

## Musings...

Clare Keller

It's that time of the year again when translators batten down the hatches and make ready for the long haul: the annual reports have arrived. Unlike many

### Higher education?

With the British Government setting the seemingly impossible target of providing higher education to over ninety percent of the population, standards are bound British companies, corporate Switzerland seems to have an aversion to ending its financial year at any time other than 31 December, which places a considerable strain on the rather limited number of freelance translators specialised in the fields of business and finance. Compounding the problem are the delays that accumulate upstream, and which become the translator's problem as things move inexorably towards the printing deadline.

\*\*\*

*Hieronymus* has gradually changed its look over the past couple of years, and we intend to continue to add improvements wherever possible. Beginning with this first volume of 2003, we will be printing the volume number and year on the spine to make it easier to locate individual issues on a library shelf. Several former pillars of the school curriculum have had their course time and content cut to the bone. One of the worst casualties has been English, where the pass level seems to consist of writing one's name and class on the examination paper without a spelling mistake. As for the American education system, it has long been divided into the "haves" and "have-nots", with the latter speaking and writing little more than Pidgin English.

The following are supposedly true answers given by children in religious education exams in England. The English may not be perfect, but then what does it matter if you get the gist...?

- The Egyptians were all drowned in the dessert.
- The seventh commandment is thou shalt not admit adultery.
- Then Joshua led the Hebrews in the battle of Geritol.
- David was a Hebrew king skilled at playing the liar.
- Solomon, one of David's sons, had 300 wives and 700 porcupines.
- Jesus was born because Mary had an immaculate contraption.
- Jesus enunciated the Golden Rule, which says to do one to others before they do one to you.
- The epistles were the wives of the apostles.
- St. Paul cavorted to Christianity. He preached holy acrimony, which is another name for marriage.
- Moses went up on Mount Cyanide to get the Ten Commandments.
- Most religions teach us to have only one spouse. This is called monotony.

...And if the gist becomes a little obscure, can we simply call it "creative English"? These are the efforts of American history students.

Ancient Egypt was inhabited by mummies and they all wrote in hydraulics. They lived in the Sarah Dessert. The climate of the Sarah is such that all the inhabitants have to live elsewhere.

The Greeks were a highly sculptured people, and without them we wouldn't have history. The Greeks also had myths. A myth is a female moth.

Socrates was a famous Greek teacher who went around giving people advice. They killed him. Socrates died from an overdose of wedlock. After his death, his career suffered a dramatic decline.

Julius Caesar extinguished himself on the battlefields of Gaul. The Ides of March murdered him because they thought he was going to be made king. Dying, he gasped out: "Tee hee, Brutus."

Joan of Arc was burnt to a steak and was canonized by Bernard Shaw.

It was an age of great inventions and discoveries. Gutenberg invented removable type and the Bible. Another important invention was the circulation of blood. Sir Walter Raleigh is a historical figure because he invented cigarettes and started smoking. Sir Francis Drake circumcised the world with a 100-foot clipper.

The greatest writer of the Renaissance was William Shakespeare. He was born in the year 1564, supposedly on his birthday. He never made much money and is famous only because of his plays. He wrote tragedies, comedies, and hysterectomies, all in Islamic pentameters. Romeo and Juliet are an example of a heroic couple. Romeo's last wish was to be laid by Juliet.

[My thanks to David Pulman and Brian Cover]

## **Logics**

A boat docked in a tiny Mexican village. An American tourist complimented the Mexican fisherman on the quality of his fish and asked how long it took him to catch them. "Not very long" answered the Mexican.

"But then, why didn't you stay out longer and catch more?" asked the American. The Mexican explained that his small catch was sufficient to meet his needs and those of his family.

The American asked "But what do you do with the rest of your time?" "I sleep late, fish a little, play with my children and take a siesta with my wife. In the evenings, I go to the village to see my friends, have some tequila, play the guitar and sing a few songs. I have a full life."

The American interrupted, "I have a MBA from Harvard and I can help you. You should start by fishing longer every day. You can then sell the extra fish you catch. With the extra revenue, you can buy a bigger boat. With the extra money the larger boat will bring, you can buy a second one and a third one, and so on until you have an entire fleet of trawlers. Instead of selling your fish to a middleman, you can negotiate directly with the processing plants and maybe even open your own plant. You can then leave this little village and move to Mexico City, Los Angeles or even New York City! From there you can direct your huge enterprise."

"How long would this take?" asked the Mexican. "Twenty, perhaps twenty-five years" replied the American.

"And after that?" asked the Mexican. "Afterwards? That's when it gets really interesting." answered the American, laughing. "When your business gets really big, you can start selling stocks and make millions!"

"Millions?" exclaimed the Mexican. "And after that?" "After that, you'll be able to retire in a tiny village near the coast, sleep late, play with your grand-children, catch a few fish, take a siesta with your wife, and spend your evenings drinking and playing the guitar with your friends!

### **Enigma**

I am more powerful than God.  
I am more terrible than the devil.  
The poor have me.  
The rich lack me.  
And if you eat me, you'll die.  
Who am I?

Answer in H2/03!

### **AGM**

The Annual General Meeting will be held in Zurich this year, on **24 May 2003**. As usual, the documents will be sent to you in due course, and will be posted on the website [www.astti.ch](http://www.astti.ch).