

Preface

French and Australian collaborative research in the humanities and the social sciences in the South Pacific has grown and intensified significantly over the past two decades, beginning with the international symposium *Changing Identities in the Pacific at the Dawn of the Twenty-First Century* held at the Australian Embassy in Paris in 1997, followed in 1999 by a major conference, *Identity in the Pacific*, organised by the French Permanent Secretary for the Pacific, Ambassador Pierre Garrigue-Guyonnaud and held at the Tjibaou Cultural Centre in Noumea. The edited proceedings of this colloquium, generously funded by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, constituted the first issue of the *New Pacific Review/ La Nouvelle Revue du Pacifique*, published in 2000 in English and French in a single volume.

In December 2003 a French-Australian symposium, *Pacific Island States Today/ L'État des États*, was held at The Australian National University in Canberra, organised by the Centre for the Contemporary Pacific, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies. This symposium brought together a wide range of scholars and whose penetrating presentations covered major issues in both the Francophone and Anglophone Pacific.

In August 2004 an international conference, *Les Assises de la Recherche Française dans le Pacifique/ A Review and Evaluation of French Research in the Pacific* was held at the Tjibaou Cultural Centre in Noumea, sponsored by the French Government and the Government of New Caledonia.

In April 2006, another French-government sponsored international symposium, *AGORA (Ateliers Gouvernance et Recherche Appliquée)* was held at IRD (Institut de Recherche pour le Développement), Noumea, New Caledonia, major themes being governance and economic development, again bringing together Francophone and Anglophone scholars from France and the Pacific region.

This was followed in October 2009 by two conjoint Francophone/Anglophone conferences, held at the IRD Centre in Noumea, *Stability, Security and Development in Oceania*, preceded by *AGORA-2*, an international conference on Anglophone research in the humanities and the social sciences in the Francophone Pacific, sponsored by the French Government and the Government of New Caledonia. The first of these conferences was sponsored by the French Fonds Pacifique and the State, Society and Governance Program at The Australian National University. An edited selection of presentations from this symposium constitutes the present volume.

In October 2010 there was another conference held in Noumea, the *École Plurilingue dans les Communautés du Pacifique / Multilingual Schools in the Pacific Communities*, co-organised by the University of New Caledonia, The Australian National University and CREDO (the Centre for Research and Documentation on Oceania).

In March 2011 the Government of New Caledonia and the French Government sponsored a major international conference *Destins des Collectivités politiques d'Océanie / The Future Destiny of French Pacific States*, co-organised by Jean-Yves Faberon, Viviane Fayaud and Jean-Marc Regnault. This conference was held at IRD Noumea. The French edition of the proceedings appeared at the end of 2011 (Presses Universitaires d'Aix-Marseille), and a selection of the presentations on the future of New Caledonia is in preparation for publication in English at The Australian National University.

To complete the picture of Franco-Australian collaborative research in the humanities and social sciences to date, the French Government Fonds Pacifique and The Australian National University are co-sponsoring an international symposium *Governance, Development and Change in Oceania*, to be held in Canberra at The Australian National University in 2012. The proceedings of that symposium will complement the present volume. For the 2009 and 2012 symposia have been designed to maximise Francophone and Anglophone interaction and intellectual exchange, the first colloquium being held in New Caledonia and the second here in Australia.

It is manifest from the above summary account of collaborative activities, that French and Australian mutual understanding and appreciation have undergone a period of constant and continuous growth for more than a decade now, especially in the fields of governance, social and political change, and economic and social development. Most pleasing, perhaps, has been the marked increase in Francophone and Anglophone Pacific Islander exchanges, backed up by the commitment to collaboration by the metropolitan powers for the development of the Pacific region.

Editors' Note

In the interests of improving accessibility to our Francophone colleagues, an abstract in French is provided at the head of each chapter.