THE GRAECO-ARABIC TRANSLATION MOVEMENT

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The Graeco-Arabic Translation Movement

Elements in Translation and Interpreting

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Abstract: To encompass the history of the Arabic practice of translation, this Element redefines translation as combination, that is, a process of meaning-remaking that synthesizes multiple realities. The Arabic translators of the Middle Ages did not simply find an equivalent to the source text but combined its meaning with their own knowledge and experience. Thus, part of translating a text was to add new thought to it. It implies a complex process that Homi Bhabha calls "cultural hybridity," in which the target text combines knowledge of the source text with knowledge from the target culture, with the source text being different from the target text “without assumed or imposed hierarchy.” Arabic translations were a cultural hybridity because the translators added new thought to their target texts, and because they saw their language as equal to Greek.

Keywords: Arabic approach to translation, translation history, Graeco-Arabic translation, translation definitions, Arabic language

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