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THE IMAGE OF MAN IN METAFICTIONAL NOVELS BY JOHN BANVILLE: CELEBRATING THE POWER OF THE IMAGINATION

A b s t r a c t. The essay analyzes how John Banville reconstructs the image of man in his two novels *Kepler* and *Doctor Copernicus* by means of broadly understood metafiction. The Author of the essay discusses the following elements: implied author's and narrator's power of creative imagination and Rheticus's self-consciousness which enables to create fiction and intertextuality of the novel. When analyzing the last aspect of the novels, the Author mentions also Michel Foucault's term, heterotopia. The results of this analysis are twofold. On the one hand, man has got practically unlimited creative imagination on their part. On the other hand, man seems to be lost in the world of unclear ontological boundaries, which proves a paradoxical image of man.

In the critical works approaching *Doctor Copernicus* and *Kepler* as metafictions, that is "fictional writing which self-consciously and systematically draws attention to its status as an artefact in order to pose questions about the relationship between fiction and reality" (2), critics most often comment on these two novels in a fairly general way. For instance, Eve Patten explains that "[m]etafictional and philosophical writing in Ireland continues to be dominated . . . by John Banville (b. 1945). Since the mid1980s, Banville's fiction has continued its analysis of alternative languages and structures of perception" (272). Joseph McMinn also concentrates on language, claiming that it "is largely self-referential and simply cannot contain or explain the world outside itself, this body of work belongs firmly in the international context of postmodernism, both stylistically and philosophically" ("Versions of Banville" 87). This essay aims at presenting a more comprehensive analysis of metafictional elements of Banville's two novels and

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the way in which these elements might contribute to the image of man presented in *Doctor Copernicus* and *Kepler*.

A CELEBRATION OF THE POWER OF THE CREATIVE IMAGINATION

Both novels start with the epigraphs which set some interpretative context. *Doctor Copernicus* opens with an extract from Wallace Stevens' poem "Notes Toward a Supreme Fiction" which reads as follows:

> You must become an ignorant man again
> And see the sun again with an ignorant eye
> And see it clearly in the idea of it.

In *Kepler* the readers may find a verse from Rilke's *Ninth Elegy* which reads "Preise dem Engel die Welt." Certainly, the choice of the epigraphs is not accidental. As McMinn asserts:

> [t]he *Elegies* lament contemporary Man's loss of imaginative hope, and reassert the possibility of recovering spiritual joy through attention to the beauties of the tangible world . . . Stevens' poem, like that by Rilke, appeals for restoration of lost vision . . . ("An Exalted Naming . . ." 25)

The idea stated in the title of this section is seemingly questioned, then, from the very beginning. On the one hand, Banville's novels seem to agree, in a way, with the general thought which appears in both poems, namely that man can lack the imaginative power and, in order to recover the contact with the spiritual, imaginative world, man should start with the tangible one. On the other hand, the novels do not seem to suggest that man has lost the imaginative power altogether. It is just that some representatives of the human race may lack it. Banville's novels do not offer a naïve interpretation of man's history which would suggest that once there used to be a golden age of humanity when people could enjoy the imaginative power and, then, they lost it. What they do seem to imply, instead, is that among the human lot there are some who have at their disposal a particular kind of potential for imaginative thinking which either may be realized or not. This interpretation of man seems to be valid no matter whether one bears in one's mind the 16th or the 20th century.

The style of the novels proves that the imaginative potential of man is quite strong. In both cases the narrator, in a rather masterly fashion, uses either poetic or plain discourse which he applies depending on his needs. That is why the

readers may encounter some passages which read as if they were taken from a realistic novel:

> He had been working for six months on what was to become *Mysterium Cosmographicum*, his first book. His circumstances were easier then. He was still unmarried, had not yet even heard Barbara's name, and was living in Stiftsschule in a room that was cramped and cold, but his own. (*Kepler* 20)

There are also excerpts which certainly sound poetic:

> Now his days darkened. The child's fall had torn a hole in the fabric of things, and through this tiny rent the blackness seeped. Barbara would not be consoled. She took to hiding in shuttered rooms, in cubbyholes, even under the bedclothes, nibbling in private her bit of anguish, making not a sound except for now and then a faint sobbing, like the scratching of claws, that made Kepler's hair stand on end. (*Kepler* 44)

The narrator's ability to diversify the language and apply the poetic discourse leaves little doubt about his creative imagination. What seems interesting, though, is that only to some extent creative imagination of any kind is confirmed on the level of characters. These, one could divide into at least two groups. On the one hand, there are the scientists who, as McMinn explains, "are all dedicated, imaginative formalists whose systematic designs have less to do with the real world than with their author's need for symmetry" ("Versions of Banville . . ." 79). On the other hand, there is the whole "unimaginative lot" who are unimaginative in the sense that they do not sympathize with the theories aiming at changing the understanding of the world. Certainly, some part of the hesitation whether to acknowledge or reject revolutionary ideas may lie also in, for instance, anxiety about religious persecution or just taking the world for granted. In some way, doubt and fear become for Copernicus and, to some extent, also for Kepler a driving force which triggers and helps develop their imaginative power. A lack of the imaginative power on the part of some characters, though, only makes the implied author's one seem much greater. Being outstandingly imaginative themselves, the implied author and the narrator are capable of describing any type of man, the one who has and the one who lacks imagination. In this way, they are able to draw a very intricate picture and show various shades of the power of imagination.

This aspect of *Doctor Copernicus* and *Kepler* is even further complicated by, what seems to be, the narrator's woeful tone. These parts, which the readers may find quite baffling, reveal the narrator's more personal attitude to the presented world (see also McMinn, "Versions of Banville . . ." 84). The extracts in question are, for instance, the following:

> All would be well, O, all would be well! The infinite possibilities of the future awaited him. That was what the snow meant, what the fox said. His young soul swooned, and slowly, O slowly, he seemed to fall upward, into the blue. (*Doctor Copernicus* 25)

And in *Kepler*:

> Despite misgivings he had in his heart expected something large and lavish of Benatek, gold rooms and spontaneous applause, the attention of magnificent serious people, light and space and ease: not this grey, these deformities, the clamour and confusion of their lives, this familiar — O familiar! — disorder. (6)

Curiously enough, the narrators show a certain degree of resemblance to each other in this respect, even though there are many more such intrusions in *Kepler* than in *Doctor Copernicus*. In any event, describing Banville's œuvre, McMinn states that "the characteristic form has been the dramatic: an intense, confessional monologue. Of Banville's ten novels to date, only two, *Doctor Copernicus* and *Kepler*, offer a variation on this dramatic narrative perspective" ("Versions of Banville . . ." 84). Certainly the two novels do not feature confessional monologue and, apart from Rheticus's story, they are not first-person narratives. Still, what they do seem to show is a dramatized narrative perspective.

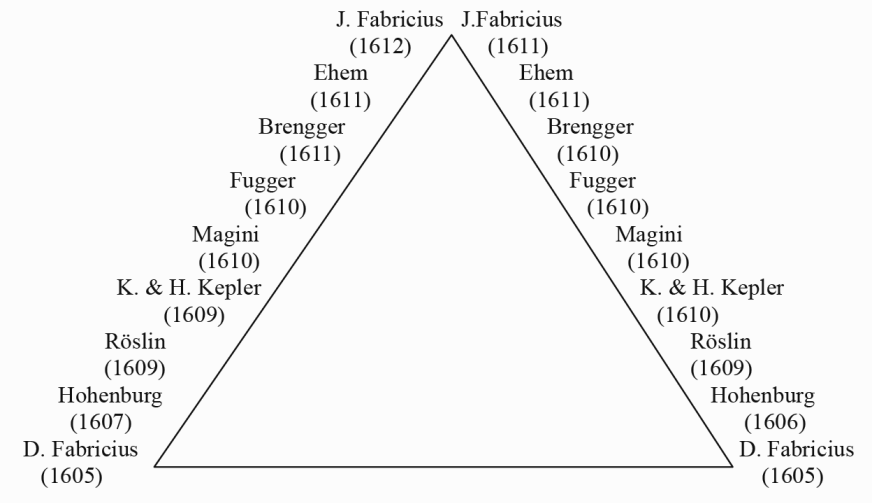
In the excerpts which have already been quoted, the narrator does not seem to reveal his full imaginative power over the presented world and, so to say, he is not really metafictional. There is one passage, though, where he presents a "dramatic narrative perspective" (MCMINN, "Versions of Banville . . .") and is metafictional. The excerpt in question reads as follows:

> O yes, Anna Shillings had opinions of her own, and firm ones at that. Those weeks following Georg's departure constituted the worst time she was ever to know. How she survived that awful period we shall not describe; we draw a veil over the subject, and shall confine ourselves to saying that in those weeks she learned that there are abroad far greater and crueller scoundrels than that concupiscent innkeeper we have spoken of already. (*Doctor Copernicus* 142)

The narrator's overt decision to withhold some information comes as a surprise. Nowhere else in both novels does the narrator become so blunt about his doings. It is true, though, that this excerpt comes from the chapter which is somewhat exceptional in the novel in terms of the narrator's decision to repeat the same passage at the beginning and at the end of the chapter, which seems to prove that the narrator's imaginative power is, in fact, quite extensive.

In *Kepler*, the imaginative power of man is revealed in the arrangement of the letters which appear in the chapter titled "Harmonice Mundi." An attentive reader

will observe that the letters are organized in an extraordinary manner. The first one is dated on Ash Wednesday 1605. Then, the letters appear chronologically up to the date of April 1612. Surprisingly enough, after this date chronology goes backwards so that the last letter is dated on Easter Day 1605, which gives the readers a visible frame of Lent. The addressees seem also to be important. The first and the last letters are addressed to David Fabricius. The middle one, in turn, is addressed to Johannes Fabricius, the eldest son of David. This, rather arbitrary, arrangement is, however, even more complicated by the design which may be presented in the form of a triangle. In this scheme, I give the surname of the addressee of the letter and the year which it is dated.



It seems hardly possible that the above design might be accidental. The narrator's imaginative power enables him to disregard the chronology of the letters and organize them around a very arbitrary pattern. In a metafictional bout of strength, the narrator uses a geometrical shape of equilateral triangle to arrange his material. What, indeed, is quite striking is the realization that unless the readers pay very close attention to the arrangement, they will fail to notice any incongruities in the thematic layer of the text. The letters read as if they were chronologically arranged. One perhaps could also risk an interpretation that this arrangement is an intratextual allusion to Kepler's doings:

> He was demonstrating a theorem out of Euclid . . . and had prepared on the blackboard an equilateral triangle. He took up the big wooden compass, and immediately, as it was contrived to do, the monstrous thing bit him. (*Kepler* 27; my emphasis)

In any event, the narrator seems to be in control of the presented world and the imaginative power which he shows seems to be truly outstanding. In her analysis of *Flaubert's Parrot*, Alison Lee claims that letters may "give the novel an illusion of reality" (3). In *Kepler*, thanks to the letters, this illusion of authenticity is also prevalent. However, the moment one realizes that there is some arbitrary pattern in the arrangement of the letters, it becomes clear that what one is dealing with is fiction. The arrangement of letters also leaves no illusion about man's power of creative imagination, which seems to be truly great.

The last element which should be discussed in this section and which certainly confirms the above conclusions are paratextual elements. Due to their use, it may be difficult to establish a clear-cut division between the implied author, the narrator and the characters. Paratextual devices in *Doctor Copernicus* and *Kepler* can be divided into several groups.

The first one has already been partially discussed. These are the epigraphs and the quotations from other texts which are acknowledged by the implied author in the text by means of italicizing and in the notes. As far as the epigraphs are concerned, these are the quotations from Stevens and Rilke. Curiously enough, they reappear as the character's or the narrator's words. In the case of *Doctor Copernicus*, the words "the makers of supreme fictions" are uttered by the Great Master Albrecht in his discussion with Copernicus. As far as Rilke's words: "Preise dem Engel die Welt . . ." are concerned, they appear in *Kepler* in the English translation as the narrator's words: "Give this world's praise to the angel!" (86; emphasis in the original). It is worth noting that Banville's version does not follow the common translation of the line in question**.** In the anthology translated by A. Poulin, Jr., the verse reads: "Praise the world to the angel . . ." (65). In terms of meaning, the two translations differ considerably. In Rilke's original text, it is the world which obtains the praise. In the translation used in *Kepler*, it is actually the angel who is praised, as if the spiritual world was much more important here. It seems difficult to interpret the meaning of these words in the text. Even for Kepler himself, they seem enigmatic. As the narrator says, Kepler "remembered that vision he had glimpsed in Baron Hoffman's garden, and was again assailed by the mysteriousness of the commonplace. Give this world's praise to the angel! He had only the vaguest notion of what he meant" (86; emphasis in the original). A striking fact is, however, that the narrator translates the line in his own way. Here, the readers may arrive at two opposite conclusions. The words may be understood as once used by the implied author (epigraph) and returning as the words of the character's/narrator's. Alternatively, one could say that the words once said by the character or the narrator are chosen by the implied

author for the epigraph. The second interpretation surely poses some more questions, for example, whether the implied author chooses from Stevens'/Rilke's words or the character's/narrator's ones. It seems impossible to answer this question, except for stating that it is a part of the implied author's game with the readers.

Apart from the epigraphs, there are also quotations which first appear in the text as the characters' words and then once again in the notes at the end of *Doctor Copernicus*. As such they form a kind of a patchwork on page 208. A plausible interpretation of this particular page but also of the other quotations can be summarized in M. Keith Booker's words: "[t]hose anachronistic quotations serve as reminders of the fictionality of Banville's texts, but they also suggest that we consider the relevance of Banville's presentation of Copernicus to the work of more modern philosophers and scientists." The anachronistic quotations come from Henri Pirenne, Søren Kierkegaard, Albert Einstein, Sir Arthur Eddington, Max Planck and, already mentioned, Wallace Stevens. Transparency of the quotations in the novel can be compared to the arrangement of the letters. If the quotations were not italicized, many readers could readily accept the words as just the characters' speech even though some lines can sound a little bit out of place. Booker's interpretation actually may add to the understanding of man in the two novels, suggesting that the philosophical problems of man in the 16th and 17th centuries were similar to the modern ones.

The third group of paratextual elements are the quotations which the implied author incorporates in the text and italicizes but does not acknowledge at the end of the book. In *Doctor Copernicus*, there are at least two such passages. The first reads as follows "Luther had scoffed at Copernicus, calling him the fool who wants to turn the whole science upside down, but Luther should have kept to theology . . ." (170; emphasis in the original). This is a quotation of Luther's actual opinion about Copernicus. As Hartner states, Luther was to use almost exactly these words to refer to the astronomer (418). Another quotation in *Doctor Copernicus* comes from the Bible. The narrator's words "Do thyself no harm! they cried, for we are all here!"(86; emphasis in the original) refer to the verses from King James translation of the Bible "But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here" (16:28). Probably the most interesting case, though, is the quotation which seems to be taken from the Bible and, more precisely, from the Book of Ecclesiastes. The quotation reads: "No day can soothe my wife's yearning, and the word is close to my heart: O vanity . . ." (51; emphasis in the original). I would like to argue that the words: "O vanity . . ." should be understood as a quotation from the Bible and a part of a larger whole,

namely "O vanity of vanities, and all is vanity." One could claim, though, that two words are not sufficient to count as a quotation from the Bible. To validate my interpretation, it seems necessary to take the analysis a step further. The narrator provides the readers with the information that this excerpt comes from Kepler's letter to Mästlin (51). The implied author, in turn, gives Max Caspar's work about Kepler as one of the standard biographies of the scientist which he used while working on the book. It seems no coincidence then that Caspar should note that "[t]he joy in the house was, however, of short duration; after sixty days the child died. 'No day can soothe my wife's yearning and the word is close to my heart: O vanity of vanities, and all is vanity' " (77). In this context, the claim that these are actually the words from the Bible seems to be more justified. There is one more element, though. What the readers can witness here is actually the implied author quoting the words of Caspar quoting Kepler's letter quoting the Bible. These embedded quotations form a very intricate structure of similar versions of the same words. As such, they resemble the general shape of mise-en-abyme. Such a structure expresses the implied author's belief in the textuality of the world, and also of man.

The last group of paratextual devices are the quotations which are not italicized in the text and "not really" acknowledged. The implied author, just as previously the narrator, "draw[s] a veil over the subject" (*Doctor Copernicus* 142) and says that there might be "numerous extracts from Copernicus's own writings which I [the implied author?] have incorporated in my text, and which I do not feel I need to identify . . ." (*Doctor Copernicus* 246). Apart from Copernicus's writings, one could put into this category the foreword by Andreas Osiander. Some of its parts come extremely close to the original. For instance, in the original Osiander writes that ". . . if they provide a calculus consistent with the observations, that alone is enough . . ." This part seems to have been an inspiration for the passage from the novel which reads ". . . it is enough if they provide a calculus which is consistent with the observations . . ." (*Doctor Copernicus* 236).

All in all, the incorporation of quotations in the novels is quite extensive and takes various forms. Certainly, one function which this incorporation may perform is creating indistinct boundaries between the implied author, the narrator and the characters. The quotations, however, point to a crucial for this dissertation issue that man wields imaginative power quite skillfully. Judging by the above analysis, it seems difficult to claim that Banville's texts present man who has lost the imaginative power. True, it may be a complicated task to develop imagination, especially in the context of historical turbulence and because of those for whom

the creative power seems inconvenient but still it seems to be possible. McMinn claims that "[a]lthough the domestic and political world in Banville's novels is usually grotesque and violent, and Man's various quests for meaning and love result in little or no joy, there is a redemptive ideal within every story" ("An Exalted Naming . . ." 20). This "redemptive ideal" seems to be crucial here. If the implied author/the narrator is treated as a model of man, it shows clearly that the redemption of man is actually quite certain.

SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS ABOUT THE ACT OF WRITING

Doctor Copernicus and *Kepler* do not seem consist of many extracts which would draw the readers' attention to the process of writing itself. All the metafictional devices are rather subtle. In this context, somewhat surprising may be the chapter from *Doctor Copernicus* titled "Cantus Mundi," which begins in the following way:

> I, Georg Joachim von Lauchen called Rheticus, will now set down the true account of how Copernicus came to reveal to a world wallowing in a stew of ignorance the secret music of the universe. (159)

The purpose of the chapter, then, becomes clear straightaway. Typically of historiographic metafiction, Rheticus is supposed to be the narrator who gives an alternative version of history probably differing from the one which is officially recognized. The way Rheticus gives his account makes him exceptional as a narrator in the whole novel. His first-person narrative is given in a personal, even confessional tone, which at times might be described as biased. Rheticus describing Copernicus says:

> Doctor Copernicus, who before had represented for me the very spirit incarnate of the New Age, was now revealed as a cautious cold old brute obsessed with appearances and the security of his prebend. Is it possible to be disconcerted to the point of tears? (166)

The immediate question is whether this may be called a metafictional narrator self-conscious about the process of writing or just an intrusive one. Patricia Waugh gives a very simple but comprehensive explanation of the difference between the two kinds of narrators. She divides the narrator's intrusions into two groups:

> such intrusions [moralistic commentary, interpretation and appeals to the reader] do in fact reinforce the connection between the real and the fictional worlds, reinforce the

> reader's sense that one is a continuation of the other. In metafictional texts such intrusions expose the ontological distinctness of the real and the fictional world, expose the literary conventions that disguise this distinctness. (32; emphasis in the original)

In Rheticus's account, intrusions appear in both forms. What seems to be of particular interest here is the second group, that is the intrusions which expose the ontological difference between the real world and the fictional one. Demystifying Copernicus, Rheticus says: "To you, now, he is Copernicus, a titan, remote and unknowable, but to me he was simply Canon Nicolas, preceptor and, yes! friend" (159). Rheticus seems to be a very particular narrative construct since, on the one hand, he operates in the world of Doctor Copernicus, on the other hand, he seems to possess the consciousness of a 20th-century person, which is noticeable in the words "To you, now, he is . . . a titan." The direct reference to the modern addressee and the actual knowledge of how people perceive Copernicus reveal that he has a very modern consciousness. It would obviously be untrue to say that it is only the 20th century that Copernicus was recognized as a scientist. As Gingerich observes, some elements of Copernicus's theory, unlike his name, were mentioned during the lectures even in the 16th century:

> Both the manuscripts and the textbook then move the question "does the earth move?" The discussion proceeds through the standard arguments of the proceeding centuries, and there is no hint that Copernicus had proposed the mobility of the earth. (516)

Still, it seems to be more contemporary times when people actually began to perceive Copernicus in terms of being a titan because, as critics observe, "at the time [even] Kepler and Galileo were both unusual in accepting the Copernican solar system as a real description of the universe, not just a theoretical model for computing purposes" (GINGERICH and MACLACHLAN 112). Nevertheless, what appears to be the most important here is that, Rheticus exposes the fictionality of the world presented in the novel. Otherwise, Rheticus would not be able to take a modern perspective on Copernicus.

Rheticus is also much more capable of drawing attention to the process of writing than the third-person narrator. I have already mentioned the case when the narrator openly admits to withholding information. Still, this act does not seem to refer to the actual writing, that is putting words on paper, which is so widespread within the canon of metafictional novels. In Rheticus's account there are two cases in which he reveals his act of writing fiction. The first one is to do with writing itself and reads "Happiness. Happiness. I write down the word, I stare at it, but it means nothing" (181; emphasis in the original). In the second, the nar-

rator is concerned with the editing of the text: ". . . he was not prepared *to lend his name* to the causing of such disturbance (my italics)" (185). As it seems on the basis of these two excerpts Rheticus the writer and the editor become responsible for the writing of Rheticus's text. Rheticus's account, obviously, does not appear as a separate work of art. It constitutes a part of a larger whole in which it is embedded and for which the implied author is ultimately responsible. This seems again to reveal the fictionality of Rheticus's text and his version of history.

Rheticus's imaginative power helps him create a text which seemingly is real. This appears to give the readers hope that it is actually possible to tell the difference between fact and fiction. This hope is dashed, however, by the realization that Rheticus's version is also fictional and is arranged/edited by the implied author who is in control of the presented world. The epistemological certainty suddenly turns into a doubt about man's capability to differentiate between text and history or between fact and fiction. This certainly illustrates an interesting paradox of human existence presented in Banville's novels: on the one hand, man has a powerful creative imagination at his/her disposal; on the other hand, man is trapped in the limbo between fact and fiction.

INTERTEXTUALITY

Some elements of the intertextual play with the readers have already been mentioned on other occasions. Here, I wish to concentrate on two more examples which in a gripping way add to the confusion of the borders between fact and fiction, and, as a result, undermine the ontological status of man. Towards the end of *Kepler*, the readers encounter a passage which reads as follows:

> Two kinsmen of Tycho Brahe called on him one day at his lodgings in Raben Alley, Holger Rosenkrands the stateman's son and the Norwegian Axel Gyldenstjern. They were on their way to England. Kepler considered. Wotton, King James's ambassador to Prague, had urged him once to come to England. Rosenkrands and Gyldenstjern would be happy to take him with them. Something held him back. (187)

The implied author, though, does not let Kepler join Rosenkrands and Gyldenstjern. It seems unfortunate since, otherwise, Kepler might have met Hamlet himself the moment he reached England. As Booker also observes, "Banville's modified spellings hardly disguise the link to Hamlet, and the result provides an incongruous moment of intertextual comedy during what is a decidedly serious moment in Kepler's life."

Kepler meeting the characters from the Shakespearian drama is not the only example of crossing the boundaries between the worlds of different works of art in Banville's fiction. A similar postmodern crossover happens in *Doctor Copernicus*. In the chapter titled "Magister Ludi," the readers encounter the character of Hermionna Hesse who was "a high spirited, self-willed girl, and although the years had smoothed away much of her abrasiveness, she was still a lively person . . ." (142). The name itself is a very clear allusion to the German author Hemann Hesse. The title "Magister Ludi," in turn, might be taken as a reference to his most acclaimed novel *The Glass Bead Game*. Interestingly, the title of the novel in the previous, first translation was precisely *Magister Ludi*[1]. In Banville's novel, Hesse is, as if, doubly embedded. Most obviously, he appears as the character in *Doctor Copernicus* but also he features in the chapter titled like his own novel. In this way, figuratively, he becomes a character in this story.

This intertextual game of the implied author is symptomatic of postmodernism. Noting a similar occurrence in *Terra Nostra* by Carlos Fuentes, McHale observes that "here . . . we have a case of intertextual boundary violation, transworld identity between characters belonging to different fictional worlds. Disparate, incommensurable worlds literally rub shoulders . . . creating a dense ontological 'knot' " (17-18). In *Doctor Copernicus* and *Kepler*, this is taken a step further, namely these are not only characters from different works of art who appear but also historical figures who, historically speaking, could not meet each other. The world which Banville creates in his books is, using Foucault's term, a heterotopia. According to Foucault, one of the principles of heterotopia is its capability of

> juxtaposing in a single real place several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible. Thus it is that the theater brings onto the rectangle of the stage, one after the other, a whole series of places that are foreign to one another . . . (25; see also MCHALE 18)

In the analysis, what such a structure reveals is precisely that the world is a human construct which is arbitrarily organized. The status of an artifact is made blunt thanks to transgressing the boundaries which theoretically seem unbridgeable. Such an understanding of the world may not leave man untouched. For man

[1] Theodore Ziolkowski, the author of the foreword to the second translation, observes that "The reception of *The Glass Bead Game* in this country has been affected by other factors as well. The book has been available since 1949 under the misleading title *Magister Ludi*. But if it failed to make to make an impact, this was due equally to the translation by Mervyn Savill, which fails to bring out its irony, and to the fluctuations of Hesse's reputation in the United States."

it means that s/he discovers that the world which s/he tries to neatly organize goes awry and turns into a place where many boundaries are violated.

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this essay has been to reconstruct the image of man inherent in metafictional elements of *Doctor Copernicus* and *Kepler*. I have tried to resort to the analysis of the thematic aspects only when I believed this would complement the formal ones so that a holistic image of man could be drawn. The conclusions to which the above analysis seems to lead is that man in Banville's novels has a great imaginative power at his/her disposal. Paradoxically, this power only partially seems to be sufficient in "his various quests" (McMINN, "An Exalted Naming . . ." 20). In the postmodern context, s/he still seems to be a creature entrapped in the world of blurred boundaries as I have tried to prove in the above analysis.

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OBRAZ CZŁOWIEKA W POWIEŚCIACH METAFIKCYJNYCH JOHNA BANVILLE'A: POCHWAŁA SIŁY WYOBRAŹNI

S t r e s z c z e n i e

Artykuł analizuje strategie budowy obrazu człowieka, które John Banville stosuje w swoich dwóch metafikcyjnych powieściach – *Kepler* i *Doctor Copernicus*. Autor eseju kolejno omawia: siłę kreatywnej wyobraźni domniemanego autora i narratora oraz samoświadomość jednej z postaci, Rheticusa, w tworzeniu fikcji oraz intertekstualność powieści. Przy okazji analizy ostatniego aspektu utworów wspomniany zostaje również termin Michela Foucault – *heterotopia*. Wnioski o człowieku, do jakich prowadzi ta analiza, pokazują, że z jednej strony dysponuje on praktycznie nieograniczoną wyobraźnią twórczą. Z drugiej zaś, człowiek jest zagubiony w świecie niewyraźnych granic ontologicznych, co udowadnia dość paradoksalną wizję człowieka.

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Key words: postmodernism, metafiction, creative imagination, intertextuality, heterotopia.

Słowa kluczowe: postmodernizm, metafikcja, wybraźnia twórcza, intertekstualność, heterotopia.