

Summary of Proposed Research Program for Doctor of Philosophy

Title

Textual Lives: (Re)Writing the Desiring Self (f)

Abstract

This thesis will address the question: how can a woman write desire? The purpose of the project is to write a desiring self that is braided or woven of many strands, drawn from personal and family stories, from textual selves created by other women writers, and from theoretical/critical discourses on desire and subjectivity. These strands will be of differing weight, texture and colour, combining in a narrative that is a mix of genres, a hybrid creation in which creative-writing and research narratives are integrated in one volume. The project of writing a desiring self will make connections between various forms of written desire and, in doing so, will shed light on the potential multiplicity of ways in which women can become desiring beings. In this way it will contribute to new knowledge in the fields of feminist studies, autoethnography and autobiography.

The central hypothesis of the creative project is that the self is a palimpsest, a text incompletely erased and re-inscribed by others. This is both a handicap and an opportunity, for a palimpsest can be re-written. The searcher reads through the inscriptions of others to find traces of what is lost. The searcher then begins to rewrite the self through reading texts of other lives, to discern how the desiring self is expressed in other palimpsestic narratives.

I will explore the concept that desire moves in the space or interface between two orders of reality, and, in this movement, exchanges happen and differences multiply. These orders appear to be binary and hierarchical, and are seen as the real/original/regular/authorised order of culture and social life, and the fictional/surrogate/irregular/unofficial order. Jacques Lacan and others have explained desire as founded in lack and loss that begin before birth in sexual differentiation and culminate in the subject's entry into language (Silverman 149-65). This construction has been questioned by many theorists; I am particularly interested in the counter-discourse of Giles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, who challenge the Platonic paradigm of desire as the drive to acquire what we lack, the real object we can only fantasise about (25), and conceive of desire as an impersonal productive force, a flow of positive difference and becoming (Colebrook 99). Their concept of the simulacrum, different from that of Jean Baudrillard, offers a way of seeing the artefacts of desire, created in the movement between the real and the imaginary, as a kind of hyper real, an order of creation that is more real than the real world within which it is produced (Masumi 2).

The world of court women and men in Heian Japanese literature is the starting point for my enquiry into the different ways the desiring female self has been expressed in other texts. The inner lives of women within a highly structured and regulated world are read in the light of Michel Foucault's theory of power and resistance, as well as Michel de Certeau's concept of how colonised individuals use tactics of disguise and evasion to survive and find meanings other than the allowed ones. Heian women's lives are also read in terms of the Japanese paired concepts of *omote* and *ura*, the two sides of everything, outer and inner, surface and hidden (Doi). The space between is the space in which desire can play.

Women's textual writings of the desiring self from other periods and cultures will be referred to for comparison, but I will focus on Heian literature, and will look at modern texts that have been inspired by it. I have chosen Heian literature because it is seminal to my enquiry in its writing of the hidden desires of women in a patriarchal culture, in its creation of a domain in which women writers and readers have developed their own genres and script, and in the simulation of a "realer than real"

world in which surfaces that may appear to be stylised and exchangeable—surrogates for an ideal that is unattainable—actually conceal a play of differences that is positive, subversive, and rich in meaning.

Objectives

The central research question is: how to connect with and construct in writing a desiring female self in a world where the dominant cultural and theoretical discourses of desire and of subjectivity have been defined and written by men? My enquiry will be structured by the following objectives:

1. To write a narrative of desire that is braided from the strands of three sorts of reading—autobiographical, autoethnographical and theoretical—and in so doing, to rewrite the self (f).
2. To connect and compare, through these readings, the different ways in which desire and selfhood have been written and interpreted.
3. To test, through reading and rewriting the self, the concept of the self as a palimpsest, a text that has been rewritten by others and can be rewritten again by the desiring self.
4. To test, through reading and rewriting the self, the concept of desire as a positive and productive force that, in moving between what are perceived as the binary orders of a real world of stable identities and a symbolic world of surrogates or copies, creates simulacra that are “realer than real.”

The thesis formed by these objectives is a creative-production thesis, the two parts of which (creative production and exegesis) will take the form of a single narrative that integrates the two parts in one written text.

Background

The literature review for this project will cover three kinds of discourse: autobiographical and biographical stories of my life and my family’s lives; women’s writing in several genres, including women being written as well as women writing; and cultural and literary theory and interpretation. The theoretical topics I will explore in the context of women’s writing include: Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of the simulacrum against that of Baudrillard; Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of desire against the dominant Western one as expounded by Sigmund Freud and Lacan; the Japanese concept of the ambivalence of reality and subjectivity seen through the dual filters of *omote* and *ura*; the tactics of evasion and disguise within cultural patterns of power and resistance; and women’s adaptation of dominant forms of material culture to write subjectivity and desire.

Reality, its surrogates and the hyper real

It isn’t nice not to be writing a book. It isn’t nice not to have a more real world than the real world we inhabit.

A.S. Byatt. *Scribbling*. ABC TV. Sydney. 10 April 2005

A.S. Byatt, speaking of her desire to create more fictional worlds, claims that the imaginary world created by the author is more real than the world she or he inhabits; by implication, this is also true for the reader who “inhabits” the imaginary world of the book. The claim can be extended to any literary or artistic work, since all representation involves not only imitation, but invention, in varying degrees. As I read the statement, this does not construe fiction merely as an escape into an imaginary world. There are many reasons why a fictional world can be more satisfying than the world we inhabit, and escapism is only one of them. The permeable boundaries and points of exchange between fiction and reality are lines of enquiry into the desiring self that this project will pursue.

Some postmodern theorists question the order of reality, of a being or substance to which

abstraction refers, and suggest that we now live in a world of simulation, in which there is no origin, no territory to which the map refers (Baudrillard). Rather than the territory engendering the map, Baudrillard argues, the map engenders the territory; the real exists only in vestiges, “whose shreds are slowly rotting across the map” (1). Behind Baudrillard stands Lacan, who re-reads Freud’s writings in the light of Ferdinand de Saussure’s and Claude Lévi-Strauss’s interpretations of semiotics. Lacan sees the subject as defined in lack and loss, through the stages of sexual reproduction, birth, separation from the mother, sexualisation as male or female, and the final and radical alienation from the real with the infant’s entry into the symbolic order of language (Silverman 149-64). Within the symbolic order the subject is cut off from the real through language, which mediates all other sources of signifiers (164-65).

Lacan’s construction of the desiring subject as constituted in lack and loss is in part relevant to my project, and will be tested against readings of the narratives of court women of the mid-Heian period of Japan (late tenth through the eleventh centuries AD). *The Tale of Genji*, a long prose narrative, depicts a highly structured, elegant society where the erotic pursuits of the hero (and his lesser types) are driven by the search for surrogates for an ideal lost love. Surrogacy is the mechanism by which this society works, for it is the foundation of the Fujiwara hegemony, which operates by marrying daughters to the emperor and wielding power through him as surrogate ruler. Women have only surrogate subjectivity defined by rank, marriage, and conformity to codes of appearance and behaviour. This is a highly constructed world, where surface appearance constitutes the beautiful, the desirable and the worthy subject.

Takeo Doi, in his study of the relationship of the Japanese individual to society, *The Anatomy of Self*, explains a pervasive concept that underlies Japanese culture: the opposite yet complementary ideas of *omote* and *ura*, “the two sides of everything,” which, in classical Japanese, were synonymous with *kao* (face) and *kokoro* (mind, heart) (23-24). He points out that, though the face usually expresses the mind, it can also hide it; so *omote* or face both expresses and conceals *ura* or mind (26). The relationship is not binary and divisive, but symbiotic and mutually constitutive (152). The outer both discloses and protects the inner. Ambivalence is a way of life. In Heian court life, it follows that the construction of appearance and reality is not a mechanistic one where the surface is simply an abstract representation of the qualities that are valorised in that society, concealing, as Baudrillard claims is the case in the postmodern world, a defunct or absent reality. Rather, outer reality is both an outward and visible expression of, and a mask for, inner heart/mind. It is what allows the individual to relate to others while having an inner life that is at least partly hidden.

Lacan, Freud et al. tell only part of the story about desire and subjectivity, but have made it the whole story, for all cultures and times. I have critiqued their interpretation of the dominant Western discourse of desire and subjectivity in my MCA exegesis (“Deserting”). In this project I will test again the Lacanian construction against women’s writing of desire, and seek to qualify it with an understanding of desire inspired by the work of Deleuze and Guattari: that desire is a force that produces life in all its different forms, and is immanent, productive, impersonal and asocial (*Anti-Oedipus* 116). Society seeks to regulate desire, to control its force (23). Part of this regulation has been the attempt to extinguish woman as a desiring subject. So, for instance, women in Heian Japan are objects of desire that are dressed to conceal and suppress their individuality and embodied selves, and manipulated to remain hidden from men’s eyes except in strictly defined circumstances. Yet, beneath the mask, there is an inner life that can be, variously, passionate, playful, jealous, vengeful, power-seeking, resistant, nostalgic, lamenting, world-weary, desirous of enlightenment. Is the mask more real

than the inner life it hides? Certainly it does not hide absence, as Baudrillard has told us contemporary culture does. Must we have only two ways of seeing, realistic and disillusioned, or fictional and escapist? Is there, as Brian Massumi argues, a third way—a way of seeing to which Deleuze and Guattari, in a theory of simulation that emerges from the corpus of their writing, open the door (1)? Like de Certeau, they see mimicry as strategic: “[t]here is a power inherent in the false; the positive power of ruse, the power to gain a strategic advantage by masking one’s life force” (Massumi 2). Deleuze and Guattari do not, according to Massumi, address the question of “whether simulation replaces a real that did indeed exist, or if simulation is all there has ever been. Deleuze and Guattari say yes to both. The alternative is a false one because simulation is a process that produces the real, or more precisely, more real (a more-than-real) on the basis of the real” (2). In a regular world of apparently stable identities or territories, simulation finds points of departure to create new forms that are more real than the real (2). “Reality is nothing but a well-tempered harmony of simulation” (3). There are two modes of simulation, the regular, normal world of surface resemblances, and the world of art, that multiplies potentials (4). Reproving Baudrillard for whining (“The work of Baudrillard is one long lament.”), for his nostalgia for the old reality that was, in fact, made up of simulacra, Massumi offers us Deleuze’s and Guattari’s liberating vision that celebrates the simulacrum as “a proliferating play of differences and galactic distances” and that opens the possibility of “becoming realer than real” (5).

What is the relevance of this for my quest for a desiring female self? It is that not only can the searcher find, in the literature of cloistered women like those of the Heian court, abundant and fertile play of differences within a rigid social system, but that she will expect to find similar patterns in the literature of other women who have lived and written within patriarchal cultures. And, having seen with their eyes, freed from bondage to patriarchal patterns, she will be encouraged, like the replicant in *Blade Runner*, to seek to live a full life on her own terms, to unmask the hidden and assume her full difference, to create a “more real than real” world of her own through art.

Resistance to power through evasion and disguise

De Certeau describes the individual in social life as the locus of relations that determine it; he qualifies this by saying that the individual is neither passive nor docile in his or her culture, but rather practises everyday life by “*poaching* in countless ways on the property of others” (xii). Though he is describing contemporary culture, he sees such practices as an evolution of “the age-old ruses of fishes and insects that disguise or transform themselves in order to survive” (xi). Individuals use the products of a dominant economic order in subversive ways that are not intended; for instance, the culture imposed by the Spanish colonisers on the indigenous Indians was ambiguously used. The apparently submissive natives did not reject or alter the rituals, representations and laws of the conquerors, but they used them “with respect to ends and references foreign to the system they had no choice but to accept” (xiii). The colonised people, unable to challenge the power of their conquerors, “escaped it without leaving it” (xiii). In similar ways, the narratives, both fictional and confessional, of Heian court women show the ambiguity of the female desiring self as *other* within the culture of men, outwardly conforming to rituals, representations and rules, yet inwardly resisting and escaping in subtle ways. One of these ways, their reading and writing of *monogatari* and poetic diaries, became, paradoxically, a flowering of cultural life that has outshone and outlived the works and lives of the powerful men who ruled their lives.

Foucault tells us that “[w]here there is power, there is resistance” (95), that power is relational, and that there is a plurality of resistances that are “inscribed [in power] as an irreducible opposite”

(96). This, too, helps us to understand how the female desiring self can survive, have an inner life, in a culture where desire is defined by men. It is simplistic to say that, in Heian women's writing, only men desire; indeed, though this was a hierarchical polygamous society, women had, in some ways, more sexual freedom and more freedom in their practice of creative arts such as poetry, prose fiction and music than women in most Western cultures have been able to expect until quite recently. The remarkable thing about Heian literature is that not only were women responsible for its flowering, but their writings "are among the earliest examples of the attempt by women living in a male-dominated society to define the self in textual terms" (Bowring, "Female Hand" 56).

Foucault throws light on how sexual desire may be differently mediated in some non-Western cultures in his incidental remarks on their *ars erotica*, where "pleasure is not considered in relation to an absolute law of the permitted and the forbidden, nor by reference to a criterion of utility, but first and foremost in relation to itself" (57). Knowledge of erotic arts is kept secret, not for fear of infamy, but because "it would lose its effectiveness and its virtue by being divulged" (57). Roland Barthes has said that the erotic derives from the space "between what contains and what is contained, between what covers and what is covered" (qtd. in Brownstein 85). The space between the outside and the inside, the *omote* and the *ura*, is the space in the texts that I will explore. Heian men found the imagining of women's hidden lives, of which their voluminous clothing, uncut hair and blackened teeth were simulacra, intensely erotic, and the most erotic narrative moments come in the space or the gap between appearance and imagined reality, in the stolen glimpse of a woman through a gap in a blind, a hole in a hedge, or behind a fan carelessly held askew. One imagines that for the women who were aware of these moments, one possible response, apart from fear, would be a desiring one (albeit passive), and even that careless moments of self-display could be intentional; this is borne out by many textual moments in Heian literature.

The vernacular of women writers

Rather than being artefacts masking an absence of reality, or bearing no relation to any reality whatever, as Baudrillard describes the simulacra of the contemporary world, the texts of Heian Japan dramatise a culture where the images and surfaces of court life conceal and protect, as well as express a rich inner life that both complies with and resists the dominant codes of behaviour. One of the strategies for sustaining inner life practised by women living in this culture is the reading, writing and copying of *monogatari* (works of prose fiction) and poetic diaries, all in the vernacular *kana* or phonetic script, derived from Chinese characters, as distinct from *kanbun*, the official script of men, government and scholarship. Richard Okada points out that this mode of writing was gendered feminine and referred to as *onna-de*, "woman's hand," although men had developed it and continued to use it (11). Heian court women's literature shows us women living surrogate lives as simulacra of desire. The texts in which their lives are created are written in surrogate script developed from official male script. Yet "they have come to be regarded as a great (if not the greatest) flowering of Japanese culture" (Okada 23). It seems we have a circular relationship between fiction and reality, for fiction is a surrogate for a reality that is itself illusory or fictionally constructed, and the fiction becomes more real than the reality within which it is created.

The searcher turns to her own life story, to patterns of desire and loss in her own life, and those of her parents and grandparents; she reads again her own story, told and re-told, and her mother's and grandfather's stories. She reads between the lines, looking for traces she has missed or mis-read, for the untold stories that live in the silences of memory and the spaces of forgetting. She pulls apart the strands, feels their different textures, fingers them into bundles and sorts them, remembering how,

when she was a small child, she grew tired of having her long hair brushed and plaited, and cut off one of her plaits. Afterwards, she always longed for that long, thick uncut hair, like that of the Heian court ladies, but it never grew back.

Significance

My project will contribute to the ongoing feminist work of creatively re-reading and valorising women's literature and life writing. It will do this by drawing on three different and mutually fertilising levels of discourse: narratives of women in other times and cultures that write the desiring female self; my own life and family stories of desire and loss; and theoretical insights into desire and subjectivity from a range of discourses. The re-reading and rewriting of the desiring female self on each of these levels will seek to multiply the potential ways in which women can become desiring female human beings, beyond the patterns laid down throughout history. The weaving together of strands of discourse about the desiring female self will create a narrative that crosses genres and borders of culture, time and theoretical disciplines, a contrapuntal composition that can be read on several levels, with creative inspiration for others who seek to explore ways of crossing the borders where research and creativity, self and other, literature and life, meet and fertilise each other. This project will contribute not only to new understandings of the achievement and relevance of women's life writing, but to the demonstration of new directions for women in the reflexive genres of autobiographical fiction and creative non-fiction, autoethnography and personal or ficto-criticism.

Research Method

Comparison and counterpoint

[The purpose of anthropology is] to find different, fruitful ways of speaking and conversing, so as to transcend the present in new possibilities of self and society. For, by providing new writings of reality, there can always flourish an epistemic diversity and interaction, offering new ways of describing ourselves and new possibilities for thinking about our experience. Hence, an edifying account posits rewriting as the most important thing to be done, also the most dignified. It continues to secure representation of human beings not as singular and limited epistemic objects so much as their own plural and limitless subjects.

Nigel Rapport. "Edifying Anthropology." 191.

Methodologically, I situate my writing within the turn in anthropology to finding greater understanding of the self through conversation and interaction with others, and in literary and cultural studies to what Edward Said calls "the contrapuntal lines of a global analysis," recognising that separatist or nativist analyses are exhausted (385). Said says that a contrapuntal analysis should be modelled, not on a symphony, but on an atonal ensemble "that takes into account spatial, geographical, rhetorical practices" (386). The primary sources for my enquiry will be my own life experiences and writings of them; the perspective of the writing will be stretched by looking at different textual lives, drawn mainly from Heian literature, with reference to selected modern Western texts. The notes of the main melody of self will be strengthened and highlighted by the accompaniment of contrasting yet related notes of other textual selves.

To access creative texts and interpretive and theoretical literature, I will use library and Internet searches for monographs and journal articles. I have chosen to concentrate on one period for a close reading of the metamorphoses of desire, and have selected the literature of Heian Japan because of the passionate intensity with which Heian women wrote desire in a patriarchal culture, and because I can

learn from the texts about how desire survives through the simulation of forms masking an inner life that is realer than the real world. I claim the licence to roam across such tracts of time and place and to compare my own writing—as a modern Western woman whose life bridges two centuries, a thousand years after Heian times—in desire itself. For desire is immanent in all forms of life, regardless of borders.

The hermeneutics of desire

The primary readings will be supported and informed by a critical reading of the discourses of philosophers and cultural and literary theorists on desire and the ways it is expressed in narrative. Among these, I have found relevant ideas that I will test in the writings of Lacan, Foucault, de Certeau, and Deleuze and Guattari. I will also revisit some of the theorists that were researched for my MCA exegesis, including Luce Irigaray for her reading of female subjectivity and desire, and Elizabeth Grosz for her enquiry into the embodied subject. I will look at the writings of Hélène Cixous, Julia Kristeva and others to consider the relevance of their concept of *écriture féminine*.

My approach to reading the primary and secondary texts will be autoethnographic. Though most of the cultures I will visit no longer exist in real life, they do in literary and historical texts, which have a life of their own. The anthropologist Nigel Rapport argues against the anti-humanist turn of Foucault, Derrida and Lacan, that deconstructs the subjectivity of the author, and claims that, though author and reader are “‘spoken’ by unconscious, preconditioned linguistic codes and knowledge-practices,” the text is nevertheless a site for the “production and proliferation of meaning within the consciousness of the individual writer and reader” (24). Reading and re-reading the texts is “as creative a process as writing them” (26). I agree that the text is an interactive site, but I question that reading is *as* creative as writing; here I agree with de Certeau that the reader is a nomadic traveller who poaches on other’s territory, and though, in doing so, she both takes from and changes that place, she has “no measures against the erosion of time,” no place of her own in which to keep what she has enjoyed (174). Unless she uses the wealth she has experienced to create a place of her own through writing. If one is not to be forever an observer of other’s lives, a poacher on other’s territories, I believe one must write one’s own place. My previous attempts to do this have been works in progress, and I intend to push the form of my writing further by combining several levels of discourse in this thesis.

The ethics of interpretation

Just as the anthropologist has ethical codes for the interpretation of other cultures, there is an ethics for reading the texts of other lives and cultures. A poacher takes what she can on the run, but an ethical reader is careful, as is an ethical traveller, to acknowledge the otherness of the territory, and not to damage for other readers the ground she visits by careless and insensitive readings. The code that I follow is that of the vulnerable observer. Ruth Behar has written of the turn in anthropology to recognition of the relationship between self and other and the potential for observation to change the lives of both parties: “Call it sentimental, call it Victorian and nineteenth century, but I say that anthropology that doesn’t break your heart just isn’t worth doing any more” (177). She reflects on the hybrid nature of the discipline:

In my view, it isn’t an accident that the effort to engage with the emotions in current anthropological and feminist writing follows up Freudianisms, structuralisms, and poststructuralisms. I think what we are seeing are efforts to map an intermediate space we can’t quite define yet, a borderland between passion and intellect, analysis and subjectivity, ethnography and autobiography, art and life...(177).

She points out that “[v]ulnerability doesn’t mean that anything personal goes”; the exposure of the self as observer has to be essential to the argument, not mere self-indulgence (14). The vulnerable observer needs to declare her position and acknowledge her limitations, while engaging with the Other. In the case of textual readings, the observer needs to understand as fully as possible the cultural and personal circumstances of the Other, while acknowledging that this can only be a translation, and allowing her own emotions and responses to be affected and expressed.

Sources of the braided self

The work of critic and cultural theorist Françoise Lionnet is innovative in its expansion of the boundaries of discourse about women’s autobiography; she has expounded the praxis of *métissage*, a comparative approach to theoretical and creative writing and its interpretation that, in a multicultural, postcolonial world, emancipates writer and reader from fixed categories and homogeneous meanings (12-18). The word *métissage* has no equivalent in English, but can be approximated in terms such as “plaited” or “hybrid.” My project is a *métissage* of literary, theoretical and autobiographical strands of the desiring female self; such a technology is appropriate and necessary to construct an ethical and viable narrative from diverse fragmented and partially erased texts that have been produced within the official orders of patriarchy. To explore the masks of desire in the telling and writing of my family and individual life narrative, I will draw on my own life writing: the exegesis and autobiographical novel written for the degree of MCA; a rewriting of the novel; essays published during and after those studies; and editorial and creative contributions to an anthology of contemporary Australian women’s writing. I will also draw on the family memoir written by my mother and the journal of my grandfather, as well as other biographical writings of my family history. The desire to rediscover one’s family “herstory” is limited by the fragmentary nature of archives and oral memories, and by the characteristic emphasis of historians on the achievements of men. This fragmentary and elusive quality will be reflected in the structure of my narrative, which will take the form, not of a novel with a teleological structure, (as in the drafts of my autobiographical novel) but of pieces that combine fiction and non-fiction interwoven with readings of other women’s writing; these will be woven together in counterpoint with interpretive reflections drawn from readings of theory. The finished text will be a braided plait, a mosaic of desire.

The choice to write a braided text determines the format of the thesis as one text, rather than a creative thesis accompanied by an exegesis. I will experiment with ways of differentiating between the different levels of discourse in the text, using layout and fonts, and will use the Harvard style of referencing with endnotes because it is less intrusive for creative works.

The words to say it

What one truly understands clearly articulates itself, and the words to say it come easily.

Nicolas Boileau, *L’Art Poétique*. Qtd. in Marie Cardinal, *The Words to Say it*.

How will these approaches further my project of rewriting a desiring self (f), in a world where desire has been defined by men? The desiring self is opaque and difficult to read; the manuscript has been edited, erased, rewritten, so many times. This project is a looking-glass journey into another world, where desire and the self are different, yet strangely familiar. Through the looking glass, I see myself differently, and return to rewrite the self.

There are many forms the simulacra of desire can take; I have chosen words. Though I cannot say, with Dorothy Hewitt’s confidence, “[w]ords fall out, I am possessed by them,” (11), I want to reach that state, where my desire for a written self creates a world that is more real than the real life I

inhabit. Through reading the ways in which women wrote desire in cultures so different from and yet so similar to my own, I will find words to create, to interpret, to compare a desiring self in a world where the right to be so, for a woman, has often been unrecognised, and where now, though much has changed, much remains the same.

Ethical Issues

This research program does not require testing to be done on humans or animals and does not involve potentially dangerous equipment of any kind.

Facilities and Resources

No resources or facilities, beyond those outlined in the *Essential Facilities for Higher Degree by Research Students* document, are required to complete this study.

Time Line

- March 2005-August 2005: background reading, establishing topic, preparing candidacy.
- September 2005-December 2005: further research/writing drafts on selected topics.
- 11 November 2005: Humanities Postgraduate Event: "A Day of Provocation."
- 24 November 2005: Tenth Annual Australian Association of Writing Programs Conference: Postgraduate Workshop
- 5-7 December 2005: "Telling Pacific Lives" international workshop, Australian National University, Canberra: presentation of "Surrogacy and Desire in The Tale of Genji."
- January 2006-March 2008: further research, writing and editing of thesis.
- March 2008: submission of final draft to supervisors.
- April 2008-September 2008: editing, rewriting.
- September 2008 (or earlier): submission of thesis.

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