certainty of this phrase also alludes to a definitive temporal break — the 'before' and 'after' of the event — that again remains out of reach in the source text.

III. Subject Deixis

In a novel "obsessed with the corporeal body" (Kauffman 135), deictic language is symptomatic of the crisis of proximity felt at the core of the traumatic event and the overwhelming physicality of the relationship between the individual, and spatial and temporal shifts. Yet it is the unseen individual psyche through which the violence and sheer physicality of the novel is filtered. Yet it is through the unseen, unreachable psyche of the individual that the violence and sheer physicality of the novel is filtered. In this sense, it is, perhaps, more accurate to refer to the protagonist's "nature of consciousness" (Sumner 1) than the individual's subjectivity, with a view to understanding how deictic language might offer an insight into how the traumatized individual appropriates and navigates his proximity to the event — in both its physical and psychological forms — from an internalized perspective on fiercely exterior events. Crucially, throughout the novel's opening scene, the protagonist remains unnamed, and unidentifiable, amongst the swathes of survivors escaping through the streets of Manhattan: he is only referred to via a third person pronoun. A reader, too, is likely to be set off-kilter by the violent event unfolding within these opening pages, as the destruction and fall of the towers is mediated entirely though the confused stream of consciousness of an unknown subject, rather than the ordered clarity of a conventional, omniscient narrator. Moreover, this indeterminacy in the nature of the subject, or agent, of the novel's narrative is further complicated by the introduction of a second "him" as the protagonist recognizes the fall of the north tower through the haze of his stream of consciousness. Here, at their most basic level, both the English sentence — "That was him coming down, the north tower" (DeLillo 5) — and the corresponding French translation — «C'était lui qui s'écroulait: la tour nord» (Véron 12) — introduce a third person pronoun that further destabilizes the subject of Keith's narration. In the English text, 'him' remains

resolutely ambiguous and points to two potential, equally viable subjects. This pronoun could first indicate the personification of the tower itself as a humanized individual[4], or could equally refer to the protagonist's disorientating sense of temporal dislocation, whereby his physical escape from the towers does not secure an equivalent, psychological break from their traumatic effects.

Harack puts forward the possibility that 'he' refers to Rumsey (322), the friend Keith is forced to leave behind and whose body falls with the north tower. I argue, however, that Keith cannot access a level of empathy and awareness beyond his corporeality in the immediate aftermath of the traumatic event. Indeed, the graphic reality of Rumsey's fate is only revealed at the very end of the novel, and Harack's inference becomes viable only in retrospect of the novel's opening. It is a complete failure to imagine the event in anything but individual terms that fuels Keith's inability to overcome anything but the physical effects of his trauma: he carries no evidence of the collective loss of the towers, no "organic shrapnel" (DeLillo 16) from either victims or perpetrators. Therefore, the non-teleological nature of trauma and the novel's trauma-induced narrative, when considered with Keith's inability to recognize his proximity to a community of fellow victims and survivors at this early stage in the event's aftermath, makes empathic recognition of Rumsey's suffering inaccessible to the protagonist.

In the French text, the conflict between the potential subjects of this statement is highlighted by the use of *lui* — a conventionally masculine pronoun — alongside *la tour* — a feminine noun — with the addition of a colon between the clauses, introducing a syntactic link that is not present in the English text. The overt subject here is the personified tower — *lui: la tour nord* — the adjacent pronoun and noun-phrase linked by a colon that acts as a cohesive, and explanatory, link between the two linguistic units. This arguably reflects the general tendency of the French text to favor a more coherent sense of narrative linearity over the grammatical disjuncture of DeLillo's text. The possibility of a protagonist-subject does remain in the target text, yet when considered in light of the narrowing of narrative proximity between subject and event in the translated novel, the personification of the north tower perhaps seems the most viable interpretation. The effects of bringing the protagonist-subject closer to the event, then, are twofold, and somewhat contradictory. The deictic specificity the French text detracts from the textual dissonance of the source novel, while clarifying the inferred connection between the crisis of identity experienced in the wake of trauma, and the temporal and spatial shifts from which this nature of consciousness arises, flags up the empathic encounters in the target text.

In terms of empathic unsettlement, the rendering of temporal and spatial shifts in proximity across the translation divide departs from the destabilized topography of Don DeLillo's *Falling Man*, whereby additional deictic specificity seeks to clarify the proximal limits of the traumatic event. These additions risk reducing the empathic encounters in DeLillo's novel and the unsettlement secured by the very act of translation itself to forms of "crude empathy" (Craps 195) that would see traumatic experience appropriated and domesticated into conventional frames of literary expression. Conversely, the retroactive, target-to-source analysis of subject deixis across the two novels supports a reading of translated fiction as a destabilized, and traumatized, terrain that serves as an alternative form of empathic unsettlement. Here, while the translation process lessens spatial and temporal dissonance, the reciprocal proximity and distanciation of the nature of individual

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[4] The personified representation of the Twin Towers has similarly infiltrated the visual arts, and can be seen most clearly in Graydon Parrish's "The Cycle of Terror and Tragedy: September 11, 2001". See <http://revista-amauta.org/2009/09/how-911-should-be-remembered/>.

consciousness to the event is clarified, thus strengthening the potential for translation as a means of uncovering alternative empathic pathways and encounters within source texts.

"The condition of identity is never a static one. It resides neither in the state of being connected, nor in the state of being distinct…it is as a mirror that place contributes to a sense of personal identity," (Leach, "Topophilia", 39–40) as the two undergo enormous pressure and dramatic shifts in the wake of the traumatic event. In the case of 9/11, the shifting proximity between these destabilized referents holds the key to understanding how the event might be negotiated and mediated by reciprocal identities and individuals through the lens of literary fiction. The translation process clarifies the interconnectedness of these now tenuously-defined spaces, places and individuals, and functions as a second destabilizing terrain where empathic encounters potentially bridge the fictionalized New York as a "locus of American's imaginations" (Harack 307) and a real-world, culturally-grounded city. Translated novels are here liberated from the restrictive and confrontational dichotomy of domesticating and foreignizing strategies, and the hermeneutic value of translation is reinstated —a necessary step if literary translation practices are to come to terms with the posttraumatic concerns and commitments of postmillennial fiction (Gąsiorek and James 610) and American works of 9/11 literature.

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