Australia is home to several hundred First Nations peoples, generally recognized as two groups: Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples. In Kanaky/New Caledonia, one distinct group is recognized: the Kanak people. Wherever possible in this book, Indigenous Nation or language affiliation names are used, such as “Wurundjeri” or “Warlpiri,” but, because this book is an analysis across two societies, Australia and Kanaky/New Caledonia, I predominantly use the term “Indigenous people(s)” when referring to the comparative context.

The terms “Indigenous” and “settlers” are political identities constructed by colonial discourses. These terms convey some of the specificity of power relations within settler colonial societies. I use the generic term “Indigenous” to refer to those whose ancestors lived on those lands before colonization and who have faced the invasion of their territories, specifically, Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders in Australia and Kanak people in Kanaky/New Caledonia. Bringing indigeneity into the frame exposes the questions of Indigenous sovereignty and challenges settler nativism.\(^1\) I use the term “settler” both for any person who has come to Australia or Kanaky/New Caledonia at any time from the early days of colonization to the present and for their descendants.

The implied binary between “Indigenous” and “settler” has certain flaws and limitations. In fact, by engaging with a state apparatus—the school system—that has helped give this colonial binary form and content, I seek to unpack the strategies behind it, the problems with it, and the possibilities beyond it. Using the colonial signifiers “Indigenous” and “settlers” challenges any apparent neutrality and enables a discussion of the articulations of settler colonial structures. It may also enable a better understanding of the positions that have been left out of or do not fit neatly into such a binary. The usage of these terms in this book

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**Author’s Note**
aims at unpacking the processes of how such identity markers came to be, rather than accepting them as constituted identities.

I have chosen not to use the citizenship denominations “Australian” or “New Caledonian” for either Indigenous or settler people unless the topic specifically attends to a question related to citizenship. This is for two main reasons. First, the citizenship denomination continues to be an assimilatory framework. It is a denomination with which many Indigenous people in these two societies do not primarily identify, if at all. Second, the Indigenous-settler relations that are at stake in this book and the issue of responsibility that is attached to them go beyond citizenship status, rights, and responsibilities within the nation-state framework, and reach the ontological level. Although citizenship certainly comes with additional responsibilities and possibilities to engage within Indigenous-settler relations, the core element of these relations remains the physical presence of Indigenous people and settlers within one space, regardless of their citizenship.

Wherever possible, and available, I use Indigenous place names. The correspondent English/French place names have been indicated in parentheses () on the first occurrence of the term only.

The name “New Caledonia” was given by James Cook on sight- ing the main island in 1774. The English term has been gallicized, and Nouvelle-Calédonie is the only name currently recognized by the French Republic. Kanaky, although a more recent coinage (officially adopted in 1984), goes back to a much older and deeper affiliation to place. It reflects the affirmation in the name of a unified Kanak people of unceded Kanak sovereignties. It is constituted by the Kanak people. According to the late Kanak politician Jean-Marie Tjibaou and many Kanak people today, it includes the non-Kanak communities peopling the country as well (Mokaddem 2009, 17). New Caledonia is a colonial appropriation through naming; Kanaky is an Indigenous reappropriation and resurgence through renaming. In that sense, “Kanaky” is a decolonial form of identification. It is a process of disidentification and reidentification, of delinking from the colonial identification of “New Caledonia.” The dual appellation “Kanaky/New Caledonia” is used in this book to reflect the sociopolitical realities of the territory and to problematize the ongoing political antagonism within it. It is also used to render the identification and affiliation with Kanaky, which is usually ignored or silenced, more visible in the current political context. In this
sense, the name seeks to reflect and respect the freedom and right of Indigenous people to define themselves in their own terms. The ordering of the terms in this double appellation reflects the primacy of Kanak sovereignty.