



vu, lu, entendu

Ce coin de « détente » est ouvert aux lecteurs. Nous y accueillerons tout élément d'information inattendu, saugrenu ou simplement distrayant.

Any unexpected, silly or simply amusing item will be of interest to us: readers are invited to contribute.

Un triomphe inattendu du français aux États-Unis

Vu le 7 août 1996, à l'aéroport de San Francisco, face à la porte d'embarquement 58-59, dans le cadre d'une exposition artisanale de vases et cruches de verre imités de l'antiquité romaine, exposition très officiellement organisée par "The San Francisco Airports Commission" et intitulée "Historic Glass".

Sur quatre présentoirs, un petit texte en anglais, français, italien et espagnol expliquant le but et l'esprit de l'exposition. Voici le texte français très exactement retranscrit :

« Pendant le Médiéval Temps beaucoup de pièces de verres Romanian était detèrrer de Tombe et dans les Ruines a l'Europe. Comme Les nouveaux villes était construit aux vieux structures, cès pieces des ancient verre devenue les models pour les Artisan de verre du prochaine siècle.

Les Vaisseau a l'Exposition ici sont des repliqué des produits que fait pendant les ages moyenne. La formulaire de ça est une grande influence des produits de travailles Romanian. »

Il s'agit, selon toute probabilité, d'un texte traduit de l'original anglais – mais par qui ? Par un logiciel de traduction, sans doute, sinon il n'y a plus qu'à désespérer de l'Amérique ! Reste que quelqu'un (un étudiant de Stanford ou de Berkeley ?) a dû relire ce morceau de bravoure informatique. Si tel était le cas, ce rare honneur fait à la langue française serait encore plus désespérant ! ■

The wisdom of tombs

A gravestone inscription reportedly found in old Saint Paul's Church, Baltimore. Dated 1692:

“Go placidly amid the noise & haste, & remember what peace there may be in silence. As far as possible without surrender, be on good terms with all persons. Speak your truth quietly & clearly; and listen to others, even the dull & ignorant; they too have their story. Avoid loud & aggressive persons, they are vexations to the spirit. If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain & bitter; for always there will be greater & lesser persons than yourself. Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans. Keep interested in your own career, however humble; it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time. Exercise caution in your business affairs; for the world is full of trickery. But let this not blind you to what virtue there is; many persons strive for high ideals; and everywhere life is full of heroism. Be yourself. Especially, do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about love; for in the face of all aridity & disenchantment it is perennial as the grass. Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth. Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune. But do not distress yourself with imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue & loneliness. Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself. You are a child of the universe, no less than the trees & stars; you have a right to be here. And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should. Therefore be at peace with God, whatever you conceive Him to be; and whatever your labors & aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life keep peace with your soul. With all its sham, drudgery & broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world. Be careful. Strive to be happy.”

Some say this is fake. It may or may not be so. Any useful information will be welcome. ■

Only in California...

A passage from David O. Sacks & Peter A. Thiel, *The Diversity Myth: "Multiculturalism" and the Politics of Intolerance at Stanford* (Oakland, CA.: The Independent Institute, 1995) 101-102:

"The [Stanford] university is also willing to tolerate excesses by members of the homosexual community that would never be tolerated in any other group. In men's bathrooms throughout the campus, but particularly in libraries and the history department, holes have been drilled between the walls of toilet stalls to facilitate 'anonymous bathroom sex.' [...] Students who use these bathrooms are often solicited for homosexual sex. David Bianco, a homosexual activist well-known on campus, described one such encounter in a 1990 Stanford Daily article:

'Doug' was barely a teenager when he saw the man in the next bathroom stall tap his foot. Curious, he tapped his own foot back, and before he knew it, the man had gotten on his knees and was caressing Doug's leg [...] As Doug grew older, anonymous bathroom sex became an addiction [...] Typically Doug and the other man would engage in mutual masturbation and occasionally oral sex underneath the stall.

Apparently unwilling to anger members of the homosexual community, the university has failed to reseal 'glory holes' in a number of the campus's public bathrooms, despite the discomforting effect on people seeking to use toilets for more prosaic purposes." ■