

ABSTRACT OF PHD THESIS

László Fábián: *The legendary of Anna Édes: pre- and afterlife of
Dezső Kosztolányi's novel*

Supervisor: Dr. Attila Thimár PhD, Csc, associate professor

Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Faculty of Humanities, PhD
School for Literatures

2014

Preliminaries

I have chosen to analyze Kosztolanyi Dezso's *Edes Anna* in my dissertation. At the beginning, I looked at the novel only to examine the relationship between the text and its film adaptation. Later, however, the text became an integral part of my analysis due to its crucial position within the Kosztolanyi canon and its importance in public education.

I have decided to analyze the filological context of the writing first. I also looked at the circumstances surrounding the creation of the novel because of the links between the plot and the era in which it was written, and because of Kosztolanyi's clear references to contemporary society. The historic context of the 1920's and 1930's offers a particular frame of interpretation, too.

This is how the historic and social context of the text became an integral and adequate part of my analysis. We can truly understand Kosztolanyi's thoughts around poverty, servanthood, prostitution and the rural and the urban existence only if we are aware of the other similar writings from the same era.

I looked at the novel from several aspects offered by the historic narratives, and strongly believe that the methodology and frame of interpretation I applied in my dissertation are valid and concur with Kosztolanyi's assumed intentions. However, my analysis would not be complete if I had missed to look at the work's

reception after its publication. In the last years of his life, Kosztolanyi himself started to make considerable alterations to his novel by adapting it to the stage.

Besides this, I examined the various film adaptations and their relation to the original text. To be able to do this, it was vital to understand the most important aspects of film and adaptation theory.

Research Methodology

The goal of my dissertation was to analyze Dezső Kosztolányi's novel called *Edes Anna* and its adaptations into film. I looked at the works from the perspective of the so-called 'historic narrative', that is, I tried to examine not only their psychological and egisistential but also their sociological aspects.

My filological approach primarily focused on the historic context of the novel's creation and reception, while the interpretations of the motives are linked to the real or imagined perspectives of Anna's position within society.

This way, the analysis of poverty, servanthood, prostitution and the conflict between city and countryside became an integral part of my dissertation, just like the comparison of the most

important observations regarding Kosztolanyi's previous writings and Edes Anna itself.

In the second part of my dissertation, I focused on the adaptations - mainly the film adaptations - of Edes Anna and their various literary interpretations. Besides looking at areas such as structure, narrative strategies and authenticity, I also compared the characteristics of the main protagonists as shown in the novel and its adaptations.

In addition to the above, I gave an brief overview of the novel's position within secondary education as well.

New conclusions

The historic narrative offers a new opportunity to approach Kosztolanyi Dezsó's Edes Anna as this perspective was never dominant in the reception of the novel due to the ideological interpretations dominating the literary scene after the 1950's. For this, I believe that this new approach to Edes Anna's examination is well-founded.

While there are numerous references in the text to Kosztolanyi's own ideals, misbeliefs and delusions, it also outlines the historic, social and psychological ambiance of the period.

Also, the novel is a perfect example of the dialogue between text and oeuvre. Many have examined the text and its numerous connotative layers in the past but there has been no comprehensive analysis that would combine so many perspectives in one dissertation such as filology, narratology, semantics or the study of reception and motives.

Since no text can fully be separated from its writer, I became very interested in Kosztolanyi's figure manifested through his writings. Although the novel is clearly a fiction, it has numerous elements of self-reflection and it offers reflections to Kosztolanyi's own life, to the age in which he lived as well as to his attitude towards it.

I claim therefore that *Edes Anna* becomes a unique piece of art thanks to its complex and sensible nature, which is primarily driven by the social and psychological descriptions of the author. These descriptions are mostly reflected in the narrations and in the refined portrayals of the characters as well as their social environment.

Each film adaptation re-defines Kosztolanyi's original text in their own particular way. For instance, the frame of interpretation outlined by Esztergályos' film is much closer to the novel's stage adaptation as it enhances the sentimental side of the writing.

Fabri's film, on the other hand, is further away from the original text due to its ideological nature. However, it has an important role within the national canon and applies very unique film techniques.

The literary tools that function as self-reflections in Kosztolány's novel cannot be traced in Fabri's or Esztergályos' film adaptations. Both films are fragmented and free in the sense that for most part they use the original writing only as a distant source of inspiration. Also, the films depict Edes Anna's world rather differently from the novel.

Publications

FÁBIÁN László, *Kosztolányi Édes Annájának sorsa és helyzete a középiskolai oktatásban*, Könyv és Nevelés, OFI, előkészületben

FÁBIÁN László, *Édes Anna-legendárium – Kosztolányi korrajza és politikai reflexiói az Édes Anna című regénye kapcsán*, Kortárs, 2014/2, 80-85.

BODÓ Márton – DOBOZY Nóra – FÁBIÁN László – SZMOLYAN Gabriella, *Magyar nyelv és irodalom tankönyv 10.*, Nemzedékek Tudása Tankönyvkiadó, 2014. (adaptációs fejezet)

BODÓ Márton – DOBOZY Nóra – FÁBIÁN László – SZMOLYAN Gabriella, *Magyar nyelv és irodalom tankönyv 9.*, Nemzedékek Tudása Tankönyvkiadó, 2013. (adaptációs fejezet)

FÁBIÁN László, *Az adaptáció: Édes Anna (film és irodalom)*, Bp., Educatio Társadalmi Szolgáltató Nonprofit Kft., IKT Műhely 2010.

FÁBIÁN László, *Tudatos médiafogadás?! A mozgóképkultúra és médiaismeret tanításának tapasztalatai, avagy mai gimnazisták „Brüsszeli 12”-je*, Bp., Kobak könyvsorozat, Nemzetközi Gyermekektől Szolgálat-ORTT, 2010, 201-209.

FÁBIÁN László – OSZTROLUCZKY Sarolta, *Érettségi tudástár magyar nyelv és irodalomból*, Bp., Bölcsélet Egyesület, 2007.