Topics in EALC: 
Ghosts and the Fantastic in Literature and Film 
Spring 2021

EALC 16000/CMST 24603/SIGN 26006
All classes meet synchronously on zoom: T, TH 4:20-5:50
weekly film viewings (on your own before Thursday’s class except Week 9)

SYLLABUS FOR PREREGISTRATION

Instructor:
Judith Zeitlin jzeitlin@uchicago.edu
Office hours (by appt through google docs)

Course Assistants:
Sophia Walker (EALC/CMS) scwalker2@uchicago.edu
Yifan Zou (Art History) yifanzou@uchicago.edu

Course Description
What is a ghost? How and why are ghosts represented in particular forms in a particular culture at particular historical moments and how do these change as stories travel between cultures? How and why is traditional ghost lore reconfigured in the contemporary world? This course will explore the complex meanings, both literal and figurative, of ghosts and the fantastic in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean tales, plays, and films. Issues to be explored include: 1) the relationship between the supernatural, gender, and sexuality; 2) the confrontation of death and mortality; 3) collective anxieties over the loss of the historical past; 4) and the visualization of the invisible through art, theater, and cinema.

All required texts are available in electronic form on canvas unless otherwise indicated
All required films are available through an online link for viewing on your own

Required films
- WEEK 1 Along with the Gods: Between Two Worlds (Korea, dir. Yong-hwa Kim, 2017)
- WEEK 2 “Hoichi the Earless” from Kwaidan (Japan, dir. Koyabashi, Masaki, 1965)
- WEEK 3 A Chinese Ghost Story (HK, dir. Ching, Siu-Tung, 1987)
- WEEK 4 A Tale of Two Sisters (Korea, dir. Kim, Jee-woon, 2003)
- WEEK 5 Ugetsu (Japan, dir. Mizokuchi, Kenji, 1953)
- WEEK 6 The Ghost of Yotsuya (Japan, dir. Nakagawa, Nobuo, 1959)
- WEEK 7 Rouge (HK, dir. Stanley Kwan, 1987)
- WEEK 8 The Epitaph (Korea, dir. Jung, Sik and Jung, Bum-shik, 2007)
- WEEK 9 Unsolved Mysteries: “Tsunami Spirits” (Netflix) (before Tuesday’s class)

Guest speakers
- Prof. Suyoung Son (Cornell University, Asian Studies), T 4/20
- Prof Or Porath (University of Chicago, EALC), T 4/27
- Prof Tom Lamarre (University of Chicago, CMS & EALC), T 5/24

All required texts are available in electronic form on canvas
All required films are available through an online link for viewing on your own
Course Requirements
1) All required readings and film viewing in advance of the class for which they are due
2) Attentive attendance in class and participation in class discussions
3) Weekly Canvas posts on readings and films (beginning Week 2)
4) A short midterm paper (5 pp or so, roughly 1200 words) undertaking a close reading of either one or two tales, or one or two film scenes
   - Due by midnight of 6th week (May 2)
5) A final project, for which there are two options
   a) A final paper on a topic of your choice (8-10 pp, roughly 2000-2400 words), to be determined in consultation with Sophia Walker or Yifan Zou
   OR
   b) A creative project inspired by and responding to the course, which will include a project narrative and bibliography, and when appropriate, a final class presentation. Advanced approval by Prof. Zeitlin required. (For guidelines, see final page of syllabus).
   - All final papers and creative projects due 10th week (Sun 5/30 by midnight)

Grading
Your final grade will be based on the following:
25% Participation (includes attendance, participation in class discussion, and weekly Canvas posts)
30% Midterm paper
45% Final project

Paper Guidelines
- All papers to be submitted to Sophia Walker, Yifan Zou, and Prof Zeitlin by email attachment.
- Your paper should have a title, and page numbers.
- It should be double-spaced, in 12pt standard font, with 1” margins.
- On the first page of your paper, include your name, the course title, and the date.
- The word count does not have to be exact but it should be close.
- Please make sure that you proofread a hard copy of your paper.
- Electronic format: Please use Word (NOT PDF, not Papers) and label each file with your last name and either midterm or final paper. (For example: Pu, final paper.)

Class policies
Please make sure you have copies of the texts available for class sessions on the day we are dealing with them. You are responsible for printing them out or having the texts downloaded and easily accessible on your computer or a tablet.

Attendance is required: We record attendance every class, and you are allowed a maximum of two absences without penalty. After that, your grade may be reduced. Being “present” entails that you are prompt and prepared.

Late work: I will consider (and usually grant) extensions for your papers if they are requested at least 3 days in advance. Canvas posts will NOT be accepted late.

Plagiarism
Plagiarism is a serious academic offense and will result in failure of the course. Make sure to cite your sources, and don’t hesitate to check with us if you are unsure about what constitutes plagiarism. When in doubt CITE! And avoid Wikipedia like the plague in your writing.

Written assignment due dates at a glance (by midnight of the due date)
- Weekly canvas posts (weeks 2-8)
- Week 6 (Sun 5/2) midterm papers
- Week 7: (Sun 5/9) proposals for creative projects due
- Week 8: (Sun 5/17) proposals for final papers due
- Week 9: (Th 5/27) creative project presentations (in class or prerecorded)
- Week 10: (Sun 5/30) all final papers and creative projects due
CLASS SCHEDULE (subject to change)

I. PROLOGUE

Week 1  What is a Ghost? (1)

T 3/30 Course overview & basic concepts

느 T /W Along with the Gods

Th 4/1 Approaches from East Asian Religion
   • Teiser, “Religions of China in Practice,” in Asian Religions in Practice, 88-122
   • Teiser, Scriptures on the Ten Kings, 1-6; 14-15
   • Chinese Hell Scrolls portal http://people.reed.edu/~brashiek/scrolls.html
RECOMMENDED:
   • Pettid, “Ghostly Encounters: Perceptions of Death and the Afterlife in Koryô and Early Chosôn Korea,” in Death, Mourning, and the Afterlife in Korea, 171-189

Week 2  What is a Ghost? (2)

T 4/6 Approaches from Art History: Ghosts and Exorcism in Chinese Painting (*class led by Yifan Zou)
   • Readings TBA

느 “Hoichi the Earless” from Kwaidan

TH 4/8 Approaches from Film Studies: The AcousmÈtre and Invisibility
   • Michel Chion, The Voice in Cinema, 17-29

Recommended:
   • Tom Gunning, “To Scan a Ghost: The Ontology of Mediated Vision,” Grey Room, no. 26 (Winter 2007), 94-127

UNIT II

Week 3  The Demon Tale

T 4/13 “The Peony Lantern” in China & Japan

   • Zeitlin, The Phantom Heroine, 13-28
   • Qu You (1347-1433), “The Peony Lantern” (trans. Joo)
   • Asai Ryôi (17th c.), “Hand Puppets,” in Shirane, ed Early Modern Japanese Literature, 33-38
   • Lafcadio Hearn (1850-1904), “A Passional Karma,” in In Ghostly Japan, 73-113

RECOMMENDED
   • P. Hanan, “The Demon Tale,” from The Chinese Vernacular Story, 44-49
A Chinese Ghost Story

TH 4/15 Comedy, Horror, & the Abject

- Bordwell, Planet Hong Kong, “Formula, Form, and Norm, 149-170 (esp. 160-168)
- Kristeva, Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection, 1-6

RECOMMENDED
- Creed, “Horror and the Monstrous Feminine: An Imaginary Abjection,” 44-69

Week 4 Ghosts and Family Trauma

T 4/20 “A Tale of Two Sisters”; the story (*guest speaker Prof Suyoung Son)

A Tale of Two Sisters

TH 4/22 “A Tale of Two Sisters” : the film
- Eunjung Kim, Curative Violence: Rehabilitating Disability, Gender, and Sexuality in Modern Korea, 113-118

RECOMMENDED

Week 5 Tales of Rain and Moonlight (Ugetsu Monogatari)

T 4/27 Tales of Rain and Moonlight (1) (*guest speaker Prof Or Porath)

RECOMMENDED:
- Stone and Walter, “Introduction” to Death and Afterlife in Japanese Buddhism, 3-15

Ugetsu

TH 4/29 Tales of Rain and Moonlight (2)
- McDonald, Ugetsu: 1-13
- “The Reed-choked House; “A Serpent’s Lust” (from Tales of Rain and Moonlight)

Sun 5/3 midterm papers due
Week 6  Vengeful Ghosts

T 5/4  The Serpent Woman

- “Madame White is Kept Forever Under the Thunder Peak Tower,” from Feng Menglong, ed. *Stories to Caution the World* (1627), #28
- “Dōjōji,” in Ury, *Tales of Times Now Past*, 93-96
- “Snakes, Serpents and Humans,” in Addiss, *Japanese Ghosts and Demons*, 139-45
  (cf “A Serpent’s Lust” from *Tales of Rain and Moonlight*)

RECOMMENDED:

 أمس The Ghost of Yotsuya

TH 5/6  The Japanese horror film (*Sophia Walker leads the class*)

- READINGs TBA

UNIT II

Week 7  Ghosts and Historical Memory

T 5/11  The Return of the Palace Lady

- *The Phantom Heroine*, Chapt 3 (87-106)
- Pu Songling, “Li Simiang” and “Gongsun Jiuniang” (trans. Zeitlin)

RECOMMENDED
  (Evon, trans), *Premodern Korean Literary Prose*, 41-65 (feel free to skim the poems)

 أمس Rouge

TH 5/13  The Déjà Disparu or ghosts and the urban experience

- Abbas, “The New Hong Kong Cinema & the Déjà Disparu,” 16-47 (esp. 16-17; 22-29; 39-44)
- Schmitt, *Ghosts in the Middle Ages*, Intro (1-10); Conclusion (221-227)

WEEK 8  Ghosts and Trauma in the Modern World

T 5/17  Ghosts and Revolutionary Rhetoric in the PRC

TH 5/19 The Korean horror film and the memory of Japanese colonialism

- Kwon, *Intimate Empire: Collaboration and Colonial Modernity in Korean Japan*, 1-16
- Jeehey Kim, “Korean Funerary Photo-Portraiture,” 7-20

RECOMMENDED:
Poole, “Late Colonial Modernism and the Desire for Renewal,” 179-203
Creed, “Horror and the Monstrous Feminine: An Imaginary Abjection,” 44-69

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**Week 9**

T 5/24 *Ghosts and ecological disaster* (*Guest speaker: Prof Tom Lamarre*)

- Yanagita Kunio, *The Legends of Tonio* (excerpt #99)
- Parry, *Ghosts of the Tsunami* (2017), 237-268

}* Unsolved Mysteries: *Spirits of the Tsunami*

TH 5/26 Final creative presentations and conclusion

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**Week 10**

Sun 5/30 Final papers and projects due
GUIDELINES FOR CREATIVE FINAL PROJECTS (Zeitlin, Fall 2018)

I. All students must get Prof. Zeitlin’s PRIOR approval.

The approval process consists of two steps

**FIRST A BRIEF DISCUSSION (IN PERSON OR BY EMAIL)** with Prof. Zeitlin getting provisional approval to develop a creative project

**SECOND, SUBMITTING A 1-PAGE PROPOSAL OUTLINING**

1) concretely *what* you plan to do (and *with whom* if it is a collaborative project like a film)
2) *how* you plan to go about doing it
3) the intellectual and creative relationship with the course
4) your aspirations/ goals for the project (what you hope to accomplish). This can be more abstract and include what the project allows you to accomplish that a traditional paper wouldn’t
5) a bibliography/filmography of sources you are looking to for creative and intellectual guidance (both stuff covered in the course and outside materials)

**THIS PROPOSAL MUST ALSO BE APPROVED BY PROF. ZEITLIN**

II. With the final creative project, students must additionally submit a project narrative (2-3 pp) describing the process, the obstacles or changes the project underwent in development, the division of labor in the case of collaborative processes—basically a self-reflective account to help me evaluate and understand your project. You can conceive of the project narrative as a preface or an afterword, as a project report, or a form of your choosing. It should include an updated bibliography/ filmography.