

Literariness Journal

A Peer-Reviewed Quarterly
Journal of Literature and Cultural
Studies

P-ISSN: 3108-1614
E-ISSN: 3108-172X

LiterarinessJournal.org

**Vol. 1, Issue 4, September
2026**

© 2026 by the author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC-BY 4.0), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.



A Literariness.org Project

DOI: 10.67147 literariness.v1i4.026

Deslinguadas: Sylvia Molloy, Jhumpa Lahiri, and Yoko Tawada: Writing between Languages and Beyond Fluency

JULIA FERRY

University of São Paulo

juliatferry@gmail.com

Abstract: In this article, I explore how writing between languages, as practiced by immigrant writers through acts of exophony and dispossession, can reveal alternative ways of dwelling in the world. To do so, I examine the work of three women writers—Sylvia Molloy, Jhumpa Lahiri, and Yoko Tawada—each of whom engages with linguistic displacement in a distinct manner: Molloy through the figure of the orphan, Lahiri through that of the nomad, and Tawada through a playful embrace of not-knowing. Through these strategies, these writers offer singular ways of engaging with cultural difference and the immigrant experience. By refusing to approach language as a domain of mastery, fluency, or dominance, they conceive of it as a shared and dispossessed commons: something that we all inhabit, yet that no one can own. In doing so, their work resists imperial notions of language grounded in ideals of purity and authority, proposing instead that it is continually transformed through encounters among peoples, cultures, and geographies.

Keywords: *Exophony; Migrant Writing; Sylvia Molloy; Jhumpa Lahiri; Yoko Tawada*

1. Deslinguadas

Like nonfiction, writing between languages has been extensively analyzed and categorized by literary scholars under various labels, including translingualism, multilingualism, exophonic writing, and migrant writing, among others. Each of these categories emphasizes a particular aspect of how such forms of writing are produced and articulated, whether through creative and stylistic choices, their decolonial and resistant dimensions, or the centrality of the autobiographical project. What these approaches share, however, is the understanding that language is not merely a tool through which ideas are represented in a text; rather, it is the very medium in which meaning is produced, negotiated, and transformed.

As Kellman (2000) argues, switching the language in which one writes is not an easy task. He describes this experience as translingual writing: inhabiting both life and text between languages while continuously exploring what this in-between condition does to each. Drawing on the work of various translingual writers, Kellman emphasizes that they share an ambition to challenge language itself—its limits, possibilities, and expressive capacities.

In *Beyond the Mother Tongue*, Yasemin Yildiz (2012) asserts that multilingualism is not a recent phenomenon; rather, it has been obscured by the dominance of a monolingual paradigm, particularly in the modern era. More than a merely numerical issue, the predominance of a single language is tied to social and cultural hierarchies, the formation of subjectivities, and the constitution of institutions, communities, and nations. For this reason, Yildiz is critical of the concept of the mother tongue, which presupposes the existence of an authentic and original self rooted in a singular ethnicity, place, and origin. These assumptions constitute the very foundations of the monolingual paradigm. Against this framework, Yildiz seeks to recover multilingualism as a historical practice and lived experience that has persisted despite efforts to suppress it and that continues to reemerge in resistant forms. In this sense, multilingualism embraces the idea that subjectivity is shaped by multiple cultures, encounters, and inheritances.

Following this understanding of language as a site of transit, Yoko Tawada, an exophonic writer, approaches *exophony* as a phenomenon that extends beyond immigrant or creole literature, focusing instead on the experience of living outside one's mother tongue. Although she employs the concept of the mother tongue, she does not do so in the possessive sense criticized by Yildiz (2012). As Tawada explains, concepts such as the immigrant or the foreign writer often imply an outsider occupying a domestic language. Exophony, by contrast, designates the opposite movement: a movement from the inside out. Tawada proposes that all creative language involves an element of choice, and that it is precisely within this act of selection that literature emerges. Yet rather than

claiming that all writing is exophonic, she reserves the term for forms of writing that actively question language itself, its assumptions, boundaries, and possibilities. I will return to Tawada's work in greater detail later in this paper.

In this article, I examine the work of three exophonic writers—Sylvia Molloy, Jhumpa Lahiri, and Yoko Tawada—in order to analyze the different ways in which they articulate their exophonic practices. I refer to them as *deslinguadas*, as indicated in the title. This neologism, coined in Portuguese, captures the very potentiality of language that these writers foreground: a space for creating new realities, opening unforeseen possibilities, and cultivating forms of refusal and resistance to colonial and imperial structures of power.

2. The Orphan

In *Poéticas de la distancia: adentro y afuera de la literatura argentina*, various Argentine women writers reflect on the relationship between their writing and their country of origin. The author Sylvia Molloy, one of the editors of the collection, argues that reflecting on national literature means, from the outset, recognizing that it is imaginary. Thus, from the book's preface, Molloy (2006) states that the position of the outsider is not an impediment but a condition for "Argentine literature" to be analyzed. In this way, the author both claims an Argentine position and turns this categorization into a space of origin and transitoriness, of identity and spectrality.

This position is reiterated in several of Molloy's works, such as *Back Home: un posible comienzo*, in which she reflects on the experience of migration and writing, as well as on what it means to be an Argentine and foreign writer. Living abroad, she notes, also involved embodying an "other"—one who not only brings news of her foreignness but is also expected to explain it, functioning as a kind of native informant. In her case, she was often called upon to account for "Argentine literature," on the assumption that she belonged to a supposedly coherent and uniform national corpus.

However, for Molloy, responding to these demands was fraught, as her understanding of writing emerges precisely from displacement and loss: the loss of a point of departure, of a place of origin, and of an irrecoverable home (Molloy 18). In this sense, being an Argentine writer does not signify belonging to a familiar and unified set in which the speaking subject and the place of origin coincide

through a naturalized identification. Rather, it points to the very dispossession¹ that constitutes a person, a nationality, and writing itself.

In this sense, Molloy does not reject the attempt to reflect on the literature of a given country, nor does she deny her position as an Argentine writer. Rather, she transforms these categories into a space of radical indeterminacy and questioning. This position can be observed in several of her works, in which she stages the self in an “in-between” space of languages, geographic locations, and textual forms—that is, between English, French, and Spanish; Argentina, France, and the United States; fiction, autobiographical writing, and academic discourse.

The author suggests that the deterritorialization that writing, and the writer, may undergo is particularly evident in the experience of living between languages. Those who speak another language both carry traces of a place in their words and expose the absence of stable grounding and originality as an inherent condition of all languages. In this sense, the subject’s relation to origin is not one of appropriation but of dispossession, and this is, for Molloy, the essential quality of writing itself.

Therefore, when reflecting on her experience as an Argentine writer, Molloy approaches this identity as a form of primordial dispossession. That is, “Argentine” is not a settled identity, but rather a wandering, unstable one in the text, continually produced and destabilized by writing itself.

In her autobiographical book *Viver entre línguas (Living Between Languages)*, she reflects on her own life as a speaker of Spanish, English, and French. The condition of being trilingual is defined as a form of deterritorialization, that is, something that is both inherent to and alien to the narrator, who wonders what the language of her traumas, her listening, nonsense, forgetfulness, death, and love might be. In this sense, knowledge of three languages is not something she possesses, but something that possesses her, or even dispossesses her.

Spanish, her mother tongue, does not appear as a fixed or foundational base in relation to the other acquired languages. There is no established hierarchy among them, so Molloy’s writing—her Argentine autobiographical poetics—is made and unmade through territories and words that intertwine and become entangled. This writing is therefore the daughter of multiple encounters and, at the same time, fundamentally orphaned, without dominance and without an original inscription.

¹ Here I refer to dispossession through the idea developed by the American philosopher Judith Butler (2004) in *Precarious Life*, in which she argues that the condition of the subject is its constitutive dispossession, meaning that we do not possess our relations or fixed characteristics. Rather, we are undone and dispossessed through alterity and encounters with others. In this sense, dispossession is both a condition and an effect of sociality. This becomes evident when we lose someone. As Butler points out, what we lose is not simply a “you,” but rather the very “I” is put into question through the loss of the other. The other, then, dispossesses us.

In the first text that opens *Viver entre linguas*, entitled *Infância* (Childhood) Molloy notes that acquiring a language is “another way of breaking with what is secure” (Molloy 7)². Later, in the section titled *Perda* (Loss) the author recalls that when she did not know a word in her French classes, she would invent a new one by combining it with Spanish: *le café, une cucharite*. All of these examples point to the idea of home, suggesting that the transit between languages belongs more to the realm of the uncanny than to the familiar. It is not by chance that the text is entitled “Loss” when referring to home. She concludes that the mixing of languages is, fundamentally, “what shakes the foundation of the house” (12).

Thus, it is possible to say that, for Molloy, speaking three languages is not an acquisition but rather a dispossession, a disaffiliation, a condition close to orphanhood. Living and writing between languages means losing the fantasy that there is a stable and secure territory. It is, therefore, to become orphaned. It is in the absence of fathers and of a country that would guarantee an imagined coherence that her writing takes place.

The relation between filiation and language is both symbolic and concrete in Molloy’s experience. In the essay *Back Home*, she recalls that upon her mother’s death, “I thought my world had come to an end: I mean one of my worlds, my world in Spanish” (126). The loss of the real mother thus reactivates, on another level, a familial orphanhood: the one that bilingualism (and later trilingualism) instilled in her life from the very beginning.

Holding two passports, Molloy writes: “I would lie if I said I felt American, I would lie if I said I felt Argentine” (127). The text then turns to her search for a third passport, an Irish one, due to her paternal lineage. This search, however, does not signal a desire to appropriate the privileges embedded in the inequalities that structure citizenship rights. Rather, it points to a desire for the father after his death, one she describes as someone she has few memories of, and which, at that point in her life, she is no longer even sure are truly hers. In this sense, paternal national inheritance is both pursued and found in its condition of lack.

Nor is her country of birth a place she can claim as her own. Returning to Buenos Aires is unsettling: “the feeling of opening doors that always lead to empty spaces, of reading pages that are always blank, of groping for memories that lose shape as soon as I try to make sense out of them” (125). This country, which is her mother’s, is not her world: “this country is not mine” (125).

We see, in this sense, how the idea of loss is consistently present in her writing—whether in the loss of life (her mother), of a nation (Argentina), or in the foundational loss of language itself. For

² This and the next passages of this oeuvre are my translation from Portuguese to English.

Molloy, speaking and writing in three languages is not an acquisition, but a disappropriation. It becomes a way of emphasizing structural dispossession, which she marks as central to her exophonic writing: the sense of being an orphan of a mother, a father, a country, and of languages that are never fully “hers.”

3. The Nomadic

In Other Words is a book written in Italian by the author Jhumpa Lahiri, in which she narrates her passage into that language. The English translation presents, on each page, Lahiri’s original Italian alongside the English translation by Ann Goldstein. Although English is Lahiri’s “dominant” language, she chose not to translate the work herself, a decision she explains in a note in which she states that returning to English felt “disorienting, frustrating, also discouraging,” precisely because she was comparing her expressive abilities in both languages. She also informs the reader that her Italian is clearly limited in comparison to her English, so that from the outset we are made aware that we are reading a book that does not simply revolve around fluency, or perhaps even moves beyond it.

The book can be read as the narrative of a nomadic journey from the United States to Italy, from English to Italian, although this trajectory is not linear or progressive. Rather, Lahiri’s passage is shaped by discoveries and failures, by limitations and creative possibilities. The dictionary becomes the amulet of her journey, acquiring multiple meanings: both map and compass, both authoritative parent and sibling ally, full of information she does not yet possess, full of rules and secrets.

In Other Words is a book that reflects on its own making, on how this writing is constituted. As readers, we follow this crossing with the nomadic author, as if we were reading a journey that both transforms and ruptures the writer. Like Molloy, Lahiri does not conceive of language as a secure or stable territory. Rather, she reflects on her passage toward her mother tongue, Bengali, the language of her parents and of her early childhood home. This language is not one she fully masters in the same way she does English; instead, she exposes a sense of haunted guilt she experienced in childhood, as if her command of English signified an advantage over her immigrant parents. In this sense, her mother tongue is not a familiar language but a conflictual one—one she understands and can communicate in, but in which she recognizes her lack of fluency when visiting her extended family in India, as well as the limits of her knowledge.

English, on the other hand, although her dominant language, does not provide definitive security. As Lahiri (2016) writes: “I feel more than ever that I am a writer without a definite language, without origin, without definition” (131).

This position regarding identity as something not to be resolved or determined is emphasized in an interview, in which Lahiri (2017) said:

I used to look for an identity that could be sharp, acceptable, mine. But now the idea of a precise identity seems a trap, and I prefer an overabundant one: the Italian piece, the Brooklyn one, the Indian one. Identity is a completely fluid thing, and metamorphosis has this concept in it. (no pag.)

This idea of identity as a wandering attribute combines with Lahiri's exophonic writing, which functions as a peregrinating experience, a nomadic journey between geographies, languages, and modes of subjectivity. I draw on the concept of nomadic exophony because Lahiri transforms her life in Italian into a practice of writing that foregrounds crossing and movement rather than arrival. She does so not as a specialist, but as part of an experimental practice.

For this reason, her nomadic writing is marked by imperfection, as Lahiri (2016) herself emphasizes: "In Italian I write without style, in a primitive way. I'm always uncertain" (59). It is not fluency that Lahiri seeks to achieve, but rather an ongoing process of discovery and curiosity: "My sole intention, along with a blind but sincere faith, is to be understood, and to understand myself" (59).

As suggested by Walkowitz (2020), Lahiri conceives her lack of fluency as a limitation that becomes a driving force in her writing:

she has embraced Italian as a language in which she will never be a native speaker. English is the language she knows. Italian is the language she is using. In the gap between knowledge and use, Lahiri generates a body of intralingual prose that challenges monolingual literary histories rooted in language fluency (332).

In doing so, Walkowitz underscores the political gesture embedded in this position, as Lahiri claims a place in Italian as both speaker and writer, despite fluency operating as a normative and authoritative criterion of cultural and civic belonging.

In Other Words is Lahiri's first book written in Italian and can be read as a form of autofiction, one that later opened onto other works, such as the novel *The Clothing of Books* (2016), the edited anthology *The Penguin Book of Italian Short Stories* (2019), which she introduced, and the novel *Whereabouts* (2021), which she later self-translated from Italian into English.

As noted in *In Other Words* (2016), Lahiri initially chose not to translate herself into English. Five years later, however, she did so with *Whereabouts*. This shift resonates with the idea of the nomadic, in which the writer demonstrates openness to the challenges opened by displacement.

Moreover, this movement becomes itself a form of writing, as seen in the essay “Where I Find Myself: On Self-Translation” (2021) and in the book *Translating Myself and Others* (2022).

4. The Playful

The exophonic writer Yoko Tawada, as mentioned earlier, is one of the authors who has conceptualized the notion of exophony. Her work *Exophony: Voyages Outside the Mother Tongue* explicitly develops this idea. The notion of “voyages” resonates with the nomadic dimension of Lahiri’s exophonic writing. As Tawada emphasizes, writing in a language other than one’s mother tongue involves a movement of exit, of departure from something familiar, which in turn echoes the themes of loss and orphanhood in Molloy’s work.

This movement of exiting the mother tongue is understood as an exploration of the outside. As she states in an interview, writing in another language is like eating strange words:

Words in a foreign language are, to me, in a particular way, words that I am consuming. These words are outside of my body and I eat them, I consciously eat them. I can put them into my mouth and then they enter my body; but they are not part of my body. Sometimes these words turn out to be indigestible and then you easily can get a stomach ache. These foreign words, though, can also slowly transform themselves and become meat and then, ultimately, they can become my flesh. Although sometimes this process does not work and then the foreign word remains something in between, in between my own body and the foreign body. But, in any case, foreign words are consciously consumed much later on; we are not born with these words. (Tawada, Brandt 2005, 4-5).

The words of her mother tongue are described as those that constitute her skin, the closest elements that become part of us. Foreign words, by contrast, resist incorporation: they must be tasted, sometimes provoke disgust, and can remain indigestible until they gradually become part of one’s linguistic and bodily experience. In this sense, even though she emphasizes a foundational dimension of the mother tongue, she also understands it as something in constant transformation.

As can be observed, Tawada describes her exophony through a playful intertwining of the material and the metaphorical. She engages with unknown words and concepts not as signs of depreciated ignorance, but as forms of productive estrangement: ones that prompt unusual questions and destabilize more conventional and fixed meanings.

Japanese is Tawada's mother tongue, the language she "leaves" in order to write in German. English is also a language she "knows," and in *Portraits of a Tongue* she reflects on her encounter with this third language, which does not yet bear her linguistic "fingerprints." Tawada (2013) narrates scenes in which she encounters the word "share" as used in American English: sharing a reading, a ride, a piece of cake. In doing so, she "shares" her own strangeness through these usages, producing a sense of estrangement in fluent speakers, as if inviting both speakers and non-speakers to reconsider the most habitual forms of language.

Tawada (2013) compares English and German and reflects on how certain expressions in one language are not used in the other, as she writes about sharing a ride:

At first I didn't understand what she was trying to say. The word *teilen* made me think of the cost of the journey and confused me. In the course of our conversation it turned out that P wanted me to go with her in her car. Other people would have said: "*Soll ich dich im Auto mitnehmen?*" or "*Soll ich dich dahin fahren?*" How awkward the usual formulations sound compared with her offer! (57)

The choice to retain the German sentences in the translation by Chantal Wright aligns with Tawada's own style, which consistently mixes languages in a way that invites the reader to participate in her linguistic voyages. This strategy becomes particularly evident later in the book, when Tawada reflects on the expression "sharing a secret." She writes: "Children enjoy thinking up secret languages and are happy that other people can't understand them. Man hat nicht immer Lust, eine Sprache mit einer anonymen Masse zu teilen" (65). The secret is thus kept within the text for those who do not understand German.

Additionally, it is worth noting that the book is presented as an experimental translation by Wright. A visual division runs through the text, separating Tawada's translated writing from Wright's commentary. In doing so, the translator highlights Tawada's stylistic and conceptual intentions, which frame the relationship between languages as something playful and contaminating. There are passages like this on page 66:

*Eigentlich stellte ich es mir
schön
vor, einen Himmel mit
jemanden
zu teilen.*

[I actually found the idea of
sharing a heaven/sky with
somebody quite nice.]

*Mein Gefühl zu dem Wort
“teilen” ist gespalten. Share
oder divide?*

[My feelings about the word
teilen are mixed. Share or
divide?]

This form, which simulates poetry, also plays with the reader, as we expect the right side of the page to contain the translator’s commentary, yet this structure does not always follow a strict rule. We encounter Tawada’s German and Wright’s English translation as a stylistic configuration—playful in form—that challenges the reader and becomes a singular trace of the writing itself.

By turning unfamiliarity and strangeness into a form of play, Tawada destabilizes fluency as a political tool that produces advantages, privileges, and inequalities. At the same time, she reframes ignorance not as inferiority but as a productive condition, one that generates curiosity and exploration. She suggests that the experience of a foreign language forces us to confront what we are made of and to question what we take for granted, as she notes in an interview:

[i]n your mother tongue, words are attached to your person, so you rarely experience a playful, pleasurable sense of language. In your mother tongue, thoughts cling so closely to words that neither can take flight independently. In a foreign language, however, you have something like a staple remover: it removes what makes things cling to one another. (Tawada, McNichol 2014, 143)

5. Conclusion

As I mentioned, the Brazilian Portuguese neologism *Deslinguadas*, which could be translated into English as “dis-linguaged,” aptly describes the enunciative position of these three writers, who frame their exophonic practice as an act of dispossession. In doing so, they do not conceive of bilingualism or trilingualism as forms of acquisition, but rather as conditions that are not subject to ownership—experiences that involve a radical questioning of the certainties and norms of both the mother tongue and the acquired or foreign language.

As Yildiz (2012) points out, multilingualism is a long-standing and powerful condition that, in modernity, can be mobilized as a critical stance against monolingual and colonial practices. In this sense, she emphasizes the various ways in which writers have engaged with multilingualism: by switching languages, mixing languages, or alternating between them. All of these practices, she argues, precede and unsettle the attachment to a single mother tongue as the signifier of a person’s “true” self.

Her critique of the concept of the mother tongue stems from her argument that it reinforces the imaginary ideal of a homogeneous nation-state. By refusing an authoritative aesthetic based on notions of authenticity and originality, she highlights how literary creation should be detached from premises that limit, order, and dogmatize its practices.

Walkowitz (2020) analyzed how the limitations encountered in processes of crossing between languages can emerge as a creative force for writers. More than that, she suggests that writers, through these constraints, produce literary works that explore a position of ignorance and unknowing rather than mastery and dominance, thereby articulating a political understanding of writing and language as processes that can be thought beyond hierarchical ideals of knowledge and fluency.

As demonstrated, the writers examined in this article engage with linguistic crossing in different ways. The figure of the orphan, as I have suggested in relation to Molloy, emphasizes both her attachment to and impermanence within Argentina and the Spanish language, and how she narrates her transit through a horizon of loss—of a mother, a territory, and a fantasy of security: a loss of something that was never fully owned.

The nomadic dimension of Lahiri’s writing lies in the way she frames her exophony as a form of re-narration of her autobiography. Learning and writing in Italian leads her to question Bengali and English, as well as her personal history and family heritage. In doing so, the author situates herself in neither place and in all places at once. She becomes a nomadic writer whose work emerges from multiple locations, accents, and geographies, always oriented toward a trajectory that does not culminate in a final destination.

The last writer, Yoko Tawada, demonstrates how exophony can be mobilized as a playful practice of writing. By treating ignorance not as inferiority but as a catalyst for curiosity and exploration, she engages with established meanings in a way that turns writing into a shared play with the reader. In this sense, as she suggests, exophony is an exit from the mother tongue toward the other—a process of ingesting and incorporating difference that becomes part of the self. She does not conceive of the mother tongue as a foundational principle of writing, which would be critiqued by Yildiz and Walkowitz, but rather as something to be played with, explored, and tasted.

To conclude, I would like to suggest that, in a world increasingly oriented toward the strengthening of authoritarian nationalisms, it is worth returning to the writing of authors such as Molloy, Lahiri, and Tawada, for whom language is not a means of reinforcing inequalities between territories and cultures. Rather, they move across languages, and their writing becomes an experiment that produces something that cannot be possessed—and it is precisely for this reason that it can be shared.

Works Cited

- Balderston, Daniel, and Sylvia Molloy. "Back Home." *The Iowa Review*, vol. 31, no. 1, Summer 2001, pp. 125–131. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20154931>.
- Brandt, Bettina. "ein Wort, ein Ort, or How Words Create Places: Interview with Yoko Tawada." *Women in German Yearbook: Feminist Studies in German Literature & Culture*, vol. 21, no. 1, 2005, pp. 1–15.
- Butler, Judith. *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*. Verso, 2004.
- Kellman, Steven G. *The Translingual Imagination*. 1st ed., University of Nebraska Press, 2000.
- Lahiri, Jhumpa. *The Clothing of Books*. Vintage Books, 2016.
- Lahiri, Jhumpa. *In Other Words*. Vintage Books, 2017.
- Lahiri, Jhumpa, editor. *The Penguin Book of Italian Short Stories: A Penguin Classics Hardcover*. Penguin Books, 2019.
- Lahiri, Jhumpa. *Whereabouts*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2021.
- Lahiri, Jhumpa. *Translating Myself and Others*. Princeton University Press, 2021.

- Lahiri, Jhumpa. “What Am I Trying to Leave Behind?” Interview by Francesca Pellas. *Literary Hub*, 31 Aug. 2017, <https://lithub.com/what-am-i-trying-to-leave-behind-an-interview-with-jhumpa-lahiri/>. Accessed 3 July 2026.
- Lahiri, Jhumpa. “Where I Find Myself: On Self-Translation.” *Words Without Borders*, Apr. 2021, <https://wordswithoutborders.org/read/article/2021-04/april-2021-where-i-find-myself-on-self-translation-jhumpa-lahiri/>. Accessed 3 July 2026.
- Molloy, Sylvia. *Viver Entre Línguas*. Relicário, 2018.
- Molloy, Sylvia, and Daniel Balderston. “Back Home.” *The Iowa Review*, vol. 31, no. 1, Summer 2001, pp. 125–131. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20154931>.
- Molloy, Sylvia, and Marcelo J. Siskind. *Poéticas de la distancia: Adentro y afuera de la literatura argentina*. Norma Grupo Editor, 2006.
- Tawada, Yoko. *Exophony: Voyages Outside the Mother Tongue*. Translated by Lisa Hofmann-Kuroda, New Directions, 2025.
- Tawada, Yoko. *Yoko Tawada’s Portrait of a Tongue: An Experimental Translation*. Translated and with commentary by Chantal Wright, University of Ottawa Press, 2013.
- Tawada, Yoko, and Rachel McNichol. “From Mother Tongue to Linguistic Mother.” *Mānoa*, vol. 18, no. 1, 2006, pp. 139–143. University of Hawai‘i Press. <https://doi.org/10.1353/man.2006.0039>.
- Walkowitz, Rebecca L. “On Not Knowing: Lahiri, Tawada, Ishiguro.” *New Literary History*, vol. 51, no. 2, 2020, pp. 323–346. <https://doi.org/10.1353/nlh.2020.0021>.
- Yildiz, Yasemin. *Beyond the Mother Tongue: The Postmonolingual Condition*. 1st ed., Fordham University Press, 2012.