



HAL
open science

The Decolonisation Process Without Independence in the Light of Changes in the Nickel Sector in New Caledonia

Christine Demmer

► **To cite this version:**

Christine Demmer. The Decolonisation Process Without Independence in the Light of Changes in the Nickel Sector in New Caledonia. Matthias Kowasch; Simon P. J. Batterbury. Geographies of New Caledonia-Kanaky: Environments, Politics and Cultures, Springer International Publishing, pp.103-115, 2024, 978-3-031-49139-9. 10.1007/978-3-031-49140-5_9 . hal-04661757

HAL Id: hal-04661757

<https://hal.science/hal-04661757v1>

Submitted on 25 Jul 2024

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.



Distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License



The Decolonisation Process Without Independence in the Light of Changes in the Nickel Sector in New Caledonia

Christine Demmer

Abstract

From the Matignon-Oudinot Accords of 1988 onwards, the pro-independence parties agreed to play the economic development game proposed by the State in order to reduce the glaring inequalities between Indigenous Kanaks and non-Kanaks. The FLNKS (*Front de Libération Nationale Kanak et Socialiste*) took up the challenge in two of the three provinces, where Kanak people were in the majority, and the pro-independence coalition tried to establish a form of economic sovereignty by claiming partial public control of the “country’s” main resource, nickel. The story of the stages of this mining nationalism, which enabled the pro-independence movement to gain a foothold in a reconfigured nickel sector (despite encountering opposition both in the economic and the local political arena), aims to measure the road still to be travelled by FLNKS to achieve decolonisation. This could be in harmony with the foundation of a new national community of citizens, one that would be more autonomous vis-à-vis metropolitan France and in which the Kanaks would be fully included.

Keywords

Decolonisation · Economic struggle · Nickel sector · Nationalisation · Mining policy · Ethnic equality · National economic community

9.1 Introduction

Nickel is the main mineral resource of New Caledonia. Depending on the year, it represents up to 90% of the territory’s exports and 10% of its GDP (Morvannou 2015). This chapter focuses on the strategy deployed by pro-independence parties gathered in the *Front de Libération Nationale Kanak et Socialiste* (FLNKS) to control nickel in order to build a sovereign country. The study of Kanak economic nationalism and its vagaries is in fact a pretext for measuring the extent and forms of decolonisation in New Caledonia. If it is a question of grasping the progress of the archipelago’s economic sovereignty, it is also a question of reflecting on the extent of the construction of a “common destiny” between different ethnic groups in this former settler colony. It may seem surprising to try to measure the sharing of socio-economic citizenship – which can be defined by free access to employment, education or health – that would complement the sharing of the same citizenship marked by common political rights and duties. However, we shall see that the entry of Kanak independentists into the nickel industry at the end of the 1980s was perceived as much by the State as by FLNKS itself as an opportunity to participate in the reduction of inequalities that mainly affect Indigenous Kanak people. From this period onwards, the issue of social justice – well as of Kanak cultural recognition – became a permanent part of the definition of decolonisation in New Caledonia.¹ More precisely, nickel was invited into politics as a lever to reduce the strong territorial inequalities between the North of the main island Grande Terre, mainly populated by Kanaks, and the South where wealth is concentrated and where most of non-Kanaks live. This multiculturalist perspective was an imperfect response to the pro-independence movement’s desire to create a nation (in the sense of a

C. Demmer (✉)
French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS), Centre
Norbert Elias, Marseille, France
e-mail: christine.demmer@univ-amu.fr

¹See Frazer (2011) on the link between recognition and redistribution and Trepied (2021) on decolonisation from the post-war period to the 1970s.

national community of citizens), moving beyond being recognised as a national minority.

In order to trace the history of Kanak mining nationalism and to provide food for thought on the two main aspects of the economic decolonisation of New Caledonia (strengthening the productive fabric and reducing inter-ethnic inequalities), I begin by recalling how nickel became central to the Kanak discourse on emancipation, before evoking the Kanak strategy for attempting to control it for the benefit of the “country”. In a second step, I expose the obstacles encountered in this process of nationalisation, which will be an opportunity to reflect on the limits of the decolonisation process still underway (see Chaps. 17 and 18 by Gagné and Fisher in this book).²

9.2 Economic Nationalism as a Response to State Developmentalism

In addition to the establishment of a penal colony and the spoliation of Kanak land for the benefit of cattle-breeding colonists, the colonial history of the archipelago is marked by nickel mining. For more than a century, the French company *Société le Nickel* (SLN), managed between 1888 and 1974 by the Rothschild family, ruled over the mining sector with no real competition from the smaller mining companies mainly run by New Caledonian families (Bencivengo 2014). From the end of the nineteenth century, these companies called on forced labour, from the New Hebrides (today the independent state of Vanuatu), from French Indochina and the Dutch East Indies (today the independent states of Vietnam and Indonesia), but also hired labour (particularly Japanese workers), because the Indigenous Kanak were requisitioned for other works in the French colony (Muckle 2015).

Although the Defferre’s Framework Law of 1956 offered some political autonomy to the archipelago, the State’s desire to control nickel resources, the so-called green gold, put an end to this in the 1960s. Placing the French Overseas Territories under the Ministry of Overseas France encouraged new immigration from metropolitan France. Due to the boom of the nickel sector between 1967 and 1972, immigration to New Caledonia increased so that the Kanaks became a minority in their own country. Encouraged by a group of

Kanak students defending anti-colonial theories, who returned to New Caledonia after studying in metropolitan France, some Kanaks then began to challenge the French presence. From 1981 onwards, several pro-independence parties merged in the *Front Indépendantiste* (FI) before founding FLNKS in 1984 (Chappell 2013/2017). The creation of FLNKS, asserting itself in a break with political institutions, also marked the reinforcement of a struggle with the State to achieve independence. At least 80% of Kanaks (representing over 41% of the total population today) want independence. At the beginning of the fight, activists highlighted the fate of Kanak people during the “dark years” of the exceptional legal regime of the *Code l’indigénat* (between 1887 and 1946), which opposed citizens and Indigenous people because of their cultural difference (Merle and Muckle 2019). The pro-independence movement stressed the reality that Kanak people were pushed into reserves, based on legal segregation, deprived from freedom of movement and compelled into forced labour. They observed that the equality of political rights, acquired at the time of the French Union, after the abolition of the *indigénat* regime and after World War II, was slow to be established. The movement also denounced the inequality of treatment that remained, with Kanaks occupying poorly paid and precarious jobs. The first decade of the independence movement thus saw demands for the restitution of their land.

After violent and deadly confrontations between descendants of (European) settlers and Kanak people, the agreements negotiated with the French Government and the anti-independence camp to restore peace in the mid-1980s opened a political dialogue centred on development of Kanak livelihoods, territories and recognition of identity. With the Matignon-Oudinot Accords, signed in 1988, the French State tried to favour the economic development of the Kanak-majority regions in the hope of weakening the independence claim. This decolonisation path, without independence, was named “within the French Republic”, by the former French Prime Minister Michel Rocard (Mohamed-Gaillard 2020). To this end, three provinces (North, South and Loyalty Islands) were created, considering the ethnic distribution of the population, which allowed the independentists to manage two of them.³ Moreover, the Accords provided a referendum on self-determination after a ten year period. With this power conferred, the independentists had to demonstrate their capacity to eventually govern a country. With the establishment of this multicultural perspective, the French Government took care to favour the North and the Islands in the distribu-

²A first referendum on self-determination took place on 4 November, 2018; 56.4% of eligible voters were against independence. The second referendum on 4 October, 2020, saw an increase in the proportion of pro-independence votes to 46.7% (53.3% against). The third vote was due to take place on 12 December, 2021. The independentists demanded the postponement of the third referendum to respect the mourning of the Kanak people affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. They were not successful. With less than 10,000 votes separating them from a “yes” vote in 2020, the call to stay at home allowed the “no” to win hands down.

³In 1989, 78.7% of the total population in the North Province was Kanaks against 15.7% of Europeans and 5.6% of other ethnic groups; the Loyalty Islands were home to 98.1% Kanaks and 1.3% Europeans at that time. As for the South Province, where the capital Nouméa is located, Europeans were in the majority with 44.3% of the total population against 25.8% of Kanaks (Gilbert et al. 1999).

tion of budgets and investments, although the South Province was by far the most populated. With the help of state-province contracts that promised to train 400 Kanak managers, the Accords aimed at a growth policy in these areas and a more equitable redistribution of benefits across the territory. However, in line with the new orientations of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), local elected representatives were asked to take responsibility for the development of the archipelago (Blanchet 1999). New negotiations in 1998 led to the Nouméa Accord, which pursued the objective of rebalancing between ethnic groups while seeking to strengthen the autonomy of the archipelago – in particular with the transfer of political competences, except sovereign powers (see Chap. 18 by Fisher in this book). It also tried to bring the different ethnic groups together around a New Caledonian citizenship based on the creation of a restricted electorate for local (provincial) elections (see Chap. 20 by Roberston in this book). This mandate has also been used for a local employment preference policy. Within this new political framework, “New Caledonia-Kanaky” became an “overseas territory” (*pays d’outre-mer*).

From 1988 onwards FLNKS, which was now in charge of two of the three provinces, deployed an economic nationalism strategy aiming, through the reappropriation of the territory’s main mineral resource, to get New Caledonia out of a situation of dependence (Freyss 1995). Shortly before this, the independence leaders promoted entrepreneurship in Kanak rural areas to shift the economy from domestic agricultural activities still practised on Kanak lands. After the rejection of a political solution proposed by the French State and the execution by the elite group of the national gendarmerie of Eloi Machoro, the leader of a Kanak revolt, the State proposed, in 1985, a first development plan by regions, inviting FLNKS to be involved. Due to the lack of resources to wage an armed struggle against the coloniser, and aware of their numerical inferiority, the independentists returned to economic nationalism. FLNKS seized upon the regions it was able to run before provincialisation, in the hope of “building Kanaky” (Demmer 2016). Leaders particularly encouraged a form of nationalisation of the economy “from below”, in order to enter the market for goods and services and also, to a lesser extent, the labour market, from which the Kanak had largely been excluded. The Matignon-Oudinot Accords, through their concern for “economic rebalancing” between Kanak and non-Kanak populations and the creation of decentralised governance through elected representatives, allowed the independence movement to enter the nickel industry (Pitoiset 2015). Under pressure from Jean-Marie Tjibaou, the president of FLNKS, who wanted the Kanaks to have access to the main economic levers of the territory, and with financial assistance from the French State, the local mining company *Société Minière du*

Pacifique Sud (SMSP), subcontractor of SLN, was purchased by the *Société de Financement et d’Investissement de la Province Nord* (SOFINOR), the investment company of the North Province. It is governed by the independence movement. The unprofitable company was bought from the loyalist politician Jacques Lafleur, former owner of SMSP. That is why it remains a symbol of the ethnic rebalancing process, even though Lafleur’s supporters (predominantly white) voted massively against the Accords.

Through public control of resources, and by being the main shareholder of SMSP, FLNKS also promoted nationalisation of the economy “from above” despite also soliciting the private sector and seeking alliances with multinationals. FLNKS was (and still is) aiming to create wealth and an economic basis for future independence. The SMSP became a leading mining company in New Caledonia in a short time-frame. From the FLNKS point of view, other nationalisations of nickel enterprises should follow. To strengthen the added value of the mining sector, FLNKS argued in 1992 at its national conventions in favour of the progressive cessation of raw ore exports, which provide less profit than the sale of processed ore. The pro-independence leaders then promoted the creation of a nickel smelter in the North, in addition to the SLN smelter in the suburbs of Nouméa. After numerous blockades of mine sites, French Prime Minister Lionel Jospin agreed to the pro-independence leaders’ wish to build a nickel smelter which was backed by the supply of ore from the Koniambo massif. The Bercy Protocol (named after the location of the Ministry of the Economy and Finance in Paris), which was signed on 1 February 1998, formalised the agreement and was a prerequisite for discussions on a new political status for the archipelago. These negotiations resulted in the Nouméa Accord, signed on 5 May, of the same year, extending the decolonisation process by 20 years.

It is now time to explain in more detail the stages of this nickel independence conquest and its obstacles.

9.3 The Stages of Mining Nationalism, Focused on Companies in the Nickel Sector

With the “Regions status” back in 1985/86, the preparation for independence involved cooperatives and “economic interest groups” imbued with an utopian idea of liberation by action. In the following phases, this utopian or millenarian dimension evaporated. What remained from the Kanak national liberation struggle was the more pragmatic idea of an investment in the market economy, as described above. Now in possession of the mining company SMSP, the question of rural Kanak entrepreneurship (often of a collective form) has arisen again, but the pro-independence leaders are also promoting subcontracting companies, located in the

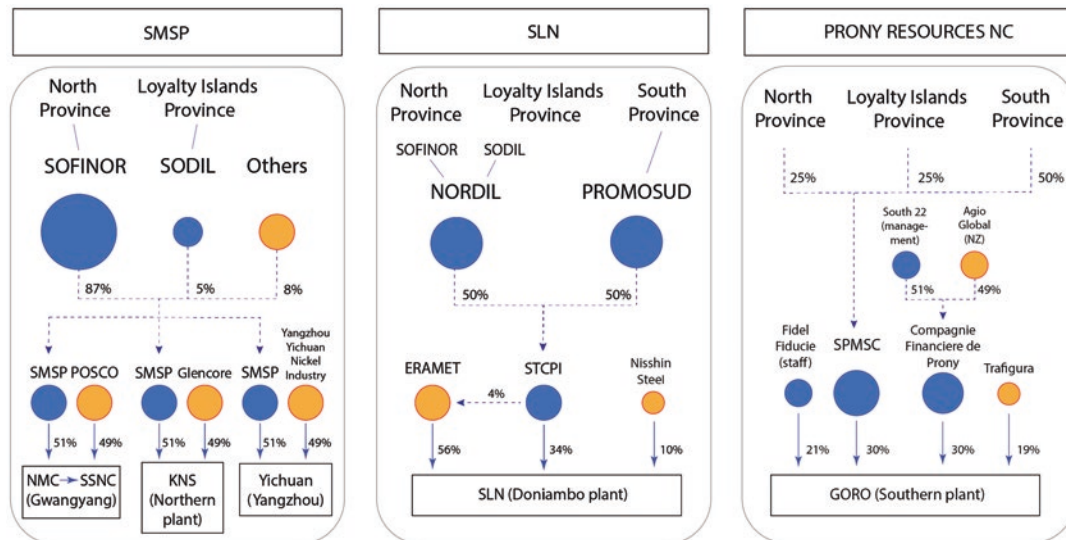


Fig. 9.1 Shareholding of the mining companies SMSP, SLN and Prony Resources. (Source: Burton and Levacher 2021)

neighbourhood of the mines and, later, of new smelters in the North and also in the South (see Chap. 8 by Kowasch and Merlin in this book), based on the model of so-called people's shareholding enterprises (see Fig. 9.1). These shareholding companies involve Kanak clans or communities ("tribes" or *tribu* in French) on former reserves that have become customary land (see Chap. 10 by Batterbury et al. in this book). Other small non-Kanak mining contractors have also been encouraged to participate in local economic development. In 2001, people's shareholdings included approximately 15% of the adult population of the North Province, of which 49% were selected to represent clans (Pitoiset 2002). For example, in the neighbourhood of the Koniombo project, local enterprises are gathered in a "simplified shareholding company" (*SAS Vavouto Koniombo*) whose shareholders were four civil participation companies,⁴ three of them representing customary actors and one of them individual Kanak and non-Kanak shareholders (Kowasch 2010; Le Meur et al. 2012). Advocating the development of entrepreneurship – again without excluding the presence of small non-Kanak operators – was perceived as a condition for clan members to retake control of an economy that was dominated by colonial settlers and largely dependent on transfers from the French State. Raphaël Pidjot, the first general manager of SMSP and later its CEO, has particularly encouraged this model of nationalisation from below, which means ownership of the resource by the citizens (Mauss 2018).

The recognition of a form of local sovereignty over the resource does not obscure the national dimension of mining heritage. Jean-Marie Tjibaou, FLNKS leader and signatory

⁴These companies are made up of at least two partners who show a desire to join together to undertake a business, thus contributing to losses and sharing profits together.

of the Matignon-Oudinot Accords, along with other leaders, considered the takeover of SMSP as a step in the Kanak reconquest of the nickel sector, and more broadly of the territorial economy, from above. He perceived it as an opportunity to allow local people to really benefit from the spin-offs of resource exploitation. The State, for its part, encouraged the assumption of responsibility for development by the provinces created in 1988. Each province was to have an investment company (half private and half public) for this purpose. In the South, 68% of PROMOSUD (the local Development and Investment Corporation) was financed by the provincial budget. The investment company in the Loyalty Islands Province, which does not possess nickel resources, was financed to a level of 79.5% by public funds. In the North, 75% (now 85%) of SOFINOR was financed from the provincial budget.⁵ SOFINOR became the majority shareholder of SMSP, with 87% of the shares, while the *Société de Développement et d'Investissement des Iles* (SODIL) has 5% and 8% are held by other shareholders (see Fig. 9.1). Therefore, pro-independence representatives, who have a majority in the North Province assembly, were integrated into the SMSP board of directors.

Control of a mining company through financial investment by the North Province was seen as a major economic development tool (see also Chap. 8 by Kowasch and Merlin in this book). It was innovative, using local semi-public companies, so-called *Sociétés d'Economie Mixte locales* (SEML), to invest in the mining sector and to develop socio-economic

⁵The remaining 25% of SOFINOR's capital belonged to the *Institut Calédonien de Participation* (Caledonian Participation Institute), split between the *Agence Française de Développement* (the French overseas aid agency), holding 52% of the shares, and the three provinces, each holding 16%.

activities. Traditionally, public authorities do not invest public funds in industry. Here, they use this economic tool to serve the general interest for the development of facilities or the creation of social housing. According to the independentists, the takeover of SMSP, symbol of a Kanak reconquest of the economy, was also a means of better integrating the Kanak into the labour market, both as workers and entrepreneurs. Given the problem of exclusion experienced by Kanak people, the demand for participation in the nickel industry was to paraphrase the politician Léon Bourgeois, a claim to build a “society of equals”, a nation that (re-)integrates marginalised and excluded people (Castel 2008). However, while being an act of partial reconquest of Kanak sovereignty over the nickel resource, the control of SMSP was tantamount to reappropriation of all of the society called upon to make a nation – Kanaks and non-Kanaks alike. The semi-public set-up of the company (the “semi-nationalisation”) in fact signalled a desire to ensure that a territory, and not just a single ethnic group, benefited from the spin-offs of the nickel sector. Nickel was presented as a “national heritage” that should no longer benefit only a few industrialists but be for “all the people of this country” (Pidjot 1993).

SMSP, owner of mining titles, quickly became a major player in the nickel sector, the largest exporter of nickel ores in New Caledonia and the second largest producer of oxidised ores in the world. But that was not enough for the independence leaders. In accordance with the wishes of former FLNKS leader Jean-Marie Tjibaou, investment in metallurgy became the main way to add value to the nickel sector, following the example of other producer nations. In 1995, SMSP succeeded in convincing the Canadian company Falconbridge to engage in a metallurgical project with an unprecedented set-up: SMSP took a 51% stake in the capital of the future smelter, leaving 49% for the Canadian group. In return, SMSP would provide the mineral resource. To accomplish this, the independentists needed a new nickel deposit. They proposed an exchange of mining titles with the oldest of the mining companies in New Caledonia, SLN. They wanted to swap the Poum massif, less rich in nickel, for that of Thiébaghi, a richer deposit both located in the North (Fig. 9.2). SLN, supported by loyalists, refused. Long-term discussions began: SMSP, supported by FLNKS, negotiated with SLN and the French State, which held shares in Eramet, the French parent (then owning 70%) of SLN through a public investment group, ERAP.⁶ In the end, through the Bercy agreement, it was not Thiébaghi that was involved in the swap but the Koniambo massif, located closely to Koné, the capital of the North Province. The condition was that SMSP and its partner Falconbridge had to begin investing before 1

January 2006 (David and Sourisseau 2016; Kowasch 2010). KNS, the joint venture between SMSP and Falconbridge, was then founded to mine the deposit and run the future smelter. After changing partners twice (Falconbridge was acquired by the Swiss group Xstrata, which was then acquired by Glencore), the Koniambo smelter began producing ferronickel, with a fairly high nickel content, in 2013 (see also Chap. 8 by Kowasch and Merlin in this book).

The development of the metal processing strategy, on a global capitalist market, has continued (see Fig. 9.1). SMSP joined forces with another industrial corporation, the South Korean steel group POSCO, on the same unprecedented 51/49% shareholding model. Together, they created a company called *Société du Nickel de Nouvelle-Calédonie et Corée* (SNNC), which since 2008 has been processing Caledonian ores, with a lower grade compared to Koniambo, in Gwangyang (South Korea). This alliance marked a new turning point in the history of SMSP as the company has become primarily a nickel refiner. Except for Koniambo, SMSP mines have been spun off to become the property of the Nickel Mining Company (NMC), a new POSCO (Pohang Iron and Steel Company)-SMSP joint venture. Since then, the Korean group has benefited from a regular supply of New Caledonian nickel ores while the Kanak part of the venture ensured the sale of its ores. After a period of trial and error, in March 2018, SMSP signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Chinese industrial group Yangzhou Yichuan Nickel Industry, again on the 51/49% shareholding model, for a future processing plant in China. According to the strategic plan of the independentists, the joint venture refineries, in each of which SMSP has a majority stake, are intended to get better value from nickel by selling it in refined form. In October 2015, the SNNC smelter in South Korea, for example, was estimated to have returned ten times more than what would have been received by selling unprocessed ore (SMSP 2015). The North Province, which benefits from these spin-offs through SOFINOR, seeks to reinvest them in financing economic projects.⁷

But local development objectives are not the only element in the Kanak nickel project. FLNKS is also looking to extend the provincial strategy to New Caledonia as a whole. According to a second version of the Bercy Agreement in 1999, they obtained the transfer of a parcel of SLN shares to a New Caledonian public structure co-managed by the three provinces: the *Société Territoriale Calédonienne de Participations Industrielles* (STCPI). From 2007, STCPI has had a minority interest of 34% with special voting rights. Eramet (with a quarter of shares held by the French State), restructured into three groups (nickel, manganese and alloys), holds 56% of SLN shares, while the Japanese com-

⁶In 1985, via ERAP (and Elf Aquitaine), Eramet was 85% owned by the French State. But EU competition laws made the State divest its holdings and it began floating off its shares in 1994.

⁷For its part, KNS does not pay dividends. It is still repaying its debt, 97% of which is held by Glencore.

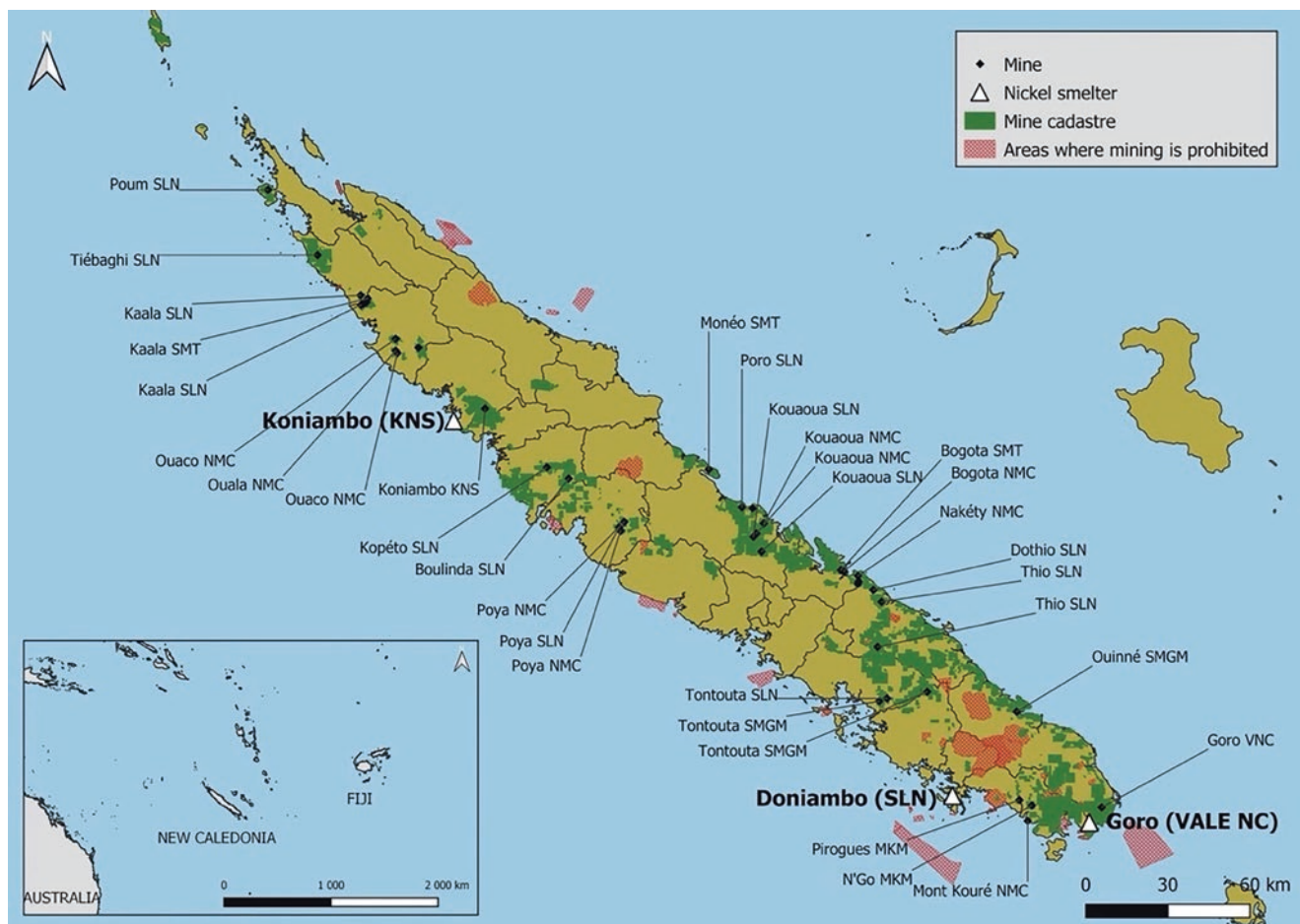


Fig. 9.2 Nickel smelters and mines in New Caledonia. (Source: <https://georep.nc/>, cartography: Eibl 2022)

pany Nisshin Steel holds the remaining 10% (see Fig. 9.1). Between 2000 and 2010, SLN paid more than 335 million € in dividends to New Caledonia. The objective (shared by the predominantly white, conservative and autonomist but anti-independence party *Calédonie Ensemble*) is to eventually achieve a 51% majority public share in SLN. This strategy is in line with a broader political vision that focuses on the nationalisation of nickel resources (both raw and processed) by ensuring that the dividends earned by companies benefit New Caledonia rather than the French State or private shareholders. This “nationalisation” of SLN’s capital was an important step in a Kanak logic of control over mineral resources. It is significant because SLN still owns three quarters of New Caledonian nickel reserves and retains more than 50% of the mining titles. The changes to the major shareholders have obliged SLN to refocus its assets towards New Caledonia. The challenge is to “caledonise” local nickel smelters through public-private partnerships and encourage “small” local mining companies to sell the ores they extract to the New Caledonian smelters (including those “offshore” in South Korea or China in the future). The aim is to create more added value and streamline mining activities.

9.4 A Changing Nickel Sector

The demands of the Kanak independence leaders – first the acquisition of SMSP and then the construction of a smelter in the North – has changed the New Caledonian mining sector. The SMSP is not only the originator of a local metallurgical project but also of several offshore partnerships, all aimed at making better use of nickel incomes. In addition, Kanak demands have led to a “caledonisation” of processed nickel from the oldest local smelter in New Caledonia, Doniambo, changing the relationship between mining operators in the “country”. In colonial times, from the 1870s to the 1930s, SLN had a hegemonic position, controlled by the French branch of the Rothschild Bank. It ruled over small subcontractor mining companies, run by migrants from France who had established local roots or settlers from other Pacific islands, with a fluctuating number depending on nickel prices, who were only able to export by themselves between the two World Wars. These “small miners” were almost wiped out during World War II, but they rebounded after the war. By the end of the 1960s, thanks to a boom in nickel prices, 15 independent companies were exporting raw

nickel and 6 others were subcontracting for SLN. Today, the “small miners” (now four in number) are no longer linked to SLN (Bouard et al. 2018).

The involvement of the independence movement in the nickel sector (through SMSP) also had an impact on the construction of a third nickel processing plant in the archipelago. When the loyalist leaders of the South Province and the New Caledonian Government realised that the Kanak independentists would succeed in setting up the joint venture between SMSP and Falconbridge, they contacted the Canadian group Inco to initiate another project to exploit low-grade nickel laterites found in the southern region. Launched in 2002, Goro Nickel was acquired by the Brazilian company Vale in 2006. Despite employing a number of Kanak people and engaging with local subcontractors also gathered in an SAS, the mine and processing plant has had a troubled history (Levacher 2016). Initially, the project moved away from a “national vision”; it was essentially privately owned – with only 5% participation by the provinces. Unable to benefit, along with the rest of the inhabitants of the South Province, from the dividends of the plant, the local Kanak communities, in the spirit of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, negotiated a new agreement in 2008, the *Pacte pour un Développement Durable du Grand Sud* (“Pact for Sustainable Development of the Big South”), which allows them to benefit from funds to encourage local socio-cultural development (Levacher 2016; Demmer 2007; Horowitz 2015; see Chap. 8 by Kowasch and Merlin in this book).

In 2020, in the middle of the second referendum on political independence, the departure of Vale has been a game changer. At the end of a major mobilisation on the part of FLNKS, customary authorities and local associations, Goro has also been the subject of public investment (see Fig. 9.1). Prony Resources, a newly created mining company, brings together, in *Compagnie Financière de Prony*, Goro Nickel managers and industrial investors and customers; they have 30% of the shares in the project. The Swiss trading company Trafigura acquired 19%. Moreover, the New Caledonian shareholding company *Société Publique Calédonienne de Participation Minière* (SPMSC), including the three provinces, has 30% of the shares (compared to 5% previously in Vale). The other novelty is that employees of Prony Resources have a 12% stake in the project through the *Fonds Commun de Placement d'Entreprise* (FCPE) and local communities, represented by their customary authorities, and have a 9% stake through the *Fonds de Prévention des Risques Environnementaux et Socioculturels* (FPRESC). Both together therefore have 21% of the shares in the project (represented by *Fidel Fiducie*; see Fig. 9.1).

The board of directors of the mining company Prony Resources has eight seats: two for SPMSC and two for FCPE and FPRESC, which allows local communities and staff to

play a role in decision-making. In this shareholding scheme, “New Caledonia” exercises a certain control over the project through the provinces (SPMSC) and Kanak groups (clans and chieftancies) represented in the FPRESC. The latter thus got involved in the nickel sector that is far away from the more inclusive vision proposed by FLNKS.

Therefore, with the rise of SMSP under the control of the independentists, it is not so much the company, having become one of the world leaders in nickel exports, that has imposed itself on the New Caledonian industrial landscape but rather the demands of FLNKS for a form of nationalisation of metallurgical companies which does not exclude the recognition of Kanak’s localised rights nested within national rights. The three models of shareholding now established on the archipelago all respond to the desire to constitute a public nickel rent. This does not prevent SLN from retaining 53% of the area covered by mining concessions in New Caledonia. By comparison, the mining branch of SMSP (NMC) now owns 13% of this area (acquired in a short time span), while the Koniambo mine has 4%, and *Société des Mines de la Tontouta* (SMT, see Fig. 9.2), owned by “Ballande”, a historic “small miner”, has 16%, making it the second most important owner of mining titles after SLN (Morvannou 2015). Despite being called “small”, such companies have revenues that vary between 8 million and 42 million € (Syndicat des producteurs-exportateurs et exportateurs de minerai 2016).

9.5 Searching for a “National” Mining Policy

Through its emancipation struggle focused on (semi-)nationalisation of metallurgical enterprises, FLNKS initiated a refocusing of the mining sector on territorial development aims. In addition to the prospect of nationalisation, Kanak mining nationalism is expressed at the political level by the aim to develop a sustainable mining strategy. This project has accompanied the political dynamics of the Nouméa Accord, which favour greater autonomy for New Caledonia. In its weak sense (for the loyalists), this autonomy should not go beyond the transfer of sovereign powers to New Caledonia; in its strong sense (for most Kanaks but also a portion of non-Kanaks), it should lead to independence in partnership with France. Within the strong politicisation of mining questions, a *Schéma de Mise en Valeur des Richesses Minières* (“Plan for the Development of Mineral Resources”) was established in 2009, accompanied by a new mining code regulating mining activities in New Caledonia. The *Schéma* includes prospects for exploiting mineral deposits in a more environmentally friendly way, gives guidelines for management of non-renewable resources and contains principles for

the export of mining products.⁸ Article 39 of the mining code states that any individual decision taken within the framework of mining regulations must be compatible with the principles and orientations of the *Schéma*. Thus, the struggle led by FLNKS also allowed for stricter regulations on mining to optimise the nickel rent and plan for the ineluctable exit after the next 50 years of this industry based on an unsustainable resource. On the environmental aspect of the *Schéma*, the nationalist leaders have learnt from activists for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples who, in Goro and elsewhere, willingly combine in their discourse the preservation of living areas of local populations with criticism against extractivism (Demmer 2021).

Acting within the *Schéma* does not, however, amount to a well-defined political strategy for nickel. Between October 2010 and February 2012, such orientations were discussed within an Industrial Strategic Committee composed of the signatories to the Nouméa Accord and representatives of local political authorities. The committee of signatories of the Nouméa Accord (which annually brings the political representatives of New Caledonia together in metropolitan France) and the Working Group of Presidents (of New Caledonian provinces) and Signatories, which was created in 2013, have had further discussions. With two expert reports to support them, written by Anne Duthilleul (2012) and by Michel Colin (2016), politicians were able to examine the issues of management and development of mineral resources, the export policy for raw ores, the shareholding structure of metallurgical companies and the contribution of nickel to present and future territorial wealth. After 2016, these questions were deliberately left aside so as not to weigh on the first referendum on political independence which occurred on 4 November 2018. A concerted political strategy on the competences of the Caledonian government therefore remains to be defined (Demmer et al. 2018). As we shall see below, the loyalists reopened the debate in 2020, in a framework that appears to bypass both the previously invited actors and the nationalist approaches.

On the Kanak side, there is a well-defined strategy, called the *doctrine nickel* (“nickel doctrine”). Officially adopted in January 2015 by FLNKS in Kaala-Gomen, it echoes the strategy that started with the Matignon-Oudinot Accords in 1988. In addition to demanding the control of mining titles, it reminds us of the need to process nickel ores in smelters that are more than 50% owned by New Caledonia in order to

maximise profit. In doing so, FLNKS defends the multiplication of processing plants to ensure the processing of ores of different grades, therefore taking into account the progressive depletion of New Caledonian deposits of nickel, the “green gold”. In fact, the doctrine confirmed the historical orientations of the pro-independence movement, which intends to nationalise both the raw resource and its transformation to benefit the “country” rather than private companies. This implies suspending exports of raw ore from the “small miners” with a view to processing them locally and, in the future, processing nickel from elsewhere (especially Indonesia or the Philippines) in New Caledonian smelters. By wanting to create added value by transforming raw ores, FLNKS not only defends the territory’s current development but also hopes that this strategy will make it possible to finance economic diversification and therefore to think about the post-nickel era. More broadly, the nickel doctrine poses the need for the “country” to control the granting of mining titles and extraction permits. The pro-independence movement aspires to transfer mining titles to a New Caledonian public institution capable of deciding when and where to grant mining concessions to extractive companies – a power that currently belongs to provincial administrations.

While the question of authorising the export of unprocessed ores has been particularly debated by the elected representatives, as we shall see below, the prospect of holding three referendums on self-determination between 2018 and 2021 has left other questions relating to the construction of a New Caledonian nickel policy unresolved. These include the question of mining taxation or the creation of a sovereign wealth fund to be financed in whole or in part by nickel, either to implement economic diversification or to build up intergenerational savings. All these issues related to a nickel strategy, although regularly debated, have not yet been decided.

9.6 The Difficulty of Imposing a Kanak Nationalist Strategy

Political and economic critics of the doctrine claim that the FLNKS “offshore model” is not equivalent in terms of benefits to a local processing model. It could even lead to the rapid depletion of nickel ores due to the need to honour delivery contracts with multinational smelter partners. These same critics believe that the repayment of debts contracted with private and public partners and the nickel price crisis on the world market between 2015 and 2021, and again in 2023, has not yet enabled the economic take-off expected from the dividends earned. In terms of tax benefits, the situation is not good either, since the current smelters in New Caledonia benefit from exemptions that apply until they become profitable (a decision voted in 2001 and 2002 to

⁸In detail, the *Schéma* concerns (1) an assessment of the mineral reserves of New Caledonia, (2) prospects for the exploitation of deposits, (3) guiding principles in terms of environmental protection for the exploitation of deposits, (4) identification of geographical areas subject to special policies, (5) orientations in terms of industrial development necessary for mineral resource exploitation with regard to sustainable development and (6) policy principles for the export of mining products.

attract foreign investors). Finally, the exporters of raw ores believe that by demanding the processing of raw ores in local plants, FLNKS is seeking to favour SMSP, of which it is the majority shareholder via SOFINOR, rather than allowing New Caledonia to benefit from nickel revenues. Finally, they invoke freedom of trade principles to counter the nickel doctrine. The scheme established in 2009 guarantees exporters a certain independence from local processors, as it only encourages them to maintain connections with so-called traditional customers.

In this regard, in 2015, a request to export raw ores to China, a non-traditional client of New Caledonia, led to lively debates that illustrated the reluctance of mining operators but also of most political authorities to adopt a raw ore export strategy in line with the nickel doctrine. This debate spilled over into the political sphere, with a large part of the loyalist camp defending a liberal option against the FLNKS strategy, especially against the parliamentary coalition *Union Nationale pour l'Indépendance* composed of *Parti de Libération Kanak* (PALIKA) and *Union Progressiste en Mélanésie* (UPM) parties. However, the pro-independence party *Union Calédonienne* (UC), also a member of the umbrella party FLNKS, was divided on this issue (Demmer 2017). The dispute that took place between 5 and 28 August 2015, seemed to oppose *ContraKmine*, the union of the subcontractors transporting nickel from the mines, and the New Caledonian Government. With fears for their jobs, the union (representing truck owners, subcontractors of the operators, mostly Kanaks) demonstrated against the prohibition on mining companies selling low-grade ores to China. In this conflict, called in the media *conflit des rouleurs* (haulage conflict), the government wanted to respect the decisions of the Strategic Committee at the time. Therefore, the Committee on Foreign Trade in Mining (CCEM), composed of the president of the New Caledonian Government, the provincial presidents and representatives of miners and metallurgists, initially referred the “small mining companies” back to one of their authorised historical Australian clients, even though the latter was in great difficulty and had decided to freeze the price of its purchases for 5 years. After 2.5 weeks of blockades by subcontractors and truck owners paralysing the main roads in Nouméa, a first protocol of agreement was proposed to the leaders of *ContraKmine* and the *Syndicat des Producteurs et Exportateurs de Minerai de Nickel* (SEM), a union representing producers and exporters of nickel ores. The president of the New Caledonian Government committed to reconsider export requests to China and to consult CCEM for possible exports to the Japanese Pacific Metals Company (PAMCO). *ContraKmine* and the miners only obtained the possibility of a re-examination of their request and support for the harmonisation of contracts with the Australian customer, Queensland Nickel. Judging the guarantees to be insufficient, the movement continued demon-

strating. A fatal crash of a driver at a roadblock and the mediation of the UC president finally brought the dispute to an end, on the basis of a slightly different memorandum of understanding.

The story did not end there. The conflict has led to a softening of the previous view of the mining scheme. Modalities for processing raw ores with less than 1.65% nickel were then examined by the New Caledonian parliament. On 14 October 2015, parliament representatives concluded by 27 votes to 25, with two abstentions, that the *Schéma* does not prohibit exports to non-traditional customers such as China, in line with the regulation in force before the initial refusal. The result was that “small mining companies” and SLN were allowed to sell less rich nickel ores to Chinese smelters for a limited period, despite the opposition of a “nickel doctrine support committee”. The latter argued that low-grade nickel ores should not be extracted now but preserved for future exploitation. The aim was that such low-grade nickel ores should later be sold to a smelter that will be built in China and that will be run by a Chinese-New Caledonian consortium including SMSP. One interpretation is that the nickel crisis, for pragmatic reasons, has overridden the Kanak nationalists’ desire to control exports. However, the conflict can be considered as an ideological battle between a liberal vision of the sector’s management and a more Keynesian conception compatible with an economic (and political) emancipation sought by FLNKS. In a third interpretation, the conflict can be seen as a mobilisation aiming to destabilise SMSP – and nationalists – and their integrated economic model. To defend the nationalist position, the *Union Nationale pour l'Indépendance* (UNI) organised conferences throughout 2016 devoted to the SMSP’s strategy, explaining the drawbacks of exporting raw ores in the context of a nickel low price crisis and the inadequacy of sustainable management of the nickel sector. Its supporters even launched a legal action in the administrative court to annul a licence granted by the Caledonian government in 2015 (after the conflict) to the Ballande company, to export ores to the (Japanese) Sumitomo smelter (Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes 2016). But nothing changed. Since the conflict, other contracts with Chinese clients have been validated.

By opening up a new export channel, the *ContraKmine* struggle has thwarted the nickel doctrine. It also modified the philosophy of the *Schéma minier*, aiming to restrict the authorised export channels. In the appendices to the *Schéma*, point 15 of paragraph 4 (dealing with the industrial development guidelines for mineral exploitation from a sustainable development perspective) states that mining operators should not be dependent on local smelters. However, point 17 highlights that the conditions for authorising exports depend on future market evolution and other criteria, including those of the preservation of interests and benefits for the miner and also for public authorities. Divergent interpretations have

thus arisen, allowing different responses to this nickel export crisis. While the prevailing interpretation gave the advantage to the mining operators, another interpretation focussed on New Caledonia. In any case, the crisis has shown that the nickel doctrine, with its desire to control nickel ore exports, did not prevail.

In July 2020, Thierry Santa, president of the conservative *Le Rassemblement* party and president of the New Caledonian Government at that time, validated the principle of a new work cycle dedicated to nickel, called “a new nickel for a new world”, which bypassed the historical players. FLNKS personalities such as the president of the North Province, Paul Néaoutyine, have criticised this principle. They argued that a working group with local politicians and the French State on nickel has existed for a long time (15 years) without ever having been able to develop a common strategy (Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes 2020). Santa’s initiative led to bills submitted to the parliament (*Congrès*) on 4 August 2020 (Projet de loi de pays. Rapport n°46 et projet de délibération n° 48), and 5 November 2021 (Congrès Proposition de loi de pays n°71). The first bills proposed amending the mining code to allow (for a limited period) the export of raw ores from SLN’s Tiébaghi mine and from the Goro mine (Vale NC’s deposit at the time) (see Fig. 9.2), which are normally due to be processed in an ad hoc smelter. The latest bill on 5 November 2021, explicitly states that it is a response to claims based on the Kanak connection to land, with the aim of developing mineral wealth – through local implication. The bill concerns the authorisation of mining exploitation under a sublease (amodiation), a contract allowing the exploitation and sale of ores in return for a royalty payable to the primary lease holder. The ores could therefore be exploited by a company with a majority shareholding of a person under of public law (*personne de droit public*). A mining concession can be assigned to such a company without the need for a “personal mining authorisation” (APM, *Autorisation Personnelle Minière*). This law proposal, extending some discussions related to the Vale conflict (selling of the smelter and mine in March 2021), opens up the possibility for public players, particularly from the South Province, to become involved for the first time, in a different way than in the North Province, in the exploitation of nickel. Indeed, this sublease in exchange for a royalty, which allows the sale of nickel ores, was discussed in detail during the relaunch of the Goro Nickel project with the new consortium. The proposal seems also to be in line with a demand made in middle of 2010 by a group of Kanak subcontractors affiliated to UC, called the Federation of Small Kanak Miners (Demmer 2019). This grouping wanted to see Kanak people, in municipalities near mine sites, to become mining operators recognised in the name of “the connection to land” (with the help of companies made up of shareholders

grouped into clans and chieftainships). The Federation defended the idea that nickel, although a national resource, is first of all a local heritage of specific clans. In the light of this recent mobilisation, the objective of the proposed law becomes clearer. In addition to reinforcing the direct benefits from the nickel sector in the South Province, the bill also encourages the recognition of clan or community societies as mining operators although they have a legal status of customary civil law (in opposition to public law)⁹ – through the Fonds de Prévention des Risques Environnementaux et Socioculturels (FPRESC), which can get subleases. This is a new opportunity for companies run by clans or communities (with “people’s shareholding”), as they are generally not able to obtain an APM because they lack the required financial and technical capacity. In any case, it can be seen that the range of Kanak claims to sovereignty over nickel resources are taking increasingly varied forms, more or less supported by a democratic conception of the Kanak nation.

9.7 Unfinished Decolonisation

All of the above casts light on the process of decolonisation. The “caledonisation” of metallurgical companies and the mining *schéma* of 2009 is an achievement of the Kanak struggle for “national” control over mineral resources, but other struggles continue. The independence leaders are not the only actors in the management of New Caledonian mineral resources, either in the nickel sector or in the political arena. They have to deal in particular with “small miners” who defend their own interests. They also must deal with loyalist politicians, generally non-Kanak, with whom they have agreed to form one people (Demmer 2018). In July 2021, the presidency of the collegial New Caledonian government was for the first time won by a pro-independence leader, Louis Mapou of PALIKA (“Kanak Liberation Party”), after more than 30 years of political agreements. Out of the 54 members of the parliament, 32 seats are allocated to elected representatives from the South Province (mainly loyalists), 15 to those from the North Province and 7 to those from the Loyalty Islands (mainly pro-independence representatives). But for those advocating for *Kanaky-Nouvelle-Calédonie*, the challenge remains to convince non-Kanak citizens to build an independent country with them. FLNKS must continue to assert common interests to

⁹Communities (*tribus*) created by the colonial administration with the *cantonment* policy, represented by a chief, are part of customary *districts* corresponding to larger chiefdoms founded on the territory of municipalities. These Kanak communities are legal persons but are not currently recognised in public law; they instead fall under customary civil law.

one day achieve its goals, such as defending mineral resources as national heritage.

The position of the autonomist party *Calédonie Ensemble* in the *conflit des rouleurs* shows that a kind of convergence of perspective is possible. Indeed, while not supporting political independence, *Calédonie Ensemble* joined with FLNKS on the question of economic benefits for the “country” and thinking about some form of common destiny. Since the referendum period, both conservative parties *Le Rassemblement* and *Les Républicains Calédoniens* support in contrast a “hyper-provincialisation”, a kind of autonomy of the provinces that could permit or maintain separate ethnic groups and conserve the benefits acquired since the colonial period by a territory which is now the South Province. The multiculturalist policy developed at the end of the 1980s, based on the promotion of Kanak identity and the reduction of interethnic inequalities, which implied that the richest province had to make more of an effort, is deeply contested. In contrast, some parties composed of non-Kanaks, like *Calédonie Ensemble*, seem less afraid to share economic or political power without going so far as to support the foundation of a new common nation.

For its part, the French government worked for a long time in support of a *rapprochement* between supporters of independence and loyalists, in the hope of establishing a durable peace. It even tried to encourage the emergence of a national sentiment, either to prepare for independence or to strengthen autonomy within the French Republic. It defended the economic empowerment of the “country” by supporting the mining *schéma* annexed to the Nouméa Accord. By supporting the involvement of independentists into the nickel sector, it sought to ensure peace by promoting a sharing of the “nickel cake” while hoping that Kanaks would participate in boosting the territory’s GDP and contribute to lightening the State’s financial burden in New Caledonia. Thereafter, it tried to accommodate each of the opposing parties. Therefore, the 14th meeting of the Committee of Signatories of the Nouméa Accord in February 2016, which devised an economic plan for the mining and metallurgy sectors, enabled both SLN (through financial aid from the State) and the “small miners” to be strengthened by allowing both of them to benefit from the plan. It also helped the latter, by allowing a review of ore exports to China, and SMSP, by inviting other mining operators to support it in supplying the Gwangyang smelter in South Korea so that it can honour its commitments to the Korean manufacturer. However, during the fight led by the independentists for the takeover of Goro Nickel in 2020, Emmanuel Macron’s France was initially much less conciliatory with FLNKS and has since (particularly in 2023) shown clear signs of *rapprochement* with the loyalists (Trépiéd 2021).

9.8 Conclusion

In the complex history of the struggle to reclaim mining resources, FLNKS won a battle with the takeover of SMSP by the North Province. Through SMSP and SOFINOR, FLNKS has taken a place in a sector previously reserved for non-Kanaks, which it has largely helped to transform and revitalise with the aim of building independence. FLNKS is not the master of the New Caledonian nickel game, but it did not seek to be. In wanting to prove itself economically in the circle of miners and industrialists, locally or even globally, the challenge for the coalition was to make the most of it for the “country” and its inhabitants. This is the meaning given to the prospect of nationalisation, which does not necessarily mean, for all members of FLNKS, defending a socialist vision of the economy.

In the absence of independence and ownership of nickel resources, the nationalisation strategy took the form of a (semi-public) appropriation of one mining company. This struggle has borne fruit. After 1998 and more recently in 2020, the idea of provincial participation in the three New Caledonian smelters was accepted. After years of struggle, semi-public ownership of nickel resources – or rather of the companies that exploit and process it – has been strengthened. Yet, if the “mining scheme” was a step forward in control of nickel sector by the New Caledonian political class, according to increased autonomy of New Caledonia in the Nouméa Accord, where the failure seems more bitter, it is in the implementation of a common nickel policy. Already battered since the 2015 *conflit des rouleurs*, it seems to be moving further away after the pro-independence failure in the referendums. A large part of the anti-independence political class does not accept the idea of a centralised control of resources. The freedom of enterprise is presented as sacred, as is the idea that each province in possession of the “green gold” should be able to benefit as much as possible from nickel extraction.

In the past agreements, provincialisation, supporting an ethnically based territorial economic rebalancing, was a difficulty in creating a common destiny for all Caledonians, based on something more than just equity between ethnic groups. Thinking about the reinforcement of a *communauté des citoyens* (community of citizens) (Schnapper 1994), a new Caledonian community based on equality between citizens as FLNKS would prefer is not on the political agenda, except perhaps for some parties which defend an autonomist and non-independent perspective. The policy of equitable development, initiated by Michel Rocard in 1988, now sounds to some (*Le Rassemblement* or *Les Républicains*) like a failure that should lead to a reduction in the weight of the government and a strengthening of the power of the provinces. Such conception enshrines a desire to break off dialogue between pro- and

anti-independence parties and even to fragment the “country”. This means that the enactment of social justice between citizens, which involves sharing the same country together, is not the preference of loyalists, especially anxious to challenge the presence in the South of Kanaks from the North and the Islands, who are perceived as parasites on local social assistance. In 2021, even *La Chambre Territoriale des Comptes* (“The Territorial Audit Chamber”) has questioned the legality of the presence of the North and Islands’ provinces in the SPMSC on the grounds that the smelter is not located on their territories, and these two provinces should be required to respect the geographical perimeters in which they exercise their powers (CTC Nouvelle-Calédonie 2021).

Although SOFINOR promoted the development of entrepreneurship in the different municipalities of the North Province, and FLNKS saw it as a way to reduce economic inequalities within the province, the provincial logic of nickel re-appropriation is detrimental to the advancement of inter-ethnic social justice in New Caledonia. More broadly, the process of nickel nationalisation is conducive to the enrichment of the territory but cannot be considered as an effective tool for reducing inequalities. A new community of citizens with equal rights is constructed with the help of other political dynamics. In this respect, the decolonisation of New Caledonia (within the Republic or not) has not yet been achieved. Moreover, it is the persistence of social inequalities that leads to a competition between two different visions for New Caledonia-Kanaky: a nationalist vision and a demand for Indigenous recognition based on ethnic difference (Graff 2012; Demmer and Salomon 2017). The legal proposal to assign a mining concession to a company without the need for a “personal mining authorisation” (APM) that is granted if there is “connection to land” signals this kind of tension between different conceptions of Kanak sovereignty and at least conceptions that envisage nested levels of sovereignty. But, to date, the establishment of distinct community rights (claimed only by a minority of Kanaks and which suits the anti-independence movement because it does not require independence) is still not considered as a satisfactory resolution of the colonial problem by FLNKS. The latter remains attached to a unitary conception of the nation. It promotes a cultural pluralism under private law, attached to a particular personal status called “customary”.

References

- Bencivengo Y (2014) Nickel. La naissance de l’industrie calédonienne. Presses universitaires François-Rabelais, coll. Perspectives historiques, Tours
- Blanchet G (1999) Réflexions sur le concept de rééquilibrage en Nouvelle-Calédonie. In: David G, Guillaud D, Pillon P (eds) La Nouvelle-Calédonie à la croisée des chemins: 1989–1997. Société des Océanistes, Paris, pp 28–45
- Bouard S, Levacher C, Bencivengo Y, Decottigny L, Demmer C, Le Meur P-Y, Blaise S, Burton J, Enjuanes F, Grochain S (2018) Petites et moyennes entreprises minières en Nouvelle-Calédonie, Rapport scientifique final du programme PME Minières en Nouvelle-Calédonie
- Burton J, Levacher C (2021) The state that cannot absent itself: New Caledonia as opposed to Papua New Guinea and Australia. In: Bainton NA, Skrzypek EE (eds) The absent presence of the state in large-scale resource extraction projects. ANU Press, pp 313–346. <https://doi.org/10.22459/AP.2021.10>
- Castel R (2008) La citoyenneté sociale menacée. *Cités* 35(3):133–141
- Chappell D (2013/2017) Le réveil kanak. La montée du nationalisme en Nouvelle-Calédonie, Madrépores-Punc (Presses universitaires de la Nouvelle-Calédonie), Nouméa
- Colin M (2016) Adapter le modèle de gouvernance du nickel et préciser la stratégie minière et industrielle. Rapport Congrès Proposition de loi de pays portant modification du code minier de la Nouvelle-Calédonie, du code des Impôts de la Nouvelle-Calédonie et du code civil, et relative à l’amodiation de concession minière aux fins de mise en valeur de la richesse minière territoriale, 71, 5 novembre 2021
- CTC Nouvelle-Calédonie (2021) Rapport d’observations définitives, Les interventions de la Province Nord dans le nickel. Exercice 2016 à 2019
- David C, Sourisseau J-M (2016) De Matignon à la consultation sur l’indépendance : une trajectoire politique et institutionnelle originale. In: Bouard S, Sourisseau J-M, Geronimi V, Blaise S, Ro’i L (eds) La Nouvelle-Calédonie face à son destin : Quel bilan à la veille de la consultation sur la pleine souveraineté ? Karthala, coll. Hommes et sociétés, Paris, pp 23–69
- Demmer C (2007) Une nouvelle stratégie kanake. *Vacarme* 39:43–48
- Demmer C (2016) Socialisme kanak. Une expérience politique à Canala (Nouvelle-Calédonie), coll. Karapaa. Karthala, Paris
- Demmer C (2017) L’export du nickel au cœur du débat politique néocalédonien. *Mouvements* 91:130–140
- Demmer C, Salomon C (2017) À propos du Sénat coutumier. De la promotion mélanésienne à la défense des droits autochtones. In: Demmer C, Trépiéd B (eds) La coutume kanak dans l’Etat. Perspectives coloniales et postcoloniales sur la Nouvelle-Calédonie, Coll. Cahiers du Pacifique sud contemporain, hors-série, vol 3. L’Harmattan, Paris, pp 97–134
- Demmer C (2018) Un peuple Calédonien ? La vie des idées. https://laviedesidees.fr/_Demmer-Christine_.html
- Demmer C with Le Meur P-Y, Sourisseau J-M (2018) Quelle stratégie nickel après le référendum d’indépendance ? Médiapart. <https://blogs.mediapart.fr/edition/les-invites-de-mediapart/article/301018/quelle-strategie-nickel-apres-le-referendum-d-independance>
- Demmer C (2019) La catégorie petit mineur au prisme des revendications nationalistes. In: Bouard S, Levacher C, Bencivengo Y, Decottigny L et al (eds) Petites et moyennes entreprises minières en Nouvelle-Calédonie, Rapport de recherche, tome Nickel et Environnement, CNRT Nickel et son environnement, pp 44–65
- Demmer C (2021) Souveraineté(s) kanake(s) au pays du nickel (Nouvelle-Calédonie) : Deux écologies politiques à l’examen. *Écologie & Politique* 63:57–73
- Duthilleul A (2012) Schéma stratégique industriel de la Nouvelle-Calédonie. Rapport
- Freyss J (1995) Économie assistée et changement social en Nouvelle-Calédonie, Paris, PUF, coll. Tiers-Monde/IEDES
- Fraser N (2011) Qu’est-ce que la justice sociale ? Reconnaissance et redistribution. La Découverte, Paris
- Gilbert D, Guillaud D, Pillon P (1999) Introduction. La loi du nombre. In: Gilbert D, Guillaud D, Pillon P (eds) La Nouvelle-Calédonie à la croisée des chemins. Société des Océanistes/IRD, Paris, pp 15–35

- Graff S (2012) Quand combat et revendication kanak ou politique de l'État français manient indépendance, décolonisation, autodétermination et autochtonie en Nouvelle-Calédonie. *Journal de la Société des Océanistes* 134:61–83
- Horowitz LS (2015) Culturally articulated neoliberalisation: Corporate social responsibility and the capture of indigenous legitimacy in New Caledonia. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 40(1):88–101
- Kowasch M (2010) Les populations kanak face au développement de l'industrie du nickel en Nouvelle-Calédonie. PhD thesis in Geography. Université Paul Valéry Montpellier III/Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg, Montpellier/Heidelberg
- Le Meur P-Y, Grochain S, Kowasch M, Poithily D (2012) La soustraction comme interface, Rapport CNRT Nickel et son environnement. https://horizon.documentation.ird.fr/exl-doc/pleins_textes/divers19-02/010075040.pdf
- Mauss M (2018) La nation, ou le sens du social, Collection Quadrige. PUF, Paris
- Mohamed-Gaillard S (2020) Michel Rocard et la Nouvelle-Calédonie. Une décolonisation dans la République. In: Bergounioux A (ed) Michel Rocard Premier ministre. Presses de Sciences Po Académique, Paris, pp 161–174
- Morvannou P (ed) (2015) Nickel, métal du diable ou vecteur du développement. Cabinet Syndex, Nouméa
- Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes (2016) La province Nord défend sa doctrine nickel, 05/05/2016
- Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes (2020). [Il ne faut pas laisser filer les titres miniers et les ressources](#), 25/09/2020
- Levacher C (2016) De la terre à la mine ? Les chemins de l'autochtonie en Nouvelle-Calédonie », thèse en anthropologie. EHESS-Paris
- Merle I, Muckle A (2019) L'indigénat. Genèses dans l'empire français. Pratiques en Nouvelle-Calédonie. CNRS éditions, Paris
- Muckle A (2015) Putting Kanak to work: Kanak and the colonial labor system in New Caledonia. *J Pac Stud* 38(3):345–372
- Pidjot R (1993) Un projet de société différent (la terre, l'entreprise, le pays), Mwâ Véeé, 1, May 1993
- Pitoiset A (2002) L'actionnariat populaire en province Nord de la Nouvelle-Calédonie. Société de profit dans une société de partage, DEA in Economic Anthropology, University of New Caledonia, Nouméa
- Pitoiset A (2015) Le nickel, une passion calédonienne. Le Rayon vert, Nouméa
- Schnapper D (1994) La Communauté des citoyens. Sur l'idée moderne de nation, Gallimard, coll. NRF essais
- SMSP (2015) Exportations vers des fondeurs étrangers vs usine off-shore : même performance ? <https://www.blogsmsp.nc/exportations-vers-des-fondeurs-etrangeurs-vs-usine-off-shore-meme-performance/>
- Syndicat des producteurs-exportateurs et exportateurs de minerai (2016) Eléments de réflexion sur la situation de la profession minière en Nouvelle-Calédonie
- Trépied B (2021) Le retour de l'Etat colonial en Nouvelle-Calédonie, Libération, 21/12/2021

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

