

Toward an Ontology of Translation: Of Existentialist Angst, Language, and Linguistic Hospitality

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Abstract

The author explores a few existing views on the fundamental meaning and value of translation. The question of why we translate takes us to the very origin and meaning of what “being” means, thence the need for an ontology of translation. The word “Hermeneutics” comes from Hermes, a Greek god who translated between Zeus and humans. Even if one does not believe in magic, the difference between a crowd and an army is still a speech. Words are instruments of life and death, as recent history painfully reminds us. The author contends that translation is a spark of goodness in our bleak ocean of words because of its inherent nature as a harmony-maker, reconciliator, unifier.

Keywords

translation, hermeneutics, language, interpretation, globalization,
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