



Scuola Italiana di Studi  
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École Française  
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# 2018 KYOTO LECTURES

Monday, June 4th, 18:00h

David Lurie

SPEAKER

## Dead Goddesses and Living Narratives

### Variant Accounts in Early Japanese Mythology

Most students of Japanese culture or comparative mythology are familiar with tales of the progenitor deities Izanagi and Izanami, or of Susano-o, rebellious scion of the next divine generation. But fewer people are aware that such myths exist in radically different versions with challenging contradictions. Through close readings of two key narratives—Izanami's death and afterlife, and Susano-o's murder of a cereal goddess—this lecture places the sources of ancient Japanese mythology in historical context and considers how we might make sense of their variant accounts.

**David Lurie** is Associate Professor of Japanese History and Literature in the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures at Columbia University. His first book, *Realms of Literacy: Early Japan and the History of Writing* (Harvard University Asia Center, 2011), received the Lionel Trilling Award in 2012. With Haruo Shirane and Tomi Suzuki, he was co-editor of the *Cambridge History of Japanese Literature* (2015), to which he contributed chapters on myths, histories, gazetteers, and early literature in general. He is currently preparing a scholarly monograph entitled *The Emperor's Dreams: Reading Japanese Mythology*.



**Please note that this lecture will be held at the Kyoto centre of the École Française d'Extrême-Orient**

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