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Bringing to life the ghost of the ideal work: hypotexts, hypertexts and re-crafting the creative writing doctoral thesis

Abstract:

The ideal work that Creative Writing doctoral candidates seek to create can hover like a ghostly presence in their imaginations, as mothers dream the shape of an unborn child, so a birthing metaphor is one way of understanding creativity. Before the creative thesis is fully fleshed, however, it comprises multiple drafts or alternate selves that imprint each other. They can remain in the mind like insubstantial ghosts. The doctoral journey can also be conceptualised as a descent to the classical underworld to discover vital truths. The supervisor is, therefore, in some ways a midwife; a fellow traveller who accompanies the candidate on this dangerous journey; and a craft master who helps the apprentice to shape inchoate material. These ghosts can live in the supervisor's mind too, interfering with fresh perceptions of revised work just as numerous drafts, with associated track changes, are stored in the electronic ether. Concepts of authorship as well as genetic criticism that focus on manuscript development illuminate the thesis writing process, offering parallels to compositional stages, including how both imagination and research work within the heuristic practice-led research loop. Finally, this paper theorises the creative dissertation as a genre itself fashioned from a series of textual selves that can be understood within the framework of Genette's concepts of the hypotext and the hypertext. Since the thesis begins as an unstable product that by definition has not achieved its final form (the hypertext) until examination, each draft becomes a hypotext that embodies traces of the last.

Biographical note:

Professor Jeri Kroll is Dean of Graduate Research at Flinders University and former President of the Australasian Association of Writing Programs. She has published twenty-five titles for adults and young people. Criticism includes *Research Methods in Creative Writing* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013). Recent books are *Workshopping the Heart: New and Selected Poems* (Wakefield Press, 2013) and a verse novel, *Vanishing Point* (Puncher and Wattman, 2015), which was shortlisted in the 2015 Queensland Literary Awards. A MainStage production of *Vanishing Point* occurred at George Washington University in October 2014. The play was subsequently a

winner in the 47th Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival and produced in January 2015 in Ohio.

Keywords:

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1. Introduction

The ideal work that Creative Writing doctoral candidates seek to create can hover like a ghostly presence in their imaginations, so a birthing metaphor is one way of understanding creativity. As a mother dreams the shape of a forthcoming child, so the writer dreams of the finished project, but along the way both need emotional, physical and rational support to ensure that what Paul Valéry calls the ‘fertilised embryo’ (*Cahiers 15:180-81* as quoted in Deppman et al. 2004: 1) of a creative work, with its history of drafts, finds its shape. Hence Creative Writing doctoral supervisors perform complex roles. They function as midwives, helping to usher new artefacts into the world; and they are fellow travellers, accompanying their candidates on an extended imaginative journey, offering encouragement, critical sustenance and honest advice so that each thesis finds its best possible form. As Plato suggests, knowledge and craft – or *epistêmê* and *technê* – follow rules, and although craft and art often seem to be the same activity (*Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/episteme-techne/>; Randall 1963), both struggle in their respective spheres towards attaining their ‘own greatest possible perfection’ (Plato 1963: 22). Supervisors oversee this difficult process of striving to perfect (Brien & Williamson 2009).

In addition, the midwifery metaphor subsumes other academic and artistic identities – master craftsperson, for example – since research doctoral supervisors train apprentices in the discipline, including its proper subject matter, methodologies and practices (Brien, Burr & Webb 2010; Kroll 2013). That training should facilitate the postgraduate’s task of unearthing a viable shape from inchoate material (spurred on by inspirational flashes and considerable effort) that will find its first forms as rough drafts. If the midwife and birth metaphors are apt, however, they are nevertheless inexact, because the thesis takes longer than an elephant to be born. So supervisor and candidate need stamina (Dibble & van Loon 2004), especially for what can be a challenging emotional, psychological, intellectual and creative journey (Brien & Williamson 2009).

Along the road to graduation, however, and before the creative thesis has achieved its fully fleshed shape, it comprises multiple drafts, each one embodying traces of the last. These palimpsests or alternate textual selves can remain in the mind, insubstantial as ghosts that refuse to disappear. The doctoral journey can therefore also be conceptualised as a type of descent to the classical underworld, where individuals travel in order to discover vital truths. For example, in Book XI of Homer’s *Odyssey*, ‘A Gathering of Shades,’ Odysseus follows Circe’s instructions (Kirkê, Book X) to the mouth of Hades where he must seek the blind sage Tiresias who possesses knowledge the hero needs to travel safely home (Fitzgerald, 1963: 180-181). In order to speak, however, the shades must be offered blood. Odysseus explains:

Thus to assuage the nations of the dead
I pledged these rites, then slashed the lamb and ewe,
Letting their black blood stream into the wellpit.

Now the souls gathered, stirring out of Erebos...

(Homer, Fitzgerald trans. 1963: 186).

A medley of ideas are embedded in this episode. They suggest a tortuous journey in order to gain knowledge; they involve appeasement, bargaining, generation, regeneration and resurrection. The shades that are revived by blood importune Odysseus while he stands on Hades' threshold and haunt him afterwards, as versions he remembers from his former life and as what they have become in death.¹

This descent to the borders of the underworld even more strongly recalls the writer's movement into the unconscious. As Margaret Atwood says:

All writers must go... from here to there; all must descend to where the stories are kept; all must take care not to be captured and held immobile by the past. And all must commit acts of larceny, or else of reclamation, depending on how you look at it (Atwood 2002 'Negotiating with the Dead': 178).

Writers must brave darkness and flirt with cultural and personal ghosts in order to take what they need from the past, including stories that belong to history and myth. Whatever they find they must remake as their own. Supporting students on this journey is the supervisor's responsibility. The ghosts of former textual selves – the manuscript's past lives – can exist in the supervisor's mind too, often interfering with fresh perceptions of revised work, just as numerous drafts float in the candidate's consciousness. All of them are stored in perpetuity (until the server dies, or the hardware becomes obsolete, whichever comes first) with associated track changes, unaltered in the half-light of the electronic ether. Yet with a few keystrokes they can be called back to life if facts, phrases or passages need resurrecting. Sometimes the supervisor will suggest this retrieval and source the material; at other times it will be candidates themselves searching for what has been lost as part of the play endemic to the creative process.

The preceding excursion into the nature of the malleable creative product with its transient selves foregrounds this paper's engagement with authorship and, in particular, genetic criticism, which focuses on manuscript development. It has much to add to an understanding of how a thesis takes shape. This paper will therefore address some of genetic criticism's key features as well as Gérard Genette's analysis of literary work in *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* and *Palimpsestes: Literature in the Second Degree*. A key question is what constitutes the equivalent of Genette's hypotext in the Creative Writing doctoral thesis, given that it begins as an unstable series of texts that inevitably will be superseded by others, until a hypertext reaches a temporary 'final' form, into which it must coalesce in order to be worthy of a degree. Theorising the dissertation in this manner has implications for the supervisor-student dynamic, pointing to pedagogical interventions.

2. Authorship, Genetic Criticism and the Creative Thesis

Supervisors edit doctoral theses in whole and in part, but to what degree? Will they focus equally on creative and critical components? Paradoxically, Australian universities generally mandate limited intervention by external editors (paid for by

the student).² Note these guidelines: ‘Professional editing must be limited to formatting, grammar and style and must not alter or improve the substantive content or conceptual organisation of the thesis’ (Flinders University 2015, 30). But judging by anecdotal report at conferences and in essays, most supervisors do structural and linguistic editing in order to facilitate a high-quality dissertation. Understanding the nature of the drafts before them can clarify the tasks required of the master craftsperson and the candidate. Even an experienced author needs guidance, since a PhD thesis is not equivalent to a book manuscript aimed at agents, publishers or indeed the reading public. Within an academic context, the supervisor becomes the first audience for creative and critical texts while the examiners are the second (Kroll 2013).

In addition, candidates as authors have plural identities that separate them from or overlap with commercial and private personae, because ‘a proper name does not have just one signification’ (1991, 1984: 106), as Michel Foucault argues. Institutional environments determine which identities are preeminent, according the author ‘a certain status’ (1991, 1984: 107). Foucault’s unpacking of the ‘author-function’ illuminates how texts are categorised and assessed in academia, where the default position for all universities is that the student owns their intellectual property. This localised environment functions in the same way that the wider culture might: it conditions how we conceptualise authorship.³ Foucault offers this summary:

...(1) the author-function is linked to the juridical and institutional system that encompasses, determines, and articulates the universe of discourses; (3) it is not defined by the spontaneous attribution of a discourse to its producer, but rather by a series of specific and complex operations; (4) it does not refer purely and simply to a real individual, since it can give rise simultaneously to several selves, several subjects – positions that can be occupied by different classes of individuals (Foucault, 1991, 1984: 113).

Creative Writing doctoral candidates are always to some extent apprentices (even experienced practitioners within the academy) and they are individuals with their own needs. Through the research process, they might find themselves taking on alternative subject positions if they engage with theories derived from outside their disciplinary comfort zones. While genetic critics analyse the development of artistic personae or voices, most often posthumously, working on those with set historical identities, supervisors observe candidates change throughout the doctoral journey and therefore are aware of these ‘several selves, several subjects,’ who produce draft manuscripts appropriate to particular stages and, indeed, might be concomitantly working as professional authors on other projects. The discourse that embodies their creativity and research, however, in fact forms a distinct genre – the creative dissertation.

Drafts, notes and all the associated paraphernalia surrounding a manuscript are the stuff of genetic criticism. Its proponents acknowledge Edgar Allan Poe as one of its forebears, specifically his exposé of his working method behind ‘The Raven’ in *The Philosophy of Composition*’ (1846). Genetic criticism flourished in France and Germany before it took hold in the US and the UK, to a large extent because the 19th century surrealist poet, Charles Baudelaire, translated and disseminated Poe’s essay

(Deppman, Ferrer & Groden 2004: 3; Hay 2004: 19). In the twenty-first century, genetic critics have far more evidence to consult, given the prevalence of computers as tools of the trade for artists in all genres that work with text, making multiple permutations of projects available in a variety of electronic and recorded platforms. Genetic criticism is, therefore, a field that examines textual versions of works, whether in published (temporarily ‘final’ form) or drafts in order to opine intentions, trace influences and analyse structures. Although it has roots in structuralism and poststructuralism, ‘it accepts a teleological model of textuality and constantly confronts the question of authorship’ (Deppman, Ferrer & Groden 2004: 2).

This emphasis on individual production and responsibility reflects upon the necessity for doctoral candidates to claim ownership of their work. Note the requirement that all those submitting a thesis for examination must acknowledge that they are indeed the authors who have generated this new knowledge. For example:

I certify that this thesis...to the best of my knowledge and belief... does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text (Flinders University *Research Higher Degree Student Information Manual* 2015: 30. Also see p. 25 for Statement of Authorship).

This declaration abides by the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* (nhmrc.gov.au/publications/synopses/r39syn.htm); in particular, refer to Section 4 Publication and dissemination of research findings and Section 5 Authorship).

This paper’s focus on the author and the textual permutations that lead to an examinable artefact and exegesis also accords with the focus on the writing process that characterises genetic criticism, because ‘its real object is ... not the existing documents but the movement of writing that must be inferred from them’ (Deppman, Ferrer & Groden 2004: 2). Supervisors and students must track this movement in order to help the thesis progress. The simple underlying question is: How did this text come about? If we break up that question, we realise that we are asking about external and internal influences, including technical, practical, economic and commercial decisions, let alone personal and emotional factors. Similar foci ground theories applied to professional writing (including composition) and on a broader scale even theories of creativity. Alamargot and Lebrave’s various studies ally cognitive psychology with genetic criticism. According to them, genetic criticism is a

linguistic-literary discipline [that] reconstructs the activity of a given author by collecting, analysing, and interpreting the various compositional traces held in the archive – sketches, plans, drafts, successive versions, fair copies, proofs, etc. (2010:13).

Cognitive psychology posits the ‘I’ or ‘subject’ as a nexus for exploring what happens during the writing process and the evidence of those processes are, of course, the physical and electronic material available to the genetic critic – and to supervisors.

The current trend to exploit the concept of ‘Poetics’ (Lasky 2013; Hecq 2015) as a way into understanding candidates’ working methods does point to this emphasis on

process in a doctoral project as much as genre or historical background, for example. Thus the archive of notes and drafts takes on added significance, especially in a time-based candidature where an official – and therefore artificial – end date exists, imposed by Commonwealth and institutional policy. On the other hand, the generator of the material in all its forms – the object of study – is present, not absent, and the supervisor (unlike the genetic critic) observes to some degree the candidate's mind in action.

This paper turns now to the notion of the draft itself, as understood by genetic criticism. Jean Bellemin-Noël termed drafts in general '*l'avant-texte*' (Hay 2004: 7), creating this word in 1972 in an effort to cover the variant forms a manuscript could take. In a later essay Bellemin-Noël asserts that 'I am calling "avant-texte" the totality of the material written for any project that was first made public in a specific form' (2004: 31; originally published in 1982). A doctoral dissertation's official forms comprise first the examinable and then the authorised copy after the degree is awarded. When authors allow exposure through open access, their work is 'made public.' But they can also embargo it, wishing to revise further in accordance with examiners' feedback intended to facilitate publication or performance, which is a type of formative assessment⁴ (see Holbrook, Bourke, Lovat and Fairbairn 2008 and Webb, Brien and Burr 2012). Keeping an archive of previous drafts, notes and deleted sections might provide suitable material to guide those revisions. During candidature supervisors can clarify that even excellent passages might not fit this particular project, but can be kept for future manuscripts or relegated to appendices. In sum, a creative doctorate awarded does not signify a final endpoint because either creative or critical components can be resurrected, finding new life in alternate forms.⁵

3. Genetic Criticism: Key Features

Pierre De Biasi and Ingrid Wassenaar's 1996 essay, 'What is a Literary Draft? Toward a Functional Typology of Genetic Documentation,' facilitates a conceptualisation of the doctoral candidate as critic, writer and editor. This taxonomy of writing processes outlines four stages: 'precompositional, compositional, prepublication, and publication' (1996: 31). Each stage is also analysed in terms of operations and functions. In fact, the overlap they note between phases (1996: 32) accords with the overarching concept of the practice-lead research loop in its various forms as discussed in the literature on Creative Writing research, where progression can be followed by regression – what they describe as 'link[s] in a chain of modifications' (1996: 33). These 'links' and 'modifications' can be traced in text variants and reported as completed in University documents that monitor candidature progress (periodic reviews and milestones). For example, Confirmation of Candidature proposals, draft chapters and final thesis versions provide physical proof of a lengthy process: 'a crystallization of a primitive preproject to the publication of the printed work [or authorised copy in the case of doctoral theses]' (De Biasi & Wassenaar 2004: 33). As mentioned previously, this cycle does not necessarily finish with graduation, since the work in its various iterations can be resurrected as the candidate sees fit for public dissemination.

A closer examination of phases in De Biasi's and Wassenaar's typology demonstrates how attention to draft stages illuminates the forces at work in doctoral projects, since they comprise the candidate 'text laboratory' (2004: 39). Both 'endogenetic' and 'exogenetic' phases are present and overlap exists between them. The former term identifies the imaginative processes working on 'pre-textual material' in 'simple reformulation[s]' (2004: 43). This is where original composition occurs and recalls the 'brainstorming' favoured in writing classes. Candidates might report the output from similar processes or they might be discussed in meetings. The latter term, 'exogenetic,' involves the mind dealing with external information of various kinds (both printed and aural), which take a written form. This is what supervisors in the final analysis need to see in order to verify that progress is being made. Specifically, 'exogenetics designates any writing process devoted to research, selection, and incorporation, focused on information stemming from a source exterior to the writing' (De Biasi & Wassenaar 2004: 43-44).

The basic primary marker in a beginning candidature is the Literature Review that demonstrates the depth and breadth of the research as well as the fact that a viable project plan exists. In the final analysis, any endogenetic process needs to become exogenetic in order for written drafts to result, through what De Biasi and Wassenaar call 'textualization' (2004: 46). Depending on the project, the alteration between research activity, imaginative cogitation and creative production in the heuristic practice-led research loop will vary, especially if the project itself raises unforeseen research questions. Candidates discover their own working rhythms and supervisors can advise as to when initiating new stages might be valuable. Understanding De Biasi and Wassenaar's 'seven major stages constituting the *avant-texte* ...which outline a chain of "partial processes"' (2004: 38) might in particular support those supervisors who are not themselves practitioners. Creative production is not necessarily linear.

A word here about Program and Process Writing, which appears as a concept in both genetic criticism and professional writing (including composition) criticism, according to Alamargot and Lebrave (2010). These approaches often exploit cognitive psychology theory with its focus on the subject that writes. Program Writing involves a "strongly prospective and controlled character"...with "a compositional mechanism" requiring a succession of preparatory phases that remain identical for a given author' (Alamargot & Lebrave 2010: 14). Nevertheless, genetic critics admit that authors will also make use of Process Writing at some stage, where composition can be 'triggered by an initial phase – the famous *incipit* – which emerges from a sudden jolt of consciousness' (as quoted by Alamargot & Lebrave 2010: 14-15 from Hay 2002: 74-74). Process Writing usually involves 'a succession of writing and revision phases until the author arrives at a stabilized manuscript' (Alamargot & Lebrave: 14). The successive and at times frustrating or playful nature of the phases of creative composition differs from the more straightforward construction of a critical discourse, especially one that does not have the pressure of grounding a creative artefact.

In a Creative Writing doctorate, as noted, both processes will come into play. Some candidates will favour a developed plan initially and begin with research; others will focus on generating ideas for the creative project. At some point the switch to the

other method will be necessary to generate or refine research questions and to drive the project forward. Each process will need to produce suitable drafts for supervisors to assess. Whatever alteration between phases students establish during the doctoral journey, the ultimate goal is to move towards a finished artefact within the temporal restrictions of candidature. In sum, the quality and refinement of drafts at crucial stages will indicate whether that goal can reasonably be achieved.

4. Genette's Typologies: Hypotext and Hypertext

In *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree* (1997), Gérard Genette unpacked the complex relationship between past and present literary texts. His analysis applies to revised complete works that already have a public profile (as diverse as Montaigne's *Essays*, the novels of John Fowles or W H Auden's poetic oeuvre) as well as to classical or contemporary reinterpretations of the structure, language or spirit of seminal works. Genette takes Homer's *Odyssey* as one such literary benchmark that gave rise, for example, to Virgil's *Aeneid* and to James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1997: 1-10). According to Genette, the base concept is 'transtextuality', which underpins his concept of poetics: '...*transtextuality*, or the textual transcendence of the text, which I have already defined roughly as "all that sets the text in a relationship, whether obvious or concealed, with other texts"' (1997: 1). He enumerates five types and, although acknowledging the work of Julia Kristeva, who coined the term *intertextuality*, he sharpens it by explaining it 'as a relationship of copresence between two texts or among several texts: that is to say, eidetically and typically as the actual presence of one text within another' (1997: 1-2). This definition applies equally to a parody, a rewriting, a writing back or a revised draft within a doctoral dissertation.

Key definitions here include 'hypertext' and 'hypotext' – the fourth type of transtextuality:

It is therefore this fourth type that I now rebaptize *hypertextuality*. By hypertextuality I mean any relationship uniting a text B (which I shall call the *hypertext*) to an earlier text A (I shall, of course, call it the *hypotext*), upon which it is grafted in a manner that is not that of commentary' (5).

Genette acknowledges that Louis Marin also formulated a similar typology, but called it *architect* (1997: 429). Nevertheless, it 'was meant to designate "the primary text of all possible discourse, its 'origin,' and its foundation"' (429).⁶

In the context of a time-based candidature, text B or the *hypertext* can be seen as the 'final' authorised dissertation copy, the one submitted to the library and/or uploaded to the digital archive after confirmation of award of the degree. In my theorisation, Text A is not equivalent then to one originary or seminal complete work, but rather conceptualised as a multiplicity of text As (originating texts and foundations): draft chapters, partial theses versions and full rough drafts and revised drafts of the whole – the *hypotext* – each version of which will be superseded by another until the examination process finishes. To summarise, text B, the hypertext, is 'a text in the second degree...a text derived from another pre-existent text' (1997: 5) or texts.

It is noteworthy here that it is common practice for postgraduates to analyse exemplary texts and/or or use them as case studies to ground doctoral creative artefacts; those exemplars also must be designated hypotexts, whether the candidate pays homage to, parodies, updates or critiques the original. Pointing out similarities and variations between the final text B, the hypertext, and these hypotexts written by other authors forms part of the thesis argument, just as candidates might reveal the challenges and theoretical responses to what they discover during research (and which is embedded in drafts). In sum, they generate original hypotexts (that are transformed in order to be incorporated into a hypertext – the examinable thesis) and usually study hypotexts by others; these dynamic operations condition the process of the doctoral journey. Although Genette's stated purpose in *Palimpsests* is to select the most obvious 'massively hypertextual' (1997: x) among the 'five types of transtextual relationships' (1997: 1) that best illustrate his theory – that is, parodic or satiric works – nevertheless, as this paper argues, his typology also applies to stages in a doctoral dissertation. Conceptualising those various incarnations with the help of Genette's analyses, we can see how each draft leads on to the next, eventually being stitched together (in what might be only a temporary rapprochement) to produce an examinable whole.

One other aspect of the relationship between hypotext and hypertext needs elucidating. It can be approached by introducing the concept of paratext, as analysed by Genette in *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* (1987, 1997) and *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree* (1982, 1997). Paratexts are any and all of the following:

a title, a subtitle, intertitles; prefaces, postfaces, notices, forewords, etc.:
marginal, infrapaginal, terminal notes; epigraphs; illustrations; blurbs,
book covers, dust jackets, and many other kinds of secondary signals,
whether allographic or autographic (1997, 1982: 3).

Paratexts contextualise, they speak to readers of all types, sometimes simply by drawing attention to the 'generic *contract* (or *pact*)' (1997, 1982: 3) when a title is followed by the words: *A Novel*, or a *New and Selected Poems*. In a similar manner, exegeses presented to examiners as separately bound entities or as individual sections of a dissertation usually have their own titles, highlighting their explanatory nature. They address examiners, intending to emphasise purpose and contribution to knowledge, guiding how the work as a whole should be received and consumed (Genette 1997, 1982: 1, 2-3).

Involved in transtextuality is the notion of perception, the necessity of readers (and therefore examiners) to comprehend the allusions, echoes and variations embedded in hypertexts. Michael Riffaterre states that "the intertext...is the perception, by the reader, of the relationship between a work and others that have either preceded or followed it" (Genette 1997: 2). This statement suggests that astute readers perceive these relationships and thus mediate between works, engendering meaning on multiple levels. The exegesis or critical essay functions in this way, as paratext (or second type of transtextuality), one that illuminates a text by acting as intermediary between hypotexts and hypertext, ensuring that the first reader, the supervisor, and

the second readers, the examiners, grasp the nature of the literary complex that the candidate has constructed. Gerald Prince's summary of Genette's theory in fact crystallises the process that occurs between drafts – hypotext and hypertext – which 'reread and rewrite one another [in a type of] transtextual perfusion' (1997: ix), contributing to the vitality of the organic entity that is the doctoral dissertation.

5. Conclusion: Talking to Ghostly Selves

The ghosts of past textual lives can endure in both supervisor's and candidate's mind, either contextualising or interfering with fresh perceptions of work.⁷ A comment such as 'This is improved from the last draft' or 'Didn't I mention revising that bit?' demonstrate positive pedagogical interventions, providing evidence of what might be called the nitty gritty of editing. While supervisors read they endeavour to hold the ideal of an integrated and linguistically accomplished thesis – a hypertext – in their minds in the way that students might. Indeed, discussing what the above comments mean within the environment of supervisory meetings can model how important it is to maintain that picture of extended critical and creative narratives. In addition, those supervisors who are also practitioners might recall the personal experience of having flashbacks to lines and passages that have sent them to mine their own drafts or hypotexts. They sometimes discover that ghosts have more potency than the overly refined latest version. Yet within the context of a doctorate, the desire for potency and originality needs to be balanced with an artefact whose daring does not confuse or alienate examiners. If the 'overworking' that can accompany the creative process has occurred then it can be analysed in supervisory meetings, whether it has resulted from authorial anxiety or risk aversion. Postgraduates must learn, therefore, to recognise what stage drafts – the hypotexts – have reached and how much more might need to be done to complete (if not perfect) the project.

The visual arts offer instructive parallels here, both in terms of how fiction depicts artists and in their own right as practitioners. It takes Lily Brett, the painter in Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*, the entire novel to discover how to finish her painting. In the final analysis, what she needs to balance it is only one stroke of her brush, even if her 'vision' (1977: 1224) is not perfect, her picture remaining an 'attempt at something' (1977: 224). Renaissance masters such as Da Vinci, printmakers such as William Blake as well as twentieth-century greats such as Picasso (among countless others) described projects in notebooks, sketched, drafted sections of paintings, completed multiple versions of major works or used different media. They might paint over sections of canvas or in fact reuse them (creating palimpsests). That is the fine arts' form of 'rereading' and 'rewriting.' Museums and private collections operate as posterity's archive, preserving visual art hypotexts not only of key figures but also of their influences. In similar ways, libraries acquire the letters, papers, notebooks and manuscript versions of major authors – the hunting ground of genetic critics.

Creative Writing doctoral candidates, however, must create their own databanks. Notes on exemplary case studies, marked-up hard copy or track changes on electronic versions document what needs to be done and why, providing evidence of the thought

processes of candidate and supervisor. This archive reveals postgraduates talking to themselves and others (in the form of annotations, autograph corrections, etc.) and conserves the dynamics of intellectual debate. When similar problems arise, either in the thesis at hand or in future work, postgraduates can revisit this idea repository. Marginalia and palimpsestuous drafts preserve the trajectory of the writing process just as genetic criticism's typologies illuminate its stages. Computer drafts facilitate the resurrection of discarded material that might fruitfully be rewritten.

Finally, it must be acknowledged that the above analysis of the doctoral dissertation's former textual selves can apply to drafts with and without a public profile. Additional permutations exist in the form of book chapters, journal articles, creative extracts in literary magazines in print or online, and indeed published books – all of which possibilities exist during candidature. The pressure to publish before graduation to enhance job prospects and to increase a university's profile encourages postgraduates to seek this type of recognition – often called 'publishing as you go'. Nevertheless, these permutations must be integrated into a coherent entity for the purposes of examination and all universities demand that previous publication be acknowledged. Occasionally examiners will receive a novel in the form of a trade book although some universities require a manuscript version. A thesis that includes information about literary awards and that acknowledges prior publication (including a publisher's or journal's name) can be understood as a paratext that might possibly affect examiners (Kroll & Webb 2012).

These paratexts and hypotexts therefore speak to Genette's analysis of transtextuality, the 'author function' as theorised by Foucault and authorial intentionality, as theorised by genetic critics; in all cases institutional and cultural environments influence perception. Indeed, post-graduation the hypertext might be reborn. In the first instance, that process is less about adaptation (although that possibility exists too) than about realisation. Put simply, a novel might be accepted after a candidate graduates, undergo structural edits and become a more perfect version of itself. The auxiliary verb 'might' in that above phrase is instructive, indicating lack of certainty, and not just about this hypothetical novel finding a home. A publisher might also have a commercial agenda and insist on transforming the fiction into a popular version. For the purposes of graduating, nevertheless, that novel does not belong only to the genre of fiction, but also to that of the creative dissertation. To summarise, the supervisor's goal is to help to stabilise a series of unstable hypotexts – both in terms of their inner coherence and in terms of the relationships between them – until they lose their ghostliness, materialising into an examinable hypertext. The candidate collaborates in the process of producing a coherent critical reflection and an aesthetically competent artistic product, all the while holding in their minds the ideal vision that pushes towards realisation.

Endnotes

¹These shades are only temporarily resurrected, but for an interlude they remember their pasts and Tiresias can still foretell the future. Chance seems to dictate what ghosts – including Odysseus' mother – manage to drink blood. Some request specific favours, as the hero's shipmate, Elpênor, who pleads for proper burial. So these ghosts can affect the living's behaviour.

²As yet no standard rules exist for the use by a publisher of an in-house or external editor, if a doctoral manuscript has been accepted for publication before award of the degree. It could be argued that these types of external editors are equivalent to the peer reviewers of journals who might suggest structural changes in papers, a practice common in hard-science disciplines.

³This institutional environment also conditions how candidates and staff members conceptualise co-authorship. See *The Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* (nhmrc.gov.au/publications/synopses/r39syn.htm); in particular, refer to Section 4 Publication and dissemination of research findings and Section 5 Authorship).

⁴Mandatory changes for award of the degree belong to the summative assessment category.

⁵Kate Grenville's University of Technology, Sydney (UTS) Doctor of Creative Arts (2006) was transformed into the award-winning novel, *The Secret River* (2005 – its most recent incarnation is as a 2015 Australian Broadcasting Corporation TV mini-series). Grenville's exegesis appeared as *Searching for the Secret River* (2006). Amy T Matthews, a lecturer at Flinders University, published her PhD novel as *End of the Night Girl* (2011) and the exegesis as *Navigating the Kingdom of Night* (2013).

⁶With characteristic wit, Genette believes the time has come for 'some High Commissioner of the Republic of Letters' who could 'enforce a coherent and consistent terminology' (1997: 429).

⁷Some supervisors and students prefer to hold an Associate Supervisor in the wings for a fresh reading of the whole near completion. Peer to peer mentoring and reading groups can also contribute additional marginalia and influence hypotextual versions.

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