

THE AUSTRALIAN JOURNAL OF FRENCH STUDIES: LOOKING FORWARD¹

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Introduction

Readers of *Explorations* will be interested to know that the *Australian Journal of French Studies* has entered into an agreement to collaborate with Liverpool University Press in the UK (LUP).

See: <http://www.liverpooluniversitypress.co.uk/> and
<http://arts.monash.edu.au/french/ajfs/> (Subscriptions).

The first number to be published under this agreement appeared in January 2012. I would like to provide some background information on this development and to comment on its anticipated benefits.

I had been approached by several UK-based publishers of journals before being contacted by LUP in April 2010, but felt that it would be prudent, for the time being, to maintain our well established cottage industry rather than enter into an arrangement that would entail a substantial increase in our relatively modest subscription rates. The approach from LUP was different. The Managing Director, Anthony Cond, stressed LUP's academic ambitions—'to be the leading international publisher in French Studies'—and willingness to negotiate an agreement acceptable to both parties.

LUP is the UK's third oldest university press after Oxford and Cambridge, and has grown rapidly during the past decade. Many colleagues will be aware that LUP has made very good progress towards achieving its academic objectives, through its distinguished Contemporary French and Francophone Cultures monograph series, and by securing agreements to publish a number of high profile French Studies journals (for example, *Contemporary French Civilization*, edited by Denis Provencher following the untimely death of Larry Schehr; an annual for the UK-based Society for Francophone Postcolonial Studies; a new journal in collaboration with Andrew Hussey and

¹ This note by the Editor of *AJFS* is based on a text originally published in the on-line newsletter *oz-french*.

the University of London Institute in Paris, titled *Franco sphères*). LUP has a very extensive web of international connections and routes to markets, and has invested heavily in a sophisticated journals infrastructure.

The agreement

In consultation with the *AJFS* editorial board, I proceeded to negotiate a draft agreement. The board unanimously and enthusiastically approved the agreement in November 2010. The main points of the agreement are as follows: The journal remains the property of Monash University; the editor and the editorial board remain exclusively responsible for the journal's content and editorial policy; the editor remains responsible for proofs/copyediting; the format and appearance of the journal are unchanged.

LUP is responsible for printing and distribution, maintaining subscriptions, and marketing. The journal will thus no longer pay for printing (c. \$20,000 p.a.) and payment to the editorial assistant (hitherto responsible for subscriptions and distribution) will be reduced (from c. \$4,000 to c. \$1,500). Payment for layout (c. \$3,600 p.a.) will continue.

Subscription rates have remained virtually unchanged (libraries: £100 p.a. for three issues; special rates for Australia/NZ). There will be no increase to rates before 2016. All subscribers have access to the online edition of the journal.

The journal will receive 50% of subscriptions income and 25% of all other income (online publication downloading and viewing fees, content licensing, paid advertising, copyright permission fees).

Rationale

The rationale for acceptance of the agreement was naturally reflected in the comments of editorial board members. For example: 'This is a brilliant move, and is absolutely right for any journal that is looking for global impact!' 'There doesn't seem these days to be any point whatever in continuing to try to go it alone—this notwithstanding *AJFS*'s constantly high academic reputation in the past. An Australian-British link, with the extra marketing and academic strength accruing, seems very indicated.' 'Collaboration with LUP should provide both technical and marketing support which will be extremely valuable

in the challenging years to come, and I am strongly in favour of the excellent agreement you have negotiated with them.'

Conclusion

'Internationalisation' and technological progress have changed the business of academic journal publishing immeasurably, indeed exponentially, over the last decade. *AJFS* should exploit those changes, rather than being left behind in its cottage. The agreement (which will be reviewed in 2015) represents a very promising basis for expansion of *AJFS* and enhancement of its already high reputation. I hope to be in a position before too long to discuss with colleagues possible uses of increased revenue. For example, longer-than-usual special numbers could form the basis of, or be published subsequently as, books. This possibility could be linked to workshops/mini-conferences with distinguished invited speakers. This would not only strengthen the journal but would also enhance the standing of Australian French Studies in the world.

Please support *AJFS* by subscribing and by encouraging others to subscribe:

http://www.liverpooluniversitypress.co.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=43&catid=8&Itemid=21

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