

# FOREWORD

The current issue of *Explorations* features two peer-reviewed articles which discuss two different but equally topical issues of French-Australian interest, as well as a variety of notes and book reviews.

Fabrice Dauchez and Jacqueline Dutton investigate the use and significance of stereotypes in David Fauquemberg's *Nullarbor*. Dauchez and Dutton situate this recently published book in the tradition of French travel writing about the antipodes and examine how Fauquemberg negotiates the conflicting tendencies between exotic stereotypes on the one hand and authentic, original observation and narration on the other in his representations of Australia and its people.

Chloe Patton explores the issue of the religiosity of young Muslim women in Western societies and their capacity to make free and autonomous choices. The article discusses *Hijab and the Republic: Uncovering the French Headscarf* by Australian feminist Bronwyn Winter. Placing Winter's book in the context of recent scholarship on the topic, particularly of anthropological studies on the so-called 'new piety', Patton argues that feminist scholars need to pay closer attention to the agency of young women who wear the hijab.

In the 'Notes and Documents' section we have three very different contributions. William Land, President of the Friends of the Laperouse Museum Association, argues that the recent NSW government publication *Challenges in the Landscape* overlooks the role played by the French government, the French-Australian business and artistic community and the Laperouse Association for the Australian Bicentenary in the creation of the Lapérouse Museum in Sydney. Laurence Moreux gives an account of a recent meeting organised by the 'LC Salons Association' in Sydney where the language researcher Kerry Mullan and the author of *Almost French* Sarah Turnbull led a discussion on the cultural differences between Australian and French ways of communicating. Lia Hills, the translator of Marie Darrieussecq's latest novel, writes about the French writer's participation in the 2009 Melbourne Writers' Festival. The book review section of this issue is particularly abundant: it contains no less than six reviews as well as two book notes and an informative list of recent French-Australian publications.

We are also pleased to announce that the creation of an online version of *Explorations* under the auspices of the University of Melbourne is well under way. The web address will be made available to subscribers of *Explorations* shortly.

J.V.