

Spring 2007 • LIT 295C  
M•W•F 10:10-12:10pm (CD)  
Wilson Hall Rm. 2018  
Office hours: M•W•F 1-2pm

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# The Japanese Supernatural

From the earliest times to the present, animals masquerading as humans, mountain priests working miracles through prayer, vengeful ghosts, and all manner of unusual phenomena have played prominent roles in Japanese literature. Elements of the supernatural cut across class lines, appealing to commoner and noble alike, as well as across time, with common themes appearing in Buddhist parables of a thousand years ago and modern Japanese film less than a decade old. This class examines the major threads of the supernatural in Japanese literature, theater, and film; explores their continuity and change from ancient times to the present; and attempts to find reasons for the enduring appeal of the supernatural in our current, supposedly rational age. The organization is thematic rather than chronological, and each week we will explore how different ages have explored and developed common themes to very different ends.

This course makes extensive use of the university's Blackboard online learning environment, both to distribute readings and as a forum for submitting and responding to reaction papers. Access Blackboard at [blackboard.wlu.edu](http://blackboard.wlu.edu), and login using your W&L Username and Password. The Blackboard interface is fairly straightforward, but if you have no experience using the system or are uncomfortable with computers, let me know immediately so we can help you get started. Becoming experienced with using Blackboard is vital to your success in this course.

Evaluation will be on the basis of class attendance and participation, online reaction papers and responses, and a final project:

Attendance and Participation		25%
Six Online Reaction Papers	6 x 5% =	30%
Ten Online Responses	10 x 2% =	20%
Final Project		25%

Given the short spring semester schedule it is crucial, both to your grade and to the success of the class, that you keep up on the readings and come to class every day ready and willing to discuss them. Attendance is taken and, because active participation in class discussion is one of the only ways I have to check whether you are keeping up on the readings, it is a major portion of your grade. Throughout the semester you will be required to post weekly reaction papers and responses to the Blackboard online discussion board, and these online postings are intended to act as a starting point for in-class discussion. A reaction paper should be at least 600 words (about two pages) and should articulate your reaction to that day's readings. It does not need to be a formal argumentative essay, but it should be more substantive than mere summary. It is

intended to give your interpretation of the material in light of your own experience and the issues we raise in class, and should show an active engagement with the text. Remember: you aren't expected to be an expert on the topic, just an engaged reader. Creative reading, speculation and exploration of unfamiliar ideas are welcome. Reaction papers must be posted online **by midnight the night before** the class in which the readings are to be discussed, in order to give your fellow students time to read them before class. Late reaction papers are useless to fostering online discussion and thus will not be accepted. Other students' reaction papers should be considered a part of your required reading, and you should make a point of reading the other students' reactions before coming to class, and perhaps writing an online response to them. The online responses are less formal than the reaction papers and should respond not only to the text itself, but to the other students' reactions. There is no set length for these responses, but they should show a willingness to engage with both the texts themselves and other students' readings of those texts. At least one of these responses is required per week, and a total of ten must be completed by the end of the semester. Because these online discussions are intended to be the jumping off point for in-class discussion, responses must be posted any time **before class**. In other words, all online discussion regarding a given day's readings must occur prior to being discussed in class for it to receive credit.

The reaction papers, responses and in-class discussion might also serve as a starting point for your final project, though you will naturally have to go beyond what we looked at as a class. The most common form of the final project is a final paper, but you are welcome to explore other ways of showcasing your work as long as they are approved by the instructor. In the case of a final paper, it should be approximately ten pages in length, and alternative projects should consist of a similar level of work. The final project is worth 25% of your final grade, 5% of which is for your initial one-page proposal (due May 18<sup>th</sup>) and a brief presentation on your project in the last week of class. Your final project is due by 5pm on June 4<sup>th</sup>, the last day of final exams, but you are welcome to submit a draft for instructor feedback at any time.


There are four required texts for this course:

Royall Tyler, *Japanese Tales*

Stephen Addiss, *Japanese Ghosts and Demons*

Ueda Akinari, *Tales of Moonlight and Rain* (trans. Anthony Chambers)

Akutagawa Ryûnosuke, *The Essential Akutagawa*




All are available at the bookstore. Additional readings will be made available in pdf format in the "Materials" section of Blackboard. These readings are identified on the schedule with a  mark. In addition to the readings, there may also be materials listed on the schedule which you are required to view online (via Blackboard). There will also be one required film per week, to be discussed in class on Fridays. In the first week of class I will schedule a time slot for a screening at a time that attempts to accommodate most of your schedules, but if you are unable to attend the screening the films are on 4-hour reserve at Leyburn and can also be viewed on the computers at the TMC any time during that week of classes.

## Course Schedule





### Week One – Gods & Monsters

Monday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> Introduction to the Course

Wednesday, April 25<sup>th</sup>



Readings: Addis, “Introduction” and “Snakes” pp. 9-13, 139-153  
“The Sacred Beings” (*Catalpa Bow* pp. 34-50)   
Excerpts from *Kojiki* (*TJL* pp. 21-44)   
Excerpts from various *Fudoki* (Aoki pp. 233-241, 264-271)   
Tyler, episodes 28-32, 45, 47, 48, 187

Friday, April 27<sup>th</sup>




Film: *Princess Mononoke*  
Readings: Addis p. 174 (on spiders)  
View website on Raikô and the Tsuchigumo   
“The Demon Shuten Dôji” (*TJL* pp. 1123-1138)   
View images from “Shuten Dôji” picture scroll   
“Princess Mononoke” (Napier pp. 231-248)   
Akutagawa “The Faint Smiles of the Gods” pp.115-128

### Week Two – Yin-Yang Masters and Buddhist Hells

Monday, April 30<sup>th</sup>

Readings: Addis, “Sennin” pp. 57-65  
Tyler, episodes 49-53, 59-63, 70-74, 85-90, 100, 101, 124-128, 162-166  
View “Floating Storehouse” picture scroll  (Tyler episode 72)  
Kabuki play *Saint Narukami* (*TJT* pp. 68-94 ) 

Wednesday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>

Readings: *The Essentials of Salvation* (*SJT* pp. 211-222)   
“In and Out of the Rokudô” (LaFleur pp. 26-59)   
View images from *Jigoku zôshi* and *Gaki zôshi*   
Addis, “Shôki” and “Oni” pp. 81-101  
Tyler, episodes 97, 98, 113-118, 146-151, 157-161, 176-180, 215, 216

Friday, May 4<sup>th</sup>

Film: *Onmyôji*  
Readings: Akinari “Owl of the Three Jewels” and “Blue Hood” pp. 121-138, 186-201

Akutagawa “Spider’s Thread,” “Hell Screen,” and “Tu Tze-chun”  
pp. 29-70, 79-92

## Week Three – Snakes and Women Scorned

Monday, May 7<sup>th</sup>

Readings: Carmen Blacker “The Snake Woman” (pp. 40-50) 📖  
Tyler, episodes 108-112, 131-139, 185  
“Dôjôji Engi Emaki” (Skord pp. 75-83) 📖  
View images from Dôjôji picture scroll 📖  
Nô play *Dôjôji* (TJT pp. 193-206) 📖

Wednesday, May 9<sup>th</sup>

Readings: Noriko Reider “Emergence of Kaidanshû” (pp. 79-99) 📖  
Akinari “The Reed-Choked House,” “The Kibitsu Cauldron,” and  
“A Serpent’s Lust” pp. 91-109, 139-185

Friday, May 11<sup>th</sup>

Film: : *Ugetsu*  
Readings: Nakagami Kenji “Snakelust” and “Tale of a Demon” (pp. 41-70,  
99-120) 📖

## Week Four – More Dangerous Women

Monday, May 14<sup>th</sup>

Readings: Excerpt from *The Diary of Lady Murasaki* (pp. 7-11) 📖  
Excerpt from *The Pillow Book of Sei Shonagon* (pp. 260-261) 📖  
Excerpts from *Tale of Genji* (Seidensticker pp. 57-83, 158-175) 📖  
Nô plays *Hajitomi* and *Yûgao* (Goff pp. 111-119) 📖  
Nô plays *Aoi no Ue* and *Nonomiya* (Goff pp. 134-145) 📖  
Mishima Yukio *The Lady Aoi* (pp. 145-171) 📖

Wednesday, May 16<sup>th</sup>

Readings: “Mythical Bad Girls” (Copeland pp.15-31) 📖  
“Yamauba” (Reider pp. 239-264) 📖  
Tyler episodes 217, 218  
Nô play *Yamamba* (TJT pp. 207-225) 📖  
Ôba Minako “Smile of the Mountain Witch” (pp.194-206) 📖


Friday, May 18<sup>th</sup>

Film: *Onibaba*  
Readings: Izumi Kyôka “The Holy Man of Mount Kôya” (pp. 21-72) 📖  
Nakagami Kenji “The Immortal” (*Showa* pp. 426-442) 📖





• **Deadline for submitting final project proposal** •

## Week Five – Ghosts & Restless Spirits



Monday, May 21<sup>st</sup>

Readings: Addis, “The Male Ghost” pp. 49-55  
Tyler episodes 11-16, 190-194, 200-204  
“The Sakura Sogoro Story” (Walthall pp. 35-75)   
Akinari “Shiramine” and “The Chrysanthemum Vow” pp. 51-90

Wednesday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>






Readings: Addis, “Yûrei” pp. 25-33  
“The Peony Lantern” (*EMJL* pp. 33-38)   
“Peony Lantern Ghost Story” (*EMJL* pp. 961-968)   
“Banchô Sarayashiki” (Unno pp. 41-64)   
“Ghost Stories at Yotsuya” (*EMJL* pp. 844-884) 

Friday, May 25<sup>th</sup>




Film: *Ringu*  
Readings: “From Scrolls to Prints to Moving Pictures” (Sumpter pp. 5-23)   
Akutagawa “In a Grove” pp.103-114  
Tanizaki Jun’ichirô “The Reed Cutter” (pp. 1-53) 

## Week Six – Tricksters & Transformations



Monday, May 28<sup>th</sup>

Readings: Addis, “Trickster” pp. 103-137  
“Witch Animals” (*Catalpa Bow* pp. 51-68)   
Tyler, episodes 80-84, 119-123, 205-209  
Marian Ury, “A Heian Note on the Supernatural” (pp. 189-194)   
Janet Goff “Foxes in Japanese Culture” (pp. 66-77)   
View images from *Tamamo no mae* and *Tamamizu monogatari*   
“The Fox” scene from *Yoshitsune Sembon Zakura* (pp. 234-262) 

Wednesday, May 30<sup>th</sup>

Readings: Addis, “100 Demons” and “Tengu” pp. 15-23  
Tyler, episodes 9, 33-37  
Excerpts from *Gikeiki* (pp. ??)   
Elizabeth Lillehoj “Transfiguration” (pp. 7-34)   
View images from *Tsukumogami* and *Hyakki yakô* picture scroll 

Friday, June 1<sup>st</sup>

Film: *Pompoko*  
Readings: Foster “The Metamorphosis of the Kappa” (pp. 1-24)   
Akutagawa *Kappa* (pp. 45-141) 

**Deadline for submitting final project: 5pm, June 4<sup>th</sup>**