

cease to exist or identify as Māori. I take this position because whaikōrero is more than a mere speech.”²

With this book, the author makes up the lack of scientific publications on whaikōrero. It is written in a very convenient way, which makes it accessible not only to researchers but also to the public. Its great value lies especially in interviews with the old indigenous Maori people experienced in traditional culture. As the author points out, many of them died during the period of research and much of their knowledge has been irretrievably lost. This book provides an exhaustive review of whaikōrero in Maori culture.

Apart from analysing the individual whaikōrero the author provides lots of examples thoroughly explaining this unique aspect of Maori culture even to non-expert readers. Last but not least this publication may serve as a textbook, inspiring everybody devoted to learning this special Maori art – as it reflects its complexity and long tradition. Though until today whaikōrero remains a central element of pōwhiri (formal welcome ceremonies), there is a strong absence of research literature dealing with the depth, cultural and social context of this Maori art.

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SHAN CHOU, Eva. *Memory, Violence, Queues. Lu Xun Interprets China*. Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA: Association for Asian Studies, 2012. 346 p. ISBN 978-0-924304-68-2.

Lu Xun (Zhou Shuren) is one of the most famous Chinese writers of the 20th century. From his first work, “Diary of Madman”, he started to present a completely new view of Chinese society as well as new tendencies in Chinese literature. Although plenty of studies have been written about him, there has been little movement in reflections on his life and works, the way in which historical events were reflected in Lu Xun’s writings, or in how Lu Xun has been interpreted by critics even more than seven decades after his death. In this new study, the author discusses how an interpretation of Lu Xun’s works depends on political events in China and whether a positive evaluation from the government had a positive or negative influence on the author’s image in China; the author also tries to locate Lu Xun’s position in the context of world literature.

The study consists of five chapters. While the first four chapters focus on the specific periods in Lu Xun’s life and how they influenced his literary works, the fifth chapter concerns the illustrations in his works.

In the first chapter of the book, “Renewing a Seminal Literary Figure”, the author gives the readers some basic and well-known information about Lu Xun, his life and works, and the cultural atmosphere in the period of his life in China. The purpose of this presentation is to offer non-specialists an approach to the topic so that they better understand some facts and connections which are covered later on. The author focuses on key years in Lu Xun’s life in order to discuss how his literature was influenced by his own life experiences. She describes Lu Xun’s childhood and his studies in Japan,

² REWI, Poia. *The World of Māori Oratory*, p. 181.

and looks closer at the events which led him to change his original decision to study medicine to becoming a writer. The original purpose of Lu Xun's trip to Japan was to become a doctor to help sick people like his father, who had suffered for years because of a lack of specialists. But after an incident in 1906 when he saw a film about the Japanese occupation of China, he changed his mind, realising that the souls of the Chinese people were also sick; he thought awakening their minds was a more urgent cause than curing their bodies. Thus he changed his specialisation and became a writer in order to use the power of language and literature to change the status quo in Chinese society. The author presents the most important works by Lu Xun, which brought a new style of writing and which focused on new characters in Chinese literature, symbolising a shift from classical literature to modern literature (i.e. "New Literature" or the literature of the "May Fourth Movement", which are two different names for the literary movement Lu Xun belonged to). Later on, the author explains the approach of the study and other things like elements of violence (especially political violence) and the queue (the hairstyle of hair imposed on males during the Qing dynasty). Lu Xun got rid of this hairstyle during his studies in Japan, but it still appeared in his works. Violence is evident in the works of Lu Xun: the death of Ah Q and the image of cannibalism shown in "A Madman's Diary" (which, according to the mentally-ill protagonist, was caused by China's traditional moral values) are full of violence. Lu Xun described the cruel face of Chinese society.

Memory was a well-known aspect of Lu Xun's writing, but caused suffering. However, Lu Xun's protagonists were not able to forget anything because they felt everything was important.

The second chapter, "Cutting His Queue: Nationalism, Identity and Other Unknowns", challenges the queue hairstyle and its connotation in Chinese society during Lu Xun's life, especially in the time of the years when he studied in Japan and after his return to China. Lu Xun discarded his queue in the spring of 1903 soon after he started studies in Japan. The motif of cutting the queue appears in his comments on photographs from that period. The author here closely looks at all the circumstances about Lu Xun's photographs taken after cutting his hair, and analyses Lu Xun's poems attached to these photographs, with the purpose of finding out all the possible reasons for cutting the queue (from personal and political reasons to avoiding becoming a target of Japanese nationalists). The author goes back into history, where she notices the difference between bounded and unbounded hair, and quickly grasps the negative connotation of the queue, which became a symbol of the Manchu government in China. Cutting the queue was a symbol of anti-Manchuism, and later on, after 1900, the symbol of revolution. Most of the Chinese students studying in Japan were influenced by ideas of revolution or reformism, and there were strong anti-Manchu feelings in student circles. Lu Xun himself avoided clearly stating the reasons for cutting his queue, but about ten years later he mentioned meeting friends from his native Shaoxing, who were also without a queue, and his feeling was one of triumph. From this it can be assumed that his decision was personal as much as political and in fact a mixture of reasons.

In "The Literary Afterlife of the Queue: A Closer Look at the Years 1920 – 22" Lu Xun's most famous short stories, which were all written in this period, are discussed. "The True Story of Ah Q", "Storm" and other stories present the shadow of violence.

There are three pieces of fiction ("The True Story of Ah Q", "Storm" and "A Story about Hair") and two essays ("Surrendering in Life but Not in Death" and "Names") analysed which were written in this period and in which Lu Xun mentions a queue. The author here compares the protagonists of the short stories from the different points of view of their existence. While Ah Q belongs to the lowest social level, he is in some ways similar to Seven Pounds from "Storm", whose highest level is that of tavern owner and who cut his queue after leaving the village. By contrast, the narrator N from "A Story about Hair" is a member of the new elite. He is an intellectual returning from studies abroad (Japan) and had cut his queue there. Upon returning home, he bought an artificial queue in order to be more similar to other people from his homeland. He appears deceptive because of his having an artificial queue and after having worn foreign clothes without a queue. Even though "The True Story of Ah Q" is not primarily about queues, Ah Q presents his opinion on cutting the queue; he has a very negative opinion of a character who cut his queue in the short story. Ah Q calls him an "imitator of foreigners". What is interesting in the short stories mentioned here is that in "A Story about Hair" the protagonist, N, is in a similar situation but in the opposite position; he is the one who deceives the village people because he had cut his queue. According to the author's analysis, Ah Q was defined by a having queue. Although the topic declared in this chapter is the queue, the author describes two other topics mentioned in the title of the book. In these writings, violence is presented in the death of Ah Q, who is sentenced to death for a burglary which he did not commit; Seven Pounds also faces violence and his life is in danger, but he avoids the grim fate of Ah Q. Narrator N from "A Story about Hair" witnesses the death of some revolutionists. He feels pain in remembering this, but he is unable to forget and he does not really want to forget the death of these people. The author points out how Lu Xun is playing with memory in the "The Real Story of Ah Q": people did not know his name when he was alive and he was also forgotten after death. In the two essays, "Surrendering in Life but Not in Death" and "Names", there is also the motif of the queue along with motifs of violence. In "Surrendering in Life but Not in Death", Lu Xun discusses the queue from a historical point of view, as a tradition brought by the Manchu dynasty which was not typical for the ethnic Chinese (Han). In the essay the author finds similarities with the starting part of Ah Q, where Lu Xun explains why he used the Western letter Q as the name of his character. Here it is explained that he was not able to choose between two Chinese characters. What makes the story even more satiric is the fact that both characters mentioned there do not use the Roman letter Q at the beginning.

In the chapter "The Life of a Poem, 1903 – 36", the author focuses on the poetry of Lu Xun. Here the author reflects on Lu Xun's activities in the Communist Party and his compassion for poets who were sentenced to death or died in prison at the time of combat between the Communists and the Guomintang. This part of his work was not so well-known as his fictional writing, essays or articles before he added some of his poems into the essays he wrote. According to his diary, he wrote about fifty poems in the classical style as opposed to the vernacular "new language" he used to write his fiction. Although the number of his poems is small, some of them are very important. The author here stresses the poem "Inscribed by the Author of a Small Likeness", which was mentioned in Chapter 2, where it was part of the photograph of Lu Xun with his

hair cut short. He used this poem, which he wrote in 1903, several times in his life. After 1903, when he added it to the photograph, he rewrote this poem in a calligraphic style in 1931 to commemorate five young people, members of the League of Left-Wing Writers, who were arrested and executed along with other Communist activists. Lu Xun's activities in Shanghai had been connected closely with the League, although he was not a member, as well as a member of Communist Party. One of the five executed young people, Rou Shi, was very close to Lu Xun and used to call him "teacher". Lu Xun chose this early poem as he felt its spirit depicted the 1931 situation well. This poem was not known during Lu Xun's life but one copy of this well-known poem was given to his Japanese physician as calligraphy before he returned to Japan.

Lu Xun published only one of his poems, "Remembrance", during his life. The poem was published with a description of the situation in which it was composed. This poem was much admired by Lu Xun's contemporaries. In 1933 he published this poem together with an essay entitled "Remembrance in Order to Forget" and placed it into the essay. This essay and poem commemorate the death of the five young people, who were subsequently called "the Five Martyrs". Lu Xun did not speak a lot about his poems written in classical Chinese. He once mentioned that poetry was only occasional writing for him. But from his poems we can notice that he did not just write poems on random occasions. There are also poems discussed which were written in 1936 which are connected with the death of his comrades in prison. Lu Xun wrote out his grief in poems and in essays. Here we can see a part of his writing which was very private.

The fifth chapter, "In the Hands of Others, 1934 – 36", is devoted to the illustrations in Lu Xun's books and articles. The illustrations are significant for his works; it is a well-known fact that he enjoyed woodcuts and supported young Chinese artists in expressing themselves in this medium. Here the author deals with several aspects connected with the illustrations: particularly the lack of the original work, which happened often as the artists were persecuted because of their political opinions and their works were destroyed or lost in these times, and the problem with visualising personalities in Lu Xun's short stories. Artists often asked him for an opinion of their work. His answers to the young artists sometimes encouraged them to continue creating even though their style was not yet perfect. Lu Xun's personal interest in woodcuts started in 1928 and he begun to collect woodcuts expressing European social criticism. He started encouraging Chinese art students to do woodcuts. In 1931 he organised a workshop in woodcutting methods and in 1934 he published a first volume of Chinese woodcuts. For Lu Xun, illustration or woodcut techniques were useful as powerful ways to spread ideas among people. He took great effort to present art. Although he personally did not produce fine art, he was a promoter, introducer, sponsor, printer, collector and critic of woodcuts. The common background of these artists was their commitment to the Left: every artist had a relationship with some kind of leftist political group. The woodcut movement represented a very important period in searching for the features of new art in the 20th century, importing Western techniques and using Western styles of art in combination with domestic traditions, especially *nianhua*. The problem of the appearance of some of Lu Xun's most famous protagonists, for example Ah Q, is also discussed. Lu Xun's response was that most artists made Ah Q too individual. In his fantasy, Ah Q had the look of a very ordinary man without any

specific features; he was so ordinary that people did not even remember his real name. Leftist artists regarded woodcuts, cartoons and prints as an ideal medium to address the crowds. A specific category in these woodcuts and prints is the number of portraits of Lu Xun. There were three groups of woodcut artists in that time in Shanghai: the first group comprised the artists grouped around the “Theatre” journal. The strong political features of these artists caused a lot of their works to be lost or censored. It is interesting that many censors in the 1930s often restricted them to exhibiting a portrait of Lu Xun. The style of the Chinese woodcuts of that time was strongly influenced by the expressionism of Kathe Kollwitz, Edgar Munch and other expressionists. The topic of realism was new in Chinese painting, although there was a high level of stylisation. However, the style of these woodcuts and cartoons was very different from classical Chinese ink painting. In addition to the revolution in the style of new writing, there was also a revolution in fine art.

In the conclusion, the author discusses the results of her study. In her opinion, the queue played the smallest role in Lu Xun’s writings. The motif of the queue appears probably because Lu Xun had discarded his queue in his school years and might have faced the same reactions as were shown in the short stories. The absence of the queue can be interpreted as the absence of moral values in Chinese society. Violence was constantly present in Lu Xun’s life, as well as in most of Lu Xun’s writings, and it is an increasingly important topic in literary studies. In later years, he discussed how the reality of violence ruined his ability to write fiction. This study presents us with the connections between violence and writing in a personal dimension and the personal aspect of political events which had touched Lu Xun. As we can see, one poem was used in two different contexts, once when he cut his queue and the second time thirty years later when he was recollecting the tragic deaths of his young comrades in prison. The last element of this study, memory, is also studied a lot in literary criticism. For Lu Xun, memory was both a personal and national matter: this element was constant throughout his writings. For example, one early work of his from 1911 is called “Remembering the Past”. There are both memories in his fiction, his personal memories as a child and the memory shared with his ancestors or elderly people. In “A Story about Hair”, N felt a great fear that all the suffering and sacrifice could be easily forgotten because the memory of individuals was unreliable. Almost a century after his first works were published, Lu Xun is still popular in China. In this time of commercialization, he has become something of a trademark; there are a number of articles and parks bearing his name, which is compared by the author to the status of Mozart in Austria. His fiction writing and essays are studied and often translated into foreign languages.

There are two appendices attached to the study. Appendix A explains the lack of clarity about the dating of some photos of Lu Xun and the exact meaning of the words “arrow of gods” (*shen shi* 神矢) used in his poem, while Appendix B presents us with the illustrations of some artists (providing their names in Pinyin and in Chinese characters), their biographical data and the background of the illustrations. The illustrations are divided into three sections: the illustrations of authors grouped around the “Theatre” journal, other illustrations of Lu Xun’s works and portraits of Lu Xun, some of which are serious portraits and some of which are caricatures.

Although a lot of studies have been written about Lu Xun, the author presents us with a new approach to Lu Xun's work and offers a fresh and interesting perspective on the topic of Lu Xun's writings. On the example of the queue, she presents the different attitudes of people towards the topic. In doing so, one can imagine the whole atmosphere of Chinese society, maybe even its spirit, in looking at one small difference of one person and the attitudes toward this. Motifs of violence and memory were often used in Lu Xun's writings. It can be said that violence is a typical feature of modern Chinese literature, which reflects a violent period in the country. Memory is something which is typical for Chinese culture; this we can see in China's long history of recollecting the past, at least from the period of Confucius. Pointing out the very typical features of Chinese society, the author shows us her deep understanding of Lu Xun's life and much more. Besides this, I feel it is useful that author addressed her study also to readers outside of Sinologist circles. She explained this in the first chapter, where she has repeated all the well-known facts about Lu Xun; this is also obvious in the limited use of Chinese characters: she used as few as is possible in this study. I believe this study will increase the number of potential readers, and in my opinion it is really worth reading.

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BUKOVÁ, Martina, KRUPA, Viktor, ELSCEK, Oskár. *Austrália a Oceánia. Tradícia – kultúra – hudba. Tradičná kultúra kontinentov*. [Australia and Oceania. Tradition – Culture – Music. The Traditional Culture of Continents.] Bratislava: ASCO Art & Science, 2010. 294 p. ISBN 978-80-88820-46-8.

In 2010 the ASCO Art & Science publishing house released a monograph written by Martina Bucková, Viktor Krupa and Oskár Elschek focusing on the traditional cultures of the peoples of the continents of Australia and Oceania as a part of its "Traditional Culture of Continents" series. This is one of few publications from this part of the world informing readers about unique Austronesian cultures.

Viktor Krupa, a linguist and specialist on Austronesia, is the author of a number of works discussing selected issues from the region of Oceania including *Polynézia/Polynesians* (Bratislava 1988), *Legendy a mýty Polynésie – Polynéská kosmogonie/Legends and Myths of Polynesia – Polynesian cosmogony* (Bratislava 1997) and others; these books were written for scholars as well as the general public. Martina Bucková comes from the younger generation of scholars in Austronesian studies and focuses on the traditional cultures, religious concepts and mythology of Oceania and Australia; her works in this field to date include the books *Nábožensko-mytologická diferenciácia Polynézie – Variácie spoločného dedičstva* [The Religious and Mythological Differentiation of Polynesia – variations of a common heritage] (Trnava, 2007); *Māui: Polynesian Culture Hero – Variations of Themes in Māui's Mythological Cycle in East and West Polynesia* (Bratislava, 2012) and other works. The third author of the book under review is Oskár Elschek, a foremost Slovak ethnomusicologist and the author of many scholarly publications on ethnic music.