

EALL 4200: Topics in East Asian Cultural Studies
Sample syllabus: The Monstrous in Japanese Literature and Culture
Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures

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I. Course Description

Disembodied vengeful spirits, foxes that turn into alluring women, green and red ogres, Godzilla, and Pokémon: these are some of the monsters that have spooked and beguiled Japanese people across time. Called “yōkai”/fantastic being, “bakemono”/transforming thing, or “kaijū”/mysterious beast, these beings of the otherworld or the supernatural provide insights into the collective cultural psyche of the Japanese. Through a diachronic examination (8th through 21st centuries) of discourses on monsters in literature, visual arts, and scholarly studies, this course will investigate the cultural history of the monstrous in Japan.

II. Class Format

The class consists of lectures, media presentations, and class discussions. Readings are to be completed before the class in which they will be discussed and students are required to bring the assigned reading to class. The film viewings are mandatory, which means that you will be expected to attend class on those days and also that the content will be included in the quizzes and final examination. Please limit your computer/tablet/smart phone usage to taking notes for class.

Warning: If you do not keep up with the readings, you will not do well in the class.

III. Texts *Course packet and textbooks* available at Student Book Exchange (SBX) (14th and N. High St., Phone: 291-9528)*

Required:

1. Course packet.
2. *Tyler, Royall, trans. *Japanese Tales*. New York: Pantheon, 1987.

Recommended:

1. *Figal, Gerald. *Civilization and Monsters: Spirits of Modernity in Meiji Japan*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2000.
2. *Foster, Michael Dylan. *Pandemonium and Parade: Japanese Monsters and the Culture of Yōkai*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009.
3. *Foster, Michael Dylan. *The Book of Yōkai*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015.
4. *Varley, H. Paul. *Japanese Culture*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1974. 4th Edition 2000. Print.

*All of these texts, except for the course packet, are held on closed reserve at the Main Library.

IV. Course Requirements

1. **Attendance and participation (20%):** Do not miss class. You are expected to complete the assigned readings for each session and to participate actively in class discussion. You are allowed one unexcused absence.
2. **Writing (30%):** Two short essays of about 800 words (two-and-a-half to three pages, typewritten, double-spaced, 12-point font, with 1-inch margins). Guidelines will be provided and we will have a writing workshop to prepare you for the papers. No late papers will be accepted. Each paper is worth 15% of the final grade of total grade. Papers should be submitted to the course's Carmen "dropbox" folder by 5pm on the days they are due (dates to be announced).
3. **Quizzes (20%):** There will be three quizzes; the dates for the quizzes will be determined during the course of the semester. The lowest score will be thrown out; therefore, only two quiz grades will be calculated into your final grade score. There will be no make-up quizzes. Each quiz is worth 10% of the final grade (your two highest-scoring quizzes will be worth 20% of the total grade).
4. **Extra credits (5%):** Extra credit options will be offered in conjunction with the films viewed in class, for a possible 5% extra added to your final grade.
5. **Final Project or Final paper(30%):** Project: Creation and write-up of your own monster, based on class readings, discussions, and research. Guidelines will be provided. Final paper: research paper with topic chosen in consultation with the instructor.

Note: Any requests for exceptions to the above criteria must be accompanied by official documentation supporting the reasons behind the request.

V. Grading Criteria

1. Attendance and participation: 20%			
2. 2 short papers: 30%	93-100	A	60-66 D
3. 2 quizzes: 20%	90-92	A-	Below 60 E
4. Extra credit: 5%	87-89	B+	
5. Final project: 30%	83-86	B	
	80-82	B-	
	77-79	C+	
	73-76	C	
	70-72	C-	
	67-69	D+	

VI. Academic Misconduct (University Statement)

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct (http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp).

VII. Disability Services (University Statement)

The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. SLDS contact information: slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; slds.osu.edu; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

Course Schedule

Week 1

1. Overview of the course with introduction to some Japanese monsters
2. Introduction to Monster Studies
 - a. Jeffery Jerome Cohen, "Monster Culture: Seven Theses," *Monster Theory: Reading Culture*.
 - b. Zakiya Hanafi, "The Origins of Monsters," *The Monster in the Machine*.
 - c. Richard Kearney, "Evil, monstrosity, and the sublime" *Strangers, Gods, and Monsters: The Ideas of the Otherness*.
 - d. Margrit Shidrick, "Monsters, Marvels, and Meaning," *Embodying the Monster*.

Week 2

3. Monsters in early myth: selections from *Kojiki*, *Nihon shoki*, and *Fudoki*
4. Nature as Supernatural: The Indigenous Religion Shinto
 - a. Robert Ellwood, "Japanese Religion in Historical Perspective," *Japanese Religions: A Cultural Reader*.
 - b. Julie Wolfgram, "Oni: The Japanese Demon," *Japanese Ghosts and Demons*.
 - c. Gerald Figal, "The Question of Monsters and Ancestor Worship," *Productions of Culture in Japan*.
 - d. Matthew Welch, "Shoki, the Demon Queller," *Japanese Ghosts and Demons*.

Week 3

5. The spirit of things: viewing of film *Princess Mononoke*.
6. The spirit of things: finish viewing film *Princess Mononoke*. Discussion.

Week 4

7. Controlling the spirits and demons: Yin-yang Master Abe no Seimei (921-1005)
 - a. Selections of stories about Seimei from Tyler, *Japanese Tales*.
 - b. Marian Ury, "A Note on the Heian Supernatural," *Journal of the Association of Teachers of Japanese* 22.2 (Nov. 1988): 189-194.
 - c. Viewing of excerpts from film *Onmyōji*
 - d. Overview of Seimei in the popular imagination/the Seimei boom of the late 20th/21st century.
8. Spirit Possession in *The Tale of Genji*
 - a. "Yūgao" chapter of *The Tale of Genji* and excerpts of other spirit possession scenes.
 - b. Viewing of excerpts from the animation film *Tale of Genji*

Week 5

9. Buddhism and monsters
 - a. Selections of anecdotal tales from *Konjaku monogatari* relating the saving of souls by benevolent Buddhist figures.

- b. The Hell Picture Scrolls (*Jigoku zōshi*).

10. Medieval Warriors and the Monstrous

- a. Selections from *The Tale of the Heike*.
- b. Elizabeth Oyler, "Nue and Other Monsters in Heike monogatari," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 68:2 (Dec. 2008): 1-32.

Week 6

11. Gender and monsters: Women as Foxes, Ghosts, and Mountain Hags

- a. Selection of folk tales about foxes transformed as beautiful women.
- b. Selection of folk tales about female vengeful ghosts.
- c. Selection of folk tales about *yamauba* (mountain hags).

12. Gender and monsters: Momotarō, the Peach Boy

- a. F. Hadland Davis, "The Adventures of Momotaro, the Peach Boy," *Myths and Legends of Japan*.

Week 7

13. Liminal spaces and Demons (*oni*)

- a. Selection of folk tales about *oni*.
- b. Selections from Noriko Reider, *Japanese Demon Lore: Oni from Ancient Times to the Present*.

14. *Oni* in modern times

- a. Viewings of excerpts from *Gegege no Kitararō* (TV series) and *Spirited Away*.

Week 8

15. Monsters on the Stage in Early Modern Japan

- a. Selections from "Yotsuya kaidan," in "Ghosts and Nineteenth Century Kabuki," *Early Modern Japanese Literature: An Anthology*.
- b. "Thunderbolt," *Traditional Japanese Theater: An Anthology of Plays*.

16. Monsters in Early Modern Japan

- a. "One Hundred Demons and One Hundred Supernatural Tales," *Japanese Ghosts and Demons*.
- b. "Rootless Weeds" and "The Life of Shidoken," *Early Japanese Literature: An Anthology*.

Week 9

17/18. The Meiji Restoration and the Spirits of Revolution

- a. Ueda Akinari, "Shiramine," *Tales of Moonlight and Rain*.
- b. Anne Walthall, "Sakura Sōgorō," *Peasant Uprisings*.
- c. Gerald Figal, "Bakumatsu Bakemono" and "Words and Changing Things," *Civilization and Monsters*.
- d. M. William Steele, "Edo in 1868: The View from Below," *Monumenta Nipponica* 45.2.
- e. Andrew Marcus, "The Carnival of Edo," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 45:2 (1985)

Week 10

19/20. Modernization: Science vs. Monster

- a. Cawson, "The Monster in Fantasy and Reality," *The Monsters in the Mind*.
- b. Gerald Figal, "Modern Science and the Folk" and "Modern 'Science' of the Folk," *Civilization and Monsters*.
- c. Michael Dylan Foster, "Strange Games and Enchanted Science: The Mystery of Kokkuri," *Journal of Asian Studies* 65.5 (2006).

Week 11

21/22. WWII: The Enemy as Monster

- a. Excerpt from "Kirishitan Monogatari."
- b. Frank Schodt, "A Thousand Years of Comics," *The World of Japanese Comics*.
- c. John Dower, "The Demonic Other," "Apes and Others," and "Lesser Men and Supermen," *War Without Mercy*.

Week 12

23/24. The Nuclear Bomb and Monstrosity

- a. Robert Jay Lifton, "Monsters and Mockery," *Death in Life*.
- b. William Tsutsui, "Introduction," *In Godzilla's Footsteps*.
- c. Susan Napier, "When Godzilla Speaks," *In Godzilla's Footsteps*.
- d. Freda Freiburg, "Akira and the Postnuclear Sublime," *Hibakusha Cinema*.

Week 13

25/26. Technology and the Monstrous

- a. Simon Partner, "Technologies of Desire," *Assembled in Japan: Electrical Goods and the Making of the Japanese Consumer*.
- b. Susan Napier, "Akira and Ranma 1/2: The Monstrous Adolescent," "Doll Parts: Technology and the Body in *Ghosts in the Shell*," and "Ghosts and Bodies: The Technological Body," *Anime: From Akira to Princess Mononoke*.
- c.

Week 14

27/28. Pokémon and the Global Monster

- a. Anne Allison, "Pokémon: Getting Monsters and Communicating Capitalism," and "Gotta Catch 'Em All," *Millennial Monsters*.
- b. Christine Yano, "Panic Attacks: Anti-Pokémon Voices in the Global Market," *Pikachū's Global Adventure*.

Week 15

Student Presentations