

Syr Gawayn and the Grene Knyȝt

Armitage 2007

1



Once the siege and the assault of Troy had ceased,
with the city a smoke-heap of cinders and ash,
Pe tulk þat þe trammes of tresoun þer wroȝt
was tried for his treason – the truest crime on earth.
Then noble Aeneas and his noble lords **highe kynde**,
went conquering abroad, laying claim to the crowns **bicome**
of the wealthiest kingdoms in the western world.

Mighty Romulus quickly careered towards Rome **wyfe**,
and conceived a city in magnificent style **biges vpon fyrist**,
which from then until now has been known by his name.

Ticius constructed townships in Tuscany **nes**,
and Langobard did likewise, building homes in Lombardy.
And further afield, over the Sea of France, **Brutus**
on Britain's broad hill-tops, Felix Brutus made **settez**

his stand.

And wonder, dread and war and wonder
have lingered in that land **drinne**,
where loss and love in turn blunder
have held the upper hand. **aynne**.

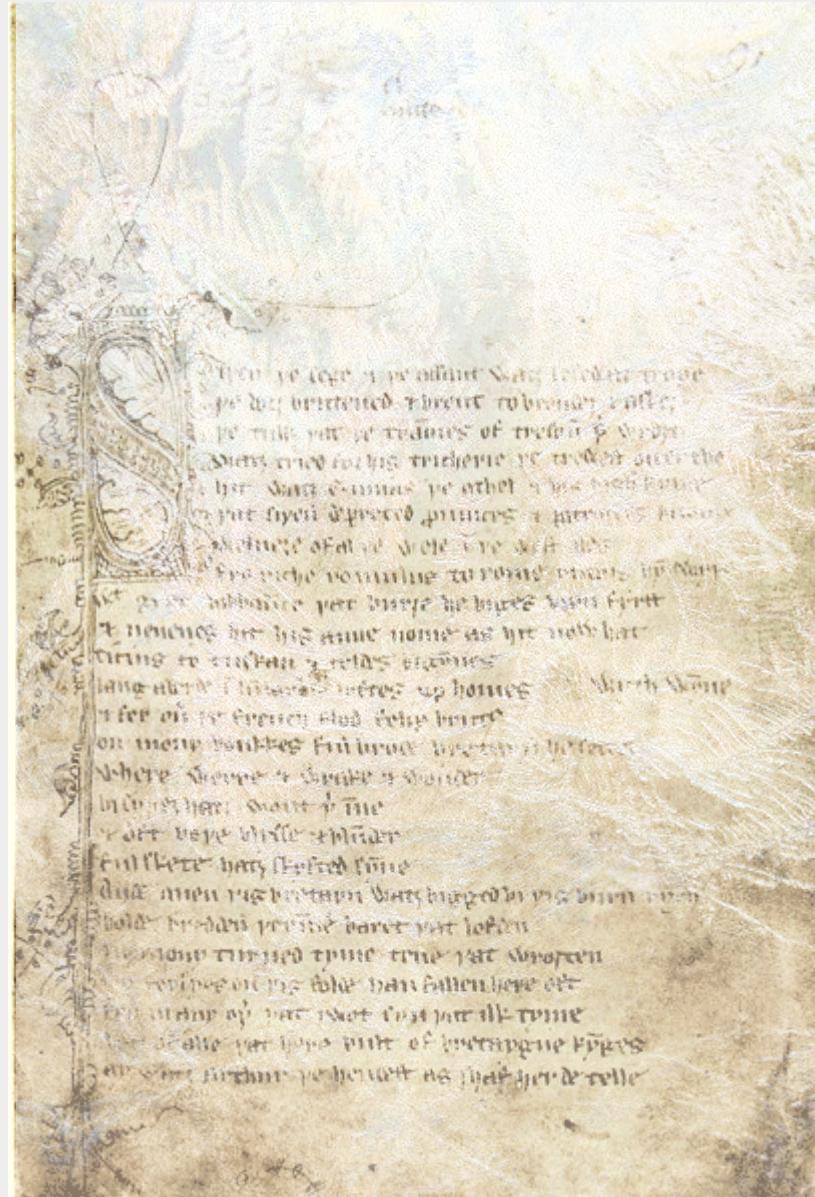


1. Qu'est-ce que la traduction transparente ?



To the untrained eye, it is as if the poem is lying beneath a thin coat of ice, tantalizingly near yet frustratingly blurred. To a contemporary poet, one interested in narrative and form, [...] the urge to blow a little warm breath across that layer of frosting eventually proved irresistible.

Simon Armitage, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. (Introduction). London. Faber & Faber 2007. vi-vii.



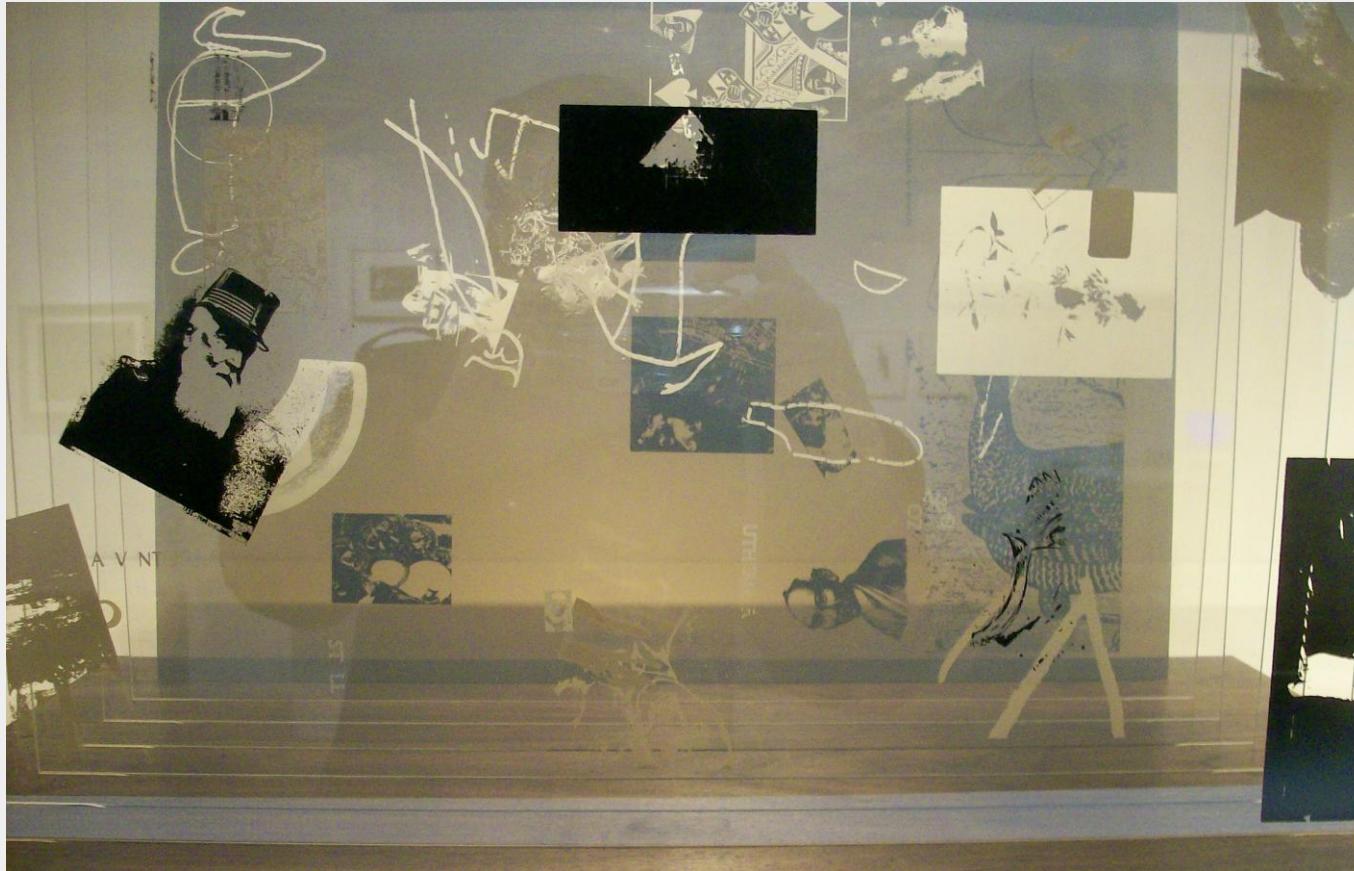
I see translation as the attempt to produce a text so transparent that it does not seem to be translated. A good translation is like a pane of glass. You only notice that it's there when there are little imperfections — scratches, bubbles. Ideally, there shouldn't be any.

Norman Shapiro, in Kratz, D. (1986) 'An Interview with Norman Shapiro', *Translation Review* 19, 27-8.

A translation is judged acceptable by most publishers, reviewers, and readers [...] when the absence of any linguistic or stylistic peculiarities makes it seem **transparent**, giving the appearance that it **reflects** [...] the essential meaning of the foreign text – the appearance, in other words, that the translation is not in fact a translation" (My emphases.)

Laurence Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility*. London. Routledge 1997. 1.

in(di)visible ?



I was the shadow of the waxwing slain
By the false azure in the windowpane
I was the smudge of ashen fluff—and I
Lived on, flew on, in the reflected sky,
And from the inside, too, I'd duplicate
Myself, my lamp, an apple on a plate:
Uncurtaining the night, I'd let dark glass
Hang all the furniture above the grass,
And how delightful when a fall of snow
Covered my glimpse of lawn and reached up so
As to make chair and bed exactly stand
Upon that snow, out in that crystal land!

Vladimir Nabokov (as John Shade).

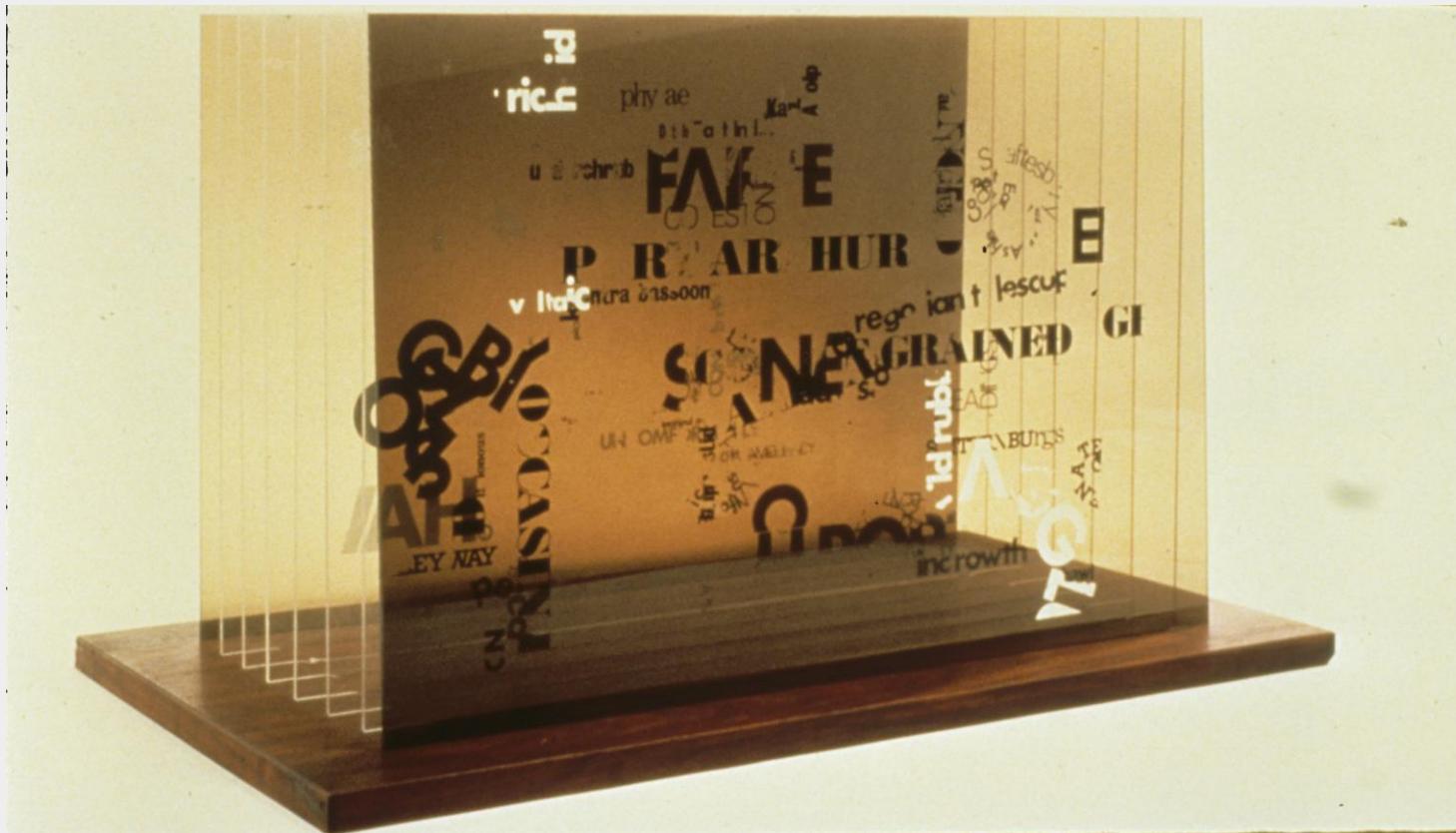
Pale Fire (1962)

C'était moi l'ombre du jaseur tué
Par l'azur trompeur de la vitre ;
C'était moi la tache de duvet cendré — et je
Survivais, poursuivais mon vol, dans le ciel réfléchi.
Et de l'intérieur, également, je savais reproduire
Mon visage, ma lampe, une pomme sur une assiette :
Dévoilant la nuit, je laissais la vitre obscure
Suspendre le mobilier au-dessus de l'herbe,
Et quelles délices quand une chute de neige
Couvrait ce bout de gazon, s'amoncelant assez
Pour que chaise et lit se tiennent exactement
Sur cette neige, là-bas sur cette terre de cristal !

Trad. Maurice Couturier. *Nabokov* (cahiers CISTRE 8).

Lausanne, Editions l'Age d'Homme, 1979.

2. Qu'est-ce que la traduction synoptique ?





WARNING! Do not allow the AC adapter to contact the skin or a soft surface, such as pillows or rugs or clothing, during operation.

تحذير! لا تدع محول التيار المتناوب يلامس الجلد أو أي سطح ناعم، مثل الوسائد أو قطع السجاجيد الصغيرة أو القماش، وذلك خلال التشغيل.



VAROVÁNÍ! Napájecí adaptér se během provozu nesmí dostat do kontaktu s kůží nebo měkkým povrchem, jako jsou polštáře, pokryvky nebo šaty.



ADVARSEL! Når vekselstrømsadapteren er i brug, må den ikke komme i kontakt med huden eller bløde overflader, som for eksempel puder, tæpper eller tøj.



WARNUNG! Vermeiden Sie während des Betriebs den Kontakt des Netzteils mit der Haut oder weichen Oberflächen wie Kissen, Teppichen oder Kleidung.



ADVERTENCIA! No permita que el adaptador de CA entre en contacto con la piel o con una superficie blanda, por ejemplo almohadas, alfombras o ropa, mientras esté en funcionamiento.



ΠΡΟΕΙΔΟΠΟΙΗΣΗ! Μην αφήνετε το τροφοδοτικό AC να έρχεται σε επαφή με το δέρμα σας ή με μαλακή επιφάνεια, όπως μαξιλάρια, χαλιά ή ρούχα, κατά τη διάρκεια της λειτουργίας.



AVERTISSEMENT! Veillez à ce que l'adaptateur secteur n'entre pas en contact avec la peau ou une surface en tissu doux, comme des oreillers, des tapis ou des vêtements, durant le fonctionnement.

Notice Hewlett-Packard.

Ainsi, pris du dégoût de l'homme à l'âme dure
Vautré dans le bonheur, où ses seuls appétits
Mangent, et qui s'entête à chercher cette ordure
Pour l'offrir à la femme allaitant ses petits,

24

Je fuis et je m'accroche à toutes les croisées
D'où l'on tourne l'épaule à la vie, et, béni,
Dans leur verre, lavé d'éternelles rosées,
Que dore le matin chaste de l'Infini

28

Je me mire et me vois angel! et je meurs, et j'aime
— Que la vitre soit l'art, soit la mysticité —
À renaître, portant mon rêve en diadème,
Au ciel antérieur où fleurit la Beauté!

32

Mais, hélas! Ici-bas est maître: sa hantise
Vient m'écoûter parfois jusqu'en cet abri sûr,
Et le vomissement impur de la Bêtise
Me force à me boucher le nez devant l'azur.

36

Est-il moyen, ô Moi qui connais l'amertume,
D'enfoncer le cristal par le monstre insulté
Et de m'enfuir, avec mes deux ailes sans plume
— Au risque de tomber pendant l'éternité?

40

So, seized by disgust for the man of obdurate soul
sprawled in happiness, where his appetites only
are fed, who persists in searching this filth
to offer it to the woman nursing his little ones,

I flee, and I cling to all cross-panes
where a man can show life the cold shoulder, and, blessed
in their glass, washed by eternal dews,
gilded by the chaste morning of the Infinite

in their mirror I see myself an angel! and I die, I love
— if the windowpane be art, or the mystical —
to be reborn, wearing my dream for a diadem,
in a prior sky where Beauty flourishes!

But alas! this world is master: its obsessive fear
comes even in this safe house to make me sick,
and the impure vomit of Stupidity
compels me to hold my nose before the blue.

Is there a means, o Self well-versed in bitterness,
to smash the crystal insulted by the monster
and to fly, with my two wings featherless
— at the risk of falling till the end of eternity?

SIRE GAUVAIN ET LE CHEVALIER VERT

PREMIÈRE PARTIE

I

QUAND le siège et l'assaut eurent cessé à Troie, [cendres,
que la ville forte eut été mise en pièces, et réduite en braises et
l'homme qui avait là tissé la trame de trahison
fut jugé pour sa félonie, la plus vraie qu'il y eût eu sur terre ;
Ce furent Enéas le gentil, et sa haute lignée,
qui ensuite conquirent des royaumes et devinrent maîtres
peu s'en faut de toutes les richesses des îles d'ouest.
Après que le grand Romulus vite eut gagné Rome
et tout d'abord bâti avec grande jactance la citadelle,
en la nommant de son propre nom, comme elle se nomme encore,
Ticius [se tourne] vers la Toscane et se met à bâtiir ;
Langobard en Lombardie dresse des demeures,
et au loin, par delà les flots français Felix Brutus
sur maintes vastes rives fonde la Bretagne
avec soulas,
là où guerre et ruine et prodiges
plus d'une fois ont élu séjour,
et où fortune souvent et infortune
vite depuis ont eu leur tour.

II

Et quand la Bretagne fut bâtie par ce baron puissant,
des hommes farouches y firent souche, qui aimèrent à batailler,
et qui mainte et mainte fois engendrèrent le malheur;
plus de prodiges se sont produits en cette terre

SYR GAWAYN AND THE GRENE KNY3T.

FYTTE THE FIRST

I.

SIPEN þe sege and þe assaut watz sesed at Troye,
þe borg brittened and brent to brondez and askez,
þe tulk þat þe trammes of tresoun þer wroȝt
Watz tried for his tricherie, þe trewest on erthe;
Hit watz Enrias þe athel, and his highe kynde,
þat siȝen depreced provinces, and patrounes bicome
Welneȝe of al þe wele in þe west iles.
Fro riche Romulus to Rome ricchis hym swyþe,
With gret bobbaunce þat burȝe he biges upon fyrist,
And nevenes hit his aune nome, as hit now hat;
Ticius [turnes] to Tuskan, and teldes bigynnes;
Langaberde in Lombardie lyftes up homes,
And fer over þe French flod Felix Brutus
On mony bonkkes ful brode Bretayn he settez
wyth wynne,
Where werre, and wrake, and wonder,
Bi siȝez hatz wont þerinne,
And oft boþe blysse and blunder
Ful skete hatz skyfted synne.

II.

Ande quen þis Bretayn watz bigged bi þis burn rych,
Bolde bredden þerinne, baret þat lofden,
In mony turned tyme tene þat wroȝten;
Mo ferlyes on þis folde han fallen here oft

CONVERSATION CAUSERIE

You're an (AUTUMN) sky BeauTifL, unc.l.o.u.ded ro-syhued
 But Sadness !sweLLS [in]me like h/e/a/v/Ing waVes
 WHICH asthey ebb a.W.a.y leaveon my SULLEN lips
 The Biting after taste of BITter Silt.

- Your hand glides: You're an autumn sky, bright and unclouded
 Vous étoffez le ciel d'automne, clair et rose,
 but sadness, even in me, like tonyued
 Mais la tristesse en moi même comme heaving waves
 which are long, laid waste, it's all a waste of time
 which are long, laid waste, it's all a waste of time
 For what it's looking for? in me, sunna le temps
 The sullen currents of my sullen lips
 is a place already

By others
 Your hand glides smoothly across my breathless
 Ta main se glisse en vain sur mon sein qui se pâme,
 to what I'm searching for. It's all a waste of time
 ce que je recherche n'est un lieu saccage
 for I'm fierce and the heart's already
 car l'affreux et la dent féroce de la femme.
 Give up the search: lay your hand now in form and laid to waste

Give up the search: lay your hand now in form and laid to waste
 Ne cherchez plus mon cœur; les bêtes l'ont mangé
 Give up the search my hearts long since

My heart's a
 Mon cœur est à launr plaisir flétris par la coûte;
 My heart's a perfume rankalked by the mob
 Mon cœur est à launr plaisir flétris par la coûte;
 Drunk so I'm led by these ones, y prend aux cheveux!
 Drunk so I'm led by these ones, y prend aux cheveux!
 - Un parfum nage autour de votre gorge nue!...
 - Un parfum nage autour de votre gorge nue!...
 A perfume dogs around your naked breasts
 each other's throats, and hair

A perfume
 Beauté du rideau des âmes, tu le yeux!
 (Avec tes yeux de feu, brillants comme des fêtes,
 Et tes yeux de feu, brillants comme des fêtes,
 Calcine ces lampbeaux qui ont épargnés les bêtes!
 To reinvigorate what's left of me after the dogs an done

Clive Scott, "Overwritten translation
 of Baudelaire's 'Causerie'" in:
*Literary Translation and the
 Rediscovery of Reading.*
 Cambridge, CUP 2013. 121.

Before turning to the specific issues arising out of ‘Causerie’, we might briefly outline overwriting’s more general enactment of translation. Most obviously, the TT overwrites the ST, masking it without obliterating it, not a palimpsest so much as a sedimentation of texts, each layer concealing, the better to reveal as a bedrock, the originating ST. Overwriting is a textual geology, writing temporal accumulation into the page, its strata making visible different time-scales and historical tempi. But, at the same time, and with equal urgency, the two-dimensionality of the page asserts itself. This two-dimensionality not only allows the eye to see as reversible the process we have just described; it also allows all the texts included in the overwriting to affirm a simultaneity of appearance and activity. Texts vie with each other, or engage in well-orchestrated polyphonic choruses, as if by spontaneous combustion. The page does indeed become the stage of translation on which are acted out the protagonistic relationships of ST and TTs.

Clive Scott, *Literary Translation and the Rediscovery of Reading*.
Cambridge, CUP 2013. 121-2.

CONVERSATION CAUSERIE

You're an (AUTUMN) sky BeauTifL, unc.l.o.u.ded ro-syhued
 But Sadness !sweLLS [in]me like h/e/a/v/Ing waVes
 WHICH asthey ebb a.W.a.y leaveon my SULLEN lips
 The Biting after taste of BITter Silt.

- Your hand glides: You're an autumn sky, bright and unclouded
 Vous étoffez le ciel d'automne, clair et rose,
 but sadness, even in me, like, sighing waves
 Mais la tristesse en moi même comme les vagues
 which are long, like it's all a waste of time
 qui sont longues, comme il n'y a pas de temps
 For what it's looking for? in the sullen, sunnys, yellow lips
 The sullen, curvants, sunnys, yellow lips
 is a place already

By others laid to waste
 Your hand glides smoothly across my breathless
 Ta main se glisse en vain sur mon sein qui se pâme,
 to where the flesh is torn - it's all a waste of time
 où la chair est déchirée et la dent féroce de la femme.
 Give up the search: lay your hand now in form and laid to waste

Give up the search: lay your hand now in form and laid to waste
 Ne cherchez plus mon cœur; les bêtes l'ont mangé
 Give up the search my hearts long since

My heart's a mob, drink soda
 Mon cœur est un plaisir rancunier par la cohue;
 Drank it so I'm broken by the mob
 Drank it so I'm broken by the mob
 each other's throats, and hair
 - Un parfum nage autour de votre gorge nue!...
 A perfume drifts around your naked breasts
 throats, and hair

A perfume
 Beauté du tableau des âmes, tu le veux!
 (Avec tes yeux de feu, brillants comme des fêtes,
 Et tes yeux de feu, brillants comme des fêtes,
 calcine ces flambbeaux qui ont épargné les bêtes!
 To reinvigorate what's left of me after the dogs an done

Clive Scott, "Overwritten translation
 of Baudelaire's 'Causerie'" in:
*Literary Translation and the
 Rediscovery of Reading.*
 Cambridge, CUP 2013. 121.

3. Qu'est-ce que le *Synoptic Translation Prototype* ?

sinon :

Comment animer une troisième dimension textuelle ?

The screenshot shows a digital interface for a medieval text. At the top left is a green square containing the letters 'STP'. To its right is the title 'Syr Gawayn and the Grene Knyȝt'. Below the title is a dropdown menu showing 'Armitage 2007' with a downward arrow. To the right of the menu are three navigation icons: a left arrow, a large number '1', and a right arrow. The main text area contains two columns of text. The left column is in Middle English, and the right column is in Modern English. The text discusses the fall of Troy and the subsequent actions of various heroes like Aeneas and Romulus.

Once the siege and the assault of Troy had ceased,
with the city a smoke-heap of cinders and ash,
Pe tulk þat þe trammes of tresoun þer wroȝt
was tried for his treason – the truest crime on earth.
Then noble Aeneas and his noble lords highe kynde,
went conquering abroad, laying claim to the crowns biconne
of the wealthiest kingdoms in the western world.
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and conceived a city in magnificent style biges vpon fyrst,
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