

Translation of Culture: France Presented to the Sinhala Reader

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Translations of texts that come from different continents into different languages demand an attention on language as well as on cultural differences. Anthony K. Appiah said: « If what language you speak determines what thoughts or intentions you can have, translation, thus conceived, will always be impossible (1993:811) ». According to Appiah, translation is linked with language, language is linked with culture. Only a person who understands all the nuances of a language will be able to do a successful translation. But translators are almost never from the land from which the original text comes from. The accepted notion is that in Literary Translation, we never translate to a foreign language. We translate only into our mother tongue. Therefore, the overall objective of this research would be to show how far a foreign translator could communicate culture of a distant community to his/her own community.

The translation is a continuous research for equivalents. Edward Said declared: “The worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached” (1958:69). This study analyses 7 translations from French to Sinhala under the following themes: cultural realities, idiomatic expressions, proverbs, and other language nuances and the representation of the style. In this research, the cultural aspect of the novels that decide on choosing an equivalent are kept in mind. The main methodology would be to discover if there has been naturalization or domestication. In naturalization, it is believed that the translator intervenes directly to provide a reader a friendly atmosphere in providing local references to complicated cultural phenomena and in domestication, the translator leaves the originality of the original text in introducing his/her reader to the foreign world.

This study is in no position to judge which is better, a source oriented translation or a target oriented one. It merely presents the strategies that a translator could use, to

provide a good translation. This could help the future translators to adopt satisfactory strategies to bridge the gap between distant cultures.

Key words: *Culture, Domestication, Naturalization, Translation.*

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