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Translating Contemporary Literature: Opportunities and Challenges

Translated fiction and poetry only make up roughly 0.7 percent of all books published in English in any year. The proportion of translated works is rather higher in other major literary languages. Yet 'international visibility' is often equated with translation into English and a literary work's transnational standing largely depends on the way in which it is presented in English.

This paper forms part of an ongoing effort to understand the politics of translation into English. In particular, I deal with initiatives to raise awareness of contemporary literature in a particular language; group translation workshops; small publishers of translated literature; institutions that set up translation prizes and the use of social media to promote contemporary literature in translation.