



Taiwan Lectures on
Chinese Studies

臺灣漢學講座

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

November 9, 2021 @10:00 AM (Hungary) / @17:00 PM (Taiwan)

Online Lecture: <https://tinyurl.com/murbzj3h>

This talk selects one part of the book *Russia as Master and Monster: The Literary Experiment of Lu Xun, Qu Qiubai and Cao Yu in Transcultural Practices*, investigating 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. Prof. Chen will examine 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, 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."

About the Speaker:

Hsiang-Yin Sasha CHEN 陳相因 is Associate Research Fellow in 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. Her current long-term project is a literary and cultural history of translating and transmitting Russian and Soviet literature (including women's writing) and film in transforming modern and contemporary China and Japan.



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