

## **Translingualism, Autobiography, Fiction: Levy Hideo and On Yuju**

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Translation plays a crucial role in contemporary literary production. In world literature today, bilingualism, multilingualism, and translingualism are everywhere. All of these enhance translational poetics. Many writers' practices are rooted strategically in exophony (writing in a language other than one's mother tongue) and omniphony (writing consciously in the presence of other languages). Japanese, often considered a rather centripetal and homogeneous language to write in, is no exception.

As examples of translingualism in Japanese, I will take up two contemporary writers, neither of them Japanese by nationality yet choosing Japanese as their language of expression.

Levy Hideo (1950-) abandoned his well-established academic career as a Japanologist in the US and opted to become a Japanese-language novelist. Growing up in Taiwan as a young child and by obsessively repeating his trips to China's mainland as an adult, the focus of his works are now the four-sided relationships among islands (Japan, Taiwan) and continents (US, China) in both fiction and non-fiction. Fluent in several forms of Chinese, his memories are often haunted by the sounds of distant times and places.

On Yuju (1980-), on the other hand, is Taiwanese but grew up in Tokyo. She writes about her own experiences of communication and dis-communication in her trilingual family. Like her mentor Levy, she is extremely language-conscious and further East Asian history of colonialism and post-coloniality often surfaces in her personal literary pursuits.

By examining their works and associating them with the works by others in other languages, I'd like to shed light on the translingualism in action across East Asia today and show how translational consciousness offers a basis for some of the most exciting pieces of border writing.