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French Development Aid and the Reforms of 1998–2002

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ABSTRACT

SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES
PhD thesis

French Development Aid and the Reforms of 1998–2002

Richard Moncrieff

This study is an analysis of the changes to the institutions and doctrines of French development aid between 1998 and 2002, and specifically the reforms announced by Prime Minister Jospin in February 1998. This includes analysis of institutional reorganisation and of new policy doctrines. The study considers the implications of these changes for the relations between France and former French colonies of sub-Saharan Africa, including detailed analysis of the aid relationship between France and Côte d'Ivoire. Using qualitative data, especially personally conducted interviews in Paris and Côte d'Ivoire and analysis of official documents, this is the first major study of these reforms that puts them into historical and theoretical perspective. It thereby contributes to the wider debate over continuity and change both in French aid policy and in France's relations with sub-Saharan Africa. It also furthers understanding of the mechanisms and dynamics of reform within French state administration.

This study compares French development aid policy and institutional architecture from the 1960s up to the mid 1990s with the new institutions and policies put in place in the 1998–2002 period. Chapter 1 looks at the creation of French aid policy in the late 1950s and early 1960s and considers its imperial origins. Chapter 2 examines French aid from 1960 to 1995 and places it in the context of the global politics of development aid and the policies of other donors, in order to highlight the specificities of the French case. The French reaction to the emergence of the structural adjustment and later good governance agendas is considered. Chapter 3 examines the content of the reforms put in place by Jospin and associated changes in the 1998–2002 period, including the reactions of officials and critics. Chapter 4 is a case study of the changes made to the aid relationship between France and Côte d'Ivoire and the effects of instability in Côte d'Ivoire on French policy. The impact on French policy of the growing role of multilateral donors in Côte d'Ivoire is also considered. Chapter 5 examines the evolutions in French doctrine which have run in parallel to the Jospin reforms, looking at French attitudes to major development issues, particularly the relationship between the state and the market.

French development aid is part of the long-term continuities of French foreign policy, and especially France's desire to demonstrate the universal validity of its cultural and political achievements. In this study French aid is analysed as an extension of these foreign policy aims within the specific post-colonial relations with sub-Saharan Africa. French aid has helped to maintain a protected environment within which the French have sought not only to support close political allies, but also to reproduce a "model" of society and politics. This study asks whether the French can continue to use aid in this way in the light of the Jospin reforms and the events of the 1998–2002 period.

This study asks whether the changes of this period can be seen as a convergence between French aid and the policies, practices and norms of other aid donors. To this end, the notion of an aid donor "regime" is used. This helps to show that reform of French policy occurs in a context of interaction with other aid donors, and to show how that interaction affects French policy.

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List of Abbreviations

ACP	Africa Caribbean and Pacific
AEF	Afrique équatoriale française
AFD	Agence française de développement
AOF	Afrique orientale française
C2D	Contrat de désendettement et développement
CAISTAB	Caisse de stabilisation
CAR	Central African Republic
CCCE	Caisse centrale de la Coopération économique
CCD	Commission de coopération décentralisée
CCF	Caisse de coopération française
CCFOM	Caisse centrale de la France Outre-Mer
CDF	Comprehensive Development Framework
CFA	Communauté financière africaine
CFD	Caisse française de développement
CIAD	Comité interministeriel de l'aide au développement
CICID	Comité interministeriel de coopération internationale et du développement
CONFESIP	Comité de mobilisation des financements extérieurs et de suivi des investissements publics
CSN	Coopérant service national
DAC	Development Aid Committee (of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development)
DDCT	Direction du développement et de la coopération technique
DFID	Department for International Development
DGCCT	Direction générale de la coopération culturelle et technique
DGCID	Direction générale de la coopération internationale et du développement
DGRCST	Direction générale des relations culturelles, scientifiques et techniques
DOM	Département d'Outre Mer
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DREE	Direction des relations économiques extérieures
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EDF	European Development Fund
EEC	European Economic Community
ESAF	Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility
EU	European Union
EPIC	Etablissement public à caractère industriel et commercial
FAC	Fonds d'aide et de coopération
FFEM	Fonds français de l'environnement mondial
FIDES	Fonds d'investissement de développement économique et sociale

FIDOM	Fonds d'investissement d'outre-mer
FPI	Front populaire ivoirien
FSD	Fonds social de développement
FSP	Fonds de solidarité prioritaire
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP/GNI	Gross Domestic Product/Gross National Income
GIP	Groupement d'intérêt professionnel
GPG	Global Public Good
HCCI	Haut conseil de la coopération internationale
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Countries
IFI	International Financial Institution (World Bank and IMF)
IFS	Institution financière spécialisée
IHEDN	Institut des hautes études de défense nationale
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IRC	Intermediate Revenue Country
LDC	Less Developed Country
LICUS	Low Income Countries Under Stress
LLDC	Least Developed Country
NEPAD	New Plan for African Development
NPED	New Political Economy of Development
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.
OHADA	Organisation pour le harmonisation des droits d'affaires en Afrique
OMT	Orientation de moyen terme
OPCF	Observatoire permanent de la coopération française
PAAFIE	Projet d'appui aux administrations financières et économiques
PARMEN	Projet d'ajustement et de remobilisation du ministère de l'éducation et de la formation de base
PDCI	Parti démocratique de la Côte d'Ivoire
PIN	Public Information Notice (of the IMF)
PRGF	Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility
PRGS	Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RDR	Rassemblement des Républicains
RFI	Radio France internationale
RPF	Rwandan Patriotic Front
SAC	Service d'action civique
SAL	Structural Adjustment Loan
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programmes
SCAC	Service de coopération et d'action culturelle
SCTIP	Service de coopération internationale technique de police
SEDEC	Gaullist intelligence service, expansion unknown
SMP	Staff Monitored Programme

SWAP(s)	Sector Wide Approach
TOM	Territoire d'Outre Mer
UEMOA	Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WTO	World Trade Organisation
ZSP	Zone de solidarité prioritaire

Introduction

1. The Issue

i. The Area of Study and Empirical Questions

On 4 February 1998 the Parti socialiste (French centre-left Socialist Party) government of Lionel Jospin announced a major reform to the institutions of French overseas development aid. The headline reform was the dissolution of the Ministère de la Coopération (henceforth Cooperation Ministry). This ministry had managed the political relationship with France's former colonies in sub-Saharan Africa since their independence in 1960, as well as controlling the disbursement of development aid. The creation and continued existence of this ministry had for 38 years symbolised the special part the former colonies of sub-Saharan Africa played in French political life. However, as the colonial period became an increasingly distant memory, the maintenance of this ministry dedicated to sustaining relations with former colonies had become increasingly anachronistic. It is therefore no surprise that the dissolution of this ministry had been suggested before and that such a move had been at the heart of calls for reform of France's development aid system ever since the Jeanneney report of 1964. Partly as a response to these calls for reforms, the ministry was partially incorporated into the Foreign Ministry in 1966 (to 1974) and again, very briefly by the first Parti socialiste government of the 5th Republic in 1981.¹ In this sense the reforms put in place by Jospin in 1998 (henceforth the "Jospin reforms") were an historic opportunity to respond to a long-standing issue in French political life.

Under the reforms of 1998, the work and most of the staff of the Cooperation Ministry were transferred to a newly created department of the Ministère des affaires étrangères (henceforth Foreign Ministry) dealing with both development aid and cultural cooperation, the Direction générale de la coopération internationale et du développement (DGCD). This department is now represented in the recipient country by a section of the French embassy, the Service de coopération et d'action culturelle (SCAC), which has replaced the former representative of the Cooperation Ministry.

The reforms as announced in February 1998 also encompassed some changes to the remit of the French development bank, the Caisse française de développement (CFD), renamed for the occasion the Agence française de développement (AFD) and the creation of an interministerial committee to coordinate development aid policy under the Prime Minister, the Comité inter-ministeriel de coopération internationale et du

¹ See "35 ans de réformes avortées", *Marchés Tropicaux*, 14 décembre 2001, p. 2560.

développement (CICID), an idea tried but with little success under the preceding right of centre (Gaullist) government. These institutional changes were accompanied by a change in the budgetary procedures of French development aid (how development aid is allocated from central funds, an important issue in French political and administrative life) and the nomination of a group of countries that were to receive the bulk of this aid, the Zone de solidarité prioritaire (ZSP). Lastly, the creation of a semi-independent consultative body was announced, the Haut conseil de la coopération internationale (HCCI).

Other changes to the mechanisms of French development aid were enacted under Jospin's government, although they did not feature directly in the announcements of February 1998. For example, a new mechanism for the control of debt relief funds was created in 2001, the Contrat de désendettement et développement (C2D). The period also saw significant changes in the role and status of French development aid workers ("coopérants"), in parallel with the continued decline in their numbers.

These changes pose a number of basic empirical questions, which this study seeks to investigate. What exactly was the substance of the reforms? Why did they occur when they did? What was the rationale behind the reforms and what did those responsible for them hope to achieve? Were they successful in their stated aims, and if so, what were the factors that allowed for successful reforms in this area, 40 years after the Jeanneney report? What were their immediate consequences and concrete effects on the administrative mechanisms of French development aid, as well as on relations with recipient countries? To what degree did the outcome of the reforms (over a five-year period) represent the intentions of those who conceived them and put them in place? How can any distance between the intentions and the outcomes be explained? How were the reforms presented and promoted both to those directly affected and to the public? What were the reactions to the reforms, again both on the part of those directly affected, both in France and in recipient states, and among the public? Finally, were the reforms opposed by any of those affected, and if so did conflicts between officials or politicians influence either their conception or their outcome?

Although some of these questions have already been addressed in the existing academic literature, no single study has investigated all of them while putting them in an historical framework and relating them to relevant academic theory. Gaulme and Cumming provide details of the main features of the reforms, in summary form.²

² Cumming, Gordon, 'Modernisation without Banalisation: towards a new era in French aid relations?', *Modern and Contemporary France*, 8 (3) 2000; and Gaulme, François, 'Deux réformes croisées: Grande-

Otherwise, the publications of the Observatoire permanent de la coopération française (OPCF) constitute the most comprehensive independent source and commentary on the evolutions of French development aid in the period under consideration. Since the implementation of the reforms, the OPCF's annual reports have described the changes and provided analysis of their limits and ambiguities.³ They have also demonstrated that the stated aims of the reforms, particularly the aim of expanding the number of recipients of French aid away from the concentration on former colonies, are difficult to reconcile with the decline in aid volumes in the period (in reviews of aid spending in each annual report). In addition, they have analysed French aid in different sectors, including analyses of how the reforms and other policy changes of the 1998–2002 period affect the French position on development aid in health, education, rural development, debt relief and so forth.

The OPCF is a self-styled critical voice in the area of French development aid. While their analyses are often of high quality, their format (up to a dozen or more contributions in each report) and predominantly critical perspective do not allow for a comprehensive and objective overview of the reforms and of their broader importance in the history of French development aid. The most comprehensive single analysis is that of the Development Aid Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (henceforth the DAC) in its 2000 report on French aid.⁴ The methodology applied in this report is to match the reforms and their effects to the standards of donor practice that the DAC is dedicated to promoting in areas such as respect for the environment, untying aid from commercial purchases and so forth. While this report provides fairly comprehensive descriptive detail of the reforms, there remains a need for a comprehensive academic and historical analysis of the reform process and the significance of the reforms at the end of Jospin's mandate in 2002. This is the aim of this study.

Bretagne et la France', *Afrique Contemporaine*, 188, 1998. Note that the brief overview of the literature here does not include material from official sources such as the summaries of the reforms found in reports from the Foreign Ministry, the CICID, and the AFD. These reports will be referred to and cited throughout Chapters 3 and 5. Another source of description and critical analysis of the reforms are the parliamentary reports on the French budget. Especially interesting are Assemblée Nationale, *Rapport d'Information déposé par la Commission des Finances de l'Economie générale et du Plan*, (rapport Barrau), Paris, 26 septembre 2001; and Sénat, *Rapport du Sénat au nom de la Commission des Finances*, (rapport Charasse) Paris, novembre 2001.

³ See especially Pillon, Marc, 'La réforme de la Coopération française: institutionnelle ou politique?', in OPCF *Rapport 1998*, Karthala, Paris, 1998; Le Bris, Emile, 'La réforme de la coopération française: "une façade sur une réalité incertaine?"' and Némo, Jean, 'La réforme de la coopération: contexte, orientation, contenu', both in OPCF *Rapport 1999*, Karthala, Paris 1999.

⁴ Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development/Development Aid Committee (OECD/DAC), *Examens en matière de coopération pour le développement: France*, Paris, 2000.

ii. Historical and Theoretical Questions

French development aid policy has rightly been analysed as a product and instrument of France's broader foreign policy aims.⁵ More specifically, it has been analysed as a tool of France's foreign policy aims as they pertain to former colonies of sub-Saharan Africa, that is to say as a way of maintaining political alliances with leaders of former colonies, which in turn contributes to the broader aim of maintaining France's position as a middle level global power.⁶

The dominant issue addressed in this literature is the *continuity* of a set of political relations between France and former colonies established by de Gaulle in the early 1960s, and the role development aid has played in maintaining these. This theme is often developed further by pointing to the continuities between the colonial period and the post-colonial period, arguing that French development aid policy has therefore been "neo-colonial".⁷ Some saw in the policies of Giscard d'Estaing a sign that the former colonies were beginning to lose their special status, especially under the pressure of commercial considerations.⁸ However, the reaffirmation under Mitterrand of France's attachment to former colonies and the continued use of development aid as an instrument in this relationship stimulated renewed consideration of the continuity theme, including how and why policy was maintained by governments of different political persuasions.⁹

At the end of the 1980s the political and economic relations between France and the former colonies of sub-Saharan Africa were shaken by the devastating economic decline of African states and by the demands for political change in the wake of the end

⁵ See Hook, Stephen, *National Interest and Foreign Aid*, Lynne Rienner, Boulder, 1995; McKinlay, R. D., 'The Aid Relationship. A Foreign Policy Model and Interpretation of the Distributions of Official Bilateral Economic Aid of the United States, France and Germany 1960–1970', *Comparative Political Studies*, 11 (14) 1979; and Schraeder, William et al., 'Clarifying the Foreign Aid Puzzle. A Comparison of American, Japanese, French and Swedish Aid Flows', *World Politics*, 50, January 1998. Note that these authors also relate French aid to commercial considerations. These issues will be discussed more fully in Chapter 2.

⁶ Cerny, Philip, *The Politics of Grandeur*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1980.

⁷ Nearly all studies of France's Africa policy and development aid policy have pointed to this. See for example Bourmaud, Daniel, *La Politique en Afrique*, Montchrestien, Paris, 1997 pp. 103–24; Jean-Médard, François, 'Les avatars du messianisme français en Afrique', *L'Afrique politique*, 1999; Chafer, Tony, 'France and Black Africa: a very special relationship', *Modern and Contemporary France*, 4, 1996; and from a more left-wing perspective Martin, Guy, 'The Historical, Economic and Political bases of France's Africa Policy', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 23 (2) 1985; and Mende, Achille, *De l'aide à la recolonisation*, Seuil, Paris, 1979.

⁸ Bach, Daniel, La France en Afrique sub-Saharienne: contraintes historiques et nouveaux espaces économiques', in Smouts, Marie-Claude and Cohen, Samy, *La Politique extérieure de Valéry Giscard d'Estaing*, Presses des Sciences politiques, Paris, 1983.

of the Cold War. The theme of continuity became the theme of *adaptation*, as many analysts pointed to French attempts to maintain the same basic political aim of close relations with leaders of former colonies, while adapting the methods used to these changing international circumstances. On the political front, analysts pointed out that the French approach to democratisation was characterised by hesitation or resistance, due to a desire to support those leaders in power in former colonies who were threatened by these changes.¹⁰ On the economic front, analysts have pointed to the scale of the problems faced by the French in francophone Africa, which culminated in the devaluation of the CFA Franc in 1994, under pressure from the International Monetary Fund (IMF).¹¹ However, despite the scale of these problems, analysts have once again pointed to the continuity of vision in France's relations with Africa, and the way in which development aid is used to these ends.¹²

These debates and the constant affirmation of the continuity of vision behind French development aid policies point to underlying structures running through the history of France's actions in the world, dating from at least colonial times. This indicates the context in which French development aid should be understood while also pointing to the necessary adaptation to changes in the international environment.¹³ This in turn prompts a further more theoretical and historical questioning of the Jospin reforms. Specifically, do these reforms alter the role of development aid in these long-term structures of France's action in the world? If so, what do they imply for France's relations with the former colonies of sub-Saharan Africa? Do the reforms constitute or

⁹ Bayart, Jean-François, *La Politique africaine de François Mitterrand*, Karthala Paris, 1984; and Chafer, Tony, 'Mitterrand and Africa 1981–1984. Policy and Practice', *Modern and Contemporary France*, October 1985.

¹⁰ Toulabor, Comi and Heilbrunn, John, 'Une si petite démocratisation pour le Togo', *Politique africaine*, 58, juin 1995; Quantin, Patrick and Bannegas, Richard, 'Orientation et limites de l'aide française au développement démocratique. Benin, Congo et République centrafricaine', *Revue canadienne d'études du développement*, 1996; Toulabor, Comi, 'Les mots et les choses de la Paristroika', in Bach, Daniel and Kirk Greene, Anthony (eds) *Etats et sociétés en Afrique francophone*, Economica, Paris, 1993; and, although he does not emphasise this resistance as much as other authors, Cumming, Gordon, *French and British Aid to Africa: a Comparative Study*, Ph.D. thesis, University of Cardiff, 1999.

¹¹ Adda, Jacques and Smouts, Marie-Claude, *La France face au Sud*, Karthala, 1989; Chambaud, Eric, 'Comment on Aide Afrique', in M'Bokolo, Elikia (ed.), *Développement de l'aide au partenariat*, La documentation française, Paris, 1993; and on the devaluation, Bourmand, Daniel, 'La dévaluation du franc CFA: Aspects politiques: France-Afrique l'implosion' in OPCF, *Rapport 1995*, Desclée de Brouwer, 1995.

¹² Marchal, Roland, 'France and Africa: the Emergence of Essential Reforms?' *International Affairs*, 74 (2) 1998; and Chafer, 'France and Black Africa ...'.

¹³ Gaulme, François, 'Jeux du présent, héritages du passé: essai sur le protocole présidentiel dans les relations franco-africaines', *H&A Afrique*, Harmattan, Paris, 2002, provides an unusual view of how long-term historical continuities have determined features of France's relations with Africa. See also Bourmaud, Daniel, 'French Political Culture and African Policy: from consensus to dissensus', in *Franco-South African dialogue* (ISS Series: Sustainable Security in Africa, Pretoria ed. Philander, Diane, August 2000).

herald the detachment of French development aid policy from its colonial heritage, either in their intentions or in terms of their immediate outcomes (this study covers developments up to May 2003)? How can the relationship between the reforms in Paris and evolutions of political leadership in francophone Africa be characterised? Finally if, as argued, French presence has had a profound effect on the societies it came into contact with, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, what do the reforms of development aid imply for those societies?

To answer these questions, as this study intends, requires an assessment of what French aid was, and of the vision or doctrine underpinning it, not just on the eve of the reforms, but through a more detailed analysis of the history of French development aid and its origin in France's colonial past. The next step is to establish the point of departure for the reforms in order to re-examine the continuity issue in the light of the conditions pertaining at the time. This establishes the background for detailed study of the changes of the 1998–2002 period and an appraisal of their historical significance for French development aid policy. Finally, these questions demand that the impact of the reforms in francophone Africa be assessed. This needs to demonstrate both the direct impact of the changes to French development policy enacted in this period, and the wider significance of the reforms in terms of relations between France and her former colonies and favoured aid clients. This study uses a detailed analysis of French aid to Côte d'Ivoire (traditionally one of the biggest recipients of French aid) to address these questions.

2. The Conceptual Base

i. The French State and its Projection Abroad

French development aid policy will be studied in the context of the history of France's foreign and colonial policy. This context can best be encapsulated in the idea of the "projection" of France in the world. This term is useful in that it evokes a range of different ways in which French presence has been felt outside mainland France. It encompasses an active process for example of conquering (physical projection, often used in the sense of the geographical range of a country's armed forces) or influencing people in other parts of the world. It also encompasses the attempt to display or potentially implant elements of French life outside mainland France. In this sense, the idea of projection is not limited simply to ideas of exportation of military force, physical goods or emigration of people (the latter has been relatively insignificant in the French

case), but encompasses the attempt to span differences between cultures through the dissemination of ideas and practices.

This notion of projection incorporates two distinct ingredients – on the one hand the active agent of projection and on the other hand the recipient, the part of the world outside France that is affected by the act of projection. The agent of projection in this study comprises the individual actors (individuals, private companies) and public institutions (principally the state) of modern France. Individual actors have often played an important and, in some periods, decisive role in this. However, at the heart of the projection of modern France abroad has been a collective ideal within which public policy has been regarded as the creative agent of an overall vision of France's action. As in other areas of French life, the state is therefore central both to the aims and means of this projection.

The idea of projection of modern France in the world may therefore be understood with reference to the evolutions of the functions and roles that the state has taken on in modern French history. The means whereby, and ends to which, the French state has orchestrated this projection has varied with the different functions invested in it. Initially this function was “regalian” – the creation of a public sphere as distinct from the interests of private individuals and the exercise of power and authority by that state, although not necessarily over a rigidly defined territory or population. Historians attach this function particularly to the French state under the ancien régime and it is reflected in its projection in the world at that time, which was dominated by competition between European powers and the demands of raising revenue through slave colonies.¹⁴

In the wake of the French revolution, the state took on further roles and functions related to the creation and integration of a political community, a “nation”, and to the representation of that nation. The raising of a mass army, the construction of physical infrastructure and public education were all ways in which the French state helped create and culturally unify modern France in the post-revolutionary period.¹⁵ As far as representation was concerned, the role of the state was not limited to a narrow sense of representative government, although this played a significant part. It also included the idea that the French state could and should play an active role in the creation of the nation of France and in representing the values of that nation, and in the

¹⁴ The idea of the French state performing “functions”, including the regalian function, is used in Rosanvallon, Pierre, *L'Etat en France de 1798 à nos jours*, Seuil, Paris, 1990. For detail of French imperialism under the ancien régime, see Aldrich, Robert, *Greater France, a History of French Overseas Expansion*, Macmillan, London, 1996; and Meyer, J. et al., *Histoire de la France coloniale des origines à 1914*, Armand Collin, Paris, 1991.

defence of those values against threats to them and to the body politic. At the same time, the people of France were to become “citizens” who supported republican institutions and had an active, if indirect, role in government. Their political identity was to be channelled through the nation-state. This is the basis of the French interpretation of the idea of republic – that the state not only represents the people in the sense of suffrage, but incarnates and defends the historical progress of the nation.¹⁶ This representation is therefore *symbolic*. The state in France, more than in other countries, has developed and refined this role of agent for the symbolic integration of the nation and as the guarantor of French nationhood.

The projection of France in the world has evolved in parallel to this state-centred creation of a political community. Indeed, the French nation-state and its values were an issue of international concern in the immediate aftermath of the French revolution, as the revolutionary wars were prosecuted in order both to project and defend the nascent French nation-state on the world stage.¹⁷ In this way, the French revolution gave a vital new impetus to the idea that the French nation-state was the vehicle of ideals and practices that had universal importance, and thereby formed a crucial part of the doctrinal basis of nineteenth-century French imperialism: “de façon très significative, l’universalisme du message révolutionnaire a débouché sur l’Impérialisme. Dans la foulée de la Révolution, la France a exporté par les armes sa révolution et ses lois dans le reste de l’Europe. L’universalisme messianique de la Révolution permettait ainsi de légitimer l’impérialisme de la France”.¹⁸

There are two important consequences of this specific French ideology of nationalism. On the one hand it was held that, as the model of political society that came out of the revolutionary period was of potentially universal application, it could be reproduced in other parts of the world, so that other societies could benefit from the advances it represented. On the other hand it was held that, as the French nation-state is a vehicle for universal principles and practices, individuals who are originally from other cultures could potentially partake of and benefit from French political culture. It was therefore possible for individuals to join the French nation through understanding, accepting and participating in French cultural traditions to the point of “becoming”

¹⁵ What Rosanvallon calls the role of “instituteur du social”.

¹⁶ See particularly Nicolet, Claude, *L’idée républicaine en France 1789–1924. Essai d’histoire critique*, Gallimard, Paris, 1982.

¹⁷ As well as the general histories of the period, of which we have consulted Rosanvallon, ‘L’Etat en France ...’; and Hobsbawm, Eric, *The Age of Revolution*, Weidenfeld & Nicholson, London, 1975, see O’Brien, Connor, ‘Patriotes universels’, in Best, Geoffrey, *The Permanent Revolution: the French Revolution and its legacy*, Fontana, London, 1989.

French and being “assimilated” into the French nation. It is important to note that this is an exceptional way for a nation to approach its relation to outsiders, as nationalism has, historically, been used to exclude others from the national solidarity group. The French model is similar not to this exclusionary tradition of nationalism, but to the messianic qualities of proselytising religions.

This projection of the French nation-state onto the world stage is not therefore incidental but is an integral part of the creation of the modern French political community. This idea that France’s role in the world is a component part of what France itself is or could be was particularly refined in the ideology of de Gaulle, who famously believed that only on the world stage could the true greatness of France become apparent. It is therefore no surprise that French development aid policy, which was created by de Gaulle, was conceived of as a continuation of the imperial projection of the values of the French nation-state in the world. Specifically, development aid policy served to connect two distinct elements of this Gaullist vision, one specific and one generic – on the one hand maintaining relations with former colonies, and on the other hand elaborating broader ideas concerning France’s universal mission, as it connected with issues of social and political development in the post-colonial world.

This study therefore holds that the projection of France in the world has played a central role in the historical creation and self understanding of modern France, and seeks to demonstrate that French development aid policy must be understood in this context. At the same time the study addresses the significance of this projection for societies and cultures outside France, and specifically those societies that were colonised by the French and were subsequently the main recipients of French development aid. The whole variety of experiences of those who have encountered the influence, authority or brute force of this projection can clearly not be covered here. What does need emphasising is that in some instances, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, the projection of the French nation-state included the reproduction, in however partial and fragmentary a way, of practices derived from French experiences (often referred to as a “model”). Médard again: “La France poursuit ainsi, avec des succès divers, la politique d’exportation de sa langue et son modèle culturel. Ce dernier ne se limite d’ailleurs ni à la langue, ni à la ‘culture’, mais comprend l’ensemble des manières de faire considérées comme caractéristiques du génie français, qu’il s’agisse du modèle d’une administration de type centralisé et jacobin, ou de son droit.”¹⁹

¹⁸ Médard, ‘Les avatars du messianisme...’, pp. 17–18.

¹⁹ Médard, ‘Les avatars du messianisme ...’, p. 25.

This partial reproduction of a “model” included not only the creation of new forms of regalian authority, but also the extension of the French state’s integrative function and the creation of new socially integrative mechanisms, specifically through the education of indigenous populations. This policy of assimilation through education allowed some fortunate or talented Africans not only to benefit from their position as intermediaries between colonisers and colonised, but in some cases to integrate into the social and political world of their colonial masters, occasionally at very high levels. Notwithstanding its highly ambivalent relationship with the reality of colonial practice, this policy of assimilation has had strong symbolic links to the “universal” nature of the projection of modern France, as it demonstrates that any individual can potentially partake of and contribute to French culture.

This notion of symbolic projection and its reception outside France provide a broad framework within which to place the questions of this study. The question to be investigated is that of the relationship between development aid as a specific policy and symbolic projection as a guiding framework for French action. This helps to clarify what is at stake in the question of the continuity or otherwise of the aims of French development aid and enables the analyst to interpret the importance of bureaucratic or policy changes. The question posed by the Jospin reforms, especially the dissolution of the Cooperation Ministry, therefore becomes: how do they alter the role that development aid can play in the symbolic projection of France in the world in the 21st century?

ii. Historical Continuities and International Convergence

The “model” described thus far may be termed the classic model of the French state in the modern period. It has been characterised by the centralised control and “volontarist” action of the state. This state action is carried out by a small elite trained specifically for state administration.²⁰ The historical specificity of the French model is to a large extent invested in their socialisation processes and working practices. These processes and practices are characterised by reference to a number of enduring concepts, such as “l’état de droit” and “intérêt général”, which constitute a set of references to the ways in which the French state has gained the right to embody legitimately the ideals and progress of the French nation. State action has therefore been seen, by those who have worked in its upper echelons, as the embodiment of the national will, and as a

²⁰ This elite spans political and administrative functions, as there is a large degree of interchange between the two in Paris. As regards French development aid, they will henceforth be referred to as officials or decision makers.

counterbalance to a perpetually politically divided society.²¹ It is this assertive and self-confident model that has been projected through modern French imperialism.

The socialisation processes that form the French elite constitute a particular social environment. This may be likened to the idea of “habitus” developed by the French sociologist Bourdieu in studies of French academia.²² Habitus refers to the ways in which individuals understand the elements of their immediate environment that are common to the people with whom they share it (in contrast to the idea of “champ” (field), which refers to the way in which people represent to themselves the different roles they play vis-à-vis other individuals). It is particularly suited to the study of French elites who share a notably similar set of educational experiences, and whose working careers are often confined to relatively small social circles. This provides ample opportunity to create and perpetuate their own “habitus”, which provides a rationale for their actions at home and abroad.

The relationship between the individual members of the French elite and the structures of the French state, whether framed in terms of Bourdieu’s notion of habitus or in other conceptual frameworks, may be seen as one example of the perennial problem in social science of the relationship between the actor and the structure. The aim here is not to enter into the details of Bourdieusian sociology, but simply to note that French elites both create (or perpetuate) and exist within a coherent and preconstituted social environment that offers a set of ideas which make sense of their place and role in relation to each other and in relation to the outside world. Furthermore, this social environment is at once a highly coherent shared environment, and a highly fractured and territorially competitive field. Territorial competition between corps and ministries, and to a lesser extent between political affiliations, is highly prevalent in French state administration. This study looks at whether this paradox of cohesion and competition has affected French development aid policy and its reform.

The French model of state administration originates in the period of nation-state construction in the nineteenth century (and to a lesser extent in the regalian state building periods of the ancien régime, such as under finance minister Colbert in the 1660s). It was considerably reinforced in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, as educational establishments were set up to re-equip the state for the task of

²¹ This model of French administration and elites is captured in Crosier, Michel, *Le phénomène bureaucratique*, Paris, Seuil, 1963. For an elaboration of the idea that French elites work by reference to historically constituted ideas of the general interest that provide a sense of legitimacy to their actions, see the excellent analysis of in Mény, Yves, *La Corruption de la République*, Fayard, Paris, 1992.

²² Bourdieu, Pierre, *Esquisse d’une théorie de la pratique*, Editions de Droz, Genève, 1972.

postwar reconstruction. The model has subsequently been changing under internal and external pressure since the 1970s.²³ State centralisation and national control over the economy has been weakened by the privatisation and deregulation processes and the inflows of foreign investment into areas of the French economy previously considered the preserve of French capital. The primacy of the nation-state as a political unit, and as a political project, has been challenged from above (particularly in the European Union) and from below, by the (re-) emergence and affirmation of sub-national or trans-national identity groups and regional cultures. Furthermore, the legitimacy of top down state action premised on the assumption of legitimacy derived from notions of the general interest has been challenged, in France as elsewhere, by demands for greater “accountability” and “transparency” in public life.²⁴ These are part of broader changes that have weakened all nation-states as political communities and economic units – what is generally termed “globalisation”.²⁵

Although France is no worse equipped to confront the challenges of a global economy than other comparable countries, these changes are perceived by many French people, including many of those working in the higher echelons of state administration, to constitute a particular challenge to the French model of state centred nationalism and citizenship. There is a widespread perception that the French model and the values incarnated by the French nation-state are under *threat* from these global forces.²⁶ Globalisation is perceived as being the vehicle for a model of politics and society that is incompatible with historical French practice. Specifically, the French feel that the spread of market forces threatens state, and therefore democratic, control over the economy. Moreover, the rise of communitarian interest groups threatens the direct relationship between the citizen and the state, which has, in theory at least, been the basis of French democracy.

The question of any *reform* of public policy in France must be placed in this

²³ See in particular Muller, Pierre (ed.), *L'Administration française est-elle en crise?* Harmattan, Paris, 1992.

²⁴ See Rouban, Luc, ‘La Modernisation de l’Etat et la fin de la spécificité française’, *Revue française de science politique*, 40 (4) 1990.

²⁵ Among the enormous literature on the nation-state and globalisation, the following texts have been consulted: Dunn, John. (ed.), ‘The Contemporary Crisis of the Nation State’, *Political Studies*, XLII, 1994; Hobsbawm, Eric, *Nations and Nationalism since 1870*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1990; and Held, David, *Democracy and the Global Order*, Polity Press, London, 1995, part I. Some dispute this “strong” interpretation of the decline of the nation-state, including Hirst, Paul and Thompson, Grahame, *Globalisation in Question*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1996. On the French experience, see Balibar, Etienne, *Les frontières de la Démocratie*, Paris, La découverte, 1992; and Touraine, Marisol, *Le bouleversement du Monde*, Seuil, Paris, 1995.

²⁶ For an almost caricature example, see Bougnoux, Daniel, ‘Cowboys et jardiniers: le marché mondial contre l’exception française’, *Esprit*, mars 1996.

context. As in other countries, reform agendas in France have to confront the interests of those who are, or who perceive themselves to be, threatened by the reform. However, in France the problem takes on a specific dimension. Reform has become connected with the idea of convergence on a model that constitutes a threat to French cultural or political identity and is seen by many as convergence with or a capitulation to more liberal political and economic models. The reform agenda of any area of public policy in France, while it may have largely domestic origins, therefore interacts with the perception that pressures on France to change the way it does things originate at the international level.

French development aid policy, which at its origin represented the projection of the French model, and for many reasons has hitherto proven particularly resistant to reform, has had to confront a rapidly changing global environment. The initial stimulus for this has been the detrimental effect of economic globalisation on the economies of sub-Saharan Africa, which has called into question the efficacy of French aid and the viability of the model it represents. This crisis and its consequences have forced French development policy to interact more and more with other aid donors, and subjected French policy makers to pressure to act in ways considered more compatible with the norms and values of other donors.²⁷

Questions of continuity and change in French development aid policy cannot therefore be considered in isolation at the national level. Interaction with other donors, and perceptions on the part of the French as to what that interaction signifies, are an integral part of change and reform in this area. This in turn puts a new perspective on the Jospin reforms and poses a further set of questions this study attempts to answer. Specifically, what is the exact relationship between on the one hand reform (or more broadly change) of the domestic structures and policies of French development aid policy and, on the other hand, the interaction with other donors, both at the international level, and at the level of recipient countries? Does French aid continue to be the vehicle for a specific model of development and, if so, does that use of development aid conflict with the positions taken by other aid donors? Can the reforms enacted under Jospin be understood as a convergence with more internationally accepted practices, or is there continued resistance on the part of French policy makers to any notion of convergence with policies and practices that are perceived as a threat to the distinctiveness and autonomy of French action? In addressing these questions this study is examining the margins of the historically constituted social milieu of French bureaucracy, looking at

²⁷ Which are analysed in Chapter 2 as a global aid donor “regime”.

how outside influence works and at how this milieu incorporates and reacts to such influence.

3. Methodology and Synopsis

i. Research Methodology

The basic methodological framework of this study is to use detailed analysis of qualitative material to examine and evaluate the institutional and doctrinal changes directly brought about by, or closely associated with, the Jospin reforms of 1998. Secondary material (academic texts) is used extensively to establish the background – the nature and evolution of the “coopération” system and its relation to evolutions of development aid practice at the global level.²⁸ “**Coopération**” is used in this study to refer to the specific relationship between France and former colonies of sub-Saharan Africa as set up in the 1960s, of which development aid spending was a component part.²⁹ This is analysed as a set of institutions and doctrines. **Institutions** refer to the administrative departments of the French state and to the slightly broader notion of the instruments these departments use to carry out development aid work (the budgetary mechanisms for example). The term **doctrine** is used to encapsulate the set of ideas and principles that provides a sense of purpose to those working in the area and contributes to the legitimacy of their action in the eyes of the French public. Whether or not they are directly expressed in a single source, these ideas serve to tie French development aid policy to wider ideas concerning France’s place in the world, and show how overseas development work can contribute to broader aims.

The analysis of the reforms draws on three kinds of primary material. Statistical evidence is reviewed to look at the changing distribution and characteristics of French development aid³⁰. The second kind is the official documents, together with press interviews and reports produced by different departments of the French government. A substantial body of these documents has been used, including departmental reports, records of policy debates and parliamentary reports on the French development aid budget. They reflect the different positions taken by different parts of the French

²⁸ Note that the material in this study covers up to May 2003.

²⁹ The French have often used this term, by extension, to refer to all overseas development aid, often with the suffix coopération “au développement”. In some cases it may be used as a generic terms to refer to all cooperation between states, of which “coopération au développement” is one sub-set. Note that in this study the term is used with a very specific sense (hence it is written in French) to denote the set of relations between France and former colonies in sub-Saharan Africa in the post independence period. See Chapter 1 for further details.

³⁰ See Annex 1 and chapters 2 and 3.

administration and are used to examine how the doctrinal base of French development aid has changed in the period under study.

The third and most important source of primary material is personally conducted interviews.³¹ These have concentrated on government officials from the different departments of the French state who have been directly involved in the reforms. The selection of interviewees from French state administration was where possible guided by two concerns – first to include officials closely involved in the reform process, which is at the heart of this study, and second to select officials from all the different departments of the French state involved in French development aid policy in order to reflect all the different bureaucratic perceptions and interests involved.

Most interviews were semi-structured. The interviewee was sent a list of topics to be covered (generally around half a dozen). At the beginning of the interviews the interviewees spoke freely on the topics and on their general perceptions of the subject. Only after this were more specific questions used to elicit more detailed information. In many cases contact was maintained throughout the research process in order to follow up points of detail. This proved particularly important in cases when the interviewee provided documents that led to further questions.

These interviews were used to fill in factual details concerning the reforms. The interviews were therefore an attempt to double check (or *triangulate*) different views on the same core processes of reform by asking similar questions to officials in different parts of the French administration. Secondly, they were used to gauge the different reactions to the reforms and the evolving patterns of interest and alliance the reforms have engendered. The officials and politicians who were interviewed were therefore used both as a source of information and as a subject of analysis. In other words, they were used to obtain information that is otherwise unavailable, but were also the subject of this study, which seeks to analyse the knowledge and reactions of French elites.

The interviews helped to gauge the differences of perspective that result from the length of time different officials work in this area. Many French officials have been

³¹ See Annex 4. In addition to formal interviews, this study has benefited from a number of unstructured conversations with, among others, the following individuals: Abdel Goumba (former Prime Minister of Central African Republic), Anicet Akane (opposition politician in Cameroon), Stephen Smith (journalist with *Le Monde*) Antoine Glaser (journalist), Teresa Dumasy (British Embassy, Paris), Georges Ouegnin (former head of protocol for the Ivorian president), Renauld Vignal (former French Ambassador to Côte d'Ivoire), Emmanuel Fiadzo (World Bank), Lant Pritchard (World Bank), Guy Labertit, (Parti socialiste), Jean Christophe Tallard-Fleury (Foreign and Commonwealth Office, secondee from the French Foreign Ministry), Xavier Lecacheur, (Commonwealth Development Corporation, London), Paul Melly (journalist), Anthony Bouthelier (Comité des investisseurs en Afrique noire), Jean-François Médard (Centre d'études d'Afrique noire, Bordeaux) and several senior Ivorian politicians.

involved in development aid for many years. Interviews with such individuals provide an inside view of long-term evolutions of policy. The interviews with French officials also made it possible to gauge different reactions to changes in the global development aid regime, giving crucial insight into one of the key questions of the study – namely whether elements of a new French doctrine of development aid are emerging and how such a doctrine relates to and is distinguished from more globally accepted norms.

In addition, interviews have also been carried out with people involved with French development aid during the time in question but from an outsider's perspective (African and European officials and members of the public). These interviewees were selected partly to answer specific queries, which the research demanded (such as details of the history of the development cooperation profession, or details of the recording and reporting of French aid statistics). They were also selected on the basis of being those most consistently engaged in French development aid, either as observers or because it directly affected their professional life. These interviews provided the sort of insight and knowledge that informed outsiders, who benefit from a degree of distance from the day-to-day details of the changes, often have. Such insight is often lacking in those directly involved in the reform process. Interviews and less formal conversations with concerned members of the public and party political officials in France helped set the context for the reforms, examining the extent to which the reforms respond to public pressure and the nature of this pressure and whether further changes are being called for.

The research for this study also included a field trip to Côte d'Ivoire. This field trip included visits to several French aid projects in Abidjan and discussions with the people (Ivorians) involved in running these projects. Interviews with Ivorian officials and members of the public (political party members, civil society activists) have been used to build up a detailed picture of France's relations with Côte d'Ivoire, and of how French development aid has affected recipient countries, as well as to provide a recipient perspective on the Jospin reforms.

ii. Synopsis

This study is structured to take the approach of a before/after comparison, examining French development aid policy up to the mid-1990s and then looking at the changes brought about by the Jospin reforms. Chapters 1 and 2 establish what French development aid was, while Chapters 3, 4 and 5 answer the questions laid out in this introduction concerning the 1998–2002 period. Chapter 1 examines how French development aid was set up by de Gaulle as part of his policy of maintaining close

relations with former colonies in sub-Saharan Africa (“coopération”), and traces its origins back through the imperial heritage. It argues that this policy perpetuated many of the features of colonialism, and can be described as “neo-colonial”.

Chapter 2 examines in detail French development aid spending and the institutions of French development aid policy from 1960 to 1995. It describes and explains the institutional structure of France’s development aid policy and places it in the broader context of “coopération” policy. It also puts it in the context of the global system of development aid in order to highlight the specificities of the French case. It examines to what extent historical, political and cultural factors have determined the nature and allocation of French development aid. French development aid is then set in the context of changes in the global system of development aid since the 1980s and the emergence of structural adjustment and later the good governance and anti-poverty agendas. Both background chapters demonstrate how coopération entered a period of crisis in the late 1980s. Chapters 3, 4 and 5 then look at how this crisis continued to affect French aid policy in the late 1990s and into the new century.

The second part of the study examines the reforms themselves. Chapter 3 establishes the political context and then looks in detail at the content of the reforms and associated changes in the 1998–2002 period. The reactions to the reforms are examined both from inside and outside the French administration and the reforms are assessed in the light of the norms and practices of other donors.

Chapter 4 is a case study of the specific relationship with Côte d’Ivoire, a major aid recipient and once considered the jewel in the crown of France’s presence in sub-Saharan Africa. It starts by establishing the nature and impact of the French presence, including French development aid, on the country’s economic and social development. The impact of the French presence is examined in the context of the role of the multilateral donors, which increasingly challenged this “special relationship”, particularly since the late 1980s. The chapter then considers the impact of the Jospin reforms on the aid relationship and looks at the effect of the coup d’état of December 1999. It then asks what conclusions can be drawn from this case study as regards the aims of French development aid, and whether the political instability in Côte d’Ivoire since 1999 alters the outcome France can expect from its development aid relationship in terms of symbolic projection of France abroad.

Chapter 5 is an examination of the evolutions in the doctrine of French development aid that parallel the Jospin reforms. Using government texts as well as personal interviews, it asks whether features of a new doctrine are beginning to emerge

and what their possible implications may be for policy content and relations with recipient countries. It examines French attitudes to today's major development issues, particularly the relationship between the state and the market. It looks at how the French are attempting to produce a coherent and distinctive stance on these issues and at the effects this may have on concrete development aid policy. This chapter argues that French doctrine continues, to a large degree, to be characterised by a division of the world between "subordinates", those who may be expected to follow a French lead, and "rivals", whose views are considered a threat to French interests. This is analysed as a continuation of the "universalist" projection of modern France, which was the foundation of French imperialism.

Part One:

Background

Chapter 1

The Historical Origins and Evolution of the Coopération System

It was just robbery with violence, aggravated murder on a grand scale, and men going at it blind – as is very proper for those who tackle a darkness. The conquest of the earth, which mostly means taking it away from those who have a different complexion or a slightly flatter nose than ourselves, is not a pretty thing when you look at it too much. What redeems it is the idea only. An idea at the back of it; not a sentimental pretence but an idea and an unsettling belief in the idea – something you can set up, and bow down before, and offer a sacrifice to ...

(The Heart of Darkness, Joseph Conrad, 1899)

It is no coincidence that the character who spoke these famous and much commented on lines had just returned from the Congo, the apogee of colonial brutality where Europeans enacted the darkness of European modernity, fifty years before the holocaust.³² Conrad's book remains an intriguing but controversial text, condemned by some for its demeaning and negative portrayal of Africans,³³ while praised by others for its insights into the ways in which colonialism expressed the violence, coercion and exploitation lurking beneath the surface of the supposedly rational new social orders that had grown up in the wake of the social and political revolutions of late eighteenth-century Europe. The madness of Kurtz, the rogue agent of a colonial company, is apparently due to his over close contact with the "darkness" of the *African* jungle and the "savagery" of its inhabitants, but in fact his power and subsequent "descent" both derive from the quintessential activity of *European* colonialists – the large scale and systematic plunder of Africa's resources.

This idea that the colonisation of Africa exposes both the fragility and the brutality of the foundations of European society finds some extraordinary echoes in the stories of several real-life Kurtzes, including the French military officer Voulet. He was entrusted in the late 1890s with the pacification of central Africa around Lake Chad. However, the brutality of his treatment of the African populations filtered through to Paris and the French government sent a military mission to try to arrest him. Having killed the commander of this mission in a battle, Voulet made the following speech to his troops: "Quant à moi, je suis hors-la-loi, je renie ma famille, mon pays, je ne suis plus Français, je suis un chef noir ... je ne regrette rien de ce que j'ai fait ... en somme, mon action de ce matin n'est autre chose qu'un coup d'Etat. Si nous étions à Paris, je serais aujourd'hui le maître de la France"³⁴

As Thobie points out, this strange speech and the circumstances surrounding it

³² A point made by in Lindquist, Sven, *Exterminate all the Brutes: one man's odyssey into the heart of darkness and the origins of the European genocide*, The New Press, New York, 1999.

³³ See for example the reaction of the famous Nigerian novelist Chinua Achebe quoted and discussed in Cedric Watts, 'Introduction', in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness and other tales*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1990.

highlight the paradox of colonisation: that France purported to be bringing civilisation and thus institutionalised and accountable power to Africa while in reality colonial power was based on the arbitrary authority of individuals. According to the historian Crawford Young, this arbitrary exercise of personal power is the most significant legacy of the colonial period on post-colonial Africa³⁵ and, as we shall see, it is paralleled in the personalisation of relations between France and Africa in the post colonial period.

Both these examples, fictional and non-fictional, point to the dual faceted nature of European imperialism in Africa. On the one hand European empires were the site of domestic disputes of ideology and authority. In particular, Voulet saw the colonies as a site of the historical struggle over the legitimacy of the French state or of the regime in power in Paris, mediated by the distance and difference of the colonies. In addition, African empires were one of the stages on which the power struggle of European nation-states was played out. In the specific case of France, this chapter will suggest that the African empire was part of a wider debate concerning the representation of the French nation-state on the world stage.

On the other hand, European empires in Africa profoundly affected the social and political structures they encountered, whether through the pillage and brutality of the Congo as described by Conrad or through the more genteel French cultural presence in Senegal. This chapter will consider why 80 years of very thinly spread colonial presence had such a transformative effect, and will suggest that the answer lies in the highly partial and fragmentary attempt to reproduce a model of social and political organisation in a context that was dramatically different from the model's origin.

The examination of the French empire and of French colonial ideology and rhetoric in this chapter is not intended in itself to provide dramatic or original insights. Rather, it is used to establish the nature of coopération and to clarify its historical origins. This chapter argues that coopération must be seen as a distinct period in France's relations with Africa. The possible demise of coopération will not be addressed until subsequent chapters. However, this chapter will suggest that from the mid-1980s onwards the internal contradictions of the coopération system and the external pressures acting on it were such that it entered a period of crisis.

It shall further be suggested that this crisis reflected the re-emergence of a debate in France that had taken place in the late nineteenth century over the value of

³⁴ Quoted and commented on by Thobie, in Meyer, et al. 'Histoire de la France coloniale...', pp. 663–4.

³⁵ Young, Crawford, *The African colonial state in comparative perspective*, Yale University Press, 1994, Chapters 1 and 9.

francophone Africa as a vehicle for the projection of the modern French nation-state in the world. It is true that this debate had never fully ceased in the intervening period (1914 to the 1970s). It was present for example in Raymond Cartier's criticisms of the French empire in the 1950s. However, for various reasons the debate had been to a degree stifled during this "interregnum" period. The reason this debate was less evident during this period was that ties to Africa became an accepted part of French political life. This was for several reasons, including the role of colonial soldiers in the world wars, the creation of institutional structures that bound France to her colonies, the attitude of de Gaulle and, perhaps most importantly, the space that the world economy allowed during this period for maintaining protectionist ties, sheltered from the pressure of external competition. One of the questions addressed in this study is therefore how the debate around reforms of development aid policy in the late 1990s related to the debates that occurred at the formative period of France's presence in sub-Saharan Africa.

1 De Gaulle's Construction of Coopération

i. Decolonisation and the Coopération Agreements

De Gaulle constructed coopération between 1958 and 1961, by which time all the newly independent states of the French empire south of the Sahara had signed detailed cooperation agreements with France. It was based on the principle that France should "accompany" the newly independent states until such a time as they achieved the necessary institutional maturity to acquire real autonomy.

The immediate context for the creation of coopération is therefore the process of decolonisation. The dismantling of the French empire was stimulated by external events, particularly the defeat of the French in 1940 and the rise of organised Third World nationalism. During this period the tide of international opinion fundamentally turned against the idea of formal colonisation and national self-determination became an international norm (symbolised most of all in the Suez crisis). The idea of integration of the colonies into the economy and political society of the coloniser was replaced by or adapted to the idea of progress through state-centred development. In addition steps taken to promote free trade, through the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) negotiations started in 1947, ran counter to the protectionist mechanisms of the French empire.

After 1945 it was clear that the French empire would be much more difficult to

maintain. The French reacted with a series of institutional innovations and defensive reactions designed to allay nationalist sentiment in the colonies and delay decolonisation. The French Union, created in 1946, and the Communauté française (French Community – henceforth the Communauté), created in 1958, gave colonies greater internal autonomy and gave some colonial subjects representation in consultative assemblies in Paris. These only served to delay the inevitable. While decolonisation in Indochina and Algeria involved protracted warfare, in sub-Saharan Africa it preceded through a negotiated series of administrative changes. African elites gained the administrative structures they believed necessary finally to ask for or to agree to independence in 1960.³⁶ This is an important distinction, as the peaceful nature of decolonisation in sub-Saharan Africa allowed a dense network of political and social ties to survive the rupture of independence. The French, and de Gaulle in particular, allowed decolonisation because they calculated that more protracted formal colonial presence would have led to greater rupture when independence did finally arrive.

Although many features of colonial relations were retained, the sovereign independence of the new states marked an important change. Despite the closeness of the post-colonial ties, the independence of the new states meant that relations between African and French leaders were to run in part according to international negotiation, not colonial decree. The leaders of the newly independent African states quickly realised that this gave them a valuable resource, and that their allegiance could be traded for their, if not their countries', benefit.³⁷

Coopération was therefore essentially a *deal* between parties of unequal power. On the one hand, France offered financial and military support to leaders who were acutely aware of the fragility of their position. On the other hand, the African states offered France an area of political influence (including favourable votes at the UN), cultural prestige through the maintenance of the French language and some economic benefits. francophone Africa was one of the building blocks in de Gaulle's policy of "Grandeur", the attempt to maintain the status of France as an influential and independent world power.³⁸ The newly independent states gave France and French

³⁶ Ageron, Charles-Robert, *La décolonisation française*, Armand Colin, Paris, 1991, pp. 134–47; Wauthier, Claude, *Quatre Présidents et l'Afrique*, Seuil, Paris, 1995, Première partie, chapitres 6 and 7; and Biarnès, Pierre, *Les Français en Afrique noire. De Richelieu à Mitterrand*, Armand Collin, Paris, 1987, Chapter 8.

³⁷ See Clapham, Christopher, *Africa and the International System. The Politics of State Survival*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1996, part one, particularly p. 22.

³⁸ See Cerny 'The Politics of Grandeur...'. The complex network of interests and ideology with which this section deals is best captured in the excellent summary passage by Bourmand, Daniel, *La Politique en Afrique*, Montchrestien, Paris, 1997. See also Clapham, 'Africa and the International System...', pp.

citizens favourable treatment in Africa, including special consular treatment, special trade arrangements, protected salaries for expatriate workers and so on.

The close ties between France and her former colonies were expressed in a series of agreements signed between 1958 and 1961. First negotiated under the Communauté, these agreements detailed the responsibilities of all parties under the “compétences communes” (areas of shared responsibility) of the Communauté. However, as the states of the French empire became independent in 1960, new bilateral agreements were signed that took over the Communauté-wide agreements and replicated their contents. In the words of Ligot: “c'est à partir de ces compétences communes que se sont dégagés les contours du domaine à l'intérieur duquel devait s'exercer la coopération”.³⁹ Although nearly all the agreements were bilateral (between France and an African state), the complex process of decolonisation meant that some were negotiated between France and groups of states, such as the Conseil de l'Entente (which grouped Côte d'Ivoire, Upper Volta (Current day Burkina Faso) and Dahomey (current day Benin)) and the Senegal–Mali federation.

Table 1.1 gives an idea of the wide scope of these agreements. Many were extremely detailed, laying out the precise obligations of both parties, in areas such as payment of cooperation workers, rights of French residents and so forth (as an example, the education agreement with Côte d'Ivoire gives the French a say in the nomination of the dean of the University of Abidjan). Note also from Table 1.1 that three of the agreements entailed significant spending commitments – economic and financial cooperation, technical cooperation (paying for technical assistants) and cultural and educational cooperation. These agreements formed the basis of French development aid spending (see Chapter 2).⁴⁰

The table also gives an idea of the geographical scope of French relations with sub-Saharan Africa in the 1960s. The core countries with which France had privileged relations were the former 14 colonies of West and central Africa, with the exception of Guinea, which was excluded from the group having rejected de Gaulle's propositions

88–98 and Médard, ‘Les avatars du messianisme ...’.

³⁹ Ligot, Maurice, *Les Accords de coopération entre la France et les Etats africains et Malgache d'expression française*, La Documentation française, 1964, p. 52. See also Ministère de la Coopération, Secrétariat de la Coopération, *La coopération entre la France, l'Afrique noire d'expression française et Madagascar*, La Documentation française, 1966, p. 52; and Hayter, Teresa, *French Aid*, Overseas Development Institute, London, 1966.

⁴⁰ Note that the French also spent considerable sums in the military agreements, but that military aid was not counted as development aid by the OECD from 1961 onwards.

for a Communauté in 1958, and with the addition of Madagascar.⁴¹ Note also that some cooperation agreements were signed with former Belgian colonies, considered a natural extension of cooperation with former French colonies due to a shared language.

⁴¹ This group of countries will henceforth be referred to as francophone Africa.

Table 1.1: Cooperation agreements between France and African states, signed 1958–1961: issues covered⁴²

	Diplomatic	Consular	Defence	Military assistance	Mineral products	Economic/financial	Technical assistance	Education & culture	Justice	Aviation	Merchant navy	Post and telecoms	Residency
Cameroon	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
Benin	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Burkina Faso	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
CAR	x		x	x	x	x	x	x					x
Chad	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x					
Côte d'Ivoire	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Congo	x		x	x	x	x	x	x					x
Gabon	x		x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x
Madagascar	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Mali		x				x	x	x	x				
Mauritania	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Niger	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Senegal	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Togo	x		x	x		x	x	x	x				x
Burundi							x	x					
DRC							x	x					
Guinea								x					

⁴² Adapted from Ligot, ‘*Les Accords de coopération ...*’, pp. 66–7. Names used are contemporary. Current day Benin was called Dahomey and current day Burkina Faso was called Haute Volta at the time of the agreements. CAR – Central African Republic. DRC – currently Democratic Republic of Congo, formerly Belgium Congo or Zaire.

Rwanda

X

X

ii. The Coopération System

While these agreements formed its written and contractual basis, the scope of “coopération” went far beyond what was ever put on paper. It included multifaceted military, economic, political and cultural relationships and constituted an overarching framework of French political presence in francophone Africa.

Of these, military support was perhaps the most pressing, the collapse of the Belgium Congo serving as a lesson to nervous heads of state in Africa. To some extent, the military power of the coloniser was devolved to the newly installed African leaders. However, the French continued to intervene militarily when their interests were threatened and to support francophone African leaders with the threat of or the use of force, thereby maintaining their allies in power. This role has been underlined by the significant presence of French troops in key African capitals. Although Giscard d’Estaing, in the 1970s, spread the field of French influence and action to the former Belgian colonies and was more explicit concerning France’s “sub-contracted” role as policeman of the West in the Cold War conflicts of central Africa, he did not fundamentally change the relationship. When the Parti socialiste came to power in 1981, changes were expected as the party had previously professed opposition to intervention in African conflicts. However, as in other areas, continuity won the day and strategic and military relations remained unchanged until the 1990s.⁴³

It is important to note that French military and strategic power in Africa has always been presented as a reaction to the presence of third parties ready to take over and replace France. In military circles this has often taken the form of anti-communism, but its most important manifestation is as a continuation of the colonial competition between French and British power, more recently displaced onto “Anglo-Saxon” power in general. This attitude, often called the “Fachoda Syndrome” after the confrontation between French and British colonial armies in the upper Nile valley in 1898, is now better known for its role in encouraging French support for the francophone Hutu extremists in Rwanda leading up to the genocide of 1994. It is important to note how strongly held this mistrust of third parties has been in French elite circles in the decades following decolonisation, often descending into an unrealistic paranoia concerning the

⁴³ For direct military interventions, see Wauthier, ‘*Quatre Présidents ...*’; Chipman, John, *French Power in Africa*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1989; and Somerville, Keith, *Foreign Military Intervention in Africa*, Pinter, London, 1990. For changes under Giscard d’Estaing, see Bach, in Smouts and Cohen, ‘*La Politique extérieure ...*’ and Wauthier, ‘*Quatre Présidents ...*’, troisième partie . For the involvement of the French in various acts of political violence see the evidence presented in the polemical text by Verschave, François-Xavier, *La Françafrique. Le plus long scandale de la République*, Stock, Paris, 1998, and the more cautious Wauthier, especially part one, Chapters 8 and 10.

intentions of foreign powers in what has been considered a privileged area of French interest.⁴⁴ This jealous defence of autonomous action is a defining feature of French foreign policy. By incorporating notions of French national status, defenders of France's role in Africa managed to paint the "threats" to that role as threats to the general interest of France itself.

As under empire, trading ties were an important feature of the coopération system. French and French/African joint venture trading and infrastructure companies have dominated the economy of francophone Africa since independence. Africa has provided raw materials and agricultural products that France lacks. French companies have used personal and institutional links between France and the former colonies to maintain the already strong position they enjoyed at independence. In addition, the franc zone has ensured currency stability between the African franc (the CFA Franc) and the French franc, but not with other currencies, therefore giving French businesses an advantage over their competitors.⁴⁵ Moreover, for a long period after decolonisation, France paid above market prices for many imported goods from former colonies (the "surprise"), to the benefit of commercial and political elites (both French and African). In a direct echo of the colonial debate concerning the utility of the French colonies for the French economy, this protectionist state support for commercial French interests has been criticised for discouraging the French economy from consolidating a more global role. This is often expressed as an "opportunity cost", wherein the cost of concentration on Africa is a loss of opportunities for expansion elsewhere.⁴⁶

In the event, the debate on whether this protectionist policy is beneficial to France has become somewhat academic, for the position of Africa in France's commerce and finance has declined since the Second World War while trade preferences have been eroded by European integration. As during the colonial period, the sectors of the French economy with a large interest in Africa are less dynamic and rely more on commerce than on productive technology. They have remained present in francophone Africa, and have looked to share the cost of this presence with the French

⁴⁴ As a former British Minister for Africa put it, because the French seek close political influence in Africa, they assume other countries do also (which is not always the case), and are therefore their competitors (personal interview). See Stylian, David, *Il n'y a pas d'Anglo-Saxons en Afrique*, Contribution au Colloque, Centre d'études d'Afrique noire, Bordeaux, juin 1997; and Huliaras, Asteris C., 'The Anglo-Saxon conspiracy: French perceptions of the Great Lakes crisis', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 36 (4) 1998. For a striking example of this attitude in the discourse of French political life, see Mitterrand, François, *Discours sur la Politique Extérieure de la France*, Plon, Paris, 1986.

⁴⁵ This has now changed, as the CFA Franc is now pegged to the Euro.

⁴⁶ Literature that takes account of this analysis in political terms and for the post-colonial period has been rare. See, however, Adda and Smouts, 'La France face au sud ...', pp. 79–91; and Kessler, Marie C., *La politique étrangère de la France*, Presses de Sciences Po, Paris, 1999, pp. 349–52.

state and other aid donors (especially the EEC). With the possible exception of the petrol giant ELF, they have not constituted such a powerful and coherent lobby as to determine French policy. However, they do rely heavily on political influence to ensure the stability of resource flows, whether through concessions for the extraction of primary resources or capture of state resources such as development aid; as is characteristic of protected trading economies.

The most striking way in which continuity with the colonial period was ensured within the coopération system was through the consolidation of the pro-French elite that had emerged through its intermediary positions within the colonial state (often referred to as those who had assimilated into the culture of the colonisers).⁴⁷ These were the small number of fortunate or talented Africans who acted as a crucial bridge between the cultures of the colonised and the colonisers. This was regarded as important by the French as it demonstrated that French imperialism, and French culture more generally, was able to “assimilate” individuals of different backgrounds and that such individuals were able to assimilate French culture (both an active and passive process), thereby demonstrating the potentially universally appreciated benefits of French culture.

For the Africans concerned this intermediary position was in many ways culturally difficult and alienating, but as a conduit of authority and resources, it also potentially put them in a position of great power.⁴⁸ It is important to note that the majority of these assimilated elites, who went on to dominate the post-colonial political stage, were not drawn from the existing traditional power structures of African society. This is in contrast to the British colonial model, wherein the majority of the assimilated elites were sons of local chiefs.⁴⁹

The position of these elites was consolidated during the decolonisation period, in

⁴⁷ The colonial origin of ties between African and French elites can best be seen in biographical accounts. On Foccart, see Pean, Pierre, *L'Homme de l'ombre*, Fayard, Paris, 1990. On Senghor, see Vaillant, Janet, *Black French and African. A Life of Léopold Sédar Senghor*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Massachusetts, 1990. On de Gaulle himself, see the contributions to *La politique africaine du Général du Gaulle. 1958–1969*, edited by Dimitri Lavroff, actes du colloque, Centre d'études d'Afrique noire, Bordeaux, octobre 1979 and on Mitterrand, see contributions to ‘Mitterrand l'Africain’ in *Politique Africaine*, 58 (juin 1995). See also Smith, Stephen and Glaser, Antoine, *Ces Messieurs Afrique*, Calman Levy, Paris, 1992.

⁴⁸ A superb and often humorous portrayal of this can be found in Ba, Hampaté Amadou, *Oui, mon commandant*, Arles Actes du Sud, Paris (edition used: 1992).

⁴⁹ While this distinction is valid to a large degree, it should not obscure the subtleties of the dynamic relationship between colonial and traditional authority. In many cases the “traditional authorities” of the British Empire were not so much a reflection of the political society which pre-existed the arrival of the British, but were created through the interaction of the two. It is also interesting to note that some of the new elites in the French Empire tried to create a mythology of traditional authority to consolidate their domestic power base (such is the case for example of Felix Houphouet-Boigny of Côte d'Ivoire who created a mythology of Baoulé kingship around his political persona).

some cases in the Gaullist organisations of the Second World War and the organisations that emanated from this period (including the Gaullist militia – the Service d'action civique (SAC) – and the national intelligence service – the Service de documentation et de contre-espionnage (SEDEC).⁵⁰

Other ties were forged in the parliament of the IV republic (1946–1958). The complexity and rapidly changing nature of the political alliances that dominated this period gave ample scope for the handful of African deputies to forge pragmatic, but often long-lasting relations with their French counterparts. Other alliances and friendships were created in the army and in universities. A remarkable density of ties emerged from this period.⁵¹ Reflecting the politicisation of French life in this period (the 1950s and 1960s) relations between French and Africans divided along the lines of French domestic political divisions, from the Gaullist movement, through the far right (with army links) and the radical left (often in universities). The Parti socialiste party cultivated ties with opposition politicians through the socialist international. In the 1960s, however, the Gaullist movement was central to the system's cohesion, as it had the door to the centre of power – the Elysée. At this level relations were maintained by the work of de Gaulle's Africa advisor, Jacques Foccart. All subsequent French governments up to 1997 have put considerable resources and effort into maintaining this network and the support of pro-French African leaders by cultivating strong personal ties with them.⁵²

As during the colonial period, the French presence in post-colonial Africa was presented as the French nation-state's contribution to the social and political progress of what the French considered backward nations.⁵³ Indeed, in many senses, coopération was not just a continuation of this but an intensification (a revealing indication of this is that more French nationals lived in sub-Saharan Africa at the end of the 1960s than at the beginning of the decade). This continued to involve ensuring that a critical mass of the African populations learned French and therefore had access to French culture of all

⁵⁰ Wauthier, 'Quatre Présidents ...', Part One, Chapter 8.

⁵¹ Conversations with opposition politicians in Africa have been enlightening in this respect, particularly with Abdel Goumba in Bangui, March 2002, and with Anicet Akane in Douala, March 2002.

⁵² The comparison with the British case is instructive here. The UK broke relations with African colonies at independence to a much greater degree. However, some cases are comparable. For example, the Gambia, a small state heavily dependent on outside support, retained very close ties to the UK (up to the military coup of 1994), of the kind maintained between francophone Africa and France.

⁵³ Médard describes this as "une mission civilisatrice au rabais", 'les avatars du messianisme ...', p. 24 (see Introduction). See also the final section of Girardet, Réné, *L'idée coloniale en France 1871–1962*, La Table Ronde, Paris, 1972 (à titre d'épilogue). The best way to see the continuity with colonial ideology is in the speeches of de Gaulle in the early 1960s. See particularly the press conferences on 5 September 1960 and 11 April 1961 in de Gaulle, Charles, *Discours et Messages*, published by Plon.

kinds. This special emphasis on language and culture has profoundly influenced the nature of French development aid. However, this goes beyond the simple teaching of French in African schools. Francophone Africa has long been regarded as an area in which French resources and expertise can have a considerable effect, as the colonial presence left a significant French speaking population. In addition, French technical aid has been presented as expressing a particular French capacity of one sort or another, for example for drawing up economic plans or for large-scale infrastructure projects. Indeed, one of the bases of the doctrine of coopération has been that the French have a particular knowledge and expertise in dealing with the problems of development in Africa, which other donors lack. The coopération system has thereby been used as a demonstration of the qualities of French culture and of the benevolent nature of France's overseas presence.

However, the attempted reproduction of a model in a socially and culturally different context has a political price. Specifically, one of its effects is to institutionalise the neo-colonial sense of superiority felt by the French and the assimilated Africans, and the sense of inferiority attached to African cultures and languages. This provides a cultural base for French power, but alienates the majority of the population from their newly independent states, which are seen to be vehicles for assimilated francophone elites, especially if the promised benefits of independence are not realised for the population as a whole.⁵⁴

The combination of these elements constituted the coopération system. It was cemented by other ties and shared experiences between the French and African elites (consumer products, the media and so forth). The diversity of relationships was tied together by the system's doctrine – that for the French to accompany francophone African countries as they developed into modern nation-states (independence understood as a process, not a single event) was both beneficial for those states and demonstrated the qualities of the French nation that could be projected abroad.

This doctrine of coopération enjoyed a consensus of support from across mainstream politics. However, the particular combination of a rent-seeking economy and a preoccupation with cultural status resulted in a profound confusion of aims in the relations between France and Africa, confusion over the concept of “national interest” and a blurring of political and economic registers.⁵⁵ As during the colonial period, this

⁵⁴ See Martin, ‘The Historical, Economic and political bases...’. This issue will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter 4.

⁵⁵ See particularly Adda and Smouts, ‘*La France face au sud ...*’, chapitre II (*un intérêt mal compris*).

association with “national interest” has served to obscure the fact that certain economic and personal interests have been served and protected within the Franco–African relationship. Given the significant benefits derived from the system by elites on both sides, the political imperative became the preservation of the system, for as long as its cost and contradictions could be contained within manageable limits.

This explains the intransigence of the system in the face of both external change and internal attempts at reform (the continuity issue with which this study began). It is important to note, however, that the coopération system was not originally conceived to last; de Gaulle intended it to accompany the newly independent African states only until such time that they could stand on their own two feet (generally foreseen by the French at the time as needing a decade or two).

Evidently, however, the benefits both sides derived from the system outlasted this initial period – France continued to see its relationship with Africa as a source of national prestige and African elites continued to regard a French presence as crucial support to their regimes. Furthermore, those with economic and personal interests (the “micro” level) found that coopération was a comfortable environment in which they could thrive. All these elements point to the stasis of the system and an aversion to change. However, French political priorities and commercial ties were increasingly turning towards Europe during this period. One of the consequences of this was that the links made between the micro-level interests and broader notions of national grandeur became less and less credible as regards francophone Africa as the empire became a more and more distant memory for the French population. This tension between national and personal interests eventually became unmanageable in the context of declining resources, leading to a crisis in coopération that opened the way for the system’s reform. This crisis is examined in the last section of this chapter. However, it is important first to look at the roots of coopération in the colonial past in order to understand its nature and evolution fully.

2. The Historical Origins of the Coopération Doctrine

The coopération system was a continuation of the unfinished imperial project of integrating colonial territories into a broad economic and political grouping centred on France. The purpose of this grouping was to demonstrate, both to a domestic and an international audience, the attainments of France in the international arena, in short to “project” France overseas. The coopération system therefore in many ways replicated and continued the role of empire in French domestic political life, as a reflection of the

attainments and possibilities of the French nation-state. However, as with the empire, the value of using coopération to do this was periodically challenged by other views of France's role on the world stage.

i. The French Colonial Presence in Africa

French colonial expansion in Africa began in the 1870s. Initially, the French state showed little interest⁵⁶ and individual explorers, soldiers and missionaries, starting out from trading posts and missions along the West African coast, led colonial expansion. These men paved the way for later more systematic expansion; de Brazza's explorations and the treaties he signed with African leaders in the Congo basin, for example, formed a basis for the later division of the area between European powers. It was not until the 1880s and 1890s that the political will was present to back systematic colonial expansion.⁵⁷ Following rules roughly articulated at the Berlin conference in 1885 the European powers carved up Africa during the 1880s and 1890s. This left the French with large chunks of West and Central Africa, which in the 1890s were consolidated into two administrative colonial areas – French West Africa (AOF) and French Equatorial Africa (AEF).

Towards the end of the 1890s colonial domination was established and the contours of the colonial state were becoming clearer.⁵⁸ Administrators and the military ran the colonies with a large degree of autonomy from metropolitan government. With little to attract the serious European investor apart from trading companies, and no significant settler community, the French colonial state in sub-Saharan Africa raised resources from the African populations. This need to extract resources with a minimum of presence formed the basic features of the colonial state – a combination of brutal force but also profound fragility. Force was exerted where the opportunities for resource extraction were significant, such as the Congo basin (rubber and wood), while the Saharan regions remained under very loose control. Where possible, African societies were brought into the monetarised economy, as forced labour or through taxation.

⁵⁶ Girardet, 'L'idée coloniale ...', chapitre 1 and Thobie, in Meyer et al., 'Histoire de la France coloniale ...', chapitre 19.

⁵⁷ The factors behind this colonial expansion have long been the subject of a lively academic debate, made all the more complex by its relation with debates over Marxist theory and the "stages" of capitalist growth. See Cain, P. J. and Hopkins, A. G., *British Imperialism: Innovation and Expansion 1688–1914*, Longman, London, 1993, pp. 46–51; Young, 'The African colonial state ...', Chapter 4; and Hobsbawm, Eric, *The Age of Empire, 1875–1914*, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London, 1987, Chapter 3.

⁵⁸ See the fourth chapter (*Constructing Bula Matari*) of Young, 'The African colonial state ...'; and Meyer et al., 'Histoire de la France coloniale ...', chapitre 21 (*Le temps de l'organisation 1900–1914*). See also Evans, Martin, 'Projecting a Greater France', *History Today*, February 2000; Aldrich, 'Greater France ...', Chapter 5; and Reader, John, *Africa: the Biography of a Continent*, Penguin, London, 1998, Chapters 46–8.

Where this was not possible, French presence was less dense. Just as the world economy does now, the colonial state searched out “l’Afrique utile” (useful Africa), which could serve its interests.

Under the “code d’indigénat”, which was made official colonial law in 1893, the French administrator wielded arbitrary power over the African subject. While some Africans were integrated (“assimilated”) into the system as intermediaries, the vast majority of the African populations were either ignored or exploited by the colonial power. It is characteristic of the nature of colonial relationships that the European administrator straddled numerous different functions and accumulated both private power (many of the trading companies were set up by administrators) and unchecked public power. The local administrator was “local chief administrative officer, judge, police chief, military commander, prison superintendent, tax-collector, chief medical officer...” and “[he] exercised essentially unrestricted arbitrary authority over his African subjects”.⁵⁹

It is interesting finally to highlight the role of the colonial companies. Whether they enjoyed the quasi-sovereignty of the concessional system or simply traded within the French empire, they were an important voice in the colonial state and its relations with the metropolis.⁶⁰ They invariably looked to the French state to provide resources and to develop the infrastructure needed for their commerce. In general, little was forthcoming. In the absence of substantial state-led development of infrastructure, the colonial companies engaged almost exclusively in trade and primary product extraction while investment in value adding activities was kept to a minimum. This extraverted commercial orientation of economic activity remains dominant today in post-colonial Africa.

The parameters and nature of colonial power in Africa were therefore set out in the period between 1890 and 1914. However, the First World War ensured that they were not given time to stabilise. The period between the world wars saw an increased desire to “develop” the colonies. This new policy is generally referred to as the “mise en valeur des colonies” (roughly “colonial development”) after the 1921 book of that title by colonies minister Albert Sarraut and the legislation based on his ideas brought before

⁵⁹ Fuglestad, as quoted in Young, ‘*The African colonial state ...*’, p. 116. See also Aldrich, ‘*Greater France ...*’, Chapter 6.

⁶⁰ The best description of the role and power of these companies can be found in Coquery-Vidrovitch, Catherine, *Le Congo français au temps des grandes compagnies concessionnaires, 1898–1930*, Mouton, Paris, 1972. See also Young, ‘*The African colonial state ...*’, pp. 103–5; Thobie, in Meyer et al., ‘*Histoire de la France coloniale ...*’ pp. 712–22; and Marseille, Jaques, *Empire colonial et capitalisme français, l’histoire d’un divorce*, Albin Michel, Paris, 1984.

the French Parliament in 1923.⁶¹ The new policy consisted of greater and more rigorous administrative control and a certain amount of infrastructure investment. It is to be noted that it did not involve investment in value adding or industrial activity, such moves being effectively ruled out by the industrial lobby in France. Instead, it encouraged international specialisation of labour through the increased efficiency of primary product extraction from the African continent.

The period of colonial development also signalled greater and more systematic thought being given to how colonies could be run both to preserve social peace and to “modernise” the colonial societies. These changes relate to two broad imperatives; to stimulate the economic role of the colonies and to re-legitimise the colonies in the light of the death of many African soldiers in the First World War, and in the context of growing international pressures for self-determination.⁶² However, it should not be forgotten that the discourse of colonial development did not fundamentally alter the nature of colonial power. Changes in discourse and policy were a response to the ambiguity of the colonial venture, which combined arbitrary power with a moral discourse of the civilising mission. In this context colonial power had in some way to be given a teleology, a justification in terms of an end point. The end point became “mise en valeur” or “development”, which remained a justificatory discourse for Western presence long after African countries became independent.⁶³

The French colonial presence in Africa was fundamentally similar to the presence of other colonial powers. Differences related first and foremost to the discursive level and to configurations of political and economic power in the colonising country. The African empires of the different European powers followed largely similar courses, from the scramble of the 1880s to the period of colonial development.⁶⁴ Moreover, the nature of the colonial state in Africa (with the exception of colonies of settlement) was determined by elements common to all the colonial powers, particularly

⁶¹ Sarraut's book *La mise en valeur des colonies françaises*, Payot, Paris, 1923 is generally considered the reference point for this doctrine, but it was preceded by much thinking on the subject before the First World War, for example in Camille Guy's *Les Colonies françaises: la mise en valeur de notre domaine coloniale* (1900). See Conklin, Alice L., *A Mission to Civilize: The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa 1895–1930*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998; Marseille, 'Empire colonial ...', deuxième partie, 'Redéploiement ou protectionnisme?' and Meynier, 'Les années 20: un new deal colonial?' in Thobie et al., *Histoire de la France coloniale 1914–1990*, Armand Collin, Paris, 1990, chapitre 7.

⁶² Young, 'The African colonial state ...', pp. 163–71.

⁶³ Médard, 'Les avatars du messianisme ...'; and Fremigacci, Jean, 'L'Etat colonial français: du discours mythique aux réalités', *Materiau*, juillet–août 1993.

⁶⁴ One of the most striking examples of this is the almost simultaneous publication of elaborations of colonial thought at the beginning of the 1920s in Britain (Frederick Lugard's *The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa*, Edinburgh, Blackwood, 1922) and in France (Sarraut's, 'La mise en valeur ...').

the requirement to control large areas with limited resources. As Médard says in discussing the differences between British and French colonisation, “Ces oppositions sont évidemment caricaturales et demanderaient à être sérieusement nuancées. En tout état de cause elles se réfèrent davantage au discours colonial qu'à sa pratique, car les pratiques étaient fondamentalement similaires”.⁶⁵

However, French colonisation did display certain distinctive features relative to other colonial powers. While the British largely regarded themselves as conservers of an idealised African rural identity,⁶⁶ the assimilationist tradition of the French state, already practised as regards “peripheral” areas of the French mainland,⁶⁷ allowed for potentially any individual to partake in the culture of the colonial power. French colonisation, mistrustful of traditional African elites, created new elites as part of the imposition of new Republican values, mainly through education. In some extraordinary cases, even rebels who fought against the French were later assimilated into the French “revolutionary” political tradition. Although these cases were peculiar, resistance to French colonialism was very often expressed in highly franco-centric or francophile terms, soliciting the French to liberate their colonised people and allowing the materialisation of a “national will” among their colonial subjects.⁶⁸

Tied to this assimilation of elites a further feature of French presence was the emphasis on the cultural elements of colonisation. Part of the colonial, and indeed post colonial, French mission in Africa has been the spread of the French language, the necessary condition for access to the benefits of French culture. More broadly, the

⁶⁵ Médard, ‘Les avatars du messianisme ...’, p. 19. Comparative studies of French and British colonial powers, and of their post-colonial legacies, have been conducted (for the specificities of the French case see particularly Bustin, Edward, *Idiosyncrasies of political Culture in francophone Africa and their incidence on the democratic process*, unpublished paper for the 37th annual meeting of the African Studies Association, Toronto, November 1994 and for a comparative study see Dimier, Véronique, *Le Discours idéologique de la méthode coloniale chez les Français et les Britanniques de l'entre deux guerres à la décolonisation*, Centre d'études d'Afrique noire, Bordeaux, Travaux et Documents, 1998.) However, the more interesting comparison may be between colonisation of Africa and colonisation of other parts of the world. This is the basis of Young's work of 1994. See pp. 278–81 for the principal comparative features of the African colonial state.

⁶⁶ Cain P. J. and Hopkins, A. G., *British imperialism: crisis and deconstruction 1914–1990*, Longman, London, 1993, p. 218. One of the important differences between the two colonisations is the use of Indian officials to run the colonial bureaucracy in Africa. The French had no such option, which in part explains the creation of a francophone African elite as a pragmatic necessity as well as a cultural phenomenon.

⁶⁷ See Conklin, ‘*A Mission to Civilize ...*’, p. 58.

⁶⁸ Aldrich, ‘*Greater France ...*’, details several examples of African rebels co-opted into the French revolutionary tradition. See p. 40 for the fascinating example of Béhanzin of Dahomey, who rebelled against French power but was eventually buried by the French with full military honours. For the use of concepts drawn from the lexicon of French politics in pressing for independence, see Aldrich, Chapter 8. The most famous example of this is Toussaint l'Ouverture, whose slave revolt in Haiti (1792–1802) was fired by an abiding faith in the principles of the French Revolution despite French attempts to reimpose slavery. See James, C. L. R., *The Black Jacobins*, Penguin, first published 1938.

French empire was intended to be the construction of a new, French conceived model of modern society. As discussed in the previous section as regards coopération, this model was based not only on French culture in the narrow sense, but also on political principles of representation and citizenship, on education, legal systems, civil service employment codes, territorial administration (including an aversion to federalism) and so forth.⁶⁹ The result was a series of hybrid institutional forms (schools, universities, ministries), wherein the formal level was a reproduction of the French system, but the reality was a constant series of often uneasy compromises with the social and economic context, within which poverty and institutional weakness undermined the formal structures. However, despite this evident will to reproduce a social model, the French colonial presence was in many ways very superficial, consisting of very few administrators and almost no settlers. Not only was the model they reproduced very fragmented, uneven and partial, but it also had to coexist with the authoritarian exercise of power necessary to control a colonial empire.

The legacy of French colonisation in Africa is therefore highly ambivalent. Those who took over from the French perpetuated the authoritarian practices of the departing colonial power, and the democratic aspirations of the 1950s and 1960s were frustrated. However, the French also bequeathed a framework, which, in many cases (notably Côte d'Ivoire) developed, with continued French help, into a functioning modern state. This duality continued to characterise the post-colonial African state during the coopération period.

ii. The Rhetoric and Ideology of French Imperialism

The French regarded their imperial project as a way of spreading features of French life that they saw as intrinsically attached to the imperial power, while having universal appeal. To return to the terms employed by Conrad's character Marlowe in the quotation from the *Heart of Darkness* at the beginning of this chapter, the spreading of French culture was indeed the "idea" that was held to redeem the more vile elements of colonial "conquest". While all European empires were based on justificatory ideals about spreading civilisation, this was particularly sophisticated in the case of the French empire.

This section intends to argue that the "idea" of empire in the French case can only be understood in relation to the broader context of French political thought in the nineteenth century, what was outlined in the introduction as the projection of the

⁶⁹ See Badie, Bertrand, *L'Etat importé: l'occidentalisation de l'ordre politique*, Paris, Fayard, 1992.

modern French nation-state in the world. More specifically, the French empire in Africa came into being in the period of consolidation of French republicanism (from 1871 onwards). The consolidation of republican rule was based in part on its capacity to appropriate the heritage of the French Revolution. Throughout the Third Republic, the revolution became a powerful historical symbol of freedom and progress.⁷⁰ Simultaneously, the vision of spreading the achievements of this revolution to other parts of the world underwent a revival.

For its supporters, republicanism represented accountable and rational government as opposed to arbitrary or divine power, drawing a lineage with the revolution and the deposing of monarchical power, as well as with some elements of classical Greek and enlightenment thought.⁷¹ Building and defending the republic was presented as continuing the unfinished work of the revolution in spreading the principles of enlightened citizenship to all the inhabitants of France. The republican project in France therefore involved the *creation*, principally through education, both of a new political society and of citizens who could live in it. It was, as is fitting for a political idea that lays claim to a revolutionary heritage, a fundamentally *volontarist* project in which firm declarations of intent and principle preceded action intended to shape society as a whole. As Gambetta declared in 1876: “le democrat enfin n'est pas celui qui n'est uniquement préoccupé que de reconnaître des égaux, . . . ce qui constitue la vraie démocratie, ce n'est pas de reconnaître des égaux, messieurs, c'est d'en faire”⁷².

This emphasis on collective endeavour and the idea that republican ideals were at once specific to the French nation and belonged to humanity as a whole are the basis of what has become known as *French exceptionalism*. This is the notion that French culture contains elements and historical legacies that mark it out not only as being exceptional in world affairs, but as playing a crucial role in the broad sweep of world history, and, by implication as having a special importance outside France. This idea of exceptionalism feeds directly into the imperial ideology of the time, as colonisation could be seen as the natural extension of the project of the creation of the French nation. Such rhetoric not only justified French imperialism, but also indicated that the right of the French to colonise was greater than that of its imperial rivals.⁷³

⁷⁰ See Nicolet, ‘*L’Idée républicaine . . .*’; and Hobsbawm, ‘*The Age of Revolution . . .*’.

⁷¹ Nicolet, ‘*L’Idée républicaine . . .*’. Première partie chapitre 1.

⁷² Nicolet, ‘*L’Idée républicaine . . .*’, p. 492.

⁷³ For examples of the concept of French exceptionalism as applied to colonisation, see the quotation from Abbé Raboissin in Girardet, ‘*L’idée coloniale . . .*’, p.32, in which he claims that unlike the other

While keeping in mind the fundamentally similar nature of the colonial practice of different European powers, we can now understand the ideology of French imperialism as a specific version of European universalism informed by the historical symbolism of the French Revolution and French republican thought.⁷⁴ Whether in the doctrine of assimilation of individuals or that of association of different cultures, the basis of French colonisation was the same: French civilisation was superior and French imperialism entailed moral and material progress for all.

While this set of republican ideas can be seen as the basis of French colonial ideology, it must not be thought that it was unproblematic or uncontested. The challenge to French colonial ideology came from three sources – external competition, opposition from within France and the colonies and from its own internal ambiguities and contradictions.

France was not alone in drawing on the universal principles of European thought. Other countries have contested France's claim to exclusive ownership of this historical heritage. In particular, Great Britain and America had also had political and social revolutions that put European enlightenment principles of representation and (in the American case) citizenship at the heart of their political culture. As it became an increasingly global power in the twentieth century, America began to challenge France's right to use imperial power purportedly to spread progressive values. In part, of course, this was a conflict of strategic interests. However, it was also indicative of America's principled opposition to formal empire.

In addition to this external competition, French colonial ideology was unable to resolve the fundamental internal contradiction of French colonisation or what Médard calls “la contradiction flagrante entre le principe même de la colonisation et les idéaux de la République”.⁷⁵ The principle of French imperialism was the imposition of institutional power and the rule of law (as opposed to African slavery; in the same sense that, for the republicans, the Revolution was opposed to the *ancien régime*). As Conklin says, “Republican imperialism should have been a contradiction in terms”⁷⁶ as colonisation is fundamentally the exercise of arbitrary power.

The assimilationist tradition of individuals joining the French nation through

colonial powers, France elicits gratitude and loyalty from her colonial subjects because of her enlightened colonial policy, and quotes from Gambetta in Nicolet, 'L'Idée républicaine ...', p. 447.

⁷⁴ Miller, 'Unfinished Business, Colonialism in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Ideals of the French Revolution', in Klaits, J. and Haltzel, M. (eds), *The global ramifications of the French Revolution*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1994.

⁷⁵ Médard, 'Les avatars du messianisme ...' p. 20.

adherence to its values reached its own limits in the colonial project, as ultimately the difference between colonisers and colonised was irreconcilable within its framework. The doctrine of association between different cultures, which emerged later in the colonial period, was in part a reaction to the incompatibility of colonial domination and assimilation.⁷⁷ This irreconcilable difference of status between the coloniser and the colonised, when it was not conveniently ignored, could only be justified by the appropriately revolutionary distinction between means and ends. Because the ends of spreading civilisation were noble, the less than noble means of colonial domination could be justified or ignored, at least temporarily or transitionally. In some ways this reflects dilemmas in other areas of French political history, especially the expansion of the republic, through the education system, in mainland France. However, the nature of the presence of the French state in Brittany and even Corsica was and is fundamentally different from the colonial project. It would surely never have been possible to envisage granting full French citizenship to the whole colonial population. Cultural and political assimilation between sub-Saharan Africa and France therefore always remained limited to a narrow elite, a way of glossing over the fundamentally unequal nature of the colonial relationship.

Although French imperial expansion in Africa may be analysed in its association with republicanism and its references to the French Revolution, republican ideology was not shared by the majority of French colonisers, who frequently subscribed to racist views of the superiority of Europeans.⁷⁸ In the post-1789 political project that is “modern” France, the republic remains an idealistic project, always fragile and always to be defended and fought for against its traditional enemy: arbitrary power. However, the distinction is less clear-cut in reality than in the ideology and rhetoric. Compromises have of course been struck in imperial thought, as in other areas of French political history. What is of particular interest in the French ideology of imperialism is that the distance between the ideals of the republic and the reality of French power was vast and, one may have thought, irreconcilable. But both authoritarian and progressive strands of thought intermingled to a remarkable extent in the diverse media and propaganda that

⁷⁶ Conklin, ‘*A Mission to Civilise ...*’, p. 105.

⁷⁷ Médard, ‘*Les avatars du messianisme ...*’, p. 22.

⁷⁸ The most famous figure of French colonialism, General Lyautey, expressed such proto-fascistic attitudes. See further examples in Aldrich, ‘*Greater France ...*’, chapters 1 and 4 (Lyautey is quoted and discussed in Chapter 4). See also the discussion in Girardet, ‘*L’idée coloniale ...*’, pp. 75–93. This contrasts with the emphasis some writers place on the culturalist aspects of French colonialism, in supposed contrast to the more racist British attitude. See, for example, Vaillant, ‘*Black French and African ...*’.

spread the colonial message in France.⁷⁹ To a large degree the explanation for this lies in the ideology of the revival (spiritual, moral and indeed military) of the French nation-state in the wake of the defeat by the Prussians in 1871. The (progressive) republican political camp increasingly bought into this nationalistic agenda in the run up to the First World War, and the idea of the revival of the French nation was an increasingly important part of republican ideology.

The key to the doctrine of colonial expansion in France was therefore its ability to achieve a degree of consensus between seemingly opposed positions, emphasising either freedom and equality or authority. However, French colonialism was not unopposed in France, or of course in the colonies. From a broadly left-wing or socialist perspective, two strands of anti-colonialism are identifiable. The first is a moral opposition to the abuses of colonial powers and the concessionary companies. Denunciation of forced labour in the Congo is the most prominent example of this as concerns sub-Saharan Africa. This denunciation was also present in Africa where an educated minority of Africans contested colonisation on the basis of its own supposed values.⁸⁰ This form of opposition to colonisation reached a dramatic high point during the wars of decolonisation, particularly over the use of torture by French troops in Algeria. Overshadowed by the rise of the Marxist left in the 1960s and 1970s, it has recently re-emerged as concerns post-colonial relations in the works of several authors who have exposed the role France has played in corruption and violence in post-colonial Africa.

These denunciations of the abuses of colonial power did not in themselves constitute opposition to the principles of imperialism. Lurking in many of them was the idea that imperialism could be morally perfected; that it could, if improved, fulfil its real mission of spreading enlightenment. However, with the growth of an organised political and academic left wing in France, a more systematic opposition emerged to the imperial venture as a whole.⁸¹ French socialists analysed colonisation as a part of capitalism's

⁷⁹ One may note with Nicolet that the republican movement in France in the nineteenth century was built on a series of compromises with authoritarianism and empire, and with positivistic science, which willingly lent its weight to racism ('*L'idée républicaine ...*', p.449). He notes that the heritage of the revolution is itself ambivalent and in many ways lends itself to authoritarianism as well as to enlightened republicanism.

⁸⁰ See Aldrich 'Greater France ...', Chapter 1. For a general account of moral opposition to colonial abuses before the First World War, see Girardet, 'L'idée coloniale ...', pp. 102–4 and for an account of its continuation in the interwar period see pp. 143–50. See notably the novel *Batouala* published in 1921 by the black West Indies born governor of central Africa, René Maran.

⁸¹ See Girardet, 'L'idée coloniale ...', pp. 104–11. Note for example the pamphlet "Le colonialisme" by Paul Louis in 1905 and the organisation of the counter exhibition at the time of the colonial exhibition in 1931. The term "systematic" opposition is used here to distinguish from purely moralistic positions and to

global domination and exploitation. Colonialism was thus to be opposed as part of a wider fight against capitalism itself. However, this systematic opposition to colonialism suffered from various shortcomings: ties with the Soviet Union, failure to recognise the endogenous nature of Third World nationalism and ambivalence over whether capitalist development is beneficial or not in the long term.

In reality, the French colonial debate, as well as the debate of the 1960s and 1970s concerning the nature of the post-colonial relation, was often more a reflection of domestic ideological divisions than a properly considered position on the relations between France and Africa. The use by both sides of very similar language and concepts reveals the common source of their positions. The supporters of the colonial project talked of spreading enlightenment through colonialism, while its opponents argued that spreading enlightenment could be better achieved by granting the colonies their independence.⁸² In short, both sides claimed the democratic heritage of the revolution and the broader heritage of European enlightenment. The debate was over how the French could best pursue these vocations on the world stage.

Colonialism was also opposed from the liberal right, which argued that the political and economic investment in the colonies and later in the client African states was of questionable value to France as a capitalist power. This position is often called Cartierism after a series of articles written in *Paris Match* in the 1950s by Raymond Cartier, although it is also found in the position of Clémenceau in the colonial debate of the 1880s. The argument is that colonial expenditure (or later development aid – Cartier wrote a series of articles in the 1960s making the same points as regards development aid) is a waste, for it benefits neither the colonised country for which it is inappropriate nor the colonising power, which may gain in market share and political power in the colonised countries but which loses out in opening markets in other parts of the world (the “opportunity cost” argument). As Girardet argues, this conflict is one between two competing views of the vocation of France on the world stage.⁸³

The importance of this position is that it poses the question of whether the

draw attention to its emphasis on colonisation as part of a global system of exploitation, and its denunciation of colonialism as a whole.

⁸² Girardet, ‘*L'idée coloniale ...*’, p. 286. A good example of using the concept of the international status of France to argue for formal decolonisation is François Mitterrand’s, *Présence française et abandon*, Plon, Paris, 1957.

⁸³ Girardet discusses the positions of Cartier, ‘*L'idée coloniale ...*’, pp. 228–30 and those of Clémenceau on pp. 53–66. Note that the rivalry with Germany in the light of the defeat of 1871 played a large part in the arguments of both parties in this conflict. In other words colonisation could either help or hinder France’s efforts eventually to gain revenge on her continental rival, depending on the point of view taken.

colonies really benefited France economically and, by extension, *who* in France benefited and who paid the cost. As Jacques Marseille convincingly argues, significant branches of French capitalism were never persuaded of the virtues of colonisation. These were the sectors of the economy that either relied on the internal French market or exported goods to non-colonial markets. These were generally the more technically advanced sectors of the economy. They argued that opportunities were being missed for investment in France and that the colonial tariff structure would elicit reprisals from other countries, which would harm exports to other parts of the world. This position is a liberal one, arguing that only exposure to the competitive pressures of the world market could force the French economy to modernise and remain competitive.⁸⁴

On the other side of this debate were those sectors of the French economy that benefited from colonial expenditure and the protection afforded to colonial markets. This is the “colonial lobby”: the trading companies and some manufacturing sectors (typically textiles and processed agricultural products) that had important interests in the colonies.⁸⁵ As Marseille explains, their activities in Africa never amounted to more than an archaic scramble for resources from the African population, from the land or from the French government (rent-seeking). The growth of protectionism in the 1930s only disguised the fact that the more dynamic, value-adding sectors of the French economy were, in the longer term, moving away from their colonial markets: “au cours des années, le marché colonial était accaparé par des branches dont le poids dans la valeur ajoutée industrielle et les exportations de la France déclinait”.⁸⁶

Through this disaggregation of different economic interests we are now able to understand the economic bases of French colonialism more clearly – as protectionism and subsidy for sectors of the economy that were relatively marginal to France’s economic growth in the longer term. However, although these sectors were in this sense marginal, they were able to associate their interests with concepts of national pride and grandeur. French colonisation was therefore neither exclusively an affair of political grandeur nor exclusively a case of economic expansion or exploitation, rather it is to be

See also the discussion by Thobie in Meyer et al., ‘*Histoire de la France coloniale ...*’, pp. 613–15 where he notes that Clémenceau’s position is a sort of “cartierisme avant la lettre”.

⁸⁴ Marseille, ‘*Empire colonial ...*’. For the liberal anti-colonial position see Chapter 9. See also Thobie, in Meyer et al., ‘*Histoire de la France coloniale ...*’, pp. 560–1, where he examines the influence of liberal economic thought on this strand of anti-colonialism.

⁸⁵ Details of the colonial lobby and the industrial and commercial interests it represented can be found throughout Marseille, ‘*Empire colonial ...*’, but see particularly Chapters 3 and 7. See also Girardet, ‘*L’idée coloniale ...*’, pp. 68–75, Aldrich, ‘*Greater France ...*’, Chapter 3; and Thobie, in Meyer et al., ‘*Histoire de la France coloniale...*’, pp. 641–7.

⁸⁶ Marseille, ‘*Empire colonial ...*’, p. 155.

understood as the conjunction between certain special interests and a more generalised ideology and rhetoric of imperial cultural nationalism.⁸⁷ Opposition to colonisation was partially co-opted into the project by the associations drawn between colonisation and the broader French mission abroad. This mission was the representation of the collective qualities of common achievement, which, as de Gaulle so often claimed, were often missing in domestic politics. Indeed, the reality of the French colonies in a certain sense took second place to what they could one day become, to their exalted and utopian *end*. It is in this sense, in the Gaullist project of a utopian French mission abroad, that the post-colonial relations with sub-Saharan Africa are fundamentally a continuity of the colonial relations.

3. The Erosion of Coopération

i Clientelism

The first section of this chapter established that coopération was created by de Gaulle as a way of adapting the French presence in Africa to ensure its longer-term contribution to France's status in world affairs. As with colonisation, the French post-colonial presence was criticised and contested both in France and Africa – as a “neo-colonial” interference in the affairs of sovereign states, as support for dictators and, from a liberal position, as a waste of French state resources. However, coopération achieved a degree of stability and was sheltered from change and reform, at least for a couple of decades, for two reasons – its incorporation of notions of cultural nationalism and the strong personal ties that existed between French and African elites.

These relations of personal loyalty were more important than the institutional relations of diplomacy. In the formative years of coopération these relations were hierarchically structured around the French president – the head of the Franco–African “family”. The military origins of many of these links reinforced this sense of hierarchical loyalty (some of the francophone African heads of state had served in the Free French forces or the colonial wars in Indochina and North Africa).⁸⁸ The system

⁸⁷ An interesting comparison can be made with the British Empire. This was also based on a deliberate combination of sectional interests and national prestige. However, in the French case the interests were commercial interests that lobbied for protectionist measures in trade policy. In contrast, the British Empire was dominated by banking interests. The result was, as Cain and Hopkins ‘*British Imperialism ...*’ (both volumes) convincingly argue, that the fundamental aim of the British Empire in economic terms was investment protection, not trade protectionism.

⁸⁸ An extreme and rather pathetic example of this is the attitude of Bokassa who regarded de Gaulle as a revered leader. See Smith, Stephen and Faes, Geraldine, *Bokassa Ier: un empereur français*, Calman Levy, Paris, 2000.

worked through hierarchical “elite arrangement” rather than anonymous institutional procedures; not an unusual situation in itself, but more common in domestic politics than in international relations. Naturally, no relations are entirely “impersonal”. However, there is a difference (of degree) between entirely personal relations and those mediated by institutional interests and norms. In Franco–African relations in the post-colonial period, personal relationships have dominated. One interesting indication of the personalisation of Franco–African relations is how long many French officials have remained in post in Africa, such as the ambassador to Côte d’Ivoire Michel Dupuch, who remained in post in Abidjan for 15 years from 1980 to 1995, at the demand of Ivorian President Felix Houphouët-Boigny. In addition, the system has had little public accountability and was very rarely the subject of debate in the press or parliament. This was not due to its lack of importance but because of the political consensus that surrounded it and the public acceptance that relations with Africa were an important and accepted part of France’s overseas role.

The relative centralisation of the system under the patronage of de Gaulle did not survive long after his death in 1970. Rival networks re-emerged or claimed greater independence. These included the military, commercial interests, freemasons, factions of the Gaullist party and notably the Parti socialiste, which used connections with African politicians to raise funds in the period of Mitterrand-led reconstruction. These rival networks had different agendas, but they all found that Franco–African relations lent them a particularly favourable and protected environment in which to pursue them. Many became involved in the corrupt misappropriation of funds, including development aid and money generated from oil production, whether for personal enrichment or party financing. This was facilitated by the lack of impersonal institutional checks on personal interests in Franco–African relations.⁸⁹

Corruption in francophone Africa, and indeed in all of post-colonial Africa, must be seen as the inevitable consequence of handing the structures of the colonial state over to a society used to colonial rule. The newly installed leaders only had at their disposal a fragmented and superficial framework of a modern state, while the population had high expectations of what that state could deliver. Distribution of largesse outside formal institutional channels inevitably became the leaders’ means of ensuring support. At the

⁸⁹ A significant body of evidence has now built up for the corrupt activities of these networks. See Smith and Glaser, ‘*Ces Messieurs Afrique ...*’; and Agir ici/Survie *Dossiers noirs 1–5* Harmattan, Paris, 1996. See also Verschave, ‘*La Françafrique... .*’, troisième partie, chapitre 1 (‘*La Décomposition d’un système*’). In the late 1990s the judiciary in France have been at the forefront of exposing these activities, first with the scandals around the slush funds of the ELF oil giant. This has since multiplied, taking in affairs such as the Angolagate arms scandal.

same time, many new leaders not only appropriated money for redistribution to their political clientele, but also for their own bank accounts.

What is of particular interest in the case of francophone Africa is the coexistence of this corruption alongside a (French aided) effort to construct a modern state and public administration. Côte d'Ivoire is an instructive example – thousands of French technical advisors spent years setting up a formal system of taxes, public accounting and so forth. This was in many ways successful, as Côte d'Ivoire developed a reasonably solid and competent public administration. However, it was evident to all concerned that corruption was rife, starting with the Ivorian president Houphouët-Boigny, who accumulated a massive personal fortune. In the first two decades of coopération this corruption was seen as part of the “immaturity” of the new states. While most French coopérants accepted this, albeit with considerable frustration, other French nationals with links to Africa not only tolerated this corruption but also in many cases became deeply involved in it⁹⁰.

In several fascinating articles, analyst Jean-François Médard has described this system and the close personal ties that support it as an extension of the “neo-patrimonial” state that has characterised African politics in the post-colonial period, and therefore as an unusual example of international “clientelism”⁹¹ Neo-patrimonialism is defined as a political system where private ownership and public authority are not fully distinguished. The patrimonial state, following Weber, is where there is no distinction between the two, for example systems where the monarch or emperor are regarded as owning their country or empire. The “neo” indicates a hybrid system encompassing elements of both institutionalised and personal rule. Relations between the dominant or distributing party and the subject or receiving party are clientelistic in the sense of an unequal exchange wherein a patron (in this case France or a French politician) allocates resources and the client (in this case the African leader) becomes politically obliged to the patron, and is therefore a source of the patron’s political power (although it should be noted that the distribution of resources and obligation in Franco–African relations has in many cases been circular, with development aid and other resources being

⁹⁰ These questions will be discussed in greater depth in chapter 4.

⁹¹ Médard, Jean-François, ‘The patrimonialisation of Franco–African relations: political exchanges, economic exchanges and social exchanges’, in *ECPR joint sessions*, Lieden, 1993; ‘La corruption internationale et l’Afrique sub-saharienne: un essai d’approche comparative’, *Revue internationale de Politique comparée*, 4 (2) 1997; and ‘France–Africa: within the family’, in Mény, Yves and Della Porta (eds), *Democracy and Corruption in Europe*, Pinter, London, 1997. For details of the neo-patrimonial theory applied to the post colonial African state, see Médard, ‘L’Etat néo-patrimonial’, in Médard, Jean-François (ed.), *Etats d’Afrique noire, formation, mécanismes, crises*, Karthala, Paris, 1991. This idea of international neo-patrimonialism is conceptually similar to Bayart’s “post colonial block”, see Bayart, Jean-François, *L’Etat en Afrique; la politique du ventre*, Fayard, Paris, 1989, pp. 227–57.

“recycled” back to France, for example to finance political parties).

As in the neo-patrimonial state, so with France and Africa, the institutional elements have often been the public face of the relation, while the clientelist ties are more obscure, but often more important. The importance of personal ties between leaders may be indicated in public talk of friendship and even family relations, for example when President Bokassa addressed President Giscard d’Estaing as “dear relative” and when de Gaulle was often addressed as the “father” of the Franco–African family. This is a defining feature of patrimonial rule, where politics takes on characteristics of family relations. In the Franco–African case the client relationship has worked in both directions, as those in power in Paris have power over the allocation of resources, but African leaders have used these resources to support the political campaigns of French politicians. These dense two-way links between French and African elites are one reason why the system has proven so difficult to reform, as both parties profit while its costs are deferred onto a third party, generally the French state.

ii. Crisis

A system based more on personal contacts than on institutional rules is inherently vulnerable to the passing of generations, to changes in personnel and to rapid external change. As time passed, the corruption embedded in the system became less and less acceptable and more and more difficult to hide.⁹² Although the actors who benefited from the Franco–African system fought to maintain its coherence, it fractured and weakened with the resource crisis of the African state starting in the mid-1980s. By this time development aid had become not so much the means to “develop” African countries but a way of satisfying a multitude of sectional interests, whose needs had become ever more acute and competitive. At the end of the 1980s a growing body of literature criticised the French role in Africa as inappropriate and out of step with the evolutions of the time. It was held that the “special relationship” with Africa did not extend beyond a small group of francophone leaders, thus leaving France ill equipped to deal with the changes sweeping the continent.⁹³ To add to this internal crisis in

⁹² A good example of the growing intolerance to patrimonial politics is Houphouët-Boigny’s construction of a large Basilica in his hometown of Yamassoukorou in the mid-1980s. This was perceived as a massive waste of resources in the midst of Africa’s poverty and caused an outcry in France.

⁹³ See Brunel, Sylvie, *Le Gaspillage de l'aide publique* , Seuil, Paris, 1993; Freude, Claude, *Quelle coopération, un bilan de l'aide au développement*, Karthala, Paris, 1988. For a short summary of the critical position of this period, see M’Bokolo, Elikia ‘Preface’ in M’Bokolo (ed.), *Développement, de l'aide au partenariat*, La Documentation française, Paris, 1993. For a more conservative critique, see Magnard, F. and Tenzer, N., *La Crise Africaine: quelle politique de coopération pour la France?* PUF, Paris, 1988, pp. 236–43. Also worth mentioning is the official report by Stéphane Hessel of 1990,

Franco–African relations, the end of the Cold War took away the international justification for France’s policy of controlling its “back yard” in Africa.

The emergence of these criticisms and the associated sense of crisis therefore relates to both external (the crisis of resources) and internal factors. On the internal side, by the mid-1980s the cohesion of the system had been gradually weakened by fragmentation and competition. Furthermore, the power of those individuals involved in the long-lasting personal relations that were the cement of the system was declining (Foccart, Mitterrand, Houphouët-Boigny). Other political figures had cultivated their own networks, largely in order to gather support for the building of their political parties. Their relationships therefore remain more pragmatic and they continue to be outsiders to the core Franco–African system as set up in the 1950s and 1960s. Factionalism in the ranks of the Gaullists, particularly acute when Balladur and Chirac competed for the French presidency in 1995, further weakened the cohesion of Franco–African relations. As Smith and Glaser explain, the result of this is that those involved in Franco–African relations have less direct political access and must instead competitively lobby the French government for their given cause.⁹⁴ This has weakened the support for development aid as those who profit from it are gradually distanced from the corridors of power and its allocation is no longer a protected domain controlled by a clique of powerful individuals.

This sense of crisis and of the system being on the defensive in the face of a rapidly changing external environment is well captured in a fascinating study of the cocoa crisis of the late 1980s, which both in its characteristics and its timing provides a highly evocative background to the present study.⁹⁵ In 1987 international cocoa prices were falling dramatically and the decline in revenues was threatening the state budget of Côte d’Ivoire, the world’s biggest exporter. The country’s President Houphouët-Boigny, a senior figure in the constellation of Franco–African power and an old acquaintance of French President Mitterrand, attempted to stabilise the prices by stocking the product and refusing to sell it until the prices had risen. After much political and international market wheeling and dealing the French government, under pressure both from the French trading company SUCDEN and from Houphouët-Boigny himself, issued a very large aid package to the country in 1989 (400 million FF, about 5% of the total French

commissioned by Prime Minister Michel Rocard but never published in full due to its criticisms of French policy. For details see *Le Monde*, 15 mai 1990.

⁹⁴ Smith and Glaser, ‘*Ces Messieurs Afrique ...*’, 2e tome ‘Introduction’.

⁹⁵ Gombeaud, Jean-Louis, Moutout, Corinne and Smith, Stephen, *La Guerre de Cacao*, Calmann Lévy, Paris, 1990.

aid budget), to all evidence in return for a resolution that could prove favourable to SUCDEN. The money allowed the Ivorian state to pay its immediate obligations and thereby defuse the political impact of the crisis. Eventually, however, Houphouët-Boigny was obliged to lower the price the state paid to the cocoa producers for their product. He had previously fought against this, for he was a former cocoa producers union leader and this amounted to a significant personal setback. Cocoa prices continued a vertiginous decline.

In some respects this episode was an example of continuity with the colonial era, as the French state was used to bail out weak commercial interests. It also demonstrated the blurring of personal and political registers. In what is now a famous example of the patrimonial relations described above, the son of the French president, Jean-Christophe Mitterrand, became involved as a go-between on behalf of SUCDEN. However, more significantly, the episode demonstrates the entanglement of French interests, both economic and political, in the decline of African states expressed through worsening terms of trade. Franco–African interests, so long sheltered by a plethora of protective measures, increasingly had to face global market conditions. In many cases they could not cope. Lastly, the episode demonstrated emerging divisions between French officials, those favourable to maintaining the system, at the expense of the taxpayer if need be, and those who favoured reform, led in this case by the French Finance Ministry, which was hostile to the bail out.

The end of the Cold War and pressure for democratisation of African states brought renewed pressure on the coopération system. This is because coopération was based on the political longevity of African (as well as French) elites. At the 1990 La Baule Franco–African summit, Mitterrand urged his African colleagues to democratise, and indicated that French aid allocation would be tied to this democratisation. However, Paris never properly applied this policy. By the mid-1990s it had become bogged down in the complexities of the stability and reform agenda of African states, and it became harder to apply because nearly all the African states adopted formal democracy while retaining less easily identifiable authoritarian characteristics.⁹⁶

The real Achilles' heel of the coopération system was not pressure to

⁹⁶ For the La Baule summit speech, see Claeys, Anne Sophie, *Quatorze ans de Palabres. Les discours africains de François Mitterrand*, Mémoire de DEA (unpublished), Institut d'études politique, Bordeaux, 1997; and Toulabour in Bach and Kirk Greene (eds), 'Etats et sociétés ...'. For the development of the political conditionality doctrine see Cumming, 'French and British Aid ...'; and Toulabor and Heilbrunn, 'Une si petite démocratisation ...'. For an overview and general bibliography on political conditionality, see Moncrieff, Richard, *La Conditionnalité politique, une nouvelle perspective internationale sur l'Afrique?* Mémoire de DEA, IEP, Bordeaux, 1999 (unpublished).

democratise coming from Paris, but the availability of resources to fund it.⁹⁷ Throughout the 1990s the resource base of the African states continued to decline and African leaders looked to France to help plug the financial gap this left. Resistance to this grew in Paris in the early 1990s, led by the Finance Ministry, and French officials became increasingly divided over the extent to which French state funds should be used.⁹⁸ The issue came to a dramatic dénouement in January 1994 with the decision to devalue the CFA Franc by 50 per cent. This decision was taken in order to ease budgetary pressure on the French end (the overvaluation of the CFA Franc pushed up the French aid budget). Not only did it signal a major victory for the cost conscious camp of French officialdom, but it also represented an unambiguous end to France's exclusive control of her colonies and a signal that in the future financial relations between France and her former African colonies would be mediated through the International Financial Institutions (IFIs).⁹⁹

Only months later France's relations with Africa were dealt a huge and highly public blow. The French were drawn into the conflict between the Hutu dominated extremist government in Rwanda and the exiled Tutsi dominated Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). The French were drawn in because members of the Hutu government and of the French political and military elite presented Rwanda as a part of francophone Africa. The RPF was then portrayed as an English-speaking anti-francophone force. The French took sides, and lost, in what turned out to be the most violent conflict Africa has ever seen, damaging both French and European diplomatic relations with Africa.¹⁰⁰ Eight years later the conflict in the Congo that originated in the Rwanda crisis continues, with a heavy death toll. This generalised instability in Africa has profoundly changed the nature of French engagement in Africa and dramatically reduced the possible benefits France can draw from its presence there.

Conclusion

Coopération clearly constituted an unusual set of international relations. It consisted of a bundle of personal, historical and institutional ties that represented a set of dependencies and mutual needs whose density was highly unusual in relations between sovereign

⁹⁷ Or in the excellent expression of Médard: "le principe de réalité finit toujours par rattraper le principe de plaisir, ce n'est qu'une question de temps", 'les avatars du messianisme . . .', p. 31.

⁹⁸ Personal interviews.

⁹⁹ For further details see *infra* chapter 2, section 3ii.

¹⁰⁰ Prunier, Gerard, *Rwanda 1959–1996, histoire d'un génocide* , Dagorno, Paris, 1997; and Bayart, Jean-François 'La France au Rwanda', *Les Temps Modernes*, 1995.

countries, even ones previously tied within empire. This chapter has demonstrated that coopération needs to be understood both as a product of French imperial history and as a reaction, principally on the part of de Gaulle, to the loss of empire. In particular, coopération needs to be understood in terms of the long-standing tension inherent in France's projection in world affairs between a parochial and protectionist vision, and a broader internationalist vision. Coopération represented a reinforcement of the parochial vision, very much against the current of world affairs, but its decline demonstrates the transient nature of the settlement it offered between the two strands.

For at least its first decade, coopération derived enough stability from an ideology of cultural nationalism and from elite alliances to withstand criticisms comfortably from within France and Africa. These criticisms in many ways reflected the debates over colonisation – on the one hand a moral condemnation of French action and on the other hand a questioning of the utility of coopération for France as a whole. However, this stability was to prove transitory. This was principally due to coopération's inability to adapt to changes in the world political economy in the 1970s.

As with the doctrine and rhetoric of French imperialism, coopération consisted of an amalgamation of diverse objectives – the development of the African state, the maintenance of French international status, the demonstration of symbolic projection of the French nation-state and the furtherance of commercial and personal interests. As the cohesion of the system became harder to maintain, the contradictions between these objectives became exposed. The passage of time and the decline of resources exposed and exacerbated the tensions that opposed the ideals of coopération (the projection of universal values) to its reality (the capture of the system by specific interests rather than its service to the “general interest”).

Coopération continued and in many cases intensified the French effort to reproduce a model of social and political relations in Africa. This model was of a modern state bureaucracy and democratic citizenship. It was only ever very partially reproduced, at best. On independence therefore the leaders who inherited the structures of the colonial state found themselves in a highly ambiguous position. They had come to power through popular pressure for independence and, by extension, for democratic rule. The independence period (from after the Second World War to the mid-1960s) saw the creation of political parties and civil society movements across Africa, which encouraged the hope that independence would be accompanied by other forms of political emancipation. In the event these hopes were frustrated, for Africa turned to authoritarian rule and single-party states in the 1960s. Part of the explanation for this

lies precisely in the partial and fragmentary way that the French empire reproduced French political and social life. It did not nurture a sense of citizenship and democratic accountability, except in a very select few individuals, because such things would have conflicted with the authoritarianism of the colonial state.

For decades after independence the French presence was therefore intimately associated with the power structures that the French had created and then left behind in Africa. In this sense calls for reform of coopération in the 1980s and 1990s recalled (and in some cases deliberately evoked) the aspirations of the independence period, as coopération was intimately associated with the authoritarian African state. The weakening of the coopération system in the late 1980s due to the resource crisis of African states was therefore naturally associated with the crisis of semi-authoritarian African regimes in the wake of the end of the Cold War (and indeed to some degree the two phenomena shared the same causes) and African politicians and populations were therefore acutely aware of and effected by the decline of coopération. We shall look in detail in Chapter 4 at the full implications of this for an African state (and nation), suffice it to note here that the context of the late 1990s (the starting point for our study of reforms of French development aid) was marked by a multifaceted crisis that called into question the relationship between France and francophone African states, a relationship that for years had provided the *raison d'être* of French development aid policy.

Chapter 2

French Development Aid 1960–1995: Theory and Practice

The first chapter of this study outlined the historical and political framework of French development aid – relations with former colonies in sub-Saharan Africa, termed “coopération”. This present chapter aims to provide further details and establish what that aid has consisted of. General and theoretical writings on aid are used to show how French aid compares with aid from other donors, and to look at the place of French aid in the collection of expectations and practices of the aid donor community (or aid “regime”). This chapter then examines how French aid has reacted to changes in the development agenda since the emergence of structural adjustment in the 1980s. This is intended to elaborate further the ideas in Chapter 1, namely that French development aid and coopération more generally entered a multidimensional crisis in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Later chapters will ask to what degree subsequent reform initiatives can be understood as a response to this.

1. French Development Aid 1960–1995

i. The Aid

French Overseas Development Aid originates in commitments made to colonial territories during the period of colonial development (the principle of “mise en valeur”) The Préambule of the 1946 constitution states that “l’Union française est composée de nations et de peuples qui mettent en commun ou coordonnent leurs ressources et leurs efforts pour développer leurs civilisations respectives, accoître leur bien-être et assurer leur sécurité.” These commitments were written into *plans*, which formed the basis of post-Second World War reconstruction in metropolitan and colonial France.¹⁰¹

These commitments were carried over to the French Communauté in 1958.¹⁰² They consisted of two distinct elements. First, the French undertook to continue to finance domestic investment programmes of the semi-autonomous colonial territories and, second, agreements derived from the “compétences communes” of the Communauté were honoured. These covered the areas in which the Communauté was to act collectively and in which common investment would be made (for example common defence and funding to create universities).

As decolonisation occurred in the late 1950s and early 1960s these commitments were again carried over. This marked the creation of French development aid policy. For the remaining overseas territories (the Départements d’Outre Mer and the

¹⁰¹ Hayter ‘French aid . . .’, p. 38.

¹⁰² For the composition and evolution of the Communauté, see *supra* chapter 1, section 1i.

Territoires d'Outre Mer, collectively referred to as the DOM/TOMs) commitments were continued as part of French domestic investment.¹⁰³ Commitments made to Algeria under the Evian agreements were included in the aid budget. For francophone Africa, financial commitments were written into the agreements signed at independence (principally those concerned with financial, technical and cultural cooperation. See the chart of agreements *supra* chapter 1, section 1i).

These commitments were considerable, particularly in the 1960s when French aid paid for ongoing infrastructure projects and thousands of technical advisors to help to set up new government administrations. With the exception of Algeria, these commitments were to prove lasting. Total French aid was high as a proportion of the national economy throughout the 1960s and 1970s, relative to other donors. It was only as these commitments weakened and aid from other donors (principally Nordic countries and Japan) rose in the late 1970s that the volume of French aid as a proportion of GDP levelled off to nearer the donor average.¹⁰⁴

French aid has been predominantly bilateral, a function of its origin in bilateral agreements. This was also a stated policy, as the French argued that bilateral aid is more effective, due to intimate knowledge of local circumstances, than multilateral aid (see Annex 1, Table 3).

Geographical distribution

In the light of the fact that French aid was a function of agreements undertaken with former colonies, it is no surprise that French aid, initially at least, was concentrated in these areas. Aid to Algeria was initially significant, but declined rapidly due to the expiry of the Evian agreements in 1965 and Algeria's desire to forge wider political ties in the Arab world.¹⁰⁵ Aid to former colonies in francophone Africa remained high. This pattern was established in the mid-1960s and proved durable. Francophone sub-Saharan Africa has consistently taken up around a third of French aid. The rest is shared between other former colonies and the rest of the world (see Annex 1, Table 4).

Aid to Algeria declined, some of this money was re-deployed to more

¹⁰³ Note that French aid to its overseas territories (TOMs) has included historically been in the French development aid totals submitted by the Finance Ministry to the OECD/DAC. In 2000, two of them (French Polynesia and New Caledonia) were taken out of the figures on the basis that they had become too developed to be included in aid statistics. Two remained – Wallis and Futuna and Mayotte. Source: personal interview with Finance Ministry officials.

¹⁰⁴ See table 6 in Annex 1.

¹⁰⁵ See Hayter, 'French aid . . .', Chapter 5.

commercially dynamic countries (Asia, the Gulf and Latin America).¹⁰⁶ In these areas aid has consisted of concessional loans from the Finance Ministry that are tied to purchases of French services and products. However, this trend towards richer and commercially more attractive countries was slowed towards the end of the 1970s as private credit flows to these countries increased (and their need for aid therefore declined) and some of the quicker developing countries left the recipient list of the Development Aid Committee of the OECD.¹⁰⁷ This led to a return of aid (from all donors) to poorer countries, and therefore to sub-Saharan Africa.¹⁰⁸

The distinctive feature of French development aid therefore remained its continuing relative concentration on francophone sub-Saharan Africa. The principal beneficiaries were the richer coastal states of Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon and Gabon (and initially Madagascar, but relations declined after political changes in 1972). The share of these states increased in the 1970s. The French regarded these countries as able to absorb the large quantities of aid available (a high “absorption capacity”), unlike the poorer land-locked states.¹⁰⁹ It was also a result of the ability of the leaders of these countries to influence the policy process in Paris. The following table shows the “winners” in France’s aid policy.

Table 2.1: The top recipient countries of French development aid for selected years (excluding DOM/TOMs) in order of magnitude of disbursements¹¹⁰.

1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000
Algeria	Algeria	Morocco	Morocco	Morocco	Cote d'Ivoire	Cote d'Ivoire	Egypt
Morocco	Cote d'Ivoire	Algeria	Cote d'Ivoire	Mali	Senegal	Senegal	Poland
Senegal		Senegal	d'Ivoire	Senegal		Egypt	Cote d'Ivoire
Mad'scar	Tunisia	Cote d'Ivoire	Senegal	Cote d'Ivoire	Morocco	Poland	
Cote d'Ivoire	Mad'scar	d'Ivoire	Cameroon	d'Ivoire	DRC	Cameroon	Morocco
	Senegal	Tunisia	Algeria	India	Cameroon	Senegal	Senegal
Tunisia	Morocco	Cameroon	CAR	Cameroon	Congo	Morocco	Mali
Brazil	Cameroon	Indonesia	Burkina Faso	Tunisia	Mad'car	Algeria	Tunisia
Niger	Gabon	India		CAR	Egypt	Burkina Faso	Cameroon

¹⁰⁶ See particularly McKinlay, ‘The Aid Relationship ...’. He distinguishes between different sets of criteria for allocation of aid to former colonies (political) and non-former colonies (trade).

¹⁰⁷ The Development Aid Committee (DAC) of the OECD was set up in 1961 to monitor and evaluate development aid. In order to measure the amount of aid of a given country, the DAC produces a list of official recipient countries, according to their developmental need.

¹⁰⁸ See Adda and Smouts ‘*La France face au sud ...*’, p.43.

¹⁰⁹ This is the official explanation given by the Cooperation secretariat in 1966, Ministère de la Cooperation, Secretariat de la Cooperation ‘La Coopération entre ...’. See also Hugon Pierre. and Luckman, Robert, ‘L’Afrique Noire francophone: l’enjeu économique pour la France’, *Politique africaine*, 2 (5) 1982.

¹¹⁰ Calculated from OECD/DAC figures.

Benin	Niger	Djibouti	Mad'scar	Mad'scar	Mali	Faso	Burkina Faso
Chad	India	Congo	Congo	Niger	Indonesia	Gabon	Benin
			Indonesia			Guinea (Conakry)	

Sectoral distribution

French development aid was part of a policy of retaining a comprehensive presence in former colonies of sub-Saharan Africa. For this reason French aid, at least initially, covered most sectors. In particular, it was used for state construction, and for addressing the particular problems of weak tropical states. Technical assistance to ministries, scientific research (especially in agriculture), and direct budgetary support together took up the lion's share of early aid funds.¹¹¹ Investment in physical infrastructure was important, but perhaps not as important as one might expect, and was never as great as the cost of technical assistance (although there may be some overlap here in the sense that some technical assistants worked in the public works ministries). In part, this is because the French expected European aid funds to take on infrastructure work in francophone sub-Saharan Africa, which did happen in the 1960s.¹¹² European aid continues to be focused on physical infrastructure today.

It is worth considering here the exact nature and function of the large number of technical assistants (or “coopérants”) paid for partly out of French aid funds. Initially, the majority were administrators whose task was to advise African governments on setting up the institutions of public administration (legal systems, telecommunications, healthcare and so forth).¹¹³ As the hand over to African administrators occurred, the number of these coopérants declined and they were replaced by French language teachers. This process was aided by the decision of 1962 to allow young French people to spend their military service as French language teachers. By the mid-1960s the number of teachers had overtaken other coopérants. Overall numbers then remained relatively steady until the late 1970s when they started to decline. In 1982 Cadenat reports a total figure for francophone sub-Saharan Africa of 10,811 of which 8022 were

¹¹¹ For this study we have been unable to obtain precise sectoral breakdown of French aid. The DAC/OECD only started doing a sectoral breakdown of aid in the mid-1990s. As the criteria used by the DAC bear little resemblance to the sectoral allocation used in the French budget much French aid is designated “unallocated”. Note that in 2002 the CICID requested that the allocation of development aid within the French budget be brought into line with the reporting criteria of the OECD/DAC. At the time of writing this has not been enacted. Hayter reports for 1966 that French development aid to sub-Saharan Africa, excluding “avances du Trésor” (budget lending from the Finance Ministry) broke down as follows: technical assistance: 51 per cent, capital aid (infrastructure investment): 34 % and budgetary support: 15 per cent.

¹¹² According to Hayter, ‘French aid . . .’ p. 182.

¹¹³ A snapshot of the exact areas they worked in, in 1966, can be found in Ministère de la Coopération, ‘*La Coopération entre . . .*’, p. 20.

teachers and 2789 worked in other fields.¹¹⁴ The geographical distribution of the coopérants follows the same pattern as the overall distribution of French development aid – most went to francophone Africa and, within this area, the majority went to the more developed and larger coastal countries (in 1965 the countries that received the most were Madagascar, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal and Cameroon).¹¹⁵

The status of the coopérants in relation to the African state was written into the agreements signed at independence. In many cases the African government paid a proportion of their salaries (up to 75% in the case of Côte d'Ivoire). The status of the coopérants in terms of French administration has been a constant source of controversy in the status- and corps-minded world of French officialdom. Many coopérants were seconded ("détachés") from the various corps of French administration (the finance corps, the education corps and so forth). These coopérants kept their formal links with their corps, and their position as coopérants was meant to be temporary, although for many it effectively became permanent. Others were contract workers ("contractuels") whose contracts were temporary (one to three years), but which were constantly renewed. The possibility of aligning their employment position with that of the diplomatic corps was discussed but never implemented because of resistance from the diplomatic corps and cost considerations.¹¹⁶

Although the number of coopérants declined during the 1970s, it remained exceptionally high compared with other donors. Already in the 1960s the risks of making the role of the coopérants all but permanent were recognised: a slower development of indigenous expertise and problems of professional reinsertion of the coopérants themselves.¹¹⁷ However, the original aim of using coopérants principally for training their successors and then withdrawing clearly was not carried through. There are several reasons for this. First, it is undoubtedly true that the French wished to maintain high-level coopérants in order to ensure continued political influence. Second, what is less frequently acknowledged is that the African leaders themselves also wished to keep the coopérants because they contributed to state administration while also providing tangible proof of French support for their regimes. Third, the decision in 1962 to allow French people doing their national service to serve as teachers in francophone Africa was an arrangement that all sides clearly found convenient. Fourth, many senior

¹¹⁴ Cadenat, Patrick, *La France et le tiers Monde: 20 ans de Coopération bilatérale* , La documentation française, Paris, 1983, p. 162.

¹¹⁵ Hayter, 'French aid . . .', p. 173.

¹¹⁶ Personal interviews.

French coopérants went to francophone Africa in the 1980s to advise African states on issues of economic restructuring.

*ii. The Institutions*¹¹⁸

The institutions of French development aid, which lasted intact except for superficial changes until 1998, were set up in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The Foreign Ministry had a “Bureau” (later “Service”) for development aid during the 1950s. This small department dispensed small amounts of aid outside the remaining French colonies. Meanwhile, the multifaceted relations with colonial territories were dealt with by the Ministry for Overseas France (Ministère de la France Outre Mer from 1938, previously Ministère des Colonies).

The new constitution and the creation of the Communauté française in 1958 led to the dissolving of the Ministry for Overseas France (officially disbanded in 1959) and led to a three-year period of institutional instability in France’s relations with its remaining colonial territories. A *Secretariat général de la Communauté* was created in 1958 under the authority of President de Gaulle to oversee all political relations with the emerging elites of the colonies. In early 1959 the competencies of the Ministry for Overseas France in areas such as legal systems, infrastructure planning and education were given back to the relevant ministries in Paris (concerning aid these are termed the “ministères techniques”, technical ministries) that continued to work in the overseas territories of the Communauté. A junior minister (a *Secrétaire d’Etat* reporting to the prime minister) officially coordinated their work.

As francophone African states became independent, and relations with France became bilateral and sovereign, the division of labour in Paris stabilised. The Foreign Ministry retained its responsibility over aid to “traditionally foreign countries” (outside the former empire) through the DGCCT (“Direction générale de la coopération culturelle et technique”, which later became the DGRCST – Direction générale des relations culturelles, scientifiques et techniques). This was the new form of the old “service” which had dispensed development aid outside the French empire before decolonisation. The DGCCT also dealt with aid to the former French colonies of North Africa and Indochina. Diplomatic relations with all former colonies, including the francophone African states, were handed to the Foreign Ministry. Diplomatic relations

¹¹⁷ See Nemo, Jean, *Les Appuis en Personnel dans les actions de Coopération* , Rapport de Mission, Ministère des affaires étrangères, Paris, 2000, pp. 18–27.

¹¹⁸ Material in this section is drawn from Ministère de la Cooperation *La Coopération entre ...*, première partie, chapitre 1; Ligot, ‘*Les Accords de coopération ...*’, 6e partie; and Hayter, ‘*French Aid ...*’, Chapters 3 and 6. Some details have been filled in through personal interviews.

with francophone African states were officially given to the newly created Direction des Affaires africaines et malgaches, set up in the Foreign Ministry in 1959.¹¹⁹

Responsibility for executing the cooperation agreements with francophone African states and for spending the majority of France's aid budget was entrusted to the newly created Ministère de la Coopération (Cooperation Ministry) in June 1961. This ministry took coordinating responsibility, which had temporarily been under the prime minister, and took back many (but not all) of the responsibilities that had been recovered by the technical ministries between 1958 and 1961. The competence of the Cooperation Ministry was therefore a product of the wide remit of the cooperation agreements. Although diplomatic relations with francophone African states were formally under the "direction" of the Foreign Ministry, in reality the Cooperation Ministry had overall charge of all relations, including political and diplomatic.

The principal means by which the Cooperation Ministry retained this comprehensive overall control was through the Fonds d'aide et de coopération (FAC), which was created in March 1959 and transferred from the prime minister to the Cooperation Ministry in 1961. This development fund was simply the colonial development fund FIDES (Fonds d'investissement de développement économique et sociale, created in 1946), under a new name. Just as FIDES spending was overseen by the Ministère de la France Outre-Mer, the Cooperation Ministry was made the "ordonnateur" of the FAC (agent responsible for authorising payments). The "Comité directeur" of the FAC (the board of management, which made final spending decisions), comprised a relatively wide range of officials and parliamentarians. However, the Cooperation Ministry was the key administrator and the Coopération Minister chaired the meetings of the board. The FAC operated only in francophone Africa, where it constituted nearly all the French aid in the first period of Coopération, financing the commitments under the cooperation agreements.¹²⁰

The Cooperation Ministry had a large staff, divided between its two departments – technical and cultural and economic and financial, which was renamed the development department (département de développement) in the late 1980s. The Cooperation Ministry comprised 650 people in 1965, including staff in Paris and abroad

¹¹⁹ Relations with Algeria, both diplomatic and aid relations (stemming from the Evian agreements), were the responsibility of a specially designated secretariat under the prime minister. This responsibility was only transferred to the Foreign Ministry in 1966 (see Hayter, 'French aid . . .', Chapter 5). Relations with the territories that remained colonial dependencies after 1962, the Territoires Outre Mer (TOMs) were dealt with directly by ministries in Paris.

(but excluding the coopérants). This compared with a mere 50 members of staff in the DGCCT/DGRCST of the Foreign Ministry.¹²¹ Around half the staff of the Cooperation Ministry in the 1960s had originated in the colonial administrator corps: they had returned to the domestic civil service corps according to their specialisation (engineers, teachers and so forth) and had then been seconded back to the Cooperation Ministry. This convoluted process was necessary because the diplomatic corps resisted the setting up of a professional corps attached to the Cooperation Ministry (with all the institutional power this gives a professional group in France). They feared that the creation of a specialised corps would formalise the exclusion of the Foreign Ministry from relations with francophone Africa, which they hoped would only be a temporary aberration in their official monopoly of France's external relations.¹²² The other half of the Cooperation Ministry staff was made up of secondees from other ministries and from the private sector, or specialist consultants.

The Cooperation Ministry was represented in each francophone African state by a dedicated mission: the “Missions permanentes d'aide et de coopération”, which coordinated the work of the coopérants. The missions also worked on the initial stages of drawing up funding proposals for the FAC. They wielded considerable power through their network of coopérants, many in senior positions in the recipient state's government, often doing most of the work on project proposals themselves (rather than allowing it to be done by the francophone African state). They communicated directly with the Cooperation Ministry, often bypassing the ambassador, although the ambassador retained both formal authority over them and often had considerable political influence depending on his relations with senior authorities in Paris.¹²³

While the Cooperation Ministry held the key coordinating position, other ministries have had an important role in French development aid from the start. The Finance Ministry, through its “Direction du Tresor” and its “Service de Coopération technique”, has made loans tied to the purchase of French goods and has developed its

¹²⁰ The exact composition of the Comité directeur of the FAC and a description of the process of decision making on aid projects can be found in Ligot, ‘*Les Accords de coopération ...*’, pp. 129–33 and in Ministère de la Coopération, ‘*La Coopération entre ...*’, pp. 13–14.

¹²¹ Hayter, ‘*French aid ...*’, pp. 116 and 147–8. Cadenat notes that this number had not diminished by the early 1980s, citing a total in Paris and Africa of 1000 staff in 1981. Cadenat, ‘*La France et le tiers monde ...*’, p. 158.

¹²² Personal interview. In truth the Foreign Ministry was not entirely successful, as a temporary holding corps was created – the conseilleurs or administrateurs des affaires d'outre-mer. However, it did not recruit new members and it therefore diminished through natural wastage (Hayter, ‘*French Aid ...*’, p. 161).

own system of training and grants to pursue its commercial policy.¹²⁴

Finance Ministry officials have always had a strong influence over development aid spending decisions, in part through their position on the management committee of the FAC and through their network of secondees. The Finance Ministry's key role in the management of the franc zone has of course given it further influence. It should be noted in addition that the Finance Ministry started making substantial loans on its own behalf to francophone African states from the early 1980s, as the resource crisis in Africa became apparent. This role was reinforced and formalised by the decision in 1992 to transfer all responsibility for debt relief and budget aid for francophone Africa from the Cooperation Ministry to the Finance Ministry.¹²⁵

A specialist development funding body – the Caisse centrale de la coopération économique (CCCE) – has administered a substantial proportion of the French aid budget. As with all French development aid institutions, the CCCE had its origins in the colonial institutions of the 1940s. Originally, the Caisse centrale de la France libre was set up in 1941 in London, but became the Caisse centrale de la France Outre-Mer (CCFOM) in 1944 to act as the paying agent of the FIDES. It was renamed the CCCE in 1958 and became the paying agent for the FAC,¹²⁶ making payments under authorisation from the FAC's Board of Management (Comité directeur). The role of the CCCE expanded slightly relative to the CCFOM to include the overseeing of infrastructure projects and to help set up regional development banks in Africa.

The CCCE started to make loans on its own behalf in the early 1960s, first in the francophone African states and later in the rest of the world.¹²⁷ This lending expanded

¹²³ See Cadenat, 'La France et le tiers monde ...', p. 139 for an organigramme of the responsibilities of staff in French embassies in francophone Africa and for a political assessment of the missions, see Hayter 'French Aid ...', p. 145.

¹²⁴ See Hayter, 'French aid ...', pp. 119–25. Note that these loans vary in their "concessionality" (the extent to which their terms are more generous than market rates) and therefore do not all count as development aid, as defined by the DAC/OECD.

¹²⁵ The decision was due to the increase in budget aid and the feeling that financial management was not the primary expertise of the Cooperation Ministry.

¹²⁶ Technically speaking the FAC was an account held by the CCCE. Note that the CCCE remained the paying agent for the FIDES and FIDOM, which continued to operate in the DOM/TOMs. It remains now the paying agent for much government spending in the DOM/TOMs and carries out project work there.

¹²⁷ Hayter, 'French Aid ...', pp. 89–91 and 164. She reports that by the mid-1960s these loans constituted one-seventh of all the money for which the CCCE acted as paying agent. Hugon and Luckman, 'L'Afrique noire francophone ...', p. 85, give figures for the expansion of CCCE lending, indicating a rise in lending from the CCCE from 0.26 MFF in 1970 to 2.4 MFF in 1980 (while these figures are useful illustration, it is not clear exactly what criteria are used by Hugon and Luckman, as the table from which these statistics are drawn is entitled "Aide bilatérale française" but the statistics are not taken from the OECD/DAC but from French ministerial documents. It is therefore likely that the criteria used for what counts as aid are different from those used for the OECD/DAC returns. This is a characteristic confusion in dealing with French aid statistics).

rapidly. The money used is raised on financial markets, with the state acting as guarantor in order to lower the interest rates incurred.¹²⁸ Over time, the CCCE developed a large portfolio of project aid (building roads and so forth) in francophone Africa. The loans are principally made with commercial objectives in mind and have been tied to the purchase of French goods. However, they are generally on more generous terms than those of the Finance Ministry (greater concessionality). This is because the aim of the CCCE was to fund infrastructure projects that would not become profitable in the near future.

This difference with the Finance Ministry is important. The CCCE has always been more orientated towards the problems of development on the ground, and in this has benefited from its long-standing presence in francophone African states. In the late 1970s, however, this distinction blurred somewhat as the CCCE became more directly commercial with the establishment of a second fund directed towards private sector funding (the “2e guichet”¹²⁹) in 1975, which later became the private sector lending arm of the CCCE called Proparco.

The final part of the complex institutional jigsaw of French development aid is the other ministries that had been present in the colonies before independence. After 1961 they retained significant residual roles, performed through a Service de coopération in each ministry. Hayter calculates the figure for 1966, including five ministries (Education, the Interior, the Prime Minister’s Office, Public Works and Posts and Telecommunications) as around 10% of the French budget allocation for development cooperation (this does not include the budget for military assistance, which has generally been calculated as part of development cooperation for the purposes of the French budget, despite being excluded from OECD figures).¹³⁰ This amount declined slightly in subsequent years.

The institutions of French development aid as set up in the early 1960s were therefore both complex in structure and fragmented.¹³¹ This makes the volumes and provenance of French aid hard to calculate. This complexity originates in the colonial period and the interministerial bargaining of the early 1960s. However, its persistence

¹²⁸ Initially, this state guarantee was only implicit. It became formalised in the mid-1990s. See *infra* chapter 3, section 2i.

¹²⁹ See Adda and Smouts, ‘*La France face au sud ...*’, pp. 41–2.

¹³⁰ According to calculations by Hayter, ‘*French Aid ...*’, p. 86, based on budget reports to the French Parliament. Note that Hayter’s figures do not include loans made by the Finance Ministry, nor the loans made by the CCCE on its own authority, as these were not presented as development aid in the French budget report. This is still the case at the time of writing.

¹³¹ See Annex 6 for graphic representation of this structure.

requires separate interpretation. For many observers it has remained fragmented because special interests, principally those of the leaders of the francophone African states, have benefited from the system they understood but that was closed to outsiders.¹³² As the Cooperation Minister said in 1995, “les Africains ont su jouer sur la multitude de guichets.”¹³³ This explains in part the persistent geographical concentration of French development aid on this area. Moreover, the fragmentation of the French development aid system has allowed the French President to play a determining role in decisions, should he choose to do so. This was a function of the strength of de Gaulle’s domestic position in the early 1960s and of the unwritten arrangement that relations with Africa would constitute the “domaine réservé” of foreign policy, already the “domaine réservé” of the President in the Fifth Republic. This situation particularly suited de Gaulle’s political style, as he saw himself as the one who “tranche” (makes the final decision), cutting through the divisive fray of French political life. It was also dependent on the significant backroom role played by the Africa office (cellule) of the Elysée, which had a decisive influence on development aid policy. The continuation of this influence under subsequent presidents has depended crucially on relations between the president and the Cooperation Minister. This relation was unproblematic in normal times, but not under cohabitation. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the period 1986–1988, when Mitterrand had to negotiate with a Gaullist Cooperation Minister, is pointed to as a particularly conflict-ridden period.¹³⁴

iii. Institutional Reform 1966–1995

Several attempts were made to change or reform the institutions of French development aid in the two decades after its establishment. The first of these reforms occurred in January 1966 when the Cooperation Ministry was made a “secretariat” under the authority of the Foreign Ministry. The chef de mission in the francophone African state became a “conseiller” and was, theoretically at least, more firmly under the authority of the ambassador. Although this change was seen as a victory for the Foreign Ministry, the formal loss of ministerial autonomy for “coopération” changed little in the way it actually functioned. As Hayter pointed out, the decree of January 1966 failed to outline any mechanisms by which the Foreign Ministry could take greater control of development aid work, and of the FAC in particular.¹³⁵

¹³² As described in Chapter 1.

¹³³ *Le Monde*, 5 juillet 1995.

¹³⁴ By Verschave, ‘*La Françafrique ...*’, pp. 285–318.

¹³⁵ Hayter, ‘*French Aid ...*’, p. 88.

The convulsions of Franco–African relations in the early 1970s were of greater importance than the institutional adjustment of 1966. African leaders demanded a greater say in Franco–African relations, resulting for example in reform of the franc zone system, with the headquarters of the two central banks moved to African capitals.¹³⁶ However, both Pompidou and Giscard d’Estaing demonstrated a desire to perpetuate the close relations with francophone African presidents. In 1974, Giscard d’Estaing reversed the change of 1966 and re-created the autonomous Cooperation Ministry. He estimated that by doing so, and by naming the new Cooperation Minister, he could exert his authority over Franco–African relations after 16 years of Gaullism.

When the Parti socialiste came to power in 1981 many, including left wing opposition movements in former colonies, believed that the first socialist government of the Fifth Republic would bring significant changes to the coopération system and, by extension, to the institutions of French development aid. The new Cooperation Minister, Jean-Pierre Cot, expressed his preference for more concentration on poverty alleviation and a move away from the privileged partners of the Franco–African relationship.¹³⁷ Initially, some changes were made, including, once again, the formal attachment of the Cooperation Minister to the Foreign Ministry and the expansion of its area of competence to cover all developing countries.

Cot resigned in December 1982, unable to implement his programme. His replacement, Christian Nucci, made it clear that he supported the traditional system of coopération with francophone African states.¹³⁸ The halting of the reform process when Cot resigned demonstrated the power of insiders to preserve the system from which they benefited. These comprised principally the francophone African leaders who risked losing political support and considerable amounts of resources, but also included commercial interests challenged by Cot’s anti-apartheid position and human rights agenda. It also demonstrated the key role of the French President, who was ultimately responsible for stopping the reforms. Divisions within the Parti socialiste also played their part – between those willing to challenge de Gaulle’s heritage in Africa and those who wanted to perpetuate it in order to turn it to their own and to the political ends of

¹³⁶ For further details of this period, see Wauthier, ‘*Quatre Présidents...*’, deuxième partie, chapitre 5; Cadenat, ‘*La France et le tiers monde ...*’, pp. 79–107; and *Le Monde* of 22 juillet 1972.

¹³⁷ Cot, Jean-Pierre, *A l’épreuve du pouvoir. Le tiers-mondisme pour quoi faire?* Seuil, Paris, 1984.

¹³⁸ See Bayart, ‘*La Politique africaine de François Mitterrand ...*’ and Chafer, ‘Mitterrand and Africa ...’ and Wauthier, ‘*Quatre Présidents ...*’, 4e partie, Chapitre 3.

the Parti socialiste.¹³⁹

The record of the superficial or aborted reforms of the institutions of French development aid demonstrates the presence of a persistent but unsatisfied reform agenda, dating from the Jeanneney report of 1964. Later sections of this chapter will look in more detail at the features of this reform agenda. Suffice it to note here that the core of this reformist agenda is the suppression of the Cooperation Ministry, *either* in order to integrate aid policy into foreign policy *or* to provide a more coherent distinction between aid and diplomacy. Either way, this should entail the suppression of the distinction between former colonies of francophone Africa and the rest of the world, thereby ending the privileged status of former African colonies as recipients of French development aid.

It is worth considering at this point who in Paris held what position on this debate throughout the main period of coopération (from 1960 until the economic shocks of the 1980s). In part, the positions held were a function of bureaucratic rivalry - those in the Foreign Ministry favoured incorporating development aid into their ministry, while officials from the Finance Ministry wanted to have as great a control over spending as possible and in this respect were generally hostile to the Cooperation Ministry, which was often able to over-ride their authority through direct relations with the Elysee.

Such rivalries are the daily diet of the Parisian administration, and they explain many of the micro-level decisions and blockages. The Cooperation Ministry used this rivalry in order to play the two large ministries off against each other. However, the longevity of the Cooperation Ministry, which crucially did not have a strong corporatist base, requires separate explanation. Those working in or for the Cooperation Ministry generally supported the coopération system. They therefore supported development aid as a separate activity, which had its own value and should not be subordinate to diplomacy or commerce. Due to personal involvement on the ground, many associated this ethic of development aid with France's relations with former African colonies. This complex set of positions naturally gave rise to alliances which crossed over the bureaucratic boundaries (hence the need to avoid subordinating development aid to diplomatic consideration would have found support in both the Cooperation Ministry and the Finance Ministry). In the Cooperation Ministry, those with greater attachment to Francophone Africa naturally tended to favour the status quo,

¹³⁹ As noted in the previous chapter Franco–African relations go back to the parliamentary politics in the 1950s, and Mitterrand played a key role in this, forging links with important African leaders such as

whereas those with a more general attachment to the development ethic would have looked favourably on a development aid ministry with responsibilities for all developing countries. However, while it is true that many of the mid level staff strongly held this development ethic, the Cooperation Minister was generally tasked with ensuring that French cooperation was orientated towards the political aims of France in Africa. In this sense he acted as a foreign minister for that area, usually reporting directly to the Elysee¹⁴⁰.

The persistence of the institutional structure of French development aid in the face of these pressures to reform is therefore due to the political strength of the coopération system it financed.¹⁴¹ In this context, French development aid policy relied on the fact that the French client states of francophone Africa were both allies of France *and* among the poorest countries in the world. This has allowed French aid to francophone Africa to be presented *both* as poverty alleviation and economic development *and* as support for French political interests through the coopération system. The circle of altruism and self-interest, common to all development aid policies, was thereby squared. As a result, although opposed by some, at least in some of its guises, the basic elements of development aid policy were the subject of a consensus among the political and administrative elites in Paris, including among the system's moderate critics on the left.¹⁴²

Like the “colonial consensus” this doctrine of coopération and the derived aid policy has always been subject to a tension between expansionism and protectionism. For those companies present in francophone Africa, the coopération system and the large quantities of aid provided a protected and supportive environment.¹⁴³ However, other companies have wanted French aid to be used to open markets in other areas of the world. The continued poverty of francophone Africa states has reinforced their argument. This lobby has considerable influence, especially at the Finance Ministry, at the DREE (Direction des relations économiques extérieures) and at COFACE (the French credit export guarantee scheme) and has ensured that some French aid has

Houphouët-Boigny of Côte d'Ivoire.

¹⁴⁰ For further views on the positions and alliances in Paris see Cumming ‘French and British Aid to Africa . . .’.

¹⁴¹ On coopération see *supra* chapter 1, section 1. Short statements of the French doctrine can be found in the preface to Ligot, ‘*Les Accords de coopération . . .*’, written by Foccart and in the speeches of Pompidou to the National Assembly in June 1964.

¹⁴² Even Cot held to some of the basic tenets of Gaullist aid policy, including the need to concentrate on francophone Africa. In a direct echo of the Gaullist version of French cultural universalism, he stated in 1984 that “La France tient un discours de portée universelle, mais l’applique en Afrique pour lui donner son plein effet”, Cot, ‘*A l’épreuve du pouvoir . . .*’, p. 38.

¹⁴³ See Chapter 1, 1.

gradually moved to other areas of the world. The persistent attraction of sub-Saharan Africa to the French, as expressed in aid allocation, cannot therefore be explained purely as commercial self-interest, but as the financing of the broader coopération policy.

2. French Development Aid in Theoretical Context

i. Overseas Development Aid: History and Definitions

Development aid originated in the architecture of international relations set up in the wake of the Second World War and became global in scope with the independence of formerly colonised countries in the subsequent two decades.¹⁴⁴ The Marshall Plan for the reconstruction of Europe after the Second World War is often regarded as the starting point, as the first case of large-scale transfer of public money with the aim of the economic transformation of the recipient state or states. Several features of the Marshall Plan recur in development aid doctrine as it was refined in later decades, notably the ideas of defending the Western world through economic growth and the Keynesian idea that the world economy could be stimulated by publicly financed investment and demand led growth. As with subsequent aid transfers, the Marshall Plan was at once an economic plan and a strategic policy to shore up Western European support against the Warsaw Pact. Soviet and Chinese aid mirrored these strategic considerations. Aid to allied states was valued by both sides in the Cold War as a stimulus to trading partners in the developing world, and as a way of “buying hearts and minds”.

When French aid emerged in the early 1960s, global aid policies were therefore dominated by Cold War and post-colonial politics. A division of labour was apparent as the United States and eastern bloc countries concentrated on strategic allies around the world, while both France and the UK directed their aid to former colonies. Multilateral aid was only a small percentage of total aid flows (around 10 % in the 1960s).¹⁴⁵

During this period a constituency for development aid policy took shape in

¹⁴⁴ Material on the definitions and early period of development aid is drawn from the following texts: Hjerholm, H and White, H, ‘Foreign Aid in Historical Perspective’, in Tarp, Finn (ed.), *Foreign Aid and Development*, Routledge, London, 2000; Thorbecke, Eric, ‘The Evolution of the Development Doctrine and the Role of Foreign Aid 1950–2000’, in Tarp, ‘*Foreign Aid and Development ...*’; Wood, R. E., *From Marshall Plan to Debt Crisis. Foreign Aid and Development Choices in the World Economy*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1986; Raffer, Kunibert, and Singer, Hans, *The Foreign Aid Business*, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, 1996; Ohlin, G., *The Evolution of the Aid Doctrine*, reproduced in Bhagwati, Jagdish and Echaus, Richard, *Foreign Aid*, Penguin, London, 1970; Burnell, Peter, *Foreign Aid in a Changing World*, Open University Press, Buckingham, 1997.

donor countries. Aid ministries were formed and groups of individuals emerged, working in the development field (both governmental and non-governmental), who were prepared to argue the case for aid. The system also took on institutional forms in recipient countries, as swathes of government administrations orientated their work to attracting and using aid.

This relatively stable system persisted until the mid to late 1970s when disappointed expectations of growth and poverty alleviation, especially in southern Asia and Africa, led to a reconsideration of development thinking and a shift away from a pure growth principle to “growth with poverty alleviation” (or “basic needs” in the term popularised by the International Labour Organisation and adopted by the World Bank). The actors in the aid business diversified, as new countries emerged (especially Japan) and non-governmental and multilateral aid grew. At the same time financial instability and the debt crisis started to change the nature of development aid, as financial stability of recipient countries became seen as a precondition for development. These changes will be considered in greater depth in the next section.

It was during the early formative period of the development aid system that attention was given to what development aid actually was. A definition was needed in order to compare and analyse the policies of donors quantitatively. Moral arguments and concepts of generosity and solidarity have always been part of the political discourse and debate around development aid. However, these elements do not lend themselves easily to definitions and quantification.¹⁴⁶ Eventually, a default consensus emerged around the definition of the DAC. This definition retains an element of the idea of the moral purpose of aid while emphasising more its quantifiable *concessionary* feature, namely that the money is given on more generous terms than normal commercial lending. The DAC stipulates that development aid is “those flows to developing countries and multilateral institutions provided by official agencies ... administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as its main objective and [it] is concessional in character”.¹⁴⁷

ii. Theories of Aid: Technical and Political

Development aid is presented as a moral good, which should contribute to the well being of the populations of recipient countries. Aid is therefore concerned with the

¹⁴⁵ Raffer and Singer, ‘*The Foreign Aid Business ...*’, p. 40.

¹⁴⁶ Burnell, ‘*Foreign Aid ...*’, Chapter 1; Raffer and Singer, ‘*The Foreign Aid Business ...*’, Chapter 1; and Pincus, ‘The Cost of Foreign Aid’, reproduced in Bhagwati and Echaus, ‘*Foreign Aid ...*’.

¹⁴⁷ Cited in Raffer and Singer, ‘*The Foreign Aid Business ...*’, p. 1.

development of underdeveloped countries and thinking around aid looks at the conditions required for development to occur, and why development aid is needed. Aid is based on the supposition that the recipient country lacks something, be it financial capital or human capital (technical assistance) that the donor can bring. Aid is therefore allocated to countries that can neither attract external private finance nor generate adequate domestic savings – the two gap theory.¹⁴⁸

The basis of early development aid thinking was thus that it could usefully contribute to “development”¹⁴⁹ (could provide the missing “factor”). The notion of development, originating in the emergence of formerly colonised countries and the spread of capitalist relations around the world, has become a highly elastic notion. It has been taken up by the left, which has argued that global capitalism impedes development. However, its origins in the post-Second World War period lie in American theories of “modernisation”, which argued that developed societies are converging through stages of economic growth and change towards the individualistic contract relations of modern liberal society.¹⁵⁰ These theories built on the ideas and practices of colonial state planning in the late colonial period – the idea that societies of the colonised world could and should converge on Western society through the intermeshing of their social and economic relations with the West.

Naturally, Soviet aid was also premised on convergence on a certain social, political and economic model. The model was a different one, although it shared notions of progress proper to “Western” thought (“Western” understood here as derived from the European enlightenment rather than its Cold War related usage). The actual differences between aid from the Western bloc and Soviet aid should not be exaggerated. Both blocs encountered similar contexts and constraints in the developing world. Furthermore the postwar Keynesian consensus in the West was not entirely indisposed towards state-centred planning.

The relationship between aid and the development of the countries that receive it has generated considerable analysis. However, most studies have shown that aid is not

¹⁴⁸ Burnell, ‘*Foreign Aid ...*’, Chapter 2.

¹⁴⁹ Thorbecke, in Tarp, ‘*Foreign Aid and Development ...*’, discusses how development aid policy changes according to the underlying assumptions of development economics.

¹⁵⁰ See, for example, Rostow, Walt W., *The Stages of Economic Growth, a Non-Communist Manifesto*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1960. As the subtitle of this book was intended to indicate, “modernisation” theory and “development” theory originate before the post-Second World War period, in notions of progress proper to modern Western thought. For overviews of the discipline, see Hettne, Bjorn, *Development Theory and the Three Worlds*, Longman, London, 1995; Bartlett, Robert, ‘On the Decline of Contemporary Political Development Studies’, *Review of Politics*, Spring, 1996; and Leys, Colin, *The Rise and Fall of Development Theory*, James Currey, London, 1996.

allocated according to its potential for achieving technical developmental ends, but rather according to the political interest of the donor.¹⁵¹ According to this sort of analysis, development aid is not considered as a policy in itself but as part of broader aims in the international actions of states. The different political perspectives taken on development aid thus depend on background theories concerning the international action of states. As with general International Relations theory, for development aid one sees a three-way division into idealist, realist and structuralist schools of thought.¹⁵²

The idealist or liberal idealist strand of International Relations theory emphasises instances of international cooperation and ideas of international community. For development aid, emphasis is thus placed on the moral aspects, and political theories of justice, entitlements, international solidarity and needs are evoked. This strand of thought in International Relations has enjoyed something of a revival as “mutual interests”, such as the environment, have become more prominent on the international agenda. As a result attention has once again focused on the concept of “international society”, of which development aid may be taken to be one element. Although the notion of mutual interest has always been a crucial element of the political discourse of development aid, few studies have ever concluded that enlightened humanitarian concerns explain aid policy, especially the question of allocation.¹⁵³

According to the realist approach to International Relations, the international realm is characterised by an absence of rules and the pursuit of political power by states.¹⁵⁴ This approach has been overwhelmingly influential in the analysis of international politics in the post-Second World War era. Further elaboration of realism has taken into account the systematic and institutionalised interaction between states as

¹⁵¹ See typically Echaus, Richard, ‘Economic criteria for foreign aid for economic development’, in Bhagwati and Echaus, *‘Foreign Aid ...’*. The two are not incompatible in that a distinction must of course be made between the *allocation* of aid, which is generally seen to follow “realist” political motivations, and theories of what aid can be achieved once allocated to a given country.

¹⁵² The following general introductions have been consulted: Williams, H., Wright, M. and Evans, A. (eds), *A Reader in International Relations and Political Theory*, Open University Press, Buckingham, 1993 and Booth, Ken and Smith, Steve (eds), *International Relations Theory Today*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1995.

¹⁵³ See Hopkins, R. F. ‘Political Economy of Foreign Aid’, in Tarp, ‘*Foreign Aid and Development ...*’, who argues that these issues of international concern are likely to re-emerge to underpin development aid policy in the future. For new thinking on the implications of global concerns, see particularly Brown, ‘International Political Theory and the Idea of World Community’, in Booth and Smith (eds) *‘International Relations ...’*. Note that Mosley found some correlation between humanitarian concern and aid allocation for the Scandinavian donor countries, Holland and Canada in a 1981 study discussed in Burnell, ‘*Foreign Aid ...*’ p. 144. This sort of finding remains exceptional. For the general implications of liberal idealism for theories of development aid, see Burnell pp. 47–9. As discussed in Chapter 5, the idea of mutual international interests has recently been revived as concerns development aid policy, for example through the “Global Public Goods” agenda.

¹⁵⁴ Morgenthau, Hans *Politics among Nations*, Alfred Knopf, New York, 1948.

an autonomous sphere or “structure”.¹⁵⁵ This development was a recognition that realism based exclusively on strategic or military power was not adequate to account for the many different ways in which states interact. Both regime theory and interdependence theory took realism a step further by looking at how interaction between states develops its own dynamic separate from the interests of each individual state.

Many analyses of development aid have taken a positivist/realist approach.¹⁵⁶ First, they take the primary factor in both the existence and allocation of aid to be general foreign policy goals: “Foreign assistance may be viewed as a microcosm of nation-states’ broader efforts in foreign affairs.”¹⁵⁷ The fact that as givers they enjoy a more powerful position means that they can purchase influence or support (*leverage*) that enhances the donor states’ power and furthers their interests in the international arena. Analysts then disaggregate and quantify the concept of “interest” or “power”. Variables such as security ties, trade links, investment links, and the potential regional power of recipients may then be used to quantify the concept of interest from the donor perspective. Humanitarian need of the recipient state is also measured. If it is not established as a criterion for allocation, this is taken to be further evidence that national interest is the determining factor. The next step is to take the actual development aid flows and analyse their correlation with the different components of “national interest”. The results almost invariably confirm that a combination of trade and security interests determine the allocation of aid.

The positivist/realist approach has been valuable in showing that donor interests are at the heart of aid allocation and that the relationship of which aid is a part is characterised by unequal power relations. It has been convincingly demonstrated that, contrary to the expectations of liberal idealist thinking, any analysis of development aid cannot ignore the concept of “return” to the donor power, that is to say that the donor power gives aid in order to receive something back, either a privileged economic relation or political support. However, the positivist realist tradition and the positivist quantitative analyses used suffer from several drawbacks inherent in the realist tradition itself. In particular:

¹⁵⁵ Waltz, Kenneth N., *Theory of International Politics*, Addison-Wesley, MA, 1979.

¹⁵⁶ Good examples are McKinlay, ‘The Aid Relationship ...’; Hook, ‘*National Interest...*’; and Schraeder, Hook and Taylor, ‘Clarifying the Foreign aid puzzle ...’. They are “positivist” in that they attempt to use methods, particularly quantification and correlation, which are derived from the physical sciences.

¹⁵⁷ Hook, ‘*National Interest...*’, p. 34.

- The concept of national interest is simplistic and hides how different groups acting for a given donor power interpret and benefit differently from the potential “returns” of development aid.¹⁵⁸
- Similarly the concept of national interest is taken to be an ahistorical concept and is rarely considered as a function of the specific history of the state in question. As regards development aid, the specific history of the relations between a given pair of donor and recipient is often glossed over.
- In most cases (including the French case) strategic relations and trading relations exist with the same states. The quantitative approach to development aid allocation cannot be used to analyse these differences, and runs the risk of confusing correlation with cause.
- The realist positivist tradition is unable to take proper account of the changing nature of development aid and the emerging issues and norms that surround its disbursement (see next section).

Two critical perspectives on development aid need to be mentioned here as well – structuralist and liberal. Structuralism, in this context essentially a neo-Marxist school of thought, places aid in the context of the overall structures of the world economy. Although little concerned with development aid as such, the major writers in the critical structuralist school have rightly pointed to medium term global economic evolutions as the determining factor behind development aid policy. The structuralist school has also influenced specific critiques of development aid policy that accuse donors of using aid to perpetuate neo-colonial domination and impose unequal capitalist relations, particularly in relation to debt. These criticisms influenced the emergence of the basic needs approach in the 1970s as a reaction to the accusation that aid was not orientated towards poverty alleviation.¹⁵⁹

The other school of thought that rejects not just the effectiveness of development aid, but its very intrinsic value, is the extreme liberal position. Similar to the French anti-colonial tradition stretching from Clémencau to Cartier,¹⁶⁰ this position holds that

¹⁵⁸ See Hook, ‘*National Interest* ...’, ‘Introduction’ for an analysis of “national interest” as applied to development aid.

¹⁵⁹ See Wood, ‘*From Marshall Plan ...*’; Hayter, Teresa, *Aid as Imperialism*, Harmondsworth, London, 1971; Hayter, Teresa and Watson, C., *Aid: Rhetoric and Reality*, Pluto Press, London, 1985; and Caufield, Catherine, *Masters of Illusion. The World Bank and the Poverty of Nations*, Pan, London, 1996. A good short summary of the structuralist left position on development aid can be found in Hayter, Teresa, *The Creation of World Poverty*, Pluto Press, London, 1981, Chapter 15. For a French language perspective, see Mende, Achille, ‘*De l'aide à la décolonisation...*’. For the structuralist school in general international relations theory, see the works of Samir Amin, Immanuel Wallerstein and Gunder Frank.

¹⁶⁰ See Chapter 1.

aid distorts the working of incentives and signals in the market, impedes development by encouraging dependency on outside assistance and encourages central planning.¹⁶¹ This argument has had a strong advocacy and audience in many donor countries, and is partly responsible for the sharp drop in American development aid in the 1980s and 1990s.

Despite these criticisms, and doubts over the utility of development aid, its deployment increased in the 1960s and 1970s. During this period, the interaction between donors and recipients, and between different donors, intensified. For this reason it has been analysed as a “regime”.¹⁶² Regimes are cases of international interaction characterised by stabilised expectations and norms and in which state behaviour is modified according to perceived mutual benefits that accrue to the collection of interacting states (a positive sum interaction wherein all the actors can potentially gain). Over time regimes create pressures for states to act in various ways that may be against their immediate interests. Each state only stands to gain if other states follow suit. States that do not conform to regime pressures to modify their behaviour, but that benefit from the regime may therefore be termed “free riders”.¹⁶³

Regime theory in international relations is derived from the observation that the competitive model of state interaction does not always hold. The archetypal regime, which at the broadest level gave rise to the theoretical interest, was the block system of the Cold War, wherein state behaviour was clearly modified according to external norms and pressures. At the same time the increasing complexity and density of international interaction gave rise to analysis of a proliferation of (sub-) regimes, such as trade, debt, energy and so forth¹⁶⁴. Regime theory, like the related idealist/liberalist ideas¹⁶⁵, points to the limitations of “anarchy” in the international system. It does not thereby question the basis of the realist approach (state as discreet actor), but modifies its parameters and predictions.

¹⁶¹ The classic statement of this position is that of Friedman, *Foreign Economic Aid: Means and Objectives*, first published in 1958 and reproduced in Bhagwati and Echaus, ‘Foreign Aid ...’. See also the discussion of the theses of Bauer in Burnell, ‘Foreign Aid ...’, pp. 111–16.

¹⁶² See Wood, ‘From Marshall Plan to ...’; and Nölke, A., ‘Regime theory and development assistance: the case of the Lomé Convention’, unpublished paper presented at ECPR Joint Sessions, Bordeaux, April–May 1995.

¹⁶³ A good example of this is non-OPEC oil producing countries that benefit from higher oil prices without having to limit their production.

¹⁶⁴ See Strange, S ‘Political Economy and international relations theory’ in Booth and Smith *op cit.* For international regimes in general see Krasner, Stephen D. (ed.), *International Regimes*, Cornell University Press, Ithica NY, 1983. (Some of the limits to the applicability of regime theory for French development aid are considered in the conclusion to this study) and Keohane, R and Nye J, (eds) *Transnational Relations and World politics*, Harvard University Press, 1972.

¹⁶⁵ See Hurrel, A ‘International Political Theory and the Global Environment’ in Booth and Smith, *op cit.*

As Wood has persuasively argued, the record of development aid does conform in some ways to this idea of a regime: norms and institutions have been created and expectations stabilised. However, the inequality of negotiating power *between donor and recipient* is such that several features of regimes, such as shared values and aims, cannot be said to hold. On the other hand, regime theory does usefully encapsulate many elements of the interaction *between donors*, especially between the relatively small club of Western donors. He therefore concludes that there exists an “aid donor regime”. This donor regime emerged in the early 1960s and was given concrete form in the creation of the DAC in 1962. The DAC defined development aid and collects data on it. It has set targets for aid’s concessionality in order to exert pressure on donors to increase the grant element of their aid. In addition, the DAC has formulated targets for the untying of development aid from the purchase of goods from the donor country. The partial success of untying development aid is a good example of regime interaction – donor states only stood to gain from this (or not to lose) if all states in the system could be persuaded to take the same action (and not “free-ride”).

The DAC is the most obvious form of donor interaction in the early period – prominent due to its data collecting remit and as a forum for peer pressure among donors. The specialised organs of the UN have also played a significant role not only in creating, but also in contesting and modifying, the norms of the aid regime. In 1970 the UN adopted the often-cited target for the quantity of development aid (0.7 % of donor GDP) independently of the DAC.¹⁶⁶ This target and other similar pronouncements have had an influence, albeit limited if taken in isolation, on donor policies. The UN bodies, dependent on all members of the UN, have generally been more critical of donor policies (especially their lack of focus on poverty), than the DAC, which is dependent on OECD governments (a donor’s club). The interaction needed to create the norms and expectations of a regime has also taken place in various other settings, both at the recipient country level and in international fora.¹⁶⁷ Indeed, the diversity of issues and of settings and the different ideas around development aid and different operating principles of donors means that the term regime must be applied loosely.

iii. The French Case

To recapitulate, Chapter 1 described a comprehensive system of political relations between France and francophone Africa, called *coopération*. This system was a product

¹⁶⁶ See Raffer and Singer, ‘*The Foreign Aid Business ...*’, p. 69–70.

¹⁶⁷ See particularly Raffer and Singer, ‘*The Foreign Aid Business ...*’, Chapter 3; and Hjertholm and White, in Tarp, ‘*Foreign Aid and Development ...*’, pp. 80–5.

of colonial history and was created by de Gaulle to maintain French status in the world. It lasted because of various vested interests, both within the public administration and the private sector, and because it appealed to the self perception and discourse of legitimisation of French elites who saw francophone Africa as a privileged area of action for the French state. The international context (economic growth in Africa and the Cold War) gave it a sheltered environment in which to thrive.

As this chapter and the preceding one have demonstrated, French development aid has been used to oil the wheels of coopération. The concentration of aid spending in francophone Africa has helped to ensure the continued loyalty of African elites. It ensured that their children learnt French at school and university, that advisors from the French civil service surrounded them and that their regimes were in most cases protected from Africa's post-colonial instability.

French development aid can therefore be interpreted as *political post-colonial* aid. It was political (and in this sense realist) in that it was allocated according to the political interests of France, as perceived by the decision-making elites in Paris. The “return” for the donor power has been in this case multifaceted: including cultural, political and economic benefits, all of which were regarded as compatible with the development of the recipient countries. French aid therefore contributed to the symbolic aspects of France's projection in the world by contributing a narrative combining altruism and political influence, as well as attempting to demonstrate the possibility of reproducing the French political and social model in other parts of the world.

The realist interpretation is therefore valid, but it does not sufficiently account for the complexities of the politics of French aid allocation and of the conflicting positions of the influential parties. These complexities are both historical and bureaucratic. They are *historical* in the sense that French aid was evidently (and explicitly) a way of perpetuating (while adapting) the colonial project and was linked to the historical project of spreading elements of modern political French culture. The *bureaucratic* complexities derive from the colonial period. The institutional structure set up in Paris on the independence of sub-Saharan African colonies responded to the perceived need to continue and complete the building of the modern state bureaucracies in Africa which was started in colonial times¹⁶⁸. The institutional structure then persisted after the initial period of “state building” because institutions and individuals became

¹⁶⁸ This precise question of the continuation of the project of constructing modern state bureaucracies in the coopération period has not received the detailed research attention it perhaps deserves. Valuable work could therefore be done drawing together existing work on specific sectors such as education, finance (the

dependent on its perpetuation and have proven adept at deploying arguments concerning France's status in the world to ensure its continuation. Analysis of French policy has therefore revolved around ideas of "old guard" and "reformers", and the necessary but difficult adaptation of the system to a changing context – the "post post-colonial" period.¹⁶⁹ Different individuals and institutions in Paris have different perceptions and interests in their relations with Africa. This deviates from the standard realist model, which tends to take national interest as a unitary concept.

Technical reasoning has played little part in the choice of recipients, although within the main recipient group (francophone Africa) the allocation to the richer coastal states of West Africa may be seen as a technical reason (absorption capacity). However, it has played a significant part in the use of French aid. As with other donors, French aid was used to fill a "gap" – to compensate for a perceived lack in the recipient country. In the French case the emphasis was on capacity building – on using the expertise of French officials to help countries construct modern bureaucracies and mixed economies. This has been based on two elements: planning and a presence on the ground.¹⁷⁰

It is important to note that the French tradition of state economic planning in the context of a mixed economy found considerable common ground with the early period of development economics. The principles of development thinking in the early period were compatible with French notions of state orchestrated collective action with the aim of general social progress. French development aid shared with the early aid regime the principles of planning, state construction, technical cooperation and project based aid.¹⁷¹ The effectiveness of this planning was assured by the presence of a large number of

franc zone) and the judiciary. For an overview see Médard 'les avatars du messianisme . . .', and Bayart (ed) *La Greffe de l'Etat importé*, Fayard, Paris, 1996.

¹⁶⁹ The phrase post post-colonial period is from Bayart, Jean-Francois, et al. 'l'Afrique et la fin de l'ère post-colonial', in *Esprit*, mai 1998. For analyses of reform and resistance see previous citations, particularly Bourmaud, Daniel, 'La Politique africaine de Jacques Chirac: les anciens contre les modernes', *Modern and Contemporary France*, NS4, 1996; Chafer, Tony, 'Africa Policy: towards change' in *African Affairs* 91 (362), 1992; and Cumming, 'French and British Aid ...' .

¹⁷⁰ Some critics have focused on large-scale and inappropriate infrastructure projects. While there have been examples of this (see Boigallais, Anne-Sophie and Verschave, François-Xavier, *L'aide publique au développement* Syros, Paris, 1995), French development aid has not concentrated on infrastructure relative to other donors. For an overview, see Hugon, Pierre, 'The Three Periods of Francophone Development Economics', *European Journal of Development Research*, 3 (2) December 1991.

¹⁷¹ In part this is a function of the needs of newly independent states in Africa and is independent of French influence. However, there are parallels between "development" in francophone Africa and the tradition of state planning dating from centralised pre-revolutionary France. The principle that instability can be countered by top-down construction of national bureaucracy, an important element of French history, has been applied in francophone Africa. See Gouttebrune, François, 'La France et l'Afrique, le crépuscule d'une ambition stratégique', *Politique étrangère*, hiver, 2002–03, who relates the application in francophone Africa of the notion of "Raison d'Etat" to French state traditions derived from the period of Richelieu. Note also that Girardet, 'L'idée coloniale ...', ('Conclusion') argues that the Jacobin tradition of state planning in France fitted well with the early development agenda.

coopérants in Africa. French development aid has always been based on a feeling that the French understand the problems on the ground better than other donors. Furthermore, during the Cold War the French were able to present their aid, and the mixed economy model it promoted, as part of France's "third way" position as an independent insider in the Western camp. This is not to say that French development aid fundamentally differed from other donors for this reason, but rather to point to important differences of political presentation.

As noted above earlier in this chapter, the fact that the area of French influence is also an area with great development need has allowed French development aid to bridge the gap between political influence and development work. The holistic nature of the coopération system and, crucially, its relative isolation from the world economy and from other donors (at least in the early period), allowed the French to elaborate and test a model of development. While this model was far from being totally different from development policies in other parts of the developing world, it included the distinctive features we have outlined. In retrospect, therefore, the coopération system can be seen as a French-led experiment in comprehensive development planning.

The system, and the extent to which it could be sold as a successful model of French-led development, needed some achievements to its name. It required political stability and, within the limits of what could be reasonably expected, some development success. In the early period success was achieved – francophone Africa was generally more stable than the rest of Africa (particularly Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal, the three flagship francophone countries) and infrastructure was improved in the coastal states. Poverty alleviation, it was assumed, would naturally result from infrastructure and institutional development.

French development aid principles and practice were therefore largely compatible with the emerging aid regime in the 1960s and 1970s. The colonial past and close political ties ensured, however, that French aid policy and practice were insulated from the direct influence of other donors and other peer pressures. These pressures were at any rate weak in the early period as the Cold War context meant that the underlying political aims of aid were rarely questioned in international fora.

3. France and the New Aid Regime

i. The New Political Economy of Development

In the late 1970s and the 1980s, features of the aid regime described in the previous

section were challenged by increasing instability in the world economy. There were various causes of this instability: declining commodity prices, rising (and then unstable) oil prices, increasing flows of private capital around the world economy and accelerated uptake of technology in certain industrial sectors in some countries.¹⁷²

The political repercussions of these changes could be seen both in the developed and less developed worlds. The less developed world became more and more differentiated according to how well different areas adapted to the changing environment. Those countries that failed to adapt, including almost all the sub-Saharan African states, saw their financial stability and their international political power severely weakened.¹⁷³ In the industrialised world, the New Right, whose rise was confirmed by the victories of Thatcher and Reagan, argued for the implementation of liberal economic policies that complemented rather than counteracted the major market shifts of the time, allowing international financial deregulation to accentuate the effects of market forces around the globe.

The global rise of the New Right and the financial collapse of African countries had significant effects on development economics and on the political relations between aid donors and recipient countries. A new way of thinking emerged, or what Mosley et al. have termed a “New Political Economy of Development” (NPED).¹⁷⁴ This thinking applied the principles of classical liberal economics to development questions, arguing for greater liberalisation both internally (reduced subsidies, reduced state employment and privatisations of state industries and state run public services) and externally (reduction of import tariffs and greater concentration on the export market). The basic principle is that market pressure will force economies to adapt and find economically efficient specialisations in the global marketplace¹⁷⁵ (although some critics argued that

¹⁷² Strange, Susan, *States and Markets: An Introduction to International Political Economy*, Francis Pinter, London, 1988; Gilpin, Robert, *The Political Economy of International Relations*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1987; Dolan, ‘Global Economic Transformations and Less Developed Countries’, in Slater, Robert, Schultz, Barry and Dorr, Steven (eds), *Global Transformation and the Third World*, Lynne Rienner, Boulder, 1993; and Grieder, William, *One World, Ready or Not*, Penguin, London, 1997.

¹⁷³ Clapham, ‘Africa and the International System ...’, Chapter 7; Smouts, Marie-Claude, ‘L’Afrique dans la diplomatie multilatérale’ and Souley, Niandou Abdoulaye, ‘Ajustement structurel et effondrement des modèles idéologiques’, both in *Etudes internationales* (Quebec) 22 (2) juin 1991.

¹⁷⁴ Good summaries of this change in development thinking can be found in Mosley, P., Harrigan J. and Toye, J. *Aid and Power. The World Bank and Policy Based Lending*, Routledge, London, 1991, Part 1: Background; and in Raffer and Singer, ‘The Foreign Aid Business ...’, Chapter 11. See also Lensink, Robert, *Structural Adjustment in sub-Saharan Africa*, Longman, London, 1996; and Gibon, Peter, ‘The World Bank and the New Politics of Aid’ in Sorensen, Georg (ed.), *Political Conditionality*, Frank Cass, London, 1993.

¹⁷⁵ The clearest statement of the new thinking as regards Africa is the Berg Report of 1981: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (the World Bank), *Accelerated Development in sub-Saharan Africa*, Washington, 1981.

the real motivation was simply to ensure debt repayment through foreign exchange earnings).

At the same time as this new thinking was elaborated, aid was being used increasingly to prop up the budgets of heavily indebted countries. This constituted a relative shift away from project based aid, used for specific purposes, including building physical infrastructure. Project aid is at one end of the spectrum from aid attached to specific use, through aid attached to one sector (sector wide aid now often termed Sector Wide Approach or SWAPs) to budget support or programme aid.¹⁷⁶ The increase in lending to governments to ensure budget stability was connected to the NPED through conditions attached to these loans. Under these conditions, the recipient governments were obliged to carry out reforms in line with the NPED. This was promoted with enthusiasm at the beginning of the 1980s by the IFIs, who saw it as an opportunity to increase their power over development policies of poor countries. The short-term problem of coping with balance of payments difficulties thus transformed into a longer-term restructuring of the recipient countries' economies in line with the NPED, particularly as conditional lending (or "adjustment lending") was taken up by all major donors in the course of the 1980s.

These conditioned loans are known as Structural Adjustment Loans (SALs) and the programmes of reform are known as Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs). Since their introduction in the early 1980s, they have dominated the politics of aid, especially in the aid dependent countries of Africa. The changes have meant that the complex negotiations over the conditions and their fulfilment have become an important part of the internal and external politics in African states. Recipient governments have tried to implement as little painful reform as possible while still receiving the aid they urgently require. This is particularly true when the reforms involve highly politically sensitive areas such as public sector employment. Conversely, the donors, particularly the IFIs, now use aid not only to fill a capital gap but also to "buy policy" and compensate governments that make difficult choices.¹⁷⁷

These changes, particularly the differentiation between successful and unsuccessful developing countries, undermined existing development thinking. Rather

¹⁷⁶ Programme aid is equivalent to budget aid. Note that in French, however, "aide programme" is equivalent to sector-wide aid and the term "aide budgétaire" is used to refer to aid to governments that is not allocated to any specific sector.

¹⁷⁷ Mosley, et al., ' *Aid and Power ...*'. See also Clapham, ' *Africa and the International System...*', Chapter 7. See also Jeffrey Herbst, who explains how the changes imposed by SAPs have weakened the support base of political elites in Africa and increased instability. 'The Structural Adjustment of Politics in Africa', *World Development*, 18 (7) 1990.

than concentrating on a global critique of the world economy, analysis turned to identifying the factors behind the success or failure to adapt to the changes in the world economy.¹⁷⁸ At the same time, the NPED questioned the role of the state in development. The state in developing countries came to be seen as more predatory than developmental, in other words those who control the state have used it for corruption and rent seeking. This is a dramatic change in development thinking, which had long been premised on the use of the state as the agent of social and economic change. The earlier paradigm, drawing on European experience, posits the creation of a politically and socially “modern” community (that is a “nation-state”) and economic growth as mutually reinforcing elements of progress towards the good life. While the collapse of African economies undermined the notion of linear social and economic progress, the turn away from the state in development thinking raised questions about the potential agent for such progress. As the effects of the weakening of the nation-state and the rise of the neo-liberal agenda have spread, changes in development thinking reflect a generalised loss of political capacity, a loss of the capacity to act and plan collectively. For many development specialists, especially those on the left, rather than providing a coherent alternative to state-led development, the NPED is more a sign of failure of the previous paradigm.

In the light of the weakening (and in some cases near collapse) of these states in the 1980s, and of the failure of SAPs to stimulate growth or alleviate poverty, the NPED was modified during the 1980s to take better account of the necessary role of the state. The concept of “good governance” emerged in the 1990s. The good governance agenda holds that economic reform requires a stable, efficient, legitimate and non-corrupt public sector, or what has been termed “embedded liberalism”.¹⁷⁹ As Clapham puts it,

¹⁷⁸ This change has also undermined the structuralist critique of development economics. This critique held that (after Marx) the poor of the world were exploited by the global capitalist system and that weaker areas of the world economy should therefore isolate themselves from global capital and trade. The success of East Asian countries demonstrated that managed integration into the world economy could be beneficial for previously underdeveloped countries. As a result, analysis turned to looking at the complex internal conditions in which development takes place and specifically why some countries integrate more successfully with the world economy than others. See Goran Hyden’s *No Shortcuts to Progress, African Development Management in Perspective*, University of California Press, 1983. On the theoretical implications of the crisis of development thinking, see Leys, ‘*The Rise and Fall ...*’, Chapter 1; Hettne, ‘*Development Theory ...*’; Bienefeld, M. *Rescuing the Dream of Development in the 1990s*, Institute of Development Studies Silver Jubilee paper 10, Sussex, 1992 and James, Paul, ‘Postdependency? The Third World in an Era of Globalism and late Capitalism’, *Alternatives*, 22 (1997).

¹⁷⁹ Callaghy, Thomas, ‘Vision and Politics in the transformation for the Global Political Economy’ in Slater, Schultz and Dorr, (eds) ‘*Global Transformation ...*’ It is generally agreed that the 1989 report from the World Bank heralded the emergence of the “good governance” agenda: *Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth*, Washington 1989. For subsequent evolutions, see Raffer and Singer, ‘*The Foreign Aid Business ...*’, Chapter 11; Hoogeveelt, Ankie, *Globalisation in the post-colonial world*, Macmillan, London, 1997, Chapter 8; Clapham, ‘*Africa and the International System ...*’, 172–6; Thorbecke, in Tarp, ‘*Foreign Aid and Development ...*’; and Mosley, et al. ‘*Aid and Power ...*’.

“the International Financial Institutions soon had to recognise that a well run State was an essential participant in any effective structure of economic management”.¹⁸⁰

According to this adapted neo-liberal agenda, the developmental state, which participated actively in the country’s economy, is to be replaced by the juridical or minimal state. In this perspective “good” governance is the efficient and non-corrupt arbitration of competing private interests, while “bad” governance is excessive and inefficient interference. Within this new context, development aid is to be used to construct institutions that govern well (“capacity building”) and to buy policy, to ensure that reluctant leaders put in place the reforms deemed necessary by the good governance agenda¹⁸¹. In line with this “policy buying”, aid is now valued by donors as a way of retaining the right to inspect the economic management of recipient countries. In addition, aid is now seen almost exclusively as a way of creating the conditions for better functioning markets and therefore increased private investment¹⁸².

The initial short-term aim of SALs (to rescue bankrupt states) was therefore transformed during the 1990s into a more permanent relationship with donors who want to encourage policy change in indebted countries. All African countries now regularly negotiate these kinds of loans (the original SALs have become more diverse, but the logic of buying policy is now embedded in almost all lending). Large parts of the donor community and large parts of public bureaucracy in African countries are now engaged exclusively in negotiating these loans.

Many of the basic elements of the NPED and good governance agenda are now widely accepted by all donors – essentially the need to get the macro-economic and social context right before aid can be effective. Good governance is seen as a necessary condition for aid to be effective, although the continued failure of African economies, even those that are relatively well governed, cautions against regarding it as sufficient. Broadly speaking, poverty alleviation or, more boldly, eradication, is generally accepted

¹⁸⁰ Clapham, ‘*Africa and the International System ...*’, p. 174.

¹⁸¹ The aid regime further changed with the emergence of political conditionality after the end of the Cold War. Selecting aid recipients according to their degree of democracy fitted into the pre-existing good governance agenda, as democratic government and efficient “governance” were held by donors to be closely, if not inextricably, linked. However, this policy faded from prominence in the late 1990s (see *supra*, chapter 1, section 3ii).

¹⁸² It should also be noted that for many the failure of structural adjustment lending in the 1980s to help the poorest economies of Africa indicated that there were simply limits to what aid spending could do. For a French argument for a more modest approach to what development aid can achieve, see Marchand, Yves, *Une Urgence: Afro-realisme. Pour une nouvelle politique de l’entreprise en Afrique subsaharienne*, La Documentation française, Paris, 1996.

as the ultimate aim of development aid – the difficulty remains how to get there.¹⁸³

One answer to this question, and to what role aid can play in poverty eradication, has emerged in the last few years. According to this position, the best way to ensure that aid works towards the ends that have been set is to select recipient countries that are following the right policies – *selectivity*. This allows the recipient country greater control over the resources (ownership), while assuring the donor that these resources are not being wasted.¹⁸⁴ For countries with very poor records of managing resources other strategies must be found, including working exclusively with the NGO sector and working to encourage political change.¹⁸⁵

One important result of the move away from aid tied to projects, such as public infrastructure, to sector-wide aid or budget support is the development of multi-donor documents,¹⁸⁶ which are intended to inscribe aid into a contract with the recipient state. These documents are drawn up by the recipient state, but with very close guidance from the donors. By signing up to these, the recipient state has to carry out wide-ranging reforms of public administration, which are closely monitored by the main donors. While many critics point out that this does not differ significantly from the structural adjustment conditions (which were hardly a notable success in Africa) donors try to present these as elaborated and “owned” by the recipient state. This notion of recipient ownership is inherently paradoxical. While there are undoubtedly many African officials and politicians convinced of the need for these reforms (or something similar) the reforms are still to all intents and purposes imposed on recipients by donors as conditions of aid disbursement. For the purpose of this study, it is important to note that, in heavily aided countries, donors have taken an increasingly coordinated

¹⁸³ A typical statement of this is the 1997 White Paper of the UK’s Department for International Development (DFID) on poverty eradication. See Burnell, Peter, ‘Britain’s New Government, New White Paper, New Aid?’ *Third World Quarterly*, 19 (4) 1998. The Cotonou Agreement between the European Union and ACP states is another good example: “the central objective of ACP-EC cooperation is poverty reduction and ultimately its eradication” (article 19). Such strands were later incorporated into the UN’s “Millennium Development Goals” in 2000.

¹⁸⁴ This position (selectivity) is associated with the World Bank and, since its creation in 1997, the UK’s DFID. See World Bank, *Assessing Aid, what works, what doesn’t and why?* Washington, 1998. Further details can be found in Burnside, Craig and Dollar, David, ‘Aid, Policies and Growth’, *American Economic Review*, 90 (4) 2000; Van de Valle, Nicolas, ‘Aid’s Crisis of Legitimacy: Current Proposals and Future Prospects’, *African Affairs*, Vol 98, 1999; and Guillaumont, Patrick and Chauvet, Lisa, *Aid and performance: a reassessment*, World Bank, Washington, 1999; and Hermes, Niels and Lensink, Robert, ‘Changing the Conditions for Development Aid: A New Paradigm?’, *The Journal of Development Studies*, 37 (6) 2001.

¹⁸⁵ This problem is studied by the World Bank under the rubric LICUS – Low Income Countries Under Stress.

¹⁸⁶ Especially the Comprehensive Development Frameworks (CDFs) developed by the World Bank in the late 1990s and the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) developed by both the IFIs, also in the late 1990s.

approach, consulting each other informally, meeting regularly to discuss progress in a given sector and perhaps, most importantly, in the drawing up of and subsequent support for the PRSPs and CFDs.

ii. The French Position

There is a degree of common ground between the NPED and the views of policy makers in Paris. The key point of agreement, which became increasingly apparent in the 1980s and early 1990s, is that for African states a balanced budget was an essential precondition to a renewal of the development agenda. Many in Paris also agreed that market signals were not properly functioning in the heavily bureaucratic economies of Africa. It followed that at least some conditionality needed to be imposed on aid, especially if the function of that aid was to stabilise the recipient country's budget. The more technocratic-minded policy makers in Paris (principally the Finance Ministry) came round to this position in the early 1980s.¹⁸⁷

Many in Paris were naturally favourable to this position, and had indeed long been worried by the lack of “rigueur” (spending discipline) in the public administration of African states. To some degree they welcomed the financially rigorous position of the IFIs as a support for their own position in arguments in Paris. For others, the necessity to align French practice with NPED was a reaction to the scale of the financial problems facing francophone African states and the need to ensure that the IFIs shared the burden of budgetary support (burden sharing).¹⁸⁸ An increasing proportion of French aid was taken up by budgetary support from the mid-1980s. With the deepening of the debt crisis, large amounts of this aid were used to enable francophone African governments to pay debts previously contracted to the French or the IFIs. The French therefore became aware that they were pouring money in, with little prospect of repayment (table 7 in Annex 1 shows the increasing proportion of French aid used for budget aid).¹⁸⁹

As was shown in Chapter 1, the crisis of the CFA Franc and its eventual devaluation crystallised at the same time the resistance of the French to the NPED and the impossibility for France to continue to go it alone. The overvaluation of the CFA

¹⁸⁷ Wilson, E. J., ‘French Support for Structural Adjustment Programmes in Africa’, *World Development*, 21 (3) 1993 and personal interviews.

¹⁸⁸ In a very typical statement of this latter French attitude to structural adjustment lending (burden sharing), French Finance Minister Alphandery stated in 1993: “Ces efforts [de l’ajustement] il faut que les Africains les poursuivent pour retrouver une crédibilité internationale et pouvoir bénéficier de l'aide financière à l'ajustement structurel de la part des organismes internationaux” (*Le Monde*, 22 septembre 1993).

¹⁸⁹ Chambaud, in M'Bokolo ‘*Développement de l'aide au partenariat . . .*’

Franc from the mid-1980s ran counter to measures recommended by the IFIs, which were targeted at increasing the franc zone's export base. The CFA Franc's overvaluation led to over consumption of imports, with inflationary pressure absorbed by the French Finance Ministry. The devaluation was therefore a sign of a shift of power away from importers into francophone Africa (many of whom had powerful influence in Paris) and public sector employees in Africa, towards the IFI backed technocrats and exporters. This shift of power was symbolised by the appointment, under pressure from the IMF, of Allasane Ouattara, as the prime minister of Côte d'Ivoire in 1990. He had previously been deputy director at the IMF and was considered a technocratic outsider by the majority of the elites in Abidjan and Paris. It should also be noted that the devaluation and the Abidjan doctrine that accompanied it (the statement that France would not give budget/programme aid to countries unless they had an agreement with the IFIs, pronounced by Prime Minister Balladur in September 1993) had important political implications. Specifically, the Abidjan doctrine was designed to stop African heads of state using their links to the French president to get round the reluctance of French officials to bail them out when they did not have enough money to pay the public sector salaries ("boucler les fins des mois"). This can be seen as an important and successful attempt to impose technocratic (as opposed to political) criteria on the allocation and use of French aid.

Despite this apparent alignment, French development aid policy and doctrine continue to show strong differences from the NPED. At the technical level, the majority of French policy makers (from all parts of the administration) believe that the use of market forces in developing societies must be limited and regulated, and are suspicious of the ideological fervour with which the IFIs pursue the liberalisation and privatisation agenda. French officials also argue that their long-term presence in francophone Africa has given them greater knowledge of the subtleties of the problems facing Africa, as opposed to the office-bound bureaucrats of the IFIs. More specifically, French officials argue that the conditions attached to adjustment loans are too detailed for the recipient country to own fully, and that they led inevitably to a takeover of the state administration by donors.¹⁹⁰

Further differences stem from the fact that the starting point for the French differs from that of other donors. The NPED, as well as the generalised liberalisation of trade and finance since the 1980s, is fundamentally incompatible with the coopération system, which was the *raison d'être* of French development aid policy. As discussed,

¹⁹⁰ Wilson, 'French Support for Structural adjustment...' and personal interviews.

this system worked through negotiation between well-placed elites in Paris and across francophone African and constituted a protected environment for African leaders and French officials and businesses. The NPED challenges the position of leaders in francophone Africa and the closeness of their relations with the French. The French have been reluctant to select aid recipients on any basis other than political support. As the analyst Béatrice Hibou stated in a report for the Foreign Ministry on the franc zone in 1995: “[les] pratiques mercantilistes et protectionnistes, [les] reflexes de chasse gardée … sont incompatible avec les réformes libérales en cours et avec l’intégration de l’Afrique dans l’économie mondiale”.¹⁹¹ Moreover, in their relations with recipient governments the French look to use insider influence and diplomatic persuasion in order to see reforms implemented, as opposed to the policy buying model of the IFIs.¹⁹²

The French attitude to the NPED agenda was therefore ambivalent. The same can be said of the attitude of French officials to the new ideas that emerged in the 1990s. Many French officials welcomed the turn back to the state (the acknowledgement that a functioning state was an important part of development and that in some cases structural adjustment had undermined it). French attitudes to other emerging issues have been varied. Selectivity is difficult to enact because the criteria for the selection of French aid recipients are ultimately political (the French point out that given the ultimately subjective nature of judgements concerning “governance”, all aid selection decisions are in fact political).¹⁹³ However, one may argue that the French do pursue a policy of selection according to state capacity as the main coastal states of Africa have always received greater amounts of aid per capita than the Sahelian countries. Finally, as far as SWAPs are concerned, French aid practices have in fact proven largely compatible with this idea, as the French have been involved in restructuring whole sectors of African economies and public administration since the mid-1980s, effectively doing sector wide aid without calling it such.

Chapter 5 will consider some of these issues concerning the state and development policy in greater depth and relate them to the reforms of 1998–2002. It is important to note here, however, that while French state traditions fitted well with the state centred development paradigm of the 1960s, the good governance concept is treated cautiously in French administration and, where it is used, it has a different content relative to its use by other donors. The model of society it presents appears to present a juridical and minimal state that functions solely to regulate competing private

¹⁹¹ Cited in *Libération*, 13 novembre 1995.

¹⁹² This will be covered in further depth and for the 1998–2002 period in Chapter 4.

interests, which is seen as incompatible with the French social model. French traditions, the milieu in which French officials collectively forge their values, place greater emphasis on the state as the site of the expression of the collective will of the nation and see society as more than the aggregation of individual activities. In this conception the state should be “volontarist” (take initiatives) in order to achieve social progress.

In the place of good governance, the French prefer to use terms that refer to the strengthening of state institutions. Terms such as “Renforcement [or développement] institutionnel” or “Etat de Droit” are frequently used. Dating from the period of the construction of the French state before the French Revolution, this latter term refers to the legitimate and impartial nature of state authority over citizens.¹⁹⁴ This conception of the construction of political entities is not incompatible with private interest and initiative, but posits the state at the centre of social life.

In summary, French development aid policy in the 1980s and early 1990s aligned to some degree with the precepts of the NPED. This occurred both at the macro-economic level and at the micro level of aid practice. Equally, the French welcomed many of the precepts of the good governance agenda, particularly as it related to institutional strengthening. However, differences of interpretation between the French and other major donors indicate that there are limits to the convergence of both policy and doctrine. Subsequent chapters of this study will look at the evolution of these differences in the 1998–2002 period.

iii. Regime Pressures and Donor Reform

These changes to development aid in the last two decades have altered the workings of the aid regime. While some features have persisted such as the role of the DAC and the UN agencies, overall the regime has “tightened” following the introduction of structural adjustment – there are now greater expectations and pressures on donors to behave in prescribed ways. The rise in importance of the IFIs has meant that bilateral donors have lost their privileged and protected relationship with recipient states (this is particularly true of France’s relations with francophone Africa). In order to influence decisions bilateral donors now have to think about influencing multilateral donors as well as recipient states. This has also meant that there is potentially greater scrutiny of what bilateral donors do.

Changes in what aid is used for (from projects to institutional engineering and

¹⁹³ In personal interviews.

¹⁹⁴ The translation “rule of law” is an imperfect equivalent.

policy buying) have demanded greater donor interaction and coordination. Using aid to buy policy will not work if recipients can exploit differences between donors. The sheer technical capacity needed for continued institutional reform work has increasingly led donors to divide up work between them, with lead donors concerned with finance reform (the IFIs), the health sector (often the World Bank), education (often France in francophone Africa) and so forth.

One important aspect of these changes is that parts of the institutional reform agenda have been turned back onto the donors themselves. This is particularly true of non-governmental pressure groups at the margins of the regime attempting to influence the IFIs. Although the critics lack the direct “leverage” that donors have over recipients, much of the substance connects with doubts that officials have about the institutions in which they work. The donor regime has responded to this by constantly trying to ensure that development aid is seen as being oriented towards the needs of the poor.

This use by pressure groups of the good governance concept to direct attention to the very institutions of aid disbursement is well captured by Ngaire Woods:

“each [of the IFIs] has come to accept the notion of “good governance” within countries in which they work and the need for local participation and widespread political support in order for economic reforms to be sustainable. The challenge the institutions have been slower to absorb is what these principles mean for their own operations”.¹⁹⁵

The IFIs especially have been criticised for not following their own prescriptions on openness to civil society, both in terms of consultation and dissemination of information. They have been criticised for being the sort of unwieldy bureaucratic institutions that they argue against in their policy prescriptions and for not adequately and impartially representing the concerns of the different groups affected by their decisions (often called “stake-holders”). It is argued that the institutional forms and policy-making procedures of the IFIs prevent them from fulfilling their principal role, which is the alleviation of poverty in aid receiving countries.¹⁹⁶ The IFIs are aware of a

¹⁹⁵ ‘The challenge of Good Governance for the IMF and the World Bank Themselves’ in *World development*, 28 (5) 2000. See also Stevens, Mike and Gnanaselvam, Shiro, ‘World Bank and Governance’, *IDS Bulletin*, 26 (2) 1995; and Woods, Ngaire, ‘Good Governance and International Organisations’, *Global Governance*, 5, 1999.

¹⁹⁶ While this is certainly the stated aim of the World Bank, the IMF was set up to ensure stability in the world’s financial system. However, in the last two decades it has increasingly expanded into areas of development aid whose end points are presented as the alleviation of poverty in recipient countries. For

need constantly to adapt their functioning and role to maintain legitimacy in the eyes of their publics, both critics and shareholding governments. They have made some moves to open their workings to more public scrutiny.

In the French case the criticisms of the system are similar to those made of other donors, and for similar reasons, although the particular post-colonial nature of French aid means that the context is somewhat different. This study has previously identified a long-standing but unfulfilled reform agenda, from the Jeanneney report of 1964 through the Cot reforms of 1981. It has also concluded that the coopération system entered a crisis in the late 1980s. This crisis intensified pressures for reform and encouraged reformers to be bolder in their calls for change. Before looking at specific attempts at reform in the late 1990s, it is worth recapitulating the features of the reform agenda and the composition of the reform lobby in France.

The reform agenda has pointed to the following faults with French development aid:

- The institutional structures of French aid administration reflect a post-colonial objective of maintaining ties with former colonies, rather than development objectives. There is as a result a lack of clear direction and purpose.¹⁹⁷
- This institutional structure of French aid administration is overly complex, with too many different parts of the administration involved. As a consequence, decisions are dominated by insider negotiations and are obscure to those not in the very inner circles of power (the lack of transparency).
- There is a lack of public and democratic debate on development aid and a lack of democratic control over aid spending. The views of NGOs and pressure groups (both in France and in recipient countries) are not taken into account. NGOs are under-valued and under-used in project implementation.
- As a result of the above three points, there is a proliferation of cases of corruption involving French development aid.

In addition there are a number of more specific points:

- French aid remains tied to the purchase of French goods.

example, the IMF now negotiates PRGS (Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy) programmes with recipient countries.

¹⁹⁷ This summary of the reform agenda is taken from critical texts such as those cited in footnote 93; OECD/DAC, *Peer Review of Donor contribution, France*, DAC, Paris, 1997; *Marchés Tropicaux*, 14 décembre 2001, '35 ans de réformes avortées' and personal interviews.

- Budget support has an overwhelming place in the French aid spending budget, which leaves little room for direct focus on poverty alleviation.
- There is very little consideration given to evaluating French aid spending.
- Recipient governments do not participate in the elaboration or implementation of French funded programmes (lack of ownership), which are implemented almost exclusively by highly paid French officials.

In the early and mid-1990s therefore there was a clearly identifiable reform agenda. It was articulated in private by other donors, and in public by civil society and the DAC. This generated a strong perception, including among French decision makers, that French aid was out of line not only with some of the evolving norms of the global aid regime, but also with some of the better practices of other donors. This strengthened the case of the domestic French reformers.

Several official reports of this period, although often defensive of the French record on aid to Africa, pointed to this malaise.¹⁹⁸ They again highlighted the detrimental effects of the confusing bureaucratic architecture of French aid policy and the inappropriate geographical and functional distinction that the Cooperation Ministry represented (for example in Fuchs pp. 31–5). These reports point to the fact that French aid policy is a closed shop, with a lack of openness to input from outside, especially from the non-governmental sector. They also pointed to a more general lack of transparency and Fuchs specifically recommended that future aid relations should be based on “contracts” with the recipient state that would make clear the responsibilities of each side. Finally, these reports (especially those by Fuchs and Marchand) argued that French aid policy suffered from a deteriorating international image and that better public transparency was needed in order to allow better coordination with other aid donors.

Advocates of reform within France were in fact fairly heterogeneous. Broadly speaking there were two camps. On the one hand there were the “technocrats”, largely made up of officials, who had little attachment to Africa and were concerned to limit the damage that coopération was inflicting on France’s finances or diplomatic standing. The historical origin of this school clearly lies in the position of those who were against colonisation of Africa on the grounds that the benefits for France were minimal and the costs potentially too high (Clémencau and later Cartier). On the other hand calls for reform came from the development camp, many of whose supporters had direct

¹⁹⁸ Fuchs, Jean-Paul, *Pour une Politique de développement efficace, maîtrisée et transparente* , Rapport au Premier Ministre, La Documentation française, Paris, 1994; and Marchand, ‘Une Urgence ...’.

experience of aid work in Africa. They believed that development aid in Africa was a noble and worthwhile pursuit for France, and that the crisis and scandals of coopération should not obscure this, or serve as a pretext to reduce development aid spending. Advocates of reform therefore came from diverse backgrounds and had different ideas of how they would wish to see French aid in the future. It was only by virtue of the crisis of coopération and the glaring problems that this exposed, that they found common ground on the need for reform.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the main features of French development aid in the first three decades of its existence. It was orientated towards the construction of viable states and economies in the former colonies of sub-Saharan Africa. This was intended to be beneficial both to French commercial and political interests, and to provide the capital and expertise these countries lacked, in line with broader coopération policy. French aid can therefore be termed “political post-colonial”.

In the 1960s and 1970s French aid fitted fairly comfortably with the norms and expectations of other donors and of the wider aid donor “regime”, which also focused on state led economic development. Reform of French aid, particularly changes in its institutional and ministerial structure, was occasionally called for. But significant change was successfully resisted by those who had an interest in the system. In this period many, both insiders and outsiders, regarded French aid as having many laudable attributes, including a good understanding of problems in sub-Saharan Africa and a large cadre of competent aid workers. Larger coastal countries in francophone Africa in particular benefited from the French presence.

In the 1980s, the economic crisis of African states changed the nature of development aid (from all donors, not only France), which became orientated more to financial stability than to development per se. Aid was increasingly used to encourage changes in policy on the part of otherwise recalcitrant states (“policy buying”). This period also saw the rise in importance of the IFIs. At the end of the 1980s, further changes saw the introduction of other elements concerned with institution building and further thought was given to how aid could best be used (concentrating on reformist governments, restructuring economic sectors and so forth).

The French reaction to this changing agenda has been mixed. In general, French decision makers have been wary of what they sometimes perceive as the “market

fundamentalism” of the IFIs, although they have welcomed the more recent renewed interest in institution building. However, the French reaction to the changing development aid agenda at the global level has occurred at the same time as the basis of French aid (in short “coopération”) has suffered a severe crisis due to the financial collapse of African states, corruption scandals and diplomatic disasters such as Rwanda. One of the consequences of this crisis was that the consistent but often muted calls for reform of the system became more vocal or more persistent, both on the part of outsiders (French and African civil society and other donors) and insiders or semi-insiders (the authors of parliamentary reports, French decision makers themselves). These calls for reform were largely negative, as they had always been, in the sense that they called for given elements of the system to be changed but offered little detailed vision of what may take its place.

Part Two:

Reforming French Development Aid

Chapter 3

The Jospin Reforms

It was argued in the first two chapters of this study that by the mid-1990s coopération was in crisis. Following the Rwandan genocide and the emergence of corruption scandals, the public debate was fractious and polemical. The general public perception was that France's presence in Africa, and by extension French development aid, only served to prop up dictators and line pockets and party coffers in Paris and in Africa. This crisis strengthened calls for reform in Paris.

1. The Political Context

i. The Juppé Reforms 1995–97

Despite these calls for reform, the election of Jacques Chirac as president (May 1995) was generally interpreted as a sign that the “old guard” of Franco–African relations would be able to consolidate their position. Chirac was associated with conservatism and the maintenance of close relations between the French head of state and his francophone African counterparts, and the use of development aid to this end. Various pieces of evidence indicated that this would carry over into his presidency: his speeches underlining his support for the presidents of francophone Africa, some of whom were regularly criticised by commentators for undemocratic practice and abuse of human rights, his regular summer visits to francophone Africa and his appointment of several stalwarts of the conservative position (including Dupuch, as his Africa advisor, Godfrain as coopération minister and, briefly, including Foccart himself as Chirac's “personal representative to African leaders”).¹⁹⁹ According to some, support for undemocratic African leaders by members of Chirac's government or entourage extended to a forlorn attempt to prop up President Mobutu of Zaire during the first Congo war.²⁰⁰

However, to describe Chirac as a supporter of the old guard is to tell only part of the story. Although he has close alliances with most of the long-serving presidents of francophone Africa, his association with Africa does not go back to the two key periods we have identified in the creation of the post-colonial Franco–African relationship, the Fourth Republic and the immediate post-independence period. Chirac's relation with

¹⁹⁹ For a critical view on Chirac and Africa, see Agir ici/Survie, *Les Candidats et L'Afrique: le dire et le faire*, Harmattan, 1995, pp. 303–11 (for an analysis of his speeches) and Agir ici/Survie, *Jacques Chirac et la Françafrique. Retour au casse Foccart?* Harmattan, 1995. For further details, see Marchal, Roland “La France en quête d'une politique africaine?” *Politique étrangère*, hiver, 1995/96; and *Le Monde*, 5 juillet 1995 “la France entend maintenir son “Champ” Africain”.

²⁰⁰ According to Glaser, Antoine and Smith, Stephen, ‘Le Retour en Grace négocié de Mobutu’, *Libération*, 3 septembre 1995; and McKinnon, Roddy, Charlton Roger and May, Roy, ‘Marching Towards Multilateralism’, *Modern and Contemporary France*, NS 4, 1996, pp. 466–7.

Africa is more pragmatic, a function of his role within the Gaullist movement, with its strong emphasis on continuity and loyalty. Chirac was not therefore averse to ideas of adapting France's role in Africa, and often gave succour to the reformist line.

Given the key role of the President in the formulation of foreign and aid policy in France, the political context for reform in 1995 was therefore highly uncertain. As Bourmaud rightly puts it: "tout semble se passer comme si l'hôte de l'Elysée, fidèle à son pragmatisme et faute d'une doctrine personnelle établie, souhaitait conserver deux fers au feu, se réservant la possibilité de changer d'option si les circonstances venaient à l'imposer".²⁰¹ Given the ambiguities of the President's position, it is unsurprising that during the 1995–1997 period, a reform project for development aid was outlined, but that the supporters of the old ways impeded its implementation. Prime Minister Alain Juppé was the driving force behind the changes. This was motivated in large part by his time as Foreign Minister, when he broadly accepted the argument of French diplomats that development aid spending had to be brought under Foreign Ministry control in order to stop it being used for party political financing. It should also be noted that the splits within the Gaullist movement in 1993–95 had repercussions for Africa policy and for the coopération system. The "old guard" itself was divided by Balladur's challenge to Chirac, and some used resources from development aid, or more broadly from relations with African leaders, in their fight against rival factions. These divisions seriously weakened the general support for maintaining old style relations with Africa, including in the mind of Juppé.²⁰²

The intentions of the reform programme were elaborated in May and June 1995.²⁰³ They included keeping a tighter reign on development aid expenditure, in part due to preparation for European Monetary Union. One way this could be achieved, it was thought, was to continue to implement the economic conditionality agenda to ensure better use of scarce resources, and specifically to maintain the Abidjan doctrine of alignment on IMF conditions. The reform programme also included moving away from the concentration on the former colonies, by expanding the focus of French development aid to include all countries dealt with by the European Development Fund (EDF), referred to as the ACP countries (Africa Caribbean and Pacific). This alignment

²⁰¹Bourmaud, Daniel, 'La Politique africaine de Jacques Chirac: les anciens contre les modernes', *Modern and Contemporary France*, NS4, 1996, p. 436. Smith also points to the ambivalence in Chirac's position in Glaser, Antoine and Smith, Stephen, 'Deux lignes africaines pour la France', *Libération*, 5 septembre 1995.

²⁰² According to several personal interviews.

²⁰³ Notably in the Lettre de Mission from Juppé to Godfrain. See Marchesin, Phillippe, 'L'aide française en 1996', OPCF, *Rapport*, 1996, p. 21. See also *Le Monde*, 8 février 1996.

with European aid on the geographical level was also intended to further coordination and cohesion between French aid and the EDF. While in some ways this shift to Europe can be understood as an attempt on the part of the French to share the burden of their support for francophone Africa by drawing in support for the EDF, it is also true that the reformist camp tended to look to Europe to pull France away from the focus on former colonies in sub-Saharan Africa and potentially to open up French aid policy to third-party scrutiny.

The specific administrative changes finally enacted fell far short of the intentions of the Prime Minister. The interministerial committee (the Comité interministeriel de l'aide au développement, CIAD) he set up to try to give French development aid bureaucracy greater cohesion rarely met and did not produce the evaluation documents demanded of it. The decision to allow the FAC to be spent in all ACP countries stalled within the French bureaucracy and was never properly enacted (see annex 2). Most importantly, Juppé's attempt to make the Cooperation Ministry administratively subordinate to the Foreign Ministry, and to merge their budgets, failed.²⁰⁴

The failure of these reforms clearly pointed to the continued strength of the “old guard”, and the support it enjoyed at the very top of the political system. It is revealing for example that Chirac felt it necessary to underline explicitly his support for an independent ministry for coopération, even as his prime minister was elaborating the reforms: “je peux vous dire qu'il y aura toujours en France, tant j'assume mes responsabilités, un Ministère de la Coopération indépendant ayant ses propres moyens et son identité.”²⁰⁵ Juppé's reform agenda finally became lost in what for him were more pressing problems of reforms of the domestic public sector. As so often before, the opportunity for reform in this area was lost because those who wanted the reform either had little power or else had little to gain, while those against the reform had both power and motive to obstruct the reform process.

ii. Jospin's Election and the Position of the Parti socialiste

The position of the Parti socialiste on the eve of Jospin's unexpected election victory of May 1997 was in reality no less ambivalent than that of the Gaullist right. The socialist reflex of solidarity with the world's poor and the belief in France's “historical responsibility” towards francophone Africa had been seriously compromised by the

²⁰⁴ Personal interviews and *Le Monde* 4 septembre 1995 and 5 juillet 1995. For insight into the attitudes of the old guard in this period see the revealing interview with Godfrain in *Le Monde*, 20 juillet 1995.

²⁰⁵ In *Liberation*, 1 décembre 1995: a pledge he was not finally able to keep.

corruption scandals that had proliferated in the Mitterrand period, scandals that were indicative of the fundamental confusion between this aim of solidarity and the aims of political and personal influence.²⁰⁶

The reaction on the part of the majority of the Parti socialiste who concerned themselves with these issues was to advocate what commentators have called “distanciation maîtrisée”²⁰⁷ – a recognition that the Parti socialiste had to disassociate itself from the heritage of close relations with leaders in francophone Africa, without expecting to cut entirely such strong historical and personal ties. To diminish the “proximity” of the Franco–African relationship was considered necessary in order to bring these relations under greater control to prevent relations with African countries from being turned away from their original stated aims and used to further particular interests. Jospin encountered little opposition in the Parti socialiste in the mid-1990s as he elaborated the lines of this policy of “distanciation”. In effect, the crisis of coopération was such that all elements of it had become tarred with the same brush of corruption and clientelism. It was easy to forget that most of the people working in the system continued to see their work much on the lines established by de Gaulle at the outset – helping countries in difficult circumstances establish the economic infrastructure and state administration needed to develop as a nation-state. They clearly had a good number of achievements to their name. The challenge that the fairly heterogeneous group of coopération reformers therefore faced was to change the system without destroying its recognised assets.

Jospin and his close advisors on diplomatic affairs (Jean-Louis Bianco, Hubert Vedrine, Jean-Maurice Ripert and Pierre Sellal) decided on what overall shape the reforms would eventually take as party policy before 1997. Some studies carried out within the Parti socialiste and the opinions of some members, such as Yves Tavernier and Guy Labertit, may have had some marginal influence. However, the reality was that Jospin did not need to be convinced of the need for reform, and the precise nature of the reforms was decided within his inner cabinet.²⁰⁸

Inevitably, the shadow of Mitterrand hung heavily over the Parti socialiste at the time and it is no surprise that some critics expressed scepticism over whether the Parti socialiste really had the political will to reform France’s Africa policy and development

²⁰⁶ See *supra* chapter 1, section 3.

²⁰⁷ The expression “distanciation maîtrisée” is used in *Marchés Tropicaux*, 14 décembre 2001, p. 2547. For further details on the position of the Parti socialiste at this time, see *Africa Confidential*, 18 July 1997 and *Le Monde*, 6 février 1998.

²⁰⁸ Personal interviews.

aid system.²⁰⁹ However, Jospin's personal hostility to the overly close relationships with the leaders of francophone African countries, relationships he saw as neo-colonial and corrupting, had been clear for some time. In the 1980s, he had taken the unusual step of breaching the President's prerogative in foreign affairs by speaking out against Mitterrand's Africa policy in government meetings.²¹⁰ On arrival in the Prime Minister's office in 1997, Jospin and his close advisors strongly believed that a page had to be turned, in the interests of both the Parti socialiste and of French foreign policy. The 1997 elections had left Chirac in no position to block the eventual reforms, both because he had lost control of the government machinery and because to have done so would have put him too firmly in the conservative camp, and closed down his option of associating himself with ideas of reform and renewal. The eventual implementation of such long-awaited reforms therefore owes something to the opportunities presented by electoral fortune. They were also made possible by the gradual, long-term weakening of support for the old ways: "l'apparition de la réforme en France est aussi le signe qu'il y a moins d'attachement pour l'Afrique qu'il pouvait en avoir pendant les années 60 ou 70. Les gens changent, passent à la retraite ou ne sont plus là."²¹¹

However, while Jospin had a relatively clear momentum with which to push through the reforms in Paris, the context in Africa was far more ambivalent. Jospin premised his reforms on the emergence of a new generation of African leaders, and a demand in African society for a new kind of relationship with France.²¹² This demand was of course not new, but in many ways echoed the demands of the independence period (1950s and 1960s). However, the context was different in two crucial respects: democracy and fears of instability. The democratic opening of the early 1990s had been welcomed, albeit ambiguously, by Mitterrand at the La Baule summit in 1990.²¹³ By the late 1990s nearly all the African countries had formal structures of democracy in place, including multiparty elections. The possibility of democratic change was therefore a new political factor in francophone African politics. However, many leaders have learned to use their incumbency to retain power and in many instances hopes have again

²⁰⁹ Personal interviews. Note for example that Bianco, who in 1998 became the first head of the newly created Haut conseil de la coopération internationale (HCCI), had been the head of the presidential office for nearly ten years under Mitterrand.

²¹⁰ According to Verschave, Francois-Xavier *France-Afrique le crime continue*, Tahin Party, Lyon, 1999, pp. 36–7. According to one official a major factor behind the reforms was Jospin's "personal disgust" at the scandals of la "Francafrique" (personal interview).

²¹¹ Personal interview 2001. For elaboration of the importance of the passing of a generation, see Cumming, 'Modernisation without Banalisation ...', pp. 364–6 and Bayart et al., 'l'Afrique et la fin ...'.

²¹² See his interview of 5 February 1998 in Annex 3.

²¹³ See *supra* Chapter 1 section 3ii.

been frustrated. In other cases, apparently “new” leaders have proven just as incompetent or corrupt as the dinosaurs they replaced. The policy implications of this were complex. The policy of democratic conditionality, attractive to many on the left in France, and of course to opposition groups in Africa, could no longer be applied through clear distinctions between democrats and dictators as was possible at the beginning of the decade. Furthermore, as wars in the Congo, Liberia and Sierra Leone raged on, the fear of instability took over from the concern for democracy in the priorities of the international community, France included.

Nevertheless, and despite the frustrated hopes of the Mitterrand period, the Parti socialiste was still associated with change and democratic reform, especially in countries still ruled by regimes put in place by de Gaulle. Leaders in these countries (Biya of Cameroon, Bongo of Gabon, Bedie of Côte d’Ivoire and Eyadema of Togo) undoubtedly saw the election of Jospin as a weakening of the support they could expect in Paris, support that had in the past proven vital both in economic and political terms. Conversely, opposition parties and human rights groups in these countries saw the election of a centre left government as a cause for minor celebration. However, the political significance of “new” African leaders, or opposition parties that may hope to come to power, is not without ambiguity. In the first place, many of the emerging alliances in Africa and between Africans and the Parti socialiste were anything but new. The lines of alliance running from Paris throughout the African continent had already been drawn historically, independently of any reference to a “new” generation of African leaders or civil society figures. Equally, those in opposition naturally appear to represent change, but whether the nature of their political support or the domestic context they may operate in if they achieve power is fundamentally different from their long-term opponents in government is a question that remains unanswered in the rhetoric of “new” African leaders.

2. The Reforms

i. The Administrative Reform

Of the reforms announced by Jospin on 4 February 1998 the most significant was the dissolution of the Cooperation Ministry, what *Le Monde* (5 February 1998) called the “mesure la plus spectaculaire et immédiate des réformes”. This measure shouldered the symbolic weight of the reforms as the very existence of the Cooperation Ministry had for 38 years encapsulated the ambivalent position of France’s development aid policy,

and its relation with the policy of maintaining influence over former colonies.

The dissolution of the Cooperation Ministry was enacted through the fusion of its staff and functions with the department in the Foreign Ministry, the DGRCST, which had previously dealt with cultural and development cooperation with countries outside the “champ” of francophone Africa (and outside the area in which the FAC could be spent).²¹⁴ This fusion led to the creation of a wholly new department in the Foreign Ministry, the DGCID, which now deals with development work and cultural cooperation with all the countries of the world. This new department is solely responsible for spending the FAC, renamed under the reforms the Fonds de solidarité prioritaire (FSP). The representatives of the Cooperation Ministry or the DGRCST in recipient countries have been replaced by a “Service de Coopération et d’Action culturel” (SCAC), which is attached to the ambassador, unlike the previous representative of the Cooperation Ministry, who reported directly to the Cooperation Ministry in Paris. Although the ministry disappeared, a minister was retained, within the Foreign Ministry and formally delegated to the foreign minister, with responsibility over all the functions of the DGCID. The minister and his cabinet (of around 12 staff) were the key actors in the fusion process and were regarded as the source of DGCID’s political support and the advocates of their work within the Foreign Ministry.²¹⁵

The principal feature of the fusion was the merging of staff. The staff of the Cooperation Ministry had never had a “corps” within the French civil service. Originally it was staffed with officials from the colonial administration, but over time they were replaced with secondees from other ministries²¹⁶. At the dissolution of the Cooperation Ministry some of these staff returned to their original corps (members of administrative corps in France are automatically entitled to a post in the ministry to which their corps is attached), although the length of time spent in the Cooperation Ministry made this impractical for some. Others simply retired. The fusion therefore resulted in an overall loss of staff. A few of those who remained took up posts in various Foreign Ministry departments, but the majority were transferred to the DGCID, although not as members of the diplomatic corps but as members of the “administration générale” of the Foreign Ministry. In 2000 around 350 of the DGCID’s staff of around 550 were from the Cooperation Ministry, which in 1997 had counted around 700 central

²¹⁴ See *supra* chapter 2, section 1.

²¹⁵ Personal interviews.

²¹⁶ See *supra* chapter 2, section 1i.

staff.²¹⁷

This administrative reorganisation was presented as a “fusion”, a two-way process between two parties on an equal footing, in order to produce a new structure. The reality was quite different and, according to one official, it was “technically a takeover” of the Cooperation Ministry by the Foreign Ministry.²¹⁸ This is borne out in the first instance by the simple fact that the DGCID is part of the Foreign Ministry, and responds to its priorities and administrative hierarchy. This in turn poses the question of whether the DGCID has adopted the expertise in development questions and the culture of development aid work from the Cooperation Ministry or whether the working practices and priorities of the former DGRCST (the promotion of French language and culture) has predominated. The mechanisms of the fusion of staff strongly indicate the latter. Once former staff of the Cooperation Ministry move on or retire, diplomats, with a sprinkling of secondees from other ministries, will staff the DGCID. Although the diplomats who choose to work in the DGCID are often individuals who feel a vocational pull to development work, development cooperation as a specific career path for French officials will not survive in the Foreign Ministry. It is also likely that development cooperation will continue to suffer from low status as a career choice within the Foreign Ministry.²¹⁹

The danger of the cultural work of the old DGRCST dominating the work of the DGCID is also apparent in the department’s composition.²²⁰ To some extent development aid work is sprinkled throughout the geographical coordination service, the evaluation department and in the higher education and research section. However, it is only the Direction du développement et de la coopération technique (DDCT) (only one of four thematic departments) that properly continues the development work of the old Cooperation Ministry. This department comprises only 80 of the DGCID’s 550 staff, and has a large concentration of former staff of the Cooperation Ministry (what one official described as “une concentration ethnique très marqué”²²¹).

Although not all staff in the Cooperation Ministry had dealt with development issues (others dealt with cultural cooperation in the same way as the DGRCST staff did), there is no doubt that the former staff of the Cooperation Ministry still regard

²¹⁷ DAC/OECD, ‘Examens en matière de coopération... pp. 51–4 and personal interviews.

²¹⁸ Source: personal interview.

²¹⁹ See *Le Monde* 25 avril 2001, “Quai d’Orsay: la disparition de la coopé” and the statement from Cooperation Ministry staff published in *OPCF Rapport 1999*, Karthala, Paris, 1999, pp. 36–8.

²²⁰ The organigramme of the DGCID is in Annex 6.

²²¹ Source: personal interview.

themselves as quite different from the diplomats who now surround them, as France's "va pied nus" (those who "go barefoot", signifying those prepared to get their hands dirty in real development issues). They now regard the DDCT as a corner in the Foreign Ministry within which they can try to continue their development work. In contrast, the three other departments of the DGCID are concerned almost exclusively with cultural and linguistic cooperation ("la diplomatie d'influence")

The DGCID is a somewhat anomalous department within the Foreign Ministry. Many diplomats regard its status as one of the Foreign Ministry's "Direction générales" (a level above a simple "Direction") as unwarranted. Many see its work as a bolt-on addition to normal diplomacy, or as a means of general French linguistic and cultural influence, but not of great intrinsic importance. Furthermore, many consider the size of the DGCID excessive in the light of the decline in numbers of development aid workers in the field (coopérants) managed by the central staff. This is certainly the view of the Finance Ministry, which continues, as before, to control a substantial proportion of the French aid budget.

Under the reforms of 1998, the French development bank, formerly the CCCE and renamed the Caisse française de développement (CFD) by Juppé in 1995, became the Agence française de développement (AFD). At the moment of its renaming in 1999 the AFD was comprised of around 1100 staff, half of whom worked in the agency's 35 offices in foreign countries or eight offices in the DOM/TOMs.²²² It manages around 10–15 % of France's development aid spending²²³ in the form of infrastructure projects (around 400 at any one time, which last around two to five years). Part of AFD funds come from a block grant from the Foreign Ministry's budget, part is managed on behalf of the Finance Ministry and part is raised on the financial markets. This borrowing on the financial markets is facilitated by the fact that the AFD has been formally owned by the French state since it became a public financial institution ("Etablissement public à caractère industriel et commercial", EPIC) in the mid-1990s. The state is therefore legally contracted to its debts. This acts as a guarantee and allows the AFD to benefit from lower interest rates and to maintain its AAA credit rating. It is also, like its predecessors, subject to French banking laws as a financial institution (an "Institution financière spécialisée", IFS).

²²² Details on the AFD are drawn from OECD/DAC, 'Examens en matière de coopération . . .'; *Marchés Tropicaux*, 14 décembre 2001 and personal interviews.

²²³ The exact figure is extremely difficult to calculate and estimates vary widely. This is because the AFD does not have any development aid budget allocation of its own – it only manages funds on behalf of other ministries. It is also due to the complexity of some of its loan products, within which it is difficult to calculate the concessional element, which constitutes its aid content for OECD/DAC purposes.

The AFD retains the functions and working principles of the CCCE/CFD,²²⁴ including acting as the “paying agent” for the main aid budget (the FAC, now the FSP).

The only formal change in the AFD’s functions under the reforms of 1998 was to become the “opérateur pivot” (key operator) of French development aid. This entailed taking on work on education and health infrastructure (planning and building hospitals for example) previously done by the Cooperation Ministry. The overall division of labour in a recipient country as a result of the reforms is therefore that the AFD does all infrastructure work, while the SCAC does all the capacity building (that is training) and manages France’s network of technical assistants (“coopérants”).²²⁵

This division of labour does not work smoothly in all circumstances. One of the changes enacted in 1998–99 was to place the AFD office in recipient countries more formally under the authority of the ambassador (in order to make French representation “more coherent”). It is not clear how this relates to the AFD’s financial autonomy (one official described the authority of the ambassador over the AFD’s office as having “aucune base légale”).²²⁶ Although in most instances grey areas are papered over through cooperation between AFD and SCAC staff, in some cases relations have all but broken down over this question of the ambassador’s authority and over territorial disputes in the health and education sectors. This situation will only be aggravated by the plans the AFD is currently considering to expand its work in the health and education sectors to cover training programmes.²²⁷

Potential conflicts with the SCAC in recipient countries are a reflection of a constant tension with which the AFD has to work, between subordination to political authority and technocratic independence. The ministries represented on its management board (Conseil de surveillance) oversee the AFD – the Foreign Ministry, Finance Ministry and the Ministry for Overseas France (as the AFD works in the DOM/TOMs). It is also subject to day-to-day pressures from ministries, the Prime Minister’s office and the Elysée concerning spending decisions. For many in the AFD this politicisation of decision-making is detrimental to its credibility as an independent financial institution. In this context the AFD tries to retain autonomy by playing the Foreign

²²⁴ See *supra* chapter 2, section 1ii.

²²⁵ One official described this distinction as between “hardware” (AFD) and “software” (SCAC) (personal interview). AFD’s new role was outlined in a letter from the interministerial committee on Development Aid (CICID) in September 1999.

²²⁶ Personal interview.

²²⁷ Personal interviews. It is difficult to judge how widespread the AFD–SCAC conflict is, as this study only covers one recipient country in depth (in Chapter 4). However, in one case described by a senior

Ministry and Finance Ministry off against each other and is constantly looking to forge spaces of autonomy for itself, which it partially succeeds in doing in its more successful client countries.

The AFD's work is characterised by a further tension related to the reforms, over its area of intervention. The reforms expanded the number of countries the AFD can work in from former French colonies to all the countries of the newly designated Zone de solidarité prioritaire (ZSP), which includes nearly all African countries. However, paradoxically, just as its area of intervention has been expanded it has become apparent that many in the AFD would wish to have all restrictions on its area of intervention lifted. This is because many countries in the ZSP are too poor to "absorb" large amounts of aid, while the richer ones to whom the AFD can lend²²⁸ are in many cases failing to honour their debts. In these circumstances the AFD is obliged by its banking codes to stop all lending to these countries. As a result, AFD work in Africa has declined since the mid-1990s. This problem is further aggravated by the structure of the AFD – the Africa department is divided between West Africa and the rest of the continent. Since the AFD's lending to Côte d'Ivoire started to fall off due to unpaid arrears in the late 1990s, the West Africa department has experienced increasing difficulty in maintaining spending levels.²²⁹

The issue at stake here is what kind of work the AFD should do, and how it should select the countries in which it works. Many in the AFD remain wedded to the project approach, and to selecting projects purely on their merit. Others argue that the AFD has to move from the micro to the macro, and to adopt a more global approach to the development of its recipient countries, including integrating its work with multi-donor sector wide programmes.

This idea of a global approach entails greater concentration on a limited number of successful "clients", which in turn raises the question of which recipient country to concentrate on (or "select"). However, in some respects this issue is made academic as the AFD is obliged to concentrate its lending on those intermediate revenue countries in the ZSP that honour their repayments. As a result new AFD lending is now

official in a personal interview, the French ambassador had tried to have a determining say in AFD's project choices and had run into serious conflict with the head of the AFD country office.

²²⁸ In 1992 the French government decided not to lend to less and least developed countries (LDCs/LLDCs). Of the 54 countries of the ZSP, 32 are LDCs. Others such as Côte d'Ivoire or the North Africa countries are intermediate revenue countries (IRCs). This evidently posed a problem for the AFD, whose work was based entirely on lending. Since this time the Cooperation Ministry, and later the Foreign Ministry, have allocated a block grant to the AFD to allow it to continue its work in LDCs.

²²⁹ Source: personal interviews.

(2002–2003) heavily concentrated in South Africa, Morocco and Tunisia. As well as being restricted in some cases by non-payment of arrears, AFD's choice of country is, unsurprisingly, subject to political interference. In several cases the French government (via the Finance Ministry funds) has cleared arrears to the AFD so that the AFD can restart lending (as has recently occurred in the case of the Democratic Republic of Congo, for example). The AFD, over this issue as over others, is therefore fighting a constant battle for autonomy over its decision-making processes.

The reforms of February 1998 included the setting up of a semi-official consultative body, the Haut conseil de la coopération internationale (HCCI), under the direct authority of the prime minister. It is made up of a secretariat and 60 members who are distinguished French personalities from the field of development cooperation. The HCCI organises seminars and publications, occasionally in conjunction with other European think tanks. The members gather in the plenary sessions and in six commissions in order to produce reports and to adopt public “avis” (opinions). Its membership encompasses a broad range of positions on France's development aid policy, from those who have taken a softly critical stance (the diplomat Stéphane Hessel) to those who are known for a firmer one (the writer Sylvie Brunel). Others are from the more conservative side of the debate (for example Jacques Godfrain, a former Gaullist Cooperation Minister). In order to give the HCCI independence from the bureaucratic rivalries of French policy there are no acting government officials in its membership or secretariat, although its secretariat was clearly selected with the aim of balancing the perspectives of the Finance Ministry and the Foreign Ministry (the general secretary, Michel Doucet, is formerly from the diplomatic corps; his deputy, Emile-Robert Perrin, is from the finance corps).

The setting up of the HCCI, envisaged by Cot in the early 1980s and in the Hessel report of 1990, responds to a criticism levelled at France's development aid policy since its inception – that its mechanisms are only known and understood by a few insiders who use their position to turn the policy to their own ends and that the system was unresponsive to outside concerns. The very establishment of the HCCI is therefore an avowal of the previously closed nature of debate on these issues: “Le dialogue entre responsables politiques ne suffit plus. Le débat sur les orientations et le contenu de la politique de coopération doit être élargi à la société civile.”²³⁰ The HCCI is meant to combat this by transmitting the preoccupations of “civil society” to the government and

²³⁰ From Ministère des affaires étrangères, *La Réforme du Dispositif français de coopération* , Ministère des affaires étrangères, Paris, 1998.

by evaluating French policy. In addition, it is hoped that this dialogue between “civil society” groups and a semi-public body may help stimulate interest and therefore support for France’s programme of development aid and counter “aid fatigue”.

The setting up of a semi-public consultative body is *potentially* a significant innovation in a political culture premised on a direct representative relation between the state and the citizen, in which the state is taken to incarnate the “national will” and justifies its actions with reference to “La Raison d’Etat”. In contrast to France’s political traditions of vertically structured relations of administrative and political loyalty, the HCCI is intended to open dialogue on a broad front, and legitimise semi-official criticism of policy, constituting what Le Bris calls a “rupture épistémologique”²³¹ relative to French political culture.

Whether the HCCI in reality constitutes a “rupture épistémologique” depends on two things – its relations with the state and its relations with the public. Coopération, while symbolically co-opting notions of solidarity with the world’s poor, has in reality been characterised by the unchallenged authority of the French state and those working in its name. This model has ultimately been shown not to work in the longer term. The HCCI has shown some capacity to distance itself from this principle of “La Raison d’Etat”, producing critical “avis” on development aid policy and entering into conflict with Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine over its stance on the Chechen war.²³² Overall, the activity and positions taken by the HCCI since its inception do indicate a desire to forge a credibly independent role. However, the HCCI is inevitably obliged to retain a degree of proximity with state power (for example in having as members former Cooperation Ministers and other senior officials involved in French development aid policy) in order to retain its influence. It is therefore constantly obliged to tread a difficult line between influence and autonomy. The ambiguity of this position and relations towards the French state are encapsulated in the fact that the HCCI is tasked not only with gathering critical opinions, but also with *promoting* French policy. Promoting the actions of the French state is not necessarily compatible with providing a mechanism that is responsive to initiatives and criticisms of the public. On the contrary, it favours a repackaging of French development aid policy with minimal self-criticism.

In terms of its relations with the public, the HCCI has again shown some capacity to distinguish itself from the habitual distrust shown by French state

²³¹ In *OPCF Rapport*, 2000, p.32. Note also comments made by the OECD/DAC, ‘*Examens en matière de coopération, France . . . (2000)*’ on the originality of the HCCI in the context of French political culture.

²³² According to *Marchés Tropicaux*, 14 décembre 2001.

institutions towards organised public opinions in the form of “opinion groups” or pressure groups, and especially of those who express opposition to action taken under the principle of “la raison d’Etat”. The HCCI has held meetings with NGOs and academics and the details of these meetings have been made public. However, the position of the HCCI is in this respect ambiguous, and reflects some of the broader problems encountered in “reform” processes in France. Although it has members drawn from many different areas of French life, it remains in many ways highly elitist, made up of members of the small polyvalent elite of Paris, who circulate with ease in the higher echelons of the state, business and academia, and, crucially, share similar backgrounds and socialisation experiences, in cultural and educational terms. The danger of this is that the HCCI acts in part as a vehicle for their personal advancement (what Le Bris calls the danger of “notabilisation”). In addition, the HCCI, for all its good intentions of keeping its distance from state authority, inevitably works in a context in which the French state is highly adept at co-opting expressions of resistance to its action, and integrating them into a state orchestrated tradition of political radicalism.

The final change to the administrative structures initiated by the reforms of 1998 was the creation of an interministerial coordination committee, the Comité interministeriel de coopération international et du développement (CICID), along the lines of the short-lived CIAD. This committee was intended to meet annually and produce evaluation reports for the French parliament prepared by its joint secretariat made up of Foreign Ministry and Finance Ministry officials. Its principal aim was to ensure greater coherence of action under the auspices of the prime minister. In other words, it was intended as a means of restoring governmental authority over the use of the development aid and of making the prime minister the arbitrator of interministerial disputes.²³³ In the event, it did not meet in 2001 (meetings were held on 28 January 1999, 22 June 2000 and 14 February 2002) and produced two reports detailing, but not properly evaluating, France’s development aid policy.²³⁴

The reforms of 1998 were intended to rationalise and simplify the architecture of France’s development aid policy. To an extent this was achieved through the dissolution of the Cooperation Ministry, which resolved the ambiguity between geographical and functional responsibilities. However, the formulation of policy continues to be characterised by bureaucratic infighting. With the dissolution of the Cooperation Ministry, this conflict has become focused around two points – the Foreign Ministry

²³³ See *Le Monde* 8 février 1998.

²³⁴ These will be discussed further in Chapter 5.

and the Finance Ministry. One could indeed argue that the very existence of the Cooperation Ministry had simply served to cover over a tension inherent in external financial relations, including development aid. In the words of one senior official: “il est incontestable que le Ministère des Affaires étrangères voulait que la coopération fasse partie de son domaine. Depuis toujours cela s’inscrit dans un mouvement plus vaste au Quai d’Orsay, qui a toujours essayé d’étendre ses compétences vis-à-vis d’un autre interlocuteur qui est le Ministère des Finances, en essayant de récupérer les compétences économiques extérieures.”²³⁵

To some extent the conflict between these two ministries is policy based – the Finance Ministry is less enthusiastic than the DGCID about isolated project work and prefers programme or sector wide aid with strong economic conditions attached. However, the essence of the conflict is “territorial” – disputes over areas of intervention and decision making authority. Among many examples of the continual wars of attrition between these two ministries one may cite the dispute over who was to be the French representative for the European Development Fund (EDF), which the Foreign Ministry eventually obtained in 2000, and the proposed creation of a multilateral affairs department in the DGCID, which the Finance Ministry managed to block. In addition, there is considerable friction due to the Finance Ministry’s day-to-day oversight and occasional blocking of DGCID spending. The Finance Ministry demands greater a priori control over money spent abroad, as this spending is less easy to check after the event. Many officials in the DGCID and elsewhere regard this oversight role as excessive.

There were some indications in 2002 that the two ministries were making efforts to cooperate. The CICID, which had previously been paralysed by this rivalry, held a meeting in February 2002 that most officials considered successful. However, the structure of French development aid policy, and the highly corporatist nature of French administration, mean that policy will inevitably continue to be dominated by this rivalry.

ii. The Reform of the Instruments

Although the main reforms of French development aid as announced in February 1998 concerned the administrative architecture, changes were also made between 1998 and 2002 to the tools, or what may be called the instruments (the budgets and staff) at the disposal of the different departments and ministries, either as part of the reforms or as a

²³⁵ Personal interview.

result of them. The first one to demand attention is a change to the principal French aid budget and its geographical distribution. The Cooperation Ministry had been responsible for aid relations with a specific set of countries (francophone sub-Saharan Africa, see *supra* chapter 1, section 1i and chapter 2, section 1ii). In contrast, the DGCID has responsibility for aid and cultural relations with all foreign countries. However, it was decided to create a specific list of countries within which it can spend aid funds. These countries are chosen by the CICID and are termed the Zone de solidarité prioritaire (ZSP).²³⁶ At the same time the FAC was changed to the Fonds de solidarité prioritaire (FSP) to reflect this change.

The change from the FAC to the FSP was taken as an opportunity by the Parti socialiste government to make several changes to the mechanisms for project selection and planning, intended to make the system more transparent and susceptible to evaluation. The two committee stages of project approval (Comité d'Examen, internal to the DGCID, and the interministerial Comité de Projets) are both now more formalised meetings, as opposed to the previous system in which projects were approved either in ministerial cabinet or through informal discussion and bargaining between senior officials. In the same vein, the presentation of projects (the “fiche de prise en considération” written by SCAC or DGCID staff) is now more uniform and formatted, with obligatory boxes on cost and evaluation.

Three official criteria are used to select the countries of the ZSP: economic need (capital gap, see *supra* chapter 2, section 2ii), historical proximity to France and “la manière de se gouverner”²³⁷ (which must be read as a watered down version of political conditionality). The inclusion of some countries in the ZSP that have highly questionable records on human rights and democracy resulted in public criticism and some disputes within the Foreign Ministry. This debate over the use of aid to support undemocratic regimes is of course a familiar one in France, going back at least to the early 1980s. However, although this debate did surface in ministerial cabinet when discussing the ZSP, it would be mistaken to understand the ZSP exclusively in these terms, as it acts essentially as a catch-all. Most importantly, it acts as a statement of France’s interest in forging relations with Africa as a whole, as it includes all but three African countries (Egypt and Botswana, neither of which were considered to have pressing enough development needs, and Libya, which has poor diplomatic relations with Paris). The important selection decisions evidently occur *within* the ZSP because

²³⁶ The countries of the ZSP are listed in annex 2.

²³⁷ According to Charles Josselin in press conference 5 February 1998, reported in *Le Monde* of that day.

some countries have and will continue to have a dense aid relationship with France and others, such as the small Anglophone countries of sub-Saharan Africa, will continue to receive almost no French aid. Being part of the ZSP is therefore a necessary but not sufficient condition for receipt of large quantities of French development aid from the FSP fund and the AFD (which is restricted to working in the ZSP).²³⁸

The importance of the ZSP is to protect Africa's position in receipt of French development aid. In France, government funds are allocated through specific funds ("titres") in the national budget, rather than being allocated in block grants to ministries. The FSP has the advantage of being a pluri-annual fund (titre VI) allowing for longer-term project planning (FSP projects, which number about 500 ongoing at any one time, are generally around one million Euros or more and last several years). For government officials therefore the issue of which countries are or are not in the ZSP is initially a budgetary one, and relates to the attempts on the part of officials to secure continuous funding for countries under their responsibility.

At the more general level, the question relates to the degree of concentration of French development aid spending. While some in the DGCID and the AFD would like to see the ZSP either greatly expanded or simply disbanded to give them greater flexibility of decision making, officials in the Finance Ministry want to reduce the number of countries in order to reduce FSP spending. This is why officials from the Finance Ministry have ensured that for each new entrant into the ZSP there is at least one country to leave. Yemen and Sudan entered in 2000, while Mauritius (because it was not considered in great enough development need) and several Caribbean countries (which had been named in reports on money laundering by the OECD's Financial Action Taskforce) left (see annex 2).

The creation of the ZSP therefore needs to be understood in the context of French thinking on the geographical spread of their development aid and is indicative of a tension between on the one hand the desire of many officials to have greater flexibility in deciding where to spend aid resources and on the other hand the need to keep overall spending concentrated on a limited number of countries in order to ensure a minimum level of impact. The logic of the reforms is to designate an area of French bilateral interest (the ZSP), in contrast to other parts of the developing world in which French aid

²³⁸ It should of course be noted that although the FSP is France's principal development aid budget in terms of development work, it is much less in terms of pure volume than debt relief to middle income countries, which is counted as development aid for the purposes of DAC reporting. This creates several anomalies, such as the position of Egypt as the second biggest recipient of French development aid in 2000 despite its absence from the ZSP.

would only be present in a multilateral form. For many officials in all parts of the bureaucracy, however, the designation of 54 countries is unhelpful and not reflective of France's means. They consider that to engage fully with a recipient country, and to move to sector-wide work, requires far greater concentration of resources. Thinking in terms of 54 countries is simply not realistic. The problem for many officials is therefore that the ZSP in fact provides very little guidance on country or project selection. Partly as a consequence of this, it is very often political expediency that dominates the project selection process.

Furthermore, the ambitions of those who wish to engage more fully with sector-wide work and to support recipient country ownership of reforms²³⁹ are held back by the rigidities characteristic of French budgetary procedures. In particular, the FSP cannot be given directly to recipient country governments to manage their own health or education sectors. The SCAC is in effect obliged by French budgetary regulations to control the whole project or sector reform process. Furthermore, the onerous bureaucratic procedure for FSP projects allows for very little flexibility and therefore little capacity to respond to the crises afflicting many African states, unless political decisions are made to cut through the bureaucracy and release funds quickly.²⁴⁰

Alongside these changes to the FAC/FSP, Jospin's government oversaw the creation of an entirely new budgetary mechanism – the contracts of désendettement et développement (C2Ds). This scheme, conceived by the Finance Ministry and unveiled in early 2001 involves the conversion of debt to the French state into development aid grants on the completion of a HIPC (Highly Indebted Poor Countries) programme by the recipient country. The funds are then integrated into a contract signed by the two states detailing the projects and sector reform programmes to be funded. Four areas are to be prioritised: the natural and agricultural environment, health, education, and administrative capacity. The release of specific funds is then dependent on the dual signature of the French ambassador and the recipient state government.

C2Ds have so far been put in place in Mozambique (for 30 million euros) and Uganda (for only a few million euros; spending was interrupted by political disputes over the war in the Congo). The paperwork and procedures were found in both cases to be so onerous that a new "lighter" C2D was designed for amounts under 50 million

²³⁹ For elaboration of these issues see *supra* chapter 2, section 3i.

²⁴⁰ One official lamented that these reforms were characteristic of French bureaucracy in being "instrument led" – the instrument is created through bargaining between officials and as a function of budgetary procedure, with little consideration given to the nature of "demand" for it, nor for the practicalities of its use (personal interview).

euros. In some forthcoming cases, however, the sums may be vastly larger than this. France's debt exposure to Cameroon for example is around one billion Euros and France is committed to cancelling all Cameroon's debt on completion of a HIPC programme (likely to be sometime in 2004).²⁴¹

The introduction of this potentially massive new aid fund raises several interesting issues. In the first place, such large sums will inevitably lead to friction between the Foreign and Finance ministries. Although the DGCID/SCAC will be responsible for some C2D projects, the bulk of them will be managed by the AFD on behalf of the Finance Ministry. While many DGCID staff are favourable to the principle of controlling debt relief funds through contracts, and are therefore favourable to the C2D project as a whole, they will undoubtedly eye the funds released with considerable envy and resentment.

In the second place the C2D programme gives ambivalent indications about coordination with other aid donors. On the one hand the C2D programme is intended to be integrated with a recipient country's PRSP, which is negotiated with the IFIs.²⁴² In addition, the timing of the C2D programme is dependent on completion of a HIPC programme, which is decided by the IFIs. However, if the C2D programme is intended to be integrated with the PRSP, why have a C2D programme at all, rather than making disbursal of French debt relief funds conditional on compliance with the conditions written into the PRSP programme? The official reason is that debt relief has in the past been followed by a lightening of fiscal pressure (fewer taxes are raised). The C2D should help ensure that this does not happen by directing spending to specific projects and making sure that the money is not used to relieve pressure elsewhere in the government budget. However, another answer which clearly suggests itself, is that the French are unhappy at the thought of having large amounts of funds being released without retaining control over how the funds are spent and that they want to use the C2D programme in order to continue to develop their thinking on development aid questions and retain influence over recipient country governments (see Chapter 5).

One of the consequences of this is that French debt relief under HIPC cannot be characterised as simple debt relief. Indeed, the C2D has been criticised by NGOs in the joint development commission (the Comité de Coopération et Développement, which brings together DGCID officials and NGOs) both for not conforming to the spirit of

²⁴¹ The figures for France's debt exposure to all HIPC eligible countries are given in OPCF *Rapport*, 2001, p. 68.

²⁴² On the PRSPs, see *supra* chapter 2, section 3i.

debt relief commitments and for imposing onerous procedures on countries with poor negotiating capacities. Few French officials are troubled by these criticisms of the C2D programme, which have been neither vocal nor particularly far-reaching. The more serious obstacle to the successful implementation of large C2Ds may be the availability of funds. Given that HIPC was created in order to deal with countries with “unsustainable debt” it is questionable whether these countries can provide the funds to be used in the C2D programme and unclear what will happen if they cannot. In other words, if the debt being “relieved” is effectively unpayable, who will pay for the C2D programme? On the face of it, the debtor countries will have a strong incentive to plead inability to pay, as they will then presumably escape French control over the use of funds. The C2D programme may yet have many teething problems ahead.

Alongside these new budgetary mechanisms for French development aid, Jospin’s government oversaw a transformation in the role of France’s development aid workers (the “coopérants”).²⁴³ The decline in numbers of coopérants started in the early 1990s, principally because the African states failed to pay their agreed share of salaries. Some coopérants who had previously been integrated (“titularisés”) into the “corps” of the French civil service rejoined their corps in France during the 1990s. This integration into the French administrative corps was undertaken in the framework created by Le Pors as minister of public employment in the early 1980s. The Le Pors laws decreed that those working on renewable contracts should be integrated into the French administrative corps. However, in 1998 this process had not been completed for a remaining 2000 or so coopérants.²⁴⁴ This was due to delays in implementing legislation and organising the exams needed to enter into public administration in France, delays undoubtedly caused by the Finance Ministry’s reluctance to create new civil servant posts.

The dissolution of the Cooperation Ministry, which was responsible for managing all coopérants in francophone Africa, was taken as an opportunity by the Foreign Ministry, with support from the Finance Ministry, to bring to an end what they saw as a costly and outdated feature of French development aid policy. (Unusually, the Finance Ministry allowed the Foreign Ministry to keep the money it gained from cutting coopérants’ posts and to use it in other areas. This obviously increased the Foreign Ministry’s incentive to cut them.) Recruitment of coopérants has now been reduced to minimal levels. The principal aim has been to move from recruiting coopérants to spend

²⁴³ For the evolution of the function of the coopérants see *supra* chapter 2, section 1i.

²⁴⁴ This is described in detail in Nemo, ‘*Les Appuis en Personnel ...*’.

a large part of their career in coopération, to recruiting experts on short-term contracts. Existing coopérants were offered early retirement, which only very few took up, but refused full integration into the corps structure. This occurred because, despite the demands of the Le Pors laws, many coopérants simply did not have a corps into which to be integrated. Such is the corporatist nature of French state administration that they, in the image of their profession as a whole, fell into the cracks between the paving stones of French bureaucratic life. This failure to find a solution to the employment status problem caused bitter disputes between the coopérants and the administration (Foreign and Finance ministries).²⁴⁵ The remnants of the coopérants were then kept on, many in recipient countries, on an ad hoc basis.

The structures established to replace the coopérants are revealing of some of the evolutions of the priorities of French development aid policy. The principal mechanism established to replace the coopérants is the “Groupement d’intérêt professionnel (GIP) développement international”, set up in 2001. This is a networking structure run by the DGCID, established to support French citizens, including public officials, who wish to work for short periods in the international development field. Some of its work involves coordinating work funded by the French government, but its main priority is to help French consultants and experts obtain contracts from multilateral aid donors – part of the DGCID’s objective of making sure that the French voice is heard in multilateral fora.²⁴⁶

The replacement of the coopération profession by the GIP is intended to do away with long-term coopérant posts in Africa, which have regularly been criticised for impeding the development of local capacity, and replacing them with more short-term, flexible and responsive arrangements. It is also intended to provide a mechanism to allow officials from across the French administration to work for the DGCID without having to go through the onerous bureaucratic procedure of official secondment (officials can work outside their ministries for under two months on temporary duty, while any duration over ten months must be an official secondment. Anything in between is a grey area. The GIP and the new possibility of a temporary diplomatic status are intended in part to provide a framework for two- to ten-month work periods). While many observers have welcomed the dissolution of permanent coopérants posts, the aim of introducing greater flexibility will undoubtedly prove tricky, especially where it involves movements of staff between different ministries, a traditional

²⁴⁵ According to several personal interviews.

²⁴⁶ Source: personal interviews and attendance at the annual DGCID open meeting in April 2003.

battleground in French administration.

The reforms enacted by Jospin's government to France's development aid system were evidently fairly diverse, encompassing the creation of a new ministerial department, changes to funding procedures, new staffing structures, and the creation of new financing mechanisms. The major reform was evidently the dissolution of the Cooperation Ministry, and other changes (the creation of the DGCID and of the ZSP) flowed as a direct result of this central change. Other changes, in response to the aim of making the system more transparent (creation of the HCCI, changes to the procedures for project approval), were hitched onto the central reform in, as it were, an opportunistic manner. Lastly, some of the changes, while related to the broad dynamic of the reforms, were essentially a response to external changes (the C2Ds for example were a response to the advancement of the HIPC process).

3. Rationale and Reactions

i. Rationale and Presentation

The rationale of the reforms, both in terms of public presentation and private motivations, can largely be gleaned from the position of the Parti Socialiste, and that of Jospin himself, in 1997.²⁴⁷ The aim was to counteract what was seen as a corrupt and obscure system by introducing clarity into the administrative architecture and making relations with recipients, other donors and the public more transparent. Bringing aid under Foreign Ministry control was seen as a way of ensuring better oversight over its use and making it more accountable to the administrative and governmental hierarchy (Cooperation Minister, Foreign Minister and then Prime Minister via the CICID). Other changes, such as formalising the FSP project's decision-making process, were implemented, like the Abidjan doctrine of 1993, in order to make the decision making criteria more "technocratic", rather than being dominated by requirements of political influence.

More transparency could also be achieved, it was held, by taking French development aid away from its concentration on former colonies in sub-Saharan Africa. This was one of the ways in which the ZSP was presented. However, in other circumstances (specifically when addressing audiences from francophone Africa), it was presented as a mechanism for protecting the place of Africa, and thereby of francophone Africa in the allocation of French aid. This dichotomy demonstrates the highly elastic

²⁴⁷ See above and the interview with Jospin 5 February 1998 in Annex 3.

use of the ZSP formula.

Other ways of ensuring more transparency in the use of aid funds were held to be exposing French practice to that of other donors, through AFD co-financing, and within the in-country PRSP processes. Integration with multi-donor processes (UN development goals, the G8 Africa Action Plan and so forth) was seen as a way of exposing French officials to other (and potentially better) ways of doing things, as well as a way of promoting the French position or “voice” in international debates on development issues.²⁴⁸ At the more specific level of relations with African states, increased interaction with donors was seen as a way of avoiding what had become in many cases a very tense “tête-à-tête” with recipient states, the logic being to use other donors not just to share the financial burden but to defuse the political relationship by sharing the task of imposing conditions on aid disbursement.

Increased openness to the public was clearly a major theme of these reforms, responding to what Jospin called the “déficit de transparence” of the previous system.²⁴⁹ The creation of the HCCI was naturally pointed to as the principal innovation in this respect. Other policies aimed at greater openness to the public included participation of the recipient country population in drawing up the development contract documents (the Document Cadre de Partenariat), and the continuation of the policy of funding and encouraging relations between local authorities (coopération décentralisée),²⁵⁰ although the sums of money spent on this are dwarfed by spending in other areas.

A further line of argument concerning the rationale of the reforms was that they were a necessary adaptation to a changing world. These included changes that were occurring in Africa as well as more global developments. The reforms were presented as a response to African demands for a more “normal” (that is not neo-colonial) relationship. In general terms, the reforms were undoubtedly accompanied by a different political “tone” as Jospin sought to shake off the paternalistic approach French leaders had taken in the past, through talk of renewal, and equal relations, based on a more open avowal of the less than honourable aspects of French colonial presence in Africa. His speech to the South African Parliament on 31 May 2001 was characteristic, and is worth quoting at some length:

L’Afrique des zones d’influence et des interventions inappropriées doit être

²⁴⁸ These issues are discussed further in Chapter 5.

²⁴⁹ Interview 5 February 1998 in Annex 3.

²⁵⁰ Minister for Cooperation Josselin, who has been involved in this area since the early 1990s, was a particularly strong advocate of local government development cooperation.

derrière nous ... La France et l'Afrique ont en commun une histoire qui les a liées pour longtemps, faite de lumières mais aussi d'ombres. Nous ne voulons pas occulter la période de domination coloniale pendant laquelle l'Afrique a souffert et qui a laissé de profondes cicatrices. ... Parce que nous aussi, nous avons à regarder notre passé en face et à admettre les erreurs que nous avons commises. ... Dès sa formation en 1997 le gouvernement que je dirige a fait de l'ouverture à l'ensemble du continent africain, au-delà des seules régions francophones, un principe de sa politique étrangère. Notre pays devait s'adapter aux nouvelles réalités de l'Afrique.²⁵¹

We have already pointed to some of the ambiguities in this idea of a “new” generation of African leaders, and it will be further examined in the next chapter. However, this idea was not simply a description of African realities, but must be understood as part of the domestic debate. Specifically, those responsible for the reforms perceived a need to counteract the argument deployed by the old guard that the old way of doing things was what African leaders expected of them and was the best way to maintain good diplomatic relations. In other words, it was a way of arguing that the reforms had support not only in France but also in Africa. It is also the case that the reforms were thought of and presented as a way of adapting to broader changes in the international environment. Specifically, the integration of development aid into the Foreign Ministry was presented as an opportunity to integrate development policy with thinking on the global economy, and to stimulate new ways of engaging with the ideas and practices of other donors.²⁵²

The dominant theme therefore in the presentation of these reforms was the necessity for change. However, in contrast to this, Jospin’s government felt strongly beholden to counteract any impression that the reforms constituted “abandoning” francophone Africa, or loosening the ties of loyalty and history that tied France to its former colonies. Much of the work of Cooperation Minister Josselin, for example, was concerned with persuading African leaders that they would continue to hold a special place in the French system, as the creation of the ZSP and the maintenance of a dedicated minister attested.²⁵³ In the specific context of these reforms there are two

²⁵¹ Quoted in *Le Monde*, 1 juin 2001.

²⁵² These issues will be discussed further in Chapter 5.

²⁵³ Personal interviews. A revealing example is the interview Josselin gave to *Marchés Tropicaux* on 14 décembre 2001, which reads as an attempt to persuade an African audience that the Jospin

main reasons why the discourse of change constantly oscillated with that of loyalty – the natural desire of any government to maintain good diplomatic relations with countries where they can expect to wield influence, and the need to avoid confrontation with President Chirac, for whom loyalty to francophone African leaders is a cornerstone of French Foreign policy. At a broader level, this coexistence of two views – one orientated to the global international horizon, the other towards a more protected and parochial environment – is simply a manifestation of the tension inherent in France's view of the world since at least colonial times. Despite Jospin's desire to maintain a consensual approach and placate potential opposition, the direction of his reforms was clear – orientated to the broader international horizon.

ii. Reaction

The majority of observers and officials welcomed the overall direction of the reforms. In particular, the dissolution of the Cooperation Ministry, representative of the attempt to move away from neo-colonial relations, was greeted as a highly welcome, if long overdue reform (described by one official in a personal interview as “une nécessité criante”). Other features of the reforms were also welcomed, including the introduction of more openness and consultation (in the HCCI for example), the relative simplification of the bureaucratic architecture, and the attempts to contractualise relations with recipient countries.²⁵⁴

However, while welcoming these features, most observers and reform-minded officials expressed considerable scepticism, and questioned whether the reforms really represented the fundamental change needed and whether they offered a clear direction for French development aid beyond its neo-colonial framework. The following reflection of an official is representative: “OK, c'est très bien, on a fini avec le ministère des colonies pour entrer dans le 21e siècle. Maintenant il faut voir ce que c'est l'aide au développement”.²⁵⁵ This initial scepticism concentrated on two elements. In the first place it was widely felt that the conception and implementation of the reforms did not follow the principles of consultation and openness that they were meant to promote in French aid practice. Comments made by those directly effected reveal that many working within the bureaucracy also felt excluded from the process of elaboration of the

government was not abandoning Africa (*Marchés Tropicaux* is a publication specialising in the economy of francophone Africa and is widely read by francophone African elites).

²⁵⁴ See especially Pillon, ‘La Réforme de la Coopération ...’; ‘Avis de l'OPCF’ both in *Rapport 1999* and OECD/DAC, ‘Examens en matière de coopération... (2000)’, which welcomes the ministerial reorganisation, for example on p. 13.

²⁵⁵ Personal interview.

reforms, which were described as “dictées par le haut” by the AFD trade union group.²⁵⁶

In the second place, scepticism focused on the limits to the reforms. In particular, the survival of the Africa cell at the Elysée, which retains considerable influence over aid policy and allocation decisions, was pointed to as an indication of continuity with the old ways of doing things. Given the role played by French presidents in the past and given Chirac’s well-known support for the undemocratic leaders of francophone Africa, this was naturally seen as an area within the system where the “old guard” could try to limit the impact of the reforms, for example by allowing some aid funds simply to bypass the new set of institutions and procedures designed to keep a better check on their use. This sense of excessive compromise with the old ways was also apparent in criticisms of the ZSP, which, it was held, offered no clarification of allocation criteria and allowed such undemocratic countries of francophone Africa such as Gabon and Togo to remain in the lead group of aid recipients, if political expediency so demanded.²⁵⁷

Equally, many commentators considered that the French bureaucratic fragmentation that so characterised French development aid policy for four decades was not resolved in these reforms. The technical ministries, as well as the Elysée itself, continue to control their own aid funds, ensuring that the system continues to be fragmented into a series of jealously protected bureaucratic territories, with of course, at the centre, the stand-off between the Finance and Foreign Ministries.²⁵⁸ Such a situation does not favour clear administrative control over aid funds.

As the reforms bedded down and the structure and work of the DGCID became clearer, observers and critics, both from inside and outside French officialdom, turned their attention to the loss of expertise and capacity on development questions. Despite Jospin’s professed desire to engage with Africa on a new basis, many saw the reforms as the dissolution not only of the Cooperation Ministry, but also of the whole coopération ethos. The phrase “liquidation deguisée” used by Didier Pillot is a strongly worded, but in fact representative reaction.²⁵⁹ Many felt that the idea of development cooperation was losing support within the French government because it was

²⁵⁶ In OPCF *Rapport*, 1999, p. 85. Several personal interviews have confirmed this impression.

²⁵⁷ For example by Le Bris, in OPCF *Rapport*, 1999; and in the, ‘Avis’, of the OPCF in both *Rapport*, 1998 and *Rapport* 1999. See also the more moderately worded criticism in OECD/DAC, ‘*Examens en matière de coopération...* (2000)’, pp. 37–40.

²⁵⁸ In the opinion of the Sénat in 2001 the bureaucratic blockages may be worsened rather than improved by a move to a two-pillar system. (*Sénat, Rapport du Sénat au nom de la Commission des Finances*, (rapport Charrasse) Paris, November, 2001).

²⁵⁹ In OPCF, *Rapport*, 1999, p. 93.

unreasonably associated in the minds of the Parti socialiste with the decline and corruption of “la Francafrique”: “on aurait nous dit-on ‘rasé le village’ (entendez qu’on a abandoné la notion de pré-carré). Mais n’a-t-on pas du même coup, évacué la question du développement abusivement réduite à sa dimension africaine?”²⁶⁰

This problem may be described as that of throwing the baby of development work out with the bathwater of corruption and neo-colonialism. As indicated earlier in this chapter, it clearly relates to the crisis of coopération in the 1990s, which resulted in the whole of coopération being tarred with the same brush of bad practice. The issue is complicated, however, by the different perspectives of different actors, even between those who are broadly supportive of the reforms. For example, for many, the coopérant profession is a great asset for French development aid, in need of some adjustment to ensure it doesn’t block the careers of educated Africans, but nevertheless something to be preserved. For others, however, particularly those who have not spent time in Africa, the coopération profession is an anachronism, intrinsically, not accidentally, linked to the neo-colonial aspects of coopération. In short, for them, it is the bathwater, not the baby.

Beyond this concern that some of the elements of coopération were being wrongly associated with the crisis of the system, there was a more general perception that the support for genuine development work was fading in Paris. Aside from the issue of the coopérants, this concern focused on two things – the evident priority given to cultural work in the DGCID and aid volumes. On the first issue, Vershaye expresses a commonly held view: “non qu’il soit interdit de défendre nos intérêts: mais on fait alors de la politique étrangère, pas de l’aide au développement”.²⁶¹ On the second issue, the decline in aid volumes was unmistakable and was regularly criticised by such unlikely bedfellows as the OPCF and President Chirac. Although the principal reasons was the decline of debt relief, which had peaked in the years following the CFA devaluation, and the exclusion of two DOMs from the DAC/OECD aid recipient list in 2000, there was a strong impression given that development aid had lost its constituency within French government. In particular, Josselin failed to hold the government to the commitment that it had made early on in its mandate not to take the decline in debt relief volumes as an opportunity to cut the cost of the overall budget. In short, they lost in the budget arbitration process.²⁶² Bourmand, writing in 2000, feared that France was slipping into the group of Western countries for whom: “l’aide au développement n’a

²⁶⁰ Emile le Bris in OPCF, *Rapport*, 2000, p. 37.

²⁶¹ In OPCF, *Rapport*, 1999, p. 53.

jamais constitué une priorité ... [et] qui la réduisent à un outil parmi d'autres de la seule recherche de l'influence".²⁶³

This debate around aid volumes is of course a manifestation of the dilemma that has characterised French policy in Africa (and French foreign policy more broadly) for decades – the ambition versus means dilemma. The ambition may have altered under Jospin from the maintenance of neo-colonial influence to an as yet ill-defined development policy, but it is still undermined by a lack of financial resources. In reality, this is part of a broader problem that is currently confronting all the world's poorest countries and major aid donors, particularly since the emerging economy crises of Asia in 1997 and Argentina in 2002 led to a retreat of private capital to safer developed world investments. The amounts of money called for in the development of the world's poorest countries, for example in the NEPAD programme (New Plan for the Development of Africa), have not been forthcoming from the private sector, despite the strategies of all donors to use aid resources to lever in private money by acting as a stimulus and in some cases as a credit guarantee (for example in the UK's International Financing Facility Initiative). The debt problem has exacerbated this financing gap, as governments and banks are now reluctant to lend to countries that have in the past incurred unsustainable debt, even if they have now managed to reduce their debt to sustainable levels.²⁶⁴

Conclusion

The material presented in this chapter allows for some preliminary conclusions and answers to some of the questions laid out in the introduction. However, several questions remain unanswered, concerning the impact of the reforms on relations with major recipient countries, and concerning the evolution of the broad policy doctrines of French development aid during this period. These issues will be dealt with in Chapters 4 and 5.

To conclude this chapter it is instructive to review the reforms of 1998–2002 in the light of three questions – first, did they respond to what was identified in Chapter 2 as a reform agenda for French development aid?²⁶⁵ Second, did the mechanisms of the

²⁶² Personal interviews.

²⁶³ In OPCF, *Rapport*, 2000, p. 20. For statistics on the decline of French aid volumes in this period, see Annex 1.

²⁶⁴ These issues are further discussed in contributions to the 2001 OPCF *Rapport*, especially by Anne-Sophie Bougouin and Marc Raffinot pp. 125–8.

²⁶⁵ See *supra* chapter 2, section 3iii.

reforms (essentially institutional change) have the effects intended by those who initiated them, and what are the limits to these kinds of institutional reforms? Third, it is useful to return to the starting point of this chapter and interrogate how the position of the Parti socialiste and the position of Jospin in particular effected the outcome of the reforms.

The answer to the first question is largely covered in section 3 above. In short, the reform did respond to some of the long-term concerns of the reformist camp, but it did not go far enough to ensure that all the neo-colonial features of coopération were consigned to history.²⁶⁶ The bureaucracy was made more transparent and intelligible by the dissolution of the Cooperation Ministry, and the strengthening of the role of the prime minister through the CICID. The symbolism of finally getting rid of the “ministry of the colonies”, which had previously functioned as a conduit for back-room political influence over aid decisions, was of course a key response to the reform agenda. Other moves towards greater openness (in project procedures, in consultation with civil society during the drawing up of country programmes, in the HCCI and so forth) respond to the long-standing demand to make the system more accountable to the public. This can be seen as an attempt on the part of Jospin’s government to combat the capture of the coopération system by corrupt personal interests (see *supra* chapter 1, section 3i) by anchoring decision making more firmly in formal, institutionalised procedures.

Two further details can be pointed to as being in line with demands for reform. The first is the untying of aid from the AFD from purchases of French goods, which has been a key (and helpfully measurable) demand made by the global aid regime (specifically the OECD) for several decades. Secondly, the end of the coopérant profession responds to a long-standing concern that the presence of French experts in francophone Africa impedes the growth of domestic capacity.

To point to these correlations between the pre-existing reform agenda and the actual reforms of 1998–2002 does not in itself establish that the influence of those who supported the reform agenda was the reason why it occurred as it did, although of course the two cannot be disassociated. However there are good reasons for thinking that the two are strongly linked, especially that Jospin was already known to be attentive to the reform agenda. Crucially, the crisis of coopération had both strengthened the hand of reformers within the French administration and made calls for reform from the

²⁶⁶ See additionally the OECD/DAC, ‘*Examens en matière de coopération. (2000). .*’ , which evaluates all the reforms in the light of the DAC’s list of good practice criteria.

outside more vocal. The manner in which the reform was carried out indicates that it was the two principal reform voices from within the administration (diplomats and Finance Ministry officials) responding indirectly to international evolutions that had the greatest influence.²⁶⁷

In other ways the reforms of 1998–2002 did not fully address the concerns of those pushing for reform in the late 1990s (the Elysée retains a significant role, and the “technical ministries” continue to control a significant portion of the aid budget).²⁶⁸ Many of the changes cited above, such as the involvement of NGOs in consultation are very limited, and concern only very small amounts of the French aid budget. As pointed out in section 3 above, the institutional reform was limited in its reach and some changes such as the ZSP were essentially all things to all people, and did not constitute a clear reformist path. Overall, the reforms do address key issues, such as making the use of aid money more accountable, but do so in a piecemeal manner. Some greater scrutiny of aid money was achieved, but plenty of blind spots remain if powerful insiders wish to exploit them.

Overall, the reform package and its implementation were fundamentally marked by a desire for compromise with the supporters of the old system. Those involved in enacting the reforms wanted to be absolutely sure that the key changes, especially the dissolution of the Cooperation Ministry, were enacted in an irreversible way, and were nervous of the power of the old guard to obstruct or reverse this. For this reason they did not focus on many of the other issues which, as reformists, they would have liked to tackle.²⁶⁹

The reforms of 1998–2002 consisted of enacting clearly identifiable institutional changes with at least an outline of an idea of the desired outcomes. However, while some changes can indeed be done “by decree” (getting rid of a ministry for example) other outcomes depend to some degree on the micro level actions of the officials who are charged with the reforms (and indeed their successors), how seriously they take some of their new responsibilities, how new departments are viewed within the broader administration and so forth. This problem may usefully be described through the

²⁶⁷ Personal interviews carried out for this study have tended to confirm this. The issue of how these sorts of influences work in the French development aid system are covered in further detail in Chapter 5.

²⁶⁸ In the course of the research for this study it has not proven possible to obtain reliable statistics for the distribution of development aid spending between the dozen or so different ministries that control spending in Paris, which in itself is revealing of the complexity and obscurity of the system. It has, however, been made clear that institutions other than the Foreign Ministry and the Finance Ministry, including the Elysée, and the technical ministries (education, research and so forth) control a significant proportion of funds.

²⁶⁹ Personal interviews.

analogy of pulling levers on a machine (in this case the complex machine of government). The levers may be identifiable, but the complexity of the machine and the potential points of resistance are such that one can by no means be sure that the desired outcome will result.

In the case of the reforms studied here, this distance between the objectives and the outcome can be illustrated by several micro-level examples. The aim for the Prime Minister to have greater control of aid spending was hampered by two things that Jospin either could not or would not change: the existence of the Presidential Africa office, and the bureaucratic rivalry between the Foreign and Finance Ministries, which impeded the working of the CICID. To cite another example, the objective of making the AFD the key mechanism for implementing aid programmes on the ground, in some respects to replace the Cooperation Ministry, was made difficult because French officials are very reluctant to let a non-ministerial agency have full control of spending plans. In the question of aid allocation and the position of francophone Africa as the privileged recipient of French aid, the reforms have a clear direction – to move French aid away from former colonies – but there is in fact no specific mechanism to ensure that this happens. On the face of it the ZSP should strengthen the hand of those who wish to make this change, but it will depend on winning a whole series of micro level battles against those who see French aid as a mechanism for retaining allies in francophone Africa (as well as a series of obligations connected to debt relief). As Jospin's foreign minister Vedrine stated: “nous faisons un travail politico-psychologique pour dégager notre politique africaine de ce qu'elle a pu avoir de contestable dans le passé.”²⁷⁰

These obstacles may be seen as belonging to two broad categories – the attachment to francophone Africa on the part of many officials, and the corporatist/bureaucratic rivalry that is built into the socialisation of French elites. Both these elements place obstacles in the way of realising the elements of the reform that are not amenable to being implemented “by decree”. In this respect it seems reasonable to suggest that the key change of the Jospin period may well not be the institutional reshaping, but the end of the profession of the coopérants. Beyond the changes to the architecture of the institutions, this change actually alters the potential experiences of the individuals who will make the micro-level decisions in the future. The importance of this is that the support for coopération was in large part based on the personal experiences of many officials in francophone Africa, and the emotional ties this represented. While others who have not lived in Africa may see influence in

²⁷⁰ In an interview with *Le Monde*, 7 novembre 2001.

francophone Africa as a crucial part of France's presence in the world, their attachment to Africa as such is more pragmatic, and may change if they perceive that the symbolic "return" France is getting from her presence there is diminishing.²⁷¹

The appraisal of the distance between the objectives and the outcomes of the reforms is qualified by the difficulty in establishing in detail what the objectives of the reforms actually were. The principal aim of the major reforms was clear – to do away with a corrupt neo-colonial system and replace it with one that had greater administrative and public transparency. However, this objective is essentially a negative one (to get rid of something). Jospin himself made little clear beyond that. He and his close advisors designed the initial reform announced in February 1998 and then withdrew from the implementation phase, leaving it to the senior officials. His position on some of the more detailed issues covered in this chapter was simply not known, and had to be fought out between rival departments or ministries.²⁷² This lack of central drive behind the process is reflected in the sense of compromise with the supporters of the old ways, which entailed the risk that in some areas the supporters of the old ways would win, as it were by default, in the absence of a clear and positive alternative set of policies and ideas.

This question of the ideas behind the reforms will be covered in more detail in Chapter 5. For now, it is important simply to note the paradox of the absence of direction from the initiator of the reforms and the person whose name is attached to them. In a sense this is curious as Jospin had been involved in the "tiers-mondiste" current of the Parti socialiste since the 1970s, and one may have thought that a strong reaffirmation of France's vocation of solidarity with the world's poor would have appealed to him. His reticence, to the extent that it can be explained (and some of those closely involved remained perplexed, according to several personal interviews), is due to two things. First, such was the discredit that coopération had fallen into, in his eyes and in the eyes of the French public in the wake of the crisis of the early 1990s, that Jospin saw no advantage in investing political capital in this area. While being careful not to push the comparison too far, given the different context, Jospin's position can be likened to the current of thought going back to Clémenceau in the 1880s, which holds that what France has to gain from its presence in Africa can be too easily exaggerated.²⁷³ Jospin's position can also be related to the belief that there are limits to

²⁷¹ This issue, and the direct effects of the decline in the number of coopérants, will be further discussed in Chapter 4.

²⁷² Personal interviews.

²⁷³ See *supra* chapter 1, section 2.

what aid can achieve, and the aims of aid (whether they are policy buying or wholesale social transformation) are simply over-ambitious²⁷⁴. Second, one must look to the politics of cohabitation, and Jospin's desire to avoid direct and public confrontation with the President. As Cohen points out: “de fait si [Jospin] s'intéresse de près aux grands dossiers de politique internationale et manifeste une présence active dans les domaines traditionnellement dévolus au Premier ministre, tels celui de la construction européenne, il s'efforce d'éviter tout conflit ouvert avec le président de la République et s'abstient de lui porter ombrage par une activité internationale trop soutenue”.²⁷⁵ In the words of one individual closely involved in the process, “il ne voulait pas franchir la ligne jaune entre le Matignon [the Prime Minister's office] et l'Elysée. Il avait peur d'être sifflée hors jeu dans la cohabitation.”²⁷⁶ However, the reforms detailed in this study demonstrate that development aid is not unambiguously “foreign” policy and constitutes one of the grey areas that fall between the prime minister's responsibility for government spending and domestic policies (and institutional structures) and the president's prerogative over foreign affairs.

Overall, the main thrust of the Jospin reforms is clear – to heighten transparency and cohesion through both macro and micro level institutional changes. However, these are principally negative changes and were not accompanied by a clear direction for a new French aid policy. Chapter 2 of this study characterised French development aid as oriented towards “political post-colonial” objectives. The Jospin reforms do not allow for any clear characterisation to supplant this. French development aid remains in an ambivalent and transitory condition, with significant residual post or neo-colonial elements. From the perspective of May 2003, the main reforms, especially the dissolution of the Cooperation Ministry, appear to be irreversible, although there is a significant risk that post-colonial objectives may maintain their influence in various ways. This study returns to this question of whether the reforms and the principles behind them will prove to have had a lasting impact in Chapter 5 and in the Conclusion.

²⁷⁴ See *supra* chapter 2, section 3i.

²⁷⁵ Cohen, Samy, ‘La Diplomatie française dans la cohabitation’, *Esprit*, juin 2000.

²⁷⁶ Personal interview.

Chapter 4

The Implementation of the Reforms in a Recipient Country: Côte d'Ivoire

In Chapter 1 it was established that the French imperial presence, and the “symbolic projection” of the French nation-state both before and after the independence period, had a profound effect on societies in Africa, largely through the assimilation of elites and the partial reproduction of a political and social model. It also discussed the financial problems of the late 1980s and early 1990s that modified this relationship and contributed to a crisis in the coopération system. Côte d’Ivoire is a good example of all these evolutions, as it enjoyed very close and multi-faceted relations with France after independence. From the mid 1980s it suffered a thoroughgoing economic and financial crisis, which made it one of the world’s highest aid recipients at the end of the decade. For this reason it is a good example of the three-way relationship between France, the IFIs and recipient governments, which is at the heart of France’s relation to the global aid regime. Côte d’Ivoire is therefore an ideal case study for this chapter, which will also look not only at how some of the specific elements of the reforms were implemented on the ground, but also at the reactions to the changes on the part of the Ivorian governments, allowing for broader conclusions concerning how the reforms and other changes in the 1998–2002 period may effect relations between France and francophone Africa.

Côte d’Ivoire has been both the most successful economy of francophone Africa and the country with the most links to France, as is demonstrated by the presence of the biggest community of French citizens in Africa. The French have clearly intended in Côte d’Ivoire to reproduce, however imprecisely, a certain way of doing things, derived from the political, social and cultural practices of France. To this end they nurtured a host of institutional and affective ties and similarities. This was done with two expectations – that this proximity would generate allegiance to France on the part of the Ivorians, and that it would demonstrate the capacity of the French state, and more broadly of the French nation-state, to project itself beyond the borders of metropolitan France.

French aid spending in Côte d’Ivoire aimed to support this conception of the relationship. It was therefore based on maintaining French influence at all levels – from French language teaching to senior advisors in the presidency. This conception contrasts significantly with Côte d’Ivoire’s relationship with other donors, especially the IFIs, from the 1980s onwards. While the IFIs also had a certain conception of how Côte d’Ivoire should be, a rival but not entirely dissimilar conception of a “modern” state, they have not looked to omniscient influence to achieve this but to the “policy buying”

model.²⁷⁷ They have used aid and the threat to withhold it (leverage) to achieve changes in Côte d'Ivoire's government policies (buying reform), on the premise that the Côte d'Ivoire government would not otherwise have implemented these reforms. The record of France's aid relationship with Côte d'Ivoire in the period of the Jospin reforms is in many ways the story of the interaction between these two conceptions of aid, interrupted, but not initially changed, by the coup d'état of December 1999.

In order to unpack this complex triangular relationship, and locate the precise impact of the Jospin reforms, this chapter first looks at the overall picture of Franco–Ivorian relations in the first two decades of independence, and the effects of economic downturn thereafter. It then examines the direct impact of the Jospin reforms on the aid relationship before the coup of 1999 and asks what the impact of political instability has been thereafter. Finally the chapter scrutinises the interaction between France and the IFIs in Côte d'Ivoire and attempts to draw conclusions concerning France's relation to the broader aid donor regime.

1. Background

i. The Ivorian “Model”

Côte d'Ivoire is a creation of the economic policy of the French, who developed a plantation economy in the south of Côte d'Ivoire using imported labour from the north of the country and from the Sahel areas. Immigrants came both to work on rubber and fruit plantations and to set up smallholdings of coffee and cocoa.

As a landowner and minister in French governments in the 1950s, Félix Houphouët-Boigny, the country's founding father and president to his death in 1993, understood the workings of the French colonial economy. At independence in 1960 he made a reasoned and calculated decision to continue the colonial policy of agricultural exports, encouraging increased output through expansion of the area of cultivation. The proceeds from agricultural exports were siphoned off through the state marketing board (CAISTAB) to fund the country's mixed economy development (infrastructure, the expansion of the civil service and low value-added industry).²⁷⁸

²⁷⁷ See *supra* chapter 2, section 3ii for details of IFI's policies. For the “policy buying” model in particular, see Mosley, et al., ‘*Aid and Power ...*’.

²⁷⁸ On the model of agricultural expansion see Fauré, Yves-André, ‘Le Complex Politico-economique en Côte d'Ivoire’, in Fauré, Yves-André and Médard, Jean-François (eds), *Etat et Bourgeoisie en Côte d'Ivoire*, Karthala, Paris 1982; Chauveau, Jean-Pierre, ‘La Question foncière et construction nationale en Côte d'Ivoire. Les enjeux silencieux d'un coup d'Etat’, *Politique Africaine*, juin 2000; and Crook, Richard, ‘Cocoa Booms, the legalisation of land relations and politics in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana,

Côte d'Ivoire, both before and after independence, was therefore an economic project before it was a social or political entity.²⁷⁹ Houphouët-Boigny's social and political approach was determined by his economic policies. In encouraging long-term migrant labour, he knew he had set up a delicate social balance. Ivorians from the south had to be placated to avoid ethnic resentment, while migrant labour had to be made welcome in the cocoa belt in the south and middle of the country. Houphouët-Boigny himself supported the economic and political rights of the migrant labour force. However, the delicate balance had to be maintained by complex informal bargaining and resource distribution within which the ruling party, the PDCI (Parti démocratique de la Côte d'Ivoire), principally supported the interests of Ivorian nationals, especially in the area of public employment.²⁸⁰ In 1964 Houphouët-Boigny proposed a law that would have given nationals of Haute-Volta (current day Burkina Faso) the same rights to public sector employment as Ivorian nationals. In an unprecedented move of opposition to presidential will, the PDCI successfully resisted this. However, Houphouët-Boigny did give foreigners the vote in the one-party system, although it was taken away in 1990 under pressure from some factions of his own party and from the opposition Front Populaire Ivoirien (FPI) who, aware that many foreigners felt a strong allegiance to Houphouët-Boigny, accused him of using them as "electoral fodder".

The history of Ivorian development as sketched out above, a model that was in large part conceived by Ivorians and for Ivorian interests, must be the starting point for the analysis of the role of the French. While the comprehensive presence and influence of the French is undeniable, as is the logic of subordination between a coloniser and colonised and between an aid donor and recipient, allowance must nevertheless be made for the autonomy and capacity of the Ivorians. The point is not to contest the imposition of French influence, nor even the capture of the Ivorian elites by French interests, but to underline the fact that French presence and influence were a integral part of a relatively successful strategy of development put in place in an alliance between the French and Ivorian elites.²⁸¹

explaining farmer responses', *IDS Bulletin*, 32 (1), Institute of Development Studies, Sussex, 2001. On CAISTAB, see Losch, Bruno, *Le Complexe café-cocoa de la Côte d'Ivoire*, thèse de sciences économiques, Université de Montpellier, 1999. On French colonial development policy see *supra* chapter 1, section 2.

²⁷⁹ See Fauré, in Fauré and Médard, ' *Etat et Bourgeoisie ...*', pp. 36–44: "l'économique précède la politique".

²⁸⁰ See Bach, Daniel, 'L'insertion ivoirienne dans les rapports internationaux', in Fauré and Médard, ' *Etat et Bourgeoisie ...*'.

²⁸¹ This point is less controversial than it once was. In the 1970s dependency theory argued that the North–South economic relationship always subordinated developing economies to the interests of the developed countries (or capital from developed countries). This theory gave insufficient weight to the

From the 1950s Houphouët-Boigny argued that Ivorian development required massive foreign help: “La Côte d’Ivoire ne pourrait pas par elle-même se procurer les capitaux nécessaires à une expansion à la fois rapide et soutenue. Pendant de nombreuses années elle aura besoin d’une aide en capital suffisamment importante pour permettre à ses habitants de franchir les obstacles sérieux que la nature impose aux pays tropicaux”.²⁸² This help was forthcoming from the French. French aid covered infrastructure projects, the presence of coopérants in ministries, the presence of a French military base (although this did not count as development aid for the purposes of the DAC/OECD) and plenty of French language teaching.²⁸³ From independence to the late 1980s France provided more than half Côte d’Ivoire’s net development aid receipts, while Côte d’Ivoire was consistently the highest recipient of French aid. The French filled the capital gap, in terms of financial and human resources, necessary for Côte d’Ivoire’s development. The extensive public funds and political stability provided by the French state, as well as Côte d’Ivoire’s attractive foreign investments laws, attracted private French investment, which dominated the infrastructure, large-scale retail and import sectors.

While this French presence must be understood as part of Côte d’Ivoire’s development strategy, this does not deny that it was part of the French policy of deriving political and commercial benefit from close relationships with African leaders. Côte d’Ivoire was in many ways a perfect client for French aid. It developed quickly enough to have the capacity to absorb large quantities both of development aid and private investment. French development aid spending at least appeared to be integrated into the successful growth patterns of the country. Côte d’Ivoire could therefore be held by the French as an example of the success of their broader Africa policy of stability through close political alliance (the heart of the coopération system, as analysed in Chapter 1). Côte d’Ivoire also had the capacity to absorb a significant amount of French cultural assistance (namely French Language teaching), as it had a critical mass of literate francophones. Furthermore, Côte d’Ivoire accepted and indeed encouraged French development aid not only for the technical reasons of development financing but also because Houphouët-Boigny wanted to encourage the political alliance between

autonomous strategies of leaders of developing countries. The Ivorian model, as Fauré and Médard demonstrated, is one in which dependence on external capital is *actively* sought. See Fauré and Médard, ‘*Etat et Bourgeoisie ...*’, ‘Introduction’.

²⁸² Speaking in 1957. Quoted by Bach in Fauré and Médard, ‘*Etat et Bourgeoisie ...*’, p. 90.

²⁸³ The World Bank reports that of the 31,000 French coopérants present in Côte d’Ivoire between 1981 and 1995 over 80% were teachers. In Berg, Guillaumont, Amprou and Pegatianan, *Côte d’Ivoire*, Chapter 7; World Bank, *Aid and Reform in Africa: Lessons from Ten Case Studies*, edited by Devarajan, Shantayanan, Dollar, David and Holmgren, Torgny, Washinton, DC, 2001.

French West Africa and the former colonial power, an alliance he rightly saw as a guarantee to the stability of his regime.

The key to French influence has been the presence of coopérants at very senior levels of government.²⁸⁴ The French position in Côte d'Ivoire may be described as “semi-insider”. French nationals on long-term secondment to the Ivorian government have provided a network of information, which has ensured that the French government has had a privileged position to understand and therefore influence Ivorian policy. In the light of the extraordinary length of service of many of these coopérants, French and Ivorian interests, and the perception of those interests, have become tightly intertwined. Many of the coopérants have regarded themselves as working for both the French and the Ivorian government. They have had considerable influence over French development aid spending in Côte d'Ivoire. This has resulted in complex patterns of negotiation between Ivorian officials and French officials working for both governments, as well as between French officials.

What of the other side of the coopération relationship? Any analysis of the effects of French coopération on Côte d'Ivoire and Ivorian society must begin with the emergence of an intermediary elite that owed its position to its ability to bridge the gap between the colonial subjects and the colonial power at the cultural, political and commercial levels. It represented a new elite, distinct from the traditional power structures of the Côte d'Ivoire area. As befits the French colonial model, it owes its positions to its success in the French education system, both civil and military, either in its imported form or during study in France. After independence it was able to dominate the Ivorian state, and to a lesser degree (in competition with the French and the Lebanese) the country's economy. Relations with the French have therefore played a central role in the creation of a relatively large technocratic civil service and political class. This model of elite assimilation is described in Chapter 1. Note here that due to its central role in the economy of the French empire, Côte d'Ivoire had a relatively large educated middle class.

Due in large part to its dense relationship with the French, especially through education, the Ivorian administrative elite has displayed a relatively strong sense of coherence and horizontal allegiance – that is to say allegiance to state structures and

²⁸⁴ The analysis presented here has been helped by interviews with French and Ivorian officials. For a critical approach to French technical assistance see World Bank, *'Aid and Reform in Africa . . .'*, pp. 376–8. Of the many hundreds of French or binationalals in very senior positions in Côte d'Ivoire one may cite Jacques Baulin, Jeannous Lacaze (a former chief of staff of the French army) and M. Nairy, all advisors to Houphouët-Boigny for long periods and Bernard Digué, advisor in the prime ministerial cabinet of Alassane Ouattara in the early 1990s, now (May 2003) one of Chirac's Africa advisors.

colleagues. This is in contrast to what sociologists of the post-colonial African state have termed vertical loyalty (to one's family or area of origin).²⁸⁵ At the same time the Ivorian elite is firmly anchored in domestic power structures, within which it has used its proximity to France as a resource to consolidate its position, as well as a part of the strategy of economic growth that has generated the financial resources used to ensure domestic support.

To some extent the French presence and influence in Côte d'Ivoire have resulted in the reproduction of a French "model" of society and politics, as well as an allegiance to French culture. The institutions of the state, of the judiciary and of the education system closely mimic those in France, at least in a formal sense (institutional structures and titles are the same, as are many texts and processes). A highly trained civil service elite, strong sense of bureaucratic hierarchy and authority and belief in a mixed economy are other elements derived from contact with French officials. However, this view must be nuanced. As demonstrated in Chapter 1, (*supra* chapter 1, section 2i) this reproduction of a social and political model was highly fragmented and partial, and was compromised by the authoritarian nature of colonial rule, which of course was taken on after independence in the authoritarian one-party state. To return to the characterisation of the French state used in the introduction to this study, it may therefore be said that the French presence in sub-Saharan Africa reproduced many aspects of the French state's "regalian" function, but only reproduced the French state's "integrative" function very marginally and only at the elite level, despite the multi-layered relationships created.

Most analysts rightly view the reproduction of Western social models in Africa as a dynamic process producing new or hybrid forms, incorporating elements of "personal rule" and elements of anonymous institutional authority.²⁸⁶ African politics, in francophone Africa as elsewhere, is a dynamic response both to colonial history and to the current domestic context, creating new combinations of personal authority and

²⁸⁵ For a general view of this position see Daloz, Jean-Pascal and Chabal, Patrick, *Africa Works, Disorder as a Political Instrument*, James Currey, Oxford, 1999. Crook has argued (in Crook, Richard 'Patrimonialism, Administrative Effectiveness and Economic Development in Côte d'Ivoire', *African Affairs*, April 1989) that the isolation from society and sense of horizontal loyalty were important factors in the efficient functioning of the Ivorian civil service as compared with other African countries. See also Bakary, Tessy who talks of "l'émancipation de l'Etat par rapport à la société" in 'Côte d'Ivoire: l'étatisation de l'Etat', in Médard (ed.) 'Etats d'Afrique noire ...'.

²⁸⁶ Jackson, Robert and Rosberg, Carl, *Personal Rule in Africa*, Cambridge University Press, 1982. Médard uses the idea of "mixed type" in Médard, (ed) 'Etats d'Afrique noire ...' Chabal African politics operates at several different levels at once, according to whether the audience is Western or domestic. This generates new forms that incorporate but adapt Western elements: Chabal, Patrick 'The African Crisis: context, and interpretation', in Werbner, Richard and Ranger, Terence (eds), *Post Colonial identities in Africa*, London, Zed Press, 1996 and Chabal and Daloz, 'Africa works ...'.

institutional procedure. While this broad issue in African political sociology cannot be examined in detail here, for our analysis it is important to note that the elites who have controlled the Ivorian state have used their proximity to France in the consolidation of their semi-authoritarian rule.

In Côte d'Ivoire, more so than in some other francophone African countries where there were substantially fewer links, the French presence in the 1960s and 1970s went beyond the elite level. Many French nationals ran small businesses there or, having gone on a temporary basis to teach, chose to remain. The several thousand Franco-Ivorian dual nationals currently resident in Côte d'Ivoire attest to the fecundity of these links. Many French became personally attached to what they saw (rather condescendingly) as the "warmth" of Ivorian society, while many Ivorians remained drawn to the symbols of "civilisation" in Paris that had drawn the select few Africans since the early twentieth century. As time passed, and more Ivorians lived in France, these ties became more functional. Links with France became not only a source of "culture" (and that culture became as much rap music as Racine) but also a source of livelihood.

This broader French presence, which manifests itself in French language teaching and a cultural presence (the existence of French cultural centres for example), is inextricably associated with access to domestic power and prestige. For many Ivorians, particularly during the 39 years of uninterrupted PDCI rule, the presence of the French was rightly seen as an integral part of the power structures of Ivorian society, which presented an opportunity for some to enter the rarefied world of the intermediary elites, but generated resentment on the part of those who could not take this opportunity, especially among the educated unemployed youth.²⁸⁷ The French presence led neither to the reproduction of a nation-state nor to a citizen's republic resembling either the ideals or the reality of French political society. Instead, fragments of French political culture were transplanted onto an historical extension of colonial authoritarianism.

ii. The Crisis of the Ivorian Model and the Relationship with Donors

Encouraged by high prices for agricultural commodities in the 1960s and 1970s, Côte d'Ivoire became heavily indebted in the 1980s to both public and private borrowers. The capacity to repay these debts was dependent on income from agricultural exports, which dropped vertiginously in the 1980s. By mid-decade, Côte d'Ivoire had one of

²⁸⁷ On the political role of educated unemployed youth, who have since September 2002 been involved in organising anti-French demonstrations, see Konaté, Yacouba, 'Les Enfants de la Balle, de la Fesci aux mouvements de Patriotes', *Politique Africaine*, 89, 2003.

Africa's highest debt burdens, while its income was falling.²⁸⁸ In 1987 it defaulted on service payments on external debt.

The immediate domestic consequence of this financial crisis was that less money was available for the government to buy off contending social and economic groups. In the boom times, Houphouët-Boigny had used the country's wealth to fund a successful patronage system and purchase loyalty to his vision of national integration. As the cake, including available agricultural land, became smaller, the conflicts over its distribution became more acute.²⁸⁹

In the 1990s these problems took on political dimensions. Allasane Ouattara, from the north of Côte d'Ivoire and then deputy director of the IMF, became prime minister in 1990. His nomination followed pressure from the IMF, which regarded him as a highly competent technocrat. However, in the context of the growing social divisions in the country, he came to be seen as the representative of the north. Henri Konan Bedié, Houphouët-Boigny's heir apparent, regarded him as a serious rival for the succession to the presidency. At Houphouët-Boigny's death in 1993, Bedié became President after a tense standoff. Ouattara left the PDCI to join the breakaway Rassemblement des Républicains (the RDR).

The importance of this political split is that newly introduced political competition in the form of multi-party democracy, which was introduced at donor insistence and very much against Houphouët-Boigny's will, began to mirror increasing social divisions. Under the guise of the concept of national purity ("Ivoirité"), Bedié excluded Ouattara from running for political office at the 1995 elections because he could not prove he was an Ivorian national. His exclusion came to represent the plight of the millions of vulnerable or excluded northerners and foreigners. In this way, the social crisis of dwindling resources intertwined with a factional political struggle with nasty xenophobic undertones.²⁹⁰

The financial crisis changed Côte d'Ivoire's relationship with donors. Maintaining the lending relationship with the IFIs became the most urgent issue for the

²⁸⁸ Côte d'Ivoire's ratio of total external debt to export earnings rose steadily from the late 1970s to reach a peak of nearly 800% in 1993/4. For further details see World Bank, *'Aid and Reform in Africa ...'*, Figure 7.10.

²⁸⁹ Chauveau, 'La Question foncière ...'.

²⁹⁰ For the general political developments of the 1990s, see N'Guessan, Koumé, 'Le Coup d'Etat de Décembre 1999, espoirs et désenchantements', in Le Pape, Marc and Vidal, Claudine, (eds) *Côte d'Ivoire l'Année terrible 1999–2000*, Paris, Karthala, 2002; and Dembele, Ousmane, 'Côte d'Ivoire la fracture communautaire', *Politique africaine*, 89, 2003. On "Ivoirité", see Dozon, Jean-Pierre, 'La Côte d'Ivoire au Péril de l'Ivoirité', *Afrique Contemporaine*, 193, 2000.

Ivorian government, leading for example to the creation in 1991 of an interministerial committee dedicated solely to this issue – the COMFESIP²⁹¹ IFI lending overtook bilateral development aid for the first time in 1982 after a major loan from the IMF, agreed in 1981. From 1986 disbursements of development aid from the IFIs were higher than bilateral funds, with the exception of the early 1990s when the French poured money into Côte d'Ivoire while the IFIs declined due to unpaid arrears and blockages in the structural adjustment programme. Around half of bilateral funds have come from France.

Table 4.1 Bilateral and Multilateral disbursements to Côte d'Ivoire for selected years, in Millions of dollars current²⁹²

Year	Bilateral	Multilateral	Year	Bilateral	Multilateral
1970	53	23	1990	554	621
1975	102	66	1991	439	594
1980	210	148	1992	462	512
1982	183	301	1993	768	198
1986	164	200	1994	982	734
1988	138	448	1995	829	416

The loans from the IFIs were attached to demands for reforms (conditionalities). The reforms concerned the internal and external liberalisation of the Ivorian economy and reduction of state expenditure in line with the New Political Economy of Development (NPED, see chapter 2). The specific measures demanded of Côte d'Ivoire were summed up by the World Bank in 1998 as “further fiscal consolidation to reduce the dependence on external assistance and increase public saving, with a more efficient use of scarce public resources ... deepening of structural reform to promote private sector development and investment ... the pursuit of an ambitious social development agenda designed to reduce poverty”.²⁹³ These generic features of the NPED merged in the IFI conditionalities with elements specific to the Ivorian economy, including for example pressure to formalise land ownership in order for farmers to use land as collateral for loans. The IFIs also pressured the Côte d'Ivoire government to dismantle CAISTAB and liberalise the whole cocoa sector. This was highly contentious, as CAISTAB constituted the principal source of money for the state patronage that greased

²⁹¹ The Comité de mobilisation des financements extérieurs et de suivi des investissements publics.

²⁹² Adapted from World Bank, ‘*Aid and Reform in Africa ...*’, Table 7.10. Note that this table is based on total disbursements, not all of which were concessional enough to be counted as development aid under OECD/DAC criteria. Total net flows, which would subtract loan repayments, would show a greater proportion of bilateral aid, as this consists of more grants.

²⁹³ In World Bank, News Release, 19 March 1998.

the wheels of the Ivorian political system.²⁹⁴

This process of reform under pressure from the IFIs was, in the words of the World Bank review of 2001, “a bruising experience”, in which reforms were made only under “extreme Bank pressure”.²⁹⁵ The IFIs saw resistance to the reforms as “vested interests” related to links between politicians and businesses that stood to lose out. While the IFIs enjoyed the considerable leverage given them by Côte d’Ivoire’s financing needs, the Ivorian side remained convinced of the virtues of its mixed economy model, and suspected the IFIs of ideological dogmatism. This confrontation became acute over the issue of the devaluation of the CFA Franc, which the IFIs considered necessary for the success of all the other reforms. Although a change in the value of the CFA Franc was not a decision for Côte d’Ivoire alone, Houphouët-Boigny’s opposition was well known. Such was his influence in the Franco–African community that the devaluation, which was supported by many in Paris, was delayed until January 1994, a fortnight after his death.²⁹⁶

The devaluation of the CFA Franc was followed by massive development aid transfers, both from the IFIs and, especially, from France (Table 4.1), to alleviate the country’s immediate balance of payments and debt problems. The massive rise in disbursements by the IFIs, which had withheld funds in 1993, was regarded as a “reward” for the devaluation. The years 1994 and 1995 saw a series of new loan agreements, including a three-year Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF) loan agreed by the IMF in 1994, which acted as an important trigger for other donors. The growth of the Ivorian economy in 1995–1998 was impressive, although the debt burden remained massive.²⁹⁷

The French were of course aware in the early 1990s not only that the scale of the financial crisis of Côte d’Ivoire was beyond their means, but also that the political and social model they had helped set up was fracturing. Although increasingly worried by the emergence of a xenophobic political discourse after Houphouët-Boigny’s death in

²⁹⁴ See World Bank, ‘*Aid and Reform in Africa ...*’, pp. 382–3; and Conte, Bernard and Sindzingre, Alice, ‘*Les Réformes comme processus international et domestique: liberalisation et industrie en Côte d’Ivoire*’, unpublished paper, Centre d’études d’Afrique noire, Bordeaux, 1999, pp. 10–13. The World Bank’s view on the reform of CAISTAB can be found in McIntire, John, and Varangis, Panos, ‘Reforming Côte d’Ivoire’s Cocoa Marketing and Pricing System’, Policy Research Working Paper, World Bank, Abidjan Resident Mission, March 1999. See also Losch, ‘*Le Complexe café cacao ...*’, Chapter 6, ‘Ruptures et recompositions: le complexe révélé’.

²⁹⁵ World Bank ‘*Aid and Reform in Africa ...*’, pp. 446 and 435. See also the potted history of relations with the IFIs in *Jeune Afrique/L’Intelligent*, 11–17 février 2002.

²⁹⁶ See *supra* chapter 1, section 3ii.

²⁹⁷ See Conte and Sindzingre, ‘*Les Réformes comme processus ...*’, pp. 15–17. Note that the IFI approach of withholding funds in 1993 is a good example of the “policy buying” approach.

1993, and especially surrounding the elections of 1995, the French in fact had little option but to support Bedié and try to use behind the scenes influence to moderate the political dialogue. The French were also intimately involved in Côte d'Ivoire's crisis through their multidimensional presence in Côte d'Ivoire, in the commercial and banking sector in particular. During this period the Ivorians habitually came to the French for financial help and, through the Elysée and the Cooperation Ministry, tried to use historical and personal influence to persuade the French to bail them out before going to the IFIs. This practice was stopped, or at least seriously curtailed, by the Abidjan doctrine of 1993.

In terms of the IFI-led reform agenda, France played an ambivalent role. Their considerable interests in the country and the region meant that both French officials and the business community were divided over reform issues.²⁹⁸ Given the fact that the model of mixed economy was in large part inherited from the French, it is no surprise that they were generally supportive of the Ivorian resistance to liberal reform, for example of the cocoa sector. However, faced with the scale of the financial crisis and mismanagement by the Ivorian state, the French were also aware of the need for reform, and supported the principle of privatisation of productive sectors, in contrast to disputes with the IFIs over privatisation in francophone Africa in the past. Equally, the French largely agreed on the need to take steps to expand Côte d'Ivoire's tax base and public service efficiency. For some French officials reform was needed in order to keep the IFIs on side and keep the lending coming (burden sharing). For others the reforms were necessary regardless of relations with the IFIs, as Côte d'Ivoire's problems were due to a fundamental divergence from the discipline of market principles.²⁹⁹ The result was that the French tried during this period to cajole the Ivorian government into implementing reforms, in order for Côte d'Ivoire to avoid having to accept all the details of direct IFI conditionalities, while using IFI leverage as the "bad cop" when this failed. This ambivalent relationship with the IFIs was played out in the growing numbers of donor coordination fora, both at the general level (the donor round tables) and the sector wide donor coordination meetings. In the words of Conte and Sindzingre:

"les Français critiquent volontiers la Banque et les Ivoiriens, éduqués à la française, ne font pas confiance aux forces de

²⁹⁸ While the World Bank study of 2001 takes the position that French interests made them generally reform averse, Conte and Sindzingre, 'Les Réformes comme processus ...', pp. 17–20, convincingly argue that different French actors had very different positions on the range of reform issues.

marché, notamment en matière de politique de prix agricoles ... [mais] ... en 1993, la France n'a plus les moyens de verser des sommes de plus en plus importantes qui ne servent pas au développement mais à rembourser les bailleurs multilatéraux. Emerge une 'division de travail' entre les IBWs [IFIs] (crédibilité économique, liage des mains des gouvernements par des arrangements multilatéraux) et l'ex-puissance coloniale (influence politique)."³⁰⁰

2. 1998–2002: the Bilateral Relationship

i. The Initial Implementation of the Reforms

"Partnership" has been a leitmotif of Franco–African relations since the time of de Gaulle, used to indicate that each side brought different advantages to a mutually beneficial relationship. Paradoxically, "partnership" is also a leitmotif of the Jospin reforms, within which it is meant to indicate a break with "les démarches imposés, voire teintés de néo-colonialisme". It indicates a policy of devolving to the recipient the role of formulating policy independently, policy that will then be approved and supported by the donor side. In this sense the renewed use of the term partnership constitutes an avowal that one of the original aims of coopération, the nurturing of indigenous capacity in recipient states, has not worked and requires a new stimulus.

To see just how new this approach was and how it interacted with relations with other donors it is necessary to look in detail at how the French implemented the reforms, or attempted to do so, in the initial period (1998–99). The first concrete form the new approach took was in the Franco–Ivorian "Commission Mixte" of December 1998. Since independence, these meetings have brought together French and Ivorian officials to discuss the aid relationship. The year 1998 saw two substantial innovations. First, the 1998 Commission Mixte involved meetings with the non-governmental sector and with local authorities, the results of which were then fed into the main conclusions.

The second innovation was the demise of the "rapport de commission mixte", a general document outlining French intentions, which was then completed by signed

²⁹⁹ Very schematically, the first position is that of the old guard of Franco–Ivorian relations, including Dupuch, then ambassador to Côte d'Ivoire, while the second position is that of the reformers, led by the Finance Ministry.

³⁰⁰ Conte and Sindzingre, ' *Les Réformes comme processus* ...', p. 14. For brief details of donor coordination mechanisms, see World Bank, ' *Aid and Reform in Africa* ...', p. 380–1. The analysis here has benefited from discussion of donor coordination with French and Ivorian officials.

protocols authorising specific aid projects. This rapport was replaced by the “Document Cadre de Partenariat au Développement”.³⁰¹ The innovation of the Document Cadre is to include a table outlining a series of mutual obligations, tying French coopération to Ivorian policies and initiatives. This was an attempt to show, along “contractual” lines, that Ivorian undertakings were matched by donor undertakings. In this table the French undertake to support specific Ivorian implemented policies, which are based on commitments under the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) that the Ivorian government had negotiated with the IFIs.³⁰² In the health sector for example the Ivorian undertaking is to put in place the “Programme national du développement de la santé”, while on the French side the commitment is to support the general workings of the Health Ministry. In broad terms, the intention of these changes was to ensure Ivorian “ownership” of the reforms that France wished to support, in the belief that the reforms would fail if the Ivorian side did not consider that the reforms were part of their own policies. Some of the ambiguities and limits of this notion of ownership are examined shortly.

Table 4.2: Composition of French development aid spending in Côte d’Ivoire by instrument and French institution, in MFF³⁰³

	1994	1995	1996	1997
MC/MAE grants	359	302	263	230
Of which FAC	111	58	49	49
Of which assistance technique	231	216	190	166
Of which other	17	28	24	15
AFD loans	327	825	479	346
Structural adjustment aid	8135	2125	1258	400
Of which lending ³⁰⁴	1135	1200	500	0
Of which debt cancellation	7000	925	758	400

³⁰¹ Ambassade de France, Abidjan, *Document Cadre de Partenariat au Développement entre la France et la Côte d’Ivoire*, 15 décembre 1998. These documents are meant to be renewed roughly every three years. The other change in 1998 was to the internal French government documents on recipient countries. The earlier “Orientation de Moyen Terme (OMT)” became the “Document Stratégie Pays (DSP)”. Relative to the OMT, the DSP is more preformatted, including obligatory boxes to be filled in on costings and evaluation. Note that the work of the AFD is also laid out in the DSP. The intention is that the DSP is written after the Commission Mixte so that it can take its findings into account. However, if necessary, a DSP is drawn up in the absence of a Commission Mixte.

³⁰² The PRSP, which was signed in March 1998, is referred to explicitly as the framework of Franco-Ivorian cooperation (in the Ambassade de France, Abidjan, ‘*Document Cadre . . .*’ p.2).

³⁰³ Adapted from Service de Coopération et d’Action culturelle (SCAC), Ambassade de France, Abidjan, *Coopération France Côte d’Ivoire*, Abidjan, 1998, pp. 12–13. Note that the French Interior Ministry ran a police training programme, SCTIP, which is not included in these figures.

³⁰⁴ Structural adjustment lending is under the budget and responsibility of the Finance Ministry, but is managed in recipient countries by the AFD. In the event of the application of a “C2D” (see *supra* chapter 3) to Côte d’Ivoire the AFD will also manage the majority of debt relief funds, which are currently managed directly from the Finance Ministry.

What of the composition of French spending in Côte d'Ivoire in the years leading up to the Jospin reforms? As Table 4.2 shows, structural adjustment aid vastly overshadowed project and sector aid in the years immediately following the devaluation of the CFA Franc. By 1997, this had returned to levels comparable with AFD lending and FAC grants. AFD lending was composed of around a dozen long-term projects, in place from as early as 1990. The values of each AFD project ranged from as little as 1.5 MFF, to fund prospective studies, to 39 MFF for the national transport sector. The projects were spread across a continuum between specific projects, such as the third Abidjan bridge, and wider sector-based plans, such as support for rural land ownership reforms or urban electrification.³⁰⁵

Table 4.3: FAC/FSP projects current between 1998 and 2001³⁰⁶

Sector	Project	Amount, MFF	Initiation date
Economy	Finance Ministry capacity PAAFIE	5	94
	Private sector support	13	96
Infrastructure and rural	Geological infrastructure	5	92
	Rice growing	6	92
	Support to livestock farmers	5	92
	Agricultural professional groups	8	94
	Land ownership law	5	96
	Support for Rural professions	9	96
	Environment	12	99
Institutional development	Agricultural research	15	97
	Local government capacity	12	96
	Support to anti-drug work	3	93
	Support to Security Ministry	16	94
Education	Support to Justice Ministry	8	97
	Primary schooling	35	93
	Teacher training (PARMEN)	32	95
	Professional training	20	95
Health	Higher education	6	97
	Abidjan health project	30	92
	AIDS prevention	5	97
Culture/Sport	Treichville day centre	12	93
	Archives and Health data	5	94
	Youth and Sport	8	94
FSD	Local culture	15	97
	Fonds special	8	96
	Fonds social	15	01

Table 4.3. shows the composition of FAC spending in Côte d'Ivoire. In contrast to AFD spending, it includes almost no infrastructure work.³⁰⁷ In the health sector for example there is an explicit commitment to move from financing large hospital

³⁰⁵ Details of all current spending can be found at www.afd.fr/projects/projects_pays

³⁰⁶ Adapted from SCAC, 'Coopération France Côte d'Ivoire ...', p. 15 and Personal communication (documentary), 2001.

³⁰⁷ See SCAC, 'Coopération France Côte d'Ivoire ...', pp. 59–68.

constructions to a combination of training and support for local level initiatives. Typically, the programmes consist of managing the work of coopérants and training programmes, archive and information management, and the introduction of information technology. These elements clearly reflect perceived weak points in Ivorian administration.

FAC/FSP spending in Côte d'Ivoire in 1998 consisted of several projects, which have been running from the early 1990s. The specific effects of the Jospin reforms are therefore inevitably hidden by a time lag. However, the 1998–1999 period saw some important innovations or shifts of emphasis and intentions. First, French spending was concerned with ensuring that the Ivorian administration was prepared to take over from French coopérants. In theory, this has been one of the guiding principles of French development aid since the 1960s. However, the task was given greater urgency by the sharp decline in numbers of assistants since the early 1990s.

Table 4.4: Total number of coopérants in Côte d'Ivoire (including teachers)
1980–1999³⁰⁸

1980	1986	1990	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
3,324	2,045	1,346	623	464	355	232	200

Table 4.5: Breakdown of French coopérants to Côte d'Ivoire by type, 1994–1997³⁰⁹

	1994	1995	1996	1997
Teachers	511	418	358	248
<i>Of whom CSN</i>	66	53	56	50
Other	104	96	94	101

While coopérants in all areas declined in the early 1990s, from 1994 teaching took the brunt of the decline in numbers.³¹⁰ Replacing these teachers was the focus of the PARMEN (Projet d'ajustement et de remobilisation du ministère de l'éducation et de la formation de base) aid programme, one of the largest FAC spending commitments. Outside the teaching profession French coopérants worked in central and local government administration. With hundreds in place in the early 1980s, the French

³⁰⁸ Personal communication (documentary). Note that the French have been paying the full salaries of the coopérants since 1990 when the Ivorian government stopped paying their two-third share (see Table 4.3).

³⁰⁹ SCAC, ‘*Coopération France Côte d'Ivoire ...*’, p. 14. The discrepancies between this table and the information in Table 4.5 are not large enough to be significant. CSN – Coopérant Service National (the alternative to military service).

³¹⁰ The breakdown by category is not available prior to 1994. Non-teaching coopérants account for a large proportion of the decline prior to 1994 seen in Table 4.5. Around one hundred is considered a minimum effective number, which explains the levelling off after 1994 (personal interview).

virtually were able to run entire sections of Ivorian administration. With only 100 in place, the emphasis in 1998–99 was on strengthening Ivorian capacity in order to maximise the benefits of their presence. The Document Cadre of 1998 states that: “la Côte d’Ivoire doit pouvoir disposer d’une administration moderne et autonome” while at the sector level, among many other examples, the SCAC report of 1998 states that French support for the Ivorian health sector aims to “encourager une culture gestionnaire du système de santé”.

The second shift observable in the 1998–1999 period was the increasing emphasis given to cooperation with non-governmental organisations and local government. In the agricultural sector, for example, one of the principal aims of French spending was to support the creation of professional organisations (unions and cooperatives), in part to replace the state marketing system. In health, the most successful French project (at least in French eyes), was in support of a non-profit making medical cooperative, whose freedom from state control and proximity to the population were heavily lauded in French documents.³¹¹ As for local government, FAC funds were used (under local government development, see Table 4.3) in a pilot project to support the capacity of the town council of Man, in the west of the country, in combination with funds and visiting volunteer workers from the French town of Besançon. Finally, the FSD (Fonds social de développement) was intended to work closely with local populations on small-scale projects.

The third shift of emphasis, which constituted the umbrella concept for the other changes, was the principle of “ownership”. The French constantly emphasised that foreign aid should support Ivorian national and local government policies, and non-governmental initiatives. French aid would therefore be more fully “demand led” and respond to the range of demands from Ivorian society.³¹² In this sense “partnership” can be understood as the donor acting in support of recipient government initiatives. As was the case with other aid donors in the 1990s, this emphasis on ownership was intended to replace the (relatively informal) conditionalities attached to French aid, which in any case could no longer be properly enforced due to the decline in the presence of coopérants.

The principle of ownership requires qualification, both generally and in the case

³¹¹ SCAC, ‘*Coopération France Côte d’Ivoire ...*’, pp. 61–4.

³¹² Making French aid “demand led” was an explicit intention of the changes according to Josselin who in December 1998 said, “c’est désormais une politique basée sur la demande et non plus d’offre”, in *Marchés Tropicaux*, 25 décembre 1998. Ownership is frequently translated in French as “appropriation des réformes par le pays recipiendaire”, although the English word is sometimes used.

of France and Côte d'Ivoire. In the first place, the reform process, which is to be owned by the Ivorian side rather than imposed by donors, is still attached to an aid programme, and can therefore still be seen as a set of conditionalities. The central paradox of the ownership agenda is that it is donor led, and very clearly Côte d'Ivoire was still under thoroughgoing donor surveillance within the ESAF framework. As previously outlined (*supra* chapter 2, section 3i), the new approach of the World Bank is to say that ownership can only work by selecting countries that sign up to the reform agenda. This cannot be said of Côte d'Ivoire in this period. However, the size of the Ivorian economy and the World Bank's own debt exposure to it means that the country simply cannot be “de-selected”.

In the second place, some of the “Ivorian” policies and institutions the French were to support according to the 1998 Document Cadre had not yet been put in place in 1998. Their creation or initiation was therefore clearly a “condition” of French support. For example, for the French to “support” reform in the health sector the expectation is that the Ivorian side will initiate it. Finally, due to administrative restrictions on the French side (that is, the control exercised by Finance Ministry over spending decisions) full Ivorian administration of aid funds could not be envisaged: “une fongibilité totale supposerait une adaptation certainement lourde et difficile des règles budgétaires françaises” – in other words the French would continue to require detailed oversight of how their aid is spent.³¹³ Of course no aid comes without strings attached – ownership does not entirely escape from the paradoxes of the conditionality agenda.

There are indications that the development aid relationship between France and Côte d'Ivoire, with its envisaged shift of emphasis, was facing some serious problems in 1998 and 1999. The table of mutual obligations attached to the 1998 Document Cadre shows that although the clear intention is for French development aid spending to follow Ivorian policies, in many areas the Ivorian government had simply not begun to implement the required policy. This indicates a lack of planning capacity on the Ivorian side, and hints at the historic over-dependence on French assistance. On the French side this caused concerns that relying on recipient country management would lead to large spending arrears.³¹⁴ In addition, in 1998 and 1999, frustrations were mounting on the French side over the willingness of the Ivorian side to implement administrative reforms, and over widely reported fraud in Ivorian administration. In 1999, these

³¹³ Ambassade de France, Abidjan, ‘*Document Cadre . . .*’, p. 5. “Fongibilité” (fungibility) refers to the interchangeability of money within a national budget – that is the possibility for the Ivorian side of using aid money exactly as they wish.

³¹⁴ Personal interview.

problems grew more serious, and were added to as the Ivorian economy deteriorated and repayment arrears to donors, including to the AFD, started to accumulate.³¹⁵

These problems were added to, but not caused by, political tensions between the newly elected Parti socialiste in France and the Ivorian PDCI administration. For the reformers of the party, a less supportive relationship with the PDCI was not only part of their opposition to Gaullism in Africa, but also part of the “droit d’inventaire” of the Mitterrand period. The visits of Josselin to Côte d’Ivoire in July 1997, and Vedrine in October, were dominated by public and media discussion of France “abandoning Africa” and scaling down support for African regimes, starting with the PDCI. To some degree these aspects must be nuanced, as the relations between the two administrations were too dense to be fundamentally altered overnight. However, 1999 was clearly a period of tension in Franco–Ivorian relations, culminating in Josselin’s public rebuke to Bedié over the jailing of opposition RDR members, which, Josselin stated, would inevitably damage the Franco–Ivorian relationship.³¹⁶

ii. Dealing with Instability

The Bedié regime was overthrown in a coup d'état on Christmas Eve 1999, led by General Gueï, the first successful coup in any of the big three countries of francophone Africa (Cameroon and Senegal being the others). The immediate cause was army discontent, but it was widely considered that it had political intentions, specifically the restoration of the political rights of Ouattara.³¹⁷ Bedié fled to Paris, with little support from his West African counterparts, who were increasingly worried by the effects of social tensions on the sub-region and unhappy at the treatment of their nationals who had migrated to work in Côte d’Ivoire.

In contrast to the established pattern in Franco–African relations, the French decided not to intervene, and their public denunciation of the coup did not demand the restoration of the previous regime. Jospin was against an intervention, as he saw little to be gained from involvement, or what he thought of as “interference”, in Africa. The Paris old guard, headed by Chirac’s Africa advisor Dupuch, argued for intervention. The position Chirac took is less clear. It is likely he initially supported intervention, but

³¹⁵ One example of frustrations on the French side is in the area of decentralisation, where the Ivorian side were very reluctant to allow funds to filter down to the local level. The Document Cadre demands specifically that they do so.

³¹⁶ See AFP, 17 November 1999, “France expresses concern about ‘grave tensions’”.

³¹⁷ N’Guessan, in Le Pape and Vidal, ‘*Côte d’Ivoire l’Année terrible...*’.

not wholeheartedly.³¹⁸

With their depth of knowledge and contacts in Côte d'Ivoire, the French believed that Gueï would keep his promise to hold democratic elections and not stand himself, despite early warnings from senior Ivorian officials that Gueï was eyeing power.³¹⁹ They were undoubtedly encouraged by the fact that Gueï was already well known in French military circles, having graduated at the St Cyr academy. As 2000 progressed towards the scheduled October elections, law and order broke down and public administration, including state finances, virtually disintegrated. In the summer a controversial referendum and Supreme Court decision excluded both Ouattara and Bedié from the presidential elections, leaving Gueï and Laurent Gbagbo of the socialist FPI the only serious contenders. The French and the European Union supported the referendum, but suspended aid when Ouattara was excluded. Gbagbo eventually won the elections, despite Gueï's effort to hijack the process by force.

The French were initially reluctant to state explicitly the consequences of the Christmas Eve coup on their aid programme, in contrast for example to American aid, which was automatically suspended.³²⁰ In January 2000 the French stated their intention to suspend aid that directly supported the Ivorian state ("aide souveraine", sovereign aid), as well as all military cooperation except aviation security and plans for a regional peacekeeping training school for the Ivorian military. Practically all coopérants working in central ministries were withdrawn. At the same time, the French intended to continue aid that directly benefited the population ("aide de proximité"): "Les programmes qui bénéficient directement aux populations (secteurs productifs, santé, éducation, programmes sociaux) sont maintenus."³²¹ Coopérants in these areas were maintained where possible.

In reality, the record of FAC spending in Côte d'Ivoire shows that the effects of the coup were more complex than this binary distinction the French wished to draw. Taking the projects that were active in 1999 (see Table 4.4), five different effects may be observed.³²² First, some of the projects were suspended throughout 2000 due to suspension of cooperation with the Ivorian state. Support for the fire service, security

³¹⁸ Smith reports that Chirac felt that the Bedié regime was "not worth saving". 'La France dans la crise ivoirienne: ni ingérence, ni indifférence, mais indolence post-coloniale', In Le Pape and Vidal, 'Côte d'Ivoire l'Année terrible ...', p. 312.

³¹⁹ Personal communication. In the words of Smith the French believed that Gueï was "maitrisable" (in Le Pape and Vidal, 'Côte d'Ivoire l'Année terrible ...', p. 318).

³²⁰ See for example AFP, 29 December 1999, 'France to review its cooperation ...'

³²¹ Declaration by the Ministère des affaires étrangères, 11 janvier 2000.

³²² This section is based on Personal communication (documentary), 2001, and personal interviews.

sector training and military training come into this category.

Second, some projects were not suspended on principle, but their spending rate was considerably slowed down, either because of security conditions, or because the Ivorian administration concerned had been thrown into chaos or had run out of money (in some cases the coup simply added to the administrative problems already apparent under the Bedié regime). The majority of FAC projects fell into this category. The degree of hindrance caused by the coup varied. In the environment sector for example conditions precluded almost all spending. Typically, evaluation visits and training sessions were cancelled. In some cases the French spelt out conditions to the Ivorians under which the projects would restart properly, including security of French personnel.

Third, several projects were divided between their “sovereign” and their “proximity” components. For example, the local government support project consisted of capacity support to the Interior Ministry, which was suspended, and aid to the town council in Man, which was continued. A fourth effect of the coup was the suspension of activities by other donors. French support for rural professional centres, for example, was hindered because it depended on the framework agricultural policy, for which the World Bank suspended support during 2000.

Finally, some sectors were either unaffected, or positively encouraged. This is particularly the case with the FSP, the fund for small-scale projects. This demonstrates the *de facto* division that emerged in French aid spending during 2000. While cooperation with state authorities was either stopped on principle or obstructed (some high level French coopérants did stay on, but far fewer than before the coup), decentralised or small-scale work continued and, despite problems, was considered by the French as an important way of maintaining a bare minimum of presence and influence on the ground in Côte d’Ivoire.³²³

The election of Gbagbo in the October 2000 presidential elections delighted many in the Parti socialiste who had long-standing links with the FPI and with Gbagbo in particular, and was quickly approved by the French despite hesitations of other donors, and the statement by Kofi Annan that the elections as a whole were not legitimate. The victory of a long-standing opposition to Gaullist influence in Africa was considered in step with the Jospin reforms, which were premised on the emergence of a new generation of leaders who would not just accept but demand reform of French development aid.

³²³ Personal interview.

By mid-November the Paris political machinery was swinging round to support the new regime in Côte d'Ivoire.³²⁴ Full normalisation of the Franco-Ivorian relationship was prepared by the French in November but was delayed by controversial legislative elections of December (which the RDR boycotted), while French budget aid was delayed because of the Abidjan doctrine, which made an agreement between the IFIs and the recipient country a prerequisite to French budget aid. The IFIs were in wait and see mode.³²⁵

At the end of 2000 and beginning of 2001 the French looked at restarting their aid spending. AFD spending had been slowed by repayment arrears dating from before the coup. These arrears continued to accumulate after the coup, although one infrastructure project was agreed in May 2000. Eventually, Côte d'Ivoire stopped all payments to the AFD in June 2002 and all AFD spending was completely stopped in November 2002. For the FAC/FSP, projects in the "proximity" sectors were able to restart relatively quickly using coopérants who were still in the country. In contrast, there were delays getting assistants in place to work in the ministries, as they had almost all been moved out of the country in January 2000. Meanwhile, tensions arose in Paris as political pressure (from the Parti socialiste and from the Elysée) was exerted in order to get projects up and running in the face of reluctance from within the DGCID and the SCAC in Abidjan. This reluctance was due to continuing doubts over the competence and probity of the Ivorian regime.³²⁶

At this point (early 2001) and in the midst of a series of evaluation missions and documents, the French began to think about how their development aid relationship with Côte d'Ivoire could be changed. The value of a presence throughout all Ivorian ministries was questioned, as was the value of cultural cooperation. The DGCID suggested four new lines of approach: support for negotiations with the IFIs, fight against poverty, institutional cooperation and cultural and scientific cooperation. The suggestion was therefore to accept the notion of the "lead donor" according to sector, which is now common practice in heavily aided countries. In the Ivorian case, for example, the World Bank would take the lead and set the donor agenda in the health sector while the French would do the same in the education sector. To some degree this

³²⁴ See *Le Monde*, 11 novembre 2000 and 28 novembre 2000.

³²⁵ Smith, in Le Pape and Vidal, 'Côte d'Ivoire l'Année terrible...', p.322, claims that the Parti socialiste wanted an exception made to the Abidjan doctrine. Whatever the case, the French did not restart budget aid until after the signing of a Staff Monitored Programme with the IMF in mid-2002, although they did rapidly restart the technical assistance to the Finance Ministry (the PAAFIE programme) in order to speed up negotiations with the IFIs. See next section.

simply reflects the reality of the situation since the early 1990s, the novelty is the suggestion that the French simply pull out of several sectors altogether.

This thinking reflected, however imprecisely, some serious concerns on the part of some French officials as to the benefit of Franco–Ivorian cooperation and deep frustration that the country they had helped so much had descended into chaos. However, it was cut short by the looming economic and financial crisis, and the urgency of restarting relations with the IFIs.³²⁷ Innovative thinking on the Franco–Ivorian aid relationship was also restrained at the time by the politics of cohabitation, wherein neither the government, the Elysée nor officials wanted to make any bold initiatives that would risk upsetting the other side, and officials were unsure of the reception their ideas might receive because they were unsure of the nature of the administrative hierarchy above them and how it may be effected by cohabitation. In short, cohabitation inserted an extra element of uncertainty into the policy process.³²⁸

On the bilateral front, what stands out in the 18 months following the election of Gbagbo is the combination of support and misgivings. It is clear that there was a multifaceted mobilisation in Paris in favour of the Gbagbo regime, for some as support for a socialist ally, for others in the hope of a return to stability. This convergence of interest between the left and the right in France is shown in the fact that both Robert Bourgi, the advisor who is closely connected with the Chiracian right and Jean-Michel Séverino, associated with the Parti socialiste, were dispatched by Paris to try to keep President Gbagbo on side and on the course of political reconciliation.

It is notable also that the French laid down virtually no conditions to the Ivorians for their support and the resumption of their aid, short of “stability” and, of course, starting negotiations with the IFIs. In effect, conditions on French aid were displaced onto the IFIs, who were expected by the French, as in 1999, to play the “bad cops”. In this sense, French support for Côte d’Ivoire had apparently seamlessly accommodated itself to the change in regime, as if to confirm the perception that France would effectively support whoever made the presidential palace his or her own. However, at the same time, there were growing doubts in Paris over the wisdom of almost unconditional support for the FPI regime and misgivings about the viability of a serious

³²⁶ RFI, 31 janvier 2001, “Paris–Abidjan la Normalisation” reports the renewal of aid spending. Other details here are from personal interviews.

³²⁷ On the country’s economic problems at this point, see *Marchés Tropicaux*, 15 décembre 2000. According to AFD figures, the Ivorian economy shrunk by 2.3 % in 2000 and by 0.9 % in 2001.

³²⁸ Personal interviews.

aid “partnership” with a country struggling to avoid civil war.³²⁹

3. 1998–2002: the Multilateral Dimension

i. Côte d’Ivoire and the Multilateral Donors

Côte d’Ivoire’s relation with multilateral donors during the period under study may be divided into three periods – before the coup of December 1999, the period of suspension of aid (2000) and the period of renegotiation (2001).

Despite continuing to suffer from a huge debt burden, Côte d’Ivoire experienced rapid economic growth in the three years after devaluation.³³⁰ In 1997 World Bank lending was high, and Côte d’Ivoire signed its second three-year ESAF in February 1998, which released over a billion dollars of loans from the World Bank and IMF.³³¹ In addition, Côte d’Ivoire was declared by the IMF in March 1998 to be eligible for the HIPC initiative, which would bring substantial debt relief from bilateral and multilateral lenders over three to six years. Both these decisions helped trigger a debt relief decision from the Paris club of bilateral lenders (in April 1998).³³²

Increasingly dense interaction between donors was apparent during this period. The exchange of information at the general level was far more regular and thorough than in the 1980s, while an increasing number of sector wide projects were co-financed by different donors. Equally, there was a far greater coordination of conditionalities than before, with the IFIs taking an accepted lead on formulating those on economic policy. It is notable for example that a major donor consultation meeting was held in Abidjan in May 1998 to endorse the ESAF linked Policy Framework Document negotiated by the IMF in March.³³³

³²⁹ Personal interviews. Many analysts and journalists shared these doubts. See the RFI editorial of 25 December 2000 and *Jeune Afrique*, 5 décembre 2000.

³³⁰ Debt as a percentage of government revenue was 42.2 % in 1997, 43.6 % in 1998 and 47.6 % in 1999, in IMF Public Information Notice, 2 October 2001. Côte d’Ivoire’s economic growth rates were as follows during this period: 1995: 7.12%; 1996: 7.72%; 1997: 5.72% 1998: 4.75% 1999: 1.58%. It is instructive to compare these figures to the figure for 2000, after the coup: -2.47%. (source: World Bank).

³³¹ See *Jeune Afrique*, 17 février 1998 and the announcement of the first IMF tranche of \$167 million covered in *Marchés Tropicaux*, 20 mars 1998. The ESAF loan is essentially a way of packaging a series of World Bank sector based loans (World Bank loans account for \$800 million of the \$1185 million ESAF announcement).

³³² This decision, for a total of \$1.4 billion, was announced in April 1998 and followed a similar decision in May 1997 (see *Marchés Tropicaux*, 1 mai 1998). Note that France accounted for 51% of Côte d’Ivoire’s bilateral public debt and 52% of Côte d’Ivoire’s private debt is to French banks. See *Marchés Tropicaux*, 27 mars 1998.

³³³ This analysis has been helped by interviews with French, European Commission and Ivorian officials in Abidjan in April 1998.

One result of this donor interaction is that relations with donors tend to oscillate between upswings, when donors agree on a positive assessment of a country's progress, and downswings when a break in relations with one donor can lead to others following suit (this implicit or explicit link between conditions set by donors is referred to as "cross conditionality"). In the first half of 1998, Côte d'Ivoire's relations with donors were in an upswing, allowing both sides to talk optimistically of the "last generation" of adjustment lending and looking forward to moving from adjustment lending to conclusive debt relief.

However, with extremely tight financial margins, optimism can be short lived. By the late summer 1998, the IMF ESAF lending had been delayed due to unfulfilled conditions.³³⁴ By the beginning of 1999, Côte d'Ivoire and the IMF were in open conflict, with Bedié publicly attacking IMF officials (and by implication his main political rival Ouattara, who had returned to the IMF). The second year of the ESAF agreement was not in place by the summer of 1999, with the IMF citing concern over the willingness of the Ivorian government to carry out reforms and questions over accounting practices.³³⁵ While the IMF avoided the word corruption in its carefully worded statements, the breakdown in relations with the European Union (EU), also in 1999, was more spectacular as the details of a major corruption scandal in an EU-funded health sector project was splashed across the newspapers.³³⁶

Relations with donors, as well as the Ivorian economy as a whole, were therefore at a low point at the end of 1999. The effect of the coup of December 1999 was simply to accentuate this. Initially, aware that relations with the IFIs were crucial to keeping his newly acquired state machinery above water, Gueï kept up a minimum of repayments to private donors and the World Bank. However, he could not prevent the economy continuing its slide started in 1999, and the increased disorder in the wake of the coup simply served to make donors and investors hesitate or pull out.³³⁷

The FPI regime started intense negotiations with the IFIs in February 2001. The instability of 2000 had left the country's public coffers empty, and IFI lending was still

³³⁴ See *Marchés Tropicaux*, 9 octobre 1998 and *Africa Confidential*, 11 September 1998, which claims that the difficulties were due to a "spending spree" by the Ivorian government after the signing of the ESAF in March.

³³⁵ See IMF public information notice 16 July 1999. See also *Le Monde*, "Crise ouverte entre la Côte d'Ivoire et le Fonds Monétaire International", 16 mars 1998.

³³⁶ See *Le Monde*, "Les Ivoiriens apprennent par la presse le détournement de l'aide européenne", 21 juin 1999.

³³⁷ Details of donor relations in this period are found in IMF Public Information Notice, 12 July 2000 and *Marchés tropicaux*, 15 décembre 2000.

blocked due to arrears.³³⁸ A visit by IMF officials to Abidjan in April ended in familiar acrimony due to disorganisation in the Ivorian Finance Ministry (despite the presence of French coopérants). In late April the IFIs laid down 14 conditions for restarting their aid, covering public accounting, fiscal coverage, accelerating the privatisation process and starting the preparation for a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), the latter necessary for a Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF) loan. The IFIs also demanded a “secured budget”, which balanced the books independently of IFI lending, thereby stopping the build up of further arrears while new disbursements were frozen. This was duly passed at the end of May.³³⁹

The hesitant attitude of the IFIs in 2001 was mirrored in the position of the European Union. Negotiations opened in February 2001 under article 96 of the Cotonou agreement, which made provision for negotiations between the parties in the case of violations of obligations concerning human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law, and allowed the EU to take “appropriate measures” in the case of non-compliance (that is suspend aid payments). The European Union’s assessment, concentrating on human rights, judicial process and elections, was damning. A six-month assessment period was agreed, accompanied by demands that the Ivorian authorities pursue national reconciliation and carry out prosecutions for human rights abuses. The Ivorian side left the negotiations with an unsuccessful plea that some European Commission spending be resumed before the end of the six-month review.³⁴⁰

One of the more remarkable features of this period was that the IFIs made an agreement with the European Commission a precondition for restarting their aid, in an unprecedented inversion of the customary procedure. This may be seen as a way for the IFIs indirectly to impose political conditions on their aid, which they are not allowed to do directly (under their charter). A division of labour in the imposition of conditionalities therefore emerged, with the IFIs setting economic conditions, while

³³⁸ On 1 March 2001 the World Bank put Côte d’Ivoire in “non-payment status” due to overdue payments of six months. This meant that all World Bank lending on new or outstanding projects was suspended. See World Bank, news release, 1 March 2001.

³³⁹ The ESAF was renamed the PRGF in November 1999 to reflect the new holistic and poverty orientated approach the IFIs wanted to present. See Chapter 2 and *Marchés Tropicaux*, 20 avril 2001. Details of the Côte d’Ivoire budget at this time are in *Fraternité Matin*, 22 mai 2001. The hesitant approach of the IMF during the first six months of 2001 is expressed in the IMF Public Information Notice (PIN) of 31 August 2001.

³⁴⁰ The EU position is found in the presidential statement of 15 February 2001. Note that while condemning the unrepresentative nature of the elections of 2000, the EU did not demand fresh elections, but saw the political reconciliation process as compensation.

deferring to those of the European Commission on human rights and democracy.³⁴¹

Under pressure from the French, the European Council decided in June 2001 to restart Commission aid. This decision was based on the successful local elections of March 2001, ongoing political dialogue and an improvement in the security and human rights situation. However, the level of spending was made conditional on further progress, and the European Council and Commission made further demands and outlined areas of “further concern” including the continued failure to bring to justice the perpetrators of human rights abuses in 2000.³⁴²

The EU decision and the payment of some arrears to the World Bank enabled the IMF to start an interim Staff Monitored Programme (SMP) in July 2001. Côte d’Ivoire was again into an upswing period of donor relations, not experienced since 1998, although donor disbursements were extremely slow in the later half of 2001.³⁴³ The holding of a major “National Reconciliation Forum” in November 2001 reassured the European Commission, which restarted aid fully in February 2002. Negotiations with the IMF for a new three-year programme started in November and in January 2002 World Bank lending resumed. In March 2002 the IMF agreed to a three-year PRGF loan, which in turn stimulated bilateral donors to agree to a large debt reduction package in April. Côte d’Ivoire, in the words of its president in February 2002, “is back”³⁴⁴

What is remarkable in this period of relations with multilateral donors is the continuity in the nature of the tortuous negotiations. Various assumptions of the development aid relationship hold true both before and after the coup, especially the idea that the recipient country government does not wish to implement reforms, and that multilateral lending is used to “purchase” policy. Lead negotiations, even with the Guei junta in 2000, concerned fiscal coverage, public accounting and so forth. Swathes of the Ivorian administration were and remain permanently occupied in trying to meet the IMF

³⁴¹ See *La Lettre du Continent*, 17 mai 2001. Note that in August 2001 the IMF directors “encouraged the [Ivorian] authorities to make every possible effort to regularise their relations with their bilateral and multilateral external partners”, in IMF PIN, 31 August 2001. Some in the FPI and some in Paris saw in this the hand of Ouattara, as in 1999. While there is no evidence to support this, it is indicative of how Ouattara’s position in the IMF was sensitive in terms of domestic Ivorian politics.

³⁴² See RFI, “Gbagbo à Paris pour convaincre”, 18 juin 20; *Le Monde*, “Gbagbo demande à Paris de faire cesser le boycott de l’UE”, 20 juin 2001; and RFI, “l’Union européenne reprend son aide”, 11 juillet 2001.

³⁴³ On the slowness of disbursements in the second half of 2001, see *Africa confidential*, “Conditionally Yours”, 10 October 2001.

³⁴⁴ On this period, see AFP, “Ivory Coast, IMF agree to start talks on three yearly programme”, 16 November 2001; AFP, “World Bank ready to resume aid to Ivory Coast after Abidjan clears dues”, 1 December 2001; AFP, “World Bank to resume financial aid to Ivory Coast”, 31 January 200; *Jeune Afrique*, “Abidjan fait la paix avec ses créanciers”, 11 février 2002; AFP, “Paris Club cancels 911 mn Dollars of Ivory Coast Debt”, 11 April 2002 and World Bank news releases, various dates.

demands, starting with the prime minister, who in reality acts as the external finance minister.

The debt trap has proven a heavy burden for successive Côte d'Ivoire regimes. Instability has slowed the economy down overall and has hence diminished government tax receipts and its ability to service debt. While servicing debt takes up a significant proportion of government revenues, Côte d'Ivoire is constantly obliged to borrow more in order to pay existing debts. It is clear that at several points they were borrowing from one donor in order to pay arrears and thereby restart lending from another.³⁴⁵ Côte d'Ivoire therefore was and remains in a classic debt trap. Donor conditionalities attempt to tackle this by raising the government's tax base and introducing efficiency savings into public services so that debt repayments do not have a detrimental effect on the poor. This has not been successful – fiscal coverage remains low and poverty has not decreased. This failure has led to the mutual recriminations that have characterised Côte d'Ivoire's relations with the IFIs. In particular, the IFIs believe that successive Côte d'Ivoire governments have been reluctant to increase fiscal coverage due to corrupt relations with the business sector. Although 2002 represented a small upswing, the “end to adjustment” envisaged in 1998, to be followed by HIPC debt relief, was some way off, even before renewed instability in September 2002.

ii. The French Role

As discussed previously, the devaluation of the CFA Franc, and the Abidjan doctrine that accompanied it, were indications that the French could no longer bail out francophone African states struggling with debt. The policy that emerged in subsequent years was to use French aid to lever in money from multilateral donors (burden sharing), while attempting to reap the political benefits by positioning themselves as the advocate of the African position in Washington. This policy had the advantage of satisfying the different parts of the bureaucracy in Paris by attempting to externalise the cost of support for francophone Africa's economy.

In the case of Côte d'Ivoire, this policy was apparent before the period of instability, but became dominant in 2001. The French saw 2001 as the year of negotiations with the IFIs: “l'année 2001 sera dominée par les négociations des autorités ivoiriennes avec la communauté financière internationale.”³⁴⁶ In public the French took

³⁴⁵ Especially striking is the explanation given by the Ivorian finance minister to Ivorian Radio, 31 January 2002, according to which World Bank funds have been used to reimburse the World Bank and to restart lending.

³⁴⁶ Personal communication (documentary) May 2001.

pride in their efforts to help Côte d'Ivoire get back onto an IFI programme, help that the Ivorian authorities had publicly requested: “nous allons contacter les institutions internationales pour négocier avec elles. Pour ce faire, nous avons besoin d'un Etat qui se porte garant, qui nous donne l'argent pour amorcer ce dialogue dans de bonnes conditions.”³⁴⁷ French support took various forms. The PAAFIE (Projet d'appui aux administrations financières et économiques), involving around ten coopérants in place since 1993 and funded by the FAC, was intended to give general help to the Ivorian administration in terms of accounting and tax collecting. Initially, PAAFIE worked in coordination with the World Bank's economic support project, but this latter project was suspended after the coup of December 1999. When PAAFIE restarted in 2001, its principal aim was to aid the Ivorians with their negotiations with the IFIs, in which, according to the French, their assistance “devrait jouer un rôle important”.³⁴⁸

In addition to this, the French, starting with Cooperation Minister Josselin, put considerable effort into lobbying the IFIs directly in an attempt to persuade them to restart lending. This included speaking in support of Côte d'Ivoire at the Development Committee of the annual World Bank meeting in 2002 (postponed from 2001 due to the events of 11 September).³⁴⁹ Finally, the French helped Côte d'Ivoire in its negotiations with the IFIs simply by being the first donor to restart project and sector wide aid in late 2000 and early 2001. This was intended to act as a signal that Côte d'Ivoire was now an acceptable development aid recipient, as a sort of political stamp of approval, as well as a general economic stimulus. In addition, it was intended as an encouragement to the World Bank to restart project spending, as several World Bank projects were run in close coordination with French FAC/FSP or AFD projects. Once IFI lending restarted in the first half of 2002, France agreed two budget aid packages of 182 and 183 million Euros, signalling the full renewal of relations, just before the end of Jospin's mandate. (The second of these loans was signed between the two rounds of the presidential elections of May 2002, after the Parti socialiste was certain of not gaining the presidency and was unlikely to form the new government.)

³⁴⁷ Gbagbo, interviewed in *Le Monde*, 19 décembre 2000.

³⁴⁸ Personal communication (documentary), May 2001. Note that the French sent several experts to help in these negotiations, not all of whom were directly included in the PAAFIE programme, but it is unknown exactly how many.

³⁴⁹ Josselin's desire to be in the French chair at this meeting, partly in order to speak on behalf of Côte d'Ivoire, was the subject of a dispute with the Finance Ministry. Although the Finance Ministry leads on relations with IFIs in French administration, the finance minister at the time, Fabius, was not particularly involved in development aid issues and was often represented by an official at World Bank meetings. Josselin managed to establish that in these cases he should take the French chair. This clearly demonstrates the importance he at least attached to the issue.

The French supported Côte d'Ivoire in this way both before and after the instability of 2000, with the difference that the instability had damaged the economy and increased the urgency of negotiations with the IFIs. The new element in 2001 was the key role handed to the European Union by the IMF. The French pulled out all stops in their attempts to influence the European Union decision, in the face of scepticism from the North European countries and from European Commission staff. This included influencing EU diplomatic reports from Abidjan, and directly lobbying commission staff, including two visits by Josselin to the European development commissioner Neilson.³⁵⁰ The fact that these lobbying activities in the European Union did not result in a rapid renewal of Commission spending was a source of intense frustration on the part of the French, who expected to have a greater influence in Brussels than in Washington.³⁵¹ In addition to these direct lobbying efforts, the French were instrumental in advising the Ivorians on measures they could take to meet the conditions of the EU, including various reconciliation meetings between political leaders and the setting up and presentation of the National Reconciliation Forum of November 2001.

Effectively, each part of French development aid spending was subject to a different set of political restrictions. For the AFD, the only condition was repayment of previous lending, without consideration to the political situation (note for example that the AFD agreed to a new project in May 2000, under the military junta of Gueï). Budget aid was of course conditioned on an agreement with the IMF. The conditions for FAC spending were less clear. Contrary to the assertion of one official that it was dependent on full development aid relations with the EU,³⁵² it appears that FAC spending comes with no specific conditions other than the practicability (and political desirability) of individual projects.

It is clear from this analysis that whatever the conditions placed on multilateral aid to Côte d'Ivoire, the French attempted to exert influence in order to get it restarted. For the French, with political, commercial and lending interests far outweighing other donors, getting development aid running was of greater urgency. However, the attitude of the French to the actual conditions requires separate consideration. As previously

³⁵⁰ Personal interviews. See Smith in Le Pape and Vidal, '*Côte d'Ivoire l'Année terrible...*', for a summary of this lobbying activity.

³⁵¹ This standoff on Côte d'Ivoire expressed some longer-term frustrations in that some European countries and Commission staff felt that the French had previously used EU aid to support undemocratic regimes. In 2001 they found themselves with an exceptional degree of leverage over the French on the Côte d'Ivoire issue. Note that while the French held the EU presidency in the last six months of 2000, this transferred to Sweden in the first six months of 2001. For another similar case see the analysis of European and French aid to Togo in Cumming, 'French and British Aid ...', Chapter 8.

³⁵² Personal interview.

argued, the French agreed with the necessity of most of the conditions applied by the IFIs in the late 1990s. This was also true in 2001–2002, with the addition that the French also concurred with the need for political reconciliation demanded by the European Union; they simply wanted development aid spending resumed quicker. Overall, although the French were rather more willing than other donors to give the FPI regime the benefit of the doubt, this should not disguise the fact that they had doubts about the policies and probity of the FPI regime, and looked to the multilateral donors to push for changes.³⁵³

Conclusion

Relations between France and Côte d'Ivoire in the period of this study present a paradox familiar in Franco–African relations – the seeming coexistence of continuity and change. The continuity is seen in the consistently supportive role played by the French in the multi-donor game. Equally, some of the apparent changes in the bilateral relationship may be seen as a repackaging under more acceptable headings, such as “ownership”, of what the French have always done, or as attempts by the French state to co-opt previously existing civil society cooperation. Overall, there is good reason to be wary of exaggerating the degree of change in France’s role in francophone Africa.

The pressure for continuity is indeed strong. The French need to support Côte d'Ivoire because they have too great a material and symbolic interest in its success. It is undoubtedly true, however, that the French have had to *adjust* and *adapt* their aid in the light of four major evolutions – the decline in the number of coopérants, the continuing rise in importance of the IFIs, violent instability and doubts from within French bureaucracy about the wisdom of unconditional support. These doubts remained only roughly articulated in the period under study, but have surfaced more clearly since the renewed instability and attacks on French interests in 2002 and 2003.

These adjustments in the Franco–Ivorian relationship, which in part reflect the wider changes of the Jospin reforms, are important. Their significance lies in what the French can expect as a return for their development aid spending, especially at the symbolic level, and whether Franco–Ivorian relations can continue to be used as a demonstration of the capacity of the French state to project itself abroad. We will return to this issue at the end of this conclusion.

The evolutions of 1998–2002 also have more functional implications for the

³⁵³ This conclusion is based principally on personal interviews.

composition of French aid spending in Côte d'Ivoire. To recapitulate, this spending is comprised of three instruments: budget aid and debt relief managed by the Finance Ministry (in some cases with the AFD acting as intermediary), project and sector wide aid managed by the AFD, and the work of the coopérants and associated development and cultural projects managed by the SCAC. To take each one in turn, budget aid and debt relief to Côte d'Ivoire have been reduced significantly since the mid-1990s. Côte d'Ivoire's HIPC eligibility announced in 1998 would have led to renewed large-scale debt relief under the C2D programme, but this has now been indefinitely set back due to political instability. The AFD's work continues to depend on Côte d'Ivoire's shaky ability to ensure repayments. However, as a middle-income country, Côte d'Ivoire will continue to be an attractive client for AFD lending. The SCAC is principally occupied with managing and paying for coopérants, and does not do significant amounts of project spending.

One potential evolution of this situation is that the AFD will take on all development project work as FSP development projects come to a natural end, and the SCAC will manage only cultural projects, such as cultural centres (as the old cultural attachés did before the reforms), in addition to coordinating the work of NGOs and local government cooperation. In this scenario, it is likely that the SCAC would retain nominal control of a limited number of short-term technical assistance missions in the finance and education sectors.

Many French officials either foresee or support this outcome, or both.³⁵⁴ The principal factor that may lead to such a change is the decline in the numbers of coopérants, which, if it is confirmed (which is highly likely), will force the SCAC to reduce the number of areas in which it acts. In addition, such a change would reflect the dominance of cultural concerns in the DGCID in Paris. However, there are obstacles to such an outcome, indicative of the dilemmas of French development aid in general. First, the division of labour between AFD's project aid and the DGCID/SCAC's aid to ministries ("sovereign aid") as established by the 1998 reforms would be blurred. The AFD is not currently in a position to place its own staff in recipient country governments in significant numbers, nor would ministries in Paris be happy to see the AFD take on such an independent role. Without the presence of the coopérants to give the French an overall view of the economy, the AFD may be hard pushed to do

³⁵⁴ Personal interviews. Note that the renewed instability of 2002, and the sacking of the French cultural centre by a gang of youths in February 2003, has led to renewed consideration of the benefits of the sort of holistic presence under the previous cooperation system. According to some it is likely that the practice

successful sector wide aid. Second, giving a greater role to the AFD would make spending dependent on banking rules and arrears repayments. It is therefore likely to be resisted by those who continue to regard development aid as a political instrument. Third, and most importantly, the DGCID will of course try to defend and indeed expand its areas of intervention, and will try to maintain its position as coordinator of French project aid. The fact that the AFD is not a ministry, and is overseen by officials from the Foreign Ministry, is always likely to restrict any ambitions of the AFD to expand into areas formerly controlled by the Foreign Ministry.

Whatever the exact final consequences of these changes are, it is inevitable that French presence will be significantly reduced. The all-encompassing approach of the previous coopération system is no longer possible. At the same time, the nature of the problems has changed. In the previous period, French development aid projects could at least be seen as going “with the current” of Ivorian development, supporting Ivorian efforts to develop their country and economy. In times of conflict, not only does the scale of the problems change, but development aid also has to work against the destructive dynamics of conflict and pillage. Small-scale social development projects may benefit the local population and reassure coopérants who do not want to work with a government at war, but these projects may equally be destroyed overnight by armed violence. As noted by the DGCID in 2003: “Pour ce qui concerne le Ministère des Affaires étrangères, des concours sont possible sur FSP ou FSD, mais leur niveau est sans commun mesure avec l’ampleur des sujets à traiter.”³⁵⁵

As with the reforms in Paris, this problem can be seen as the relationship between policy decisions (“levers”) and outcomes. As concerns the administration of aid in Paris, some if not all, policy decisions have clear and predictable outcomes (see *supra* chapter 3, conclusion). When it comes to trying to implement a change in Côte d’Ivoire the presence of 3000 French coopérants in the 1980s at least gave the French government a reasonable grip on policy outcomes. In this sense, Côte d’Ivoire was only partially a foreign country for the French government, such was their capacity to effect changes. Relations between sovereign governments are generally quite different from this in that a desired outcome is achieved not through hierarchical decree, but through negotiation between formally equal parties. In its traditional project form, development aid has deviated from this (if a donor’s policy is to build a hospital, the donor can take direct measures to ensure that it is built), although the policy-buying and capacity

of sending coopérants will be all but stopped and only very micro-level FSD projects will continue as before, alongside AFD projects. However, at the time of writing the exact consequences are unclear.

³⁵⁵ Personal communication (documentary).

building model is closer to the more normal negotiation of international relations.

These observations raise a number of questions around the notions of partnership and overcoming neo-colonial relations, which form a central part of the rhetoric of the Jospin reforms. The tentative moves towards recipient country involvement in the reform process,³⁵⁶ combined with the decline in the number of coopérants, indicate that this idea of partnership should be seen as a move from the (post-colonial) semi-insider model towards the sort of negotiations more normal in relations between sovereign states. Although this is a reasonable interpretation of the reforms there are two important reasons to exercise caution in envisaging this outcome for relations between France and Côte d'Ivoire and other francophone African countries. In the first place, French officials very much favour the insider influence model in francophone Africa, and are more than happy to leave the policy-buying to the IFIs. In short, after four decades of decisive influence, French officials simply do not expect to deal with governments in francophone Africa on the basis of formal sovereign equality. In the second place, years of French influence have built up a series of expectations on the part of Ivorian governments (for example that the French will help them in negotiations with Washington) who, moreover, have depended on French help for so long that they have a very low capacity to implement reforms themselves, or play a part in managing aid funds (as seen in 1998–1999, see *supra*, this chapter, section 2, i).

This forced modesty for French development aid in Côte d'Ivoire presages a continuing complex relationship with the IFIs, whose lending Côte d'Ivoire will need for the foreseeable future. The France–IFIs relationship in Côte d'Ivoire may be further clarified by returning to the concept of an aid donor regime.³⁵⁷ Regime theory postulates an expectation of mutual gain to regime participants. In the case of France and the IFIs in Côte d'Ivoire, mutual gain is observable in the coordination of conditionalities. As both parties are generally favourable to the content of these conditions, they stand to gain by coordinating their implementation in order to minimise the extent to which the recalcitrant recipient state can use the differences between donors to avoid compliance. The position of the French, who use the IFIs to impose conditions in order not to be the bearers of bad news, may be described in regime terms as a “free rider”, drawing benefit

³⁵⁶ See *supra* this chapter, section 2i.

³⁵⁷ As discussed in Chapter 2. The Côte d'Ivoire case study is a useful illustration of France's relation to the donor regime, which has been little covered since the work of Wilson, ‘French Support for Structural adjustment...’, and more generally since the discussion surrounding the CFA Franc devaluation, for example in Conte and Sindzingre, ‘*Les Réformes comme processus ...*’ (although in neither case is the specific concept of a regime used. It is used by Cumming, ‘*French and British Aid ...*’, who focuses on the early period of political conditionality).

from conditionalities, and sharing the cost, without incurring loss in terms of diplomatic goodwill. While this notion of free rider is partially applicable in this case, there are further nuances in the France–IFIs relationship in Côte d’Ivoire. Specifically, the IFIs, being controlled ultimately by donors (including France), are in fact happy to play the bad cop, as they do not actively seek good diplomatic relations, and are prepared to impose sanctions. This observation moderates applicability of the notion of the aid donor regime, in highlighting the fact that if non-state actors are included (and in this case they clearly must be in the form of the IFIs), the different actors in the regime are not in fact independent of each other, as regime theory presupposes.

For the French, such is the well-founded expectation that they will be the first to support the Ivorian regime regardless of circumstance that the result of the deferral of conditions to other donors is an almost complete loss of leverage. In effect, the French can obtain very little (cannot buy policy) from any threat to withhold aid, as the Ivorian side simply do not believe such threats. In fact leverage has been the inverse of what may be expected in an aid relationship, as the Ivorian side have been able to use France’s considerable interests in Côte d’Ivoire as a bargaining chip (particularly so in the period after the attempted coup of September 2002) by demanding that the French save them from bankruptcy or instability on the grounds that French interests would go down with them. It is highly likely that the anomaly of this situation is a factor behind doubts among French officials about the value of the relationship.

It is of value to consider at this point how to understand the French position on imposing conditions on the disbursing of aid. The first point to make is to distinguish between “conditions” and “conditionalities”. As explained in section 2ii of this chapter, French aid may be subject to various “conditions” which are not part of French aid policy as such (the problems of spending aid in a conflict situation for example). “conditionalities” on the other hand, must be understood as conditions laid down by the French (whether or not they are done so explicitly) as a way of encouraging or sanctioning actions on the part of the recipient State.

With respect to conditionalities, in Francophone Africa the French tend to shy away from conditionalities, and even to circumvent their own conditionalities, for example by using Finance Ministry money to pay off debts owed to the AfD. This may be out of a French statist respect for sovereignty or, more often, due to a historically embedded desire to curry favour with the President of the recipient country. This reluctance to impose conditions leads to a loss of leverage as an expectation builds up that French aid money will arrive no matter what. However as noted in chapter 2 and

earlier in this chapter, there is a strong belief in Paris that conditions on aid disbursement are necessary, especially in the area of public financial management. In order to square this circle conditionalities are deferred to the IFIs, while the French try to play the “good cop”.

Regime theory further postulates a convergence on norms and expectations over time. This case study has shown convergence of what donors expect of recipient governments, confirming earlier findings.³⁵⁸ Both this case study and further research in Paris have shown that there is convergence on two linked issues – the importance of conditionalities for maintaining macro financial stability and the need to use conditions, including pressure for privatisation, in order to combat public sector corruption. In some respects this convergence may seem unexpected, as significant differences remain (despite the recent modification of the “Washington consensus”) between the French model of a state as a mode of national integration and the IFI model of a minimal embedded state.³⁵⁹ However, both these models remain highly abstract, and bear little resemblance to current-day political society in Côte d’Ivoire. This distance between the reality and the ideals in effect allows the French and the IFIs to agree on current approaches to be taken.

The postulate of regime convergence can be extended to the institutions and actions of donors. The adaptations of France’s aid relationship with Côte d’Ivoire as envisaged in 1998, including engagement with civil society and recipient ownership of reforms, certainly consist of a convergence with the norms of the aid regime, and are in part made necessary by increased donor interaction. Indeed, the ownership agenda is very clearly a regime led evolution, which runs counter to the desire of many French officials to have a hands-on approach to individual projects. The following statement from the CICID is indicative in that it clearly states that this is not a French led policy agenda: “La communauté internationale met aujourd’hui l’accent sur le développement des capacités nationales et l’appropriation par les gouvernements des pays en développement de leurs propres politiques.”³⁶⁰ At the same time it is equally true that these adaptations derive from the domestic context in France and specifically from the desire to put an end to the dissolute practices of la Françafrique. Effectively, those in Paris who have wished to push for reform for domestic reasons look to regime pressures to support their agenda, and consider alignment with the practices of other donors desirable, especially in the area of recipient ownership and the move to sector wide

³⁵⁸ See especially Wilson, ‘French Support for Structural adjustment ...’.

³⁵⁹ See *supra*, chapter 2, section 3ii and *infra*, Chapter 5.

³⁶⁰ CICID, *Relevé de conclusions du Réunion 14 février 2002* Paris, 2002 p. 49.

Regime pressures, in as much as they are causal factors in changes in French practice, therefore operate in several ways. They operate through micro level persuasion and interaction in day-to-day donor work on the ground, which is increasingly coordinated. In addition they work by giving reformers in the French bureaucracy elements of a doctrine of reform that can then be adapted for use in the French setting. Lastly, regime pressure operates through leverage – by virtue of the need of Côte d'Ivoire, and thereby of the French, for IFI and EU funds.

The ruptures in the aid relationship with Côte d'Ivoire pose a further question for the French, which is reflected in regime norms – *selectivity*. In the past the French have avoided all selection of aid partners on the basis of good management (governance, or “policy environment”), except in the sense that the richer (and hence generally better run) states of francophone Africa have been able to absorb more aid than the poorer ones. Instead, aid recipients have been selected purely on a political basis and according to the density of French interests, which ensures a high political and economic return. However, problems experienced in Côte d'Ivoire indicate that the differentiation of francophone Africa into competent partners and difficult partners may force the French to consider selection on good management grounds, although this is unlikely to be declared policy as it is with the World Bank and DFID.

Of course the selectivity issue is really a reformulation of the much-analysed question of allocation (why donors give money to certain countries rather than others). The difference is that selectivity is purportedly based exclusively on the capacity of the recipient country to make proper use of funds. For bilateral donors, such as the UK, this consists in reality of selecting within a group of countries that is already determined by historical ties (nearly all DFID aid in Africa goes to former British colonies, Rwanda and Ethiopia being the only significant exceptions). The French are clearly in a similar position of selecting aid recipients from within a limited set of countries, although recent increase in aid to South Africa may indicate some potential expansion (and in the near future debt relief is likely to be the decisive factor in allocation). However, the French are reluctant to take the path of explicit selectivity based on good management criteria. This is not only for political reasons, but also because they argue that if countries are preselected, the donor's office in that country is likely to fund projects of an inadequate standard in order to fulfil spending expectations. At present the French remain flexible on this issue, although there are evidently a number of informal reasons

³⁶¹ This conclusion is principally based on analysis of personal interviews.

why one country may get more French aid than another. Flexibility in country allocation should be encouraged by the 1998 decision to end the practice of allocating specific quantities of aid to specific countries (country “envelopes”). This decision was taken to alleviate pressure on officials to spend set amounts, which leads to a risk of poor projects being approved. In this sense the French are in fact moving away from the selectivity agenda.³⁶²

Evidently, the decline in the number of senior level coopérants will alter France’s position, both in relations with donors in Abidjan and in terms of the aid donor regime more generally. Previously, the presence of coopérants was considered a means of allowing the French to have an independent and authoritative voice in contributing to debate over development issues, both at country level and more generally. The decline in the numbers of coopérants throughout francophone Africa will increase France’s reliance on the IFIs for both information and analysis, and the credibility of the autonomous French position will suffer. Moreover, the growing influence of the IFIs in Côte d’Ivoire and in the rest of francophone Africa challenges some aspects of the reproduction of the French social and political model, for the external “audience” to which Ivorian decision makers have to respond in order to survive financially subtly shifts from Paris to a combination of Paris and Washington. This process is not even: in some areas Côte d’Ivoire is and will remain distinctly francophone (in the structures of the education system for example). However, in other areas one can observe a long-term struggle for influence between the French and the IFIs, for example in the restructuring of the agricultural marketing systems.³⁶³

* * *

The crisis in Côte d’Ivoire is a crisis of a model that never existed. Neither the French nor their allied successors in power in Abidjan ever created a nation-state in Côte d’Ivoire. In contrast to the evolving sense of nationhood in other parts of francophone Africa, specifically Mali and Senegal, Côte d’Ivoire, in the words of one analyst, “has never been a real country”.³⁶⁴ The French practice of concentrating on education, a

³⁶² See Chapter 2 for details of the selectivity agenda. Note that the AFD already operates a *de facto* selectivity agenda through freezing lending to countries that fall behind on repayments.

³⁶³ As has been pointed out in this chapter and will be discussed further in the next, this does not mean that the French and the IFIs are implacably opposed on all issues. On the contrary, they agree on many aspects of state reform in Africa, but a subtle fight for influence is nevertheless occurring.

³⁶⁴ This observation is from the journalist Andrew Manley. See also Ngouandé, J.-P. *L’Afrique sans la France*, Albin Michel, 2002, Chapter X; and Sidibe, Ibrahima, ‘Le remodelage de la politique étrangère du Mali’, in *Afrique Politique*, Karthala, 2001 for a discussion of the historical “nationhood” of Mali and how this concept has been used by its recent rulers.

reflection of their heritage of nation-state construction, did not contribute to the construction of an Ivorian nation, as it became part of the external orientation of political power. In other words, education became associated not so much with the construction of a single political community but with the exercise of power through proximity to the former colonial masters. Houphouët-Boigny established a particular set of social practices based on inter-communal compromise and state patronage, but neither provided those living in Côte d'Ivoire with a sense of equitable citizenship nor instigated democratic practices akin to those in France. He contained, rather than curtailed, the country's ethno-regional divisions. It is this "model" that is now in crisis through the absence of formal citizenship (seen in the contentious issues of nationality and identity cards), and in the introduction of democracy, which has been marred by factional ethno-regionalism.³⁶⁵

What the French *did* create in Côte d'Ivoire – an economy and the elites to run it – are also integral parts of the crisis. The elites who benefited from previous economic success, and who are now at each other's throats, all owe their success in part to their capacity to maximise the benefits from their links with different parts of the French political, administrative or military establishments. As a consequence, the French have been drawn into the conflict because different parts of the French establishment have supported different parties. In turn, this has exposed differences of position in Paris, which have been exacerbated by the context of cohabitation.

Despite what were in many cases the best intentions on the part of the French coopérants, in reality French presence has left a legacy of semi-authoritarian rule, which reflects the ambiguities of the colonial venture and the paradox of republican imperialism.³⁶⁶ As in the colonial period, so within the coopération system, the creation of a nation-state remained an ideal – something always "in construction" – while the reality of Côte d'Ivoire in the coopération period reflected the economic logic of colonial power and its reproduction in the post-colonial period. The political contribution of coopération in Côte d'Ivoire was to support stable single-party rule. The introduction of formal democratic competition in 1990 therefore destabilised coopération to the same degree that it destabilised Houphouët-Boigny's regime, and exposed the lack of attention given to how coopération could adapt to changes in the international environment and to the passing of a generation.

³⁶⁵ On the crisis of democracy in francophone Africa, see Ngoupandé, ' *L'Afrique sans ...*'. And on Côte d'Ivoire specifically, see N'Guessan, in Le Pape and Vidal, 'Côte d'Ivoire: L'anne terrible ...' On ethno-regional democracy, see Crook, R. 'Winning Coalitions and ethno-regional politics: the failure of the opposition in the 1990 and 1995 elections in Côte d'Ivoire', *African Affairs*, 96, (1997).

Coopération aimed to continue the imperial reproduction of a political and social model. In reality coopération perpetuated a partial, authoritarian version of this model. It is clear that the stability of this authoritarianism owes much to the absence of reform of coopération in its first three decades. The exact relationship between this legacy and Jospin's reforms is difficult to discern, partly because of ambiguities in the reforms themselves, and partly of course because of events on the ground. There is little indication that the cultural nationalism that has driven the reproduction of this model is to be consigned to history in the reforms (witness the preponderance of cultural work in the DGCID). However, at the same time, the decline in the number of coopérants at all levels, as well as the decline of other ties such as the number of Ivorians given visas to study in France (especially when compared with North America) is surely an avowal that while the French language can be promoted here and there, and direct French interests can of course be supported, the idea of the wholesale reproduction of democratic forms, legal systems, notions of citizenship and so forth has now reached its limits.

For the foreseeable future, aid will continue to come from France, and political ties will not disappear overnight. However, this stability pact between French and Ivorian leaders has now been broken. It is important to note that although the FPI government looked to the French for support in 2001 and 2002, they were not inclined to do so out of any long-term sense of loyalty or attachment to France, but out of pragmatic necessity and ties to the Parti socialiste. The FPI has a strong feeling of having been excluded from the France-Africa club, and in some cases have bitter resentments against the former colonial power, which backed the PDCI regime that put many of them in prison. Early in the FPI's period in power this was already evident, for example in their demand that the French close their military base, which according to the Ivorian defence minister "aliene la souveraineté nationale".³⁶⁷ A further illustration of this can be found in some elements of President Gbagbo's interview with *Le Monde* in December 2000. When asked about French hesitations over disbursing a large aid package, he replied "je ne vais pas me mettre à genoux pour pleurer, si la France ne veut plus nous aider, il nous faut chercher du soutien ailleurs."³⁶⁸

As a result the 2000–2002 period was marked by an ambivalence – on the one hand the FPI could be expected to have welcomed the end to neo-colonialism, which the reforms purportedly heralded, while on the other hand they were forced to look to old

³⁶⁶ See Chapter 1.

³⁶⁷ In *Le Monde*, 6 décembre 2000.

friends in France for help and the impression was therefore given of business as usual. However, the return of the Gaullists to power in May 2002 and the armed rebellion in Côte d'Ivoire five months later have led to a serious and thorough-going estrangement between the two governments. Some in the FPI even hold the Gaullists responsible for the outbreak of the civil war.³⁶⁹

While trying to adapt, many French officials are profoundly disappointed and demoralised by the near disintegration of the country they have put so much into for 40 years. The symbolic loss for the French is indisputable – the capacity to demonstrate a symbolic projection of France in the world is weakened. Furthermore, the immediate political gain the French state stands to make out of its presence in francophone Africa is diminished. Not since Algeria has an attempt by the French to project elements of its political society to other parts of the world reached such a dramatic point of crisis as in the French involvement in instability in what was once the jewel in the crown of French Empire.

³⁶⁸ In *Le Monde*, 19 décembre 2000.

³⁶⁹ This will be discussed further in the conclusion to this study.

Chapter 5

The Evolution of the Doctrine of French Development Aid

The opening chapters of this study argued that French development aid was, until the mid-1990s, based on the doctrine of “coopération” – multidimensional support for former colonies of francophone Africa, with the aim of creating and maintaining political and cultural proximity. The context that made this possible (financial stability and the political stability offered by the Cold War) has radically changed. In the wake of these changes, the institutions of French development aid, which reflected the doctrine of “coopération”, were reformed in 1998. It is therefore reasonable to expect that those reforms would entail and stimulate adjustments and evolutions of the doctrinal underpinnings of French development aid spending, in order to provide a renewed rationale for French development aid, both to guide those working in the area, and to maintain public support.

This chapter looks at the production and evolution of the doctrine of French development aid during the period of the Jospin reforms. It asks how doctrine was produced and how it evolved and what specific changes have taken place. It also asks what the concrete implications of the changes are and how they relate to the interaction between French development aid policy and changes in the ideas and practices of other donors.

1. The Production of Doctrine

ii. Doctrine and the Bureaucratic and Political Architecture

Many in Paris have felt that renewal of the foundations of French development aid has been necessary since the financial and political upheavals of the 1980s. In the late 1990s this gained extra impetus through calls from non-governmental groups and parliament for the government to clarify publicly the aims of development aid spending, to justify its cost, and to produce a coherent doctrine that the French could use to exert influence at the global level.³⁷⁰ Renewal of doctrine was urged in order to improve the cohesion of action of the Paris bureaucracy, and to ensure that French development aid accorded with the presentation of French state action in a changing context, for internal and external audiences. As Severino, the head of the AFD, put it: “La France a longtemps

³⁷⁰ The OPCF, in its annual reports, frequently lament the lack of clear French doctrine, as do reports from the Sénat and Assemblée nationale finance committees. In speaking of the doctrinal bases of French development aid in 1998, the OPCF stated “on ne voit pas se définir une politique d’ensemble à long terme susceptible de constituer une solution de rechange réelle au pratiques historiques de l’aide par le haut par les opérateurs étatiques, ni aux approches libérales des institutions internationales.” ‘Avis de l’OPCF’ in OPCF *Rapport 1998*, p. 43. The parliamentarian Barrau calls for “la Crédit de la Coopération (Rapport Barrau), Paris, 26 septembre 2001.

soutenu sa politique de coopération au développement, notamment en raison de l’expérience concrète de l’Afrique ou du Maghreb que nombre de Français avaient acquise. Cette époque est révolue ... le soutien public doit donc être sur d’autres bases.”³⁷¹

This chapter concentrates on the doctrine (the ideas and principles that guide policy choices and provide purpose and legitimacy) produced by official institutions (ministries and others). Concentrating on this level is not to deny the importance of the semi-official level (Parliament, the HCCI) or non-governmental organisations (the OPCF, researchers). For decades French development aid policy has been notoriously closed and unresponsive to outside scrutiny or criticism. However, in the late 1990s, officials became far more receptive to outside influence, as the creation of the HCCI attests. This is also demonstrated by greater frequency of interaction between the official and the non-official levels (joint seminars, commissioned reports, evaluations and so forth). In part this is due to the desire on the part of officials to renew the doctrinal bases of French development aid and the search for new ideas, all in the light of the crisis of the system in the 1990s. It is also true that critics had become more vocal, and were encouraged to believe that reform was possible. In particular, many critics on the centre left were encouraged by the arrival of the Parti socialiste in power and the perception that Jospin was determined to distance himself from Mitterrand’s legacy in Africa.

The key institution in French development aid doctrine is the DGCID. Its development department and evaluation and strategy department have, since 2000, produced “reference documents” on key themes (such as sustainable development or poverty and inequality reduction). These documents are intended to serve as the basis for the planning and then evaluation of projects, and to stimulate convergence of thinking with other parts of the French bureaucracy. This procedure marks a shift from the traditional practice and the culture of the Cooperation Ministry, which had previously concentrated on isolated projects and was highly mistrustful of transversal themes.³⁷²

The AFD is the other main site of production of French doctrine. Like the

³⁷¹ Interviewed in Hessel, Stéphane, *Dix pas dans le nouveau siècle*, Seuil, Paris, 2002, p. 249.

³⁷² Around half a dozen of these reference documents had been produced by mid-2003. They are based in part on the DGCID’s increasingly common practice of commissioning reports or seminars involving outside expertise. See for example the document written by French experts in 2000: *Développement: 12 Thèmes en débat*, DGCID, 2000. Note that the researcher Marc Lévy had recently completed (mid-2003) an evaluation report on the DGCID’s record on poverty and inequality alleviation, using the reference document as an evaluation baseline.

DGCID it was specifically tasked with renewal of French doctrine. The “Lettre de Mission” addressed to the incoming head Severino in November 2001 is explicit in this, requiring the AFD to “jouer un rôle moteur dans l’élaboration de conceptions nouvelles et cohérentes en matière de développement [et] mobiliser les capacités d’analyse de l’Agence pour les faire participer activement à l’élaboration d’une réflexion stratégique française sur les questions de développement”.³⁷³

From 2001 the AFD has played the role of semi-authorised thinking, deliberately pushing the boundaries and testing the waters both with other parts of the French bureaucracy and with other donors. Severino has been well placed to oversee this, as a sympathiser of the Parti socialiste, as a former vice-president at the World Bank and with well placed contacts as a member of the prestigious “Inspecteurs de Finances” corps. It has also been a role he has relished. He has positioned the AFD as a conduit for bringing in and adapting external ideas, encouraging reflection on concepts such as “governance” and SWAPs and welcoming PRSPs, all of which have often been considered too “Anglo-Saxon” by some, especially in the DGCID.³⁷⁴

In order to fulfil this think tank role for the AFD, Severino created a new strategy department. This included major staff reorganisation and the recruitment of new experts, including the addition of the semi-official journal *Afrique contemporaine* (previously at La Documentation française), which has since been increasingly used as the official mouthpiece of the AFD. This is a major departure for the AFD. Under previous heads, including Severino’s immediate predecessor Antoine Pouillieute, the AFD’s policy was to remain focused exclusively on physical infrastructure projects and mechanisms of raising finance for developing countries. Lacking the clout of a ministry, the AFD had always been very reluctant to engage in any form of policy elaboration.

The new strategy department is intended to build on AFD experience to construct a corpus of knowledge and to position the AFD to act as the primary interface with other aid donors, in order to encourage harmonisation and the import of best practice. In the words of the Strategic Plan of April 2002, this is to “contribuer à une meilleure insertion de l’aide française dans les pratiques collectives des bailleurs de fonds” and to provide “importation des bonnes pratiques disponibles sur le ‘marché’”³⁷⁵. This strategy should in turn allow the AFD to promote its own practices, and more

³⁷³ The Lettre de Mission is reproduced in Annex 5. See also the article on the AFD in *Tropicaux*, 14 décembre 2001.

Marchés

³⁷⁴ His views can be gauged from his interview in Hessel, ‘*Dix pas ...*’; Severino, Jean-Michel ‘Refonder l’aide au développement au XXIe siècle’, *Critique internationale*, janvier 2001 and Séverino, Jean-Michel and Bianco, Jean-Louis, *Un autre monde est possible*, Fondation Jean Jaures, Paris, mars 2001.

generally the specificities of French practice, on the world stage – “être une agence de développement de référence mondiale”.³⁷⁶

The Finance Ministry has not actively participated in this doctrinal elaboration, except in its role as co-secretariat of the CICID, as it has neither the staff capacity nor the inclination, but its dominant financial position and oversight role has allowed it to act as a restriction and a filter on production of doctrine. It has pushed for greater sector wide aid and better coordination with other donors, against the wishes of many in the Foreign Ministry/DGCID who remain wedded to the project approach. In addition, it holds a highly strategic role in representing France at the IFIs, which puts it in a key position to enact France’s policy of influencing other donors, which has emerged as a major part of French strategy.

Superimposed onto this confused bureaucratic landscape was the politics of cohabitation. Chirac enjoyed the presidential prerogative over foreign affairs, and all thinking at the Elysée level enjoyed hierarchical authority over other parts of the administration. Moreover, Chirac has always been heavily involved in the area, and believes that political capital can be made out of it, in contrast to Jospin, who did not see it as in his political interest to invest time or political capital in overseas development.³⁷⁷ However, Chirac did not control the government machinery, and the Parti socialiste and many of the senior officials who prospered under its government saw Chirac as fatally tainted by the corruption of “La Françafrique” and were therefore resistant to ideas and guidance coming from the Elysée. As a result, many officials responsible for elaboration of France’s development doctrine had a strong sense that change was needed, but lacked direction from their hierarchical seniors, and were not sure whether what they produced could be presented as *the* government’s policy.³⁷⁸

However, the tensions caused by the reforms cannot be read entirely through party political differences. Traditional aspects of French development aid policy, such as maintaining a presence in francophone Africa, have always held considerable appeal on the left as well as the right. Equally, the “technocratic” alliance, which has resisted

³⁷⁵ AFD *Plan Stratégique* Paris, 2002.

³⁷⁶ The Strategic Plan is summarised in Assemblée Nationale, ‘*Rapport au nom de la Commission des finances ... 2002*’, Annexe 3, ‘Affaires Etrangères, Coopération au développement’, Rapporteur spéciale: Henri Emmanuelli, Paris, 2002. Some examples of concrete results of this doctrinal elaboration are *L’AFD et la réduction de la pauvreté et des inégalités*, AFD, January 2001; *L’AFD et le NEPAD*, no date, available on the AFD website May 2003; “Pour une politique continentale des infrastructures” speech by Severino at conference of African Development Bank March 2001; and *Le Partenariat public-privé à l’AFD: une approche renouvelée*, no date, available on the AFD website, May 2003.

³⁷⁷ See *supra* chapter 3, conclusion.

³⁷⁸ Source: personal interviews.

this policy on the grounds of cost, also spans left and right. The real root of the political differences that cohabitation exposed is that Chirac has long-standing ties to several African leaders and looks to development aid to cement these relations. He therefore looks for opportunities to tie support for francophone Africa to ideas of the generosity and solidarity of France. Diminishing aid volumes in the 1998–2002 period and accusations that Jospin was “abandoning” Africa gave him an opportunity to place himself as the advocate of France’s aid policy and the face of France’s “solidarity” with the world’s poorest countries, to demand a rise in development aid volumes and to present himself in paradoxical contrast to the “austere” socialists, outflanking Jospin to the left. In 2001, the emergence of the NEPAD agenda provided Chirac with the opportunity to shift this support for Africa away from his ties with the undemocratic “dinosaurs” of francophone Africa by enthusiastically embracing a political and economic project supported by all African leaders.³⁷⁹

French support for the NEPAD agenda, orchestrated from the Elysée by former IMF director Michel Camdessus, was in many ways all things to all people, encompassing infrastructure, governance, peace and security and so forth. However, the central thrust of increased support for Africa channelled through support for domestic African reformers and continent wide reform ownership, was in fact entirely in line with the doctrine that was emerging from those responsible for the reforms under Jospin.³⁸⁰ This highlights the central paradox of the production of French development aid doctrine in this period. On the one hand it was clearly marked by bureaucratic and political rivalry, or what the head of the DGCID aptly called in 1999 the “Mosaïque de féodalités” common in French political and bureaucratic life.³⁸¹ On the other hand, despite these centrifugal forces, the positions actually taken by the different institutions and actors were remarkably similar. French development aid doctrine cannot therefore be satisfactorily interpreted through the prism of bureaucratic or political competition. All those involved agreed on the central premise of the emerging doctrine – that French aid should be used to demonstrate the limits of “market fundamentalism” and to rehabilitate the role of the state while simultaneously opening out to non-state actors. In part this similarity of views across French administration was due to a shared desire to

³⁷⁹ NEPAD was a plan for African development created in 2001 under the impetus of President Mbeki of South Africa, which quickly gained the endorsement of the G8 group of leading economies, including France, which embraced this principle, and has since made relations with Mbeki a key to French pan-African policy.

³⁸⁰ As an official close to Josselin remarked, it was only in 2002, when it was effectively too late, that they realised that Camdessus was in fact promoting ideas very close to their own (personal interview).

³⁸¹ François Nicoullaud, in *Ministères des affaires étrangères, Les Correspondances du ministère des affaires étrangères* N. 43, Paris, 1999, p. 6.

have a strong national doctrine in development issues, which has encouraged some collaboration and coordination across Paris, including for example secondment of staff between the AFD and the DGCID and closer collaboration between the Finance Ministry and DGCID officials in the production of CICID documents.

This consensus in the context of a highly competitive bureaucratic environment is illustrative of the tension between the two key forces at play – cohesion and fragmentation. In the coopération period, this consensus was maintained through broad allegiance to the coopération doctrine (see Chapter 1). What further research shows is that although the consensus of coopération has been severely weakened,³⁸² strong centripetal forces remain in French aid policy doctrine, related to the institutional functioning of French bureaucracy.

As emphasised in the introduction to this study, this relates to the shared socialisation processes of French elites (their “habitus”), in particular in educational terms. Despite some limited diversification in recent years, the majority of the elites who are the subject of this study have taken the grand école route, most often preceded by study at one of France’s institutes of political studies.³⁸³ In addition to education, the corps system serves at least as much to give these individuals a sense of belonging to a restricted elite charged with the fortunes of the French nation-state, as it does to give a sense of bureaucratic competition. Although cohabitation undoubtedly acted as a significant extra factor for fragmentation or dissension, it did not obviate this. The result can be seen on two levels – in the first place in a desire to produce a coherent French doctrine and in the second place in the key elements of that doctrine, especially as concerns the role of the state in development. This latter point will be further elaborated in the next section of this chapter.

ii. The Construction of Rivals and Allies

The creation and adaptation of French doctrine in the period under study is characterised by the construction of a rival development doctrine – the neo-liberal

³⁸² See especially Bourmand, Daniel, ‘French Political Culture and African Policy: from consensus to dissensus’, in Philander, Diane (ed), *Franco-South African dialogue* ISS (Series: Sustainable Security in Africa), Pretoria, August 2000.

³⁸³ Although it is rare for senior French officials to have significant experience outside the French system, at the very senior level there is a degree of interchange between the world of the “grands corps” and the IFIs, which itself is an interesting counterpoise to the notion that French and “Anglo-Saxon” policy are at loggerheads. There are some interesting examples of this position of gatekeepers between French administrative culture and other environments. Camdessus is the most prominent example in recent times. Severino, previously at the World Bank and the head of the AFD during most of the period of this study, is particularly interesting in this respect, for he has shown an evident desire to push the limits of this gatekeeper role.

position attributed to the IFIs (paradoxically given that the French are significant shareholders in the IFIs), and sometimes more widely to the “Anglo-Saxon” donors. To refer to neo-liberalism as a “construction” of French doctrine is not to deny that it exists. There was indeed a clear move to neo-liberal thinking in development aid from the 1980s. However, as is often the case with fault-lines in international politics (the use of the “clash of civilisations” concept may be cited as another example), French doctrine rhetorically simplifies this position and exaggerates its cohesion and homogeneity in order better to construct an identity in opposition to it, to position France as the “alternative view” or the “resistance” to a powerful rival. In addition, in some cases French doctrine attempts to bring in other elements of difference that can shore up the two alternative identities, relating the French position to long-held beliefs or experiences and highlighting supposed deep cultural and political fault-lines with those who hold rival beliefs.³⁸⁴

The common thread to these attempts to rally support behind the French position, again familiar to observers of French cultural and foreign policies, is the inference of rebellion and dissent against a stronger hegemonic order. Often this consciously evokes the “revolutionary” origins of French modern society, even if, in the current context, that dissent is predominantly presented as a conservative dissent (stability versus the destabilisation brought about by global capitalism). This solicitation of global dissent incorporates the attempt to use (or “co-opt”) existing dissent in French or international society as a support for official French positions.³⁸⁵

One highly refined example of this reinforcement of a policy identity in contradistinction to the rival is the text “Coopération au développement: pouvons-nous échapper à la pensée unique?” in a foreign ministry document of 1999,³⁸⁶ which describes a homogenous and misguided neo-liberal “Washington Consensus” originating in American universities and which “règnent en maître sur la pensée économique mondiale”. It is held to be responsible for “cures d'austérités amères imposées aux populations et aux Etats, avec des ajustements monétaires relayés par des politiques budgétaires drastiques, une confiance quasiment sans bornes envers les lois du marché”.

³⁸⁴ In a revealing example of this, one senior French official described the UK’s and America’s position on sanctions against undemocratic regimes in Africa as “Protestant moralism”, presumably in contrast to France’s Catholic pragmatism (personal interview).

³⁸⁵ Chirac’s sympathetic attitude towards the anti-globalisation demonstrations at Genoa in 2001 is a characteristic example. It is interesting to note that the DGCID financially supported the radical anti-globalisation forum ATTAC in its preparation for the Porto-Allegro conference in 2002, according to *Le Monde* of 2 février 2002.

In another example, the report of 1999 for the Conseil Economique et Social on West African integration reads as an attempt to transpose this doctrinal fault-line onto the construction of regional organisations in West Africa. According to this report, UEMOA (Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine), building on French and European support, can serve as an example of how regional organisations in Africa can function properly. A reinforced UEMOA would, naturally, constitute a rampart against the neo-liberal dictates of the IFIs, its regional strength allowing it to resist the forced pace of liberalisation. It should be noted that this position, reflected in the financial and technical support France gives UEMOA, is in contradiction with the aim of economic integration of the whole of West Africa through the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), adhered to by all West African states and by the African Union, although regarded as some way off by analysts.³⁸⁷

Clearly, French support for UEMOA is also intended to consolidate the sense of belonging to francophone institutions on the part of francophone African leaders, as a diluted way of perpetuating the existence of a French model of political and institutional practice, as well as preserving French commercial advantages. The creation of OHADA (the Organisation pour le Harmonisation des Droits d’Affaires en Afrique, also set up in 1994) is another example of this, for its attempt to harmonise business practices is limited to francophone countries (with the partial exception of Cameroon). While this is a pragmatic position given the historical differences between the judicial systems of francophone and Anglophone Africa, and needs also to be seen in the light of French mistrust of the chaotic and ungovernable Nigeria, it clearly works against the longer term harmonisation or integration of the two.

This creation of the neo-liberal rival runs like a thread through almost all French work, whether official or not, and is used by both the right and the left. The report on French development aid of 1999 by the Parti socialiste member of parliament Yves Tavernier, for example, provides a clear statement of this construction of the French position by counter-distinction:

³⁸⁶ Ministère des affaires étrangères ‘*Les Correspondances...*’ pp. 12–13.

³⁸⁷ Conseil économique et social *Prospectives pour un développement durable: quelle politique de coopération avec les pays de l’UEMOA?* Rapport présenté par Janine Cayet, Documentation française, Paris, 1999. UEMOA was created in 1994 after the devaluation of the CFA Franc in order to enhance the potentials of regional economic integration. The hostile attitude regarding anglophone West Africa (namely Nigeria) is most clearly articulated on pp. II 72–3. The regional strength of UEMOA as a potential counter-force to neo-liberalism, for example in the cotton sector, is described on pp. II 59–93. Note that there has recently been a resurgence in French interest in ECOWAS, but this is related exclusively to the Ivorian crisis and the desire to build the capacity of ECOWAS to respond to such crises and share the burden with the French.

“Cette approche ultralibérale imprègne la démarche de certaines institutions multilatérales, qui accordent à la libre entreprise et aux lois du marché la vertu de créer des richesses tout en garantissant l'équilibre social ... le modèle français d'organisation de la vie économique et sociale, et plus généralement la perception du politique et de l'économique en Europe, nous permettent de mieux comprendre les besoins des pays en voie de développement.”³⁸⁸

This position has been made more complex, however, by the apparent breakup of the neo-liberal Washington Consensus, the introduction by the IFIs of governance related ideas and of a more holistic approach (the CDFs – Comprehensive Development Frameworks), and by their (re)discovery of the anti-poverty agenda.³⁸⁹ This new international consensus creates complications for those who wish to position themselves as “counterweights” to the dominant thinking, as it appropriates the prescriptions of its own critics and creates a tendency to depoliticise the debate and “bury” the underlying tension between liberal and social-democratic views.³⁹⁰

In some quarters in Paris this evolution is celebrated as the vindication of the French position, although scepticism is often expressed about whether the changes really constitute a change of heart on the part of the IFIs: “A juste titre tous ceux qui depuis des décennies travaillent au sein de la coopération française dans l'intimité des problèmes du monde en développement, ont eu l'impression que la Banque Mondiale découvrait soudainement, avec une certaine naïveté, des réalités triviales.”³⁹¹ For others, however, these changes have stimulated new thinking and new counter-proposals. Much recent French doctrine attempts to incorporate notions of good governance and poverty alleviation, despite continuing reservations in many quarters in Paris, and produce new and original interpretations, partly in order to be in a position to wield greater influence on the evolutions of development aid doctrine globally. The AFD in particular has been in the forefront of attempts to consider the implications of this new international

³⁸⁸ Tavernier, Yves, *La Coopération française au développement, Rapport au Premier Ministre* [] , La Documentation française, Paris, 1999. Other prominent examples of this anti-neo-liberal consensus can be found in the parliamentary debate on development aid and Africa of 10 April 2003 and the collection of texts and interviews by Stephen Hessel, ‘*Dix Pas ...*’.

³⁸⁹ See *supra* chapter 2, section 3i.

³⁹⁰ See Lévy, M. ‘Comment renouveler les politiques de “coopération au développement”’, *Esprit*, juin 2000, pp. 83–7: “Un débat difficile dans un contexte de consensus”.

³⁹¹ Ministère des affaires étrangères, ‘*Les correspondances ...*’, p. 13. For a more thorough and academic expression of this scepticism see the record of the HCCI meeting of August 2000 on good governance: Haut conseil de la coopération internationale, *Les non-dits de la bonne gouvernance*, Karthala, Paris, 2001.

consensus for French doctrine.³⁹²

This construction of national identity in counter-distinction to more powerful global forces is familiar to observers of the foreign policy and cultural politics of France, for whom, in the words of Marisol Touraine, “l’identité a toujours passé par l’affirmation de sa différence.”³⁹³ It has manifested itself in Africa policy as the “Fachoda syndrome”, and in more general foreign policy in France’s position as a middle path alternative to the Cold War confrontation of the superpowers, whereby France was able to construct distinction and difference while avoiding direct confrontation. With the end of the Cold War these distinctions are less clear. To some degree the baton has passed to “globalisation” itself, with American power regarded implicitly as a sort of shadow puppeteer. The process and values of globalisation are constructed as a threat to both the French way of life and to French influence abroad, but also, paradoxically given France’s history of cultural centrism, to global cultural diversity.³⁹⁴ The exact form that the rival takes, and the exact nature of what is being defended, may therefore be highly malleable according to circumstances. However, the principle of constructing a French foreign policy identity in contradistinction to rival powers is remarkably persistent.

In order to constitute a credible counterweight to rival thinking, France needs to have allies. The composition of this group in the presentation of French development aid policy is highly variable. At its narrowest it encompasses only France and francophone Africa, particularly in questions of regional integration in Africa. At its broadest it encompasses all those who may be assumed in some way to share French official thinking or to adhere to a notional commonality of interest. In several official documents this stretches to include academic researchers, who are expected to provide intellectual foundations for the French position.³⁹⁵

³⁹² See, for example, AFD ‘*L’AFD et la réduction ...*’, which reads as an attempt to persuade a sceptical French audience that the fight against poverty is to be taken seriously as a central plank of development aid policy: “objectif international de réduction de la pauvreté doit être considéré comme une tendance ‘lourde’ que l’opérateur de l’aide publique française qu’est l’AFD doit intégrer dans ses stratégies opérationnelles”, p. 1.

³⁹³ Touraine, Marisol, ‘La Representation de l’adversaire dans la politique extérieur de la France depuis 1981’, *Revue française de science politique*, 43, 5, 1993.

³⁹⁴ This question has filled acres of newsprint and academic volumes, especially in the debate over the “cultural exception” (whether cultural products should be given special treatment in trade liberalisation negotiations). One characteristic contribution is by the Parti socialiste parliamentarian Henri Weber, “Faire vivre l’exception culturelle”, in *Le Monde*, 8 janvier 2002.

³⁹⁵ Examples are DGCID, *Lutte contre la Pauvreté, les inégalités et l’exclusion*, Paris, 2002 and Ministère des affaires étrangères ‘*les correspondances ...*’, in which Nicoulaud calls for the creation of a French development studies research institute in order “s’organiser en conséquence [de] la ‘pensée unique’ qui domine les instances internationales” (p. 5).

The most commonly referred to source of support for the French position is “Europe”. French contribution to the European Development Fund (EDF), which at 24.7 % is far above its economic or demographic weight in Europe, and France’s central role behind the reforms of European development aid in 2000 attests to a “choix européenne pleinement assumé”.³⁹⁶ This generates an expectation that European development aid can be relied upon to be an extension of the ideas, principles and influence of French development policy, an expectation reflected in the broader foreign policy field. The role demanded of Europe is to draw upon its social-democratic tradition to construct a counter-hegemonic position to neo-liberal thinking. As Jospin put it in a speech in June 2000: “Dans cet Esprit l’Europe peut apporter une expérience irremplaçable à la mise en œuvre d’une mondialisation maîtrisée: parce qu’elle fut à la fois le berceau du développement économique et de la démocratie, parce qu’elle a su après la seconde guerre mondiale conduire une intégration économique voulue et maîtrisée, respectant la diversité de ses nations”³⁹⁷.

This expectation is remarkably consistent in France.³⁹⁸ While historically the French have successfully used the European aid programme to share the financial burden of development financing in francophone Africa, this expectation that Europe will fall into line behind France has the potential to generate suspicion and resentment in other European capitals, especially given tensions over France’s support for undemocratic regimes (what may be termed the “Togo problem”). As a result, and more generally due to weaknesses in European foreign policy cohesion, the French expectation that Europe would be the source of counter doctrine on development issues have been continually frustrated. The European Union simply does not collectively have a capacity or cohesion to produce strongly articulated doctrine comparable to the IFIs, and especially the World Bank in its self-appointed role as the research and knowledge management institution. This is indeed a problem for the creation of French doctrine as a whole. Once the French, for reasons discussed in this chapter, have set up their own doctrine in contradistinction to the alleged “consensus” of Washington they face a serious problem of lack of capacity to elaborate fully that doctrine, especially faced with the enormous research capacity of American universities.

³⁹⁶ CICID, *La Politique française au développement: pour une mondialisation plus solidaire* , Paris, 2002, p. 42.

³⁹⁷ Speech at the opening of the European conference on development, Paris, June 26, 2000.

³⁹⁸ Lévy, Marc, ‘La Coopération européenne de développement’, in OPCF, *Rapport 2002* , gives an appraisal of how and why this expectation may be frustrated. Note that the Groupe d’artisanat auditioned by the Conseil Sociale et Economique described this expectation that Europe will follow the French lead as “assez présomptueux”, but this dissenting position is rare in France (in Conseil social et économique, ‘*Prospectives pour un développement durable ...*’).

Europe remained an unavoidable reference point in French doctrine in the period of this study. Aside from financial burden sharing, there were important reasons for the Jospin government to confirm and consolidate the multilateral dimension to French aid, as it was regarded as one important way of overcoming the corrupt relations of “la Françafrique”, which had flourished in the bilateral environment. For reasons of supposed doctrinal proximity (as well as the fact that EDF funds are more likely to go to French allies than are other multilateral funds), channelling funds through Europe was far more attractive to them than to increase funding to other multilaterals (as statistics in Annex 1 show, French multilateral aid increased between 1997 and 2002, and of this an increasing amount went to the EDF).

Frustrated by the failure of Europe to be “à la hauteur du défi”,³⁹⁹ French discourse often falls back on the tried and tested position of the advocate of the world’s poorer countries, or more specifically of Africa, in global politics and economy. “Nous restons”, claimed Josselin, “le meilleur avocat de l’Afrique”.⁴⁰⁰ This position suffers from several problems – tensions between support for populations of Africa and support for unpopular regimes, and problems over the supposition of commonality of interest. Its biggest challenge comes from francophone African leaders who, counter to French expectations built up over years of de facto diplomatic leadership, do not fall into line.⁴⁰¹ In development terms this is seen most clearly in the agricultural trade issue, as more and more Africans voice concern over the effects of Western subsidies on world prices, and see France as a major backer of the Common Agricultural Policy, which is partly responsible for these low prices. Malian President Amadou Touré for example, in discussing the trade issue during a visit to France stated that “plus que de l’aide nous demandons la justice”. In diplomatic terms the problems of France’s “leadership” of Francophone Africa it was brought dramatically to the fore in reticence on the part of Senegal and Cameroon to back openly Chirac’s position on Iraq in early 2003.⁴⁰²

2. French Development Doctrine and the Global Aid Regime

i. The State, the Market and Poverty

³⁹⁹ Tavernier, ‘*La Coopération française au développement . . .*’ p. 93.

⁴⁰⁰ In *Marchés Tropicaux*, 14 décembre 2001.

⁴⁰¹ As discussed in the previous chapter and *infra* conclusion, section 2.

⁴⁰² On the agricultural issue see *Africa Confidential* of 23 November 2001, which reports irate exchanges between French and African officials at the WTO negotiations in Doha. Touré is quoted in *Le Monde* of 12 septembre 2002. French “support” for the world’s poor countries of Africa is of course often expressed through “la Francophonie”. For the ambiguities and limits of this see Etienne Le Roy, *La Francophonie supranationale au milieu du gué*, in OPCF, *Rapport 2001*, Paris, 2001.

It is clear that the doctrine of French development has an ambivalent relationship to the norms and principles of the wider global aid regime, as part insider, part dissenting voice. The key issue of contention has been, and remains, that of how the *end point* of development can be characterised (whether the alleviation of poverty, which dominates the doctrine at the global level, is an adequate formulation) and what mechanisms can be used to achieve it, and how these mechanisms are to be balanced. At the broadest conceptual level the two mechanisms available are the allocation of factors of production through anonymous market forces, and the actions possible through conscious collective action, whether at the state level or through public organisations semi-independent of state power (such as decentralised government).

Those involved in formulating French development aid doctrine believe that market forces are useful in order to create an efficient economy that can hold its own in the international economy. It is also important to note that many influential French companies have benefited from privatisation of public services and infrastructure in sub-Saharan Africa. However, French officials also believe that the perfect market place does not exist, least of all given the inequalities of the global economy. Without the support of strong public and private institutions, including the financial sector and professional associations, market forces will fail to deliver benefits: “dans la plupart des pays de la zone de solidarité prioritaire, les mécanismes de marché ne fonctionnent pas correctement: les acteurs économiques locaux, souvent de petite taille et placés dans un rapport de force inégale ... ont besoin de soutien extérieur pour se structurer.”⁴⁰³

Markets therefore need tailoring and structuring, by the state, in ways that reflect the context in which they operate. In Africa, this involves support for the institutional environment, including the judiciary; support for private sector financing, including micro-credit schemes; continuing public investment in basic infrastructure (transport, energy) on which the private sector relies; and support for regional integration in order to increase economies of scale. What unites these, and what necessitates the intervention of the public sector and of external development aid, is that these are areas of common benefit, or what the French term “l’intérêt général”, and therefore cannot be expected to

⁴⁰³ CICID, *La Politique française au développement ...* p. 56. Pages 56–60 of this document specify the current French position on markets and developing countries. See also Conseil économique et social, ‘*Prospectives pour un développement durable ...*’, pp. 9–10, which advocates selective protectionist measures for developing countries (specifically UEMOA). Note that this position draws on theories of market failure or market imperfection associated with Joseph Stiglitz, former chief economist at the World Bank. Stiglitz’s position and role in evolutions of World Bank policy are discussed in DGCID, *Lutte contre la Pauvreté ...* p. 9. Stiglitz’s view is put succinctly in *Globalisation and its Discontents*, Penguin, London, 2002, which enjoyed considerable success in France under the title *La grande Désillusion*. See also the text by Severino, who worked with Stiglitz at the World Bank, ‘Pour une politique continentale ...’.

be provided by the private sector, especially when the market in Africa cannot support the private sector's demand for returns.⁴⁰⁴

This concern with the relation between the market and the “intérêt général” is revealing. For the majority of French officials and politicians, the market is one part of the equation of development, but only one, and must not be seen as an end in itself.⁴⁰⁵ This is representative of the historic distrust of the French towards anonymous market forces. While the traditions of liberal theory, which are influential in America, see the market as an enhancement of democracy through personal freedom, the market is habitually opposed in French thinking to the capacity of the political and democratic system to enact its decisions (“voluntarism”) and the state’s capacity to represent “l’Intérêt général”. For most French the liberal market lacks a cohesive narrative, and does not provide a sufficient sense of political community. The notion of collective public action is therefore an integral part of the French notion of the Republic. This distrust of the market has been partly attenuated since the early 1980s. However, the distrust of the market in France persists today, as is demonstrated by the strength of the anti-globalisation movement and its force of attraction over the political mainstream.⁴⁰⁶

The French position points to the centrality of the state in the development process. The French were always uneasy about what they saw as the eagerness with which the IFIs turned against the state in the 1980s and have always argued that the state in developing countries needs to be strengthened not minimised. The role that the French hope the state can play, and areas in which French aid is intended to help, are made explicit in the key CICID document of 2002 – namely to guarantee legality, to guarantee security of individuals and property, to build capacity in local government, to make social services (health and education) available to the population and to ensure that public servants are competent and honest.⁴⁰⁷ In addition, the state is seen more generally as the site of legitimacy of public action: “le rôle des Etats reste déterminant,

⁴⁰⁴ The difficulty of attracting private investors to make investments in Africa’s infrastructure (largely because supply is based on Western prices, and demand in Africa is based on incomes that are on average one-thirtieth of Western levels) indicates that the French are right in thinking that some form of collective as opposed to purely private remedy is called for.

⁴⁰⁵ See, for example, Severino and Bianco, ‘*Un autre monde ...*’, pp. 60–5, who argue that efficiency, in which the market plays a role, should be one, but only one, of the four founding principles of global governance, the others being democracy, justice and sustainability.

⁴⁰⁶ On the “legitimisation” of the market in French domestic politics from the 1980s, see Georges Hatchuel, ‘Les grands courants d’opinion et de perception en France’, in Foucauld, Jean-Baptiste, *La France et l’Europe d’ici 2020*, La Documentation française, Paris, 1993. For an example of the appeal of the anti-globalisation position to the mainstream parties see article by Henri Emmanuelli and Jean Luc Mélenchon (of the Parti socialiste), “Un autre monde est possible”, *Le Monde*, 13 août 2002.

⁴⁰⁷ CICID, ‘*La Politique française au développement...*’, pp. 55–6.

car c'est d'abord en leur sein que s'élaborent les choix démocratiques.”⁴⁰⁸

These priorities can be seen essentially as a restating of the problem of state construction. In this doctrine, there is an implied differentiation between two connected visions of state action. On the one hand the demand is made that the state be technically competent, that it *exist* as a public sphere as distinct from the interests of private individuals (what was identified in the introduction to this study as the regalian function). On the other hand it is being asked to be *legitimate*, not simply in the sense of being representative in its structures (formally democratic) but also to embody the will of the population. While state construction is of course a general problem of development, perceptions of what the process consists of differ, in part according to national experiences. This dual construction through the state of “l'intérêt général” and a democratic republic is embedded in the historical construction of the political sphere in France, or what Touraine calls the “mouvement français de construction du politique par l'Etat”.⁴⁰⁹ It is present in the symbolic significance of the French Revolution as the imperfect rupture with the absolutist state and the development of the integrative and representative functions of the French state. In other words, the French perception of state construction as a problem for modern day developing countries is filtered through the prism of language and practices that are embedded in the history of the French state and manifest in the attitudes of senior officials.

However, while the French state, for all its faults (which indeed relations with sub-Saharan Africa have brought out very clearly), can be looked to and referred to as an example of disinterested public action, the state in Africa evidently cannot. Nor can the French state be transposed lock and key into the African context, as seen in the previous chapter. The processes of corruption embedded in the process of state construction in Africa and the “captation du pouvoir par une élite peu soucieuse du bien commun”,⁴¹⁰ pose a particular challenge to the French position, or in the words of Gustave Massiah, head of the French research institute CRID: “La nécessité de lutter contre l'idée libérale qui voudrait que tous les Etats soient forcément corrompus, bureaucratiques, inefficaces ne rend que plus pressante la lutte que nous devons mener contre les déviations bureaucratiques, technocratiques et autoritaires de l'Etat.”⁴¹¹

The problem is therefore, in French eyes, not that the state in Africa does too much, but that it has, in the majority of cases, fundamentally failed to represent

⁴⁰⁸ Jospin speaking to the joint World Bank and Conseil d'analyse économique conference, June 2000.

⁴⁰⁹ ‘La Representation de l'adversaire . . . ’ p. 812.

⁴¹⁰ DGICD, ‘Lutte contre la Pauvreté . . . ’, p. 15.

“l’intérêt général”.⁴¹² There is an implicit acknowledgement in this that the replication of elements of the Jacobin state in Africa, while it has in the past brought stability benefits, is now at an impasse. Part of the response is the turn towards supporting independent initiatives emanating from the population. In some ways this can be seen as a reflection of the evolution of French society. For example, this was true of cooperation between local government authorities, which was only made legal in France in 1992 (local government cooperation is generally assimilated to the area of non-state cooperation in French doctrine). This change in French development doctrine aims to facilitate the construction of a more active citizenship, and a contribution to the legitimacy of the state, which may be called on to participate in such initiatives. After much hesitation, and in the face of doubts on the part of many French officials, the French are now more openly embracing the principle that non-governmental groups should be actively involved not only in economic and social development in Africa (which they clearly are anyway), but also in the formulation of development aid policy both in Paris and in recipient countries. This role may consist of a consultative role (in the DGCID’s Commission de coopération décentralisé, set up in 1996 (CCD), or in the bilateral Commission mixte or multilateral PRSP processes in the recipient country) or it may consist of an active part in development aid funded projects. In this latter case the French want to try to encourage a three-way contractual relationship between the donor, the non-governmental group and the state of the recipient country.

This turn towards the non-governmental has an uneasy coexistence with the historical strength of state-centrism in French life. As an illustration of this, the French do not often use the term civil society (“société civile”), a familiar refrain from other donors. This reticence demonstrates some unease with the use of a term that often appears to posit the population in opposition to the state, and that is regarded by many in France as naive in its evocation of a “civil” society apparently unsullied by power or politics. In contrast, French doctrine evokes a variety of forms of that may in certain circumstances be supported (unions, professional organisations and so forth), and most importantly, pleads for a greater account to be taken of the power structures inherent in society.⁴¹³

This view is reflected in the French position on the fight against poverty. After

⁴¹¹ In Hessel, ‘*Dix Pas ...*’, p. 122.

⁴¹² This analysis has been helped by personal interviews. In a lengthy discussion on the development problems of Africa, one official from the DGCID concluded in exasperation that, “il n’y a aucun sens de ‘l’intérêt général’ en Afrique”.

⁴¹³ See DGCID, ‘*Lutte contre la Pauvreté ...*’, pp. 25–7.

years of hesitation, the French now embrace the fight against poverty as one of the foundations of their development aid programme, in the framework of multilateral commitments made through the UN or the EU. In the words of the CICID French policy has “un objectif central: la réduction de la pauvreté et des inégalités dans le cadre d’un développement durable”,⁴¹⁴ However, the French approach wishes to argue for a more sophisticated view of poverty, not as the isolated condition of an individual, but as a dynamic social relationship. To consider the poor in isolation runs the risk of trapping social groups into a marginal position in society and into a short-term charity relationship with donors. The very notion of poverty must therefore not be seen simply as a lack of income, but should encompass notions of *security* (from violence and from unforeseen events, such as market instabilities or bereavement), *empowerment* and *opportunity*.⁴¹⁵ The implication of the fight against poverty for French aid is not therefore to set up projects that purposefully target the poor, but to integrate the notion of poverty as a social relationship into all development work:

Le risque de dualité est grande entre, d’un côté les pays et les populations qui relèveraient de la lutte contre la pauvreté et de l’autre, ceux qui relèveraient des dynamiques de croissance. ...
Pour la partie française, la lutte contre la pauvreté ne se réduit pas à une modalité particulière d’intervention en faveur des plus démunis, mais elle est une façon de concevoir des modèles ‘inclusifs’ de croissance.⁴¹⁶

This concern to adhere to a more holistic and structural view of poverty is reflected in the importance the French attach to the fight against inequality. This is intended to place poverty in the context of social processes, and to take into consideration the causes of poverty at national and international levels. It reflects, and is intended to reflect, the French (and nominally “European”) experience of using public and other collective mechanisms to maintain the social compact, and to counter the potential risk inequality poses to the stability of the social fabric (le “lien social”).

⁴¹⁴ In CICID, ‘*La Politique française au développement...*’, p. 7.

⁴¹⁵ These two terms, often given in English in the French texts (the AFD translate empowerment with “de-marginalisation”), draw on ideas of poverty as the absence of opportunity of personal freedom and fulfilment, associated particularly with Amartya Sen.

⁴¹⁶ DGCID ‘*Lutte contre la Pauvreté ...*’, p. 17. See also AFD ‘*l’AFD et la réduction de la pauvreté ...*’ pp. 3–9. A representative example of more polemical work on the fight against poverty from a broadly French perspective is Lévy, ‘Comment renouveler les politiques ...’, in which he describes it as a way of covering up the failure to tackle the broader development and global inequality agenda. Note that in fact the French do have a specific aid mechanism to tackle poverty, the Fonds Social de développement, but it is a tiny percentage of the total aid budget.

To sum up, the French position is to accept the fight against poverty, but to question some of its preconceptions, and use other concepts, especially the fight against inequality, as a means of appropriating it (making it more “French”) and moving to what they see as a more sophisticated understanding: “Maintenant que la lutte contre la pauvreté est retenue, avec les précisions nécessaires, comme un des objectifs de l’aide française, il faut tirer parti au mieux de cette exigence internationale pour dégager de nouvelles pistes d’interventions.”⁴¹⁷

This position calls for two broad remarks. First, it does not in itself constitute an original French position. As both the AFD and the DGCID acknowledge, it is a caricature to imply that other donors adhere to a simplistic revenue based view of poverty. The World Bank in particular has been in the forefront of developing more sophisticated views of what poverty is and how it can be tackled, which include the dimensions of social power and inequality. Put simply, the trickle down theory according to which growth through the market will automatically alleviate poverty has been successfully challenged across the global aid regime. The French government naturally emphasises the role of French researchers in these innovations, but it is difficult to disguise the fact that French research has in reality played only a minor part in the evolutions of thinking in Washington and at the global level.⁴¹⁸

Secondly, it is not clear, even in the attempts by the AFD to match the doctrinal framework with its actions on the ground, that the fight against inequality has any specific policy implications at the country level that are not included in the fight against poverty, especially if poverty is seen as a complex relationship of exclusion and lack of opportunity. As other donors do, the French clearly see private enterprise and capital accumulation as a necessary part of growth in developing countries, which in turn is regarded as a necessary part of fighting poverty. Put simply, people must have the opportunity to become rich. At no point does French doctrine imply that the fight against inequality should include the reduction of revenues at the top of the income scales. Inequality must therefore, presumably, simply be tackled by alleviating poverty at the bottom of the income scale. This in effect blurs the distinction between the fight against poverty and the fight against inequality and makes it difficult to discern what original contribution the latter makes to the debate.

⁴¹⁷ DGCID, ‘*Lutte contre la Pauvreté ...*’, p. 22.

⁴¹⁸ For a discussion of the contribution of French research, see DGCID, ‘*Lutte contre la Pauvreté ...*’, pp. 12–15. For the World Bank view, see *Tackling Poverty*, World Bank, Washington, Annual Report, 2000 and *Voices of the Poor*, World Bank, Washington, three volumes, all 2000.

ii. The Broader Development Agenda

Since the late 1980s interaction with other donors has had an increasingly important influence on French actions, both in the reforms in Paris and, more dramatically, in France's relations with its aid recipients.⁴¹⁹ More recently, and especially during the period with which this study is concerned, this interaction and the greater complexity of the issues involved have also influenced French thinking, which has been stimulated by a desire to engage with the donor community on a wider range of issues, relating not only to the process of development in a developing country taken in isolation, but also to issues of regulation and political action at the global level. This is intended to be a two-way process, but as a means to ensure that French ideas and policies have an international influence. This is most clearly observable in the DGCID's policy of placing French experts, both government officials and others, in strategic positions in multilateral organisations and of supporting French consultants in their bids for multilateral contracts.⁴²⁰

It is now the stated intention of French aid to adopt internationally agreed development aims and targets as its objectives, especially the millennium development goals agreed by the UN in 2000: "l'objectif central de notre aide, la lutte contre la pauvreté et les inégalités dans le cadre d'un développement durable, s'inscrit en étroite cohérence avec les orientations prises par la communauté internationale."⁴²¹ Other international conferences and processes have contributed incrementally to the enlargement of the range of issues that French development aid thinking attempts to take into account. For example, the Monterrey conference on development financing of March 2002, UN summit on sustainable development in August 2002, and the process of coordination of donor response to the NEPAD agenda are all instances in which the French have had to consider their position on relatively new development related issues, and confront that position with that of other donors.

A further example of French thinking on development issues being unavoidably confronted with the positions of other donors is the HIPC/C2D process. Clearly the extent to which the concrete implementation of a C2D programme is fully integrated into the multi-donor PRSP/CDF process will vary from country to country. In Cameroon the French will in all probability have greater scope for their own initiative than they had in Mozambique, where the C2D programme was a relatively small part of

⁴¹⁹ As discussed *supra* chapter 2, section 3ii and chapter 4, section 1ii.

⁴²⁰ See *supra* chapter 3, section 2ii.

⁴²¹ CICID, 'La Politique française au développement...', p. 9.

donor funding. As pointed to in Chapter 3 in this study the C2D programme is conceived as a mechanism to retain greater bilateral political influence over a recipient country than would be the case in a straightforward debt cancellation. Nevertheless, the French have certainly made it clear in their public pronouncements that this bilateral influence will be circumscribed by the policies and priorities of the PRSP/CDF, as was undoubtedly the intention of the Finance Ministry, which in general favours tight coordination with the IFIs in the design of the C2D programme. It is also important to note that the timing of the C2Ds is necessarily dependent on the position of other donors, as it follows the successful completion of an HIPC programme.

The French engagement with broader issues of development and development financing can therefore be seen in part as a consequence and acknowledgement of greater donor interaction. In order to understand the possible implications of this for French development aid, it is necessary to consider French positions and policies on broad issues of globalisation as they emerged and evolved in the period under study. The position expressed by the Jospin government was that globalisation needs political regulation in order to make it legitimate and sustainable. The international architecture of globalisation has up to now concentrated purely on the promotion of the market; it must now acknowledge the limits of that agenda and respond to concerns of human rights and the environment. Problems of developing countries are not exclusively due to their poor “governance” but due to structural problems of the inadequately regulated market, especially the short-term financial markets, as was demonstrated by the 1997 Asia crisis. The argument is made clear in a sequence of speeches given by Jospin in 2000 and 2001: globalisation is potentially beneficial to all, both in economic and political terms. However, its current political and economic shortcomings and the excesses of the free market have given rise to an international movement that contests the legitimacy of the process. In order to gain legitimacy, globalisation needs to be politically controlled and regulated by the coordinated action of democratic states.⁴²²

These are clearly not easy issues, and they go to the heart of the relationship between European social democracy and the global economy. What is also clear is that they constitute a challenge to the pro-market turn of the 1980s and especially to the principle that the failure of developing countries is entirely attributable to their own shortcomings (or “poor governance”). However, the key problem remains unresolved –

⁴²² See speech at the opening of the joint World Bank and Conseil d’analyse économique conference, June 2000 (without title); “Peut-on encore réguler l’économie?” speech for the 20th anniversary of Alternatives Economiques, 15 November 2000 and “Maîtriser la mondialisation” speech at the Brazilian Centre for International Relations, 6 April 2001.

how can a global market be regulated? Under Jospin the French government suggested and borrowed several ideas such as taxation of speculative capital, and reinforcement of the role of the UN, notably by the creation of a UN Economic and Social Council to complement the Security Council.⁴²³ Little concrete outcome was observable.

A further such idea is encapsulated in the notion of Global Public Goods (GPGs), a concept elaborated by the United Nations Development Programme and taken up to a lesser extent by the World Bank in the 1990s. GPGs refer to “goods” whose production and consumption are generalised rather than attributable to individuals or single actors. In the “pure” form of the concept, this refers to goods whose consumption is non-exclusive, namely that consumption by one individual does not preclude consumption by another, examples being peace and knowledge. However, the use of the term, in French doctrine and elsewhere, generally encompasses a wider sense of that which is of potential benefit to all, and often refers to the reduction of the adverse effects of an individual agent’s actions that are harmful to the population in general (“externalities”, pollution being an obvious example, a lack of pollution being a GPG). In this broader sense GPGs generally require, in order to be created, sustained or disseminated, the cooperation of the international (or global) community. This may encompass the environment, public health, financial stability, and preservation of cultural heritage.

Despite the fact that this notion is rooted in liberal ideas of international cooperation and rights that have little historical currency in France, it has proved consistently attractive to French officials and politicians. It was often referred to by Jospin and has received the support of Josselin’s successor as development minister.⁴²⁴ Its appeal relates precisely to its capacity to translate the idea of “l’intérêt général” to the international level and to provide an opportunity to reject altruism or charity as the basis of international cooperation, and introduce more pragmatic notions of concrete mutual need (the rejection of the charitable basis of development aid is mirrored in French hostility to the simplistic anti-poverty agenda). The attraction of this for many is to tie aid spending to broader thinking on dealing with the negative aspects of globalisation, providing a more coherent doctrine for development aid than an isolated project or sector management. Some examples given by the French government of development aid spending that supports GPGs are the French environment fund FFEM

⁴²³ See CICID, ‘*Relevé de conclusions 2002 . . .*’ and CICID ‘*La politique française au développement . . .*’ Annex 2: “face à l’instabilité financière”.

⁴²⁴ Wiltzer announced his support for a new international working group on GPGs in 2003 (Ministère des affaires étrangères press statement, 10 April 2003).

(Fonds français de l'environnement mondial), which compensates developing countries for the cost of reducing the negative environmental effects of development projects; French contribution to the UN's and World Bank's environment work; contributions to UN health funds and the contribution budgetary support makes to international financial stability.⁴²⁵

The concrete implications of this broader agenda are of course hazy. Some broader themes have been considered by the DGCID and the AFD, and environmental standards are now integrated into AFD spending. But exactly how French development aid could be orientated towards ideas of market regulation is not entirely clear. Meanwhile, there is a risk of simply relabelling French work to make it more internationally presentable. This is most apparent in the area of cultural cooperation. There has been a persistent attempt in recent years to present French cultural cooperation as a contribution to development work, as a means of training and access to knowledge. This has been greeted with some scepticism in the donor community, especially in the DAC, as French cultural cooperation has historically been more concerned with promoting the French language and retaining an influence over the elites of developing countries.⁴²⁶

Partly as a reaction to this scepticism, the French now present much of their cultural work as the development of local cultures, particularly in Africa, arguing that this strengthens a society's capacity to confront the challenges of the modern world. French cultural centres are now expected to host exhibitions of both French *and local* art, music and dance and to present this work as a specific French contribution to the development debate.⁴²⁷ In some respects this responds to the traditions of respect for local cultures, which has been a feature of French presence in Africa since colonial times,⁴²⁸ although it has always been expressed through an anthropological gaze (with

⁴²⁵ These examples are in CICID, ‘*La Politique française au développement ...*’. For the idea that development aid spending should be a function of broader ideas on international regulation and institutions, see the speeches of Jospin as cited above and Severino and Bianco, ‘*Un Autre Monde ...*’. On GPGs see Kaul, Inge, Grunberg, Isabelle and Stern, Marc, *Global Public Goods: International Cooperation in the 21st Century*, UNDP, New York, 1999, or for a more sceptical view, see Constantin, François (ed.), *Les Biens Publics Mondiaux*, Harmattan, Paris, 2002.

⁴²⁶ The DAC report of 2000 (OECD/DAC ‘*Examens en matière de coopération ...*’) is scathing on this point. While accepting that spending in this area is formally acceptable as development aid for reporting purposes, it argues that French development aid is fundamentally devalued by the “dualité d'objectifs” of influence and solidarity and that cultural cooperation consists of “types d'aide qui obéissent à une logique autre que celle de la réduction de la pauvreté et de la stratégie du CAD” (OECD/DAC p. 21. See also pp. 91–3).

⁴²⁷ See CICID, ‘*La Politique française au développement...*’, pp. 49–50, 65; Conseil économique et social, ‘*Prospectives pour un développement durable ...*’ p. 21–3; and *Le Monde*, 25 juillet 2001, which discusses a parliamentary report on French cultural centres written by Yves Dauge.

⁴²⁸ See Dozon, Jean-Pierre, *Frères et Sujets. La France et l'Afrique en perspective*, Flammarion, Paris, 2006

all this implies in terms of exoticism and “orientalism”). However, the contemporary resurgence of official interest in promoting indigenous African culture must also be seen in the light of the French interest in promoting cultural diversity in the face of “globalisation”, which is thereby interpreted as a process of uniformisation. The following citation from an interview with the DGCID head Delaye in 2001 shows the importance for the French of demonstrating a capacity to promote both French and African cultures:

Q: A propos des centres culturels français, notamment en Afrique, on constate que ce sont des centres importants pour l'animation de la vie locale. Est-ce qu'il n'y a pas à leur niveau deux conceptions antagoniques: l'une consistant à dire que le CCF a vocation à promouvoir la culture française; une consistant à tirer davantage vers une défense et une promotion des cultures francophones?

Delaye: Non. Nous sommes tous d'accord qu'il faut alterner, faire les deux. Ce n'est pas contradictoire: il s'agit de lieux de convivialité, si possible de mélange, d'enrichissement mutuel. Et nos centres ont vocation à accueillir les artistes, les productions locales. C'est é-vi-dent.⁴²⁹

Whether these adaptations will allay the scepticism of others remains to be seen. What is clear is the central importance for the French, given the weight that cultural cooperation holds in the DGCID, of finding ways of presenting cultural influence and development work as being compatible. In the words of the CICID: “la culture a partie liée avec le développement. Elle joue un rôle fondamental dans la capacité des populations à adapter leurs comportements à des situations nouvelles, processus caractérisant les sociétés en transformation.”⁴³⁰

However French spending is presented, the strategy of engaging with global development issues has to confront the age-old dilemma of ends versus means. Current levels of development aid spending are not sufficient to have enough of an impact on the ground to be the basis of a credible French position at the international level. The growing area of crisis management in West Africa, while it may serve as a catalyst for

2003.

⁴²⁹ In an interview with Radio France Internationale, 7 November 2001.

⁴³⁰ CICID, ‘*La Politique française au développement ...*’, p. 65.

new thinking, will also accentuate this dilemma. Inevitably, one reaction will be the search for other donors or sources of finance to share the burden of French ambition. The AFD in particular is highly preoccupied with how French aid can be used to “lever in” other funds, especially from the private sector, in order to maximise the benefits and influence derived from bilateral spending.⁴³¹

Conclusion

The material and arguments presented in this chapter provide answers to the set of questions posed at the outset: how was French development aid doctrine produced and by whom? What were its principal characteristics? How did the production of this doctrine interact with the norms and expectations of the global aid regime? And, finally, what are the implications for French development aid policy?

The AFD and the DGCID were the main sites of production of doctrine. Both were officially tasked with testing the waters with outside expertise and other aid donors through seminars and exploratory papers, and with producing authoritative French positions on major development questions. Other ministries or official institutions played a guiding or filtering role, and the semi-official or non-official level had an unusually strong influence in this period. To an extent the creation of a single coherent French doctrine was impeded by three intersecting lines of fracture: *bureaucratic*, related to the different positions and interests of the different ministries or official bodies involved and to the sheer complexity and lack of coordination in the system; *political*, related to the tensions of cohabitation and *policy*, related to attitudes to project based aid as opposed to sector wide aid, to coordination with other donors and to the different degrees of attachment to francophone Africa. Nevertheless, there was a large degree of common ground in the actual content produced by the different actors. This is due both to attempts to coordinate positions, particularly between the DGCID and the AFD, and to a commonality of views across French officials and politicians relating to shared experiences and a shared cultural milieu.

The central tenet of French doctrine is to contest the capacity of market forces to solve the problems of developing countries on their own and to emphasise the role of the state in regulating the economy and providing the right conditions for market forces to act in a way that is beneficial to society as a whole. This is not new in French development thinking, but in the period of this study the French government

⁴³¹ Personal interviews and AFD, ‘*Plan stratégique . . .*’

increasingly integrated their thinking with the global aid regime's turn towards more holistic ideas of social development. This convergence reflects greater practical involvement with multi-donor issues and procedures on the part of the French (for example the PRSPs). At the same time the French have tried to develop and promote an original French position on these issues, in particular by advocating a more sophisticated view of poverty and by introducing the fight against inequality. These positions are deliberately promoted as the product of the French and European experience of the creation of a political community through states' social policies and as a form of resistance to a powerful, homogenising Anglo-Saxon led globalisation. The French government also attempted to broaden the range of their development thinking to encompass the regulation of the global economy, but the concrete outcomes of this thinking were often unclear or hesitant.

* * *

These hesitant changes in French development policy doctrine pose further questions that go beyond the basic positions taken by the French on issues such as donor coordination or poverty alleviation and relate to the kind of influence the French expect to gain from their development aid spending, and how this influence relates to the symbolic projection of the French state abroad.

Naturally all donors aim to increase their influence and prestige, even in cases where this is gained through the display not of political pre-eminence but of humanitarian concern. Furthermore, the conditionality agenda (both in its political and economic versions) serves to emphasise that this influence is connected to the expectation that the recipient should or will converge on the social, political or economic example (or "model") of the donor. In other words, the influence carried by development aid is tied to an expectation that the recipient will see the donor as an example to aspire to. In broader terms this expectation of convergence draws on the implications of "westernisation" buried in the development agenda⁴³² and is therefore intimately bound up with the history of development aid, and all donor-recipient relationships. However, the nature of this influence is a particularly far-reaching issue for the French, as French aid is called on to contribute to a historical narrative about France's place in the world and, by extension, about the greatness and magnanimity of the French political community.

The Jospin reforms were presented as a way of maintaining and perpetuating

French influence through adapting French development aid to a changed context and through stimulating a partial alignment with the norms and expectations of other donors. In the words of Josselin, the reform of French aid institutions was a necessary modernisation: “cette modernisation est la condition de leur efficacité et d'une plus grande influence française.”⁴³³ At the same time the reforms were presented, and thought of by many of the officials and politicians involved, as a means of change – by overcoming 40 years of pernicious neo-colonial influence over former colonies and of pushing French policy in Africa into the “post post-colonial” era. The rationale of the reforms is therefore to jettison one historical part of the French development aid agenda in order better to preserve another – to jettison neo-colonialism in order to preserve influence, just as de Gaulle had decided to jettison formal colonisation in order to preserve influence. However, historical antecedents are rarely easily dispensed with in French political life, and the question that this naturally raises is how French influence may be prised away from its historical origins in imperial thought.

For the majority of policy makers in Paris, and politicians on the left and on the right, the answer to this question, even if it is not often articulated as such, is to take the position of “reformed universalism”. In this perspective the Jospin reforms are seen as an opportunity to adapt French development aid policy in order to continue to use it as the vector of the universally enlightening message that France brings to other parts of the world. In other words, the need for reform is accepted – institutions need adapting, engagement with all of Africa is important where possible, the financial cost of development aid needs monitoring to prevent the sort of corruption seen in the 1980s, and France should engage in the broad issues of development aid within the donor community. The broad lines of the Jospin reforms are therefore accepted, as is the validity of much of the criticism that led to it, especially the perception that French aid was ill adapted to the contemporary context. However, crucially, it also held that French aid should continue to demonstrate the universal applicability of French culture.

In this vision, French development aid should therefore concentrate on those parts of the world where French influence may be expected to reach a certain minimum threshold. If this includes all of Africa then so much the better, but if this is not possible a strategic retreat to francophone Africa must not be excluded. In other words, the geographical allocation issue is not resolved in this position because the end versus means dilemma is also not resolved. As a consequence, it is also not clear how this

⁴³² See *supra* chapter 2, section 2ii.

⁴³³ Speech to ambassadors’ conference, Paris, 28 August 2001.

position relates to the historic tension between the parochialism of France's relations with francophone Africa and the more internationalist vision. Support for reform hints at internationalism, but this is strongly countered by the sense that stretching too far outside francophone Africa is an intolerable dilution of influence. In the rest of the world influence should be sought on a range of issues connected to development in less developed countries, but expectations of this influence are dampened by the assumption of hostility from rival views.

The inviolability of the linguistic assumption in French development aid is a pertinent illustration of this “reformed universalist” position. The assumption of the compatibility of French language teaching and development persists, even in a broadly reformist climate.⁴³⁴ This is not merely the reflection of the hybrid history of the DGCID, but also of the continued association of the French language with notions of rationality, progress and perfectibility. This perfectibility is not only beneficial to all, but is also potentially available to all (that is it is universal). However, in reality the concrete mechanisms for access to it, specifically assimilation through higher education, are reserved for the privileged or talented few. The following statement from a former colonial administrator, which points to the limited access that this model offers in reality, is one of the strikingly rare cases of a French official questioning the merits of French language education for people from other cultures: “La réponse apportée depuis les indépendances aux besoins d'éducation a été une école sur un modèle étranger, en langue étrangère, et surtout véhiculant une vision du monde (individualiste et exogène) étrangère aux cultures et sociétés traditionnelles. Ses effets néfastes ont pu être masqués assez longtemps par quelques spectaculaires réussites individuelles.”⁴³⁵

This (reformed) universalist perspective perpetuates the distinction between the rival and the ally. Rivals are those who have a rival universalist position and the power to disseminate it. There is little expectation that French influence can be effective over them. In this schema allies become subordinates, those who are susceptible to following a French lead (or in colonial terms those who can potentially be “assimilated”). They are those who, to return to the excellent analogy used by Adda and Smouts, can provide the “mirror” to reflect French power and prestige⁴³⁶. In some cases this may be leaders of francophone African states, or of Africa more generally. In other cases it may be

⁴³⁴ Aside from the education sector, another good example of this is the absence of African languages from the airwaves of Radio France International, in contrast to the BBC's Africa service, which transmits in Hausa in Nigeria and Swahili in East Africa.

⁴³⁵ Bernard Dumont, in Hessel, ‘*Dix pas . . .*’, p. 232. See also the DAC report on French aid of 2000 as discussed above regarding cultural policy.

⁴³⁶ Adda and Smouts ‘*La France face au sud . . .*’.

French non-governmental organisations or researchers whose work should, in the words of the Foreign Ministry, “s’inscrire dans les priorités nationales”.⁴³⁷

A discussion about the legal code in Ethiopia in a report on French development aid by the Parti socialiste parliamentarian Yves Tavernier provides a small but highly revealing example of this attitude. Tavernier’s position is that French aid should be used to encourage African countries to retain the Napoleonic code as the basis of their legal system. The alternative, common law, is promoted by the United States (and by the World Bank, which according to Tavernier “ne fait pas toujours preuve de la neutralité que l’on serait en droit d’attendre d’elle”) in order to put their private companies in a better position to win contracts.⁴³⁸ What is remarkable in this is neither the concern with commercial interests, nor even the caricature of the machinations of the rival, but the absence of any consideration that the Ethiopians may have an original contribution to make to their own legal system. Rivals are at least credited with a viable vision, while subordinate cultures are expected to choose between rival suitors. Any genuine plurality of views is therefore excluded from the field of vision.

Whoever the potential subordinate may be, this position is reflective of a substratum in French thinking that expects convergence on a single answer to a given problem. Two different views are only valid in so far as they are a building block to achieving the more rational or higher order position, or what the French refer to as the “synthèse” (synthesis). The more rational position does not, in theory, have to be the French position, but given that the origins of this model of rationality are taken to be French, and given the history of colonial cultural domination, there is an overwhelming expectation that it will be. Cultures that differ from this model of rationality, or else in some way resist French assimilation, do not have intrinsic validity, and must at some point be expected to change, although they may have anthropological interest.⁴³⁹ Le Roy, discussing Francophonie, relates this to a European tradition of “mono-conceptuality”, which is now increasingly questioned by the principles of social and political pluralism and by philosophical relativism: “La vision du monde qui a porté la langue et la culture francophones est originellement judéo-chrétienne et sa conception archétypique est fondée sur le principe d’unité d’où on déduit une conception

⁴³⁷ Ministère des affaires étrangères, ‘*Les Correspondances ...*’ p. 10.

⁴³⁸ Tavernier, ‘*La Coopération française ...*’, pp. 80–4 and p. 93.

⁴³⁹ Dozon, ‘*Frères et Sujets ...*’ makes more of this anthropological interest and of the associational aspects of the Franco–African relationship, as opposed to the assimilationist side, which more commonly receives attention. Unfortunately, this text was published too late to be fully used in this study.

monologique, un seul discours, une seule interprétation, une seule rationalisation".⁴⁴⁰

This universalist reflex is so deeply rooted in French thought that it becomes disassociable from the very notion of French influence in the world. The fact that this position of "reformed universalism" is so widely held indicates that it cuts across what has been called the old and new guard of Franco–African relations (note for example that Tavernier, whose report is discussed above, is a Parti socialiste parliamentarian, and is strongly supportive of the Jospin reforms). Although universalism has links with the imperial past that are increasingly regarded as problematic, it has the important advantage of providing French aid policy, and more broadly French foreign policy, with an appealing historical narrative, and a flexible set of ideas about why France should act in one way or another. Its principal problem is, and has always been, how it can adapt to a changing external context.

There are fragmentary indications, but no more, that some officials and politicians saw the Jospin reforms, and related changes, as an opportunity to question the universalist foundation of French development aid doctrine and thereby alter French expectations concerning the reception of their influence. Josselin, for example, stated in a speech to French ambassadors that "le recours à des arguments d'autorité dans les relations avec le monde en développement appartient à une époque révolue, et ce quelle que soit la nature de ces arguments (parfois pétris des meilleures intentions)" and later makes an interesting distinction between this "authority" and more normal diplomatic influence "tourner le dos à la relation d'autorité du passé, ce n'est pas renoncer à l'influence. C'est la faire passer par un effort accru de persuation et d'information."⁴⁴¹

Others have sensed that reforming French development aid in order to continue to use it to demonstrate the universal appeal of French culture and to assimilate Africans into that culture may no longer be either a realistic or a desirable aim. The parliamentarian Dionis du Sejour, for example, in the parliamentary debate on aid to Africa of 2003, argues that the reform of French development aid must be complemented by a reconsideration of the suitability of the models of which this aid has been the vector, and specifically to promote the virtues of federalism in the African context and reconsider the suitability of the nation-state model. He argues that the French view of Africa has been marked by a disdain for African society and a refusal to accept its positive aspects. The French reaction to Africa has been to impose models connected to the European nation-state and parliamentary democracy, but the failure of

⁴⁴⁰ In OPCF, *Rapport 2001*, p. 208.

⁴⁴¹ In speech to ambassadors' conference, Paris, 28 August 2001.

these models to function in the African setting and the distortion of parliamentary democracy by ethnic competition have now led to an impasse: “La France républicaine a en effet promu en Afrique le concept d’Etat-nation autour duquel elle s’est elle-même construite. Or, quarante ans après la décolonisation, celui-ci a conduit en Afrique à une impasse majeure.”⁴⁴²

Despite the changing generations in Paris, the views of the world and of France’s place in it, which ensured that a neo-colonial system was accepted by so many and for so long, have a persistent if adaptable place in French political life. While some in Paris see the need for a genuinely new, not just adapted, vision, they have yet to find ways to present this convincingly within the framework of how French foreign policy is presented. Whether French development aid policy will begin to free itself from its imperial roots may depend on broader and what may be very long-term evolutions concerning French perceptions of their place in the world. The more significant stimulus for change is likely to come from instability in West Africa and the leaders who emerge from it.

⁴⁴² Assemblée nationale, Paris, 10 April 2003.

Conclusion

1. The Research Questions: Assessing Change

i. The Empirical Questions

This study started with a series of basic empirical questions relating to the Jospin reforms of French development aid policy: what was the historical context for the reforms? What were the reforms? Why did they occur when they did, with what concrete outcome? What reaction did they provoke? These questions required answers and clarification before it was possible to consider the significance of the reforms for France's relations with sub-Saharan Africa and for the place of development aid in French foreign policy more generally. These answers were provided in detail in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 section 2. They can be summarised as follows:

- The most prominent concrete result of the reforms was to create a two-pillar system in which decision-making is dominated by the relationship between the Foreign and Finance ministries.
- Alongside this bureaucratic change, a series of micro-level changes were enacted with the intention of giving the prime minister greater control of the system, ensuring greater transparency of process both within government and in relations with the public, and embedding French spending into donor-recipient contracts. Changes to the format of project proposals, involvement of NGOs in the elaboration of DCPs and the creation of the HCCI can all be placed in this category.
- The reforms occurred because Jospin and a small group of close advisors were convinced that the old system was inappropriate, out of step with the modern world, lacked transparency and was in some cases corrupt. They had the opportunity to enact the changes because the generalised crisis of the system had weakened the position of its supporters (the “old guard”) and due to electoral fortune.
- The Jospin reforms were partially successful in these aims and a greater degree of openness does now exist in the system. However, for various reasons relating to the strength of the old guard, the politics of cohabitation and bureaucratic blockages, several important elements of the old system were left untouched, including the influence of the Elysée. Consequently, the reforms were criticised for being a “missed opportunity” and a halfway house solution.
- The absorption of the structures of the Cooperation Ministry into the Foreign Ministry indicated that much lower priority was attached to development aid than had previously been the case.

- While the dissolution of the Cooperation Ministry was intended to counteract the neo-colonial and corrupt aspects of the old system, one of its (largely unintended) effects was to accelerate the loss of expertise on development issues in the French government. To some degree, the role of perpetuating and using this sort of expertise has been taken up by the AFD. However, the final demise of the development aid workers profession (the coopérants), after years of decline, further confirmed that one of the most lasting effects of the changes in this period would be a possibly irretrievable loss of French expertise on development issues.

The common thread running through these observations is the concern with evaluating the degree of change that the reforms of 1998–2002 actually represent. The changes covered are principally adjustments to the architecture and mechanisms of the French bureaucracy. These are important and constitute significant limitations on the range of possible actions open to actors, just as the existence of the Cooperation Ministry provided important opportunities for actors under the previous system. However, this study has outlined some important limitations to this emphasis on bureaucratic structures in this context. French development aid is influenced by long-term historical features of French public life, notably the emphasis on the state as the expression of collective will. Bureaucratic restructuring could not change to any significant extent and certainly not in any immediate or mechanical sense, the cultural milieu of French officials, which shows strong tendencies to continuity (except to take away the possibility of spending a significant proportion of one's career in francophone Africa).

This study has sought to address two separate but connected issues and contextualise them in historical and cultural terms in order to make possible some early analysis of whether these changes have had or are likely to have the effects intended. In the first place, what were the mechanical reforms implemented, or what “levers” did the Jospin government “pull” (the “organigramme question”)? In the second place this study considered (to the extent that this was possible only one year after the reforms) whether these changes had the effects intended. Here the record is mixed. Some of the changes had an undeniable impact, such as the continued demise of the coopérant profession and the dissolution of the Cooperation Ministry, while others were more ambivalent. The realisation of the objectives in terms of transparency and accountability, and the move away from relations with former colonies is obstructed by several factors – the bureaucratic battles of French administration, the continued

politicisation of decision-making⁴⁴³ and the continued attachment of many French officials to francophone Africa. Their longer-term outcome will depend on micro-level negotiations between officials as well as on evolutions in Africa and in the international environment.

ii. France and other Donors

At the beginning of this study we suggested that the position of French development aid policy in relation to other donors, and the interaction with them, might be an important factor in the changes to be examined. In Chapter 2, we further suggested that the notion of an aid donor regime might be helpful in clarifying the mechanisms and consequences of this interaction.

A preliminary conclusion, although neither dramatic nor surprising, is that the interaction between the French and other donors, which was initially stimulated by the African economic crisis of the 1980s, became increasingly dense between 1998 and 2002. This can be observed both at the recipient country level (as shown in Chapter 4) and at the international level in Washington and Brussels (as discussed in Chapters 3 and 5). We also have some indications of exactly how this day-to-day interaction affects French development aid policy. Interaction with other donors creates pressure to act in certain ways, pressures that may be termed “moral” (an expectation of a “better” practice), incremental (day-to-day interaction causing individuals to harmonise how they work) or “leverage” (an incentive to act in a certain way in order to obtain financing from other donors).

It would be erroneous to conclude, however, that these regime pressures modify French behaviour in a direct sense. Instead, they feed into existing Franco-French debates, or stimulate new ones. In some cases actors within the French bureaucracy may use expectations generated at least in part from the norms of the donor regime to press their case for change, or use terms and concepts derived from contact with other donors to elaborate new French policies. However, this is only ever done very cautiously. Paradoxically, it is also possible for those who oppose a given change to portray it as being externally “imposed”, appealing to the French desire to ensure that their policies are specifically and originally “French”. However, changes at the international level, which have moved the international aid regime back towards more holistic notions of social development, make it increasingly difficult for the French to distinguish their

⁴⁴³ By political is meant the decision by a politician or a senior official to deviate from accepted procedure, generally in the interest of either short-term popularity or to enhance diplomatic relations (the occasional use of the FSP outside the ZSP is a characteristic example).

own thinking and make sure it is clearly different from the international consensus.

The material presented in this study also allows us to draw several conclusions about the relationship between these regime pressures and the specific institutional and doctrinal changes of the 1998–2002 period.

- The institutional reforms were in part intended to make French development aid practice more “compatible” with the norms of the global aid donor regime by introducing mechanisms of openness and contractuality. Part of the intention was to make the French system more comprehensible for other donors, as well as to give the French greater influence (or “voice”) in international debates. These aims have only been partially achieved. While the AFD has been given licence to engage in debate on issues of donor practice and to work more closely with other donors, considerable mistrust remains and French aid is commonly regarded by other donors as distorted both by bureaucratic complexity and by the desire for cultural influence⁴⁴⁴. The conflict between the Finance and Foreign Ministries deprives other donors of a clear choice of interlocutor.
- On the doctrine and policy fronts, during the 1998–2002 period issues and problems common to the whole donor community (recipient ownership, sector wide aid, multi-donor frameworks such as PRSPs and CDFs) increasingly entered the debate among policy makers in Paris. While many (especially in the Finance Ministry and to a lesser extent the AFD) pushed for greater acceptance of practice common among other donors, others remain wedded to projects directly managed by the donors. Some features of the practice of other donors, such as sector wide aid, which the French have done for years in francophone Africa, although without using the term, are fairly easily absorbed into the system. In contrast, the France remains reluctant to promote recipient ownership of reforms, where this would entail recipient governments controlling the disbursal of funds. The desire on the part of the French to continue to “micro-manage” the use of their aid funds is illustrated by the C2D programme.

Finally, it is possible to draw conclusions about the applicability of regime theory as an explanatory tool in this case:

- Regime theory’s proposal that actors’ behaviour may be modified according to norms and expectations generated within a regime is borne out, both at recipient country level and at the international level. In this way regime theory provides some indications

⁴⁴⁴ For reasons of diplomatic nicety these views are rarely expressed in public. However interviews carried out for this study indicate this to be the general perception, both among donors and in recipient countries. This view is expressed publicly by the DAC. See Chapter 2, 3, iii.

of the reasons for changes in French policy and behaviour (incremental harmonisation, creation of collective norms and perception of mutual gain), with the important qualifications outlined above.

- Given the reasonable expectation that interaction with other donors will continue to be a major factor in French development aid policy, useful further research could be carried out on the exact relationship between France and multilateral donors. This could build on the material presented in Chapter 4, potentially using comparison between the experiences of different recipient countries in francophone Africa. This could usefully include study of how different francophone African countries have succeeded or failed to adapt to the gradual encroachment of the IFIs into their once isolated and protected relationship with France.
- The findings presented in Chapters 4 and 5 point, however, to several important caveats to the applicability of regime theory. First, as regime theory is based on the billiard ball view of state interaction, care needs to be taken when dealing with the multilateral donors, who are ultimately controlled by the donor countries, and are therefore willing to let the donors act as “free riders”, hiding behind them for diplomatic cover. The assumptions of similarity and independence of regime actors clearly do not apply. It is also important to note, following material in chapter 5, that the image and rhetoric of two isolated camps (“francophone” and “Anglo-Saxon”) must be countered in reality not just by the fact that the French own between 10 and 15 % of the IMF, but also by the movement of personnel between the “grands corps” and the IFIs.
- Chapter 5 pointed to some deliberate resistance in Paris to compliance with regime norms, which contradicts regime theory’s assumption of convergence. Regime theory is useful for capturing instances of convergence and cooperation, but not for capturing instances of divergence. This study has approached divergences through a historical examination of the specificities of the French case, and has attempted to explain how these create a pressure for French officials to “marquer la difference” with other “regime” actors.

iii. Relations with Francophone Africa

To recall the arguments presented in Chapters 1 and 2, French development aid, from its inception in the 1960s until the early 1990s, was based on maintaining close relations with former colonies in sub-Saharan Africa. In several cases (including Côte d’Ivoire), this encompassed relations on a huge array of issues, and the presence of thousands of French “coopérants”. Importantly, French presence was associated with the authoritarianism of domestic regimes. The question this study sought to answer was to

what extent the reforms enacted by Jospin changed these close relations. To this end, Chapter 4 attempted to isolate the specific changes enacted under Jospin within the complex and multi-faceted relations between France and Côte d'Ivoire. The direct effects of the reforms were to a large extent masked by the coup of December 1999, and by subsequent political instability and civil unrest. While this clearly rendered the initial research project more difficult, it also provided an opportunity to reflect on the effects of instability on France's aid programme. It also provided an opportunity to reflect on the degree to which institutional reform directed from Paris can have coherent and predictable outcomes in recipient countries undergoing dramatic social and political upheaval.

The answers to the questions asked in the introduction, and the conclusions that can be drawn from the case study, are therefore complex and wide-ranging, and go beyond the remit of this study, as indicated below. In summary, the French colonial and post-colonial project of the partial reproduction of a model of society is challenged by the convergence of three things – the increasing importance of the IFIs, the decline in the number of coopérants and sudden recent instability in francophone Africa. This may be elaborated as follows:

- Events in Africa and the repercussions of both instability and democratic change are emerging as the primary motor of change in the French development aid system, in contrast to the many forces of stability and continuity that retain a strong influence in Paris. This conclusion inverts the more traditional view of the West as dynamic and changing and Africa as socially conservative.
- In the case of Côte d'Ivoire, violent instability inevitably altered the parameters the reforms. To a certain degree, the coup of 1999 may be attributed to the strong position of the reformists in Paris at the time, in the sense that the perpetrators of the coup rightly judged that the French would not intervene to reverse it.
- The French system is as yet ill adapted to dealing with instability. While the French have in the past been able and willing to intervene militarily in Chad and the Central African Republic, the need to deal with a drawn out civil and military conflict in an area of heavy French presence has wrong footed the French whose aid has in the past been oriented to dealing with a stable semi-authoritarian system. Many officials in Paris consider that small-scale social projects and a less visible presence is now more appropriate, but the debate has yet to produce any concrete results as the French continue to react to events.

- This study also pointed to how France's aid relationship with francophone African countries is changing due to the decline in the number of high-level coopérants. Specifically, this relationship has previously been based on semi-insider influence, as opposed to the “policy buying” approach of the IFIs. This semi-insider approach will be harder to pursue with fewer coopérants. The Jospin reforms can be seen as an attempt to adapt to this by introducing more formally equal (sovereign) relations (“partnership” and “ownership”), in line with the long-standing demands of those calling for change, especially in opposition groups in Africa. However, the tendency of French officials to expect a high degree of insider influence in francophone Africa is likely to continue for the foreseeable future, and the French will be obliged to continue to manage the complex political and commercial interdependence of their relations with Côte d'Ivoire, which counteracts the “distanciation” implicit in the notions of “partnership” and “ownership” as understood in the context of the Jospin reforms.
- The French presence in Côte d'Ivoire will henceforth be scaled down and the French will be forced (not least by the reduction in the number of coopérants) to have a more modest view of their potential influence. As a result of years of proximity, the French are too embedded in recent instability in Côte d'Ivoire for their own good and some in Paris are arguing with some influence that a heavy presence can have counter-productive effects. In addition, Franco–Ivorian relations will continue to be mediated through a complex triangular relationship with the IFIs and through the norms, expectations and constraints of the broader aid regime. The influence of the IFIs, which have subtly (although by no means entirely) different conceptions of how African societies should develop, challenges the French project of reproducing a French model of politics and society, especially in terms of public administration and the role of the state in the economy.
- Instability in Côte d'Ivoire diminishes the scope for using French development aid to demonstrate the qualities of the French nation-state by transplanting elements of it to other parts of the world. The loss for the French at the symbolic level is undeniable and they are likely to reappraise the value they can gain from a significant presence in aid recipient countries.

To what degree do these conclusions apply to relations between France and other countries of francophone Africa? This study is not a comparative study in this sense and this question demands further enquiry, which could usefully look at how different francophone African countries' relations with France have evolved and differentiated in the past ten years. However, it would be churlish not to indicate the lines of enquiry and tentative conclusions that emerge from this study. The first point is

that relations with France at the political level are diversifying between different countries, despite the stability of several overarching institutional frameworks tying France to all francophone African countries (notably the franc zone). While some leaders remain firmly wedded to relations with the French (and in particular to relations with the Gaullists), others wish to diversify their diplomatic alliances, while others still have an uneasy if not downright hostile relationship with Paris. In addition, the ever-increasing importance of the IFIs suggests that France will henceforth be only one potential ally among others for francophone African countries, albeit an important one. What this naturally suggests is that the political “return” the French have expected to derive from aid spending in Africa is likely to be less easy to obtain, or less guaranteed, in the future.

Relations at the social level have not been the focus of this study. Nevertheless, it is important to point out that the view of France held by African populations has significantly changed in the last few decades. Diluted by increasingly dense ties to the United States, and damaged by problems over student visas, the relationship with France has lost its aura. The appeal of France is no longer that of a great civilisation, but is commensurate simply with the employment that can be obtained there. However, although France is in this sense being “demystified”, there remains considerable resentment over the legacy of the French presence, and its role in supporting authoritarian regimes. There is no better example of this than the anti-French feeling that has emerged in the Côte d’Ivoire since September 2002.

The final issue that needs to be addressed in relation to France’s position in francophone Africa is that of aid allocation. The proportion of French aid going to francophone Africa has declined since the devaluation in 1994. South Africa and North African countries have since emerged as the lead recipients.⁴⁴⁵ The general thrust of the Jospin reforms was in line with this trend, for example in the dissolution of the “champ” and the greater geographical spread of the ZSP, and in the increase in the proportion of aid channelled through multilaterals. In addition, there is some interest in the more technocratic circles in Paris for the idea of selectivity – concentrating only on countries with proven competence and absorption capacity. This could potentially pull France away from the traditional recipients of its aid.

⁴⁴⁵ Statistics of aid receipt have to be treated with caution in this respect, however. Relations with South Africa, Tunisia and Morocco encompass genuine development aid elements (projects, sectoral reform programmes and so forth). However, France’s aid to Egypt, which was the biggest recipient of French aid in 2000 according to OECD/DAC statistics, despite not being in the ZSP, consists almost entirely of debt relief. See annex 1.

However, there are several reasons to treat these indications with caution. Forthcoming debt relief to francophone countries under the HIPC programme will ensure that francophone sub-Saharan Africa retains its high place in the list of recipient countries of French aid. Furthermore, the desire to do comprehensive sector wide aid work, rather than isolated project work, argues for more, not less, concentration on limited number of countries. Limited means also demand that the French stick to the countries that they know best. At the broader level of doctrine, although many officials would wish to see French aid expand away from francophone Africa, they have been unable to produce a coherent narrative that would explain how such a policy would contribute to France's foreign policy aims or to France's self perceived role in world affairs. In this sense, the concentration on francophone Africa is retained by default. The only view that does suggest itself as an alternative is the emerging French pan-Africanism, the ambiguities of which are discussed in the next section.

iv. Development Aid and the Projection of France in the World

The introduction to this study suggested that French development aid policy should be understood as part of the symbolic projections of France in the world, and particularly as part of the “universalist” mission of post-revolutionary France to spread its message and way of life to other parts of the world. The background chapters further elaborated this by pointing to the direct connections between colonial policy and development aid policy, which succeeded it. French policy was therefore described as “political post-colonial”. The study then highlighted the ways in which French development aid, and particularly its doctrinal underpinnings, are constantly articulated through reference to France's self perceived role in world affairs, and France's universalist cultural nationalism.

The notion of symbolic projection is therefore a useful overall framework within which to understand French development aid policy. In particular, the notion enables the analyst to search for different ways in which politicians and officials search to implement policies that are expected to provide a return on the symbolic level. The case of development aid examined here has exposed the continued relevance of the distinction between the internationalist outlook within French foreign policy, and the more parochial vision that looks to relations with former colonies to affirm a self image of France.

The question posed, however, concerns not only how useful this conceptual framework is, but whether the role development aid plays in France's projection in world affairs was in any way changed in the 1998–2002 period. To a large degree the

answers lie in the changes in the relationship with francophone Africa previously discussed. In short, any expectation that relations with francophone Africa can contribute positively to the perception of France's role in world affairs has been weakened in this period.

In addition, there was a subtle shift from a geographically fixed vision (French influence through presence in francophone Africa) to a more conceptual and internationalist vision, within which France should attempt to contribute to and influence global debates on development issues. This is the position Jospin took, and it is in line with the broad thrust of the institutional reforms. However, the reforms themselves were primarily negative in the sense that they consisted of getting rid of features of the old system but with little bold or indeed clear idea of what to put in its place. A renewed and vigorous internationalist vision has not emerged from these reforms, nor is it clear what role "Europe" would play in such a vision, whether as a financial support to French ambitions, or as a genuine counterweight to the "Anglo-Saxon model" (with all the ambiguities this entails for defining the historical locus and culture of Europe). Culture and commerce therefore continue to dominate development aid policy, alongside the remnants of coopération's priority on political relations with francophone Africa. There are ultimately only very fragmentary indications of what the basis of French development aid may be if it is to move beyond the neo-colonial framework.

Within this tension Europe plays an ambiguous role. Some officials and politicians in Paris have always looked to Europe as a way of supporting the traditional aims of coopération. In the past the EU has done so, both politically and financially. However, this support has weakened over time (as seen in Europe's refusal automatically to support France over resuming aid to Côte d'Ivoire in 2001). In the context of the Jospin reforms therefore Europe was seen as a way of loosening the grip of the old guard on the system, not least by transferring a large portion of France's aid budget to the European Community level. This gradual change in the place of Europe in France's aid policy naturally mirrors the gradual historical shift from France's post-colonial heritage in which France played an almost unchallenged leadership role in Europe's aid and (embryonic) foreign policy, to France's new and more complex position in an expanding European Union.

All this points to the conclusion that the symbolic projection of France in world affairs is a highly elastic and adaptable framework. In the colonial period the idea that France had a moral right to pursue a predetermined role in world affairs was used not

only to argue for colonial expansion in Africa, but also *against it*, in the sense that the African empire was seen as an obstacle to France's European and broader international vocation. This same tension between two conceptions of how to pursue the universal projection of the modern French nation-state can be observed in the 1998–2002 period. The (neo-)colonial view continues to look to a presence in francophone Africa as a vehicle, while others, accepting the passing of the post-colonial era, prefer to look to international issues and to the construction of Europe.

The two views are not incompatible, but constitute a constant dynamic tension within French development aid policy, and French foreign policy more generally. This tension is able to persist at present within the French system because it exists on the basis of a common core of belief over the fundamental aim of France's presence in the world. This is the belief that France should demonstrate practices and qualities that are of universal application and benefit, and that a French presence in the world should serve to demonstrate the distinctiveness of the French vision – to “*marquer la différence*”. In other words, the parochial and the broader internationalist views have *both* derived their persuasive force from their capacity to evoke France's cultural universalist vocation. The compromise that the Jospin reforms represent, and with which many French officials align, consists of accepting the need for adaptation and reform while continuing to look for ways in which French development aid can be used to express this cultural universalism. Chapter 5 of this study termed this position “reformed universalism”.

The universalist belief is so historically embedded in the social milieu of those working for the French state that it is indistinguishable from the very idea of a French role in world affairs, or of French “interests”. In other words, they are unable to see France's interest as being simply commercial or developmental, as is largely the case with other aid donors. The analysis in this study concluded not only that French development aid policy continues to operate within this framework, but that there are very few signs that French politicians or officials are able to propose alternative views. The principal challenge to this framework for aid policy is therefore the degree to which it can be sustained in a rapidly changing external environment and whether the financial resources are available to do so. This ends-versus-means dilemma creates a constant search for policy ideas, which are limited enough in scope to fit credibly with the means available, while being wide ranging enough to satisfy the desire to have a strong international role and voice.

The introduction to this study indicated that the Jospin reforms needed to be

understood in the light of the debate over the continuity and adaptation of France's development aid policy. This study has shown that the Jospin reforms are a significant chapter in the increasingly forced pace of adaptation. The intention of the reforms was to push significant change through the system. Although this was impeded by inertia in the system, the Jospin reforms were nevertheless highly significant, especially when understood in conjunction with other highly significant factors for change at the international level and in francophone Africa.

2. The End of Cohabitation – Chirac “Re-engages”, Côte d’Ivoire Implodes

The re-election of Chirac in 2002 and the failure of the Parti socialiste in the legislative elections provide an opportunity to examine further these questions of change and continuity by examining the 12 months following this change of government, in order to determine to what degree the changes brought about under Jospin mark either a genuine watershed or an interregnum in French aid policy. Furthermore, the attempted coup and protracted civil and military unrest that broke out in Côte d’Ivoire on 18 September 2002 shed important new light on the conclusions regarding France’s aid relations with francophone Africa, largely confirming what has already been identified in this study as a loss of symbolic return for the French presence in Africa, despite an apparent reversal of the distanciation process under Chirac.

The first question to ask is whether Chirac’s new government reversed any of the basic features of the reforms. The short answer is no; the Cooperation Ministry was not reconstituted, the HCCI was kept, the ZSP was maintained and the DGCD – Finance Ministry – AFD division of labour continues (in May 2003) broadly as before. Furthermore, significantly, the government has made no moves to halt or reverse the decline in the number of coopérants.

There are two reasons for this continuity with the Jospin era. First, as noted, Chirac wishes to be seen as a moderniser in questions of development and development aid. He therefore supports attempts to forge new ideas and policies and wants these ideas vigorously promoted in international fora as original French ideas. He is therefore wary of any step that may be seen as retrograde, or as a retreat back to the comfortable, but parochial isolation of the France-francophone Africa relationship. Second, the nature of the reform process made it very difficult to envisage any reversal. In particular, changes in staffing made the reconstitution of the Cooperation Ministry (or anything resembling it) effectively impossible – the specialist staffs were largely no longer available, and in any case the diplomatic corps would have put up a fierce

resistance.

Several changes in focus and in procedural detail were nevertheless made, although their precise effects cannot necessarily be observed by May 2003. The new government has clearly signalled an intention to reverse the shift to multilateral aid, and has made strident criticisms of the slow disbursement of European aid funds. Other changes either enacted or proposed include allowing the AFD to operate outside the ZSP (Chapter 3 pointed to pressures in this direction in the 1998–2002 period), and allowing for funds unused in one part of the aid budget to be shifted to other parts (including moving money between ministerial allocations).⁴⁴⁶ This later move is designed to counteract the inflexibility of spending procedures and to ensure that money allocated to development aid is actually spent. This is given additional importance by Chirac's high profile pledge to raise France's aid budget to 0.5 % of GDP by 2007. However, given the interministerial rivalry and the inflexibility of existing budget procedures, it remains to be seen whether this will have any significant effect.

The second question raised by the first 12 months of Chirac's new government is whether a new rationale or elements of a new doctrine for French development aid emerged. Broadly speaking, the doctrinal base of French development aid has not fundamentally changed from the previous period, and the same issues are being tackled and broadly the same arguments deployed. French doctrine continues to encompass a managed tension between engagement with ideas and debates on the global stage and a retreat to the more parochial relationship with francophone Africa.

However, in explicitly stated contrast to Jospin's lack of interest for Africa and for development issues, Chirac's intention has been to “re-engage” with both. Chirac's customary visits to Africa, those of his energetic and loyal foreign minister Dominique de Villepin, the promise to devote a large proportion of France's aid budget to Africa and significant military engagement (including three new French military missions in this period, in Côte d'Ivoire, Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of Congo), are all aspects of this re-engagement. French aid policy is therefore to be an integral part of France's newly invigorated foreign policy, free from the shackles and hesitations of cohabitation.

Characteristically, Chirac wanted to present this re-engagement as having a more modern and reformed outlook than previously. One crucial aspect of this is to reinforce the trend towards a relationship with all of Africa. The logic behind this is that

⁴⁴⁶ For all these changes see CICID, *Relevé de Conclusions du réunion novembre 2002* Paris, 2002 .

an exclusive concentration on francophone Africa is neither reliable nor brings the international prestige (or symbolic return) Chirac seeks.

What implications does this new propulsion which Chirac wishes to give France's Africa policy have for French development aid? The first point to make is that these high profile changes do not necessarily represent a major shift from Jospin's time. Indeed, Jospin initiated the move to an Africa wide approach and also placed great emphasis on relations with South Africa. The key issue for French development aid, notwithstanding the increase in the budget, therefore remains the ambitions versus means dilemma. Using development aid to further a genuinely pan-African policy is ambitious and the potential demand on resources is huge. Even if France's public finances allow for the increases in aid that Chirac has promised, the capacity both of the French administration and of recipient states to spend increased funds will continue to pose a serious problem.

The ambition versus means dilemma is not the only obstacle facing Chirac and Villepin's policy of active re-engagement in Africa. Many in Africa question the sincerity of Chirac's commitment to African development and, more importantly, question whether France and Africa really constitute a community of interest and "common destiny" that Chirac likes to evoke (for example in his speech to the Africa-France summit in February 2003). This idea of common interests between France and Africa is particularly difficult for Chirac to sustain given his well-known support for European subsidies on agricultural exports.

However, these problems are, on their own, manageable. The more significant obstacle to Chirac's vision was thrown up by the attempted coup in Côte d'Ivoire in September 2002, and the continued violence subsequently. The coup failed, but the country has been partitioned in two. The rebels, who control the north, contest Gbagbo's legitimacy and are generally seen as supportive of the rights of northerners and migrant labourers (see Chapter 4). The hostilities are now (May 2003) at an uneasy standstill following a French imposed peace deal in February 2003.

Aside from the obvious damage to French economic interests, this outbreak of hostilities is particularly damaging for the French for several reasons. First, Côte d'Ivoire is home to around 15,000 French nationals whose protection has become one of the major issues of the conflict, and is the principal reason behind the French decision to deploy over 3000 peacekeeping troops in October 2002. Second, the crisis has been accompanied by often violent anti-French sentiment by a segment of the population that accuses France of supporting the rebels, or at the least of lending them legitimacy and

credibility. Third, the help President Compaoré of Burkina Faso has given the rebels has complicated the French position.⁴⁴⁷ Compaoré is a close ally of Chirac and the apparent inability of the French to stop him lending support to the rebels has only increased anti-French feelings in Gbagbo's camp.

As discussed in Chapter 4, the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire is a crisis of the political and social model left behind by the French. Although there is considerable debate among analysts over whether the anti-French hostility is spontaneous or politically manipulated, this latest phase has several hallmarks of a long-delayed post colonial crisis, or what has been called a "second independence"⁴⁴⁸. Relations between the FPI regime and the French government have fluctuated since September 2002, and the French have had to repair some of the damage of the low point of the beginning of 2003. However, it is clear that Gbagbo, who spent time in the prisons of his French backed predecessor, and who as a historian documented the abuses of French colonisers in his native region in the south-west, sees the conflict as part of Côte d'Ivoire's struggle finally to achieve independence from its former colonial power.

The French position in Côte d'Ivoire therefore illustrates the problems of re-engagement. Chirac and Villepin present their policies as a new way of doing things, especially in that their policies support "African solutions to African problems" (that is supporting solutions drawn up by regional bodies, referring explicitly to ECOWAS in the case of Côte d'Ivoire). However, the subtleties of these distinctions are lost on many in Africa who continue to see French military intervention as supporting favoured allies and deposing those seen as enemies.

Events in Côte d'Ivoire are a dramatic demonstration of one of the main findings of this study - that French development aid is being forced to adapt swiftly, and that the pace of adaptation is largely determined by rapid external change. Although the outcome of the Ivorian crisis is extremely difficult to envisage at present, it is surely not too fanciful to suggest that it is a transformative crisis that places France at the cusp of the "post-post colonial era", but whose historical complexities are constantly pulling France back towards its former role, and to the consequences of past involvement.

⁴⁴⁷ According to Banegas, Richard and Otayek, René, 'Le Burkina Faso dans la crise ivoirienne', *Politique africaine*, 89, 2003, and the report by the International Crisis Group, *Côte d'Ivoire: the war is not over*, Brussels 2003.

⁴⁴⁸ By Banegas, Richard and Marshall-Fratin, Ruth, ‘Introduction au thème’ in *Politique africaine* 89, 2003.

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ANNEXES

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- 4. List of Interviews**
- 5. The “lettre de Mission” to Jean-Michel Séverino from the “Ministres de tutelle” of the Agence française de développement, 14 November 2001.**
- 6. Organigrammes of the coopération system pre and post 1998 and of the DGCID.**
 - i. Administrative Structures of French Development Aid prior to 1995.*
 - ii. The Administrative Structures of French Development Aid following the reforms of 1998.*
 - iii. The internal Structure of the DGCID.*

Annex 1

French Overseas Development Aid: Statistical Tables.

All the statistics in this annex are taken or calculated from the OECD/DAC database of aid activities, which since 1961 has constituted the authoritative source for official aid flows. Figures are taken from annual submissions from the donor countries. In the French case the Trésor department of the Finance Ministry is responsible for collating this information and communicating it to the DAC.

Table 1: French aid disbursements, net volume, in millions of Dollars.

1960	823	1971	807	1982	3050	1993	7915
1961	903	1972	964	1983	2909	1994	8466
1962	945	1973	1067	1984	3026	1995	8443
1963	820	1974	1176	1985	3134	1996	7451
1964	828	1975	1493	1986	4042	1997	6307
1965	752	1976	1432	1987	5250	1998	5742
1966	745	1977	1481	1988	5463	1999	5639
1967	826	1978	1835	1989	5802	2000	4105
1968	853	1979	2440	1990	7163	2001	4198
1969	955	1980	2889	1991	7386	2002	5486
1970	735	1981	2964	1992	8270		

Table 2: French bilateral aid disbursements, net volume, in million of Dollars.

1960	759.4	1971	946.6	1982	2328	1993	6153. 7
1961	830.3	1972	1128.8	1983	2238.9	1994	6611. 2
1962	830.1	1973	1267	1984	2407.7	1995	6428. 7
1963	789.6	1974	1369.4	1985	2400.7	1996	5754. 2
1964	810.4	1975	1788.7	1986	3099.2	1997	4776. 5
1965	724.5	1976	1845.6	1987	4051	1998	4185. 5
1966	716.2	1977	1916.9	1988	4198.6	1999	4127. 6
1967	775.6	1978	2350.6	1989	4486.9	2000	2828. 8
1968	805.2	1979	2878	1990	5612.1	2001	2595. 8
1969	860	1980	2187.6	1991	5771.7	2002	3614. 9
1970	868.1	1981	2331.5	1992	6302.3		

Table 3: Multilateral aid as % of French net aid disbursements.

1960	7.8	1971	16	1982	23.7	1993	22.3
1961	8	1972	19.9	1983	23	1994	21.9
1962	12	1973	18.2	1984	20.4	1995	23.9
1963	3.6	1974	19.2	1985	23.4	1996	22.8
1964	2.2	1975	20.4	1986	23.3	1997	24.7
1965	3.7	1976	20.9	1987	22.9	1998	27.1
1966	3.8	1977	23.6	1988	23.1	1999	26.8
1967	6	1978	19.3	1989	22.7	2000	31
1968	5.6	1979	23.4	1990	21.7	2001	38.2
1969	10	1980	24.3	1991	21.9	2002	34.1
1970	14	1981	21.3	1992	23.8		

Table 4: French aid to Restricted Francophone Sub-Saharan Africa as % of total French bilateral aid¹

1960		1971	17	1982	29.5	1993	33.4
1961		1972	20.3	1983	27.4	1994	34.1
1962		1973	18.9	1984	30.8	1995	28.1
1963		1974	22.7	1985	26.7	1996	26.3
1964	24.4	1975	22.5	1986	27.7	1997	29.3
1965	25.3	1976	34.8	1987	26.7	1998	22.2
1966	33.4	1977	19.8	1988	27.7	1999	23.3
1967	23.6	1978	19.7	1989	29.7	2000	28.2
1968	21.6	1979	19.2	1990	33.7	2001	21.7
1969	23.4	1980	33.4	1991	29.9	2002	31.2
1970	21.7	1981	29	1992	30.2		

¹ For the purposes of this table, restricted Francophone Africa is used to refer to the core allies of France (“the Champ”) not including the former Belgian colonies: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo Republic, Gabon, Cote d’Ivoire, Madagascar, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Togo

Table 5: French ODA to sub-Saharan Africa as % of total French bilateral ODA.

1960	40.5	1971	33.1	1982	49.8	1993	49.2
1961	36.6	1972	33	1983	45.5	1994	47.3
1962	39.3	1973	33.6	1984	45	1995	42
1963	42.8	1974	36	1985	46.3	1996	42.2
1964	42.6	1975	33	1986	49	1997	45.4
1965	35.6	1976	30.3	1987	46.3	1998	36.3
1966	35.4	1977	29.6	1988	50.4	1999	34.2
1967	64.2	1978	30.7	1989	52.7	2000	42.8
1968	36.4	1979	29.3	1990	55.8	2001	36.4
1969	35.6	1980	48.2	1991	51.2	2002	58
1970	32.8	1981	44.6	1992	51.8		

Table 6: French ODA as a % of GNI².

1960	1.35	1971	.51	1982	.56	1993	.63
1961	1.36	1972	.49	1983	.56	1994	.64
1962	1.27	1973	.43	1984	.62	1995	.55
1963	.98	1974	.44	1985	.61	1996	.48
1964	.9	1975	.44	1986	.56	1997	.45
1965	.76	1976	.41	1987	.6	1998	.4
1966	.69	1977	.38	1988	.58	1999	.39
1967	.71	1978	.39	1989	.61	2000	.32
1968	.67	1979	.42	1990	.6	2001	.32
1969	.67	1980	.44	1991	.62	2002	.38
1970	.52	1981	.51	1992	.63		

² GNI refers to Gross National Income. This is now the preferred reference point for the OECD, replacing the previously used Gross National Product. The change of nomenclature has not entailed a significant shift in what is measured.

Table 7. Budget aid and debt relief as a % of French aid total 1985 - 2001³.

1985	<i>14.8</i>	1994	<i>40.4</i>
1986	<i>9.7</i>	1995	<i>26.8</i>
1987	<i>7.0</i>	1996	<i>11.3</i>
1988	<i>6.5</i>	1997	<i>24.0</i>
1989	<i>12.0</i>	1998	<i>29.6</i>
1990	<i>9.6</i>	1999	<i>26.8</i>
1991	<i>27.8</i>	2000	<i>25.8</i>
1992	<i>18.8</i>	2001	<i>28.1</i>
1993	<i>17.2</i>	2002	<i>39.3</i>

³ These figures are calculated as “action relating to debt” plus “commodity aid/general programme assistance” as a % of total bilateral aid.

Annexe 2

The Changes to the Recipients of the Fonds d'aide et de coopération/Fonds de solidarité prioritaire, 1959 - 2002.

This annex lists the countries which have been officially authorised to receive funds from the aid budget controlled by the Cooperation Ministry and called the Fonds d'aide et de coopération until 1999 and thereafter controlled by the Direction générale de la coopération internationale et du développement and called the Fonds de Solidarité Prioritaire (see chapter 3). As noted in chapters 2 and 3 (and detailed in Annex 1, and table 2.1), this list is not necessarily representative of those countries which receive the most French aid, as it does not take any account of lending by the French Finance Ministry.

According to interviews carried out for this study, prior to the changes of 1998/1999, the composition of this list was determined by informal political negotiation in the French bureaucracy and changes were made on an ad-hoc basis, where it was not related simply to external events such as the end of the Portuguese empire in Africa, or the death of Sékou Touré in Guinea in 1984. Officials in the Direction de l'Afrique et de l'Océan indien in the Foreign Ministry generally tried to get their countries onto this list, in order to increase the importance of relations between France and that country, even if that meant giving up some control over political relations to the Coopération Ministry (this counts for Namibia which joined in 1990 for example). The Finance Ministry almost always argued against the expansion of the list, in order to restrict aid spending. Following the changes of 1998/1999, the composition of this list is negotiated at a more senior level, in the run up to the CICID meetings, which is now the only forum at which changes are formally made. The arguments deployed and sides taken are similar. However one recent issue to emerge is the exclusion of some countries which can impede the use of funds for regional development. For example, attempts on the part of some officials in the DGCID to use funds to support the Southern African Development Community (SADC) has been hampered by the fact that Botswana is excluded from the ZSP on the grounds that its development needs are not significant enough.

Note that the change initiated by Prime Minister Juppé, which was to entail the inclusion of all ACP countries, was not officially enacted according to source used for this study¹.

¹ In the course of research for this study I queried this on several occasions in conversations and interviews with French officials. Most, even those closely involved, did not have a clear idea of when different countries joined this list nor how. However those few who did broadly confirmed the list used here, which is based on documents from the DGCID.

1959

Benin
Burkina-Faso
Cameroon
Chad
Central African Republic
Comores
Congo Republic
Côte-d'Ivoire
Gabon
Madagascar
Mali
Mauritania
Niger
Senegal
Togo.

1964 - countries joining

Burundi
Democratic Republic of Congo
Rwanda

1971 - country joining

Mauritius

1973 - country joining

Haiti

1975 - country joining

Comoros Islands

1976 - country joining

Cape Verde
Guinea-Bissau
Sao Tome and Principe
Seychelles

1978 - country joining

Djibouti

1980 - country joining

Gambia
Equatorial Guinea

1983 - countries joining

St Lucia
Grenada
Dominica
St Vincent
St Kitts and Nevis

1984 - country joining

Guinea (Conakry)

1985 - countries joining

Angola
Mozambique

1990 - country joining

Namibia

1993 - country joining

Cambodia

1999 - (creation of the ZSP) countries joining

Algeria
Autonomous Palestinian Territories
Cuba
Dominican Republic
Eritrea
Ethiopia
Ghana
Kenya
Laos
Lebanon
Liberia
Morocco
Nigeria
South Africa
Seychelles
Sierra Leone
Surinam
Tanzania
Tunisia
Uganda
Vanuatu
Vietnam
Zimbabwe

2002 - countries joining

Sudan

Yemen

2002 - countries leaving the ZSP

St Lucia

Grenada

Dominica

St Vincent

St Nevis and Kitts

Seychelles

Mauritius

Annex 3

Interview given by Prime Minister Jospin to Le Monde, TV5 and Radio France internationale, February 4, 1998.

I.- ENTRETIEN DU PREMIER MINISTRE, M. LIONEL JOSPIN, AVEC "TV5-RFI-LE MONDE"

(Paris, 4 fevñer 1998)

Q - Monsieur le Premier ministre, merci d'avoir accepte d'etre le premier invite du "Monde en Frangais", une interview mensuelle TV5-RFI-Le Monde. Notre theme, c'est l'actualite d'aujourd'hui, c'est-a{tire le nouveau dispositif frangais de Cooperation que vous avez presente au Conseil des ministres. Depuis 30 ans, cette reforme a ete bien souvent tentee sans reussite ; aujourd'hui elle existe, alors est-ce que l'on peut dire qu'avec cette reforme, dans les esprits, dans les comportements, le colonialisme et le neocolonialisme sont morts ?

R - Le colonialisme est une vieille histoire, il est a la fois la matñce des relations qui se sont nouees notamment entre la France et l'Afñque, et c'est en meme temps une histoire revolue, une histoire que nous avons combattue, un certain nombre d'entre nous, notamment l'homme que je suis, quand fetais un jeune citoyen, un jeune militant. Le neocolonialisme est toujours une tentation qui peut effleurer les politiques mais qui peut effleurer aussi parfois le monde des entrepñses. Et donc c'est des relations égales, des relations de partenariat que nous voulons fonder. En l'oaxrrrence, si cette reforme s'amorce enfin avec t'accord de l'ensemble des autoñtes publiques; le gouvemement qui l'a pensee, muñe depuis le mois de juillet environ - puisque c'est sept mois apres la declaration de politique generale que fai faite en jufn et dans laquelle fannongais parmi les projets une r6forme de la Cooperation - que cette-ci est presente au Conseil des ministres ce matin, avec l'accord du Pr6sident de la Republique et donc l'accord de l'ensemble des autorites publiques frangaises. C'est cela qui est important. Je crois que c'est parce que le monde a' txwge, parce que l'Afñque elle-meme a boug6 et a evolue, parce qu'il y avait une volonte politique que le gouvemement a essaye d'incamer; parce que le President de la Republique a compñs la necessite de cette evolution, que cette reforme effectivement se presente, meme s'il faudr i effectivement la concretiser. Et la encore par le dialogue avec nos partenaires.

Q - Monsieur le Premier ministre, on a le sentiment que, au fond, cares sont ceux qui vont pleurer sur ce ministere tel qu'il etait. Tout d'abord, sur une question d'image : deficit de transparence, un certain nombre d'affaires, un certain nombre de petits ou de grands secrets... est-ce que l'on peut avoir la certitude que maintenant, cette nouvelle stnxture va permettre cry voir clair sur la fagon dont la France gere sa Cooperation ?

R - Nous voulons travailler dans un esprit de transparence et en assontant aor cbt6s de l'Etat, toute une serie d'acteurs de la societe civile. Nous savons qu'il y a de nouveaux acteurs dans la Cooperation, des organisations intergouvernementales, des associations, des collectivites locales ; gVil y a des mouvements divers qui menent des exp6dences novatñces de Cooperation en Afñque ou ailleurs. Et dnns ce Haut Conseil de la Cooperation, nous allons reunir ces acteurs autour des acteurs d'Etat - qui ont une mission naturellement, notamment d'organiser l'aide publique au developpement ou de contribuer au financement de projets de developpement:

Il y a un comite interministeñel qui est mis en place, aux competences elargies et qui aura pour objet; se reunissant regulierement de d6finir les grandes orientations de la Cooperation. Ce qui va permettre de coordonner l'action des differents ministeres, et notamment celle de ce pôle diplomatique Affaires etrangeres-Cooperation, et du pôle Economie et Finances qui est present.

Il y a un operateur pivot qui est cette Agence de developpement qui succede a la caisse centrale de developpement, qui va la aussi permettre de coordonner. Et il y a cette volonte de partenariat notamment avec les pays de la zone de solidarite pñoñtaire, puisque nous degageons une zone dans laquelle l'aide au developpement sera l'instrument principal et dnns cette zone, avec chacun des pays - et notamment avec les pays africains, mais aussi avec les pays que l'on appelle ACP ou avec les pays membres de la Francophonie -, c'est sur la base d'accords de partenañat entre deux pays 6gaux en droit et en amitie - les pays africains, la France - que seront definies les orientations qui guideront nos politiques bilaterales.

Donc, on a la un effort de coherence, de clarte et de transparence qui nous permettra, je crois, d'avancer. Alors, moi, je ne veux pas m'arreter a des caricatures, je ne veux pas m'arreter a des critiques - meme si certaines d'entre elles etaient fondees, si d'autres sont un peu injustes - mais je crois que la, il y a un depassement+ r6aliste et novateur que j'espere un certain nombre d'observateurs vont saluer, que vous commencez de faire indirectement, disons.

Q - On le voit, vous bousculez les structures - cela, c'est pour la forme. Qu'est-ce que cela va changer au fond ? Est-ce que c'est une réforme de fond également ? Parce que vous avez annoncé des modifications au niveau ministériel ; comment vont suivre les multiples services, les multiples missions, comment cela va s'intégrer, comment le Quai d'Orsay va pouvoir coopérer plus activement, plus efficacement puisque c'est l'un des objectifs que vous poursuivez par cette réforme ?

R - Vous savez que le Secrétariat d'Etat à la Coopération et à la Francophonie dont le titulaire est Charles Josselin va devenir un ministère, ce qui prouve qu'au moment où vous

intègrons la Coopération aux Affaires étrangères, nous ne diminuons pas non plus son poids, il va devenir donc un ministre délégué auprès du ministre des Affaires étrangères, Hubert Vedrine.

Q - C'est un symbole ?

R - Oui, c'est un symbole d'intégration, d'abord des personnels qui seront intégrés progressivement dans les Affaires étrangères ou dans l'Agence, selon leur statut, la fonction qui est la leur aujourd'hui rue Monsieur, comme l'on dit. Cela veut dire aussi que l'on rapprochera les structures administratives et notamment la Direction du développement au Secrétariat d'Etat à la Coopération, et la Direction générale des affaires scientifiques, culturelles et techniques au ministère des Affaires étrangères, et que ce travail se fera sous l'autorité du ministre des Affaires étrangères qui donnera donc à cette réflexion sa vision d'ensemble, son caractère global ; de la même manière que le ministre délégué à la Coopération aura des responsabilités hors de l'Afrique au sens strict, sur tous les problèmes qui sont des problèmes de Coopération. Je pense donc que l'on arrive à une conception de la Coopération véritablement adulte. Et par ailleurs, j'ajoute que sur le terrain, dans les pays concernés, ce que l'on appellait les missions de Coopération, les missions d'aide et de Coopération ou les missions culturelles, vont être intégrées dans les ambassades, devenir des services des ambassades. Vous voyez que cet effort de coordination s'opère y compris au niveau du terrain.

Q - Pour en finir avec le ministère de la Coopération, ce n'est pas un simple porte-parole de la Coopération ? On peut avoir tendance à penser cela quand un ministère n'a plus d'administration, tout juste un cabinet.

R - Non, parce que les services nécessaires à l'action de Coopération seront délégués au ministre de la Coopération qui aura en tant que de besoin, autorité sur ces services. Donc l'intégration n'est pas la disparition, elle est la coordination, l'addition des efforts. Et c'est ce que nous voulons faire. Il est formidable finalement pour les pays africains qu'ils soient à la fois traités comme tous les autres pays sur la planète partenaires ou interlocuteurs de la France, dans le même temps où, dans la zone de solidarité prioritaire, il reste des pays qui, non seulement en raison de leur niveau de développement, du revenu par tête de leurs habitants, de leur impossibilité d'accéder aujourd'hui par exemple au marché des capitaux pour financer leurs projets mais aussi en raison des liens historiques que nous avons noués avec eux, en particulier bien sûr dans l'Afrique francophone mais éventuellement ailleurs. Ils vont être en même temps des partenaires choyés.

Q - Demain, un chef d'Etat africain a qui pour interlocuteur ? Il n'y a plus le ministre de la Coopération en tant que tel, c'est le ministre des Affaires étrangères, c'est

vous-même ou c'est en fonction du dossier qu'il a à traiter ? N'ont-ils pas été inquiets quand ils ont appris que la France changeait la règle du jeu de la Coopération ?

R - D'abord nous avons discuté avec eux. Le ministre des Affaires étrangères, le Secrétaire d'Etat Charles Josselin dans ses voyages nombreux en Afrique, moi-même lors du voyage récent que j'ai fait par exemple au Sénégal et au Mali. Nous avons posé ces problèmes devant le président Abdou Diouf, devant le Premier ministre H. Thiam que je connais depuis très longtemps ou devant le président Konaré que j'ai appris à connaître en la circonstance ou devant mon collègue Premier ministre au Mali. Donc, nous avons parlé avec eux, nous avons entendu leur point de vue. Je pense qu'il y a de nouvelles équipes, de nouvelles élites en Afrique qui aspirent à un autre type de rapport, qui veulent porter chez eux la démocratie, qui ne veulent pas être enfermés dans une relation exclusive avec la France mais qui comptent sur elle et qui, je crois, voient de façon favorable cette évolution. En tout état de cause, quand un chef d'Etat africain vient à Paris, il est reçu par le President de la République, il rencontre généralement le Premier ministre. Lorsque nous allons dans ces pays, nous les rencontrons, donc ces formes de dialogue vont continuer.

Q - Vous n'avez envisagé à aucun moment la création d'un grand ministère du Développement qui aurait hérité des missions de Secrétariat d'Etat à la Coopération et de certaines missions des Affaires étrangères. La Grande-Bretagne vient d'annoncer un tel mouvement : c'est-à-dire la création d'un grand ministère de la Coopération.

R - Tout est toujours possible. Je vous parle de la démarche que nous avons initiée. Nous ne partions peut-être pas de la même histoire que la Grande-Bretagne et je pense que ce qui était nécessaire chez nous, c'était de faire évoluer ce ministère de la Coopération pour lui permettre, sans perdre de son originalité, de son expertise, de la qualité des hommes et des femmes qui y travaillent, de s'intégrer dans un ensemble plus vaste, dans ce pôle diplomatique dont je partais. Lequel dit pôle diplomatique va lui-même titré coordonné avec ce que j'appelais le pôle économique, c'est-à-dire le ministère de l'Economie et des Finances dont on sait bien le rôle très important qu'il joue dans ces affaires.

Q - Nous sommes en régime de cohabitation ; est-ce que cette réforme a été acceptée sans la moindre nuance par le chef de l'Etat et est-ce qu'à l'Elysée, il y aura toujours cette cellule Afrique ou y a-t-il un vent de réforme qui, du côté de l'autre partenaire institutionnel, tient compte de l'évolution ?

R - D'abord, je ne suis pas le porte-parole du President de la République. Naturellement, nous en avons partie. Les collaborateurs du President de la République ont été associés à ce travail de réflexion au niveau des grandes orientations et

puis quand on a commencé à cerner de plus près les réformes que nous proposions, le dispositif que nous voulions mettre en place. Ces collaborateurs ont été associés directement à ce travail. Quand nous sommes arrivés plus près du moment où nous avions achevé en quelque sorte notre projet de réforme, je lui en ai parlé directement dans le cadre des entretiens réguliers que nous avons notamment avant les réunions du Conseil des ministres. Il a souhaité, ce qui était tout à fait légitime, poser toute une série de questions, questions parfois importantes, d'autres plus précises parce qu'il connaît bien ces questions et qu'elles l'intéressent. Et nous avons répondu à chacune de ces questions d'une façon, je crois, qui l'a satisfait ou éclairé lorsqu'il pouvait y avoir doute sur les intentions. Il a marqué l'importance qu'il attachait à la nécessité d'un approfondissement du lien avec l'Afrique. Ce qui rencontrait tout à fait ma position. Il a naturellement insisté sur la Francophonie, c'est pour lui important. À ce propos, il a aussi nous avons répondu à ses préoccupations. Donc, je ne veux pas m'exprimer en son nom, il s'est d'ailleurs exprimé lui-même aujourd'hui pour dire qu'il se reconnaissait tout à fait dans cette réforme. En ce qui concerne l'organisation même de l'Elysée, je ne suis absolument pas compétent.

Q - Vous voulez dire que cohabitation ou pas, cela aurait été la même réforme ?

R - Je ne veux pas avoir l'air d'être insolent à votre égard, mais je ne suis pas sûr de comprendre l'intérêt de la question en l'occurrence puisque nous sommes en cohabitation. Ce qui je trouve formidable...

Q - Mais s'il n'y avait pas eu de cohabitation, seriez-vous allé un peu plus loin ?

R - Ma fonction n'est pas franchement académique. Elle est quand même plutôt pratique. Je ne sais pas ce qui aurait été fait dans d'autres circonstances. En gros, vraiment, ce que nous faisons là qui est novateur, et qui reste réaliste, qui rationalise aussi notre aide pour qu'elle soit plus efficace, pour que nous économisions tout en disant que si nous économisons cela sera recyclé dans l'aide, c'est-à-dire que nous ne diminuerons pas le montant de notre aide, correspond vraiment à ce que j'avais envie de faire. Ce sont des choses auxquelles j'ai réfléchi il y a longtemps même. Je suis heureux de voir que cette conception a été approuvée. Et le fait que ce soit dans la situation d'aujourd'hui, de cohabitation, l'ensemble des autorités françaises et en tout cas de l'exécutif qui sont derrière cette réforme, donne encore plus de poids et plus de chance de réussite.

Q - Vous avez donc évoqué un certain nombre de critiques de jeu nouvelles en matière de Coopération, est-ce qu'il y aura des règles du jeu ? Il y a eu ce qu'on appelait (esprit de La Baule. Est-ce qu'en d'autres termes, les Droits de l'Homme, la

democratie, les paramètres éthiques de ce genre seront pris en compte sur les choix de la France en matière de solidarité, de partenariat et de développement ?

R - C'est pour nous un objectif et je crois aussi qu'il y a de nouvelles élites africaines, de nouveaux responsables d'Etat ou de gouvernement qui veulent porter ces évolutions. Je pense que le vent de la liberté a soufflé à l'Est mais il s'est mis à souffler aussi au Sud. On l'a vu. Ça n'est pas facile parce que parfois, cela peut aussi entraîner des déstabilisations ; parfois, retrouver des équilibres nouveaux ou trouver des équilibres nouveaux quand on abandonne des équilibres anciens peut être une occasion de trouble. Dorénavant, nous devons examiner ces choses là avec pragmatisme, dans le respect aussi des choix de pays qui sont indépendants, que nous respectons. Si nous disons qu'ils sont des partenaires, si nous abandonnons cet esprit du néocolonialisme, ce n'est pas pour le reintroduire au nom de nos propres valeurs. Mais ces valeurs, nous ne croyons pas qu'elles soient celles de l'homme blanc, nous ne croyons pas qu'elles soient celles de l'Occident, nous croyons que ce sont des valeurs universelles. Alors les pays évolueront progressivement. Ce reste pour nous des finalités et donc elles seront présentes dans le dialogue, dans ce partenariat que nous nouerons avec ces pays pour guider notre politique de Coopération.

Q - Pour l'aide aux pays, quels seront les operateurs en dehors du fait que la Caisse française de développement devient l'Agence française de développement ?

R - Beaucoup de gens réfléchissaient à cette idée d'Agence depuis longtemps et il est bien de le faire ainsi. Vers cette Agence, se concentreront les efforts des équipes à la fois du pôle diplomatique et de la Coopération et celles du ministère de l'Economie et des Finances. De même que le secrétariat du Comité interministériel sur la Coopération et le développement sera assuré en commun par le ministère des Affaires étrangères et par le ministère de l'Economie et des Finances. De la même manière, nous allons intégrer dans les services des ambassades, des pays dans lesquels il y a une Coopération de la France, ces structures qui avaient été autonomes. Vous voyez qu'il y a un effort de coordination et de cohérence. Mais là, nous avons fixé les grandes orientations. Je ne voudrais pas vous donner l'impression que je fais déjà réponse à tout. En plus, ce n'est pas forcément de ma responsabilité. Vous savez la façon par laquelle je essaie de gouverner et de laisser les ministres remplir véritablement leur fonction. Je crois que cette réforme était suffisamment importante pour que je la porta un peu moi-même, même si c'est le ministre des Affaires étrangères et le secrétaire d'Etat à la Coopération, bientôt ministre délégué, qui font présence au Conseil des ministres, que le ministre de l'Economie et des Finances, Dominique Strauss-Kahn est intervenu, d'autres ministres encore. Il y a à travailler maintenant sur l'Agence, sur le Comité interministériel, sur le Haut Conseil. Il y a encore beaucoup de travail à faire pour concrétiser tout cela.

Donc aujourd'hui, je suis seulement en mesure de vous donner les grandes orientations mais elles sont clairement marquées.

Q - S'agissant de l'Agence de développement justement, on voit que son champ d'intervention va être élargi, ses moyens renforcés, on sait que la France est un des pays les plus généreux en matière d'aide au développement - cela représente à peu près 0,4 % du PIB.

R - 0,41 %.

Q - Mais cet effort décroît, cette aide décroît régulièrement chaque année. Est-ce que la réforme que vous envisagez peut inverser la tendance ?

R - En tout cas, elle assurera certainement que pour un même montant d'aide, cette-ci sera plus efficace. Je pense aussi que cette aide devrait être mieux adaptée aux besoins des populations car là aussi, il y a un effort à faire pour justifier de la qualité des projets de développement. Notre volonté n'est pas de faire décroître l'aide au développement. C'est vrai que la tendance est celle que vous avez dite. Mais il faut que vous ayez à l'esprit qu'il y a eu des évolutions profondes dans le monde en développement. Un certain nombre de pays que l'on considérait il y a quelques années, comme des **pays** sous-développés, sont des pays qui émergent économiquement. Il n'y en pas forcément aujourd'hui beaucoup en Afrique et il y a d'autres facteurs d'instabilité politique, des problèmes militaires, parfois des problèmes ethniques malheureusement qui freinent ('Afrique dans son développement). Encore que le taux de croissance moyen des pays de l'Afrique francophone est de 5 % ces dernières années. C'est à dire qu'il y a un taux de croissance plus élevé que le nôtre avec évidemment une base de départ qui ne peut pas être comparée. Mais cela signifie qu'il y a des éléments d'optimisme dans la situation. Et donc, quand des pays voient augmenter leur niveau de développement, leur capacité industrielle, leur capacité d'exportation, ils peuvent recourir au marché des capitaux par exemple, à des capitaux privés et ils ont peut-être moins besoin d'une aide au développement au sens classique du terme fondée essentiellement sur des dons ou sur des prêts à très bas taux d'intérêt. Voilà ce dont il faut tenir compte. Nous travaillons sous contrainte budgétaire, vous le savez bien et cela concerne l'aide au développement comme d'autres secteurs de l'activité de la France.

Q - Parmi les quelques critiques qui ont accompagné votre réforme, il y a celle d'une forme de désengagement de la France en Afrique au moment où, disent les observateurs, les Etats-Unis sont en challenge diplomatique. Ne redoutez-vous pas que ce soit interprété dans le monde entier et notamment en Afrique, quelle que soit la réforme que vous venez d'évoquer, comme une banalisation des rapports avec ('Afrique et une sorte de désengagement ?

R - Cette idée de la concurrence, cela a été dit mais c'est une vérité qui ne me préoccupe pas beaucoup. Je crois qu'elle relève un peu du fantasme que cette présence, cette compétition américaine à l'étranger. Je ne suis pas sûr, quand je vois le poids que passe le Congrès américain, la détermination de ses choix aujourd'hui dans le dispositif politique américain, que les Etats-Unis soient véritablement à l'offensive dans une politique planétaire. En tout cas, je crois que la qualité de notre présence en Afrique, les liens d'amitié que nous avons noués, tout ce qui nous réunit dans la Francophonie nous préparent réellement contre ces risques surtout si nos partenaires ont l'impression qu'ils sont aimés toujours mais peut-être un peu plus encore respectés. Donc, non, je ne crains pas cela. Il n'y a aucun désengagement. Je crois au contraire que c'est un progrès du point de vue psychologique, même d'un certain point de vue éthique que nos partenaires africains soient absolument égaux aux autres dans la façon d'être traités, mais en même temps, c'est normal, un peu de privilégié.

Q - Revenons à la zone de pñontes parce que je crois qu'il faut titre tres clair et que cela interesse particulierement nos auditeurs. Ces zones pñontaires de Cooperation et de developpement signifient quoi exactement ? Pour l'Afrique, s'agit-il des pays du champ ou bien que demain notre aide peut aller au Mali et à égalité au Zimbabwe pour simplifier. Est-ce que cela concerne exactement les anglophones, les lusophones ? Comment va-t-on faire ?

R - Cette zone de solidañte pñontaire va, lorsqu'elle sera miÑe en oeuvre, concerner ('ensemble des pays qui relevient actuellement des credits du Fonds d'aide et de Cooperation, ce qu'on appelle le FAC, donc des pays du champ. Nous partons avec cette definition. Personne, aucun pays de ceux qui beneficient de cette forme d'aide de la France, plus genereuse sans doute, n'en sera pñve dans la definition de départ de cette zone de solidañte pñontaire. Ensuite, ce sera au Comite interministeñel, dont je paÑais, de Cooperation et de developpement de definir au fur et à mesure des evolutions, les frontieres de cette zone. Naturellement, ce sera fait par dialogue avec les pays aujourd'hui beneficiaires et par ailleurs, les criteres sont quand même des pays dont le niveau de revenu par tête est bas et des pays qui n'ont pas les moyens d'accéder au marché des capitaux pour le financement d'un certain nombre de ces projets. Donc ces criteres objectifs continueront à exister mais comme c'est aussi une definition politique, je crois que ces criteres de caractere politique continueront à jouer un rôle dans les decisions que nous prendrons en accord avec nos partenaires.

Q - Et vous pensez que cette reforme va encourager le secteur pñve frangais à aller investir en Afñque, à se porter sur les marches afñcains ?

R - D'abord, nous avons dit qu'il y avaii des formes d'aide qui iraient davantage avec la zone de solidañte pñontaire et

d'autres qui, hors champ en quelque sorte, pourraient prendre d'autres formes, davantage de financement de projets sur des credits pñves notamment des credits commerciaux mais nous n'avons pas non plus interdit que des formes differentes puissent titre presentes notamment dans la zone de solidañte pñontaire. Donc je pense qu'il est de la responsabilite des entrepñses frangaises d'investi~ partout OU elles peuvent, exporter, vendre, exercer une influence au bon sens du terme bien sur.

Q - Comment avez-vous reagi au fait que cette reforme est presque consensuelle ? Il y a du tres peu de reactions d'hostilite. Finalement, etes-vous alle assez loin dans cette reforme ?

R - Je me disais bien qu'il me manquerait quelque chose. A ce stade et sur ces orientations, le consensus me convient.

Q - Et en Afñque, il y a eu des critiques ? Est-ce que des capitales se sont inquietees de la dispañtion de ces structures qu'ils connaissaient depuis des decennies ?

R - Le ministre des Affaires étrangères, le secrétaire d'Etat à la Cooperation vous en parleraient de fagon peut-dtre plus précise. Ils ont été au contact. Je crois qu'il y a sûrement des messages qui ont été passés, des interrogations qui ont été formulées. Je n'ai pas senti, au niveau d'information qui est le mien, de véritable inquiétude. De toute fagon j'adresserai certainement dans les joues qui viennent, une lettre à l'ensemble des chefs d'Etat et de gouvernement des pays qui nous sont les plus proches, notamment des pays d'Afñque, pour leur redonner le sens de cette réforme. Et puis par ailleurs, comme le souhaitait d'ailleurs le President de la République, nous en avons paÑe ce matin, nous enverrons certainement un messager du gouvernement pour discuter directement avec les chefs d'Etat ou de gouvernement en Afñque.

Q - A votre sortie de l'ENA en 1965, vous êtes entré au Quai d'Orsay à la Direction économique, dans le service de la Cooperation et de l'aide au développement. C'est donc une We qui vous tient à cœur depuis plus de 35 ans. Et aujourd'hui, vous la réalisez.

R - Il arrive qu'on puisse rester en continuité avec soi-même, en cohérence avec soi-même. Et c'est pourquoi je suis heureux de pouvoir porter cette réforme. C'est vrai que j'ai commencé ma vie professionnelle comme jeune diplomate, et dans ce domaine multilatéral. La Cooperation économique, en réalité, c'était le FMI, la BIRD, mais aussi ces problèmes de Cooperation et d'aide au développement. J'ai continué à m'intéresser à ces questions quand j'étais un jeune responsable du Parti socialiste, secrétaire au Tiers-monde du Parti socialiste. J'ai écrit, j'ai contribué à un livre collectif sur ces problèmes, dans lesquels on retrouverait beaucoup d'idées qui sont peut-être mises en œuvre autrement aujourd'hui. Et là, Premier ministre, j'ai

chance d'avoir des ministres, un gouvernement qui a travaillé à une réforme qui a l'aval du President de la République - dont vous dites qu'elle est relativement consensuelle, qui vous amène à vous interroger pour savoir si elle n'est pas trop timide. Moi, je crois que ce sont de bonnes étapes. Maintenant, essayons de le concrétiser en étroit dialogue avec nos partenaires. Nous aurons bien avancé, et fait une réforme utile, non seulement pour nous, mais pour tous ceux qui coopèrent avec nous.

Q - Quand sera-t-elfieachevee ?

R - Deja ce matin, au Conseil des ministres, fal presente un projet de decret - qui a ete approuve par le Conseil des ministres, qui est donc devenu un decret - qui cree ce Comite interministeriel sur la Cooperation. Et donc, deje un premier acte a ete immediatement pose dans le meme Conseil des ministres. Les mises en oeuvre vont se faire maintenant tres rapidement. Et les premieres traductions financieres se retrouveront clans le budget 1999.L

Annex 4.

List of Interviews.

The following list is of structured interviews either recorded or written up and incorporated in detail into this study. Other less formal conversations and interviews on other issues have helped in the writing of this study, as listed in the introduction, footnote 31.

PARIS

Emile Robert Perrin,	Vice-Secrétaire général du Haut Conseil de la Coopération Internationale (HCCI), February 2001.
Emile le Bris	Directeur de l'Observatoire permanent de la coopération française (OPCF), February 2001.
Hubert Dognin and Cyrille Berton	Direction Afrique de l'Ouest, Agence française de développement (AFD), May 2001.
Senior officials*	Service de coordination géographique, Direction générale de la coopération internationale et du développement (DGCID), Ministère des affaires étrangères (Foreign Ministry), May 2001 and April 2003.
Senior officials*	Direction Afrique et l'océan indienne, Ministère des affaires étrangères, May 2001 and April 2003.
Alain Blancheton	Rédacteur pour la Côte d'Ivoire, Direction générale de la coopération internationale et du développement, Ministère des affaires étrangères. Former coopérant in Cote d'Ivoire, May 2001 and April 2003.
Mme Tisseyre-Girard	Conseiller spécial du Ministre de la Coopération, May 2001.
Francois Gaulme	Redacteur en Chef, Afrique contemporaine, Agence française de développement, September 2002.
Jean Nemo	Formerly Directeur de l'administration in the Ministère de la Coopération. Author of a report in 2000 on the personnel of the Cooperation Ministry and cooperation workers (the coopérants), April 2003.
Simon Scott	Principal Administrator, Statistics and Monitoring Division, Development Co-operation Directorate, OECD, April 2003.
Richard Clarke Jervoise	Chargé d'Affaires, Services Banques et Marchés, Proparco, Agence française de développement, May 2003.
Charles Josselin	Ministre de la Coopération, 1997 - 2002, May 2003.

Senior officials* (3)	Direction du Trésor, Ministère de l'économie des finances et de l'industrie (Finance Ministry), May 2003.
Senior officials* (2)	Direction du développement et de la coopération technique, Direction générale de la coopération internationale et du développement, Ministère des Affaires étrangères, May 2003.
François Croquette	Chef de Cabinet du Ministre de la Coopération, June 2000 - May 2002, July 2003.
Antoine Baux	Coopérant in the Ivorian Ministère du Plan 1965 – 1973. Head of Agence française de développement in Abidjan 1988 - 1993, subsequently Agence française de développement Paris. September 2003.
Jean-Marc Châtagnier	Directeur adjoint du Department de développement et de la coopération technique, Direction générale de la coopération internationale et du développement, Ministère des Affaires étrangères, September 2003.

COTE D'IVOIRE and other Africa

Christine Rosselini	Directrice du Fonds sociale de développement, Mission d'aide et de coopération, Abidjan. March 1998.
M. Villagra	Delegation of the Commission of the European Community, Abidjan. March, 1998.
Eugène Allou Allou	Section Europe, Ministère des Affaires étrangères, Côte d'Ivoire, March 1998.
Honoré Marcellin Wognin	Secrétaire général, Front populaire ivoirien (FPI), section Grand Bassam, March 1998.
Cedric Soenon	Chargé de ressources humaines, Association française des volontaires du Progrès, Abidjan, March 1998.
Mattia Crosetto	Economist, Delegation of the Commission of the European Community, Abidjan, March 1998.
Paul Yao N'Dré	Professeur de droit public et science politique, Université de Côte d'Ivoire, Abidjan, March 1998.

Martin Bleou	Président de la ligue Ivoirienne des droits de l'homme, Abidjan March 1998 and October 2001.
Daniel Voizot	Service de Coopération et d'Action culturelle, Ambassade française, Dakar. October 2001.
Senior official*	Service de Coopération et d'Action culturelle, Ambassade française, Abidjan. October 2001.

LONDON.

Tony Lloyd	Minister of State with responsibility for Africa, 1997 - 1999. June 2000.
Karen Miller	Seconded from British Foreign and Commonwealth Office to Direction générale de la coopération internationale et du développement, Ministère des affaires étrangères 2000 - 2001. October 2001.

* Several interviews were carried out under conditions of anonymity at the request of the interviewee.

Annex 5

The “Lettre de Mission” to Jean-Michel Severino from the “ministres de tutelles” of the Agence française de développement, 14 November, 2001.

Spécial Lettre de mission du Directeur général

Novembre 2001

EDITORIAL DU DIRECTEUR GÉNÉRAL

J'ai le plaisir de vous transmettre le texte de la lettre de mission que viennent de m'adresser les quatre membres du Gouvernement responsables de nos administrations de tutelle. Je voudrais saisir cette occasion pour partager avec vous quelques réflexions que m'inspire ce document et ses implications pour notre groupe.

Cette lettre de mission est une première historique. Elle nous confirme que les aspirations du projet stratégique répondent aux attentes de nos tutelles. C'est aussi une normalisation souhaitable de relations de tout établissement public avec l'Etat.

Sans entrer dans une longue exégèse, je voudrais souligner que ce document détaillé, tout en maintenant les missions fondamentales de l'AFD et en rappelant la qualité des interventions de notre groupe, nous fixe de nouveaux défis et plusieurs orientations tant au niveau stratégique qu'opérationnel.

Nos tutelles attendent de l'AFD qu'elle contribue plus activement à la rénovation de la politique française de coopération, en aidant les services de l'Etat à rendre notre aide publique au développement plus efficace et plus légitime et en jouant un rôle moteur dans l'élaboration de conceptions nouvelles en matière de développement.

Elles expriment la volonté de voir notre établissement se concentrer sur trois thèmes fédérateurs : la stabilité économique et financière, l'environnement et la réduction des inégalités sociales.

Elles marquent leur souci de voir l'AFD renforcer la qualité de ses opérations, poursuivre l'amélioration de ses systèmes de gestion et élaborer un système de mesure de sa performance.

Par ailleurs, le rôle majeur de l'AFD dans l'outre-mer républicain est particulièrement souligné et nos orientations pour les années à venir clairement tracées.

Enfin, cette lettre insiste sur la nécessité de voir l'AFD clarifier ses relations avec ses tutelles grâce à une meilleure contractualisation.

Cette lettre que je vous invite à lire avec la plus grande attention est pour notre groupe une référence, une ambition et une responsabilité :

- *Une référence parce qu'elle encadre les actions futures du groupe et les orientations du plan stratégique,*
- *Une ambition car, bien que je n'aie aucun doute sur la capacité de notre groupe à satisfaire les attentes de nos tutelles, certains points de ce document sont pour nous des défis qu'il conviendra de relever,*
- *Enfin, une responsabilité personnelle et collective car nous sommes dorénavant comptables des objectifs qui nous sont assignés et qu'il nous appartient d'honorer dans le cadre du contrat plurianuel qui sera négocié prochainement.*

C'est grâce à notre travail d'équipe que nous permettrons au groupe AFD de rester l'outil apprécié qu'il est aujourd'hui et de s'améliorer tant au bénéfice de la France et de la communauté des bailleurs que de nos partenaires du Sud.

Je suis heureux et fier de partager avec vous cette ambition.



Le Ministre
de l'économie,
des finances et de l'industrie

Le Ministre
des affaires étrangères

Le Ministre délégué
à la coopération
et à la francophonie

Le Secrétaire d'Etat
à l'outre-mer

Monsieur le Directeur général.

Paris, le

14 NOV. 01

009178 CM

Vous avez été nommé directeur général de l'Agence française de développement (AFD) par décision du Conseil des ministres en date du 19 avril 2001.

Dans le cadre du mandat qui a été confié à l'AFD lors de la réforme de la coopération française, votre mission consistera, avec le concours de vos équipes, à prendre toutes les dispositions nécessaires pour lui permettre de remplir pleinement son rôle d'opérateur-pivot de l'aide publique au développement de la France.

À la service de cette ambition, nous attendons de l'AFD qu'elle apporte son concours aux services de l'Etat pour rendre notre aide plus efficace et plus légitime, en accord avec les objectifs que la France s'attache à promouvoir dans les enceintes internationales. Il s'agit de concilier une approche à la fois locale du développement, en étant plus à l'écoute des préoccupations et des attentes des populations et une approche globale qui permette d'assurer la cohérence des programmes et projets que l'AFD met en œuvre avec les politiques macroéconomiques et sectorielles des pays ainsi que des grands enjeux mondiaux.

Nous attendons notamment de l'AFD qu'elle joue pleinement le rôle qui doit être le sien pour permettre à la France d'approfondir un véritable "partenariat pour le développement" avec les pays de la zone de solidarité prioritaire, en prenant en considération la place qui est celle de notre pays au sein de la communauté des bailleurs. Cette tâche incombera, pour une large part, à vos équipes sur le terrain. Celles-ci, aux côtés des assistants techniques et agents des services de l'Etat, notamment ceux en charge des projets du Fonds de solidarité prioritaire, travailleront de conserve à la politique de coopération arrêtée sur la base des documents stratégiques pays (DSP) et mise en œuvre sous la conduite des ambassadeurs dans le respect de l'autonomie découlant du statut d'établissement public de l'AFD et des prérogatives de son Conseil de surveillance. Dans ce contexte, l'implication sans réserve des agences de l'AFD au processus d'élaboration des DSP revêt une importance cruciale. Elle s'inscrit dans la démarche globale de recherche d'une meilleur impact par la mise en valeur de l'avantage que représente la diversité des instruments qu'elle utilise.

Cette orientation fondamentale est particulièrement d'actualité pour la mise en œuvre du volet bilatéral français de l'initiative "pays pauvres très endettés", où, dans le cadre des procédures que nous avons définies, l'AFD participera aux réflexions conduisant à la définition des politiques sectorielles entrant dans les cadres stratégiques arrêtés par les pays concernés et aux débats de fond qui animent la communauté des bailleurs.

Monsieur SEVERINO
Directeur Général
De l'Agence Française de Développement
5, rue Roland Barthe
75598 Paris cedex 12

MINISTÈRE DE L'ÉCONOMIE
DES FINANCES ET DE L'INDUSTRIE

De façon plus générale, nous souhaitons que l'AFD apporte une contribution active à la rénovation de la politique française en matière de coopération, que le Comité interministériel de la coopération internationale et du développement a vocation à conduire. L'AFD devra ainsi, au delà de ses activités de projets, jouer un rôle moteur dans l'élaboration de conceptions nouvelles et cohérentes en matière de développement en association étroite avec nos services, qui l'associeront systématiquement sur les différents dossiers, y compris ceux relatifs à des débats dans les enceintes internationales, pour lesquels elle est en mesure d'apporter une contribution utile à la réflexion et à l'élaboration de positions. Il vous est demandé, dans cet esprit, de mobiliser les capacités d'analyse de l'Agence pour les faire participer activement à l'élaboration d'une réflexion stratégique française sur les questions de développement.

Le cadre général ainsi fixé, nous demandons à l'AFD, en liaison étroite avec les services du ministère des affaires étrangères, chargés plus particulièrement de la coopération "institutionnelle", de concentrer son action autour de trois thèmes fédérateurs, essentiels à un développement durable et solidaire : la promotion d'un environnement économique stable et efficace, et notamment la bonne gouvernance économique ; la promotion d'un développement respectueux de l'environnement ; la promotion d'un développement plus soucieux de cohésion sociale :

➤ S'agissant de la promotion d'un environnement économique stable et efficace, votre action portera plus particulièrement sur l'amélioration de la canalisation de l'épargne locale vers des projets productifs, en développant notamment les mécanismes de garantie du groupe AFD, et sur le renforcement des systèmes financiers locaux. Il s'agit là d'un enjeu essentiel dans les pays de la zone d'intervention de l'AFD pour permettre la multiplication des débouchés, soutenir la croissance, améliorer leur compétitivité et favoriser l'insertion internationale de ces pays. Dans cet esprit, vous vous attacherez également à développer les actions de Proparco en direction des secteurs privés locaux et du financement privé des infrastructures dans le respect de ses contraintes de rentabilité :

➤ S'agissant de la promotion d'un développement respectueux de l'environnement, l'AFD concentrera son action sur la promotion d'une gestion plus rationnelle du territoire et des ressources naturelles tenant compte de l'équilibre à maintenir entre objectifs économiques, sociaux et environnementaux. La question de la gestion et de l'accès plus équitable à l'eau sera l'un des enjeux majeurs. Vous prendrez également en compte dans vos opérations les sujets globaux comme le réchauffement planétaire :

➤ S'agissant de la promotion d'un développement plus soucieux de cohésion sociale, la réduction de la pauvreté et des inégalités devra être le maître mot des projets mis en œuvre par l'AFD. L'AFD s'attachera tout particulièrement à résorber les inégalités d'opportunité entre individus à travers le renforcement de l'éducation de base et professionnelle et la promotion d'un meilleur accès de tous aux soins de santé primaire et notamment la lutte contre les grandes endémies ; Vous inscrirez également votre action dans ces derniers domaines en cohérence avec les grandes initiatives mondiales (conférence de Dakar sur l'éducation universelle, initiative globale contre le SIDA...) ; L'AFD contribuera enfin à réduire les écarts entre espaces urbains et ruraux en favorisant un aménagement du territoire plus équilibré en terme d'infrastructures et d'équipement :

➤ Enfin, vous mettrez en œuvre les mesures nécessaires pour faire de l'AFD un gestionnaire efficace des opérations de sortie de crise, dans le cadre du mandat qui lui est confié par le gouvernement.

Nous attendons de l'AFD que, dans l'accomplissement des missions qui lui sont confiées par le gouvernement, elle fasse preuve d'un souci de sélectivité en terme d'impact, de coût et de qualité des programmes et projets qu'elle finance. Ceci suppose que l'Agence française de développement se dote d'outils qualitatifs et quantitatifs appropriés de mesure, de suivi et de pilotage de la performance intrinsèque de ses projets et programmes. Ces outils auront vocation à devenir des instruments de pilotage au quotidien pour vos équipes. Dans ce contexte, l'indépendance du département évaluation devra être renforcée et la programmation de ses missions plus directement reliée aux orientations stratégiques de l'établissement. Le retour d'expérience sur les projets devra être à cet égard systématisé et largement diffusé au sein de l'ensemble des départements de l'AFD. Nous attachons enfin une importance toute particulière à la participation du département des évaluations de l'AFD à la politique d'évaluation de la coopération française conduite par les départements ministériels concernés et, dans ce contexte, à l'élaboration de conclusions opérationnelles communes, à l'accroissement du nombre d'évaluations croisées, au développement des capacités de nos partenaires en matière d'évaluation et à la promotion de l'approche comparative entre bailleurs.

Soucieux de faire des actions mises en œuvre par l'AFD un élément moteur de la politique française de coopération au développement, vous vous efforcerez d'insérer celle-ci de manière dynamique dans la communauté des bailleurs de fonds. Vous vous attacherez, dans la ligne des actions entreprises par votre prédécesseur, à rechercher plus systématiquement les synergies et la complémentarité avec les autres financements bilatéraux, européens ou multilatéraux dans le but, notamment, de diversifier l'origine des fonds que l'Agence met en œuvre en recourant le plus possible aux procédures de délégation de crédits et au co-financements. A ce titre, vous poursuivrez les démarches partenariales engagées conjointement avec la KfW avec l'agence Europe Aid.

Nous vous demandons donc de nous soumettre, au plus tard en mars 2002, un plan d'orientations stratégiques en précisant les moyens qui vous semblent nécessaires pour assurer au groupe de l'AFD un développement équilibré et ciblé conforme aux orientations d'ensemble de la politique française de coopération au développement. En particulier, vous nous soumettrez toute proposition que vous jugeriez utile, visant à dynamiser et optimiser votre réseau d'agences, tout en gardant à l'esprit les missions de service public qu'elles sont chargées de remplir.

S'agissant de l'outre-mer, l'Agence veillera à la poursuite de ses missions d'intérêt général. Elle devra accompagner l'effort de soutien des économies et de l'emploi des départements, territoires, et collectivités d'outre-mer que le Gouvernement a impulsé avec les dispositifs de la loi d'orientation pour l'outre-mer adoptée en décembre 2000, le nouveau soutien fiscal à l'investissement et l'augmentation importante des contrats de plan et de développement.

L'Agence devra en particulier conforter son rôle d'établissement de place : elle cherchera d'une part à optimiser le fonctionnement du fonds de garantie interbancaire des DOM et elle assurera d'autre part une meilleure distribution des produits et des services offerts par la BDPME dont l'AFD assure la représentation outre-mer. Dans ce cadre, elle devra également s'efforcer de remédier à l'insuffisance chronique en fonds propres des petites entreprises d'outre-mer : elle poursuivra, en partenariat avec d'autres établissements, la mise en place de mécanismes de financement de haut de bilan tels que les fonds régionaux de participation et les fonds de capital investissement.

Le financement à moyen et long terme des petites entreprises qui constituent l'essentiel du tissu économique et qui sont à l'origine de nombre de créations d'emplois outre-mer restera l'une de ses priorités, notamment au travers de l'action de ses filiales.

Aussi à la suite des conclusions de l'audit de l'Inspection Générale des finances, il vous appartiendra d'ici à la fin de l'année de nous soumettre un projet d'ouverture du capital de ces filiales et de réorganisation de leurs activités. Ce projet devra permettre de valoriser au mieux les participations de l'AFD et de l'Etat, et de rétablir leur équilibre financier afin qu'elles demeurent durablement des acteurs importants dans le financement du développement local et qu'elles favorisent l'accès aux services bancaires des agents économiques des régions isolées telles que les provinces de Nouvelle Calédonie, les archipels de Polynésie française, les communes de l'intérieur de la Guyane, Mayotte, Wallis et Futuna.

L'Agence continuera d'assurer le financement d'une part importante des investissements des collectivités publiques, notamment celles qui ne trouvent pas d'offre alternative en raison de leur taille réduite et/ou de leur éloignement.

Enfin, l'AFD devra s'attacher à affirmer son action dans le domaine du logement social outre-mer en vue de contribuer à l'amélioration des conditions de vie des populations fragiles : pour cela, elle continuera d'assurer le financement de projets d'aménagement dans les mêmes proportions financières qu'aujourd'hui et celui de programmes immobiliers dans les zones non éligibles au financement de la caisse des dépôts et consignations.

Par ailleurs, nous souhaitons que vous renforiez, à la lumière des conclusions des différents audits auxquels votre établissement a été soumis ces derniers mois, les procédures de contrôle de gestion, d'analyse financière et comptable et d'une manière générale que l'ensemble des systèmes d'information soient mis à niveau dans le cadre d'un plan stratégique qu'il vous appartiendra de soumettre au Conseil de surveillance.

Vous améliorerez également l'information des membres du Conseil de surveillance dans tous les domaines stratégiques pour sa bonne marche (gestion de bilan, système d'informations, évaluations, ressources humaines et formation) afin de mieux rendre compte de l'activité de l'ensemble du groupe AFD. Un comité d'audit de trois membres devrait ainsi être constitué comme le règlement CRBF 97-2 en offre la possibilité et être opérationnel pour l'arrêté des comptes au 31 décembre 2001. Celui-ci sera chargé d'assister le Conseil de surveillance et sera plus particulièrement compétent pour porter une appréciation sur la qualité du contrôle interne, notamment la cohérence des systèmes de mesure, de surveillance et de maîtrise des risques, pour émettre des avis sur la stratégie financière, les opérations de capital significatives et la politique de risque ainsi que sur le choix des Commissaires aux comptes et de leurs honoraires.

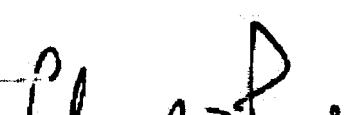
Vous apporterez votre contribution à la réforme de l'Etat et à la maîtrise des coûts de mise en œuvre de sa politique d'aide publique au développement, dans la ligne des réformes déjà entreprises en concertation avec votre prédécesseur, en proposant une réforme des relations financières entre l'Etat et l'AFD dans un sens plus économique des deniers publics, plus responsabilisant pour votre établissement et plus transparent pour le Parlement.

Veuillez agréer, Monsieur le Directeur général, l'expression de nos sentiments les meilleurs.


Laurent Fabius


Hubert Védrine


Charles Josselin


Christian Paul

Annex 6

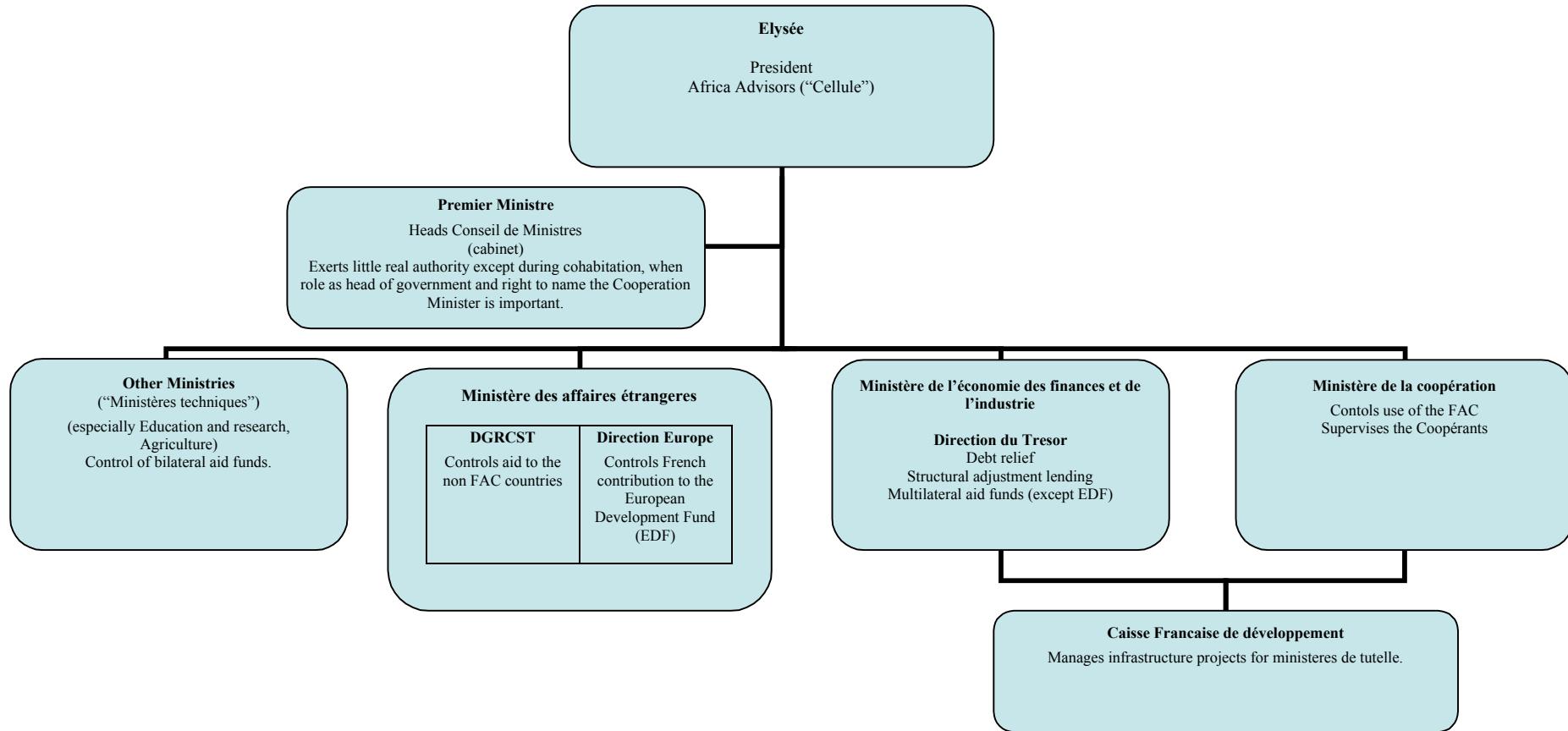
Organigrammes of the coopération system pre and post 1998 and of the DGCID

i. The Administrative Structures of French Development aid Prior to 1995

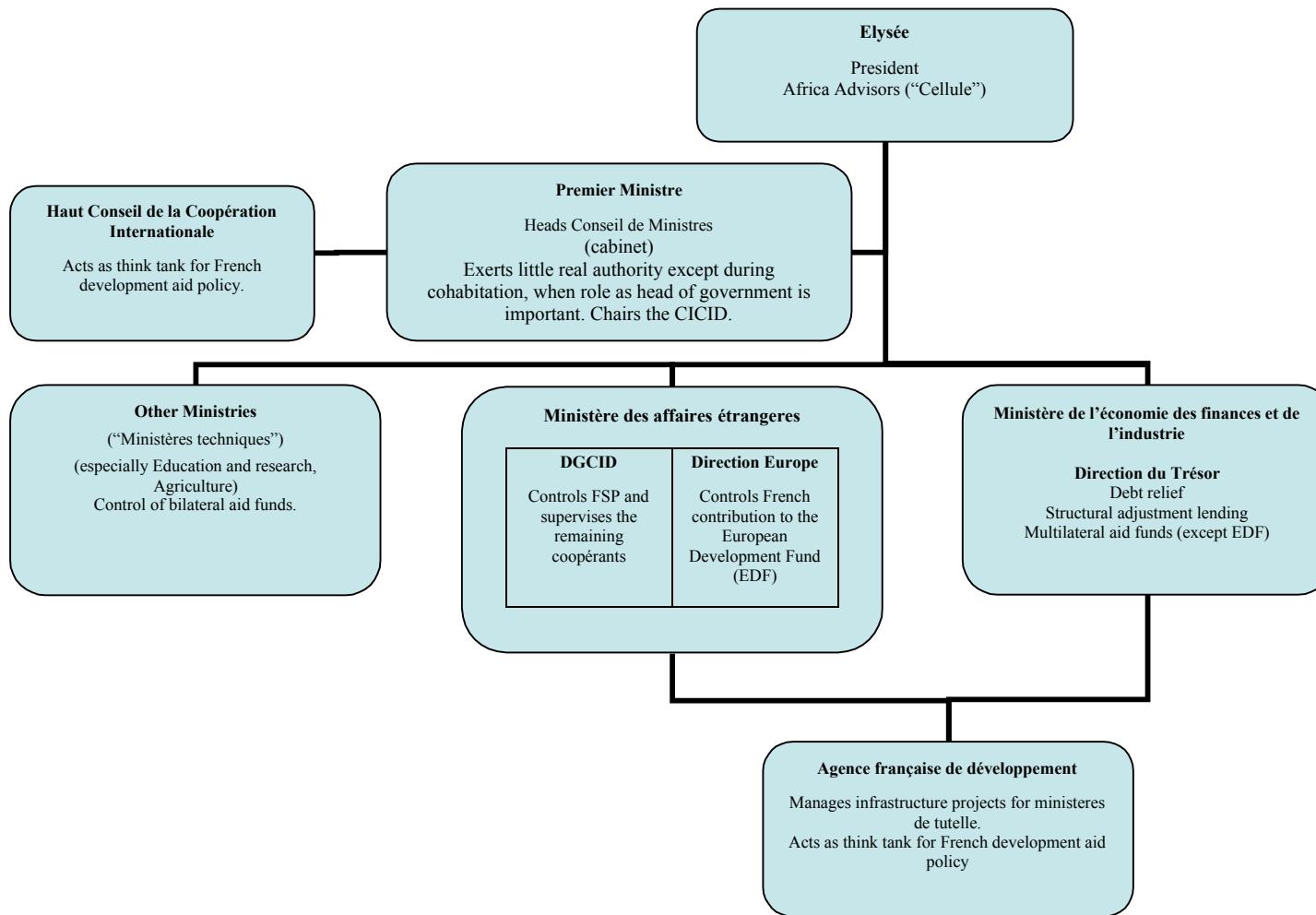
ii. The Administrative Structures of French Development Aid following the Reforms of 1998

iii. The Internal Structure of the DGCID.

i. **The Administrative Structures of French Development Aid Prior to 1995.**



ii. **The Administrative Structure of French Development Aid Following Reforms of 1998**



iii. **The Internal Structure of the DGCID**

