

リービ英雄論：喪失としての不在と非在

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A Study of Levy Hideo
—Absence and Nonexistence—

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Recently, “transnational literature” is in the spotlight in the Japanese literary world. Simply put, transnational literature refers to any work that involves, in some way, the crossing of a national border. Of course, this includes work written by foreigners living in Japan. Perhaps, the work of Japanese authors who have lived in foreign lands and write from an expanded cultural point-of-view can be included, too—for example, Yoko Tawada. These “border crossings” not only imply an introduction of foreign cultures, or an expression of a character’s inner conflicts, but also an expression of a more fundamental mental state. I argue in this paper that, fundamentally, that state involves a sense of loss. It is because of this loss, or some destruction, that transnational literatures often takes the form of an “I” novel. The works of Levy Hideo certainly fit into this category. Many authors of “transnational literature” create stories in which characters try to rebuild after loss and destruction — in effect, creating a new identity for themselves. Levy differs from many of them, however, as he does not write of characters who find an identity by overcoming loss and destruction, but rather by living with loss and destruction, as it is—and by writing in a language that he did not grow up with. In this paper, I analyze in Levy’s work not only the loss and destruction that results from crossing borders, but also the elements of “absence” and “non-existence” which accompany loss.