Course Description and Objectives:

Japan has a rich tradition of myths, folktales and ghost stories. In this course, we will examine a wide selection of tales, including ancient myths, Buddhist-themed tales, and traditional folktales. We will also study the various manifestations of supernatural yōkai 妖怪 figures from folklore such as ghosts, shape-shifters, and demons in a variety of media, including woodblock prints, anime, and film. In addition, we will examine the ways in which social practice, spiritual beliefs, and political strategies have been linked to folklore in Japan.

Upon successful completion of this course, you should be able to:

- Identify key figures from folklore, and their characteristic features and behaviors, and explain why nearly all supernatural creatures have complex natures;
- Explain the roles played by certain animals in Japanese culture, and the changing attributes people have ascribed to them;
- Interpret the folk motifs in visual media, such as Japanese prints and anime;
- Interpret folktales from the perspectives of religious beliefs, social practice, and political ideology;
- Recognize similarities and differences between Japanese and European folktales with similar themes;
- Explain the symbolic meaning of social practices related to the relationship between the dead and the living;
- Understand the ways in which folklore has been strategically adapted to new contexts such as environmentalism and tourism promotion in the process of folklorism and town revitalization.

Textbooks and Other Required Materials:


**Course Packet (CP):** Selected folktales, translated from the Japanese (Nihon mukashibanashi by Tsubota Jōji) by Ann Wehmeyer and Jonathan Smith. Target Copy, Campus, 1412 W. University Ave., 352-376-3826, service@target-copy.com.

**Course Reserves (CR):** Selected journal articles and book chapters, required reading unless otherwise indicated. Access through "Course Reserves" on the course Canvas site, or on the UF Libraries site, and select JPT 4502 Japanese Folklore. Then, find and open the item in question.

**Resources in Sakai:** A few articles will be found here, as noted in the Daily Schedule.

**Course prerequisites and credits:**

There are no prerequisites for this course. This course is taught entirely in English. Japanese terms will be used alongside their English equivalents, for the benefit of those who know Japanese, but such use is for informational purposes only. For Japanese terms for which there is no established translation, the Japanese term will be used along with an explanation of its meaning. Successful completion of the course satisfies 3 credits H and N General Education requirements.

**Policies and Expectations:**

a. **The Honor Code:** *We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.* On all work submitted for credit by students at the university, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." All sources of information, including print, digital, and verbal, must be acknowledged. Verbatim materials must be indicated as such with quotations marks, and cited.

b. **Special Accommodations:** Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. Please visit me during office hours early in the semester.

c. **Attendance and Participation:** Class sessions will combine lectures, discussions, and presentations. Your attendance and active participation is essential to the success of the course, and to your grade.

d. **Preparation and Assignments:** Read the assigned text(s) carefully ahead of time, and be prepared to discuss them on the date that they appear in the Daily Schedule. All assignments, exams and projects are due on the date indicated in the Daily Schedule. Late submissions will be downgraded by 5% for each day beyond the deadline.
e. **Make-up Exams**: Prior notification to awehmeye@ufl.edu, or 273-2961, and written documentation of illness or family emergency is required. Consult with instructor to schedule the make-up exam.

f. **Instructor evaluations**: Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at [https://evaluations.ufl.edu](https://evaluations.ufl.edu). Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at [https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/](https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/).

**Course Requirements:**

a. You are required to **contribute to the class as an active and thoughtful participant**. This can be done by such means as posing questions, providing examples, offering interpretations, and critiquing the various approaches and methodologies.

b. There will be **short pop quizzes** at regular intervals on the assigned readings that will address identification/recognition of main points in the reading. You should be able to answer the questions easily provided you have completed the assigned readings.

c. **Midterm Exam, 10/04/16**. You need to demonstrate that you have learned basic concepts and can apply them in multiple choice, true/false, and short-answer questions. In essay questions, you should show the ability to apply an independent perspective in critical arguments, and communicate this effectively. Study guides and sample questions/responses will be provided.

d. **Group Presentation**. In teams of 3-4 members, you will give a 20-30 minute presentation on one or more of the assigned readings.

1. Please identify which of the following you wish to participate in, and sign-up for that group in *People ➔ Group presentation* on Canvas.
   1. **Tengu** (a type of supernatural figure associated with Buddhism), R 09/15/16
   2. **Yamauba** (mountain witch), R 10/06/16
   3. **Tanuki** (raccoon dog) T 11/01/16
   4. **Kappa** (water imp), T 11/08/16
   5. **Foxes**, R 11/10/16
   6. **Kuchi-sake onna and other women in J-horror**, R 12/01/16
2. Your presentation should provide a close focus on one or more aspects of the themes, figures and/or key aspects of the story lines highlighted in the readings.
3. Provide background information, and new information, as appropriate, along with your own interpretation of the material.
4. The presentation should be supported by visual images (artworks, photos, diagrams) and film or anime clips, as appropriate.
5. Your team should pose questions for the class.
6. The source for the images and clips should be cited in a list of Reference at the end of your presentation, along with all sources for the information in your presentation.
7. **One member of your group must submit a copy of your presentation (slides or other) to Group Presentation in Assignments on Canvas. This is due on the day of your presentation.**
8. Planning and Evaluation
1. **Engagement with material**
   - For primary sources, are your interpretations persuasive, and supported by direct reference to the material?
   - For secondary sources, are your positions distinguished from the author’s?
   - Are you guiding the class to a complex engagement with the work and topic?
   - Are the stakes clear?
   - Is the way the topic and work relates to Japanese culture clear?

2. **Exposition and Style**
   - Did you benefit from consulting other resources? Were you able to convey the fruits of your work to classmates?
   - Are the visual aids interesting and creative? Do they support and add to the understanding of the presentation?
   - Do all members of the group participate in the presentation?
   - Does the presentation flow well? (ease of delivery and transition, good eye contact, appropriate idiom)

3. **Posing and handling questions**
   - Did you pose questions to the class that allowed for expansion of the material?
   - When responding to class member questions, were you able to introduce new information and perspectives through your answers?
   - Were you able to guide discussion back to the material as you fielded questions and comments?

   1. **Suggested topics:** some options follow, but you are not limited to these.
      1. Select a tale to translate from Miyagi Denshō no Kura (伝承之蔵 ‘Warehouse of Legends’) website at [http://legend.main.jp/](http://legend.main.jp/). Translate the tale, and analyze the theme(s) of the tale by relating and comparing them to similar theme(s) in other Japanese tales, or tales from other countries.
      2. Research and develop a particular theme by looking at a variety of tales and/or media. Past examples that worked well include aspects of the portrayal of women; heavenly spouses in folktales and non-human paramours in anime; humor in folktales; vengeful ghosts; manipulative relationships and their consequences; rivers and bridges as mediators between life and death.
      3. Compare and contrast a particular theme or figure in Japanese folktales and folktales of some other country or tradition. A past successful example was the dog in Columbian folktales versus the wolf in Japanese folktales.
      4. Study the ways in which traditional supernatural figures are featured in contemporary media, and how they contribute to the messages of the film, manga, or anime.
      5. Collect some scary tales from Japanese acquaintances in English (summarize the telling), and analyze their themes. These can be traditional, personal, or urban folklore.
   2. **Three steps:** Please use Microsoft Word or PDF files.
      1. **Submit Abstract to Canvas by 09/15/16 Thursday.**
         - The abstract should be a one paragraph statement that clearly identifies your topic, explains why you are interested in it, and what you hope to find out about it.
2. **Submit Draft to Canvas by 10/27/16 Tuesday.**
   - Draft should be nearly complete version of your paper, and must include list of references. Incomplete sections of the paper should be presented in outline form. I will provide feedback on content and style.

3. **Submit final version to Canvas by 11/17/16 Thursday.**
   - Format should follow the Chicago Manual of Style (see “Chicago Crib Sheet” in Files section on Canvas—guidelines for papers are toward the end of the guide). Paper should include a bibliography, and may include foot or endnotes. You may follow another established style (e.g., MLA, specific academic journal) as long as you are consistent.

4. A bibliography of selected references in Japanese Folklore studies is available on Canvas. I am happy to provide other suggestions during office hours or via email. Please use a variety of sources in your research on this paper, including books, journal articles, and internet sites. Google Scholar [http://scholar.google.com/](http://scholar.google.com/) is a great way to find material (input subject area, etc. into the search window). *Do not rely solely on information gleaned from anecdotal websites.*

**Grades and Evaluation:**

a. Grades will be determined as follows:
   - a. Pop quizzes 10%
   - b. Attendance and participation 10%
   - c. Mid-term Exam 25%
   - d. Group Presentation 20%
   - e. Research Paper 30%
     - i. Abstract 02%
     - ii. Draft 03%
     - iii. Final version 25%

b. Grading Scale:

   A = 93 – 100%, A- = 90 – 92%
   B+ = 87 – 89%, B = 83 – 86%, B- = 80 – 82%
   C+ = 77 – 79%, C = 73 – 76%, C- = 70 – 72%
   D+ = 67 – 69%, D = 63 – 66%, D- = 60 – 62%
   E = less than 60%

**DAILY SCHEDULE:** Subject to adjustment as necessary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assigned Readings</th>
<th>In-class/Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 1</strong> <strong>Origins:</strong> Creation and land-settling myths</td>
<td><strong>08/23/16</strong> Introduction to course; genres in oral literature</td>
<td>Syllabus Foster, “About Folklore,” p. 11-32.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
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| **08/25/16** | Creation myths; Amaterasu (the Sun Goddess) and the Imperial line | *Kojiki*, translated by Gustav Heldt, p. 7-25. CR  
*Kojiki*-related entries in *Ashkenazi*  
- “Izanagi and Izanami,” *JM* p. 172-177.  
- “Food deities,” *JM*, p. 146-147.  

**Week 2 Heavenly and earthly deities**

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<th>Date</th>
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| **08/30/16** | Land deities | *Kojiki*, translated by Donald L. Philippi, Chapters 21-28, p. 93-112. CR  
“Okuninushi,” p. 228-230, *JM* |

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| **09/01/16** | Land deities and early heroes | *Nihon shoki*, Vol.1, p. 92-95 (story of Toyotamahime and Hiko-hohodemi); p. 200-211 (story of Yamato Takeru). Titled “Nihongi” in CR.  
- “Sukunabikona,” *JM*, p. 256-257.  |

**Week 3 Setsuwa (anecdotal tales) and Buddhist teachings**

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<tr>
<td><strong>09/08/6</strong></td>
<td><em>Konjakumonogatari shū</em> (Tales of Times Now Past), ca. 1120 Ongaeshi tales (恩返し, repayment of kindness)</td>
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</table>
- Watson, p. 23-40.  
- Resources in Canvas.  
- “The Crane Returns a Favor,” “The Land of Mice,” “The Little Snot-Nosed Brat,” Nos. 7, 8, 9, CP.  |

**Week 4 Jizō Bodhisattva and Tengu in Buddhist tales**
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  - “The Bush Warbler’s Lotus Sutra,” No. 17, CP.  
| 09/15/16  | Medieval Buddhist tales; tengu | - Research paper abstract due  
  - “Tengu—Mountain Goblin,” Foster, p. 130-139.  
  - “The Tengu’s Hiding Cloak,” No. 43, CP. |
|          | Research paper abstract due | Group Presentation 1: Tengu |
|          | Week 5 Strange happenings in the medieval world | |
| 09/20/16  | Medieval secular tales; oni (demons) | - Watson, p. 65-86.  
  - “The Tale of the Demons and the First Dream of the New Year,” No. 2; “Little One-inch,” No. 44, CP.  
  - Recommended:  
| 09/22/16  | Evolution of folktales | - Watson, p. 87-94.  
  - Foster, “Nekomata—Split-tailed cat or forked cat,” “Bakeneko—Monster cat or goblin cat,” p. 213-216.  
  - Film viewing: Kuroneko, 1968, Kaneto Shindo, Dir., 99 minutes |
| 09/27/16  | Uji shūi monogatari (A Collection of Tales from Uji, early 13th c) and related modern folktales | - Watson, p. 95-119.  
| 09/29/16  | The varied images of | - Watson, p. 120-148. |
### Week 7  **Yamauba, the Mountain Witch—supernatural space**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>T 10/04/16</th>
<th>Midterm Exam, in class</th>
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| | | o “Yamamba or Yamauba,” *Foster*, p. 144-149.
| | | o “Chimata no kami,” 128-129.
| | | o “Dosōjin,” *JM*, p. 139-140.

### Week 8  **Folklore studies in the modern period**

| T 10/11/16 | Yanagita Kunio and the origin of folklore studies | Foster, “Modern Disciplines,” p. 52-73.
| | | Recommended:

| | | “The Mountain of Abandoned Parents,” *Folktale*, No. 32, CP.
<p>| | | Iwasaka and Toelken, pages 1-42. |</p>
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<th>Week 9 Ghosts, yōkai, supernatural animals</th>
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<th>Week 10 Ghosts; pregnancy and death</th>
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<th>Week 11 Animated objects; spiriting away</th>
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### Week 12 Folklore and the environment, tricksters

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<td>“Kappa,” <em>JM</em>, p. 195-196</td>
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<td>“The Gourd and the Kappa,” No. 27, CP.</td>
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<td>“About a Man who Copied the Lotus Sutra to Save the Soul of a Fox,” and “How Kaya no Yoshifuji, of Bitchu Province, Became the Husband of a Fox and was Saved by Kannon,” In Ury, Marian. 1979. <em>Tales of Times Now Past</em>, p. 96-98, 102-105. Berkeley: University of California Press. “Files” in Canvas (in “Readings”)</td>
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<td>“The Fox of Old,” “Kongoin and the Fox,” Folktales, Nos. 19-20, CP.</td>
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### Week 13 Folklore and the environment, tricksters

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<td>11/17/16</td>
<td>Research paper due</td>
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<td>In class viewing of <em>Pom Poko</em> (平成狸合戦ぽんぼこ Heisei Tanuki Gassen Ponpoko), 1994, Takahata Isao, Dir. 119 min.</td>
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### Week 14 Folklore and war propaganda

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<td>11/24/16</td>
<td>Thanksgiving, classes suspended</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 15</strong></td>
<td><strong>Natural calamities and the supernatural; urban legends</strong></td>
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• “Namazu,” *JM*, p. 220-221.
• Foster, “Toire no Hanako-san—Hanako of the Toilet,” p. 219-220.
• Yanagita and Sasaki, p. 117-139. |
| **Week 16**| **The transformation of folktales in modern times** |          |                                                                             |
• “Urihimeko,” No. 13, CP
• “Little Red Riding Hood” and other tales of this type (at [http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/type0333.html](http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/type0333.html))
• “The Celestial Maiden,” Nos. 17-18, CP.
• “Bluebeard,” at [http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/type0312.html](http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/type0312.html). |