

Eötvös Loránd University Faculty of Humanities

Doctoral Theses

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TRANSLATION AND MATERIALITY – THE LITERARY TRANSLATIONS OF LŐRINC SZABÓ

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In my dissertation I am trying to rethink the question concerning literary translation from the point of view provided by writing understood as a cultural technique, and from the point of view of media theory. While reading the translations of Lőrinc Szabó, I am discussing the relationship between translation and the materiality of language. Here I am summing up the main statements of my dissertation.

1. In my dissertation, I am reading the poem translations of *Örök barátaink*, a book of translations by Lőrinc Szabó, in parallel with the English source texts, Shakespeare-sonnets and texts by Coleridge and FitzGerald. In the first chapter I am summarizing the insights hermeneutics is providing for translation theory up until today.

2. In the second chapter I start working on a concept that is dealing with translation not only as interpretation, as a relation between meanings, but that takes into consideration the visual and acoustic layers of the texts as well. From this point on it is possible to understand the relation between two texts as translation, even if there is a necessary difference between their meanings.

3. As the operations of the medium of language come into focus in this context, several concepts of writing seemed to be relevant, offering aspects that make a comparison between translation and materiality possible, emphasizing the spatiality of writing.

4. While reading the *Rime of the Ancient Mariner* by Samuel Taylor Coleridge, I proposed the term medial translation to describe the translation between different medial operations. The translation text in this case comes up with the visibility of writing and its own presence, while the source text is acoustically concentrated. In this case, translation happens between sound and writing.

5. In chapter 5, I am trying to show, how the different concepts of media anthropology are able to modulate the notion of medial translation. Because of the medial preceedence and the constitutive presence of the medium of language, the relationship between source text and translation text can be understood as translation because of these constitutive operations happening on both sides.

6. The interrelations of translation and physiology could be accessed through a scene of writing, while discussing the stenographic techniques used by Lőrinc Szabó. In this scene of writing the emphasis is on the writing body, the marginal stenogramm is not only in a recording function here, it has a constitutive operation as well that is in parallel with the automatisms of the writing body. Translation can happen not only between languages but between handwriting and printed text, techniques, systems and practices of writing and through the gestures of the body. The practice of writing provides a frame for the translation process that can be accessible only as a part of writing scenes.

7. While reading a translation scene of *Faust* and *Rubaiyat*, it became clear that the uncontrollable, constitutive nature of writing, that is present in its spatiality, in its visual or acoustic operations preceeds interpretation. Which means, translation is not the territory of hermeneutics, it can be derived from practice and materiality as a result of which we have to face the automatisms of writing taking the place of translation.