

PAULA BURNETT

Introduction

This varied issue completes our inaugural year and the first volume of *EnterText*. We wish to thank everyone, near and far, who has contributed to it to date—all those who have submitted their work, whether or not it has appeared, and all those who have participated in the peer-review process. This is also our first edition to be published since the events of 11 September, and the opening poems are placed where they are as our way of marking those losses, and the questions they pose for us all. The poet Chris Moylan had emailed some of his work to me before 11 September but I did not open that mail until just after, and was greatly moved by the added elegiac eloquence the first poem in particular acquired in its fresh historical moment. It is an important reminder that meanings are always on the move, and contingent, and that juxtapositions, sometimes random ones, can produce real significance. Likewise, the inclusion in this edition of some thoughts and writings from the Egyptian novelist Ahdaf Soueif was in train well before 11 September, but it too has acquired something extra. The presentation here of the extract from her latest novel, not only in the English in which it was written but also in Arabic translation, is of symbolic importance at this point of history, as well as, we hope, of lasting interest.

One of the tasks of history as an academic discipline could be expressed as trying to give an account of what went wrong. Heather Nunn's article on the way J. G. Ballard uses fiction to anatomise the psychology of dysfunction in Thatcherite Britain engages imaginatively and productively with some urgent questions about the politics

Andy Weaver in their different poetic idioms raise a number of searching questions around thought, language, and experience, while Davis Schneiderman's story is a witty postmodern excursus into the idea of language as power, in which the unfolding strangeness yet surreal logic of the story's language distances the reader, to unsettling effect. This is a sci-fi dystopian world like no other. Robert Miltner's poems are also simultaneously ludic and serious, though in a more painterly way. Above all, each of these works is a delight, with a relish of language and of the human condition, in all its contradictions and imperfections.

Our previous issue marked the designation of 2001 as Year of Languages. This issue develops that commitment by including a stimulating range of work in and about translation. We have some sharp and sparkling poems from a Romanian poet and dramatist, Saviana Stănescu, currently a Fulbright scholar in the USA, in their original Romanian and in English translation. We also have some poems from the Arctic region, where the implications of a

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The homes of Conrad's childhood and the places where he stayed on his visit at the outbreak of World War I are pictured, as well as some of the public places, particularly in Cracow, where he lived and moved. It gives an insight into the Polish roots of a writer who chose his fourth or fifth language, English, as the medium for his aesthetic expression.

Perhaps others would like to develop the genre of the cultural "tour" in words and pictures. The editor

for our Listings. As already mentioned, we cherish the hope that our Forum will spring into life in the forthcoming months. We have some excellent things in the pipeline already for the coming editions—though we need more—and are planning ah