



## Japanese Animal-Wife Tales: Narrating Gender Reality in Japanese Folktale Tradition (International Folkloristics)

Fumihiko Kobayashi

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A familiar, beloved, and yet misunderstood character in the Japanese folktale tradition is the animal-woman, an earthly animal that assumes the form of a female human. In order to articulate the characteristics that make Japanese Animal-Wife tales unique, this trailblazing book Japanese Animal-Wife Tales: Narrating Gender Reality in Japanese Folktale Tradition challenges long-held characterizations of them in folklore scholarship. By re-examining the gender-specific behaviors of both the animal-woman and her human spouse, the book recovers the sociocultural and historical contexts that underlay their behaviors to demonstrate the actual gender characteristics that shaped the original Japanese Animal-Wife tales, highlighting the assertive, rather than naïve, personality of women in early Japanese folktale tradition. This new approach to the study of Japanese folktales and culture will interest researchers and students in a variety of fields, including Japanese studies, comparative folklore studies, culture studies, Asian studies, and anthropology.



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