

## EDITORIAL

This issue of the journal continues to develop themes and approaches outlined in previous issues of the journal. The four articles here focus on the cultural aspects of language learning in the wider Asian context. Two of the articles focus in one way or another on the relationship of Iran to the Asian world, while another article examines the problems faced by teachers who wish to include literature in their English language courses. The other article, more theoretical, looks at a new way of conceptualizing the students' cultural experiences in studying English in non-native speaking contexts...in Asian rather than Western universities.

There is also the recurrent theme of the ways we are censored or limited in what we write or study. These themes are hinted at in the article that responds to the novel *Reading Lolita in Tehran*. The link between the Nabokov book is further sounded in the review of one of the Australian novels reviewed here that explores the theme of under-age sexuality. The excerpt from an autobiographical account of writer's exile from Burma further sounds the theme of political repression in the Asian context. A different form of exile is explored in the other Australian novel reviewed here that is set in Thatcher's London back in the 1980s.

Another feature of this issue of the journal is the inclusion of several poems from two poets. This marks a return to older issues of the journal whereby poets living and working in Bangkok were published in the journal. Part of the journal's remit is to foster intercultural creative exchanges between people from across the world who are committed to living, working and creating in the Asian world.

How this world is being reshaped may need to be understood in new ways once we can get past the restrictions imposed on us by the old "cultural studies' paradigms that seem mired in postcolonial experience. To this end, the other book reviewed in this issue of the journal may turn out to be a new road for us to travel as we remythologise our roles that seem more commensurate to life in an Asian country than do the ways of seeing envisaged in the old and compromised ideologies of the dominant critical trends and critical practices. In this way, we may regain much of the lost

power of the humanities which have been embarrassed and sidelined in our universities over recent years.

If we in the humanities are seriously committed to resisting the forces that alienate us from the central places we used to occupy in the university, we need to rethink the ways we do things...and that rethink must include the ways we collaborate with each other in meaningful projects that relink us back to the real world that we have exiled ourselves from in recent years by following the petty narratives of a de-politicised postmodernism

**Stephen Conlon**

Editor