

## POSTMODERN TRANSGRESSIONS OF NARRATIVE: AN INTERTEXTUAL DIALOGUE BETWEEN J. BANVILLE'S *THE BOOK OF EVIDENCE* (1989) AND V. NABOKOV'S *LOLITA* (1955)

Jūratė Butkutė

PhD Student, Department of Literary History and Theory  
Vilnius University

John Banville's novels and his assertions about literature have generated a common view of this contemporary Irish author as an ultimate stylist, a formalist whose perception of and engagement with aesthetics is often light-heartedly attributed the features of postmodernism.

A literary critic who takes a special interest in Banville's work, Ingo Berensmeyer<sup>1</sup> informs us that numerous critics, especially those outside Ireland, have termed Banville an exponent of "international postmodernism" on the premise of the metafictional nature of Banville's texts. However, as he further elaborates<sup>2</sup>, the fact that a number of texts in the history of literature have displayed features of self-referential mode of writing even before the advent of postmodernism or modernism, for that matter, makes this claim a sweeping generalisation. A more astute judgement of Banville's work, in Berensmeyer's view, is presented by a philosopher Richard Kearney who

maintains that Banville belongs to a tradition of Irish writers, such as Joyce, Beckett, Flann O'Brien, who "interrogate the very possibility of writing" and "explore fundamental tensions between imagination and memory, narration and history, self and language"<sup>3</sup>.

As a student of Banville's novels, I find it crucial to raise a question about the ways this Irish author addresses the issue of the possibility of writing in the postmodern age which actually challenges the very notion of representation. Banville's intertextually rich body of work, numerous references to Nabokov, Beckett, Joyce, Proust and many other authors suggests an intertextual method of reading. In this particular case, I will explore the nature of a dialogic discourse between his novel *The Book of Evidence*<sup>4</sup> which belongs to his trilogy *Frames*<sup>5</sup> and Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita*<sup>6</sup>, a text that has

<sup>3</sup> Berensmeyer, 2006, 304.

<sup>4</sup> John Banville, *The Book of Evidence*, London: Picador, 1989.

<sup>5</sup> John Banville, *Frames Trilogy. The Book of Evidence, Ghosts, Athena*, London: Picador, 2001.

<sup>6</sup> Vladimir Nabokov, *The Annotated Lolita*, ed. Alfred Appel, Jr., London: Penguin Books, 1955, 1991.

<sup>1</sup> Ingo Berensmeyer, "Between Canons: John Banville's Reception in National and International Contexts", *The Current Debate about the Irish Literary Canon*, ed. Helen Thompson, Lewiston, Queenston, Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2006, 292.

<sup>2</sup> Berensmeyer, 2006, 304.

been widely examined as an example of post-modernism. The objective of the present paper therefore is to establish whether both of these texts operate in the same dimension of post-modern aesthetics by discerning the structural strategies of their narratives and discussing semantic implications that the reading of the texts may lend. The analysis will be based on a question, whether the semantic structure of Banville's text goes beyond the notions of postmodern ontology and if it does, in what direction of discursive practices does it tend to develop.

At first, the premises for the intertextual reading of *The Book of Evidence* have to be examined by delineating specific features of the discursive and diegetic planes<sup>7</sup> of the text and for this purpose a brief account of the plot will be presented.

The story of the novel is related by a homodiegetic narrator, an imprisoned Irishman Frederick Montgomery or otherwise referred to as Freddie. A confession of his crime, addressed to the jury and the judge, begins with his self-consciously defined resolve to explore the state of affairs that led him to the demise of his imprisonment. From a fragmented account we learn that he, a scholar of hard sciences works at a university in America for a couple of months, where he meets his would-be wife Daphne, quits his academic pursuit and goes to a Mediterranean island with her, which he is forced to leave because of his gruesome financial involvement with the local mafia. Alone, he travels to Ireland to his mother's estate who he hopes will replenish his empty pockets, however, his plan falls through. Upon learning that his mother had sold

his deceased father's collection of pictures, Freddie leaves his home in fury and visits Whitewater estate and gallery which belongs to his friends. There he spots a "Portrait of a Woman with Gloves", ambiguously attributed to one of the 17<sup>th</sup> century Dutch painters. Mesmerised by this painting, he creates a story about the woman in the portrait and narrates the imagined interaction between her and the painter while she is being painted in his imagination. Freddie returns to Whitewater next day and in an attempt to steal the painting he is caught red-handed by a maid. He grabs the portrait and kidnaps the maid and in a flight of frenzy simply hammers her to death in a car that he steals the same morning from a car rental. After the murder he stays with a family friend Charlie for a month until he is arrested by the police. The arrest is followed by his interrogation and a trial whereby he is pleaded guilty of murder.

The discursive level of the text exhibits a clear departure from the scheme of *the crime fiction genre*<sup>8</sup>, within the framework of which, at first sight, this text might be read. This can be observed in the fragmented, non-linear narration that is permeated with analeptical and proleptical digressions and deviations from a teleological discourse that the examples of the genre of crime fiction would normally display. The features mentioned above and frequent self-referential comments of the narrator, questioning the validity of the strategy of the narrative that is based on the cause and effect principle and challenging the reader who is 'lusting after meaning' in Freddie's words<sup>9</sup>, direct the reader in search for the paradigmatic, rather than syntagmatic relations that the narrative of this text may be based on. In

---

<sup>7</sup> The terms "discursive" and "diegetic" planes of a narrative are used from a narratological theory presented by Seymour Chatman in Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse. Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1978.

---

<sup>8</sup> For further references on the crime fiction genre refer to John Scaggs, *Crime Fiction. The New Critical Idiom*, London and New York: Routledge, 2005.

<sup>9</sup> Banville, 1989, 24.

other words, the reader is encouraged to look for a conspicuous presence of other literary or possibly hermeneutic traditions than the crime fiction genre and define the significance of their operation in the text.

The diegetic level of the narrative seems to be constructed around Freddie's preoccupation of an epistemological nature, i.e. the question of what laws govern the world that he inhabits or what is the structure of the real that Freddie, as the subject experiences. This question is addressed through Freddie's interaction with other numerous characters in the novel. His references to their authentic mode of being as opposed to his sense of drift and lack of authenticity forms a dialectical relationship between him and the rest of the world as that between him and the Other<sup>10</sup>. A recurrent motive of a threshold in the narrative upon which a meeting with the Other may take place is never trespassed and thus Freddie ends up repetitively experiencing the possibility of identification with the Other, perception of its structure and the imminent loss of it. All these observations suggest that the Other is perceived by the subject, Freddie, as an unrecognisable structure which possibly may have some clearly defined demarcations. Thus, to the implied reader the other characters and the narrative situations in which they appear seem to represent certain semantic codes. Given the metafictional nature of the novel, it becomes clear that these semantic codes yet again point to specific traditions of literary representation, with which the implied author is establishing a polemical relationship.

---

<sup>10</sup> According to J. Lacan, the term "the Other" indicates alienation, a lack of pre-linguistic *jouissance*, a structurally incomplete representation of something ultimately unrepresentable that the subject experiences in the process of identification within the field of linguistic representation, i.e. the symbolic register. Ref. to Jacques Lacan, *Écrits. A Selection*, transl. by Bruce Fink, New York, London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2002.

With the premises for the intertextual reading of the text established that are based on the inner structure of the novel, one may turn to the actual references to Nabokov's *Lolita*. As it has been mentioned above, the narrator engages himself in the polemics with the genre of crime fiction which is also revealed by the narrator's adversity to a psychological portrait of a criminal, as for example, one can find in Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment*<sup>11</sup>. Another narrator in another book displays a similar approach to a psychological or psychoanalytic depiction of a criminal, that is, Humbert Humbert who on numerous occasions expresses his disgust with the Dostoyevkian ethical-psychological delineation of a murderer.

The first intertextual reference to Nabokov's *Lolita* in *The Book of Evidence* seemingly indicates that the relationship between the two novels is that of textual *transworld* identification rather than a *homonymy*<sup>12</sup> in Eco's terms. The reference is in the third sentence of Freddie's narrative, describing his reflection on his imprisonment and the reaction of the world to him: "They should let in people to view me, the girl-eater, svelte and dangerous, padding to and fro in my cage, my terrible green glance flickering past the bars, give them something to dream about,

---

<sup>11</sup> Fyodor Dostoyevsky *Crime and Punishment*, transl. by Jessie Coulson, Oxford University Press, 1998.

<sup>12</sup> Umberto Eco, "Lector in Fabula: pragmatic strategy in a metanarrative text," in *The Role of the Reader: Explorations in the Semiotics of Texts*, Bloomington and London, Indiana University Press, 1979, 229. Eco defines a "transworld identity" with reference to an identification between certain elements of two worlds (they may be two fictional worlds). If an entity in one world differs from its "prototype" in another world only in accidental properties, not in essentials, and if there is a one-to-one correspondence between the prototype and its other-world variant, then the two entities can be considered identical even though they exist in distinct worlds. Consequently, if a prototype and its replica differ in essential properties, and not just the accidental ones, then, this may be a case of mere *homonymy* rather than *transworld* identity.

tucked up cosy in their beds of a night”.<sup>13</sup> The word ‘girl-eater’ presented in an oxymoronic proximity to the word ‘svelte’ in this ironic description points to the cultured paedophile and killer Humbert Humbert and his mode of describing himself. Moreover, the actual reference to the bars of his cell refers to the field of empirical reality, i.e. V. Nabokov’s account of the newspaper story that inspired him to write a work such as *Lolita* presented in the novel’s afterword *On a Book Entitled “Lolita”*. The story is about “an ape in the Jardin des Plantes, who after months of coaxing by the scientists, produced the first drawing ever charcoaled by an animal: the sketch showed the bars of the poor creature’s cage.”<sup>14</sup> Although, Nabokov does not elaborate on the meaning of this story, a reader can deduce that the “bars” in *Lolita* are the passion that imprisons Humbert Humbert which is rendered in the most aesthetised form. Thus, the semantic content of the “bars” is the actual form or shape of representation of ‘reality’ in the novel. The same narrative dominant, as it has been observed, is employed in the *The Book of Evidence*. The question is, however, whether both narrators and both texts exemplify an adherence to the ontological postmodern aesthetics, which extols the disintegration of the subject by asking such questions as Dick Higgins suggests in his *A Dialectic of Centuries*, i.e. “Which world is this? What is to be done in it? Which of my selves is to do it?” rather than asking the questions of epistemological nature “How can I interpret this world of which I am a part? And what am I in it?”.<sup>15</sup>

The answer to this can be provided by further analysis of both narratives, which leads to a conclusion that the nature of the identity of these texts is that of a *homonymy*, after all, and not *transworld* identification.

<sup>13</sup> Banville, 1989, 3.

<sup>14</sup> Nabokov, 1991, 311.

<sup>15</sup> In Brian McHale, *Postmodernist Fiction*, London: Routledge, 1996, p. 2.

Indeed, at the centre of both novels we have narrators who are unreliable and who admit it themselves in a self-referential mode of narration. They are both “cultured killers”, whose crimes are related with aesthetics and a transgression of boundaries between art and reality. Freddie kills Josie Bell because she hinders him in his attempt to steal the “Portrait of the Woman with Gloves” who he tries to resurrect to life through his imagination mediated through language and whose fictive existence is more real to him than the life of a “real” person. Humbert Humbert seduces a child Dolores and kills a playwright Clare Quilty because the first one lives in his consciousness through his desire that is bound by his literary games and the latter ironically unravels such nature of his passion and rids Humbert Humbert of his weapons using the tools of Humbert’s crime, i.e. the overpowering dominance of art and literature when faced with a decision of an ethical nature. It is also noteworthy, that the objects of artistic representation for both narrators are women. In the Lacanian sense of the word both of them represent the ultimate Other to the protagonists and they appear in the narrative as objects of male gazing with whom the protagonists seek to establish an authentic relationship.

Regardless of the fact that in *Lolita* Dolores is a typical American child of the 60’s with all the attributes that such a child is supposed to display, an old-fashioned aesthete Humbert creates his own fictive construct of her as a nymphete with clearly defined poetic functions and forms of her sensuality. The narrator achieves this through intertextual games and a self-regarding play of signifiers. As a character Lolita undergoes a metamorphosis and, according to critic John Pier<sup>16</sup>, her metamorphosis is isomorphic with that

<sup>16</sup> John Pier, “Narrative Configurations” in John Pier (ed.) *The Dynamics of Narrative Form. Studies in Anglo-American Narratology*, Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2004, 257.

of the text, since *Lolita* functions not only as a character but as a text as well.

As J. Pier notes, the narrative of this text is an accumulation of various strategies: it has a text within a text, elements of a fairy-tale, coincidences and geometrical mirroring patterns which are based on Nabokov's passion for lepidoptery, chess and tennis games. The most ostensible frames of narrative configuration in the text are those of the bereaved lover, the *Doppelgänger* and the love triangle which allow a reader to trace the directions of *Lolita's* semiosis.

Without going too deep into *Lolita's* analysis, a few aspects may be singled out in terms of the framework of the author – reader relationship as it operates in the narrative of the novel. To Humbert, *Lolita* is his text, which is dominated by the motive of the bereaved lover as the numerous references to Edgar Allan Poe's poem "Annabel Lee" indicate<sup>17</sup>. The reader of his narrative is Clare Quilty, who upon his engagement with Humbert's text, introduces the motives of *Doppelgänger* and a love triangle in the narrative. Thus, an ideal reader, Quilty, introduces his own strategies of reading of the text that are different to those of Humbert, who may be considered as the author of the narrative. Quilty creates an alternative text to that of Humbert's, ridding him of his sense of authorship over his creation. A conclusion may be drawn that the meaning of *Lolita* as a character and a text changes with a gaze of a new reader turned upon her/it in the process of representation.

---

<sup>17</sup> Nabokov, 1991, 328. In his *Notes to Lolita* Alfred Appel, Jr indicates 21 instances of references to Edgar Allan Poe's "Annabel Lee" found in *Lolita*, which exceed the number of allusions to works of any other writers in this novel. As the commentator suggests (in Nabokov, 1991, 330), the intertextual references to E. A. Poe evoke a number of aspects common to *Lolita* and life and texts by E.A. Poe, for example, the "child bride" motif, a *Doppelgänger* tale (Poe's "William Wilson") and a detective tale. Nabokov also questions and parodies Poe's Romantic vision of language and literature through numerous references.

In other words, the roles of writer – reader are transgressed and the function of textual representation balances on the level of the superficial semiosis that does nothing else but reflects upon its own narrative structures.

In *The Book of Evidence* such a transgression of reader-writer functions also takes place and it happens through an intertextual relation with *Lolita*. The most obvious allusion to Nabokov's text found in *The Book of Evidence* is the name of the car, a "Humber" that Freddie "rents" from a car rental called "Melmoth's car hire", which becomes an agent of his crime, as he drives it to Whitewater in pursuit of his picture and it eventually happens to be the site of the murder that Freddie commits<sup>18</sup>. The "Humber" reference is a clearly stated allusion to *Lolita's* Humbert Humbert. Whereas "Melmoth" also refers to the old car Melmoth which belongs to Humbert's second wife, Charlotte Haze that he drives when he sets out on his travels with the bereaved *Lolita* across America and which also takes him to his alter-ego Quilty who he murders.

The name "Melmoth" leads the reader to yet another intertextual frame, that is, a text of Irish author, Charles Robert Maturin – his gothic novel *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820)<sup>19</sup> which relates a story of a scientist John Melmoth. Melmoth sells his soul to the devil in return receiving extra 150 years of life which he spends in search of a person who could share his fate with him but having failed to do so, he returns to his home in Ireland to die. A certain element of the narrative structure found in *Melmoth the Wanderer* may be paralleled with the one in *The Book of Evidence* which is the use of a portrait in the story of Melmoth. Young

---

<sup>18</sup> Banville, 1989, 99–118.

<sup>19</sup> Charles Robert Maturin, *Melmoth the Wanderer*, The University of Adelaide Library: Books@adelaide, 1820, 2004, at <http://etext.library.adelaide.edu.au/m/maturin/charles/melmoth/melmoth.zip>, accessed in 2006/10/19.

Melmoth sees a portrait in his uncle's house which depicts a demised relative of his who drew a pact with the devil and whose gaze follows his movements in the house from the pictorial frames. Similarly, in *The Book of Evidence* Freddie declares his faith to the "Portrait of the Woman with Gloves" by committing his crime and being constantly seized by the observant eyes of the lady represented in it<sup>20</sup>.

All the references mentioned above formulate certain semantic paradigms in *Lolita* and *The Book of Evidence*. These are a paradigm of *travelling*, a paradigm of *Doppelgänger* and a paradigm of *artistic representation of reality*. Without focusing on the *Doppelgänger* element, which can be exclusively elaborated on as a separate subject, I shall examine only on the first and the third semantic elements which will suggest major differences of meaning in relation to the ways of representation in both novels.

On the diegetic level Humbert's travels begin with his moving from Europe to America in search of a substitute for his deceased young object of love, Annabel Leigh. Further in the text, Humbert undertakes a trip around the USA with Dolores, in the course of which he loses his identity as the author of his text. In *The Book of Evidence* Freddie as we saw earlier also travels from Europe to America in pursuit of an academic career and then to a Mediterranean island from which he returns to Ireland. In Ireland Freddie's journey culminates in his ultimate, if somewhat perverted, glory of artistic perception through his obsession with the portrait. Thus, one might infer that the paradigm of *travelling* of the two authors of their narrative yields diverging results, however, this paradigm acquires even more complicated semantic implications when it is considered in relation to the paradigm of *artistic representation of reality* in both novels.

---

<sup>20</sup> Banville, 1989, 105, 215.

Humbert's movement through narrative takes the direction of transgression of boundaries between life and art by creating a fictive, post-modern construct out of a "real" person, Dolores Haze. In the case of the narrator of *The Book of Evidence* the direction of the movement is the opposite: Freddie casts his artistic eye at a woman that is already enclosed in a perfect world of representation, a 17<sup>th</sup> century Dutch painting and tries to convert her into reality. His description of the woman in the portrait begins in the following way:

I have stood in front of other, perhaps greater paintings, and not been moved as I am moved by this one. [...] when I look at it my heart contracts. There is something in the way the woman regards me, the querulous, mute insistence of her eyes, which I can neither escape nor assuage. She requires of me some great effort, some tremendous feat of scrutiny and attention, of which I do not think I am capable. It is as if she were asking me to let her live.<sup>21</sup>

Then Freddie summons his mimetic talent to reproduce her life with minute details of her character and relationships with other people. His exercise of artistic representation in this case requires further explanation which reveals that Freddie finds himself in a controversial situation as an artist, both a writer and a reader, who undertakes the task of solving the enigma of the Other or perceiving and representing the unrecognisable and unrepresentable reality. In his attempt to recreate the woman in the portrait Freddie employs a method of ekphrasis, which is a verbal commentary on a work of visual arts. Such form of representation accentuates the gaze of the observer who is engaged in the act of the transformation of the object of representation as the object is withdrawn from its primary reality, in

---

<sup>21</sup> Banville, 1989, 104–105.



this case, a fictive, artistically rendered reality which is demarcated by the frames of the painting. Thus, Freddie is involved in the double process of reading and writing of the object whereby the object itself is sacrificed to a new structure, a new medium of representation, a literary narrative.

However, the ekphrastic form of representation that Freddie chooses to employ determines a demise of his as an author and a reader of his text. Such a semantic movement may be explained by the fact that Freddie's description of the woman in the portrait is based on the principle of pure mimesis in the sense of how Paul Ricoeur uses this term<sup>22</sup>, which is "the *circle of triple mimesis*". It consists of the following elements: "1) the prefiguring of our life-world as it seeks to be told; 2) the configuring of the text in the act of telling, and 3) the refiguring of our existence as we return from narrative text to action." What is significant, as Richard Kearney indicates<sup>23</sup>, is that the referral of the narrative text back to the life of the author and forward to the life of the reader belies the structuralist maxim that the text relates to nothing but itself. The logic of triple mimesis is at work in Freddie's case of constructing a new reality for the woman with gloves. Thus, the essential difference between Freddie, the narrator and the author of his text and Humbert, the narrator and the author of his text becomes apparent. If Humbert in his configuring of Lolita's character and text enters gleefully the linguistic play of postmodern aesthetics of continuous semiosis, Freddie in his tale-telling performance appears to be battling with the opposite of what the postmodern maxim prescribes.

Indeed, in his mimetic representation of the woman with gloves, Freddie is engaged in the

artistic act of formal configuring, just as Humbert is in his re-creation of Dolores Haze. He, like Humbert is also appalled by the intrusion of another reader in his act of telling, the reader being the maid of Whitewater, Josie Bell who introduces an unexpected turn to his narrative with her appearance at the moment of him stealing the portrait and thus ruining his text marked by semantic unity that he seeks to sustain in relation to the object of his representation. As we know, Josie pays for this intrusion with her life. The story does not end here, and following the principle of triple mimesis, Freddie, as a creator and a reader of his own text returns from narrative text to action a changed man. In his reflections over the crime that he committed Freddie sets out to recreate Josie.

At this point of analysis, it is worthwhile returning to the mode of his representations of characters like Josie, a representative of the ultimate Other in his narrative. The mode of narration that is used in their creation is that of mimesis proper, just like in the ekphrastic description presented about the woman in the portrait, i.e. the nature of their representation is based on a well-established relationship between a signifier and a signified. However, Freddie constantly challenges pure mimesis by providing comments, such as "how many of these do I have to create"<sup>24</sup> which brings one back to the representation of himself in the novel. And indeed his portrait assumes multiple forms: Freddie appears in numerous fluctuating identities which are disclosed in various narrative situations: as a svelte cultured killer, a scholar, a sentimental lover, a Joycean seeker of a father, and, most importantly, as a writer of his fragmented confession, playing with words. Thus, in his relation to the Other, appearing in the form of mimetic representation, he is a comic narrator at a loss.

---

<sup>22</sup> In Richard Kearney, *On Stories*, London and New York: Routledge, 2002, 133.

<sup>23</sup> Richard Kearney, 133.

---

<sup>24</sup> Banville, 1989, 92.

He constitutes a parody of Nabokovian Humbert who is himself placed within the framework of postmodern mode of representation, whereas Freddie, who is overtly distrustful of the mimetic mode, paradoxically succumbs to it in his ultimate representation of the woman in a portrait, the ultimate Other. It is, therefore, rather ironic that at the end of his tale Freddie admits that after he committed his crime and threw the portrait into the ditch, he gained knowledge that “something [in the portrait] was dead”<sup>25</sup>. Thus, in other words, the Other, be it the woman in the portrait or Josie Bell, remains an enigma, the incomplete Other, the Other with the ultimate lack of essence that could not be grasped in the mimetic form of telling. Therefore, it is possible to suggest that the task Freddie sets himself in creating Josie is going to be that of a reconciliation with the postmodern, of giving her the multiple shapes of appearing in the

narrative, allowing for the endless signification to take place in the representation of reality and thus, possibly, revealing the Other by disengagement with the autocratic authorial voice that Freddie unwittingly exercises in his narrative.

To conclude, in terms of the mode of representation, *Lolita's* discourse reveals Humbert's flaw as a character and a narrator, however, the discursive metamorphosis of *Lolita's* text and the endless process of semiosis of the meaning of this text, makes it a perfect example of postmodernist ontology. Whereas, Freddie's ostensible fluctuation between mimetic and poetic forms of representation in *The Book of Evidence*, inscribes a polemical relationship of this text with the postmodern ontology thus revealing only a possibility of approaching the recognition of and accessibility to the plurality of worlds. The question remains though, whether this reconciliation with the postmodern, that Freddie possibly achieves in his further narratives of the trilogy *Frames*, is going to be valid in the pursuit of the complete Other.

---

<sup>25</sup> Banville, 1989, 215.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Allen, Graham, 2000: *Intertextuality*, London: Routledge.
- Banville, John, 1989: *The Book of Evidence*, London: Picador, 1989.
- Banville, John, 2001: *Frames Trilogy. The Book of Evidence, Ghosts, Athena*, London: Picador.
- Banville, John, 1995: “Nabokov's Dark Treasures”, in *The New York Review of Books*, 5 Oct.
- Berensmeyer, Ingo, 2006: “Between Canons: John Banville's Reception in National and International Contexts”, *The Current Debate about the Irish Literary Canon*, ed. Helen Thompson, Lewiston, Queenston, Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press.
- Chatman, Seymour, 1978: *Story and Discourse. Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.
- Derrida, Jacques, 2000: “The Law of Genre” In Duff, David (ed.), *Modern Genre Theory*, Harlow: Longman.
- D'Hoker, Elke, 2004: *Visions of Alterity. Representation in the Works of John Banville*, Amsterdam, New York, NY: Rodopi.
- Dostoyevsky, Fyodor, 1998: *Crime and Punishment*, transl. by Jessie Coulson, Oxford University Press.
- Duff, David (ed.), 2000: *Modern Genre Theory*, Harlow: Longman.
- Eco, Umberto, 1979: *The Role of the Reader: Explorations in the Semiotics of Texts*, Bloomington and London, Indiana University Press.
- Genette, Gérard, 1980: *Narrative Discourse. An Essay in Method*, Ithaca and New York: Cornell University Press.
- Fink, Bruce, 1995: *The Lacanian Subject. Between Language and Jouissance*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Kearney, Richard, 2002: *On Stories*, London and New York: Routledge.



- Lacan, Jacques, 2002: *Écrits. A Selection*, translated by Bruce Fink, New York, London: W. W. Norton & Company.
- McHale, Brian, 1996: *Postmodernist Fiction*, London: Routledge.
- McMinn, Joseph, 1999: *The Supreme Fictions of John Banville*, Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press.
- Nabokov, Vladimir, 1959, 1991: *The Annotated Lolita*, London: Penguin Books.
- Pier, John, 2004: *The Dynamics of Narrative Form. Studies in Anglo-American Narratology*, Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter.
- Scaggs, John, 2005: *Crime Fiction. The New Critical Idiom*, London and New York: Routledge.
- Simons, Jon (ed.), 2004: *Contemporary Critical Theorists. From Lacan to Said*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, Ltd.
- Wood, Michael, 1995: "Lolita Revisited" in *New England Review*, vol. 17.
- Žukauskaitė, Audronė, 2001: *Anapus signifikanto principo. Dekonstrukcija, psichoanalizė, ideologijos kritika*, Aidai.

*Author's address*  
 Department of Literary History and Theory  
 Vilnius University  
 Universiteto str. 5, Lt-01513 Vilnius  
 E-mail: jurate.butkute@flf.vu.lt