

On James E. Bosson's Translation of *A Treasury of Aphoristic Jewels: The Subhsitarstnanidhi of Sa Skya Pandita in Tibetan and Mongolian*

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Abstract

From the perspective of history, literature and translatology, this article discusses in depth the translation of Bosson and holds that: (1) his selection of source language text (SLT) should be timely—his adaptation to the social and historical context of the United States and the theme of the era; (2) his interpretation of SLT is much accurate since Bosson has devoted all his life to Tibetan and Mongolian studies; however, there still exists some under-translation—the translation carries less information than the original, Bosson fails to reproduce the deep meanings of SLT related to Tibetan culture; (3) his literal translation or foreignization, making the version featured by a purely linguistic translation method, in order to help the intended readers to insight into the laws how to render the Mongolian, or Tibetan into English; and (4) his expression in the version tends to be colloquial, and be rich in foreignized expressions. All these reflect the subjectivity from Bosson, as a linguistic translator, non-literary translator. Furthermore, Bosson's subjectivity is not only an adaptation to the social and historical context, the theme of the era, but also a limited transcendence of these constraints.

Keywords: James E. Bosson, Tibetan classic, *Sakya Gnostic Verse*, English version, comment

1. Introduction

The Tibetan classic *Sakya Gnostic Verse* is the first collection of Tibetan philosophical sayings created in the first half of the 13th century, the transition of Tubo (Note 1) society from slavery to feudal serfdom. The poetry collection emphasizes the role of knowledge and wisdom, and promotes the basic tenets of Buddhism, such as mercy, tolerance, altruism, integrity and refinement... Kunga Gyaltzen (1182–1251) (Note 2), the author of *Sakya Gnostic Verse* also expounds his deep concern for the social reality in a unique language strategy, which reflects the Kunga Gyaltzen's profound knowledge and cultivation as well as his personality. Therefore, *Sakya Gnostic Verse* is not only widely spread all around the world for its important reference value to Tibetology, Dunhuangology and Mongology.

According to the historical data, there are currently five different English translations of *Sakya Gnostic Verse*. The five English versions are translated respectively by Li Zhengshuan (2013), John Thomas Davenport (2000), Tarthang Tulku (1977), James E. Bosson (1969) and Alexander Csoma de Kőrös (1833). All the five versions are translated inter-lingually, but those by Li Zhengshuan, John Thomas Davenport, and James E. Bosson respectively can be regarded as full translations, and just two versions by John Thomas Davenport and Alexander Csoma de Kőrös are directly rendered from the Tibetan version. The title of James E. Bosson's English version is *A Treasury of Aphoristic Jewels: The Subhsitarstnanidhi of Sa Skya Pandita in Tibetan and Mongolian* (hereinafter referred to as "*A Treasury of Aphoristic Jewels*"), which is published by Indiana University Publications in 1969. The source text of *A Treasury of Aphoristic Jewels* is from a Budapest photocopy of Louis Ligeti (1902–1987) in 1948, and originally the version was James E. Bosson's doctoral thesis in 1965, and then published in book by Indiana University in 1969.

James E. Bosson (1933–2016), hereinafter referred to as "Bosson", is an American Tibetologist and Mongolist and linguistic translator, who has ever worked in the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures (formerly Oriental Languages) at UC Berkeley. Up to now, the scholars in China have not systematically studied *A Treasury of Aphoristic Jewels*, such as the text election, understanding and expressions, translation principles and strategies, translation style... Due to the academic values of *Sakya Gnostic Verse* itself, the research status of translations and the 4th anniversary of James E. Bosson's Death, this article from the perspective of history,

literature and translatology, discusses Bosson's English version of *A Treasury of Aphoristic Jewels* in order to answer the four questions, namely, why did Bosson choose *Sakya Gnostic Verse* to translate? How did he interpret the source text? What translation strategies and methods were adopted by him? And how did he express in the target text?

2. Why Did Bosson Choose *Sakya Gnostic Verse* to Translate?

The factors that affect the text selection of a translator are subject consciousness and objective situation. The subjective consciousness is specifically derived from those such as cultural and educational background, life experience, aesthetic taste and translation purpose; while the objective situation roughly includes social background, national policy, text value, poetic norms and linguistic forms. Cultural and educational background and life experience have laid the foundation for the translator's knowledge and ability to carry out translation practice, and even the bias of aesthetic taste; and the purpose of translation is often subject to the objective situation. The combination of the factors between the subject consciousness and the objective situation, just like a process of balance-game, forms the process of the translator's text selection.

2.1 Bosson's Foundation of Knowledge and Ability

Mongolia Initiative (2018) records that "Bosson is an associate professor emeritus in the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures (formerly Oriental Languages) at UC Berkeley" (p. 191). And through historical research, we find that Bosson is an expert in Mongolian studies, and a member of the Executive Committee of the International Mongolian Society. He is proficient in Mongolian and Manchu, and has studied Tibetan language, too. He studied under Mongolian scholars, Nicolas Poppe (1897–1991), Tibetan scholars Turrell Wylie, (1927–1984), Sinologists Herbert Franke (1914–2011) and Lao Yanxuan (1934–2016), etc. His achievements in the field of Mongolian studies are mainly manifested in several groundbreaking works: *A Buriat Reader* (1962), *Modern Mongolian—A Primer and Reader* (1964), *Highlights of the Manchu-Mongolian Collections* (2003), and *Mongolia: The Legacy of Chinggis Khan* (1995), coauthored with Patricia Ann Berger, Terese Tse Bartholomew, Heather Stoddard, etc. From 1965 to 1967, he edited the journal of *The Mongolia Society Bulletin* of The Mongolian Society. Besides, Bosson was one of the first 60 members when The Mongolia Society was founded in 1961, and then he was elected as a director by The Second General Membership Meeting of The Mongolia Society in 1965 and The Third General Membership Meeting in 1967 (Note 3). Also, before World War II, Bosson became familiar with the Mongolian textbook, which was published by the Swedish missionary to Mongolia Folke Boberg (1896–1987), and he took an interest in studying the language. And he with a great influence on the study of the New Qing history in the United States remained active at Berkeley until the late 1990's. Mongolian People's Republic awarded him the Order of "Polar Star" in 2014 for his Mongolian studies in the United States. These cultural and educational background and academic accomplishment also laid a solid foundation of knowledge and ability for him to select and translate the Mongolian version of *Sakya Gnostic Verse*.

2.2 The Objective Situation in That Era

The National Defence Education Act was passed by the U.S. Congress in 1958, which included Tibetan language studies. The University of Washington also set up the Tibet studies program, which was co-chaired by Bosson's teacher, Nicolas Poppe, and Chinese-American scholar Fang-kuei Li (1902–1987). After World War II, the research of orientalism in the United States developed rapidly, academic environment and technical conditions for scientific research were much good—Columbia University, Indiana University, University of California, University of Washington and other scientific research institutions have established a considerable number of research centers and institutions. In the 1970s, a large number of works to study and promote Tibetan Buddhism were published in the United States. Many universities offered Buddhism programs with degree. Publications such as *The Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, *Philosophy East and West*, and *Golden Lotus*, etc., often publish research articles related to Tibetan Buddhism. Alex Wayman (1921–2004) was a professor of Sanskrit at Columbia University and one of the most accomplished scholars of Tibetan Buddhism. He has published papers and monographs such as *Buddhist Tantras: Light on Indo-Tibetan Esotericism* (1973), *The Encyclopedia of Religion* (1987), *The Lamp and the Wind in Tibetan Buddhism*, etc. Representatives of Tibetan Buddhism in the United States include the eminent Tibetan monk Chogyam Trungpa and Mongolian monk Geshe Ngawang Wangyal. Disciples from Ngawang Wangyal are Jeffrey Hopkins (1940–), Robert A. F. Thurman (1941–), and so on. In the early 1970s, Ngawang Wangyal founded the American Buddhist Institute. In 1973, he translated and published the doctrines of The Kagyu Sect and The Gelug Sect. Also, Ngawang Wangyal mainly inherited the Gelug theory and was known as the founder of the American Gelug Sect, and later Jeffrey Hopkins and Robert A. F. Thurman worked at the University of Virginia and Columbia University

respectively, making them major centers for Tibetan Buddhism studies on the east coast of the United States. At that time, Tibetan Buddhists in the United States are mostly concentrated in California, New Jersey, Washington, Massachusetts, Colorado and Vermont. Some important Buddhist centers such as Tibetan Nyingma Meditation Center (1969), Tibetan Kagyu Meditation Center (1970), and Research Center of Sakya Sect (1974) are founded, too.

Especially, Thubten Jigme Norbu (1922–2008), another living Buddha of the Gelug Sect, moved to Bloomington of Indiana in 1965 and became a professor of Tibetan studies at Indiana University, where he began to train Tibetan scholars. He mentored prominent Tibetologists such as Christopher Beckwith (1945–) and Elliot Sperling (1951–), making Bloomington an important Tibetology center in the central United States; in 1969 Tarthang Tulku (1934–) at the university of California, Berkeley, established the Tibetan Nyingma Meditation Center for the Berkeley, which is beneficial to introduce Tibetan tradition and Buddhism to the international community...all these inevitably have some impact on Bosson's academic research. During the decades when Tibetan Buddhism spread in the United States, it has had a certain impact on American society, culture and values. Tibetan Buddhism and other religions communicate with each other, breaking the dominance of Christianity, Catholicism, and Judaism in the United States. Celebrities such as Henry Steel Olcott (1832–1907), William W. Rockhill (1854–1914), Arthur Frederick Wright (1913–1976), and Hollywood stars Richard Gere and Martin Scorsese propaganda and elevate Buddhist teachings to mainstream awareness in the United States. As an integral part of American religion, Tibetan Buddhism has trained a number of believers with new consciousness to help Americans understand Tibetan culture, expand the international influence of Tibetan Buddhism, and promote the development of American Tibetan studies. Another, in terms of Mongolian studies in the United States alone, some academic research methods, development programs, and research areas are ahead of the world's Mongolian academia (De, 2004). It is worth mentioning that between 1961 and 1963 Bosson was also funded by Fulbright to study in Turkey, where he worked on his dissertation. During that period, he also studied the Altaic language in depth, which laid the foundation for him dedicated in Tibetology and Mongology later. Therefore, to choose *Sakya Gnostic Verse* to Translate is Bosson's adaptation to the social and historical context of the United States and the theme of the era, too.

2.3 The Value of the Sakya Gnostic Verse

According to Bosson's view, the complete version of *Sakya Gnostic Verse* in Mongolian is one of the most important documents of Mongolian literature in the middle ages (Bosson, 1969). The SLT of *A Treasury of Aphoristic Jewels* is from a Budapest photocopy of Louis Ligeti (1902–1987) in 1948. Ligeti is the founder of Hungarian Mongology, a famous Mongolian scientist, Altaic linguist and Sino-Tibetan linguist. When he was young, Ligeti studied in Paris under the guidance of Paul Pelliot (1878–1945). Ligeti's research has made Hungarian Mongolian Studies an independent school known worldwide, and during more than 30 years of teaching at Budapest University he has trained a group of Mongolists such as András Rona-Tas (1931–), László lorincz (1939–), Uray-Khalmi Katalin (1926–2012), Denis Sinor (1916–2011), etc. Although there is no available literature to directly prove that Bosson has received the academic influence of Ligeti, it can be seen that Bosson has some intersections with Ligeti and his students just from the fact that Bosson has chosen Ligeti's *Sakya Gnostic Verse* as well as similar research fields among them.

Regarding the value of the manuscript, Louis Ligeti (1948) pointed out that the Budapest manuscript of *Sakya Gnostic Verse* retains all the features of the orthography, morphology and vocabulary of middle Mongolian. About the archaeological value of fragments related to *Sakya Gnostic Verse*, Bosson has mentioned in his study like this:

Fragment TIII D322:D1 clearly shows the page numbers 10 and 11 respectively. This fragment shows that each folio contains twenty lines, and with three lines per stanza this allows six and two-thirds stanzas on each side. By comparing the fragments with the MS published by Ligeti one can approximately reconstruct the length of the Phags-pa edition. From this one can calculate the length of the entire book to have been approximately seventy folios (Bosson, 1961).

Kunga Gyaltzen, the author of *Sakya Gnomics Verse* was praised as Sakya Pandita (The Great Scholar of Sakya Sect) for his writings on the Five Aspects of Knowledge (Note 4) and *Sakya Gnostic Verse* is one of his major works. The collection is of keen observation, less subjective tendencies, and contains good suggestions and noble principles (these contents are basically correct). The classic work is often imitated by Tibetan scholars in later generations, and has become one of the most precious wisdom works learned by all ethnic groups in the East. Although there were other different versions of *Sakya Gnostic Verse* in written and oral forms, they became popular after they reached Mongolia, as much as the popularity of the original among the Tibetan areas. So a

large number of imitation works also were born, and became an important part of the gnomic verses in Mongolian literature. Therefore, from the perspective of literature *Sakya Gnostic Verse* is not only a representative work of Tibetan writers in the period of social and cultural transformation, but also a literary text in which Tibetan culture gradually changes from hero worship to wisdom worship. From the perspective of history *Sakya Gnostic Verse* conveys the pacifist beliefs, and from the perspective of culture *Sakya Gnostic Verse* implies that culture can cross the political gap and military confrontation and it can find its ultimate meaning in communication and complementation (De, 2015). Then it can be concluded that: the Mongolian edition of *Sakya Gnostic Verse* may stand out from the topics of Bosson's doctoral thesis because of its great linguistic and archaeological value.

2.4 Bosson's Translation Purpose

Functional translation theory believes that the interaction of all aspects of translation is determined by the purpose of translation. (Nord, 2018) Text selection is also largely determined by the intended purpose of the translation. In the preface of *A Treasury of Aphoristic Jewels*, Bosson explains his translation motivation is "the linguistically interesting pre-classical Mongolia translation that was published in photocopy by Louis Ligeti in 1948" (Bosson, 1969, p. 1). According to Bosson's extensive description of the linguistic features of SLT in his preface just like:

In being literal I have sacrificed the style and smoothness of a free translation, but in return I have given, I hope, what will serve as an interesting study of the traditional techniques and methods of translation from Tibetan to Mongolian (Bosson, 1969, p. 1).

Hence, we may believe that he wants to use the translation strategy of "literal than free translation" to provide reference for the study of Tibetan/Mongolian-English translation strategies and techniques. In addition, *A Treasury of Aphoristic Jewels* is printed in Tibetan-Mongolian-English trilingual typography, which reflects Bosson's translation purpose—from the perspective of a linguist to explore the laws of language. In this regard, Dr. Otogon (2009), a Chinese professor of historical philology from Northwest Minzu University, also believes that *A Treasury of Aphoristic Jewels* aims at studying Mongolian and analyzing its linguistic features. Similarly, Wang Miqing (2015), a professor from Hebei Normal University, holds that "his (Bosson's) translation is a research text with a strong academic atmosphere" (p. 71).

For many years, translator, as an important participant in the construction and dissemination of ethnic culture, and the only subject of the practice of interlingual translation, has not been received enough attention until the 1960s. In the words of Eugene A. Nida (1993), among the elements involved in translation, only SLT exists objectively. But SLT is the subject of translation, and the translator is the subject of translation activities, without SLT, there is no source of translation; without the translator, there is no executor and catalyst of translation behaviors, and it is generally believed that translators have the freedom to select materials, determine translation strategies and cater to specific readers, so the translator must be the subject of translation, too (Zhou, 2014). Viewing from the analyses of subject consciousness and objective situation, we may conclude that Bosson's text selection reflects his subjectivity, and the main attributes of the subject. The main attributes of Bosson, as the translator of *A Treasury of Aphoristic Jewels* may be summarized into three aspects, namely, dominance, subjectivity and subjective initiative. At the same time, the initiative of the subject originates from the object, which is a ternary complex composed of SLT and target language text (TLT); the author of SLT; and readers of SLT and TLT (Liu, 2007). In the process of exerting the subject function, the subject of translation activity cannot do without the object, *Sakya Gnostic Verse* in Mongolian, and its text value, etc.

3. How Did Bosson Interpret the Source Text?

From the literary perspective, *Sakya Gnostic Verse* is featured by four-line stanza, which reflects Sakya Pandita's personal philosophic apprehension of life, the wisdom of life and aristocratic morality in particular. What Sakya Pandita advocates include honesty and frankness, kindness and generosity, prudence and foresight, fearless and courage, etc. Sakya Pandita appreciates these qualities more than power and wealth. However, he also reminds people to be self-restrained, diligent, courageous, and persevering. He holds that a wise person must have good judgment, foresight, and a calm mind, and he may admit his mistakes so as to correct them. A virtuous nobleman should always pay attention to maintaining his noble manners—to be generous, kind, gentle, dutiful, and to have a sense of honor and integrity. He never stumbles in frustration, and never loses his honor. A wise and virtuous person should also be humble, quiet, honest, and fair in order to win the respect of everyone and become a model role for others. The opposite of virtue and wisdom is ignorance and meanness, which manifests in the hedonist, the greedy, the rogue, the rude, and the selfish, etc. All of them should get nothing but ridicule and condemnation. The author of *Sakya Gnostic Verse* indignantly criticizes their way of life and warns people to take precautions.

The content mentioned above accounts for two-thirds of the book. Another, the dualistic structure is the main feature of *Sakya Gnostic Verse*, Sakya Pandita divides the people or deeds into “智 wisdom” and “愚 folly”, “德 virtue” and “恶 evil”, etc., however only “德 virtue” and “智 wisdom” are well recognized.

Example 1 is selected from the 170th stanza in chapter five “*Observations of the Evil*”. The SLT contains the Tibetan allusion of “The Lion Carrying the Elephant” and describes the specific acts of the “恶 evilness” and “愚 foolishness”. “Fox” and “Lion” are respectively the incarnations of the “恶 evil” and “愚 stupid”. The former is “恶 evil” because he deceives the “Lion” with his cunning and trickery, while the latter is “愚 foolish” because of his arrogance being deceived by the former (Huang & Yan, 2018). After studying the translation of Bosson (see the Table 1 for details), we found that he puts the “lion”, “arrogance” and “愚 folly” in SLT into a deep-level interpretation, reflecting the causal logic of semantics and reproducing the original intention of “the lion becoming the porter of the fox” in SLT. However, the interpretation of “fox”, “狡猾 cunning” and “恶 evil” seems to be incomplete and does not reflect the deep meaning of “恶徒 the evil” seducing and deceiving “愚人 the fool”. Maybe Bosson has completed the understanding in the first stage of translating, but he has just made an improper discretion and judgment in reproduction and expression.

Table 1. Text interpretation in Bosson’s version (Note 5)

No.	SLT (Tibetan)	Referential Meaning (Chinese)	Version (English)
1	ha cang rlom pa che drags na sdug bsngal rgud mar thor tu bab seng ge nga rgyal ches pai rgyus wa yi khur po bskur zhes thos (170th stanza)	由于过于狂妄自大, 痛苦就会接踵而来; 由于狮子过于骄傲, 就做了狐狸的脚夫。 (第 170 首)	If one’s pride is great in excess, Suffering continually falls on one’s self. It is reported that the lion, because of his great pride, Carried the load of the fox.
2	blo dang ldan na nyams chung yang stobs ldan dgra bos ci byar yod ri dags rgyal po stobs ldan pa ri bong blo dang ldan pas gsad (25th stanza)	有智谋的人哪怕再弱小, 强大之敌也无法征服他; 勇猛的狮子是兽中之王, 却被小兔子送掉了性命。 (第 25 首)	What can the powerful enemy achieve if someone, Although weak, has intelligence? The Mighty king of beats was killed by a wise hare.

In combination with the allusion of “The Lion Carrying the Elephant”, this article suggests to reorganize the last two lines and to use “induce” to restore the metaphor part in order to highlight the deep meaning and new ideas of SLT—to educate the people in the world to be good at identifying the wise and the virtuous, to be close to the good and to keep away from the evil, and then to seek the truth, goodness, and beauty (Huang & Yan, 2018; Huang, 2014). Example 2 is selected from the 25th stanza in the first chapter, “*Observation of Scholars’ Virtue*”, which focuses on the distinction between “wise men” and “fools”. In the process of interpretation, Bosson changes “有智谋的人”, “强大之敌” and “兽中之王” into “someone has intelligence”, “powerful enemy” and “the mighty king of beats” respectively. The expressions are slightly different from those by Thomas Davenport (2000) and Li Zhengshuan (2013), but overall, their interpretations of SLT are quite consistent.

However, there exists a big deviation in the understanding of “小兔子”. The binary division is the main idea of *Sakya Gnostic Verse* and its structural feature is that the general or abstract theme, such as moral thought, conduct, and principle is proposed in the first half of each stanza, which is then illustrated by concrete examples in the second half of the stanza. There exists a metaphor in the 25th stanza, which shows that the hare is weak but full of wisdom and is a symbol of the wise. If the translator interprets it as “small hare”, which seems to fail to reproduce the deep meaning of “small but clever”, the allusion of “The Rabbit Planning to Kill the Lion” in particular—lack of a deep interpretation in cultural level, which is due to the lack or neglect of the relevant background knowledge about Tibetan culture. From the view of Sakya Pandita, Bosson has not achieved the best interpretation because he is not the ideal reader Sakya Pandita presupposes. Bosson’s version—“wise hare” reflects the hare’s wisdom, but he does not reproduce the deep meaning of “the weak overcoming the strong”. If the deep meaning between the lines is shown too, the degree of domestication will be higher.

The interpretation in the two examples above can be called under-translation, which means the translation carries less information than the original does; Bosson fails to interpret the deep meanings in the two allusions of “The Lion Carrying the Elephant” and “The Rabbit Planning to Kill the Lion”. In spite of this, Bosson’s interpretation derives from SLT, which shows his respect to SLT. In other words, the understanding of SLT, accurate or inaccurate, will reflect Bosson’s subjectivity. Bosson, as the translator is the only subject of this translation

practice, but he is not an isolated and abstract subject. He should be always in a complex and interactive relationship with the author of SLT, SLT, the target readers and TLT, and even the translation environment. Bosson's subjectivity should be played on the premise of respecting the object of translation activity. That is to say: emphasizing the translator's subjectivity, but avoiding the subject-centered theory—avoiding the subject's overriding of SLT, and then forming the subject presence as stated by deconstruction (Derrida, 1967; Culler, 1994). All factors such as the mentioned above—social background, national policy, text value, poetic norms and linguistic forms, which may affect Bosson's subjective initiative, are the manifestations of his objective passivity—he endeavors to make the version faithful to the SLT although there exists some inaccurate even distorted understanding. It is a general principle that the subjective initiative and objective subjectivity are dual attributes possessed by translators (He, 2016, p. 29). But without doubt, objective passivity may be consciously transformed into subjective initiative, and subjective initiative will also subconsciously subject to objective passivity. So the version will be perfect if Bosson had a deeper understanding of Tibetan culture behind the verses, especially the dualistic structure, as well as the allusions from the Tibetan gnomic works.

4. What Translation Strategies and Methods Were Adopted by Bosson?

Table 2. Translation methods in Bosson's version

No.	SLT (Tibetan)	Referential Meaning (Chinese)	Version (English)
3	chen po re shig rgud gyur kyang de la gdung ba bskyed mi dgos zla ba re shig gzas zin yang de ma thag tu grol bar gyur (48th stanza)	贤者暂时遇到困难, 人们不必为他担忧; 月亮若被天狗吃了, 很快就会得到解脱。 (第 48 首)	Even if a great person declines slightly, There is no need to be distressed. Although the moon is consumed by a planet for a moment, It is immediately released (again).
4	ngan pa thogs mar tshig gis brid bag phebs gyur nas phyi nas slu nya ba zas kyi kha brid nas nya mams gsod pa byed la ltos (146th stanza)	恶人用巧言进行诱骗, 丧失警惕就会上当; 渔夫用香饵下钩, 贪吃的鱼儿就会送命。 (第 146 首)	The bad first deceive with words. After having laid aside their timidity they lure one (in) from outside. Behold (how) the fisherman, after luring the mouth with food, Slaughters the fish.

Translation strategy is a macro principle guiding translation practice, which may be subdivided into micro translation methods or skills. Specifically, translation strategy refers to the conscious or unconscious approach preferred by translators in dealing with paragraphs, or the principle on which specific translation purposes are based (Hejwowski, 2004; Xiong, 2014). Translation techniques belong to microscopic language operations. From the perspective of intercultural communication, translation strategies can be divided into domestication and foreignization. Domestication does not disturb the reader, and let the original author close to the reader; while foreignization does not disturb the original author as much as possible, so as to let readers come close to the original author (Shuttleworth, 1997). In other words, domestication is to eliminate the strangeness of the original text in the way of expression, sentence structure, discourse features and cultural content so that the translation can be read smoothly and naturally, and can be consistent with the idiomatic expression of the target language. Foreignization tries its best to preserve the strangeness of SLT in terms of expression, sentence structure, discourse features and cultural content (Venuti, 1995).

Form the translation purpose discussed above, we can see that Bosson's intended readers are linguists or language workers who study Mongolian, Tibetan, and English, or those who aim to explore Tibetan/Mongolian-English translation skills and linguistic rules. Therefore, he chooses Louis Liget's Mongolian version in 1948 as SLT and adopted the literal translation as close as possible to SLT (Bosson, 1969). Moreover, for the literal translation, he sacrificed the style and rhythm of the verse. Professor Wang Miqing (2015) commented on Bosson's translation as follows: "In terms of content and syntactic structure, the version is as close to the original as possible... it is a purely linguistic translation method" (p. 70). All these comments reflect that the translation strategy adopted by Bosson is mainly foreignization, or "literal than free translation".

The translation method also refers to the solution to the specific problem in the process of translation, which is commonly referred to as translation skills (Fang, 2004, p. 100). Each Tibetan gnomic stanza is generally divided into two parts: the first two lines are the first part, directly describing the author's original intention; the last two lines are the second part, which is generally a metaphor of the original intention. In SLT of the translation examples 3 and 4 there are no obvious conjunctions between the clauses that indicate the semantic relationship. However, Bosson adopted the literal translation, and "add or clarify the implicit linguistic elements in the

original text, namely, explicitation” (Huang, 2007, p. 36). As can be seen from Table 2, in the translation of 48th stanza, Bosson not only uses “although” to express the transition relationship of the second part, but also adds “even if” to express the hypothetical relationship. In example 4, Bosson uses two “after” successively to complement the logical relationship of SLT. The lines of stanza are also quite different, and words like “(again)”, “(in)” and “(how)” are added as notes in the version. In addition, some implied information or sense, such as “first” in the 146th stanza, and “for a moment” in the 48th stanza is elaborated, too... These translation skills such as amplification and explicitation are the specific manifestations of Bosson’s style of linguistic translation.

Through the study of more translation examples, we can find that Bosson adopts the translation strategy, methods and skills to make the version close to SLT in order to help his intended readers insight into the laws how to render Tibetan/Mongolian into English. Due to his knowledgeable foundation and translation purpose, Bosson makes it possible and naturally to adopt “literal than free translation”. Bosson’s version is indeed “a pure linguistic translation”—using more words to indicate syntactic or logic relationships, which is far from the rhyme and rhythm of gnomic verses. To some extent, Bosson’s translation strategies and methods also reflect his subjectivity from a linguistic translator, not a literary translator since he aims to provide reference for the study of Tibetan translation strategies and techniques.

5. How Did Bosson Express in the Target Text?

Commonly, the method used to analyze the translator’s expression is to study the unique language in the version. The so-called unique language mainly refers to the distinctive vocabulary, sentence pattern, or word frequency for the same semantics or concepts (Huang, 2014). With the help of corpus statistical software, it is found that the lexical density of Bosson’s Tibetan-English translation is not high, the number of types is 1761, and the type-token ratios (TTR) is 34, lower than 40, which indicates that his version tends to be colloquial and be in line with the stylistic features of the *Sakya Gnostic Verse*, easy to recite and memorize. And among the top five high-frequency words, “wise”, “person”, “enemy”, “excellent” and “bad” appear more than 50 times in *A Treasury of Aphoristic Jewels*. The word “wise” is up to 85 times... Bosson tends to use “the wise” or “wise man” to reproduce the core concepts of “智者” or “学者”. These unique expressions above belong to high-frequency words both in spoken and academic English, which may be proved in BNC (British National Corpus). In spoken English, the word frequency of “the wise” is 1.30 per MIL and “wise man” is 1.61 per MIL, 1.04 per MIL and 0.20 per MIL respectively in academic English. Simultaneously, the COCA (Corpus of Contemporary American English) shows that Blog, Web, TV/M are the first three sections (sub-database of the corpus) which “the wise” and “wise man” appear in. Thus the frequency of these unique expressions in BNC and COCA also indirectly reflects that the two core concepts “智者” or “学者” expressed by Bosson in his *A Treasury of Aphoristic Jewels* tend to be colloquial.

In terms of content, about one-third of SLT is related to Tibetan Buddhism. In many ways Sakya Pandita, the poet talks about Buddhist teachings, both religious and secular morality and ethics. He inculcates his readers with the basic Buddhist teachings and emphasizes that people need to do good deeds for the afterlife in accordance with karma, and that life is short, and death is inevitable. Because Sakya Pandita is a Buddhist, the inherent Buddhist thought from him is bound to be reflected in SLT, and the complete “transcendence” or “anti-objectification” from the translator is rejected, too. That is to say, a successful translator should reproduce the intentions of the author of *Sakya Genomics Verses*.

In the 48th stanza, Bosson has completely reproduced the image “月亮被天狗吃了,很快就会得到解脱” with “the moon is consumed by a planet” or “seized by Rahu”. This version reflects the origin relationship between Chinese Tibetan Buddhism and Indian Buddhism because “Rahu” originally means the demon in ancient Indian mythology. Beside, Bosson renders “金山” in the 144th stanza and “玉帝” in the 278th stanza into “Mount Sumeru” and “Indra” respectively. In Buddhist cosmology “Mount Sumeru” is described as a mountain standing on a golden wheel in the middle of the world; and “Indra” is regarded as a chief deity in ancient Indian mythology. The alienation can better reflect the Buddhist thought from Sakya Pandita as well the relationship between Chinese Tibetan Buddhism and Indian Buddhism (Huang, 2014). From these analyses, we can draw a conclusion that Bosson’s “Indra” reproduces the Indian myth, his expression is more appropriate than “Jade Emperor” by other translators although Chinese Tibetan Buddhism has also been influenced by Buddhism in Han areas, even by Confucianism and Taoism. “大鹏” in the 4th and 17th stanzas also have similar peculiarity in expression. In traditional Tibetan values, birds symbolize peace, joy and auspiciousness. “大鹏” also known as the golden-winged bird is a divine bird recorded in Hindu and some Buddhist books, symbolizing nobility, so it is often seen as a symbol of Buddha wisdom (Ling, 2012, p. 491). Bosson translates it into “Gruda”, which can better reproduce the cultural information of SLT by borrowing Buddhist terms.

Whether the terms of Buddhist thought are retained or not or how to express them depends on the translator, and embodies the scope and limit of the translator's subjectivity, or a kind of "privilege". From the perspective of communication, Sakya Pandita as the first communicator expressed his Buddhist ideas with the help of gnomic verse. Therefore, his thoughts are rich in the characteristics of the times of Tubo society at that era, even some of his views are idealistic and limited. When Bosson as the second communicator expresses the content of the communication, that is, the original information in SLT, including Sakya Pandita's values or creative intentions should be taken into account. This should not only follow the overall cognitive structure of gnomic verse, but also actively "filter" some information according to his translation and communication purposes. In combination with Sakya Pandita's dualistic Buddhist thought of "智 wisdom" and "愚 foolishness", "德 virtue" and "恶 evil", Bosson expresses "智者" or "学者" as "the wise", "wise man" or "the excellent"; and "恶人" as "evil-doers" should be an accurate expression. Perhaps, to spread Tibetan culture is not the main purpose of Bosson, his foreignized expression—being "as close to SLT as possible" may be not readable, but it will help spread the essence of ethnic literature to the outside world, and shape the image of ethnic culture while preserving and developing ethnic culture, the Tibetan culture in particular.

6. Conclusion

As the translator of *A Treasury of Aphoristic Jewels*, Bosson inevitably brings his own subjectivity different from others into the process of translation. These differences are embodied in his knowledge and ability base, personal experience, and the social environment he lives in, etc. Bosson's subjectivity is obviously embodied in three aspects, too: (1) selecting the source language text (SLT); (2) interpreting SLT; (3) adopting translation methods; and (4) selecting ways of expression. In detail, firstly, Bosson chooses Louis Liget's Mongolian version in 1948 as the object of study and translation, which should be timely, because of the so-called Chinese Culture Vogue—Tibetology and Mongology in particular from the 1950s to the 1970s and the prevalence of Tibetan Buddhism in the United States, which called for the translation of Chinese culture. Therefore, Bosson's text translation is his adaptation to the social and historical context of the United States and the theme of the era, too. This adaptation is similar to the cultural mission of the Chinese translation circle, which is the objective reflection of the translator's subjectivity. Secondly, the interpretation of SLT is much accurate since Bosson having devoted all his life to Tibetan and Mongolian studies; however, there still exists some under-translation—the translation carries less information than the original, Bosson fails to reproduce the deep meanings of SLT related to Tibetan culture; the version will be perfect if he had a deeper understanding of Tibetan culture behind the verses, especially the dualistic structure, as well as allusions in the Tibetan gnomic works. Thirdly, Bosson's literal translation or foreignization makes the version featured by a purely linguistic translation method. The approach to scarify the style and rhythm of the verse is in line with his translation purpose—to provide his intended readers with the opportunity to insight into the laws how to render the Tibetan/Mongolian into English. Fourthly, Bosson's expression tends to be colloquial, and be rich in foreignized expressions—making the version close to SLT as possible as he can.

It is Bosson's prose translation that exemplifies that Bosson as the linguistic translator may choose the words with philosophical and psychological connotations without consideration of the rhyme and rhythm, so the translation reflects a more profound and accurate philosophy than the poetry. It seems to embody the analytical wisdom, a typical concept of western philosophy. Another, Bosson also in the version adds some critical translation like notes or commentary, which not only shows the oriental wisdom, but also enriches the quality of *Sakya Gnomic Verse*. For the new scholars, this successful practice to combine Chinese and western wisdom is worthy to learn. All these reflect Bosson's subjectivity, which is much different from those literary translators, and indirectly shows the academic tradition of American Sinology (Chinese Studies), paying attention to the current situation and solving practical problems. Of course, Bosson's critical translation or linguistic-style translation is a necessary form of translation for some texts, such as Tibetan gnomic verses with profound and complex contents, and it has its special value—beneficial to spreading the essence of ethnic literature to the outside world, and shaping the image of ethnic culture.

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Notes

Note 1. Tibet was known by many different names in history, such as “Tubo” in the Tang Dynasty (618-907), “Xibo” in the Song Dynasty (960–1127), the “ü-Tsang and Ngari Korsum area” in the Yuan Dynasty (1127–1368), and “U-Tsang” in the Ming (1368–1644) and Qing (1644–1911) dynasties.

Note 2. Kunga Gyaltsen (1182–1251) is the fourth generation of ancestors of the Sakya, an important sect in the history of Tibetan Buddhism. Sakya Sect is also called “Colorful Sect” or “Stripe Sect” originated in the 11th century. Kunga Gyaltsen was born in the royal family of Sakya in Tsang region, and was subjected to strict interpretation and study of classics from his childhood. He was praised as “Sakya Pandita” —“The Great Scholar of Sakya Sect” for his writings on the Five Aspects of Knowledge and *Sakya Genomics Verses* is one of his major works.

Note 3. More information is in *The Mongolia Society Newsletter*, No. 1, Vol. 1, 1962.

Note 4. Five Aspects of Knowledge includes Greater Five Aspects of Knowledge and Lesser Five Aspects of Knowledge according to the Tibetan tradition. The Greater Five Aspects of Knowledge refers to skill, medicine, philology, logic and religion; while the Lesser Five Aspects of Knowledge includes poetry, rhetoric, rhythm, opera and calendar.

Note 5. All SLT (Tibetan) and Version (English) in the two tables are from Bosson’s version: *A Treasury of Aphoristic Jewels: The Subhsitarstnanidhi of Sa Skya Pandita in Tibetan and Mongolianin*, published by Indiana University Publications in 1969.

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