

Research Note

Crossing Boundaries: The Fox-Woman in Twenty-First-Century Novels

Jiachuan Li

Summary

The fox-woman, a literary figure able to shape-shift from fox to woman and vice versa, originated in Chinese mythology, thereafter appearing often in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean folklore. The figure was first introduced to Europe in the nineteenth century, at a time when fascination with Asian literature and art was blooming. The character and the narrative structure of the East Asian fox-woman stories have been adapted and interpreted in various cultural contexts, establishing connections between Eastern and Western traditions, and between tradition and modernity. In the last 20 years, more novelists from other cultures have adapted the fox-woman story into their own writing than ever before. This paper argues that the fox-woman in twenty-first-century novels is used to portray the ambiguous boundaries between cultures, genders, and human-animal spheres against a background of globalization and technological development. The fox-woman is therefore becoming a cultural symbol of those who cross boundaries in postmodern society, individuals with heterogeneous identities who transform themselves in order to live in different environments. Until now, studies on the fox-woman have remained mainly within the limits of national literature. This paper adds new perspectives to these readings by exploring the fox-woman story within a broader context that goes beyond that typical national framework. Several examples from twenty-first-century novels featuring the fox-woman are taken up and explored using different methodological approaches, such as critical feminist, postcolonial, new materialist, ecocritical, and animal studies.

Keywords: literary animal studies, literary transformation, fox-woman, twenty-first-century novel

Jiachuan Li is a doctoral student at the Department of Comparative Literature of the University of Vienna. She is currently working on her dissertation on the fox-woman transformation in twenty-first-century novels.

zzuljc@163.com

Fox-woman stories in East Asian culture

In early literature, the fox was seen as a boundary crosser between the earthly and divine spheres. The very first mention of the fox figure in East Asian literature is the nine-tailed fox (九尾狐) in the fourth-century Chinese mythology collection *Classic of Mountains and Seas* (山海经). The nine-tailed fox is one of the animals accompanying the goddess Queen Mother of the West (西王母), later even becoming an embodiment of her (Maihlahn 2006: 95). In this legend, after 100 years of practicing its magical powers, the fox was able to get a new tail, a process that continued until it reached the highest level of expertise: that of nine tails. At this point, the fox is able to transform into a woman. Since its inception, the nine-tailed fox has often been associated with female characteristics and especially with divine goddess figures. In Japan, the mythical fox is called *kitsune* (狐) or *myōbu* (命婦), and serves as the messenger of the divine spirit Inari Ōkami (稻荷神), who is also often represented as female (Smyers 1999: 8) and is believed to be the patron of the rice harvest and of fortune.

The fox-woman is found in early Chinese myths and tales. Just like the nine-tailed fox in the early legends, the fox spirit is said to train its magical powers for thousands of years before it can transform itself into a beautiful young woman, seduce a man, and possibly marry and give birth to children with him. The fox-woman usually keeps her true identity secret and establishes a relationship with her beloved, possibly a young student. The most influential fox-woman figure in Chinese legend is Su Daji (苏妲己) from *Investiture of the Gods* (封神演义), a sixteenth-century Chinese novel. It tells the story of how the goddess Nü Wa (女娲) sent a nine-tailed fox to earth to embody Daji, the new concubine of Emperor Zhou. The transformed fox spirit uses her charm to seduce Zhou and entices him into inflicting harsh punishments on his people. In the legend, Daji even causes the collapse of the Shang dynasty.

The same plot can be found in the relevant stories in *Ghost Stories from a Chinese Studio* (聊斋志异) and *Taiping Guangji* (太平广记), in which fox-women are depicted as being friendly to humans, and as getting along well with the family of their lovers or husbands. In the late imperial period in China, running from the mid-fourteenth to the early twentieth century, foxes as well as fox-women became very prominent figures in notebook fictions (笔记小说) written by Chinese literati such as Ji Yun (纪昀) and He Bang'e (何邦额) (Huntington 2003). In the twentieth century, however, the erotic aspect of fox-woman stories was depicted mostly in Chinese trivial literature (Monschein 1988: 329). The fox-woman figure and the narrative structure of these Chinese legends and tales also spread to Japan and Korea. The most significant fox-woman figures in Japanese myths and folklore are Kuzunoha (葛の葉) and Tamano-no Mae (玉藻前), and in Korean legends, the Kumiho (nine-tailed fox, 구미호).

Nowadays, the fox-woman stories are continuously reinterpreted in East Asian pop culture, showing up in Japanese manga, Chinese web fiction, and video and mobile games. Examples are the character Kūgen Tenko (天狐 空幻) in the Japanese novel *Our Home's Fox Deity* (我が家のお稲荷さま, 2004) and the Three-tailed Fox (三尾狐) in the Chinese mobile game *Onmyoji* (阴阳师, 2016). In modern Chinese slang, “fox spirit” (狐狸精) is used in two allegorical ways: as a determined and independent woman, and as a seductive female who destroys the marriage of others. The fox-woman character and the narrative structure of the romantic liaison between her and a man have been taken up time and again in East Asia, both in literature and in pop culture.

The adaptation and interpretation of the fox-woman stories in other cultural contexts

The fox-woman stories have broken cultural boundaries and made their ways into Western literature over the last two centuries. In the Western literary tradition, the talking fox is often depicted as a seductive and cunning figure who is good at persuading others through the sly use of language. Examples of this are the foxes in *Aesop's Fables* and in Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Reineke Fuchs* (*Reynard the Fox*). There are very few indications of the fox being characterized as female in Western literature. The fox-woman stories and the female fox figure were introduced into Western countries in tandem with the growing European fascination with Far Eastern cultures during the nineteenth century. At this time, numerous fox-woman stories from China and Japan were translated into European languages, such as in Herbert A. Giles's English translation (1880) and Martin Buber's German translation (1911) of *Ghost Stories from a Chinese Studio* (聊斋志异). Simultaneously, some Japanese *ukiyo-e* woodblock prints featuring the fox-woman stories were introduced to Europe, such as Utagawa Kuniyoshi's (歌川国芳) *Abe no Yasuna and the Fox Kuzunoha* (安倍保名 葛葉狐) — as collected by William Sturgis Bigelow between 1882 and 1889.

Figure 1. *Abe no Yasuna and the Fox Kuzunoha* (Utagawa 1852)



Source: The Trustees of the British Museum, released as CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

After the fox-woman stories had been introduced to Western readers, some writers began to incorporate it into their own works in the early twentieth century. Some examples include the American John Luther Long's *The Fox-Woman* (1900), the Canadian of Chinese-British descent Winnifred Eaton's *Tama* (1910), and the Englishman David Garnett's *Lady into Fox* (1922). In the mid-twentieth century, while a growing interest in the East Asian fox-woman was evident, novels about

the fox-woman transformation still remained, however, on the margins of Western literature (Monschein 1988: 356).

Further to those early adaptations, the proliferation of the fox-woman in pop culture and the growing interest in fantasy literature over the last two decades have contributed to the increased reception of this figure in Western culture. It is remarkable that the fox-woman has been taken up more frequently in the last two decades than in any other previous era. Furthermore, not only novelists from Asia but writers from many different parts of the world are increasingly making use of the character and the narrative structure too. Good examples of this are *The Sacred Book of the Werewolf* (2005) by Russian novelist Victor Pelevin and *Fox* (2018) by Croatian-Dutch writer Dubravka Ugrešić. According to Gérard Genette's theory of "transtextuality" (1997: 2), as far as twenty-first-century novels are concerned it is possible to identify two different patterns here with regard to the early East Asian fox-woman stories: (1) hypertextuality: novels which share the same storyline as the early East Asian stories without mentioning or citing them directly, with the fox transforming into the semblance of a woman and experiencing the human world, for example *Vixen* (2000) by Vietnamese-Australian writer Hoa Pham; (2) intertextuality: novels that cite or reference the fox-woman stories in a subplot, for example *Die Füchsin Spricht* (2016) by the Austrian writer Sabine Scholl and *Der Fuchs und Dr. Shimamura* (2015) by German peer Christine Wunnicke.

The fox-woman stories are proving suitable to a multitude of different cultural contexts. The study of the fox-woman in contemporary texts is very promising, as one can read it as a quintessential symbol for the boundary crosser, one who mediates between East and West, animal and human, past and present, tradition and modernity. Previous research on the fox-woman, however, has analyzed it almost exclusively within the framework of national literature, such as *The Cult of the Fox: Power, Gender, and Popular Religion in Late Imperial and Modern China* (2006) by Xiaofei Kang and *Der Fuchs in Glaube und Mythos* (2006) by Klaus Mailahn. Few researchers have done studies on fox-women in contemporary world literature and in a modern global context. Ylva Monschein (1988), for example, examined how the Chinese fox-woman stories were reinterpreted in twentieth-century European literature. Some other studies are conducted on the basis of modern feminist and posthumanism approaches meanwhile. Luciana Cardi's article "A Japanese Fox in a Woman's Body: Shifting Performances of Femininity in Kij Johnson's Reworking of Konjaku Monogatari" compares the old Japanese *setsuwa* tale of fox-woman with a rewriting of it by Kij Johnson in *The Fox Woman* (2000). She argues that Johnson's novel blurs the boundaries between human and animal, thereby demonstrating the notion of the fictional nature of femininity. Furthermore, T. C. Baker (2009) explores the interrelationship of text and body in twenty-first-century fiction from the perspective of posthumanism, using the metamorphosis of the fox-woman as an example.

Yet there are two relevant questions that have not been addressed by previous studies on fox-woman stories so far: First, why have these stories gained more attention in the current social and historical context than ever before? Second, what problems are thematized and discussed through invoking this literary figure in twenty-first-century novels? In the following, several representative examples are selected out of the considerable number of twenty-first-century novels containing the fox-woman figure for examination. This will provide a perspective for reading the fox-woman stories in the current social and historical context.

Gender stereotypes and female self-perception

While the fox-woman originated in texts written in strict patriarchal societies, it is now being taken up again — in ways that go against the traditional social grain. Today's fox novels are predominantly composed by female writers and mark yet another step forward for the women's liberation movement first emerging in the 1960s. They are also representative of the ongoing evolution and evaluation of feminist discourse via fox-woman stories.

Via the fox-woman figure, certain gender stereotypes that can be traced back to early East Asian writing are revisited. The fox-woman in East Asian folklore — and even in present-day pop culture — is depicted as a seductive, mysterious, and dangerous figure. Men's uneasy feelings of being threatened by women were expressed in the elusive superhuman power of the fox-woman. For example, in both Hall's *Mrs. Fox* (2014) and Wunnicke's *The Fox and Dr. Shimamura* (2015), the first-person narrator is a man trying to understand the women around him. In *Mrs. Fox*, young wife Sophia transforms into a fox shortly after getting married. The story line of Hall's novel is almost the same as Garnett's *Lady Into Fox* (1922). In both stories, the husband is shown as being confused and sad after his wife transforms into a fox. At the end of Hall's story Sophia is killed by a hunting dog, after which she reverts to her human form. In both novels, the inaccessibility of the women's psyches and their inability to talk contributes to the men's feelings of alienation.

The novel *The Fox and Dr. Shimamura* also focuses solely on the male protagonist, Dr. Shimamura, a psychiatric doctor in nineteenth-century Japan. He is sent to a remote village to study several cases of mentally ill women, seen by the locals as a "fox epidemic." In the novel, the possessed women are regarded as being fox "receptacles." After his experiences in the village, Dr. Shimamura is sent to Europe to keep pace with research developments in modern Psychology and Psychiatry. During Dr. Shimamura's visit, he is able to study hysteria with the influential French neurologist Jean-Martin Charcot, who during the nineteenth century diagnosed the condition as a mental illness particular only to female patients. Despite devoting himself to the study of the condition, the "fox epidemic" in Japan and the cases of hysteria in Europe remain inexplicable to Dr. Shimamura,

as do his relationships with the female members of his family, from whom he has felt emotionally isolated his whole life.

In both novels, the boundaries and the tension between men and women are represented through the polarization of human and animal dimensions. Women are regarded as incomplete human beings in a patriarchal society, believed to “suffer so much by being half-human” (Hall 2014: 31). It is noticeable that both works are written by females who portray mysterious fox-woman figures whose voices can be neither heard nor understood. Commenting on the fox-woman figure in Garnett’s *Lady into Fox*, Tim Youngs notes that this inability to express themselves creates a kind of gap between “the intention and product, the declaration and behavior” (2014: 198). Why this gap is brought up repeatedly in twenty-first-century novels using the fox-woman story, despite the feminist movements, is something certainly worthy of further discussion.

In other novels, such as *Where the Wild Ladies Are* (2019) by Japanese author Matsuda Aoko and *The Revenge of the Mooncake Vixen* (2009) by Chinese-American writer Marilyn Chin, the voicelessness and mysteriousness of the fox-woman become hidden powers. In East Asian folklore, the fox-woman has the ability to change her shape at will, allowing her to adapt to two different worlds. The protagonists in *Revenge of the Mooncake Vixen*, twin sisters Moon and Mei Ling, call themselves “vixens.” They were born in Hong Kong and grew up in San Francisco, California. When Mei Ling is asked to meet a famous American poet at the airport, the latter wants the exotic young graduate student to go to his hotel room with him. Mei Ling seduces him in the taxi, then transforms herself into a fox and takes revenge by spraying him with yellow varnish, which makes him and his career stink for the rest of his life. The fox-woman in this novel makes full use of her fox powers — cunning and seductiveness — to deal with the threat and power of a human male. It also corresponds to the talking-fox character found in both Eastern and Western culture, who is good at manipulating others without them noticing in order to achieve its goals.

In the story “A Fox’s Life” in *Where the Wild Ladies Are*, the fox-woman folklore tale of Kuzunoha is retold, now set in contemporary Japanese society. The protagonist Kuzunoha, a fox-like girl who had always been the cleverest student in middle school, chooses to work as a secretary after graduating from high school instead of going on to study at university. She marries a colleague from her company and gives birth to his child, thus fulfilling the conventional expectations of society. Once her son has grown up, she starts to climb mountains as a hobby, where she accidentally transforms into a fox. After this experience, she discovers her true identity as a fox and decides to lead a more determined life, which results in her becoming head of a department in her company toward the end of the story. In this tale Kuzunoha has two identities, each with different expectations: as a woman she follows social and gender norms, as a fox she follows her inner voice and dreams. The latter identity is perceived as demonic within her patriarchal

society and is supposed to remain hidden as if a shameful secret. Changing into a fox, however, gives Kuzunoha the chance to show her talent and achieve her dreams. According to Baker (2019: 80), in literature such transformation not only represents the process of changing from one physical form to another, but also the destabilization of a given identity. The fox-woman stories show the opportunities that women in modern society have to overturn gender stereotypes and use them to their advantage, while reflecting on the conventional norms and identities still prevailing even in this new social environment.

Multicultural identity

As the result of globalization and the development of information technology, cultural boundaries have become increasingly blurred and related identities less fixed. Subjectivity in postmodern societies is always in a process of becoming and undergoing metamorphosis (Braidotti 2002: 13). Against this backdrop, the change from an ideal of homogeneity to the acceptance of a heterogeneous cultural identity has been thematized in twenty-first-century novels invoking the fox-woman figure. One of the most important early texts in which the fox-woman appears is the earlier-mentioned story of Su Daji, which portrays the simultaneous existence of her two identities, fox and woman, together with her ability to shift between the two in the very first chapter. The fox-woman story has always been associated with intercultural communication. Rereading these stories in the context of globalization, it becomes clear that the previously given stability of the individual identity is now being challenged — consequently becoming more and more precarious in the process.

In *The Revenge of the Mooncake Vixen*, for example, the twin sisters have to deal with the conflicts of the two cultures they are part of: the American milieu that surrounds them at school and in society, and the expectations of their traditional Chinese family. Braidotti (2002: 40) claims that the human body is a point of intersection between different classes, races, and sexes. It must transform simultaneously in order to negotiate the contradiction of social imaginary and one's sense of self-existence. The vixen girls in this novel must cross the boundaries between two different cultural contexts, and develop the ability to transform in order to deal with the situation faced. Their grandmother makes them do a Chinese full-body exercise routine every day, calling it “the dance of the mooncake vixen” (Chin 2009: 71). This exercise routine ingrains the Chinese cultural identity of their family — which is totally different from that of American culture — into their blood and muscles. At school and in society at large, the vixen girls must transform into women, keeping their fox side — in other words, their Chinese identity — secret and leading a normal life, just like the fox-women in early writings. From this point of view their heterogeneous cultural identity still appears to be unacceptable in the context of present national settings, even despite greater intercultural communication.

The troubled acceptance of heterogeneous cultural identities stands out in the discussion about migration. In the postcolonial discourse, the current century is characterized as a time of “new nomadism,” with people crossing national boundaries for the sake of their either immediate or long-term interests (Young 2015: 175). However foreign cultural identities, representing the “other” of society, are still regarded as “undesirable.” Pham’s *Vixen* (2000) conveys the experience of an immigrant to Australia through the invocation of the fox-woman story. In this novel, the protagonist is a Vietnamese fox-woman, courtesan of the imperial court in Hue during the First Indochina War (1946–1954). Having witnessed the decline of the empire and the worshiping of spirits, she flees to “the new gold mountain” — Australia. In this new environment she soon recognizes that she has simply chosen yet another alien and strange society, one in which she continues to struggle. In order to adapt to her new surroundings and transform into a woman she must take possession of a dead girl’s body.

It is remarkable that the female authors of these two novels, both of whom have immigration backgrounds, use the fox-woman figure to reflect upon their own multicultural identities. On the one hand, the transformation into a woman is a kind of compromise and trickery used to negotiate the conflict between an unfamiliar environment and their own self-perception. On the other, the transformation represents their exceptional ability to adapt to a globalized society in which they are required to continually break cultural boundaries, both physically and mentally. As Braidotti (2002: 60) argues, transformation is a fundamental feature of nomadic subjectivities when interacting with social realities in our new century. The characterization of the fox-woman in these two novels differs from the works mentioned in the previous section, where the fox-woman is regarded as an unfamiliar animal that is unable to talk and behave properly. Here, thanks to the transformation, the fox-woman has not only the fundamental ability to adapt to human society, to speak and to behave like a human being, she also has the chance to take a superior position, to make use of her advantages as a fox-woman, and even to take revenge on human beings by using her innate abilities.

Human-animal relations

In recent years social discussion has been increasingly concerned with relations between humankind and ecosystems, which has led to the development of the concept of the “Anthropocene.” The problematic implications of anthropocentrism and of the boundaries between humans and animals have been discussed both in academic spheres and among the general public. The fox-woman stories in twenty-first-century novels can be regarded as the representation of a new way forward, one in which humans and animals could live together, thus shattering the anthropocentric worldview (Baker 2019: 76).

The novel *How to Be Human* (2017) by Paula Coccozza, for example, tells how the protagonist Mary’s attitude toward the fox changes as the two become acquainted.

At the beginning of this work Mary sees the fox as an invader in her garden, while towards the end she comes to respect it as a friend who lived in the area before her arrival and who is willing to share the garden with her. This novel is a good example of Michael Cronin's concept of the "tradosphere", as developed in his work *Eco-Translation: Translation and Ecology in the Age of the Anthropocene* (2017). Cronin broadens the concept of "translation" to a universal context in the form of nature and defines tradosphere as the sum of all translation systems existing on the planet and of all the ways in which living and nonliving organisms can communicate. In contrast to the "infosphere," where information from different parties cannot be translated into another language, the tradosphere enables a non-anthropocentric perspective on the manifold possibilities for communication between humans and animals. In Coccozza's novel, Mary's suffering from the recent breakup with her boyfriend and her loneliness are "understood" by the fox, in a way that the protagonist is not able to express through words. Nonetheless, Mary is still able to perceive the friendly greetings and messages of the fox. This story depicts a way of "living together" that naturally arises when humans relinquish an exclusively anthropocentric understanding of communication, opening up new dimensions of empathy between humans and animals.

The development of biotechnology has resulted in a sharpening of the ambiguous boundaries between human, animal, and machine, a theme that has been discussed using the fox-woman in twenty-first-century novels such as *The Many Selves of Katherine North* (2016) by the American Emma Geen. Kit, the protagonist, "jumps" into the body of a laboratory fox being used by a research program to help people better understand animals. After several years of being subject to experimentation, Kit is no longer certain of her identity — is she a fox or a woman?

When the boundaries between human and animal, organic and inorganic, body and mind are no longer easily distinguishable, the problem of ascertaining identity becomes an urgent one. This blurred boundary is depicted by the idea of the "Great Story" of nature, which is, Cronin (2017: 72) argues, everything that happens between all species within a given physical environment. In both Coccozza's and Geen's novels, the Great Story and the animal voices usually ignored by human beings are translated into a language comprehensible to the latter. Thus, the fox-woman stories can be interpreted as a way to tell the Great Story of nature and translate animal voices into human language in literature.

Conclusion

The fox-woman figure has been crossing cultural boundaries ever since the beginning of its long history of adaptation, from its first appearances in East Asia to today's reception and translation into cultures all over the world. In twenty-first-century novels, the fox-woman not only symbolizes females of East Asian background; it is also becoming a prolific symbol used in diverse cultural contexts.

This exemplifies how stories from national folklore continue to cross boundaries in our globalized society.

Due to its history as a boundary crosser, the fox-woman stories also convey important themes from the specific social and historical contexts in which it is embedded: namely the increasingly vague boundaries between genders, humans in general, animals, and machines. Ugrešić addresses the definitions of “writers” and “writing” in her novel *Fox* (2018) through the medium of the fox-woman. The first chapter of this work narrates the biography of Russian writer Boris Pilnyak. The latter would write that the fox is the writers’ totem, and that the entire tribe of a person possessed by a fox spirit is cursed together with the person in question himself (Ugrešić 2018: 10). The narrator, however, regards the cunning and sometimes even divine and spiritual fox (referring to the fox messenger of Inari in Japan) as everyone’s totem:

In today’s social codes, Pilnyak’s fairy tale about the ethics of the writerly trade, about the fox as totem of treachery, would be read in reverse. The motto of the present would go something like: the fox is the totem of cunning and treachery: if the spirit of the fox enters a person, then that person’s tribe is blessed! The fox is everyone’s totem, there are no privileged few! (Ugrešić 2018: 27)

Fox is a good example of the converse attitude toward the fox-woman as compared to the early East Asian texts. In early texts, fox was rather a demonized “other”, while now it is regarded as a “totem” for everyone. In the current social and historical context, once stable frameworks, boundaries, and homogeneous identities are now continually being challenged. Therefore the fox-woman is neither merely a symbol of the boundary-crossing “other” and of minorities nor a totem for the few — rather she is representative of everyone. In contemporary texts, the transformation of the fox-woman is regarded as an affirmative and necessary strategy for us to deal with the tension caused by the destabilization arising from the simultaneous existence of various different identities. By adapting and reinterpreting the fox-woman story, twenty-first-century novels tackle the relevance of accepting ongoing mental and physical transformation as well as heterogeneous identities in modern society — both during the last 20 years and into the future too.

This research note is based on the first phase of the author’s research on the subject of fox-woman transformation in twenty-first-century novels. The aspects discussed above will be further explored and developed therein. There are several perspectives also very promising when it comes to matters for further exploration: How are fox-woman stories represented in new media (television series, manga, web fiction, and similar)? How do they influence the adaptation of the fox-woman stories in different cultural contexts? And, compared to earlier texts, how are fox-woman stories written and read differently within contemporary East Asian contexts?

References

- Awa, Naoko; Toshiya, Kamei; Amane, Kaneko (2009): *The Fox's Window and Other Stories*. New Orleans: University of New Orleans
- Baker, Timothy C. (2019): *Writing Animals: Language, Suffering, and Animality in Twenty-First-Century Fiction*. London: Palgrave Macmillan
- Braidotti, Rosi (2002): *Metamorphoses: Towards a Materialist Theory of Becoming*. Cambridge/Malden: Polity
- Cardi, Luciana (2020): *A Japanese Fox in a Woman's Body: Shifting Performances of Femininity in Kij Johnson's Reworking of Konjaku Monogatari*, in *Forms of the Body in Contemporary Japanese Society, Literature, and Culture* Lanham: Lexington Books, 3–22
- Chin, Marilyn (2009): *Revenge of the Mooncake Vixen: A Manifesto in 41 Tales*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co
- Cocozza, Paula (2017): *How to Be Human*. New York: Metropolitan Books/Henry Holt and Company
- Cronin, Michael (2017): *Eco-Translation: Translation and Ecology in the Age of the Anthropocene*. London: Routledge
- Garnett, David (2013): *Lady into Fox*. New York: Dover Publications
- Geen, Emma (2016): *The Many Selves of Katherine North*. London: Bloomsbury Circus
- Genette, Gérard (1997): *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*. Lincoln: U of Nebraska Press
- Hall, Sarah (2014): *MRS FOX*. London: Bloomsbury House
- Huntington, Rania (2003): *Alien Kind: Foxes and Late Imperial Chinese Narrative*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press
- Johnson, Kij (2001): *The Fox Woman*. New York: Tor Books
- Kang, Xiaofei (2006): *The Cult of the Fox: Power, Gender, and Popular Religion in Late Imperial and Modern China*. New York: Columbia University Press
- Long, John Luther (1900): *The Fox-Woman*. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott
- Mailahn, Klaus (2014): *Der Fuchs und die Göttin: Erkenntnisse über ein heiliges Tier der Großen Mutter*. Hamburg: Dissertation
- Matsuda, Aoko; Barton, Polly (2020): *Where the Wild Ladies Are*. London: Tilted Axis Press
- Monschein, Ylva (1988): *Der Zauber der Fuchsfée: Entstehung und Wandel eines 'Femme-fatale'-Motivs in der chinesischen Literatur*. Frankfurt am Main: Haag + Herchen
- Pelevin, Viktor; Bromfield, Andrew (2008): *The Sacred Book of the Werewolf*. New York: Viking
- Pham, Hoa (2000): *Vixen*. Sydney: Hodder Headline Australia
- Scholl, Sabine (2016): *Die Füchsin spricht*. Zürich: Seccession
- Smyers, Karen Ann (1999): *The Fox and the Jewel: Shared and Private Meanings in Contemporary Japanese Inari Worship*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- Ugrešić, Dubravka; Elias-Bursać, Ellen; Williams, David (2018): *Fox*. Rochester: Open Letter
- Utagawa, Kuniyoshi (1852): “No. 43 Tsumagome 妻籠”, woodblock print, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/A_2008-3037-14743 (accessed 2021-7-15) (Sixty-Nine Post Stations of the Kisokaido series (木曾街道六十九次之内))
- Watanna, Onoto (2008): *Tama*. Whitefish: Kessinger Publishing
- Wunnicke, Christine (2015): *Der Fuchs Und Dr. Shimamura: Roman*. Berlin: Berenberg
- Young, Robert. (2015): *Empire, Colony, Postcolony*. Oxford/Malden: Wiley Blackwell
- Youngs, Tim (2014): *Beastly Journeys: Travel and Transformation at the Fin de Siècle*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press

Zhou, Jianming (1996): *Tiere in der Literatur: eine komparatistische Untersuchung der Funktion von Tierfiguren bei Franz Kafka und Pu Songling*. Tübingen: Niemeyer