From authenticism to alethism: Against McCarroll on observer memory

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Abstract

In opposition to the natural view that observer perspective memory is bound to be inauthentic, McCarroll (2018) argues for the surprising conclusion that memories in which the subject sees himself in the remembered scene are, in many cases, true to the subject's original experience of the scene. By means of a careful reconstruction of his argument, this paper shows that McCarroll does not succeed in establishing his conclusion. It shows, in fact, that we ought to come to the opposed conclusion that, while it may be possible in principle for observer perspective memory to be authentic, this is unlikely ever to happen in practice. The natural view, in short, is more or less right.

In opposition to the natural view that observer perspective memory is bound to be inauthentic, McCarroll (2018) argues for the surprising conclusion that memories in which the subject sees himself in the remembered scene are, in many cases, true to the subject's original experience of the scene. By means of a careful reconstruction of his argument, this paper shows that McCarroll does not succeed in establishing his conclusion. It shows, in fact, that we ought to come to the opposed conclusion that, while it may be possible in principle for observer perspective memory to be authentic, this is unlikely ever to happen in practice. The natural view, in short, is more or less right.

The paper is structured as follows. Section 1 sets out the authenticity thesis, the claim that authenticity in observer perspective remembering is a routine occurrence. Sections 2 and 3 describe the roles played by two key concepts—"observer

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perspective experience" and "translation"—in McCarroll's argument for the authenticity thesis and argue that, once these are clearly described, it becomes evident that he is, despite his claims to the contrary, a preservationist. Section 4 argues, first, that McCarroll fails to show—as he must, if his argument is to establish the authenticity thesis—that translation can, with any regularity, lead from an observer perspective experience to an observer perspective memory without the addition of content and, second, that we have positive reason to suppose that it cannot do so. This brings us to the conclusion that observer perspective memories are, perhaps with rare exceptions, inauthentic. Section 5 goes on to argue that, rather than leading us to endorse the claim that observer perspective remembering is unsuccessful, this conclusion should lead us to reject authenticism, the view that successful remembering presupposes both truth and authenticity, in favour of alethism, the view that it presupposes truth but not authenticity.

1 Authenticity

McCarroll defines observer perspective memory (OPM) in contrast to field perspective memory (FPM):

> When remembering events from one's life one often sees the remembered scene as one originally experienced it, from one's original point of view—a field perspective. Sometimes, however, one sees oneself in the memory, as if one were an observer of the remembered scene—an observer perspective. (2018: 3)[1]

This is in line with earlier definitions. Nigro and Neisser, in their foundational paper on OPM, say that "[i]n some memories, one has the perspective of an observer, seeing oneself 'from the outside.' In other memories, one sees the scene from one's own perspective; the field of view in such memories corresponds to that of the original situation" (1983: 467). Sutton, in a paper responsible for triggering much of the current philosophical interest in OPM, echoes Nigro and Neisser, saying that, in an OPM, "I [see] myself in the remembered scene", whereas, in an FPM, "I experience the remembered actions and events as from my original point of view" (2010: 27). Debus (2007), Bernecker (2015), Lin (2018), and Fernández (2021) offer broadly similar definitions. It is, in short, standard to define observer perceptive memory as *autoscopic*—i.e., as involving a visual representation of the rememberer.[2]

Having defined OPM, McCarroll asks whether such memories can be "genuine" (36) or "faithful" to the past (35). Let us state this question more precisely.

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[1] All references are to McCarroll 2018 unless otherwise specified. See also McCarroll 2017, 2019; McCarroll & Sutton 2017. For an overview of psychological research on OPM, see Rice 2010.

[2] The fact that what distinguishes OPM from FPM is the presence of a visual representation of the self in OPM does not imply that the self is not involved in another, nonvisual manner in FPM (90). Only OPM, however, involves a *visual* representation of the self, and it is on this characteristic of OPM that our argument will focus.

Suppose that we have an agreed-upon theory of remembering—that is, a set of conditions meant to be individually necessary and jointly sufficient for the occurrence of remembering, such as the causal theory (Martin & Deutscher, 1966) or the simulation theory (Michaelian, 2016). Suppose that this theory does not include a condition requiring the accuracy of the apparent memory. We will say that *successful remembering* occurs when, first, all of the conditions included in the theory are satisfied and, second, the apparent memory is accurate. If one is a causal theorist, one will take the key condition for successful remembering to be an appropriate causation condition. If one is a simulation theorist, one will take it to be a reliability condition.[3] But causalists and simulationists can agree on the role of accuracy in making the difference between successful and unsuccessful remembering. This point of agreement means that we need not choose between the causal theory and the simulation theory here. OPM is an ordinary phenomenon, and, at least in the everyday instances of the phenomenon in which we will be interested, all plausible conditions on remembering other than accuracy, including appropriate causation or reliability, are, we can suppose, satisfied. We will thus take McCarroll's question to be whether OPMs can be *accurate*.

The view has often been expressed, in psychology and in popular writing, that OPMs cannot be accurate. As McCarroll sees it, the basic impulse that motivates this view is *preservationism*, which he defines as "the idea that memory preserves perceptual content" (12). Preservationism has historically been the default view of remembering in philosophy. (McCarroll cites, *inter* many *alia*, Plato, who maintained that "memory is the preservation of perception" and, more recently, Recanati, who maintains that memory "is supposed to replicate … perceptual experience" (2007: 137).) This view would seem to ground a straightforward argument for the claim that OPMs cannot be accurate. For, if memory is the "preservation of perception", then, because one cannot—setting aside certain unusual cases to be discussed below—see oneself taking part in an event, an OPM, in which one sees oneself taking part in the event that one remembers, is bound to be inaccurate. Despite the historical dominance of preservationism, philosophers of memory have recently argued that it should be abandoned in favour of antipreservationism or *generationism* (Michaelian, 2011).[4] McCarroll agrees that we ought to abandon preservationism and argues that, once we do so, we no longer face any barrier to seeing OPMs as accurate. In addition to preservationism, a reason that has sometimes been cited in favour of the view that OPMs cannot be accurate is that they are inevitably products of *reconstruction*. McCarroll, in line with a number of other authors (see Campbell, 2001; Debus, 2007; Sutton, 2010; Michaelian, 2011), suggests that this argument does not work for the straightforward reason that *both* OPMs

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[3] There are disagreements between causal theorists and simulation theorists about questions other than whether appropriate causation or, instead, reliability is the key condition for genuine remembering; we will return to these in Sect. 5.

[4] McCarroll refers to the denial of preservationism not as "generationism" or "antipreservationism" but rather as "reconstructivism"; we explain why in Sect. 3. Note that "preservationism" has also been used by epistemologists to refer to the view that memory is capable of preserving but not of generating epistemic justification (see Lackey 2005; Frise 2017); epistemological preservationism plays a role neither in McCarroll's argument nor in ours.

and FPMs are products of reconstruction. The basic thought behind this suggestion is that, given either the simulation theory or a sufficiently flexible version of the causal theory, reconstruction is compatible with the satisfaction of all conditions on remembering other than accuracy. Reconstruction does not inevitably result in inaccuracy in the case of FPM. The preservationist argues that it does inevitably result in inaccuracy in the case of OPM. The question is whether this argument works.

In order to assess the preservationist argument, we need to have a definite notion of accuracy in hand. Bernecker (2010) distinguishes between two forms of accuracy: a memory is *true* when it is accurate with respect to the remembered event; it is *authentic* when it is accurate with respect to the subject's original experience of the remembered event. Authenticity does not imply truth: suppose that a subject has an experience that is inaccurate with respect to the scene before his eyes, such as an hallucination; if he later has a memory that is accurate with respect to the experience, the memory will inevitably be inaccurate with respect to the scene. Truth likewise does not imply authenticity: suppose, again, that a subject has an experience that is inaccurate with respect to the scene before his eyes, such as an hallucination; if he later has a memory that is accurate with respect to the scene, the memory will inevitably be inaccurate with respect to the experience. Thus neither form of accuracy implies the other.

Bernecker (2015) himself holds that both forms of accuracy are necessary for successful remembering and takes it for granted that OPMs are bound to be inauthentic. McCarroll agrees with Bernecker in holding that both forms of accuracy are necessary for successful remembering but disagrees with him regarding OPM, holding the surprising view that OPMs "can satisfy *both* truth and authenticity conditions" (51). Our task in what follows is to reconstruct and critique McCarroll's argument for this view, which we will refer to as "the authenticity thesis".

Before turning to that task, a remark regarding the strength of the authenticity thesis is necessary. On a weak reading of the thesis, it says merely that authentic OPMs are possible in principle. On a strong reading, it says that authentic OPMs regularly occur in practice. The weak authenticity thesis is not especially interesting. Nor does it fit with the naturalistic spirit of McCarroll's argument: his aim is not merely to say something about how memory might possibly work but rather to make a point about how memory in fact works. Thus, while we will continue, when no confusion will result, to describe the authenticity thesis as saying simply that OPMs can be authentic, this should be understood as shorthand for the claim that OPMs are authentic on a regular basis. This claim does not imply that they are always authentic. (Even FPMs are routinely inauthentic.) Nor does it imply that they are usually authentic. The claim is the relatively modest one that there is nothing unusual or rare about authentic OPM.

2 Observer perspective experience

McCarroll distinguishes between two approaches to OPM. The first is the *reconstructive retrieval* approach, according to which OPMs result from processing performed during retrieval. This approach is meant to explain how OPMs can be true.

The core claim of the approach is that a representation encoded in field perspective is sometimes transformed into an observer perspective representation during retrieval: the subject has a field perspective experience, encodes a field perspective trace, but later retrieves an observer perspective memory (68).[5] The retrieved OPM will include content that was not included in the experience, the addition of which is due to processing occurring during retrieval. It will therefore be inauthentic. Despite the fact that this content was not included in the experience, the OPM might nevertheless be accurate with respect to the remembered event. (Consider the example, given above, of a memory of a public talk.) The memory might therefore be true.

The claim that the introduction of content during retrieval might result in a memory that is accurate with respect to the remembered event should be uncontroversial and is irrelevant to the authenticity thesis; we will therefore set the reconstructive retrieval approach aside in what follows. The second approach distinguished by McCarroll is the *constructive encoding* approach, according to which OPMs result from processing performed during encoding. This approach is meant to explain how OPMs can be authentic. The core claim of the approach is that *observer perspective experiences* (OPEs) are possible. It is because he endorses this claim that McCarroll is able to maintain that "remembering from-the-outside mainly[6] incorporates information that was available at the time of the original event" (44) and thus to endorse the authenticity thesis; we will therefore focus on the constructive encoding approach in what follows.

In introducing the concept of OPE, McCarroll points out that Nigro and Neisser were "open to the possibility of observer perspective experiences" (25). McCarroll does not, of course, mean merely to appeal to Nigro and Neisser's authority and offers reasons of his own in support of the existence of OPEs. Before assessing these, we first need to see what, precisely, he means by "observer perspective experience". We can begin to see this by noting that the most obvious objection to the constructive encoding approach—namely, that an OPM inevitably includes perceptual (specifically, visual) content that goes beyond the content of the corresponding experience, enabling the subject to see himself in the remembered scene despite not having seen himself in the experienced scene—overlooks the existence of special cases in which the subject *does* see himself in the experienced scene. One might see oneself in an experienced scene, in a relatively straightforward sense, by means

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[5] McCarroll attributes more or less this approach to Debus, who writes that "we might try to explain [the completely new information contained in an observer memory] in at least two different ways. Firstly, we might find that the new information is "filled in" by some sub-personal mechanism. Alternatively, one might hold that (at least sometimes) the subject herself actively imagines those aspects that are new in the observer-memory as compared to the original perceptual experience" (2007: 201–202). She appears to take both potential processes to take place during retrieval. It is not entirely clear whether she takes authenticity in addition to truth to be required for successful remembering,

[6] This qualifier suggests that McCarroll holds that successful remembering is compatible with the introduction of small quantities of new content. This is not entirely clear, as formulations that he uses elsewhere suggest that he holds that successful remembering precludes the introduction of any new content. What is clear is that he holds that a retrieved memory that includes a representation of the self cannot be successful unless the corresponding earlier experience included an equivalent representation of the self, and this is all that will matter for our critique of his argument. We will thus disregard the qualifier.

of an image in a mirror or on a video monitor.[7] Or one might see oneself in an experienced scene, in a somewhat less straightforward sense, by visually imagining oneself from an external perspective. In a mundane case, one might, while giving a talk, visualize how one looks from the perspective of the audience. In a more exotic case, one might have an out-of-body experience. All of these cases are instances of what we might call "autoscopic OPE": experiences that involve a visual representation of the experiencer. It is obviously true that an OPM can be accurate with respect to an autoscopic OPE. Thus, if McCarroll were concerned merely to demonstrate that authentic OPMs are possible, he could simply appeal to the existence of autoscopic OPEs. But while it is true that an OPM can be accurate with respect to an autoscopic OPE, this is also uninteresting, and McCarroll does *not* seek to establish the authenticity thesis by showing that OPMs can be accurate with respect to autoscopic OPEs but rather by showing that they can be accurate with respect to *nonautoscopic* OPEs, where a nonautoscopic OPE is an experience that involves a nonvisual representation of the self. "I accept the possibility of observer experiences", he writes, but he adds: "I argue that such experiences need not involve a visual perception of oneself from-the-outside" (52). The special case of autoscopic OPE is thus irrelevant here.

It will matter to our argument that the representations of the self that are involved in nonautoscopic OPE are meant to be nonvisual. McCarroll does, in places, employ formulations that suggest that he means to say that the content of an OPE may include a visual representation of the self. For example, discussing amodal completion—a phenomenon in which one has mental imagery of parts of objects that one does not literally see (Nanay, 2016)—he suggests that, "just as the occluded sides of an object are invisible but one still has a [visual] sense of them, so too one may have a visual sense of oneself in an unfolding experience" (87). Similarly, citing Clark and Wells' model of social phobia, he points out that they suggest that "while in social situations, patients experience spontaneously occurring images in which they 'see' themselves as if from an observer's perspective" (Clark & Wells, 1995: 91). His remarks elsewhere, however, make clear that he does not in fact mean to say that OPEs of the sort in which he is interested include visual representations of the subject as seen from an observer perspective. Nor should he mean to say this, for to do so would be to turn the authenticity thesis into the claim that OPMs can be accurate with respect to autoscopic OPEs. This claim is, again, uninteresting; McCarroll means to defend the interesting claim that OPMs can be authentic with respect to nonautoscopic OPEs.

Because OPEs do not (setting aside special cases of the sort discussed above) involve visual representations of the self, the concept of an observer perspective, as McCarroll employs it, is importantly ambiguous. In the case of memory, it refers to visual perspective: observer perspective memory means autoscopic observer perspective memory. In the case of experience, in contrast, it refers to perspective of a nonvisual kind or kinds: observer perspective experience means nonautoscopic

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[7] Whether seeing via mirrors and video cameras can, strictly speaking, amount to genuine seeing is an issue that can be left to philosophers of perception.

observer perspective experience.[8] Stated more precisely, the authenticity thesis thus says not just that an autoscopic OPM may be authentic but, specifically, that it can be authentic with respect to a nonautoscopic OPE. Thus stated, the authenticity thesis may seem even less plausible than it seemed to begin with. But this is clearly the claim that McCarroll means to defend:

> I suggest that [OPMs] may be constructed in part from external perspectival information available during perception. Emotions, thoughts, semantic information, and images that are experienced during the original episode may be used in the construction of observer perspective memories of the past event. ... I suggest that during certain events, one's literal (visual) perspective is internal, but one may adopt an external thoughtful or emotional perspective on oneself. And it is from this "external" perspectival information that observer perspectives can be constructed. (44)

In short, he maintains that the apparently new visual content included in an OPM—the visual representation of the rememberer—may in fact be included in the corresponding experience, though in another, nonvisual form and thus that "in observer perspective memories nothing need be *added* to the content of the memory" (61).

3 Translation

It is in order to explain how the memory process might lead from a nonautoscopic OPE to an autoscopic OPM without introducing any new content that McCarroll introduces the concept of translation. Before considering that concept, however, we need to resolve an ambiguity. It is not immediately obvious whether McCarroll takes the nonvisual observer perspective at issue in OPE to be present during the *experience* itself or, rather, introduced during the subsequent *encoding* process leading from the experience to the formation of a memory. His talk of "observer perspective experience" suggests that it is the former possibility that he has in mind, whereas his references to "the constructive encoding approach" suggests that it is the latter. The availability of these two possibilities means that he might intend to defend either of two versions of the authenticity thesis. What we might refer to as the "experience authenticity thesis" says that OPMs can be accurate with respect to what was experienced, while what we might refer to as the "trace authenticity thesis" says that they can be accurate with respect to what was encoded. The two authenticity theses are importantly different. Encoding is a constructive process, and it would thus not be surprising if, given that encoding has led from a nonautoscopic OPE to an autoscopic encoded trace, retrieval might later result in an autoscopic OPM the content of which does not include anything additional to the content of the trace. Several observations indicate that this is not the version of the authenticity thesis that McCarroll aims to establish. First, it is no more interesting to claim

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[8] It is unclear whether the notion of perspective is meaningful with respect to modalities other than vision and, perhaps, audition, but our argument will not rely on this point.

that an autoscopic OPM can be authentic with respect to an autoscopic trace than it is to claim that an autoscopic OPM can be authentic with respect to an autoscopic OPE. Second, if McCarroll were to aim to establish the trace authenticity thesis, there would be no need for him to introduce the concept of an OPE. If constructive encoding can lead from a nonautoscopic OPE to an autoscopic trace, it can presumably lead from a field perspective experience to an autoscopic trace. It follows that, if the trace authenticity thesis were what McCarroll were after, it would enable him to claim not just that OPMs can be authentic with respect to observer perspective experiences but, more dramatically, that OPMs can be authentic with respect to *field* perspective experiences. Third, the trace authenticity thesis simply fails to secure the kind of match between the retrieved representation and the experience the need for which motivates the view that both truth and authenticity are necessary for successful remembering. We will thus take it that McCarroll aims to establish the experience authenticity thesis.[9]

If McCarroll is to establish the (experience) authenticity thesis, he needs to explain how the memory process might lead from a (nonautoscopic) OPE to an (autoscopic) OPM without introducing any new content. His explanation invokes the concept of *translation*[10]: "information in one modality (e.g., kinesthesia)", he argues, "may be translated into another modality (e.g., visual imagery)" (26), so that "the representation of the self in observer perspective memories may result from [a] multimodal integration of information" (66). The concept of an OPE and that of translation together enable McCarroll to maintain that there need be nothing more, content-wise, to an OPM than there was to the corresponding OPE, despite the autoscopic character of the former and the nonautoscopic character of the latter. The OPE, he claims, contains a nonvisual representation of the self which is transformed by the translation process into the visual representation of the self contained in the OPM. Because the self was already represented in the experience, he argues, the memory need not contain any new content, relative to the experience. "Translation" is, of course, a metaphor, but the point of the metaphor is clear enough: the meaning of the text that results from a translation is, ideally, identical to that of the text that is translated; the translation process involved in remembering is like linguistic translation in the sense that, when all goes well, it does not generate any new content. Translation is, in both cases, preservative, not generative.[11]

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[9] It is also possible that McCarroll aims to establish the trace authenticity thesis but takes OPMs to be authentic not with respect to autoscopic traces but rather with respect to nonautoscopic traces. If this is the view that he has in mind, it faces issues analogous to those that we raise for the experience authenticity thesis.

[10] Note that, while McCarroll makes use of the term "translation", he does not provide an explicit definition of the term. Our discussion here is meant to make explicit the concept of translation that remains somewhat implicit in the text.

[11] McCarroll is less clear than we might wish about *when* translation is supposed to occur, but, given that his focus is on constructive encoding, he presumably takes it to occur during encoding rather than retrieval. To the extent that he is concerned to establish the authenticity thesis, however, it should not matter when translation occurs—all that should matter is that it is preservative in character.

While McCarroll provides a number of examples of how translation might take us from a representation in one format to a representation in another format, he does not provide a systematic account of the nature of the translation process. This is forgivable: it is not implausible that remembering sometimes involves a sort of translation of content from one format to another format, including from a nonvisual format to a visual format, and we will not challenge the claim that it does. It is less forgivable that he does not explain how nonvisual-visual translation might be *preservative*—that is, how it might take us from a nonvisual representation to a visual representation *without introducing any new content*. The lack of such an explanation constitutes a major gap in his argument, for, unless we are given a reason to suppose that preservative nonvisual-visual translation is possible, we will have been given no reason to suppose that the authenticity thesis is true.

We will argue below that this gap cannot be filled. Before turning to that argument, however, we want to ask why, given that he emphasizes the (re)constructive character of remembering and distances himself from preservationism, McCarroll claims that preservative translation is possible in the first place. We have seen that he needs to make this claim if he is to be able to endorse the authenticity thesis. The motivation for the authenticity thesis, in turn, lies in the more general view that authenticity, in addition to truth, is necessary for successful remembering. Let us refer to this view as "authenticism". McCarroll's overall project can be seen as an attempt to combine authenticism with the rejection of preservationism.

This combination of views, however, is incoherent. Preservationism is a thesis concerning the relationship between a retrieved representation and the corresponding experience: in order for memory to be successful, the retrieved representation must not include any content not included in the corresponding experience. As McCarroll puts it, the idea is "that memory preserves perceptual content" (12). Authenticism is the thesis that, in order for a memory to be successful, the retrieved representation must be authentic, i.e., that it must be accurate with respect to the corresponding experience. But what it is for a representation to be accurate with respect to an experience presumably just is for it not to include any content not included in the experience. Authenticism just is, in other words, another way of formulating preservationism: to be an authenticist is to be a preservationist and vice versa. Given that he is an authenticist, it is thus no surprise that McCarroll ends up claiming that preservative translation is possible, even while ostensibly rejecting preservationism.

McCarroll himself apparently fails to remark the incoherence in his view. Looking at why he fails to remark it will shed light both on that view and on the relationship between preservationism and the view, referred to by McCarroll as "reconstructivism", that remembering has a reconstructive character. We have seen that McCarroll accepts both reconstructivism and the view that reconstruction is involved in the production not only of OPMs but also of FPMs, which are (disregarding cases of misremembering) both true and authentic. If both of these views are right, then reconstructivism ought to be compatible with preservationism. McCarroll nevertheless sees reconstructivism as being incompatible with preservationism. McCarroll's reason for taking himself to reject preservationism is thus straightforward: he is a reconstructivist, and reconstructivism is not compatible with preservationism. His reasoning here, however, is problematic.

As noted above, McCarroll defines preservationism as "the idea that memory preserves perceptual content". He also defines it as "the idea that memory preserves perceptual content *and* stores static items for later retrieval" (12; emphasis added). The latter definition incorporates two distinct ideas: it is one thing to say that successful remembering is such that its output matches its input; it is another to say that this match between input and output is secured by storage and retrieval of static traces. The ambiguity in his definition leads McCarroll to conflate preservationism and the denial of reconstructivism and thus to run preservationism together with antireconstructivism and generationism together with reconstructivism[12]:

> An important difference ... between the preservationist and the reconstructive understandings of memory is the relation between the input to memory content at the time of encoding and the output of memory at retrieval. According to preservationism, the input and output of memory do not differ (at least not to any significant degree). Reconstructivism, on the other hand, allows for changes between the input to memory content and the output that is retrieved. (43)

Preservationism is, however, distinct from antireconstructivism, while generationism is distinct from reconstructivism. *Preservationism* is, again, a thesis about the relationship between the content of a retrieved representation and the content of the corresponding experience. In a nutshell, the thesis is that the content of the retrieved representation must match the content of the corresponding experience. In order to allow for the fact that less-than-total forgetting is compatible with remembering, the notion of matching at issue here must be understood as permitting subtraction of content. Preservationism thus amounts to the claim that the content of the retrieved representation must be a subset of the content of the corresponding experience. The denial of this claim is *generationism*: according to the generationist, the content of the retrieved representation may be a proper superset of the content of the corresponding experience. *Reconstructivism*, on the other hand, is a thesis about the nature of the process leading from an experience to a retrieved representation. In a nutshell, the thesis is that remembering is an active process that does not reduce to the mere encoding and retrieval of static traces. The denial of this claim can be referred to as *antireconstructivism*. Insofar as it concerns content, reconstructivism says that content can be transformed, subtracted, or added both during encoding and during retrieval.[13]

At this point, the problem with McCarroll's reasoning becomes clear. Generationism entails reconstructivism: if no content is added between experience and retrieval, the content of the retrieved representation cannot very well be a proper superset of the content of the experience. But reconstructivism does not entail generationism: reconstruction may introduce new content but need not do so, and, as long as it does not introduce any new content, the preservationist requirement that the content of the retrieved representation be a subset of the content of the experience will be respected by the memory

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[12] This explains why he makes no use of the terms "generationism" and "antipreservationism".

[13] McCarroll is by no means the only author to fail to keep the preservationism-generationism distinction apart from the antireconstructivism-reconstructivism distinction; Michaelian (2011), for example, makes the same mistake. For a discussion of this point, see Michaelian & Robins 2018.

process. Remembering might be reconstructive in the sense that it involves only the subtraction of content. This is obviously compatible with preservationism. Remembering might be reconstructive in the sense that it involves both the addition and the subtraction of content but operate according to principles that ensure that the content of the retrieved representation is nevertheless a subset of the content of the experience: if, for example, content is subtracted during encoding and added during retrieval, but the content added during retrieval is a subset of the content subtracted during encoding, the process will result in a retrieved representation the content of which is a subset of the content of the experience. This is likewise compatible with preservationism. Remembering might—if McCarroll is right—be reconstructive in the sense that it involves the transformation or translation of content from one format to another but operate according to principles that ensure that this does not introduce any new content. This is, again, compatible with preservationism. McCarroll thus sees an incompatibility between reconstructivism and preservationism where is none: the fact that remembering is a reconstructive process does not entail that it is not a preservative process.

Because McCarroll runs together preservationism and antireconstructivism, he takes his endorsement of reconstructivism to amount to a rejection of preservationism:

> [OPM] does not seem compatible with the preservationist model, which holds that memory content remains more or less the same as was encoded. In contrast, I suggest that the existence and legitimacy of observer memories can be explained both by reconstruction at the point of retrieval and construction at the time of encoding. (43-44)

An endorsement of reconstructivism does not, however, amount to a rejection of preservationism, and we have seen that McCarroll's position is ultimately preservationist in character, as the relationship between preservationism and authenticism would suggest it must be: in order to secure the authenticity thesis, he ends up endorsing a *reconstructivist preservationism* meant to rule out the addition of content. Sacrificing charitability for memorability, we might describe his position as a form of *cryptopreservationism*—preservationism dressed in generationist clothing.[14]

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[14] See also Trakas 2020 for a discussion this point. McCarroll does acknowledge in passing that his position may be compatible with "quasi-preservationist" approach (45); our point is that there is nothing "quasi" about it. In a recent paper, McCarroll has objected, in response to a draft of this paper, that preservationism is in fact best understood as including both what we refer to as preservationism and what we refer to as antireconstructivism, claiming that.

> the notion of passivity and static traces is inherently linked to preservationism. For example, the view that memory is reconstructive is frequently contrasted with the idea that memory is reproductive, (passively) replaying stored images in much the same way as a video camera would. […] Preservationism, as I understand it, is a view that combines content matching with a purely passive process. It is this notion of preservationism that I reject. (2020a: 292)

McCarroll is, of course, free to define the term "preservationism" however he likes. But we note, again, that his preferred definition combines two distinct theses, a content-matching thesis (preservationism, as we define it) and a passivity thesis (antireconstructivism). Notwithstanding McCarroll's suggestion that there is inherent link between these two theses, they are, as we have shown, logically independent of one another. Setting the terminological issue aside, our substantive point thus stands: rejecting the passivity thesis does not entail rejecting the content-matching thesis, and McCarroll's own position combines a rejection of the passivity thesis with an endorsement of the content-matching thesis.

4 Against the authenticity thesis

Our focus so far has been on reconstructing McCarroll's argument for the authenticity thesis. Given that the conclusion of that argument is not merely that authentic OPMs are possible in principle but, more strongly, that they regularly occur in practice, its premises must be correspondingly strong. We will thus take the argument to have the following structure.

(1) OPEs regularly occur.
(2) OPMs regularly result from OPEs via preservative translation.
(3) Therefore, authentic OPMs regularly occur.

With this reconstruction in place, we are in a position to see why the argument fails. We do not challenge the argument's validity: it can, given the definitions of OPE, OPM, preservative translation, and authenticity, easily be made valid. We do challenge its soundness.

(3) is just the authenticity thesis. Call (1) "the OPE claim" and (2) "the translation claim". Given the definition of OPE, the OPE claim is unobjectionable: we do not deny that nonautoscopic OPE's regularly occur. Our objection is to the translation claim: while we do not deny that remembering may involve the "translation" of content from one format to another, we do deny that this process can—perhaps with extremely rare exceptions of a sort specified below—be preservative in cases in which it leads from a nonvisual representation to a visual representation of the self. We will offer two reasons in support of our denial of the translation claim. First, a negative reason: McCarroll's case for the claim that a nonautoscopic OPE can, under ordinary conditions, give rise to an autoscopic OPM via a preservative translation process is unconvincing. Second, a positive reason: general considerations suggest that a nonautoscopic OPE cannot, under ordinary conditions, give rise to an autoscopic OPM via a preservative translation process. We will thus maintain not merely that McCarroll does not show that the authenticity thesis is true but, more strongly, that the authenticity thesis is false: because, OPMs, under ordinary conditions, include content not included in the corresponding OPEs, it is not the case that authentic OPMs regularly occur.[15] The overall conclusion to which we will come is thus that (disregarding autoscopic OPE, as we have done throughout) *OPMs are, perhaps with rare exceptions, inauthentic*.

We begin with the negative reason against the translation claim. The basic problem encountered by McCarroll's case for the claim that an OPE can give rise to an OPM via a preservative translation process is that he does not provide convincing evidence that the content of the nonvisual representation of the self that is included in an OPE might be equivalent to the content of the visual representation of the self that is included in an OPM. He argues, for instance, that experience may incorporate allocentric spatial representations, in the sense that it locates objects "in a frame of

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[15] This inference assumes that there is no kind of experience other than OPE with respect to which OPM could, in theory, be authentic. We do not anticipate any objections to this assumption.

reference centered on some feature or object or position within the external environment", as opposed to a frame of reference centered on the subject (71). In an object-centered reference frame, space is centered on a location occupied by a given object. In a "virtual point of view" (Grush, 2000), space is centered on a location not occupied by any object. If an experience incorporates a reference frame of either sort, it follows that some of the sources of information available to memory at encoding.

> involve an allocentric frame of reference conducive to the encoding of observer perspective memories. During perceptual experience, an agent may make use of both egocentric and allocentric spatial information, and I suggest that observer perspective memories may be constructed from this non-egocentric information available at the time of encoding. (78)

Suppose that a given OPE incorporates an allocentric frame of reference: the entities figuring in the experience are located by the subject with respect to a frame of reference centered on a position in the environment other than that occupied by the subject himself. This feature of the OPE might help to explain how an OPM corresponding to the OPE later comes about. But it does not help to explain how the visual representation of the subject involved in that OPM might be produced without the introduction of new content.To see this, consider one of the examples by means of which McCarroll introduces the concept of OPM:

> My partner, Paloma, and I are packing all our things into rucksacks and suitcases. We are leaving our flat in Cardiff, leaving our life behind there, to fly to Sydney so that I can start my PhD. We are a bit the worse for wear after yet another leaving party, and very emotional about leaving such good friends behind, and apprehensive about what lies in store. I can see us in the remembered scene, as if from a position near the ceiling, Paloma energetically packing, me looking more than a bit bewildered. (2)

McCarroll's claim about allocentric spatial representations concerns reference frames only; it does not say, for example, that an OPE incorporating an allocentric spatial representation might include information about, for example, what the top of the subject's own head looks like. But this is precisely the sort of information that might figure in the representation of McCarroll included in his memory of packing for Sydney.[16]

We turn next to the positive reason against the translation claim. To begin with, we submit that, while McCarroll's appeal to allocentric spatial representation is not the only evidence that he offers in favour of preservative translation, there is no need

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[16] To reinforce this point, consider McCarroll's appeal to O'Keefe's (1993/1999) argument that the human "allocentric spatial system … represents the environment from any location and includes within itself a representation of the subject-as-object" (1993/1999: 44–45). McCarroll's take on this is that "spatial cognition essentially involves the use of allocentric cognitive maps, in which one may see oneself from-the-outside" (76). The notion of "seeing" is clearly being used here in a metaphorical sense: it is one thing to represent one's position on a map; it is quite another to represent one's own appearance. But what is needed, in order to secure the authenticity thesis, is precisely a nonvisual representation equivalent to the later visual representation of one's own appearance.

for us to review every piece of evidence that he does offer, for the same issue arises with respect to each: it fails to establish the presence, in OPEs, of nonvisual representations that might be equivalent to the visual representations of the self that are present in OPMs. We submit, furthermore, that this should come as no surprise, for there are general reasons to suppose that OPEs do not—perhaps with rare exceptions—involve such representations. To establish this, we begin by reviewing McCarroll's discussion of an experience reported by Furlong (1951) and taken as the basis for a thought experiment by Von Leyden (1960) (26–30). Furlong walks around a familiar room with his eyes closed, feeling his way by touch. When he later remembers the event, his retrieved memory includes a visual representation of himself: "although my eyes had been closed, I was now 'seeing' myself get up, walk across the room, and grasp the handle" (Furlong, 1951: 76). Furlong's take on this experience is that, as he felt his way through the room, he entertained propositions such as "I am now touching the armchair" and that, when he later remembered the event, these propositional thoughts somehow gave rise to a visual representation of himself performing the relevant actions. Von Leyden describes a hypothetical variant of Furlong's experience in which the room in which the subject walks around is unfamiliar to him, with the consequence that he is unable to entertain propositions of the sort described by Furlong. Even in this case, von Leyden argues, the subject might later entertain a memory of the event that includes a visual representation of himself; the suggested basis for this representation is the tactile and kinesthetic sensations enjoyed by the subject at the time of the experience. Remembering may well sometimes work in the general manner described by Furlong and von Leyden. Neither author suggests, however, that the content of the visual representation of the self that is included in the retrieved memory is equivalent to the content of the nonvisual (propositional or tactile and kinesthetic) representation that is included in the original experience, and it seems that such an equivalence is either impossible or very unlikely to obtain.

Consider, first, propositional thoughts of the sort invoked by Furlong. It is common (though not uncontroversial; see Wright, 2015) to suppose that perception involves nonconceptual in addition to conceptual content. Let us assume for the moment that it does. Presumably, if a retrieved memory involves a visual representation, then it involves nonconceptual content of the sort that is involved in perception. Since OPMs, by definition, involve visual representations of the self, it follows that they include nonconceptual content. It is plausible to suppose that propositional thought involves only conceptual content and that a conceptual content cannot be equivalent to a nonconceptual content. Thus, given the assumption that perception involves nonconceptual content, it is likely that the involvement in an OPE of propositional thoughts about the self does not imply that its content is potentially equivalent to the content of a subsequent OPM of the same event—i.e., that it might lead to an OPM via preservative translation. The content of the representation of the self at issue in the OPE is simply not of the right sort.

Of course, one may well want to reject the notion of nonconceptual content and hence the assumption that perception—and hence OPM—involves nonconceptual content. Let us suppose, then, that both experience and memory involve only conceptual content. It is thus no longer the case that the content of the representation of

the self at issue in an OPE is not of the right sort to enable it to be potentially equivalent to the content of a subsequent OPM of the same event. In other words, the involvement in an OPE of propositional thoughts about the self then does imply that its content might in principle be equivalent to the content of an OPM: *in principle*, the subject might, during the experience, entertain propositions with content equivalent to the content of the visual representation of the self that is involved in the memory. In *practice*, however, this would seem to be vanishingly unlikely. McCarroll's memory of packing for Sydney involves a visual representation of himself from above. Suppose that this representation represents the top of his head as being covered in hair of a certain length, colour, and texture. It is not impossible that, when packing for Sydney, he, for some reason, entertained, perhaps not consciously, propositions to the effect that his hair was the relevant length, colour, and texture. This is, of course, no reason to suppose that he actually did so. In general, there is no reason to suppose that it is the case with any regularity that, when one remembers from an observer perspective, one's earlier experience of the event included propositional thoughts, whether conscious or not, with contents sufficiently detailed to enable the authenticity of one's OPM. Indeed, it seems quite clear that, even if one might, in theory, sometimes entertain, while experiencing events, propositions about one's self sufficiently detailed to enable a potential subsequent OPM to be authentic, one rarely if ever does this in practice. An appeal to the involvement of propositional thoughts about the self in experience thus would not make authentic OPMs impossible, but it would make them into freak occurrences.[17]

A McCarrollian might object at this point that, while our positive reason against the translation claim assumes that the visual representations of the self that are involved in OPMs are highly detailed, this need not be the case. Perhaps, when McCarroll observer perspective remembers packing for Sydney, he does not represent the top of his head as being covered in hair of a certain length, colour, and texture. Perhaps he simply represents himself as having brown hair. If the visual representations of the self that are involved in OPMs are typically relatively undetailed, this would make it correspondingly easier to secure the possibility of authentic OPM by means of an appeal to the involvement of propositional thoughts about the self in experience: McCarroll need not have entertained propositions to the effect that his hair was the relevant length, colour, and texture but, more modestly, to have entertained a proposition to the effect that his hair was brown. In reply, we point out that, first, that McCarroll does not appear to want to make the possibility of authentic OPM depend on the level of detail that it involves and, more generally, that we should not want to make the possibility of successful OPM depend on the level of detail that it involves. It might, in principle, turn out that the visual representations involved in OPM only ever have a very low level of detail. Given that there appear, as a matter of empirical fact, to be considerable individual differences in mental imagery however, with some individuals reporting highly-detailed mental images, this would seem to be unlikely.) We point out, second, that while making the content

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[17] The fact that we concede that OPMs might, in certain rare cases, be authentic, is compatible with the claim, made above, that McCarroll's own evidence does not show that OPMs can be authentic.

of OPMs less detailed would indeed lower the bar for authenticity, it seems clear that, unless the bar is lowered to such an extent that the content of OPMs no longer has the characteristics that make them interesting to begin with—it is, we take it, no coincidence that McCarroll's anecdote about his memory of packing for Sydney suggests a high degree of visual richness—then one rarely if ever entertains, while experiencing events, propositions about one's self sufficiently detailed to enable a potential subsequent OPM to be authentic. Hence the objection might at best save a version of the authenticity thesis too weak to be interesting.

A McCarrollian might also object that what matters, as far as the authenticity of a memory is concerned, is not only the content that the subject actively entertained during the relevant experience but also, more broadly, the content that was then *available* to him. While McCarroll, for example, is unlikely to have actively entertained, while packing for Sydney, a proposition to the effect that his hair was brown, such a proposition was certainly then available to him in semantic memory. In reply, we point out that an appeal to content that was merely available during the relevant experience would make authentic OPM too easy—given that each of us stores a wealth of knowledge about himself in memory, it would, if merely available content were sufficient to secure authenticity, be difficulty to explain how OPMs might ever be *in*authentic.[18]

Consider, then, tactile and kinesthetic sensations of the sort invoked by von Leyden. Whatever kind of content—conceptual or nonconceptual—is involved in visual perception, it is plausible that these sensations involve content of the same general kind. One might thus hope to argue that an OPE involving sensations such as these might lead to an OPM via a preservative translation process. This strategy faces two problems. First, it is plausible that, while some kinds of features that can be represented in vision can be represented in another modality, other kinds of features cannot. Compare movement, which can be represented both visually and kinesthetically, and colour, which can be represented visually but not kinesthetically. Second—and this parallels a difficulty noted above for the appeal to propositional thoughts—even if we set this first problem aside, it is in general terms implausible to suppose that it is the case with any regularity that, when one observer perspective remembers an event, one's earlier experience of the event included tactile and kinesthetic sensations with contents sufficient to enable the authenticity of one's memory. McCarroll clearly did not kinesthetically represent the colour of his hair. Again, an appeal to the involvement of tactile and kinesthetic sensations in experience thus would not make authentic OPMs impossible, but it would make them into freak occurrences.

A McCarrollian might object that the content of tactile and kinesthetic sensation together with the content of propositional thoughts about the self, together, perhaps,

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[18] McCarroll (2020a) suggests that the relevant content is indeed the content that the subject entertained during the relevant experience but that he not have entertained this content actively, invoking the possibility of content that was "part of [the subject's] experience but not attended to" (297). We take it to be only slightly less unlikely that McCarroll entertained, while packing for Sydney, a proposition to the effect that his hair was brown and that he did not attend to that proposition than it is that he entertained, while packing for Sydney, a proposition to the effect that his hair was brown and that he did attend to that proposition.

with other self-related (e.g., emotional) contents entertained during an experience, might ground the authenticity of a subsequent OPM. In reply, we recall that the point is not merely to show that it is possible for OPMs to be authentic in principle but rather to show that they are authentic with some regularity in practice. It seems clear that the content of the sort of visual representation of the self that defines OPM will normally simply outstrip the content of the nonvisual representations of the self that one sometimes entertains during experience. The suggested strategy thus does not succeed in making authentic OPMs into anything other than freak occurrences.

We have seen that, while authentic OPMs may not be impossible in principle, there is no reason to suppose that they occur with any regularity in practice; indeed, there is reason to suppose that they never or essentially never occur in practice. We thus come to the conclusion that OPMs are, perhaps with rare exceptions, inauthentic with respect to OPEs. Since there is no kind of experience other than OPE with respect to which OPM could, in theory, be authentic, this entitles us to conclude that they are, perhaps with rare exceptions, inauthentic *tout court*.[19]

A McCarrollian might object to our overall argument that it assumes an overly-narrow conception of OPM.[20] We have, in particular, assumed that OPM is always autoscopic, that is, that OPMs always include visual representations of the self. But McCarroll sometimes seems to want to say that there are multiple kinds of OPM, not all of which include visual representations of the self (see Trakas, 2020; McCarroll, 2020a). If such a conception is adopted, the objection runs, then our argument applies only to a subset of instances of OPM. Since that subset might, the objection continues, include only a minority of instances of OPM, the argument does not succeed in showing that McCarroll fails to establish the authenticity thesis (the claim that there is nothing unusual or rare about authentic OPM). In reply, we acknowledge that, if McCarroll ultimately means to define OPM in such a way that it is autoscopic only in rare cases, then our argument indeed does not show that he fails to establish the authenticity thesis. We point out, however, that, if OPM is so defined, then the authenticity thesis loses much of its interest. Indeed, there is a risk here of committing the motte and bailey fallacy. McCarroll starts out (as noted above) with the standard definition, on which an OPM is necessarily autocopic, on which "one *sees* oneself in the memory" (3; emphasis added). Given this definition, the authenticity thesis is a highly surprising position, one that can be defended only with difficulty. If he ultimately means to retreat to a weaker definition, on which OPMs only rarely include visual representations of the self, he turns the authenticity thesis into a much more easily-defended but also much less surprising position. Indeed, since it is plausible that an "OPM" that includes a nonvisual representation of the self can be accurate with respect to an OPE that likewise includes a nonvisual

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[19] An additional reason to be sceptical of the authenticity thesis is that we are generally able to switch, when remembering, among multiple observer perspectives. Unless we suppose that OPEs contain representations of the self from many different perspectives, which seems unlikely, most of the representations involved in an OPM in which one switches among multiple perspectives are bound to be inauthentic. Thanks to Ying-Tung Lin for this point.

[20] Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for suggesting this objection.

representation of the self, the resulting version of the authenticity thesis is a position that few would wish to dispute. Considerations of charity thus support taking McCarroll's initial definition of OPM as autoscopic to be his official definition. Regardless of McCarroll's own intentions, the corresponding version of the authenticity thesis is the version in which we will continue to be interested.

A McCarrollian might also object to our overall argument that it assumes an overly-strict definition of authenticity.[21] We have said, following Bernecker, that a memory is authentic when it is accurate with respect to the subject's original experience of the remembered event. Now, accuracy with respect to an experience of an event presumably comes in degrees; if it does, then authenticity comes in degrees.[22] In light of the graded character of accuracy, one might maintain that, while an OPM cannot (for the reasons we have given) be fully authentic, it can be authentic to a lesser but still significant degree, getting some elements of the original experience right but—because it purports to reveal aspects of the scene that were not visible from the perspective from which the subject originally experienced it—getting others wrong. In reply, we note, first, that this strategy clearly does not capture the sense in which McCarroll himself—we note, again, that McCarroll claims that "in observer perspective memories nothing need be *added* to the content of the memory" (61)—holds that OPMs can be authentic. We note, second, that the strategy amounts to a significant weakening of the authenticity thesis. Indeed, since there is no apparent reason to suppose that an OPM cannot get some elements of the original experience right, it is difficult to see why anyone might reject the resulting version of the authenticity thesis. This objection, like the previous one, thus runs the risk of committing the motte and bailey fallacy.

A McCarrollian might, finally, object to our overall argument that, even if it succeeds in establishing that OPMs are (perhaps with rare exceptions) inauthentic, it fails as an argument against McCarroll's position because it misconstrues the authenticity thesis that he aims to establish.[23] This objection, in contrast to the previous objection, pertains not to the strength of the thesis but rather to the kind of authenticity at issue in it: McCarroll is, the objection runs, most charitably interpreted not as maintaining that OPMs can be authentic in the sense that they can be (fully) accurate with respect to the corresponding experiences but rather as maintaining that they can be authentic insofar as what we might refer to as their "perspectival gist" is concerned. An OPM might be authentic with respect to the perspectival gist of the corresponding experience even if the experience does not involve content equivalent to that of the visual representation of the rememberer that is involved in the memory; all that is required is that, in the experience, the subject take an external perspective of one sort or another on himself, just as, in the memory, the subject

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[21] Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for suggesting this objection.

[22] The same thing holds with respect to truth: accuracy with respect to an event presumably comes in degrees; if it does, then truth comes in degrees. Because our argument concerns authenticity rather than truth, there is no need for us to consider this point any further here, but we will note that philosophers of memory have so far paid surprisingly little attention to the graded character of authenticity and truth.

[23] Thanks to Denis Perrin and to an anonymous reviewer for suggesting this objection and to the anonymous reviewer to suggesting the term "perspectival gist".

takes an external visual perspective on himself. Put less abstractly, the idea is the following. The OPM involves a visual representation of the self from an external perspective. The experience does not involve a visual representation of the self from an external perspective but does involve a non-visual (e.g., emotional) representation of the self from an external perspective. The OPM is thus accurate with respect to the experience in the sense that both the memory and the experience involve representations of the self, though the representations in question are in different modalities. In reply, we point out, first, that there is no clear textual evidence that McCarroll himself means to define "authenticity" in such an unusual manner. We point out, second, that, if McCarroll were to so define the term, it would, given the standard definition of "authenticity", be highly misleading for him to advertise himself as claiming that OPMs can be authentic. Setting issues of McCarroll interpretation aside, we point out, third, that the objection does not imply that our argument does not succeed in establishing that OPMs are (perhaps with rare exceptions) inauthentic, where authenticity is defined, as is standard, as accuracy with respect to the corresponding experience.[24]

5 Against authenticism

We have argued against the authenticity thesis, and those who deny the authenticity thesis but endorse authenticism will be bound to come to the conclusion that OPMs are—we hereinafter drop the qualification regarding possible exceptions—unsuccessful. Rather than coming to that conclusion, however, we want to argue that the fact that authenticism and the denial of the authenticity thesis together imply that OPMs are unsuccessful gives us reason to reject authenticism. Given that authenticism is equivalent to preservationism, this amounts to saying that the fact that authenticism and the denial of the authenticity thesis together imply that OPMs are unsuccessful gives us reason to reject preservationism.

While we do not have enough space here to develop this argument in detail, the strategy of the argument is straightforward. First, we assume that successful remembering is the norm, in the sense that most occurrences of apparent remembering amount to successful remembering. Second, we note that, if successful remembering is the norm, it follows that an account of the nature of successful remembering that implies that unsuccessful remembering is frequent is false. Third, we claim that authenticism/preservationism is such an account. We thus come to the conclusion that authenticism/preservationism is false. The assumption that figures in the first step of this argument might be challenged, but it is widely—if implicitly—accepted in the philosophical literature. The inference that figures in the second step of the argument is unproblematic. Hence only the claim that figures in the third step of the argument requires any defence. Our defence is straightforward. We assume, first, that observer perspective remembering is a frequent occurrence. This assumption is

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[24] While it may have little to do with authenticity as standardly understood, the notion of perspectival gist is certainly worth exploring.

supported by the empirical literature cited by McCarroll. We assume, second, that observer perspective memories are rarely or never authentic. This assumption is just the conclusion of the main argument of this paper. These two assumptions together imply that authenticism/preservationism implies that unsuccessful remembering is frequent. Thus, while the bulk of this paper's argumentation has been negative in character, as we have been concerned first and foremost to show that McCarroll's attempt to secure the authenticity of OPM fails, our overall conclusion is positive: one important lesson to be drawn from an investigation of OPM is that truth, rather than authenticity, is the standard of success in remembering. Authenticism, the view that successful remembering presupposes both truth and authenticity, ought to be replaced with *alethism*, the view that remembering presupposes truth but not authenticity.[25]

A final observation: while the argument for alethism just offered does not assume any particular theory of remembering, enabling both causal theorists and simulation theorists to sign on to it, its conclusion fits particularly well with simulationism. There are two reasons for this. The first reason pertains to the simulation theory itself. First, as noted above, there are disagreements between causal theorists and simulation theorists about questions other than whether appropriate causation or, instead, reliability is the key condition for genuine remembering. In particular, they disagree about whether genuine remembering presupposes that the subject *experienced* the remembered event when it occurred, with the causal theorist maintaining that it does (Martin & Deutscher, 1966) and the simulation theorist maintaining that it does not (Michaelian, 2016). The causal theory is compatible both with alethism and with authenticism. The simulation theory, however, since it does not (as standardly formulated) include a previous experience condition, *entails* alethism and is therefore incompatible with authenticism: simulationists hold that remembering is a form of imagining and thus that a subject can, in principle, successfully remember an event even if he did not experience it (see McCarroll, 2020b); if a subject can successfully remember an event even if he did not experience it, then it cannot be the case that, if a subject successfully remembers an event, then his current representation of it necessarily matches his previous experience of it. The second reason pertains to the body of empirical research on memory as mental time travel by which the simulation theory is inspired. Simulationists interpret this research as

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[25] Further alternatives to authenticism are available. We suspect that the lay view is, roughly, that success presupposes authenticity but not truth. De Brigard (2014), meanwhile, can be read as arguing that success presupposes neither authenticity nor truth. We acknowledge that alethism faces objections. See McCarroll 2020b. These objections are important, but answering them will have to be left as a task for future work. One who is reluctant to endorse alethism might, in principle, reject the authenticity thesis and nevertheless continue to endorse authenticism. To do so would, in effect, require him to reject the first premise of the argument sketched above. We leave it to those who accept our conclusion that the authenticity thesis is false but wish to reject our conclusion that authenticism is false to make a case against the claim that successful remembering is the norm. To put the point somewhat less abstractly, we leave it to those who wish to reject the authenticity thesis and nevertheless continue to endorse authenticism to make a case for the view that many cases of apparent remembering—and, in particular, most cases of observer perspective remembering—amount to unsuccessful remembering.

supporting *continuism*, the view that there is no fundamental difference, other than temporal orientation, between episodic memory and episodic future thought (see Perrin & Michaelian, 2017; Michaelian et al., 2020). We have argued that authenticism constitutes an unreasonably high standard for success in remembering. Readers who have doubts about our argument should nevertheless be prepared to concede that authenticism constitutes an unreasonably high standard for success in future thinking: if successful future thinking were to presuppose a match between the subject's current representation of an event and his future experience of the event, then successful future thinking would be an overwhelmingly unlikely occurrence, simply because there is normally no way for subjects to anticipate the specifics of their experiences of future events. Continuism thus leads naturally to alethism.

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