Introduction

This book is primarily a vehicle for the 2010 Clark Lectures. These lectures constitute Chapters 1 to 4 and appear, aside from minor revisions, very much as they were delivered. They bring in their train further chapters on some of the issues addressed by them, issues which the lectures could only touch upon and which, by their very nature, deserved much fuller critical consideration. Indeed, we are here confronted by topics whose significance far exceeds the bounds of this book. Before embarking on a fuller description of the structure and contents of the book, I would like to outline, in their bare bones, the arguments underlying the lectures, and the polemical positions from which they spring.

The task of the lectures, put in its simplest form, was this: to develop a mode, or rather modes, of translation which would capture reading as a phenomenological, rather than as an interpretative, activity. To achieve this switch-over from the interpretative to the phenomenological, one must abandon hermeneutic habits of reading and listening and adopt what these lectures call 'constructivist' ones. What is the back-argument of this enterprise?

Currently, translation is principally understood as the translation of a source text (ST) in one language into a target text (TT)[1] in another language, for the benefit of readers who are not conversant with the language of the ST (interlingual translation). But if it is translation's business to increase the circulation of languages and to sharpen our awareness of the inbuilt problematics of language and of linguistic transfer (transtextuality), then clearly the current model, as I have defined it, does not work. Indeed, it is a form of translation which, by encouraging the continuing linguistic ignorance of the reader, acts directly against what I take to be translation's principal concern. If, then, we insist that translation should preoccupy itself with readers *familiar* with the source language (SL), what kind of translation should we envisage, and what should its function be? What we can immediately say is that interlingual translation should forfeit its

present monopoly, and that our engagement with intralingual translation (translation of a language into a different version of itself) and intermedial translation (translation across media) should become correspondingly more conspicuous.

Let us start from another point. The chief concern of literary criticism, as at present constituted, is the interpretation and evaluation of literary works. The discourse of interpretation is a public discourse, constituted of shared disciplines, modes of analysis and critical language. Interpretation is a post-textual operation. It tends to assume that a text, once properly established by scholarly means, remains constant to itself, whatever its mode of presentation or delivery, and, however much interpretations of it vary as time unfolds, in something approaching an a-temporal state. What literary criticism wishes to lock out of interpretation are the personal idiosyncrasies of the reader, the associative mechanisms, the memories, the unpredictable intertexts, in short, the *autobiographical* input, on the grounds that it does not transcend the anecdotal and the impressionistic. Also included in this outlawed autobiographical input is the realisation, or enactment, of text by the individual reader's voice, the elements of paralanguage (speed, loudness, pausing, intonation, tone, differing degrees of stress), since the voice is the instrument whereby the reader actualises or embodies his/her individual experience of the text, of the reading process. In canvassing the importance of this autobiography of reading, I am therefore arguing for two basic shifts of emphasis: from textual examination to readerly consciousness, and from post-textual, post-reading, critical retrieval of text to in-textual, in-reading readerly response. It is with the latter components of these shifts that translation should concern itself. And these shifts make it desirable to envisage translation not just as an in-textual act, but also as a pre-textual act (i.e. the ST is an inadequate transcription of an oral performance by the reader that has already taken place) and as a post-post-textual act (i.e. translation should not just be the translation of a reading of a text, but also, possibly, the translation of the *memory* of reading a text).

Immediately we speak of 'in-textual reading', of a view of the text from an ongoing, developing inside, from a constructivist position, we must abandon 'standard' translation's dedication to textual stasis, to the textual immobilisation of the ST. By this we do not mean that meaning *within* the ST has achieved stasis, since evidently polysemy, connotative range and interpretative variation, are part of the ST's literariness. No, we mean rather that the ST is deemed to have achieved *textual* stasis, has authority as a text, so that the TT can safely mount itself on that ST and aim at the same completeness, the same achieved condition. But the ST, as we

have it before us, is in fact not in a suspended state, but at the intersection of three durations: the process of the work's composition and revision, a process which has within it the dimension of potentially infinite extension; the process of the ST's post-publicational life, in the minds of countless readers, in different editions, imitations, adaptations, merchandising, and so on; the process of the ST's existing and becoming in the mind of any *individual* reader.

We must be careful, then, not to disparage this autobiographical input, not to regard it as the accidental, the decorative, the whimsical; it is, after all, that by which a reader assimilates himself/herself bodily into text and, conversely, that by which text is enriched by a reader and absorbed into a life. Autobiographical input is best understood as a creative force, a creative force which can be harnessed, 'respectabilised', textualised, by translation, fed back into the ST as part of translation's own creative project. In other words, translation is in a peculiarly *privileged* position to give expression to what literary criticism, for professional reasons, for reasons of critical integrity, must push to one side: the contingencies of linguistic association and of vocal realisation.

And if the translator is properly to become the reader we describe, and vice versa, we must move on from the partial view of the translator, as someone with a particular translational competence, to a holistic view of the translator, as an unconscious, a subjectivity, a writerly metabolism. That is, we must move on from translation as a linguistic activity necessitated by the non-translatedness of a particular text to translation as an existential need and condition of reading. We need, correspondingly, to distinguish between a TT which generates an audience for itself by virtue of its connection with an otherwise unreadable ST, and the TT which is part of the audience of the ST; and to distinguish between a translation which purports, in some form or another, to be 'Baudelaire', and translations which seek, thanks to the continuing activity of the ST, either to co-author with Baudelaire (dialogue/communion), or to produce a not-Baudelaire, where Baudelaire is still present in the 'notness'.

The empirical languages now go their own ways, neither as perfect nor as failed languages, but as languages which have come into their own and have the wherewithal to expand and evolve. Translation attempts neither to reconcile languages nor to demonstrate their differences as inalienable, as measures of cultural identity or indelibility. Is it translation's function to act out, again and again, the right-thinking ethnic ritual whereby one understands and imaginatively inhabits the 'other' and seeks to preserve it, even in one's own linguistic sphere? I think not. More important is the

entirely personal enterprise of alterity: I confront another to become myself; this is neither the concealment of other in self, nor the preservation of other in self, but the transformation of other into self, where the transformative process itself is what counts, is what must remain visible, is both process and project. It is for this reason that there is no difference between intra-lingual and interlingual translation.

Properly to conduct this process of transformation, the translator must have at his/her disposal every resource of language, and every resource of verbal and visual paralanguage. We may regret that the experimental and the avant-garde, for all the local enthusiasms they may have engendered, have generally been marginalised, so that we have signally failed to learn from their imaginative leaps, and have consequently failed to incorporate their findings into our own middle-of-the-road practices. In my own translations, I feel I am engaged in an endless process of catching up with the expressive possibilities that the experimental and the avant-garde have long made available to us. This book tirelessly, if implicitly, argues that translation should, by definition, be a form of experimental writing, by definition (a) because its material, what we are loosely calling 'the autobiographical input of reading', is unstable, shifting, varied, metamorphic, multi-lingual and multi-sensory – that is to say, its parameters are difficult, if not impossible, to establish; and (b) because it is translation's business to put the ST at the cutting edge of its own progress through time, to open up for the ST its possible futures, its strategy of textual self-regeneration. We at present lack a language able to capture the phenomenology of reading, and experimental writing offers us the best hope of finding one.

The autobiographical input of reading/translating, as understood in this book, has two faces: one turned towards the reader's encounter with the language of text itself, as a set of somatic, associational triggers, and towards the ways in which translation can textualise this encounter, can make it textually significant; the other is turned towards the environment, the ambience within which the act of reading takes place, and towards the ways in which, through translation, the text-internal and the text-external might find a route to fruitful co-habitation and interaction. But these two faces do belong to the same figure: deepening readerly response, particularly the reader's auditory capacity, through verbal and visual paralanguage, not only extends the range of readerly consciousness, but opens up new channels of communication between the text and the world outside.

The first two chapters explore the former of these faces, the way in which a reader inhabits text, and that in two senses: first, in terms of psycho-physiological and kinaesthetic responses to the materials and structures of

language itself – phonemes, morphemes, parts of speech, syntactic constructions; and second, in terms of vocal and rhythmic inputs into text, the paralanguage of the reading consciousness. To capture these responses in all their complexity, translation's own language must expand: in the development of visual paralanguage (typography, page layout, bibliographical design, readerly gestures and postures) and of alternative graphics (handwriting, doodling in pen and paint, crossing out), so that translation is actively engaged in textual performance, both performance *in* the text, and performance *of* the text.

The first chapter is entitled, simply, 'Reading and translation'. It begins by reviewing some of the sources and objectives of the book as a whole, and of this chapter in particular. A principal concern is the clarification of what is to be meant by literary translation. It then elaborates a distinction between hermeneutic and constructivist reading, before adopting the constructivist position as a reading/translational strategy in relation to Edward Thomas's 'Adlestrop'. The consideration of this poem, with an emphasis on the perceptual experiences communicated by linguistic structure (enumeration) and parts of speech (proper noun, co-ordinating conjunction), leads to a two-part translational development, the second part of which also incorporates the notion of radial reading. This is followed by an exploration of one of Rilke's *Sonnets to Orpheus*, focusing on the ways in which textual acoustics use the body of the reader to make the poem's sense and to inculcate an intensified aural receptivity. This analysis, in its turn, generates a translation, and a detour into doodling. The chapter closes with a brief reflection on textual exactitude and its relation to the written and the oral.

Resuming the constructivist mode of reading, the second chapter ('Reading: voice and rhythm') considers readerly input into text in two related aspects: voice and rhythm. It opens with a differentiation between the physiological/pronunciatory and the expressive/articulatory versions of voice, and with an examination of voice in the speech-indicators of popular fiction. It assesses the injustices that criticism, and particularly the criticism of poetry, has done to the voice, and suggests possible ways out of that predicament. Voice and its paralanguage are central to the constitution of rhythm, whereas metre is peculiarly neglectful of them. The chapter argues that metre and rhythm have deeply divided interests, and briefly explores the translation of the metrical into the rhythmic in a treatment of Yeats's 'Leda and the Swan'. A section of W.E. Henley's *In Hospital* cycle is the occasion of a further translation, a pre-textual translation, in which vocal performance is incorporated into text, in anticipation of

its achieving textual status. Themes touched on at the close of the first chapter – handwriting and doodling – return as important features of translational practice. The chapter ends with an investigation of voice and rhythm in a tabular, as opposed to a linear, text – in this instance, a translation of the translation by Philip Cranston of a short poem by Jules Supervielle ('L'Errant').

Correspondingly, Chapters 3 and 4 are concerned with the relationship between text and the outside world, reading and the ambient, and with the ways in which translation might express or facilitate that relationship. The third chapter ('Translating the textual environment (1)') addresses the incorporation of the environment into the reading experience, the infiltration of world into text. The image of reading which our art favours is that of the reader absorbed in the world of the book, to the exclusion of all else. But there is an equally instructive thematics of looking up from the page, of interrupted reading (Woolf, Bonnefoy, Barthes), and this looking up helps us to distinguish between two kinds of ambience: one connected with radial reading, with the activation of the reader's own associations and memories, embodied here in a photographic translation of Apollinaire's 'Marizibill'; the other connected with the absorption into text of the world beyond the text. The development of this latter aspect necessitates both a reappraisal of collage (in relation to Shakespeare's Sonnet 71) and an elaboration of the ways in which we think about onomatopoeic and ideophonic devices (graphic novel, Futurism, anthropology), and culminates in a 'multilineal' translation of a sentence from Maupassant's 'La Femme de Paul'.

The fourth chapter, as its title indicates ('Translating the textual environment (2)'), picks up where the previous chapter left off: where the third chapter was principally interested in the infiltration of text by environment, the fourth considers the exfiltration of text into the environment. But before embarking on this reversal of direction, we pay a last visit to infiltration, by re-examining Shakespeare's Sonnet 71, in a version in which it is overrun by environment. The investigation of exfiltration follows two lines: that of performance, and that of text projected into the wider environment. We are familiar with the opportunities offered by performance for wrenching text from the page and enlarging and diversifying its area of operation. But we do not sufficiently attend to the opportunity to develop new kinds of listening, nor do we sufficiently consider how performance studies might interact with translation studies and literary criticism. The projection of text into the ambient looks into the possible applications of R. Murray Schafer's World Soundscape Project and Henri Lefebvre's 'rhythmanalysis', and explores how a translation of Thomas Nashe's 'Song' might be used

as a rhythmic component in a larger soundscape. As a further model of exfiltration, we briefly visit translation as a destabilising insertion of text into the status quo. The chapter goes on to a further reconsideration of the relationship between the written and the oral, before concluding with reflections on survival translation (as opposed to transmissional translation). Survival translation encapsulates many of the aspirations identified in the opening sequence of chapters.

One of the book's underlying arguments is the case for the redemption of the paralinguistic from the linguistic, the performed text from the silently read, the dict from the script. But within the paralinguistic, as Chapter 2 has already demonstrated, there is a potential, and potentially destructive, 'rivalry' between the two aspects of the paralinguistic, the physiological/pronunciatory and the expressive/articulatory, between timbre and delivery. It might be claimed that these two aspects belong to different 'ages' of the voice, the prelapsarian (geno-vocal) and the postlapsarian (pheno-vocal); at all events, the latter tends to exist at the expense of the former. Chapter 5 ('Translating the acousticity of voice') investigates this distinction in relation to a translation of Baudelaire's 'Causerie'. This translation is based on a thorough metrical and acoustic exploration of the poem and an examination of the ways in which it invites the reading voice to invest the text with the voice's own idiosyncrasies. The translation attempts to release the Baudelairean poem from its vocal quandaries, an enterprise given a different kind of significance in a second translation, an 'overwritten' version of the same texts. Overwriting, the closing argument runs, is a model of the naturally 'redemptive' function of all translation.

The opening question posed by Chapter 6 ('Free verse and the translation of rhythm') is: what part should metrical considerations play in the translation of verse? Translators often make them paramount. But this is to drive translation off course, particularly if one believes that it is translation's business to capture the perceptual experience of reading/performing one text into another. Metre has no interest in paralinguistic values, and, accordingly, it obstructs the translator's capacity to reconcile texts, to cross back and forth between languages, in endless acoustic and dictional explorations. Rhythm is the proper instrument of such transactions, and it is so because, in relation to metre, it is potentially so inclusive a paralinguistic category. The pursuit of this argument entails an enquiry into assumptions made by English and French metrical analysis about verse-constitutive features, an assessment of the advantages of free-verse and tabular translation, and the detailed investigation of two examples: a translation of the first

line of Baudelaire's 'Chant d'automne', and a translation of the first stanza of Valery Larbaud's 'Ode'.

This book is dedicated to the memory of Malcolm Bowie,[2] not only to mark the passing of a peerless scholar and a critic of inspiriting breadth and subtlety; not only to express by this memorial some of the gratitude owed to him by the worlds of French Studies and Comparative Literature for the magnificent way in which he nourished them; but also, and perhaps presumptuously, to suggest that many of the ideas and argumentative threads pursued in this book lie within the purview of his own convictions. Accordingly, Chapter 7 ('The reinvention of the literary in literary translation') is largely the text of the Malcolm Bowie Memorial Lecture delivered in Oxford in March 2007, in which I addressed more fully a topic only touched on in Chapter 4, but central to an approach to translation that wishes translation to be the record of the phenomenology of reading, namely literary translation's constant reinvention of the literary. Standard attitudes hitherto have tended to assume that a literary text is literary by virtue of qualities which inhere in it, in its printed language, and that, therefore, translation should seek to keep these qualities in place as best it can – this means that, ideally, one translates metaphor by metaphor, ambiguity by ambiguity, alliteration by alliteration. If, however, one assumes that the literary is not an effect guaranteed by devices within the text, but rather something experienced and bestowed on the text by a reader, then the translational policy just described will be a mistaken one. Instead one will argue, as we do, that every literary text translated must be translated back into its literariness, that literariness might well be relocated by the process of translation, that the literary might well reside not just in the linguistics of a text, but in its paralinguistics, that is to say, in certain vocal inflections or rhythmic choices, in certain dispositional and/or typographical manoeuvres, wherever the reader's psycho-physiological or kinaesthetic relationship with a text 'deepens' and ramifies. These issues are explored with reference to translations of passages from Virgil's *Aeneid* and Apollinaire's 'Zone' (*Alcools*), and cover the paralinguistic in both its verbal and visual manifestations.

Chapter 8 ('Writing and overwriting the sound of the city'), the concluding chapter, returns to the area of exploration of Chapters 3 and 4, reading and the textual environment, and does so using CRESSON (Centre de recherche sur l'espace sonore et l'environnement urbain), the inheritors of R. Murray Schafer's World Soundscape Project, as its tutelary spirit. It undertakes an examination of Baudelaire's 'À une passante', guided by the proposition that the poem's sound-structure is informed by the different

sonic effects at work in the street, and that, indeed, its language generates the urban acoustic within which its action occurs. At the same time, the chapter returns to overwriting as a translational resource (first broached in Chapter 5), and in particular as a translational resource which keeps text in contact with the outside world, in two senses. First, a consideration of Sean Bonney's overwritten translation of Baudelaire (2008) shows how overwriting turns language outwards: it casts language as the flotsam of urban dereliction, and thus prevents the smooth 'inward' text from establishing itself; overwriting seems to be both the debris of a failure and the instrument of a revolution; the typewriter is a significant protagonist in this drama. Second, a superimposition of translations of 'À une passante' reveals how overwriting affects the status of the page and keeps the sheet of paper locked in a dialogue with extratextual reality. The chapter closes with reflections on translation in two intermedial guises: as a homologue of walking, and as an activity comparable to drawing.

The Epilogue ('Portrait of a reader – Malcolm Bowie in search of the critical interworld') refocuses on the book's central preoccupation – literary reading – in an assessment of Malcolm Bowie's critical orientations. Bowie's reading practices are the embodiment of certain readerly/translational features we deem capital: the foregrounding of the dynamics of reading, reading seen as an experience located in a vivid here and now, text as a mobilisation of the kinaesthetics of reading, reading as an awakening of what is multi-sensory and synaesthetic in language. But Bowie remains a critic rather than a translator, or rather, with him, the translational cast of mind inhabits critical perception in such a way that the hermeneutic is informed and multiplied by the constructivist. Bowie uses the languages of the other arts to articulate the experiential intuitions of reading, in what might be called acts of transubstantiation; correspondingly, through recourse to the other arts, the critic is better able to perform the creativity of thought in his/her writing. In his pursuit of the appropriate interlanguage, Bowie looks particularly to psychoanalysis as a potential methodological and linguistic model.

My objection to the current over-preoccupation with translation for those ignorant of the SL, at the expense of intralingual and intermedial translation, and the consequent exclusion of translation from many kinds of literary reading, might lead me to the proposition that literary translation should dissociate itself from translation studies. Intralingual and intermedial translation are bound to assume in their readers knowledge of the SL/ST. And a more thorough theorisation of intralingual and intermedial translation would, I believe, lead to the practices I am anxious to

promulgate: expanding and proleptic TTs; multiple translation; multisensory translation. Where translation studies has addressed literary translation, it has developed no theory about the literariness of the translational act itself, nor about how translation might re-locate or develop the literariness of the ST; and it has failed in any marked degree to incorporate literary theory into its thinking, in particular textual theory and reader-response theory. By this last, I do not so much mean the extent to which translation might be seen to project or re-project literary paradigms, 'horizons of expectation' (Jauss, 1981), or to anticipate readerly competencies (Iser, 1974, 1978), but rather how translation might engage with exchanges of consciousness (Poulet, 1969–1970) or help us to 'rediscover the movements of . . . reading within the body itself' (Certeau, 1984, 175). Only in this way will translation be able to create a poetics/eco-poetics of its own, and discover its true and fruitful affinities with life-writing and creative writing.

As this book unfolds, one overriding proposition should constantly be borne in mind: translation is a mode of reading which gives textual substance to reader response; reading is reading-to-translate. This book imagines that every reader should be a translator and that no other translator can translate our reading for us, although other translators may change the way we read. Thus, while the translations which appear in this book do indeed claim to cast new light on their STs, to give them new expressive being, to have validity as free-standing translations, their principal function is to act as models for a translational practice in which all readers of literature are exhorted to indulge.

But my subject in the pages that follow is almost exclusively poetry, and it may seem that the intricacy and extravagance of my translational methods could not easily be applied to prose fiction. I would claim otherwise, for these reasons: translation is a way of discovering how we read, and of enhancing reading, and can be used diagnostically either of a brief, whole text, or of a portion of text, as my treatment of a sentence of Maupassant's 'La Femme de Paul' (see Chapter 3) is meant to demonstrate; any translator of a longer fiction can intermittently, for the space of a sentence, or a paragraph, or a page, turn from 'straight' translation to something more experimental – when translation is intended tirelessly to explore and intensify the reading experience, there is no virtue in consistency of translational approach.