



**ISFAR Symposium 2023
13-14 April**

New Perspectives in French-Australian Studies

You are warmly invited to attend the 2023 biennial ISFAR Symposium, to be held online on Thursday 13 (5pm-8.15pmAEST) and Friday 14 April (1pm-7pm AEST). Some sessions will be held in the early evening in order to include our French colleagues. Attendance is free. For members and attendees living in Melbourne, a dinner will be held on Friday 14, details to come.

Keynote sessions include Professor Matthew Graves (Aix-Marseille University) on *Le Géographe Revisited: Unofficial Diplomacy in Post-Federation French-Australian Relations*

The role of learned societies, la Société de Géographie in particular, in fostering "soft diplomacy" will be illustrated through the Fleurieu missions undertaken in the wake of Federation and the Entente Cordiale "on matters of geographical interest to Australia".

And Nic Maclellan on *Silenced Voices in the Indo-Pacific*

Even as politicians in Paris and Canberra strengthen the Indo-Pacific strategic partnership, Indigenous voices are often missing in the debate on France-Australia relations in Oceania. In this presentation, journalist, author and researcher Nic Maclellan will reflect on Pacific perspectives in the age of AUKUS.

The Symposium includes sessions on a wide range of French-Australian topics: the representation of Indigenous Australians in French children's books; sport; socio-cultural political misunderstandings; families and individuals who acted as "cultural brokers" between the two nations; the influence of French cuisine and much more.

For more information: alexis.bergantz@rmit.edu.au;
elizabeth.rechniewski@sydney.edu.au

Eventbrite link for registration:

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/new-perspectives-in-french-australian-studies-tickets-563725808067>

Programme

Thursday 13 April. 5pm-8.15pm (AEST)

5pm. Welcome by the President; Acknowledgement of Country; Programme; Announcement of inaugural Colin Nettelbeck award.

5.15-6.15pm. **Keynote 1**

Le Géographe Revisited: Unofficial Diplomacy in Post-Federation French-Australian Relations

Matthew Graves

Chair: Robert Aldrich

6.15-6.30 Break

6.30-7.15pm

The Emergence and Acceptance of Provençal Cuisine in the Nineteenth Century

Barbara Santich

Chair: Kerry Mullan

7.15-8.15pm

Representations of Indigenous Australians in French Children's Books

Vanessa Castejon

Alice Duncan

Chair: Françoise Grauby

Friday 14 April. 1pm-7pm (AEST)

1-2pm

Reflections on AUKUS and its Aftermath

French-Australian Relations: *Une Entente Glaciale* Revisited

Kerry Mullan

Panel discussion

Chair: Liz Rechniewski

2-3pm

The Role of "Cultural Brokers"

**Before Lady Kerr: Anne Robson and the Rise of Simultaneous Interpreting
in the Asia-Pacific, 1940s-1975**

Alexis Bergantz

**A Case Study in Australia's French Connection: The Huybers and Loureiro
Families**

Paul Kiem

3-15-3.30pm Break

3.30-4pm

On Sport

Cultural Inversions: Footy in France

Stephen Alomes

4-4.30pm

Explorations

In Search of Leschenault and the Lost Manuscript of his Voyage to Australia

Paul Gibbard

Chair: Margaret Sankey

4.30-5.00pm

Civilising the Pacific in Louise Michel's "Kanak play"

Liz Rechniewski

Chair: Briony Neilson

5.00-5.30pm

**Making History, Making the Australian French Speaking Subject: Marie
Niau's *Souvenirs d'une Parisienne aux antipodes***

Sonia Wilson

Chair: Alexis Bergantz

5.30-5.45 break

5.45-6.45pm **Keynote 2**

Silenced Voices in the Indo-Pacific

Nic Maclellan

Chair: Alexis Bergantz

7.30pm Dinner in Melbourne

Abstracts

Keynote 1

***Le Géographe* Revisited: Unofficial Diplomacy in Post-Federation French-Australian Relations**

Matthew Graves

The role of learned societies in international relations has long been acknowledged by historians of diplomacy, while the agency of non-state actors in general, and of scientific institutions in particular, has attracted closer attention since the “cultural turn” of the 1990s and the emphasis placed by critical geographers in recent years on the material and personal conditions of diplomatic activity. The Fleurieu missions undertaken in the wake of Federation and the Entente Cordiale “on matters of geographical interest to Australia” were inspired by the International Geographical Congress, backed by the Société de Géographie and hosted by the Royal Geographical Society of Australasia. Part of a wider Asia-Pacific initiative that encompassed New Zealand and Japan, they combined personal, scientific and public diplomacy in a concerted effort to persuade state and Commonwealth authorities to amend the charts of Australia and bestow the names given by the French navigators to otherwise “unnamed” features of coastal toponymy, albeit with mixed results. The present paper draws on archival research for a forthcoming book about the unofficial diplomacy of Alphonse de Fleurieu and his contemporaries to argue that it set a template for diplomatic exchange – of media, objects and practices – which would influence later missions and is, to a degree, still extant in French-Australian relations.

Matthew Graves is Professor of Contemporary British History and Commonwealth Studies at Aix-Marseille University, a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, and Research Associate of the Australian Prime Minister’s Centre. His research interests lie at the crossroads of political history and critical geography. He has published widely on issues of space, memory and power in the 20th -21st century British and Australian polities, including *Geographies of Identity* (co-ed., *Portal*, UTS ePress, vol 12, n°1, 2015) and *Histories of Space, Spaces of History* (co-ed., *E-rea*, 14.2 2017), with a particular focus on the role of imaginative geographies in the formation and recomposition of postcolonial societies.

Keynote 2

Silenced Voices in the Indo-Pacific

Nic Maclellan

President Emmanuel Macron and Prime Minister Anthony Albanese have moved rapidly to rebuild France-Australia relations in the Indo-Pacific region, ruptured by the September 2021 Australia - United Kingdom - United States (AUKUS) agreement.

This rapprochement comes as Australia plans a referendum on an Indigenous Voice to Parliament, Foreign Minister Penny Wong has called for First Nations' perspectives to inform foreign policy, and independence movements in New Caledonia and French Polynesia seek a new political status to end French colonial administration.

Even as politicians in Paris and Canberra strengthen the Indo-Pacific strategic partnership, Indigenous voices are often missing in the debate on France-Australia relations in Oceania. In this presentation, journalist, author and researcher Nic Maclellan will reflect on Pacific perspectives in the age of AUKUS.

Nic Maclellan is a correspondent for *Islands Business* magazine (Fiji) and has published widely on French policy in the Pacific islands. He is co-author of *La France dans le Pacifique — de Bougainville à Moruroa* (Editions La Découverte, Paris) and *After Moruroa— France in the South Pacific* (Ocean Press, New York and Melbourne). He was awarded the 2015 “Outstanding Contribution to the Sector” award by the Australian Council for International Development and the Walkley Foundation’s 2020 Sean Dorney Grant for Pacific Journalism. His latest book *Grappling with the Bomb* (ANU Press, Canberra) was shortlisted for the EPAA “Scholarly Book of the Year.”

Cultural Inversions: Footy in France

Stephen Alomes

Australians have always underestimated the sophistication and the export of their cultural forms. In parallel many students of France and Australia are aware of French cultural importations to Australia, but not the reverse. In a third related pattern, enthusiasts for Australian Football, the oldest codified form of football (1858), usually have no awareness of the approximately 100,000 players around the world, assuming that the game is predominantly played by expats— in fact a miniscule minority, even though missionaries for the footy gospel.

In France the game is entering its third decade under the Commission Nationale de Football Australien (CNFA), even though the first games were played in 1916, and others in the 1990s. Reflecting the east coast journeys of young French travellers, unusual team names can appear such as the Montpellier Firesharks (cf the Berlin Crocodiles) but also traditional French and Australian names, the Paris Cockerels and the Bordeaux Bombers.

This analysis explores the patterns, the fusions of French and Australian cultural forms, and the ever changing story.

Dr Stephen Alomes is Adjunct Associate Professor at RMIT University. He is the author of *Australian Football The People's Game 1958-2058*, Walla Walla Press, 2012, 2017. He played for 'Australia' against the Japan Samurais in the Sugadaira Cup in June 2001 and umpired a practice match in Helsinki in 2008. Recent publications include Stephen Alomes, Robert Mezyk and Sang-Chul Park, eds. *The European Union—New leaderships and new agendas*, Connor Court, Redland Bay, 2021; *Our Pandemic Zeitgeist*, Ginninderra Press, Port Adelaide, 2020, *Selective Ironies*, Ginninderra Press, Port Adelaide, 2020.

Before Lady Kerr: Anne Robson and the Rise of Simultaneous Interpreting in the Asia-Pacific, 1940s–1975

Alexis Bergantz

Before Anne Robson married Sir John Kerr and became embroiled in the controversy of the Whitlam dismissal, she had an international career spanning some thirty years as a French–English simultaneous interpreter and interpreting service consultant. She gained her first experience at the South Seas Conference in 1947 and became the first and only Australian elected to the International

Association of Conference Interpreters until she retired from the profession in 1975 when she became Lady Kerr. Based on her memoirs, newspaper reports and interviews, this talk considers Anne Kerr's relationship with France and the French language from her student days in the 1930s at the University of Sydney, her life in Paris and her career working for various UN bodies. Her life and career, overshadowed by John Kerr's legacy, speak to the professionalisation of simultaneous interpreting and of the development of French-Australian relations in the Asia-Pacific in the second half of the twentieth century.

Alexis Bergantz is a Senior Lecturer in Global & Language Studies at RMIT University. His research focuses on Franco-Australian history, the French Pacific and New Caledonia. His first book, *French Connection: Australia's Cosmopolitan Ambitions* (NewSouth, 2021) won the 2022 NSW Premier's Australian History Award.

Exploring Cross-Cultural Representations: French Children's Literature and Australian Indigenous Culture

Vanessa Castejon and Alice Duncan

Vanessa will be presenting in French, Alice in English.

This study analyses the impact of French children's literature on the representation of Indigenous Australians and how it perpetuates harmful stereotypes. Children's literature is influential in shaping the worldviews of future generations and often constructs young readers as colonial subjects, reinforcing social inequalities that exist due to colonialism. By examining French children's books, this research explores how these narratives construct Indigenous culture as "other" and contribute to the ongoing effects of colonialism. The study also considers the historical context of colonialism and its ongoing effects on Indigenous cultures, highlighting the contradiction between the perpetuation of colonial attitudes and France's value of equality. By shedding light on the transmission of colonial ideologies through literature, this research seeks to understand how these attitudes and beliefs are communicated and reinforced through children's literature, impacting future generations' worldviews. The findings of this research have important implications for promoting cultural understanding and equality between France and Australia, and for understanding how society perpetuates social inequalities. The research was conducted using the extensive collections of French children's books at the Bibliothèque nationale de France and the Sorbonne Paris Nord University library.

Vanessa Castejon est enseignante chercheuse à l'université Sorbonne Paris Nord, laboratoire Pléiade. Ses recherches portent sur l'identité et les revendications

politiques autochtones en Australie ainsi que sur la représentation des autochtones australiens en Europe (littérature, cinéma, musées, séries, théâtre...). Elle a publié divers ouvrages et articles sur ces questions, en France et en Australie. Parmi ses dernières publications un article sur le Black Power en Australie en lien avec Black Lives Matter et un article sur les déconstructions d'identité et de genre dans le théâtre australien.

Vanessa Castejon is a researcher at Sorbonne Paris Nord University, Pléiade laboratory. Her research focuses on Indigenous identity and political claims in Australia as well as on the representation of Indigenous Australians in Europe (literature, cinema, museums, series, theater...). She has published several books and articles on these issues in France and Australia. Among her latest publications are an article on Black Power in Australia in relation to Black Lives Matter and an article on the deconstruction of identity and gender in Australian theater.

Alice Duncan is undertaking a PhD in Fine Art at RMIT University on "Photography, Australian Cultural Identity, National Identity and Nationalism". She gained a Master of Fine Art (Photography) in 2019 from RMIT University: "Love It Or Leave It: Representations of Australian Landscape." She has recently published a photographic editorial with accompanying essay exploring Marcia Langton's theory of colonial anxiety in the central Australian desert in HAPAX Magazine 2, 2022; and "Colonial Myths and Contemporary Portrayals", 2020, an essay exploring the ongoing legacy of colonial portrayals of Indigenous people and culture and its effects on contemporary society.

In Search of Leschenault and the Lost Manuscript of his Voyage to Australia

Paul Gibbard

The manuscript journals written by the officers and scientists of the Baudin expedition have been an essential source for historians of early French encounters with Australia. In the case of the journal of the botanist of that expedition, Théodore Leschenault (1773-1826), there was a puzzle: why were the first two chapters of his account missing and why was the journal not written in his own hand? When out of the blue in 2016 the original manuscript was put up for auction in France, the answer to these questions became clearer. In this talk I discuss the new insights that the original manuscript brings to our understanding of Leschenault's ideas – about, for example, slavery and the Indigenous peoples of Australia – and the process by which I tracked down new sources in château attics, family papers and archives for my recently published book *The French Collector: The Journal and Letters of Théodore Leschenault* (2023).

Paul Gibbard is Senior Lecturer in French Studies at the University of Western Australia. His research interests lie in French literature from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries and in the history of the French exploration in Australia. He has edited a number of volumes of the *Complete Works of Voltaire* and a collection of essays on *The Political Thought of Enlightenment Women* and has also translated Émile Zola's *The Dream* for Oxford World's Classics. His latest book *The French Collector: The Journal and Letters of Théodore Leschenault* came out with UWA Publishing in February 2023.

A Case Study in Australia's French Connection: The Huybers and Loureiro Families

Paul Kiem

Emerging from history research that was originally unrelated to Australia's 'French connection', this presentation will aim to highlight how two Hobart and Melbourne families can be used as a case study to illustrate and reflect upon the ways in which this easily overlooked French connection operated in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Members of the Huybers and Loureiro families were transnationals whose cultural diversity challenges notions of a homogenous Anglo-Australian society existing around the time of Federation. As Francophone Australians steeped in European culture, they catered to and benefited from the cosmopolitan aspirations of sections of Australia's middle class. With Vasco Loureiro we are also able to examine the relationship between Francophilia and Australian bohemianism. This presentation outlines some of the ways in which Australia's French connection manifested itself and evolved, as evidenced in the lives of the Huybers family, Artur and Marie Thérèse Loureiro, and their children Vasco Loureiro and Fauvette Erdos. The detail, inherently interesting, links to larger themes in Australian social history and may be useful in suggesting fresh perspectives for those researching in related areas.

Dr Paul Kiem, currently an associate lecturer (sessional) in history education at the University of Sydney, is a former President of the History Teachers' Association of Australia. He has a research interest in Australian social history and life writing, much of it focusing on Melbourne in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Recent publications include chapters in *The Australian History Industry* (2022) and *Revisiting the British World: New Voices and Perspectives* (2022).

French-Australian Relations: Une Entente Glaciale Revisited

Kerry Mullan

This paper will examine the deterioration in French-Australian relations caused by the cancellation of the French submarine contract in 2021. We will undertake a detailed analysis of the exchanges between former Prime Minister Scott Morrison and President Emmanuel Macron, with a particular focus on the underlying French and Australian English cultural values and assumptions which influenced their communications. It will be argued that these different ways of seeing the world and respective expectations around communication contributed significantly to the decline in relations between the two leaders, and that more awareness of—and respect for—such different worldviews might have prevented a great deal of the recent entente glaciale.

Associate Professor Kerry Mullan is President of ISFAR and Convenor of Languages at RMIT University, where she teaches French language and culture, and linguistics. Her main research interests are cross-cultural communication and differing interactional styles, particularly those of French and Australian English speakers. She is a member of the ISFAR Research Committee and a Chevalier de l'Ordre des Palmes Académiques.

Civilising the Pacific in Louise Michel's "Kanak play"

Elizabeth Rechniewski

Among the more than 4000 communards deported to New Caledonia in the 1870s were many who had professional, literary and publishing experience. Despite the harshness of the conditions of detention, that varied according to the punishment imposed: *déportation simple*, *dans une enceinte fortifiée* etc, many contrived to exercise their talents in this unlikely setting and many more discovered an aptitude for cultural pursuits, transforming the life of the colony. Amongst the most challenging, perhaps, of their cultural endeavours—because of the considerable material that had to be sourced—was the performance of plays in 'bush' theatres and in Noumea itself. This paper briefly explores the role the deportees played in setting up theatres in Noumea and outside, and then examines a previously unpublished play by Louise Michel, set in New Caledonia and probably written while she was imprisoned there: *Civilisation [Scènes de la vie des primitifs au vingtième siècle]*. It presents the themes of the play as a commentary on the multi-faceted forms of exploitation that Michel witnessed or

presciently recognised to be developing across the region in the context of British/Australian and French colonisation.

Dr Elizabeth Rechniewski is Honorary Senior Lecturer at the University of Sydney in the School of Languages and Cultures. She has a long-standing research interest in the political uses of the national past and has published widely on remembrance of twentieth century war in Australia, France and New Caledonia, including on the role of Indigenous soldiers. CI on the ARC Discovery project on the post-Cold War world (2013-2016), with Judith Keene published *Seeking Meaning, Seeking Justice in a Post-Cold War World* (Brill 2018). Current projects include research into tensions between France and Australia over control of the South Pacific in the late nineteenth-twentieth century and on the early period of the Anglo-French condominium in the New Hebrides (Vanuatu).

The Emergence and Acceptance of Provençal Cuisine in the Nineteenth Century

Barbara Santich

The most important features in the evolution of French cuisine in the nineteenth century were the triumph of cuisine bourgeoise and the recognition of regional cuisines, both of which were increasingly evident in cookbooks (for example, Jules Gouffé's *Le Livre de Cuisine* (1867)). French cuisine finally became genuinely representative of the nation, reflecting the practices of the general population as well as geographic diversity.

The regions of France had long been known for their distinctive produce—for Provence, its luscious fruits, olive oil and anchovies—but the appearance of the first regional cookbooks in the nineteenth century drew attention to their distinctive cuisines. One of the first to be publicly recognised and discussed was that of Provence, following the success of the Frères Provençaux restaurant in Paris and the publication of cookbooks featuring recipes for specifically Provençal dishes. By 1850 a definitive corpus of typically Provençal dishes had been agreed, all firmly anchored in the produce of the region. Many of these dishes had been prepared and eaten within the region in the previous century.

This presentation traces the emergence of Provençal cuisine and its acceptance into a national repertoire.

Barbara Santich is a food historian and Professor Emeritus at the University of Adelaide and coordinates ISFAR's French Australian Wine Project (FAW). Her

research into food history and culture focuses on both France and Australia with publications including *The Original Mediterranean Cuisine* (Wakefield Press, 1995; new revised edition Equinox, 2018) and *Bold Palates: Australia's Gastronomic Heritage* (Wakefield Press, 2012), which was shortlisted in the non-fiction category of the 2013 Prime Minister's Literary Awards. Her next book, *Eating in Eighteenth-Century Provence: The Evolution of a Tradition*, will be published by Bloomsbury in 2023.

Making History, Making the Australian French Speaking Subject: Marie Niau's *Souvenirs d'une Parisienne aux antipodes*

Sonia Wilson

Gesturing to what she calls "diffuse and diverse forms of everyday 'history-making'" and distinguishing them from History as institutionalised and professionalised discipline, Anna Clark readily acknowledges that this distinction "isn't always clear" (Clark, 2022). This paper focuses on a slim volume published in 1930 by Angus and Robertson that muddies this distinction in ways that invite us to reconceptualise the relationship between material in French and the writing of Australian history.

Titled *Souvenirs d'une Parisienne aux antipodes* and authored by Marie Rousselet Niau, the book assembles three short narratives. In the first, the recently wed Niau cowers in her mother's cellar on the rue St Anne during the Paris Commune. In the second she and her husband arrive in Sydney (1880) following an ill-advised investment in the Marquis de Rays' fraudulent scheme to establish a French colony in New Ireland. In the third and most substantive, she and her young family attempt to eke out a living growing sugarcane on the banks of the Daintree.

Touted as the first "Australian book written in French", publication of the volume was proclaimed an Australian first. In a lengthy review in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, Thomas Courtney went further, describing the book as a reminder of the debt owed by his contemporaries to bush pioneers and stating that, as such, it "merited a place in the country's archives." (*SMH*, Oct. 31. 1930) Yet even as Courtney sought to locate the book in Australian archives, Angus and Robertson were working closely with the author's daughter to place it in French secondary classrooms across the country. In his review, Courtney makes no mention of the lengthy vocabulary list appended to the book, nor of the preface recommending the book as suitable for the upper levels of French.

This paper proposes to explore the questions this book and its critical reception raise. As Clark reminds us, history is something we *do*. Like language learning, it is a cultural practice. What happens then when Australian historical identity is transacted through the learning of French? When to negotiate the "subtle nuances" of the French language is also, as journalist Thomas Courtney would have it, to inherit a debt from "our" pioneering past?

Sonia Wilson is a Senior Lecturer in French Studies and International and Comparative Literature at the University of Sydney. She is one of the CIs on a multilingual collaborative ARC DP, entitled "Opening Australia's Multilingual Archive". This paper is drawn from that research.