

Translation as a Cultural Medium: Understanding the Mauritian Culture and History through an English Translation

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Abstract : This project seeks to translate a chapter in *Le Silence des Chagos* by Shenaz Patel a Mauritian author whose work has never been translated before. The chapter discusses the attempt of the protagonist to return to her home country Diego Garcia after her deportation. The English translation will offer an historical account to the target audience of the deportation of Chagossians to Mauritius during the 1970s. The target audience comprises of English-speaking translation scholars translation students and African literature scholars. In light of making the cultural elements of Mauritian culture accessible the translation will maintain the cultural items such as food and oral discourses in Creole so as to preserve the authenticity of the source culture. In order to better comprehend the cultural elements mentioned the target reader will be provided with detailed footnotes explaining the cultural and historical references. This translation will also address the importance of folkloric songs in Mauritius and its intergenerational function in Mauritian communities which will also remain in Creole. While such an approach will help to preserve the meaning of the source text the borrowing technique and the foreignizing method will be employed which will in turn help the reader in becoming more familiar with the Mauritian community. Translating a text from French to English while maintaining certain words or discourses in a minority language such as Creole bears certain challenges: How does the translator ensure the comprehensibility of the reader? Are there any translation losses? What are the choices of the translator?

Keywords : Chagos archipelagos in Exile, English translation, *Le Silence des Chagos*, Mauritian culture and history

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