

# STORYTELLING IN ASIAN RELIGIONS

## Term 1 (Fall, 2020/21)

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**Lecture:** Recorded lecture (Tuesdays)

**Tutorials:** Wednesday, 6–7 pm (Zoom)

**Office:** UH 118

**Office Hours:** By appointment (e-mail)

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## **Course Description**

This course provides an overview of key themes in Asian societies, cultures, and religions (particularly Buddhism) through the medium of storytelling. We will explore a variety of source materials including, but not limited to, *manga* (comics/graphic novels), Japanese *setsuwa* (Buddhist storytelling traditions), Japanese Nō theatre, Sanskrit poetry (*kāvya*), previous birth stories (*jātakas* and *avadānas*), Sanskrit satirical dramas, Indian legal narrative literature and the "Bible of Tibet," and ghost stories. We will examine a number of stories in multiple versions to see how, for instance, Indian tales have been adopted and adapted to fit their new contexts in Tibet, China, and Japan.

This course counts towards the Minor in Japanese Studies (being phased out effective Sep. 2023) and the Minor in Asian Studies, both administered through the Department of Religious Studies.

## **Course Objectives**

By the end of the course students should be:

- familiar with a significant number of storytelling genres in Asia;
- able to identify and discuss the significance of key terms, themes, and concepts that have exerted—and continue to exert—influence in the societies, cultures, and religions of Asia (particularly those influenced by Buddhism).

## **Required Materials and Texts**

- None. Everything needed may be accessed either through the library's e-resources, the University's Fair Dealing Policy, or elsewhere on the internet using older sources in public domain. See the course's website on Avenue for links to the weekly readings. Please access readings ahead of time since some e-books only allow for one simultaneous user. As for audio/visual material, not all of this is able to be licensed through the library. Where available, links will be provided to commercial streaming services, as recommended here: <https://copyright.mcmaster.ca/serving-student-access-needs-as-we-rapidly-shift-to-online-course-and-exam-delivery-copyright-considerations/>. You will not be tested on material not available to all students (i.e., audio/visual material available only through commercial services).

## **Class Format**

Prerecorded, weekly video lectures will be uploaded to Avenue to Learn for you to review at your convenience by Tuesday morning (the course was originally an evening course meeting on Wednesday evenings).

Weekly Zoom tutorials will be held at 6 pm on Wednesdays.

## **Course Evaluation: Overview**

1. There will be two online, open-book tests, each worth 20% of the final grade. Students will be required to identify and/or explain key terms and concepts, and discuss the significance of selected passages/images. You will have two hours to complete each test.
2. There will be two assigned response papers based on weekly readings (worth 20% each). To do well in these papers, students must show evidence of critical engagement with the readings. It is not sufficient simply to summarise the readings. The topic will be announced two weeks prior to the deadline.
3. There will be 8 mini quizzes. Each quiz is worth 5% of the final grade. You should complete 4 mini quizzes to receive 20%. If you complete more than 4 mini quizzes, only your best 4 scores will be retained, thus allowing you to improve your grade.
4. Participation and attendance will not be graded.

## **Course Evaluation: Details**

- 1) Online, open-book Test 1 (20%), October 7 (week 5)
- 2) Paper 1 (20%), due October 28 (week 8)
- 3) Online, open-book Test 2 (20%), November 25 (week 12)
- 4) Paper 2 (20%), due December 9 (week 14)
- 5) Weekly Mini Quizzes (20%), available weeks 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13

## **Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings**

### **Week 1 (September 9)**

#### **Introduction/overview**

#### **Manga: Tezuka Osamu's *Buddha***

#### **Readings:**

Tezuka, Osamu. 2003. "Brahmin: Chapter One." In *Kapilavastu*, 8–47. Vol. 1 of *Buddha*. New York: Vertical.

Swanson, Paul L. 2004. "Review of Osamu Tezuka's *Buddha*." *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 31 (1): 233–240.

Bolton, Christopher. 2014. "Tezuka's *Buddha* at the Tokyo National Museum: An Interview with Matsumoto Nobuyuki." *Mechademia* 9, 200–215.

### **Week 2 (September 16)**

#### **Setsuwa: *Nihon ryōiki***

#### **Readings:**

Shirane, Haruo. 2013. "Introduction." In *Record of Miraculous Events in Japan: The Nihon Ryōiki*, 1–5. New York: Columbia University Press.

Watson, Burton. 2013. "Preface" and translation of volume one. In *Record of Miraculous Events in Japan: The Nihon Ryōiki*, 7–57. New York: Columbia University Press.

### **Week 3 (September 23)**

#### **Setsuwa: *Konjaku monogatari shū***

#### **Readings:**

Shirane, Haruo. 2011. "Introduction." In *The Demon at Agi Bridge and Other Japanese Tales*, ed. Haruo Shirane, 1–9. New York: Columbia University Press.

Watson, Burton, trans. 2011. "Tales from India," "Tales from China," "Buddhist Tales of Japan," and "Secular Tales of Japan." In *The Demon at Agi Bridge and Other Japanese Tales*, ed. Haruo Shirane, 23–94. New York: Columbia University Press.

#### **Notes: Mini Quiz 1**

## **Week 4 (September 30)**

### **Japanese Nō Theatre: *Dōjōji***

#### **Readings:**

Kanze Kojirō Nobumitsu (1435–1516). 1970. “Dōjōji.” In *Twenty Plays of the Nō Theatre*, trans. Donald Keene, 237–252. New York: Columbia University Press.

#### **Notes: Mini Quiz 2**

## **Week 5 (October 7)**

### **Online, open-book Test 1: 20%**

## **Week 6 (October 14)**

### **Mid-term recess: relax!**

## **Week 7 (October 21)**

### **Lives of the Buddha in Sanskrit Poetry**

#### **Readings:**

Khoroché, Peter. 2017. “Introduction” and “Prologue.” In *Once a Peacock, Once an Actress: Twenty-Four Lives of the Bodhisattva from Haribhaṭṭa’s Jātakamālā*, 1–10. Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press.

Khoroché, Peter, trans. 2017. “The Hare,” “Rūpyāvati,” “The Deer,” “The Peacock,” “Sudhana and the Fairy Princess,” and “Nirupamā.” In *Once a Peacock, Once an Actress: Twenty-Four Lives of the Bodhisattva from Haribhaṭṭa’s Jātakamālā*, 33–39, 46–52, 73–79, 80–94, 147–175, 192–197. Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press.

Khoroché, Peter, trans. 1989. “Viśvaṃtara.” In *Once the Buddha Was a Monkey: Ārya Śūra’s Jātakamālā*, 58–74. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

#### **Notes: Mini Quiz 3**

## Week 8 (October 28)

### Previous Lives: Buddhist Narrative (*avadānas*)

#### Readings:

Rotman, Andy, trans. 2017. “The Story of Jyotiṣka,” “The Story of Sahasodgata,” “The Story of Rūpavatī,” and “The Story of a Lonesome Fool.” In *Divine Stories. Divyāvadāna. Part 2*, 45–82, 95–116, 181–195, 201–240. Boston: Wisdom Publications.

#### Notes: Paper 1 due

#### Notes: Mini Quiz 4

## Week 9 (November 4)

### Sanskrit Satirical Drama

#### Readings:

Bhaṭṭa Jayanta (9<sup>th</sup> century CE). 2005. “Act One: The Buddhists Defeated.” In *Much Ado About Religion (Āgamaḍambara)*, trans. Csaba Dezső, 53–81 (odd pages [English translation] only). New York: NYU Press & JJC Foundation.

Śyāmilaka (9<sup>th</sup> century CE). 2009. “The Kick (*Pādatāḍitaka*).” In *The Quartet of Causeeries*, eds. and trans. Csaba Dezső and Somadeva Vasudeva, 5–161 (odd pages [English translation] only). New York: NYU Press & JJC Foundation.

#### Notes: Mini Quiz 5

## Week 10 (November 11)

### Indian Tales of Asceticism and the "Bible of Tibet"

#### Readings:

von Schiefner, F. Anton, trans. 1882. “The Clever Thief,” “Mahākāśyapa and Bhadrā,” and “Viśvaṅtara.” In *The Bible of Tibet: Tibetan Tales From Indian Sources*, 37–43, 186–205, 257–272. Translated from the Tibetan of the Kahgyur by F. Anton von Sheifner, and from the German into English by W.R.S. Ralston, with an introduction, and new edition with a preface by C.A.F. Rhys Davids. London: Routledge. Please also read the Preface (pp. i–v).

Granoff, Phyllis. 1998. “Ārdrakumāra.” In *The Forest of Thieves and the Magic Garden: an Anthology of Medieval Jain Stories*, 21–37. New Delhi, India; New York, NY: Penguin Books.

Clarke, Shayne. 2014. “Former Wives from Former Lives.” In *Family Matters in Indian Buddhist Monasticisms*, 78–119. Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press.

———. 2014. “Reconsidering Renunciation: Family-Friendly Monasticisms.” In *Family Matters in Indian Buddhist Monasticisms*, 150–169. Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press.

#### Notes: Mini Quiz 6

## **Week 11 (November 18)**

### **Ghost Stories (1): *Ugetsu***

#### **Readings:**

Ueda Akinari (1734–1809). [1974] 2011. “The House Amid the Thickets (Asaji ga yado)” and “The Lust of the White Serpent (Jasei no in).” In *Ugetsu Monogatari, Or, Tales of Moonlight and Rain: A Complete English Version of the Eighteenth-Century Japanese Collection of Tales of the Supernatural*, 121–132, 161–184. Translated by Leon M. Zolbrod. Abingdon: Routledge.

#### **Watch:**

Mizoguchi Kenji 溝口健二 (1898–1956), dir. *Ugetsu (Ugetsu Monogatari 雨月物語)*. 1953. Daiei Film 大映. San Francisco: Kanopy Streaming, 2014. The Criterion Collection.

#### **Notes: Mini Quiz 7**

## **Week 12 (November 25)**

### **Online, open-book Test 2: 20%**

## **Week 13 (December 2)**

### **Ghost Stories (2): *Kwaidan***

#### **Readings:**

Hearn, Lafcadio (1850–1904). 1904. “The Story of Mimi-Nashi-Hōichi,” “Jikininki,” and “Yuki-Onna.” In *Kwaidan: Stories and Studies of Strange Things*, 3–20, 65–73, 111–118. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

#### **Watch:**

Kobayashi Masaki 小林正樹 (1916–1996), dir. *Kwaidan (Kaidan 怪談)*. 1965. Tōhō 東宝.

#### **Notes: Mini Quiz 8**

## **Week 14 (December 9)**

### **Conclusions/Review/Relax**

#### **Paper 2 due: 20%**



## **Course Policies**

### **Submission of Assignments**

Do not submit papers by e-mail (attachments, in-line, etc.); they will not be accepted. Submit only to Avenue to Learn, following specific instructions on the course's website (Announcements in Avenue). Staff in the office of the Department of Religious Studies will not date-stamp or receive papers and other assignments.

All written work will be marked on grammar, clarity of writing, and organization, as well as content and analysis. Proofread and then proofread again. All work must be properly referenced, with footnotes and bibliography (where applicable). Students are encouraged to visit the Student Success Centre to improve their essay skills (Gilmour Hall 110). For information about the Writing Support services, visit the Centre's website: <https://studentsuccess.mcmaster.ca/academic-skills/writing-support/>

### **Grades**

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

<b>MARK</b>	<b>GRADE</b>
90–100	A+
85–90	A
80–84	A-
77–79	B+
73–76	B
70–72	B-
67–69	C+
63–66	C
60–62	C-
57–59	D+
53–56	D
50–52	D-
0–49	F

### **Late Assignments**

All written work must be submitted on the due date. Late assignments will be penalized 5% a day (including weekends). Late penalties will generally not be waived unless your Faculty/Program Office advises the instructor that you have submitted to that office the appropriate documentation to support your inability to submit the work by the due date. If you are having trouble with a deadline, contact me, ideally before the deadline.

### **Avenue to Learn**

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent

to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

### **Turnitin.com**

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically to Turnitin.com ~~and in hard copy~~ so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com must still submit a copy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please go to [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

## **University Policies**

### **Academic Integrity Statement**

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

### **Academic Dishonesty: Zero Tolerance (my policy)**

If in doubt, consult with your instructor before submitting any work. Under no circumstances should you submit work if you are unsure whether or not submission of said work constitutes academic dishonesty.

All students are encouraged to complete the following:

<http://www.indiana.edu/~istd/practice.html>

<http://www.indiana.edu/~istd/examples.html>

## Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online**.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms.

## Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or [sas@mcmaster.ca](mailto:sas@mcmaster.ca) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University’s [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

## Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work

[McMaster Student Absence Form \(MSAF\)](#): In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”. As per the policy, students must immediately follow up with their instructors to request accommodation for any missed academic work. Failure to do so may negate their relief.

## Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO](#) policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office **normally within 10 working days** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar’s Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

## **Copyright and Recording**

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors.

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

## **Extreme Circumstances**

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.