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Appropriating Culture to Recuperate History/Prisoner

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the award of the degree

Master of Creative Arts – Research

From

UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

By

Terence Joseph Keeley Dip.Ed., BCA(Hons)

FACULTY OF CREATIVE ARTS

2007

CERTIFICATION

I, Terence J. Keeley, declare that this thesis, submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Master of Creative Arts – Research, in the Faculty of Creative Arts, University of Wollongong, is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. This document has not been submitted for qualification at any other academic institution.

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ABSTRACT

The following thesis consists of three parts: a research paper comparing two other texts, *In Country* by Bobbie Ann Mason and *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting* by Milan Kundera, that incorporate the same or similar strategies as those adopted in the creative component of the thesis, a synopsis of two related texts preceding the creative component, and finally, the creative component itself, *Prisoner*.

The essay, requiring research into critiques of the Mason and Kundera texts, found a number of parallels between them and my own creative practices relating to *Prisoner*. All three texts can be seen to appropriate icons of popular culture, and high culture on the part of Kundera, as part of their strategy to tell a story. Additionally, all three can be seen to develop similar, and occasionally oppositional, philosophical discourse on the recuperation of history, at both a personal and political level.

The inclusion of a synopsis of two creative texts written prior to *Prisoner*, was deemed necessary as they set the stage for the third and final text in completing an extended narrative.

The creative text itself completes the story begun in the previous texts, *The Visitation* and *The Interview*, and resolves the ambiguities inherent in the previous texts. Additionally, it incorporates a strategy, much like Mason and Kundera, of appropriating a popular cultural icon in *Prisoner* – the television series of the early eighties, as part of its discourse into the recycling and re-interpretation of history conducted by the story's characters.

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