



The Institute for the Study of French-Australian Relations (ISFAR) is celebrating its 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a series of public events to which you are warmly invited, including a free online lecture and a two-day Symposium.

***From the French East Indies Company to the French in the 'Indo-Pacific'***  
Professor Robert Aldrich, Professor of European History at the University of Sydney

Free online public lecture  
Thursday 8 April, 5.30 – 7pm

The overseas economic, political and cultural policy of a country such as France—including the acquisition and rule of colonies, which formed an important component of that policy from the 1600s until the mid-1900s (and beyond)—was never limited to individual relations with discrete outposts. Rather it encompassed the articulation of visions of expansive areas of the globe and efforts to link together colonies and other areas of France's foreign presence. This paper argues that key points of current discussion of the 'Indo-Pacific', *mutatis mutandis*, can be traced to the undertakings of the French East India Company from the late 1600s, the 'new' imperialism of the late 1800s, and notions, current from the 1880s to the 1980s, about a broadly defined Pacific as the 'new centre of the world'. These ideas and actions involved constructing a broad vision of a capacious region, connecting together geographically dispersed sites of commercial, strategic and civilisational interest, challenging the hegemonic power of old and new rival powers, using sovereign island territories as stepping-stones to gain traction in larger continental spheres, and maintaining a globalised big-power status.

*Robert Aldrich is Professor of European History at the University of Sydney and the author of a two-volume study of France in the Pacific, as well as studies of the French overseas territories and various other aspects of colonial history, including Vestiges of the Colonial Empire in France: Monuments, Museums and Colonial Memories. His latest publication, with John Connell, is The Ends of Empire: The Last Colonies Revisited (London, 2020). He is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities and the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia and has been decorated with the Ordre des Palmes Académiques for 'services to French culture'.*

Registration: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/from-the-french-east-indies-company-to-the-french-in-the-indo-pacific-tickets-145178200907>

This public lecture is also the keynote speech of the ISFAR @ 35 Symposium.

