

# Only sixteen years...

Responses to articles in *ET* typically reach me three months after the relevant issue comes out. Each issue contains around ten contributions, and presents a wide and shifting range of topics, backgrounds, styles, perspectives, lengths, and densities of expression. In addition, we know from experience that, while some contributors approach *ET* because for them it is a comfortable and suitable vehicle, others do so because they see it as the only outlet available for what they have to say.

At the same time, interwoven with the range, the freedom, and the liberal humanism, *ET* has a necessary stake in that intimidating word 'rigour' – defined by the *New Oxford Dictionary of English* (1998) as 'the quality of being extremely thorough, exhaustive, or accurate... severity and strictness', and by *The ENCARTA World English Dictionary* (1999) as 'lack of tolerance... use of demanding standards'. While we seek to sustain the right balance between open-minded reach and disciplinary rigour, the concept of 'world English' remains significant in terms of both 'the humanities' of academia and the 'human interest' of journalism. One particular contribution to this issue belongs very much in both of these categories.

Sometimes, a response to a contribution in *ET* comes so swiftly that it appears in the next issue. Sometimes a discussion covers several years. However, by and large, responses to an article are rarely delayed beyond a year. But there are exceptions – and some of them are seriously exceptional. Recently, we received from China an article (in this issue) responding to a piece published some *sixteen* years ago in *ET*12 (Oct 87). That article, by Elizabeth-Anne Malischewski in Canada, was (en)titled '*Kai Fang*: Loan words to the Middle Kingdom', in which she discussed English words adopted into Chinese, and encountered when she was working in the PRC.

A 16-year gestation period. Yet Hongyuan Wang's 'Loans from the Middle Kingdom revisited' is most welcome, his information a valued addition to our series on English, China, China English, and Chinglish, and to Malischewski's original piece. This flow of information and comment from the PRC complements another *ET* tradition sustained in this issue: providing data on English in shop signs around the globe. In this issue, it is sightings by Stewart and Fawcett in Portugal.

Tom McArthur

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