Apocryphal Irish Texts, Revived in Australian Historical Fiction, as Collective Memory

Unsettled, the Magistrate of Galway, *The Hibernian Father*

and

Narratives Arising from the Wreck of the *Admella*

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See Appendices for detailed acknowledgment of Lynch family members, *Booandik* cultural and language advisers, Mr Ken Jones, Mr David Moon, historian Pam O'Connor, NSW archivist and historian, Janette Pelosi, and Professor Peter Kuch.

Declaration:

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Signed: ……

Summary

This thesis consists of a novel titled *Unsettled* and a critical exegesis that contextualises the creative work. Both pieces establish apocryphal stories, in all their transformations, as powerful contributors to collective memory. Both create new knowledge. As far as I know, no Australian novel has been written about a convict play derived from an Irish apocryphal story. Nor has a novel been written about 1859 Gambierton, South Australia nor, in particular, about fragments of oral apocryphal stories passed down through the family of settlers, Martin and Maria Lynch. The sesqui-centenary memorialisation of the wreck of the *Admella* in August 2009 makes its inclusion in my novel timely and unique.

The exegesis documents previously unpublished primary material, including Lynch apocryphal stories, and *The Hibernian Father*, a play by Irish convict, Edward Geoghegan.[1] It puts forward new hypotheses: that the Irish hero Cuchulain may have provided a template for the apocryphal story of the Magistrate of Galway; that working-class South-east Irish families were marginalised in South Australian historical records; that oral apocryphal Lynch stories may be true; that Kate Grenville's *The Secret River* (2006) offers an alternative history of the Hawkesbury River settlement, by some definitions apocryphal.[2] The mystery of Geoghegan's disappearance has been solved, knowledge about his life increased, and his unpublished play *The Hibernian Father* has been explicated in my novel. While Irish and Indigenous Australian subjects have been previously depicted as victims of British colonialism, my use of metaphor to link their migrations in times of turmoil with the migrations of bats offers a new inflection.

Identified characteristics of apocryphal stories frame their analysis: irreducible and enduring elements, often embedded in archetypal drama; lack of historical verification; establishment in collective memory; revivals after periods of dormancy; subjection to political and economic manipulation; implicit speculation; and literary transformations.

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[1] *The Hibernian Father*: *A Tragedy in Five Acts* [hereafter referred to as *The Hibernian Father*] hand-written manuscript, submitted by William Knight as *The Irish Father*, 6 May 1844, Secretary's In-Papers, 1852, No. 3673, Box 413078, play at [SZ55]; microfilm copy of play SR Reel 2558. See http://www.records.nsw.gov.au/state-archives/.

[2] Kate Grenville, *The Secret River* (Melbourne: Text Publishing, 2005).

French theorist Gerard Genette's notion, advanced in *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree* (1997), of all novels being transtextual, provides a model for the analysis of relationships between key apocryphal texts.[3] Chapter I of this exegesis establishes The Magistrate of Galway as hypotext for all the hypertexts which follow. Chapter II discusses *The Hibernian Father* as both hypertextual and intertextual. Not only does the play retell the story of the magistrate, but my novel quotes directly from Geoghegan's playscript. Apocryphal narratives of the wreck of the *Admella* analysed in Chapter III, cluster around the climax of *Unsettled*, and work as metatext for narratives of dispossession and the so-called extinction of *Booandik* traditional landowners. Sections incorporating metatext can be read literally and for alternative meanings.

Genette's work on prefaces and their paratextual functions, support Chapter IV's analysis of Kate Grenville's discarding of an apocryphal tale in *Searching for the Secret River* (2006) and her creation of an alternative history which might one day be construed as apocryphal.[4] Discussions about architextuality and, in particular, genre, in Chapter V, place *Unsettled* within the Australian fiction tradition, demonstrating how this new historical fiction narrative works in a discursive and dialectical way, reframing and transforming apocryphal stories. A contemporary novel, *Unsettled* aspires to literary historical fiction with a popular plot anchored by family stories.

Each chapter explicates the way particular apocrypal stories contribute to the fictional world that is *Unsettled* and therefore augment the collective memories of people linked with South-east South Australia: in particular, descendents of Lynch Irish settlers of 1852, Gambierton.

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[3] Gerard Genette, *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree* (1982; Lincoln, Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), trans. Channa Newman and Claude Doubinsky, *Palimpsestes: la littérature au second degree*, foreword, Gerald Prince.
[4] Kate Grenville, *Searching For the Secret River* (Melbourne: Text Publishing, 2006).

Explanatory Notes

For discussion about the nomenclature of Mount Gambier, see The Manning Index, Place Names, 'Gambier, Mount,' State Library of South Australia, http://www.slsa.sa.gov.au/manning/ or *Mount Gambier: the City around the Cave* (1972), by Les Hill, pp. 11-21. In various nineteenth-century documents, Mount Gambier is referred to as 'Gambierton'/'Gambier-Town'/'Gambier Town'/'Gambier' and 'Mount Gambier.' When settler Lynches arrived in 1852, the town of Gambierton and *Mount* Gambier, were discretely named, and for this reason I have used the former in my novel, until Chapter XXXVI, Coda, dated 1863. Chapter III of this exegesis follows the lead of newspapers at the time of the *Admella* wreck in using 'Mount Gambier,' although the name was not recognised until an Act of the South Australian Parliament, dated 29 November 1861.

'South-east' or 'South-eastern District' refers to the nineteenth-century region of South East South Australia in deference to this usage in *Geological Observations of South Australia: Principally in the District South-East of Adelaide* by Father Tenison Woods.[5] Margaret Allen, Catherine Martin's biographer, also uses 'South-east' when writing about this location during this period, thus suggesting it as correct nomenclature.[6] In contemporary applications 'South East' is used. The term 'southeast' denotes geographical direction or is used in direct quotation from other texts.

Similarly, I have used Woods's spelling for local flora including 'banksia', 'grass-tree', 'honeysuckle', 'shea oak', 'stringy bark' and 'tea-tree' assuming it to be common usage at the time of the primary setting of *Unsettled*. He also occasionally substitutes 'mimosa' for 'wattle'. Variations occur in the spelling of Mount Schank (modern usage). In the novel I have used Woods's spelling: 'Mount Schanck'.

Booandik and Irish words have been conventionally italicised as languages other than English. I am aware that some contemporary orthographers and the

[5] Father Tenison Woods, *Geological Observations of South Australia: Principally in the District South-East of Adelaide* (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts & Green, 1862), p. 26: '…that part of South Australia called the South-eastern District.'
[6] Margaret Allen, 'Biographical Background', in Catherine Martin, ed., Rosemary Campbell, *The Australian Girl* (1890; St Lucia, Queensland: University of Queensland Press, 2002), p. 647.

Encyclopedia of Aboriginal Australia (2006) render *Booandik* as *Buandig*.[7] Norman Tindale's *Aboriginal Tribes of Australia* (1974) catalogues twenty-four names but prefers *Bunganditj* for these people at the time of European contact.[8] This may have been phonetic. In using *Booandik*, I have followed the lead of missionary Christina Smith, who recorded their language at the time of my novel's setting.

Disavowing glossaries of words, footnotes, and pedagogic intrusions into the text, I hope that the reader, swept along by the narrative, will understand *Booandik* word choices by their repetition or by context. Occasionally, reiterations of English equivalents, after the use of an Irish or *Booandik* word, offer further support.

Settler accounts variously refer to *Booandik* people as 'natives', 'black-fellows', 'blacks' and 'Blacks'. In colloquial contexts, in the novel, I have used 'old people' or 'Blacks'. In the exegesis, the word 'Indigenous' is used in most cases, with courteous initial upper case because it has become conventional, apart from in direct quotes and nineteenth-century contexts, where 'Aboriginal', 'Aborigines', 'black-fellows', 'Blacks/ blacks'or 'natives' would be more likely to be used.

While some variation can be seen between *Connaught* and *Connought*, I have abided by the former, unless in direct quotation. To distinguish between the numerous Lynches and their stories I have commonly referred to the historical Lynch family as 'settler-Lynches', or 'real-life Lynches' and to their fictional counterparts by name, with regular references to their relationship to Rosanna, the novel's protagonist. The Magistrate of Galway Lynches have been referred to by name or as characters in the version of the apocryphal narrative being discussed. For brevity, The Magistrate of Galway apocryphal story is sometimes referred to as 'the magistrate's story' or 'the Lynch story'.

Copying Anthony Trollope's and Maria Edgeworth's use of ellipses to indicate missing letters constituting a profanity, for example, d…d attracted criticism from some twenty-first century readers who interpreted this as coy. My defence that it had been a nineteenth-century convention was dismissed. When I encountered blasphemy set out in the same way ─ H… M… of G… ─ I made the decision to remove ellipses from swearing and blasphemy. Of course, it is likely that sexually-explicit profanities

[7] David Horton, ed., *Encyclopedia of Aboriginal Australia: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander History, Society and Culture* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press for the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, 1994), p. 159.
[8] Norman Tindale, *Aboriginal Tribes of Australia: their terrain, environmental controls, distribution, limits and proper names* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1974), appendix on Tasmanian tribes by Rhys Jones.

were employed in 1852, particularly by men and women working and enjoying the hospitality of inns, but I found no textual evidence of them. To have my characters swearing like colonial Australian bullockies would have introduced a third confusing vernacular to the narrative. Instances in which Skelly describes his brother and sister screaming at each other in the 'worst Irish' is a literary device, I hope admissible in a novel, reminding the reader of reality, rather than reflecting it.

As an unpublished manuscript *Unsettled* is not entitled to italicisation, however, I have abandoned this conventional prohibition in the interests of simplicity, mainly, to facilitate the use of possessive apostrophes. Thus, the novel will be referred to, as *Unsettled*.

Epigraph

When my father had danced his white bear backwards and forwards through a half a dozen pages, he closed the book for good an' all, — and in a kind of triumph redelivered it into *Trim*'s hand, with a nod to lay it upon the 'scrutoire where he found it. —— Tristram, said he, shall be made to conjugate every word in the dictionary, Yorick, by this means, you see, is converted into a thesis or hypothesis; — every thesis and hypothesis have an offspring of propositions; — and each proposition has its own consequences and conclusions; every one of which leads the mind on again, into fresh tracks of enquiries and doubtings. …

Laurence Sterne, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy* (1759-67; London: Penguin Books, 2003), ed., Melvyn New and Joan New, essay, Christopher Ricks, intro., Melvyn New, p. 370.

Introduction

Stories resonate through diasporic families, shaping conscious and unconscious beliefs about identity. As the author of *Unsettled*, an Irish-settler novel, I am interested not only in the complex psychological baggage carried by a family of Galway Lynches to frontier South-east South Australia (1852) but in the etiology of the apocryphal tales that coloured their life-journeys. Packed tightly amongst eidetic Lynch memories of landscape, home and belonging, these tales retain essential elements which have continued to convey meaning and have informed my characters.[9] Research focuses on each tale's genesis, its motility in its historical context, its interpolation and extrapolation in key texts including mine, and its transformations. When history and story collide apocryphal narratives wither away or renew themselves, constructing and validating particular identities.

This Ph D argues in its creative praxis and historical analysis that apocryphal tales purposefully revived, as oral stories or in literary transformations, re-depict and frame collective memories. Sociologist Maurice Halbwach argues in his influential book that collective memory is a social construction informed by the temporal concerns of its stake-holders including family.[10] While not the primary subject of this thesis, collective memory acts as a receptacle for memories bound up in apocryphal stories and is therefore relevant.[11] Fiction offers a way of recuperating memory. Apocryphal stories and collective memory can be shaped and renewed, and subsumed by individual memories. They can be associated with nations and with groups and sites of memory connect them.

Etymologically the word apocrypha derives from a Greek word, *apokryphos*, from *apokrupto* — 'to hide away' — and ecclesiastical Latin, *apocrypha* (*scripta*) —

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[9] While I primarily write in third person, first person lapses occur, following Sir Walter Scott's lead in his 1829 preface to *Waverly* (1814: New York: Signet Classic, New American Library of World Literature, 1964), p. 11: 'But it appears to him [her] that the seeming modesty connected with the former mode of writing, is overbalanced by the inconvenience of stiffness and affectation which attends it during a narrative of some length, and which may be observed less or more in every work in which the third person is used…'

[10] Maurice Halbwach, *On Collective Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), ed. trans. Lewis A. Coser.

[11] Halbwach, p. 59*:* he refers to the commemorated memories and secrets of families which 'express the general attitude of the group; they not only reproduce its history but also define its nature and its qualities and weaknesses'.

'hidden (writings)'.[12] Apocryphal stories cluster around two meanings: those which fall outside canonical stories accepted by the Judaic-Christian tradition and, therefore by extension, texts offering alternatives to canonical literature and history; and stories of doubtful authenticity. Those examined in this thesis fall mainly into the latter group whereby 'apocryphal' signifies popular but contested stories that thus far have avoided historical verification. Is it because apocryphal texts have been contested that they develop surprising resilience, or despite it?

The first meaning of 'apocrypha' encompasses sacred and esoteric Gnostic Christian texts inspired by spiritual enlightenment. Often ranked higher than books produced by rational thought, and frequently prophetic, these works were considered literature rather than scripture.[13] Biblical scholars classify the *Book of Judith* as an apocryphal text, a parable, and an early historical novel containing real-life historical figures and anachronisms.[14] Like the apocryphal tale of the Magistrate of Galway — the subject of Chapter I and the hypotext of *Unsettled* — Judith has been employed as an exemplar of moral courage. She stands up against her country's subjugation by a foreign power. Her story challenged the canon and yet remained outside it — absent from the Hebrew Bible. Interestingly, Halbwachs considers stories about the childhood of Jesus to be apocryphal, imaginative localisations consolidating the occupation of holy places during the Crusades.[15]

Critics, who nominate non-canonical narratives as alternative or apocryphal, have expanded on this interpretation of apocryphal stories to create another.[16] For example, Joseph Urgo applies this meaning to describe several of William Faulkner's novels, vigorously arguing that he [Faulkner] 'employs the term in its etymological

[12] "Apocrypha", *The Australian Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English*, 1997 ed. 1.
[13] George Reid describes pseudepigraphic composition, in vogue among the Jews in the two centuries before Christ, whereby authors attached names of great patriarchs from the distant past to fictional works in "Apocrypha", *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 1 (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1907), 3 Sept. 2008 <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01601a.htm> Accessed 4 Apr. 2008.
[14] The story of Judith contains recognisable but inaccurately placed historical characters and invasions (Nebuchadnezzar and Antiochus IV).
[15] Halbwach, p. 234.
[16] 'Canon' and 'canonical' have several applications in a twenty-first century context. In this exegesis the terms are used, initially, to refer to 'a collection or list of sacred books accepted as genuine' and later, more broadly, as 'literary works regarded as significant by the literary establishment', definitions taken from *The Australian Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 1997 edition. I expand these definitions to include the idea of a canon of history. James Ley criticises the loose application of the word 'canon' in a review of Ken Gelder and Paul Salzman's *After the Celebration: Australian Fiction: 1989–2007* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2009); see 'Coping with the Hangover', 'A2, Saturday', *The Age*, 24 Jan., 2009. For the sake of argument I hope that readers will accept my broad usage of 'canon' and 'canonic' without more detailed qualification.

and biblical sense: that is to designate a subversive (thus "hidden") narrative form that challenges and refutes traditional, commonly accepted ("canonical") ideas about history and literature, particularly in *Intruder in the Dust* (1948*)* and *The Reivers* (1962)'.[17] A case can be made for Kate Grenville's attempting something like this in *The Secret River* (2006), wherein she purposely revives a hidden story of white settlement of the Hawkesbury River.[18] At the time of writing, she challenged views present in national collective memory about the dispossession of traditional landowners. Only time will tell whether her book becomes a watershed for the way Australians view their history.

The same interpretation of apocryphal could also be usefully applied to *Waterland* (1983), a novel by Graeme Swift, frequently described as apocryphal, in which he interrogates the idea of history as progress. Using the fens as setting and its stubborn tides and rivers as metaphors for history, he suggests that human endeavour can be as unpredictable, forceful and regressive as tidal water. History, built on a flimsy base of family secrets, local custom and natural disasters, cycles rather than advances. He intersperses the main narrative with meta-fictive discourse about history — 'a yarn', 'the Grand Narrative, the filler of vacuums, the dispeller of fears of the dark', an apocryphal tale, no less — conducted by his protagonist: a history teacher addressing his class.[19] Swift's alternative view challenges and refutes western canonical views that history is progressive.[20] A case can be made for *Unsettled* as a polyphonic and alternative history of the South-east, which brings to the foreground hidden stories of dubious authenticity and, therefore, apocryphal.

Stories that fit the second meaning of apocryphal manifest themselves in every culture. This category covers unauthentic stories like Parson Weems' invented stories about George Washington, including one about him hacking down a cherry tree, and the Magistrate of Galway discussed in Chapter I. Such stories remain in collective memory and gain increasing credibility over time. Such a story in Grenville's family provided the catalyst for the writing of *The Secret River*. The dearth of historical evidence to support it does not mean that it is not true. But until substantiated, it

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[17] Robert Hamblin, untitled, rev. of Faulkner's Apocrypha: "A Fable, Snopes," and the Spirit of Human Rebellion, by Joseph R. Urgo, *South Atlantic Review*, May 1991, pp. 160-163, 5 Jan. 2008, www.jstor.org/-

[18] See Chapter IV of this exegesis.

[19] Graeme Swift, *Waterland* (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1983), p. 53.

[20] See Chapter V on Australian Fiction Tradition, Genre.

remains apocryphal and contextual. It remains an apocryphal story because of its factual unreliability and because it shares some of the characteristics of apocryphal stories: irreducible and enduring elements, for instance, often archetypal; acceptance in collective memory; revival after periods of dormancy; political and economic manipulation; implicit speculation; and literary transformations. These characteristics frame investigations in this exegesis of key stories informing *Unsettled*.

Apocryphal stories should be distinguished from myth — the terms are often used interchangeably because of their common features. Both derive from archetypal dramas.[21] Both transform themselves over time, particularly in literature, and both function as instructive or allegorical tools. Both suffer political, economic and religious manipulation, revive and resume after periods of apparent dormancy, and show fidelity to enduring elements which refuse reduction. But according to the literary critic Theodore Gaster, myth is more than story. Myth theory has come to incorporate ritual and it can not, therefore, be studied 'merely as a branch of literature or art'.[22] Apocryphal stories do not employ ritual, and while they manifest in visual art, primarily exist in oral and written narrative.

Myth plays with parallel or archetypal worlds, and fantasy. 'There was initially no ontological gulf between the world of the gods and the world of men and women,' explains Karen Armstrong in *A Short History of Myth* (2005).[23] Thus, the feats of the god-like heroes and heroines of myth are supra-human and unbelievable. Gaster defines mythic idea as 'the concept of an intrinsic parallelism between the real and the ideal.'[24] Imbued with secondary meaning, myths showcase rules for living rather than factual information, explaining natural phenomena in a non-scientific way.[25] Myth frequently springs from de-historicised stories closely linked to place.

Apocryphal stories, however, utilise everyday tools and historical events. Their heroes and anti-heroes *are* believable — capable of great deeds, but grounded in their

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[21] Jung argued that myth can be the vehicle for communication between consciousness and the collective unconscious. See Joseph Campbell, ed., *The Portable Jung* (England: Penguin Books, 1984).

[22] Theodor H. Gaster, *Numen*, Vol. 1, Fasc. 3 (Sep., 1954), pp. 184. BRILL, Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/3269498, accessed 5 Jan. 08.

[23] Karen Armstrong, *A Short History of Myth* (Melbourne: The Text Publishing, 2005), p. 5.

[24] Gaster, p. 187.

[25] For a comprehensive investigation of myth see Andrew Van Hendy, *The Modern Construction of Myth* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2002). Van Hendy explicates the myth theory of Hans Blumenberg, James Frazer, Northrop Frye, Eric Gould, Leszek Kolakowski, Levi Strauss and others too numerous to mention. He also considered the treatment of myth in the work of modern writers: T. S. Eliot, James Joyce, D. H. Lawrence and W.B. Yeats.

humanity and their temporality. The historically unverifiable story of Lady Godiva in which a naked woman makes her stand against high taxes, without losing her modesty, is considered to be apocryphal because of its competent plot and feasible denouement. The Arthurian romances, despite some allusions to medieval magic, play out in a generalised English setting during the Middle Ages, and valorise heroic traditions. Distinctions between mythical and apocryphal stories crystallise around their relationship with history and fiction, apocryphal stories being more closely aligned with history. Recent Australian contretemps over the credibility of historical fiction make timely an investigation of apocryphal stories.

Two motivations led me to an historical-fiction project involving apocryphal stories: fascinating Lynch narrative material discovered whilst travelling in Ireland, and a desire to bequeath to my children stories about their paternal family, including its maternal line — thus balancing the oral and written family histories of my family.[26] Apocryphal stories feature speculation and create discourse; they have the potential for endless interpretation and thus, thriving on renovation, lend themselves to creative writing. My pleasure in conveying in a novel the boisterous camaraderie between my Lynch children went hand in hand with another wish to portray the darker side of family personalities, which I attributed partly to their experience of traumatic historical events and migration, and partly to the same atavistic Irish energy evident in apocryphal stories. Replicating the Irish history of South-east South Australia, for the most part missing from the records of the dominant settler classes, allowed me to tell half-forgotten unsubstantiated family tales, and incorporate the apocryphal tale of the Magistrate of Galway. Critical reading of 1850s histories and literatures of two villages, each about three hundred strong — Woodford, County Galway and Mt Gambier, South Australia — scaffolded my fictional recreations.

Reading the French theorist Gerard Genette's work on narratology encouraged me to think self-reflexively about how apocryphal texts and the relationships between them would change the structure of my historical novel.[27] How would Irish and

[26] My imagining of Rosanna was partly informed by stories about my maternal grandmother, Sarah Anne Theresa Fennel, who worked in the early years of the twentieth century as a parlour maid at Yallum Park, stately home of the Riddoch Family, pastoralists who frequently hosted Adam Lindsay Gordon's visits. She too rode her horse to work each day.

[27] Gerard Genette: *Figures of Discourse* (1967–70; New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), trans.; *Narrative Discourse: an Essay in Method* (1972; Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1983), trans. *Discours du récit*, *Figures III*, Jane E. Lewin; *Narrative Discourse Revisited* (1983; Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1990), trans. *Nouveau discours du recit*, Jane E. Lewin;

Australian apocryphal stories get along in an 1850s frontier setting? Would some dominate and others fade away? Genette deconstructs literature at formidable macro and micro levels, seeing criticism as dialectical and closely linked with creativity: '[W]hat would theory be worth if it were not also good for *inventing practice*?'[28] How useful his ideas proved to be as I moved back and forth between creative and theoretical writing. How helpful to have a model when constructing a novel narrative burgeoning with intertexts, hypertexts and metatexts. Criticism from self and others fed my re-writing.

I tried to beat back the urge to be seduced by his language: *bricoleur*, for instance; *I* was using old stories to make something new. In so far as I was writing over writing, was my novel palimpsestuous? Genette was interested in transtextual relationships — that is the relationships between texts in literature. In *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree* (1997), he discusses five types of transtextual relationships. Hypertextuality defines a relationship between a text (hypertext) and an earlier text (hypotext) 'upon which it is grafted in a way that is not commentary'.[29] Genette breaks down examples of hypertextuality into forms of textual imitation — pastiche, caricature, and forgery — and transformation — parody, travesty and transposition.[30] Citing examples of imitation and transformation in the text of *Unsettled* is beyond the scope of this exegesis, although some examples will be mentioned.

Genette defines intertextuality as the 'relationship of co-presence between two texts or among several…typically as the actual presence of one text within another'.[31] Paratextuality includes all secondary signals on the threshold of the book's actual text — titles, prefaces, book covers and exegeses like this one, and Kate Grenville's *Searching for the Secret River*. Metatextuality, 'often, labelled commentary', Genette

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Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree (1982; Lincoln, Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), *Palimpsestes: la littérature au second degree*, trans. by Channa Newman and Claude Doubinsky; *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* (1987; Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), *Seuils*, trans. Jane E. Lewin. Citing the original French versions of Genette's work on discourse would be a major project. In each case, I used modern paperback translations. Genette's detailed analysis of Marcel Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu*, and Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, was nevertheless illuminating in the determination of narrative strategies for my novel.

[28] Genette, afterword, *Narrative Discourse Revisited*, p. 157.

[29] Genette, *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*, p. 5.

[30] Genette, *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*, p. 28.

[31] Genette, *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*, pp. 1-2.

claims, 'unites a given text with another without necessarily citing it'.[32] This exegesis broadly interprets *Unsettled*'s referentiality to postcolonial sub-themes including race, class and gender, as metatext — these hidden texts being accessible only to an interested reader. Architextuality, 'a relationship that is completely silent', connects with title, and of 'taxonomic nature' concerns the book's generic quality.[33] Locating my novel within an Australian fiction tradition calls upon this relationship.

Delineating textual relationships in *Unsettled* helped clarify my thinking about how apocryphal narratives worked within other texts. Genette offers a model — tools perhaps — that allows me to break into research that includes creative practice. There I was engaged in writing paratext, unsure about my novel's architextual qualities — especially genre — and weighed down by a multitude of hypotexts, hypertexts and intertexts, including Irish and *Booandik* apocryphal stories. Readers of *Unsettled* need to make links between the Red Branch of Ulster Cycle, dialogue from a play by Edward Geoghegan, and new national stories set against hegemonic colonial models, in Ireland and Australia. Gerald Prince, foreword-writer for *Palimpsests,* summarises Genette's thesis:

> …any text is hypertext, grafting itself onto a hypotext, an earlier text that it imitates or transforms; any writing is rewriting; and literature is always in the second degree. Now though all texts are hypertextual, some are more hypertextual than others, more massively and explicitly palimpsestuous. [34]

If the narrative of my novel *Unsettled* seems more palimpsestuous than some I hope that it is coherent. Genette has been criticised for his analysis of fragments, rather than the structural whole, and for his focus on narrative information and signification, but novels can be read in diverse and heuristic ways. This exegesis argues that applying Genette's analysis of fluid and overlapping transtextual relationships in fictional narratives assists an understanding of the way that apocryphal tales work within my novel.

Unsettled, fictionalises several 1850s Lynch family stories that seek to validate ordinary people and the complexity of their lives.[35] It relates how an Irish boundary rider's daughter, Rosanna, succumbs to the charms of an actor visiting the pastoral

[32] Genette, *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*, p. 4.
[33] Genette, *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*, p. 4.
[34] Gerald Prince, forword, Gerard Genette, *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*, p. viii.
[35] See Summaries: Synopsis, *Unsettled*.

station where she works. He brings to her attention the story of the Magistrate of Galway transformed in Edward Geoghegan's play and wins her heart and her horse. Rosanna's brother Skelly's blood symbolises the Lynch tribe's precarious survival and the wreck of the *Admella* becomes a twist of fate. Rosanna, based on a real-life Lynch daughter whose historical records have been erased or simply never existed in the first place, has lived on the South-east South Australian frontier for seven years, engaging in archetypal battles against nature ─ fire and flood, shipwreck and drought ─ initially eating only what her family can catch and kill.[36] The novel speculates about why she never married or left home and whether she knew *Booandik* people.[37]

Chapter I of this exegesis argues that oral and literary narratives of the Magistrate of Galway — my novel's hypotext — encapsulate archetypal tensions between fathers and sons which, with no historical substantiation, re-enter collective memory in various historical periods and settings. The story transforms into many hypertexts including mine. I bring another layer to an argument about the genesis of the tale, adding the narratives of Cuchulain of the Red Branch of Ulster, to the list of its possible antecedents. Genette's assertion that true hypertext precludes commentary — for then it would become a metatext — makes the application of the notion of hypertext to *Unsettled* difficult but nonetheless productive. In the novel the magistrate's story is the subject of metafictive dialogue.

The magistrate would rather kill his son than have the Lynch name and any subsequent issue impugned, the primary function of this story being the irony of male hubris that ensures lines and tribes survive yet, at the same time, places them at risk. Presented as religious parable, or folk-story manipulated for economic gain, and popularly accepted, the Magistrate of Galway only feebly resists its apocryphal framing. How much longer it can be integrated in Galway history remains to be seen. Its nineteenth-century recasting as tourist spiel retaining central elements, allowed space for further embellishment and the nineteenth-century production of physical

[36] See Chapter III of this exegesis, and Appendix 8: Lynch Family.
[37] Janet Malcolm, *Two Lives: Gertrude and Alice* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2007), p. 186. Malcolm interviewed various narrators of a story about Gertrude Stein and a Jewish child during World War II: 'The instability of human knowledge is one of our few certainties. Almost everything we know we know incompletely at best'.

artefacts for the town's economic benefit.[38] This positioning, continued and elaborated on into the twenty-first century, overshadows its literary transformations.

Making the convicted medical student and successful Irish playwright Edward Geoghegan the subject of Chapter II serves two purposes. Firstly, his crafting of the play *The Hibernian Father* reinscribed the apocryphal story of the magistrate in an Irish Australian and colonial consciousness. For reasons of scope I am not able to analyse Geoghegan's corpus. The play works intertextually in *Unsettled*, allowing its protagonist to act out the dark Lynch event and link family experiences with Galway history. Secondly, Geoghegan's disappearance in 1861 and, for 114 years the loss of all copies of his play, shifted his life story into apocryphal territory. Everything changed, however, with the 2008 discovery of his death certificate demanding that he be re-imagined as an historical rather than an apocryphal figure.[39]

Chapter III explicates apocryphal narratives connected with the wreck of the *Admella*: the invisibility of pre-1859 South-east Irish; the discovery of the wreck by Indigenous people; a heroic wild horse-riding yarn about raising the alarm; and a Lynch story handed down through several generations. Roland Barthes's *Mythologies* (1957) links signs and metaphors with ideology. His ideas can be extrapolated to include apocryphal stories. He suggests that in certain situations people willingly believe things that may not be true.[40] Such engagements spring from an instinctive understanding of narrative limitations put aside for local and collective gain: tourism, for instance, hagiography or resistance to authority. The presence of Lynch family members at the *Admella* site is speculative, prompted by an apocryphal story about Martin Lynch, the first Australian settler-Lynch. It may well be true.

Chapter IV hitches my argument to Kate Grenville, who discards an apocryphal story, inadvertently perhaps, creating another in *The Secret River*. *Searching for the Secret River* acts as preface to her novel. If its cultural context is university postgraduate, it is difficult to discern academic traces, now that it has been edited for trade publication. Her novel narrative plays out in dangerous territory at a particular time — during the 'Australian History Wars'.[41] The frontier, where events

[38] Chapter I of this exegesis discusses a 'skull and crossbones plaque' dated 1624 and the Lynch Memorial Window completed in 1854.
[39] Geoghegan, Edward. Death certificate. 11 Jan. 1869. NSW Births Deaths and Marriages. Prepared for Janette Pelosi. 2 Jun. 2008.
[40] See Roland Barthes, *Mythologies* (1957; London, Great Britain: Random House, 1993).
[41] See *The History Wars,* Stuart Macintyre and Anna Clark (Carlton, Vic: Melbourne University Press, 2003). In 2004, Grenville uses the term 'step ladder' during a radio interview with Ramona Koval, to

often occur without witness or record, lends itself to apocryphal stories growing with each retelling, or being lost; it remains a contested site demanding historicity. *Searching for the Secret River* explicates the two meanings of apocryphal as potentially unauthentic, and as alternative history. Genette's work on paratexts allowed me to consider *The Secret River*'s cultural context in relation to common criticisms of historical fiction writing.[42] Literary historical fiction increasingly places itself in the line of fire by attracting reviews and the investment of public money — government grants and prizes, for instance.[43] Did Grenville intend to disrupt the complacency of historians, in creating an alternative history of white settlement at Wiseman's Landing? As a consequence will her novel damage the credibility of her family's apocryphal tale?

Chapter V interrogates the architextuality of *Unsettled* in relation to genre. Where does the novel fit within the Australian fiction tradition? The twenty-first-century collapsing of boundaries between commercial literary genres weighs against trade publishers' push for brand signifiers and makes defining fiction by genre challenging. *Unsettled* borrows from conventions and narrative strategies typical of literary fiction, popular fiction and historical fiction. Its preoccupation with apocryphal stories should not make any of these labels chafe. While its style leans towards literary historical fiction, the plot, apart from its denouement, is akin to that of popular historical romance. Genette's view that 'the text itself is not supposed to know, and consequently not meant to declare, its generic quality… one might even say that determining the generic status of the text is not the business of the text but that of the reader, or the critic, or the public', cautions me against consigning *Unsettled* to one genre or another; indeed, it may be cross-genre.[44] Whether Rosanna's historical prototype can now be separated from her relationship with *Booandik* land and people or from the apocryphal story of the magistrate, her father from his pride and hunger for security, her eldest brother from his Irish luck, has become more than a matter of genre. Architextuality is but one of the unstable transtextual relationships in *Unsettled*.

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imply that novel writers had an exalted and detached perspective on history, compared to historians squabbling metaphorically below them, a slip which later proves to be controversial. See Ramona Koval, interview, 'Kate Grenville', 'Books and Writing: Radio National.' 17 Jul. 2005. Transcript http://www.abc.net.au/rn/arts/bwriting/stories/s1414510.htm. Accessed 5 Apr. 2009.

[42] Gerard Genette, *Paratexts*: *Thresholds of Interpretation*.

[43] See Chapter IV of this exegesis.

[44] Gerard Genette, *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*, p. 4. Architextuality covers more than genre, but this section confines itself to that topic.

Genette, Gerald Prince suggests, delineates the subtle and not so subtle ways fictional texts link with others.[45] It is on this assumption that the work of this exegesis rests: that an understanding of *Unsettled*'s transtexts, riven though they might be with constructions of gender, race and class, will inform its reading. That these texts belonged to the collective memory of settler-Lynches is a speculative leap. My novel opens the way for the creation of further Lynch apocryphal texts, demonstrating their inexhaustibility. Apocryphal stories provide a stopgap measure preventing loss and closure. They open up new spaces in which other unreliable and unstable fictions (history and memory) can be tested. Paul Ricoeur argues that 'real and symbolic wounds are stored in the archives of collective memory'.[46] Perhaps like families of the holocaust, Lynch survivors of Ireland's Great Famine suppressed their memories and never passed them on. *Unsettled* builds on traces and is therefore transgressive.

Tensions arise from stories told years after the events they describe.[47] Synthesising family narratives can be redemptive, embracing present-day people who have lost touch with their history but may have the opposite effect, precipitating new conflict. Imagination overriding memory to create new apocryphal stories can signal the loss of an 'actual' story now considered irretrievable. But 'history does not limit itself to reproducing a tale told by people contemporary with events of the past, but rather refashions it from period to period', says Halbwach.[48] It is to be hoped that readers engage with *Unsettled*, a story which borrows from rather than imitates key apocryphal texts, creating anew, and that they find research about its transtextuality relevant to Lynch family and South-east collective memory.

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[45] Gerald Prince, foreword, Gerard Genette, *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*, p. x: While in some cases — 'I can understand Joyce's *Ulysses* without Homer's help (even if the title would be baffling)' he says — and to the contrary — 'though I could decipher *Mots d' Heures, Gousses, Rames* without reference to its hypotext, I would probably not enjoy it much' — he believes that in all of the four cases he cites, he would 'better appreciate the text — its craft, its form, its force' — if he 'had access to its model.'

[46] Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2004), trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer, pp. 82, 87.

[47] Halbwach, p. 182: '… the various groups that compose society are capable at every moment of reconstructing their past…they most frequently distort that past in the act of reconstructing it'.

[48] Halbwach, p. 75.