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Assessment 1: Creative Response – Non-fiction Narrative
with Exegesis

Option 1 - Displacement

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Beings of Light near the Corner Country

Magor had been thinking about this for a long time. 'I should try it! If they found some, I might be lucky too. I will take her there. She loves the barren Australian wilderness. Easter weekend, nice weather, what else do we need? Now or never ever!'

Pandemic agreed hard. 'I would go, and I wouldn't go. It's a long way. But if you don't do it now, I could never do so again.' she thought. I am just doing my favorite university course. It is not easy. The other course has just started at the other university. I am the tutor. It takes a lot of time to get prepared for the tutorials. What an honor! Teaching in my language at a university!' Suddenly Pandémia picked her reward and merit up. Both, her motherland and Australia recognized her work. 'Is there any more to it than that!?!' Suddenly memories of the bitter struggles brought huge tears to her eyes, alternating with tears of joy and pride. And that's when she decided. 'I'm going to try my luck.'

Many people say that the night is no one's friend. Though it is for Pandémia. She felt in the dark darkness that even though the destination was the same for both, she would still find something different there, as it had been always the case.

The loaded 4-wheel drive with the caravan behind it left the capital of South Australia and was now racing north at 90 km / h under the magnificent starry sky. Pandémia is like the night owl. She sees at night. This is the time when Pandémia can hear and see imaginatively everything what others are just walking past. The half desert is talking to her. The desert recounts that once upon a time in this countryside there was a prosperous life.

‘What are you thinking about so deeply?’ Magor interrupted her. Such a question usually starts the words, and her internal knowledge begins to flow. Pandémia pandered this question. She knew she was responsible for every single word leaving her mouth. After a few minutes, the faucet opened, but the words did not flow at all. The words just dripped very slowly.

‘Did you see the city names’ signs?’

‘I saw one, we just passed Burra. Why?’

‘And the rest?’

‘What rest?’

Pandémia got surprised at the question. ‘How comes that you have not seen the rest? Are you blind in the dark?’ she thought. Then she suddenly began to list ‘Booborowie, Canowie, Yarcowie, Terowie, Parnaroo.’ Meanwhile, they entered one of her favorite little towns, Peterborough.

‘Do you remember? We stayed here in the caravan park last year. With that, the reflection stopped for a while. They got tired. Peterborough is in 251 kms from their residence. They had been on the road for more than three hours at that time. They put their heads to sleep in their little caravan set up on the side of the road’

They dreamed of a beautiful world. ‘Once upon a time there was a huge area. The natives used to live there happily, in peace with nature. What they received from above, was returned from below. They were like a solar cell, or more like the tiny batteries of the sun. They were charged with the sun’s warm, loving maternal energy, which was projected back into the universe by Mother Earth. It was a constant cycle.

Magor talked telepathically with Pandémia in his dream.

‘Are you serious?’

‘Yes. Our tongue was spoken here.’

‘Why do you think so?’

‘The names of the small settlements are telling me. The country of Ngadjuri is now telling stories to me. There was a huge, very well-functioning water system here, maybe not so long ago. Do you know what “wie” means in our tongue?’

‘No. I have no idea. Help me!’

‘“Wie” means, “víz”. It is water in English. Do you understand that?’

‘Good God! I understand everything!’

It dawned. It was a pleasant late summer morning. Magor asked Pandémia incidentally, ‘Did you dream of something during the night?’

‘I do not remember anything, but I know that the names of the indigenous people of Ngadjuri who used to live here ring sweetly in my ears. But where did this people with such a great knowledge disappear after Edward John Eyre put his foot down here in July 1839? And where did the people, who settled here after them, go? This city was declared as a historic city in 1985. Why? I wonder how many times cultures disappeared from this country?’

Pandémia morphed in a low voice.

‘I got the answer in my dream!’ Magor shouted.

‘Shhhh !!’ silenced him away Pandémia. ‘If you want to avoid trouble, shut your mouth!

Don’t move your mouth like as if it were a duck’s moving ass!’ and this declared the topic closed.

But Magor continued excitedly. ‘Just listen to me! I know what Burra means in our language.

You know the name of the city we came through last night. I figured it in my dream’

Before he could continue, Pandémia was shaken by the cold. Yet a warm, quiet breeze swept through the landscape. The birds were already waking up, singing. Then, grouping into flocks, they set out to do their business.

‘Moan!’ Pandémia asked him impatiently. So far, however, Magor had lost his temper. Reluctantly he slammed his words in anger. ‘Burra means a hemispherical cover in our tongue. It also means the sky that is above your head, supposedly protecting the earthly beings from harmful happenings.’ Then Pandémia jumped up as a rubber ball and became very excited. ‘Yes! Yes! And you know, we have a saying in our language with that word, like this one: You grew up in a “búra”, sheath in English!’

‘Indeed. Maybe you grew up there, too!’ Magor grinned.

They set the table in front of the caravan for breakfast. There was no one around them. Only the big nothingness was breathing rhythmically while hiding deep secrets within.

And in the nothingness, there was the voice of the birds in the distance. In the drought, they must have found a little oasis. They were merrily soaked in the water.

‘How could the native people survive almost without any water here, in this yet amazing tough countryside?’ Pandémia murmured to herself not hearing the birds’ happy chirping. Magor was glad to finally hear her voice. ‘Did you know that there were no natives living here?’ he asked her. They laughed with that sneer. They recalled when they visited the Mount Atila in Northern Territory, and the locals stated the same. ‘There were no natives here at all as there was no water in the area.’

Leaving Broken Hill, they were scooting the car towards the destination. They hoped for their luck. Pandémia felt at home in the bush. She felt the vast semi-desert area in her heart. She also forgot her fear as they passed several groups of trees. There was no grass in the red sand.

Sometimes she called out ‘Look, they used to live there, too! There are also some ruins of collapsed houses. These ruins suggest there used to be once a great life there.’

‘Of course! Don't you see it? There was even a railway here. Where there were railway tracks, there was also life. Look! There, too!’ Magor pointed into the distance. ‘Do you see that alley? There were houses, too.’

‘But what happened here?’ Pandémia asked. Then the silence returned reigning the cabin of the car. The everyday objects of use thrown back and forth inside on the back seat dominated over the silence while the desert suggested complete tranquility out there.

Pandémia’s thoughts returned to what they saw in Broken Hill. Motherland cries perhaps the most there. Not because they mined much of their viability, but because the predatory human beings did not even spare the lives of 800 hard-working miners. The miners drilled inside our Motherland. Their souls did not stand it for long, they died. Yet, the predators did not even care about the screaming pain of Mother Earth.

‘Well, this is not the peaceful capital of the Golden Age, that is for sure! If nature spoke here, what would she tell us? There are still 320 kms left. Will there be a petrol station on the way?’ Pandémia muttered.

‘Do not worry! All our cans are full of petrol. There will be enough petrol to get there.’

It is the Outback again. In the rough environment, the beautiful, abundant landscape alternated with the extremely dry barren areas. But even then, this semi-desert landscape looked wonderfully attractive to Pandémia. Not to mention the intimately fragrant vegetation of the local desert. Pandémia still did not understand why there are no people living in such a huge area. It looks like as if everything had been destroyed in a war by aliens.

And see a miracle! In the middle of nowhere, the Packsaddle Roadhouse emerged. Magor and Pandémia went in with the hope that they would get rid of the scorching heat for a while. Other passers-by tried to relax on the terrace, where it was a few degrees cooler than outside. To Pandémia's biggest surprise, there was a saddle exhibition inside the Roadhouse. Having seen this, another mystery struck through her head. 'If saddles were in this area, also horses must have been here. But how did the horses get here if this area was uninhabitable? Maybe it wasn't uninhabitable? What is ever happening on this continent?'

The more times Pandémia asked this question, the more she felt having shards deep in her soul. She felt her eyes getting more and more blurred due to the bursting sob. Tears protected her from Magor being able to see her broken heart and soul. At that time Pandémia did not yet know that her own pain was part of the pain of the whole world. She felt her body and soul be on a pawn. 'Am I the debtor to the world in unloading my experiences, my hidden thoughts on history? The promise is a beautiful word, keeping it, considered to be the best.' she thought.

And the 4-wheel drive was running into the nothingness. To that nothingness, where the most hidden things in the world can be revealed before the spiritual eyes of the seers. The Outback is another boring, monotonous journey that makes the everyday traveler more and more impatient and anxious.

Pandémia's concern did not passed. 'Will there be enough petrol to get there?' Pandémia did not dare to speak out about her concern, as she feared a possible storm her question might create. She feared Magor's possible rage.

Pandémia watched the landscape with every nerve. The landscape revealed more and more secrets to her. She remembered how in a film, John Grant, a teacher from a metropolitan

university arrived in Tiboonda, the far away town, where even God does not exist. The director of the film, Ted Kotscheff, explained, among other things, how the then-Department of Education required freshly graduated teacher candidates to start their careers far away from everything. They had to spend at least 1 year, teaching in the Outback.

‘Oops’ she thought suddenly, turning towards Magor. ‘Yes! At that time, the Department of Education also strictly prescribed to these teacher candidates what they could teach the children in rural schools. What a brainwashing teaching it could have been and still, it is.’ Magor watched Pandémia erupt with widened eyes. ‘The heat and the long journey must have gone to her mind’ he thought to himself. Finally, he asked "Shall we stop?" Would you like some water?"

They would soon reach the countryside where the reddish-brown landscape is replaced by a very interesting landscape. Everything there looks white. It is as if a snow cover would sit in the heat and drought-stricken countryside. It is said that the diggers of the 18th century broke the earth in the gold deposits with the power of horses, so that some water could come to the surface and the gold could be washed.

And see a miracle! The first snow-covered area appeared. Pandémia took a closer look at the landscape and did not believe her eyes. As far as the eye could see, she saw shattered crystal stones everywhere. Magor stopped his car at riverbeds that had dried up. Pandémia was amazed to see that there were hardly any crystal debris on the banks of the riverbeds. ‘I’ve seen this before! Though, they were not crystal debris, but limestones of old buildings. Old buildings from which time? Who knows!?! Very similar phenomenon.’ Pandémia thought. Magor preferred not to disturb Pandémia in her reflections. She would talk when the time came.

Pandémia was very nervous towards the end of the road. And finally, they arrived! They have arrived to find gold. Pandémia wanted to go first to the city before they went into the sand dunes, overgrown with Australian semi-desert plants behind the black granite stones.’ We are in the Wadagali, Wankumara and Malyangapa land! I want to find some information about them!’

Suddenly words started flowing from Pandémia about the landscape. ‘Do you know what Tibooburra means? Tiboor means a community of good people. Burra, I've already told you. Tibooburra is a community of good people living under the sky... What nonsense it is again! ... Look, here on the internet it is written in English that Tibooburra means the “Kingdom of the Stone”. Anyway ... But what kind of good people could have lived here ever? Come on! Our first trip is to the local library!’

Starting from the petrol station located on the outskirts of the town, they were surprised to see that the furniture of the local police had been offered for sale on the right-hand side. The whole city consisted of one single street up to 2 km long. At the local convenience store, they asked where the local library was, as the library of Tibooburra was mentioned on the internet as a local curiosity.

‘Ah, yes! It is not far, 150-200 meters from here on the left if you are heading backwards. Books can be taken away. It is a community book exchange place.’ the owner of the little shop said.

Leaving the store, Pandémia was shocked. ‘What???? Has the library become a room, chewed by mice? Will this town also become a place of disintegration and invisible absorption?’ She felt that not only had her soul fallen to pieces from her sudden memories from her young woman's age, but also her heart was broken by what had been happening at least for 32 years in the country she had thought of as her new home.

The only sign of life in the township was in the local pub called The Family Hotel, built in 1882 by Francis Bladon. Passers-by heading to the farthest north-west corner of NSW, a corner, called the “Corner Country” enjoy here a few nights and very nice meals. The question was rising again How many cultures must have disappeared here? How many are in the queue now while the Australians, trapped in big cities, have no ideas about it all. It is well known, whoever writes history also has the power over the media. And there....’. ‘Come on! It's late! We still need to find the place to settle down for the night!’ Magor growled more and more nervously.

Even in the evening, it was impossible to exist without a net. The naughty flies did not even come for food, but also for human sweat. Magor camped in an area surrounded by dunes.

Only the clear sky could be seen, not a single man.

‘Well ... if he left me here now, I would die. I don't even know where is the Where! True, it doesn't matter to me any more ... and Pandémia’s eyes flashed through her painful memories. And the awful army of the flies was just struggling to get through the net to taste the salty tears on Pandémia's face.

‘Come and look for gold!’ Magor set off with his gold finder detector into the crystal world that looked like a snowy field. Pandémia started after Magor. The evening descended slowly. In the valley, which was surrounded by sand dunes, the crystal field was illuminated by the moon and by the mysteriously shining crystal stones. That night they saw two celestial bodies in the sky at the same time, the setting sun, and the cold full moon. Pandémia finally got to understand the significance of their trip. It was a special mission. It is Easter, there is the full moon looking down at the shattered crystals which began to whisper in the white night.

Pandémia fell asleep, immersed in Dream Time.

‘Once upon a time there was a wonderful world. There used to be a huge land. Her name was Tara. Wonderful, happy beings used to live there in peace and love. Their spiritual world soared high. They knew, they were parts of the universe, serving the unity of the universe. They lived in huge crystal palaces. These crystal palaces fed them with energy caught from the outer space and protected them from destructive low-vibrational energies, coming from a certain part of the universe....’

‘Bummm!’ There was a giant click in the huge silence in the night, when even the vibration of the flies could not be heard. Pandémia’s heart was beating very fast with fright. After a few seconds, she realized that a mountain goat, having lost his sense of fear, had come close to their table, and had crushed her favorite camp mug, causing a huge rattle.

Pandémia was determined. ‘I must immediately look for him. For him, who shattered my soul when I was a young woman. I must restore the Crystal City of the Dream Time in my own soul!’ she formulated the task for herself. In the middle of that night, she turned to Magor.

‘We can go. We can go home! I got to understand everything.’

They both put their heads to sleep. In their dreams, they became the Beings of the Light.

Waking up in the morning, they found this amazing stone next to their 4-wheel drive vehicle.

The crystal world sent a message to them. ‘We are still here, just you cannot see us with your physical eyes.’

Total calm broke the morning silence



Photo: Szabo, A. (April, 2022)

EXEGESIS

673 Words

For my creative non-fiction narrative, I choose to write about one of my recent travel experiences which has changed the way how I view the Outback of Australia. I thought I would find much more information about the area which I visited at Easter time this year. The lack of information forced me to do some research about the Corner Country and its capital named Tibooburra. I found very few information which suggests me that there are some hidden secrets about this area.

When I personally visited Tibooburra, my first impression was about this township in NSW that there is a dying population. I observed the workshops which were dominantly shut off, the road which suggested they need some repairs. The only life was in the local grocery shop and at the pub. I was sitting at the terrace of the hotel watching the visiting people and cars. It was a sunny Easter Sunday afternoon. I saw only 4-wheel drives heavily uploaded with boats, fishing gears. I asked the present owner of the hotel if she had enough people staying and eating in the pub. Her answer was 'yes', but she could not find cooks and waitresses for her kitchen. While I was sitting there, I overheard her speaking on the phone almost begging to someone to come to work that night. Taking into consideration that it was an Easter Sunday the number of visitors was relatively low. It was interesting to see that on the road there was a building from where the Tibooburra Local Aboriginal Land Council is still operating.

My personal experience and my research influenced my thinking about the information broadcast to the city dwellers in Australia. My conclusion is that something does not add up how the history is presented in the television, in schoolbooks and among the everyday population in the urban areas. My purpose in my writing about Tibooburra was to introduce the Outback to the urban dwellers from a spiritual perspective. My tool to do that was my language knowledge in 8 languages including 2 Indigenous languages. Thinking in my Central European mother tongue using the supposedly Indigenous names for the cities in the Outback was to create some contrast within the institutionalised educational materials about history of the Australian continent. This way the language reflects on this dilemma and not a historical scientific approach.

The texts studied reflected on the life of the English settlers more than the life before Charles Sturt visited the area in 1844. Luckily, I purchased a book written by a local, John Gerritsen during my visit in Tibooburra. *Tibooburra Corner Country* was published first in 1981. I was extremely surprised that Gerritsen talked about everything like The First Australian, the explorers, the early pastoralists, the golden years, about the landscape without emphasising the very rarely occurring huge crystal fields around the township. That led me to write my creative response around this phenomenon. This reading and researching experience left me with further doubts what might have happened at the Corner Country from the historical perspective.

This research benefitted me in that the knowledge in languages and first-hand experiences I already had have a strong base for doing further research in the history of this mass land called Australia. I am aware that this is a sensitive topic leading me to the conclusion that Creative Non-Fiction writing is a good approach to release the results of my personal research to the public. Writing Creative Non-Fictions short stories gives the opportunity for the readers to put themselves in the shoes of the characters who present some alternative views on the topic.

Revealing my truth in writing makes me, as a writer obliged to dig out the concealed universal truth and to expose it to the public in a very gentle and delicate way. The example for me, how to do it, is the Indigenous Dreaming which uncovers her stories only to those who are initiated enough through their own personal experiences. This is an important commitment for my future writing career.

“Wan gam ngarra marrtji buma ngarra dhuwal, which translates as: ‘I create different places as I travel.’” (Cunningham 2014, p. 11).

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