

Difference Between Ghouls and Ghosts

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Key Difference – Ghouls vs Ghosts

Ghouls and ghosts are two supernatural beings that often scare us. Although these two words sound and look alike, they refer to two different beings. The key difference between ghouls and ghosts is that **ghoul is a legendary evil spirit that robs graves and feeds on dead bodies whereas ghost is a spirit or soul of a dead person that becomes visible to the living.** It is also important to note that these supernatural beings can be portrayed differently in various [legends](#), [myths](#), [folktales](#) and literature of various languages and [cultures](#).

What are Ghouls?

Ghouls are monsters or evil spirits associated with graveyards or burial grounds and consume human flesh. The origins of this supernatural being can be traced back to Arabian [mythology](#). It was with the translation of the story of Arabian Nights by Antoine Galland that the western conception of ghoul was introduced. Ghouls are generally known to dwell in cemeteries, robbing graves and feeding on [corpses](#). Ghouls are basically depicted as a kind of undead monster in modern literature.

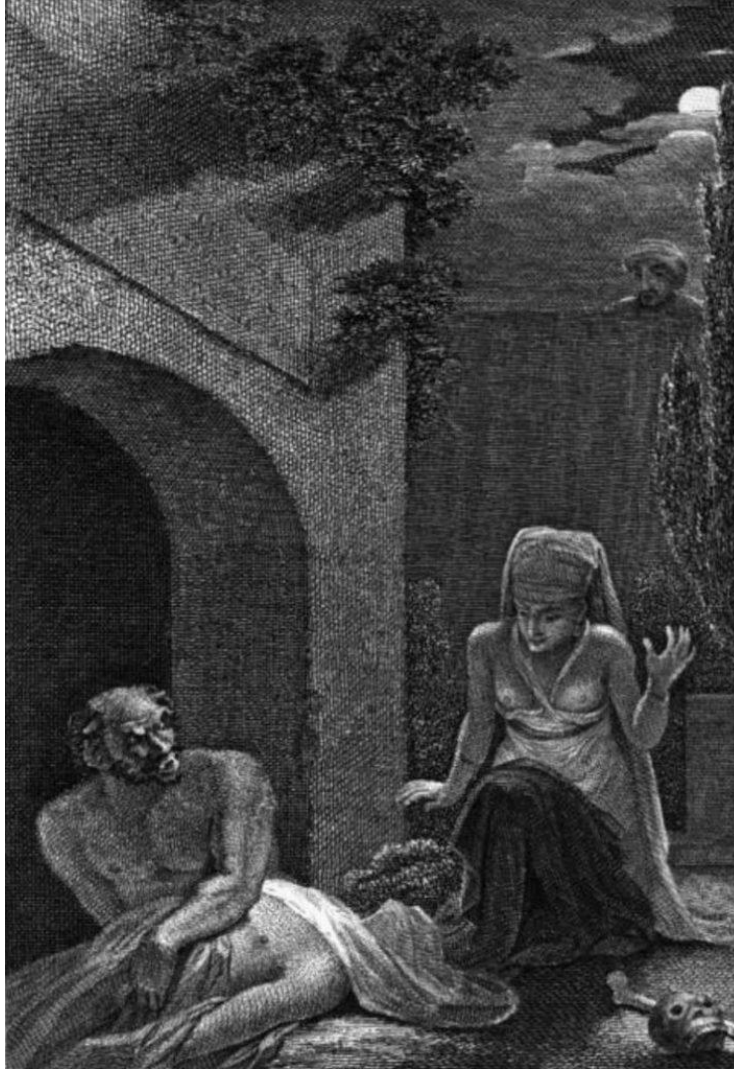


Figure 01: Depiction of a ghoul from a story in Arabian Nights.

In Arabian folklore, ghouls are also shapeshifters and are able to lure humans into the desert with their animal disguise. They are also known to prey on children, drink blood, and steal coins.

What are Ghosts?

Ghosts are souls or spirits of dead people that appear to the living. The description of appearances of ghosts may vary from an invisible presence to nebulous images to realistic life-like visions. Ghosts are believed to haunt particular places, objects or people they were connected in their lives.

The idea of ghosts exist in many cultures and countries; folklore, myths, and legends about ghosts can be found all over the world. The depiction of ghosts in them may be different, but the basic concept about ghosts, i.e., ghosts being spirits or souls of dead people, can be noted in all these stories. The concept of ghosts is also used in popular literature in many cultures; for example, many horror films contain ghost stories as their plots. Ghost stories or the presence of ghosts can be also traced in classical literature; ghosts in Shakespeare's Hamlet and Macbeth are prime examples for this.



Figure 02: A photograph claiming to capture the image of a ghost.

Although the existence of ghosts has not been scientifically proven, many people believe in their existence. The deliberate attempt to make contact with ghosts is known as necromancy and ghost hunting, which sometimes uses scientific methods, is classified as a pseudoscience.

What is the difference between Ghouls and Ghosts?

Ghouls vs Ghosts	
Ghouls are legendary evil spirits that rob graves and feed on dead bodies.	Ghosts are spirits or souls of dead people that become visible to the living.
Appearance	
Ghouls have a physical form.	Ghosts may be invisible or translucent.
Behavior	
Ghouls dwell on burial grounds and feed on corpses.	Ghosts haunt objects, places or people associated with their previous life.
Origin	
The idea of ghouls originated from Arabian folklore.	The idea of ghosts can be found in many cultures.
In Popular Culture	
Ghouls are not as commonly used as ghosts in popular culture.	Ghosts are commonly used supernatural beings in films, novels, plays, etc.

Summary – Ghouls vs Ghosts

Ghosts and ghouls are two supernatural beings in myths, legends, and folklore. Ghouls are evil beings that dwell on burial grounds and consume human flesh while ghosts are spirits of dead people that become visible to the living. This is the basic difference between ghouls and ghosts. One another main difference between ghouls and ghosts is that ghouls have a physical form whereas ghosts may or not have a clear physical form.

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