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Bringing the Neo-Patrimonial State back to Europe

French Decolonization and the Making of the European Development Aid Policy

«Des décennies d'aide au développement ne semblent pas avoir donné les résultats escomptés. Cela tient essentiellement au fait que notre relation était fondée et figée sur un principe de dépendance donateur-bénéficiaire. Notre partenariat fut, de ce fait, trop souvent mis en échec par des non dits, les embarras de l'Histoire, les suspicions, voire les humiliations. Ce schéma archaïque ne correspond plus à la réalité ni aux aspirations et aux défis qui se posent à l'Afrique comme à l'Europe. Il nous faut aujourd'hui changer la nature de ce partenariat. Il s'agit de redéfinir une relations privilégiée et de nature nouvelle entre l'Afrique et l'Europe. J'irais même plus loin: il faut changer la psychologie de notre relation héritée de l'expérience coloniale et post-coloniale.»¹

This judgement from Louis Michel, Commissioner for Development, was brought forward on the EU-African Summit in Lisbon, 7 December 2007. At this conference, the African and European Union heads of states met for the second time. They meant to adopt a joint EU-Africa strategy for development and discuss again a 50 years old partnership, what had been for years the main, if not the only, external action of the European Economic Community, the EEC: the Cotonou agreement with the African Caribbean and Pacific states (2000), previously and successively called the »Association« with Overseas Territories, the Yaoundé and Lomé Conventions with the African Caribbean and Pacific countries. In his speech, Michel was all too right in insisting on the colonial aspect of this partnership. The Association was born on the corps of dying empires, those of France and Belgium in Sub-Saharan Africa. Quickly, it became the recycling ground for the very leaders and gravediggers of colonial institutions: ex-colonial officials.

Earlier, those officials had been exerting authorities in the name of France, Belgium and Britain in large territories where they supervised the first development plans launched in the 1940s. Then quickly, they had to leave behind states and administrations which largely bore the mark of their own government and practices, what Africanists referred to as »neo-patrimonial« systems:² from outside, those states resembled any bureaucracy, with its procedural kind of control, its hierarchies, transparency and impersonal rules. From inside, they were taken over by the very elite with whom ex-colonial officials used to work and who replicated the kind of government they were involved in for years, a patrimonial kind of authority and legitimacy which rested on bonds of trust, loyalty, mutual dependence and permanent exception to the rules. In that system, characterised by opacity and personal relationships, the distribution of resources to »clients«, usually restricted to a specific clan, was the basis of power. To say that colonial officials left behind this »neo-patrimonial system« is inaccurate, however. It would be more appropriate to state that they brought part of it back to the heart of Europe...

Indeed, as decolonization proved impending, finding new building sites became a necessity. Development, this new white man's burden, was the natural site to start a second

1 »L'Europe-Afrique: l'indispensable alliance« conférence des Parlements Européen et Panafricain, Lisbonne, 7 décembre 1997.

2 On this system see *J. F. Bayart*, *L'Etat en Afrique: la politique du ventre*, Paris 1989; *F. Cooper*, *Africa since 1940: the past of the present*, Cambridge 2002; *J. F. Médard* (ed.), *Etats d'Afrique Noire*, Paris 1991; *T. Chafer*, *The end of empire in French West Africa. France's successful decolonization*, Oxford 2002.

career. From Dakar some of these French colonial officials directly sailed to Brussels and engaged in the most challenging venture of the time: the building of a European Economic Community, more precisely of the services responsible for the Association within the European Commission, the Directorate General 8 (DG 8). As will be shown, they eventually »transfused« their colonial »psychology« to some of the nascent EEC institutions, i. e. they built up administrative methods which resembled or were well adapted to the neo-patrimonial style of their African political »clients«. This adaptation was all the more necessary because of the main paradox the DG 8 had to face during the first years of its existence. The mission it had to serve was largely influenced by the colonial interests of France, but was less and less accepted by most territories concerned. To convince them that the Association was not the continuation of the colonial past but »a grande œuvre de solidarité«, to gain the support of the nascent African political elite when independence became impending, the DG 8 had to compromise with them as well as to adapt its action and discourse to their political needs and way of working. In this context, the expertise, knowledge and networks of former ex-colonial officials who started working in the DG 8 were a great asset, and allowed them to build their own authority and power within the Directorate General. As a result, DG 8's legitimacy and identity, i. e. its ideal for action, *esprit de corps* and its administrative system, became largely linked to the colonial and post-colonial psychology of ex-colonial officials and of their African clientele.

Starting from a historical point of view but also borrowing from a sociological perspective, this article will address the question of the transfer of values, norms, practices and methods of public action, from colonial to development administrations. Within the framework of the building of a multi-national administration, it will also deal with the issue of loyalty and autonomy of the Commission officials vis-à-vis their member states. The article will proceed as such: we will first present the context in which this process took place. Then, we will consider the role played by French ex-colonial officials in building the DG 8, its identity, autonomy and legitimacy. Finally, we will analyse their confrontation with the main stakeholder of the Association, France.

I. FRENCH BURDEN IN AFRICA

There is no doubt that France saw the nascent European Economic Community as an opportunity to maintain its influence in Africa and perpetuate its colonial mission, at a time when it did not have any more means, financially speaking and politically, to fulfil its ambition.³ As Maurice Faure, then French Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, put it:

»What a better chance for Europe than this agreement with Africa? The authority of Europe in the world affairs will overtake the authority of the member states [...]. The union of the two continents will have some weight on the world balance of power and will have some weight in favour of the peace and entente between the peoples of the world. Should France be frightened by the association of the overseas territories to the economic community? No. By opening to its overseas people new and large perspectives of an union with Europe, [...] we will perpetuate our influence.«⁴

3 Special number of the Journal *Matériaux pour l'Histoire de notre Temps* 77, *Europe et Afrique au tournant des indépendances*, edited by G. Bossuat, 2005; *Gérard Bossuat/Marie-Thérèse Bitsch* (eds.), *L'Europe unie et l'Afrique: de l'idée d'Eurafrrique à la convention de Lomé I*, Paris 2004; *R. Schreurs*, *Un leg historique: l'Eurafrrique dans les négociations du Traité de Rome*, in: *Politique Africaine* 49, 1993, pp. 82–92. *P. Guillen*, *L'avenir de l'Union Française dans les négociations du traité de Rome*, in: *Relations Internationales* 57, 1989, pp. 103–112.

4 *Faure*, quoted by *Guido Thiemeyer*, *West German Perceptions of Africa and the Association of the Overseas Territories with the Common Market 1956–1957*, in: *Bossuat/Bitsch*, pp. 269–286.

In 1956, France was still recovering from the war in Indochina. It had to face the Suez Crisis, the independence of Tunisia and Morocco and it was more and more involved in the Algerian ›disorder‹. For the French post-war elite, the maintenance of an empire was considered as essential if France was to regain its status as world power.⁵ When France renamed its empire ›French Union‹ in 1946, it had to engage in a new ›white man's burden‹: the social and economic development of what was then called its ›overseas territories‹ in Tropical Africa. Since the 1930s, the development discourse had progressively replaced the old civilising mission to justify its colonial status.⁶ The 1946 Constitution clearly mentioned that France's aim was to ensure the security and welfare of overseas peoples while developing their respective civilisations. Concretely, a specific Fund, the ›Fonds d'Investissement pour le Développement Economique et Social‹ (FIDES) was set up for development purposes in 1946, but its scope remained limited for financial reasons. Indeed, weakened economically by the war, France did not have any longer the means to pursue its imperial role. Between 1950 and 1958, French public investments overseas represented between 3,5 and four percent of the expenses of the French State. Maintaining such an empire became more and more ruinous, especially as the elite of its overseas territories were claiming equality of treatment, politically and socially speaking.⁷

The constitution of 1946 only partially answered their demands:⁸ a common citizenship was created for all the inhabitants of the French Union and the principle of ›equality of rights and obligations‹ was declared, but the rights that were granted to the former subjects of empire were different to those of the French citizens: the right to vote was limited to certain categories of persons and these could only send a limited number of representatives to the French National Assembly in Paris, even though those representatives were allowed to take part in special commissions and could be appointed ministers in the French government, like e.g. Houphouët Boigny who became a deputy minister in 1956. Federal institutions were set up (like the Assembly of the French Union, the Council of the French Union), but were purely advisory bodies without legislative powers. Territorial assemblies were elected for each territory, but their power was left unresolved, later on carefully circumscribed by the law of 25 October 1946 which specified the constitution. Campaigns launched locally by trade unions for the extension of social security benefits to overseas workers, family allowances, a labour code similar to the French labour legislation, equal pay for equal work and a real local education system could only lead to piecemeal reforms, especially when the costs of such project became unacceptable to metropolitan tax payers.⁹

The *loi-cadre Defferre*, as finalised by the French Parliament in June 1956, was a new framework legislation for the overseas territories. It constituted a more definite landmark towards local political autonomy: government councils were set up in the territories. Also, it was decided to give a partial devolution of power to the territorial assemblies, especially in the field of social and economic development.¹⁰ This represented a step forward towards

5 *Chafer*, pp. 85, 92.

6 See *F. Cooper*, *Decolonization and African society. The labour question in French and British Africa*, Cambridge 1996; *V. Dimier*, *For a Republic ›diverse and indivisible‹? Experience from the colonial past*, in: *Journal of Contemporary European History* 13, 2004, pp. 45–66.

7 *J. Marseille*, *Empire colonial et capitalisme français, histoire d'un divorce*, Paris 1989, p. 104. This represented 1740 millions of dollar between 1946 and 1955, according to the OEEC figures, quoted by *D'Elmeida Topor/M. Lakroum*, *L'Europe et l'Afrique. Un siècle d'échanges économiques*, Paris 1984, p. 58. See *Cooper*, *Decolonization*.

8 On this evolution see *Chafer*, pp. 65–66; *Dimier*, *For a Republic*.

9 See *Chafer*; *Cooper*, *Decolonization*.

10 The French government remained responsible for: ›foreign affairs, defence, police (apart from municipal and rural police), customs service and certain other areas of policy deemed important for ›maintaining the solidarity of the elements comprising the Republic‹, such as financial

the confederation called *Communauté Française*, as it was intended by De Gaulle and written in the French constitution of 1958. The constitution granted full internal autonomy to the territories while maintaining French predominance in the confederation – the President of the *Communauté* being the French President of the Republic. It allowed the territories to choose by a referendum between being part of the Community or becoming independent. Following this referendum on 28 September 1958, all French colonies, Guinea excepted, agreed to be part of it. However, as the *Communauté* failed to convince them of the potential benefits they could draw from it, and when France was accused of too much interference in the internal affairs of some of these countries, they eventually followed Guinea's example. Thus very quickly, they opted one by one for independence in the early 1960s, which led this Community to be short-lived.

At that time, France was already well engaged in building a new Community in Europe itself. Indeed, while trying to save its Franco-African empire, it was also negotiating with its European partners how to participate in the future Common Market. The idea of finding some arrangements for French overseas territories within that context, already envisaged earlier at different stages of the European integration, was proposed again during the negotiations of the Treaty of Rome.¹¹ Gaston Defferre, then Minister for colonies, raised the issue within the Mollet government in April 1956, just before the Parliament decided about the *loi-cadre Defferre*. His plan led to numerous discussions amongst various ministries as to how the Common Market could become a »eurafriquean common market«. ¹² Soon, it was recognised that those territories were too diverse as well as too different economically, institutionally and politically to be fully integrated together with France into the future European Economic Community. Thus, some different arrangements and guarantees, soon to be called »Association«, had to be found and proposed to France's European partners.

In order to justify this proposal, the French government developed the following economic argument: France formed with its overseas territories a »common market«¹³ which was much more integrated than the one envisaged in Europe and which could not be disrupted without ruining years of efforts and a lot of money for the development of those territories. Indeed, thanks to the West African currency Franc CFA (*Franc de la Communauté Financière d'Afrique*) and the system of colonial preferences, France constituted with its overseas territories a large trade and monetary zone. The trade barrier which was set around itself and its empire largely protected its products and those of its overseas territories from external competition. The system of colonial preferences meant that French enterprises had free access to the market of the overseas territories and vice versa. Those commercial links were vital to the colonies: »In 1953, 85 % of French West Africa's imports came from France and nearly all of its exports went to France. [...] As well as depending on the French to buy their product at inflated prices the Africans depended on

and monetary regime, communication, the media and higher education«. *Chafer*, p. 166. »The territorial assemblies were given budgetary responsibility for those areas of policy concerned with African economic and social development that posed the most serious financial and therefore also political, difficulties for the colonial authorities«. *Ibid.*, p. 167.

11 *Guillen*, p. 106, and seq. *C. Twitchett*, *Europe and Africa: from association to partnership*, Farnborough 1978, pp. 3 f.; *M. Lister*, *The European Community and the Developing world*, Aldershot 1988, p. 15.

12 *Guillen*, p. 106

13 Word used by G. Defferre, French Overseas Minister during the French preparatory works for the Venice Conference: Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères (A. M. A. E.), série Affaires économiques et financières, sous-série, service de la coopération économique, Box 719: letter from G. Defferre to the French Foreign Minister (Pineau) 17 May 1956. He compared directly the economic links between France and its overseas territories with the future economic links of the European Common Market.

French capital (from 1947 to 1956, 70 % of public capital in French West Africa came from France).¹⁴ So it was clear that »any sudden change in the economic relations of the colonial African economies and France would have seriously damaged the Africans. The EEC's application of its common external tariff to the colonies' exports to France would have been such detrimental change.«¹⁵

In so far as France was less and less able to absorb the agricultural production of its empire and less and less able to cope financially with its African »burden«, it proposed the following deal to its European partners: it would open progressively the African market to other member states' goods and enterprises in exchange of them taking part into the financing of a European Development Fund and opening their border to French colonial products. These proposals were supported by important personalities of the French business colonial circles, e. g. neo-liberals like Robert Lemaigen, the future European Commissioner for Development, who, within European economic movements (especially the *Ligue Européenne de coopération Economique*), militated in favour of closer relationships between the future Common Market and Africa.¹⁶ Their position may not have been shared unanimously by all French businessmen in Africa, however: many were hostile to the opening of the colonial markets to enterprises and industries of other member states and feared the destruction of the Franc area, which gave French firms in Africa a real monopoly.¹⁷ The latter ones tried to inhibit these steps towards an arrangement by lobbying against it at the French Ministry of Finance, but failed. Indeed, the French Minister of Finance supported the argument of the French Minister for Colonies concerning the Association: given the weakness of the Franc and the deficit of the French budget, the financial burden of the empire had become unbearable for the French economy, which may have ended up in a situation of inferiority vis-à-vis the economic comeback of the Germans.¹⁸ Sharing this African burden had become an economic necessity.

The other argument advanced by the French government to justify the Association was more political: France and its overseas territories constituted a *Union Française* fully recognised in the 1946 Constitution, and nobody would agree that »it should sacrifice its African vocation for a European one.«¹⁹ Those territories were an integral part of the Republic, so leaving them out of the European Economic Community would simply be anti-constitutional and would surely lead to what was still called »secession«²⁰, namely independence. It was also feared that this would facilitate the access of the USSR to the new states.²¹ At a time when the USA followed the domino theory and were pressing West European countries and especially Germany to have a development policy that would support the American approach, this was a strong argument.²² Besides, with its colonies and their 40 millions inhabitants, it was assumed that France would have more weight and power within the European institutions. Additionally, it was argued that with such pro-

14 »While trade in Africa was only a small proportion of French trade«, *Lister*, p. 16.

15 *Ibid.*

16 Lemaigen had been President of the *Société commerciale des ports africains* (1941–1958). He had also been a member of the governing board of the *Compagnie de l'Afrique Orientale et de la Banque d'Afrique Occidentale*. From 1942 to 1958 he was Vice President of the *Chambre de Commerce Internationale*. After 1945 he also became a leading personality of the *Conseil National du Patronat Français*. C. Hodeir, *Stratégies d'Empire: le grand patronat colonial face à la décolonisation*, Paris/Berlin 2003.

17 *Guillen*, p. 106.

18 *Ibid.*, p. 106, 110.

19 Letter from G. Defferre to the French Foreign Minister (Pineau) 17 May 1956.

20 Word used by G. Defferre, *Ibid.*

21 *Guillen*, p. 105.

22 H. I. Schmidt, Pushed to the front: the foreign assistance policy of the federal republic of Germany, 1958–1971, in: *Contemporary European History* 12, 2005, pp. 473–507.

posals African representatives within the French Assembly would be less tempted to vote against the European project, as they did in 1954, during the European Defence Community debates. »The pattern of shifting alliances between parties, which provided French governments with small and often fragile majorities in parliament, meant that overseas députés could on occasion exert influence disproportionate to their small numbers«.²³

Armed with those arguments, the French representatives went into the negotiations of the Venice Conference of May 1956. They made it clear that France would not agree to build a European Economic Community without specific arrangements for its overseas territories, thus making it a pre-condition to their entering the EEC.²⁴ Of course, the main task was for »our representatives in the negotiations to convince our partners that our offer is extremely constructive and that the accomplishment of a common mission in Africa is probably the greatest task which can be proposed to a Common Europe«.²⁵ However, this proved to be difficult, because it did not meet the interests of those partners.²⁶ After long debates, the French proposal was finally accepted with some modifications, and with reluctance from Germany and the Netherlands. As defined in the Treaty of Rome, the Association with overseas territories and countries »shall serve primarily to further the interests and prosperity of the inhabitants of these countries and territories in order to lead them to the economic, social and cultural development to which they aspire« (art. 131 of the Treaty, part IV), a mission which was consistent with the Charter of the United Nations. In 1958, only 18 overseas territories and countries which had »special relations«, not to say colonial, with some of the member states, were included in those arrangements. They were mostly French and Belgian colonies in Tropical Africa.²⁷ The Association included two aspects regarding the economic integration of the African territories, one commercial, left mainly into the hands of the member states, the other financial, run by the European Commission. After a close look at the situation, it seems that this European mission was less accepted for itself and the sake of the African peoples than for the sake of the European Economic Community ... Indeed, there is no doubt that for none of the member states but France and Belgium it constituted a new servitude.

II. EUROPEAN SERVITUDES

However, for the French government and the majority in the French Assembly, the inclusion of the Association within the Treaty of Rome was a great success. It bore an opportunity to preserve the future of the French Union and enhance the international position of France, not to say of the future European Economic Community.²⁸ Surely France struck a very good financial bargain: the Association envisaged the creation of a European Development Fund for overseas territories (FEDOM), a grant in aid of 581 millions of units

23 *Chafer*, p. 87.

24 *Guillen*, p. 106; *Schreur*, p. 88; *Lister*, p. 15.

25 Letter from G. Deffere.

26 See on the discussions of the Treaty of Rome concerning the Association: *Bossuat/Bitsch; V. Dimier*, *Legitimizing the DG 8: a small family business (1958–1975)*, presentation at the European Consortium for Political Research, Grenoble, 6–10 April 2001; *Guillen; Schreur; Lister; Twitchett*.

27 French West Africa; French Equatorial Africa; Saint-Pierre and Miquelon, the Comoro Archipelago, Madagascar and dependencies, French Somaliland, New Caledonia and dependencies, French settlements in Oceania, Southern and Antarctic territories; the autonomous Republic of Togoland; the Trust territories of the Cameroons under French administration; the Belgian Congo and Ruanda-Urundi; the Trust territory of Somaliland under Italian Administration; Netherland New Guinea.

28 *Guillen*, p. 111.

of accounts (equivalent in dollars), more than a half of what France initially required. This fund, implemented in 1958, would be paid over a period of five years (1958–1962) by an annual contribution from the budget of the member states. It would only complement their bilateral aid and not substitute for them. It was small compared to the size of bilateral aid of the member states. This was the case in both, absolute and relative terms, since it represented no more than ten percent of the total amount of aid delivered by the member states.²⁹ But half of its resources would be provided by member states which did not have any links with Africa. Indeed, France would participate for only 200 millions of units of account, on an equal footing with Germany, not a small sacrifice for the latter, since most of the money would be allocated to the French overseas territories in Tropical Africa.³⁰

Given French influence on the FEDOM, it came to no surprise that its mechanisms were borrowed from the FIDES, with procedures designed to work in the context of colonial administration.³¹ The implementing convention established that the associated countries and territories' authorities (later on transformed from colonial into African governments) were responsible for putting forward economic and social projects which should be financed by the European Economic Community and then to realise them (launch the calls for tenders etc.) under the supervision of the Commission. The Fund would be run by the European Commission, but following German demands, a distinction between social investments and economic ones was inserted.³² The social projects would be entirely run by the European Commission. For economic projects, the Council of Ministers of the EEC would have to give its favourable opinion (at the qualified majority)³³ for a project to be adopted. The Commission had to appraise and advise on the economic development projects proposed by associated territories (with the power to accept or reject projects), after that to bring forward financing proposals to the Council of Ministers for approval. Criteria to assess the development projects were not specified but could be deduced from the broad aim set in Article 131 of the Treaty »to contribute to the interests and prosperity of the inhabitants of the associated territories«. The Commission's right of initiative was here translated into the role of a mediator and negotiator between associated territories and Member States. Its role (as far as implementation was concerned) became rather that

29 *E. Grilli*, *The European Community and the developing countries*, Cambridge 1993, pp. 51, 74, 122. According to *Lister*, French aid in 1958 to French Africa totaled around 350 million of dollars.

30 Member States contribution (millions of units of account): France (200), Germany (200), Belgium (70), the Netherlands (70), Italy (40), Luxembourg (1,25). Overseas territories share of the fund: French (511,25); Belgium (30); the Netherlands (35); Italy (5). These figures are clearly set in the implementing convention on the Association of the overseas territories included in the Treaty of Rome.

31 See the FIDES régulations: OJ, Lois et Décrets de la République Française, 4 June 1949, p. 5482.

32 »The general program shall contain projects for financing: a) certain social institutions, in particular hospitals, teaching or technical research establishments and institutions for vocational guidance and advancement among the people concerned. b) economic investments which are in the public interest and are directly connected with the implementation of a program containing specific productive development projects«. The implementing convention set also that »at the beginning of each financial year the Council shall, acting by a qualified majority after consulting the Commission, determine what fund would be devoted to social or economic investments« and to see to it that »a rational geographical distribution of the funds be made available.« art. 3 and 4 of the implementing convention of the FEDOM.

33 »The qualified majority voting shall be 67 votes. The number of votes were based on the size of each member state's contribution to the EDF. Member States shall have the following number of votes: Belgium (11 votes), Germany (33 votes), France (33 votes), Italy (11 votes), Luxemburg (1 vote), Netherlands (11 votes)« (art. 7 of the Convention).

of monitoring projects implemented by associated territories and of supervising calls for tenders; its mission as guardian of the treaties was transformed into a supervising role which meant to control the equal share of tenders and contracts amongst companies from both the Member States and associated territories. Indeed, the Treaty insisted that »for investments financed by the Community, participation in tenders and supplies shall be open on equal terms to all natural and legal persons who are citizens of a member state or of one of the countries and territories« (art. 132). Principles of non discrimination also applied to private investments, as wanted by the Germans even though the means to implement them were not specified:

»In relations between Member States and the countries and territories the right of establishment of nationals and companies or firms shall be regulated in accordance with the provisions and procedures laid down in the chapter relating to the right of establishment and on a non-discriminatory basis, subject to any special provisions laid down pursuant to article 136« (art. 132).

As far as the practical implementation of the FEDOM was concerned, it was decided that within six months of the entry into force of the Treaty, the Council would, acting by a qualified majority on a proposal from the Commission, lay down some regulations. With the Treaty coming into force in January 1958, and the Association not being a major priority of the Six, the first regulations were not adopted before the end of 1958, which means that the Fund did not become operational before March 1959.³⁴ They were supplemented by the Commission's rules specifying the detailed management and financial procedures.³⁵ Those regulations sought to establish a systematic framework by which the feasibility and eligibility of the projects could be judged, even though criteria for approval remained very vague. They provided outlines for projects and country dossiers to be included in any project proposal. In terms of information to provide, these documents were so ambitious as to preclude the authorities of the associated territories (even during colonial times) to fulfil the expected requirements. The fact that those needed help to devise their projects proposals raised the thorny issue of technical assistance, especially at decolonization.³⁶ The Commission regulations also provided for the appointment of a chief authorising officer (the Director General) responsible for the final commitment and disbursement. They envisaged the presence on the spot of technical supervisors (*contrôleurs techniques*) whose function was to control the implementation of the projects. This, as we will see, became another controversial issue between some of the member states and the Commission. Local authorising officers (*ordonnateur local*) were also to be appointed in each associated territory (normally the local planning minister): they were responsible for implementing the project. They authorised expenditures, launched calls for tenders, received the bids, notified results, and awarded contracts under the close supervision of the *contrôleur technique*. In so far as in 1958 some of the member States were both donors and recipients, projects proposals were channelled through them and they had to notify who were the responsible authorities in each associated territories for proposing and implementing the projects. However, »the Commission's crucial role in receiving and evaluating requests for development assistance, even though channelled via metropolitan authorities«, gave the DG 8 effective power and, as we shall see, the opportunity to get in direct contacts with the associated territories.³⁷

34 *Twitchett*, p. 25.

35 Regulation 5 of the Council, 2 December 1958; Commission regulation n°6, 3 December 1958; regulation n°7, 23 February 1959. For details concerning those regulations, see *Twitchett*, p. 28.

36 *Ibid.*, p. 29.

37 *Ibid.*, p. 36.

III. THE ASSOCIATION AS A *PACTE COLONIAL*?

Those territories remained at once highly sceptical about the Association, marked as it was by French colonial style. The Association was itself a very colonial concept which was used by France since the 1930s to describe its relations within the empire:³⁸ »The Treaty of Rome did not declare the associated dependencies to be the equals of the European six, just as French colonial association had not made the dependencies the equals of Metropolitan France.«³⁹ Accordingly, signs of this unequal relation were to be found in the negotiations of the Treaty of Rome. Indeed, at a time when France granted more and more political autonomy to its overseas territories, these were not asked or even consulted about their possible association with the EEC. As one commentator had put it some years earlier: »To engage the overseas territories in the European Community without their consent would be most questionable form of colonialism.«⁴⁰ It is quite significant that African representatives were not present at the 1957 debate of the Assembly of the French Union on the Common Market, which, as some MPs deeply regretted⁴¹, took place in a hurry.« In the absence of our colleagues from overseas territories, whose silence had so much weight on the debate«⁴², the Assembly, which was supposed to represent those territories, adopted the project. As some French representatives in the Assembly noted, fears and opinions of the African politicians were not considered or even calmed down by the French authorities or politicians.⁴³ Despite several claims of that sort (some by Africans themselves), local assemblies were not consulted on or even informed of such an important matter at a time when they were granted important power and autonomy by the *loi-cadre Defferre* already mentioned.⁴⁴ An amendment was proposed to the Commission responsible for analysing the issue of the Common Market (in the Assembly of the French Union). It requested the official consultation of the local assemblies in the overseas territories. However, this amendment was refused. Sure, some African representatives were associated to the negotiation process: Houphouët Boigny, representative of the Ivory Coast and then *Ministre d'Etat* in the Mollet government, was sent to Brussels to help Maurice Faure, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, who led the French delegation. However, his presence was merely strategic. It was a means to convince the other Member States of the interests of the French proposals rather than a means to involve the African elite.⁴⁵

Considering the participation of these African representatives and the context of the time, it is even more surprising that there did not exist any provision for the continuation of the Association for the case that any of the associates would become independent.⁴⁶ The provisions of part IV of the Treaty of Rome were concluded for an unlimited period,

38 *Lister*, pp. 5, 12. On the concept of Association during colonial times see: *A. Sarraut*, *La mise en valeur des colonies française*, Paris 1923.

39 *Lister*, p. 13.

40 *R. Moreux*, *La République française doit entrer avec ses TOM dans une Europe instituée, mais la France seule pourra négocier et décider dans nos pays d'outre-mer*, in: *Marchés Coloniaux du Monde*, 24 October 1953, p. 2882.

41 *Antonini*, JO, *Union Française*, *Debates*, 25 January 1957, p. 91.

42 *F. Mitterrand*, JO, *Union Française*, *Debates*, 29 January 1957, p. 106.

43 See *C. Cros* (Socialist): JO, *Union Française*, *Debates*, 24 January 1957, p. 69; *G. Oudard*, JO, *Union Française*, *Debates*, 25 January 1957, p. 85; *Antonini*, p. 91; *J. J. Boucavel*, p. 93.

44 La participation des TOM au Marché Commun européen est étudié au Comité central de la FOM, in: *Marchés Coloniaux du Monde*, 2 February 1957, p. 351. *C. Cros* (Socialist): JO, *Union Française*, *Debates*, 24 January 1957, p. 69; *Antonini*, JO, *Union Française*, *Debates*, 25 January 1957, p. 104. All deplored the fact that African politicians were not associated directly to the discussion and negotiations of the Treaty of Rome.

45 *Guillen*, p. 109.

46 *Lister*, p. 21.

even though the implementing convention was in effect for only five years. »The EEC council of Ministers was empowered, before the five years elapsed, to determine the provisions to be made for a further period«. But »this procedure for concluding a new implementing convention did not call for any consultation with the associates«. ⁴⁷ Additionally, there was no opportunity for the overseas territories to withdraw from the Association. ⁴⁸ Later on, »the European Commission held that any associated state which became independent still remained associated with the Community through the Treaty of Rome«. ⁴⁹ This represented a very colonial reflex indeed.

On the African side however, it seems that nobody was fooled by this marriage of convenience concluded without the consent of the main actors concerned. ⁵⁰ Léopold Sédar Senghor, who had always supported the idea of an Eur-African community, referred to the general disappointment of the African public opinion and of African politicians after not having been consulted before the ratification of the Treaty of Rome. ⁵¹ The fact that the Association did not envisage any representation for overseas territories in the future EEC institutions or any participation in the running of the European Development Fund was also a great delusion for African politicians like him who kept asking for the full political integration of these territories into the EEC. In that context, the argument put forward by France that overseas representatives in the National Assembly would vote against the European project if they were not associated with it, as they did in 1954 for the European Defence Community, emerged as a pure artefact. The most fervent opponents of the project like Sourou Migan Apithy, deputy of Dahomey, voted against it, not because overseas territories were not associated with it, but because they considered the arrangements proposed for these territories as a new kind of *pacte colonial*, the perpetuation of the colonial division of labour and power. ⁵²

Such scepticism and mistrust remained very strong after the Treaty was signed. Following the trip of one of its delegations to Africa in 1959, the European Assembly concluded that »the idea of Association was fought against by propaganda and actions coming from different sides«. ⁵³ In April 1960, an »information visit« in Brussels organised by the Commission for African Students and Academics, ended up in an uncontrolled tide of criticism: the Association was branded by the latter as a new colonialism, as serving European and not African interests, as stopping the industrial development and progress

47 Ibid., p. 20.

48 Ibid. She is quoting here *PNC Okigbo*, Africa and the Common market, London 1967.

49 Ibid., p. 29. Although Sekou Toure made it clear that Guinea (which became independent from France in 1958) did not want to be associated, the commission continued to regard Guinea as one, *ibid.*, p. 30.

50 See especially *Senghor's* discourse: JO, Assemblée Nationale, Debates, 18 January 1957, pp. 166–167; 4 July 1957, p. 3262–64. See also: A plus de 100 voix de majorité l'Assemblée Nationale a ratifié les traités d'Euratom et de Marché Commun, *Marchés Tropicaux du Monde*, 13 July 1957.

51 *L. Senghor*, JO, Assemblée Nationale, Debates, 4 July 1957, p. 3264.

52 *Sourou-Migian Apithy*, (Député of the Dahomey), *Les projets de construction européenne et les TOM*, in: *Marchés Coloniaux du Monde*, 22 January 1955, pp. 177–178; See the position of the African representatives in the debates of the French Union, OJ, *Union Française*, Debates, 26 August 1954, pp. 916–979.

53 *Rapport Assemblée parlementaire Européenne*, doc. n° 67, octobre 1959, rapporteur: Duvieusart, rapport fait au nom de la Commission des Pays et Territoires d'Outre-mer et de la délégation chargée d'une mission d'étude et d'information dans certains pays et territoires associés d'Afrique Centrale, sur les problèmes juridiques et politiques relatifs à l'association de la CEE avec les PTOM, sur les problèmes de l'information sur les objectifs et réalisation des Communautés Européennes tant en Europe qu'en Afrique.

of Africa etc.⁵⁴ The same year, the Belgian journal *écho de la brousse* published an interview with Modibo Keita, the future president of Mali, who insisted on the fears of the African elite about Africa becoming a huge market for European products and a mere producer of raw materials. Those fears, he said, may come from a lack of knowledge about the provisions of the Treaty of Rome, but also from a lack of clarity about Europe's intention. In any case, he concluded, Europe had to forget about this idea of Africa as potentially exploitable.⁵⁵

This overall criticism accounts for the main paradox that the nascent European development policy had to face. Its principles were devised to serve the interests of France and were taken over from the French colonial mission at a time when this mission was less and less accepted by the main overseas territories concerned. Hence, restoring confidence amongst the African elite became the most urgent task for the DG 8, especially because many of these territories were clearly on the verge of independence. This brought about a huge problem, since the Association could not proceed without their consent. As a French official noted, »the Commission is determined to refute any accusation of neo-colonialism [...]. We have to fight misunderstandings on this point, and make an effort on information, [...] in order to clearly specify the intentions of the Community, which are peaceful and positive«.⁵⁶ As part of this strategy, the European Development Fund for Overseas Territories was quickly renamed the European Development Fund (EDF), a way to avoid too much resemblance with that compromising colonial past and spare »the susceptibility of the political circles in associated states«.⁵⁷ Ironically, the main task of information or rather »propaganda« was left in the hands of French ex-colonial officials, those who colonised the DG 8.

IV. »DEALING WITH NEGRO KINGS«⁵⁸

To foster its interests at the community level, France ascribed itself the position of Commissioner for development. This position was responsible for the services which had been created within the European Commission to deal with the associates countries, i. e. the DG 8. The first one to be appointed was Robert Lemaigen, formerly a renowned businessman in Africa. In 1958, Lemaigen asked Jacques Ferrandi to become his head of cabinet. Ferrandi, a French ex-colonial official in West Africa, had been working for the French colonial ministry, and had been appointed Director General in charge of the economic services which oversaw the implementation of development projects of the FIDES in French West Africa (1953–1958).⁵⁹ As such, he was widely recognised as an expert in

54 See Archives of the European Commission (A. E. C.), 25/1980/1493, minute of a »stage d'informations« for African students, Brussels, 6–7 April 1960, 18 April 1960 (it includes questions and comments by African students).

55 A. M. A. E., Box 722, Letter from Bousquet, French ambassador in Belgium to the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, 3 March 1960.

56 A. M. A. E., Box 721, Letter from Bousquet to the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, January 1959.

57 A. E. C., 25/1980/1034, note from Allardt, 17 December 1959; positive answer from Ferrandi, 23 December 1959.

58 J. Ferrandi, interview, 26 August 1999: According to him, in other services of the European Commission, the DG 8 was considered with despise as the DG »dealing with negro kings«.

59 Ferrandi was a former student at the colonial school and then assistant to the district officer in Casamance, Senegal, from 1941 to 1943. In 1945 he moved to the Overseas Territories Ministry in Paris to the direction responsible for implementing the FIDES. In 1947, he was promoted as head of the service in charge of International Affairs within that ministry, in 1949 French delegate to the Overseas Territories Committee at the OECE. Two years later, he became technical

overseas development issues and had a huge network amongst the African elite. Very quickly Ferrandi was able to dispose of DG 8's officials who might have disturbed him or had competing expertise. The first one concerned was the Director General of DG 8, by convention a German, Helmuth Allardt. Within the hierarchy of the Commission, relations between a Commissioner and a Director General were not clearly set. In the case of DG 8, Allardt, a former ambassador in Indonesia had the unfortunate idea of criticising the Franco-African side of the Association in public. He proposed that it should be extended to all underdeveloped countries, following the idea of German business circles.⁶⁰ Such statements were considered as unacceptable by Lemaigen, the French government and French businessmen in Africa: the latter ones regarded Allardt »as not having any clue of the African mentality« and »not being in harmony with his African interlocutors«.⁶¹ From the German point of view, »the Commissioner for development was willing to exert on the activities of Allardt a control that he could accept only in so far as it was coming from the whole body of the Commission«.⁶² After some pressure imposed by the French government on the German and the agreement of both Lemaigen and Walter Hallstein, the President of the Commission⁶³, Allardt was called back in 1960, »a decision commented with much emotion«, not to say criticism, by the German press.⁶⁴ He was replaced by a former ambassador in Algeria, Heinrich Hendus »whom by his culture and his character was much closer to the French character«⁶⁵ and more »acquainted with French preoccupations in Africa«.⁶⁶

This context largely helped Ferrandi to impose himself in DG 8: when in 1962 Lemaigen left the Commission, Ferrandi was promoted head of one of the directions of DG 8 that was responsible for the EDF, Direction B (Etudes et programmes).⁶⁷ His function was to appraise the preparatory studies that had to be included in the project proposals submitted to DG 8 by the associated states. At that time, the only official who could have disturbed Ferrandi in this function was the director in charge of the second direction responsible for the financial management of the EDF, with whom he had to share his power: Jacques Lefebvre. The latter had formerly worked within the Belgian colonial ministry and took part in the negotiations of the Treaty of Rome. Both had to agree on development project proposals before they were submitted to the Council of Ministers for approval.⁶⁸

adviser to the Minister for Overseas Territories. In 1953 he was sent to Dakar (*Gouvernement Général*) and was promoted as head of the direction responsible for implementing the FIDES in French West Africa (*Directeur Général des services économiques de l'Afrique Occidentale Française*).

60 A. M. A. E., box 722, letter from the secretary general in charge of the relationships with African countries of the Communauté Française (Foyer) to the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs (service des relations avec la Communauté Française), 21 March 1960.

61 Article published in *Marchés Tropicaux du Monde*, La politique européenne en Afrique doit rester solidaire, 18 June 1960, unsigned; Il n'y pas de divergences politiques fondamentales entre la Commission de la CEE et le Dr Allardt, 16 July 1960, unsigned.

62 Article published in *Marchés Tropicaux*, 18 June 1960.

63 See on this point *Twichett*, p. 36.

64 A. M. A. E., Box 722, letter from the German ambassador to Couve de Murville, French Minister of Foreign Affairs, 15 June 1960.

65 J. Chaperon, interview, 23 June 2000. See his biography below.

66 A. M. A. E., box 722, letter from the French ambassador in Germany to the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, 15 June 1960.

67 The DG 8 chart before 1963: Direction A: Affaires Générales. Direction B: Etudes de Développement. Direction C: Direction financière et technique du Fonds de Développement. Direction D: Echanges commerciaux. After 1963: Direction A: Affaires Générales. Direction B: Etudes de Développement. Direction C: Fonds de Développement. Direction D: Echanges commerciaux.

68 As far as preliminary studies for project proposals were concerned, they had to be forwarded by the associated territories to a *comité de coordination* made up of direction B and C. After

This necessity aroused a huge problem, because precisely they did not agree on those proposals.⁶⁹ Therefore, the whole management procedure of the EDF was blocked and Ferrandi quickly sought a way to »get rid of him«. ⁷⁰ Also, in May 1963, Hendus decided to reform the administrative structure of DG 8: backed by the Commissioner, he decided to merge the two directorates. Lefebvre was entrusted with »general studies« which seemed to be adapted to »his large knowledge of the world«. ⁷¹ As a consequence, Lefebvre preferred to depart the DG. The new Directorate that run the EDF (Directorate C) was led by the man Hendus trusted the most: Ferrandi. Additionally, Hendus quickly delegated his power as chief authorising officer to him.

The reorganisation went hand in hand with an overall reform of the EDF after the first years of work. It was decided to suppress the distinction between social and economic projects and to rationalise the procedures of selection in order to simplify its mechanisms. A Development Fund Committee was created which represented the member states and was presided over by the Commission (only the first ones being entrusted to vote). In that new system, the Commission's task was again to appraise the development projects submitted by the associated countries, then make a financing proposal to be forwarded to the EDF Committee for approval. ⁷² Besides, the chief authorising officer was given discretionary powers for speeding up selections and financing processes. His role was further formalised: the national authorising officer (the African Minister of Finance in most cases) was still responsible for authorising expenditures, launching the call for tenders, receiving, notifying the result of the tenders, and concluding contracts, but the chief authorising officer, already responsible for the final commitment and disbursement, had to supervise the whole process. He had to make sure that the tenders and contracts were proceeded in the best conditions of competition and gave priority to the best offers. Hence, the national authorising officer could decide nothing without his endorsement and vice versa the chief authorising officer depended on the decision of the former. This means that they had to collaborate. The fact that Ferrandi knew personally many African officials made things easier, but also, along with the reform of the EDF, gave him tremendous power: he and his team were well placed to control the whole tendering process and so the allocation of the EDF money to the African associates and the European businesses which were interested in the execution of the projects. Indeed, since their actual task was to appraise development projects and as far as the criteria for that appraisal remained very vague, not to say »secret«, Ferrandi and his team had considerable scope to act on their own.

Until then, Ferrandi had built up a considerably strong team of ex-colonial officials around him in order to use the given power. He could trust his former collaborators in Africa who he had managed to place in strategic positions in DG 8. With this structure he had copied the clan structures of African politics and was well aware of that when he

appraisal of the proposed studies, those were supposed to make a proposal to the Director General: AEC, 25/1980/1045, Minute of a meeting in Hendus' office, 28 November 1961.

69 See on this: A. E. C., 25/1980/1045, Note to Hendus, by Lefebvre, 24 November 1961, sending him a counter-project proposed to that of Direction B, and complaining about the repartition of competencies between the two directions.

70 Chapperon, Interview.

71 Article published in *Marchés Tropicaux du Monde* when J. Ferrandi was promoted *Directeur du Fonds Européen de Développement*, 25 May 1963, unsigned.

72 This approval followed a decision by a qualified majority. This meant that 67 votes were needed for a project to be accepted. France and Germany each disposed of 33 votes, thus no project could be adopted without an additional country's vote. Most of the French representatives on the committee came from the Ministry of Finance. Proposals which have been approved by the EDF Committee are forwarded to the Commission which then take the decision. Proposals which have not been accepted by the EDF Committee are forwarded to the Permanent Council of Ministers, then forwarded to the Commission for it to take a final decision.

even called this team his »mafia«. Or rather, he said, »let's put it that way, a large family«. ⁷³ All the French ex-colonial officials who were recruited had been former students at the colonial school. ⁷⁴ Some of them (André Auclert, Pierre Cros, Jean Chapperon) ⁷⁵ had a long experience both, in the bush, where they had served as assistants to the district officer (territorial administration) as well as in the central services, in Dakar or the Colonial ministry: Pierre Cros ⁷⁶ was recruited by the Press and Information Office of the European Commission, and seconded by this service to DG 8 in order to organise what was soon called »propaganda«. As colonial official, he had formerly been seconded to the French National Assembly where he had become acquainted with many African representatives. André Auclert ⁷⁷ came directly with his former »patron« ⁷⁸ at the Direction »Générale des Affaires Economiques et du Plan« in French West Africa to Brussels. In 1958, he was positioned at the Division »études« (in Ferrandi's *Direction des Etudes et Programmes de Développement*) of DG 8. After the reorganisation of the DG in 1963, he became assistant to Ferrandi and later on he was promoted head of the division »opérations financières« in Ferrandi's direction. Jean Chapperon ⁷⁹, one of Ferrandi's best »associates« in Paris like in Dakar, succeeded him as head of cabinet of the successive commissioners for Development, Henri Rochereau (1962–67), then Jean François Deniau (1967–1973).

Numerically speaking, French ex-colonial officials were not dominant, but they formed the only coherent group within DG 8, with strong ties and a recognised expertise in »development« and Africa. From my interviews and from what Lemaïgnen wrote in his biography ⁸⁰, it seems that during the first years of DG 8's existence, most of its members did not have any recognised knowledge of that specific field. Since there does not exist any social survey of the DG 8's officials for that period of time, one cannot judge whether they were the only »experts«, but one can assume that the team possessed a strong *esprit de corps*. As the case of Lefevre exemplified, Ferrandi was quick in disposing of those who may have provided any rivalling expertise. He was even quicker in presenting himself and his team as having the only valuable and legitimate expertise in dealing with Af-

73 Ferrandi, interview.

74 Pierre Emile Fay, former student at the colonial school (Promotion 1935). He worked in the Overseas Territories Ministry with Ferrandi (*Direction Général des Services Economiques et du Plan*) from 1946 to 1948. He became head of the service »import« in that direction from 1953. He followed Ferrandi in Dakar: he served in the direction »plan équipement« and became assistant director to the economic services, 1954–1957. From 1957 to 1958, he worked in the World Bank; Michel Cellerier, a former student at the colonial school (promotion 1943). From 1956 to 1958, he served in the Ministry for Overseas Territories (*Direction Générale des Services Economiques et du Plan au Ministère de la France d'Outre-Mer*); Petit Laurent, a former student at the colonial school (promotion 1939). He became head of one of the service of the *Direction des Affaires Economiques et du Plan* (Overseas Territories Ministry 1953–1958); Salmon, a former student at the colonial school (promotion 1946), had been assistant to the district officer in Cameroon (1948–1962); see also Pierre Cros, Jean Chapperon and André Auclert.

75 P. Cros, Interview, 2 March 2002; Interview Auclert, 16 May 1999; Interview Chapperon.

76 Pierre Cros, a former student at the colonial school (promotion 1949), he had been working as assistant district officer, then from 1956 in the colonial ministry, seconded to the French parliament.

77 André Auclert, a former student at the colonial school (promotion 1945), had been working in Dakar with Ferrandi (*Direction Générale des Affaires Economiques et du Plan*) from 1953 to 1957.

78 Auclert, Interview.

79 Jean Chapperon, a former student at the colonial school, (promotion 1940), he worked in the Overseas Territory Ministry (1945–1946, 1950–1953), then as chef de cabinet of the general secretary of the *Afrique Occidentale Française* (1953–1958).

80 R. Lemaïgnen, *L'Europe au berceau: souvenirs d'un technocrate*, Paris 1964, p. 117.

rican countries and development. As these ex-colonial officials justified it, this expertise rested on »a practical knowledge of African reality« and »capacity to deal with the African elite«. These aspects had been two main elements of their socialisation at the colonial school where they were trained to be »spécialiste de l'indigène«.⁸¹ In the absence of any strong competing group and with their huge network in Africa, it was rather easy for them to convince other DG 8's officials that they were indeed the only »experts«. Hence, these networks and expertise were used by Ferrandi to justify, legitimate and enhance his power within DG 8. Conversely, this power helped him to impose his own definition of DG 8's mission and methods along the lines of his colonial expertise. It allowed him and his team to socialise other officials to certain ideals for action, what soon constituted a certain identity of DG 8, its *esprit de corps*. As reckoned by a German official, »Jacques Ferrandi was the only one who truly believed in development within the European Commission. He transmitted us his faith, he indoctrinated us«.⁸²

In its general terms this faith or the »belief«⁸³ in development was neither different from the paternalistic discourse of the colonial time nor was it specific to DG 8. It was part of the »historic task of the West to help the developing countries in overcoming want and poverty«.⁸⁴ However, in the DG 8 discourse, »development« and »under-developing countries« were never really defined except in very materialistic and negative terms such as »countries which are still at the dawn of material progress«.⁸⁵ The modernisation theories of the 1950s, which were developed by leading American economists like Walt Rostow and influenced many national policies like the US-American one towards »developing« countries⁸⁶, had few repercussions within DG 8. Any attempt at conceptualising development was regarded as unnecessary, as Allardt, the Director General expressed it: »A uniform and clear definition does not and probably cannot exist.«⁸⁷ As a matter of fact, the ultimate aims of development remained as vague as the concept itself.

Practically speaking, it seems, from early figures, that the EDF's purpose was to invest mainly in physical infrastructures, which reflected the general orthodoxy of the donors in the 1950s as well as a clear continuity with the colonial priorities of the FIDES.⁸⁸ However, this was only part of a broader mission well presented by Allardt:

»We wish to help and to mitigate want and poverty, but this help is not to be an end in itself – we want to look upon it as a means of attaining that relationship of mutual confidence between the

81 V. Dimier, *Le Commandant de Cercle: un »expert« en administration coloniale, un »spécialiste« de l'indigène?*, in: *La Revue d'histoire des sciences humaines* 9, 2004, n° spécial sur les sciences coloniales, pp. 5–17.

82 B. Haffner, interview, 26 April 2002. A German technician, he was one of the first *contrôleurs techniques* recruited by J. Ferrandi in 1960. He retired in 1996.

83 G. Rist, *Le développement. Histoire d'une croyance occidentale*, Paris, 1996.

84 Address by Hendus, to the meeting of ambassadors of the Congo Republic at Leopoldville on 25 January 1963. Archives of the EC delegation in the USA, 448/3.

85 Ferrandi, EEC action in the associated countries. Address delivered to the African and Malagasy economic conference (Marseilles, 18, 19, 20 October 1962). EC delegation's in USA, 448/3.

86 For the role of Rostow and his modernisation theory for US-American foreign policy see the contribution of *Sönke Kunkel* in this volume.

87 Allardt, The tasks and aims of the EEC in Africa, lecture given on the occasion of the African Day at the German Industries Fair, Hanover, 30 April 1959. Archives of the EC delegation in the USA, 448/3.

88 Transport and communication projects alone absorbed nearly 45% of the EDF resources when the EDF was set up: *Grilli*, pp. 115–117. By its decision of the 31st March 1962, DG 8 allocated 39,7% of the EDF to infrastructure (transport and communications), in *DG du développement de l'outre-mer, note sur les activités du FED*, situation 31 mars 1962, 6th April 1962. Archives of the EC Delegation in the USA, 448/3.

free and equal men and nations which is the foundation of a peaceful and happy future for us all.«⁸⁹

Within the context of the Cold War, this mission could have had a clear political function, as Rochereau emphasised: »Nowadays the industrialised countries are under a moral obligation to grant aid« and the EEC is especially »conscious of its duty to assist developing countries«. At the same time, »the political motives in the wider sense have assumed greater importance since it is probable that, if the EEC member countries had decided not to maintain their special relations with Africa, a vacuum would have been created that other powers would have tried to fill with perhaps less experience and less disinterest.«⁹⁰

If the objectives of the EEC development policy were unclear, the approach followed by Ferrandi was more specific, as it drew directly from the repertoire of the colonial school and French native policy in the thirties, with their core ideas of evolution within tradition, pragmatism, respect for and adaptation to African cultures and reality:⁹¹

»As far as development is concerned [...] there are only two ways of considering things: either one can start from an a-priori conception, from the beginning establishing principles for action and acting according to it, in brief having a doctrine. Or, one can draw from his own experience and from others and model, revise permanently his line of action according to reality. I must say I am opposed to the first approach and prefer the second one.«⁹²

For that reason, »it is in fact our constant concern to try and place each project in its economic or social context, since it is there that its real justifications are found.«⁹³ This statement, typical of the colonial school, stood in sharp contrast with the technocratic discourse of economic experts which prevailed at the World Bank. Indeed, the modernisation theories which inspired the priorities of the World Bank proposed a universal model of development based on the pursuit of economic growth.⁹⁴ They implied standardised recipes, regardless of the economic, social, cultural and political specificities of each country. As such, they were despised by Ferrandi and his team, whose expertise was drawn from a practical experience of African politics and societies.

Ironically, and much against Ferrandi's assertion, his pragmatic style soon became the »doctrine« of DG 8, the core belief and ideal for action of its officials. To some extent, this approach, what Hendus called the »fundamentally pragmatic nature of our association«, was a good way to justify the absence of any clear identified goals to pursue, and of any clear criteria in the selection of the projects: »It obliges us periodically to submit our original doctrine to the test of experience, to draw up each successive contract in the light of the lessons learnt from the difficulties that obstructed the implementation of the previous contract.«⁹⁵ Whether this approach was really followed in practice is out of scope

89 Allardt, The tasks and aims of the EEC in Africa, lecture given on the occasion of the African Day at the German Industries Fair, Hanover, 30 April 1959. Archives of the EC delegation in the USA, 448/3.

90 H. Rochereau to the symposium on Africa, organised by the Afrika Institut, the Hague, 29 October 1962. Archives of the EC delegation in the USA, 448/3.

91 V. Dimier, *Le gouvernement des colonies: regards croisés franco-britanniques*, Bruxelles 2004; Dimier, *For a Republic*.

92 A. E. C., Bac 25/1980/1323, J. Ferrandi, Assistance et association, communication à l'Académie des Sciences d'Outre-mer, Paris, 22 mai 1964.

93 Ferrandi, EEC action in the associated countries. Address delivered to the African and Malagasy economic conference (Marseilles, 18, 19, 20 October 1962). Archives of the EC delegation in the USA, 448/3.

94 On this modernisation theory see N. Gilman, *Mandarins of the future*, Baltimore 2003.

95 Address by Hendus, to the meeting of ambassadors of the Congo Republic at Leopoldville on 25 January 1963. Archives of the EC delegation in the USA, 448/3.

of this analysis.⁹⁶ Suffice here to say, that after the independence of the overseas territories, it also became the main justification for that core principle of the Yaoundé, later Lomé Conventions: the absence of any conditionality, economic or political, to this »co-operation between equal partners«.⁹⁷ This becomes particularly clear in Rochereau's statement:

»[...] we are not theoreticians of development, we are men of action and of good will. [...] They [the associates, V.N.] have not made this choice to adopt our European way of life or our political conception, they did it in order to encourage, within a partnership between friends, progress in their own way. This way has to lead men of Africa and Madagascar rooted in their soils of their homeland, towards a modern and free economic order.«⁹⁸

The idea of »progress in their own way« resembles the old colonial idea of evolution within the respect of tradition, on which the French and British native policies rested in the thirties. These ideas could not have been more contradictory and vague, but they helped to justify the respect and strategic use of local leaders, what was called the *gouvernement indirect*. As advocated by the colonial school, this indirect rule referred to an ideal of government based on very personal relationships, opaque bonds of loyalty and mutual trust between colonial officials and the local elite. The same ideal for action constituted the basis of Ferrandi's »style«. Indeed, according to him, the only possible method in development action could be summarised as followed:

»*Competence, modestie, courage, realism* [...] all these qualities can only open out in a context of loyal co-operation with the legitimate government and administrations of those countries. As was already said, and it is now a kind of banality: the way we give is much more important than what we give. Everything is based on the style, by this I mean human relations.«⁹⁹

In DG 8's system it was difficult »to make a hard and fast distinction between contacts made on a personal basis and those thought officially«.¹⁰⁰ Ferrandi himself recognised that »I was very much criticised later on for these personal relationships, but everything is made of personal relationships in politics, isn't it?«¹⁰¹ This means that he considered development not to be a pure technical problem but also a political one, to be treated politically, in a way which could be politically understandable and acceptable to its interlocutors in Africa. Also, his approach to politics drew from a conception of power as unbounded by formal rules and where personal relationships constitute the main basis of authority and legitimacy. As such, it was well adapted to the concerns and ways of working of the main public concerned, i. e. the African elite. It mirrored their political practices and the functioning of their neo-patrimonial states. Being the basis of his own authority and legitimacy within DG 8, it resulted in a specific system, the Ferrandian »style« as many of the DG 8 officials would call it: individual projects were presented and appraised by Ferrandi's team on an ad-hoc basis, according to vague criteria, which were not linked to the possible social impact or economic profitability of the project proposed, or the poverty of the country. Rather, they were based on Ferrandi's personal relationships, reciprocal

96 See *V. Dimier*, *Recycling empire: the invention of a European aid bureaucracy, 1958–2008* (forthcoming).

97 Exposé Rochereau, conférence parlementaire de l'Association, 8/11 décembre 1964, Dakar. Archives of the EC delegation in the USA, 448/3; Address by Hendus, to the meeting of ambassadors of the Congo Republic at Leopoldville on 25 January 1963. Archives of the EC delegation in the USA, 448/3.

98 Exposé Rochereau, Commissioner for development, conférence parlementaire de l'Association, 8/11 Décembre 1964, Dakar. Archives of the EC delegation in the USA, 448/3.

99 Talk given by *J. Ferrandi* in front of the Comité européen d'ingénieurs-conseils, Brussels, published in *Marchés Tropicaux*, 1974, p. 1055–56 (emphasis in original).

100 *Twitchett*, p. 35.

101 Ferrandi, Interview.

bonds of loyalty and compromises with the African heads of states. To some extent, they were linked to French or European political considerations.

Indeed, political strategic considerations were never absent in EEC aid distribution, even though criteria for these considerations were never set clearly.¹⁰² Despite EEC's official political neutrality, they even may have been at the centre of the system. Community aid certainly meant to be a stabilising factor in the context of the Cold War. According to some analysts, its »intangible and unquantifiable benefits in practice included keeping or courting the favour of the African governments«. It encouraged them to have friendly relations with Europe. »In some cases, it also allowed the governments (African governments) to pass on benefits in the form of a project to a favoured region or group of supporters.«¹⁰³ In this way, EEC assistance contributed to the rules of power in Africa. It fuelled neo-patrimonial practices: African leaders could distribute those benefits to their »clients« and, in doing so, maintained their authority and legitimacy. This may explain why »prestigious projects – under-used railroads and over-equipped schools«¹⁰⁴ – were particularly favoured, as it was for the benefits of both sides: on one hand, it gave the EEC visibility and credibility; on the other hand, it provided the African leaders with a display of power and new resources to reinforce their bonds of loyalty and dependence. This also explains why rich countries like Gabon, one of France's favourite, got so much money compared to the poorest ones.¹⁰⁵

This unfair distribution of funds and the arbitrary side of the system did not remain without criticism within DG 8. By the end of the 1960s, young economists amongst the newly recruited officials began to advocate a more rational approach in term of programming and evaluation, like the one Robert MacNamara tried to develop at the World Bank. They asked for more precise criteria in appraising the projects and allocating funds amongst the associates. This criticism gained momentum in the 1970s when Great Britain joined the EEC. Ferrandi was then accused of being a mere »tool« of the French government, but this accusation missed the point, as we shall see in the next section. In so far as most African leaders of the former French colonies still depended on French financial, military and political support for their own legitimacy and power, Ferrandi could hardly ignore their political needs, and the political priorities of France. Also, notwithstanding some criticism, his methods were largely accepted within DG 8 thanks to the successful socialisation process led by his team. They were considered as »efficient« by many DG 8's officials, whether French or not.¹⁰⁶ And indeed they were very efficient in »selling« the Association to the African heads of state, in convincing them that it was »a grande œuvre de solidarité«, and not the mere continuation of the colonial past. This »efficiency« was largely due to Ferrandi's capacity to adapt DG 8's mission to its environment and main constituency, the African elite. He and his team even resorted to very old colonial practices like touring: regular tours through Africa by DG 8 officials and frequent visits of African leaders, journalists and civil servants to Brussels were organised and orchestrated by Pierre Cros.¹⁰⁷ This communication strategy paid off: following Cameroon's example

102 *Grilli*, p. 121.

103 *Lister*, p. 135.

104 *Ibid.*

105 *Ibid.*, p. 50.

106 See on this aspect *V. Dimier*, Administrative reform as political control: lessons from DG 8 (1958–1975), in: *D. Dimitrakopoulos* (ed.), *The Changing European Commission*, Manchester 2004, pp. 74–88.

107 *V. Dimier*, Du bon usage de la tournée: stratégies de légitimation et propagande au sein de la DG 8 (Développement), in: *Pôle Sud* 15, 2001, pp. 19–32; *V. Dimier*, The invention of the DG 8, in: *A. Smith* (ed.) *Politics and the European Commission, actors, interdependence, legitimacy*, London 2004, pp. 83–95.

in January 1960, all African states, with the exception of French Guinea, agreed in 1961 to renegotiate their association with the EEC.

Indeed, the Convention of Yaoundé was signed on the 20 July 1963 for a period of five years and ratified by the 18 *Associated African and Malagasy States* (AAMS). In order to emphasise their newly acquired sovereignty, the Convention stated in its preamble that all signatories agreed to »cooperate on a basis of complete equality and friendly relations in the respect of the UN Charter«. In DG 8 official statements »the Convention was not a type of neo-colonial domination but a free alliance«¹⁰⁸, i. e. a »contractual« agreement with mutual rights and obligations. As a proof of this equality between partners, joint institutions (*Council of the Association, Parliamentary Conference of the Association*) were set up which mirrored those of the EEC.¹⁰⁹ The fact that they largely reproduced the colonial institutions of the defunct French Union or *Communauté Française* and, like the latter one, had mere advisory powers, was left unnoticed.¹¹⁰ Procedures which were originally devised by France to keep a firm control on the EDF, i. e. procedures by which the authorities of the associated territories were responsible for devising and implementing the development projects, were presented in ideal terms as allowing an equal participation in the decision of the EDF. Later on, Edgar Pisani (Commissioner for Development 1982–1985) called this procedure »joint-management«.¹¹¹

Whether this Convention was really like it was presented, »unique in the world« and »based on a real equality between partners«, is doubtful. It was based, like any other development assistance on »asymmetrical relations« between North and South¹¹² and »remained a relationship between the have countries which set its parameters and the have not which sought its benefits«.¹¹³ The main paradox is that while the discourse on »cooperation based on dialogue and consultation« was repeated by African representatives themselves during the negotiations of the first Yaoundé Convention¹¹⁴, they were offered to »take or leave it« by the Europeans.¹¹⁵ Despite the setting up of joint institutions, »it was a Convention designed mainly by the EEC which reserved to the Community most of the crucial decisions over aid and trade«.¹¹⁶ In the same way, the idea of an active participation of beneficiaries in the management of aid resources, the total respect of their national development objectives largely remained an ideal. In a context where those countries lacked the expertise to propose »good« projects, technical assistance could become a useful tool for the Commission to impose their projects and priorities.¹¹⁷

108 *J. van der Lee*, *Association between the European Economic Community and African states*, in: *African Affairs*, 1967, quoted by *Lister*, p. 31.

109 These joint institutions were: the council of the Association which consisted of the EEC Council of Ministers and Commission as one part, and one member of the government of each associate as the other. This council was assisted by a specific committee which »was composed of one representative of each of the Six and one Commission representative, and one representative from each associate«. A Parliamentary conference of the Association which met once a year and was »composed of equal numbers of European and AAMS parliamentaries«; an arbitration court, *Ibid.*, p. 41.

110 *Ibid.*, p. 5.

111 *Pisani*, *La main et l'outil*, p. 225, quoted by *Grilli*, p. 93.

112 *Lister*, pp. 107–108.

113 *Ibid.*, p. 12.

114 A. E. C., Bac, 79/182/4, J. R. Yaouné, ambassadeur du Gabon en Allemagne, »Ce que les Africains attendent de la coopération économique au sein du Marché Commun«, paper presented at the conference organised in Hamburg by the Europa Union and Afrika Verein, 17 November 1961.

115 *Lister*, p. 37.

116 *Ibid.*

117 *Grilli*, p. 108

However, there is no doubt that the ability of Ferrandi's team to mediate between DG 8's priorities and the political needs of the African elite through their personal networks, accounted for the quick acceptance of the Convention by the AAMS. In the same way ex-colonial officials had had to compromise with the local elite in order to get some legitimacy, DG 8 had to compromise with the nascent African political leaders in order to »sell« them the Association and achieve some legitimacy in return. Eventually, this meant dealing with leaders as different as Léopold Senghor and later Jean-Bédél Bokassa, even when it became clear for everybody that these leaders would not take the path of democracy and follow the basic principles of the UN Charter, as it was still hoped in the early 1960s. This was the price to be paid for DG 8's adaptation to African realities and its »discrete entente« with its African clientele.¹¹⁸ The identity and legitimacy of DG 8 were defined in interaction with the African elite so strongly that it became impossible to change its methods and mission in the short run.¹¹⁹ To some respect, DG 8 and the associates became »allies in the quest for more and more stable Community development aid«.¹²⁰ They also depended on each other to carve out for themselves some autonomy vis-à-vis their main stakeholder or former »mentor«, France. At some point, this »growing autonomy of DG 8«¹²¹ and the links established between Brussels and many African capitals came to »irritate« Paris.

V. FRENCH PATERNALISTIC CRISIS

Indeed, as early as 1958 the French permanent representative in Brussels complained that »recent debates in the Strasbourg Assembly and Hallstein's press conference have highlighted a certain tendency by the European Commission, already perceptible from sometimes now, to establish and intensify contacts with the authorities and the local population of the overseas territories«.¹²² Even worse, the Commission »makes sometimes the mistake of leaving its officials to give political indications to the Africans«.¹²³ This was typical of what Jacques René Rabier (head of the Commission's Press and Information Office) called »the allergy of the French government, of the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Couve de Murville [...] towards the activities of information of the EEC, considered as »too communautarian«, i.e. going beyond the mere technical and economic aspect of the application of the Treaties«.¹²⁴ Indeed, for Michel Debré, then Prime Minister, there was no doubt that the Commission »exceeded their rights«¹²⁵ as far as relationships with the overseas territories were concerned. Complaining about the fact that experts and correspondence were sent directly by Brussels to Africa without French authorisation, he asked Couve de Murville to give precise instructions to the French permanent repre-

118 *Lister*.

119 *V. Dimier*, *Constructing conditionality: the bureaucratization of EC development aid*, in: *Journal of European Foreign Affairs* 11, 2006, pp. 263–280.

120 *Grilli*, p. 98.

121 A. M. A. E., box 721, letter from the French permanent representative to the EC (Carbonnel) to the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, 16 March 1959.

122 A. M. A. E., Box 721, letter from the French permanent representative to the EC (Carbonnel) to the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, 25 October 1958.

123 A. M. A. E., box 721, letter from the French permanent representative to the EC (Carbonnel) to the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, 16 March 1959.

124 *J. R. Rabier*, *Les origines de la politique d'information européenne (1953–1973)*, in: *M. G. Melchionni* (ed.), *Fonti e luoghi documentazione europea. Istruzioni per l'uso*, Rome 2000, pp. 84–98.

125 Letter from M. Debré to Couve de Murville, 3 March 1960, Archives Couves de Murville (Cm7, 1960).

sentative in Brussels to remind European officials what they apparently forgot, »that sole France did sign the Treaty of the Common Market and sole France is eventually politically responsible for the French Community with regard to the European cooperation«.¹²⁶ Arguing in the same way that »officially the relations between African governments and Brussels' headquarters can only be established through France in a diplomatic way«¹²⁷, the French government demanded that European civil servants should be accompanied in their »journey (to Africa) by a French civil servant appointed by the French Community«.¹²⁸ This measure was presented as »a courtesy gesture towards foreign visitors«¹²⁹, but became a source of growing irritation to European officials.¹³⁰ France also asked the Commission »to show the greatest reserve in their public statement on the Association and refrain from any comment on the behaviour of the member states«.¹³¹ Lemaignan himself was criticised for having, during one of his trips in Madagascar,

»adopted attitudes and pronounced some words, for which [...] he had rather asked the approval of the French government. [...] Indeed, without even having consulting us on that issue, Mr Lemaignan decided to announce to Madagascar that the country would be a pilot state for the EEC, that he would agree to finance several investments that are currently analysed by our Secretary of State. He advised the Malagasy government to open an embassy in Brussels, which will be paid by the French government of course. I think that Gorse [the French permanent representative, V.D.] should point out to Mr Lemaignan the disadvantages – the word is weak – of his current attitude and the necessity in the future, not to say or do anything without preliminary conversation with a qualified French authority.«¹³²

This »haute surveillance«¹³³ exercised by the French government on DG 8, similar to the one exercised on the Press and Information Office, was only the beginning of a long »paternalistic crisis« from the part of a dying colonial power. Once decolonization became impending and the issue of the representation of the overseas territories in Brussels was raised, the French government found it necessary »to influence those in Brussels who are prone to anticipate this event« »to orientate in the direction we wish the doctrine that the Commission will adopt on that question«¹³⁴ and to »guide the choice of the African leaders«.¹³⁵ Indeed, leaders like Felix Houphouët-Boigny and Gilchrist Olympio soon informed Paris that »they wished to remained associated to the EEC« and wanted to have »direct links with them«, i. e. »to have their own representation in Brussels in order to assert their independence«.¹³⁶ In Paris, however, every means were used to convince the new African states to be represented in Brussels through the French permanent representation:

126 Ibid.

127 A. M. A. E., Box 722, letter from Morand (French ambassador in Liberia) to the French Foreign Minister, 5 February 1960.

128 A. M. A. E., Box 721, telegram from Brunet (Brussels), to the French Foreign Minister, 20 February 1959.

129 A. M. A. E., Box 721, letter from the French permanent representative to the EC (Carbonnel) to the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, 16 March 1959.

130 A. M. A. E., Box 722, letter from Morand (French ambassador in Liberia) to the French Foreign Minister, 5 February 1960.

131 A. M. A. E., Box 722, telegram from Carbonnel, 15 July 1960.

132 Private archives of M. Debré (2 DE (21), letter from Debré to Couve de Murville, 30 January 1961.

133 *Rabier*, p. 91.

134 A. M. A. E., Box 722, letter from the French permanent representative to the EC (Carbonnel) to the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, 16 March 1959.

135 A. M. A. E., Box 722, letter from the French permanent representative to the EC (Gorse) to the French Foreign Minister, 22 September 1960, included a report from his visit to Africa, 18 August –3 September 1960.

136 Ibid.

»One of the most convenient formula would be for them to accredit their representation in Paris to the European institutions. These representations may detach one of their officials to Brussels [...]. Other African countries may ask us to represent them directly, which means, that, according to the international customs, their instructions should be addressed to the French government [...]. In any case, there may be some interest for us that projects presented by these countries should not go without intermediary to the Commission. We could propose to these states to forward their proposals through our permanent representation as long as they do not have their own representation in Brussels.«¹³⁷

As early as November 1960, during a Franco-African meeting, the Ivory Coast, Dahomey (later Benin), Niger, and Haute Volta (later Burkina Faso) made it clear that their government would set up their own representation in Brussels.¹³⁸ In the face of such eagerness, the French government felt obliged to remember its former ›pupils‹ in Africa that the European Economic Community could not be reduced to the Commission. It also consisted of the member states, particularly France which had been the main initiator of the Association.¹³⁹ They made it clear that African states were free to have their own representation, but that this was a »possibility, not an obligation.[...] The French permanent representation in Brussels remains at their service. They can entrust it with the defence of their interests«.¹⁴⁰ In the end, all African governments opted for their own representations¹⁴¹, to the great disappointment of Michel Debré who went on insisting that »concerning Africa there should not be two capitals. Brussels must not compete with Paris«, or worse become a »resort against Paris«.¹⁴² Indeed, there is no doubt that the African leaders used their direct links with Brussels to gain some political autonomy vis-à-vis their former ›mother country‹. Whether they eventually succeeded or even wished to become totally independent from France is more questionable. Indeed, their legitimacy and power were often too dependent upon French support and money, what became the French-African networks, to allow a real autonomy.¹⁴³ Meanwhile, in order to maintain its position, France did its best to keep the Commission aside from the preparation of the two Yaoundé Conventions.¹⁴⁴ This task was granted by the Council to the COREPER (*Comité des Représentants Permanents*)¹⁴⁵, despite the protests of a desperate European Commission. The latter one could only remark, that »unfortunately the communautarian spirit has not made any headway within the Council«.¹⁴⁶

137 Ibid.

138 A. M. A. E., Box 723, minute of a Euro-African meeting, Paris, conference of the 8 November 1960.

139 Ibid.

140 Ibid.

141 As remarked by Twitchett, »new procedures introduced within the framework of the Rome Treaty regime, included, among other innovations, provision for the direct submission of projects by the independent associates to the Commission, and the sending of associates' representatives to Community Institutions with ad hoc meetings between these representatives and the EEC Committee of Permanent Representatives. By March, 1961, some ten associates had requested such representation to the EEC«. Twitchett, p. 39.

142 Letter from Debré (Prime Minister) to Couve de Murville (Foreign Minister), 23 July 1960, following a conversation with Hallstein. Archives Couve de Murville (cm7, 1960).

143 Chafer.

144 A. M. A. E., Box 722, telegram from Lucet (direction politique, French Foreign Ministry) to the French Foreign Minister, 11 June 1960.

145 »The Council never gave the Commission a mandate to negotiate on EEC's behalf [...]. The Commission was present throughout the formal negotiations but its role was limited«. Twitchett, p. 78.

146 A. C. E., Bac 25/1980, Box 39, minute of a meeting of the European Parliament committee in charge of the relations with the AAMS, speech by Rochereau, 3 February 1969.

VI. GAINING AUTONOMY

In that context, a direct confrontation between Ferrandi and the French government, became impending, focusing on the issue of the technical assistance and control. The problem of the control of the EDF projects was first raised during the negotiations of the Treaty of Rome: from the beginning it had been clear for all member states that their participation in the funding of a European Development Fund meant also a common control on the way the funds were used on the spot. This was regarded as a share of »political responsibility« on territories which were still at that time under French sovereignty.¹⁴⁷ For the French however, it was also clear that the organisation of the Fund should allow to find a compromise between this common responsibility and the necessity to limit foreign intervention on French territories. This meant that France wanted to keep some dominant position in the decision making process and the implementation of the Fund.¹⁴⁸ Later discussions around the setting up of the EDF showed that Germany was not really satisfied with that position and wanted to prevent France from interfering directly between the associated territories and the Commission.¹⁴⁹ The issue became even more explosive when the first territories became independent. Then, the question arose as to which administration should be responsible for proposing and implementing the projects. From the point of views of other member states than France, there was no doubt that the administrations of the new independent African States should be responsible for that. France, in contrast, insisted that it should still be consulted or even associated in one way or another to the process. Given the clear opposition of other member states on that issue, it had to find more subtle means to keep its hands on the EDF. This was the technical control on the implementation of the projects.¹⁵⁰

Regulations concerning the implementation of the EDF stated that this control would be done by someone named by the Commission and notified in the financing agreement. To be worked out, this agreement had to be signed by the Commission, the associated territories and the member states. Any of these three actors could refuse to sign it, if they had found some clauses unacceptable, which would have blocked the whole process. This happened in the year 1960, when the Commission (on an idea developed by Ferrandi) proposed to hire its own technicians to control the implementation of the EDF. The French government disagreed arguing that this solution was

»not adapted to certain local situations and would possibly disturb it in the responsibilities it still exercises overseas. [...] We can assume that the action of those controllers would evolve from control to technical assistance and that the authorities of the beneficiary countries would eventually regard them as a kind of representation of the Commission at an embryonic state.«¹⁵¹

Thus, the French government asked »the Commission to revise its choice and to entrust as far as possible the controlling mission to associations of control which would be made up of French companies possibly associated with foreign ones«.¹⁵² As far as most of these companies were under the control of the French government, it was not difficult to see how they could be a useful tool to control or even propose the projects. Indeed, most of the future African states would need assistance to build up their own projects. This task

147 A. M. A. E., Box 719, report of the 24th May 1956, French Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Direction Générale des Affaires Economiques et financières, service de la coopération économique).

148 A. M. A. E., box 719, report (July 1956), from the inter-ministerial commission of the Common Market, working group on the overseas territories.

149 A. M. A. E., box 721, Council of Ministers of the EEC CEE, 8th session, 1st and 2nd July 1958.

150 A. M. A. E., box 722, telegram from Carbonnel (French Permanent representative to the EEC) received by the French Foreign ministry, 15th July 1960.

151 A. M. A. E., Box 722, note of the French Foreign Ministry, 21 December 1959.

152 Ibid.

could be handed to *bureaux d'études* (consultancy offices) more or less connected with French companies, at least it was the hope of the French officials. Now the following scenario was clearly envisaged by the Germans:¹⁵³ an office would advise one of these states to build up a bridge, or even worse would offer money to the head of state and would want him to propose such a project where a specific company would have a clear advantage. This project would be proposed to the Commission and by getting some strong support by some of the member states, it would be accepted by the council. The bridge would be built by the company linked to that office and the implementation of the works controlled by the same company. »You see what kind of abuses could follow.»¹⁵⁴ In that scenario, Ferrandi would also lose control of the whole process, from the selection of the projects to the control of their implementation. Since French companies were predominant on the spot, it is not difficult to see how the system could have been prejudicial to German interests as well.¹⁵⁵ As no agreement could be reached on that issue between France and the Commission, the former went on refusing to sign the financing agreement. Finally, it was asked by its partners to stop »its practices which were not compatible with the Convention«.¹⁵⁶

Benefiting from German support, Ferrandi proposed again to set up local *contrôleurs* of the EDF who could advise the future African states for their projects (technical assistance) and control their implementation. The proposal was several times refused by the Council of Minister of the EEC.¹⁵⁷ In the end, the issue was solved »pragmatically, and in a provisional way«.¹⁵⁸ From 1960 onwards, French and Belgian, Italian, and German technicians were hired by J. Ferrandi through consultancy firms and sent as *contrôleur-techniques* (technical controllers) to the newly independent states. As the system remained very unsatisfactory, a new regulation was adopted in 1965 which created the *contrôleur délégué*. Those were hired through a non-profit making association under Belgian law: the »Association Européenne de Coopération« (AEC), a kind of »annex« to the DG 8, largely dominated by Ferrandi who was the chief administrator of the AEC. Ferrandi could then hire his own men according to his own criteria, as long as a certain share between nationalities was respected. He could also move them freely within his own »empire«. Many of these controllers were ex-colonial officials. Hence, he could have on the spot people whom he could trust, who were loyal to him as they owed him their job. Again, he installed a very neo-patrimonial system.¹⁵⁹

Indeed, the administrative system Ferrandi built within DG 8 during his 13 years as head of the EDF (1962–1975) was of an hybrid kind. From outside it was not different from any bureaucracy: the broad aim to »lead the overseas territories to the economic,

153 A. M. A. E., box 724, letter from the German ambassador to the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, Couve de Murville, 7th October 1959. A. E. C., Bac 25/1980, box 1035, report from the Director General to the Direction C (1962).

154 Ferrandi, interview.

155 See the criticism by Germany against French discrimination vis-à-vis the German enterprises: A. E. C., Bac 25/1980, box 1035, report from the Director General to the Direction C (1962, sd), on the problem of that discrimination. Bac 25/1980/1316, DG 8 note of the 5th June 1964 on the same issue. Bac 25/1980, box 37, minutes of the meeting of the European Parliament commission (in charge of the relationships with the EAMA), 9 February 1968.

156 A. M. A. E., box 722, letter from the French ambassador in Germany to the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, 15 June 1960.

157 A. E. C., Bac, 15/1969, box 27, minute of the European Parliament committee in charge of the relationships with the EAMA, 20th July 1965.

158 A. M. A. E., box 724, report on the implementation of the EDF, 5th November 1960.

159 V. Dimier/M. McGeever, Diplomats without a flag: the institutionalization of the delegations of the European Commission in ACP countries, in: *Journal of Common Market Studies* 44, 2006, pp. 483–505.

social and cultural development to which they aspire« was set up in the Treaty of Rome and the subsequent Conventions which constituted the legal basis of the Association. Rules were adopted to determine how these aims should be pursued, through several regulations concerning the functioning of the EDF. According to its organisational chart, DG 8 was structured along a clearly defined hierarchy like any bureaucracy. Nonetheless, inside that bureaucratic framework, a patrimonial system of authority based on very personal relationships, and bonds of loyalty and patronage were built and extended to the African associates through a kind of »collective clientelism«. ¹⁶⁰ The idea of adaptation to African realities became a good justification to keep the aims of the Association and the criteria to select the projects very vague, in sum to justify what could be seen as a permanent exception to the rules. To some extent, this system resembled the neo-patrimonial character of the post-colonial state in Africa which inherited from the same influence. Rather, it was well fit to deal with it, and this was precisely one of Ferrandi's strength as a leader: his very capacity to adapt DG 8 to its environment and main clientele. Whether this system was specific to DG 8 or was a more general feature of the early Commission is still an open question. In its study of the Hallstein Commission, Coombes described it as a »porous organisation« characterised by very informal and personal relationships and dominated by strong leaders and their »clans« ¹⁶¹. Rosenthal in her book on the early Commission also mentioned this »clanic« aspect as a strong feature of its nascent administrative system. ¹⁶² However, in the case of DG 8, this clanic system was central to Ferrandi's authority and a method to run the EDF. It also constituted the very basis of DG 8's identity and its legitimacy. For many years, within the European Commission, DG 8 kept its image as the DG »dealing with negro kings«.

160 Ravenshill.

161 *D. Coombes*, *Politics and bureaucracy in the European Community*, London 1970.

162 *G. Rosenthal*, *The men behind the decisions: cases in European policy-making*, Lexington/MA 1975.

