

Monsters, Media, and the History of the Supernatural in Modern Japan

Kyoto Consortium for Japanese Studies

Instructor: Drew Richardson (dkrichar@ucsc.edu) Time and Location TBD

Objectives

This course is a study of modern Japanese history from the late Edo period to the present day. It examines the cultural lives of monsters and transformations in meaning through major events in Japanese history. This course is an examination of the intellectual, cultural, and social histories of monsters and their entanglement with the emergence of science and folklore; the formation of the nation-state; racism, politics, and war; urbanization and kinship structures; and capitalism and virtual worlds.

Students will learn the importance of monsters in each of these historical contexts, and though the meanings inscribed on monsters are particular to a time and a place, they have long afterlives. The significance of Japanese monsters is an accumulation of layered meanings. Monsters are unstable, unpredictable and multi-faceted, and haunt each moment with the possible return of their collected pasts. Each week we study a different period and consider new meanings for monsters within that historical context, while also considering the influence of previous meanings on each moment.

Learning Outcomes

SKILL DEVELOPMENT

- Identifying key arguments
- Reading challenging material and historical monographs
- Researching and locating historical documents
- Presenting and demonstrating the importance of humanities research
- Honing visual as well as textual analysis in a variety of media
- Distinguishing between and integrating primary and secondary sources

SUBJECT KNOWLEDGE

- Reinforcing knowledge of main themes, events, and persona of modern Japanese history
- Detailed knowledge of major movements in Japanese intellectual and cultural history
- Historical contextualization of cultural phenomena
- Understanding multiple theoretical frameworks
- Developing tolerance for ambiguity and imbricated meanings

Class Materials

Required: Foster, Michael Dylan. *The Book of Yokai: Mysterious Creatures of Japanese Folklore*. Oakland, CA: California UP, 2015.

All other texts are available as .pdfs on the course website.

Most weeks contain readings from secondary and primary sources, marked as '(S)' and '(P),' respectively. Students are advised to read the secondary source materials first and then apply their concepts to readings of primary sources.

Evaluation

Participation Quizzes	20%
Primary Source Analyses (x10)	30%
Secondary Source Reading Assignment (x10)	20%
Essay Outline & Annotated Bibliography/Mediography	10%
Mediographical Monster Essay	20%

Participation

Ten times throughout the quarter, at random intervals, students will receive a simple pop quiz at the end of class. Each pop quiz is worth two percent (10 x 2% = 20%). Pop quizzes are based exclusively on the content of the textbooks.

Missed quizzes cannot be made up. Students who miss many classes are still able to achieve a high score if they complete all four essays and the final exam.

Field Trips

This course includes five field trips to historical sites in the Kyoto area; participation in these trips is mandatory. Details and location of these trips are subject to change.

- 1.) Mount Kurama and Kurama-dera Temple (Tengu Hike for Monsters and Place Unit)
- 2.) Nintendo Museum? (Depending on ticket availability)
- 3.) "Kaikai Yokai Festival," Toei Studio Park (This fieldtrip may be rescheduled depending on availability)
- 4.) Seimei Shrine (Occult Boom and Onmyodo sorcery Unit)
- 5.) Kyoto International Manga Museum (May be rescheduled depending on special exhibit offerings.)

Pokelids Scouting Exercise

Primary Source Analyses

Primary sources are the original materials that historians study to understand the past; these include: letters,

scrolls documents, photographs, paintings, postcards, literary materials, etc. Part of doing historical work is understanding how a primary source fits into a broader context. Moreover, media studies uncovers the ways that different media operated within a larger environment of production, dissemination, adaptation, and usage. In this course, students will examine a new primary source each week and place it within a historical context and media environment.

At the beginning of week, students are required to submit a one-page primary source analysis on each of the primary source readings assigned that week -- there is one per week. Primary sources are indicated on the schedule by (P). In total students will complete fourteen primary source analyses for a total of 30% of their final grade.

Use the “Primary Source Analysis Worksheet” to answer the questions about each primary source.

Extra-credit Opportunity: In meeting five, there is an optional reading for extra credit. If students complete an additional Primary Source Analysis for this reading, it will replace their lowest score within this category.

Note: the lowest grade will only be replaced if all primary source analyses have been completed.

Secondary Source Reading Assignment

Secondary sources are the commentary and analyses of other scholars that historians use to frame their arguments. Often, these are other works of history or other disciplines such as literature, film, or anthropology. Historians use secondary sources to engage with other scholars in their field. Close reading of secondary sources allows us to understand the “conversation” of history – that is, the central issues and discussions that frame a topic. In this course, these are all the ways that monsters matter.

At the end of each week, students will complete a reading assignment on the secondary source readings of that week.

Mediographical Essay, Outline & Annotated Bibliography/Mediography

For this research-based project, students will select any Japanese monster and prepare to write a “mediographical essay.” This assignment allows students to track the changes historical contexts of a single monster, as well as its media appearances.

The essay should introduce the reader to your monster. It must discuss any changes in name, visual representation, characteristics, and meaning across time. The essay should also explain the significance of the monster in historical contexts – in what historical contexts does the monster (re)emerge? What is the possible meanings for the monster in each of these contexts? (play, nature, science, folklore, politics, nationalism, race, war, environmentalism, capital, affect, databases, travel, etc.)

To help you choose a monster, refer to the “Yokai Codex” in Michael Dylan Foster’s *The Book of Yokai*. Students are encouraged to discuss their choice with me during office hours. Students are also encouraged to review the model provided.

This assignment consists of two parts with different deadlines. The components are worth 10% and 20% of the final grade, respectively, for a total of 30%.

Week 10: Outline & Annotated Bibliography / Mediography due

Week 14 : Essay Due

Lecture Schedule & Readings

Readings must be completed before the class in which they are listed as we will discuss them in class. Viewing lists media that may be shown in class [in part or in full.] It is also optional viewing for students who want to trace the evolution of fantasy genre tropes.

Week I

INTRODUCTION TO JAPANESE MONSTERS

(S) Reading 1 Foster, Michael Dylan. "Introducing Yokai," *The Book of Yokai: Mysterious Creatures of Japanese Folklore*. Oakland, CA: California UP, 2015: 3-32.

Lecture 1 Syllabus, Course Design, Introductions / "What are Yokai and Why Do Monsters Matter?"

"*Japanese Yokai - 1. Japan, the Land of Yokai*," Japan Foundation, 2021.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=egXQKQC7ur4>

"*Japanese Yokai - 2. Birth of the Yokai*," Japan Foundation, 2021.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w-OvkJji6sA>

"*Japanese Yokai - 3. Oni, the Quintessential Yokai*," Japan Foundation, 2021.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QgaYoKebk2U>

Viewing

"*Japanese Yokai - 4. Kappa, the Quintessential Yokai*," Japan Foundation, 2021.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V6twmBa6fUw>

"*Japanese Yokai - 5. The Edo Period Yokai Explosion*," Japan Foundation, 2021.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QUh0ba64Q6A>

"*Japanese Yokai - 6. Hokusai and Kuniyoshi*," Japan Foundation, 2021.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wEhHITcrHe0>

"*Japanese Yokai - 7. The Spread of Yokai Culture*," Japan Foundation, 2021.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_A1LCbNwnEE

(S) Reading 2 Foster, Michael Dylan. "Shape-Shifting History," *The Book of Yokai: Mysterious Creatures of Japanese Folklore*. Oakland, CA: California UP, 2015: 33-73.

Lecture 2 Monster Scrolls and Late Edo Monster Culture

(P) Reading Yumoto, Koichi. "Picture Scrolls, A Cast of Colorful Yokai," *Yokai Museum: The Art of Japanese Supernatural Beings from YUMOTO Koichi Collection*. Tokyo: PIE International, 2013: excerpts.

Week II

APPROACHES TO MONSTER STUDIES

(S) Reading 1

Foster, Michael Dylan. "Yokai Practice/Yokai Theory," *The Book of Yokai: Mysterious Creatures of Japanese Folklore*. Oakland, CA: California UP, 2015: 74-101.

Lecture 1

Yokai Theory, Monster Theory, and the Growth of Yokai Studies

Viewing in Section

Night Parade of a Hundred Demons Clips (*Pom Poko*, *Spirited Away*, *Paprika*)
[Download from Canvas]

(S) Reading 2

Foster, Michael Dylan. "Natural History of the Weird," *Pandemonium and Parade: Japanese Monsters and the Culture of Yokai*, 30-76.

Lecture 2

Thinking Through the Encyclopedia

(P) Reading

Toriyama, Sekien. "The Illustrated Demon Horde's Night Parade," *Japandemonium Illustrated: The Yokai Encyclopedias of Toriyama Sekien*, Eds. Matt Alt and Hiroko Yoda, 1-74.

Week III

MONSTERS AND THE NATION; MONSTERS AND PLACE

(S) Reading 1

Hansen, Wilburn. *When Tengu Talk: Hirata Atsutane's Ethnography of the Other World*. Honolulu: Hawai'i UP, 2009: 42-73.

Lecture 1

Raising National Spirits: Hirata Kokugaku and Supernatural Nativism

Viewing in Section

"Yukionna," *Kwaidan*. Directed by Kobayashi Masaki, Toho, 1965.
[Download from Canvas]

(S) Reading 2

Marcon, Federico. "Nature in Cultural Circles," and "Nature Exhibited," *The Knowledge of Nature and the Nature of Knowledge in Early Modern Japan*. Chicago: Chicago UP, 2015: 179-227.

Lecture 2

Regional Identity and Monsters of the Snow Country

(P) Reading

Suzuki Bokushi. *Snow Country Tales: Life in the Other Japan*. Tokyo: John Weatherhill, Inc., 1986: 3-21, "Snow Insects" 37-38, "Foxfire" 99-101, "The Giant Cat of Tomariyama" 146-148, "Strange Beasts" 274-280.

FIELD TRIP #1

Week IV

CHINESE ROOTS IN FOLKLORE AND LEGEND

(S) Reading 1

Fleming, William. *Strange Tales from Edo: Rewriting Chinese Fiction in Early Modern Japan*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2023: excerpts.

- Lecture 1 Adapting Chinese Tales as Kidan and Kaidan
Tales of Moonlight and Rain.
- Viewing *Suikoden* (Hokusai illustrations, 1805)
- (S) Reading 2 Robert J. Antony, *Rats, Cats, Rogues, and Heroes: Glimpses of China's Hidden Past*, excerpts.
- Lecture 2 Water Margin, Wuxia, and the Suikoden Boom
- (P) Reading Pu Songling, *Strange Tales from a Chinese Studio*. (New York, Penguin Classics): 110-149.
 Takizawa Bakin, Glynne Walley trans., *Eight Dogs or Hakkenden: Part One, An Ill Considered Jest*, 273-329.

Week V

SCIENCE, MODERN MONSTERS, AND MEIJI JAPAN

- (S) Reading 1 Figal, Gerald. "Bakumatsu Bakemono," and "Modern Science of the Folk," *Civilization and Monsters: Spirits of Modernity in Meiji Japan*. Durham: Duke UP, 2007: 21-37, 77-104.
- Lecture 1 From Catfish to Modern Monsters and the Meiji State
- Viewing in Section *Eijanaika*. Directed by Imamura Shohei, Shochiku Films Ltd., 1981.
 [Download from Canvas]
- (S) Reading 2 Tanaka, Stefan. "Nothing is the Way it Should Be," *New Times in Modern Japan*. New Jersey: Princeton UP, 54-84.
- Lecture 2 New Disciplines; New Temporalities; and World-Renewal
- (P) Reading Minakata, Kumagusu. "Remarkable Sounds." *Nature*. 1896: No. 1371, Vol. 53, 318.
 ---. "Remarkable Sounds." *Nature*. 1896: No. 1375, Vol. 53, 414.
 ---. "Remarkable Sounds." *Nature*. 1896: No. 1383, Vol. 53, 605.
 ---. "Remarkable Sounds." *Nature*. 1896: No. 1387, Vol. 54, 78.
 ---. "Illogicality concerning Ghosts." *Nature*. 1900: No. 1589, Vol. 61, 564.
 ---. "Hobgoblins' Claws." *Notes & Queries*. 1904: s10-I, 93.
 ---. "Ghosts' Markets." *Notes & Queries*. 1904: s10-I, 206.
 ---. "Corpse Bleeding in Presence of the Murderer." *Notes & Queries*. 1911: s11-III, 398.

Week VI

FOLKLORE AND MINZOKUGAKU

- (S) Reading 1 Christy, Alan. "The Discipline of the Foot," and "Western Social Science and the Japanese Task," *A Discipline on Foot: Inventing Native Japanese Ethnography, 1910-1945*: 169-214.

- Lecture 1 The Birth of Japanese Folklore Studies
- Viewing in Section "Oshirasama," Directed by Saga Takako & Haruhiko, The Throat Singing Society, 2021. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wXX2XR08H8o>
 "Zashiki-Warashi, Part 2," *Mononoke*. Directed by Nakamura Kenji, Toei Animation, 2007. [Download from Canvas]
- (S) Reading 2 Foster, Michael Dylan. "Museum of the Weird," *Pandemonium and Parade: Japanese Monsters and the Culture of Yokai*. Berkeley: California UP, 2005: 115-59
- Lecture 2 Authenticity, Preservation, and Museumification
- Yanagita, Kunio. *The Legends of Tono*. Tr. Ronald Morse. Plymouth, UK: Lexington Books, 2008: 5-74.
 [Optional Reading for Extra Credit Primary Source Analysis]:
- (P) Reading Mizuki, Shigeru. *Tono Monogatari*. Translated by Zack Davisson. Montreal: Drawn & Quarterly, 2021: excerpts.

FIELD TRIP #2

Week VII

TRANSNATIONAL MONSTER MAKING

- (S) Reading 1 Manning, P. (2019). Goblin spiders, ghosts of flowers and butterfly fantasies: Lafcadio Hearn's transnational, transmedia and trans-species aesthetics of the weird. *Japan Forum*, 32(2), 259–283.
- Lecture 1 Re-writing Yuki-onna and Japanese Monstrosity in the works of Lafcadio Hearn
- Viewing *Kwaidan* (1965)
- (S) Reading 2 Foster, Michael Dylan. "Museum of the Weird," *Pandemonium and Parade: Japanese Monsters and the Culture of Yokai*. Berkeley: California UP, 2005: 115-59
- Lecture 2 H.P. Lovecraft and the Cthulhu Mythos in Japan
- (P) Reading Selections from *Lair of the Hidden Gods: Night Voices, Night Journeys*. (2005) Inoue Masahiko, trans. Edward Lipsett, "Night Voices, Night Journeys. Kamino Okina, trans. Steven P. Venti, "27 May 1945."

Week VIII

MONSTERS AND WAR

- (S) Reading 1 Dower, John. *War Without Mercy: Race & Power in the Pacific War*. New York: Random House, 1986: 234-262.
- Lecture 1 Racializing Monsters: Ijin, Demons, and the Momotaro Paradigm
- Viewing *Momotaro's Sea Eagles*. Directed by Seo Mitsuyo, Shochiku, 1942.
Godzilla vs Mechagodzilla. Directed by Fukuda Junji, Toho, 1974.
[Download from Canvas]
- (S) Reading 2 Papp, Zilia. "Monsters at War: The Great Yokai Wars, 1968-2005," *Mechademia 4: War/Time*: 225-239.
Igarashi, Yoshikuni. "Naming the Unnameable," *Bodies of Memory: Narratives of War in Postwar Japanese Culture, 1945-1970*: excerpts.
- Lecture 2 Fighting Monsters in the Post-War
- (P) Reading *Yokai Daisenso*. Dir. Kuroda Yoshiyuki, Daiei Film, 1968.
- FIELD TRIP #3

Week IX

ENDANGERED MONSTERS

- (S) Reading 1 Ivy, Marilyn. "Narrative Returns, Uncanny Topographies," *Discourses of the Vanishing: Modernity, Phantasm, Japan*. Chicago: Chicago UP, 1995: 98-140
- Lecture 1 Re-Discovering Monsters' 'Native Place'
- Viewing *Pom Poko*. Directed by Isao Takahata, Studio Ghibli, 1994.
[Download from Canvas]
- (S) Reading 2 Ortabasi, Melek. "(Re)animating Folklore: Raccoon Dogs, Foxes and Other Supernatural Japanese Citizens in Takahata Isao's Heisei tanuki gassen pompoko." *Marvels & Tales*. Vol. 27.2, *The Fairy Tale in Japan* (2013): 254-275.
- Lecture 2 Environmentalism and Monstrous Ecologies
- (P) Reading Mizuki, Shigeru. *The Birth of Kitaro*. Translated by Zack Davisson. Montreal: Drawn & Quarterly, 2016.

Week X

ONMYODO SORCERY AND THE OCCULT BOOM

(S) Reading 1

Noriko Reader, *Japanese Demon Lore: Oni from Ancient Times to the Present*, 113.

Lecture 1

Re-Orienting the Cosmos: *Teito Monogatari*

Viewing

Tokyo: The Last Megalopolis (1988), *The Great Yokai War* (2005), *The Great Yokai War: Guardian* (2021)

(S) Reading 2

Laura Miller, "Extreme Makeover for a Heian-era Wizard," *Mechademia*, Vol. 2.

Lecture 2

The Onmyodo & Abe no Seimei Booms

Masao Higashi, "A Mammoth Story which Leads Reality: The Impact of *Teito Monogatari*," *Kwai* vol. 23. ; Aramata Hiroshi, *Teito Monogatari* (excerpts.)

(P) Reading

FIELD TRIP #4

Week XI

MONSTROUS CAPITAL, MONSTROUS COLLECTION

(S) Reading 1

Allison, Anne. "Pokemon: Getting Monsters and Communicating Capitalism," in *Millennial Monsters: Japanese Toys and the Global Imagination*. Berkeley: California UP, 2006: 192-233.

Lecture 1

Japanese Toys and the Media Mix

"Bye Bye Butterfree," *Pocket Monsters*. Directed by Tamagawa Akihiro, TV Tokyo, 1997.
[Download from Canvas]

Viewing

"Yokai are Here!/A New Student." *Yo-Kai Watch*. Directed by Ushiro Shinji, TV Tokyo, 2014.

[Download from Canvas]

(S) Reading 2

Richardson, Drew. "Pokémon, Yo-Kai Watch, Yuru Kyara: Economies of Friendship and Ethnography at Play." *Replaying Japan* 3 (2021): 115-125.
DOI: <http://doi.org/10.34382/00014540>

Lecture 2

Capitalism and Virtual Monsters

(P) Reading

"Pokemon Trainer's Guide." Instruction Manual. Game Freak, *Pokemon Blue*, 1998.
"Pokemon Official Nintendo Player's Guide." *Nintendo Power*. 1998: excerpts.

Week XII

MONSTERS, FRIENDSHIP, AND AFFECT

(S) Reading 1

Raffles, Hugh. "Yearnings." *Insectopedia*. New York: Vintage Books, 2010: 343-383.

<u>Lecture 1</u>	Love for Bugs and the Beetle Boom: An Insectile History of Monsters
<u>Viewing in Section</u>	<i>Beetle Queen Conquers Tokyo</i> . Directed by Jessica Oreck, Myriapod Productions, 2009. [Download from Canvas]
<u>(S) Reading 2</u>	Kinsella, Sharon. "Cuties in Japan." <i>Women, Media, and Consumption in Japan</i> . Honolulu: Hawaii UP, 1995: 220-252.
<u>Lecture 2</u>	Kawaii Characters and Monstrous Affect
<u>(P) Reading</u>	Midorikawa, Yuki. <i>Natsume's Book of Friends</i> , Vol. 1. San Francisco: VIZ Media LLC, 2010: 5-105.
Week XIII	MAKING MONSTERS: THE DATABASE AND FOLKLORESQUE
<u>(S) Reading 1</u>	Foster, Michael Dylan and Jeffrey Tolbert. "Introduction" and "The Folkloresque Circle: Toward a Theory of Fuzzy Allusion," <i>The Folkloresque: Reframing Folklore in a Popular Culture World</i> . Boulder: Colorado UP, 2016: excerpts.
<u>Lecture 1</u>	Inventing 'Fakelore' & Database Monsters
<u>Viewing</u>	"Nyango Star: The Heavy Metal Cat Mascot Saving a Japanese Farm." Vice News, 2019. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dntu3VDep8w "A National Contest of 865 Characters -- the Yuru Kyara Grand Prix." ANN News, 2012. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5XD3L-ZIQA4 "Chiitan." <i>Last Week Tonight with John Oliver</i> . HBO, 2019. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f4fVdf4pNEc
<u>(S) Reading 2</u>	Azuma, Hiroki. "Database Animals," <i>Otaku: Japan's Database Animals</i> . Trans. Jonathan E. Abel and Shion Kono. Minneapolis: Minnesota UP: 3-54.
<u>Lecture 2</u>	The Yuru Kyara Explosion
<u>(P) Reading</u>	"Pickers of Empty Cocoons." <i>Mushishi</i> . Television. Directed by Nagamama Hiroshi, Artland, 2006.
	FIELD TRIP #5
Week XIV	MONSTERS IN GLOBAL FANTASY
<u>(S) Reading 1</u>	Susan Napier, <i>Miyazaki World</i> , excerpts.
<u>Lecture 1</u>	The Fantasy of Studio Ghibli

Viewing

On Your Mark, Princess Mononoke, Spirited Away

(S) Reading 2

Price, Paul. "A survey of the story elements of isekai manga." *Journal of Anime and Manga Studies*, vol. 2 (2021).

Lecture 2

Isekai and the Emergence of Global Fantasy

(P) Reading

Hayao Miyazaki, *Starting Point: 1979-1996*, excerpts.
Taiki Kawakami, *That Time I got Reincarnated as a Slime*.