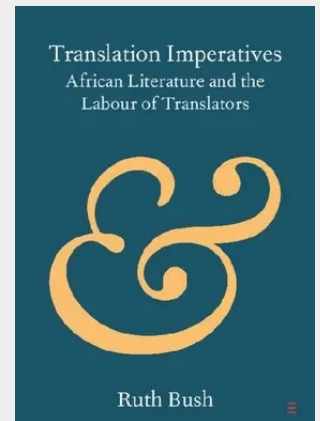


Translation Imperatives

This Element explores the politics of literary translation via case studies from the Heinemann African Writers Series and the work of twenty-first-century literary translators in Cameroon. It intervenes in debates concerning multilingualism, race and decolonization, as well as methodological discussion in African literary studies, world literature, comparative literature and translation studies. The task of translating African literary texts has developed according to political and socio-economic contexts. It has contributed to the consecration of a canon of African classics and fuelled polemics around African languages. Yet retranslation remains rare and early translations are frequently criticised. This Element's primary focus on the labour rather than craft or art of translation emphasises the material basis that underpins who gets to translate and how that embodied labour occurs within the process of book production and reception. The arguments draw on close readings, fresh archival material, interviews, and co-production and observation of literary translation workshops.

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