Translating

Isaac Schneebaum[*]

Translating is taking a thought someone thought, a painting someone painted, a hope that someone hoped, and transferring them like that, as they are, to someone else with the thought and the painting and the hope in a vessel which he does not know how to open.

Translating is writing with the writer and reading with the reader, blowing with the speaker and breathing with the listener.

Translating is travelling on the twisted paths between the gray cells, mining from them not only what "he" said, but also what he intended, and pouring this ore into other twisted paths in other gray cells.

Translating is understanding better than the speaker, writing better than the author.

Translating is catching a stone in midflight, pounding it into dust, making it like clay, adding from here, taking from there, and then throwing it back again to its destination.

Translating is searching for a word in a dictionary and in another dictionary and in another dictionary, in lists of yellowing words, cluttered Word files, bothering peaceful citizens with weird questions, thinking that here, you have understood the word and the path to the destination is paved, but then discovering that there is no equivalent word in Hebrew.

Translating is waking up in the middle of the night in a cold sweat, to a faded memory of a word that should have been written differently, or with cries of Eureka!! I found it!!, and running barefoot to the computer so that I will not forget until the morning.

Translating is agreeing to be the idiot who does not know Arabic / who does not know Hebrew/ who does not know how to translate / who no one knows how he even got this job, when that, really really, was what was said in the source.

Translating is traveling in another culture and writing a travel journal

Translating is swimming in a strange river, and bringing home its waters.

Translating is making the hated tolerable, the strange familiar, the frightening understood, the different similar.

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[*] Isaac Schneebaum (itzikshn@gmail.com) translates prose, poetry and non-literary texts in Hebrew and Arabic. He teaches translation in various frameworks.