The Mistranslation of James Legge in *A Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms* from Eco-Environment Translation Theory

Mingxin Li[1*]

[1] School of Foreign Studies, Henan Polytechnic University, Jiaozuo, Henan Province

[*] Mingxin Li, E-mail: snowlily2008@yeah.net

Abstract

Fo Guo Ji, known as A Record of Buddhistic Kingdom, was written by Chinese Monk Fa Xian in the Eastern Jin Dynasty. It is more a travel documentary than an exotic sceneries miracle stories; and place-legends. It has been regarded as one of the most significant classics that probed into the South Asian culture, religion. This paper deals with James Legge's English translation of Fo Guo Ji from the perspective of translation ecology. Eco-translatology is put forward by Michael Cronin and met with new result when Hong Kong scholar Hu Gengshen put the three properties of language, to be exact, the characteristics of variability of language in both language structure and context is possible, it follows negotiability in the process of using language and the adaptability is required in eco-environment setting. In light of eco-translation theory, this paper aims at exploring the factors influencing James Legge's English translation by analysizing the text as well as providing a new angle to interpret James Legge's translation to Chinese classics.

Keywords

Fo Guo Ji, James Legge, adaptation and selection, translation ecology

1. Introduction

Fo Guo Ji is a documentary travel book written by Fa Xian, who was regarded as the first important Chinese Buddhist pilgrim to India. It is a valuable primary source for the study of South and Central Asia and the history of Buddhism in China. The missionary translator Dr. James Legge published the most faithful translation of Fa Xian's travels with notes and commentaries in 1886 under the title *A Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms*. In the light of Eco-environment Translation Theory, this thesis probes into the linguistic and cultural aspects of Dr. Legge's *A Record of Buddhistic Kingdom,* evaluating the loss and gain of the Buddhist text in translation.

In this paper, a descriptive approach is adopted in the analysis on James Legge's versions of *Fo Guo Ji* from the perspective of adaptability. Apart from introduction and conclusion, this paper consists of three parts being the main body. It largely deals eco-environment translation theory with regard to the characteristics of James Legge's translation. First of all, it is necessary and worthwhile to trace the trends of translation studies that have undergone great shifts of research focus from

language-orientation to culture-orientation, together with the feasibility of pragmatic perspective to translation by overcoming defects of former translation studies, and points out that the translation ecology will be a objective and feasible pragmatic perspective for our translation studies. In the light of eco-translatology, James Legge in his translating can be examined as continuously dynamic linguistic choices after adaptation and negotiation to the environment.

Through illustrative analyses, it is found out that in pursuit of fidelity, Legge adopted foreignization as an approach of translation, a source-culture-oriented way of reproducing the source text, trying to give a version of the text which should represent the meaning of the original and at the same time to keep the features of the original, including retaining Chinese sentence patterns and cultural factors.

This paper explicates in what way the translator's orientation and religious subjectivity are related to his specific way of deciphering and transmitting the cultural image of the Buddhist text. As a translator, he undertakes the task to convey the cultural elements contained by the source text to the target language readers. How far a translator utterly pass on culture without imposing it? And in what way will the target language readers receive the original text in the process of reading rather than replace it with the target culture? The paper establishes a profile including: (1) literature review: the current study of James Legge's *A Record of Buddhistic Kingdom*, (2) the introduction of translation ecology and significance of its application in analyzing Legge's version, (3) text analysis displays the characteristics of linguistic and style in Legg's version, (4) and by analyzing, the factors affected the effectiveness of source text are proposed, the emphasis is also placed upon how to understand translator's cultural identity which serves for target readers in the translation eco-environment which it contained. On the grounds of theory and the conceptions, in a sense James Legge's translation serves as a simulation of intercultural communication by a rewriting and manipulate model when target language readers to recognize Asian people and Asia Buddhism. Hence the conclusion can be drawn that James Legges's translation appealed to the latent Oriental images of westerners in the 19th century; however, the Orient image in which his target text manifested somehow was not so real and much different than it was due to his rewriting and misunderstanding.

The article contains two purposes. One is to describe the current situation relating James Legge's translation to *Fo Go Ji* for the western readers from translation ecology approach. The second purpose is an exploration of ways in which translator make it clear how to interpret the source culture contained by the source text and respect the ethical boundary in the process of intercultural communication. Readers themselves yearn for cognizing the cultural varieties manifested by the texts that will assist them in their acquisition of sound cross-cultural communication. Thus readers often see translation works are more media than books that help them use language in real-world and culturally imbued contexts, as they can also understand cultural identity forms their understanding.

2. Literature Review

Since *Fo Guo Ji* is not only one of the world's greatest travel books, but is also filled with invaluable accounts of early Buddhism, and the geography and history of numerous countries along the Silk Roads at the turn of the 5th century. It is considered by scholars home and abroad to be an important historical and religious document for South and Central Asian history and for the Buddhist tradition.

The first translation of *Fo Guo Ji* in English language was published in London in 1869. This was succeeded in a few years by Herbert A. Giles' *A Record of the Buddhistic Kingdoms*, which originally appeared in the Shanghai Couriers. Giles in his notes to the text pointed out a large number of mistakes in translation which Beal made mainly out of ignorance of Chinese. A faithful translation of Fa Xian's travels with notes and commentary truly describes the next try by Dr. James Legge in 1886. Titled *A Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms, Being an Account by the Chinese Monk Fa-Hien of his Travels in India and Ceylon (A.D. 399-414)*, it is the most widely read and appreciated version, past and present.

Although there are still some geographical, historical, and textual difficulties remaining unsolved, Dr. Legge's translation can definitely be found of "abounding merit and excellency" as Thomas Pearce foretold in his commentary article. Then Pearce continued: This new version of Fa-hien may not be proof against any criticism, but it is at least free from the grave faults of former versions. (Pearce, 1887, p. 208) One of the beauties of the book is the addition of the original text printed in full at the end of the book. To the present day, *A Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms* is still the most frequently studied among all English versions of Fa Xian's travel. In his monograph *Bringing the East and the West: Studies on the Scottish Sinologist James Legge (1815-1897)*, Professor Yue Feng devoted several chapters to discuss the orientation, faithful and scholarly manner and academic achievements of Dr. Legge while occasionally extracting illustrations from *A Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms*. The book is intended to offer reference for putting right some frequent mistranslations by offering suggestions on related translation techniques, keeping and disseminating Chinese culture as well as for the exchange between China and foreign countries. Hong Jie (2006) "Discuss of English Sinologist James Legge's Translation of *A Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms*" proposed the question of rigid-translation and misunderstanding to Chinese character in Legge's translation. Song Lidao (2010) in his dissertation *The Study of "Fahien Biography" and the Review of James Legge's English Translation Edition* gave a thorough description of Legge's translation. Wong Man Kong's *Christian missions, Chinese culture, and colonial administration: A study of the activities of James Legge and Ernest John Eitel in nineteenth century Hong Kong* touched upon Legge's tranlsation for *Fo Guo Ji* from the angle of translator's identity. Legge played the dual roles as service man in both sacred and secular domains but in doing more secular work to strengthen his religious mission. In addition to the approaches of traditional translation studies, the research also appeals to disciplines of history and religion studies for reference. Historical data and religious hermeneutics approaches were used to find out what historical background and religious philosophy influenced Dr. Legge's translation. Dr. Edkins' described the value of Dr. Legge's monumental work and pointed out that his object was to unfold the Chinese field

3

of thought and reveal the foundation of the moral, social, and political life of the people (Legge, 1905, p. 38). Nowadays, most studies on James Legge's English translation exist in China, and there is long way to go and greater research space to broaden in light of modern translation theory.

3. Theory Basis: The Translation Ecology

Michael Cronin put forward the concept "translation ecology" in his book *Translation and Globalization*. He analyzed the translating outer environmental such as natural environment, social environment and normative environment as well as the inner environmental factors as physiology and the individual psychology. Also it expounds the phenomena, laws and features of diverse translation genres and levels from the ecology perspective. "Translation ecology deals with the laws and mechanism of translation interacting with its surroundings including natural, social, normative, psychological, and physiological. To be specific, it means to introduce the achievements of ecology studies to translation studies, to associate translation with its ecological environment, and to study their interrelations and their mechanism for the purpose of examining and studying translation, and of trying to analyze and explain the various translation phenomena." (Xu, 2009).

Regarding translation ecology, the study covers much knowledge of different disciplines which can be divided into a few main parts: the eco-environment of translation, the ecological structure of translation, the ecological function of translation, the basic principles and laws of translation ecology, the behavioral ecology of translation. Translation activities are the center of eco-environment of translation which a system of multiple factors and multidimensional space that influences and constrains the process of production, development and changes of translation in a specific translational eco-environment. "There are five dimensions of eco-environment of translation: the natural environment, the social environment, the normative environment, the psychological and physiological environment as well as the mosaicism of translation eco-environment." (Xu, 2009) Eco-translatology draws on evolutionary epistemology based on Darwin's biological theory, especially the natural selection paradigm as the basis for the explanation of language use. A human being has to adapt his language to internal and external conditions towards the desired end of communication using language.

Eco-translatology provides us four aspects of adaptability in language use for pragmatic description and explanation, i.e. contextual correlates of adaptability, structural objects of adaptability, dynamics of adaptability and salience of the adaptation processes, these offer the building blocks for investigating the mechanism of using language (Verschueren, 1999). The four aspects "can be seen as necessary ingredients of an adequate pragmatic perspective on any given linguistic phenomenon". However, they do not occupy the same position. Their relationship can be demonstrated as follow:

Context is a structure occupying the central position of adaptation phenomena; dynamics concerns the process of context-structure interrelationships, or the dynamic interaction between context and structure; salience investigates the degree of consciousness of the language users on the dynamic inter adaptability of context and structure. Hence it concerns the status of consciousness of the adaptation

4

processes with the human mind involved. As to the translation process, the translator adapts to the eco-environment of source text and selects the target text by the eco-environment with translator as typically important component. The process of translation can be illustrated in figure.
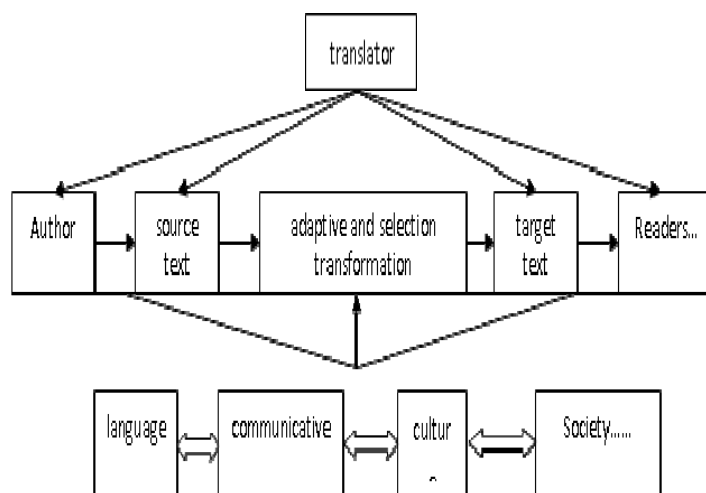

Figure 1. The Process of Translation (Hu, 2004, p. 120)

From the above figure, we can see clearly the basic framework of the Eco-environment translation theory. Obviously, it is a whole series of theoretical system. Just as the name implies, his theory may well be labeled as an ecological approach to translation studies because it is supported by Darwin's principle of natural selection and is based on translators' natural needs for "survival and career". It is quite clear that two stages must be made before the production of the target text, namely, selection of translator by "nature" and selection of target text by "translators". Nature here refers to the translation eco-environment. From the perspective of "natural selection", production of the target text may be figured out as follows:
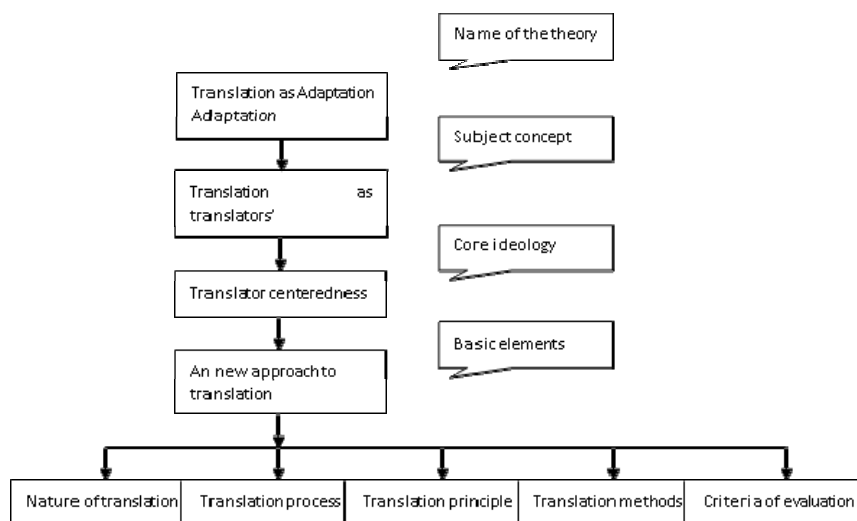

Figure 2. Production of the Target Text by "Nature Selection" (Ibid., p. 126)

5

Translation principles refer to the criteria or rules that direct translation practice. Within the framework of eco-translational theory, it can be concluded as the translator's multi-dimensional adaptation and selection in the translation eco-environment. Translators should adapt to the dimensions of translational eco-environment as many as possible and make adaptive selection. It should come as no surprise that a series of flexible translation methods may be adopted as literal translation, free translation, omission, addition, reduction and others, as long as they are adaptive to the translational eco-environment.

Translators' role in the translation process has been brought to the foreground resulting from the shift from source-oriented to target-oriented approach. As a result, quite a few scholars have realized the importance of translators' role in translation studies. "Adaptation and selection could be viewed as translators' instinct as well as the essence of the translating." (Hu, 2004, p. 221) There is adaptation in selection, which also exists in adaptation. With respect to their relationship, Hu claimed that, "translation can be defined as a cyclic process of translators' adaptive selection and selective adaptation. The aim of adaptation is to survive, the means of adaptation to optimize choice-making, while the rule of selection is to do the best adaptation". (Hu, 2008, p. 3)

The application of ecological concepts in James Legge's translation studies emphasizes a systematic and holistic view. It has great positive influence on exploring new approach and enlightening thinking ways to instruct the translation practice. To be exact: (1) It present a theoretical base for translating by analyzing the whole and systematic factors of translation ecosystems from the holism and systematic perspective. (2) Exploring the target text structure and syntax from the perspective of ecological system and ecological balance of translation, correct and control the ecological imbalance both inside and outside in order to remain the sustainable study of Legge's translation. (3) Eco-translation theory enlarges the horizon to study Legge's translation, which make it possible to dig into the Legge's subjectivity and reaction mechanism of translation by applying the principles and laws of translation ecology. (4) Furthermore, the new conceptual pattern can be built between the translators and researchers and ecological consciousness can be developed under their psychological environment in the guidance of translation ecology.

4. Text Analysis: Linguistic and Stylistic Features of James Legge's Version

The writing style of *Fo Guo Ji* can be concluded by "simple straightforwardness" (Legge, 1965, p. 4), rich in content and succinct in wording yet still expressive. James Legge primarily known as the greatest missionary translator of Chinese classics in Hong Kong, he also saw that "in no country is the admiration of scholastic excellence so developed as in China, no kingdom in the world where learning is so highly reverenced." (Legge, 1905, p. 28) To understand the Chinese nation, one must know its culture. However, his preference for Christianity and Western philosophical tradition would be the perspective for his interpretation and translation.

His experience of missionaries and research into Sinology drew him to conclude that "Christianity cannot be tacked on to any heathen religion as its complement, nor can it absorb any into it without

6

great changes in it and additions to it. Confucianism is not antagonistic Christianity, as Buddhism and Brahmanism are." (Legge, 1905, p. 37) His translation of *The Chinese Classics* exerted a far-reaching influence on development of Western Sinology. In the westerners' eyes, his translations are considered well informed and objective. He tended to render the text as literal as possible and provided varieties of lengthy explications taken from authoritative documents as well as cross-references with other classics.

4.1 Rigidness of Word-for-Word Translation

Schleiermacher believed that interpretation is built upon understanding. The translator must be familiar with the source culture as well as its text. The translator's ignorance of the implication of the source culture will put him to a decisive disadvantage in understanding and translation, resulting a translation falls short of what its source text wants to convey. Since Ancient Chinese is extremely succinct, having no verb tense or other complex grammatical construction which is foreign to Dr. Legge, some of its instinctive linguistic rules that determine the precise meaning of a word could not be perceived even by native speakers. It is due to this limitation that stiffness occurred in the translation of *Fo Guo Ji*. James Legge put the translated text at the risk of becoming a form-equivalent or word-for-word translation and result in awkward, misleading, or even incomprehensible sentences, which can be seen as the follow examples:

(1) 从四月一日，城里便扫洒街道，庄严巷陌。(Zhang, 1985, p. 14)

Beginning on the first day of the fourth month, they sweep and water the streets inside the city, making a grand display in the lanes and byways. (Legge, 1965, p. 17)

Apparently, the sentence here is rendered word by word. James Legge tried to find the exact equivalence for every single Chinese character taking merely into consideration their literal meaning: "Sweep" for "扫", "water" for "洒", "inside" for "里", etc. In fact, "扫洒" and "城里", are often used together. The word "庄严", does not necessarily mean "grand". In a buddhistic context it means to cultivate oneself through meritorious virtue or to adorn things with beautiful ornaments (Zhang, 1985, p. 16). Hence, the whole sentence could simply be "They clean up the city and adorn its streets and lanes."

(2) 雪山冬夏积雪，山北阴中，过寒暴起，人皆噤战。(Zhang, 1985, p. 51)

On the north (side) of the mountains, in the shade, they suddenly encountered a cold wind which made them shiver and become unable to speak. (Legge, 1965, p. 31)

In this sentence Dr. Legge rendered "北阴" and "噤战" character after character which seems to be fairly faithful. In fact, the translation would be improved if he took a further look into the meanings of "阴", and "噤". Here the phrase "in the shade" should be expunged as "阴" in Chinese tradition always refers to the north of a mountain which at the same time being the south of a water body (Wang, 2005, p. 460). "噤" usually has two shades of meaning: 1) to say nothing and remain silent; 2) to shiver from cold (Jin, 1997, p. 39). So the additional "become unable to speak" can be dispensable.

(3) 人民殷乐，无户籍官法，唯耕王地者乃输地利，欲去便去，欲住便住。(Zhang, 1985, p. 54)

The people are numerous and happy; they have not to register their households, or attend to any

7

magistrates and their rules; only those who cultivate the royal land have to pay (a portion of) the grain from it. (Legge, 1965, p.33)

Although the Chinese character "殷" does include a shade of meaning as "numerous", it has barely any connection with large population judging from context here. Rather it concerns of wealth as used in other phrases such as "殷实" and "殷富" meaning "rich". What Fa Xian tries to convey is that the people enjoy abundance in wealth and lead a happy life.

4.2 Mistranslation

The translator's personal experience is an important factor for the correct understanding of the source text. Lack of the latter may lead to wrong interpretation of even a single word. Besides, the ignorance of linguistic context may also arouse such errors.

Confined by the above-mentioned factors, Dr. Legge failed to bring home the meaning of the original when he came across polysemantic words or words denoting something beyond his life experience in China. The following are among the noticeable instances of unproved renderings:

(4) 其城门上张大炜幕，事事严饰，王及夫人、采女皆住其中。(Zhang, 1985, p. 13)

Over the city gate they pitch a large tent, grandly adorned in all possible ways, in which the king and queen, with their ladies brilliantly arrayed, take up their residence (for the time). (Legge, 1965, p. 17)

Dr. Legge failed to get the correct idea of the phrase "采女"; he thus translated every character of this phrase so as to be faithful to the original. And he added in the note to this phrase that "There may have been, as Giles says, 'maids of honour' but the character does not say so." (Legge, 1965, p. 18) Fortunately, Giles was right this time. Anyone who has the dimmest impression of an ancient eastern court will agree that wherever the king and his first lady go, there are numerous royal attendants waiting on them. What's more, considering the humble status of women at that time, there could not possibly be other ladies at the presence of the nation's highest authority.

(5) 王及群臣如法供养，或一月、二月，或三月，多在春时。(Zhang, 1985, p. 20)

The king and his ministers present their offerings according to rule and law. (The assembly takes place), in the first, second, or third month, for the most part in the spring. (Legge, 1965, p. 20)

In translating "一月、二月，或三月" as "the first, second, or third month", the translator has quite altered the author's statement. The sentence is followed by "多在春时", which Legge also failed to render correctly due to the preceding mistake. It is common sense knowledge that spring includes the first three months in Chinese lunar calendar. There's no rhyme or reason for Fa Xian to make such an obvious repetition. Actually, the original sentence could simply be "The king and his ministers perform the ritual for one month, two mouths, or three months, often in spring."

(6) 葱岭冬夏有雪，又有毒龙，若失其意，则吐毒风、雨雪、飞沙、砾石。遇此难者，万无一全。(Zhang, 1985, p. 24)

There are also among them venomous dragons, which, when provoked, spit forth poisonous winds, and cause showers of snow and storms of sand and gravel. Not one in ten thousand of those who encounter these dangers escape with his life. (Legge, 1965, p. 21) Dr. Legge translated "失其意" as "provoked",

8

in the same way as Beal and Giles did (Watters, 1880a, p. 217). Unfortunately, such translation could hardly convey the correct of the Chinese phrase which denotes to become disappointed when one fails in obtaining what one wanted or aimed at. Watters was right in his comment and in rendering the phrase into "thwarted (or disappointed)" (ibid.).

(7) 彼众僧叹曰：“奇哉边地之人，乃能求法至此！” (Zhang, 1985, p. 72)

"Strange," said the monks with a sigh, "that men of a border country should be able to come here in search of our Law!" (Legge, 1965, p. 41)

This is an exclamatory sentence expressing the astonishment of the monks about Fa Xian's travel. But the mood here is spoiled by Dr. Legge's rendering of "叹" as "with a sigh". It is true that the Chinese character "叹" can sometimes be correspondent with "sigh", such as "夫子哨然叹曰", "the Master heaved a sigh and said..." (Legge, 1893). However the utterance made by exhaling audibly may not naturally associate the readers with the startled look on the monks' faces. And it is not unusual that as in the Chinese phrases "惊叹" or "赞叹". Thus this sentence could be improved as follows: The monks exclaimed with admiration that isn't it marvelous that men of a border country should be able to come here in search of our Buddha Dhama!

4.3 Over-Translation

According to Peter Newmark, every act of translation involves some loss of source language meaning (Shuttleworth & Cowie, 2004, p. l19). Over-translation is a term used by Newmark to refer to the loss of meaning which entails an increase in detail. In simple terms, over-translation or unnecessary translation is the type of translation the conveyed information that is not in the original words. It conveyed the target language readers more extra content than the source language had, which could lead to a misunderstanding between the source language and the target language. Over-translation is mainly caused by word-for-word translation, fixed expressions and untranslatable culture-bound expressions. As the purpose of faithful representation of the source text is emphasized by Dr. Legge, over-translation turned up occasionally in his translation.

(8) 为焉夷国人不修礼义，遇客甚薄，…… (Zhang, 1985, p. 10)

(At the end of that time) the people of Woo-e neglected the duties of propriety and righteousness, and treated the strangers in so niggardly a manner. (Legge, 1965, p. 14)

Dr. Legge translated "礼义" into two separate words "propriety and righteousness" while it is acceptable in classical Chinese texts that "礼义", has the same meaning with "礼仪", in which the character "义" loses its original sense of righteousness as in "礼义廉耻". For instance, "殊失礼义" (Jin, 1997, p. 17). So "礼义" can be explained clearly enough by "propriety". By the word "righteousness", Western readers are apt to regard the people to be of lower moral standards. In concluding up his comment on Dr. Legge's translation of *Fo Guo Ji*, Thomas Pearce cites this as an example of "moral zigzagging", that is, "the discrepancy between teaching and practice", saying that the estimate of the number of Buddhists in China must be higher if people, who has some faint shadow of Buddhism but "neglect the duties of propriety and righteousness" like the people of Woo-e, are

9

counted in (Pearce, 1887, p. 213).

(9) 本有五百盲人，依精舍在此。(Zhang, 1985, p. 72)

Formerly there were five hundred blind men, who lived here in order that they might be near the vihara. (Legge, 1965, p. 42)

Here Fa Xian simply relates that five hundred blind men used to live adjacently to the vihara. However Dr. Legge, out of his own experience in China, amplified and violated the original. The translation implies that the blind men lived there because they wanted to be near the vihara. And he justifies his translation clearly enough in the following note:

"It might be added, 'as depending on it,' in order to bring out the full meaning of the sentence in the text. If I recollect aright, the help of the police had to be called in at Hong Kong in its early years, to keep the approaches to the Cathedral free from the number of beggars, who squatted down there during service, hoping that the hearers would come out with softened hearts, and disposed to be charitable. I found the popular tutelary temples in Peking and other places, and the path up Mournt Tai in Shun-lung similarly frequented." (Legge, 1965, p. 59)

But according to Fa Xian's original text, it did not go so far as to indicate the above conjecture Dr. Legge made.

4.4 Expressive Amplification

In translating *Fo Guo Ji*, there are times when dictionary equivalent of a certain Chinese character or phrase can't be found or when the word conveys more than its literal meaning. In this case, literal translation won't suffice and the translator needs to supply necessary words to meet the needs of text language audience. The translator usually starts from the basic meaning of the word in question and extends its meaning through the proper addition of foreign cultural signs while keeping contextual and logical consistency. The following are examples of expressive amplification.

(10) ⋯⋯共诸同志游历诸国⋯⋯ (Zhang, 1985, p. 72)

… along with their like-minded friends, they had travelled through so many kingdoms... (Legge, 1965, p. 41)

Literally, "同志" means like-minded. And judging from the context this phrase must refer to a group of people who cherish the same ideals and follow the same path. Thus Dr. Legge wisely added "friends" to complete its meaning.

Both Chinese and English are rich in figures of speech. Although born in two different languages and cultures, they share the similarities, which bring about possibilities for the translation of figures of speech between two different languages. While "同志" here translated into "company" will be more appropriate than "like-minded friends". Speech in Chinese literature can be translated into English with the equivalent content of message the equivalence of the form in the target language retained so that the readers of the translation are able to understand and appreciate them in essentially the same manner the original readers do.

The style of *Fo Guo Ji* is marked by its plain wording and simple narrative style. There is no

10

complicated figure of speeches and no lengthy decorative modifiers. But a few common figurative usages can still be found. The following examples will show how Dr. Legge's has treated various rhetorical devices that occurred in the text.

(11) 会时王请四方沙门，皆来云集…… (Zhang, 1985, p. 20)

When this is to be held, the king requests the presence of the Sramans from all quarters (of his kingdom). They come (as if) is clouds... (Legge, 1965, p. 20)

(12) 目连既还，于时八国大王及诸臣民，不见佛久，咸皆渴仰，云集此国，以待世尊。(Zhang, 1985, p. 61)

At this time the great kings of eight countries with their ministers and people, not having seen Buddha for a long time, were all thirstily looking up for him, and had collected in clouds in this kingdom to wait for the World-honored one. (Legge, 1965, p. 36)

In Chinese, the formation of the phrase "云集" is a metaphor using "云" to modify the act of "集", so the whole phrase literally means "gather together like clouds" is rigid and may cause confusion to western readers. It very likely that "come together in crowds or swarm" would be more appropriate than a farfetched expression.

5. Translation Eco-Environment

5.1 Normative Environment

Translation eco-environment regards translation as the core which is an ecosystem and dimensional space concerning the translation emergence, translation appearance, and translation development. It analyzes the outer factors of eco-environment of translation including social and normative environment of translation, and also analyzes its inner factors eco-environmental translation like the physiology and psychology individually. Through discussing the eco-environmental factors we can reveal the translating mechanism and the co-relation of eco-environmental translation, as well as the development principles of translation.

James Legge was in the era of China's economic depression while the West world enjoyed the achievements of Industrial Revolution, which stimulated their curiosity to other cultures which set the translator's normative eco-environment. "Normative environment, also called spirit environment or value environment, it is the attitude, ethos, temperament and concept which are informed and held by human in the social group life" (Xu, 2009). At that time Chinese works still employed ancient Chinese character which was as different as chalk and cheese to the ordinary language of the people. Even for Sinologist Legge, to interpret Chinese classics was to some degree beyond his reach. From the perspective of eco-translatology, sinologist introduced Chinese culture and classics to their English world was an active demand of social environment of translation. The selection and adaptation between translator and translating eco-environment decide the production of target text. Legge attempted to reveal the features of Chinese language by foreignization, making the target readers closer to the source text.

5.2 The Law of Tolerance

James Legge spent most of his lifetime studying Chinese culture and philosophy. At the beginning of 20th century, western missionary abounded in China and a lot of sinologists emerged, the global social environment make it possible for intercultural communication, and translating activity was supposed to a useful means. Regarding missionaries, their translations reflected the western cultural more or less, especially the religion, aiming at proving ancient Chinese heralded in Christian theology. They tended to add Western philosophy and culture of the ancient concepts to explain the *Fo Guo Ji* and other Chinese classics. Such as "天" translated into "Heaven", "道" translated into "the Way"; "命" translated into "fate". Legge not only imposed Jesus Christ image on Chinese culture like "God, soul, original sin, heaven and the afterlife", but also put some Western philosophy in the Chinese culture. This translation reflects Legge's cultural subjectivity, a missionary more than a translator. The Christian ideas implied underneath the word even though strategy of foreignization was used in his translation to present the linguistic feature of Chinese language. Therefore, James Legge's mistranslation was inevitable. In the translation eco-environment, he broke the law of tolerance, means "Act according to its capability and do everything in its power. The individual of translation has its own obvious holding capacity and tolerance level if it cannot reach or exceed the 'level', it will have the passive effects" (Xu, 2009). To the translation system, the quantity, scale, and speed of translation development should within the tolerance of its environment.

5.3 The Theory of Zone of the Optimum

When the individual, group, system of translation ecology develops to a certain level, they will have their own adaptive bound of all kinds of its environmental ecological factors. The subject can develop well enough within this bound, or it will develop on reverse, which is called the law of optimum. Under-translation and over-translation are the common violation of the optimum theory in translation process. "Under-translation" and "over-translation" refer to the non-equivalence between the source language and target language in meaning and style. In particular, under-translation overrates the target readers' knowledge level and ignores the version's intelligibility. In this case, the target readers cannot obtain the necessary information and misunderstand the source information. On the contrary, over-translation let the target readers obtain more than the source information which leads to the misunderstand either. Both of these two translation phenomenon are not loyal to the source text.

As examples analyzed above, there are quite a few over-translation in James Legge's version. Over-translation is absolutely not the "gain" at all. "Going too far is absolutely undesirable." To some extent, it is believed that under-translation and over-translation all exist the problem of "loss": The former one is the loss of understandability and the latter one is the loss of fidelity. Here, in translating process some strategies and some optimum methods can be taken to avoid the happening of these two similar translation phenomena such as generalization, specification, contextual amplification, domestication, annotation.

The mistranslation of James Legge's version can be boiled down that in order to satisfy the western

12

world's demand but ignored the varieties that cultures may manifest. Under the social and cultural environment, his misunderstanding to Oriental culture and sciolism to ancient Chinese betrayed his primitive intention to translate the great Buddism work. The popularity of James Legge's translation versions echoed down the centuries in promoting intercultural communication as much as the counter effect of misunderstanding. Since then more and more sinologists and west translators reread *Fo Guo Ji* and translate it overall.

6. Conclusion

Fo Guo Ji is not only one of the world's greatest travel books, but also an invaluable historical document of early Buddhism. As the most approving translation of *Fo Guo Ji*, *A Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms* deserves systematic researches. The following three points of this paper have been proposed and illustrated in details and with examples: 1) Foreignization is the most essential technique employed in Dr. Legge's translation of *Fo Guo Ji*, 2) there are errors inevitably occur when the translator's linguistic, cultural and religious knowledge of the source language falls short; 3) The specific normative environment of the target text exert great influence upon Dr. Legge's adaptation in his translating.

Firstly, to achieve maximum fidelity to the source text and maintain the exotic favor of the original text, Dr. Legge followed the route of very literal translation on word level due to his ignorance of linguistic eco-environment in which the source text exist. Rigid fidelity may also put the translated text at the risk of becoming a form-equivalent or word-for-word translation which can result in awkward, misleading, or even incomprehensible sentences.

Secondly, although Dr. Legge is one of the well-known Chinese scholars in his day, his command of Chinese language and his understanding of Chinese culture are still limited. Thus errors are inevitable at all levels, lexical, syntactical, rhetorical and cultural. The transformation on the adaptive selection in communicative dimension requires that apart from the transformations at the linguistic and cultural dimensions, the translators are supposed to pay enough attention also on communicative dimension, which concerns with whether the communicative intention of the source text is achieved in the target text. (Hu, 2011, p. 8).

Furthermore, another reason for linguistic and cultural failure is that while translating, the translator tends to consult many different target-language cultural constituents, precisely, his cultural identity as a missionary played an decisive role in his translating activity which determined his selection was for the sake the target culture, and his adaptation is to transforming the source text to conform to the target readers' visualized Orient. Although he intended to reproduce the source-language text, the translator's consultation of these materials inevitably reduces and supplements it, ever when source-language cultural materials are also consulted. (Venuti, 2004, p. 24)

This paper also analyzes James Legge's translation from normative eco-environment, seeking to find out the relationship between translation and the combination of his experience and psychology. At the

same time, eco-environment translation theory is uttered by eco-translatology who draws on evolutionary epistemology based on Darwin's biological theory as the basis for the explanation of language use. The theory provides us four aspects of adaptability in language use and enlightens the readers to concern with eco-environment of translation. In light of the theory, the interpretation on *A Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms* would make it difference both on linguistics and culture.

Acknowledgement

References

Campbell, S. (1997). *Translation into the Second Language*. London & New York: Longrnan.

Chesterman, A. (2000). *Teaching Strategies for Emancipatory Translation*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Even, Z. I. (2000). The Position of Translated Literature within the Literary Polysystem. In Venuti (Ed.), *The Translation Studies Reader* (pp. 199-204). London: Routledge.

Gentzler, E. (2004). *Contemporary Translation Theories*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.

Hatim, B., & Mason, I. (2001). *Discourse and the Translator*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.

He, Q. S., Zhong, W. H., & Xu. J. (2010). *An Anthology of Chinese Masterpieces in English Translation*. Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.

Hermans, T. (Ed). (1985). *The Manipulation of Literature: Studies in Literary Translation*.

Holmes, J. S. (2007). *Translated Papers on Literary Translation and Translation Studies*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.

Hu, G. S. (2001). *Preliminary Study to Translation as Adaptation and Selection*. Third Asian Translators' Forum, Hong Kong.

Hu, G. S. (2003). Translation as Adaptation and Selection. *Perspectives: Studies in Translatology*, *11*(4), 183-192.

Hu, G. S. (2004). Translator-centeredness. *Perspectives: Studies in Translatology*, *12*(2), 106-117.

Juliane, H. (1997). *Translation Quality Assessment: A Model Revisited*. Tiabingen: Narr.

Kenny, D. (1998). *Creatures of Habit? What Translators Usually Do with Words*, *43*(4), 5l5-523. Tarragona: Intercultural Studies Group.

Kenny, D. (2001). *Lexis and Creativity in Translation*. Manchester: St. Jerome.

Lefevere, A. (1992). *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame*. Shanghai:

Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.

Legge, J. (1965). *A Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms, being an Account by the Chinese Monk Fa-hien of his Travels in India and Ceylon (A.D. 399-414)*. New York: Paragon Book Reprint Corp. & Dover Publications. Inc.

Liu, A. H. (2012). *Translator and Translational Eco-environment: Theoretical Exploration into Literary Translator Criticism (D)*.

P. Kuhiwczak, & K. Littau (Eds.). (2007). *A Companion to Translation Studies*. Clevedon, Buffalo/Toronto: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Peter, L., & Kamenicka, R. (2008). Explication Profile and Translator Style. In A. Pym, & A, Perekrestenko (Eds.), *Translation Research Projects* (pp. 117-130).

Susanne, G., & Riitta, J. (2009). Process Research into the Development of Translation Competence: Where are we, and Where do we need to go? *Across Languages and Cultures*, *10*(2), 169-191.

Verschueren, J. (1998). *Understanding Pragmatics*. New York: Routledge.

Xu, J. Z. (2009). *Eco-translatology*. Beijing: China Sanxia Publisher.