

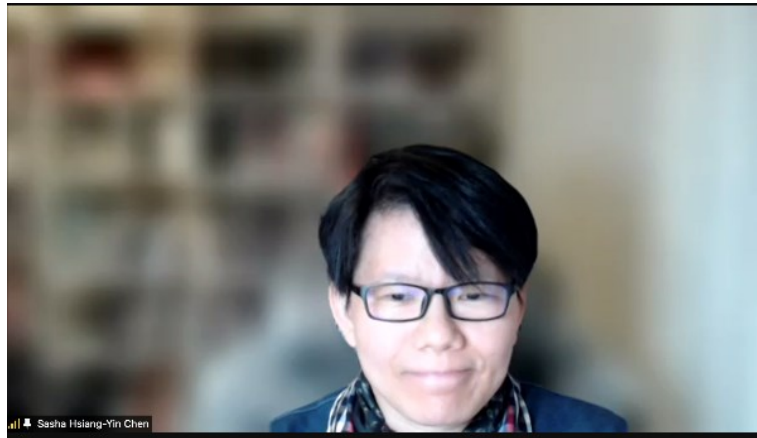
Taiwan Lectures on Taiwan Studies Series —

Master, Mara and the Mad Man: Absorbing Russia in the Prose of Lu Xun

NCL invited Prof. Hsiang-Yin Sasha Chen to speech on “Rearticulations of Foreign Literature Studies in Taiwan: Anti-Romanticism and the Translation of Subjectivity” in the collaboration with the Library and Information Centre of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences on November 9, 2021, at 5 pm (Taiwan time).

Prof. Hsiang-Yin Sasha Chen is an Associate Research Fellow at the Institute of Chinese Literature and Philosophy, Academia Sinica. Her research targets Russian-Soviet and Chinese culture in the twentieth century, with a particular emphasis on literature and cinema.

The lecture was held online with the opening by Dr. Ágnes Kelecsényi and moderated by Kornélia Major. At the beginning of the talk, Prof. Chen investigated the theme of "Learning from Russia" during the May Fourth period, with a specific reference to the crazed, possessed and superfluous characters in the prose of Lu Xun. She examined the association between the theme of madness and the consciousness of darkness in the works of Nicolai Gogol (1809-1852) and Lu Xun (1881-1936), showing how the two writers inherit Russian literary legacy and Chinese “little tradition” of the dark world, respectively. A comparative analysis of Gogol’s *Evenings on a Farm near Dikanka* and Pu Songling’s story collection *Strange Tales from a Chinese Studio* demonstrates not only a Chinese modernity acquired from Russia, as many scholars have done, but also the Russian Eurasian mentality resembling Chinese transcultural characteristics. Similarities in the two works account for Lu’s admiration and appreciation for Gogol and motivate both writers to create the image of madness through absorbing the imagination of the strange and of others, which originated correspondingly from Ukrainian folklore and Chinese “little tradition”.



Prof. Hsiang-Yin Sasha Chen
(Associate Research Fellow, Institute of Chinese Literature and Philosophy,
Academia Sinica)



Left: Dr. Kornélia Major (Institute of East Asian Studies, Eötvös Loránd University)
Right: Dr. Ágnes Kelecsényi (Library and Information Centre of the Hungarian
Academy of Sciences)