

MORAL VALUE IN *DORORO*: AN ANALYSIS OF OSAMU TEZUKA'S CLASSIC ANIME

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This study delves into the cultural and spiritual significance of Mukashi Banashi, traditional Japanese fairy tales, focusing on their deep connection to Japan's religious beliefs, particularly Shintoism. These ancient stories, often classified as fantasy, are rich in supernatural elements, such as gods, spirits, and mystical phenomena, which not only entertain but also impart profound cultural wisdom. A key element in Mukashi Banashi is the concept of Kami—spiritual beings believed to inhabit both natural phenomena and physical objects. This reflects a deeply ingrained spiritual relationship between the Japanese people and their surrounding environment. Shintoism, the indigenous faith of Japan, has profoundly shaped these beliefs. Its myths, rituals, and teachings have left an enduring imprint on both personal and societal aspects of Japanese life. By analyzing the impact of Shintoism on Japanese folklore, this study underscores the importance of traditional narratives in maintaining cultural values, while offering insights into the spiritual worldview that continues to influence Japan today.

Keywords: Mukashi Banashi, Shintoism, Kami, Japanese folklore, spiritual worldview

Introduction

Traditional stories in the form of fairy tales or folklore in Japan are known as Mukashi Banashi. The stories found in Mukashi Banashi are generally fantasy stories and fall under the fiction genre. Sarumpaet states that fantasy stories refer to their imaginary nature, stemming from imagination, such as the presence of fairies, gods, dragons, or objects with supernatural powers in a story (Sarumpaet, 2017). The Japanese people believe that the sun, moon, stars, rain, thunder, natural phenomena, and all objects, both living and non-living, are considered to have spirits that are believed to have powers influencing their lives. Therefore, they worship and regard these as gods (Brafangestu Candra, 2021). These powers, whether found in natural phenomena or in gods, which become objects of worship, are called Kami (Azmi, 2015). Most Japanese people believe in Shinto and its associated myths (Fairuz J. J., 2023; Napier, 2005). As the native religion of Japan, Shinto has become their way of life, and is a traditional religion passed down by their ancestors, adhered to not only by the people but also by the government, which acts as the main enforcer of Shinto. This is evidenced by the rise of myths related to the formation of Japan (Mansur, 2011; Allison, 2006).

In Mukashi Banashi, there are many stories about characters who can interact with animals, ghosts, gods, demons, or characters born from certain objects. In Japanese Shinto mythology, demons (called oni) are depicted as terrifying creatures often associated with natural disasters, misfortune, and the underworld. Generally, demons play the role of powerful supernatural forces that humans must face in Shinto mythology.

Over time, Japanese society's practices, teachings, and beliefs have been adapted into films, including anime, aimed at all ages. The elements portrayed in these anime are generally things that are impossible in the real world, which is a key feature of fantasy (Prihatmi, 1993). According to Cahyasari, in addition to being entertaining, fantasy stories can influence a child's subconscious mind, which is utilized by the author to convey the values they want to express through these stories (Cahyasari, 2024). Nurgiantoro argues that fictional stories are developed through imagination beyond the reach of ordinary humans and can be accepted by readers (Nurgiantoro, 2013). Therefore, fantasy or fictional stories, often adapted into anime, are frequently used to convey moral messages or values, referring to teachings about good and bad in actions, attitudes, duties, and ethics. From a certain perspective, fiction can be viewed as a manifestation of the author's desire to dialogue, negotiate, and convey messages, or perhaps opinions on certain matters, ideas,

morals, or mandates. In this sense, fiction can also be seen as a means of communication. Morals are something the author wants to communicate to the reader and represent the meaning contained within a work or the meaning suggested through the story (Nurgiantoro, 2013: 460). Manning (Haerudin, 2013) explains that fictional works can help readers or viewers understand ideas about morality and help them respond to improper morals. In a literary work, there are not only good morals but also improper behaviors. Readers are expected to respond wisely, even if the literary work contains despicable qualities, as these are meant for learning and not to be fully followed (Al Farroug Lazuardo Ababil, 2022; Azuma, 2009).

An anime, like films or literary works, can certainly contain and offer moral messages. One popular anime in Japan is *Dororo* by Osamu Tezuka, which originated from a manga published in 1967. The supernatural-themed anime *Dororo* aired on Fuji TV in 2019 with 24 episodes, produced by Tezuka Productions in collaboration with Japanese animation studio MAPPA. Set during the Sengoku era, it tells the story of Daigo, a samurai lord who made a pact with 12 demons to bring prosperity to his land. He sacrificed his unborn child and made a deal to offer all of the child's body parts to the 12 demons. As a result, his son was born without eyes, ears, skin, a mouth, a nose, and other parts. Due to the incomplete condition of the child's body, the child was abandoned and found by a swordsmith. The child was named Hyakkimaru, raised, and given prosthetic hands and legs. At one point, one of the 12 demons with whom Hyakkimaru's father had made the pact was killed in a fight, and suddenly one of Hyakkimaru's body parts returned. Hyakkimaru realized that by killing demons or evil spirits, he could recover his body parts. Hyakkimaru meets *Dororo*, a ronin, and they become traveling companions in search of demons or evil spirits so that Hyakkimaru can reclaim the body parts his father had given to the demons.

This study examines the moral messages and themes found in Osamu Tezuka's *Dororo* anime based on Nurgiantoro's theory. The research is conducted through an analysis of the narrative elements in the anime based on Himawan Pratista's theory. Narrative elements are divided into six components: narrative structure patterns, core narrative elements (characters), plot, the relationship between narrative and space, and the relationship between narrative and time (Pratista, 2017; Carrol, 2000). In *Dororo*, the narrative structure of the film is present; however, the author only uses plot, characters, and setting to highlight the theme and moral messages in the anime *Dororo*. Nurgiantoro categorizes moral messages into three types: morals in relation to oneself, morals in relation to others, and morals in relation to God (Nurgiantoro, 2013).

To guide this study, the following research questions are proposed; (1) How do *Mukashi Banashi* reflect the cultural and spiritual values rooted in Shinto beliefs?, (2) In what ways do these traditional tales influence the moral and religious perspectives of Japanese society?

Accordingly, this study aims to examine the cultural and spiritual significance of *Mukashi Banashi*, with particular attention to their reflection of Shinto principles and their role in shaping cultural identity and moral values in Japan.

METHOD

The method used in this research is qualitative research. According to Ratna (2015), the qualitative method is conducted through interpretation, presenting the data in the form of descriptions aimed at presenting facts followed by analysis. The first step of the research involves the author watching the entire *Dororo* anime.

Then, data related to the issues to be analyzed, which concern the plot, characters, setting, and theme, are sought and collected. Next, the intrinsic elements of the Dororo anime are analyzed, and the themes found in the story are explained based on the analysis of intrinsic elements, which consist of plot, characters, setting, and theme, as proposed by Pratista and Nurgiyantoro.

RESULT

The Dororo anime uses a progressive plot. The sequence of events is told in order, starting from the introduction stage (A), the conflict trigger stage (B), the rising conflict stage (C), the climax stage (D), and the resolution stage (E).

Introduction Stage (A)

1. Daigo's Covenant with the Devil

The introduction stage (A) is the initial phase that contains the background information of a story. (Pratista, 2017) This event begins by introducing Daigo Kagemitsu, the leader of the Ishikawa region, whose people are suffering from plagues and famine. Daigo's wife is pregnant, and before she gives birth, Daigo goes to the Hall of Hell, a place where demons reside. In Shinto mythology, dark and remote areas are believed to be the dwelling place of demons, and it is believed that anyone who goes to the Hall of Hell has chosen a misguided path and no longer believes in their God, Buddha, or the deities.



Figure 1. Daigo makes a pact with 12 demons

Data 1	
第五さま	”十二の鬼神に言う我が名は醍醐景光加賀国守護職富樫政親様の配下にしてこの石川領領主である度重なる飢饉と流行り病によって我が領土も民も死を待つばかりに瘦せ衰えたこのままでは生涯の望み我が名を天下にとどろかせることなど夢のまた夢なりだが！ 神仏にすがろうとは思わぬこれから申すこともそなたらへの祈りではない取り引きであるもし我が領土を守護し我に天下を握らせるならばそれよりほかに我が手に入るものをやろうよいかなんでもだそなたたちの好きなものを取るがいい返答や いかに！”
Daigo	12 demons, I am Daigo Kagemitsu, ruler of Ishikawa and a vassal of the governor of Kaga Province. Famine and repeated plagues have ravaged my land, weakening and killing my people. At this rate, I will never achieve the power and fame I desire. My dreams will remain just dreams, but I refuse to rely on the mercy of Buddha or the gods. What I offer you is not a prayer, but a pact. If

	you protect my land and allow me to govern this country, I will give you whatever is mine. Whatever it is, take whatever you want. Do you hear me?!!
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Daigo made a pact with 12 demons to bring prosperity to his region and gain fame. Daigo refused to seek help from Buddha or the gods. He placed his faith in the demons and was willing to sacrifice his unborn baby by offering all of the baby's body parts to the demons.

2. Hyakkimaru's Life

Hyakkimaru was born without limbs, facial features, and sensory organs due to a pact his father made with demons. Believing the child was cursed, his father abandoned him in a river. He was rescued by Jukai, who initially saw him as a bad omen but chose to care for him. Jukai built prosthetic body parts and trained him in martial arts. When Hyakkimaru killed a demon and regained his right leg, Jukai realized he could recover his body by defeating demons, and continued to prepare him for that purpose.



Figure 2. Hyakkimaru and Jukai's Farewell

Data 2		
樹海		妖怪とは人を食らうだけのものではない時に彼らは人の心を惑わしその力を貸し与えもする人知を超えた力でもって人に恩恵を与え代償として人から何かを奪ってゆくお前もそういう因果の中で奴らに体を奪われたのやもしれんわしは行けぬ足手まといになるばかりだからな結局何もしてやれなかったなわしはただ殺生を教えたただけでお前を拾ったとき身につけていたお守りだ持っていれば どこかで本当の親と会えるやもしれんうっ...うう..."
Jukai		That demon is not just a creature that preys on humans. Sometimes, they lead human hearts astray and offer their power. With strength beyond reason, they give something to humans, and in return, they take something from them. Perhaps, by fate, your body parts were taken by them. I can't join you. Maybe I will just accompany you. In the end, I can't really do anything, right? All I could teach you was how to kill. Here is a protective charm I found with you. If you carry it, maybe you will be able to meet your biological parents.

3. Dororo's Life

Dororo is an orphaned girl who survives by stealing and selling her stolen goods. She acquired her thieving skills from her father, a notorious samurai bandit. Her father often fought against other

samurai to seize their wealth and stolen items.

Dororo's father. After his death, he revealed that he lived his life as a samurai, surviving with others and with

4. Hyakkimaru



own subordinates. Away, her mother had amassed during her orphaned, Dororo to connect with

Hyakkimaru encountered Dororo by a river when she was captured and assaulted by criminals. As a demon appeared to prey on them, Hyakkimaru—still blind—fought and killed the creature, after which he regained the skin on his face. Sensing no threat from Dororo, Hyakkimaru allowed her to accompany him. From that point on, they journeyed together in pursuit of demons, forming a bond rooted in mutual purpose and survival.

Data 3		
どろろ		“なああんたその腕 金にしねえか？ オイラに任せりゃ絶対稼げるお大尽だって夢じゃねえな？ あんただってそう思ってるからオイラを追ひ払わねえんだそうだろ？”
Dororo		Apa kamu gak mau menghasilkan uang dengan kemampuanmu?. Serahkan padaku, akan kubuat kamu kaya. Menjadi jutawan pun bukan mimpi lagi. Kamu juga berpikir begitu, karena itulah kamu gak mengusirku, kan?

Dororo continues to follow Hyakkimaru throughout his journey. She assists him not only out of loyalty but also with the intention of earning a living by helping him defeat demons across various villages. Her role reflects both practical survival and a deepening moral commitment to their shared cause.

Conflict Trigger Stage (B)

The conflict trigger stage marks the beginning of major tensions in the narrative. In *Dororo*, several events initiate conflict, particularly the confrontation between Hyakkimaru and his younger brother, Tahomaru.

Hyakkimaru's Conflict with Tahomaru

Tahomaru, the second son of Daigo, is unaware that Hyakkimaru is his older brother. Upon learning the truth from his mother—that his brother had been sacrificed as part of a demonic pact—Tahomaru initially perceives his parents' actions as inhumane. However, after visiting the Hall of Hell and falling under demonic

influence, his perspective shifts. Manipulated by the demons and consumed by a sense of duty, Tahomaru grows determined to eliminate Hyakkimaru. He gradually mirrors his father's ruthless pursuit of power, ultimately forming an alliance with the demons to offer Hyakkimaru as a sacrifice.



Figure 4. The fight between Tohomaru and Hyakkimaru

A fierce battle breaks out between Tahomaru and Hyakkimaru, during which Tahomaru sustains an eye injury, and his two followers lose their arms in combat. They retreat to the Hall of Hell, where they align themselves with demons. As part of this unholy alliance, the demons provide a new eye for Tahomaru and artificial arms for his followers. Empowered by demonic influence and driven by rage, Tahomaru resumes his pursuit of Hyakkimaru with intensified hostility and a desire to kill.

Dororo and Hitachi Conflict

Dororo, the daughter of Hibukuro—a bandit leader who opposed the samurai—views samurai as oppressors. Hibukuro was known for redistributing stolen wealth to impoverished villagers, actions that incited resistance from the ruling class. Among his followers was Hitachi, a former farmer who ultimately betrayed Hibukuro. This act of betrayal led to a failed raid in which many were killed or injured, including Hibukuro himself. The conflict highlights themes of loyalty, class struggle, and moral ambiguity.

Figure 5. Penculikkan Dororo

Data 4		
イタチ		早く寝ろ明日はおめえにも働いてもらうからなこいつの続きを覚えてもらわなきゃなんねえ
Hitachi		"Go to bed quickly. Tomorrow, you have to work hard. You have to describe half of this picture."
どろろ		やっぱり
Dororo		It turns out, the place you were looking for was...
イタチ		お前が行こうとしてる場所って...
イタチ		“ああ火袋(ひぶくろ)のお頭が金を隠した場所よ驚くことじゃねえさ俺はな お頭と組んでるときからうすうす気付いてたのよ戸が開く音イタチあのころ 侍から奪ったお宝が度々なくなってたんだそれも金になりそうな上物ばかりがよそいつを見て思ったのよ宝を持ち出してんのはお頭じゃねえかって なんとか尻尾をつかんでやろうと思ってそこから探してみたのさだが さすが お頭だ尻尾の“し”の字も出しやがらねえそのうち俺のほうが音を上げちまってな単なる思い違いかもっ

		て気にしねえことにしたのさ”
Hitachi		Something surprising. You know? when I became his subordinate I noticed something strange. At that time, the items stolen from the samurai suddenly disappeared. Moreover, the value was equivalent to a lot of money. When I saw it, I thought of something. Maybe, the real thief is the Boss. I kept watching him and waiting for him to make a mistake. But, the Boss is really great. He didn't show any gaps..

Tension escalates when Hitachi and his followers attempt to seize the hidden treasure left by Dororo's father. Upon discovering that the markings on Dororo's back form a map leading to the treasure's location, Hitachi kidnaps her in an effort to claim it. However, his plan ends in tragedy as he is killed in an explosion at the treasure site. This event underscores themes of greed and betrayal, further shaping Dororo's distrust toward those who pursue power through immoral means.

Peak Conflict Stage (C)

This stage marks the narrative's climax, where conflicts reach their most intense point. In the final battle, Hyakkimaru confronts and defeats Tahomaru, ultimately reclaiming the last of his stolen body parts. With his body fully restored, Hyakkimaru proceeds to destroy the demon seeds hidden within Daigo's castle, symbolically ending the curse that began with his father's pact. The battle serves as both a physical and moral resolution, emphasizing the triumph of individual will over inherited sin.



Figure 6. Tahomaru gives in to Hyakkimaru

Tahomaru gives in to Hyakkimaru, and Hyakkimaru stabs the demon seed, finally after regaining all his limbs, Hyakkimaru must undergo a period of adaptation, reflecting the challenges of reclaiming one's humanity.

Climax Stage (D)

At this stage, the issue reaches its peak. After conflicts intensify, a climax is formed. The climax of this story is the destruction of Daigo's Castle and his domain. However, Daigo remains unaware of the broader consequences, as his attention is entirely consumed by the ongoing war. Ultimately, he suffers a decisive defeat. Below are images of Daigo's burning castle and Daigo receiving messages from his subordinates about the castle being on fire and the flames spreading throughout the village.



Figure 7. Daigo Castle burned and was destroyed

Data 5		
密偵		殿 一大事にございます！誠に申し上げにくいことながら
Daigo's Subordinates		“Sir, there is bad news. It is very difficult to say, but “Mr. :
第五さま		申せ
Daigo		“Tell me.”
密偵		ご城内から出火城郭伝いに延焼し若君様のお屋敷が消失いたしました若君 ならびに奥方様は行方知れず恐らくは ...
Daigo's Subordinates		“Kastilnya terbakar, apinya sudah menyebar dan kediaman Tuan Muda telah terbakar. Tuan Muda dan Nyonya telah hilang. Dikhawatirkan bahwa...”
第五さま		大義朝倉をたたく進め進め～！
Mr. Daigo		Get ready. We will destroy the asakura. Advance! “

In the scene referenced above, Daigo is portrayed as indifferent to the deteriorating condition of his castle, village, and family, despite urgent reports from his troops. Driven by his obsession with power and victory, he persists in continuing the war. This blind ambition ultimately leads to his defeat, leaving him gravely wounded and stripped of both his army and authority.

Problem-Solving Stage (E): Resolution and Tragic Atonement

In the resolution stage, Daigo—Hyakkimaru’s father—begins to confront the consequences of his past actions. In the final moments of his life, he expresses remorse for the pact he made with demons and for sacrificing his son. Together with his wife and Tahomaru, he chooses to atone for their collective sins by embracing death. The family perishes in a fire inside the castle, an act symbolizing tragic redemption and the cost of moral corruption.

Figure 8. Daigo and his family died in the burning castle

Data 6		
第五さま		全て鬼神から取り戻したかその目で初めて見るこの国はどうじゃ？美しいか？

Mr. Daigo	“You’ve taken everything from the demons, haven’t you? What do you think when you see this land with your own eyes? Is it beautiful?”
百鬼丸	きれいでは... ない
Hyakki maru	“ Not beautiful. “
第五さま	そうであろうお前のために 国も民もどれほど血を流したかいやこれからも流し続けねばなるまいだがこの国は終わらせぬこの世は食い食われるが習いじゃ食うことをやめれば食われるなればこそ わしは止まらぬこの地獄にとどまり続けよう鬼神が人を欲しいと言うなら
Mr. Daigo	“Of course. This land and its people have shed too much blood for you. No, they will continue to bleed for you. But this land will not end. We must either eat or be eaten in this world. If we stop eating, we will be the ones eaten. Therefore, I will continue to live in this hell. If demons desire humans, I will give them more food.”
百鬼丸	また食わせるまで！
Hyakki maru	“Do you want to make me be eaten again?”
第五さま	また 俺を食わせるのか？知れたこと武将と生まれたからには天下取りに勝る望みなどないそのためには鬼神の力に頼ることもいとわん！過ちを犯したとすれば ただ一つあの日お前を産婆などに任せずこの手で... この手で息の根を止めるべきであった憎かろう死せばこの身魂魄となりて我が子多宝丸とこの地を守る鬼神となろう！
Mr. Daigo	"I don't care. As a ruler, I desire nothing but to dominate. For that, I am willing to make a pact with demons. If I have made a mistake, it is only one: that day, I should not have handed you over to the shaman and should have strangled you with these hands instead. You hate me, don't you? If I die, my soul will rule alongside Tahomaru as a demon that protects this land."
第五さま	なぜだ？
Mr. Daigo	“Why?”
百鬼丸	俺の行く道はそこじゃない俺は人だあんたも鬼神になるな人として生きろ
Hyakki maru	"The path I chose was not that. I am human. Don't become a demon. Live as a human."
第五さま	百鬼丸あの日 わしが ここで鬼神にすがらねば...お前が この国を継いでいたらわしが望んだ醍醐の繁栄は...百鬼丸... 鬼神が欲するほどのお前の その生きる力の中に
Mr. Daigo	“(Speaking to himself) Hyakkimaru... If I hadn't strayed towards the demons... if you were to rule this land... perhaps the prosperity of

	Daigo that I have always dreamed of... Hyakkimaru. Within you lies the power to live... the power that the demons desire.”
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After regaining all of his lost body parts, Hyakkimaru chooses to embark on a personal journey to seek his true identity and understand his place in the world. In parallel, Dororo aspires to use her father’s hidden wealth to establish a village that supports the weak and marginalized. Although they part ways for a time, Dororo remains hopeful that Hyakkimaru will eventually return after completing his journey.

3.1.2 Main Characters in Dororo

Based on the plot analysis, the anime Dororo features several central characters whose roles contribute significantly to the development of the narrative. These include Hyakkimaru, Dororo, Daigo Kagemitsu, Daigo’s wife, Tahomaru, and Jukai.

1. Hyakkimaru as a Central Protagonist

Hyakkimaru, the primary protagonist, was born without limbs or sensory organs due to his father’s demonic pact. He initially survives using prosthetic limbs crafted by Jukai. Physically tall and slender, he conceals his disfigurement behind a mask. In the early stages of his journey, Hyakkimaru is portrayed as emotionally detached and naive, a reflection of his lack of social interaction and physical completeness. As he gradually reclaims his body parts, his character evolves—displaying greater empathy, moral awareness, and inner conflict.



Figure 9. Hyakkimaru's figure

At the beginning, Hyakkimaru struggles with anger and emotional detachment due to his incomplete body. His encounter with Dororo marks a shift, as he gradually becomes more confident and emotionally aware with each body part he regains.

2. Dororo as a Character

Dororo is an orphaned girl who joins Hyakkimaru’s journey. Though small and talkative, she is brave, mature, and resourceful. Her presence influences Hyakkimaru’s growth and emotional development.



Figure 10. The figure of a little girl named Dororo

(Eps 24, 00:14:31 – 00:15:25)

Data 7		
次平太		そりゃ おめえの言う武士に頼らないで自分たちの力で生活を立てるってのは分かるし そうしたいのはみんな同じだけどよ。その力ってのが問題だ おいらたちには扱えねえよ
Inhabitant		I understand the idea of living without relying on samurai. Everyone wants to do that too. But, the problem is strength. We can't use swords or spears.
どろろ		違う違う オイラが言ってんのはそんな力じゃ
Dororo		No, no, I don't mean that kind of power.
ねえ道秀		ではそれはどのような？
Inhabitant		So what kind of power?
どろろ		へっへ～ いいか よく聞けよ 金(かね)だ 武士の力も 鬼神の力も 借りねえ 戦もしねえ となると残るのは金の力しかねえだろう
Dororo		Okay, listen to me carefully. Money. We're not going to use samurai or demons. We're not going to war. So isn't it just a matter of money?
弥彦		おいおい そんな金 どこにあるってんだよ そんなもん あったら苦労しねえよ
Inhabitant		Hey, hey, where can we get it? If we have money, we don't have to worry.
どろろ		金ならある まあ 在りかは遠いんだが よちょっとした隠し金山ってとこだ ホントか？
Dororo		I have money. Well, it's quite far away. But it's a place of gold mountains.
弥彦		どこだい？ その場所は
Inhabitant		Seriously? Where is it?
どろろ		落ち着け 落ち着け まあ 2～3 日中に採りに行くから 準備しといてくれよ

Dororo	Calm down, calm down. Well, I'll pick it up in a few days, be ready.
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Dororo aspires to live peacefully in a village, using the treasure left by his father. He dreams of a life free from war and samurai violence. Despite his tough exterior, Dororo is compassionate and cares deeply for others.

Daigo Kagemitsu

Daigo is an authoritarian ruler who sacrifices his own child to demons in pursuit of power and prosperity. His appearance—tall, muscular, and marked with an X on his forehead—reflects his rigid and ruthless nature.

Figure 11. The figure of Daigo Kagemitsu

(Eps 12, 00:08:13 – 00:08:54))

Data 8	
第五さま	<p>“親なればこそ なしえたのだ父上！多宝丸 そなたは知るまいかつてこの国にあった地獄のごとき日々を度重なる飢きん流行り病 天変地異それに つけ込もうとする周辺諸国もはや 風前の灯火だったこの国を鬼神との約定が救ったのだこの国の豊かさを喜ばぬ民はおらぬ！民のためとは名ばかりその実は父上の野望のためではございませぬか！領主の利はすなわち 民の利ぞ</p> <p>！そのために犠牲にしたほかの誰でもない我が子！武士としてなんら恥じることはない！”</p>
Mr. Daigo	<p>It's because we are parents. Tahomaru, you don't understand. The daily hell that this land endures—repeated famine, epidemics, disasters, and neighboring countries wanting to take over. This land is already dead. But my pact with the demons has allowed everyone living here to benefit from the ruler's ambition, which is the ambition of the land itself. And for them, I sacrificed my own child. I am not ashamed as a samurai.</p>

Daigo aspired to prosper his village and become a famous ruler. However, at the end of his life he regretted his decision to sacrifice his son, to be handed over to the devil in order to gain power.

4. Daigo's Wife Story Actors

Daigo's wife had children Hayakkimaru and Tahomaru. Daigo's wife suffered because the child she gave birth to was sacrificed by her husband to the devil. She regretted herself for not being able to protect and care for her child.



Figure 12. The figure of Daigo's wife, Hyakkimaru's mother

(Eps 24, 00:09:33 – 00:09:56)

Data 9		
五さまの妻		“百鬼丸...坊や...やっと そなたを...あのとき 何があろうとこの手を離すべきではなかったただ そなたを抱いていればよかったどれほどそなたをいとおしいといとおしいと...”
Daigo's Wife		Hyakkimaru. My child, I can finally hold you. At that moment, no matter what happened, I should never have let go of this hand. I should have held you like this. I truly love you. Love you.

After her first child was abandoned, Daigo's wife became withdrawn but continued to pray for the child's safety. Though initially doubtful he would survive, she placed her hope in a merciful goddess and longed to meet him again.

Tahomaru

Tahomaru, Daigo's second son, is brave and cheerful, taking after his mother. He seeks her affection but is puzzled by her constant prayers. Upon learning about Hyakkimaru, he is shocked by his father's cruelty.



Figure 13. Tahomaru's figure

(Eps 12, 00:07:57 – 00:08:05)

田穂丸		赤子を川に...何も知らぬまま国のために？それでも人の親ですか！
Tahomaru		Throwing a baby in the river? An innocent baby for the country? And you call yourselves parents?

One day, Tahomaru went to the Hell Hall to satisfy his curiosity. Later, after his defeat in battle

against Hyakkimaru, he visited the Hell Hall and was incited by demons. The demons urged him to kill Hyakkimaru if he wanted his land to remain prosperous. The demon's incitement took hold of him, leading him to decide to kill Hyakkimaru to fulfill his dream.

6. Jukai Story Actors

Jukai is the character who cares for Hyakkimaru. He found him by the river and named him Hyakkimaru. Jukai crafted limbs for Hyakkimaru so that he could live like a normal human. Jukai is a doctor and a woodcraftsman; before that, he was a war executioner who crucified surviving war victims. Later, Jukai changed his profession to become a craftsman who helps victims of war by providing them with lost limbs, eyes, and ears.



Figure 14. Jukai's figure

(Eps 17, 00:05:43 – 00:05:56)

樹海	” お前の... なんなのだろうなお前に出会い人の体を与え 名付けはしたがそれが果たしてお前にとって...あれはまるで...”
Jukai	What am I to you? I met you, gave you a body, and named you. But did I do the right thing?

Jukai is a patient and sincere person who performs tasks to help others. He does this to atone for the sins he committed in the past as an executioner. This change in character indicates that he has reflected on himself and realized that his past actions were cruel and inhumane, and that he must make amends by doing good deeds without expecting any reward in return.

3.1.3 Background In Dororo Anime

1. Background scene

In the Dororo anime, there are several places that support the story as follows.

Desa Daigo



Figure 15. Daigo Village Atmosphere

The first image shows Daigo's village at its peak—peaceful and prosperous, thanks to his pact with demons that required sacrificing Hyakkimaru. However, after Hyakkimaru defeats the demons and

reclaims his body, the village collapses into ruin, returning to its original devastated state.



Figure 16. The Destruction of Daigo Village

Halls of Hell



Figure 17. Hell Halls Overview

Hell Hall is located on a hill in Daigo's village. In Shinto belief, places inhabited by demons are often remote and dark. The hall houses 12 demon statues that influence people to commit evil in exchange for power. Those who enter usually make pacts, offering something valuable in return.

3.2 Themes in Dororo

1. Human Relationship with Self

Hyakkimaru shows that self-confidence is key. Despite lacking real limbs, he faces challenges head-on, proving that belief in oneself can overcome adversity.

2. Human Relationship with Others and Nature

Dororo's loyalty to Hyakkimaru shows the value of friendship. They help each other in times of weakness, teaching that true loyalty means mutual support through hardship.

3. Human Relationship with God

Daigo chooses demons over gods to secure prosperity, while his wife keeps praying for Hyakkimaru's safety. The message is clear: seeking power through evil leads to ruin, while faith offers hope.

CONCLUSION

Mukashi Banashi, the traditional Japanese fairy tales or folklore, are deeply embedded in the cultural

and spiritual fabric of Japan. These stories, typically of a fantastical nature, belong to the genre of fiction and feature imaginary elements such as gods, fairies, dragons, and objects with supernatural powers. As Sarumpaet (2017) explains, the presence of such fantastical elements speaks to the imaginary foundation of these stories. The tales not only entertain but also reflect the Japanese people's belief in the spiritual nature of the world around them. For centuries, they have viewed natural phenomena such as the sun, moon, stars, rain, and thunder as possessing spirits, known as Kami, that wield power over human lives. This belief is central to many Mukashi Banashi stories, where the influence of Kami plays a pivotal role in the narrative.

Shintoism, the indigenous religion of Japan, reinforces these spiritual beliefs. As the native faith, Shinto has been a crucial part of Japanese culture and has shaped their worldview for generations. Many Japanese myths, particularly those related to the creation of Japan, are rooted in Shinto traditions, and Kami are central to these narratives. According to Brafangestu Candra (2021), both living and non-living things are believed to contain spirits, making the worship of natural phenomena a common practice. The government, as Mansur (2011) notes, has long supported Shintoism as a state religion, emphasizing its importance in Japanese society. Shinto's influence can still be seen today in both cultural practices and national governance, with myths and stories such as those found in Mukashi Banashi continuing to be passed down as a vital part of Japan's spiritual and cultural heritage.

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