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## TO TRANSLATE

FRENCH	<i>traduire</i>
GERMAN	<i>dolmetschen, übersetzen, übertragen, überliefern</i>
GREEK	<i>hermêneuein</i> [ἐρμηνεύειν], <i>metaballein</i> [μεταβάλλειν], <i>metaphrazein</i> [μεταφράζειν], <i>metapherein</i> [μεταφέρειν], <i>metagraphein</i> [μεταγράφειν], <i>metharmozein</i> [μεθαρομύζειν]
LATIN	<i>vertere, convertere, exprimere, reddere, transferre, interpretari, imitari, traducere</i>

- ANALOGY, COMPARISON, CONNOTATION, EUROPE, HEIMAT, HOMONYM, INTENTION, ITALIAN, LANGUAGE, LIGHT, LOGOS, MIMESIS, SENSE, SUPPOSITION, TROPE, WORD

"To translate," in the generally accepted sense of "passing from one language to another," derives from a relatively late French adaptation of the Latin verb *traducere*, which means literally "to lead across" and whose application is both more general and vaguer

than translation itself. We do well to keep in mind this initial, indefinite vagueness attached to the verbs we translate as the verb "to translate," verbs that always also designate something additional or something other than the passage from one language to another. We should keep in mind as well the determining role of Latin culture as it appropriated and adapted Greek culture in the construction of the Latin language. It takes at least two languages for any translation, but the Greeks, even when they spoke other languages, were willing to recognize only the *logos* [λόγος], their *logos*, the Greek language. Yet the lexicon of translation is partly Greek as well, since it derives from another foundational moment, the commission in Alexandria of a translation into Greek of the Old Testament, the Septuagint Bible, which joins together both interpretation and translation within *hermêneuein* [ἐρμηνεύειν] and in the hermeneutic gesture.

In different languages, particularly in Latin and German, a skein of recurring and varying tension runs through this lexicon of translation: between the precise and exact relations from one word to another (the *verbum e verbo* of the *interpretes*) and the literary image (the *sensum* and *sensu* of the orator). The close proximity between translation, metaphor, and equivocation (the medieval *translatio*) is troubling for us. As a result, translation can both be appreciated as "treason," treachery, or betrayal, according to the Italian saying "*traduttore, traditore*," and, on the other hand, as the very essence of tradition (starting with that *translatio studii* that applies to the displacement of Greek, then Latin, then Christian knowledge right through to the *Überlieferung*, or transmission, that enabled Heidegger access to an authentic *Übersetzung*, or "translation." But as Schleiermacher explains, there are basically two, and only two, manners of translation: the exchange of supposedly equivalent linguistic values in the passage from one language to another according to the methods of an interpreting agency (*dolmetschen*) that "leaves the reader in peace as much as possible"; and the displacement of the reader in relation to his native language by virtue of the translation (*übersetzen*) such that they become foreign to each other, which is perhaps the best method for presenting it.

### I. Greek Monolinguisim: Hellenism or Barbarism

#### A. *Hellênizein*

One needs at least two languages in order to translate. But the Greeks, in A. Momigliano's expression (*Sagesse barbares*), were "proudly monolinguisic." Instead of speaking their language, they let their language speak for them. In this way, the polysemic value of the term *logos* [λόγος] allowed them to dispense with distinguishing between discourse and reason, between the language they speak and the language proper to man (see LANGUAGE, LOGOS, and GREEK, Box 4).

In a more definitive manner, *hellênizein* [ἑλληνίζειν] (after the adjective *hellên* [ἑλλην], "Greek") fixes under the same term the meanings of "speaking Greek" and "speaking correctly," or even, insofar as the corpus of rhetoric and the historico-political corpus are bound together here as one, to "behave as a free, civilized, and cultivated individual"—in short, as a person. To speak, to speak well, to think well, and to live well—these goals all nest together. Two occurrences in Plato reveal their interrelatedness. In the *Meno* (82b), the only criterion that Socrates applies to the young slave in order for him to come to understand the idea of the square root is that he "Hellenize": "*Hellên men esti kai hellênizei?*

