Warner, Marina. 1995. *From the Beast to the Blonde. On Fairy Tales and Their Tellers*. London: Vintage.

Williams, Jay. 1978. *The Practical Princess and Other Liberating Fairy Tales*. London: The Bodley Head.

Wood, Naomi. 1996. "Domesticating Dreams in Walt Disney's *Cinderella*". *The Lion and the Unicorn* 20 (1) (1996): 25-49.

Yolen, Jane. 1982. "America's Cinderella". In Dundes, Alan. (ed.). *Cinderella. A Folklore Casebook*. New York and London: Garland.

—. 2000. "Cinder Elephant". In Datlow, Ellen and Terry Windling. (eds.). *A Wolf at the Door and Other Retold Fairy Tales*. New York: Simon and Shuster: 17-29.

Zipes, Jack. 1979. *Breaking the Magic Spell. Radical Theories of Folk and Fairy Tales*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

—. 1986. *Don't Bet on the Prince. Contemporary Feminist Fairy Tales in North America and England*. New York: Routledge.

—. (ed.). 1987. *Victorian Fairy Tales*. New York and London: Methuen.

—. 1991. *Fairy Tales and the Art of Subversion. The Classical Genre for Children and the Process of Civilization*. New York: Routledge.

—. 2000. "The Contamination of the Fairy Tale". In *Sticks and Stones. The Troublesome Success of Children's Literature from Slovenly Peter to Harry Potter*. New York and London: Routledge: 99-123.

# INTO THE HEART OF THE LABYRINTH: THE PURSUIT OF MANNERIST TRADITIONS IN JOHN BANVILLE'S *ATHENA*

**PETRA TOURNAY**
Cyprus College

In 1981 John Banville referred to his readers as "that small band" (Imhof 1981a: 12) and Rüdiger Imhof, the German Banville specialist, commented that "John Banville's work has so far only attracted scant attention" (Imhof 1981b: 52). Since then Banville has received international critical acclaim with numerous magazine and newspaper reviews, scholarly essays, literary prizes and translations of his novels into many languages.[1] In a number of articles, Banville's work has been classified as postmodernist, exhibiting the characteristic traits of postmodern literature or metafiction.[2]

*Athena* (1995), the focus of this study, *The Book of Evidence* (1989) and *Ghosts* (1993) are referred to as a trilogy in so far as these three novels all revolve around the same character, Freddie Montgomery, who is gradually transformed into a fine arts specialist. The three texts consequently trace his development from a scientist to murderer, made so by his obsession with a beguiling painting of a young woman (*The Book of Evidence*). While in prison he becomes an authority on Dutch painting, then serves as an assistant to a famous art historian in *Ghosts* and finally is called upon to authenticate a number of paintings in *Athena*.

*Athena*, which to my knowledge has received little, if any, critical response thus far, is a text which shows the most commonly mentioned characteristics attributed to postmodern fiction, such as self-consciousness, self-reference, (self-) parody, playfulness, excess, intertextuality, scepticism about the validity of *mimesis* and

Petra Tournay

Into the heart of the Labyrinth: The pursuit of mannerist traditions...

deconstruction. This study then proposes to follow a line of literary criticism that has identified striking typological analogies between contemporary postmodern fiction and metahistorical mannerist traditions in literature. This affinity has been clearly postulated by Umberto Eco in his *Postille a Il nome della rosa*.[3] Eco sees the analogy mainly in a certain attitude to aesthetical production adopted by the author, a "modo di operare" (way of operating), a *Kunstwollen* which Shearman calls "self-conscious stylization" (Shearman in Pacholek 1988: 35) and regards as the most important criterion for defining all mannerist works of art.

Characteristic of the mannerist-postmodern approach is, furthermore, an ironic disposition of mind specifically with respect to past literary traditions.[4] Given that there are various possible ways of reacting to certain poetological, historical and socio-cultural conditions, Elke Pacholek (1988) argues that mannerist and postmodernist authors share a decidedly anti-classical attitude which can be attributed to a similar external situation, corroborating her views with the following quote from Lyotard: "Classicism seems to be ruled out in a world in which reality is so destabilized that it offers no occasion for experience but one for ratings and experimentation" (Lyotard in Pacholek 1988: 12). With a more particular focus on poetological conditions, the similarities between mannerist and postmodernist texts become apparent from a similar situation in the context of literary history when all previous possibilities of form and content have been exploited and the author looks for new ways of expression.[5]

This specific anti-classical, anti-mimetic, ironic "way of operating" further manifests itself in postmodern-mannerist texts through recurrent essentially mannerist characteristics such as the wish to surprise, to create *stupore*,[6] together with an ostentatious showiness (ostentation), an excessive use of metaphor, a special predilection for (my)themes from ancient mythology, especially Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and a general marked tendency towards rhetorical stylization, to enumerate only the most dominant features.[7] I would like to argue that Banville consciously and deliberately foregrounds these mannerist elements. His work is not only pervaded by innumerable intertextual references,[8] but it also demonstrates excessive use of the prime mannerist stylistic element, namely the Queen metaphor,[9] and exhibits a pronounced predilection for the grotesque and the deformed.[10] With the introduction of myth, especially Ovid's myths of pursuit and transformation as presented in the *Metamorphoses*, and other mythemes from ancient mythology, Banville resorts to one of the dominant mannerist and postmodern themes.[11] Another notable feature that points directly to the mannerist tradition is that Banville locates all the paintings —without exception— in the period of the Baroque, the most prolific, high period of mannerist art: Banville could not have erected a clearer signpost pointing down mannerist avenue.[12] Moreover, with the recurrent anagram, Banville engages in one of the formal

cryptic games mannerists indulged in: all names of the alleged painters are anagrams of John Banville's own name (e.g. Johann Livelb, Giovanni Belli), whereby he projects himself right into the text. That this *modus operandi* indicates the author's desire to playfully challenge the reader is more than evident.

By posing equivocally as the creator of these non-existent paintings (which in the narrative are later proven fakes), Banville playfully underwrites the fictionality of his endeavours and thus deconstructs any notion of reality. The very process of transferring either real or fictional paintings into writing —projecting them into a new fictional context— is a technique which the Italian arch-mannerist Marino had recourse to in many of his texts. Following Friedrich (1964: 702-703), this transposition affords the artist the opportunity to create an illusion (fiction) of an illusion (fiction), the illusion (fiction) of a non-existent artefact, which even if it existed would only be considered an illusion (fiction). Through such intellectual play, the writer conveys his own pleasure in make-believe, in writing something into existence.

Through this play, Banville ingeniously demonstrates the very essence of fiction: "di un non ente, fa ente" (Tesauro 1968: 82) and shows that ultimately all elements aggregate into one unified body of fiction. This intricate interplay of illusion and disillusion is not only a further reference to a major mannerist theme[13] but marks what I would contend lies indeed at the heart of this labyrinth, namely the essentially metafictional concern with the fiction-making process *per se* —a prime characteristic shared by mannerist and postmodern texts. Hence the reference to the labyrinth in my title: The labyrinth, mentioned explicitly in the text (174),[14] is regarded as the central metafictional symbol of mannerist art (Hocke 1957: 99). It represents a system which is at once open and intricately structured and whose ultimate aim is to achieve what could best be expressed in an oxymoron: calculated confusion which is *in nucleo* representative of Banville's writing.[15]

As far back as 1981 Banville expressed his full awareness of his position in the context of literary history.[16] He is also, as outlined above, fully aware of this by now conventional identification of postmodernism with mannerism.[17] The point is, therefore, no longer to show that mannerism and postmodernism are interchangeable terms but, with this knowledge in mind, to take the next step and draw attention to this particular identification. Banville deliberately "pick(s) up the thread" (Banville 1995: 174) of mannerist traditions by playfully, intertextually employing mannerist themes and stylistic devices in the text. He functionalizes them by laying bare their operations —or in Banville's own words, by producing an "inside-out novel, [which] wears its skeleton and its nerves on the outside" (Imhof 1981a: 6) and thereby undermines and ironically deconstructs this relation. Ultimately, I am proposing the thesis that the deliberate foregrounding of

Petra Tournay

Into the heart of the Labyrinth: The pursuit of mannerist traditions...

mannerist elements is a reaction to the petrification and deterioration of the postmodern discourse and highlights Banville's awareness that postmodernism too has "run its course" (Banville 1981: 17) and has become obsolete.

Nowhere does this awareness show more clearly than in the overt references to mannerist features in the spoof critiques of the paintings. In view of the fact that the paintership is —if cryptically— attributed to Banville himself, those passages can (almost inevitably) only be read as ironic self-references to his own approach to art and writing and are as such a parody of aesthetic criticism. Already in the first critique, "Pursuit of Daphne", the work of Johann Livelb (read: John Banville) is criticized for its anti-classical quality: "Here as in much of Livelb's work the loftiness of the classical theme is sacrificed for the sake of showiness and "vulgar effects" (19). The latter two qualities point to central concerns of any mannerist artist: "showiness" which stands for ostentation, the mannerist's wish to show off, and "(vulgar) effects" which can be identified as the mannerist's concern to create *stupore*, surprise, in the reader. When the narrator quotes Erich Auerbach, the author of the classical study *Mimesis*, to criticize the painting for possessing "a highly rhetorical style [...] which is totally alien to classical antiquity" (19), he wraps up the poetological statement that the kind of art we are dealing with (in the paintings as well as in the multi-layered text(s) we are perusing) is anti-classical and therefore necessarily mannerist.

There are comments on the execution of the paintings in all the critical passages but it comes as no surprise that it is in the one about Pygmalion, *the* archetypal symbol of the mannerist artist,[18] that the term "mannerist" is used explicitly:

> This constant effort of transcendence results in a mannered, overwrought style [...] his work is 'too self-conscious, too deliberate in its striving for pure beauty. In the *Pygmalion* this self-consciousness and desire for purity, both of form and expression, are the most obvious characteristics [...]. In this portrayal of the goddess [...] can clearly be seen the influence of the mannerists' (76-77).

The critique closes with a quotation of the art historian Gombrich: "Belli's 'quest for forms more perfect and more ideal than reality [is] rewarded with success'" (77). Ultimately, these passages read like condensed, self-ironic mannerist manifestos and are, therefore, immediately programmatic for the novel. Some of the basic interrelated themes around which *Athena* is constructed are those of pursuit, loss and absence which are not mere evocations of the medieval quest novel. In effect, these themes are key concepts of modern literary theory as introduced most notably in the writings of Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida and Jacques Lacan; thereby linking Banville's novel intertextually to yet another (literary) system of reference. Pursuit, loss and absence are most notoriously foregrounded in the critiques of the mythological scenes depicted in the paintings

whose subjects almost invariably involve an amorous pursuit which results in a loss and ensuing absence whose presence, paradoxically, pervades the narrative. It is again in the first mythological episode, "Pursuit of Daphne" —which seemingly functions as a representative introductory chapter to the narrative procedures and themes of the text— that pursuit, loss and absence and their metafictional significance are first clearly fictionalized. In an example of wonderful self-irony the painter Johann Livelb (alias John Banville) is identified with Apollo in pursuit of Daphne:

> Apollo [...] cuts a somewhat sorry figure; this is not the lithe ephebe of classical depiction but, probably like the painter himself at the time, a male in his middle years, slack-limbed, thick-waisted, breathing hard, no longer fit for amorous pursuit (there have been suggestions that this is a self-portrait but no evidence has been adduced to support the theory) (18).

By identifying himself thus with Apollo, the god of the muses (the Musagetes), Banville ironically assumes this designation for himself. However, this identification appears in the form of a debased, ridiculous travesty of the god whereby Banville, anything but shy of sharp self-irony, undercuts and deconstructs the relation. On a poetological level, Daphne's pursuit directly alludes to the idea of the poet in pursuit of glory, the glory of the *poeta laureatus*. Considering that throughout literary tradition the laurel (into which Daphne is transformed) has functioned as a metafictional metaphor for the text, the pursuit of the female, "the object of his desire" (18), becomes then, by extension the poet's/writer's pursuit of the text.

This reading is immediately evocative of Barthes' concept of the author in (erotic) pursuit of textual *jouissance,* longing for sexual union with the beloved (female) text. But this longing or quest remains unfulfilled. The beloved/ideal text remains elusive, out of reach, changes form, is lost and finally absent. In the mythological episodes Banville thus fictionalizes and deconstructs the illusion of ever possessing the beloved object (the text), the dream of ever reaching textual *jouissance*. In view of these findings, recourse to Ovid's myths of pursuit and metamorphosis enables Banville to play simultaneously with the mannerist-baroque concept of illusion and disillusion and Barthes' idea of the erotic pursuit of the text, along with the notion of the interplay between presence and absence, suggesting that nothing is ever fully present in signs. These particular myths give perfect expression to the general poetics of ambiguity and dissimulation governing Banville's highly rhetorized discourse. Their interweaving into the discourse assumes prime significance for the fictionalization of the concern with the fiction-making process. As Imof has put it (1986: 27):

> metafictionalists aspire towards an ideal kind of fiction that lays open its true, fictive character and strive, quite frequently, to embellish their works with the universal

suggestiveness of myth. For metafictionalists [...], myth is the highest goal a fiction-writer can attain; myth represents total fiction.

Further evidence for the totality of fiction can be adduced in the light of the narrator's increasing intrusions into the critiques and the gradual identification of the females pursued on canvas with A., culminating in their complete equation: "they all look like you" (168). Thus, Banville illustrates the concept of a " weave of signifiers" (Barthes 1992: 168) as laid out by Roland Barthes. This weave or web of signifiers or codes manifests itself here as an interweaving of the predominant themes of pursuit, loss and absence between the narrative and the spoof critiques which serves to show that all elements are tightly interwoven, pervade each other and ultimately form part of the same fictional creation or, to remain in the Barthesian discourse, of the same unhappy love affair.[19]

The points discussed so far confirm that Banville contaminates, instrumentalizes and finally deconstructs mannerist and postmodern characteristics to give shape to the fictionalized presentation of the fiction-making process.[20] *How* this main theme —*fiction*— is formulated, specifically in terms of its genesis, pursuit and ultimate loss and absence, I will attempt to show in what follows through a close poetological reading of the title *Athena* and the letter A.

*Athena* is a text which marks its intertextual composition clearly from the outset: the very title functions as a marker pointing in the direction of ancient mythology. In view of the metafictionalists' understanding of myth representing total fiction, the title, and even the cover, are clear markers of exactly that quality: total fiction.[21] It is striking that the signifier *Athena* is only salient in the title of the novel and two more times in the text in the lost painting "Birth of Athena" (230, 232) so that a connection between these manifestations strongly suggests itself. In all these instances the reference to the goddess of wisdom and the arts is specifically to the event of her birth, of which a very brief description is provided in the text (232). This particular myth has since antiquity served as a poetological metaphor for the imaginative process in the sense that the birth of Athena is the description of a *Kopfgeburt*, a birth of the mind. By extension, the text, the product of this birth, comes to be regarded as the child of its creator, or in other words: his brainchild. One of the best known descriptions can be found in Ovid's *Tristia*, III, 14,13: "Palladis exemplo de me sine matre creata Carmina sunt; stirps haec progeniesque mea".

In the context of a poetological reading it follows, therefore, that the explicit appearance of Athena in the title serves as a clear metafictional reference to the fiction-making process and the text itself. In view of this valency of the sign Athena, the name seems to acquire programmatic value for the rest of the novel, warning the reader about the total fictionality of the text in hand. This aspect receives

further emphasis when it is realized that for both the text *Athena* and for the painting "Birth of Athena", John Banville (alias Jean Vaublin) signs as creator. In the context of the myth of Athena's birth, the author actually assumes for himself the role of god-like creator, which represents the mannerists' attitude towards the production of a work of art —one of hubris and megalomania.[22] Banville, however, completely deconstructs this concept by presenting a profane postcard copy of a fabricated fiction as the allegedly only authentic artefact which is in addition finally lost, in other words: absent. Everything dwindles out of sight. He has practically deconstructed himself into non-existence: no-thing, no creator. This intricate interplay of presence, loss and absence evokes the deconstructivist concept of art as failure (or, more precisely, language as failure), the impossibility and ultimate unattainability of the perfect (or authentic) work of art which will always be elusive and finally absent.[23] And yet it is out of this awareness, of the "impossibility of making the world our own" (Banville 1981: 16) that, quoting Beckett, the writer says: "I can't go on, I'll go on" (16).[24]

Banville can be said, then, to take us full circle to the beginning of the text born with the title *Athena* which becomes the book in hand and represents the author's attempt at going on with the production of fiction. Through the act of reading we are appointed witnesses to this labour —the genesis of the text *Athena*.[25] Passages composed of fragments of the myth which implicitly refer to the process of a birth appear at the beginning of the text and seem to function as a kind of prologue — for example: "holding you in my *head*. I would never have *thought* it possible to fix *a single object* so steadily for so long in *the mind's* violent gaze" (1, my emphasis) or in the analogy of a fish: "the poor creature hauled out of its element" (2) and in the frequent mentionings of the mental effort: "the thought of you" (2,3), "I thought of us" (2), "What a thought" (4) and later on specifically in the references to the workings of the head: "Your face appeared and hung in my head [...]. And in my head you slowly turned your face" (191). In addition, references to one of the consequences of the mind's efforts, the headache, are frequent: "My headaches too have stopped" (4) which appears at the close of the quasi-introductory part or "One of my headaches was coming on" (58). In one passage the headache can be seen in immediate connection with the appearance of A. and reads like a concise description of the imaginative process:

> I have a headache, it is beating away in there, a slow, soft, silent pounding. I lift my gaze. A great chubby silver-white cloud by Magritte is standing upright in the window in front of me, opening its arms. You appear out of silence. That is how I think of it, as if the silence in the room had somehow materialised you and given you form (84).

Petra Tournay

Into the heart of the Labyrinth: The pursuit of mannerist traditions...

A further clear reference to fictionality is the narrator's remark: "But at the same time I kept telling myself it was all nonsense, a fantasy made up out of my head [...] a story to tell myself" (51). In view of the above discussion, Athena suggests itself as a possible signifier for the letter A. If, therefore, in a poetological reading Athena serves as a metaphor for the imaginative process and the text itself, this understanding equally applies to the character A.[26]

Evident descriptions of A.'s genesis are discernible when the narrator ponders over the inchoateness of A. "But no, fake is not the right word. Unformed: that's it. She was not being but becoming. So I thought of her" (159) or when he compares her to a larva before metamorphosis:

> a pale, glistening new creature I hardly recognised, as if she had just broken open the chrysalis and were resting a moment before the ordeal of unfolding herself into this new life I had given her. I? Yes: I. Who else was there to make her come alive? (175)[27]

Strongly evocative both of the topos of the text as progeny of its creator and its genesis is the following passage in which the narrator likens himself to a "forlorn Baron Frankenstein" (223): "from the start that was supposed to be my task: to give her life. Come live in me, I had said, and be my love" (223). With the intertextual reference to Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and the slightly permutated reference to John Donne's poem *The Bait*, the metafictional concern becomes more than evident. Banville leaves no doubt that here we are in fact moving in the land of imagination when he reveals himself as a sovereign connoisseur of the current theses of literary theory by playfully exposing and completely deconstructing the construct A.:

> But what does it mean, what does it signify, to say: the thought of A.? Was it her I was thinking of, or the idea of her? [...] Only once or twice, towards the end, when she was in my arms, did I seem to penetrate that cloud of unknowing and find what I told myself must surely be the real she. I know, I know the objections, I have read the treatises: there is no real she, only a set of signs, a series of appearances, a grid of relations between swarming particles; yet I insist on it: she was there at those times, it was she who clutched me to her and cried out, not a flickering simulacrum foisted on me by the stop-frame technique of a duplicitous reality. [...] I had her, that is the thing. And already I am forgetting her. [...] Every day she decays a little more in my memory as the ever-returning tides wash away steadily at her image. [...] in order to have had her I must lose her. Something amiss with the tenses here, I think. What would I do to divert myself if I had not language to play with? (97-98).

In a poetological reading the words "in order to have had her I must lose her" (98) with their temporal incongruity read like a metafictional reference to the birth of the text: after the text is born it is unavoidable for the writer to relinquish his child, his product. Even though the narrator revokes the theoretical objections, the whole construct finally topples down through the self-reflective comment at the end which, shattering any illusions about reality, provides a reaffirmation of Banville's poetics: playing the language game as he has adverted from the start: "I am just playing here, amusing myself" (14).

As already mentioned, one of the possible completions for the initial A. immediately suggesting itself is the signified "Athena" with all the implications outlined above. Naturally, the question arises as to why Banville encodes the female protagonist in the letter A. and does not call her, as the title might suggest, Athena in the first place. It seems that with this refusal Banville is again drawing attention to the openness of literary discourse, reminiscent of Eco's *opera aperta*, the randomness of signs. Therefore, A.'s meaning is by no means limited to Athena. On the contrary, A. in fact acquires the status of an algebraic symbol here and could be said to be an extreme example of what Roland Barthes has called a "healthy" sign (Eagleton 1996: 117) which lays bare its own arbitrariness and indeterminacy. Nowhere does the endless play of signifiers become more apparent than in the use of the *générateur*, the story-generating element, A. Apart from Athena, some of the possible completions for the sign A. are directly suggested in the text itself:

> Abstract: that is the word I always associate with her: abstract, abstracted, abstractedly, and then the variants, such as absently, and absent-minded, and now, of course, in this endless aftermath, with the clangour of a wholly new connotation, just: absent (47).

By using the term "absent" Banville employs one of the key terms of literary theory, especially as advanced in the *Écrits* by Jacques Lacan. Here the notion of absence is linked to the ideas of lack and ensuing desire in terms of language: "Human language works by such lack: the absence of the real objects which signs designate, the fact that words have their meaning only by virtue of the absence and exclusion of others. To enter language, then, is to become prey to desire" (Eagleton 1996: 145). With respect to this novel and more precisely to the character, the sign A. to whom the term absent is applied, A. is not only said to be absent but becomes the ghostly embodiment of the term absent. In other words: A. *is* absence (personified), is identical with absence, will always be elusive and unreachable for the narrator who is in pursuit of "the object of his desire" (18). In a metafictional reading this reference is then not only another example of the preoccupation with the fiction-making process but rather a demonstration of a complete annihilation of the text in hand, since if A. *is* absent, so also is *Athena*, it is deconstructed into a no-thing. It becomes, therefore, another instance illustrative of art-as-failure or language-as-failure. The explanation of how the narrator comes to call her A. in

Petra Tournay

Into the heart of the Labyrinth: The pursuit of mannerist traditions...

the first place reads like a further fictionalization of these theoretical concepts of indeterminacy and arbitrariness:

> A., I shall call her. Just A. I thought about it for a long time. It's not even the initial of her name, it's only a letter, but it sounds right, it feels right. Think of all the ways it can be uttered, from an exclamation of surprise to a moan of pleasure or pure pain. It will be different every time I say it. A. My alpha; my omega (48).

The reduction of the letter's attraction to sound is a further clear indication of the refusal to assign any single meaning to A. When, in addition, the narrator suggests that A. will be *different* every time it is uttered, he echoes one of the key terms of Derrida's deconstructivist theory, namely that of *différance*, which refers to the *dissemination*, the "continual, flickering, spilling and defusing of meaning" (Eagleton 1996: 116). This concept undergoes further fictionalization in the immediately following description of A.: "She seemed to —how shall I say?— to *fluctuate*, [...] she *flickered* and *shimmered* in front of me" (48, my emphasis). When the description continues with: "It was as if she were trying out alternative images of herself [...]. It was not the house she had been showing me but herself —herselves!— [...] successive approximations of an ultimate self that would, that must, remain forever hidden" (48), the intertextual play with elements from literary theory becomes more than apparent.[28] This passage can actually be deciphered as the fictionalization of the deconstructivist concept which says that there is no stable, unified meaning —least of all an ultimate, transcendental signifier— that meaning is always dispersed and "nothing is ever fully present in signs" (Eagleton 1996: 112).

Keeping in mind that Banville is engaging in a *jeu de construction* in which the concepts of various literary theories serve as another system of reference, the letter A. is also strongly evocative of Lacan's notion of the Other (abbreviated with a capital O) originating from the French *Autre* abbreviated with a capital 'A.'.[29] In fact, the narrator explicitly refers to his quest in terms of the Other using a capital O!:

> No, it is not the anima lost in me that I am after but the ineffable mystery of the Other (I can hear your ribald snigger); that is what all my life long I have plunged into again and again as into a choked Sargasso Sea wherein I can never find my depth. In you I thought my feet would reach the sandy floor. [...] Now it seems I was wrong, wrong again (46-47).[30]

The reference seems to consist in an allusion to the concept of the Other, the "locus of Speech" (Lacan 1977: 305), of which the unconscious is the discourse, which forms an integrated part of the subject in that "the condition of the subject [...] is dependent on what is being unfolded in the Other O." (193) and "it is from the Other that the subject receives even the message that he emits" (305). In that

sense A. which also stands for the imaginative process and the text *Athena* and is as such a procreation by the author John Banville, takes on the function of his Other, his *Autre*, (his alter-ego), forming an integrated part of himself, emanating from within him.[31] The narrator's love-affair with A. —and by extension the author John Banville's *affaire* with his fictional product *Athena*— proves to be of a self-absorbed, narcissistic nature:

> I should say that A. herself was almost incidental to these swoony ruminations, which at their most concentrated became entirely self-sustaining. [...] I am betraying myself in all my horrible self-obsession. But that is how it was, at the start, as if in an empty house [...] I had stopped shocked before a gleaming apparition only to discover it was my own reflection springing up out of a shadowy, life-sized mirror (88).[32]

In this context a further element of ambiguity and indeterminacy seems to be of relevance. The constant change of grammatical persona —at times the narrative refers to A. as "she", at other times it immediately addresses her as "you"— suggests a rejection and thus an undermining of any coherent point-of-view, an indeterminacy of perspective: "I walked around you, [...] as if you were a problem in perspective, a puzzle-picture [...], which would only yield up its secret when viewed from a particular, unique angle" (154) with the narrator self-consciously commenting on this ambiguity: "the whole thing started off in a fog of ambiguity and dissimulation [...] you, I mean she (I must try to stick to the third person, which is after all what you turned out to be)" (45).

On another level, considering that "she" and "you" are both aspects (or sub-personas) of the same fiction of A. ("you, she-both of you!"; 89), which are simultaneously divided and equated, "she" refers more specifically to the fictional character A.'s erotic dimension, whereas "you" more often refers to the very textuality of A., that is its poetological dimension. In view of this interpretation, the above quotation "as if you were a problem in perspective" (145) can be read as a further metafictional statement with "you" standing for the text itself. Additional evidence for the specific textual quality of "you" can also be recognized when the narrator, pondering over "fantasias"(115) and "false perspectives" (115), says: "As I walked through the rain now my mind raced throbbingly on a single thought. The thought was you" (115). In another instance he seems to be directly addressing the text with the self-conscious remark: "It will not be news to you, I suppose, but I have come to realise that there is a strain of pedantry in me which I enjoy, in a quiet way" (63). He continues with what reads like a description of the writing process which he again undercuts and deconstructs by ironically commenting: "(Need I add that I never believe a word I hear myself saying?)" (63). This overlap of an *erótico*-metafictional reading —one should probably also add mythological— suggests an intertextual allusion to another female fiction

Petra Tournay

Into the heart of the Labyrinth: The pursuit of mannerist traditions...

traditionally connected with the creative process, namely that of the muse who contributes to the imaginative awakening of the writer. As already prefigured in the first critique "Pursuit of Daphne", the motif of the pursuit or invocation of the muse is further developed in the figure of A.

Apart from the evident allusion consisting in the erotic relationship between the narrator and A. the special role assigned to the first kiss clearly captures the idea of the muse's kiss triggering off the imaginative process: "That kiss. Well. The effect of it was to last for days — for weeks" (87). The narrator further confirms A.'s function as his muse when he goes on to say that, as a result of the kiss, "she was everywhere, of course, or phantom images of her, at least: a fleeting face in the crowd, a figure disappearing around a corner [...] being *borne* away from me. [...] My powers of misrecognition were prodigious" (89, my emphasis). When towards the end of the novel the narrator, with reference to the aftermaths of that first kiss, points out that "The streets were thronged with the ghost of her. The world of women had dwindled to a single image" (219), the essential quality of the muse becomes apparent. She merely fulfills a function, that of inspiring the fiction, but remains in the realm of the purely imaginative and never reaches the degree of an individuality —a quality conspicuous in the case of A.[33]

At the same time, the recurrence to romantic discourse seems to include a further cliché closely connected to the one of the muse which is that of the romantic ideal lady, the evanescent, "fleeting" (89), forever "unreachable she" (100). This understanding cannot be supported only through innumerable direct references to this feature of A. as in the quotations above (89, 100) but also in the mere fact that she vanishes, has to vanish, in the end. Otherwise, writing, the making of fiction, loses its very *raison d'être*.[34] Based on this discussion, the sign A., and by extension the novel *Athena,* can also be read as a fragmented allusion to the two romantic clichés of the invocation of the muse and the pursuit of the ideal lady. In a poetological reading these clichés serve as a further intertextual system of reference to fictionalize the author's amourous pursuit of the beloved text, as outlined in the discussion of the erotic pursuit in the mythological episodes. This intertextual play with fragments from literary tradition is yet a further confirmation of the argument that *Athena* is a text whose prime concern is with fiction and the employing of fiction to construct fiction. In the light of this analysis the narrator's remark: "I am a hopeless romantic at heart" (81) can only be read as a further ironic, self-conscious comment on Banville's *modus operandi.* The suggested poetological readings of the sign A. have confirmed the construction of a polyvalent sign to which surely other readings could be (will be) added. Based on the initial assumption of the openness of this healthy sign, it is ultimately up to the reader to complete the gap, to assign meaning/s to A. —much in the way that Derrida projected combinations onto the letters "Je m'éc..." (1986: 1).

The final episode of *Athena* constitutes an overt recourse to the topos of the text as the creator's child which is here contaminated with the concept of the other. It addresses clearly the idea of the text (*Athena*) developing its (her) own life once the umbilical cord has been severed: "There is the she who is gone, who is in some southern somewhere, lost to me forever, and then there is this other, who steps out of my head and goes hurrying off along the sunlit pavements to do I don't know what. To live. If I can call it living; and I shall" (233). Much in the sense of Umberto Eco's dictum "il testo e li e produce I propri effeti di senso" (1986: 508), the text will now lead a life of its own, independent from its creator.[35]

In a poetological reading the very end of the novel in fact seems to refer back to the beginning in a circular movement. "Write to me, she said. Write to me. I have written" (233). Now that the product (the quasi-love letter) is born, it is for the recipient to go (back) to the top and read it. In other words: the endless play of signifiers, "the game the writer is playing with and on (the reader)" (Imhof 1986: 10) can start all over again.[36] This technique implies the idea of the creative reader who along with the text creates and re-creates it in an ongoing process: "everything will be just as it is and yet wholly different" (105) as the text repeats Adorno's quotation three times, each time slightly transformed (218, 232). It is always the same narrative material (language/puzzle pieces) we are dealing with; yet it depends on *how* we make it come alive. And that process has to do with creation —on the writer's as well as on the reader's part. This is precisely the challenge (and the reward) when entering Banville's labyrinth, when taking him up on his invitation to "come live in me [...] and be my love" (223) and join him in the pursuit of the (beloved) text. In this reading it is possible to see the opening apostrophe "My love" (1) as a simultaneous declaration of love to fiction and to the reader —an invitation to a literary *ménage a trois* so to speak.

# Notes

**1.** In 1976 John Banville's novel *Doctor Copernicus* won the James Tait Black Memorial Prize. *Kepler* was awarded the Guardian Fiction Prize in 1976. In 1989 his novel *The Book of Evidence* (1989) was the winner of the GPA Book Award and shortlisted for the Booker Prize. *Athena* ranked first in the Editor's list for Spring 1997.

**2.** See for example: Susanne Burgstaller. 1992; Tony E. Jackson. 1997; Rüdiger Imhof. 1981b.

**3.** "Credo tuttavia che il post-moderno non sia una tendenza circiscrivibile cronologicamente, ma una categoria spirituale, o meglio un Kunstwollen, un modo

di operare. Potremmo dire che ogni epoca ha il proprio post-moderno, cosí come ogni epoca avrebbe il proprio manierismo (tanto che mi chiedo se post-moderno non sia il nome moderno del Manierismo come categoria metastorica)" (Eco 1986: 528).

⁴. "La risposta post-moderna al moderno consiste nel riconoscere che il passato [...] deve essere rivisitato: con ironia, in modo non-innocente" (Eco 1986: 529).

⁵. Following Russian formalist and French structuralist concepts, Juan Goytisolo distinguishes three essential possibilities the writer has at his disposal to respond to this situation of the late comer (or early diagnostic): "Podemos distinguir tres fases en la utilización de un recurso artístico: (1) empleo natural, cuando el escritor no se da cuenta de su deterioro y envejecimiento; (2) empleo paródico, cuando ha advertido estos, y los pone voluntariamente al desnudo, y (3) invención de un recurso nuevo. En general, todo procedimiento resulta visible por dos razones: por haberse gastado en exceso y aparecer ya como algo engorroso o, al revés, por su total novedad, cuando su carácter insólito nos sorprende" (Goytisolo 1977: 112, nota 20).

⁶. The mannerist's intention to provoke surprise through ostentatious showiness of his artistic skills has most pointedly been summarized by the poet Marino (1569-1625), the main representative of the Italian Baroque-mannerism: "E del Poeta il fin la maraviglia, [...] che non sa far stupire, vada alla striglia!" (1913: 395).

⁷. In an interview with Rüdiger Imhof (1981a) there are various instances in which John Banville refers to the importance of form in his work: "I consider form far more important. Content, I would maintain, is an aspect of form, no more" (5) and "I think always in formal terms" (9) and finally with reference to all art: "I can only maintain that for me, this is what art is about: form" (6).

⁸. The literary references are myriad and range from direct quotations

(Rilke, *Duineser Elegien*, 19), permutated quotes "Come live in me [...] and be my love" (John Donne, *The Bait*, 223), to the mentioning of specific authors (Rilke, 19; Brothers Grimm, 128), their works (Jean Rhys' *Sargasso Sea*, 47), characters from specific texts (Victor Hugo's *Candide*, 59 and *Quasimodo*, 222; Prevost's *Manon Lescaut*, 101; Lewis Carroll's *Cheshire Cat*, 51) and less obvious allusions (e.g., to the episode with the madeleine in Marcel Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu*, 36) through which Banville firmly places himself in the postmodern-mannerist tradition in the sense that "metafiction is play, as all art is; it involves a form of game-playing" (Imhof 1986: 10). In his monography on the novels of John Banville, Imhof reminds the reader that "intertextuality is among the oldest strategies employed by writers" and that the contemporary authors resort to it primarily "to make the point that literature is made from literature" (Imhof 1989: 11).

⁹. "Königin Metapher" (Hocke 1959: 68) —that is how Hocke entitles a chapter dedicated to the metaphor— is the central stylistic device of any mannerist writer. In *Athena* we do not only find an abundance of metaphors but also a praise of its use in the form of an ironic self-reference: "(Ah, this plethora of metaphors. I am like everything except myself.)" (90) with Banville not only drawing attention to, and thus deliberately exposing, his excessive use of metaphors but at the same time undermining his own operations. Here we can also identify a first indication of Banville's reference to concepts from literary theory. The last sentence: "I am like everything except myself" evokes Lacan's notion of the ego as a "function or effect of a subject which is always dispersed, never identical with itself" (Eagleton 1996: 147), a connection which seems even stronger if, as Lacan claims, the discourse of the unconscious works by metaphor and metonymy.

¹⁰. The large number of references to painters clearly indicates a preference for the weird ones, the representatives of baroque, grotesque, surrealist, in other words mannerist or mannered art (e.g., Bronzino, 77;

Goya, 174; Arcimboldo, 42; Rubens, 103; de Chirico, 7 and above all Parmigiano, 129). This predilection for the strange and deformed manifests itself in numerous passages and can be said to be one of the constituting artistic principles of all mannerist art which, for the reader, is complemented by the provocation of surprise and bafflement, the mannerist's desire to create *stupore*. Instances of this preference occur for example when the narrator confesses in an aside "(How I love them, these incidental grotesques!)" (134) and soon after admits to "a distressing weakness for low life" and his liking for "transgression, the desire to smear myself with a little bit of the world's filth" (135). In an indirect ironic self-reference Banville attributes these qualities to his own work when the narrator with respect to a painting by Vaublin (read: Banville) imagines the art collector Marbot "stammmering out his desire for something different, something special... Certainly his taste was for the louche and the deformed" (82). When a little later he inserts in another example of self-conscious irony "(I am sitting here, by the way, with a pitying half smile on my face, like a magistrate listening to a doltish accused stumbling through his earnest and self-condemning testimony)" (82), he openly exposes his own awareness of these qualities.

¹¹. The mannerists favour Ovid's *Metamorphoses* for their expression of antithesis, incongruity and transformation, which perfectly capture the mannerists' perception of the transformative, superior powers of their art (Hocke 1957: 92-93 and 1959: 208). All the scenes depicted in the paintings are indeed described in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*: Painting 1: Ovid, I, 452ff., Painting 2: Ovid, V,391ff., Painting 3: Ovid, X, 243ff., Painting 4: Ovid, I, 691ff., Painting 5: X, 155ff., Painting 6: Ovid, III, 138ff., Painting 7: Ovid, XIII, 750ff.

¹². Regarding the difference between mannerism and Baroque, Elke Pacholek makes the point that Baroque is a term that refers to a particular period in literary history whereas mannerism refers to a

literary style. However, since "the concept of a Mannerist style is perhaps convenient as the designation of one tendency found recurrently throughout the Baroque" (Warnke in Pacholek 1988: 34), many individual elements of baroque literature can, therefore, be called mannerist. This is of particular importance for an analysis of Banville's *Athena* since in many ways his mannerism can be traced back to the baroque tradition. In Ireland the dominant concern with form in Banville's writing has even come to be labelled "Banvillean Baroque" (*Die Welt*).

¹³. Successfully playing the game of illusion and disillusion is one of the prime aspirations of the mannerist writer: "La mayor sabiduría" states Gracián "consiste en hacer parecer" (in Hocke 1959: 92).

¹⁴. The page numbers of all further references to the novel are given in the text.

¹⁵. Hauser equates all mannerist works of art with a labyrinth, "in das man sich verirrt und aus dem man keinen Ausweg sucht" ("in which you lose your way and don't even look for a way out" (1973: 25, my translation). Intertextually the labyrinth evokes Robbe-Grillet's novel *Dans le labyrinthe* (1959), one of the main representative texts of the *nouveau roman*.

¹⁶. With respect to this issue Banville declares: "Modernism has run its course. So also, for that matter, has post-modernism. I believe, at least I hope, that we are on the threshold of a new *ism*, a new synthesis. What will it be, I do not know. But I hope it will be an art which is honest enough to despair and yet go on; rigorous and controlled, cool and yet passionate, without delusions, aware of its own possibilities and its own limits; an art which knows that truth is arbitrary, that reality is multifarious, that language is not a clear lens. Did I say *new*? What I have defined is as old as Homer" (Banville 1981: 17).

¹⁷. The deliberate exposure of the relation between mannerism and

postmodernism is furthermore indicative of an artistic awareness of the intricate inter-connectedness of the present with past traditions which in the text finds clear expression in a paraphrase of Heraclitus's concept of *panta rae*: "The present modifies the past, it is a continuing, insiduous process" (82). See also: "No, no, flux and flow, unstoppable, that's all there is" (71) and "Old What's-his-name was right, all is flux and fire wherein we whirl" (119). This is in fact one of the core ideas which pervades Banville's work. See for example the following passage in *Ghosts* (1993): "What interested her was the same thing that interested me, namely [...] How the present feeds on the past, or versions of the past" (146-147).

[18]. Pygmalion who falls in love with his own creation, the female statue, has become —in close connection with the figure of Narcissus— *the* symbol of the mannerist artist, who gazes at his own work in self-admiration (Hocke 1957: 90).

[19]. There are numerous instances where elements from the mythological scenes are reflected in passages of the narrative. Right before the critique of the painting depicting the capture of Ganymede, King Tros's son who was captured by Zeus in the disguise of an eagle, the narrator talks about the loss of his own son (127, 129-130). A few pages before the episode of Diana at her bath, the narrator comes upon A. in the bathroom (159, 167). Banville most overtly reveals his technique of interweaving the critiques of the mythological episodes with the rest of the narrative in the seamless connection of the critical passage on the painting "Revenge of Diana" and the following chapter (169, 170).

[20]. See Banville's explications on "the intuitive *shape* of the particular work of art" in the interview with Imhof (1981a: 6).

[21]. Even the cover —which is the same for the original English edition and the German translation— can be deciphered as an additional intertextual marker or signifier for ancient mythology and painting. It could

almost be said to be an ironical reversal of the popular saying: "Don't judge a book by its cover", when the reader is invited to do just that. This procedure evokes Gérard Genette's concept of the *Palimpsestes* which —originally a term taken from archaeology/art history— applied to literature refers to the idea of a *hypertexte* (which here literally would be the cover) and a *hypotexte* (the actual text which lies underneath). On a poetological level the depiction of the minotaur clearly refers to the mannerist emblem of the labyrinth and its creator Daedalus. By sovereignly playing with and marking its intertextuality, *Athena* right from the outset reveals its denial of a *imitatio naturae*.

[22]. For a more detailed presentation of the mannerist concept of *Deus in terra* see Friedrich. 1964: 631.

[23]. A corresponding passage where authenticity is specifically thematized and deconstructed can be found in the following reference to A.: "My poor Justine, yearning for some sort of final confirmation of ... of what? Authenticity, perhaps. And yet it was precisely the inauthentic, the fragile theatre of illusions [...] that afforded us the fiercest and most precious transports of doomy pleasures" (160), thus standing the concept of authenticity on its head, confirming that it is precisely the inauthenticity of fiction that brings, however doomy, pleasures. Frequent equations of A. with literary female characters provide an additional clue for A.'s total fictionality. See for instance: "(my Lulu!)" (38); "my Manon" (101) "my Morgana" (163); "like tiny Alice" (156).

[24]. In comments on artistic expression Banville has repeatedly cited the following extract from the ninth of Rilke's *Duino Elegies*: "but for *saying*, remember,/O, for such saying as never the things themselves hoped so intensely to be" (Imhof 1981a: 12) which can be understood as an immediate reference to the imaginative process of saying things into existence.

[25]. At this point attention should be drawn to the fact that true to Banville's procedure that "each book follows on more or less from its predecessor" (Imhof 1981a: 9), the theme of the genesis of fiction interlinked with that of a young female character was already prefigured in Banville's previous novel *Ghosts* (1993) when towards the end the narrator with reference to Flora says: "I still had, still have, much to learn. I am, I realise, only at the beginning of this birthing business" (239). This quotation may indeed be seen as an overt metafictional statement previewing the theme Banville was to develop further in *Athena*.

[26]. In this context a first reference can be found in the opening pages of the novel in the use of the symbol of the egg (2), a symbol for the potential of life, which in a poetological context comes to represent the evolution of fiction. Intertextually the symbol of the egg evokes the figure of Humpty Dumpty and Lewis Carrol's reflections on the arbitrariness of language. For a presentation in a more recent context, see: Auster, Paul. 1985. *The New York Trilogy*, Part 1: *The City of Glass*.

[27]. For a further episode fictionalizing the genesis of A. see also the description of the narrator's dream (a further mannerist emblem) composed of biblical and Faustian fragments (165-166).

[28]. The combination of the idea of the house with that of A. evokes Henry James' notion of the house of fiction. In that context see the description of the house in terms of a decaying (textual) structure (10).

[29]. Refusing to supply any clear definition of the concept, in his *Écrits* Lacan frequently refers to the Other as "the locus in which is constituted the I who speaks to him who hears" (Lacan 1977: 141), "the locus of Speech" (305), of which the unconscious is the discourse, "whose syntax Freud first sought to define for those bits that come to us in certain privileged moments, in dreams, in slips of the tongue or pen, in flashes of wit" (193) or as we

may add by extension: in art. He also introduces notions such as "the play of approach and rejection" and pursuit (305). At one point he identifies the Other as "the pure subject of modern games theory" (304).

[30]. The image of the bottomless depth and the impossibility of ever reaching it evokes the concept of the "bottomless linguistic abyss" (Eagleton 1996: 126). The text thus exposes its own fictive and arbitrary nature and thereby undercuts and deconstructs its own operations.

[31]. The notion of A. as the narrator's Other receives further mention in an utterance by A. herself: "We're just the same, aren't we, the two of us [...] Hardly here at all. Or at least, might have said" (165) —with the narrator's remark at the end functioning as a cancellation of the passage. In another instance the narrator likens A. to his phantom other: "You were there too, of course, I could feel your presence vividly [...] Already, you see, I was carrying you with me, my phantom, my other self" (61).

[32]. Another extreme rendering of the narrator's narcissistic self-obsession can be identified when after A.'s disappearance he is "trying to make her appear" and in that vain effort "opened my coat and masturbated into the chip shop's grease-caked dust-bin, gagging on her name" (220). In a poetological reading masturbation assumes the function of a metafictional metaphor for the self-absorbed, auto-erotic quality of fictional creation.

[33]. See also the following passage in which A. in her function as muse inspires the apparition of his phantom other: "when in the throes of passion she cried out my assumed —my false— name and for a second a phantom other, my jettisoned self, joined us and made a ghostly troilism of our panting labours" (160). The term labours clearly refers to the pains of the (fictional) birthing process.

[34]. For more details see Friedrich's exhaustive discussion of Petrarca's ideal female figure Madonna Laura who served as

an intertextual model for the romantic clichés of the muse and the ideal, evanescent lady (1964: 196-207).

**35**. Intertextually compare Paul Auster who fictionalizes this idea twice in *Leviathan*: "A book is a mysterious object [...] once it floats out into the world, anything can happen" (4) and "Books [...] go on living after they are written" (1992: 36).

**36**. Felten (1990: 8-9) adduces examples from Robbe-Grillet, Del Giudice and Tabucchi to show that this is, in fact, a technique frequently found in postmodern writing.

# Works cited

AUSTER, Paul. 1985. *The New York Trilogy*. Part 1: *The City of Glass*. London/Boston: Faber and Faber.

—. 1992. *Leviathan*. London/Boston: Faber and Faber.

BANVILLE, John. 1995. *Athena*. London: Minerva.

—. 1993. *Ghosts*. London: Minerva.

—. 1989. *The Book of Evidence*. London: Minerva.

—. 1981. "A Talk". *Irish University Review*. John Banville Special Issue 11 (1) (Spring 1981): 13-17.

BARTHES, Roland. (1971) 1992. "From Work to Text". In Rice, Philip and Patricia Waugh. (eds.). *Modern Literary Theory: A Reader*. London: Edward Arnold: 166-172.

BURGSTALLER, Susanne. 1992. "This Lawless House —John Banville's Post-Modernist Treatment of the Big-House Motif in *Birchwood* and *The Newton Letter*". In Rauchbauer, Otto. (ed.). *Ancestral Voices: The Big House in Anglo-Irish Literature. A Collection of Interpretations*. Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag: 239-256.

DERRIDA, Jacques. 1986. *Glas*. Trans. J. P. Leavey and R. Rand: University of Nebraska Press.

EAGLETON, Terry. (1983) 1996. *Literary Theory: An Introduction*. Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell.

ECO, Umberto. 1986. "Postille a Il nome della rosa". In *Il nome della rosa*. Milano: Bompiani: 505-533.

FELTEN, Hans. 1990. "Bürger im fremden Land". Sonderdruck aus *Italienisch* 23 (Mai 1992): 1-12.

FRIEDRICH, Hugo. 1964. *Epochen der italienischen Lyrik*. Frankfurt a.M.: Klostermann.

GOYTISOLO, Juan. 1977. "El mundo erótico de María de Zayas". In *Disidencias*. Barcelona: Seix Barral: 63-115.

GRACIÁN, Baltasar. (1648) 1987. *Agudeza y Arte de Ingenio*. Ed. de Correa Calderón. Madrid: Castilia.

HAUSER, Arnold. 1973. *Der Ursprung der modernen Kunst und Literatur. Die Entwicklung des Manierismus seit der Krise der Renaissance*. München: Beck.

HOCKE, Gustav René. 1957. *Die Welt als Labyrinth. Manier und Manie in der europäischen Kunst*. Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt.

—. 1959. *Manierismus in der Literatur. Sprach-Alchimie und esoterische Kombinationskunst*. Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt.

IMHOF, Rüdiger. 1981a. "An Interview with John Banville: My Readers That Small Band Deserve a Rest". *Irish University Review*. John Banville Special Issue 11 (1) (Spring 1981): 5-12.

—. 1981b. "John Banville's Supreme Fiction". *Irish University Review*. John Banville Special Issue 11 (1) (Spring 1981): 52-86.

—. 1986. *Contemporary Metafiction: A Poetological Study in English since 1939*. Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitätsverlag.

—. 1989. *John Banville: A Critical Introduction*. Dublin: Wolfhound.

JACKSON, Tony E. 1997. "Science, Art, and the Shipwreck of Knowledge. The Novels of John Banville". *Contemporary Literature* 38 (3) (1997): 510-533.

LACAN, Jacques. (1966) 1977. *Écrits. A Selection*. Trans. A. Sheridan. N.Y./London: W.W. Norton and Company.

MARINO, Giambattista. 1913. *Posie varie*. A cura di B. Croce. Bari: La Terza.

OVID (IUS) PUBLIUS NASO. 1963. *Briefe aus der Verbannung*. Lat./Dt. Trans. W. Willige. Zürich/Stuttgart: Artemis.

PACHOLEK-BRANDT, Elke. 1988. *Imagination (Un)Limited. Zum Stellenwert manieristischer Traditionen in amerikanischer Prosa der Postmoderne*. Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang Verlag.

TESAURO, Emmanuele. (1655) 1968. *Il Cannochiale Aristotelico*. Faksimile-Neudruck der Ausgabe von Turin 1670. A. Buck. (ed.). Bad Homburg: Gehlen.

WELT, Die. 1996. "John Banvilles besessenes Streben nach Stille". (2 Oktober 1996).