

Zhang Hui

Peking University

Beijing, China

What happened, When Du Fu Spoke in English?

Reflections on translatable and untranslatable issues

Du Fu (712 – 770) is one of the China's greatest poets and the most outstanding representative of Chinese culture. Many excellent poems of this Tang Dynasty poet are already very difficult to translate into modern Chinese, what happens when they are translated into English? This article attempts to take Stephan Owen's English translation based on Qiu Zhaoao (仇兆鳌) 's "Detailed Notes on Du Poems (《杜诗详注》)" as an important case, combined with other relevant English translations, to analyze the untranslatable factors in the translation process. In this way, it not only deepens the understanding of the complex connotation of Du Fu's poems, but also explores the significance of translation for activating cross – cultural interpretation and understanding.