

Indigenization of Industrial Management in Postcolonial Africa

A Case Study from Senegal

Arbeit zur Erlangung des Doktorgrades

vorgelegt an der

Universität Bielefeld
Fakultät für Soziologie

von

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Berlin, den 24.06.2005

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"All that is past processes our present."

John Fowles (in: 'the Maggot')

Prologue

On my first trip to Senegal I traveled to a tiny village called Delbi, located in the old peanut basin in the Saloum region near the small town Kaffrine, some 25 miles up north in the countryside. It was in late march, dry season, and fields had just been cleared from crops.

The sun was scorching from cloudless skies, only dimmed by the sallow mists of sand filled winds during Harmattan. I intended to visit a Wolof peasant family, which was six years before the host of a good friend of mine. My friend had profusely recommended spending some time with these lovely people. It was my initial rural experience in Senegal. Although knowing from reading some basics about religious and agricultural life there, I had not yet sensed being among those people and being taken care of by them, who - as I was prepared - spoke only their mother tongue Wolof.

Poorly equipped with humble knowledge, a letter from my friend and some presents, I went on a long rough ride by a shabby bush taxi, squeezed in with peasants, goats and chicken coming back from Kaffrine's market. I arrived covert with dust on the spacious *penc*, the village's central place. An impressive Baobab with outreaching branches overshadowed half the place and gave shelter to a group of elder men gathering there. It was such perfect scenery of western imagination of African reality, so as more reminiscent of a Hollywood plot, that I was surprised to find true. Almost immediately a young boy offered me his services and led me to the family I was looking for. The family welcomed me very naturally, more like an old friend than a stranger, showing no signs of astonishment, whatsoever.

After an extensive greeting ritual, with rather speechless nods and grins on my side, I was guided into a comfortably cool and dim clay hut. With gestures and friendly smiles I was instructed to wait there. A few moments later, the father of the family came to welcome me. As soon as he had entered, a steadily growing number of women and children poured into the room with shy, but curious expressions on their faces.

We sat there smiling and nodding friendly to each other for quite some time. I waited somehow for their questions about my reason for coming, but apparently there was no need for any explanation. When the *ataya* ceremony¹ was already in preparation, I mentioned the name of my friend, who had once been their guest. To my surprise my friend's name evoked a veritable worshipping reaction from my hosts. The whole crowd responded by cheering and clapping hands, open laughter and showing moves of Wolof dance. The atmosphere became so animated that it attracted even more villagers, wanting to participate in the event.

For the rest of the day the father kept repeating the name of my friend, by doing so sometimes looking up by murmuring '*yalla moo ko def*' (god made it happen). One son of the family fortunately spoke some French and so he was designated by his father to take personally care of my well-being, which he gratefully took as a chore of honor.

During the few days of my stay, the annual *gàmmu*² of a local marabout in one of the surrounding villages happened to take place. The father showed repeatedly great interest in bringing me there, which I accorded with pleasure. One morning before dawn the entire family (except one of the two wives and a young girl who took care of the farm) was neatly dressed in traditional Wolof outfits, including me. The horse carriage was packed with food, a blanket and a little lamp and driving to that feast. The journey took us about an hour through the countryside passing villages on the way; other carriages joined us coming from all directions.

The marabout's village was apparently 'richer' than Delbi, having a well-done stone mosque as well as the marabout's impressive house also build from solid brick with two separate wings on the back of the main building. When we arrived short after sunrise, the central place was already populated; horse carriages were parked here and there and petty traders mounted there stands. The goods were a variety of mainly perfumes, essences, jewelries, religious literature and cloths. I was obviously the only white person joining the celebration. Thus, I became rapidly - whereas treated with polite and friendly respect in Delbi - a garish attraction and somewhat public good of amusement. Before I even got accustomed to the awkward situation, the father

¹ 'Ataya' means tea, the cooking process of this Chinese green tea with large amounts of sugar can take several hours and stems from Arabic influences.

² 'Gàmmu' religious feast, usually the birthday of the prophet Mohammed or the Marabout, who organises the event.

explained to me that the great marabout demands to see me. Although I was certainly curious to get to see the praised man, I could not see the point why he would want to see a non-Muslim barren white tourist, happened to be there by pure coincidence, the more so, as he was besieged with all sorts of offers, requests and inquiries by his followers, cooped up in a little hall in the back of his house.

The father and some of his friends resolutely asked me to follow them, obviously determined to channel me through the hive to the marabout. While I was frantically rehearsing my fresh knowledge of Wolof greetings on the way, I was trying to make sense out of the whole situation. There he sat enthroned in front of an impressive congestion of sitting and crouching men of all ages. To his left side sat the department's deputy of the government party and on his right the regional representative of development programs for peasant women (the only other female in the room).

Instead of disapproval for me being non-Muslim, being female or both, the throng miraculously opened an alley to the front for me to pass, as if I was the guest of honor impatiently expected. Someone got me a chair and I was designed to sit equally next to the marabout, for which the deputy moved aside. The ceremony had just begun and the marabout was in the means of greeting his guests. This was answered by long praising and grateful speeches from the officials, attended by appreciative nods and smiles of the auditorium. Each time the microphone was passed on to the next speaker and even though I had vividly disclaimed my host's conviction that I had anything particular to say, a hunch of certainty crept up my spine, that people naturally expected me to speak, too, considering me important for some mysterious reason. I felt as a part of a vicious game of masquerade stuck in my *grand boubou*, in which I felt more wrapped than dressed. I was badly tempted to escape, but nevertheless trapped for not wanting to dishonor my host, who had so proudly presented his unusual guest to peasant colleagues and who was now awe-struck sitting to the marabout's feet.

Suddenly the microphone was given to me and a young man was called for translation. This short moment gave me a couple of seconds to recover from the shock and to get over my intimidation. In my silted Wolof, I greeted the important individuals solemnly in the order of hierarchy, which I assumed appropriate: first the marabout, than the deputy and the representative, and, finally, the auditorium. Proceeding in French, I expressed how honored I felt by being invited, thanked them, praised their

*teranga*³, their kindness and the like. Basically I was trying to emulate the Senegalese style of official speeches, I had just witnessed.

After translation, the marabout took the microphone and thanked me for my moving words and for traveling all the way from Europe to his little village to visit him. He said it with such a profound seriousness and conviction making contradiction redundant. He went on with a long sermon about the great civilization in Europe, its strong people and their wealth. I felt a churning reaction in my guts and a slinking premonition of where it all leads to in the end. God had created the world as such, he explained, with rich people on one side and poor on the other. I looked around into attentive faces showing great consensus with his words. He continued: God wanted the rich people to help the poor and so the Europeans are designed to help the Africans with their means and their knowledge. Although I was stunned by this attitude and faithful world concept, I was quite sure now, that they must take me as a development aid worker. I explained carefully that I was not - as everybody seemed to believe - a *cooperant*, but a simple tourist with little means and no knowledge of any use to them. I had no idea what the young man translated, of course, but the following reaction was not the one I hoped to get, that is the detection of a great misunderstanding and finally releasing me from my inadequate pedestal. Instead, they nodded and smiled satisfied and the marabout proceeded expounding his two-folded world concept to me and the auditorium.

Back in Delbi the father referred repeatedly to the marabout's speech, although he doubtlessly knew that I was not working with any kind of development organization. But that, indeed, did not seem to matter. What mattered most was me being European and possibly being white.

The same sort of fatal believe was thrown on me countless times in Senegal after this first experience. It is evident that the reaction of the autochthones to my appearance in the Wolof village had nothing to do with me personally. The role I was demanded to play was beyond my control. I was rather taken as a representative for Europeans in general. My ethnic group affiliation evoked a certain expectation in the Senegalese context that is to know better, to guide them, and to bring wealth and/or amelioration of any kind to the locals.

3 The term '*teranga*' (literally translated: hospitality) means an entire guest receiving culture and represents an important cultural concept.

We can conclude that this expectation is traditionally attached to white people in Senegal. They have the role of goods providers, knowledge holders, and leaders, whereas the autochthones still much claim the role of goods receivers and executers.

In the present study of management change from French to Senegalese superiors in the multinational enterprise under study, I attempt to show that these traditional roles had a tremendous impact on perception and communication in all aspects of personnel management.

Acknowledgements

This work has received much help and support from a large number of people in various ways since 1994. Although I inevitably risk omissions, I would like to express my special gratitude and appreciation in the following lines.

The idea to focus on the mining enterprise in Senegal developed in intense discussions with my colleague Gisèle Bergmann in the Graduate School 'Intercultural relations in Africa' at Bayreuth University. She opened for me the first doors to the mining community through her contacts to the engineer Djibou Diao and his uncle Habib Diao in Mboro.

The regional chief ranger Habib Diao and his family took me as a family member, except that I had practically all rights, but no duties. They lodged me in their compound in Mboro with an exceptional hospitality. Maïmouna, Kombé, Astou (1), Sokhna, Astou (2), Nenné and Oumou have kept me alive in every aspect during my research period.

Without the kind reception and warmth of the company staff, the '*Taïbaciens*', this research project would have failed before it even started. Their preparedness to give interviews and their kind attention for the evolution of my study often surprised me. I am also particularly grateful to the company directors to allow my presence at any time in the mining installations as the '*company sociologist*' for over one year and to support me in countless ways. I would especially like to thank for their impartial interest in my research focus, their extent of transparency, their kind attention for my personal well-being and for best working and living conditions, according me both office and apartment. Special thank goes to Mamadou Sy, Jean-Paul Helmuth, Dr. Abdourrahmane Koné, Abdoul Aziz Gueye, Mamadou Diarra, and Marietou Diouf. Likewise important support provided Abderrahmane Guissé, Ibrahima Serigne Ndaw, Moudy Guiro, Ndir Ndiagne, and Mamadou Dramé.

Numerous persons of the Mboro community and the surrounding villages offered me their friendship and regularly elucidated important cultural and social enigmas for me. I would like to thank in particular Dr. Abdoukarim Diouf, Demba Gueye, Awa Fall and her family, Louis Seck and family, Cheikh Mbaye, Serign Saliou

Mbaye and Ramatoulaye Mbaye, the inhabitants of Kër Magor, Ndomor, Kër Niange Wade, Kër Darou Diouf, and Kër Aliou Fall. Special thank is also due to Martin Hills, my assistant and friend, who transcribed most of the interviews during field research in endless lonesome hours in my company apartment in Mbaye Mbaye.

I am particularly grateful to the family of Fanta Sylla and the family of Aïcha Dioury who both gave me a warm home and much help in my initial period in Dakar. On my casual visits to the capital I was able to discuss and revise my observations and early hypothesis with numerous persons who constantly improved my thinking with valuable comments. Many of my intellectual discussion partners, teachers and professors in Dakar and St. Luis will recognize their input in this work. I would like to thank in particular professors Bassirou Tidjani, Cheikh Anta Diop University Dakar, and Alfred Inis Ndiaye, University of St. Louis, Dr. Berthold Franke, Director of the Goethe-Institute Dakar, and Dr. Leigh Swigart, Director of the West African Research Center Dakar, for their constant interest and kind support during and after field research. The final version would have contained a number of embarrassing mistakes and misinterpretations without the full engagement and much extra time for corrections of Bernard Bechôn, technical advisor and management consultant for the enterprise under study from 1975 to 1998.

The funding for this research was provided by the German Research Council (DFG) within the frame of the two Graduate Schools ‘Intercultural Relations in Africa’ at the University of Bayreuth and ‘Market, State, and Ethnicity’ at the University of Bielefeld. In Bayreuth, important tutors and supervisors were Prof. Gerd Spittler and Dr. Rüdiger Seesemann; in Bielefeld I owe special thanks to my first supervisor Prof. Hans-Dieter Evers and the professors Günter Schlee and Gudrun Lachenmann for their important comments and help.

Indispensable for this work was the constant intellectual input and vital support of Prof. Irmgard Staeuble at the Free University Berlin. During all those years, it was her who believed in my work and refreshed my sinking motivation in times when I was simply fed up. Other two important coaches and supervisors were Edith Püschel and Eva Grimm. Close friends in Berlin were of crucial support who tirelessly listened to my monologues about work aspects on countless evenings. I would like to name here in particular: Beatrix Brüning, Bharat Gurbaxani, Susanne Hennes, Elke Weißgerber, and

Steffi Glaser. Special thanks goes also to Kathrin Kremz and the staff of the Toronto Café, who took with great composure my habit to turn a serving table into my personal office on countless mornings and afternoons.

My extended family offered indirect and direct assistance in many respects and was fundamental for the completion of this work; they often had to accept my absence on family events. I feel indebted to all of those who helped me struggling through and would like to name the most immediate here: Dr. Erika Peters, my mother, Volker Peters, my step father, my siblings and their partners: Kirsten and Rudolph Dellner, Konstantin Grisar and Kathy Willems, Deike Peters and Charles Mondry, and Jörn Peters.

I dedicate this work to my husband, Amadou Mbacké Kassé (Khadim), and my daughter, Djodjo Kassé, to whom I owe the most and much more than can be put in words.

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Introduction

1 Introduction

When I came to the mining town Mboro, Senegal, in September 1995, I had a different focus in mind than the one which developed over time. My initial research interest was in the integration of an industrial complex, a phosphate mining company, into its local environment. How was the company perceived by the rural populations and what kind of communication happened between the company and its environment? The question was partly based on the fact that every three to four years the mining company removed a peasant village to get access to new extraction territory. The peasants were settled on a new location with brick houses, but lost their base of existence, the land. But what I found most problematic because of the evident impoverishment of the peasant population, the peasants themselves endured this with impressive composure. In my exploratory period, local people, in particular company employees, regularly referred with nostalgia to the ‘golden era’ when French expatriates ruled the mine and said things like ‘the French should come back’. First, I thought that the glorification of the French was due to Senegalese tendency to make compliments to foreigners. Although I am German, this might not make much difference to Senegalese people, because they may put us Europeans all in one sack. Maybe, so my early conclusion, they tell me that the French were so good to flatter me and to make me feel happy. But the glorification of French was often accompanied by the devaluation of Senegalese managers. I began to realize that these people were really being serious. Speaking in qualitative research terms, this was my first irritation. My research focus then shifted to the internal processes of the company and its history. My main question was: How did employees arrive at the drastic judgment that the French should come back?

I was trained in psychology, social anthropology and sociology. Therefore, in this case study I investigated the process of Africanization of management within a multinational enterprise from a psycho-sociological standpoint. The time period covered is from its first pilot installation under French colonial rule in 1952 until its fusion with another multinational enterprise, a chemical industry, in 1996.

The company was founded in 1957 and set up exclusively with French capital and mainly imported technology in a remote area of bush lands and small peasant villages, lacking in transport and infrastructure. High investments were needed to put the company in operation. In its first decade of existence, the company was almost constantly near close down, because of inappropriate equipment and impediments of the environment, resulting in insufficient profitability.

From the beginning, training of French and Senegalese staff was carried out forging appropriate industrial capacity to meet the requirements of the mining process. Mainly in the 70s and 80s, the company went through the process of Senegalization, i.e. the systematic and gradual replacement of French by Senegalese directors and managers. The replacement of French with Senegalese managers did not happen as a sudden change, but was planned years ahead, well prepared and carried out in gradual steps. In 1980, management and directorate switched from French majority in January to Senegalese majority in December. Hence, the analysis is also the comparison of 23 years French dominated and 16 years Senegalese dominated management and leadership within the investigated mining company.

When management gradually switched from French to Senegalese, numerous formerly well-established systems crumbled and caused first confusion, then open opposition, and finally resignation among Senegalese employees. Team spirit and work endeavor for the company's objectives, arduously developed under French management in the 70s, rapidly vanished under Senegalese management in the 80s. During the 80s in particular, mutual distrust and disrespect resulted in discontent, apathy, loss of loyalty and numerous forms of 'invisible resistance' among Senegalese workers and employees and poisoned the atmosphere in the work places. Until the company fusion, the Senegalese managers were not able to win the sympathy and respect of the Senegalese workforce and failed to form a new corporate identity like the one the French expatriates had managed so brilliantly before. In the present analysis I attempt to examine the intermingled internal and external factors responsible for the negative turn.

In social science on management in African enterprises, it is often argued that African managers lack the appropriate management skills to adequately guide an African work force. I argue that the major cause for the failure of the Senegalese personnel management in this case study was not deficient industrial capacity, but the impossibility of transferring the specific communication culture established between French and Senegalese to one appropriate among

Senegalese only. In the 70s, French managers had practiced industrial paternalism based on French superiority and Senegalese inferiority, which was an established social consensus in both ethnic groups. The assumption of French superiority and Senegalese inferiority was not a result of the industrial cooperation, but had been established in centuries of French colonialism and French assimilation policy. Even Senegalese Négritude movement partly accepted the positive French self-image and colonial ascriptions to the African. Over several generations the clear-cut racial hierarchy became a subconscious perception pattern and represented a subconscious basis for current action in the mining enterprise.

In the Western world of economics, industrial paternalism – although still practiced in some cases - does not stand for modern management. Nevertheless, it was obviously appropriate for the communication between French managers and Senegalese subordinates on the background of an old masters-servants relationship developed under French colonial rule in Senegal. The well educated and trained Senegalese managers lacked the high moral and social status that bolstered French managers. Additionally, devoid of the financial wealth of French wage earners in the company, Senegalese managers could not emulate the system of paternalism and granting of favors. While French managers owned the tacit right to learn their skills in close cooperation with the Senegalese work force in the 60s and 70s, any small mistake of Senegalese managers proved their general incapacity in the perception of Senegalese employees in the 80s and 90s.

The company's most successful period in terms of personnel management was doubtlessly the 1970's in which the majority of managers was still French expatriates. Both decades before and after, the 60s and the 80s, were equally tormented by production difficulties, changing phosphate prices on the world market, and inexperience of managers. In the 70s, the presence of a particularly talented French extraction manager with impressive social skills coincided with the fantastic rise of the phosphate price on the world market in 1973. Interested in a strong work commitment and devotion of their Senegalese employees, the majority of French expatriates paid attention to each individual employee in numerous ways, granting arbitrarily rights and privileges. This policy initiated processes in the 70s which led to negative consequences in the 80s and 90s.

When management mistakes of the 70s became apparent in the early 80s, Senegalese managers tried to 'clean up' some of the snafu French paternalism had left by removing privileges - granted unsystematically by the expatriates before - from the workforce. The

Senegalese managers and work force likewise ignored the initiating role of the French directorate. Although rational in economic terms, Senegalese managers did not attempt to explain things and point to French responsibility treating Senegalese employees much like an anonymous working mass. Widely ignoring the growing dissatisfaction and negative feelings among Senegalese employees, Senegalese managers were unprepared to deal with the harsh counteracts of Senegalese employees and workers like numerous strikes and open opposition in the early and mid 80s. Inexperienced, the Senegalese directorate reacted first with promises for higher wages and later with authoritarian restrictions and means to destroy workers' solidarity both equally inappropriate to win back the hearts of the Senegalese workforce. Hence, work motivation and loyalty sank to a low level and invisible resistance, robbery, sabotage and abuse of the mine's resources became more and more frequent in the mid and late 80s. Through a shift in top management in 1987 and 1989 the situation slightly improved again in the early and mid 90s, but remained up to the fusion with the adjacent chemical industry disastrous in terms of communication and work motivation within the mining enterprise.

When I talked for the first time to the mining director about my prospected research project, he said to me: "please tell us, why the 'horse carriage' (the enterprise) does not move ahead, although we, directors, try our best to move on." I conducted interviews with Senegalese employees in 1995 and 1996, and I found that Senegalese employees were tacitly still loyal to their departed French bosses who they perceived as their guiding fathers. Senegalese managers, by contrast, were regarded as misplaced in management positions. Senegalese employees perceived same behavior in similar situations differently depending on the actor's ethnic group affiliation, French or Senegalese. The failure of Senegalese-Senegalese cooperation is the result of many intermingled factors. One important factor was an uncritical overestimation of French and underestimation of Senegalese characteristics and capacities.

In broad terms, the focus of the analysis is on the mode of communication and perception that influenced and shaped the diverse social processes within the mining community. In more specific terms, I focus on personnel management in terms of both inter- and intra-group relations and interaction, thus intercommunication between groups and individuals. The social life of the multinational enterprise over four decades has been very

complex. I pursued the following aspects diachronically in more detail. These were management ideology (where present), management conduct and leadership, power and delegation, control, corporate identity, internal training, information policy and its degradation, promotion policy, wages and extra remuneration, trade union activities and strikes.

The analysis proceeds on two distinct levels. Firstly, I tried to reconstruct events and processes of the company history on the basis of documents. Secondly, I investigated the various perceptions and feelings about those events and processes on the basis of interviews with French and Senegalese employees and other local eye-witnesses.

Although an impressive corpus of literature has been produced about and around management in African firms⁴, it is widely acknowledged that empirical data in this field are rare. The present analysis attempts to fill this gap. The study is based on 14-months field research from August 1995 to October 1996. During this period I collected empirical data from various sources: archival and current company documents; the company journal; other press articles; questionnaires; biographical, narrative, and focused interviews; and observation. My methodological approach follows the principles of qualitative research outlined in **chapter 2**.

Empirical research tends to focus on singular aspects at a given moment and, thus, usually lacks historical perspective. The mine's foundation in 1957 took place under colonial rule, three years before Senegal gained political independence in 1960. The colonial domination had a lasting impact on Senegalese mentality and self-image as well as on Senegalese perception of the French. Some important historical aspects of Senegal's colonial past are briefly discussed in **chapter 3**.

Chapter 4 introduces the state of the mining company at the moment of its dissolution in 1996 and outlines organizational structure, personnel, production, capital, and ownership.

Chapter 5 is dedicated to the peculiar French-Senegalese relationship in the mining company or rather the perception of it in retrospect by both French and Senegalese interview partners. The chapter deals with the two key concepts *French industrial paternalism* and *Senegalese hidden loyalty* which had emerged from the data material. Those two key concepts embraced all processes in past and present of the mining community.

⁴ For an overview see Blunt and Jones (1992), Labazée (1991), Trenk (1991) and Ugwuegbu (2001).

Chapters 6 to 9 present the core analysis of my empirical data. The chapters cover the company's evolution in more or less chronological order. The life span of the phosphate mine can roughly be divided into five different phases from the first pilot installation in the early 50s, technical and economic struggle and first steps of Senegalization in the 60s (both described in **chapter 6**), the 'golden era' under French industrial paternalism in the 70s (**chapter 7**), management changes and social clashes in the 80s (**chapter 8**), and the mine's more recent struggle and numerous dilemmas in work relations resulting from disparaging processes in the past in the 90s (**chapter 9**). Thus, chapters 6 to 9 all focus on a particular period, usually a decade, but aspects elaborated in subchapters often overlap the decade in focus.

In recent debates, many authors emphasize that management is culture-bound and promote the search for a specific '*African*' management based on (so called) traditional African values for which '*Western*' management techniques are ostensibly inappropriate. On the basis of my analysis, I argue, by contrast, that the cultural aspect is overemphasized in scientific discourses. It is false to conclude that French personnel management was more efficient because better adapted to African values than Senegalese management. Cultural values of both ethnic groups were – if at all – less important than the established perception and interaction pattern of the superior and the inferior, both taken into account as '*natural*'. In **chapter 10**, the findings of the present study are linked to current and past debates in scientific literature.

In this study, I attempted to probe into the underlying reasons for a slow but steady degradation process from a very successful to a very unsuccessful co-operation of personnel on all levels in a multinational corporation in Senegal. It is likewise the story of a nationalization process, or should we say *Africanization*, of a large company on formerly colonial territory with all its sorrows and pit falls.

The phosphate mine I investigated is nevertheless only one single case and, I believe, a very peculiar one, too. As a country of the West African coastline with an intense history of early European settlers, Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and French colonization, Senegal represents for various reasons an 'exceptional case' (Cruise O'Brien 1996). Therefore, I will not attempt to generalize my findings. The competent reader will judge the present analysis in relation to his or her own experiences and knowledge on the issue of management in African enterprises.

My fervent hope is that my study will contribute to further discussion and fruitful research on industrial management in African enterprises.

Berlin in July 2005

Methods

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2 Methods

2.1 Methodological tools

The present work relies upon a qualitative research methodology. Mainly two methodological approaches have channeled my personal conduct in data collection and interpretation.

The first approach is the grounded theory which is today well known in the fields of the social sciences. Initially developed by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss in the 60s, it has gone through further elaboration and amendment over time and represents today a rich inventory of well coordinated methodological tools. Grounded theory allows a great flexibility in data collection and analysis appropriate for a research project without a definite initial focus, but assures at the same time a clearly structured research process.

The second approach is the method of self-reflexive encounters developed by Maya Nadig in the 80s. This method was born in the field of psychoanalytical anthropology and is additionally aligned to a feminist perspective. The second approach was chosen, because it integrates the subjectivity of the person who does research and gives - by the systematic analysis of culture value differences - a further tool for the discovery of local categories. Both approaches will be briefly described before the presentation of the data basis.

2.1.1 The Grounded Theory

Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss developed the *grounded theory* over several years. In 1965, Glaser and Strauss published an article titled "*Discovery of Substantive Theory: A Basic Strategy underlying qualitative research*". Three years later, in 1968, Glaser and Strauss

brought out a monograph, which earned a wide recognition among social scientists "*The discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for qualitative research.*"⁵

In those days, social sciences were still very much expected to strive for exact measurable items, taking natural sciences as a model, in order to be of use for statistical operations. Glaser and Strauss had to struggle with the widespread opinion that science is only serious when meeting these positivistic criteria. Otherwise - so the positivistic argumentation - it is not only useless but no science altogether. Glaser and Strauss, by contrast, had developed a method, which had nothing in common with quantification, variances and statistical correlations. Nevertheless, they claimed, that their developed tools would be able to bring out serious and valid theory. Since then, Strauss and Glaser have published numerous books and articles which focus on qualitative analysis.⁶ On various topics, Strauss and Glaser showed how grounded theory can be used in a research process.⁷ Today, the grounded theory has its firm position within the qualitative equipment of social sciences.

Grounded theory is a tool for inductively building theories through the qualitative analysis of empirical data; it is thus *grounded* in empirical data. To put it in the words of Strauss "*one does not begin with a theory, then prove it. Rather, one begins with an area of study and what is relevant to that area is allowed to emerge*".⁸ For the elaboration of theory, specific methodological tools were developed. Through the interplay of those tools and their alternating application it is possible to get to the core element or elements of an area under study. It is a process of alternating steps in order to bring out the main aspects in their local meaning. Those aspects should then lead to the immanent logic of the examined phenomenon. The so emerging core elements are named *key categories*. In grounded theory, the form of data is not important. Glaser stated:

"All is data' is a well known Glaser dictum. What does it mean? It means exactly what is going on in the research scene is the data, whatever the source, whether interview, observation, documents, in whatever combination. It is not only what is being told, how it is being told and the conditions of its being told, but also all the data surrounding what is being

⁵ Glaser and Strauss (1967)

⁶ For instance 'Theoretical Sensitivity' (1978) by Glaser; 'Qualitative analysis for social scientists' (1987) ; 'Basics of Qualitative Research - Grounded Theory procedures and Techniques' (1991, 1995) by Strauss.

⁷ Two publications stand out here: 'Awareness of Dying' (1965) and 'Time of Dying' (1968).

⁸ Strauss and Corbin (1991:23).

*told. It means what is going on must be figured out exactly what it is to be used for, that is conceptualization, not for accurate description. Data is always as good as far as it goes, and there is always more data to keep correcting the categories with more relevant properties."*⁹

Data stem from various sources such as interviews, documents, observation protocols, video films, letters, novels, and many more. The fundamental element is the manner in which the data is treated. Glaser and Strauss developed different forms of coding which are used in combination and alternating usage to generate a profound understanding of the data material. The procedures of coding are the heart elements of grounded theory. "Coding represents the operations by which data are broken down, conceptualized, and put back together in new ways. It is the central process by which theories are built from data".¹⁰

Open coding means *"the process of breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualizing, and categorizing data"*.¹¹ It represents therefore a tool that is most likely used in the exploration period of a research project, because the field of research is in the beginning still relatively unknown. Nevertheless, open coding can, like all other tools in grounded theory, be used in all phases of the research process. The breaking down of data material means the close examination of discrete parts like sentences, paragraphs, small observations etc. Those discrete parts should then get names or labels. Groups of similar labels can be grouped in concepts and so forth. In other words, we move within the research process from the very concrete to the more and more abstract level of analysis. In terms of Glaser and Strauss, we move from labeling to conceptualizing, from conceptualizing to categorizing; until we get to one or few more key categories. A key category should be able to integrate all proceeding categories and concepts.

The ultimate objective of the different coding procedures¹² is the elaboration of many immanent, behavior determining concepts out of the data material and their different meaningful connection to each other to thicken the underlying theory. For this aim the intensive study and creative reflection of the data on various levels is necessary. In order to do valuable reflections the researcher should have or gain theoretical sensitivity, including contextual knowledge. The reflection is fixed in memos, which then again can be used in the

⁹ Glaser (2001):145.

¹⁰ Ibid. p. 57.

¹¹ Strauss and Corbin 1991:61.

¹² Other forms of coding are axial and selective coding (see Strauss and Corbin 1991).

same manner as the original data later in the research process. Memos themselves can as much as the original data lead to further questions and reflections.

Because the definition of the term theoretical sensitivity comes closest to the meaning of intuition, it is outlined here in some more details. Strauss and Corbin say: "*Theoretical sensitivity refers to a personal quality of the researcher. It indicates an awareness of the subtleties of meaning of data*".¹³ Theoretical sensitivity means the ability to make use of the researcher's own experiences and information within the area under study. Whatever the researcher (or researchers in a team) has read, heard, felt and experienced within the field of study is of relevance for the interpretation of data; it is the researcher's contextual knowledge. Feelings can serve as a fundamental indicator for the hidden transcript, the underlying meaning behind the said, for instance in a conflict. Experiences of the past should not lead to quick assumptions which could become too superficial to meet the true core of an issue. The result then would be likely to represent a cliché or a prejudice. It means also to challenge habitual assumptions and traditional interpretations found in scientific literature and to come to new conclusions and possibly new theories. Theoretical sensitivity means the ability to "see" with analytical depth what is there. Contextual knowledge is also meant to be one additional source of information for the researcher to illuminate the phenomenon under study. The analysis of negative personal experiences – likely to occur in culturally new environment – can serve as an important tool to generate meaningful data and to deepen contextual knowledge.¹⁴ Theoretical sensitivity refers to an open mindedness for a maximum of possible direction the research process may take. It is, thus, much more than just using contextual knowledge. It refers to "*the attribute of having insight, the ability to give meaning to data, the capacity to understand, and capability to separate the pertinent from that which isn't*"¹⁵.

Giving meaning to data refers to the capacity to understand the phenomenon and not only to describe the observed. The same gesture or behavior can have various different meanings revealing different motives, beliefs and purposes of the actor.

¹³ Ibid. p. 41.

¹⁴ I have elaborated the value of negative personal experiences elsewhere (Grisar-Kassé 2004)

¹⁵ Strauss and Corbin 1991:42.

2.1.2 Self-reflected research

In the field of ethno-psychoanalysis Maya Nadig has carried out studies among peasant women in Mexico in 1985.

Ethno-psychoanalysis, according to Nadig, *"asks for conscious and subconscious meaning of cultural patterns and norms in the life of men and women who deal with them: it asks for the individual needs, desires, and utopias, which are connected with those patterns; and it asks for the socio-economic consequences of their interplay."*¹⁶

Social scientists from industrialized countries have inevitably been shaped by colonial and neo-colonial ideology. In social anthropology, researchers tried new ways to integrate this insight by self-reflection. For Nadig, self-reflection means the constant observation of the researcher's own feelings, beliefs and convictions in reaction to his or her informants in the research process. Subjectivity is the important methodological tool to get to a deeper understanding of the underlying motives and convictions of her informants. Nadig includes in her research process the careful observation of her own confusions about events, behavior and conviction of her informants in the foreign context. It is also the reflection of her confusions and the analysis of the difference between her values and beliefs and those of her informants which gives an insight of their life realities. Clifford Geertz (1972) equally focused on his confusions to get to a deeper understanding of local meaning. I took elements of those reflections as a fruitful inspiration and amended it to my own research needs. Particularly useful was the observation of my own irritations in the field. The analysis of those confusions often led to a deeper understanding of Senegalese values.

2.2 The data base

I collected data on my first trip to Senegal from February to April 1994. I was then 29 years old and a scholar from the sociology department at Bielefeld University. This journey was designed to get in contact with the directors of the phosphate mine and to get to know the

¹⁶ Original version: "Die Ethnopschoanalyse fragt nach den bewußten und unbewußten Bedeutungen kultureller Muster und Normen im Leben von Männern und Frauen, die sie handhaben: sie fragt nach den subjektiven Bedürfnissen Wünschen und Utopien, die mit dem Gebrauch dieser Muster verknüpft werden und sie fragt nach den gesellschaftlichen, sozio-ökonomischen Auswirkungen dieses Zusammenspiels" (Nadig 1985 a, p. 27).

mining town Mboro and the environment. At that time, I did not know what I was really looking for. I tried to be open to all possible directions, but my focus was vaguely the integration of a multinational industrial complex in a rural African environment.¹⁷ On my first visit I was introduced to the chief ranger of the rural community and his family. We became friends and he and his family were my hosts from September 1995 to October 1996. The second period can roughly be divided into six phases:

1.	Language acquisition of Wolof in Dakar	6 weeks
2.	Installation, adaptation, exploratory phase	3 months
3.	Visiting of the surrounding villages and questionnaires with peasants	2 months
4.	Installation in a mine office, questionnaires and interviews	4 months
5.	Observation of the marabout-disciple relationship in Tivaouane	6 weeks
6.	Collection of firm documents, company journal	2 months

Each phase had a main focus, that is the activities listed above. However, all methods were used according to the appearance of opportunities.

2.2.1 Approach to the field

The researcher's approach to the area of investigation is very important in the qualitative research process. It is particularly delicate in a culturally foreign context in which the researcher is not 'at home' and where he or she does not quite know the local societal rules and taboos. In equal, the researcher is a foreigner to the local population. His or her habits, manners, behaviors, even his or her appearance, way to talk etc. may appear totally 'strange' to the locals. The researcher is, thus, constantly in danger to provoke negative reactions within the local people. On the other hand, the researcher depends on the willingness of local actors to give information. The researcher is predestined to become a field of projection of all kinds of fears and expectations.¹⁸ The conduct of his or her introduction to the local environment

¹⁷ The title of the first research report was: "Embeddedness of a multinational phosphate mine in local, national, and global structures in Senegal" (unpublished manuscript, Bielefeld May 1995).

¹⁸ I elaborated elsewhere, how negative personal experiences in the field can serve as a methodological tool for analysis (Grisar-Kassé 2004).

and to potential informants plays, thus, a major role and determines to what extent the researcher is able to integrate in the local environment and how easy or difficult the development of a good relationship between the scientist and the local people will be. The 'entrée-problem' is still widely ignored in development research, although it has determining consequences.¹⁹

My host, the chief ranger was responsible for the maintenance of the landscape and tended on its natural resources (trees, bushes, herbs, etc.). He was also teacher and held seminars in the technical center of waters and forests in Mboro (*'Centre technique des Eaux et Forêts'*).

The ranger was an open minded, friendly man in his late 50s and was professionally as well as socially respected and well integrated in the rural and urban population in and around the mining town. Through his professional position, he was also a man of power. He invited me several times in his compound where he lived with his three wives and nine children. We held long conversations by drinking Senegalese tee under the comfortable shade of the central tree in the compound. After I had familiarized with all family members, he offered me to stay as a guest with his family during my field research period the following year which I accepted with great delight. The close connection with the chief ranger later turned out to be helpful for my integration within the local community, foremost because people could easily refer to me as his guest.

I attended an intensive Wolof course in Dakar for six weeks before I returned in mid-September 1995 to the mining town. The ranger and his family warmly welcomed me, showing that the offer made 18 months ago was not an empty promise. Together with all family members and some friends, we negotiated which part of the compound would be best to lodge me. The stone house, state owned, was rather small and not sufficient for the entire family. It contained three bedrooms, one living room, one bathroom, one room for cooking, and a small office. All together it was not more than about 92 m². The house was built on a socket of 1 ½ m height and a little staircase led to a partly open front porch. All room doors, except the office, pointed to the front porch on which the family and friends gathered on evenings for dinner and for the one or two hours of television before bedtime. The plot of land on which the house was built was, by contrast, relatively spacious and not fully used. Besides the house, the compound contained two straw huts. Two, or sometimes three, sons would

¹⁹ On this point see also Lachenmann (1997, p. 100).

spend the night in one of them, which was small but intact. The other larger straw hut was used to serve as a pantry and second kitchen, but the roof had rotted over time. The compound was completed by two enclosures which the family used to house a few goats and ducks.

It was decided to build a new straw hut for me, relatively central and adjacent to the goats' enclosure (this later resulted in considerable holes in my bedroom wall). An ailing little lemon tree was quickly removed to provide more construction territory. The new straw hut had two rooms. One was equipped with a bed and a little bedside table, the other larger one contained a little table (used as desk) and a wooden chair, a large shelf for books and folders, two comfortable little armchairs and a coffee table made from palm leaves (a local handicraft). Stored in the corner of the living-work room was the obligatory clay amphora containing drinking water. The hut had two windows, one pointing to the family house and one pointing to the compound entrance and main road. The little zinc door pointed to the center of the compound, giving a glimpse of the daily activities of the family in front of the house and of the other smaller straw hut. The compound territory was surrounded by a straw fence of about 2 meters height with an opening facing the main road in front. Another free-standing fence of the same height and about two meters in length was placed at a distance of about 2 meters behind the opening. It protected the compound from curious observers, but signalled enough openness for visitors to feel comfortable to enter and exit.

The compound turned out to be ideal for the research purpose for making and maintaining contacts. First of all, it was central. The only tar road of the town, the main road, went passed my host compound. Peasant men and women, coming from the surrounding villages, passed the compound on their way to the central market place in Mboro. The villagers, who knew me usually from my visits in the villages, often stopped by to get some drinking water after a long and exhausting walk while carrying agricultural goods on their heads. We took the opportunity to exchange the latest news from the villages and the area. Second, the compound had the privilege of its own water tap, located behind the boys' straw hut, and running for some hours during day time. So each day, women from the neighborhood came with their buckets and pans to fill it there. The time for standing in line was always good for chats about the local life. Thirdly, the firm's transportation buses stopped not far from the compound, bringing miners to the morning, regular, or night shifts to the mining installations and extraction fields and back home. In particular in the morning between six

and seven, employees would stop at our compound to buy their breakfast. One of the host's wife sold a traditional cereal dish (*fondé*), another wife sold home made coffee.

These circumstances helped a lot to introduce myself and my research objectives to the local population and soon turned me (the only white European in the town) into a well known person. After three months of explorative research, I summarised my first impressions in a slide presentation to the senior executives of the company. Not all of the senior executives had seen me before and so this was a perfect occasion to introduce myself and my research interests officially. My aim was to lay open my intentions to the top managers, to invite them to actively take part, if they wished, and to gain their full support for the study. The presentation focused on the poor living conditions of a relocated peasant village and on the current disastrous relationship and non-communication between workers and managers. The lecture was followed by a vivid discussion among all participants. It was proposed I include a survey within my methodological inventory in order to get even 'more valid and more precise' results. Although a survey was not my initial intention, I agreed to this suggestion, taking the occasion to demonstrate my willingness to cooperate.

After the presentation, two department managers kindly offered me offices in their departments to help me with my research. One office was located in the service medical center. The company doctor helped me with great efforts to 'recruit' valuable interview partners. The other office was in the training center and happened to be the deserted office of the last French senior executive of the training center. The departed expatriate had been the initiator and in fact the soul of the training efforts in the company almost from the beginning on until his departure in 1994. His office served also as the archive of the company documents on personnel management and training.

2.2.2 Explorative conversations

Within the first few months of investigation, I talked to locals about all sorts of subjects, about the predicaments of life in general and of the local community in particular. These conversations took place wherever and whenever the opportunity arose in which people would voluntarily want to chat with me.

Fortunately for me, people were quite curious and would not hesitate to ask me directly, who I was and what I was doing (and if I was married). This opened the way to regular contacts and more serious conversations. Explorative conversations deepened my context knowledge and broadened my net of social affiliations.

2.2.3 Participant observation

Participant observation can take place on various levels. Of course, I was at no time 'part' of the Senegalese society as a Senegalese on my place would have been, with all the Senegalese norms, obligations, and expectations attached to it. I also never tried seriously to emulate the behavior of the Senegalese women in my family or neighborhood (which included difficult and physically very hard work), except for an overall amusement.²⁰ Nevertheless, I was accepted and integrated as being just me, Karen, a European woman doing some research, a talkative person easy to approach and with whom one can have regular contacts and discuss problems.

While living and working in the mining town, I made contacts within the locals in Mboro. It was in particular within the social environment in which I played a social role myself, in other words: in which I was personally involved (as a friend or family member) in which I made the most intense experiences. Through the observation of my own irritations, I could best discover and learn to understand the values and social conventions different from the ones I knew. The precondition for this method is the possibility of participant observation. Thus, I used this method mainly while living among the population of the area. The social environment in which I lived was most of the time the family members of my host and some close friends in and around Mboro and their families.

My possibilities of doing participant observation in the company were fairly limited. This was mainly for safety reasons, but also because my presence in the workplaces was not appreciated by managers.

²⁰

One early morning I went with the girls of the house to a neighboring tab to get water. With my water bucket on my head on our way back, I became immediately the attraction of the quarter with people coming from all directions to see the event. It was the story of the day in town.

2.2.4 The interviews

After I had done numerous explorative conversations, I started to carry out narrative²¹ and focused²² interviews (n = 48) in French and Wolof, tape-recorded and transcribed them. I cited 20 interview partners with a total of 72 quotes in the text. However, information from all interviews shaped the analysis. It was possible to conduct three interviews with expatriates coming back to Mboro for vacation during my period of field research. All three expatriates were former managers and had a working experience within the mine for over ten years. Two of them had seen the evolution of the enterprise from 1960 on.

In general, the interviews took place either at the people's homes in a relatively quiet room, or in offices in the company (theirs or mine). After my experience with focus groups, I made sure that no other person was present during interviews (except the person wanted it otherwise)²³.

My objective for interviews was to motivate the interviewees to tell 'their personal story' from the first contact with the company up to the present day. I started usually with an introduction about myself and my training to then ask them about their education and training before employment in the company. After those explanations, the initial stimulus for their personal Taïba story would always be something like: How did you first come to the company and what was your first impression? The aim was to put the interviewee in the position of an expert on the social and industrial history of the mining company which the person had lived and which he or she was kindly asked to explain to me in detail. The interviews were dominated by open questions. The person was left free to tell what ever was important for him or her and to reconstruct the social reality in his/ her own terms. The time for interviews was not limited. The duration of an interview was between 30 minutes and 3 hours, in average about one hour.

²¹ Schütze (1977, 1983).

²² Merton and Kendall (1956).

²³ I first worked with focus groups, assuming the positive image of French would be an openly shared consensus. But, by contrast, Senegalese employees would not praise French expatriates in presence of other Senegalese, but only in a confidential private atmosphere.

2.2.5 Questionnaires

A) The Peasant Questionnaire

Within the period of field research, I developed two different questionnaires. The first questionnaire was designed for peasants, the second questionnaire for company employees.

The questionnaire for peasants aimed at the life circumstances in the villages surrounding the exploitation fields (those villages were mostly either evicted already or foreseen for eviction) and in the interaction between the mine's management and the peasant population, seen from the peasants' perspective. The peasant questionnaires (n = 12) were not systematically analyzed here, because another focus of investigation had been chosen for the present study. Nevertheless, it served as a solid basis for a more holistic view of the area and broadened my contextual knowledge. Contacts made through the questionnaires also deepened the level of social integration within the population. If not through personal contact, people knew through hear-say that I had visited the surrounding villages which usually increased people's estimation for my research efforts.²⁴

²⁴

Most villages were hard to reach, only by horse carriage or foot. While introducing me to others, people often pointed out my visits in the surrounding villages.

B) The employee questionnaire

The employee questionnaire had 46 items (see annex). The items covered personal data, social responsibilities (wives, children, and other adepts), data about work conditions, atmosphere, promotion steps and salary, financial situation, religious beliefs and customs, the communication within the mine, assessment of personal growth in the company, side activities, and envisaged future projects. Thirty-three items were 'closed' questions which could be answered by one word or number. Thirteen items were open questions on personal experiences in the mine (for example n° 37: *'what did you find here when you started to work at Taïba?'*). I asked the questions in French or Wolof, depending on the person's French language capacity. The inquiry was not limited in time. I applied the same rules as for the interviews: tell me whatever you find important. Most employees coming to the medical center (where I had an office) willingly agreed to fill out my questionnaire with me, firstly, because the firm doctor accorded extra absence time from work for the length of the questionnaire or interview, and secondly, out of curiosity.

The statistical analysis lays no claim to be exhaustive, nor is the sample representative strictly speaking. The informant was free to answer a question or not. Not every informant completed all 46 items. Furthermore, not all 46 items were later chosen for evaluation in the present study. The statistical analysis has, thus, a descriptive character only.

I completed the questionnaire with sixty-one employees on permanent contract. One was invalid, thus, sixty questionnaires remained. Fifty-eight men and 2 women took part in the inquiry, 13 were catholic (ca. 21%) and 47 were Muslim (ca. 79%). Most employees lived in the urban areas around the mine (52 = ca. 87% in Mboro, Tivavouane, or Thiès), 8 came from the surrounding villages (ca. 13%). The oldest employee of the sample was 63 years old; the youngest was 29 years old. The average in age was ca. 47 years. The average of years of employment in the mining enterprise was 22 years and 4 months. Questionnaires are listed in chronological order by the employees' entrance month in the company. Quotes from questionnaires in the text are referred to as 'Q', the listed number and the month/year of career start in the company (for example Q20, 10/70). To get a better understanding of the sample, it was divided into 6 cohorts of ten employees each, sorted by year of birth, starting with the eldest. This is represented in the following table:

cohorts Q = questionnaire	Average age	Average years of employment
cohort 1: Q 1 - 10	53,4	33,3
cohort 2: Q 11 - 20	53,2	29,7
cohort 3: Q 21 - 30	47,6	22,8
cohort 4: Q 31 - 40	46,4	20,9
cohort 5: Q 41 - 50	43,6	17,9
cohort 6: Q 51 - 60	37,9	9,8

The dispersion of ethnic origin was as follows:

Wolof	29	=	ca. 48,3 %
Serer	15	=	25 %
Diola	6	=	10 %
Bambara	2	=	ca. 3,3 %
Socé	1	=	ca. 1,7 %
Lebou	1	=	ca. 1,7 %

The employees of the sample had the following work categories in the hierarchy ladder of the company:

Work category 1 ²⁵	= 0
Work category 2	= 1
Work category 3	= 3
Work category 4	= 6
Work category 5	= 8
Work category 6	= 15
Work category 7	= 10
AM 1 ²⁶	= 9
AM 2	= 1
AM 3	= 5
AM 4	= 2
AM 5	= 0

²⁵ The lowest work category was not used any more in the mining enterprise in 1996.

²⁶ The following categories of middle and upper management are called in Senegal 'agent de maîtrise' or short 'AM'.

2.2.6 Company and archive documents

When I spend the first few weeks in Dakar, I went to my Wolof course in the mornings and to the national archives and libraries in the afternoons. There I collected archived documents about mining in Senegal, anything I could find about phosphate extraction, but also regional reports from colonial officers concerning the area under study.

In the company, I had my own office within the training center. This office had not been used since the French expatriate head of the training department had left in 1994. Fortunately, it was not just an office, but a huge archive with hundreds of folders packed with all sorts of documents. To my great delight I was allowed to rummage through these folders and copy whatever I found valuable for my study. I had access to one other archive in the directorate building for my research purposes.

I worked my way through the archives during the last two months of field research, when I was relatively sure, what I was looking for. The overall criterion for choosing documents was any form of communication and cooperation. Furthermore, I was interested in documents on technical and organizational efficiency of the phosphate production process. I looked for hints on interaction patterns between any groups or individuals within the company and between individuals and representatives of the company (such as trade unionists, board of directors, brotherhood representatives) and outsiders, (local groups, local or state administration, government representatives, other companies or institutions within and outside of Senegal).

I collected around 400 company documents with a total of around 1500 pages. The evaluated documents cover the time period from 1932 to 1996. Of course, the documentation presented is far from being representative or exhaustive. The office in the training center was only one of four archives scattered over different company departments.

When I was asking access to other archives, I was told to define what I want to see and they will find it for me. Although this did not fully suit my purpose, I made the attempt to ask for particular facts. Among others, I asked for organization charts of bygone times. I presented my request to the secretary of the exploitation manager, who was particularly instructed to supply me with whatever I needed and to take responsibility for my personal

well-being within the company. She passed the issue on to the extraction director who deals with marginal issues as such only once in a while. Thus a few days later he then passed it on to the vice personal manager to deal with it. This young manager had only shortly entered the company and was not familiar with the archives, but promised to look for those documents. A few months later he came up with one piece of paper which had not much in common with what I had asked for. In conclusion, my request did not fulfill my purpose, but had a negative side effect instead: other managers of the upper echelon became aware of my searching for documents and did not seem to appreciate it. My impression grew that some of them were less at ease with me than before. It is likely that some administration managers were not aware of my systematic search in the archive of the training center and it became obvious that an outward confirmation would possibly endanger my status and the liberty attached to it. The experience did not encourage me to advance further in this direction. I ceased to ask for documents, but contented myself with what I found in those two accessible archives.

The collected documents were meant to serve as non-reactive data, uninfluenced by the subjective perception of the researcher. The documents should serve as an objective ground to counter check the events and historical evolutions in employees' recall. The comparison between descriptions of events at their time and the employee's perception and appraisal of these same events ten, fifteen, or even twenty years later, give an insight of employees' perception tendencies. A description of events, produced on the spot, is naturally more detailed and accurate than the memories of these events many years later. Employees remembered only things which they judged significant in retrospective. The resulting bias sheds some light on employees' underlying hidden beliefs.

2.2.7 The company journal

The office in the training center was next to a little room which contained the archive of the company journal. Without this additional information source, many processes and aspects of the company internals would have remained enigmatic to me. I describe the company journal in detail in chap. 7.1.2 A.

Historical Preconditions

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3 Historical Preconditions

3.1 French and Senegalese: a developed relationship

The status quo of the relationship of interacting groups from distinct cultural background is not only determined by current behavior and circumstances; it also results from the historical background in which the relationship developed.

In Senegal, three historical processes should be taken into account to acquire a deeper understanding of specific communication patterns in the mining company surveyed: firstly, the emergence of Islamic brotherhoods in Senegal; secondly, the impact of the French colonization period and the assimilation policy; and thirdly, the *Négritude* movement in Senegal. These three complex historical processes are deeply interconnected and interwoven. Some aspects are pointed out before proceeding to the empirical data.

3.2 Islamic brotherhoods: emergence and characteristics

Islamic influences became important in the 11th century, when the Tekrur kingdom along the northern part of the Senegal River was the first West African society to convert to Islam.²⁷ In the following centuries, however, although exposed to Islamic influences through Muslim clerics, traders, and court advisers, the great majority of Wolof kingdoms maintained their traditional religious practices.²⁸ Usually, Muslim preachers and court advisers were migrants from North African societies and able to read and write Arabic. Holding mystic powers, the Muslim preachers, later called marabout, provided protective amulets to ward off evil spirits. Thus some royal families and the surrounding local aristocracy converted to Islam. Local traditional beliefs and mystic practices gradually

²⁷ Cornevin & Cornevin 1966.

²⁸ Gellar 1982.

blended with Muslim doctrine.²⁹ For their mystic services, kings gave marabouts territorial rights and slaves. Thus, gradually marabouts accumulated agricultural land.³⁰ With slaves donated by the *damel* (king), marabouts started cultivating this land and entered the trans-Saharan trade with their products. Farming and preaching Islam at the same time to a growing number of peasants, working and living together, created a new system of social structures. Soon well-organized economic institutions emerged. From the beginning these institutions cut across ethnic and caste barriers, as their Islamic leaders occupied, as foreigners, a position apart from distinct social categories enshrined in Wolof society.³¹ Group solidarity was no longer determined by ethnic, caste or class affiliation, but was built on a common faith, and each member of the community did the same work.³² The transatlantic slave trade, having a tremendous destructive impact on African society, caused a deep economic and social crisis as a result of numerous interwoven factors. The cooperation between marabouts and the ruling class was disturbed when the expanding transatlantic slave trade became profitable for the ruling monarchies. The search for slaves to sell to European traders endangered the marabouts' communities and the '*buur julit*' (literally *Muslim king*, a Wolof term for 'marabout') revolted against the ruling class in the first 'holy war' in the region, from 1673 to 1674. The revolt was repressed with the active help of European interest groups, who provided their indigenous business partners with a considerable amount of war material and received their share of human spoils after victory. Although the movement shrank for some time, because its members were either killed or sold to slave traders, the institutional structure remained and later regained importance under Wolof marabouts. This revolt, in which the Muslim communities opposed the arbitrary acts of the ruling class, increased their status among the local population and attracted in consequence more '*taalibee*'³³ (followers). The revolt prepared the ground for

²⁹ Diouf 1990.

³⁰ Traditionally, land was the domain of the laman, peasant chiefs holding mystic power for fertility and often in conflict with the ruling class. The allocation of land to marabout was thus a means to weaken the laman's power and influence within the rural communities (Diouf 1990).

³¹ Abdoulaye Bara Diop elaborated the complex system of castes and classes in Wolof society (1981; 1985).

³² Diouf calls it the rising of a 'new class' and pointed out: „La communauté musulmane présente une composition spécifique. Elle est pluriethnique, et fonde son existence, non pas sur une quelconque filiation ou référence à un ancêtre commun, mais sur une conviction religieuse qui met en avant l'idéale communautaire en l'exaltant et en le vérifiant dans la pratique quotidienne“ (Diouf 1990: 89).

³³ The word 'taalibee' (in Wolof spelling) stems from the Arabic word 'talib' or 'talibun' meaning 'disciple'.

the establishment of a new order of antagonistic social forces with the Islamic communities on one side and a highly differentiated hierarchical system of castes and classes of Wolof society on the other.³⁴ Although these early structures of brotherhood eventually moved towards an emphasis of family ties, faith, devotion and loyalty remained the characteristic determinants. Within these brotherhoods, the marabout had the role of a saint, who benefited his disciples through his *'baraka'* (blessing) and "his baraka rather than his learning, gave him an exalted position".³⁵ In the 19th century a number of distinct brotherhoods emerged.³⁶ The most important among them are the Tidjaniya and the Mourid brotherhood. The Mourid brotherhood was interwoven with the colonial administration, because of its effective agricultural performance. The charismatic founder of the Mourid brotherhood, Ahmadu Bamba, (1850 - 1927) developed a particular work culture and ideology, assuring proximity to god through hard work. Soon, Mourid communities turned into well-structured enterprises. French colonial administration reinforced those structures for the production of peanuts, soon Senegal's number one cash crop. The Mourid communities developed into an economic power, resulting in a growing number of followers devoted to Ahmadu Bamba. Many of his followers were members of the traditional warrior class (*ceddo*). The founder was soon perceived as a serious threat to the colonial administration. Conflicts arose and Bamba was exiled twice, from 1895 - 1902 and from 1903 - 1907. After his return he was not allowed to live in the town Touba, which he had founded around 1890 as the center of Mouridism and which had grown considerably. The cooperation between the Mourid brotherhood and the French colonial administration is an example for the French fear to lose eventually the power over the Senegalese societies.

Today, a brotherhood member or *'taalibee'* considers his or her relationship with the marabout to be a very personal and intimate issue.³⁷ Each disciple usually refers to one marabout in particular, who is in a way responsible for him. The role of a marabout for his disciples can vary largely. The most important function is to give *baraka*. The responsibility can become very concrete in a given situation. The marabout gives advice, prays for the disciple to god, cures, and may provide any kind of material or sometimes

³⁴ Diouf 1990: 92.

³⁵ Ziadeh 1958: 7.

³⁶ For a general overview the interested reader may refer to Behrman (1970), Martin (1976), and Magassouba (1985). For specific information about the Tidjaniya brotherhood see Abun Nasr (1965), for the Mourid brotherhood see Cruise O'Brien (1971), Copans (1980), and Seesemann (1993).

³⁷ The marabout-disciple relationship is elaborated by Villalòn (1993; 1995).

money. The disciple wishes to occupy a place near god in a morally and spiritually pure aura by the intermediate of the marabout, because the marabout was chosen by god. The marabout is able to assure a place on earth, as well as in the hereafter. Proximity to the marabout assures a lifelong security for the disciple and his family. In return, the disciple is loyal and devoted to the marabout.

3.3 Ideological framework of French assimilation policy

French policies with its overseas territories in Africa took place in complex and changing processes. “Depending on the political spectrum and social forces in power, *France officielle* liberated, dominated, tyrannized, cultivated, uplifted, exploited or enslaved the peoples of its overseas areas. The basic attitudes of paternalism, elitism and manipulation, however, remained constant”³⁸ French assimilation policy can be traced back to “the outgrowth of the revolutionary thinking of 1789 and 1848, which assumed that there was no racial or cultural barrier that French education and participation in French institutions could not eliminate”.³⁹ The French assimilation policy was a complex evolution of ambivalent French attitudes about the equality of Europeans and Africans. The first French governor of Senegal, Louis Léon César Faidherbe (in power from 1854-61 and 1863 - 1865), is widely recognized as the artisan of the assimilation policy. He was “a firm believer in the equality of race, and did much to increase the educational facilities of the colony”.⁴⁰ Around 1880, the four communes St. Louis, Gorée, Dakar, and Rufisque (the former early French settlements) were charted as French departments, in which African inhabitants had French citizenship as of right; they were known as the *originaires*. Long before Faidherbe came into power in 1854, the indigenous populations within the zones of French settlement were exposed to early forms of assimilation policy. Africans had enjoyed equal rights with Europeans since the end of the eighteenth century.

Africans living outside these areas, by contrast, had to endure harsh restrictions and were drafted for forced labor. Although Faidherbe attempted to integrate into Senegalese society and admired African culture, he prepared the ground for an administration system explicitly non-assimilationist. French assimilation policy was based on the assumption of the superiority of French civilization, but favored an evolutionary model, believing that the Senegalese would eventually achieve the same standard of civilization as French. Jules Ferry, a leading figure of French colonial expansion, expressed this beliefs in 1885 as the French minister of foreign affairs: “*The superior races, that is the occidental societies, having reached a high degree of technical, scientific and moral development, hold rights as well as duties in regards to the inferior races, that is the peoples not engaged in the path of*

³⁸ Markovitz 1969: 8.

³⁹ Cruise O’Brien 1972: 45.

⁴⁰ Crowder 1967: 16.

progress. These rights and duties are those of civilization in relation to barbarism“.⁴¹ The four communes were designed to serve as an experiment in assimilation. The initial plan intended the application of assimilation policy in all of French West Africa.

At the end of the nineteenth century French critics rose against the idea of assimilation. The French efforts in education within the four communes had left considerable traces on the indigenous population and in particular Mulattoes, being half French and half African, had gained considerable influence. French functionaries more and more questioned whether Africans should have French citizenship rights purely by being born in one of the four communes. In 1908, French administration decided that citizenship would only be granted by *‘individual naturalization’*. In 1912 the right of citizenship became dependent on certain conditions, which were: *“having proved devotion to France or having occupied with merit for at least ten years a position in a French office, public or private; having learned to read and write French; having given evidence of possessing a means of existence and good character”*.⁴² An era of intense negotiation over rights and privileges for Africans between Senegalese and French began. The Senegalese tried to meet these criteria and French colonial officers were reluctant to it, deeply regretting that they had ever granted these rights. The Senegalese who had already achieved citizen rights fought to retain their privileges. This colonial principle of *‘divide and rule’* separated the Senegalese in two clearly distinct categories, finally resulting in hostility between Senegalese themselves.⁴³ Senegalese put more effort into the struggle to acquire full equality and acceptance as *‘French’* then into political activities in favor of independence. Meanwhile, French attitudes shifted gradually from assimilation to association policy as the result of the recognition of the fundamental differences between European and African culture. The French Vichy regime during World War II, the Third Republic, was then clearly marked by the distinction in French superiority and Senegalese inferiority. In this era, the African populations were tormented by an overt racist ideology and had to suffer from regular vicious harassments. The omnipresence of legionnaires on Senegalese territory demanded from the local populations a total submission. The assimilation policy of former times had then turned into a profound contempt, outwardly exercised in numerous ways. *“It was during the war when we were living an absolutely racist order. At the time of Boisson,*

⁴¹ Biarnès 1987: 220.

⁴² Crowder 1967: 26.

⁴³ Lô 1987: 18.

*there was racism of the worst kind: when a “toubab” [Senegalese term for a White] had spoken, one had not the right to reply. If one replied, one was conducted to the police and locked in the ‘violon’ [prison under military control]”.*⁴⁴ The indigenous population must have been paralyzed with fear: *“The legionaries sowed terror within their barrack’s environment. They harassed the population and raped the young women. Anybody who would not - by ignorance or by forgetting - immobilize while ‘the colors’ were hoisted or descended, was hunted and stoned by the elements of the foreign legion. And we experienced – who would have guessed - the division of the beautiful beach at N’Dar-Toute, near ‘Chaumière’, in St. Louis in two zones: ‘zone reserved for Whites’ and ‘zone destined for Niggers and dogs.’”*⁴⁵

The French assimilation policy was never implied anywhere else, but in Senegal. The preoccupation of Senegalese citizen to emulate French values and life style, which was exceptionally stronger in Senegal than in other French colonies, only changed with the emergence of the *Négritude* movement.

3.4 The Senegalese response: *la Négritude*

Senegalese intellectuals responded to this degradation with a counter rejection on one hand, and with intense examinations whether one should assimilate or back up from French values. Also, with the defeat of France by Germany in World War II, the belief in the legitimacy of French rule declined considerably among Senegalese intellectuals.

The Senegalese endeavor for independence was organized mainly from Paris within the colonizer’s cultural environment, using the French language as means of expression. Within this climate among African intellectuals in Paris, the ideology of *Négritude* developed short before World War II. Aimé Césaire is acknowledged as the inventor of the

⁴⁴ Original version: « C’était pendant la guerre où l’on vivait un régime absolument raciste. Du temps de Boisson, c’était un racisme de la pire espèce: quand un „toubab“ avait parlé, on n’avait pas le droit de répliquer. Si l’on répliquait, on était conduit à la police et mis au ‘violon’ » (M. Dia, 1985:35).

⁴⁵ Original version: « Les Légionnaires semaient la terreur tout autour de leur cantonnement. Ils brimaient les populations et violaient les jeunes femmes. Toute personne, qui, par ignorance ou par oubli, ne s’immobilisait pas à la levée ou al la descente des couleurs, était pourchassée à cheval et lapidée par les éléments de la Légion Etrangère. Et l’on assista - qui l’eût cru - au partage de la belle plage de N’Dar-Toute, à hauteur de la « Chaumière », à Saint-Louis, en deux zones: « zone réservée aux Blancs », et « zone destinée aux nègres et aux chiens » (Lô 1987:18).

term *Négritude* for a “black is beauty” ideology in 1939. Aimé Césaire and Léon Damas from the West Indies and Léopold Sédhar Senghor from Senegal mainly shaped the ideology of *Négritude*, which was in its first phase rather a philosophical concept limited to arts and literature. After World War II, however, *Négritude* also developed into a political doctrine within the West African independence movements in particular in the French colonies. From the beginning, Senghor was a leading figure of *Négritude* and became a poet, writer and professor of French literature. Senegalese intellectuals engaged in *Négritude* had received a French education, in which African history was either absent or recognized only in connection with the era of colonization. Thus, Senghor also was not instructed in the history of African pre-colonial societies. Senghor strongly rejected the French assimilation policy, which still had not vanished, because he believed that it was opposed to a genuine African identity.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, Senghor was willing to work within the French community with Senegal as an equal member to France.⁴⁷ Thus, he was never in favor for political independence. In 1948, Senghor founded the BDS party (*Block Démocratique Sénégalais*) which was the only party at that time independent from French parties. In 1951, he was elected deputy for Senegal in the French national assembly with his party crony Mamadou Dia.

After independence, Senghor became the first president of Senegal (1960 - 1980) and incorporated the *Négritude* ideology in his government policy. His policy aimed to realize his vision of civilization for the Senegalese peoples. Senghor’s endeavor was to raise consciousness for the originality of African culture and its indispensable contribution to humanity. In correspondence, Senghor fought for the acknowledgement and recognition of African values and characteristics which should play a complementary role and a fruitful completion of those of Europeans forming a ‘*universal Afro-European culture*’.⁴⁸ In poems and writings, Senghor exposed an utter admiration and romanticism for African values and personality traits that he assumed to be genuine and homogeneous for ‘the African’ in general, which much resembled the stereotype ascriptions of colonial ideology before, but set in a positive light. Senghor accounted emotionality as the most salient character trait of the African contrasting European rationality. Further, the African’s spontaneity and warmth

⁴⁶ Hesselting 1985:160.

⁴⁷ Senghor 1957.

⁴⁸ See Senghor 1939.

was complementary to the European cold deliberateness.⁴⁹ In short: Senghor saw Europeans as objective, rational, analytical and worldly. Africans, by contrast, were claimed to be subjective, emotional, spontaneous, and spiritual.⁵⁰

The dichotomy of race, seeing foremost only Black and White, was meant to highlight the necessity of intercultural cooperation which serves to enrich and fertilize a common product. Provoking harsh criticism among intellectuals in other West African countries, this polarization of roles was widely accepted among Senegalese. Wole Soyinka, for example, asserted that the admiration of the African is just as bad as his detest.⁵¹ Senghor proclaimed the benefit of European values for the African culture. However, in his poetry, admiration alternates with deprecation for European values, reminiscent of the ambiguous French attitudes towards Africans. Nevertheless Senghor accepted the superiority of French civilization and acknowledged the French assimilation policy for the pressure put on Africans to acquire European civilization.⁵²

⁴⁹ Keszthelyi 1981:181.

⁵⁰ See also Kesteloot 1992.

⁵¹ See Soyinka 1976 and Said 1993, chapter 3.3.

⁵² See Markovitz 1970.

Introducing the Company

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4 Introducing the company

The company studied was a phosphate mining company in Senegal called '*La Compagnie Sénégalaise de Phosphates de Taïba (CSPT)*', short Taïba.⁵³

In September 1996, the CSPT fused with the adjacent chemical industry, '*Les Industries Chimiques du Sénégal (ICS)*' which then became Senegal's largest industrial complex, the ICS. Taïba will presumably remain to function as the ICS mining branch for a considerable number of years. Large deposits at Tobène are estimated of around 60 million tons of extractable raw material. Another deposit of around 38 million tons of calcium phosphate is estimated at Semmé (Matam).⁵⁴

The mining territory is located between two towns in the Thiès department, Tivaouane and Mboro, near the coast and about 90 km north of Dakar within the territory of the former Kayoor kingdom. The phosphate company was, until its absorption, a semi-public multinational joint-stock company. Between 1974 and 1990, the company was the most successful industrial enterprise in Senegal in terms of investment and turnover. It was 50% state-owned since 1975. As an industrial model it helped to strengthen the national identity and pride of Senegal in the 70s and 80s and was held up as an example of industrial success in the former French-ruled zones of West Africa. One of the 1000-FCFA bills, produced in the 80s and still in use, shows the extraction territory of the phosphate mine. The mining company extracted and treated industrially mainly calcium phosphates of a high and rare quality.

Since the late 80s, environmental laws reducing the use of phosphates in consumer laundry detergents and in fertilizer caused a steady decline of demands for raw phosphate rock on the European market.⁵⁵ Senegal shifted to other clients on the world market (most important are India and China) and decided to merge CSPT and ICS to put emphasis on the production and export of higher value products, foremost the phosphoric acids. Due to the 50% devaluation of the CFA franc in conjunction with the increase in international prices for phosphoric acid, ICS raised competitiveness and gained a favorable position on the world market. Today, Senegal accounts for about 1.5% of world output and 3% of world exports of

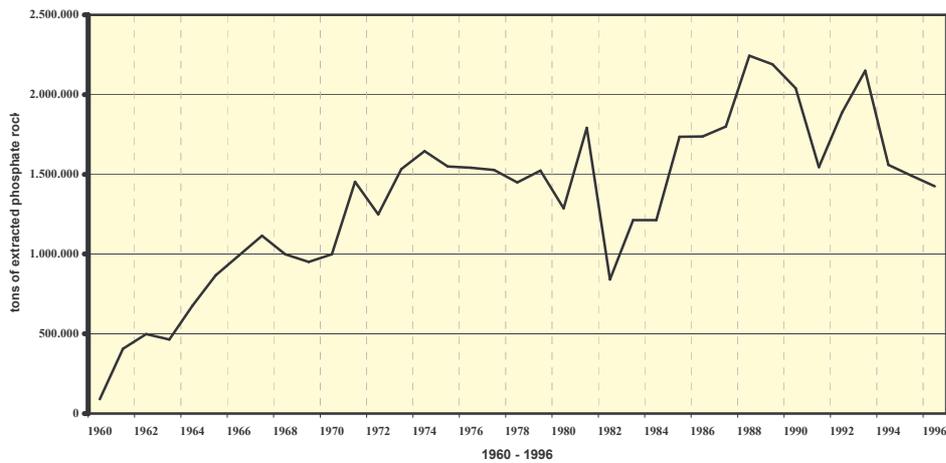
⁵³ The company was the object of research in previous studies (see Peroux & Bernis 1963, Founou-Tchuigoua 1976, Sow 1983, Ndiaye 1992, Ndoye 1996).

⁵⁴ Those are official estimations of ICS made in 2004. In earlier years, official estimations were more optimistic: 100 million tons for Tobène and 60 million tons for Semmé (Hodgkinson 1996:885-6).

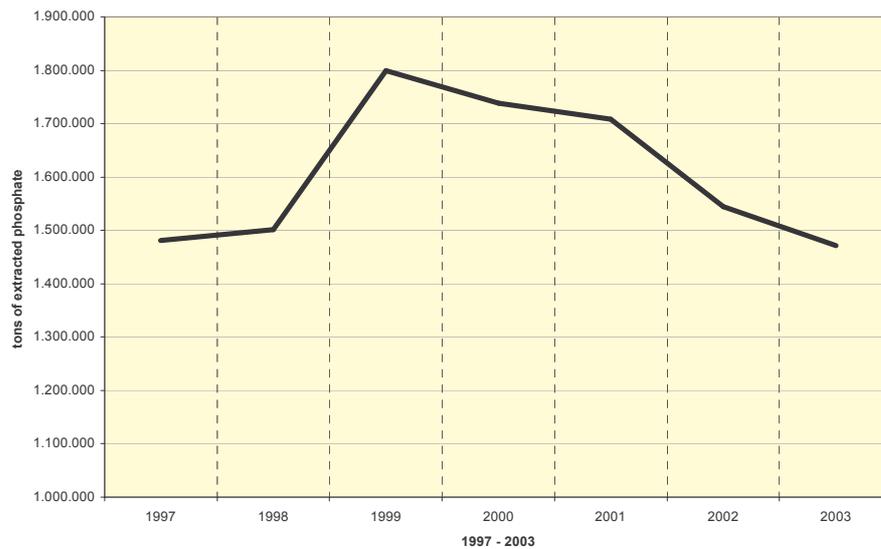
⁵⁵ Dexter (1996).

phosphates. Today, in 2004, the state owns 45% of the ICS complex. ICS mainly produces marketable phosphates, fertilizers, pesticides, and phosphoric acids and focuses the African market. Its most important client was from 1996 up to 2004 India which took up to 98% of the total ICS production. Below, table 1 shows the phosphate production of the mining company. Table 2 shows its productivity as the mining branch of ICS.

Production Evolution of the Company

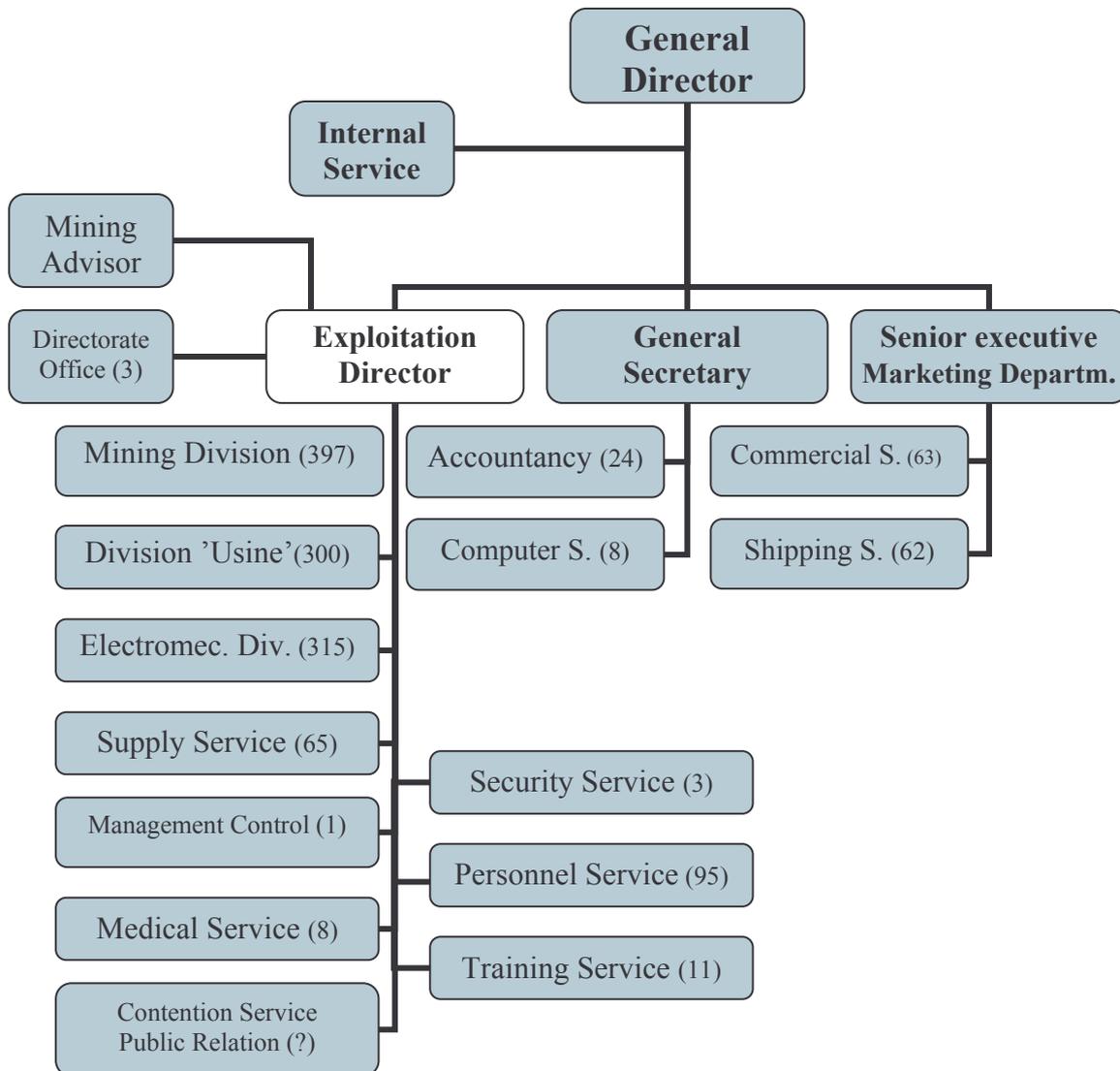


Production evolution as ICS mining branch



4.1 Human resources and hierarchies

In January 1996, the company held 1280 employees under permanent contract of which 44 were senior executives, 237 midrange managers (AM1 to AM5), and 999 workers and employees. The company was divided into three sectors: the exploitation department, the accountancy and computer sector, and the marketing department. Those three sectors were again divided into several smaller units, services and divisions. The organization chart of the company in January 1996 is shown below:



Until 1995, the exploitation sector was traditionally divided into the two main

functions exploitation department and production department. When the French chef of the production department retired in 1995, his function was taken on by the exploitation director until the fusion. In 1996, the employees of the mining company were in average 40 years of age; the number of direct dependents (legal wives and children) per salary was in average ~ 7.6, which means a total of 9685 individuals.⁵⁶ The ICS held in 2003 around 2.500 employees under permanent contract (Internet source ICS).

4.2 A short economic history

The company was founded in 1957 exclusively with French capital and mainly imported technology in a remote area of mainly bush and agricultural land, lacking in transport and infrastructure. The initial work force was composed of six Europeans and 17 Africans. In August 1960, the year of political independence, the first shipload of phosphate left Dakar's harbor for Japan. At that moment, 116 expatriates (most of them in leading positions) and 286 Senegalese workers formed the mine's staff. In the first years after independence, the mine's future was constantly under discussion in view of its low profitability.

The joint-stock company became Franco-American in 1963, when the US company International Minerals & Chemicals Corporation bought 12% of the share holdings.⁵⁷ From 1967 until 1970 the company was restructured with US and French financial aid. Over the following three years the phosphate production rose considerably and the first Senegalese engineers were employed. Meanwhile Senegal's economy went into a deep crisis caused by the devastating drought and rapidly changing world market prices. Senegal came under pressure, because of its high economic dependency on cash crops, mainly the peanut, to search for new exportable goods. Gellar has pointed out that *"in 1973 worldwide food shortages and the Arab oil embargo sparked by the Yom Kippur War drove up the price of food imports, led to a fourfold increase in oil prices, and set off a wave of inflation that had a tremendously destabilizing effect on the Senegalese economy. The 1972-1973 drought sharply reduced Senegalese peanut exports, increased food imports, and led to record trade deficits.*

⁵⁶ Doc. 00.00.96c.

⁵⁷ Founou-Tchuigoua 1976: 4.

Shortly afterwards, however, dramatic increases in the world market prices of peanuts and phosphate exports soared from 5.7 billion francs CFA in 1973 to 27.5 billion francs CFA in 1974 and the value of Senegalese peanut exports more than doubled to 34 billion francs CFA despite a mediocre peanut crop⁵⁸. Motivated by the phosphate price explosion on the world market, the Senegalese government took 50% of the company's share holdings in 1975. Shortsightedly, the government borrowed heavily on international private capital markets at relatively high interest rates on the assumption that world peanut and phosphate prices would not fall, thus allowing Senegal to keep its foreign debt at a manageable level. Eighteen months later, world market prices of peanut as well as of phosphate dropped again and a new drought period during the late 1970s aggravated Senegal's financial difficulties to a severe economic plight. Foreign investment aid was sought anew, thus in the beginning of the 1980s Senegal's economy depended more than ever on external forces. From 1979 on, the Senegalese government followed the structural adjustment program (SAP) of World Bank and International Monetary Fund. The SAP demanded the liberalization, the restructuring or privatizing of state-owned companies, but also serious cuts in the government household expenditures. This included considerable budget reduction in social, educational and welfare spending. Ndiaye (2000) sees a direct link between SAP and increasing poverty in Senegal since the early 80s.

In January 1981 the former Prime Minister, Abdou Diouf, succeeded Senghor as president. Diouf introduced the policy of 'democratic openness' (*l'ouverture démocratique*), which allowed unionists to systematically inform workers about their rights. The mining company also received some active unionists and this changed the social atmosphere and disturbed the traditional order. In 1980, the French exploitation director gave way to a Senegalese successor (with French nationality) and the proportion of Senegalese and French managers shifted from 20 Senegalese and 23 French managers in January, to 27 Senegalese and 16 French managers in December 1980.

In 1981, some important clients canceled their orders for 1982. This forced the company to half the phosphate production from 1.8 million tons in 1981 to 840 thousand tons in 1982. Fortunately, Senegalese phosphates were well established on the world market and the company managed to sell about the same amount of phosphates in both years (around 1.1 million tons). Thus, the economic deficit was less harmful than the social consequences

⁵⁸ Gellar 1982: 52.

within the inner order. To avoid unemployment, workers had to abandon their habitual positions and carried out numerous menial jobs. This caused a blurring of work categories and therefore undermined established hierarchies. In June 1983, a 26-day strike took place as a result of discontent and social tension between employees and the management. A bad social climate remained among the staff until about 1985 with minor strikes following.

The world market situation for Senegal's phosphates remained difficult in the mid-80s with the fall of the dollar currency (in which phosphates were sold) and decreasing demands. Additionally, since around 1987, exports to countries of the European Union have fallen, because of the high cadmium content of Senegalese phosphates. While the Senegalese directorate struggled on one side to gain the confidence of new clients on the world market, the inner order of the company was seriously affected by the ongoing Senegalization process. At the end of the 1980s the Senegalization of staff was almost complete, leaving only a few expatriates waiting for retirement. However, in 1987, the Senegalese directorate hired anew a French (White) engineer as production director. Among the staff, opinions differed about the significance of the fact that the newly hired superior was again White. Some top managers said that he was simply the best applicant for the job. Others assumed that this was a strategic decision to regain the confidence and loyalty of the staff and to 'reinstall order'. The 50% devaluation in the French African currency in January 1994 had a positive effect on the export industry as a whole; on the other hand the costs of imported goods, mainly food (rice) increased. Minor salary increases did not correspond to the increase of living costs. This caused, in consequence, a further impoverishment of employees, in particular of lower work categories. In lack of alternatives, workers remained with the company, but had lost any endeavor for work and for the company goals. On the 25th September 1996, the joint-stock company was dissolved and fused with Senegal's chemical industry.

Industrial Paternalism & Hidden Loyalty

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5 Industrial paternalism and hidden loyalty: French and Senegalese roles and perceptions⁵⁹

This chapter is dedicated to the two key concepts, which emerged from the data material and unite the social phenomena found in the mining company, namely *industrial paternalism* and *hidden loyalty*.

In general, paternalism means “*the system, principle, or practice of managing or governing individuals, businesses, nations, etc. in the manner of a father dealing benevolently and often intrusively with his children.*”⁶⁰ The term derives from the Latin ‘*pater familias*’, which was the title of the head of a family in the ancient Roman Empire. Although paternalism refers to an old form of human interaction, the term has been established in the 19th century during the period of industrialization in Europe. It referred to the interaction between factory directors, usually also proprietors, and the factory workers. Foulquié (1978) defines paternalism as „*applied not only in situations in which a paternal attitude would be normal - towards the children, mainly in a family context - but within the relation of superior towards inferior, mostly from patron to worker. The paternalism consist for the patron to behave towards his workers like the ‘paterfamilias’ in former times when dealing with his children and - even when adults - he would not allow a real emancipation.*”⁶¹ Foulquié mentions two important aspects also found within the social interaction between French and Senegalese in the mining company; firstly, the clear definition of superior and inferior relation; and secondly, paternalistic structures usually do not allow real emancipation of the inferior members. Bennett (1968) points out that “*paternalistic systems contribute clear-cut solutions to the problem of complementary roles within a hierarchical structure: status differences within a hierarchy can be organized by complementary services and functions so that the necessary tasks are performed smoothly and efficiently.*”⁶² Paternalism, thus, provides a frame in which status differences will be accepted through complementary roles

⁵⁹ Parts of this chapter have been published elsewhere (Kassé 2001).

⁶⁰ Second Edition of the Random House Compact Unabridged Dictionary 1996:1421.

⁶¹ Original version: « *Paternalisme [...] s’applique, non pas aux situations dans lesquelles les attitudes paternelles sont normales – avec les enfants, principalement dans le cercle familial –, mais aux rapports de supérieur à inférieur, surtout de patron à ouvrier* » (Foulquié 1978: 251).

⁶² Bennett 1968: 472.

and mutual benefit. Max Weber (1946) defined patrimonial relations existing between a boss, employer, feudal lord, or other similar figure and his dependants, who give loyalty and obedience in return for protection.⁶³

Most definitions of paternalism describe the phenomenon from the superior perspective. The superior plays the active part of imposing paternalistic behavior, doctrine, or system of governance on the inferior, mostly worker, whereas the latter remains in a passive role. Paternalistic treatment comes over him or her like a blessing, or a curse respectively, or both intermingled. In current definitions it is usually ignored, that inferiors may desire a paternalistic treatment and superiors have to live up to their social demand. The inferior, thus, also plays an active role by evoking paternalistic behavior from the superior. The superior may develop paternalistic practices in order to assure a harmonious interrelation, in our case between workers and managers in the work place.⁶⁴

In the enterprise's history, I argue that the French–Senegalese cooperation was successful, because both ethnic groups not only accepted but cherished the paternalistic frame. The paternalistic interaction pattern profited from a strong consensus about the complementary superior and inferior roles of French and Senegalese. While French expatriates provided a fatherly attention, security, and lifted Senegalese self-esteem, Senegalese employees responded with obedience, devotion, thankfulness, and loyalty.

When most expatriates had left the company and Senegalese managers had taken over, the strong emotional bond towards French expatriates remained, but employees concealed their feelings within the Senegalese-Senegalese interaction. Their hidden loyalty towards their departed French bosses had a powerful harmful impact on the relationship to their new Senegalese bosses, but remained nevertheless undetected and damaging.

⁶³ Weber 1946:297.

⁶⁴ For example, Ford (1955), in a report on Peru, notes that sugar plantation owners and managers would willingly give up paternalistic practices, as demanded by labor leaders, but cannot, because the workers expect this kind of treatment.

5.1 French perspectives

On my first visit to the mining town Mboro I was surprised to find out that the central quarter was named after the former French exploitation director. I was told that the community council had named it so, because this director was in an extraordinary way engaged in the regional development and constantly concerned about the problems of the local population. As a great connoisseur of local customs, the French exploitation director had allocated a piece of land in Mboro as stadium and organized big '*lamb*' festivals (traditional Senegalese wrestling) in the early 70s. People told me profusely that he traveled to Touba to visit the great marabout of the Mourid brotherhood. This latter fact seems to be especially important to the locals - for it was mentioned so many times - as if to explain, why the expatriate himself rightly deserves a place within the community. Also a local market place carries his name. Some locals gave the French director's name to their children. This unveils the significance of his role as a protector. It is a local custom to give a child the name of a person who is expected to show responsibility for it in the case of plight. Senegalese children are often named after a relative who than has the role of a godfather or godmother, or after a marabout, in order to shield these children in live by his spiritual power. Up to the period of field research, the former French exploitation director still seemed to hold his hand over the Mboro community. In 1993, he had organized two little carriages specially designed for collecting garbage. Even after his departure to France in 1982, he continued to see himself in the role of an initiator for local progress.

When we met for an interview in 1996, he asked me, pointing to my local knowledge, what ideas I had for a development project. He was thinking of implanting a little tin factory for preserving tomatoes. He had heard about my integration and language efforts and seemed to see in me a like-minded spirit with an equal willingness to create benevolent projects for the local population. Although he was informed about my work as a researcher, he naturally assumed that I would be interested in 'helping' on a concrete level. In his perception, presumably, I was designed to play the 'helper' role, because that is what Europeans traditionally just do in Africa.

5.1.1 French self-perception: “...we had a mission!”

The French expatriates operated mainly within the upper echelons of hierarchy. Most expatriates had no personal experience of colonial times, but were engaged from France after independence. The French government had deliberately agreed to independence; the ideological objective was now to leave an exemplary heritage to the Senegal's population.

Many young French professionals coming to work in African countries believed in the strength and potential of African societies. Expatriates in this mine must have had a sophisticated management according to the following description of an expatriate, as being driven by great eager to realize a good industrial performance:

“I knew well the organizational level of French enterprises and I said to myself on my arrival in Africa ‘you will do them a little preventive measure, a little bit of stock management, a little bit of this and that. It will be easy. They surely have a very low level’ and I happened to find an industry with a very good level of organization. Taïba, which I found here [in 1970], had an organizational level which surprised me. Engineers of a good quality, all French, of a good quality and a very good level of organization. In France also, they are all French, but I often happened to find a much inferior organizational level as the one I found here. So this was my first surprise!”⁶⁵

He was surprised, because the high level of management organization in the mining company did not correspond to his expectation of an industry in Africa. He particularly points out the observation that the work organization was even better than in many enterprises in France where he had worked before. Later in the interview he explains that he was personally delighted with the insight of the capacities of the African work force and said:

⁶⁵ Original version: « *Je connaissais bien le niveau d'organisation des entreprises françaises et je m'étais dit en arrivant en Afrique ‘tu vas leur faire un petit peu d'entretien préventif, un petit peu de gestion de stock, un petit peu de ça. Ca va être facile. Ils sont sûrement un niveau très bas’ et je suis tombé sur une industrie qui avait un très bon niveau d'organisation. Taïba qui j'ai trouvé ici [in 1970] avait un niveau d'organisation qui m'a surpris. [...] Des ingénieurs de très bonne qualité, tous Français, de très bonne qualité et un très bon niveau d'organisation. En France aussi, ils sont tous Français, mais je suis tombé bien souvent sur des niveaux d'organisation bien inférieurs au celui qui j'ai trouvé ici. Donc, ça était ma première surprise* » (Dex I, A : 50–60).

“Taïba is an sign of optimism for what Africa is capable of!”⁶⁶

According to his observation of visiting foreigners, European or North-American engineers, the expatriates of the mining company were seen as being remarkably confident in their workers by entrusting tasks of great responsibility to them. Apparently, the extent of confidence in the African workforce was exceptional in European led industries in Africa. Expatriates often mentioned the foreigners’ attitude with a certain pleasure like in the following section:

“And about the same subject of what can the Africans do alone, which is a classical theme for the..... ‘cause about this theme exist racist prejudices which you can hear from many people. I remember, we had American provider who have sold us the large trucks who’ve told us ‘it’s not possible to let the Negroes drive these trucks; it’s not clever’ they’ve said to us ‘it’s not clever!’”⁶⁷

This difference between other ‘Whites’ and ‘them’ is pointed out presumably to proof the absence of structural racism in the company and the French willingness to accept equality of French and Senegalese. The maxim was: what the French know how to do, the Senegalese are able to learn. The training system, already established with the mine’s foundation, was a very important component in the conception of the paternalistic structure. The French expatriates developed an eager to lift even Senegalese illiterates to management positions. The expatriates’ own superior position as leaders was by definition left untouched. Only the Senegalization plan determined the French position. For the Senegalese worker on the other hand it seemed that there was an exceptional freedom to learn whatever they wanted to learn without any barriers of family position and social background. The possibility of rising in the industrial hierarchy seemed infinite and only dependent on their personal endeavor and capacity. Their thankfulness and loyalty towards the French expatriates rose accordingly.

⁶⁶ Original version: *«Taïba est un signe d’optimisme de ce que peut faire l’Afrique!»* (Dex II, A: 265-7).

⁶⁷ Original version: *« Et sur ce même thème de ce que peut faire les Africains seul, qui est un thème classique pour les ... car sur ce thème-là il y a des préjugés racistes qu’on peut entendre par beaucoup de gens. Je me souviens qu’on avait des fournisseurs Américains qui nous avaient vendues des gros camions qui nous disaient ‘c’est pas possible de laisser conduire ses camions par des ‘Negros’, c’est imprudent’ ils nous disaient ‘c’est imprudent!’ »* Dex I, A : 96-102.

The effort to educate the African worker was not only seen as an industrial task purely for the sake of the mine's functionality. Expatriates felt responsible for their subordinates went to an extent which often went beyond the usual work frame. Many expatriates considered themselves as having a mission to carry out. The Africans were seen as their children, naive and like raw diamonds needing to be polished. An expatriate expressed it as follows:

“We were parents, educators for them, one estimated us...; we had a mission. In Europe they've never understood this! [...] It is true that we'd found some populations very primitive in some cases. I say indeed 'primitive'. So we have maybe helped them, we've maybe formed them, we've maybe yelled at them, but we always tried in every way the best we could to achieve the goal of [...] teaching these people how to work! [...] We've practiced paternalism!”⁶⁸

The French policy of paternalism included a straight system of reward and punishment to channel African behavior. Expatriates felt responsible for African behavior, because they saw it to a great extent as a result of their efforts. Just as the French expatriates assessed the successes of Senegalese workforce as their personal achievement, they perceived African 'misbehavior' in equal as a personal failure:

“We often organized, tried to organize the cleanness, the household garbage. I've tried ten times, twenty times to tell them: 'Get organized!' But they didn't organize themselves and when they were about to drown in the... when they were crawling on the household garbage, they said: 'you have to make your trucks come'. So, we made the trucks come, we cleaned up and then it started all over. In this I didn't succeed!”⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Original version: «On était des parents, des éducateurs pour eux, nous étions estimé...; nous avons eu une mission. En Europe ils n'ont jamais compris ça! [...]C'est vrai qu'on a trouvé certains populations très primitives dans certains cas. Je dis en faite 'primitive'. Alors, on les a peut être aidé, on les a peut être formé, on leur a peut être crié dessus, mais on a essayé dans tous les sens de faire le maximum d'arrivé à l'objective [...] à montrer ces gens-là comment travailler! [...] On a pratiqué du paternalisme! » (N.L. A: 123-154).

⁶⁹ Original version: « On a souvent organisé, essayer d'organiser la propreté, les ordures ménagères, j'ai essayer dix fois, vingt fois de leur dire 'organisez-vous!' Mais ils se n'organisaient pas et quand ils étaient submergés par les ... quand ils croulaient sur les ordures ménagères, ils disaient: 'ils faut que vous fassiez venir vos engins'. Donc, alors on faisait venir les engins, on nettoyait, puis ça recommençait! En ça je n'ai pas réussis! » (Dex II, A: 28–37).

Many statements of expatriates proof a certain pressure to show a paternalistic behavior. Apparently, paternalistic attitude and behavior was not only expected, but also demanded by the indigenous population. For the Senegalese it was, according to the French exploitation director, the natural role of a White:

“Paternalism for us, when we came from Europe, [there] they’ve said to us ‘paternalism is bad, we shouldn’t do paternalism any more, it’s bad!’ So here they ask us for it. [...] We practiced paternalism. Here in Africa nobody is against paternalism. Everybody says: ‘oh yes, paternalism, more, more!’ We did it a lot [contemplative pause, then with emphasis:] ...a lot!”⁷⁰

The local population as well as the local authorities saw the mining company as a regional protector, as a guaranty of a wealthy future. The former French exploitation director described the mines position and role for the local environment as follows:

“It was always the outstretched hand while saying: ‘Taïba, you are rich, give me this and give me that!’ and we, we resisted. Finally we loosened here and there, if this seemed to be better, the best, the most urgent, but it was not something that was planed.”⁷¹

When former expatriates explained their role and function during their professional life in the company in interviews, I could feel their hope that all their educative efforts were not futile, but had left positive traces. The former expatriates were, of course, informed about the current communication difficulties in the company in 1995 and 1996. Each former expatriate dealt differently with this reality, which in a way disappointed their hope. One former expatriate simply ignored the fact of difficulties saying: *“everything works just as well as before!”* He repeated this sentence so many times as if to convince himself. Throughout the entire interview he would carefully avoid any negative judgment of African behavior, but

⁷⁰ Original version: « *Le paternalisme, nous, quand on venions de l’Europe, on nous disait, c’est mauvais le paternalisme, il faut plus faire le paternalisme, c’est mauvais! Donc, ici on nous en demande* » (Dex I, A: 420-6). « *On a fait le paternalisme. Ici en Afrique personne n’est contre le paternalisme. Tous le monde dit: ‘ah oui, paternalisme: encore, encore!’ On a fait beaucoup,.... beaucoup!* » (Dex I, B: 57-61).

⁷¹ Original version: « *Ca était toujours la main tendue en disant: ‘Taïba, vous êtes riche, donnez-moi ceci, donnez-moi ça!’ Et nous, nous avons résistés. Finalement on lâchait ici à droite, à gauche, quand ça nous paraissait le meilleur, le mieux, le plus urgent, mais ce n’était pas quelque chose de planifier!* » (Dex I, A: 380-387).

instead come up with statements of this sort: *“It is said that the African countries are badly governed. I don’t have an opinion about this!”* The omission reveals the unwillingness to criticize African politics and governance. It reminds much of the reluctance of a father to talk about his ‘misbehaving’ children. But when critic is forbidden (morally or for whatever reason) an equal cooperation and a fruitful exchange for the sake of both parties cannot take place. Another former expatriate said *‘one is always obliged to have an impartial attitude’*. The remark is an indication to the effort this obligation may have taken. The expatriate concluded differences which are apparently not to overcome: *„the African has his deficiencies. [...] We are different“*. In the light of those remarks, paternalism becomes the positive alternative to racism. Both attitudes are not designed to progress communication. The former French superiors were unable or unwilling to objectively face current difficulties in the company. Apparently, it was too painful. This avoidance points to their personal involvement in former times.

5.1.2 Expatriates explain Africans⁷²: “you have to know how to take them”

When former French employees talk about *‘the African’*, often mentioned in singular form, ambivalent feelings can be traced. ‘The African’ can be very kind and lovely if he likes the person, but if he does not, he may play vicious tricks:

“An African, he will watch you during one month, two months, three months, even one year if necessary. And he either adopts you or he doesn’t adopt you. If he does, you can ask him whatever you want. But if he does not, he will give you hell as much as he can, all while smiling with a big grin.”⁷³

Here ‘the African’ is not a victim of French arbitrary acts, but can defend his interests and preserve his dignity. A former expatriate told the following anecdote:

⁷² In interviews, expatriates referred to their former Senegalese subordinates as ‘the African’ or ‘Africans’ showing that the Senegalese were not a distinct group for them. Senegalese likewise referred to their French bosses usually as ‘Whites’. In this chapter, I will therefore preserve the local terms of my informants.

⁷³ Original version: *« Un Africain, il va t’observé pendant un mois, deux mois, trois mois, même un ans s’il le faut. Eh, ou il t’adopte, ou il t’adopte pas. S’il t’adopte tu peux lui demandé tous ce que tu veux. Mais s’il t’adopte pas il va te faire toute les vacheries qu’il peut, toute en faisant des grandes sourires comme ça »* (Expat G, B: 123-9).

“I know an engineer, a polytechnic. He had an African with him to train him. Well, he trained him; he told him what he wanted to tell him, but many things he didn’t tell. Well, but the other, he followed him for years, for years until.... This lasted a long while [...]. But one day the other side of the medal had turned up, which means the other had outstripped him. And the guy left, the European. He was obliged to leave.”⁷⁴

In the above perception, the French engineer is the one to blame. He was not honest in giving all the necessary information for the African in training. It is clear that this behavior was intentional and not just a simple ignorance, although nothing is said about an underlying objective. But the behavior of the African is shown as devious: he can wait for years and ‘one day outstrip the expatriate’, so the latter had to leave not because of the fulfillment of Senegalization, but because of an event the African had prepared over a long time and arranged on a particular day.

It is likely that the above speaker alludes to an incident, which must have been often discussed among employees at the time. The same story was told many times in interviews in similar versions, but with a significant difference. When told by Senegalese workers the one to blame is the African who knit a vile intrigue behind the expatriate's back. To illuminate this difference in perception, we listen to the version of a Senegalese employee, now on pension, who entered the mine as a peasant boy in 1957 and became a specialist of ground drilling:

“And then, when they had done this I told him [to the expatriate engineer]: ‘Bernard, I am your technical adviser [and I know] Moussa Ndong doesn’t like you!’ If with these words I have lied to Bernard, I shall wish that my young boy dies. [The expatriate replied:] ‘This is not true!’ When they came to the extraction field II and began to work there, Bernard went on vacation and said to him [to Moussa Ndong]: ‘prepare [to start]!’ [His colleague explains:] It was at this moment that they have pulled a coup behind his back. This caused his

⁷⁴ Original version: « *Moi, je connais un ingénieur, un polytechnicien (?? déjà en métier??). Il avait un Africain avec lui pour le former. Bon, mais il le formait, eh, il disait ce que lui voulait dire, mais eh bien des choses, il les disait pas. Bon, mais l’autre-là, il a suivi les ans, il a suivi les ans jusqu’à... ça ça a duré pas mal de temps ça. Il lui faisait (tant ans?) de.... Et il y a un jour, le revers de la médaille a tourné, c’est-à-dire que l’autre, il est passé au-dessus de lui! Et le type, il est parti, l’Européen. Il était obligé de partir!* » (Expat G, B: 130-9).

departure!' [...] *[The miner calls one of his sons, who comes immediately. The father holds his son's arm and says:] 'I've named this one after Bernard! [Names are changed]'*"⁷⁵

The above speaker was the expatriate's technical advisor and had worked with him for many years. He must have felt the uprising intrigue and had warned his expatriate boss. At the time of the interview his loyalty to his former boss was still very strong, supported by the fact that he named his son after his former expatriate boss.

5.2 Senegalese perspectives

Senegalese perspectives differed. Two sub-groups can be distinguished: firstly, the perspective of employees with an experience of French management before 1980; and secondly, younger employees – usually with higher educational level – who had entered the mine after 1980. Elder workers – as we shall see – tend to glorify the ‘golden times’ with French expatriates in power. Senegalese employees in management positions have more differentiated opinions about the expatriates and their management culture. In the following sections, I attempt to show some important prototypes of perception.

5.2.1 Senegalese self-perception: “we don’t know anything!”

During field research, I was often stunned about Senegalese harsh statements about themselves and their compatriots. In particular older employees revealed in interviews and conversations a profound lack of confidence in Senegalese capacity and competence, expressed often with bitterness, resignation, sometimes contempt. The workers' firm belief of African incompetence is a sharp contrast to the expatriate's perception of indigenous work performance as described above. Some examples of the Senegalese distrust shall be given

⁷⁵ Original version: *"Leegiy nag, biñu defee noonu [...] maa ne ko: 'Bernard, man maay sa kossi teknik, Moussa Ndong bëggul la! [...] Lu mu si ne, bu fekk bañ naa Pierre, bëggoonna sama doom bu goor yal naa dee: 'c'est pas vrai!' Biñu ñëw Panneau II, [...] démarrée, Bernard dem congé, te ne ko: 'préparez!' » [Son collègue explique:] « C'est en ce moment qu'ils sont montés un coup [...] derrière lui! C'est ce qui a causé son départ! [Le vieux mineur appelle son fils:] "Kii, Bernard Lefèvre koy tudd [montre son fils]!" (A.K. & A.F., A: 349-58).*

here to enlighten this phenomenon. The following statements were given by a Senegalese midrange manager who entered the enterprise as a mechanic in 1958:

“[Let’s suppose] they gave us electricity for free and told us ‘you do the bulbs now’ we wouldn’t have light, because we, we cannot do anything! No, this is honestly said! If they gave us an electric sewing machine as a present. They’d tell us: ‘now, get busy, do your needles yourself!’ We wouldn’t even know, we don’t know how to make the needle!”⁷⁶

Besides this employee's strong believe concerning Senegalese incapacity, his fictional example is typically paternalistic. Someone from outside - he clearly refers to Whites here - gives ‘us’, the Africans, something for free, a ‘present’. This particular present, however, is somewhat conditional. There is some kind of performance aligned to this donation, which is defined by the outsider, but for the ‘sake’ of the Senegalese - according to the ideology. Naturally for this worker, innovation stems from an external source. No other frame for African productivity seems to be thinkable. The structure in which the Senegalese is to be productive is not genuine. Apparently, this fact does not disturb him for it remains unquestioned. By contrast, the Senegalese appears in the light of unwillingness and stupidity. The responsibility for initiating procedures is by definition not in Senegalese hands. This attachment of responsibility to the ‘White’ role is not only taken as a trite reality, but was presumably wanted and enjoyed by workers:

“The communication is very good between us and the Whites. Oh yes, it is good, because at that moment, well, we, the workers, well, ehh there are certain things we don’t know. Well, we are behind them! They tell us: ‘do this, do this!’ They show us: ‘do this, do this, do this!’ Therefore the communication is good between us for the time they’re there. During these times we felt quite comfortable, you see!”⁷⁷

⁷⁶ Original version: « On nous donne l’électricité gratuitement, on nous dit ‘faites-vous maintenant vos ampoules’ on va pas s’éclairer, parce que nous, on ne sais rien faire! Non, ça c’est honnêtement parlé ! On n’a qu’à nous faire la machine à coudre électrique et on nous donne à titre cadeau. On nous dit: ‘maintenant débrouillez-vous, faites votre aiguille vous-même!’ Nous, on ne sait même pas, on ne sait pas faire l’aiguille! » (L.S., A : 423-41).

⁷⁷ Original version: « Le courant passe très bien entre nous avec les Toubabs [...] Ah oui, le courant passe bien, parce que en ce moment, bon, nous, les ouvriers, bon, eh, il y a certains choses nous ne connaissons pas. Bon, nous sommes derrière eux! Ils nous disent: ‘faites ça, faites ça’ Ils nous montrent: ‘faites ça, faites ça, faites ça’ donc, le courant passe bien entre nous pendant le temps qu’ils sont là. En ce moment on était un peu à l’aise, quoi! » (V.K. A:152-66).

In this perception, the African is only the executer and in this role he feels also ‘quite comfortable’. The perception of the social order - widespread among elder workers - is seen as ‘natural’. It seems to form firm subconscious frontiers in thinking which are left untouched. Typical in interviews with Senegalese employees is the comparison between the behavior of expatriates in former times and the comportment of Senegalese managers. Although it is objectively contrasting unequal positions, they are perceived as equal. In consequence, Senegalese employees judge Senegalese managers solely negative:

“The European managers know the value of a worker. A guy who works, whatever may be his.... What you deserve, they give you! While here [now] this is not the case! This is the brother of Mister Abdou Diouf [president of Senegal] or this is the brother of Mister Habib Thiam [Minister of Inner Affairs] [...] even if he doesn’t work, I give him. Whereas the Whites, they don’t do this! The Whites, what they see is the guy who works [...]. And we, this is not our case. We, we are not honest, you know!”⁷⁸

With the forthcoming of Senegalization, workers’ esteem for Senegalese management gradually deteriorated. The warm nest of protection during the era of French management was in the worker’s perception replaced by a tacit quarrel of defending ones own position of hierarchy in the work place. Employees’ statements about Senegalese were either negative or ambiguous:

„The Senegalese is talented in practice, he is a worker! But, they are not often honest!”⁷⁹

The perception of the incapacity of Senegalese managers is widespread among workers and in private interviews they speak openly about it:

“Why you see the mine paralyzed, it’s because there was a Black as a leader! The moment we were there, there was [the French] who was the General Director who did the coming and

⁷⁸ Original version: « *Les cadres Européens connaissent le valeur d’un travailleur, un type qui travail, quelque soit sa..., ce que tu mérite, ils te le donnent! Mais ici tandis que tel n’est pas notre cas! Ca, c’est le frère de Monsieur Abdou Diouf ou bien c’est le frère de Monsieur Habib Thiam [...], même s’il travail pas, je le note [‘note’ ici = paye]. Tandis que les Toubabs, ils ne font pas ça! Les Toubab, ce qu’il a vue, ce gars qui travail, il le mérite, il te le donnent. Nous, c’est pas notre cas! Nous, on n’est pas franc, quoi!* » (A.F., A: 198-211).

⁷⁹ Original version: « *Le Sénégalais est doué en pratique, c’est un travailleur! Mais, ils ne sont pas souvent honnêtes!* » (L.S. B: 120-6).

going between countries to sell the phosphate. He has the talent, he has the connection, he is respected, he knew how to sell the phosphate. Since he is gone, the other took the power and the phosphate doesn't sell any more. Because the dialogues which would be necessary, this one is not able to do them. [...] If the White would be there, Taïba wouldn't stagnate!"⁸⁰

5.2.2 Senegalese ascriptions to French: "the law came with the French!"

Employees' views of the French role and characteristics are usually positive, but can be negative as well. The most often mentioned attribute of the expatriates is 'honesty'. This is followed by competence, then gratitude. The French are sometimes seen in ways reminiscent of the description of heroes or saviors as in this speech of an elder miner:

*"We've been slaves, oh yes! Certain tribes, the strongest, were the masters. Justice came, when the French were there! [...] The Whites had left their homes in France, they've brought their railways along; they've made us pass the train which is taking our goods from Dakar to Mali and return. So, they wanted to help us to build something. They knew when we see the train, the people will accept the work."*⁸¹

In this description, French colonizers are seen in the role of liberators of slavery and as good Samaritans who leave their comfortable home to give gratuitously help and material to those in misery and distress. The expatriates of the mining enterprise are perceived as the ones in control, regardless of haphazard circumstances. Their power and control is often overestimated by elder workers and sometimes mystified:

⁸⁰ Original version: « *Si tu vois que Taïba est paralysé, parce qu'il y avait un Noir qui est à la tête [...]! Le moment, ou on était là-bas, il y avait [l'expatrié] qui était Directeur Général qui faisait les vas et viens entre les pays et pays pour vendre le phosphates. Il a le talent, il a la connaissance, il est respecté, il sait vendre le phosphate. Depuis qu'il est parti, l'autre a pris le pouvoir et le phosphate ne se vent plus! Parce que les dialogues qu'il fallait faire, ce-lui, il ne peut pas le faire! [...] Si le Toubab était là, Taïba ne paralysait jamais!* » (V.K., A: 50-66).

⁸¹ Original version: « *On était esclaves, ah oui! Certains des tribus les plus fortes étaient les maîtres. La justice est venue, quand il y a les Français! [...] Les Toubabs ont laissés chez eux en France, ils ont emmener leurs voies ferrés, ils ont nous fait passe le train qui va nous emmener nos marchandise de Dakar jusqu'au Mali, vice versa Donc, ils voulaient nous aider a monter quelque chose et ils savaient quand on verra le train les gens acceptera le travail* » (L.S., B: 459-69).

“The moment when [the former General Director] was there, each year he gave us a bonus, a reward bonus. ‘The results are good, you had this tonnage, if you obtain this tonnage [next year] I will give you a month salary!’ he made those propositions. All Africans are on their mark! We mechanics, if there is a break down, we hurry up to fix it, because we want to achieve the amount [of extracted phosphate] the director had told us to achieve. Everybody is worried about this! Well, since this one [the Senegalese G.D.] came, all he does is lying: the phosphate doesn’t sell. Well, they’ve said that the phosphate contains cadmium [...] they don’t give a bonus. All he does is lying. The workers don’t care any more. The production they’ve done, they don’t do it any more. They can wait now three days and it is not working, because the social climate is bad! It’s the other one [Senegalese G.D.] who brought this climate with him. If it would be a White, the one who was here, if he would be here, the mine would always work. The phosphate would always sell. This is for sure!”⁸²

In fact, the high cadmium content of Senegalese phosphates caused the breaking away of the entire European market in the 80s. In the years of difficulties, this was outlined countless times to the workforce, but in vain. By contrast, the French general director appears as the generous giver of gratification who would always be able to sell the phosphate, regardless of circumstances. Senegalese employees had no confidence in information given by Senegalese managers. The above speaker is profoundly convinced that the Senegalese director is not only lacking in talent as salesman, but additionally tries to hide his incapacity by telling lies. Most workers were certain that everything would work just fine, if French expatriates would return and take over the responsibility for the company anew. Senegalese employees could give concrete examples with technical explanations for current production problems, which had nothing to do with any management conduct. Nevertheless, at the end, workers concluded the secure rapid success in case the expatriates would come back. In many

⁸² Original version: « *Le moment ou [directeur général français] était là, chaque année il fait nous des primes, primes de récompenses! ‘Les résultats sont bons, vous avez tel tonnage, si vous faites tel tonnage [l’année prochaine] je vous donne un mois de salaire!’ Il fait ces propos-là. Tous les Africains, ils se casse la tête! Nous, les mécaniciens, s’il y a une panne, on est pressé pour dépanner, parce qu’on veut atteindre le nombre de tonnage que le directeur nous avait dit de l’atteindre! Tout le monde a les soucis de ça! Bon, depuis que celui est venue, il fait que des mensonges: le phosphate ne se vent pas, alors, ils ont dit que le phosphate, il y a de cadmium [...] il donne pas des primes, il ne fait que des mensonges! Les ouvriers ne se casse plus la tête. Les productions qu’ils [faisaient], ils le font plus. Ils peuvent rester trois jours et ça ne marche pas, parce que le climat social ne va pas! C’est l’autre qui a emmené ce climat-là. Si c’était un Toubab, le gars qui était là, s’il était là Taïba marchera toujours! Le phosphate se vendra toujours! Ca, c’est sûr et certain!* » (M.S. B: 395-412).

cases the association between the given examples and an expatriate's possibility of changing the situation for the better is not apparent. In the following statement, only mystic power would have helped:

“If the Whites don't come back, Taïba will probably close down! [...] You know, the extraction field II is finished! You know, at the moment Taïba has not seen any phosphate for four days! They removed 70 meters of sand [this is a very high quantity, it used to be between 15 and 30 meters in the 70s] in the extraction field II and have only half a meter of phosphate!”⁸³

The fact, that in former times there was much less sand to be removed and much more phosphate to extract has nothing to do with the capacities of the expatriates. However, these two aspects are often intermingled in interviews. The mentioning of negative characteristics of French expatriates is rarely illustrated with concrete adjectives as will be shown in examples below:

“So, they've presented to us a Senegalization plan which ruined everything! [...] The Whites, they were very privileged here, the French! They wanted that the Senegalization fails, so they, they can return. Therefore they designed a plan of discrepancies, which we, beginners... [leaving the sentence incomplete].”⁸⁴

This statement was said by the same employee who was so profusely talking about the French charity and helpfulness. In this sequence, by contrast, expatriates deceived the aim of the Senegalization process and betrayed the inexperienced and naive Senegalese. An important underlying assumption is again the extreme power of French expatriates able to destroy the social climate in the company even after their departure.

In the following citation, a Senegalese senior executive laments about the lack of good will of the French expatriates to educate the Senegalese employees for their own sake and profit in the future. It is remarkable, how paternalistic it sounds:

⁸³ Original version: [A.F.:] « *Si les Toubabs ne reviennent pas, Taïba risque de fermer!* » [A.K.:] « *Xam nga, Panneau II jeexna! Xam nga leegiy Taïba [...] dina am leegiy ñenti fan, yoo xam nii, duñu am phosphate! [...] Panneau II dañu deekappee 70 metres, genn wall metres phosphate lay am!* » (A.K. & A.F., A: 85-98).

⁸⁴ Original version: « *Donc, on nous avait présenter un plan de Senegalization qui faussait tout! [...] Les Toubab, ils étaient bien coté ici, les Français! Ils voulaient que la Senegalization soit loupé pour que, eux, ils reviennent! Donc ils sont tracés un plan de désaccords que nous, débutants,* » (L.S., A :229-36).

“If the people tell you, it was better with the expatriates, [that’s because] they’ve accepted things that we cannot accept, because those are our relatives, we have to educate them! We have to help them to live decently. It’s not the same motivation as with the expatriates. The expatriate, he is there to do a limited work, he takes the price to assure a good work performance. So, the people, if they are nostalgic about these people [the expatriates], it’s because they did everything for them [...] without distinction!”⁸⁵

Often, Senegalese managers in higher positions had a more objective understanding of the expatriates’ intention. They were, nevertheless, unable to create an open communication about this old loyalty of the Senegalese employees.

⁸⁵ Original version: « *Tant que les gens vous disent, c’était mieux avec les expatriés, ils acceptaient des choses que nous, on ne peut pas accepté, parce que ça sont nos parents et on doit les éduquer! On doit les aider à vivre convenablement. C’est pas la même motivation qu’avec les expatriés. L’expatrié, il est là pour faire un travail déterminé, il met le prix pour que le travail ce soit bien fait. Donc, les gens, quand ils sont appelés à la nostalgie de ces gens-là, c’est parce que ils faisaient tout pour eux! [...] sans discernement* » (S.M., B: 280-94).

Colonial and post-colonial Makers of an Enterprise

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6 Colonial and post-colonial makers of an enterprise

6.1 Close to Independence (up to 1957)

6.1.1 Discoveries

In 1898, the geologist Paul Etienne discovered phosphate in the coastal area near M'Bour in Senegal, sixty kilometers south of Senegal's capital Dakar.⁸⁶

Only two years earlier, in 1896, the first decree for mineral extraction in French West Africa was issued.⁸⁷ In this decree, the indigenous population was only allowed to extract mineral resources up to 12 meters depth. Anything found beyond this depth was reserved to Europeans. Although numerous amendments of the first decree were issued afterwards, the part concerning the extraction restrictions for the indigenous population was not changed up to Senegal's independence in 1960. In 1927, French West Africa (A.O.F.: '*Afrique Occidentale Française*') created the section 'mining'⁸⁸, which later developed into the Geological Service and Mining Service ('*Service Géologique et du Service des Mines de l'A.O.F.*'). In 1934 the French government granted 20.000 French francs for research of the phosphate deposit in Senegal. In July 1935, two geologists of the Geological Service of the A.O.F., Fernand Jacquet and Maurice Nickles carried out research in the area of Pallo near Thiès and north of Mont-Rolland. In 1942, French geologists carried out the first systematic soil investigations of lime phosphate in the area around Thiès in cooperation with the French mining company Pechiney, following several ancient reports of former mostly haphazard discoveries. In 1945, the first considerable deposit of high quality phosphate was discovered (35% of P₂O₅). Subsequently, in 1948, French engineers founded the 'Mining office of French West Africa' ('*Bureau Minière de la France d'Outre-Mer*') and carried out a more precise investigation in 1949. The research results led to a modest installation ('*usine pilote*') in 1952

⁸⁶ Taïba-Info 7/1970.

⁸⁷ Original version: « *L'Organisation minière de l'A.O.F. (25.03.1932)* » (National Archives Dakar, doc. 17 G 219 (104)).

⁸⁸ Original version: „*Section des Mines de l'Inspection Générale des Travaux Publics de l'A.O.F.*».

near the peasant village ‘Taïba M’baye’.⁸⁹ Its purpose was to obtain an initial amount of 5000 tons in order to prove the final quality of the mineral on a greater scope.

In the same year, the mining office of the A.O.F. and four French mining companies created the mining research association S.E.R.M.I.S. (*‘Société d’étude et de recherches minières du Sénégal’*). The geological analysis of this first extraction revealed a fabulous quality of phosphate (*‘tricalcique de 82%’*).⁹⁰ The obtained results were promising enough to plan the foundation of a mining company. The 15th of April 1957, on the second meeting of the constitutive assembly the *‘Senegalese Company of Taïba Phosphates’* (CSPT: *‘Compagnie Sénégalaise des Phosphates de Taïba’*), short Taïba, was founded.⁹¹

6.1.2 Local environments (M’Boro, Tivaouane, Darou Khoudoss)

In geographical terms, the local surroundings of the mining company have changed dramatically over the last four decades. Today the area is rather dry, but in the 1950’s, water was abundant. Apparently three larger lakes were shaping the area and many little ponds and swamps were scattered over the landscape. Talking about these times, local elders mentioned canoes and dugouts as a usual means of transportation, in particular during rainy season, as well as fishing in sweet waters. Ostensibly, alligators were part of daily life. Mosquito swarms made the area ideal for malaria.

In those times, Mboro was known as a trading point.⁹² At the coast, near Mboro-sur-mer⁹³, the Portuguese had left an old landing point for Portuguese trade ships deserted. Portuguese *‘Gandiol Gandiolais’* left also an ancient track between St. Louis and Cap Vert, on which they had carried out their trade activities, called *‘Seru Sori’*, meaning *‘straight trail’*. The French had placed fortified posts along this track in early 19th century, namely Potou, Lompoul, Mbidjen, and Mboro.⁹⁴ In 1862, Mboro was one of the telegraphic cable stations between St. Louis and Dakar. This was extended to Lampsar, Richard-Toll, and Dagana in

⁸⁹ Taïba-Info 5/70.

⁹⁰ Atlas national du Sénégal (1977) p. 26.

⁹¹ Taïba-Info 10/85:2.

⁹² Doc. 28.04.53.

⁹³ In Wolof *bënno*: the place where sweet and salty waters meet.

⁹⁴ See Jean-Marc Chastel 1982.

1868.⁹⁵ A strip of land, five to ten miles wide and adjacent to the shore line of dunes, called the ‘niayes’ (‘*ñaaay*’ in Wolof) runs along the coast from St. Louis to Cap Vert. In 1936, the French installed an agricultural station in four kilometers distance to the old landing point, because of its fertile soils (‘*xuur*’ and ‘*jerangal*’ in Wolof). French colonial government tried to assure a continuous agricultural production to be able to supply the various legionnaire troops with fresh vegetables and fruits throughout the country.⁹⁶ It was difficult to settle Wolof farmers in the hostile place. Therefore, the French colonizers offered gratis construction of huts, appropriate to the number of wives, free allocation of land, seedlings of fruit trees and seeds for plantation. Additionally, the French colonizers assured blankets, mosquito nets, medical care, and during the first year free alimentation for the peasant family. To be beneficent, peasants agreed to settle definitely with their family on the land allocated to them. The first round of settlers composed of thirteen Senegalese peasant families.

In 1946, the colonizers created the agricultural cooperative CERS (‘*Center d’Expansion Rurale Spécialisé en Cultures Maraichères*’). Peasant members of the center held a membership card and a certificate for their allocated land. In those days, the membership card assured the privileges promised for settlement and served in numerous occasions as an identity card. The cooperative guaranteed the purchase of the total amount of the peasants’ crop production. Twice a week, a lorry was taking the products to the markets in Tivaouane, Thiès, and Rufisque. The farmer and his family members were allowed to travel free by the cooperative lorry to the urban centers. Those privileges resulted in the peasants’ higher social status within the Senegalese society. Local farmers remember these times with regret as a period of prosperity and good organization. In a local village monograph the following remark is made:

*“This cooperative organization was anyhow a success, because the few survivors among the beneficiaries regret up to now that the system had ceased in 1958 with the departure of the French colonists. This has nothing in common with the current cooperative system from which its members hardly profit.”*⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Atlas national du Sénégal (1977) p. 59.

⁹⁶ Niang 1987 (unpublished manuscript). According to this report the name Mboro is a deformation of the name of a *laman* (traditional chief for territorial matters), Mbore, who was designed to this location by the *damel* (King) of the Kayoor.

⁹⁷ Original version : « *Cette organisation coopérative a été quand même une réussite car les quelques survivants parmi les colons bénéficiaires regrettent encore ce système qui est mort et*

In the 40's, the French director's wife taught Wolof farmers' children to read and write on her private veranda. In 1996, the traditional chief of Mboro was delighted and proud to tell me that he was among her first pupils. In 1957, the agricultural station had invested into a little school with one classroom.

In the same year, the mining installations were erected close to a peasant village of around twenty huts called Darou Khoudoss. It was located between the town Tivaouane and the agricultural station Mboro. Tivaouane was about six and the agricultural station around three miles away. Because of this distance and transportation problems, the French entrepreneurs firstly sought workforce by cruising through the villages around Darou Khoudoss, asking farmers if they would be willing to work in the mine. In the remote rural area of the old Kayor kingdom, the Wolof population was rather suspicious of the French undertakings.⁹⁸ Often, peasants would not allow their sons to work for the French engineers, still colonizers at that time. In consequence, harsh conflicts arose in peasant families when sons decided independently to become a miner. Thus, French also turned to Tivavouane to seek for assistance. In lack of any transportation, workers had to walk long distances to work, some workers more than eight miles to the extraction field. In the days of the pilot enterprise, jackals inhabited the lush bush lands and sometimes caused danger to humans.

An old miner, retired in 1996, explained to me that in the first years some French managers living in Tivaouane drove with their pick-ups to the work site, bypassing the walking workers without stopping. In consequence, workers talked to the directorate accusing those managers to be racists. From then on, French managers would stop to pick up the workers on the way. Not before 1960, the directorate gave workers bicycles, later mopeds, to bridge the transportation problems. Presumably only in 1965, the first bus transportation for workers was installed.

In December 1963, the following sub-units had been established in the company: mining section; pontoon; transport; preparation; flotation; wet storage and drying, maintenance; engineering; laboratory; administration.⁹⁹

enterré avec le départ des colons français en 1958. Ceci, disent-ils, n'a rien de commun avec le système coopératif actuel qui ne profite guère aux membres » (doc. 00.00.87).

⁹⁸ They had certainly not forgotten the death of their beloved last king Lat Dior Diop killed in a battle against the French colonizers in 1886 (for life and history of Lat Dior Diop see also Monteil 1963).

⁹⁹ Doc. 06.12.63.

6.1.3 Local political and religious activities

In the four communes (St.-Louis, Gorée, Dakar, and Rufisque), indigenous political participation was possible since 1887 for male permanent inhabitants who could proof a minimum of five-year residence.¹⁰⁰ However, only in 1945, after World War II, the farmers of the *Hinterland* were granted political rights and Léopold Sédhar Senghor was elected as deputy in the parliament of Paris with these freshly acquired votes. In 1946, the discriminatory distinction between ‘*citoyen*’ and ‘*sujét*’ was abolished. The head of the opposition, Lamine Gueye, was constantly fighting for equal rights of Africans and Europeans, but had throughout his career never the intention to fight colonial rule itself. Instead, „[h]e found himself in perfect harmony with the French administration“¹⁰¹ A year later, Senghor separated from Gueye, who was mainly supported by the four communes.¹⁰² As Markovitz put it:

*“As anywhere in Africa, the war stimulated the development of a more intense politics in Senegal, and a pulling away from the métropole. A host of factors stimulated these processes, ranging from racial discrimination suffered under Vichy to the return of thousands of veterans with an increased awareness of the outside world and aroused expectations for a new way of life. Above all, belief in the legitimacy of French rule declined with the defeat by Germany.”*¹⁰³

In June 1950, Lamine Gueye succeeded to install a law for granting financial family support for all African laborers in public services according to the modes of the social system in the motherland. „By the end of 1951 the balance of votes had changed from the four communes to the countryside.“¹⁰⁴ At the end of 1952, workers rights extended further to ‘same salary for same work’, unions were freed from administrative control, the forty-hours-

¹⁰⁰ According to Hesseling: « *En fait, jusqu’à la Deuxième Guerre mondiale, le nombre des personnes bénéficiant de droits politiques ne dépassa jamais 5% de la population de la future République sénégalaise* » (Hesseling 1985:132-33).

¹⁰¹ Markovitz 1969:11.

¹⁰² Ansprenger 1992:71.

¹⁰³ Markovitz 1969:20.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. p.12.

week, free Sundays, and paid vacations were established. Workers rights were practically brought into line with the situation in France. A movement emerged for the creation of an independent African trade union. In 1956, the CGTA (*Confédération générale des Travailleurs africains*) was founded; and in 1957, the UGTAN (*Union générale des Travailleurs d'Afrique Noire*) also began its activities. Both trade unions were beseeched by a specifically African doctrine. According to Lô (1985), their aim was to ruin the colonial capitalist economy by causing strikes and harassments in order to discourage the capital to remain in the country.¹⁰⁵

The political situation in and around the area of the new extraction fields was quite agitated and stirring. The annual political report of the department Thiès reveals „*in 1951, the political situation in the department was overshadowed by the legislative elections of June which have quite profoundly troubled the harmony and the quiescence in the region*“.¹⁰⁶ In the legislative election of the 17th of June in 1951 the BDS party (*Bloc Démocratique Sénégalais*), founded by Senghor in 1948, gained two seats in the French national assembly.¹⁰⁷ Lamine Gueye had to lay down his post as a representative for Senegal.

The victory for the BDS was certainly due to the personalities of Senghor and his party crony Mamadou Dia. Senghor could please the rural population by referring to the same original status as *'sujét'*, not being born with the privileges and French citizenship of the four communes. Dia on the other hand was known as a fervent Muslim. Together Senghor and Dia had succeeded in gaining the support and confidence of the important Muslim leaders in the rural areas.¹⁰⁸ After the SFIO had lost support, numerous clashes occurred in the area. The annual report mentioned several offensive incidents in different places of the district. SFIO partisans, or 'Laminists' as they were also called, carried out assaults against local authorities. The report describes the following:

“In Tivaouane [happened] an incident with outreaching consequences. Some foreign SFIO partisans attacked disciples at the house of the Khalifa Babacar Sy. The ‘red caps’ [‘Bonnets

¹⁰⁵ Lô (1987) p. 21.

¹⁰⁶ Original version: « *La situation politique du Cercle a été, en 1951, dominée par les élections législatives de juin qui ont assez profondément troublé l'harmonie et le calme dans la région* » Thiès/ Rapport politique annuel 1951:27.

¹⁰⁷ The SFIO was the Senegalese section of the French socialist party since end of 1946, whereas the BDS was purely African and independent from French political activities.

¹⁰⁸ Hesseling (1985):160.

Rouges’] entered the concession by throwing stones. The entire Senegal was informed within three days of the violation of the Khalifa’s domicile.” ¹⁰⁹

This was quite likely the end of any sympathy for the SFIO within the rural area. The report emphasized the loyal attitude of the local population towards the French administration apparently still flawless at that time, despite political opposition on the national scenery and Négritude. On the other hand, local African authorities were set under pressure:

“Certain Serer groups from the subdivisions Thiès and Tivaouane were, for political reasons and in strong affirmation of their obedience to the [French colonial] administration, defeating the authority of their Canton chiefs. That is how they refused this year to participate in the census of their respective canton chiefs.” ¹¹⁰

The local colonial officer concluded that the elections had shown a profound attachment of the local population to France and that the political parties themselves had confessed their loyalty.¹¹¹

6.2 First steps of a company (1957 - 1963)

In preparation of the company foundation planned originally for May 1957, the French entrepreneurs asked in January 1957 the colonial ministry of production and mining service in Saint-Louis for the permission to occupy extraction and housing territory divided into three sections.¹¹² Firstly, territory necessary for exploitation for the next 15 years in the region of

¹⁰⁹ Original version : « A Tivaouane, un incident, gros de conséquences, opposa dans la nuit du 14 au 15 juin certains partisans du S.F.I.O. étrangers à la Subdivision à des Talibés de la maison du Khalife Babacar Sy. Les ‘Bonnets Rouge’ pénétrèrent dans sa concession où ils lancèrent des pierres. Le Sénégal tout entier, fut informé en trois jours de la violation du domicile du Khalife. » Thiès, rapport politique annuel 1951:27.

¹¹⁰ Original version: «Certain groupement Sérères des Subdivisions de Thiès et de Tivaouane, pour des raison politiques, et, tout en affirmant leur obéissance à l’Administration [française], font échec à l’autorité de leurs Chefs de Cantons. C’est ainsi, que cette année, ils ont refusé d’être recensés par leurs Chefs de Cantons respectifs.» Ibid.:28.

¹¹¹ Original version: «L’extension du suffrage universel a permis de mesurer l’attachement profond de ses population à la France, et les parti politiques eux mêmes ont toujours protesté de leur loyalisme.» Ibid:86.

¹¹² Doc. 15.01.57.

the villages Keur Mor Fall, N'Gaye N'Gaye and Keur Demba Gueye with a total of 1.352 ha. Secondly, territory necessary for the production and administration installations in the region de Darou Khoudos: 56 ha; and thirdly, territory necessary *'for our living site'* for the European staff in the region of M'Baye M'Baye: 60 ha. At that moment, Mbaye Mbaye was a small village of Peulh cowherds only temporarily inhabited, because of their – in those years still regular - transhumance migration. The European living site was built in 1960 and was also called Mbaye Mbaye.

New technical equipment arriving in 1957 demanded a greater amount of workers. The new labor options quickly spread in the nearer urban centers. The French managers had made quite some effort to improve the area's infrastructure for transportation. It must have been also in 1957 (or even earlier) that a small provisional living site for the European staff was built next to the extraction territory. It was called Taïba site and was equipped with a little cinema and a humble supermarket. A generator produced electricity. The first exploitation director came to function in May 1957. Because of the absence of solid roads, he used a helicopter to visit the mine. He remembered:

"I can tell you that I have experienced an exciting period during the erection of Taïba within a region which – although relatively close to Dakar – was still totally protected [presumably, he meant the region was protected from external influence] and with such uncomfortable access before the realization of the road Tivaouane-Taïba. Many inhabitants of Darou Khoudoss and Keur Mor Fall saw a helicopter, given to my service by the Air Forces (for 50 FCFA to take it and 10 FCFA per kilometer), before they have even known a bike. It was an era during which fish was sold per meter in a near by village: 100 FCFA for a fish of less than a meter length, 200 FCFA above!"¹¹³

¹¹³

Original version: « Je peux vous dire cependant que j'ai vécu une période exaltante pendant l'érection de Taïba dans une région qui, malgré sa relative proximité de Dakar, était encore totalement protégée et d'un accès si peu commode avant la réalisation de la route Tivaouane-Taïba que beaucoup d'habitants de Darou Khodoss ou de Keur Mor Fall ont vu l'hélicoptère que l'Armée de l'Air mettait à ma disposition (pour 50 FCFA de prise en charge et 10 FCFA du kilomètre) avant de savoir ce qu'était un vélo. C'était l'époque où dans un village de pêcheurs voisin, les poissons se vendaient... au mètre : 100 FCFA pour les poissons de moins d'un mètre, 200 FCFA au-dessus ! » (A. Bernos, exploitation director from 1st of May 1957 to 30th September 1966; Taïba-Info 10/85:28).

Presumably in end of 1957, a tarmac road was build parallel to the old dirt track between Tivaouane and Mboro leading to the mining territory.¹¹⁴ The first extraction program covered a period of fifteen years. The 12th of December 1958, Mamadou Dia accorded the second concession in his function as president of the government consultation (*'President du Conseil de Gouvernement'*). The second concession covers a time period of 75 years from January 1959 to 2034, and includes an area of 105 square kilometers north of Tivaouane.¹¹⁵

The French directorate first intended to construct homes for workers in the immediate environment of the installations, but the local administrators of Tivaouane persuaded the directorate to rather contribute to urbanization and to settle the workers in Tivaouane.¹¹⁶ For the European staff, however, the separate living site Mbaye Mbaye was constructed as originally planned on a little hill near the agricultural station Mboro. This resulted in a separation of the European and African habitation sites of around 17 km. While the social life of the workers and their families was easy to integrate in the Tivaouane community, the European site was rather singular and aloof in the plain bushes in 5 km proximity to the beach. Already at that early stage the company was seen as a future advertisement for the region.¹¹⁷ On long term 120 houses, the *'African habitations'*, were planed step by step according to the company needs for personnel. On the grounds which the company had bought for the workers' living site, territory for 35 houses was given free of charge to the local administration and its personnel for a *'harmonious integration'*.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁴ Only after the company fusion end of 1996, this road was partly renewed and broadened.

¹¹⁵ Doc. 12.12.58.

¹¹⁶ The commandant of the subdivision Tivaouane wrote to the 'chef du territoire du Sénégal': *«L'éloignement, par rapport à l'usine, de la main d'œuvre de la Compagnie serait largement compensé par les avantages humains et sociaux que représente l'installations des ouvriers et de leur famille dans un centre urbain »* (doc. 3.2.1958). In November 1958, the company director used the argument of the local commandant in Tivaouane in a letter addressed to Mamadou Dia, president of the government council at that time, with these words: *"We estimated that it would be socially desirable that our workers live in a little distance to their working place and in proximity to an already existing agglomeration where they and their families would find the necessary relaxation after a hard working day."* [Original version: *« Nous avons estimé qu'il était socialement souhaitable que nos ouvriers soient un peu éloignés du lieu de leur travail et tout prêt d'une agglomération déjà existante où ils pourront trouver et la vie de famille et la détente nécessaire après une journée passée sur le chantier »* doc. 26.11.58.].

¹¹⁷ In a correspondence between the chief of the subdivision of Tivaouane and the minister of the general economy in Dakar the former pointed out: *« Il s'agit d'un projet que j'ai été amené à faire quand la Cie de Taïba cherchait un emplacement en brousse pour y construire sa cité - J'ai estimé que la construction de 150 logement en dur à 17 kilomètres de Tivaouane, donc sans aucun environnement social et économique, était une perte sèche pour cette dernière localité et qu'il fallait absolument profiter de l'installation de la Cie de Taïba pour „redorer le blason“ de la capitale du Cayor »* (doc. 14.02.58).

¹¹⁸ Doc. 09.12.58.

The company constructed the first row of 20 houses in 1959, and the second row in 1960 in the West end of Tivaouane. The mining company installed the first electric lead coming from Dakar to the region. The directorate accorded to the local administration that the public sector could also profit from this electricity, providing that no harm was done to extraction necessities. The fact that the region was 'electrified' was a symbol of progress and prosperity for the Senegalese population and the national government greatly cherished the French endeavors. Thus, at a very early state, the French directorate managed to create a positive image of the company among local administrators.

The local farmers in the surrounding villages, by contrast, did not profit from electricity. The local peasant population was Muslim and found the French machinations quite suspicious, partly because they ruined agricultural land by expanding the extraction surface, but also because Europeans were known as consumers of alcohol and pork meat. Many installations for the phosphate production came from Germany, thus, the French managers entrusted German experts with their emplacement. For a period of some months, Senegalese workers collaborated with German engineers and German workers. Some miners remembered these times still fascinated by Germans' capacity to consume large amounts of beer on the work sites. "*M'Boro was a place to drink*" referred a worker to the region's reputation in those days.

At first, only few workers occupied a house in the living estate in Tivaouane, the HLM (*'Habitat de Loyer Moyen'* = habitation of medium price category). Most of them were living in hastily build straw huts in the savanna. Six workers usually shared one hut. A pick-up brought workers to the next urban center on weekends, but because of seat shortages not everybody could go. Thus, conflicts arose from these circumstances. Bread was delivered only once a week. Safety was practically absent and snakes sometimes sought shelter in human belongings.

Seeking business opportunities, many African folks from all directions invaded gradually the tiny rural community of Darou Khoudoss, the village closest to the mining installations. Massive housing and hygienic problems occurred and the Chief of the subdivision Tivaouane felt obliged to address a letter to the minister of internal affaires saying:

“This village [...] has an anarchic development. Everybody wants to settle here to construct rooms for rent; small restaurants for the staff of the different workshops can be found.”¹¹⁹

The company director exposed the matter to the same minister in April in 1960 as such:

„Foreign elements unknown within the region came to trade or to speculate with the localities; simultaneously the village chief's authority has been undermined by the new comers' activities. This results in a pitiful state of the village's internal order, no hygienic rules have been installed, the current state of pollution can become a danger for the region.”¹²⁰

European workers had official work contracts and were first accommodated in the provisional living site Taïba, later in the more luxurious site Mbaye Mbaye, whereas the Senegalese workers were hired on the spot and settled where ever they found a place.

When the Senegalese workforce was considerably growing, not only housing and hygiene became a problem in the adjacent villages, but also alimentation. Old miners remembered that there was a constant shortage on food.¹²¹ Although, in September 1959, the company director made an agreement with the French director of the agricultural station in Mboro to supply the mine's personnel with fruits and vegetables, the rapidly growing number of workers and day-laborers were difficult to feed. The supply situation was also tense in terms of crockery and cooking utensils. A miner remembered that the workers had to use work helmets as rice bowls.

Work was mostly cheap but physically hard. Therefore the French entrepreneurs welcomed in particular young Senegalese. But because of the hostile conditions, especially young immigrant workers were unwilling to settle. Most of them saw their job in the mine rather as a trespass to a better employment in nicer places. According to the following remark (given in a questionnaire), young Senegalese had often other aspirations for their future:

¹¹⁹ Original version: « *Ce village [...] connaît un développement anarchique. Tout le monde veut y installer pour y construire des chambres à louer ou des gargotes pour le personnel des différents chantiers se trouvant sur place.* » (doc. 26.02.1960).

¹²⁰ Original version: « *Des éléments étrangers à la région sont venus s'implanter pour faire du commerce au de la spéculation sur les logements; simultanément, l'autorité de l'ancien Chef de village se trouvée sapée par les manœuvres des nouveaux arrivants. Il en résulte que l'aspect intérieur du village est déplorable et que, aucune règle d'hygiène n'y étant imposée, son état de saleté peut devenir un danger pour la région.* » (doc. 26.02.1960).

¹²¹ Q3, 2/63.

“Very few people wanted to stay here. All the youngsters wanted to take that money and leave for Europe to continue studies in Europe. It’s because of the marriage that I have stayed.”¹²²

The French managers were interested in a stable fixed workforce who would gain gradually work experience and routine. The housing policy of the French directorate aimed to convince workers to pay rates instead of rent in the newly build estates in Tivaouane and later, in 1963, also in Mboro. This would align a worker for many years to the company until the house would be fully paid. At that time, so the French calculation, workers would be locally well integrated and would not want to leave the place. Many workers first refused to live in these houses for not being forced to settle.

Within the vicinity of the extraction territory workers qualified as mechanics, welders and the like were practically absent. Personnel with higher qualifications were only found in the urban centers like Dakar, Thiès, Rufisque, and St. Louis. Therefore, the company directorate installed a recruit center in the department’s capital Thiès. It was already hard to attract simple Senegalese workers, but it was even more difficult to convince qualified Senegalese employees already used to an urban lifestyle to live in remote bush lands. Accepting to live in the proximity of the mining territory meant to return to traditional rural structures which most of them had deliberately left behind. The evolution of the company personnel in 1957 to 1960 is shown below:

staff	31 st Dec. 1957	31 st Dec. 1958	31 st Dec. 1959	31 st Dec. 1960
Europeans	6	26	51	116
Africans	17	83	233	286
total	23	109	284	402

Source: Peroux & Bernis (1963:24).

From the beginning on until the late 60’s, there was also a high fluctuation among the European staff. An expatriate summarized the situation in the 60’s as such:

¹²² Original version: *“Très peu de gens voulaient rester ici. Tous les jeunes voulaient seulement prendre cet argent pour partir en Europe pour continuer des études en Europe. C’est à cause du mariage que je suis resté! »* (Q14, 10/64)

“The people, the people, the Europeans [several words incomprehensible], they didn’t stay, they didn’t stay. They stayed one month and off... and then gone. They went nuts here, the people. They disappeared... You have to look at the trespassing here; there was a lot of trespassing! [K: Why did they leave after only one month?] Because they didn’t want to die, you know. [...] Here, it was very hard, very hard! Today, it’s a joke [compared to those times]. They left, because they could see that it is not working right. It was not good for them; they were too solicited; it was too exhausting!”¹²³

It must have been around 1960 that the European staff moved into the living site Mbaye Mbaye. The new living site was supposed to meet European living standard. Sow (1983) made the following remark:

“Taken into consideration that this site is designed to accommodate the expatriates, one understands the efforts of the company in order to allow an appropriate lifestyle and to lessen the alienation of its agents coming from Europe.”¹²⁴

The European site was equipped with 61 spacious double houses, each for two families, with gardens. Special emphasis was put on leisure facilities and a variety of distraction possibilities. Two tennis courts, a swimming pool, a cinema, a supermarket, an equitation area and a club house should serve this purpose; a three-floor apartment building provided a library and a kindergarten and smaller apartments for temporary visits or unmarried expatriate personnel. From the beginning, the European families hired local personnel as housekeepers, guards, and gardeners.

The industrial phosphate extraction demanded a number of mining specialists, who were called from other mining industries in France, Morocco, Germany and the United States. In retrospective, this period is proudly perceived by eyewitnesses as a pioneer work

¹²³ Original version : « Les gens, les gens, les Européens-là, [l’année passé, l’année passé ??], ils ne restaient pas, ils restaient pas. Ils restaient un mois et hop... et puis parti. Ils devenaient fous ici. Les gens, ils ont bouf... Il faut revoir les passages qu’il y eu, il y a eu beaucoup de passage ! [K : pourquoi ils sont partir après un mois, parce que ils sont ...] Ils voulaient pas mourir, quoi ! Ils voulaient pas ... Ici, c’était très dure, très dure ! Maintenant c’est la rigolade ! [195] [...] Ils ont laisser tomber parce qu’ils voyez que ça n’allait pas.[...] Ca marchait pas pour eux, quoi, ils était trop solliciter, c’était trop pénible ! » (G.G., B: 190-8).

¹²⁴ Original version: « Etant donné que c’est dans cette cité où loge le personnel expatrié, on comprend les efforts qui ont été faits par la Compagnie pour qu’elle soit un cadre de vie convenable pour atténuer le dépaysement de ses agents venus d’Europe » (Sow 1983: 48).

and as a risky adventure of industrialization in Africa at the threshold of independence. A minor recalls these times as follows:

*„Mister Ben, he commanded the fixation of the entire mechanic section. He was responsible from beginning to the end of the dragline 1250 ECW. It was in 1958 when we started to mount the thing until 1960. Mister Oldman executed the entire electrical part. They said ‘the French don’t touch!’ because it is high tension. Then the entire Senegalese government came, because it is the largest enterprise that we will start. When we started in ‘58, we weren’t independent. In 1960 we took our independence and at once, with the federation of Mali, all these [one word incomprehensible], they came! [...] When we started [the dragline for the first time, K.G.] and everything was working [clapping twice in his hands], everybody applauded!“*¹²⁵

In August 1960, the first ship load left the Dakar harbor for Japan. This important event coincided with Senegal’s political independence also in August 1960. In the following three years, the extraction and phosphate treatment was tormented by various technical and environmental difficulties caused by wrong management decisions on equipment. It was indispensable to find important external investors to save the company. An expatriate explained:

*”You know, the people, they made studies about the extraction and all that. And... they were totally mistaken, you know, about the material, about the ... which means: they totally failed. They ordered pumps, and all sorts of things, which did not correspond to the extraction [needs].”*¹²⁶

¹²⁵ Original version: « *Quand on mettait la dragline en mouvement pour la première fois, c’était les Américains. Monsieur Ben, il commandait le montage de toute la partie mécanique. Il était responsable du début jusqu’à la fin de la dragline 1250 ECW. Ça, c’était de 1958 où on a commencé de monter ce truc, jusqu’à 1960. Monsieur Oldeman a exécuté toute la partie électrique. Ils ont dit que ‘le Français ne touche pas!’ Parce que c’est une haute tension. [...] Donc c’était tout le gouvernement Sénégalais qui était venue parce que c’est la plus grosse usine du Sénégal qu’on va lancer. Quand on a commencé en ‘58, on était pas indépendant. A 1960 on a pris notre indépendance toute suite, avec la fédération du Mali, tous ces gens, ils sont venus! [...] Quand on a démarré et tous à marcher [klatsch in die Hände] tout le monde a applaudit!* » (L.S., A: 65-85).

¹²⁶ Original version : « *Tu sais, les gens, ils ont fait des études pour l’exploitation et tous ça. Et... ils se sont plantés complètement, quoi, sur le matériel, sur le [...] c’est-à-dire, ils sont tombés à côté, quoi. Ils ont commandés des pompes, et tous un tas de trucs, qui ne correspondaient pas à l’exploitation* » (G.G., A: 158-66).

6.3 U.S. management in control (1963 - 1965)

6.3.1 Technical Restructuring

In 1963 the company sought for technical and financial aid from the American private company International Minerals Cooperation (IMC), because production stayed far behind the set objective of 600.000 tons per annum. This quantity was planned to be achieved since 1961. At the end of 1963, the phosphate production had only reached 450.000 tons and the company was indebted without any hope of improvement.

In April 1963, the French director of the mining company made an agreement with the shareholders and the IMC directors. The agreement foresaw to entrust the technical restructuring as well as the extraction management to the American company for a limited period of two years, until the 31st of December in 1965. The first meeting with the American board of directors was held in June 1963. The mine's capacities were carefully investigated by IMC end of 1963 to evaluate the obstacles to an extended extraction. The question investigated was to what cost the mine would be able to increase the extraction. The resulting expertise laid base for decisions whether to close the mine or to reinvest in better equipment and new staff.¹²⁷

In March 1964, the board of directors decided a reinvestment of 8 million dollars to aim at a minimum of one million tons of extracted phosphate per annum from 1965 on. The mine's second extraction crane, the dragline 650 B, already used by IMC in the United States, was transferred to Senegal in 1964. The new equipment needed a surplus of 3000 kilowatt electrical power. The Senegalese government planned an electrical power station (E.E.O.A.) only for 1967. The company directorate discussed the question if the technical service of the mine itself would be able to install a power station.¹²⁸ From documents it is unclear how the

¹²⁷ The following institutions were considered for credits: « *Cie Fse de Commission et d'approvis: 1.359.897; Dakar-Niger, Ets Peyrissac, A.C. D., S.E.G.O.A., Etablissements jeumont, Nordon, Pétroles B.P., Etablissements Brossette, I.M.C.C., Solvay, Tréfinmétaux, Jacque au Bergeonneau, Joseph Paris, Société des Constructions du Sénégal, Hersent: 40.478.076 FCFA.* » (Doc. 06.12.63).

¹²⁸ Doc. 08.07.64.

problem was solved at the time. Clear is, however, that the Senegalese government did not allow the company to build its own power station for not losing its most important client.

Shortly before the contract ended, IMC pleaded for the option to take 51% of the company shareholdings. In the journal 'men and organizations of Black Africa' (*'Hommes et Organisations d'Afrique noire'*) the following remark was made on this matter:

*"An option at the 31st of Dec. 1965 would have allowed to IMC to undertake alone a new augmentation of capital in the means of extending its participation to 51%. IMC, who thus desired to assure the control of the business, offered to give - in form of a credit for 5 years maximum - half of the two milliards [FCFA] needed, but the French shareholders favored a dispersion of advances to supply proportional to the shareholdings in the past."*¹²⁹

It was not in French interests to transfer on long term the control of the mine, therefore IMC was not able to increase their shareholdings to the extent of 51%, but instead remained at 12% until 1973.¹³⁰ With the extinction of the agreement end of 1965, French management took over anew.

6.3.2 Jeopardizing habitual hierarchies

For a period of two years, a group of American managers was in charge of the mine's most important activities, the restructuring and the extraction. An employee remembered:

„Taïba was close to collapse, because the personnel was too numerous and the phosphate, we couldn't make more than three thousand per day, for 24 hours [...] So they called the Americans, a society called International Minerals and Chemicals Cooperation. When they came, they saw that the driller from Taïba was not mechanical which means that it could not move by itself. We pulled it by horse or we rented a donkey in the village to move it. They brought the 'Salzgitter'¹³¹. They saw that the people are not well paid, because from the first

¹²⁹ In: "Hommes et organisations d'Afrique noire" n° 151 du 5 mars 1966:3763.

¹³⁰ Founou-Tchuigoua speaks about the extension of IMC shareholdings to 27% from 1973 on (1976:4). However, internal company sources speak about a reduction to around 10% IMC shareholdings after 1973.

¹³¹ Another employee gave the following explanation to this German engine: « *La Salzgitter, une machine allemande, qu'on a commandé et puis elle a commencé à travailler en 65, mais*

*to the fifths the workers didn't care about their work. They are occupied with their pay-slip. They didn't approach the French, because they came to the Americans: „Look, this is my pay-slip... [Imitates a submissive tone of voice], and so on. When they saw that the majority of the people complained... Some went directly to the hierarchy and some asked for credits. Therefore they said, the workers can't work like this, there are too many work accidents. The people..... you work until the end of the month and you don't get anything. So, they asked to increase the salaries of the workers. The French didn't want to, because in an enterprise, which risks to fail - how do you want to increase the salary. [But] they said: „you lift up the salaries and the tonnage will multiply“.*¹³²

The fact that Americans were for some time the bosses over the French managers resulted in some important insights which are vividly remembered by miners who had lived these times. In the period soon after independence, Americans engineers appear as more human and pitiful towards the Senegalese workers than French superiors.

In several interviews and questionnaires workers refer to the relationship between French and American with complacency. Apparently, the Senegalese could experience that it was possible for another nationality to proclaim a 'lower level of civilization' for the French. The Senegalese were for many generations well adapted to the pattern: French superior civilization and African inferior civilization.¹³³ The Americans were purported to have a

maintenant qu'on demande des pièces de cette machine, ils ne se souviens même plus qu'ils ont fait ça. En 36 ans les choses ont beaucoup évolué » (M.N., A: 130-6).

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Original version: « Taïba devrait couler, parce qu'il y avait trop de personnel et les phosphate, on n'arrivait pas à dépassé trois mille tonnes jour /24 heures. [...] Donc, ils ont fait appelle aux Américains, une société qu'on appelle International Mineral Chemical Cooperation. Quand ils sont venus, ils ont vu que la sondeuse de Taïba n'était pas mécanique, c'est-à-dire, elle ne pouvait pas se déplacer toute seule. On la tracté à cheval ou on a loué des ânes dans le village pour le déplacer. Ils ont emmené la 'Salzgitter'. Ils ont vu que les gens ne sont pas bien payer, parce que chaque fin du mois du premier jusqu'au cinq les ouvriers ne s'occupent pas du boulot. Ils ont leur bulletin. Ils se n'approchaient pas des Français, parce que ils s'approchaient des Américains (immitiert eine Untergebeshaltung, unterwürfig nörgelnden Tonfall) 'voilà, c'est mon bulletin, .. et nanani...' Quand ils ont vue que, la majorité de l'effectif venait se plaindre. Il y en a qui venaient emprunter directement à leur hiérarchie, d'autre demandent des prés. Donc, ils ont dit, comme ça les travailleurs ne peuvent pas travailler, il y a trop d'accidents de travail, les gens... tu travail jusqu'à la fin du mois, tu n'as rien. Donc, ils ont demandé à ce qu'on augmente le salaire des travailleurs. Les Français ne voulaient pas, parce que une usine qui doit aller en faillite, comment voulez-vous augmenter le salaire. Ils ont dit: 'vous augmentez le salaire, le tonnage va être multiplier » (L.S., A: 106-22).

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It is useful to recall Senghor's vision of the 'natural order' of things long before independence: „In what sense are we to understand the civilizing mission of France? We think that no nation is more proper than she to fulfill this role, which socialists in awakening and stimulation those dozing civilizations which, while young, are not primitive...“ (Senghor in 1946, cited by Markovitz 1969:89) While Senghor changed after independence gradually his opinion of the blessings of French Civilization and colonialism to a more critical one, being as president in

different perception: American superior civilization and French inferior civilization, leaving Senegalese aside. This possibility of perception was new for Senegalese and positively tormented their 'world order' as expressed in interviews.

*"If you go to Mbaye Mbaye, there are two places [in the club house]. The Americans didn't want to live with the French. They've said that the French are dirty. This is very important! Because they, if they go to the refectory and see one fly, they leave; they won't eat. Thus, it was constructed for them aside."*¹³⁴

I could find no evidence that an extra room was built for the American staff in the Mbaye Mbaye club house. I consider the above statement as an example for a myth building process resulting from an unexpected incident. The worker's conviction that Americans judged French eating habits as 'inappropriate' (or even dirty) - and this, the speaker claimed to be 'very important' - created an extreme and distorted image of American 'cleanness'. Because Americans were purported to keep distance to the 'civilized' French in a discriminatory way, showed the Senegalese the relativity of the superiority status claimed by the French for so long. The American exploitation director was particularly liked.¹³⁵

At that time, companionship was the training method applied in the company. The method meant to follow as assistant an employee of higher qualification for generally two years in order to enable the assistant to take over the position at the end of this period. In the first meeting with the new American extraction managers it was decided that he would be „assisted by a French engineer designed to replace him after formation“¹³⁶. The knowledge holder was visibly an American and the one who had to acquire this knowledge was for once French.

In 1964, the miners protested against the French board of directors. The movement took such an importance that the Senegalese government organized a meeting for the

charge of economic issues, his former beliefs had trickled down to the indigenous population and had left its marks.

¹³⁴ Original version: „Si vous partez en Mbaye Mbaye, il y a deux locaux. Les Américains ne voulaient pas cohabiter pour les repas avec les Français. Ils ont dit que les Français sont sales. C'est très important! Parce que, eux, quand ils rentrent dans le réfectoire, ils voient une mouche, ils sortent, ils ne mangent pas. Donc, on les a construit ça a coté. » (L.S., A: 123-35).

¹³⁵ The protocol of the first reunion revealed: „[the new extraction manager] did very well with the first contact in Taïba and the team there seems to have in him all confidence“ (doc. 26.06.64).

¹³⁶ Original version: « D'autre part, il est prévu que[American exploitation director] sera assisté d'un Ingénieur français appelé à lui succéder après formation » (doc. 08.07.64).

delegates with the department council, the local councils and the local police. It is rather unlikely that the American side took an active stand in this conflict. However, the final result of these negotiations and the management change eased down the turmoil.¹³⁷

6.4 First steps of Senegalization

In the first years of phosphate extraction, the productivity of the enterprise was not very promising and usually lagged well behind formerly projected quantities.¹³⁸

A profound analysis in 1966 brought to light two major weaknesses of the production process: firstly, the hydraulic system of the floating pontoon, a whimsical machine of old-fashioned standard with insufficient performance; and secondly, the actual extraction capacities of the draglines were not used efficiently.¹³⁹

6.4.1 The dragliners

In consequence to the technical analysis on production predicaments, in the following years, special attention was given to the extraction machines, the draglines. Efforts were made to keep them running 24 hours a day. Among the work force, the consciousness was raised that the draglines were the "key element" and hold a significant position in the extraction process, because they represent the entry of the phosphate production. Therefore it was pointed out that the conductor of draglines would carry a particular responsibility, existential for the company success.

The draglines were processed by a complex technical microcosm. To become dragline conductor, the Senegalese worker had to have a sufficient working experience as grease supplier for the *"inner organs of these 'iron monsters' reminiscent of pre-historical*

¹³⁷ Taïba-Info, 11/77.

¹³⁸ The provision for 1961 was 600.000 t of extracted phosphate. This amount was firstly achieved in 1964 (650.000 t) (In: "Homme et Organisation d'Afrique noir" n° 202, 18th of June 1968).

¹³⁹ Doc. 12.11.66.

animals”¹⁴⁰. These delicate and impressive giants laid in Senegalese hands were a symbol for and the first success of Senegalization and, thus, marked a new era of the growing indigenous competence. Apparently in the mid-sixties, it was perceived almost as a miracle that Africans took over the steering. It was also seen as a fabulous training success of the French expatriate management. An expatriate remembered:

*“Those who were really appreciated were the dragliners, those who steered the machines. They [the French managers] compared them with airplane pilots, you see, you see, it was really... They had [two words incomprehensible] more than us, you know, more than us. [...] In the eyes of the directorate, it [the job] was infernal; apparently not anybody can do such a thing. The evidence: the Africans, they conducted very well and without any problems, you know, that’s true! They are even more talented than the Europeans, because the African, he is more lively, more.. eh..., he is less abrupt. So, there is no problem. We had much less damage with the Africans than with the Europeans. They are less nervous.”*¹⁴¹

The first draglines were given an aura of mystification and highly respected within the mine. The following interview statements made in August 1975 reflect well the pride and glory, the dragline conductors experienced in those times:

*„Imagine, since fourteen years I am on this machine and even for knowing an entire city one doesn’t need as much knowledge. I know well my machine, that’s why I love it so much. It’s obvious that I could not hope that one day they would think of me for training to become a ‘drapeurs’. But because in Taïba they did more than a miracle for the transformation of men, for their professional promotion, here I am: conductor of the ‘drag’, the biggest one by the way, the 1250B!”*¹⁴²

¹⁴⁰ Taïba-Info, 8/1975.

¹⁴¹ Original version: « Alors, ce qui était bien considéré, c’était des drapeurs, ceux qui camionnaient des machines. Ils comparaient ça des drapeurs, ils comparaient ça à des pilotes d’avion, tu vas, tu vas, c’était vashement.... Et eux, ils avaient la [cotte comme ??], plus que nous, quoi, plus que ... [K : pourquoi ? Pourquoi les drapeurs ?] G : parce que, bon mais, c’était pour eh point de vue de la direction, c’était déjà infernal, c’était apparemment n’importe qui peut faire un truc comme ça. La preuve : les Africains, ils conduisent très bien et sans problème, quoi, c’est vrai ! Ils sont même plus doué que les Européens parce que l’Africain il est plus vif, plus...eh , il est moins brusque. Donc il y a aucun problème ! Nous on a eu beaucoup moins de casses avec les Africains qu’avec des Européens. Ils sont moins nerveux » (G.G., A: 36 – 45).

¹⁴² Original version: « Imaginez-vous que depuis plus de quatorze ans, je suis toujours sur cette machine et il n’en faut pas autant pour connaître une ville entière. Je connais bien ma machine et c’est pourquoi je l’aime énormément. Il est évident qu’au début, je ne pouvais espérer qu’un

„We are not like all the other engine conductors. We have the pride in Taïba to be the first ‘dragueurs’ of the country; our engines are not like the other engines. They are the key of the production.“¹⁴³

„The dragline conductors are extolled with a particular prestige in relation to the other conductors in the mine.“¹⁴⁴

„I am very satisfied with my condition as ‘dragueur’, especially because this is a profession which I learned to love. And my work gives me a lot of satisfactions among which the primordial one is that I am a conductor of an engine which participates a lot in the development of my enterprise in terms of the realization of big performances.“¹⁴⁵

6.4.2 The pontoon

The pontoon was a particular installation floating on an artificial basin next to the extraction territory. It served to wash the extracted raw material and to eliminate barren coarse material (*‘débouillage’*). The floating pontoon, thus, assured the first industrial treatment of the extracted phosphate. The first brochure of the mining enterprise was presumably produced by the U.S. American International Minerals Cooperation (IMC), because it was published in English and doubtlessly made in the early 60’s. In this brochure, the process was described in short:

jour l’on penserait à moi pour me former comme „dragueurs“. Mais puisque à Taïba, l’on a réalisé plus d’un miracle dans la transformation des hommes pour leur promotion professionnelle, me voilà conducteur de „drag“, la plus grande d’ailleurs, la 1250B! » (Alioune Diagne, Taïba Info 8/1975).

¹⁴³ Original version: « *Nous ne sommes pas comme tous les autres conducteurs d’engins. Nous avons la fierté à Taïba, d’être les premiers ‘dragueurs’ du pays, nos engins ne sont pas comme les autres engins. Ils sont la clé de la production* » (Sidi Wathe, Taïba-Info, 8/1975).

¹⁴⁴ Original version: « *Les conducteurs de draglines sont auréolés d’un prestige particulier par rapport aux autres conducteurs de la Mine* » (Jules Mbengue, Taïba Info, 8/1975).

¹⁴⁵ Original version: « *Je suis très satisfait de ma condition de dragueurs surtout que c’est un métier que j’ai appris à aimer. Et mon travail me donne beaucoup de satisfactions dans la première reste que je suis le conducteur d’un engin qui participe beaucoup au développement de mon Entreprise dans le cadre de la réalisation de grandes performances* » (Cheikh Thioune, Taïba Info, 8/1975).

“The phosphate bearing matrix is dug out by a 8 c.y. bucket 7 W Bucyrus Erie Dragline. In a primary dressing the run-of-mine ore is scrubbed and screened for eliminating barren coarse material (plus 7mm), before being pumped to the washing plant. Necessary fittings are mounted on a large floating pontoon, going close the matrix digging dragline.”¹⁴⁶

Because of the almost constant overload within the last few years of its existence, it needed an extraordinary attention from workers as well as engineers to function correctly. A number of employees remembered the pontoon as a source of great sorrow for the entire personnel. The floating pontoon occupied a remarkable place in the social history of the mining company and became somewhat legendary. The technical attention from expatriates and Senegalese mutated over time in a caring and loving alertness towards this machine, which soon became personified. An expatriate remembered well those challenging times:

“At the beginning, there was a pontoon, a floating pontoon. But we charged this only with a drag[line] which still exists by the way. Well, but those who made those studies, well, they didn't take into account the appearance of big rocks. [...] So, this one was a ruin, it was completely ridiculous in relation to what it had to transport, you see. There were a lot of technical problems on this, a lot, a lot, [...] in particular with the pontoon. [...] Me, I have seen people crying over the pontoon!”¹⁴⁷

The following expatriate speaker remembers the 'era of the pontoon' as an alternation of hard team work and fabulous leisure activities:

“I've lived the era of our heroic pontoon... How difficult it was to stabilize it... But we endured to achieve the production... And afterwards [it was] ocean fishing, haunting, some games of petanque restored joy in our hearts and we were ready to start again early next morning.”¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ English brochure of unknown origin and date (doc. 00.00.63:4).

¹⁴⁷ Original version : « *Au départ, il y avait un ponton, un ponton flottant. Mais on chargeait ça et que avec un drag, ça existe toujours d'ailleurs. Bon, mais, ceux qui on fait des études, bon ils n'ont pas vu qu'il y avait des gros silex. [oui, hmhm] donc, il y avait [une] qui était une ruine, qui était complètement ridicule par rapport a ce qui balançait dessus, quoi, tu vas ? Il y eu beaucoup de problèmes techniques dessus, beaucoup, beaucoup ! [...] Avec le ponton surtout. [K : mais le ponton, c'est une machine assez, assez remarquable dans l'histoire de Tai'ba !] Ah beh oui ! ah beh oui ! Le ponton, ça était, c'était quelque chose ! [K : pourquoi ?] Parce que ça était... moi, j'ai vu des gens pleurer, moi, sur le ponton ! [K : pourquoi ?] Parce que ça marchait pas ! Ca marchait pas ! » (G.G., A: 167–80).*

¹⁴⁸ Original version : « *J'ai connu l'époque de notre héroïque ponton... Que de difficultés à le stabiliser... Mais nous nous mettions à la peine pour faire la production... Et après, la peche en mer, les randonnés de chasse, quelques parties de pétanques nous remettaient de la joie au*

In end of 1960, the floating pontoon had to be replaced by a much more powerful washing station fixed on solid ground. When the message traveled among the workforce that the days of the old pontoon were numbered, some employees depicted the swirling remorse in poems to farewell the company's problem child, but also to cherish a by-gone era of tremendous communal efforts. Here is the poem *"It is floating... still!"*:

*"Well! Yes!.../ It is still there and well there! It has already seen of all colors, in particular blacks and whites./ But you notice he is in agony. He floats, in the air around him a strange scent. His doctors examine him every day, carefully, without shaking him too much. We have to give him still this little injection to extend his life a couple of days; we have to give him this cataplasm. Can we still fix him the loins like in the past?.../ Everybody regards him with nostalgia. It is the best who will go, as always!... And yet!... A great number have slaved away on his carcass! A great number have suffered with and because of him! Everybody remembers of certain caricatures when one could see grapes of humans clinging to his loins, concerned to stroke him, to comfort him!.../ He will die!.../ Already once in the past he almost drowned, almost disappeared for ever. We had to bail him out. This was not an easy operation, but everybody with impartial hearts, with the help of an external reanimation team, were devoted to the task, because we stood by him, our PONTOON./ And now... everybody smiles knowing that it is done with him./ Already everybody urgently wants to know who will inherit his scrap still smoking. Will they take it apart? Will they let it drown?/ An 'pooh' of general relief is ready to come out of all throats./ We nevertheless have to appreciate his merit in the TAIBA enterprise. His last jump of life is still impressive. He wants to do it, his Production! Up to the end!/ Lets hope that the station replacing him will serve as good as he could do. Let's wish a good and long life to the new station and let's say good bye to our PONTOON."*¹⁴⁹

coeur et nous étions d'aplomb pour recommencer dès le lendemain » (Roger Hillaire, Taiba-Info, 10/85).

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Original version: *«Il flotte.... toujours ! - Eh! Oui! .../Il est toujours là et bien là ! Il en a vu de toutes les couleurs déjà, surtout des noirs et des blancs. /Main on sent bien qu'il est à l'agonie. Il flotte, dans l'air autour de lui, une odeur bizarre. Ses médecins l'auscultent chaque jour, prudemment, sans trop le bousculer. Lui fait-on quand même cette petite piqûre, pour rallonger sa vie de quelques jours ; lui met-on ce cataplasme ; peut-on encore lui frictionner les cotes comme dans le passé?.../ Chacun le regarde avec nostalgie. C'est le meilleur qui s'en va, comme toujours !... Et pourtant !... Combien nombreux on été ceux qui ont trimé sur sa carcasse ! Combien nombreux sont ceux qui ont souffert avec et par lui ! Tout le monde se souvient de certaine caricature où l'on voyait des grappes humaines, accrochées à ses flancs, occupées à le caresser, à le chouchouter !.../ Il va mourir !.../ Déjà une fois, dans le passé, il a manqué se noyer, disparaître à tout jamais. Il avait fallu le renflouer. Cette opération n'avait pas été facile, mais tous, d'une coeur unanime, avec l'aide d'une équipe de réanimation*

To the company's 25th anniversary, each former exploitation director was kindly asked to describe his personal experiences and memories at the company in a short article for the company journal. Still fifteen years later, the first exploitation director of the mining company (employed 1st of May 1957 until 30th September in 1966), remembered the incident of the pontoon's fatale submerge to which the poet employee refers in the above cited poem. In his own words:

“One of my souvenirs is a funny episode which happened right after the factory was set in function, end of 1960, I think: the pontoon, served by a crew ... inexperienced in ocean-going, which forgot to close the hatches, drowned in consequence of a pitching created by the emptying of an overcharged goblet. During an entire month, the stunned visitors, arriving at the Taïba site still dessert like, discovered ... deep sea divers who fiddled in a murky water pond with the pontoon's superstructures sticking out. I rightly say 'deep sea divers', because it was too dangerous for ordinary divers because of the total obscurity.”¹⁵⁰

The pontoon became in later years a metaphor for an era of flawless and equal cooperation of Black and White. In the year's chronicle of 1970, the company journalist reported the sentimental feelings of the workforce towards this equipment with slight confusion:

extérieure, s'étaient attelés à la tache, car tous y tenaient, à leur PONTON./ Et maintenant... Tout le monde à le sourire de savoir que c'en est fait pour lui./ Déjà, sur sa ferraille encore fumante, chacun se penche pour savoir qui va hériter. Le découpera-t-on ? Le laissera-t-on couler ? Sans doute vaut-il mieux le rendre à cet élément sur lequel, malgré tout, il ne s'est pas si mal comporté./ Un « Ouf » de soulagement général est prêt à sortir de toutes les gorges./ Reconnaissons pourtant que notre PONTON a bien mérité de l'entreprise TAIBA et son dernier sursaut de vie est encore impressionnant. Il veut la faire, sa Production ! Jusqu'à la fin !.../ Espérons que la station qui va le remplacer nous rende autant de service qu'il a pu le faire./ Souhaitons donc bonne et longue vie à la nouvelle station et disons Adieu à notre PONTON » (J.P., Taïba-Info 5/70).

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Original version : « L'un de mes souvenirs est un épisode cocasse qui avait suivi la mise en route de l'usine, fin 1960 je crois : le ponton, servi par un équipage... peu hauturier, qui avait négligé de fermer les écoutilles, avait coulé à la suite d'un mouvement de tangage provoqué par le déversement d'un godet trop plein. Pendant plus d'un mois, les visiteurs ahuris découvraient en arrivant sur le site encore désertique de Taïba... des scaphandriers, qui s'affairaient dans une mare d'eau glauque d'où émergeaient les superstructures du ponton. Je dis bien « scaphandriers » car cela était trop dangereux pour les plongeurs classiques par suite de l'absence totale de visibilité » (Taïba-Info 10/85:28).

“Profound transformation had to take place in all domains of our exploitation; the „pontoon“ which was - for I don’t know what reasons - the beloved child, wrapped in all Taïba’s care, had to be removed and you don’t forget how terrible the pain was for all those who had to participate in its incineration. Our poets chanted the glory of the pontoon; our artists have immortalized it and - as a sign of gratitude -the principle organs were conserved after its demolition (scrubber, apron-feeder).”¹⁵¹

The floating pontoon was, for its insufficient mechanism, a perfect field for projection by seeing in it ‘somebody’ in the need of help. By the personification of the pontoon the Senegalese employees could equally show a paternalistic attitude and behavior which was in normal contexts reserved to French expatriates and to which the Senegalese employees were habitually the target. The pontoon was now the innocent and helpless child depending on the gracious benevolence of the entire staff, French and Senegalese. The common focus and the close cooperation with the expatriate engineers engraved in Senegalese employees a certain pride. Elder miners sometimes revealed old memories with great affection and nostalgia about the *‘times of the pontoon’* and apparently it became a symbol for cooperation in equality and brotherhood of ‘Black and White’.

6.5 Extension 1966 - 1969

In July 1966, two top managers arrived at the company, former mining specialists of in the Togolese Company of mines of Benin (*‘Cie togolaise des mines du Bénin’*). One of them later became the General Director of the Senegalese mining enterprise until 1993.¹⁵²

In 1968, it became apparent anew that the extraction methods, most of them used since the mine’s first steps, became more and more inappropriate to the new impediments to the

¹⁵¹ Original version: « *Des mutations profondes devant s’opérer partout, dans tous les domaines de notre exploitation, le „pontoon“ qui, je ne sais pour quelles raisons, a été l’enfant chéri que Taïba a entouré de tous les soins, doit disparaître et vous n’ignorez pas combien grande a été la peine de tous ceux qui devaient procéder à son incinération. Nos poètes ont chanté la gloire du ponton; nos artistes l’ont immortalisé et, en signe de reconnaissance, ses principaux organes ont été conservés après sa démolition (scrubber, apron-feeder) » (Taïba-Info, 9/70).*

¹⁵² Within the journal *‘Hommes et organisations d’Afrique noire’* their arrival is misinterpreted as a management shift to the Togolese mining enterprise (« *Hommes et organisations d’Afrique noire* » n° 202, 18th of June 1968).

extraction process. The phosphate layer in the two new exploitation fields ‘Keur Mor Fall’ and ‘Ndomor Diop’ was much profounder than within the formerly exploited fields. These areas were planned to be exploited end of 1969. Accordingly, modern and costly extraction equipment was required. The total amount of phosphate within the remaining mining territory was estimated at around 27 million tons. The Senegalese government justified the high costs of necessary future investments proudly as such:

„The importance of the Company (...) for the economy of Senegal justifies the pursuit of the exploitation. The company’s activity represents around 3% of the gross national product with a production of 6 billions FCFA. If replaced by other industries it would need investments of around 7 billions FCFA. In equal, in terms of taxes and rates the company handed in 150 millions FCFA in 1966. In social terms the salaries of the Senegalese personnel cover an amount of 227 millions FCFA. In equal the Company contributes with 275 millions FCFA within a total of 1.540 millions FCFA to the profits made by selling high tension of the EEOA and with 1.070.000 T within a total of 1.753.000 T to the profit of the traffic of the Dakar harbor.“¹⁵³

In Mai 1968, students and trade unions went on a strike in all parts of Senegal. Many observers claimed that the Senegalese students had been influenced and incited by French students and professors from the Sorbonne University in Paris. Senghor in particular openly accused Senegalese students to be manipulated by their French colleagues.

On the national level, however, tension against the presence of French expatriates became apparent. The conviction that foreign capital and interests had gradually ruined the national economy of Senegal was widespread. It was expressed that French trusts operated only in favor of their own members’ profit and to the enrichment of an excessive expatriate personnel. In many enterprises the presence of expatriate was questioned. The public pressure

¹⁵³ Original version: « *L’importance de la Cie sénégalaise des phosphates de Taïba dans l’économie du Sénégal justifie la poursuite de l’exploitation. L’activité des phosphates de Taïba représente environ 3% du produit intérieur brut avec une production de 6 milliards Fr CFA, qui nécessiterait, pour son remplacement par d’autres industries, des investissements de l’ordre de 7 milliards de Fr CFA. Par ailleurs, sur le plan fiscal, les taxes et redevances de la Cie s’élevant à 150 millions Fr CFA en 1966, tandis que sur le plan social, les salaires versés au personnel sénégalais se montent à 227 millions Fr CFA. De même la Cie intervient pour 275 millions Fr CFA sur un total de 1.540 millions Fr CFA dans les recettes de ventes haute tension des EEOA et pour 1.070.000 T sur un total de 1.753.000 T dans le trafic du port de Dakar.*” Hommes et organisations d’Afrique noire“ n° 202 du 18 Juin 1968:5218.

became so powerful that Senghor was forced to take stand on this point. In June 1968, in a meeting with Senegalese senior executives (*'le patronat'*) and trade unions, Senghor asserts:

*“Concerning the wage laborers, the workers emphasize the excessive presence of expatriates in certain enterprises. The employers confess their will to a rapid Senegalization, which is anyhow in their interest. The president of the Republic assesses that they should proceed in this direction and brought up later the possibility of asking the enterprises for a Senegalization plan.”*¹⁵⁴

Senghor did not want to endanger the benevolent cooperation with the French. Only after harsh strikes in 1968, Senghor was willing to accept a serious plan to Senegalize. Fouchou-Tchuigoua described the situation of African employees in this period as follows:

*„On the whole, the position of the average African employee (Technical assistants are not covered in the present analysis) has declined since Senegal became independent. [It] shows that, from 1961 to 1974, purchasing power fell by from 10 to 30 per cent according to the grade of the employee. There was no change in the basic wage scale from 1961 to 1968. After the strike in 1968 adjustments were made but these did not catch up with the rise in prices. Between 1968 and 1973 the situation grew still worse, taking inflation into account. In August 1973 the government raised prices and the wages of the lowest-paid workers. A price rise followed and then a further increase in wages in February 1974. In both cases the wage increases were less than the price increases.”*¹⁵⁵

In Taïba, the number of expatriates in 1968 was around 110.¹⁵⁶ The total of the mine's staff counted around 800 employees. It is not likely that the personnel of the mining company participated in the trade union activities or actively supported their claims. Dakar was far away and transportation means were scarce. However, the national debates might possibly have influenced the company directors' decision to accelerate the Senegalization process.

¹⁵⁴ Original version: « *En ce qui concerne les emplois salariés, les travailleurs font ressortir les effectifs expatriés jugés excessifs dans certaines entreprises. Les employeurs affirment leur volonté de sénégalisation rapide qui est, d'ailleurs, dans leur intérêt. Le président de la République estime qu'il faut persévérer dans cette voie et évoque la possibilité de demander ultérieurement aux entreprises un plan de sénégalisation* » (Lô 1987:136).

¹⁵⁵ Fouchou-Tchuigoua 1976:17.

¹⁵⁶ Doc.: 02.01.76.

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7 The ‘Golden Era’ of French Management

7.1 French Management Guidelines

7.1.1 The ‘universal culture’

The oldest document found in the company archives is a paper of the French organization SIPCA¹⁵⁷, specialized in personnel management. Apparently, the document served as a preparation for a seminary designed for top managers in March 1962. For its obvious impact on the company’s top managers’ perception of the nature of training and education, we will take a closer look at it.

According to the paper, in France the term ‘general culture’ (*‘culture générale’*) was applied to describe a total of humanistic values and general models promoting the *‘flowering of everybody’s personality’*. It means an active participation of each individual within an economic, technical, social and cultural dynamic process. In the section titled *‘the learning processes of adults’*, some programmatic ideas of education are presented. The following definition for the learning process is given:

“The education of adults is a series of formalized actions which are designed to introduce changes in the individual’s interior (perceptive, cognitive and emotive process) with respect to the personal development in a given social structure.”¹⁵⁸

These guidelines emphasize in particular the social context in which an individual’s education takes place.¹⁵⁹ The learning process is influenced by the following factors: the global society, the enterprise and its image, the training institutions, the programs, the

¹⁵⁷ SIPCA: ‘Session d’Information et de Perfectionnement des Cadres’ (doc. 00.03.62).

¹⁵⁸ Original version: «L’éducation des adultes est un ensemble d’actions formalisées ayant pour effet d’entraîner des changements à l’intérieur de l’individu (processus perceptifs, cognitifs, émotifs) en vue de son développement personnel dans une structure sociale donné» (ibid., p. 1).

¹⁵⁹ Original version: «Nous utiliserons ici un modèle gestaltiste pour ne pas isoler les processus d’éducation des adultes de leur contexte social et institutionnel» (ibid., p. 4).

pedagogical methods, the trainers, and the characteristics of the audience. Furthermore, these factors must not be treated separately, but in their interaction and interdependence. The advantage of the presented model is, according to these guidelines, the applicability in multiple social arenas for differing audiences. In addition, this frame would bear the possibility to adapt the so designed training constantly to the growing need of qualified managers within the ongoing process of mechanization in industries. The demand of this ideal frame was to create ‘more or less’¹⁶⁰ a climate of a democratic participation. To face the new economic necessity, power should be decentralized, because modern management policy favors a team cooperation of groups and sub-groups.

In these guidelines, special importance is given to motivation and its role for the employee’s work performance. Accordingly, the motivation is based on the personal needs of the employee:

"It is necessary that the content presented through training corresponds to the intrinsic needs of the learners and, according to the ‘Handbook of Adult Education’: the teacher’s ideals, the necessity to acquire a given knowledge sought by the engineer, the opinion given by the class-books or the system of stimulation and notation can only represent extrinsic motivations for the adult which can never be more than a help for him in his personal effort to achieve perfection... [sic.]”¹⁶¹

The individual’s motivation for learning, according to the guidelines, increases with the person’s degree of control over the education process. The instructor should leave a maximum of responsibility to the learner for the organization, amount and quality of the learning material. Three principles are defined to assure an emancipatory learning process: autonomy, self-training, and mutual training. For the principle of autonomy it is said:

¹⁶⁰ Original version: « Des modèle culturels de type ‘libéraux’, c’est-à-dire admettant une mobilité sociale assez ouverte mais des chances de promotion inégalement réparties, dans un climat de participation plus ou moins démocratique » (ibid., p. 5).

¹⁶¹ Original version: « Il est nécessaire que les contenus proposés par la formation correspondent à des besoins intrinsèques des élèves et, ainsi que l’exprime le „Handbook of Adult Education“: les idéaux de l’instructeur, la nécessité d’acquérir telles connaissances souhaitées par l’ingénieur, le point de vue des livres de classe ou le système de stimulation et de notation ne fournissent à l’adulte que des motivations extrinsèques qui ne pourront jamais être qu’une aide pour lui dans son effort personnel pour son perfectionnement... » (ibid., p.10). The script refers to Jack R. Gibb (1960, chap. V).

„The dependence is a normal attitude within the teacher-pupil relation. However, it is not wished in the education of adults: by contrast, the conquest of the AUTONOMY of the audience must be one of the desired aims to fight against the traditional scholar passivity.“¹⁶²

The adult pupils should define their own objective in cooperation with other training participants. The aim of the training becomes, in consequence, the result of discussions and is furthermore perfectly adapted to the pupils' level of acquired knowledge.

The self-training, as it is described, is shaped by the *social personality* of the learner. The training program should provide *"the free expression of personal needs at all times"*. The proclamation of these liberal ideas followed a new direction in the industrial world; the conference script meets common critics of those methods with the following argument:

"It is criticized that these training procedures create almost an individual organization: there is nothing to complain about. On the contrary, the self-training assures an ideal learning structure for each individual. The teacher or instructor is not more than a guide.“¹⁶³

Each individual was supposed to contribute to the collective learning process with his or her own personal qualities and skills. It is said in the conference paper that the assimilation of knowledge happens often in an atmosphere of exchanging experience between participants without any intervention from the instructor. Thus, in such a setting an ideal mutual training of the participants takes place:

“The adult pupils are often better able than their instructor to find the appropriate explanation, the pedagogical example, the illustrative reasoning, just on the right level of their development.“¹⁶⁴

¹⁶² Original version: « *La dépendance est une attitude normale dans les rapports maître-élève. Elle n'est pas souhaitable dans l'éducation des adultes: la conquête de l'AUTONOMIE de l'auditoire doit être, au contraire, un des buts à se proposer pour lutter contre la passivité scolaire traditionnelle* » (ibid., p. 11).

¹⁶³ Original version: « *On reproche à ces procédures de training d'exiger une organisation quasi individuelle: il n'y a pas à s'en plaindre, au contraire, car l'auto-formation fournit la structuration de l'apprentissage la meilleure pour chaque intéressé. L'animateur ou l'instructeur n'est plus alors qu'un guide* » (ibid., p.12).

¹⁶⁴ Original version: « *Les élèves adultes peuvent souvent mieux que leur instructeur, trouver l'explication adaptée, l'exemple pédagogique, le raisonnement illustratif, juste à la mesure de leur niveau de maturation* » (ibid., p. 13).

Another important issue of the script is the principle of *self-control*. The training should - as pointed out in the paper - give the individual the possibility to define personal objectives for his or her work results. The term used here is *self-competition*, because the individual is encouraged to evaluate the achieved results and to compare it in cooperation with the team to the formerly set objectives and to find together valuable explanations for eventual incongruity. The evaluation of the personal results is presented as an essential part for the consciousness of one's own learning process. This consciousness is needed to gain one's own ability to learn. In the words of the manuscript:

“In this perspective, we have a lot to expect from the application of the self-control methods which allow anyone to try self-conclusions with regard to one's own objective, certainly with the instructor's help, but individually - with respect to oneself - a lot more than in competition - in reference to others.”¹⁶⁵

Although the SIPCA seminary was held in 1962, these ‘principles’ remained important also in documents of the 70's. Supposedly, the presented management policy was first used to train the expatriate engineers. Later, when the training center extended firstly in 1969, and then again in 1974, the same principles were applied in the training program of the Senegalese management aspirants. In consequence, it was an integral part of the Senegalization process.

The so-called 'soft skills' like autonomy and self-control were usually only desired for management aspirants. The workers in lower echelons were normally supposed to be controlled and to execute orders. The expatriate managers extended, nevertheless, gradually these training aims over time to Senegalese subordinates, regardless of rank. They shimmer through many remarks made in interviews by Senegalese employees who had worked under French expatriate supervision before.

The principles of autonomy and self-control, for instance, can be traced in the following two sections of an interview with a Senegalese employee of sixth work category:

¹⁶⁵ Original version: «Dans cette perspective, on doit beaucoup attendre de l'emploi des méthodes d'autocontrôle qui permettent à chacun de se mesurer par rapport à son propre objectif, bien entendu avec l'aide de son instructeur, mais à titre individuel - par rapport à soi - beaucoup plus qu'à titre compétitif - par rapport aux autres» (ibid., p. 15).

“With Mister Claude it is different. I was not his secretary... I was almost his assistant. He took me for a great man. Nevertheless, I asked the permission [to leave the mine during working hours, explained before]. He said to me: ‘no [do not ask the permission], you see during the week, if we don’t have much to do, you go, I give you the car, you can sort out your problems and come back!’ I was used to that. [Name is changed].”¹⁶⁶

“When there was a problem to solve, he [the expatriate] leaves the issue to me and he gives me the time to treat it, to take initiative [...] He believed in my competence.”¹⁶⁷

To allow self-organization of work processes and autonomy to non-managers was somewhat revolutionary at the time. In a game of self-fulfilling prophecy, the strong demonstration of trust in Senegalese competence was the French expatriates' joker.

7.1.2 Creating a corporate identity: “we are all equal!”

The employees’ strong conviction that the era under French management was the time of real brotherhood and equality is one of the most striking results of the present survey. How can a certain group of people feel equal to another group of people, which is so obviously more privileged in every aspect of life?

The French expatriates and their families were not only much wealthier, because better paid, not only occupying a much higher social status, but also in total commanding power. In the following sub-chapter, we will try to unveil the factors for the emergence of this strong conviction, still valuable in 1995/1996. Over the years, I believe, it had turned into a taciturn, hidden, but, nevertheless, very influential loyalty towards the departed expatriates.

From 1970 on, the new exploitation director invested remarkable efforts to create a large information system among the company personnel. He developed various strategies to

¹⁶⁶ Original version: « Avec Monsieur Claude, c’est autre chose. Je n’étais ni son secrétaire... j’étais presque son adjoint. Il me prenait pour un grand Monsieur. Quand même moi, je demandais la permission [de sortir] il me disait ‘non, vous regardez dans la semaine, si on a pas beaucoup de choses a faire, vous allez, je vous donne la voiture, vous allez régler vos problèmes et vous revenez!’ J’étais habituer à ça » (N.S, B :114-22).

¹⁶⁷ Original version: « Quand il y a un problème à régler, il me donne le sujet et il me laisse le temps de le traiter, de prendre l’initiative. [...] Il croyait à ma compétence » (N.S., A: 129-31).

engender a strong corporate identity and company loyalty, and to achieve a maximum of intercommunication and mutual trust. The strategies were:

- A) Foundation of a company journal (Taïba-Info)
- B) Practicing *Négritude*
- C) Demystification of management
- D) Initiation of competition
- E) Creating a leisure culture

A) Foundation of a company journal

When the new expatriate exploitation director came to function in 1970, the creation of a company journal ‘*Taïba-Info*’ was one of his first actions. He remembers:

“Without saying I was the director of the Taïba-Info, because I thought that information is something very important. On one hand because the director's role is to inform his personnel - because it's a duty to his staff to inform, and also, in fact, it is an enormous power that the director... who can give information, this means communication, therefore it is a power. [...] It was above all important to have a journal; a company journal for me was something of great importance. I (undertook) this with two or three expatriates and one Senegalese, we've founded the journal.[...] We gave [...] news about the mine, the extraction, but also about... we opened the columns to all who wished to write. We had issues of different interests, some told about their holidays, others about their hunting etc.”¹⁶⁸

The first bulletin came out in March 1970. From then on, the journal was published monthly within the first eight years, then every two months, from 1985 on only irregularly, about once a year, it became once again more frequent in the late 80s and early 90s until it

¹⁶⁸ Original version: « Sans le dire j'étais le directeur en chef de Taïba-Info, parce que j'ai pensé que l'information était quelque chose de très important. D'une part parce que le rôle du directeur c'est d'informer le personnel - parce que c'est un devoir vis à vis du personnel de l'informer et puis en évident, parce que c'est un pouvoir énorme que le directeur qui peut donner une information. C'est à dire la communication c'est donc un pouvoir.[...] c'était important d'abord d'avoir un journal, un journal d'entreprise pour moi c'était quelque chose de très important. [...] J'avais relancé avec deux ou trois personnes expatriés plus un Sénégalais.[...] On donnait des nouvelles de la mine, de l'exploitation, mais également des... On ouvrait des colonnes a tous ceux qui voulaient écrire. On avait des sujets d'intérêts divers, l'un racontait de ses vacances, l'autre racontait sa chasse, bon » (Dex II, A: 142-55).

died out in 1993.¹⁶⁹ Although it was impossible to evaluate its exact print run, we can estimate around 400 copies in times of its highest popularity, in the mid to the end 70's.

The journal had two main objectives. The first objective was to inform. The issues varied from economic, technical and geographical aspects of the mining process to social events and interests of the mining community. The second objective was to evoke and reinforce a corporate identity and to melt the two different ethnic groups into a single one. The staff and its personal surroundings was often called the '*Taïba family*'. Taking into consideration the long and tormented period of French colonization and the different cultural backgrounds of French and Senegalese, this was not an easy task. Mutual respect and appreciation had to be raised on both sides. Apparently, the French were supposed to learn more about the culture and tradition of their Senegalese subordinates, because in particular in the early years of the journal's existence, many articles about the Wolof culture and tradition as well as about the Senegalese society in general were published.¹⁷⁰

Employees were encouraged to express their personal opinions and experiences within the journal. Inquiries were regularly carried out about numerous issues. Managers, craftsmen and workers likewise were asked their opinion about – in preference - delicate and controversial subjects. Inquiry results and interviews were then published and discussed in the journal.¹⁷¹ Senegalese employees could, thus, detect the French directorate's intention to take into account Senegalese past and present perspectives. Any contribution (articles, riddles, drawings, poems, photos, games, jokes etc.) concerning the company and the life of its personnel - broadly defined - was published. The ideology was a total freedom of expression. However, this 'freedom' was dominated by a French perspective, but also influenced by the ideology of 'Négritude'. These two perceptions and their interconnection was reinforced by the French exploitation director and greatly cherished by the Senegalese employees.

The journal was only published in French, although a large proportion of the miners were not able to read French. Wolofal, the transformed Arabic alphabet adapted to the Wolof phonetics - widespread among the local population - never occurred in the journal. Wolofal would have meant a means of communication out of the expatriate's sight and therefore

¹⁶⁹ According to employees' memories, Taïba-Info was not the first company journal. Previous attempts were made, but without much success.

¹⁷⁰ From May 1970 to April 1972, eight articles were published about Wolof and/or Senegalese history and culture.

¹⁷¹ In 1976, polygamous practices among the staff were investigated and discussed; in 1977, a special edition was dedicated to the work and function of the personnel delegates; in 1978, employees were asked about their opinion concerning salaries and promotion, and so forth.

somewhat independent. However, no evidence could be found that the company management intentionally suppressed the appearance of Wolofal in the journal. By contrast, the directorate posted security advices in Wolof (written in Latin characters and adapted to French phonetics).¹⁷² In the company journal, it is rather likely that the attempt to publish in Wolof was never made. Even in the most revolutionary period, the early eighties, no flyers - produced by and distributed among workers - were written in Wolofal.¹⁷³ Nevertheless, published news traveled quickly among workers by hearsay.

Many photos of cheerful employees illustrated the articles. Humorist drawings, produced by employees, accompanied the text. The journal gives the impression, that the entire staff of this company was in fact a creativity factory, innovative, modern and democratic. An employee made the following remark in an interview.

*"The Taïba-Info made believe that Taïba was something extraordinary, that salaries were better than elsewhere"*¹⁷⁴

The company's production results were given regularly on the first few pages and technical novelties were explained. Each January, the past year's chronicle of the most important events was published. In those chronicles, technical and production records played an important role; gains and losses and their causes were evaluated and discussed.

Crucial social events were equally published. In the chronicle of 1976, the birth of a triplet was mentioned. For illustration, we listen to the last few lines of an article published in the journal's July issue of 1976:

"I was most touched that Mister [exploitation director] visited my wife and my children" said Antoine to us. The Mining department organized a little 'family meeting' in the clubhouse of Mbaye Mbaye for the happy parents, the head of the mining department and his secretary, the exploitation director and some of Antoine's work colleagues, and of course the journalist of Taïba-Info. [It was] a very sympathetic meeting in which the happy parents received – besides

¹⁷² For example, one sign said *"Kuy sol caskam moy moutch"* meaning 'the one who carries his helmet avoids the danger' ('le soleil – supplement gratuit' 25.06.1977, p. 2).

¹⁷³ To use French as the lingua franca for any written communication was apparently unquestioned. The majority of the Senegalese population still tends to underestimate the Wolof language, as well as other indigenous languages. Many even still believe the colonial fabrication, that indigenous languages do not have the status of veritable languages, but have to be considered as 'dialects'.

¹⁷⁴ Original version: « *Le Taïba-Info a fait semblant que Taïba était quelque chose d'extraordinaire, que les salaires étaient plus gros.* » (Q47, 11/78).

congratulations and all possible assistance - an original gift from the company: 'the three little girls will be taken entirely in charge by the company until they can walk.' Long life for the triplet of Taïba-MBoro and our congratulation for the parents."¹⁷⁵

Decisions of this kind engendered a deep feeling of security within the Senegalese work force. Doubtless, the journal was one important means to strengthen the corporate identity among the company's personnel.

B) Practicing *Négritude*

Senghor's ideology of *Négritude* proclaimed the cooperation of races with complementary roles. As discussed before, Europeans were supposed to be rational, whereas the African races completed the fruitful cooperation with their emotionality and sensitivity. Already in the 60s', this model served both ethnic groups to legitimize the great differences in status, wealth and commanding power between French and American managers on one side and Senegalese employees and work force on the other. Senghor visited the mining company twice in 1965 and 1970, each time for inauguration after a major technical restructuring and investment. On his first visit, 17th May in 1965, the exploitation director and some of the senior executives were still American. On this occasion, Senegalese employees had prepared a speech in which they also referred to the spirit of *Négritude* and the complementary cooperation of races in the mining company. Senghor replied to the employees' speech with the following words:

"You have pictured Taïba as a symbiosis of 'African sensitivity', 'French Cartesianism' and 'American realism'. The definition is beautiful; I believe it is right. I believe especially it corresponds to the Senegalese ideal – deeply rooted in the African soil within the values of

¹⁷⁵ Original version: «J'ai été très sensible à la visite que Monsieur [le directeur des exploitations] a rendu à ma femme et à mes enfants', nous dit Antoine. Le service Mine a organisé une petite 'réunion de famille' au Club de Mbaye Mbaye. Y participaient les heureux parents, le chef du service Mine et Mme [la secrétaire], M. [le directeur des exploitations] et quelques collègues de travail d'Antoine et bien sûr le reporter de Taïba-Info. Réunion très sympathique, au cours de laquelle, outre les félicitations de toute l'assistance, les heureux parents reçurent de la Compagnie un cadeau original : 'Les trois petites filles seront entièrement prises en charge par la Compagnie, jusqu'à ce qu'elles marchent.' Longue vie aux triplées de Taïba-MBoro, et nos félicitations aux parents» (Taïba-Info July 1976, p. 11).

*Négritude – which has the primordial ambition to incorporate, among other fruitful contributions, French rationality and Anglo-Saxon realism into these values“.*¹⁷⁶

Extracts of Senghor’s speech from 1965 were published in a special edition on the occasion of the president’s 70th birthday in October 1976. At that time the Senegalization process was in full operation and the replacement of the French exploitation director was planned for 1980. Certainly having this in mind, the Senegalese general director emphasized Senghor’s remarks about the *incorporation of rationality and realism* (who’s ever it was) into the Senegalese ideal, knowing that the proclaimed ‘African sensitivity’ alone would not suffice to lead a multinational economic entity into a prosperous future. The ‘Anglo-Saxon realism’ had left long ago and the ‘French rationality’ was about to leave at that time.

However, in the company journal the French director had reserved ‘the poet’s corner’¹⁷⁷ for writing employees. These ‘miner poets’ were, of course, inspired by the romanticizing style of Négritude and, thus, used a similar style for the company installations and community. Here are the first few lines of ‘Promenade at Taïba’:

*“Eternally, days and nights follow one another.
Tirelessly, the sky and the earth look at each other.
Each day in the same angle,
The stars, patient witnesses, always help them.*

Majestic, Taïba, persistent, always remains.

*I love to contemplate over this work on the assembly line,
United like the fingers of the hand.
Take the car metal as a roundabout,
And visit this entity from top to toe.”*¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁶ Original version: « Vous avez parlé de TAIBA comme symbiose de la ‘sensibilité africaine’, du ‘cartésianisme français’ et du ‘réalisme américain’. La définition est belle ; je crois qu’elle est juste. Je crois surtout qu’elle correspond à l’idéal sénégalais qui, profondément ancré dans la terre africaine, dans les valeurs de la négritude, a pour haute ambition de greffer, sur ses valeurs, parmi d’autres apports féconds, le rationalisme français et le réalisme anglo-saxon... » (Taïba-Info 10/1976).

¹⁷⁷ Original version: « Le coin du poète ».

¹⁷⁸ Original version: « Eternels, les jours et les nuits se succèdent. / Inlassables, le ciel et la terre se regardent. / Dans le même angle de chaque jour, / Des astres patients témoins les assistent toujours. / Majestueux, Taïba, tenace, subsiste toujours. / J’aime contempler ce travail à la chaîne,

The communal efforts of French expatriates and Senegalese employees likewise to instill the spirit of Négritude within the industrial community also fostered the glorification of the 'Black and White' cooperation and a corporate identity in the 70s. But inevitably, this led to the devaluation and discrimination of the Senegalese-Senegalese cooperation in later years. The Négritude model of complementary races was, in fact, not helpful to prepare Senegalese managers and employees to operate alone without their 'completing' partners in some years' time.

C) Demystification of managers

In November 1971, an article about the organization of an enterprise was published in the company journal. In this article, everybody was asked to participate in the organization of the company, regardless of ranks:

"One of the most common, but also most disastrous faults one can do [...] is to believe that the role of the organizer is bound to the top managers and their direct assistants. It is indispensable that the brain is the point of departure. But if the members and organs stay paralyzed, one will see the objective, but unable to achieve it."¹⁷⁹

It was pointed out that the organization of a large enterprise has nothing mystic, but can be expressed in very clear key terms: time, material, and labor. These three terms were defined as the basis of any organization. According to those management principles, anything futile for the production process has to be eliminated and the necessary tasks have to be simplified. Further on, the author takes the high standards of industrial development in the United States as a model and explains the interrelation between a modern society of pioneers and economic success.

/ Uni comme les doigts de la main. / Prenez la car métal comme carrefour, / Et visitez ce complexe de fond en comble » (Taïba-Info 5/71).

¹⁷⁹ Original version: «L'erreur la plus commune et la plus grave que l'on puisse commettre, quant à ces techniques, est de croire que le rôle d'organisateur est réservé à la haute direction et à ses adjoints immédiats. Il n'est pas contestable que le cerveau est le point de départ, mais si les membres et organes restent paralysés, on verra le but, soit, mais sans y parvenir.» (Taïba- Info 11/71).

In the author's opinion, distinctions of classes do not exist in the United States as it does in Europe. Therefore, so the author, the initiative of each individual, graduated or not, is recognized and encouraged in his or her personal skills. In consequence, it is argued, the American holds the veritable sense of organizing, he is not bound to old traditions and customs; instead, he understands to use modern facilities as an effective aid.

From the American example the author draws the lesson that every worker has to be given the practical means to organize his own work. In consequence, the worker has to be taken seriously in his working experience as well as in his individual needs. He is seen as an active participant in the company organization and is asked to contribute with remarks and critics to amelioration. Additionally, he is asked to bring in his love for work, his good will, and a team spirit of cooperation.

This article briefly explained the directorate's new management techniques which were applied from 1970 on. By those principles, the directorate apparently 'dethroned' the French managers. They were no longer the ones who knew in any case better than everybody else. Information was supposed to be transferred most effectively and not hindered by any given hierarchical order. In his interview in 1996, the former French exploitation director explained those principles as follows:

*“Between departments, there were direct work relations on different hierarchical levels. The same for documents: they can be sent by an employee of a certain rank to another employee of the same rank, of an inferior rank, or of a superior rank in another department if this direct relation is the most effective one and if, for that particular reason, it was admitted by the head of the department. It is enough if the latter is informed about the existence of this rapid channel. It is pretty simple for the permanent channels, those of regular and systematic documents. It is less [simple] for occasional documents. In those cases, the transfer of opinion needs to be approved by his direct superior.”*¹⁸⁰

¹⁸⁰ Original version: «Entre services, il existe des relations directes de travail à des niveaux hiérarchiques différents. Il en est de même des documents; ils peuvent être adressés par un agent d'un certain niveau à un agent de niveau identique, inférieur ou supérieur dans un autre service, si cette relation directe est la plus efficace et si, pour cette raison, elle a été admise par la hiérarchie supérieure du service. Il convient seulement que cette dernière soit au courant de l'existence de ces filières rapides. C'est relativement aisé pour les filières permanentes, celles qui concernent des documents systématiques, périodiques; ça l'est moins pour des documents occasionnels. Dans ces derniers cas, l'émiss mérite d'être approuvé par son supérieur direct » (Dex II, A : 245–62).

Hierarchical communication in purely vertical lines was discarded as a remnant of ancient times. Relevant information could stem from any source and could equally go off in all directions. Employees of lower echelons were usually allowed to communicate directly with experts to solve a problem as quickly as possible and to cut across hierarchies in order to save costly time.

In fact, this mode of communication was an extension of the principles for successful training in order to achieve a maximum of autonomy and self-control of the learning individual, defined by SIPCA in 1962 for French managers (chap. 7.1.1). We will see below in some more detail that the elimination of all futile details, the simplification of all circuits, and the employees' ideas and opinions about any kind of amelioration became an integral part of the French training policy (chap. 7.2).

D) Initiating competition

Since company foundation, the remuneration system took into account the production results of the company. Each year, various factors of the production process were evaluated and expressed in points representing their progress. The total of points could vary between 1000 for worse performance and 3000 for best performance. The rate for the gratification was fixed at 10% of the basic salary of an expatriate for the company achievement of an annual result of 2000 points, with a minimum of 5% for 1000 points and a maximum of 15% for 3000 points.

In the early years of the enterprise, this gratification was only given to expatriates on permanent employment. At that moment, all expatriates shared the same rate. Under U.S. management in 1963, the enterprise expanded in terms of technical installations as well as in terms of company territory and personnel. In consequence, seven distinct production departments were created. From then on, the productivity of each department was evaluated separately. Thus, the expatriates received the annual gratification only in correspondence to the productivity of the department in which they worked. Accordingly, the new evaluation system installed a tool for competition among expatriates.

The expatriate contract formulary later served also as a model for Senegalese work contracts. From 1966¹⁸¹ on, each employee holding a permanent contract in the company

¹⁸¹ The monthly profit gratification was installed in February 1966 (doc. 00.04.71)

could feel gains and losses. As a result, Senegalese employees were also affected by the annual production results. While managers shared the department's annual gratification, workers from first to seventh category could profit from a production gratification on a monthly basis, presumably to facilitate workers' comprehension of the interdependence of work efforts and salaries.¹⁸²

French expatriates had a special interest to motivate the subordinates under their supervision for the best work performance on a long-term basis to maximize the opportunity of high productivity gains at the end of the year. In order to achieve the best production results, expatriate managers depended on a highly motivated work force, entirely devoted to the work processes. Besides the monthly production gratification, expatriates developed various other incentives to increase the work motivation among 'their' subordinates.¹⁸³ Among expatriates, best department results were also seen as an indication for good leadership.

The production process was split in sections for which distinct work teams were entirely responsible. Each department had several work teams, which, again, competed with each other. To avoid animosity between teams or departments, the sportive character was constantly stressed. Work teams were considered as distinct sport teams playing for the same association. Like coaches, expatriate managers tried to create a distinct team spirit among 'their' subordinates. Apparently, workers considered expatriate bosses from different departments almost as adversary team coaches. The following anecdote had reached a certain fame among employees for it was told to me several times. Here a summary of the crucial elements:

On his habitual morning walk through the mine's installations, the exploitation director talked to a worker by showing him, how to do better. The worker allegedly said (something like): "I don't know you. You are not my boss. You can't tell me anything!" The exploitation director laughed out loud and walked away without any further comment.

Accordingly, expatriates took much effort to quench the thirst of their playing team. A miner remembers:

¹⁸² Also see chapter 6.4.2 A).

¹⁸³ The most important are: training and promotion opportunities (for details see chapters 7.2 and 7.3); extra money gifts and other material advantages (here see in particular chapter 7.4.2 A, B, E, and F); and French praise and appreciation / emotional closeness (see chapter 5.2.2, 5.3).

*"In the departments, yes, there were refrigerators, [cool beverages] were sold. Well, some of the Whites did that for free. They paid for example one crate to satisfy their employees. They put this in the fridges and so on, because the Whites were really... [he falls into contemplation, shakes his head] ... for all of the workers. For example someone who works well, you were their friend."*¹⁸⁴

In the constant reinforcement of the one-big-family image, total loyalty and devotion to work was seen as a chore of honor. For an unexpected high annual production score in 1977, one-month extra salary was paid. A miner remembers:

*"MBoro was the place to drink. When I was young, I drank plenty. There was money. In 1977, everybody got one-month salary. It was the first prime."*¹⁸⁵

All this must have often pushed employees to their physical limits. The pace of work activities increased considerably in speed and caused astonishment by visitors and new comers. This endeavor even survived the long crisis in 1982/83, according to the memories of the following speaker. He had a five-years working experience in another large and well-known enterprise in Senegal¹⁸⁶. He explained:

*"At that moment [1984], I had observed that there was no relaxation. The people did not want that somebody stopped. Well, sometimes I heard among workers people saying, that if you stop, you dawdle! 'You're about to spoil the annual bonus, go on!' The people felt quite comfortable in this. It became an appeal for the workers. [...] This rhythm, finally, became natural!"*¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁴ Original version: «*Dans les Services, oui, il y avait des frigos, ça se vendait. Bon, il y a des Toubabs qui faisaient ça gratuitement. Ils payaient par exemple une caisse pour satisfaire leurs agents, ils mettaient ça dans les frigos ainsi de suite, parce que les Toubabs étaient vraiment... [pause contemplative en secouant la tête] ... pour tous travailleurs. Par exemple quelqu'un qui travail bien, tu étais leur ami* » (A.F., B 86-98).

¹⁸⁵ Original version: «*MBoro était le coin pour boire. Quand j'étais jeune, je buvais beaucoup. Il y avait de l'argent. 1977 tout le monde recevait un mois de salaire de plus, c'était la première prime* » (Q37, 4/76).

¹⁸⁶ He was employed at the state controlled railroad company Dakar-Niger. The '*Régie des chemins de fer du Dakar-Niger*', (formerly called Thiès-Kayes-Niger) has itself a long and interesting colonial history and was heavily involved in creating a trade union mentality among Senegalese workers before independence (see Ndour, 1990).

¹⁸⁷ Original version: «*Au moment j'avais constaté qu'il n'y avait pas de relaxe. Les gens ne voulaient pas que quelqu'un s'arrête. Bon, ça aussi des fois j'entendais dans le milieu ouvrier, les gens qui*

E) Creating a leisure culture

To attract qualified European staff for work overseas, more than attractive salaries was needed. The young European experts were hired on a long-term basis that foresaw the accompaniment of spouses and children. Potential employees would naturally take into consideration the living conditions and the social environment of a future work place. The living site Mbaye Mbaye was located aloof in a remote Senegalese peasant area. Distraction facilities, interesting for Europeans, were absent in the vicinity of the company territory. It was thus, a necessity to assure a great variety of entertainment for everybody's taste in order to prevent the company from a high personnel fluctuation and the French community from total boredom and its potential for negative consequences. It was in particular the problem of expatriate wives to find satisfying activities:

*“Yesterday, the wives of the senior executives, despite of the distance to urban centers, showed their know-how. Their big problem, they said to me, is to fight against the boredom, because they refuse to close themselves up. So, one is engaged in the health center, another one takes care of the company journal, a third one gives dance courses, swimming courses, etc...”*¹⁸⁸

To create an ideal atmosphere of team work and to encourage the exchange of experiences, the organization of the leisure time through parties, sport festivals and cultural events was not coincidental, but programmatic for the particular management policy.

The living site was equipped with two tennis courts, a swimming pool, a horse stable and a clubhouse. Boule, carts and various other games became regular leisure activities. However, with the arrival of the dynamic and open minded French extraction manager in 1970, the - up to that moment - rather scattered leisure activities gradually turned into a tremendous entertainment culture with interconnected games of competition, perfectly in tune

disent que quelqu'un, quand tu t'arrêtais un peu tu traînais: 'tu es en train de gâter la prime de fin d'année, vas-y!' [...] Les gens se sentaient bien à l'aise dans ça, ça devenait un goût pour les travailleurs. [...] C'était un rythme finalement qui est devenue... naturel!» (A.G., A: 222-50).

¹⁸⁸ Original version: « *La veille, les épouses des cadres, malgré l'éloignement des centres urbains, ont tenu à montrer leur savoir-faire. Leur grand problème, m'ont-elles indiqué, est de lutter contre l'ennui, car elles se refusent à vivre repliées sur elles-mêmes. Alors l'une s'occupe d'un dispensaire, une autre du journal d'entreprise, une troisième donne des cours de danse, de natation, etc...* » ('le soleil – supplément gratuit' 25th June 1977, p. 4).

with the competition system of the company production. Cooped up in the little living estate and surrounded by a ‘foreign’ land, the French expatriate families celebrated for many years their own enclosed community. An expatriate remembers:

„The Europeans were all with the Europeans, it was all a big family here during this period. [...] Everything was organized, every evening, [...] they played boules, in the evening there were a whole crowd, they played cards, they’ve played tarot until one or two o’clock in the morning. It was well organized. Saturdays and Sundays there was... well, we danced! There was a whole bunch of stuff. Saturdays and Sundays everybody gathered in the club. It was animated, it was crowded [...] It was to hold the people back, not to let them leave this place. It was a bit a golden paradise here.“¹⁸⁹

The ‘golden paradise’ was in fact for a long while reserved to the French expatriates and their families. Still legendary are the frequent beach barbecues after work in the seventies. Celebrations were mostly based on French holidays, but any good opportunity was taken to organize a party, in particular technical events.

The following report was published in the company journal in 1978, talking about a first-of-May celebration on a weekend in the living estate of the upper management. The section - accompanied by cheerful photos - reveals the nature of the company’s French leisure culture as well as the particular journal humor:

„What a week-end!“ „They“ want to kill us! We long for Tuesday for a rest“. These are some of the comments caught in the crowd before the long first-of-May weekend. To keep the poor miners busy, „they“ had organized a tennis tournament, „they“ had added some water competitions, „they“ even had captured the non-sports with a ball, and „they“ did not hesitate to finish up their misdeeds with a boules tournament.

The first victims were then the tennis players on Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning. They played against the club of Thiès. This tournament ended traditionally with a

¹⁸⁹ Original version: «Les Européens étaient tous avec les Européens, c’était toute une grande famille, ici dans cette époque-là. [...] Toute était organisé, tous les soirs, [...] ils jouaient au boules, le soir il y avait du monde, ils jouaient aux cartes, ils jouaient au tarot jusqu’à une heure /deux heures du matin. C’était tout organisé. Le samedi et dimanche il y avait... mais on dansait, il y avait tout un tas de trucs [...] Le samedi et dimanche tout le monde se retrouvait au club, c’était vivant, c’était plain. [...] C’était pour maintenir les gens pour pas qu’ils partent d’ici. C’était un peu le paradis doré, ici » (G.G., A: 193-215).

disadvantage for Taïba. This year again, the tradition was truthfully followed, despite the bad will of certain players who allowed themselves to win. [...]

On Sunday noon, a barbecue with a dozen lambs around the swimming pool was insidiously arranged by the organizers to regain the moral of the troops in order to get them to conquer anew the laurels. They had even succeeded to be supported by AIR AFRIQUE who had, by ignorance of their dark intentions, offered nice presents which were then the winning numbers for the water competition. To win a T-shirt, one saw certain jumping in water, an element which they loath in their normal state. Others spend their time under water to look for some sticks in order to win fruit juices or ice containers. Cynically this competition was called „fisher of pearls“. Then two rafts were brought to water. [...] The summit of dismay was reached when one could see honest family mothers and fathers sitting on the rafts and trying with endeavor to hit their old buddies with cudgels to push them into the water.

After having tried everything, in vain, to destroy the sporties, „they“ were attacking the entire living site through the intervention of paella and by the overabundance of decibels in order to oblige the people to exhaust themselves by jerks and Rock. Only one interruption was made to crown the princess and the queen of May. [...] One has to believe that the race of the Taïbatiens is tough, because the next day, the first of May, some specimen still found the energy to push the balls towards the jack.

Thursday morning, the miners estate regained its habitual state, and the hundreds of zombies went happily to restore their health in the mine. ¹⁹⁰

¹⁹⁰ Original version: «*Quel week-end! „Ils“ veulent notre mort! Vivement mardi qu'on se repose“.* Voici quelques commentaires pris sur le vif quelques jours avant le long weed-end du 1er mai. Pour occuper les pauvres mineurs, „ils“ avaient organisé un tournoi de tennis, „ils“ y avaient adjoint des épreuves nautiques, „ils“ avaient même piégé les non sportifs avec un bal, et „ils“ n'avaient pas hésité à parachever leurs méfaits par un tournoi de boules. Les premières victimes furent donc les tennismen, le samedi après-midi et le dimanche matin. Ils étaient opposés au Club de Thiès. Ce tournoi se termine traditionnellement au désavantage de Taïba. Cette année encore, la tradition a été fidèlement respectée malgré la mauvaise volonté de certains joueurs qui se permirent de gagner. [...] Le dimanche midi, un méchoui de douze moutons, autour de la piscine, avait été sournoisement prévu par les organisateurs pour regonfler le moral des troupes afin qu'elles puissent repartir à la conquête de nouveaux lauriers. Ils avaient même réussi à se faire patronner par AIR AFRIQUE qui, ignorant leurs noirs desseins, avait offert de jolis cadeaux qui allaient devenir l'enjeu d'épreuves nautiques. Pour gagner un tee-shirt, on en vit qui se jetèrent à l'eau, élément qu'ils exècrent quand ils sont dans leur état normal. D'autres séjournèrent sous deux brasses d'eau à la recherche d'éventuels boulons pour gagner des jus de fruits ou des conservateurs à glaçons. Cyniquement cette épreuve avait été appelée „pêcheurs de perles“. Puis deux radeaux furent mis à l'eau. Il fallait faire des courses avec toujours en point de mire le stylo feutre réclame. Le sommet de l'odieux fit atteint lorsqu'on vit d'honnêtes pères et mères de famille, juches sur ces radeaux, et s'efforçant d'assener à leurs anciens amis des coups de gourdin pour les

The toughness of the *'race of the Taïbatiens'* was constantly outlined in the company journal as on countless other occasions. Many allusions are also made to the 'tradition of the Taïbatiens', evoking the image of a firm entity. The above description shows a typical structure of an activity program in which competition games and sports usually altered with meals, celebrating and dancing.

Up to 1972, the only regular event on which French and Senegalese celebrated together was the traditional miner festival *'Sainte-Barbe'* on the 4th of December. It was celebrated within the company installations, usually within the mining department. The highlight was a lamb barbecue for the entire staff, accompanied by a lottery.

The future prospect of a growing number of Senegalese managers as permanent residents in Mbaye Mbaye obliged to think about new forms of entertainment, more adapted to a Senegalese taste than tennis or boule. Already in 1972, the extraction manager had set new goals to improve the intercommunication of the personnel. The future emphasis was namely to put on *„evoking the organization of manifestations for distraction of a sportive, cultural character, and the like in the living estate [of the upper management]“* and *„within these the gradual integration of the Senegalese management“*.¹⁹¹

Nevertheless, it was rather difficult to integrate the Senegalese management within the French leisure activities. In 1970, the first Senegalese manager and his family moved into the former exclusively 'European' living site. In a spontaneous conversation, his wife talked about the difficulty for them to integrate within the site's distraction culture. By contrast to Europeans, she explained, the tendency in Senegalese families to go out at night for eating, drinking and celebrating is rather feeble. Habits of such a kind, according to her, are usually seen as a bit immature, because *“it is a waste of money for no apparent reason“*. It would be considered as lack of solidarity, if only two or three family members go to the club for eating, drinking, and playing games, whereas the rest of the family has to stay at home out of financial considerations. Among Senegalese it is common to gather in groups at somebody's

précipiter à l'eau. [...] Après avoir tout tenté, en vain, pour détruire les sportifs, „ils“ s'attaquèrent à l'ensemble de la Cité par le truchement d'une paella et par une surabondance de décibels, obligeant pratiquement les gens à être prévu pour nommer la Dauphine et la Reine du Muguet. [...] Il faut croire que la race des Taïbaciens est coriace puisque le lendemain, Premier mai, quelques spécimens trouvaient encore la force de pousser une boule vers le cochonnet. Le mardi matin, le „coron“ retrouvait son aspect habituel, et une centaine de zombies repartaient heureux de se refaire une santé à l'usine » (Taïba-Info, 6/78).

¹⁹¹ Doc. 15.02.72.

house, to celebrate the Senegalese tea ceremony, and to giggle and gossip together. She explained that they had gone to some dining events in the beginning of their stay, but felt rather awkward among the French community, served by Senegalese waiters and waitresses, reason why they finally ceased to do so.

The cohabitation of French and Senegalese managers on the hill site remained unsatisfying, despite efforts of integration in later years. The following speaker, a Senegalese manager, moved to the site in 1978. In his interview, he remembered the moment of his arrival:

„In these times the expatriate ambiance dominated, so there was a minority of Senegalese who got along well. You know, if you are the minority you get along well, because you unite to oppose yourself to the majority of expatriates. (...) In respect to the expatriates in the beginning, when they were in the powerful position, they made fewer concessions. This means they always had their events which didn't interest us very much either. When they had their masquerade balls, in the beginning we weren't really interested, we didn't really care. The tennis, this was rather an expatriate activity. (...) Well, the tennis, we quarreled over the tennis [courts], because what we wanted was basketball. We made a campaign to get a basketball court here, there was none.¹⁹² (...) Later we had some affinities, we found ourselves on their masquerade balls, we participated, we took African masks, we disguised as Africans, this interested them also. [Q: „did you like the ambiance before then?"] NO! (...) No, I developed within, I adapted myself, but this is not an ambiance here. This is no good, with these two communities, this is no good!“¹⁹³

¹⁹² The new basketball field was inaugurated in January 1983. Thus, the campaign succeeded only after the majority of the expatriates had already left. The new basketball field was inaugurated in January 1983.

¹⁹³ Original version: «Dans cette époque il y avait l'ambiance a dominant expatrié, donc ce qui se passait, il y avait une minorité de Sénégalais qui s'entendaient bien. Vous savez, quand on est en minorité souvent on s'entend bien, parce qu'on se regroupe pour s'opposer à la majorité expatriée. (...) Vis à vis des expatriés au début quand ils étaient en position de force, ils faisaient moins de concession, c'est-à-dire ils avaient toujours leurs manifestations, nous intéressaient pas trop souvent aussi. Quand il y avait leurs bals masqués, au début ça nous intéressait pas trop, on laissait fait les. Le sport du tennis, c'était plus une affaire expatriée. (...) Bon, le tennis, on se disputait par le tennis. Nous, ce qu'on voulait ce le sport de basquet. On a mené une campagne pour avoir le terrain de basquet ici, il y a n'avait pas. (...) Ensuite on est eu quelques rapprochements, on se retrouvait dans leur balle masquée, on participait, on faisait des masques africains, on se déguisait à l'africain, ça leurs intéressait aussi." K: "Mais l'ambiance, ça vous avait plus d'abord? A: » NON! Non, j'évoluais là-dessus, je me suis adapté, mais ce n'est pas une ambiance, ça. Ce n'est pas intéressant ça, avec ces deux communautés, c'est pas intéressant» (A.N., B: 119-132).

However, French leisure culture was partly taken on by Senegalese employees of lower echelons and their families living in Taïba site. This first living estate close to the company's installation was built for the European staff in the mid 50's as a provisional solution. It was left to Senegalese craftsmen when the construction of the much more luxurious site Mbaye Mbaye was completed in 1962.

Taïba site was hardly ever mentioned in the company journal, although its social life was just as animated. We listen to a Senegalese employee who had seen these times as a teenager, son of a miner:

„We also, every week-end, we had the busses which took us here in the site to head for Mbaye Mbaye, every Wednesday, every Saturday. We went to Mbaye Mbaye to see the film. Around 10 or 11 o'clock p.m. the busses left to take us back to the site. Well, the Sunday afternoons around 2.30 / 3 o'clock p.m. we went to the beach as well with the transportation busses. The ambiance was really good. The busses picked us up and went to Mbaye Mbaye to take the people of Mbaye Mbaye who wanted to go to the beach. We went to the beach, we stayed there, took our bath until six o'clock p.m. The busses came back to collect us and to bring us back, each one to our homes. [...] Well, [the director] came to install for us a youth club here in the site. He financed us two million and something. We bought a Ping-Pong table, a fridge and we made a monthly management, somebody managed it one month and the next month we took somebody [else] to manage. We sold everything here, alcoholic drinks and all. Therefore at night there was a good ambiance. Every Saturday, I did my best to organize a dance evening at the Taïba site. As soon as we left the cinema [of Mbaye Mbaye] in the evening we organized a dance evening. We danced until dawn. Every weekend it was like this. The ambiance was really fantastic in the site.“¹⁹⁴

¹⁹⁴ Original version: «*Nous [...] tous les week-ends aussi, on avait des car qui nous prenait ici à la cité vers Mbaye Mbaye, tous les mercredis, tous les samedis. Nous, on partait en Mbaye Mbaye pour voir le film vers vingt deux heures, vingt trois heures les cars partaient pour nous remmener à la cité. Bon les dimanches après midi vers 14.30 /15 heures on partait à la plage toujours avec des car de transport. L'ambiance était bien quand même, il y avait le car qui passait nous prendre ici et passait en Mbaye Mbaye pour prendre les gens de Mbaye Mbaye qui voulaient aller à la plage. On allait à la plage, on restait là-bas, on prenait notre bain jusqu'à 18 heures, le car revenait pour nous rechercher pour déposer chacun à sa place. [...] Bon, [le directeur] est venu nous installer au foyer des jeunes ici à la cité. Il nous a financé deux millions est quelque. On a payé une table ping-pong, un frigo et on faisait une gérance mensuelle, quelqu'un gérat un mois et le mois suivant, on prenait quelqu'un [d'autre] pour qu'il gère. On vendait tous, les boissons alcoolisées et tous. Donc, la nuit il y avait l'ambiance. Chaque samedi je faisais tous pour organiser une soirée dansante à la cité de Taïba. Des qu'on quitte le cinéma à la soirée on organisait une soirée dansante. On dansait jusqu'au lendemain. Chaque week-end c'était comme ça, l'ambiance était vraiment formidable à la cité* » (A.F., A: 77-93).

When the extraction manager understood the incapacity of French leisure culture to integrate Senegalese employees, he went on the search for traditional Senegalese leisure activities and incorporated them into the company's social life. The exploitation director explains:

„When we had money, well I said we will organize wrestling festivals, big wrestling festivals! I did a favor to me and I did a favor to everybody else by organizing these festivals. It was my wife who took me to all these villages, who taught me liking those festivals, the festivals of tam-tam, of sabar, of wrestling, and I started to like them...“¹⁹⁵

Although the company leader makes it sound as a trite coincidence, the decision he took in this respect must be considered as a masterpiece of advanced intercultural personnel management. In the name of the company, he allocated a piece of land adjacent to the living estate Mbaye Mbaye as sports ground. People named it the MBoro stadium. On this ground, he organized mainly football games and wrestling events (*'lumbal'*), but also all sorts of other Senegalese leisure activities and mixed it up with typical French games. The sports and celebration events were now open not only to Senegalese employees and their families, but to the entire population of the environment. Thus, this decision turned the exploitation director almost immediately to the most beloved and worshiped expatriate of the area. In correspondence, the fame of the mining company grew.

The *'lumbal'* fights, an important traditional and beloved activity of the Wolof society, became embodied into the company reality already in end of 1972. From then on, wrestling events were organized on a regular basis. In the following section, a journalist of Taïba-Info catches a glimpse of atmosphere in April 1978:

"The report of the habitual date of the annual gala of Senegalese wrestling has not tarnished the flash of this great manifestation which continues to have great success in our region. As usually, it was organized in the MBoro stadium and its surroundings were black of the crowds already in the first hours of the afternoon of April, the 29th in 1978!"¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁵ Original version: «*Alors, quand on a eu de l'argent, a mais j'ai dis, on va organiser des luttes, des grandes luttes! Je me faisais plaisir et je faisais plaisir à tout le monde en organisant des luttes, c'est ma femme qui m'emmené dans tous ces villages qui m'a fait prendre goût à ces fêtes, les fêtes tam-tam, les sabar, les luttes, et j'ai pris goût !* » (Dex I, B: 48-53).

¹⁹⁶ Original version: «*Le report de la date habituelle du gala annuel de lutte sénégalaise n'a pas terni, loin s'en faut, l'éclat de cette grande manifestation qui continue d'avoir très grand succès dans*

The development of the leisure culture had practically the same objectives as the creation of the company journal, namely the amelioration of interpersonal contacts on all levels; the strengthening of a 'corporate identity', in other words: the personnel's identification with the company and its interests and the reinforcement of a strong spirit for competition. All these three objectives aimed at the progress of the mine's productivity.

The leisure culture was not only designed for casual communication and to relax people from work. One important aim was to create the opportunity for employees to talk about their work problems. The directorate's hope was that employees would then apprise the management about defaults, so they could be solved and, as a result, work quality would increase. The company success in general was supposed to become an overall concern of the staff. The exchange of production issues outside of working hours was much easier to succeed among the French expatriates (for their tendency to gather in the clubhouse after work) than among the Senegalese employees who were scattered over several urbanized areas and villages. To facilitate such an exchange, Senegalese employees were encouraged to create 'semi-private' associations defined by professions.

Senegalese employees took on more easily the culture of associations mainly for two reasons: firstly, various forms of associations exist in Senegalese culture (savings and fund raising associations '*mbotaay*' have a long tradition), and secondly, professional group associations were remunerated in various ways by the company management. In an interview, the president of the 'secretary club' vividly pointed out the rewarding of a dance evening he had taken workers to:

„I was the first one to drag the workers of Taïba out for dancing in Thiès. And on this day, [...] the assistant of the General Director [a Senegalese, K.G.] send me a congratulation with a pay-cheque over 25.000 FCFA, to take at the BEAO, by telling me: '[...] I congratulate you, because the organization of these sort of things can only evoke brotherly bondage between the workers' and at the time when he said that, that was in '77, I still have the letter. "¹⁹⁷

notre région. Il était, comme d'habitude, organisé sur le stade de MBoro dont les alentours étaient noirs de monde dès les premières heures de l'après midi du jeudi 29 avril 1978» (Taïba-Info 05/78).

¹⁹⁷ Original version: *«J'y étais le premier à traîner les travailleurs a Taïba pour aller danser à Thiès. Et à ce jour, [...]le Directeur Générale adjoint [...] m'a envoyé une félicitation avec une cheque de 25.000 FCFA à prendre sur la BEAO en me disant '[...] je vous félicite, parce que l'organisation de ces genres de choses-là ne peuvent qu'emmener des liens fraternels entre les travailleurs' et a*

The reinforcement and organization of activities within the leisure time of employees was an important guideline of personnel management in the 70's.

7.1.3 Management by objectives (DPO)

From 1970 to 1975, the work force gradually adapted to the expatriate requirement for individual contributions.

By 1975, it was widely embraced that everybody, regardless of rank, could be considered as an expert on something. The extraction manager himself was known for his great interest in workers' opinion. This, it was said, he proved each morning on his tour through the mining installations.

After some years of open communication, seemingly problems in decision taking occurred. Instead of the desired acceleration, problem solving had seemingly slowed down in some branches. The policy of open communication had gradually impeded the possibility to take important decisions quickly. The managers complained in particular about the time consuming, but nevertheless ineffective reunions within midrange management. A list of critics reveals that discussions in reunions were poorly prepared, too open, without properly defined topics, and without chairman. The participants were badly chosen and too many of them were not motivated. Apparently, participants tended to present solutions to problems which were not sufficiently analyzed. Further, time consuming justifications for taken actions in occurrence of a default were apparently frequent. Decisions were taken too slowly and the adhesion to them was feeble. The will to react to a given problem and to introduce correction was judged to be weak.¹⁹⁸

In October 1975, the directorate consulted a professional management institution in France (Cégos Management) which drew the directorate's attention to the method of the

l'époque il le disait, c'était en 77, j'ai encore la lettre» (N°Dir, B: 168-75). He remembered well indeed. In the letter, found in the company archives, the general director wrote : «*L'organisation de telles réunions ne peuvent qu'avoir un effet bénéfique sur les relations existantes entre les gens de Taïba, en leur offrant une saine détente et l'occasion de se connaître et s'apprécier davantage* » (doc. 11.07.77).

¹⁹⁸ Doc. 00.10.75.

‘management by objectives’, short DPO (*'direction participative par objectifs'*). In an exhaustive manuscript of 36 pages, the method DPO is explained in detail. To be more precise, the consulting institute outlined the following principles for the success of the method ‘management by objectives’:

- *One will not succeed if one has not the will to manage (controlling the organization and its permanent adaptation instead of being taken away by the events)*
- *One is only able to manage with explicit goals*
- *One evaluates and judges the units and the responsible agents by results (objective criteria)*
- *The individuals are motivated to succeed the projects they helped to organize*
- *The chance of the accomplishment of objectives, which were proposed and negotiated by the responsible agents grows considerably when real adoption has taken place.*
- *The reciprocity of communication in vertical and horizontal lines is more effective for the company than a unilateral communication.*
- *The seek of a coincidence of entrepreneurial and individual goals (by the majority of responsible employees) enables the actors:*
 - *to act in a larger context (and more effective) in self-control and to develop their potential capacities.*
 - *to have a better control of their personal evolution in the company and therefore to develop coherent ambitions*
- *The objectives dominate tasks and the agents' dynamic dominates the regulations.*¹⁹⁹

The consulting institute outlined the preconditions for a sustainable success of DPO in a manuscript. According to the expert recommendation, an effective development of personnel management has to be pursued on a long-term basis. The personnel management

¹⁹⁹ Original version: «Conviction au niveau des principes essentiels: - *On ne réussit pas si l'on n'a pas la volonté de diriger (maîtriser l'organisation et son adaptation permanente au lieu de se laisser emporter par les événements); - On ne dirige réellement que par rapport à des buts explicites; - On évalue et on juge les unités et les responsables par rapport à des résultats (prédominance de critères objectifs); - Les individus sont motivés à faire bien marcher ce qu'ils ont aidé à organiser; - L'adoption réelle des objectifs qui sont proposés et négociés par les responsables accroît considérablement les chances de les accomplir; - Les communications réciproques verticales et horizontales sont plus efficaces pour l'entreprise que les communications unilatérales; - La recherche d'une coincidence entre les buts de l'organisation et les buts individuels (pour une majorité de responsables) permet aux hommes: - d'agir plus largement (et plus efficacement) en autocontrôle et de développer leur capacité réalisatrice; - de déterminer plus clairement une évolution personnelle dans l'entreprise et donc de développer des ambitions cohérentes; - Les buts sont privilégiés par rapport aux tâches et le dynamisme des hommes par rapport aux règlements» (Cégos Management, Doc. 00.10.75).*

includes „clarification of employment, payment, posting, and further perfection“. The application of DPO means for the directorate to explicit its own goals. The defined short-term objectives have to be embedded within the company's long-term objectives. The long-term objectives should be followed by a plan, which has to be the result of strategy discussions within the top management. Without this planning the short-term objectives stay on a low level of hierarchy and take a rather routine character

Just as the expatriate management in the mining company had practiced, the DPO also modifies the hierarchical relations, which will *"bring out the veritable competence of the personnel"*. The manuscript warns that the application of DPO might engender psychological obstacles. Therefore, it needs an open communication, but focused on the formulation and evaluation of clearly defined objectives. The success of the DPO, according to the paper, resides in fact in effective reunions and changes will start from there. The report clarifies that:

"The DPO is not a 'prescription' but has to be amended to each company section individually by taking into consideration the specialties of each particular environment, nature of activities, and individuals concerned".

The emphasis is put on the negotiation of achievable goals, the profound evaluation of results and performances of each agent and their correction. An important aspect is the delegation of power and responsibility in a precise and controlled manner. With regard to the central concern 'reunion' the DPO method defines four sub-systems, which influence and precondition the communication system within the company:

- 1 the short-term objectives*
- 2 the result control*
- 3 the task definition*
- 4 the rules and criteria for superior evaluation*

In October 1975, each department manager was asked to thoroughly study the DPO manuscript and to reflect about the possibility of application within the mining company. In November, top managers decided to gradually install the DPO method in the company. Three major points were applied, firstly, the formulation of clear goals for each and every employee

in the company; secondly, a better and more effective control over work results; and thirdly, the application of a precise structure for meetings.

The first objectives were defined in January 1976. From then on each beginning of the year, annual objectives were set by each responsible agent individually and exposed and negotiated in reunions. Each manager in upper and middle range management had to formulate the annual objective for the productivity of his realm of responsibility. At the end of the year, a management committee evaluated the achieved results, compared provision and realization, and discussed the reasons for incongruence. Delays and predicaments of the production flow were analyzed and correction suggested. In correspondence to these findings, new objectives were defined. Personal performance was supervised collectively with clear criteria.

Not only upper managers were integrated into the DPO policy. Any superior was urged to hold evaluation reunions with his subordinates at the end of the year. A detailed evaluation guide was developed in this respect with clear instructions for an effective meeting. Precise definitions were given for commanding, recommendations and suggestions, delegation, initiative, organization, and capacity of evolution. To show an example: the terms '*delegation*' and '*initiative*' were defined as such:

„Delegation:

Capacity to entrust voluntarily a part of his/her responsibilities to his/her collaborators in order to increase the effectiveness of the department and the professional value of each employee. This implies to give to the employee all necessary information to take decisions, to offer eventually assistance, to retain the responsibility of their actions and the consequences, and to grant the right of error to them.

This capacity:

- should lead to the complete usage of the subordinates' skills. This can be tested in the case of absence of the superior.

Initiative:

Sound usage of the liberty of action conferred to the job. The capacity of initiative behavior is absent when urgent decisions were not taken. An excess of initiative means, by contrast, to take erroneous decisions which exceed clearly the margin of autonomy given by the job, when

a superior could have and should have been consulted previously. Take into consideration as much the quality of the taken initiatives as well as their frequency. “²⁰⁰

Besides the annual meeting, midrange managers and their subordinates regularly held other meetings of short-term objectives. Attending employees were asked to dedicate two hours time in order to prepare these meetings sufficiently.

The application of the method DPO resulted indeed in a greater formalization and effectiveness of meetings at first. As time went by, however, old customs of extensive unstructured discussions sneaked in again. The principles of reciprocal horizontal and vertical communication remained expectantly strong. In particular the French upper and midrange managers spend much of their free time together on leisure activities in the living site in lack of other alternatives. The atmosphere of openness and free expression lead in the following years to an informal and again unsystematic manner to deal with the mine's problems.

Thus, the constant communication between the members of the upper and midrange management within meetings as well as on other occasions (on the pool, in the club, etc.) had seemingly gradually blurred the hierarchical levels.

7.1.4 The end of brotherhood

At the end of 1978, senior executives of the company's Parisian appendix harshly criticized the extensive exchange of unfiltered information and the peculiar informal problem-solving manner of the personnel. At this time the Senegalization process was about to reach

²⁰⁰ Original version: «*Délégation*: Aptitude à confier volontairement une partie de ses responsabilités à ses collaborateurs, pour augmenter l'efficacité du service et de La valeur professionnelle de chacun. Ceci implique de fournir aux intéressés tous les éléments d'information nécessaires aux prises de décision, de les assister éventuellement, de conserver La responsabilité des conséquences de leurs actions et de leur accorder le droit à l'erreur. Cette aptitude doit entraîner une pleine utilisation des capacités des subordonnés. Elle peut être testée par le bon fonctionnement du secteur en l'absence du responsable habituel. *Initiative*: Utilisation judicieuse de La liberté d'action conférée par le poste. Un manque d'initiative se manifeste dans les cas où les décisions urgentes auraient dû être prises, des actions immédiates lancées et ne l'ont pas été faute de La caution d'un supérieur. Un excès d'initiative se manifeste à l'inverse par une prise de décisions erronées, dépassant nettement la marge d'autonomie du poste quand un supérieur aurait pu et dû être consulté préalablement. Tenir compte autant de la qualité des initiatives que de leur fréquence» (doc. 1.1.76).

its peak and, thus, a growing number of Senegalese top and midrange managers moved into the ‘European’ living cite.

A French consultant, who regularly visited the mine in Senegal, presented an official report to the executive director in France in December 1978. In his report he made the following propositions concerning the behavior of the exploitation director and his *entourage*:

„It is necessary for the exploitation director and his comments, in order to have an impact that the director is not in permanence in the front line. He must keep a margin between himself and his direct collaborators. It is this margin which allows him to pilot.

In order to have the hierarchy respected, in particular with regard to the production manager and the administration department, it is necessary to have as few meetings as possible, which include the director, the two people listed above and their collaborators. In fact, information means power and it should be channeled through the normal hierarchy.“²⁰¹

Furthermore, the habitual conduct of evaluation meetings was questioned. According to the paper, a meeting should focus on the production rather than organization. The disapproval in this report reveals the emphasis the exploitation director put on the constant discussions with his collaborators on the organizational style. By giving his advice for an effective meeting, the consultant circumscribes the observed, in his opinion, improper circumstances:

„It is in my eyes a meeting of the production and not of the organization; this means it is about the immediate control of the production results and not about the definition, or the temptation to define the general principles of organization“²⁰²

In the senior executive’s opinion, an improvised presentation of any issue should in no case be accepted as a point of discussion. This comment unveils that the actual practice of the

²⁰¹ Original version: «*Pour que le Directeur Exploitation ou ses remarques, ait du poids, il est nécessaire qu’il ne soit pas en permanence en première ligne. Il faut qu’il ait toujours une marge entre ses collaborateurs directs et lui-même. C’est cette marge qui lui permet de piloter. Pour que la hiérarchie soit respectée, en particulier au niveau des Chefs de la Production et du Service Administratif, il est nécessaire, qu’il y ait le moins souvent possible, de réunions englobant le Directeur, les deux personnes citées et leurs collaborateurs. En effet, l’information constitue un pouvoir, et c’est par la hiérarchie normale qu’elle doit être diffusée*» (doc. 20.12.78).

²⁰² Original version: «*C’est, à mon sens, une réunion de production et non d’organisation; cela veut dire qu’il s’agit de contrôler immédiatement les résultats de la production et non de définir, ou tenter de définir, des principes généraux d’organisation* » (doc. 20.12.78).

evaluation meetings must have been generally accepting those things. His suggestion to limit the meetings to 45 minutes shows that the usual time span must have exceeded this by large.

He proposed that top managers keep up their habitual frequency of one meeting per week, but without the presence of the exploitation director. Additionally, the daily meeting between the department manager and his direct collaborators, his engineers, should '*in no case take place in the manager's office, but only by telephone*'. Information should, according to the suggestions, be transferred as much as possible in written documents, in particular result reports, addressed only to the exploitation director rather than from mouth to mouth or, even worse, provoke any kind of discussion. From then on, information was again defined as a means of power. In consequence, the management, formerly demystified, was pushed back into mystification.

An internal paper from January 1980 shows that the exploitation director had – at least partly - followed the idea to exchange important information by telephone rather than in meetings. However, it is rather unlikely that the exploitation director followed those propositions completely. The ideology of information restrictions and the 'mystification' of the director's person clearly opposed his own beliefs as well as his affable character. He was well accustomed to be personally involved. His social skills evidently allowed him to be constantly in an open discussion with his collaborators. He was the one who had initiated the extended system of information and communication well before he had installed the system of vertical and horizontal flow of information inspired by the DPO method in 1975.

The centralization of power through information must have taken its first steps from there. In later years, the process of decline went from centralization to monopolization of information.²⁰³ Whether the French boards of directors took caution in regard to the ongoing Senegalization process, or whether this restriction only coincided with Senegalization is hard to tell. Whatsoever, it is important to note that the first impulse to restrict the free flow of important information was not a Senegalese initiative - as often presumed by Senegalese employees in interviews. It was an initiative from the - at that point - still French top management.

²⁰³ See chapter 8, in particular 8.3.

7.2 The French training policy: „...everything was possible! “

When experienced workers talk about the old times, they usually also mention the training conduct under French management. Elder miners tended to make fervent intercessions like the following:

„I never made technical mistakes at work during 37 years, because I was trained by the Whites!“²⁰⁴

"We were in good collaboration with the Whites in terms of work and in social terms. We have a very good and solid training which gave us a great experience."²⁰⁵

What was so particularly fabulous about the French training policy? The following analysis tries to find answers.

7.2.1 French training history and methods

From the mine's foundation on in 1957, some form of training was carried out in the mining company. In 1960, 116 Europeans (French, Hungarians, Greeks, and Germans) and 286 Africans (vast majority Senegalese) represented the personnel. As shown in previous chapters, it was difficult to attract trained workers, both European and Senegalese, to the inhospitable and unpleasant scrubland at that time.²⁰⁶

Mainly local peasant sons found appeal in the modernity promising European undertakings and could be convinced. Although not trained in anything else but farming, the young men were used to hard work, which was needed more than anything else in the first years of phosphate extraction.

²⁰⁴ Original version: «*Je n'ai jamais eu de fautes techniques au travail pendant 37 ans, parce que j'étais éduquer par les Blancs!* » (L.S., B: 260-3).

²⁰⁵ Original version: «*Nous étions en bonnes relations avec les Toubabs sur le travail et sur le coté social. On a une bonne formation très solide qui nous a donné une grande expérience* » (Q11, 8/64).

²⁰⁶ Working and living conditions are outlined in chap. 6.2.

The few French engineers and geologists were mostly experienced in the African mining business and thrilled enough to create a mining enterprise in the middle of nowhere and to set up a new extraction area. For additional know-how, the French engineers tried to gather useful information and experiences from other mining companies in Africa, often by telex, but sometimes by visits (Togo, Morocco). With the gathered information the French geologists and engineers trained themselves on the spot or in small seminars. At that moment, nobody could say how successful the enterprise would really be and, thus, how long it would actually exist. Therefore, in the first years of the company's existence, methods of training were provisional and self-made.

In the first years, the method of training for Senegalese workers was mainly 'companionship' (*compagnonnage*). Senegalese workers followed and observed the skilled expatriates for a determined time period depending on the task complexity. Within this period the Senegalese employee was supposed to gradually increase the active participation on the task until he was prepared to fully take over. The expatriates decided what to teach and show to Senegalese subordinates and what was futile for them to know. From around 1960 on, systematic training was carried out. Founou-Tchuigoua (1976) wrote:

*"As regards training for subordinate personnel, the company has pursued an extremely go-ahead policy for meeting its requirements. From 1958 to 1963 it created its own work force from illiterates by providing both general and technical education."*²⁰⁷

The political as well as economic request of a Senegalization of staff in Senegal's administration and industry demanded skilled indigenous workers in large numbers in a relatively short period of time.²⁰⁸

Training methods went through a first standardization when the posts to be Senegalized became more sophisticated and more basic technical knowledge was needed. In cooperation with a professional training team from France, managers revised and renewed the training methods and created the 'Service Training-Promotion' in 1969. The early revision resulted in a systematic analysis of the particular training needs throughout the different departments of the mine. A special recruit program was developed including psycho-technical

²⁰⁷ Founou-Tchuigoua (1976) p. 11.

²⁰⁸ See also «*Le soleil économique*» - special supplement, 25th of June, 1977.

and professional skill tests. The program allowed to get a clear picture of the capacities of each new job applicant.

The Senegalese work force was trained according to the immediate demands of the production process (*formation sur mesure*). These demands were meticulously analyzed in small working teams of engineers and midrange managers. A former expatriate teacher explained the training methods of the work force as follows:

“It was necessary to lift an illiterate to the CAP [Certificate for Professional Capacity] for example [...] it was necessary first to get together, to know, okay, this man, what is he supposed to do? ‘What do you want from him [...] what do you want that we should teach him in order to be efficient?’ Automatically, I was told in different categories what was needed for him to know to obtain a superior category. We’ve worked in this sense!”²⁰⁹

Senior executives and midrange managers were trained in statistics and evaluation methods to be able to control the mine’s productivity and progress, as well as the administration of the stock, especially spare parts. In the following years, the directorate restructured the production process with modern technical machinery and the demands for an effective training increased.

The Senegalization process was well planned in clearly defined steps. The policy of Senegalization demanded the gradual increase of top and midrange managers on one side and the reduction of French personnel on the other. From January 1971 to January 1972, 92 French and 72 Senegalese managers in January 1971 changed to 85 French and 83 Senegalese managers in January 1972. The exact repartition of the company’s personnel is shown in the table below for January 1971 and January 1972²¹⁰:

	Jan.1 st 1971		Jan. 1 st 1972	
	Europeans	Africans	Europeans	Africans
Sen. ex.	22	3	23	3
AM5	5		6	
AM4	18	1	18	2

²⁰⁹ Original version: «Il fallait de monter d’un analphabète au CAP [Certificat d’Aptitude Professionnelle] par exemple“ [...] „il a fallu de faire d’abord que nous fassions des réunions, savoir, bon, cet homme, il sera emmené à faire quoi, vous voulez quoi de lui [...] qu’est ce que vous voulez qu’on lui apprenne pour être efficace! Automatiquement, on m’a dit, dans différentes catégories ce qu’il fallait qu’il sache pour obtenir des catégories supérieures. On a travaillé dans ce sens! » (N.L., A: 234-53).

²¹⁰ Taïba-Info, 3/72.

AM3	17	4	19	8
AM2	20	12	14	19
AM1	20	52	15	51
7 th cat.	6	42	4	48
6 th cat.	1	150		158
5 th cat.		189		202
4 th cat.		144		126
3 rd cat.		130		141
2 nd cat.		49		69
1 st cat.		12		5
total	109	788	99	832
		897		931

In 1975, the directorate hired a Senegalese engineer as the future successor for the French general director, who then took the function of delegate administrator. While the Senegalese successor was designed to rule the internal activities and control and assure the high work quality within the company and the personnel policy, the former French general director still kept the international network of customers and providers as well as the financial activities under his close control up to around 1987 /1988. He then became vice president of the board of directors (*'vice president de conseil d'administration'*). However, the newly hired Senegalese general director and the French exploitation director did not well cooperate with each other. The French exploitation director managed the work control and the personnel policy more or less without any intervention from the new Senegalese general director. The latter hardly appears in any company documents of this time period. Thus, the Senegalese general director remained much in the background until the end of the 70s when negative consequences of the promotion policy became apparent (see 7.3).

7.2.2 The era of open questioning

In 1974, the directorate initiated a further substantial amendment of the training program, based on three evaluation treatises of external experts. The treatises were thoroughly discussed among top managers and blended into a long-term application plan.²¹¹

The same year, a modern training center was built with two offices, two classrooms, one 'hall of basic experiments' and one work hall equipped with new technical devices. The directorate installed an intense program, which laid ground for a constant amelioration of the working process. The new training methods were self-perpetuating procedures, thus, designed to become a routine.

In a first phase, midrange managers and foremen underwent a particular training in observation methods. Then, these observers thoroughly analyzed each working process of each particular task and cut it down in minor steps. Each post in the company was described in terms of tasks and also the frequency necessary for a flawless production process. The resulting manuscripts were called job dossiers, easy to comprehend in order to be taught later to other employees. A job dossier was firstly done by a foreman, then passed on to the next higher superior, again revised and amended and so on. The resulting training material was again cleaned from all futile parts and details. In 1975, for example, the practical guide for the shift leader in the preparation-washer section contained the following six fractions:

- 1 Tour on the beginning of shift
- 2 Tour at the end of shift
- 3 Control list of actions the shift leader has to execute or delegate for execution.
- 4 The key issues of control
- 5 Security
- 6 Shift reports (Fill-in-forms)

The guide had a total of 27 pages, including 4 pages of forms for final shift reports. Points 1 and 2 give a detailed passageway through the production installations and name step by step each single issue that had to be set in function, controlled, or surveyed (page 2 to 6). Point 3 (page 7 to 22) lists every possible action which is included in the shift leaders' job responsibility, giving concrete answers for each step under the heading „*what can be done here?*“ For one washer basin the answer is: "*get out the big rocks and stones*" (p. 9). Point 5

²¹¹ The following information stems mainly from the ,training special, Taïba Info, June 1975.

includes security instructions and the responsibility to clean up the different locations and to return tools to their designed places (page 23). Point six contained four formularies for shift reports (page 24 to 27), which had to be filled out during and after each shift, mainly to fix records about the state of machines and tools. Special events and observations of any malfunctioning had to be marked on an extra form. The shift leader was responsible for the surveillance of 24 water pumps. In form n° 1, he had to note in which time periods each pump ran properly.

The clarity and concreteness of the given instructions enabled even inexperienced employees to learn the job in a fairly limited time. The task descriptions of jobs were renewed on a regular basis, because equipment, tools or other circumstances concerning the job had changed. Coming for a two or three-month period of practical training, students were usually asked to research a certain job and to propose corrections and amendments.²¹²

The job dossiers consumed an enormous amount of time and had to be done predominantly aside of the usual working routine in many extra hours. To give an image of the time dimension: the amount of teaching material valuable to fill an hour of training, an evaluation time of ten hours or more was needed.²¹³ Those efforts demanded for a certain period a sacrifice of the private lives of the employees involved. In retrospective, it is nevertheless a life phase often glorified in interviews.

The application of those methods and the job evaluations enabled in particular midrange managers to get a clear structure of each working process in their working domain. Thus, their professional qualification increased considerably. Superiors were well prepared to pass on the information to their subordinates. Describing these processes, they accumulated an appropriate know-how and became more aware of their responsibility in the workshop. This vast competence made them feel secure and self-confident in cooperation with their subordinates. Questions asked by workers could either be answered on the spot or by a glance into the job dossier of the issue concerned. The industrial society moved now into an era, in which questions from subordinates were particularly welcomed and encouraged. It gradually became a general consensus that critical questions would only help to find the feeble points of

²¹² An example is a report of a three-month stage of an engineer student in the mine in September 1976. The report held the objective to redefine the practical guide of a foreman in the pretreatment station of extracted raw material. The report was judged to be of low quality, because insufficient critics and suggestions for improvement were made (Doc. 22.07.76).

²¹³ Taiba-Info, 6/75, p. 5.

a working process. The transparency of professional opinions became for some years a solid frame of interaction between superiors and subordinates.²¹⁴

Each employee of the company, regardless of rank, was entrusted a certain realm of responsibility. Employees were supposed to identify themselves entirely with their work, no matter how minor it was. The motto of conduct within the company at that time was: the more the individual worker understands and is able to decide by himself the more valuable he is for the entire working process and the higher will be the work quality. The constant search for technical know-how and the ability to take over responsibility was reinforced in various ways. Workers often mentioned the achievement of an indispensable position within the team as particularly satisfying.

7.2.3 The making of managers

From 1969 on, the directorate decided to concentrate more on the training for lower midrange management positions (AM 1 - 3). Those were considered to play an important role in the near future, because they held key positions between the top management and the executive. Additionally, those positions were the first posts of responsibility to get Senegalized.

As said before, the mining company was seen as a national example of an effective training policy. One reason could be a method applied in the company called '*rapid school training*' which was particularly successful and, thus, widely recognized. Expatriates speak about this with pride and often perceive it as a success of their personal efforts. An expatriate trainer remembers:

„Many midrange managers, who are on pension now, had the chance to get their superior level thanks to this rapid school training [...] something workshop like, to be applied right on

²¹⁴ For many Senegalese employees who had professionally grown in that period, the former personnel consensus of 'open questioning' became the synonym for professional management altogether. This attitude caused great dissatisfaction in later years in collaboration with Senegalese managers (for details see chapters 8 and 9).

*the spot in calculation and in conception of a report, you see, many midrange managers went through my hands!*²¹⁵

In the early 70's, the promotion to a midrange management position demanded a period of theoretical and practical training. In later years, however, the official rule was not always respected and sometimes working experience and extraordinary work efforts sufficed for promotion. For now, we stick to the official version and later show the rather arbitrary promotion practice (see also chap. 7.3.2).

Each company department defined its own appropriate training program for skills and know-how needed in midrange management positions. Usually, the training lasted two years and covered five training section:

1. General training (mathematics, mechanics, electrical science, physics, drawing and French)
2. Technical training
3. Specialized training depending on the department
4. Training in working methods and procedures
5. Companionship.

The combination of the two training columns, theory and practice, were supposed to form a solid base for posts within midrange management. The directorate aimed to acquire managers who were capable to take over responsibility for important technical decisions, to organize complex working processes and to be able to control and supervise subordinates.²¹⁶

²¹⁵ Original version: *«Beaucoup d'agents de maîtrise qui sont maintenant des retraités on eu la chance d'avoir leur maîtrise, si tu veux, grâce a cette training scolaire rapide (et non pas eh ..), quelque chose de chantier, immédiatement utilisable dans le calcul et dans l'établissement d'un rapport, tu vois, et beaucoup d'agents de maîtrise de Taïba sont passés entre mes mains!»* (N.L., A: 141-58).

²¹⁶ It should be mentioned here, that the aim to make people responsible for their working performance at all levels was not an isolated French undertaking only in the mining company, but corresponded to similar reflections within the Senegalese state institutions. From the early 1970s on, the Senegalese government initiated local reforms for its administration system because of widespread organizational and structural problems. A main problem was that „in the rural world, people tend to consider it a substitute for colonial power which means there is a distance between the administration and the administered“ (Dia 1986: 237). The focus of seminars and workshops lay thus on two principles: devolution and decentralization. Dia explains: „devolution is justified by the fact that local authorities are conversant with the realities in those areas under their jurisdiction and can therefore take the most appropriate decision within the limits of their competence.“ The implementation of those reforms „ran into difficulties“²¹⁶. On one hand, the delegation of decision-making to a local level raised governmental anxieties to loose control, on the other hand because three centuries of colonial domination had created within the Senegalese population the habitual

At the end of the training period, the applicants had to complete a research report and to take an exam. In cooperation with the work team and the superior, an employee usually picked a current problem of the workshop for an evaluation in class. Having already a working experience, he could refer to his practical know-how while undergoing further training in a more theoretical dimension. Nevertheless, the focus was put on the practical applicability of skills and applicants only spend around 50 hours per month in class. At the end of the training period, a committee evaluated the results of those studies. The criteria for evaluation of the reports were foremost applicability and efficiency of the presented solutions.

The committee contained engineers, foremen and sometimes the French exploitation director, if he happened to be interested in the evaluated subject. The committee gave forum to discuss employee's suggestion for amelioration with the upper management. It was a consideration of the employees' ideas valorized in public by higher position holders and therefore a means of communication cutting across hierarchies. The exam procedure represented for employees an equal exchange of competence and a sign of mutual respect. Best results obtained prizes. The training center established four different levels of long-term training.²¹⁷

The constant transformation of the industrial process and new equipment demanded the regular amendment of work procedures. These changes were shrewdly assimilated in the training process by entrusting precarious issues to the next employee going on training as a research topic. Whoever was alert enough to detect serious defaults and thus initiating the improvement was usually rewarded. Everybody was asked to think independently and to show responsibility for the working process. This system must have been very successful, according to profuse declarations during interviews. Even fairly new agents quickly took on responsibility. A journalist visiting the company in 1977 described his impression:

*„In the 'flotation' work shop I met one of these youngsters. He was in his second year [of training]; K. G.J. It was Sunday. 'I replace the foreman' he said to me. And by guiding me he was giving me so profound explanations as if he had never done anything else but that.“*²¹⁸

functioning to execute orders instead of taking initiative themselves. (See also Fall 1971, cited by Hesselting 1985: 264)

²¹⁷ First level: CEP or CAP, second level: BEPC or BEP; BE1, third level: Baccalaureate (level ENTP, BT BSEC), and fourth level: IUT and similar. In 'le soleil', special supplement: 'Taïba ouvre ses portes', 25.06.77.

²¹⁸ Original version: «A l'atelier de „flottation“, j'ai rencontré un de ces jeunes. Il était en 2e année. C'était un dimanche. 'Je remplace le contremaître', m'a t-il dit. Et de me servir de guide, en

In the 'old days', superiors picked in general employees for the training program who showed the best work performance and most endeavors. To select workers for further training, superiors filled out a special questionnaire about professional and social capacities of employees. The questionnaire contained 61 items bundled in several sections, which concerned not only practical and theoretical knowledge, but also many so called soft skills. Under the heading 'ethic values', judgments had to be made about the employee's *honesty*, *loyalty*, *equity* and *punctuality*. On the final page, a conclusion had to be drawn about the most efficient further use of the worker concerned. French expatriates were particularly interested in personality traits like *temperament*, *social* and *organizational capacities* and found, apparently, imaginative and unconventional ways to test these skills. An employee remembers his rise from work category 2 to AM 2:

"I've mounted the 280 B with the Whites. They had seen how I worked. One Saturday night they wanted to go to a disco with me. [...] We've danced a lot this night. The following Monday, they called me and explained to me that they wanted to see how I freak out in a nightclub. They've seen that it's always me who was active in our group. They proposed to me the training for AM. During training already, I climbed to category 5 and I came out as AM1. Later I was the first one to be promoted to AM2. It was my temperament they liked."²¹⁹

In 1976, so within two years, a total of 125 employees had gone through a long-term training. The company's training system became an omnipresent universe imbuing all working processes. The human resources and their effective use was purported to be a constant focus of management during that period. In reality, however, in later years, many cases of midrange managers were found to be untrained, but had been promoted purely on the basis of work experience and particularly hard efforts. Apparently, superiors not always saw the necessity to send employees on training in order to promote them to management

m'administrant force explications, comme s'il n'avait jamais fait que ça» (Gabriel Jacques Gomis dans 'le soleil', supplement gratuit, 25.06.1977, p. 12).

²¹⁹ Original version: «*J'avais monté la 280B avec les blancs. Ils ont vu comment j'ai travaillé. Un samedi soir ils voulaient sortir en boîte avec moi. [...] On a beaucoup dansé cette nuit-là. Le lundi après ils m'ont appelés et ils m'ont expliqués qu'ils voulaient voir comment j'éclate en boîte. Ils ont vu que c'était toujours moi qui étais active dans notre group. Ils m'ont proposé pour la formation pour AM. Je suis monté déjà à la 5ème catégorie pendant la formation et sorti comme AM1. Plus tard j'étais le premier pour promouvoir à AM2. C'était mon tempérament qu'ils leur ont plus!*» (Jo da Silva) The employee was hired in 1974, because he played well football.

positions. The maxim was 'appropriateness' ('*sur mesure*') and meant the adaptation of personal capacities to industrial circumstances. An employee explains:

*"They see an employee who works well. They don't hesitate to promote you to midrange manager. That is why there exist at Taïba midrange managers who cannot write up a report, they exist, they exist! [...] They [the expatriates, K.K.] know those were workers, and they deserved it, they promoted them. There are a lot of, a lot of midrange managers who cannot write up a report. [...] At the times of the Whites, this, they really didn't care. The essential was that you are hard working; they recompense this. There exist a lot of midrange managers who did not do training courses."*²²⁰

In the questionnaire sample of the present study, no illiterate was able to overcome the barrier between the highest work category (7) and the lowest midrange management position (AM1). Two illiterate employees of the sample went up to work category 6. Nine employees had started in lower work categories and had achieved management positions. However, the level of school education of these employees was already relatively high at career start with a minimum of nine years of school education with one exception: one employee had only 6 years of school education (Q8). The rise in the company of those employees is, thus, the result of an underestimation of capacities at career start.

7.3 Work categories and the system of promotion

Naturally, the expatriates' promotion policy was heavily interconnected with the training policy and the system of competition. Within the years of open conflict from 1980 on, discussions frequently dealt with the changes of the promotion policy of the mine's management (then in the majority Senegalese). The crucial question was not only who had the

²²⁰

Original version: «*Ils voient un agent qui travaillait bien. Ils n'hésitaient pas à te faire agent de maîtrise, cause pour laquelle il y a même des agents de maîtrise qui sont à Taïba qui ne savent même pas rédiger des rapports, il y en a, il y en a!! [...] Ils savent c'était des travailleurs et ils méritaient ça, ils leurs ont donné ça. Il y en a beaucoup, il y a beaucoup des agents de maîtrise, qui ne savent pas rédiger des rapports. [...] Au temps des Toubabs, ça, ils en foutaient pas mal, l'essentiel est que tu es un travailleur, ils te récompensaient ça. Il y a beaucoup des agents de maîtrise qui n'ont pas fait la formation*» (A.F., B: 115-32).

potential, but also the right to be promoted, and, thus, for what (subjective or objective) criteria employees were chosen for further theoretical and practical training.

Apparently, the policy of training during the 'golden era' made the workers believe that they could rise to whatever level in hierarchy they wanted, if they only worked hard enough. In interviews, miners often cited examples of employees who had started their career within second or third category and had ended, after frequent training, and regular promotion, in midrange management. Here two examples:

"I've seen guys, who couldn't even write their names, but who had climbed up to AM1; today, this is not possible any more."²²¹

"My father started as a worker and ended in AM3, master, but he had never been to school."²²²

The conviction of infinite rise during French management among workers, made it practically impossible for Senegalese managers to compete. In the following, a close look is taken on promotion policy in the 'old days', the emergence of delicate problems, and the consequences of inapt solutions.

7.3.1 Promotion policy and work categories in documents

In 1996, the directorate applied the following code of standards in the mining company:²²³

Unskilled worker:	1 st category	Ordinary maneuver
	2 nd cat.	Ordinary maneuver with physical or special efforts

²²¹ Original version: «*J'ai vu des gars qui ne pouvait même pas écrire leur nom et qui sont aller jusqu'à AM1, mais maintenant ce n'est plus possible!*» (Q9, 4/64).

²²² Original version: «*Mon père a commencé comme ouvrier et terminé avec AM3, contremaître chef, mais il n'a jamais fait des études*» (Q61, 6/93).

²²³ The following discussion is based on a manuscript on work categories used in the company. The personnel manager's assistant handed it to me. The manuscript of 32 pages was - so I was told - an appendix of the Senegalese law of employment. Since the manuscript was undated, it is hard to tell when it was actually produced. However, important here is that it was still in use in 1996 (doc. 00.00.95).

	3 rd cat.	Specialized worker, first level (OS.1)
	4 th cat.	Specialized worker, 2nd level (OS. 2)
	5 th cat.	Professional worker, first level (OP. 1)
	6 th cat.	Professional worker, 2nd level (OP. 2)
	7 th cat.	Professional worker, capacity of initiative
Middle management:	AM 1	Agent of mastery, responsible for ordinary work teams
	AM 2	Agent of mastery, responsible for specialized work teams
	AM 3	Agent of mastery, responsible for specialized work teams; can be responsible for AM 1 and AM2
	AM 4	Agent of mastery, direct assistant of an engineer or top manager, initiative for amendments in work process
	AM 5	Agent of mastery, direct assistant and generally successor of top manager, deputy in his absence
Top management	‘Cadre’	department manager or above, senior executives

Each work category was well-defined in tasks and skills. To show the difference between the task catalogues of one category to the next higher one, an example will be given. The 2nd category of unskilled workers, for instance, was defined as such:

- „Physically working and specialized laborer participating on the production process:
Physically working laborer executing heavy work; specialized worker executing simple jobs alone or in companionship of other workers [...]. Laborer serving as assistant workers and workers in the following jobs [a selection of the list is cited]:*
- *Sorter*
 - *Road-mender*
 - *Switchman*
 - *Gate man*
 - *Permanent janitor*
 - *Dislodger of electric cables of draglines and mechanical digger*
 - *Holder of hammer or jackhammer*
 - *Stonebreaker*
 - *Stone remover*
 - *Sampling worker exclusively charged to take samples on the vibrating sieve of a drilling installation and to bring them to the laboratory*
 - *Assistant of a rail layer*
 - *Worker on the heater /boiling installation*
 - *Seaman apprentice: cleaning of engines, usage of the rudimentary installations for fitting out*
 - *Floor worker, executing all tasks to maintain and clean the work site*

- *Stock worker, assuring the distribution of material under supervision of a stock-controller assistant.*"²²⁴

The catalogue gives a relatively clear picture of the job realm designed for 2nd category within the echelon of unskilled work. The following category (3rd cat.) was quite impressively called '*first level of specialized worker*', but was in fact in most tasks only a slight extension of the ones listed in 2nd category. The 3rd category was defined as such:

„A worker who knows only one part of a profession for which a particular training is needed in theory and/or practice, who has not the same skills and output as the professional worker such as [a selection]:

- *Punch card operator*
- *Rail layer of less than 35 kg*
- *Welder starting the job (less than a year)*
- *Operator of simple machines without know-how of repair or maintenance*
- *Lubricator*
- *Stonebreaker*
- *Worker charged with tubular material* "²²⁵

²²⁴ Original version: «*Manœuvre de force et manœuvre spécialisé participant à la production: Manœuvre de force exécutant de gros travaux; manœuvre spécialisé exécutant seul ou en compagnie d'ouvriers des travaux simples n'exigeant qu'une mise au courant sommaire et entrant dans le cycle des fabrications. Travailleur servant des aide-ouvriers et ouvriers, tels que: trieur/ cantonnier/ aiguilleur/ garde-barrière/ gardien permanent/ déplaceur de câbles électriques, de draglines et de pelles mécaniques/ teneur de marteau ou brise béton/ casseur/ dégageur de pierres/ dégageur de falaises à ciel ouvert, après minage/ abatteur de pierres à ciel ouvert/ manœuvre à l'échantillonnage chargé exclusivement de la prise des échantillons sur le tamis vibrant d'un appareil de forage pour les porter au laboratoire/ aide-poseur de voies/ manœuvre à la chaufferie/ matelot: Propreté des engins, emploi des appareils rudimentaires d'armement/ manœuvre de plancher exécutant out les travaux de manutention et de nettoyage du chantier ainsi que les travaux ne nécessitant que l'utilisation de l'outillage à main courant/ manœuvre de magasin de chantier assurant la distribution du matériel sous les ordres d'un aide-magasinier*» (doc. 00.00.95, without date: classification des ouvriers).

²²⁵ Original version: «*Travailleur connaissant une partie seulement d'un métier nécessitant une certaine formation préalable acquise par l'apprentissage ou la pratique du métier, ne possédant pas l'habileté et le rendement exigés des ouvriers professionnels, tels que: aide-boutefeu/ perforateur/ poseur de voies de moins 35 kgs/ soudeur débutant dans le métier (moins d'un an)/ conducteur d'appareils simples n'assurant ni dépannage, ni entretien/ graisseur/ abatteur de pierres en galerie/ aide-accrocheur ou homme de clés: ouvrier chargé des manœuvres des matériels tubulaires sur le plancher et éventuellement à la plate-forme d'accrochage: capable en outre d'effectuer les manœuvre de clés spéciales principales à action mécanique. Participe aux travaux de montage et de démontage des installations de chantier/ aide-ouvrier foreur occupant un emploi spécialisé sur appareils mécaniques légers, participe aux travaux de montage et de démontage des installations de chantier/ ouvrier capable d'exécuter des trous à la tarière et à la sondeuse à main. Participe aux travaux de montage et de démontage des installations de chantier:*

As stated in the official definition for the 3rd category, a theoretical and / or practical training was needed. This training was supposed to be given in small seminars on the work site. For instance, to become lubricator of 3rd category, workers were supposed to attend a course of two hours. In practice, however, this training was often judged to be futile, because workers had enough working experience and / or had taken initiative to train themselves on needed skills.

7.3.2 Promotion steps in practice

Although the company's official promotion policy was defined in clear and elaborated terms, company documents prove indeed that the daily promotion practice often followed differing logics.

In January 1977, the top management created a section called 'forward-looking management'.²²⁶ Experienced specialists from France ran the new section up to July 1977. Aligned to this section was the system of recruitment, already led by two Senegalese employees at the time. At that moment, the company lacked a specialized section for personal management since over 10 years. Instead, the various different tasks of personal management were scattered over three sub-units, namely the training center, the accountancy, and the administration office. Furthermore, the exploitation director often took decisions on recruitment, promotion, and training without any strict criteria.

In the end of the 70's, the extensive policy of upgrading caused irritation and astonishment among staff members of the company's Parisian appendix. An analysis by SOFREMINES in April 1979 proved a "*swelling of grades for the whole of the enterprise*".²²⁷ The Senegalese general director asked the French top management to take a stand on this

aide-ouvrier SOS, chargé des manutentions et des manipulations des matériels du Service des Opérations Spéciales. Participe aux travaux de montage et de démontage des installations de chantier/ aide-mécanicien sondeur: ouvrier placé sous les ordres effectuant des travaux d'entretien courant, pouvant également être appelé à remplacer un homme de clés en cas de défaillance d'un membre d'une équipe. Participe aux travaux de montage et de démontage des installations de chantier/ chef de manœuvres assurant la surveillance d'une équipe de manœuvres composée de 5 à 12 travailleurs» (ibid.).

²²⁶ Original version 'gestion prévisionnelle' (doc. 19.02.77).

²²⁷ Original version: «*Une enflure des grades pour l'ensemble de l'entreprise*» (doc. 06.04.1979).

situation and to analyze carefully the promotion practice within the last eight years. In April 1979, in an internal document the situation was summarized as such:

"A global augmentation of staff cannot be fully explained by the installation of supplementary equipment, neither by a significant increase of the global quality of the performance. [...] Thus, there is an accumulation of negative effects in respect to the productivity and in respect to the wage cost per hour, all this by having granted in five years a billion CFA investment. We know very well that partial explanations can be given among which some are convincing. None the less, the global tendency is a reduction of TAÏBA's capacity for competition, because our concurrence on the international scenery are not in the same situation: by contrast, we observe in the industrialized countries, with which we are confronted, that an annual growths of 3 to 4% does not lead to an increase of staff and this situation therefore permits an amelioration of salaries without putting the balance of the enterprise in danger on a medium-term basis."²²⁸

In the analysis of the time period between December 1976 and April 1979, the results revealed the following increase of staff:

top managers	52% (+14)
AM	16% (+27)
Professional workers	23% (+128)

The percentage of midrange and top managers in relation to the entire staff had increased from 16.4 % in end of 1974 to 18.1% in end of 1978. In four years, an increase of 1.7% of managers had been established.²²⁹ The inflation of staff was partly due to a restructuring of the technical installation, which had evoked the creation of new jobs. But a

²²⁸ Original version: «Une augmentation globale des effectifs, la mise en place de compléments d'équipements ne l'expliquant pas en totalité, non plus qu'une augmentation significative de la qualité globale des prestations. [...] Il y a donc accumulation d'effets négatifs au niveau de la productivité et au niveau du coût salarial horaire, tout en ayant consenti en cinq ans un investissement de l'ordre du milliard CFA. Nous savons très bien que des explications partielles peuvent être données, dont certaines sont pertinentes. Il n'empêche que la tendance globale est une réduction de la compétitivité de TAÏBA, car nos concurrents, au plan international, ne sont pas dans la même situation: il est au contraire constaté dans les pays industrialisés avec lesquels nous sommes confrontés qu'un taux de croissance de 3 à 4% l'an n'entraîne pas de renforcement d'effectifs et permet donc d'accepter une amélioration des salaires sans mettre en péril l'équilibre à moyen terme de l'entreprise» (doc. 06.04.1979).

²²⁹ In numbers: 188 employees in midrange and top management end of 1974 with a total of 1149 employees, 232 managers end of 1978 with a total of 1284 employees (doc. 06.04.1979).

larger proportion of the increase remained illogical to the senior executives of the Parisian office.

Furthermore, among a total of 128 employees in midrange management positions, almost one third (40 = 31.3 %) were found to not have attended any training. In other words, those employees had been promoted without the officially obligatory two years training period. Nine of those 40 untrained midrange managers were classified as ‘*not trainable*’, presumably making allusion to the missing basic school education of those employees and possibly their illiteracy.²³⁰ This fact unveiled the sometimes arbitrary promotion from the early 70’s on. The report pointed out the extensive upgrading of particularly elder miners with over ten years of employment. We listen to a statement in the SOFREMINES report:

„The capacities and the general basic knowledge of the older workers are feeble in average. [...] It exists an over-classification of the group of ‘professional workers’ by promotion of the elder workers without any control of qualification.. [...] Their turn-over is almost zero.“²³¹

From 1977 on, the company ceased to recruited illiterate workers. Instead, the aspirant needed at least the CAP (‘certificate of professional capacity’) as level of instruction. Nevertheless, the over-classification was also observed for the group of workers who had been employed after 1976, but for different reasons. It was pointed out that the better instructed younger workers (CAP level minimum) could have been employed on 4th category, according to the lower job complexities, instead of 5th category in the beginning of their career.²³² The general conclusion was that the amount of employees did not correspond to the actual necessity of the company and, additionally, the qualification and professional capacity of employees did in tendency not reflect their higher grades. The analysis showed that French

²³⁰ Doc. 08.06.79, p 7. Four years later, this proportion had decreased to 2% (ESGE-report, doc. 00.11.83, p. 23.)

²³¹ Original version: «*Le niveau moyen des aptitudes et le niveau moyen de connaissances générales de base de ces ouvriers anciens sont faible [...] Il y a surclassification du personnel „ouvriers professionnels“ par promotion d’ouvriers anciens sans contrôle de qualification [...]. Leur turn-over est presque nul*» (doc. 01.05.79, p.3).

²³² Original version: «*Il y a surclassification du personnel ‘ouvriers professionnels’ par affectation de CAPistes nouvellement recrutés à des postes de qualification modeste (qui pourraient être classés en catégorie 4 au lieu de la catégorie 5 affectée aux titulaires du CAP)*» (doc. 01.05.79, p. 2). It is interesting to note that CAP holders were indeed qualified at least for 5th category in the company manuscript ‘workers’ classification’ (doc. 00.00.95). The recommendation to hire CAP graduated employees on 4th category instead of 5th category, thus, means degrading the qualification.

managers often used promotion as a tool to motivate their subordinates by ignoring their actual realm of capacities.

This policy was judged to be a predicament for the company's progress in the near future as well as on a long-term basis because of high personnel cost with insufficient productivity.

7.3.3 Installing promotion barriers

As a consequence of the analysis in 1979, numerous recommendations were made to meet this situation. The first recommendation was: seniority cannot be a criterion for promotion. The aim was that *„the structure of staff categories has to foresee maximum percentages (or the amount in absolute numbers).“*²³³ Further was planned to *„slow down the staff's inflation“*.²³⁴

The French exploitation director proposed several interventions to streamline the pyramid of categories. Having installed the former policy of easy and unbureaucratic promotion, the experienced French exploitation director insightfully foresaw the possible negative consequences on a very early stage and uttered a pertinent warning:

„Theoretically we are capable to adapt any of those methods. The essential problem is to know how our policy will be perceived. Actually, the staff is used to a certain rate of promotion and a regression will cause perturbations within the month or months, which follow the announcement of our policy. Explanation: - the individual expectations. Everyone aspires a rapid progression. - The procedure of participation of the entire middle management on the grading (notation), augmentation and promotion: this evokes on the basis unjustified requests, whereas their refusal evokes frustrations.

Personal conclusions: - Avoid recruiting from higher levels. But it is so much more attempting, for the S.E.M for instance, to recruit a B.E.P with experience instead of training an unskilled worker or even a specialized worker. - Inform permanently the staff about the rules of the game: meetings of managers, TAÏBA INFO, meetings of unionists. [...] But it is to

²³³ Original version: «*La structure en catégorie de personnel faut faire l'objet de pourcentages maximums (ou de nombres en valeur absolue)*» (doc. 06.04.79).

²³⁴ Original version: «*freiner l'inflation des effectifs*» (ibid.).

fear that a rigidity from our side concerning the classification will lead to a lack of flexibility and good will on the side of the workers concerning the execution of tasks which do not clearly belong to their function. ²³⁵

The directorate decided to reduce the group of ‘professional workers’ depicted as the core problem. Up to 1979, the creation of new jobs was the responsibility of each department director independently. From 1980 on, the general director accorded this right exclusively to the exploitation director. To rise from one category to another demanded now to take ‘professional exams’. Additionally, in most categories²³⁶ the employee was now obliged to change the job in order to be promoted. It was not possible any more, as in previous years, to get upgraded purely by the acquisition of a profound working experience. The SOFREMINES report recommended the reduction of training investments for workers on a long-term basis.²³⁷ In 1979, only three employees were promoted from 7th work category to the first midrange management position (AM1).²³⁸ Additionally, from then on permanent employees were more often and more easily dismissed for rather vague explanation of „*personal reasons*“.²³⁹

An increasing number of young professionals were employed to take part in the internal training as a preparation for the desired midrange management positions. Fear spread among elders that they would be left behind with all their acquired work experience. The limit of internal training and recruitment became evident to the elder workforce of lower echelons (cat. of workers 1 to 7). Many of them had gone through an impressive career in the past and

²³⁵ Original version: «*Le problème essentiel est de savoir comment sera perçue notre politique. En effet, le personnel est habitué à un certain taux de promotion et un „resserrement“ causerait des perturbations dans le ou les mois qui suivent l’annonce des promotions. Explication: - les attentes individuelles. Chacun aspire à une progression rapide. - La procédure de participation de toute la maîtrise aux notations, augmentations et promotions: elle provoque à la base des demandes non justifiées dont le refus provoque des frustrations. Conclusions personnelles: - Eviter de recruter à des niveaux élevés. Mais c’est tellement plus tentant, pour le S.E.M. par exemple, de recruter un B.E.P. expérimenté que de former un manœuvre ou même un O.S. - Informer en permanence le personnel des règles du jeu: réunion de dirigeants, TAÏBA INFO, réunions de délégués. [...] Mais il faut sans doute craindre qu’une rigidité de notre part en matière de classification n’entraîne de la part du personnel un manque de souplesse et de bonne volonté pour effectuer des tâches ne ressortissant pas clairement de sa fonction.*» (Doc. 12.3.80)

²³⁶ Namely from OS2 to OP1, from OP2 to OP3, and from OP to AM.

²³⁷ The recommendation was to remain the annual amount of 100 Mio. Fcfa for 1979, but to reduce to 70 Mio. Fcfa from 1980 to 1982, and to reduce even further from then on (doc. 08.06.79, p. 13).

²³⁸ In 1980, however, 16 employees were again foreseen for promotion to AM 1, 5 climbed one step ahead within midrange management (3 employees advanced from AM1 to AM2, one from AM2 to AM3, and one AM3 to AM4) (doc.07.02.80).

²³⁹ Doc. 18.06.80.

were accustomed to regular promotion. To fight these new threatening tendencies, an association "the elder of Taïba" was founded in July 1978.²⁴⁰ From then on, regular reunions were held to observe and discuss the rapid changes. In a letter of April 1979, the elders' concern was expressed to the board of directors as such:

„The personnel delegates expressed their dissatisfaction that the elders of Taïba are somehow neglected in the allocation of promotion and that they are in general not promoted or very little. To be precise, they feel underestimated by the recruitment of the groups designed for training to achieve the level of mastery (maîtrise), in particular the constitution of group 9. In fact, the elders in Taïba are very anxious to see the newly recruited for group 9 who come - so they think - to 'snatch away' their places.“²⁴¹

The impromptu assurance given by the exploitation director that the majority of the training participants would be internal recruitment could not sooth down the growing worries. The elders' anxiety was, in fact not a false impression. Only two months later top managers came to the following conclusion:

“We have to decide to recruit from this summer on agents with university degrees of technology and for the composition of group 9.“²⁴²

Numerous cases like the following might have existed at the time:

“The Whites had promised to me that I would do the mastery in '79, but in 78 the [expatriate] jobs were given to Senegalese, and it was over! The biggest mistake of Taïba was to Senegalize the jobs. [...] To on training [today] you have to be their buddy, you have to talk to them, they have to like you. I don't want to stay any more. I want to do mechanics in ships.

²⁴⁰ Doc. 01.09.1978.

²⁴¹ Original version: «Les délégués du personnel ont exprimé leur mécontentement du fait que les Anciens de Taïba sont quelque peu négligés dans l'attribution des promotions et que d'une manière générale ils n'évoluent pas ou très peu. Plus précisément ils s'estiment lésés dans la sélection des groupes qui entrent en formation en vue de l'accès à la maîtrise, notamment dans la constitution du groupe 9. En effet, les anciens de Taïba se sont beaucoup inquiétés de voir arriver de nouvelles recrues destinées au groupe 9 qui viennent - pensent-ils - leur „souffler“ la place» (Taïba-Info, 4/79).

²⁴² Original version: «Nous devons décider dès cet été des recrutements de DUT [diplôme universitaire de technologie] et de la composition du groupe 9 » (doc. 26.06.79).

Since 18 years I was not promoted. They block the people in Taïba. I want to be dismissed. It's a work where you cannot get promoted."²⁴³

The strike of the dragline conductors end of 1979, as well as the strike of the lorry conductors a short while later (exact date could not be found), was a clear indication for the rising dissatisfaction among workers and for a changing atmosphere within the company.²⁴⁴

At the end of 1980, the total number of staff had diminished slightly (- 5) and the policy of renewing contracts instead of recruiting new employees had at first succeeded.²⁴⁵ In December 1982, however, the following demand appeared in the trade union's catalogue of claims in the dawn of the June-strike in 1983:

„4 *development of the internal promotion in case of vacancy or creation of new jobs.*"²⁴⁶

The cited demand shows that the directors' effort to train present staff rather than to hire new personnel was either not apparent for employees or it had considerably diminished after its first accomplishment.

The strike catalogue in 1982 mentioned several other claims concerning the organization of categories and the system of promotion (claims n° 10, 18, 35, and 44) showing the growing dissatisfaction with the new frame of action. During the periods of great conflict and strikes, foremost during the year 1983, those claims came out of focus, because the trade unionists had decided to concentrate on other, more concrete aspects with clear evidence of injustice.²⁴⁷

It is important to emphasize that the new restrictions for promotion were decided still under French management. It was not - to the contrary of the general assumption of my

²⁴³ Im Original: «*Les toubabs m'ont promis que je vais faire la maîtrise à 79, mais en 78 les postes étaient donné aux sénégalais, et c'était fini! La plus grande erreur de Taïba était de sénégaliser les postes! [...] Pour aller à la formation [aujourd'hui] il faut être leur copain, il faut parler avec eux, il faut leurs plaire. Je ne veux plus rester. Je veux faire la mécanique dans les bateaux! Depuis 18 ans on m'a pas avancé. On bloque les gens à Taïba. Je veux qu'on me licence, c'est un travail ou on n'avance pas*» (Q19, 5/70).

²⁴⁴ The exact background of this strike is unknown to the author.

²⁴⁵ Original version: «*Par rapport au nombre d'agents recrutés (59) le nombre de contrats renouvelés est considérable (49) surtout si l'on se refera à la période précédente (63 contrats renouvelés pour 127 agents recrutés de Mai 79 à Mai 80). En pourcentage on obtient 83% contre 49% pour la période antérieure*» (doc. 15.01.81).

²⁴⁶ Original version: «*4 - Développement de la promotion interne dans le cas de la vacance ou de la création des postes (Art. 13)*» (doc. 19.12.82).

²⁴⁷ On this point see chap. 8.2.

Senegalese interview partners in 1996 - the initiative of Senegalese management. The installation of promotion barriers became a necessity after an extensive and misled upgrading during French management. The Senegalese managers were - after the departure of the majority of French managers in the early 80's - only the unfortunate new leaders, designed to enforce the '*new rules of the game*' and to clean up the French snafu.

The former promotion practice was intelligently used to build a firm bondage between French expatriates and Senegalese employees. Despite of the mentioned weaknesses, the regular reinforcement of a high work motivation by promotion was nevertheless - judged in retrospective - far more supportive for company climate than the personnel policy which followed.

7.4 Workers indebtedness and its roots

The following sub-chapter is dedicated to the most existential problem of the great majority of the company's staff for over three decades. We first listen to the judgment of the Senegalese company doctor, who was in permanent contact with the employees' personal worries since his arrival in July 1980:

*“If I look at the dimensions, the amount of family members... I have some knowledge of the peoples' resources. I know what they earn. So, between the expenses and the gains, if there is an inequality it's not working, it's not possible.”*²⁴⁸

The financial responsibilities of Senegalese employees to their sometimes excessive number of adepts were indeed one aspect of the problem. But – as we will see in the analysis below – the issue was far more complicated than the above assumption purports. For an introduction, it is useful to apply a local perspective on money exchange habits.

A well-known Wolof proverb says: “to give increases your prosperity”.²⁴⁹ It represents a firm conviction enshrined into the beliefs of Senegalese society.²⁵⁰ The underlying ideology

²⁴⁸ Original version: «*Quand je vois souvent la dimension, la taille des familles... J'ai à peu près une idée des revenus des gens. Je sais ce qu'ils gagnent. Donc, entre les charges et les recettes quand il y a un déséquilibre ça ne peut pas aller, c'est pas possible!*» (Company doctor II, A: 180-9).

here means: what you give away to people will come back eventually in one way or the other to your benefit. The fact of being rich or poor is, according to Senegalese beliefs, rather a choice of God, a fate, and to a lesser extent under individual control.²⁵¹ Therefore, it is a societal consensus that a rich person or institution is expected to give to others. If this expectation is not fulfilled, the society can devalue the person or institution. A negative judgment leads to a bad reputation, which again can cause a social marginalization.

Giving money to others is not only seen as a duty or a social necessity, but is also a matter of honor and often an internal need of Senegalese people.²⁵² Giving money deserves great respect and is, thus, highly rewarded with social prestige. Lending money on the other hand from others has nothing shameful, by contrast, it means to augment personal alignments, in other words to strengthen ones own social integration.

In the small mining town MBoro, I discussed the widespread giving and lending habits and tried to filter out some money circulation principles. People seem to have developed strategies and tacitly accepted rules in this respect. Being asked for money by relatives, neighbors, or acquaintances is a common phenomenon and taken into account in daily life. According to my conversation partners, people in MBoro tend to leave their house with no or little money in their pockets. Usually the taken amount represents little more than the sum they knowingly will need. The rest is then to give away in case a person will ask for money.

7.4.1 The employees' financial realities

In discussions, interviews, and questionnaires, workers often mentioned the poor financial situations of the staff in general, but of the workers (categories 1 to 7) in particular. Usually, Senegalese employees of lower echelons blame the bad Senegalese management for this situation.

²⁴⁹ Original version: "*Joxé dafay xall wërsëg*", literally: "To give increases good luck / prosperity".

²⁵⁰ Although, there might exist regional differences in money dealing habits correspondent to the local circumstances of pecuniary resources no significant variance worth mentioning for the context of the present study could be found. In small villages in the countryside far from salary providers or large market places, the principles of the money circulation system may be the same, but less frequently practiced in comparison to urban centers.

²⁵¹ See also the preface of this work.

²⁵² Brilliantly pictured by Aminata Sow Fall (1979) in '*La grève des battus*'.

The analysis of company documents on this issue shows that a growing indebtedness became apparent long before the Senegalese management took over. The following discussion shows, that the problem was not only widely ignored by the French senior executives, but was evoked and aggravated. On one hand, the rather careless giving and lending policy of French managers misled workers in their judgment of financial possibilities. On the other hand, the French senior executives simply disrespected the Senegalese law, which clearly foresees the obligatory payment of one third of an employee's net income regardless of debts.

It is unlikely, that the French management drew the work force intentionally into heavy debts. Nevertheless, it was in their interest and suited their purpose to keep the personnel strongly aligned to the mining company. The directorate knew the personnel's growing indebtedness latest in May 1976. As years went by, a growing number of employees only worked for the repayment of increasing debts and ended up with no cash money at the end of a working month. The first 'zero pay slips'²⁵³ appeared in the company in mid 70's. Being a singular phenomenon at first, it became more frequent during the next two decades.

Although strong lending restrictions were installed in the 80's to reduce the workers indebtedness, the problem could obviously not be solved. In 1990, the workers indebtedness was a normal phenomenon and so widespread that the company journal published regularly cartoons picturing the situation. The one below was published in July 1990.

²⁵³ The term 'zero pay slips' is the humble translation for the famous and widely discussed 'bulletins nul'. It indicates the number '0' marked on the result line on the bottom of a pay slip. In this case the entire amount of the employee's net income was kept in for refund rates or alimentary goods automatically delivered each month by the company cooperative.

CONJONCTURE



*"Mister Director, could you do me a favor?" <> "Yes, but what?" <
"I want you to lend me my salaries of the next two months!"*

During field research in 1995/96, many employees mentioned the 'zero pay slip' as a common occurrence among employees. In questionnaires, four employees of the sample (n = 60) deliberately admitted that they regularly receive a 'zero pay slip'. A miner of 7th category, hired in June 1973, made the following statement:

„The workers are all indebted. If one observes carefully, we are all living by credits!“²⁵⁴

A Senegalese manager (AM 4), who had through his position a better overview of the employee's financial situation, had observed:

²⁵⁴ Original version: «Les travailleurs sont tous endettés. Si on regarde bien, nous vivons de crédit» (Q24, 6/73).

"200 - 300 workers get [monthly] a zero pay slip; one out of three is bukiman"²⁵⁵

Employees gave a number of reasons for this situation. Some clearly connected the phenomenon with the departure of the French expatriates. Very few were conscious that the money policy of the French senior executives gradually led to heavy indebtedness. However, it should be mentioned that the Senegalese management was equally not able, although truthfully trying, to find a satisfying and sustainable solution.

Before we proceed to the conglomeration of various generating factors in this respect, we take a look on the salary basis at the time to get a clearer picture of the money dimensions involved. The list below shows the income of Senegalese employees, paid on a monthly basis (*'les mensuels'* M1 to M7) in February 1977, and three years later in August 1980 (in FCFA):
 256

work category	1977	1980
	gross income	net income
M1	25.901	29.194
M2	30.092	33.129
M3	32.944	36.036
M4	40.278	41.878
M5	45.232	44.407
M6	50.108	50.452
M7	60.509	60.610
AM 1	64.143	70.587
AM 2	77.791	85.939
AM 3	91.740	100.059
AM 4	103.427	114.690
AM 5	???	115.487

The list shown above can only give a basic idea of the actual salaries paid to employees. In reality, apparently, each salary was the result of the individual interpretations and negotiations about working conditions and qualification between an employee and his expatriate superior. It also reflected in a way the relationship between the two. Some salaries

²⁵⁵ Original version: «200 à 300 travailleurs reçoivent des bulletins nul, un sur trois est bukiman!» (Q37, 4/76). The meaning of the term 'bukiman' is explained in detail in chap. 7.4.1 G.

²⁵⁶ Doc. 28.02.1977 and doc. 31.08.1980.

went way beyond the salary basis shown in the list, sometimes extending the limit of the next higher category.²⁵⁷

The shift workers were paid per hour. Their monthly wage amount heavily depended on the number of extra hours, night shifts, and weekend and holyday shifts. Fortunately, one shift worker kept a number of pay slips during his career from 1957 to 1982 and was pleased by the interest I took in them. He kindly allowed me to copy them. He was hired in work category 3 for shift workers (H3) and was promoted only once in 1977 to H4. Some of the basic elements of his pay slips are summarized in the table below:

month	gross salary	net salary	The '15th'	total hours	hours / week	hourly wage	average wage /h	salary augment. %
H3 11.1963	14.704	14.243	5.000	216	50,23	55,75	68,07	0
11.1964	13.257	12.836	5.000	208	48,37	55,75	63,73	0
05.1966	9.840	9.538	5.000	188	43,73	55,75	52,34	0
07.1966	15.418	17.530	-----	210	48,83	55,75	73,41	0
02.1968	18,652	12,215	5.000	208	48,37	60,00	89,67	7,6
02.1969	illegible		5.000	216	50,23	68,35		
07.1974	10.604	10.651	-----	56	-----	95,91	189,35	40,3
10.1975	41.344	44.226	8.000	192	44,65	159,50	215,33	66,3
12.1976	59.643	62.947	10.000	192	44,65	171,73	310,64	7,6
H4 07.1977	86.687	89.711	10.000	200	46,51	186,30	433,43	8,4
08.1978	59.179	61.049	10.000	208	48,37	213,00	284,51	14,3
05.1979	72.668	74.636	7.000	184	42,79	256,95	394,93	20,6
07.1979	70.978	73.204	10.000	200	46,51	256,95	354,89	0
??.81 ²⁵⁸	??	??	??	??	??	306,50	??	19,2
11.1982	84.363	93.387	7.000	135	31,39	314,87	624,91	2,7

These payslips give insight into the salary policy in those years. It is interesting to note that there was no wage increase in the early 1960s. The wage of a normal working hour remained on the same level (55.75 FCFA) until – at least – July 1966. Thus, the era of the U.S. management (Jan. 1963 to Dec. 1964) did not seem to have any positive impact on salaries, contrasting some workers' conviction on that point. Only in the 70s, salaries soared

²⁵⁷ We can only speculate that firm loyalty and work devotion must have played a determinant role.

²⁵⁸ Doc. 21.01.82. It was a letter of the General Director to this employee informing him on the salary increase.

in correspondence to production results. In 1978, the basic salary in the mining company was composed of the following three elements:

- 1° The basic salary: the legal minimum defined by the state in the law of employment for each work category (*'salaire de base'*)
- 2° The bonus: the augmentation defined by the company each year for each category above the legal minimum (*'sursalaire'*); and
- 3° Six extra hours with an extra payment of 10% (*'forfait 6 heures supplémentaires'*).²⁵⁹

From its foundation on, the working schedule in the company was 48 hours per week instead of the legally stipulated 40 hours weekly. The top management sought the official permission from Senegalese authorities at least twice in the 70s.²⁶⁰ In 1976, the weekly working hours were reduced from 48 to 46. The six hours over the legal amount were remunerated with an additional 10% of the payment for a normal working hour.²⁶¹ Further, the company increased the basic salaries each year. The Senegalese state, by contrast, had augmented the salaries only every three to five years.

On numerous occasions, the directorate pointed out to the staff as well as through journalists and through hearsay to the exterior that the salaries were well above the legal minimum and were, additionally, higher in comparison with salaries in other large Senegalese enterprises. The fabulous advantages granted to company adherents got widely known. In the end 70's, the *'Taibaciens'* had earned the reputation to be the best qualified, paid, and treated work force in Senegal.

The indebtedness of the mine's staff is the result of a variety of intermingled factors. I arrived at the following list of seven factors, which drew the work force gradually in a disastrous financial situation:

- A) Allowances and gratification
- B) Advances
- C) The workers' coop-shop
- D) The medical insurance
- E) Creation of a take-mentality

²⁵⁹ Taiba-Info 06/78.

²⁶⁰ Letter to the ministry of public function, work and employment in February 1972 (doc. 05.02.72); letter from the same ministry to the exploitation director in January 1975 (doc. 23.01.1975).

²⁶¹ See also discussion on incorrect remuneration in chap. 8.2.1.

F) Used material

G) "Bukiman"

Although the company policy of points A to D was outlined in detail in several series of the company journal in 1978, it is questionable how far this specialist knowledge could travel, taking into consideration that illiteracy was still common among the personnel in those days. It is more likely that these factors caused a tremendous confusion among the work force.

The most devastating effect, however, was the workers' conviction of infinite resources. The frequent habit of many expatriates to make money gifts had presumably strengthened the impression that workers could get hold on cash money whenever necessary. From a certain moment on, employees must have started to count definitely on those extra amounts. Two following statements confirm this impression:

„There was honesty! What you work is what you get, there was the merit, loads of allowances! Today it's the friendship or parental relations to the boss!"²⁶²

"It went really well, fantastic! Every six months you had a' bonus' [actually: 'above salary'], it was easy to get advances. The Whites felt responsible. They were willing to sort out the workers' problems. They judge the worker by what he deserves!"²⁶³

Expectantly, the speaker of the last citation mixed up the regular monthly bonus ('sursalaire' = literally 'additional salary' or 'above salary') with the biannual production bonus, which shows well his confusion with these terms. Each factor will be explained in detail in the subchapters below.

²⁶² Original version: «[il y avait] l'honnêteté! Tous que tu travail ils te donnent, il y avait le mérite, les sursalaires en pagaille. Aujourd'hui c'est l'amitié ou les parentés avec le chef!» (Q27, 2/74).

²⁶³ Original version: «Ca marchait très bien, formidable! Chaque 6 mois tu avais un sursalaire, il y'avait facilité d'avoir de prêts. Les Blancs étaient disponibles. Ils étaient prêts à régler les problèmes des travailleurs. Ils jugent le travailleur selon son mérite» (Q44, 3/78).

A) Allowances and Gratifications

From the company's foundation on, the directorate had gradually installed more and more allowances and gratifications.

Extra payment was granted to the employee in certain situations or for different aspects of work performance. Some of them were granted only once and on singular occasions, others were granted on a regular basis. Gratifications often represented the communal efforts of the employee's department or workshop. The following list represents a selection of 17 gratifications granted in 1978:²⁶⁴

1. Medal bonus	(<i>prime de médaille</i>)
2. Bonus of the economic situation later called: 2.1.- flat-rate bonus	(<i>prime conjoncturelle</i>), (<i>prime forfaitaire</i>)
3. Monthly production bonus	(<i>prime mensuelle de résultat</i>)
4. Biannual production bonus later changed to: 4.1.- annual bonus	(<i>prime semestrielle de résultat</i>) (<i>prime de fin d'année</i>)
5. Tools bonus	(<i>prime d'outillage</i>)
6. Compensation / allowance for first marriage	(<i>prime de premier mariage</i>)
7. Bonus of continuous working	(<i>prime de marche continue</i>)
8. Seniority bonus	(<i>prime d'ancienneté</i>)
9. Stand-by bonus	(<i>prime d'astrainte</i>)
10. Bonus for extra hours during night shift	(<i>prime de panier</i>)
11. Till bonus	(<i>prime de caisse</i>)
12. Alimentation bonus	(<i>prime de nourriture</i>)
13. Clothing bonus	(<i>prime de vêtements</i>)
14. Interim bonus	(<i>prime d'interim</i>)
15. Contract termination bonus	(<i>prime de fin de contrat</i>)
16. Compensation for death	(<i>indemnation en cas de décès</i>)
17. Bonus of merit	(<i>prime de merite</i>) ²⁶⁵

These gratifications meant an augmentation of the basic salary. Unfortunately, some of the gratification could turn into a trap. To get an idea of the different dimensions, some of them will be explained in greater detail below.

1. Medal bonus:

Each year on the miners' holiday 'St. Barbe'²⁶⁶, the directorate awarded medals to employees who were on service for a certain number of years: silver medal for 10 years, gold medal for 20 years, and great gold medal for 30 years.

²⁶⁴ The list is not exhaustive. In: 'Un bulletin de paie tous neuf' Taïba-Info 6/78.

²⁶⁵ Doc. 04.03.78.

2. Bonus of the economic situation

This bonus was first installed in 1975 and was changed two years later to the name ‘bonus of the operation results’ (*prime de resultats de l'exercice*). It is defined in consideration of the financial gains of the previous year. By company definition:

"It is granted to employees who have worked the entire year and who are present the first day of the month of payment."²⁶⁷

2.1 Flat-rate bonus

This allowance had been accorded to the workers in the production section and summarizes three work predicaments: dust, dirt, and production. This allowance is not based on the basic salary of each employee individual, but is calculated on the basic salary of 4th category, which was 2.430 FCFA in 1978 and had increased only to 2.585 FCFA in 1996 (ignoring the Devaluation in January 1994).

3. Monthly production bonus

In principle, the bonus system for workers was the same as the annual bonus system for expatriates (explained in chap. 7.1.2 C), but only on a monthly basis. The bonus is attributed to employees from 1st to 7th category. It can reach from 5% to 15% with an average of 10% of the employees' salary inclusively his extra hours of work, his seniority bonus, his bonus for continuous working, and his stand-by bonus. The amount is calculated each month in correspondence to the department productivity in which the employee is working. If the department's results meet the defined previsions, the amount will be of 10%. Is the monthly result better then expected, the amount will increase accordingly with a maximum of 15%. It will equally decrease accordingly in the case of inferior performance with a minimum of 5%.

Thus, through his salary the worker felt the direct consequences of good or bad team performance and was equally able to compare it to other departments of the company.

²⁶⁶ The virgin holy Barbara died in 306 a. C. and is patron saint of artillerists, of firemen, and miners.
²⁶⁷ Original version: «*Elle est octroyée aux agents ayant travaillé l'année complète et étant présent le 1er jour du mois où cette prime sera payée*» (Taïba-Info 06/78).

4.1 Annual bonus

The biannual bonus was subsidized by the annual bonus of results in January 1976. This bonus is only paid to the employees in midrange and upper management, who do not get paid the monthly bonus, in contrary to the workers (categories 1 to 7).

The principle of the percentage calculation is the same as for the monthly bonus with a minimum of 5% and a maximum of 15% and an average of 10%. Here also, the comparison is made between defined goals and reached results. The calculation of the achieved results included a variety of different factors, which are listed below:

1. *The content of P_2O_5 of the extracted raw material;*
2. *The gravity of work accidents;*
3. *The tonnage of purchasable phosphate produced;*
4. *The removed volume of the superior sand layer;*
5. *KW/h Mine per m^3 utile terrassé à La mine*
6. *les KW/h Laverie par tonne marchande produite*
7. *les réactifs par tonne marchande produite*
8. *The extraction expenses (partly)*

The payment was split in two parts: one part was paid in June, the other part in December of each year. The annual results were usually known only in February the following year. Therefore, the amount of this bonus paid to the employees in December was based on a speculation which could differ from the actual result known in the following February.

A so-called 'even out' of payment was hence due each February. This meant, thus, an additional payment in case of an underestimation of the actual results in December. Accordingly, if the management's estimation of December was too optimistic, the employees get drawn away the overpaid amount of December from their regular salary in February. Taking into account money distribution habits in Senegalese society, it is unlikely (if not impossible) to hold back money already received in December until the following February. In practice: eventually the employee had to pay back money, which was already spent.

The principle of the percentage calculation is the same as for the monthly bonus with a minimum of 5% and a maximum of 15% and an average of 10%. Here also, the comparison is

made between defined goals and acquired results. For illustration, we take a fictional example: The annual net income for AM 2 was in 1977:

$$\begin{array}{rcl}
 68.561 \text{ FCFA} \times 12 = 822.732 \text{ FCFA} & \text{then } 5\% & = 41.136 \text{ FCFA} \\
 & \text{then } 10\% & = 82.272 \text{ FCFA} \\
 & \text{then } 15\% & = 123.408 \text{ FCFA}
 \end{array}$$

We suppose, the employee received 82.272 FCFA in December for an estimated annual bonus of 10%. In February 1978, however, the management rectifies this amount to only 8% = 65.818 FCFA. The employee, in consequence, remains involuntarily indebted to the company with 16.454 FCFA.

6. Allowance for first marriage

The allowance for first marriage²⁶⁸ represented half of the gross salary (all other allowances excluded) and was paid only once.

8. Bonus of seniority:

This bonus is given to employees after three years under permanent contract. Its amount is of 3% of the basic salary for each category individually in the fourth and fifth year. It rises 1% per year correspondent to the number of completed years from the sixth year on. In the seventh year, an employee receives thus 6% above the basic salary, in the eighth year 7% and so forth until the 16th year in which the maximum of 15% of seniority bonus is reached.

9. Bonus of stand-by duty:

Certain employees holding jobs as mechanics, drivers, supply service, and the like are regularly on stand-by duty. They get paid for each necessity of intervention the equivalent of half an hour of their normal pay.

²⁶⁸ The allowance for first marriage was installed on the 14th of May in 1974.

B) Advances

Additionally to the great variety of extra money, the French management had installed an inscrutable system of regular and exceptional advances. The financial support of the various advances, contrarily to the allowances and gratification, represented a credit, which was drawn monthly from the employee's salary. A miner comes to the following conclusion on this topic:

"The system of advances gives frustration; it maintains the debts of the workers!"²⁶⁹

Islamic and Christian holidays (Tabaski, Korité, Christmas, Easter) represented the most important advances for workers in social significance as well as in economic terms. Furthermore, exceptional advances were granted for the funeral of a close family member, for baptism, and the like.²⁷⁰ These advances were always paid, regardless of the employee's financial situation until 1980. Doubtless, these advances were one of the core elements of the growing indebtedness of the work force. The list below shows the advances Tabaski and Christmas accorded to employees from November 1974 on in connection with the basic salaries of normal shift workers in Oct. 1976:

Work category	Advance Tabaski/Christmas	Net income (Oct. 1976)	Percentage approximation
1 st category	14.000	25.901	54%
2 nd cat.	17.000	30.092	56%
3 rd cat.	17.000	32.944	51%
4 th cat.	21.000	40.278	52%
5 th cat.	21.000	45.232	46%
6 th cat.	24.000	50.108	46%
7 th cat.	24.000	60.509	40%
AM 1	27.000	64.143	42%
AM 2	33.000	77.791	42%
AM 3	36.000	91.740	39%
AM 4	36.000	103.427	35%
AM 5	???	104.254	???

²⁶⁹ Original version: «*Système de prêt donne frustration, maintenir des dettes des ouvriers!*»
²⁷⁰ Doc. 00.10.75.

The list shows that employees of the lowest work categories had the highest debit on their debt account compared to their monthly basic salary. Thus, it was for employees of low work categories much harder to keep out of an infinite accumulation of debts. Moreover, employees of lower categories tended to support more adepts with their salaries than employees of higher levels. For the 'religious' allowances, the modalities for repayment were 1/10th monthly. The employee needed, thus, ten months to efface the full amount of this allowance.

Numerous other allowances could be added for example for electric devices, cars, construction materials and the like. In the present research, I was unable to discover, what rules of repayment existed. By contrast, each case seemed to have its own particular system of repayment.

C) The workers' co-op-shop

In February 1974, the management founded a co-op shop ('*cooperative*') in cooperation with the workers' representatives. Here, the workers could get monthly basic alimentary and household items.²⁷¹ The employee had the choice to join the co-op-system by signing a contract or to take the amount in cash in the middle of the month. In 1977, the cooperative counted 900 members, almost 90% of the total staff.

A board of nine supervisors, elected among the members, ruled the cooperative. The monthly purchase of foodstuffs ran between 9 and 10 millions FCFA in 1977. The company advanced this amount with an interest rate of 5%. The initial objective was to encourage the cooperative leaders to become one day an independent organization. This plan never succeeded, because the constantly increasing indebtedness of the cooperative would not allow such a step.

The cooperative held three centers of distribution: Tivavouane, MBoro, and the living site Mbaye Mbaye. The variety of '*basic household items*' decreased over time, because of

²⁷¹ The reasons for its foundation were: «*L'éloignement de la mine des gros centres de distribution, tels que Dakar et Thiès, l'irrégularité des approvisionnements des commerçants des villages et bourgs environnants, les spéculations qui se faisaient périodiquement en cas de pénurie de denrée de grande consommation, appelaient une solution judicieuse pour le ravitaillement des travailleurs de Taïba*» (Supplément gratuit de 'le soleil économique', 25 Juin 1977).

the disastrous financial situation of most members. In mid 70's, employees could order items like cigarettes, tea, bleach for cloth washing, and stock cubes (frequently used in the Senegalese cooking). Before the 15th of the month, each member had to turn in an order list on which the items and their amount had to be marked. Around the 22nd of the month, company trucks started to deliver the ordered items to the employees' homes. According to the rules, an employee had the right to get the equivalent of one third of his salary in goods. But apparently, the majority regularly extended this amount and sometimes by large. This caused further indebtedness of the co-op-institution at the company as well as of the employees. Therefore in 1987, the Senegalese directorate decided to diminish the assortment to the following basic items: rice, tomato paste, oil, sugar, powder milk or concentrated tin milk, instant coffee, and soap.

The purpose of the co-op shop was to assure the basic monthly needs of the employee and his family. However, in the opinion of many employees during field research, the cooperative did not fulfill this purpose any more. By contrast, the growing dissatisfaction among the staff is summarized in the following statement made by a miner:

"The cooperative brings debts to the people of the company, the sense of the cooperative as a social institution has been betrayed."²⁷²

Another practice called 'Mini-Taïba' was intermingled with the procedure of the cooperative. 'Mini Taïba' was the name for the release of a portion of the monthly net income on the 15th of each month (also called 'the fifteenth', 'la quinzaine', 'l'acompte quinzaine')

This portion - „slightly above the third of the salary“²⁷³ - included the untouchable third which was supposed to be paid in any case in cash. However, this money was constantly used to pay the employee's monthly share for alimentary goods and was then directly taken from the employee's account.²⁷⁴

²⁷² Original version: «la coopérative endette les gens de la compagnie, le sens de la coopérative comme institution sociale est détournée» (Q37, 4/76).

²⁷³ Original version: «légèrement supérieur à ce tiers» (doc. 13.07.77).

²⁷⁴ For this discussion see chap. 6.3.3.

D) The medical insurance (IPM)

In 1977, the state installed and authorized an institute to supervise the medical expenses of the employees in Senegalese industry called ‘the institute of decease prevention’; short the ‘I.P.M.’ (*Institut de Prévoyance Maladie*). The conceptual frame of the I.P.M. is explained as such by the company doctor:

"I.P.M. [...] is a system of an illness insurance in a way. What's the philosophy of the I.P.M.: today your are in the need and I help you in order to be sure that tomorrow, if I may be in the same situation, you have to help me. Hence, there is a principle of solidarity and mutual help, which guides the establishment of the I.P.M. This is different from a private insurance where you pay a price for a certain risk."²⁷⁵

Employees on permanent contract paid 3000 Fcfa monthly to the I.P.M. account. In the need of medical care of the employee or his close family members (wife / wives, children), the employee paid 40% of the bill, I.P.M. paid 30%, and the company paid the remaining 30%. The payable sum was debited from the employee's salary on total or in installments at the end of the month, depending on the amount.

However, this insurance did not cover medical care for the extended family members of the employee or his wife / wives. Thus, other close relatives like parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, and nephews, were not included.²⁷⁶ Nevertheless, the employee had a moral obligation in this respect; all the more that it was the best-equipped center in the region.

The I.P.M. agent had to authorize with his signature each prescription before it could be taken from the pharmacy. His office was in the health center. By Senegalese law, only a doctor has the permission to prescribe. The law allows only one exception: under certain

²⁷⁵ Original version: «*I.P.M. ou la mutuelle [...], c'est un système d'assurance maladie en quelque sorte. [...] La philosophie de l'IPM c'est quoi? Aujourd'hui tu es dans le besoin, moi je t'aide, pour que demain si jamais je sois dans la même situation que toi tu dois m'aider. Donc, il y a un principe de solidarité et d'entre aide qui guide la mise sur place de l'I.P.M., ce qui est différent d'une assurance privée ou c'est un risque ou tu paye une prime*» (Company Doctor, II, A: 21-43).

²⁷⁶ This definition of core family is a heritage from the French management and was never changed after their departure. (Another occasion to introduce a positive modification towards Senegalese social reality was left unexploited.) The adjacent enterprise ICS would also take care of the extended family members, for instance father of the employee or his wife(s). This was one reason for what the ICS had in general a better reputation in social terms among the local population. (Field diary II, p. 53)

conditions the midwife is allowed to prescribe a small variety of remedies concerning pregnancy. However, the daily routine often followed different rules. An expert explains:

"The pharmacist, when he sees a prescription done by a doctor, there is no problem. That's what the law tells him to execute. But, in some cases, sometimes, he can come across prescriptions which come from the health center in Mboro [which has no doctor], or it is done by a nurse, but - well ... eh - he executes! Normally, a prescription is a document which has to fulfill well defined criteria, formal criteria, blank paper, certain dimensions, with a heading [showing] the name of the doctor and all, things like that. But in practice, it happens on little scrap paper of all colors [...] In the reality of the territory, all medical auxiliaries prescribe. There you go!"²⁷⁷

The employee brings the prescription directly to the I.P.M. agent in order to get it signed. The IPM agent is under no further control. This position and his isolated and rarely frequented office²⁷⁸ give the possibility to make 'deals', which means to behave 'in everybody's interest'.

The IPM agent came to the company in 1977 when the state had decided the installation of the IPM. Up to 1996, he had always occupied this position. He knew the majority of the employees quite well and in many cases also their families.

A speculated example: an employee arrives with his ill mother. The firm doctor examines her and gives her a prescription. Normally, the employee had to pay the full amount of the medication, because his mother is not - according to the definition - considered as a close family member and, thus, not covered by the insurance. The IPM agent does him the favor to sign the prescription anyhow and, thus, gives the employee the possibility to get the treatment for his mother from the pharmacy. Instead of paying the full amount immediately, the employee only pays 40% of the price drawn from his account at the end of the month, usually in installments. For the favor and the silence keeping of the IPM agent, the employee

²⁷⁷ Original version: «*Le pharmacien, quand il voit l'ordonnance délivrée par un médecin, il n'y a pas de problème. C'est ce que la loi lui dit d'exécuter! Mais dans des cas par fois il peut voir des ordonnances venant de poste de santé ou c'est prescrit par un infirmier, mais behh il exécute! Normalement l'ordonnance c'est un document qui répond a des critères bien définis, des critères de forme sur du papier libre, certains dimensions, avec en tête [ou il y a] le nom du praticien et tout et tout eh, des choses comme ça. Mais dans la pratique ça ce passera sur des petits bouts de papier des toutes les couleurs. [...] Dans la réalité du terrain, tous les auxiliaires médicaux prescrivent. Voilà!*» (Company Doctor, II, A: 45 – 60).

²⁷⁸ I was talking with him for long hours in his office without disturbance.

is deliberately willing to show his appreciation usually by a money gift. Although done in discretion, the practice is well known and tolerated.

The time factor, that means the moment of payment, was an important element. It made a great difference to the employee, whether he had to pay immediately or if he could pay in rates. His indebtedness, increased of course with the number of people he could get treated at the company health center.

E) The creation of a take-mentality

Paternalistic management practices had, if not created, at least reinforced and encouraged a certain take-mentality.

Expatriates had a strong interest to motivate the subordinates under their supervision, because their own annual bonus on one side, but also their standing among the expatriate society on the other side, depended to a large extent on 'their' subordinates' productivity. As mentioned in previous chapters, expatriates found various ways to increase the motivation of the work force to perform well. In parallel to emotional closeness, training and promotion promises, expatriates occasionally offered money.

Expatriates were well aware of their departure in the near future through the irreversible process of Senegalization. Intentionally or subconsciously, the growing indebtedness of the staff was not their prior concern.²⁷⁹ Being in charge of employees' financial situation since 1980, the Senegalese administration manager explained the actual and the former custom of salary advances and the French and Senegalese managers' different intentions:

"The system of indebtedness, you know, well, the loans are regulated. So there is the law of the civil constitution, which says you are not allowed to lend to somebody more than the equivalent of his distrainable share ('quotité saisissable'). And to remove from salary, you are not allowed to exceed a certain amount. So, you have to take this system into account, if you lend to somebody. But with the old system, they [expatriates] weren't too worried about this rule. Well, the people had problems. These problems had to be solved. Thus, they had to give them as much as they'd asked for. There was not a precise frame like today.[...] Each

²⁷⁹ See also chap. 7.4.3.

department has the right to give to the personnel 100.000 FCFA every 15 days, and before you can give, you have to check the employee's situation of indebtedness. If he is capable of paying back, you give, if he is not able to pay, you don't give. Well, before this was not the case. In the departments, from midrange manager on, from team chef on, everyone wanted to please his personnel! [...] If the people tell you, that it was better with the expatriates, it's because they accepted things we cannot accept, because they are our relatives and we have to educate them! We have to help them to live convenient. It is not the same motivation as the expatriates'. The expatriate, he is here to do a limited job. He pays a price to make sure the work is well done. Thus, if the people [Senegalese employees] get nostalgic over those people [expatriates], it's because they did everything for them [...] without distinction!."²⁸⁰

The expatriates' foremost interest was the assurance of a flawless production process. Money gifts were a perfect means to keep each worker's mind on the task, the company entrusted to him. Expatriates used financial aid to ease quickly and without a formal circuit an employee's situation of personal hardship. Otherwise, so their belief, his mind would shift to extraneous matters to the detriment of new production records. A Senegalese worker explained his sincere gratitude as follows:

"I remember this very well. One morning I came to work and was quite depressed and hungry, because my wife was very ill lying in hospital. There was little money to even pay for lunch for the family. I didn't have breakfast. I couldn't sleep at night because of worries. My boss [expatriate] asked me what was wrong. Finally I told him the story. He took me to the club [of

²⁸⁰ Original version: «Le système d'endettement, vous savez, bon, les prêts sont réglementés. Donc, il y a la loi qui est là à la côte de procédure civile qui dit qu'on n' a pas le droit de prêter à quelqu'un plus que tant sa quota saisissable, et que pour retirer sur le salaire de quelqu'un on a pas le droit de dépasser une certaine quotité. Donc, c'est ce système qu'il doit être pris en compte quand on prête à quelqu'un. Mais avec l'ancien système, la réglementation, on s'inquiétait pas trop. Bon, les gens avaient des problèmes, il fallait résoudre ces problèmes. Donc, il fallait leur donner autant qu'ils demandaient, donc il n'y avait pas de cadre précis comme maintenant [...]. Chaque service, on lui dit, chaque 15 jours tu as droit à 100.000 Franc pour donner à ton personnel, et que le personnel, avant de donner, il faut regarder sa situation d'endettement. S'il est en mesure de payer, vous donnez, s'il ne pas en mesure de payer, vous ne donnez pas. Bon, avant c'était pas le cas! Aux niveaux des services, bon, à partir du contremaître, à partir du chef d'équipe, [...] chacun voulait faire plaisir à son personnel! [...] Tant que les gens vous disent, c'était mieux avec les expatriés, ils acceptaient des choses que nous, on ne peut pas accepter, parce que ce sont nos parents et on doit les éduquer! On doit les aider à vivre convenablement. C'est pas la même motivation qu'avec les expatriés. L'expatrié, il est là pour faire un travail déterminé, il met le prix pour que le travail, ça soit bien fait. Donc, les gens, quand ils sont appelés à la nostalgie de ces gens-là, c'est parce qu'ils faisaient tout pour eux! [...] sans discernement!» (S.M., A: 142-68).

*the company], bought me a sandwich and a drink. We talked for about half an hour about my home situation, at the end he gave me 20.000 francs [CFA].*²⁸¹

The expatriates' money giving habit was often glorified as a general trait of European charity in interviews. The amount of 20.000 Fcfa was in fact a lot of money for a worker at that time. For instance, for a normal salary of a Senegalese employee in 4th category, 20.000 Fcfa represented about half of his gross income (40.278 Fcfa in 1977). The above described money gift of 20.000 Fcfa was presumably an exception. But smaller amounts like 5000 Fcfa must have been quite frequent. If we look at the issue from an expatriate perspective, making little money gifts every now and then to Senegalese subordinates to increase work efforts was indeed a fabulous investment.

In 1975, for instance, the expatriate monthly income on AM 4 was about 268.000 Fcfa. Thus, a money gift of - let's say - 5.000 Fcfa represented not even 2 percent of his monthly income. If the expatriate boss managed to reach 15% production bonus at the end of the year instead of 10%, he would get 482.000 instead of 321.000 Fcfa. Thus, the financial difference would make about 160.650 Fcfa.²⁸²

While expatriates were cherished as particular benevolent, the Senegalese managers in later years were loathed for their strict application of legal rules for salary advances. A miner expressed with bitterness the following words:

*"If you had a problem, you could ask your [expatriate] boss directly, he sorted it out. Now, you make a long circuit for crumbs."*²⁸³

Pecuniary help in a situation of plight deeply rooted the idea of existential security under French paternalism in Senegalese subordinates' minds. According to many remarks of Senegalese employees, expatriates felt like fathers responsible for the personal well being of

²⁸¹ Original version: « *Je me souviens très bien, un beau matin je suis venue au travail et j'étais très déprimé et affamé, parce que ma femme, elle était très malade à l'hôpital. Il n'y avait pratiquement pas de monnaie, même pour le repas à midi pour la famille. Moi-même, je n'ai pas pu prendre le petit déjeuner. J'avais très mal dormi à cause des soucis. Mon chef [expatrié] m'a demandé quel était le problème. En fin, moi, j'ai lui raconté toute l'histoire. Il m'a emmené au club, il m'a payé un sandwich et une boisson. On a parlé environ une demi-heure sur ma situation à la maison. A la fin il m'a donné 20.000 francs!* » (Field note book II).

²⁸² See also the salary table of expatriates in chap. 8.1.2 A).

²⁸³ Original version: « *Si tu as un problème, tu peux demander directement ton chef, il te le règle. Maintenant tu fais un long circuit pour des miettes.* » (Q7, 9/63).

'their' subordinates. On the contrary, Senegalese managers were perceived as irresponsible, who *"couldn't care less about your personal problems"*.

Given cash money, however, was not always a gift, but in the majority loans, which increased each time the employee's debt account. Quite likely, this important difference was not always clear to the receiving employee.

However, the money-giving custom of expatriates engendered a take-mentality, which drew the work force further into debts. The easiness to get hold on cash money fatally decreased the Senegalese employees' awareness of debts. This take-mentality influenced negatively the later cooperation with Senegalese superiors who could not grant those favors. Senegalese superiors could neither evade the law, nor did they have the same financial possibilities.

F) Used material

Each year, the company spits out large quantities of used material, invalid for the production process, but treasures for Senegalese employees. To picture the dimension of the incurred 'used material', the stock of spare parts and machines contained constantly a total of around 30.000²⁸⁴ pieces in 1977. The classical objects of desire are shown below:

- All sorts of furniture, household and office devices:
- Refrigerators, water heaters, typewriters, radios, air conditioners, etc.
- Cars
- Car tires, conveyor belts, and other rubber items
- Wood items
- Any kind of scrap metal
- Barrels, tubes, tarpaulins

The unjust distribution of used material apparently caused great annoyance and conflicts among the work force since the end of the 70's. In the period of expatriate management, used material was gratis and without any formal procedure. An employee explains:

²⁸⁴ In: Supplément gratuit de 'le soleil économique', 25 Juin 1977.

"There is plenty of [used] material here. If you need something, well, the White, he takes it with his car, he gets it out [of the mine] for you, he takes it to your house, he gives it to you for free; there is no problem! But now, you know.... In general, when you see a guy who comes here, who steals you something, who takes it away, it's just because he has problems. He has problems, but he does that without consciousness. A guy who takes here material in Taïba, they catch him red-handed of robbery, you know that this, this is not his nature, it's because he has not [anything]! He has nothing, you see! That's what is dangerous, it's dangerous!"²⁸⁵

Expatriate managers had no personal usage for the mine's scrap material. The expatriate houses were built by the company and well equipped with furniture and all household items necessary for a European life style. By contrast, Senegalese employees had to satisfy the needs of usually more than one household, and were additionally also interested in building houses, mounting fences and stalls for domestic animals (chicken, ducks, sheep, etc). Furthermore, these items were for Senegalese employees not only of personal use, but were often sold to thirds. Hence, the company's used material became a source of commercial activities and, thus, helped to improve the employees' monthly income. Used material was, thus, an additional source of cash money.

Under French management, this Senegalese desire was welcomed and encouraged, because it prevented the company of a costly disposal system for waste material. When Senegalese managers took over the former expatriate positions, the situation changed. Senegalese managers, although living in the European real estate under the same cost-free conditions as their predecessors, were only allowed to move in with the first wife (*awa*). Polygamous Senegalese managers had to satisfy the needs of their second, sometimes third and fourth wife and had additionally the extended family members on their backs.

Privileged by their power position, Senegalese managers were now the first beneficiaries of used items, ignoring needs of subordinates. From the mid 70's on, workers under Senegalese supervision could only get hold on these items, if their Senegalese manager

²⁸⁵ Interestingly, the speaker draws a clear link between the employees' indebtedness and robbery in the company. In his opinion, the 'guy who takes away' has no other choice, but to steel. People who steel material in the mine are not really thieves, there are not 'like that'. It is because they just cannot do otherwise to survive. Original version: « *Il y a beaucoup de matériel ici, tu as besoin de quelque chose, mais le Toubab, il te portait ça dans sa voiture, il te sortait ça, il t'emmène ça chez toi, il te donne ça cadeau, il n'y a pas de problème! Mais maintenant, tu sais ... En général quand tu vois un gosse qui viens là qui te vol quelque chose, qu'il amène ça, ce qu'il a des problèmes. Il a des problèmes, mais il le fait sans conscience. Un type qui te prend du matériel ici à Taïba on le prend in flagranti de vol, tu sais que ça, c'est pas sa nature, c'est parce qu'il n'a pas! Il n'a pas quelque chose, voyez! C'est ce qui est dangereux, c'est dangereux!* » (Faye, B: 59-66)

was not interested. In June 1977, the head manager of the electro-mechanical workshop within the company circulated the following note:

"Since some time we observe an upsurge of robbery which seemingly reveals a deep complicity among the personnel of the company."²⁸⁶

In May 1978, the directorate decided that employees must buy used material. Clear and strict directives were given out for the purchase procedure of used material. Thus, a formerly benevolent redistribution of goods from rich to poor, from white company owners to black workers, transformed into a tedious procedure, defined as follows:

"Only department managers are authorized to decide about the purchase of used material. [...] The decision to sell to an employee of the company will be taken by the personnel manager only if the material can contribute to the amelioration of the habitat. It is strictly to exclude to engender any commercial operation by sale [...]. The personnel office will choose the buyer by taking into consideration a priority order confirmed with the boss of the Administration department.

Procedure of removal

When the personnel manager decided the sale with an employee or eventually a third person, the adjacent form has to be filled out in four copies [...].

The buyer - provided with this form - goes to the cash register, which will indicate that the payment has been executed and stamps it. (The cash register will keep a copy as justification)

The removal of the material will take place exclusively during normal working hours at daytime in presence of the security boss or his direct assistant.

The security boss or his assistant accompanies the buyer and his material to the principal company exit and puts his stamp on the sale document of which he keeps a copy."²⁸⁷

²⁸⁶ Original version: «Nous constatons depuis quelque temps une recrudescence des vols qui laissent supposer de graves complicités parmi le personnel de la C.S.P. Taïba» (doc. 06.06.1977).

²⁸⁷ Original version: «Seul les chefs de service sont habilités à décider de la vente de matériel réformé. [...] La décision d'en vendre à un agent de la Compagnie ne sera prise par le Chef du Personnel qu si ce matériel peut contribuer à l'amélioration de son habitat. Il faudra absolument éviter de favoriser par cette vente une opération commerciale.[...] Le Bureau du Personnel choisira l'acheteur en tenant compte d'un ordre de priorité fixé avec le Chef du Département administratif. Procédure d'enlèvement: Lorsque le Chef du Personnel aura conclue la vente avec un agent ou éventuellement un tiers le bon joint en annexe sera rempli en quatre exemplaires jusqu'à la case: visa du Chef du Personnel./ L'acheteur muni de ce bon ira payer à la Caisse qui indiquera sur

From then on, commercial activities with used material were prohibited and, thus, the possibility of extra money was irreversibly removed from the workforce. The new procedure was the idea of the Black French extraction manager designate. He had just begun his two years of trial phase as first assistant of the beloved White French exploitation director (taking over in 1980). Not yet fully in function, he destroyed an important material and monetary source of the work force and was still well remembered (and hated) for this act by employees during field research in 1996.

The 'priority order' mentioned in the above cited document was now defined by the boss of the administration department. No further elucidation is given on that point in the document. The criteria determining such a priority order remain, thus, unclear.

In workers' opinion, however, access to used material became more or less the privilege of Senegalese upper superiors alone. Apparently, the ban to sell used material was not applied to everyone alike. A miner compared the old days to the current state:

“When you needed something, they [the expatriates] not only give it to you, but they organize also the transport [...]. Now, only the bosses profit. They take the material and often sell it.”²⁸⁸

G) "Bukiman"

The term 'buki' means in the Wolof language 'hyena'. A person called 'bukiman' is someone who sells something cheaper than he or she had paid. To my question for what reason the term 'bukiman' was chosen, I was given the following answer:

„The hyena is an animal which thinks it is smart. It seeks to fool other animals, to take advantage of them. But at the end it's always the hyena who is the fool.”²⁸⁹

celui-ci que le paiement a été effectué et apposera son cachet. (La Caisse garde un exemplaire comme pièce justificative)./ L'enlèvement du matériel se fera exclusivement pendant les heures normales de travail de la journée en présence du chef de la section Surveillance et Gardiennage ou de son adjoint./ Le Chef de la section Surveillance et Gardiennage ou son adjoint accompagnera l'acheteur et son matériel jusqu'à la sortie principale de l'Usine et apposera son visa sur le document de vente dont il gardera un exemplaire» (doc. 22.05.1978).

²⁸⁸

Original version : « Quand tu avais besoin de quelque chose, non seulement ils [the expatriates] te donnent le matériel, mais aussi des moyens de transport [...]. Maintenant ce sont seulement les chefs qui profitent, ils prennent le matériel et ils le revendent souvent. » (Q20, 10/70).

In previous chapters, I attempted to explain the different sections of payable debts. The main elements are advances, the coop-shop, and the medical insurance (IPM).

It is now well possible, that the different positions eat up all of the employees' salary, leaving the person with a zero pay slip at the end of the month. It was not unusual that employees received no cash money for several months. In this situation, an employee can choose various strategies to get hold on cash money. Each strategy means either the obligation to trespass legal barriers or, chosen more often, the aggravation of indebtedness. Employees applied mainly the two following strategies to get hold on cash money:

1. He can sell his delivery of alimentary or household items which he receives each month automatically. He sells for instance the monthly delivered sack of rice worth 20.000 FCFA for only 18.000 FCFA.
2. He can also sell a prescription, which he got for himself or for a family member to thirds who have no financial possibilities to see a doctor. Here also, he is obliged to sell it to a cheaper price than the actual amount taken from his salary.

Through contacts, I happened to get to know an employee who used to be a well-known bukiman for several years. He was willing to speak openly about his bukiman career with me. His current rank was work category 6. Here a statement from the interview:

"In the years 80 - 85 I was indebted up to the neck. I found myself indebted with about 600.000 FCFA. I didn't know how to feed my family. I increased my debts little by little without even recognizing it. I started to sell everything I could get hold on just to have some money. It's the Whites who taught me to take credits!"²⁹⁰

²⁸⁹ An inhabitant of MBoro made this assumption during a chat on the street (20.10.95; field diary II, p.53). Hesseling also explained the phenomenon 'buki' (1985, p. 374ff.).

²⁹⁰ Original version: «*Dans les années quatre-vingt / quatre-vingt cinq j'étais endetté jusqu'au coup. Je me suis retrouvait avec des dettes d'environ 600.000 FCFA. Je ne savais pas comment nourrir ma famille. J'avais petit à petit augmenté mes dettes sans me rendu compte. J'ai commencé de vendre tous que je pouvais avoir rien-que pour avoir un peu d'argent. C'est sont les Blancs qui m'ont appris de prendre des crédits!* » (M.B., B: 289-97).

Exceptionally, this interview took place in 'his office' (and not in mine) somewhere in a remote and deserted room of the mine's installations. It was only equipped with a table, two chairs, and a telephone. He told me, he couldn't leave 'his office', because he has to take care of the incoming orders. As a reaction of his disastrous situation, he had started a small business with used household devices coming from Dakar (he handed me a detailed price list of 20 items, like televisions, video and tape recorders, cameras, etc.). Incoming phone calls interrupted the interview four times, which only lasted 45 minutes. He had successfully worked his way out of indebtedness by becoming an entrepreneur with a flourishing business. On the other hand, it is hard to speculate, how useful he still was for the phosphate production.

At the time of interview, he was not only without debts, but had also acquired a certain decent living standard. He was, nevertheless, a singular and extraordinary case in the company.

7.4.2 Zero pay slips: directorate vs. local authorities

In May 1976, the company office in Paris tried to turn the French director's attention to the growing problem of staff indebtedness by a note saying:

“The account ‘advances of personnel’ increased from 27 million CFA in end of December 1974 to 40 million in end of December 1975. It was at 22 million in end of 1973. This is not a normal situation, all the more so as the payment of an economic bonus should have been used to lighten the account.”²⁹¹

The statement reveals the growing worries of the managers in the Parisian office and their wish that the annual bonus should be used to decrease the employees' debts, instead of

²⁹¹ Original version: « *Le compte 'Avance au personnel' passe de 27 millions CFA au 31.12.74 à 40 millions CFA au 31.12.75. Il était de 22 millions fin 1973. Il s'agit d'une situation anormale, d'autant que le versement d'une prime conjoncturelle aurait dû être mis à profit pour alléger ce compte* » (doc. 19.05.79).

transferring the full amount directly to the staff.²⁹² Also in regular turns, workers' representatives tried to draw the top managers' attention to the precarious financial situation, and, in particular, to the frequency of zero-pay slips. It was also pointed out that the financial policy concerning the salaries was not in tune with Senegalese laws. The upper management apparently began to realize the earnestness of the situation and sought help from the local authorities.

In June 1977, the Senegalese senior executive of the administration department describes the situation in a first letter (in a series of a four letters exchange) to the regional inspector of employment in Tivavouane as such:

„Recently we had a request of workers to draw our attention to the multiplication of zero pay slips which is, according to them, a result of ignoring certain legal measures and rules concerning the refunds drawn from salaries. This problem is a principle subject of concern to us since over a year.“²⁹³

In particular, problematic appeared the distinction made between the transferable share ('*quotité cessible*') and the distrainable share ('*quotité saisissable*'). The second important question dealt with the 'non-distrainable share'. The administration manager put it in the following words:

"The penultimate paragraph of the article 381, law of civil procedure, confirms that 'the total of debit or refunds, whatever their nature is, including voluntarily made assignments, can in no case, even for alimentary debts, exceed the two thirds of the amount earned.'

We understand by the above citation that at least one third of the gross income has to be given to the employee. This disposition is respected by Taïba which pays to all employees a partial payment the fifteenth [the 15th of each month] slightly above this third, but with one particularity: the employees aligned to the coop-shop signed a mandate to the company to use

²⁹² According to a Senegalese lawyer, allowances are under protection by law and it is not permitted to hold back the amount completely or partly for reasons of refund. Thus, apparently, the situation of encumbrance could not be solved legally in this manner.

²⁹³ Original version: «*Nous avons eu à enregistrer, récemment, une revendication des travailleurs visant à attirer notre attention sur la multiplication des bulletins nuls qui résulteraient, selon eux, du non-respect de certaines dispositions légales et réglementaires relatives aux retenues à effectuer sur les salaires. Ce problème constitue, pour nous, depuis plus d'un an, un sujet de réelle préoccupation [...]*» (doc. 04.06.77).

this portion (until concurrence) to pay the alimentary goods which they have received from the coop-shop. This mandate has not been formalized and remains a practice, which is accepted by everybody. Is it necessary to formalize the procedure?"²⁹⁴

The section clearly unveils the company policy to use in general almost two thirds of the employees' salary for debt refunds and '*slightly above one third*' to pay the ordered alimentary goods. The Senegalese manager is also conscious about another important legal procedure the company had never respected in the past. He attracts the inspector's attention to the delicate point by quoting again the Senegalese law for employment:

„The repayment of advances can legitimately be carried out through installment of salary only if the employee has made a voluntary assignment of salary by declaration signed by the prefect of Tivavouane.“²⁹⁵

The inspector reacted to the questions - raised by the company management - in his first letter with clear, but partly wrong explanations. He differentiated between the transferable and distrainable share of an employee's salary.²⁹⁶ The transferable share represented, according to the inspector, a voluntary action of the employee, whereas the distrainable share represented the legal monthly maximum which can be taken from the employee's salary.

The lending limit of salary advances was equal six times of the transferable share of the salary. This was, thus, the maximum amount of an employee's indebtedness (article 129, paragraph 5 of the legal constitution of employment).

²⁹⁴ Original version: « *L'avant dernier alinéa de l'article 381 du code de procédure civile dispose que 'le total des prélèvements ou retenues, quelle que soit leur nature, y compris les cessions volontaires, ne peut, en aucun cas, fût-ce pour dettes alimentaires, excéder les deux tiers du montant ainsi obtenu'. Nous comprenons de ce qui précède qu'au moins un tiers du salaire brut doit être versé au travailleur. Cette disposition est satisfaite par Taïba qui verse à tous les agents un acompte de quinzaine légèrement supérieur à ce tiers, avec cependant une particularité que les agents adhérents de la coopérative des travailleurs ont donné mandat à la Compagnie de régler, jusqu'à concurrence de leurs acomptes de quinzaine, la valeur des denrées qu'ils ont reçues de la coopérative. Ce mandat n'a pas été formalisé et reste une pratique admise par tout le monde. Y'a-t-il lieu de procéder à sa formalisation?* » (doc. 10.06.77).

²⁹⁵ Original version: « *les remboursements d'avances ne peuvent être valablement effectués par retenues sur les salaires que si le travailleur a consenti une cession volontaire de salaire par déclaration visée par le préfet de Tivavouane. (Article 129, paragraphe 6, loi 77-16 du 22.02.77)* » (doc. 13.07.77).

²⁹⁶ The translation for transferable share = 'quotité cessible'; and distrainable share = 'quotité saisissable'.

The debts can have three different forms: attachment, voluntary assignment and salary advances. The inspector points out that it is forbidden by law that the addition of all three forms of debts go beyond an amount equal to six times of the transferable share. For the amount of the transferable and distrainable share per month, the inspector adds the following list (in FCFA)²⁹⁷:

monthly gross income	transferable share	distrainable share	[by the author] distrainable share in %
30.000	2.875	7.500	25
40.000	5.000	12.500	31.25
50.000	7.500	17.500	35
60.000	10.833	22.500	37.5
75.000	17.916	32.500	43.3
90.000	25.416	42.500	47.2
120.000	40.416	69.000	57.5
150.000	67.916	99.000	66
200.000	117.916	149.000	74.5
250.000	167.916	199.000	79.6

We notice that the amounts in the list do not correspond to the explanations given in the prefect's letter. The legal monthly distrainable share can represent, according to the inspector's explanation, in maximum only two thirds of the employee's monthly gross income. But in the added list, the proportion of the distrainable share varied enormously without any further explanation. It may possibly be an indication for the confusion on the issue also on the prefect's side. Doubtless is, however, the obligation to leave one third of the monthly gross income in cash at the end of the month. Thus, the prefect concluded:

*"A zero pay-slip is therefore, exceptional case omitted, forbidden."*²⁹⁸

²⁹⁷ Doc. 18.07.77.

²⁹⁸ Ibid. Original version: « *Un bulletin nul est donc, sauf cas exceptionnel, interdit.* »

The inspector insisted on the legal constitution by citing the relevant paragraph again; he closed his letter by moralizing the company managers with the following lesson:

„The salary has an alimentary character which does not only serve the individual needs of the worker. You have by law a great responsibility concerning the granting of salary advances, which you should accept. Too much favors are accorded to the workers and often to their detriment on the pretext to help them through a difficult period, all the more so as a restriction would have prevented the employer to get caught up in a spiral which, at the end, becomes a vicious circle from which he can only free himself by default of the law (zero-pay slip, recognition of debts without legal procedure, etc...), if it is not the worker himself who seeks to escape (withdrawal) or to protect himself (Inspection of employment, Justice).“²⁹⁹

The Senegalese administration manager, who had taken the initiative to raise the delicate subject, was apparently now silenced. The French exploitation director took over the correspondence. He replies to the work inspector's letter by teaching him that the legal texts have been modified in October 1976. They now confirm that the transferable and the distrainable share is the same amount. Further, he lined out that the non-distrainable third is sensibly used to assure the employee's subsistence which:

"without any doubt meets the intention of the legislator when he fixed the limit of the non-distrainable third."³⁰⁰

Further, the director explained to the inspector that the legal obligation to sign each voluntarily assignment, including the coop-shop assignments, would cause the company as well as the inspector a lot of extra work and hassle.

²⁹⁹ Original version: «*Le salaire a un caractère alimentaire qui ne sert pas uniquement à couvrir les besoins individuels du salarié. Vous avez, par la disposition de la loi, de grandes responsabilités en matière d'octroi d'avances sur salaire que vous devez assumer. Trop de facilités sont accordées aux travailleurs et souvent à leur détriment, sous prétexte de les aider à traverser une passe difficile alors que la persuasion alliée à la fermeté aurait permis à l'employeur de ne pas mettre le doigt dans un engrenage qui, au bout du compte, devient un cercle vicieux d'où il ne peut sortir qu'en tournant la loi (bulletin nul, reconnaissance de dettes hors-procedure, etc.) si ce n'est pas le travailleur lui-même qui cherche son salut dans la fuite (démission) ou sous une aile protectrice (Inspection du Travail, Autorité Judiciaires) » (doc. 18.07.77).*

³⁰⁰ So wrote the extraction manager in his response to the Inspector. Original version: «*correspond sans doute à l'intention du législateur lorsqu'il a fixé cette limite du 1/3 non prélevable*» (doc. 02.08.77).

In an internal note to the Senegalese administration manager, the French exploitation director shrewdly threatened some 'holy cows' of the employees by saying with great diplomacy:

"The inspector's opinion about the coop-shop, if it is maintained, will complicate the recovery of the exceptional advances we accord [...]. I think in particular about the procedure of the credited sale of the cars which we repair and the posterior lending of savings. Are those two procedures still valuable taking into consideration the amounts, which we reach [by those] or should we not consider them as illegal. [...]"

If the inspector maintains his position concerning the inclusion of the coop-shop advances in the two deductible thirds, it equally has to be assured that the [coop-] agent does not exceed the fifteenth account. [...] Finally, I am asking myself if the granting of the regular advances (TABASKI, KORITE) is still compatible with those [legal] texts. [...] This would be an interesting novelty worth following."³⁰¹

To endanger in particular the two beloved advantages 'car credits' and 'Islamic holiday advances' has to be considered as an intelligent strategic move of the French director. Presumably, it sufficed to peter out the internal critics about the extensive French lending policy. The inspector replies to the extraction manager before all with an excuse of having neglected the latest legal amendments and with a rather flimsy explanation why it is so difficult to keep track with legal texts.

Then, he seemingly holds up his position of the 'non-distrainable third' by stressing the article 381 again, this time underlining the passage 'not even for alimentary debts'. But in the following text, his firmness crumbled and vanished completely at the end. He wrote:

"The intention of the Justice Minister is here without any doubt to prevent the worker of an overburdened indebtedness which would not allow him to respond to his own alimentary

³⁰¹ Original version: «La position de l'Inspecteur sur la coopérative, si elle est maintenue, rendra plus difficile la récupération des avances exceptionnelles que nous consentons.[...] Je pense en particulier à la procédure de vente à crédit des véhicules que nous réformons et à celle des prêts postérieurs à des épargnes. Ces 2 procédures sont-elles toujours valables compte tenu des montants auxquels nous arrivons, ou bien ne devons nous pas les doter des "garde-fous légaux". [...] Il faudra également, si l'Inspecteur maintient sa position sur l'inclusion de la dette coopérative dans les 2/3 prélevables, veiller à ce que le gérant ne dépasse pas les plafonds que constituent les acomptes de quinzaine. [...] Enfin je me demande si l'octroi des avances périodiques (TABASKI, KORITE) sera toujours compatible avec ces textes. [...] Ce sera une nouveauté intéressante à suivre» (doc. 02.08.77).

*needs and those of his family. The salary has in fact, as I reminded you in my former letter, an alimentary character. Whereas, do we have to understand by alimentary debts the occasional debts by credit purchase of any kind of nutritious goods or only those which, other than the coop-shop debts, do not relieve the worker, even after payment, to engage other costs to buy nutrition items to cover alimentary needs for the same month? Unfortunately, the law does not clarify any of this. I will give you therefore the advice to go by the actual rules even so, I agree with you, their vagueness can cause particularly difficult situations.*³⁰²

So in his second reply, the regional work inspector conciliated more or less with the French exploitation director, confirming that the coop-shop relieves the worker of further alimentary needs. Although the law is in fact impartial, the regional work inspector avoids at the end to give a clear directive to the French director and left, in consequence, the final decision of proceeding to him alone. After this debate, expectantly, the management had decided not to change the traditional conduct of using the 'distrainable third' for the automatic payment of coop-shop items.

In April 1977, the French exploitation director also replied to the workers' representatives by analyzing the current amount of zero-pay slips. He found 62 cases of zero-pay slips (among a total of 1.196 employees at that moment). Among those 62 cases, so he concluded, were 30 employees partially or totally absent because on vacation. Other 19 employees had exceeded their monthly quota for foodstuffs. The remaining 13 cases were indeed indebted for numerous kinds of salary advances. The exploitation director concluded:

*„The fewest are, thus, improvident employees.*³⁰³

Nevertheless, the debate over zero-pay-slips showed that informal and casual granting of advances had to come to an end. In September 1977, the (before silenced) administration

³⁰² Original version: «*L'intention du Ministère de la Justice est sans doute ici de prémunir le travailleur contre un endettement trop important qui lui interdirait de subvenir aux besoins alimentaires de lui-même et de sa famille; le salaire a, en effet, comme je vous le rappelai dans ma précédente lettre, un caractère alimentaire. Cependant, faut-il entendre par dettes alimentaires les dettes occasionnées par des achats à crédit de nourriture quelles qu'elles soient ou seulement ceux qui, à la différence des dettes coopérative, ne dispensent pas le travailleur, même après leur paiement, d'engager d'autres frais pour l'achat de nourriture destinée à la couverture des besoins alimentaires pour le même mois? Le décret, malheureusement, ne précise rien de semblable. Je vous conseillerais donc de vous en tenir aux règles actuelles même si, je le reconnais avec vous, leur défaut d'imprécision peut occasionner des situations particulièrement difficiles*» (doc. 11.08.77).

³⁰³ Original version: «*Ce sont donc pour le moins des agents imprévoyants*» (doc. 23.06.77).

manager installed new principles for granting advances and turned it into a complicated procedure with a minimum of five distinct steps.

According to those principles, the employee had to write a request in which he had to mention the desired amount of money and hand it to his direct superior. The superior then passed it on to the department manager. The department manager gave it to the boss of the payment section (*'Chef de la Section Paie'*). The latter checked the financial situation of the demanding employee and returned the information to the department manager. In consideration of the employee's financial indebtedness the department manager decided then "*the amount he wants to grant*"³⁰⁴. The request - with the department manager's decision attached - had to go to the administration boss of the personnel section (*'Chef de la Section Administrative du Bureau du Personnel'*). This manager concluded the state of all received requests on a list and handed it over to the administration manager. Finally, the administration manager eventually granted or rejected the voucher for payment, but "*no justification will be given by the administration department to employees whose request is rejected.*"³⁰⁵

The time schedule for the entire procedure was originally defined for a maximum of one week. The employee, having asked for an advance on Monday, Thursday or Wednesday, was supposed to have a definite answer at the latest on Friday the same week. Before, according an advance happened in general in the expatriate's office within a confidential atmosphere. This setting also provided a perfect frame to discuss all kinds of delicate subjects and conflict potentials in the workplace. The accorded amount was based on the expatriate's comprehension of the worker's current situation and, thus, also reflected the relation between the two. With the new order, by contrast, the human relation aspect was completely removed from the act.

Despite the principle of high confidentiality in this matter, an employee's advance request became somewhat 'public'. We have to count not only the managers officially involved, but also their secretaries and sometimes their assistants as well. We can, thus, count a minimum of nine people involved (five managers and four secretaries, since direct superiors of workers did not have secretaries) who would get to know the employee's request and

³⁰⁴ Original version: «*Le Chef de Service indique alors, sur chaque demande, le montant qu'ils veulent accorder, sans que l'endettement total puisse être supérieur à six fois la quotité saisissable de la catégorie de l'agent, tel que cela ressort de l'état ci-joint en annexe 1*» (doc. 01.09.77).

³⁰⁵ Doc. 01.09.77.

possibly his financial situation. The fact that the people involved in 1977 were in majority Senegalese created another weighty obstacle to the desired advances.

Furthermore, the complex procedure could apparently not be handled in the formerly defined time schedule. The requests for exceptional advances could take, in practice, several weeks. But in general, the employee needed the money immediately (for funeral, baptism etc.). Thus, the demanding employee had to struggle at first by himself through the financial difficulties. The social consequence was the decrease of loyalty on the workers' side. The fact that a rejection needed no further explanation opened the doors for arbitrary acts. Thus, the Senegalese employees felt the French policy of transparency betrayed, which had created the fabulous team spirit and family sense between superiors and subordinates before.

In December 1979, the Senegalese minister of craft industry raised the subject of employees' indebtedness anew. Although strict measurements were taken to control the situation of workers indebtedness the minister concluded:

"A recent control revealed a profound indebtedness which puts a serious strain on the salaries of certain workers since several months and even years."³⁰⁶

The minister reminded the company directorate of its important social responsibility and of the great pressure on the workers' social life caused by the remaining indebtedness.

In September 1980, as a consequence of this ministerial scolding, the directorate decided that the traditional advances for religious events were only granted to those employees, who were free of debts. The advances for the Islamic holidays Korité and Tabaski as well as for the Christian holidays Christmas and Easter were fused into a single advance and this one was even threatened now.³⁰⁷ The new order, installed to prevent workers from infinite indebtedness, was perceived from the workers' point of view very negatively.

The former French exploitation director always assured the regular advances for those important religious events for everybody, regardless of his or her current financial situation. Thus, the employee could firmly count on the money, happy to be able to meet the needs of his core and extended family at celebration periods. The religious advances therefore represented a great relief for the financial worries, all the more so, as the amount of the

³⁰⁶ Original version: «Un récent contrôle a permis de constater un endettement assez lourd qui grève dangereusement et pour plusieurs mois, voire des années, les salaires de certains travailleurs de la Compagnie» (doc. 26.12.79).

³⁰⁷ Doc. 03.09.79 and doc. 12.11.79.

advance was significant. The ratio between salaries and religious advances granted in 1980 is shown in the list below:

Category	Salary (brut) (doc. 31.8.80)	Salary(net) (doc. 31.8.80)	advance 'religious events' (doc. 1.9.80)
1st	32.141	29.194	25.000
2nd	36.545	33.129	30.000
3rd	39.964	36.036	31.000
4th	46.856	41.878	36.000
5th	49.848	44.407	38.000
6th	57.168	50.452	43.000
7th	68.915	60.610	46.000
AM 1	80.297	70.587	50.000
AM 2	97.507	85.939	58.000
AM 3	114.844	100.059	66.000
AM 4	132.582	114.609	66.000
AM 5	133.642	115.487	66.000

The religious advance represented in particular for the lowest categories almost the equivalent of a monthly salary. Thus, the rejection of granting the most important of all advances hit hardest the lower categories. Employees of low categories were also the ones who had the most difficulties to extinguish their former debts and were therefore most likely to be indebted.³⁰⁸

Salaries, advances and bonuses were paid to the workers in cash money. (Only managers got their salary by bank transfer up to the moment of field study.) At the end of each month, workers lined up in front of a small box-office standing aloof on the open parking lot in front of the company's administration building. So, from that moment on the

³⁰⁸ In particular in the Senegalese Moslem society it is perceived as a bounden duty for an adult man to assure the festival costs of his family. It is a sign of maturity and sense of responsibility and, thus, also a measurement for his social position within society.

distribution of advances divided the miners into 'advance-receivers' and 'non-receivers', into 'good guys' and 'bad guys' or 'winners' and 'losers'. By this procedure the financial situation of each and everyone became a public matter.

The 'non-receivers' felt left alone by the directorate in the workers' social responsibility towards their families. They were obliged now to find other resources to meet the celebration necessities in order to fulfill their duty as a '*borom kër*', a housefather. The work force, so profusely cherished as the 'key of the production' in countless articles of the company journal, started to feel seriously neglected. A silent premonition crept into workers' minds that the wonderful times of equality and brotherhood had ceased.

From the late 70's on, the access to monetary resources got far more complicated, in many cases impossible. The financial predicament started to cause distress among the workforce. Taking into account the new evolution, it is understandable that the debate about promotion possibilities in order to get access to higher salaries became even more important.³⁰⁹ The Senegalese managers made numerous efforts to fight the employees' indebtedness, but the relatively vague and 'confidential' criteria for granting advances left also room for individual interpretations. Apparently, the strict criteria blurred over time and old lending habits sneaked in again in later years. One top manager contemplated over possible reasons for those lending habits contrasting the formal rules:

“For a very very long time, Taïba applied a personnel policy which I personally call paternalist. They were very very far in the help and assistance giving to those people up to the point that I know employees today who are completely lost if you refuse at a certain moment a credit, because they really took the habit during twenty, twenty-five years. Each time during the golden era, when it was the annual period to return to school, the people asked for money.”³¹⁰

³⁰⁹ See chap. 7.3.

³¹⁰ Original version: « *Taïba, pendant très très très longtemps, a eu une politique que j'appelle, moi, personnellement paternaliste avec son personnel et on a été très très très loin dans l'aide et dans l'assistance qu'on a donné à ces gens à tel point que moi je connais des gens maintenant qui sont complètement perdu si à un moment donné vous leur refusez un prêt, parce qu'ils ont tellement pris l'habitude pendant vingt ans, vingt-cinq ans. Chaque fois à la belle époque dans l'année, quand il y avait par exemple le rentré scolaire, les gens demande de l'argent.* » (J.P.H., A : 253-262).

In the questionnaire sample of the present study (n = 60), four employees deliberately admitted to receive regularly zero pay slips. Up to 1996, illegal zero pay slips' remained a constant problem in the company.³¹¹ Workers' indebtedness was never solved.

³¹¹ Instead of paying nothing at the end of a month, the directorate decided to pay in any case a minimum of 500 FCFA. The word used among employees for the minimum remained nevertheless 'zero pay slip'.

Senegalese Managers take over: The 80s

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8 Senegalese managers take over: the 80s

In January 1980, twenty-three expatriate and twenty Senegalese top managers ruled the company. In December, the relation had changed to sixteen expatriate and twenty-six Senegalese top managers.³¹²

In August 1980, the beloved French exploitation director left the company. His successor was carefully chosen among the top managers by his excellent qualification and work performance in the past. Within the Senegalese mining company he had gradually worked his way up to the top. He was of Senegalese Wolof origins, but had done his military service in France, graduated in France as engineer, had married a French woman, had taken the French nationality, and worked in French and Guinean mines for some years before he entered the mining company in 1967. For the still mixed French and Senegalese top management the Black French engineer was seemingly the perfect link between the two ethnic groups in the company. In technical terms he succeeded to improve the phosphate production considerably. Under his supervision, the annual production climbed over 2 Mio. tons for the years 1988 to 1990.³¹³ Ever since and up to now (2005), the production never reached 2 Mio. tons *per annum* again.

In terms of communication and social climate, the focus of the study, the new exploitation director could not succeed as an accepted leader. We shall see some possible explanations for his failure in sub-chapter 8.1.4. A newly hired White French engineer replaced him in 1992.

8.1 Conflict potential in various groups

The 80s were overshadowed by growing difficulties to communicate and to pass on information. The all-imbuing and transparent information system - installed in the 1970s -

³¹² Doc. 31.01.81.

³¹³ It was 2.214.000t in 1988, 2.189.000t in 1989, and 2.039.000t in 1990.

could not succeed in the 1980s. The senior executive of the training center had an insightful explanation:

"The problems of communication, which means the... and of the transformation of information were never really solved until today! Because accepting the information, the communication, means already accepting the contradiction, it means accepting the other! [...] Even if he's mistaken, try now to have the power to convince: 'no, you're mistaken. It's not like this, it's like that!' But already, I think, well, culturally well eh.. this since childhood we were taught not to contradict. When the father talks, you have to bow your head, when... you must not oppose yourself! Even if you don't agree, you must not show it. [...] There was already a disruption!"³¹⁴

He evoked indeed an important aspect of the problem. Nevertheless, the failure of the internal communication within the company cannot be reduced to authoritarian traditions within Senegalese society. However, we shall see below that it was by far more complicated.

8.1.1 Towards a centralization of power: Senegalese top managers

The new Black French exploitation director of Senegalese (precisely Wolof) origin was apparently eager to demonstrate French rigidity combined with his profound knowledge of the Senegalese mentality. The top management assumed at the time that he was more than anybody else predestined to see through the numerous little devious tactics which the staff had purportedly developed over time to fool the naïve and easy trusting expatriates.

In his leader era, he urged to install order and regain control over commanding territory the expatriates had ostensibly lost. He had started his mission in his trial period as assistant director in May 1978, when he initiated to restrict the redistribution of the

³¹⁴ Original version: « *Les problèmes de communication, c'est-à-dire de ... et de transformation de l'information n'ont jamais été résolus jusqu'à ce jour! Parce que l'accepter l'information, la communication, c'est accepter déjà la contradiction, c'est accepter l'autre! [...] Même s'il est dans l'erreur, essayer maintenant d'avoir la force de convaincre: 'non, tu te trompe, c'est pas ça, c'est comme ça!' Mais déjà, je crois que, bon, culturellement bon eh ça depuis gosses, nous avons été appris à ne pas contredire. Quand le père parle il faut baisser la tête, quand ... il ne faut pas s'opposer! Même quand on est pas d'accord, il ne faut pas le manifester. [...] Il y avait déjà une rupture!* » (M.F., A: 29-45).

company's used material.³¹⁵ He had the reputation to be convinced that many Senegalese employees had often invented heart-rending stories on personal plight to squeeze a bit of money out of their expatriate bosses. In his alleged opinion, the French expatriates were not strict enough, but, by contrast, had pampered in particular the Senegalese workers unjustified, resulting in their overconfidence. This perception was perfectly in tune with the attitude of the Senegalese general director.

His new style of personnel management was indeed a sudden change for the entire staff. Statements in interviews with company employees reveal their impression that he disliked his own compatriots. Whereas most French expatriates had *a priori* trusted in Senegalese subordinates and colleagues, the new exploitation director, by contrast, displayed an attitude of general suspect. In the following sequence, a midrange manager explained his first encounter in 1981 with the newly promoted Black French exploitation director:

"I will tell you a little story about my first day of contact. I spend the night in Dakar [...]. I came late; it was a Monday. A friend drove me to Taïba. The engineer who was in charge of my recruitment was an expatriate. [...] He hosted me... not the fact that I was late, but because I spend the night in Dakar. I left Dakar to come to Taïba. That's what I have told the personnel office that I had to find accommodation [...]. Before I even finished, a man came up the alley who I didn't know. [The expatriate] turns to this man by saying: 'Mister [name of the exploitation director], I would like to present to you Mister Ndaw. He just arrived, because he came from Dakar, because he spent the night there.' So, Mister [director] turns to me, looks at me with an eye... and says to the expatriate 'he told you he doesn't know anybody here? You don't know anybody here?' I said to him 'no!' because it is an African to me – I say 'no' – I didn't say that. Well, I spoke in Wolof, I said [speaking in Wolof] 'I didn't say that! What I said was that I know some people here, but their house is cramped!' So I looked him in the eyes. He turned to [the expatriate] and they went into his office [...]. And when [the expatriate] came out I said to him: 'did you talk about me?' He said to me 'no, it doesn't matter!' [I said] 'No, tell me the truth! If you talked about me there is no...?' He said to me: 'Well, yes [...] this one is the exploitation director' – but I didn't know him – 'well, we wanted to call [the former employer] to know a bit more about you.' And I said 'and so?' [He said]

³¹⁵ For details see chap. 7.4.1 F).

'No, your relations... those who informed us talk very positively about you. They told us: 'even if he comes back tomorrow, we would take him back!'' There you go!''³¹⁶

In the perception of the above speaker, the new exploitation director followed two intentions in this situation. Firstly, he demonstrated in front of the expatriate his knowledge of Senegalese social network knit so closely that it is practically impossible to *not* know anybody in the large semi-urban area of Mboro. In addition, he put on evidence the expatriate's innocent trust to accept any kind of 'absurd' story. And Secondly, he immediately imposed rigidity onto the newly hired manager by insisting on punctuality regardless of the circumstances. In the young manager's recall the expatriate appears in a very positive light. Firstly, the expatriate attempted to conceal the exploitation director's offence and, when this failed, to mollify it at least. By claiming the young manager's good reputation in his former position, the expatriate becomes the protector of his dignity so fiercely violated by the exploitation director before.

This top-down approach of distrust rapidly spread among the entire staff and poisoned even more the tense atmosphere. Among top managers, apparently, started a veritable competition of who is the strictest and most competent leader. This fostered the process of centralization of power moving to the top which had gradually increased since 1977 / 1978. In parallel, transparency declined and monopolization of information continued.

³¹⁶

Original version: « *Je vais vous raconter une petite histoire, c'est-à-dire que mon premier jour de prise de contact. Je passe la nuit à Dakar la veille [...]. Je suis venu en retard, c'était un lundi. C'est un copain qui m'a transporté jusqu'à Taïba et l'ingénieur qui s'occupait de mon recrutement, c'était un expatrié [...]. Quand il m'a accueilli... juste le fait - pas que je suis venu en retard – mais parce que j'avais passé la nuit à Dakar. J'avais quitté Dakar pour venir à Taïba. Voilà ce que j'ai dit au bureau de personnel, il fallait trouver des conditions de hébergement. [...] Avant d'avoir terminé, un homme est venu dans le couloir que j'ai connaissais pas. Et cet homme, [l'expatrié] s'est approché à lui en disant: 'voilà Monsieur [Dex], je vous présente Monsieur Ndaw. Il vient d'arriver, parce qu'il vient de Dakar, parce qu'il a passé la nuit là-bas.' Alors, Monsieur [Dex] s'est tourné vers moi, il me regarde avec un œil... et dit à [l'expatrié] 'il vous a dit qu'il connaissait personne ici? Vous ne connaissez personne ici?' J'ai lui dit 'non!' parce que cet un Africain pour moi - je dis 'non' - je n'ai pas dit ça. Alors, je parlais en Wolof, j'ai dit 'waxuma ko loolu! Lu ma ko wax moy xamnaa ay nit, seen kër dafa xat!' Alors je lui regarder dans les yeux, il s'est retourné vers [l'expatrié], ils ont entré dans son bureau [...] Et quand [l'expatrié] avait sorti, je lui dit : 'vous aviez parler de moi?' Il me dit, 'non, ça fait rien.' [J'ai dis] 'NON, dite-moi la vérité! Si vous avez parlé de moi il n'y a pas.... ?' Il m'a dit, 'oui, en fait [...] celui-la, c'est le directeur des exploitation!' Mais moi, je ne le connais pas. 'Bon, on voulait lui [ancien employeur] téléphoner pour savoir un peu plus sur toi'. Et j'ai dit: 'alors?' 'Non, tes relations... parce que ceux qu'ils nous ont informés, c'est... on dit beaucoup de bien sur toi. Ils nous ont dit: 'même s'il revenait demain, nous le reprendront.' Voilà ! » (M.G., A : 10-22).*

Always in the past, it was an unquestioned necessity to update each six months the company's organization chart and send it to the Parisian office. Furthermore, a list of the current top and midrange managers including their actual salaries was send. In March 1981, the managers in Paris complained about the missing organization chart and the generally insufficient information on hierarchical structures and dependencies as well as a lack of information on top managers' salaries.³¹⁷

Seemingly inspired by the new commanding style, top managers tended much less to negotiate important issues, but rather decided on their behalf what they thought was appropriate to their position in hierarchy and tried to impose this decision on other top and midrange managers. Numerous documents of the early 80s give evidence that top managers insisted in a first phase to be informed about any decision taken within their section and in a later phase to decide by themselves. In consequence, the right to decide was gradually removed from lower echelons and accumulated at the top. For illustration, in the following document sequence, we listen to a department manager sending an internal note to his direct superior, a Senegalese senior executive, in March 1981:

“In response to your note of the 26th February, arriving at our office the 2nd March, you allow me to express my astonishment about the position you have taken in this totally normal and simple affair. My intention was and is not to question any portion of the Directorate's competence and I think to call at order in this sense is not appropriate. I neither think to be obliged to ask permission before I execute an act of usual management aligned to my responsibility as service chief, in particular if it is an act to render the service more effective, or [otherwise] one should point out to me into which form of “management” we develop.”³¹⁸

After clarification on the matter concerned, the above cited managers concluded:

³¹⁷

Doc. 05.03.81.

³¹⁸

Original version: « Suite à votre note en date du 26 Février 1981 parvenue à nos bureaux le 2 Mars 1981, nous me permettez de vous faire part de mon étonnement eu égard à la position que vous avez prise dans cette affaire simple et parfaitement normale du reste. Mon intention n'était et n'est pas de discuter une quelconque parcelle de compétence à la Direction, et je crois qu'un rappel à l'ordre dans ce sens ne parait pas opportun. Je ne pense pas non plus être obligé de demander une autorisation avant d'exécuter un acte de gestion courante découlant de mes attributions de responsable de service, surtout quand cet acte va dans le sens d'une optimisation du rendement du service, ou alors qu'on me précise sous l'emprise de quelle forme de « gestion » nous évoluons » (doc. 03.03.81).

“Concerning [the matter], if you decide – in order to manifest your hierarchical authority – to impose [your decision] in the [...] service while another solution is at your disposal, I can only execute provisionally your instructions, but leaving the full and entire responsibility for this decision to you.”³¹⁹

Occupied with taking isolated decisions of even minor matters, most Senegalese senior executives rapidly lost contact with the shop floors. As a result, employees' adherence to decisions taken by Senegalese superiors was feeble. Among the workforce, the new exploitation director had the reputation to be unapproachable and unwilling to accept any exception of company rules, regardless of circumstances. In 1984, one of the director's closer relatives, a young man of then 21 years, was hired in the mining company in work category M4. The young man told me, he was hoping to get promoted quite rapidly through his parental liaison with the exploitation director or would at least be chosen for further training. But none of his aspirations were fulfilled. He had, by contrast, the impression that for him it was even more difficult to get an 'audience' with his uncle than for anybody else in the company. In 12 years of service, his career had not improved. This was a known case in the company and employees perceived the exploitation director's behavior as disloyal to his own kin. While Senegalese employees were suspicious of him, French expatriates seemingly liked him. In an interview of 1990, a French senior executive answered the question about his best memories in his professional function in the company:

“The [first] encounter with the current exploitation director [...]. I worked with Mister [Director] seven years in Guinea from 1961 to 1968. When we shook hands I had immediately the feeling to be at home.”³²⁰

In correspondence to his strict internal conduct, the Black French exploitation director did not agree with the generous giving habit of the French expatriates in the past in favor of the local populations and administrations. The former paternalistic company comportment as

³¹⁹ Original version: « *En ce qui concerne [l'issue], si, pour marquer une certaine manifestation de l'autorité hiérarchique, vous décidez d'imposer [votre décision] au Service du Personnel alors qu'une autre solution est à la portée de votre main, je ne puis qu'exécuter provisoirement vos instruction en vous laissant toutefois la plaine et entière responsabilité de cette décision.* » (Ibid.).

³²⁰ Original version: « *La rencontre avec l'actuel Directeur des Exploitation [...]. J'ai travaillé avec M. [le Directeur] 7 ans en Guinée de 1961 à 1968. Quand on s'est serré la main, j'ai immédiatement eu le sentiment que j'étais chez moi* » (Taïba-Info 7/1990).

the “*father of the region*” was in his eyes not appropriate to an economic industrial entity constantly struggling to preserve the fragile position in the round of phosphate exporters on the world market. Thus, the Black French director rejected many external demands of the local communities (for instance new school equipment, repair of mosques, extending local health centers, etc.), each time explaining the urgent extraction necessities.

Apparently, the Black French director was not credible in his explanations and people accused him on several occasions of embezzlement. After the devastating strike in June 1983, the external pressure rose to “*show a sign of good will*”, (in other words to financially support the local institutions) that he was forced to return more or less to the old conduct.

In 1987, the expatriate head of the production department went on pension. Among the remaining expatriates and the Senegalese engineers it became quickly apparent that nobody had enough international experience imperatively needed for the job. Thus, the company directorate decided to hire a White French engineer, born and raised in Algeria, as director of the production department. I have no information if skin color played any role for recruitment. Presumably, it did not. However, it is interesting to note that many of my interview partners concluded that the directorate needed again a white face in a key position and who would be able to develop into the new exploitation director.

Clear is that from then on, the Senegalese general director and the new White French production director formed a winning team in the combat of external expenses. The general director and the exploitation director delegated local demands to the White French engineer, because – so the official version – the production manager would be best informed about the production necessities and the budget. The production director, on the other hand, was advised to reject as many demands as he finds appropriate. The former production director (exploitation director during our interview in 1996) explained the process as such:

“I really had the impression that we spend all our time by distributing. My predecessor, who was Senegalese, but who had a French passport, he was against this. [...] And he gave me the advice: ‘you have to manage to stop those things, because it becomes unmanageable. If you start to give something to the rural community of Mboro, we also have the rural community of Taïba Ndiaye which plays the same role. If you give to the community of Taïba Ndiaye, you also have the administration of Tivaouane or the mayor. You have the mining service in Thiès, you have this and you have that.’ Therefore we took advantage of my arrival - and that was really a concerted action – we took advantage of my arrival in this position, which means [the

arrival] of a real White. My predecessor was nevertheless Senegalese, he was all black. [...] Me, I am rather white even if I am suntanned. [...] So my general director said: 'We will profit from your arrival to stop a number of certain abuses. [...] The populations have to take care of themselves. It is enough!' Me, I said 'we [the company] are on a deficient period, we cannot do that!' The people, because they knew I was a White, did not discuss with me. When my predecessor did the same thing, the guy didn't believe him. If you want, I have the chance, if I say something, if I write something, the people don't question that, because the White is good by definition. 'He doesn't tell stories, he doesn't tell lies. And the Whites, well, they say the things how they see it. He doesn't have a wrecked mind like we, the Senegalese.'"³²¹

While the company directorate tended towards a policy of centralization, the Senegalese government fostered a "new industrial policy" (*'la nouvelle politique industrielle'*) and instructed the public and semi-public organizations to decentralize their management in order to become more efficient.³²²

Two years later in, 1989, the Senegalese head of the administration and financial department died unexpected. He was not replaced until the company fusion in 1996. Instead, the sections of the administration and financial department were placed directly under the supervision of the exploitation director. Two years later, in 1991 the French General Secretary was replaced by a Senegalese. The first contact is well remembered by a top manager with a working experience in the company since 1975:

³²¹ Original version: « Mais j'avais l'impression que si vous voulez, on passait notre vie à distribuer. Mon prédécesseur, qui était Sénégalais mais qui avait un passeport français, lui, il était contre ça. [...] Et moi, il m'avait donné des conseils c'est : il faut faire en sorte que la direction on général arrête ces choses-là, parce que ça devient ingérable. Si vous commencez à donner quelque chose à la communauté rurale de Mboro, nous avons la communauté rurale de Taïba Ndiaye qui joue le même rôle. Si vous donnez à la communauté de Taïba Ndiaye, vous avez l'administration de Tivaouane ou le maire de Tivaouane. Vous avez le service des mines qui est à Thiès, puis vous avez ceci, puis vous avez cela. Donc, on a profité - et c'est vraiment très concerté – on a profité de mon arrivé à ce poste, c'est-à-dire un Toubab pure. Mon prédécesseur était quand même Sénégalais; il était tout noir. [...] Moi, à priori, je suis plutôt blanc même si je suis bronzé. [...] Mon Directeur Général a dit 'on va profiter de votre arrivé pour mettre un terme à un certain nombre d'abus. [...] Il faut que les populations se prennent en charge, il y en a marre. [...] Moi, je disais 'on est en période déficitaire, on ne peut plus faire ça!' Et les gens, comme ils savaient que j'étais Toubab, ils venaient pas discuter avec moi, parce que mon prédécesseur, quand il faisait la même chose que moi, le type le croyait pas. [...] Et donc, si vous voulez, moi, j'ai cette chance que quand je dis, quand j'écris quelque chose les gens le mettent pas en question, parce qu'il est bon le Toubab par définition, ça raconte pas d'histoire, ça dit pas de mensonges et les Toubabs - eh behn - ils disent les choses comme ils les voient et il n'a pas l'esprit tordue comme nous les Sénégalais » (J.H., A: 150-86).

³²² In February 1987, the president of Senegal addressed a letter to all ministers and directors of public and semi-public enterprises and organization explaining the 'new industrial politic' in detail in which decentralization was an important column (doc. 26.02.87).

“One morning, we went to the meeting and he was there with us, just like this, you see! We sat down around the big table and my neighbour asked me: ‘well, who is this mister; do you know him?’ And I said: ‘no, I don’t know him, but we will see. We will certainly get to know in a minute.’” And Mister [general director] stood up and said: ‘Well, I present to you Mister [X]. From now on he is the new General Secretary of the company!’ There you go; the message was over. Nobody had a word to say in all this!”³²³

Some managers said in interviews that they found it surprising that the post of the General Secretary was located in the head office in Dakar, some 60 miles away from the company territory where the two services under its command remained. They suspected that the Senegalese General Secretary was only a puppet for the Senegalese general director, also in Dakar, to take entirely control over the two ‘money services’ (accountancy and computer section). Interestingly, the fact that the former French expatriate General Secretary as well as the former French general director both worked for the company in Paris, some 3000 miles away, remained unquestioned in those interviews.

It is important to note that the company never had a director of finance, neither under French nor under Senegalese management. This is very unusual for a large company operating on the international market. Under French management, financial control was also mainly executed by the former French general director - later in the position of delegate administrator (1975 – 1988) - who dealt directly with the accountancy and computer section. When he slowly pulled away from the internal financial activities of the company in 1987/88, the Senegalese successor took over his responsibilities and was of course supposed to do so also. It is quite logical that the Senegalese general director takes over the same functions as his French predecessor before.

However, the general director in cooperation with the production and the exploitation director ruled the company. All other top managers were held under their close control. But while the White production director was accepted in the role of a supervisor, the Black

³²³ Original version: « *Un bon matin on arrive à la réunion et il était là avec nous, comme ça, vous voyez ! On s’assoit autour du grand table et mon voisin me demande: « mais qui est ce monsieur, vous le connaissez? » Moi, je dis : « non, je le connais pas, mais on va voir. On va certainement le savoir toute suite ».* Et Monsieur [Directeur Général] se lève, il dit : « *Voilà, je vous présente Monsieur [X]. Dès maintenant, il est le nouveau Secrétaire Général de l’entreprise !* » Et puis voilà, le sujet était clos. Personne n’avait un mot à dire dans tous ça ! » (A.G., field diary III, p. 139).

exploitation director was perceived as imposing his will unjustified and for his pleasure of domination. For the company's financial difficulties in the early 90s he became the culprit. Although he tried so much to demonstrate an upright and honest 'French' character devoted to the company's interests, in employees' perception he gradually became the malicious tyrant of the company and the root of all evil.

In summer 1992, the Black French exploitation director left the company and returned to France. For his departure, the local section of the PIT (*'Parti de l'indépendance et du Travail du Sénégal'*) in Tivaouane produced a flyer starting with the following paragraph:

*"The exploitation director of TAIBA is gone. At last! The great majority of TAIBACIENS exhaled a PUF of relief. It means that this man convinced neither through his management style nor by his sociability, far from being in the hearts. In his name, the work in the company became austere and the enthusiasm died in the relations of domination, defiance, and distrust."*³²⁴

An important mistake in the Black French director's management conduct was quite certainly that he insisted on the French language as the only accepted communication means in the company, although his mother tongue was Wolof in equal to the great majority of the staff. Under French management it was normal and unquestioned that French was the language of expression in the company. Each employee of the staff was able to communicate, even if rudimentary, with the solely French speaking expatriates. The negative reputation of the Black French exploitation director was to a large extent due to his fervent rejection of his own mother tongue in office. It was perceived as a denial and betrayal of his genuine African origins. While the French expatriates were authentic in speaking French, the Black French exploitation director was not. A miner expressed it in those words:

"This one has given up his roots, he is disoriented." ³²⁵

³²⁴ Original version: « *Le Directeur des Exploitation de TAÏBA est parti. Enfin! C'est un OUF de soulagement qu'a poussé la grande majorité des TAÏBACIENS. C'est dire que l'homme, loin d'avoir été porté dans les coeurs n'a séduit ni par son management ni par sa sociabilité. A son image, le travail dans la compagnie était devenu austère, l'enthousiasme s'estompant dans des rapports de domination, de défiance et de méfiance* » (doc. 03.08.92).

³²⁵ Original version: "Koku dafa gënn xeet, dafa jalgati" (Q18, 11/69).

His intention might have been to prove loyalty to the still present expatriates and to emphasize his ‘French’ character (purported to be honest, strict, just, etc.). But at the same time he lost the support and respect of his subordinates, both necessary for him to succeed in his position as a leader. Instead, most employees displayed a taciturn contempt and silently did not take him serious as authority.

After the departure of the Black French extraction director, the former White French production director replaced him in this function. Instead of an internal recruitment for the post of the production director, a new face was hired from France, but stayed only for two years. Then again another French White engineer was hired to replace him who also only stayed until the end of 1994. In 1995, the production department and the extraction department melted into one called the ‘extraction department’ and was put under the control of the White French exploitation director. Thus, power was mainly in the hands of the general director and the exploitation director until the fusion with the chemical industry in 1996.

8.1.2 Newcomers and the ‘elders’: Certificates versus Experience

As pointed out in previous chapters, harsh conflicts arose with the gradual management changes in the end 70s between the elder workers and the newly arriving young Senegalese superiors.³²⁶

We start with the part of the communication problem, which derives from Senegalese norms. In traditional Senegalese society, age plays a major role. An old Wolof wisdom says: ‘The elder sees by sitting what the young doesn’t see by standing’.³²⁷ Dia (1986) writes:

„Traditional African culture is based on community life. In villages, which may be considered as the basic units, social rules forged by tradition were well established. Life appeared to be static. In this specific context it is not surprising to note the importance of age, because the elderly always had a deeper knowledge of traditions. By virtue of their experience and wisdom

³²⁶ See in particular chap. 7.3.3.

³²⁷ Original version: “*Mag dina toog di gis la xalé bu taxaw dul gis*”.

*they became the custodians of the spiritual and moral values within the group. This body of values served as the unwritten constitution of the community.*³²⁸

The Senegalese workers, hired in the 60s and 70s, stem in majority from the mine's surrounding villages and rural communities. They were, thus, much rooted in traditional values and the imperative of respect and obedience from youngsters towards elders.

Those elder employees not only had a much lower standard of education, but also in tendency another perception than the Senegalese employees of the 80s. Both groups have to be considered as two distinct generations with differing life biographies of a rapidly changing society. The Senegalese elders had been born and grown up still under French colonial rule. The young generation of the 80s, by contrast, was born into a politically independent young state.

The young graduates, often with overseas experiences, had other measures to understand and judge French undertakings than their older colleagues from rural backgrounds. In Senegal, academics represent a social elite precious for the country's future. The self-confident intellectuals came to the company with optimistic outlooks and expectations on their future careers in lucrative key positions.

We have seen that the older Senegalese workers, on the other hand, had developed a pride and strong self-esteem with the mine's industrial success and through constant French praise and glorification of Senegalese workmanship in previous years. With the ongoing process of Senegalization, those graduated employees entered the mine and took over work sections formerly guided by expatriates.

The elder Senegalese subordinates were accustomed to regular promotion every six years in average. French training policy had created a silent mirage of infinite raise. Many elders had hoped to reach management positions. Promises to promote them in the near future, made by expatriate superiors, were usually not fulfilled when a Senegalese had taken on the expatriate's job.

In the 70s, working efforts and high engagement was a sure means to get trained and promoted. In the 80s, level of education became more important. Elders were annoyed and worried, because young graduates were invited to take part in the internal training as a

³²⁸

Dia, Abdul Aziz, 1986, p.232.

preparation for midrange and upper management positions before they had ever shown any work endeavor or effort.³²⁹

Much criticized for the former extensive training and promotion policy of mostly uneducated workers, the directorate had changed its conduct considerably and put young engineers in midrange management positions. The outcome of this new decision was that experienced elder employees with no formal degrees stood in rivalry against young graduates with no working experience. The elders had worked their way through different workshops and kinds of equipment in the mine. They knew every little quirk of the various old machines and each buckled screw by its nickname. One of those elders, retired by the time of the interview (1996), pictured the situation as follows:

„An engineer, he has his degrees. But his degrees of instruction [...] do not tell him how to handle an oven. They take him and tell him: ‘Abdou is commanding, [speaking of himself; name is changed] Abdou is there since Taïba was born!’, if he isn’t in tune with me, the factory will not turn. So for me, I do what I want, he cannot rebuke me [literally: hit me on the fingers], because he is not able to say ‘it is not like this, but like that!’“³³⁰

The elder employees with their particular specified practical training were habituated to take over responsibility for the entire work process in which they operated. Despite of the high education of those new engineers, the elders became indispensable for the working process.

Doubtless, the age difference between workers and young possibly unmarried³³¹ engineers caused additional social clashes. The societal hierarchy of the Senegalese society collided now with the industrial echelon: the beginning young engineers with the higher formal degree, but without practical knowledge, were supposed to command the experienced and instructed elders who had occupied the work places for many, many years. This was a delicate and most critical social setting for both parties.

³²⁹ In 1979, the ‘elders of Taïba’ reproached to the directorate to neglect the training and promotion of elder employees in favour of inexperienced young beginners. For the first time, the directorate had decided to train newly hired graduates, the ‘group 9’ (see also chap. 7.3.3).

³³⁰ Original version: « *Un ingénieur, il a son diplôme, mais son diplôme d’instruction. Mais le diplôme ne lui dit pas comment on conduit un four, on le prend, on lui dit: ‘vous commandez, Sidibé’ Sidibé est là depuis la naissance de Taïba, s’il n’est pas d’accord avec moi, l’usine ne va pas tourné. Donc, moi, je fais ce que je veux, il ne peut pas me taper sur les doigts, parce qu’il ne peut pas me dire ‘c’est pas comme ça, c’est comme ça!’* » (L.S, A: 299-314).

³³¹ Only marriage can turn a person into a full member of the Senegalese society. An unmarried man can still be called ‘*le gosse*’ (= *the urchin* or *boy*).

The young managers' riddle was: How can I command someone in a position of authority to me and who also knows better? While the experienced workers contemplated over the question: Why can a "boy" ('gosse') without any merits give me orders, get more money and privileges, but depends on my working experience and practical knowledge? Serious legitimization problems arose for those new Senegalese managers. A miner put it in those words:

„The young top managers who had come from school and had never worked before... You come, they give you an apartment in Mbaye Mbaye [living estate for the upper management]; they give you a car [...]. They trust in you and you know nothing. You find me here, me, I served more than 15 years here... [laughter].“³³²

The contact between new Senegalese superiors and subordinates became very complicated and charged with tension. Some superiors were soon marginalized by the elder work force and gradually mutated into rather ridiculous figures.

In the following interview sequence, another retired miner (hired in 1957!) talked about a quarrel, he had with his superior, a Senegalese engineer, because the latter had deliberately ignored his advice and had caused costly damage. In the following section he explained the interaction with this manager shortly after the accident by imitating his superior's voice:

„I've cut the cable! What am I doing! Oh, father!' I said to him 'You knew it before! I said this would happen! You are the foreman, I am [only] the team leader, but I didn't allow it to you! So you knew!' I said to him 'You are not my buddy!' He said to me 'I am the engineer here!' I said to him 'It is me, who tells you what to do! Me, I am here twenty five/ twenty-six years, yes! The one, who does two years and the one, who is here already twenty five years, this latter is your boss!' Since five years now, you know, I haven't said 'hello' to him.“³³³

³³² Original version: „Les jeunes cadres qui sont venue de l'école qui n'ont jamais travailler avant. Tu viens, on te donne un logement en Mbaye Mbaye, on te donne une voiture. (...) On te fait confiance et tu connais rien. Tu me trouves ici, moi, je fais plus de 15 ans ici ... (er lacht lauthals!)“ (L.S., A: 320-8).

³³³ Original version: „'Maa dagg teñ! Fumay jem! Ahh, góor gi!' Maa ne ko 'Yaa xam! Lii maa wax! Yow, yaay contre-maitre bi, man, maay chef de poste, mais teerenaa la! Yaa xam!' Maa ne ko: 'Duma sa moroom!' mune ma 'ingénieur laa!' Maa ne ko: 'Man, man mii, man la commander! Man, mangiy ci vingt-cinq, vingt-six ans, waaw. Kii, mu def deux ans ak kii, mu nekk ñaari fukki att ak juróom de service moy sa kilifa!' Amnanu cinq ans, yoo xam ni, duma nuyu, duma ko nuyu!'“ (A.K., A: 152-74)

The narration shows brilliantly the snafu of positions and competence, which had taken over the internal conduct of personnel management after 1980. The above-cited miner rightly said, he did not "allow" it to his superior. The experienced employees (specialized workers or low midrange managers) had now the possibility to patronize their young superiors.³³⁴

Up to the period of data collection of the present study in 1996, certain employees in 7th category held the nickname '*the strong sevenths*' ('*septièmes forts*'). It concerned only those employees in 7th category who had gone through the times of transparency and open questioning³³⁵ and who had therefore acquired an impressive technical comprehension and know-how indispensable for the production process. In workshops, those employees held a veritable power position, because they were able to tell everybody else what to do and how to do it (including later arriving engineers).

This term takes also into account the startling high salaries of this group. Those salaries exceeded by large the basic salary plus the usual gratification, habitual for the 7th category in the mining company. The net income of the *strong sevenths* was often higher than the salary of his Senegalese superior in AM1 and sometimes AM2. It was an outcome of the various pecuniary privileges granted unsystematically for this and that by the former expatriate superiors and which nobody dared to touch ever after. This, for instance, was a favoritism practiced by expatriates, which was seemingly never questioned by anyone. The *strong sevenths* considered themselves as the group foreseen and best prepared for midrange management positions and who felt so viciously betrayed by the new management policy.

To demonstrate competence and commanding power, Senegalese managers apparently put their subordinates under closer scrutiny. In March 1980, an employee of the company's supply department since 1976 replied to the traditional question in Taïba-Info about his work satisfaction:

"We are not working in security any more because of a climate of suspicion. It's like a Damocles sword hanging over our heads. They hindered our growth and it seems that they want to remove all freedom of action from us. And in my opinion: either you trust your

³³⁴ We will return to this point in chap. 9.2.1.

³³⁵ See chapter 7.2.2.

employee or you don't trust him. We know how to take responsibility and we have to save our dignity and honor.”³³⁶

Being used to organize their own working process and take their own decisions, employees felt now a growing distrust from their Senegalese superiors' side in their competence and work efficiency.

8.1.3 Manager differences: French and Senegalese

In previous years, white skin color meant automatically certain privileges, and generally also higher positions in the industrial echelon. In the early 70s the correlation of white skin and higher position was almost perfect. Practically all expatriates were in management positions; on the other hand, almost the entire work force was Senegalese (with few exceptions on both sides). The social order and partial distribution of privileges and power along the skin color line was long established and, thus, widely accepted.

By the end of 70s, when a growing number of Senegalese engineers took over management positions, the clear-cut dichotomy of French management and Senegalese work force began to crumble. While young, well-educated and ambitious Senegalese poured steadily into the company, the great gap between French and Senegalese managers in terms of rights and privileges became apparent. Firstly, the differences in salaries and other materialistic resources got obvious. And secondly, Senegalese managers became painfully aware of the difference in authority and reputation between them and their expatriate predecessors and colleagues, which both had in the social arena of the company.

A) Financial differences: Salaries and other resources

Comparison of salaries alone does not show a tremendous gap of the financial situation of both ethnic groups. In interviews, employees often explained that expatriate

³³⁶ Original version: «*Nous ne travaillons plus dans la sécurité à cause d'un climat de suspicion qui, comme l'épée de Damoclès, plane au-dessus de nos têtes. Nous sommes jugulés et l'on semble vouloir de toute liberté d'action. Et je dis: on a confiance en l'agent, ou on n'a pas confiance. Nous savons être des responsables et nous avons à sauvegarder notre dignité et notre honneur*» (Taïba-Info, 3/80, p.10).

salaries were *four times* the amount of Senegalese salaries for the same rank. Internal documents, however, show that the basic expatriate salaries have not been that high. The basic salaries of French and Senegalese managers in the same position varied in reality as shown in the list below (in FCFA):

Category	Senegalese salary (Doc. 02.02.78)	Expatriate salary (Doc. 27.06.75) ³³⁷	$X \times S = E$ ³³⁸
AM 1	69.046	---	
AM 2	83.845	223.000	ca. 2,65
AM 3	98.752	239.000	ca. 2,42
AM 4	114.006	268.000	ca. 2,35
AM 5	114.917	326.000	ca. 2,83

We have to take into account that the given salaries in the above table differ in about 2 ½ years. What really must have made the great difference were the numerous primes and gratifications on the expatriate salaries. But I have no exact information about their amount and conditions. Further, the expatriate contract included quite generous vacation allowances. The expatriate acquired the right for vacation after 10 months and 10 days of continuous service in the enterprise. For each completed month of service, the expatriate earned the right of 5 days vacation. Thus, the expatriate earned 50 days of vacation for 10 months of service regardless of rank.

For vacation, the company paid the expatriate employee an allocation equal one sixth of the total amount of the basic expatriate salary earned in the period of service (all gratification excluded). Additionally, the company paid for the flight tickets for the expatriate and all family members living permanently with him.

In the logic of expatriation, the Senegalese mining town was considered as the '*place of employment*', whereas the '*habitual residence*'³³⁹ was the place of origin, in other words

³³⁷ The two cited documents stem from different time periods because of the lack of a more recent document representing the expatriate salaries. Thus, the shown data for expatriates might not represent the actual state in 1978. Clear is that the expatriate salaries had not decreased since July 1975, but presumably increased.

³³⁸ $X \times S = E$ means: how many times the Senegalese salary results in the expatriate salary of the same category.

³³⁹ Doc. 31.12.69 (date estimation).

France. By law, the company was obliged to prevent alienation by supplying sufficient financial resources and time allowing the expatriate personnel to foster family ties and friendships within their '*natural social environment*'. So, each year during summer, the expatriate families took off to France, often taking along their Senegalese nannies and domestic servants.³⁴⁰

The Senegalese managers, by contrast, were allowed to a maximum of 30 days for 11 months of continuous service. The length of 30 days was no right, but a favor, exceptional for the mining company, and only granted to Senegalese top managers (above AM4). For all other employees below top management level the Senegalese law of employment was applied. This meant in 1978 1½ days of vacation per month of service, thus, a maximum of 18 days vacation per year.³⁴¹ In consequence, situations arose that expatriate foremen (still existing in 1978) went on a six weeks vacation on company expenses with all family members, while his Senegalese superior had only two and a half weeks without financial surplus.

The Senegalese managers' comprehension for the predicaments of expatriation was fairly limited. They only saw a strongly aligned, cheerful and celebrating expatriate community, far from being isolated or disadvantaged in 'their hinterland' Senegal. Compared to Senegalese living standards, the expatriate families lived in affluence impossible to afford by Senegalese manager salaries. The new Senegalese managers had expected to work on equal rights with the expatriate staff. So, what they found in the mining company was quite irritating to them.

In 1978, the directorate observed a remarkable low work motivation among Senegalese managers. Just as elder workers, Senegalese managers also created an association to defend their rights. In a first meeting in March 1978, annoyances at the unequal situation were uttered officially to the Senegalese general director and the French exploitation director. The list of topics included financial interests, promotion possibilities, clarification of responsibilities, and better information.³⁴²

³⁴⁰ In the surrounding villages I have got to know three peasant women who had served as housekeepers in expatriate families in former times. All three of them were proud of their past and told me profusely how often they had gone to France with 'their' families during summer. When I conducted the two interviews with the former French exploitation director who had returned to Senegal for vacation, his former Senegalese housekeeper was each time on her marks to be at the family's service. The old work relation had, thus, become a lifelong bond.

³⁴¹ Doc. 00.04.1971 (date estimation).

³⁴² Doc. 04.03.78.

In June 1978, the 'Senegalese management' ('L'Encadrement Sénégalais') addressed a letter to the directorate in which the unequal length of the annual vacation was questioned. Apparently, the directorate ignored the request, because in November 1978 another letter was sent to the general director saying:

*"With the letter from the 24th of June, 1978, the Senegalese managers of the company presented to you the problem of the extension of the annual vacation. We are surprised and astonished at the same time about the silence kept for four months without any reply. We regret this which seems to be a lack of interest for this question which is a heartily matter for the entire Senegalese management and for which a positive solution would represent an important point of motivation."*³⁴³

In 1979, Senegalese managers asked the directorate to extend their limits of salary advances. The urgent request might be an indication for the growing annoyance over the wide gap of living standards compared to their expatriate colleagues. The general director made allusion to this problem in a letter addressed to the Parisian office of the company:

*"Since a few months, the company directorate is confronted with a growing number of advance requests from [Senegalese] managers. Up to now, the company refused systematically to lend money to those managers, legitimately believing that they should not have any serious financial problems by taking into consideration their salaries and their advantages and that they could ask, if necessary, other credit institutions existing in Senegal. This prevented us up to now to be trapped in the excessive according of advances and loans as in the case of the workers, employees, and certain midrange managers. To end now the proliferation of managers' requests it is urgent to define a way how to handle this matter. [...] If the company must continue to show severity, but by contrast, assure the fruits of our recruitment efforts concerning the young Senegalese managers, we have to install an effective policy to hold them back in the enterprise, at least for this first period."*³⁴⁴

³⁴³ Original version: « Par lettre en date du 24 juin 1978, les Cadres Sénégalais de la C.S.P.T. vous posaient le problème de l'extension de la durée de leur congé annuel. Nous sommes, à la fois, surpris et étonnés du silence gardé depuis plus de 4 mois sans la moindre réponse. Nous regrettons, ce qui semble être un manque d'intérêt porté à cette question qui tient à coeur l'ensemble des Cadres Sénégalais et dont la solution heureuse constituerait un élément de motivation non négligeable» (doc. 15.11.1978).

³⁴⁴ Original version: « Depuis quelques mois, la Direction de la Compagnie est confrontée à une demande accrue de prêts de la part des cadres. Jusqu'alors, la Compagnie refusait systématiquement de prêter de l'argent à ses cadres, estimant à juste titre que ceux-ci, de par

In October the same year, an advance was accorded to the Senegalese managers to buy cars, and some months later to build houses.³⁴⁵ These new advantages slightly decreased the feeling of injustice for a while among Senegalese managers.

For the annual increase of salary in 1980, however, the top management decided to apply a higher percentage to the expatriates' salary than to the Senegalese ones. The motif of this move was on one hand to agree to a certain indemnity to expatriates who were obliged to leave definitely the company for Senegalization. On the other hand, the directorate wanted to limit the salaries of the growing Senegalese management staff, which had reached an amount far superior compared to homologue positions in other Senegalese enterprises. This policy, however, deepened the feeling of a growing injustice again and created jealousy and distrust between the two parties. Some employees had used the term 'anti-apartheid' to characterize the directorate's behavior.³⁴⁶

The annual augmentation of salaries had traditionally been based on the conventional minimum fixed by the Senegalese government. Because the Senegalese managers protested, the general director decided in 1982 to calculate the traditional 5% increase on the base of the salary minimum of the company, which was higher than the conventional minimum. The workers annual augmentation remained, however, on the conventional basis. This move, thus, introduced a first differentiation in treatment between the Senegalese midrange and top management (AM 1 to 5) and the work force (categories 1 to 7) with destructive consequences.

leur rémunération et leurs avantages ne devaient pas avoir de problèmes financiers importants et que, le cas échéant, ils avaient la ressource de s'adresser aux organismes spécialisés en matière de prêts existant au Sénégal; ce qui nous a évité jusqu'ici de tomber dans l'excès des avances et des prêts accordés aux ouvriers, employés et certains agents de maîtrise. Pour mettre donc un terme à cette prolifération de demandes de prêts des cadres, il est urgent de définir une politique en la matière. [...] Si en matière de prêts aux cadres la Compagnie doit continuer à faire preuve de sévérité, par contre pour rentabiliser les efforts importants entrepris pour le recrutement des jeunes cadres sénégalais, nous devons mettre en place une politique efficace pour leur maintien dans l'entreprise, au moins dans cette première phase » (doc. 05.07.1979).

³⁴⁵ Doc. 11.10.1979.

³⁴⁶ Doc. 09.08.1983

B) Social differences: status and interaction patterns

While young Senegalese superiors had to struggle with elders for the legitimization of their commanding power and competence, young French superiors, still arriving at the company in the end 70s, had in this respect apparently nothing to complain about.

In contrast to their Senegalese colleagues, they were excluded from traditional norms of Senegalese society. Instead, French and Senegalese interaction was still based on the old pattern of French superiority and African inferiority established in many generations under colonial rule. French managers were thus not expected to show obedience or respect towards Senegalese elders, regardless of their age. To the contrary, Senegalese workers helped out the young expatriates with great pleasure and delight. Hierarchical positions on both sides were neither questioned nor endangered. In an interview published in the company journal in November 1978, a newly arriving young French engineer states:

"I am now part of the new team of the S.E.M [electro-mechanical department] in which I try to take over the responsibility of the central workshops and the garage with the sympathetic help of the company elders."³⁴⁷

Supposedly, competence of French managers was never seriously questioned among elder miners, even when they depended on the elders experience and know-how. Young Senegalese managers, by contrast, had to fight an arduous battle with their subordinates. Newly hired Senegalese managers were from the beginning on considered as '*position snatchers*' and the work force scrutinized them with scornful eyes.

For the young Senegalese managers it must have been a painful and even humiliating experience to observe and feel how different workers reacted to them in comparison to their expatriate colleagues, regardless of rank. An expatriate foreman or midrange manager had apparently more commanding power than Senegalese engineers in higher positions. One of the trade union leaders, who entered the company in 1980, recapitulated the French-Senegalese interaction as follows:

³⁴⁷ Original version: « *Je fais parti maintenant de la nouvelle équipe du S.E.M. au sein de laquelle j'essaierai d'assumer la responsabilité des ateliers centraux et du garage, avec l'aide sympathique des anciens de l'entreprise* » (Taïba-Info,11/78).

“When I came to the company, there was complete submission under the ruling French expatriates. It was all: ‘Yes, Sir! No, Sir! Thank you, Sir!’ Most workers at that time didn’t know that they had any rights. A lot of them seemed to be quite happy the way it was.”³⁴⁸

Apparently, whatever the expatriate said or did was widely accepted without question. The Senegalese worker tended to ignore unjust treatment by expatriates; scrutiny and criticism were practically absent. For same behaviour in similar situations, French and Senegalese were judged differently. This created growing insecurity in competence and realm of responsibility within Senegalese superiors and negatively affected the entire Senegalese management.

In interviews, miners often contradicted themselves. When confronted with two opposing statements, they confirmed both, as if in their eyes contradiction was absent. An example:

“You know, the French were interested in how well you worked. They were very strict in that. For good work they were willing to promote you. A Senegalese superior wants to know, what kind of relation do you have to him, in other words, do you belong to his family or not.”

In a later phase of the interview, to the question, why the first Senegalese exploitation director was so unpopular among workers, he answered:

“Oh, he was too strict, you know, and then, people said, he didn’t even help his family by giving them jobs in the company!”³⁴⁹

The miner recalled in the first quote a cliché about African mentality: the tendency of nepotism. In his opinion, Senegalese superiors only promote members of their families in ignorance of capacities or qualification. In the second quote, by contrast, he shows great

³⁴⁸ Original version: « *Quand je suis venu à la compagnie, il y avait une soumission totale sous les expatriés français. C’était en tous ‘Oui, Monsieur ! No, Monsieur ! Merci, Monsieur!’ La plupart des travailleurs ne savaient pas qu’ils ont des droits. Beaucoup entre eux étaient aussi bien heureux comme ça* » (M.G., A: 178-182).

³⁴⁹ Original version: « *Bon, il était trop stricte, tu sais, et puis les gens disaient qu’il n’aidait même pas à sa famille en leur donnant des poste dans la boîte!* » (L.S., B: 114-6).

disagreement with the first exploitation director of Senegalese descent who did not correspond to the assertion he had made about Senegalese superiors in the first quote.

It is interesting, how subconsciously the Senegalese superiors had actually no room for positive action. Whatever they did was apparently ‘wrong’. Here another example:

“With the expatriates we cooperated equally, we did the job together. But today, if you enter a workshop, you feel immediately who is superior and who is subordinate. It’s this culture of bosses [“chefferie”] that dominates the atmosphere. A Senegalese superior would never wear an overall like everybody else.” I asked him, if expatriates wore overalls. He replied surprised: *“Oh no, never. They always wore jeans and T-shirts”*³⁵⁰

These answers are only paradoxical if one assumes that French and Senegalese were indeed ‘equal’ (in the pure sense of the word), as the workers emphasized. However, they become logical, when giving credence to the opposite: employees subconsciously took French superiority into account.

These two examples elucidate that same behavior was judged differently and even contrarily depending on the individual’s ethnic group affiliation. Senegalese managers lost respect among workers for the same behavior for which the French had been respected. Being now in a power position, Senegalese superiors tried to emulate the behavior of French managers, not because they wanted to be like the French (as often presumed by workers), but because they had no alternative experiences. Usually the workers had never worked under Senegalese superiors before. Workers reacted to Senegalese superiors with marginalization by simply not considering the superiors’ opinions any longer as valuable, maybe executing orders, but letting them subtly feel their disdain.

This humiliation painfully festered in young Senegalese managers. The Senegalese superiors in consequence tried to impose their power and to get respect by force. This policy of course evoked even greater irreverence on the workers' side. The reaction on both sides was a distancing. As years went by, apparently Senegalese superiors tended to avoid direct

³⁵⁰

Original version: *«Avec les expatriés on a coopéré à titre égal, on a fait le travail ensemble. Mais aujourd'hui, si tu vas au chantier tu sens toute suite qui est supérieur et qui est subordonné. C'est cette culture de chefferie qui domine le climat. Un supérieur sénégalais ne voudrait jamais porte un bleu comme tout le monde! [Moi: est-ce que les expatriés travaillaient avec un bleu?] Ah non, jamais. Ils portaient toujours des jeans et t-shirts. »* (L.S., B: 120-32).

contact with their employees on the work sites. In consequence, contact frequency and intensity between the two groups declined and became arbitrary.

8.1.4 Employees expectations towards Senegalese superiors

In chapter 7.4.2 E) I attempted to show how French expatriates brought about a take-mentality among the Senegalese work force, in correspondence to their paternalistic missionary ideology. The well-established take-mentality caused irritation on the side of the new Senegalese superiors who were neither able nor willing to ease the numerous requests of their subordinates. Growing dissatisfaction emerged among a highly indebted work force now deprived of the habitual possibility of getting hold on cash money.

Not prepared for this sudden change, the Senegalese workers accused their Senegalese superiors to lack the sense of social responsibility and solidarity with their compatriots and reacted with condescension. The investigation of the great conflict in 1983 (ESGE-report) revealed that workers considered '*generosity*' to be the second most important quality a superior should have.³⁵¹

In interviews, employees often expressed their great disappointment in this respect like in the following sequence:

"No, oh no, they're not thinking about you. They're only seeking their own profit, that's what they're interested in. They couldn't care less about your personal problems."³⁵²

The Senegalese midrange managers were supposed to be in constant contact with the workers who were used to the generosity of the expatriates. But the indigenous managers' salaries were of course only a small proportion of the former expatriate salaries. Being Senegalese themselves, they had no paternalistic attitude towards their compatriots. Helping subordinates out with money or other favors was for them nevertheless a moral and social

³⁵¹ The most important quality was '*respect for his subordinates*', and only the third desired quality was '*competence*'. See also discussion in 8.2.2.

³⁵² Original version: «*Non, oh non, ils ne pensent pas a toi. Ils cherchent leur propre profit seulement. C'est ce qu'ils leur intéressent. Ils en fiche de tes problèmes personnels* » (M.S., A: 324-329).

obligation, but with very limited possibilities. Taking into consideration the social expectation of a Senegalese money-earner, they had their own personal problems to keep pace within the country's declining economy. A foreman expressed it in an interview as follows:

„...because, you know that we Africans, the African foreman, me, I replaced a 'Toubab' [a White]. That Toubab, [he has] another mentality, I say! That Toubab, he can pay me four times in one month. Me, I have a little salary. Okay, ehh, there is that little hate, which is in his heart. [Speaking about the midrange managers in general] Okay and [...] that what he earns also, if he plays stupid he will.... he will not earn this all at once and it's necessary that he is a little nasty towards his subordinates, the African. Okay, he says that 'I am of this kind, but I don't receive very well, but when I make fuzz they will kick me out [...] this hate there, I will show this to my subordinates'. This is our mentality! “³⁵³

In a stilted way, the employee indicated his personal strategy to cope with his subordinates' monetary expectations towards him as superior. He shows them *'a little hate'* to discourage them to ask for money. Although he rightly explained the fact that his financial possibilities are limited compared to an expatriate colleague (he is only mistaken in the assumption of *'four times'* less), he resumes his behavior at the end paradoxically in *'this is our mentality'*.

This strategy certainly served well his personal purpose of keeping the subordinates in a distance. At the same time it poisoned the social atmosphere in the workshop. The opinion that Senegalese superiors do not care about the problems of their compatriots is a widespread cliché but cannot bear closer scrutiny. Many Senegalese superiors have said in interviews that their subordinates frequently asked them for money and that they would also give, if they had the immediate possibility to do so. A top manager replied to a question concerning the issue:

"Oh yes, that happens a lot, people ask me outside of the professional frame, well, in a more spiritual dimension. [...] I do it if I can. [...] Yes, giving money happens a lot to me. [...] I take it

³⁵³

Original version: «*Parce que, tu sais que nous les Africains, le contremaître africain, moi, j'ai remplacé un Toubab. Ce Toubab-là, [il a] une autre mentalité, je dis! Ce Toubab-là, il peut me payer 4 fois dans le mois. Moi j'ai un petit salaire. Bon, ehh, il y a cette petite haine, qu'il est dans son coeur. Bon, et (...) ce qu'il gagne aussi, s'il fait le con il va les ... il va plus le gagner d'un coup et il faut qu'il soit un peu méchant envers les subordonnés, l'Africain. Bon, il dit que 'je suis ce grade-là, mais je ne perçois pas, pas bien, alors si je manifeste ils vont me licencier (...) aussi je vais le faire, cette haine-là, je vais le faire montrer a mes subordonnés. Ca, c'est notre mentalité!* » (L.S., A: 244 – 253).

from myself; I don't need to take it from the company, because there are other legal ways to get credits or other things like that. But here, the person asks in a private manner and I give him also in a private manner in discretion without the need to.... to be able to preserve despite all the person's dignity. [...] The problem is tremendous!"³⁵⁴

Whatever the expatriates gave to their subordinates was perceived as a veritable gift. For the Senegalese work force it was apparently miraculous that French would feel motivated to give money to Senegalese. Why would the French even care about their personal problems?

The most logical explanation, the Senegalese found for this 'bizarre' behavior was the 'sublime' French character. The French not only fostered this image, but presumably believed it also. It was, therefore just as logical to assume a bad character on the Senegalese superiors' side.

8.2 Strikes and their remedies

8.2.1 Trade union activities

In former years, the Senegalese trade union in the company was quite docile in correspondence with the strong loyalty and devotion to the ruling expatriates. But in June 1979, the workers' union changed its personnel by elections.

The atmosphere within the company's personnel got tense and agitated. For the traditional miner festival St. Barbe on the 4th of December 1979, some employees had prepared a theater play with the title: 'what happens in Taïba'.³⁵⁵

³⁵⁴ Original version: « *Eh oui, ça arrive souvent, des gens me sollicitent en dehors du cadre professionnel, bon, dans une dimension plus spirituelle.[...] Je le fais quand je peu. [...]Oui, il m'arrive souvent de donné de l'argent. [...] Je le prends sur moi-même, je n'ai pas besoin à mettre à contribution l'entreprise, parce qu'il y a d'autres voies légales, pour pouvoir accéder au crédit ou quelque chose comme ça. Mais là la personne vient de me le demander a titre personnel et je lui donne à titre personnel dans la discrétion sans avoir besoin... pour pouvoir préserver quand même la dignité de la personne. [...] Le problème est immense!* » (Company Doctor II, A: 198- 210).

³⁵⁵ Original title: '*Li xew Tayba*' (doc. 20.01.83, p. 10).

Unfortunately the play was not recorded, but it must have tackled important aspects of dissatisfaction and maybe unmask certain events from the past, because the Senegalese top managers reacted outraged. On the 17th of December, a group of workers marched during working hours to the directorate building and, in consequence, eight workers were dismissed.

Only one week later, the dragline conductors went on strike for a couple of days. A later summary of the events revealed that the strike ended *“because of an energetic action of the company directorate which herein had shown a lot of perceptiveness and authority”*.³⁵⁶

The atmosphere of distrust and suspicion became omnipresent. In May 1980, the guards on the gate to the upper living estate were instructed to control systematically the people going in and out. Each person who had the ‘right’ to enter the site was given a particular identification card with a personal photo. These cards differed according to the status of the holder and his or her function. Sow (1983) made the following remarks:

*„In terms of the relationship between the site and the surrounding villages, especially with Mboro, one has to say that although the inhabitants can do their shopping in the cooperative (supermarket) of the site, they cannot use the leisure equipment; the company has by the way built a cinema in Mboro. There is also to mention that around a hundred people coming from the surrounding villages, are employed as housekeeper (cooks, maids, gardeners); but the vegetable sellers who are coming to commercialize their products in the site, are obliged to carry an entrance card which has been established by the gate guards. Thus, it is to state that the integration of the living site in its environment remains incomplete.”*³⁵⁷

At the end of 1980, the extraction process proceeded to a new territory. It was the traditional farming land of the peasant village Keur Mor Fall. Environmental circumstances were less favorable there than on previous extraction fields. The sand layer was much thicker whereas the phosphate layer much thinner. This demanded important investments on new

³⁵⁶

Ibid, p. 10.

³⁵⁷

Original version: « *En ce qui concerne les rapports entre la cité et les villages environnants, surtout avec Mboro, il faut dire que même si les habitants peuvent se ravitailler à la coopérative de la cité, ils ne peuvent pas profiter des équipement de loisir,; et d'ailleurs la compagnie a installé un cinéma à Mboro. Il faut aussi noter qu'une centaine de personnes venant des villages environnant est employée dans la cité comme gens de maison (cuisinières, ménagères, jardiniers); mais les marchands de produits maraîchers qui viennent écouler leurs marchandises dans la cité se voient exigé des cartes d'accès établies par le service de gardiennage. Donc il faut reconnaître que l'intégration de la cité dans son environnement reste imparfaite*» (Sow 1983, p. 48ff). The author seems to ignore that the director took the decision on the identity card system quite recently on the 21st of May 1980. Thus, the process was rather a growing disintegration. A brick wall crowned by a fence was built in 1984 surrounding the site.

extraction equipment. Thus in the near future, the extraction process requested more effort for fewer outcomes in raw material. Further the market situation for the company's phosphate was inauspicious and the directorate expected the loss of important clients for the coming years. The extraction result in 1980 was only 1.288.000 t/phosphate (compared to 1.500.000 average in previous years) because of the technical restructuring in preparation of the new extraction field.

In addition, the Senegalese government had followed the demands of the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) set by the World Monetary Fund and World Bank since 1979 to get out of the foreign debt crisis. This also demanded strong restrictions on salaries, because the CFA franc was considered as an overestimated value. From company documents, however, it remained unclear how much SAP also affected salaries in the company under study. It is probable that SAP played a role on the directorate's decision to cut down the production grants usually accorded to the workforce at the end of each year. In the beginning of 1981, the board of directors prepared the employees for the removal of production primes in the company journal with these words:

“The new era can only begin with willingness to deliberate sacrifices. Taïba's leaders well understood this and their new-years-speech to the entire personnel emphasized the necessity to stand together in order to lighten the production costs and to save the industrial patrimony.”³⁵⁸

The directorate still attempted to evoke the old loyalty and team spirit while those sentiments had practically completely vanished among the workforce. In the early 80s, the company journal rapidly degraded to a tool to moralize the staff. The tone in most articles transformed into a lamenting over the bad world market situation as well as over the local environmental predicaments of phosphate extraction.

In 1981 and 1982 cases of abuse and robbery became again more frequent. In particular the disappearance of tools and spare parts in the workshops became a swelling

³⁵⁸ Original version: «*Mais les ères nouvelles ne sauraient s'amorcer sans d'énormes sacrifices librement consentis. C'est ce qu'on compris les dirigeants de Taïba qui n'ont pas manqué, dans leurs messages de nouvel an, d'attirer l'attention de l'ensemble du personnel, sur la nécessité de serrer les coudes pour alléger le coût de la production et sauvegarder le patrimoine industriel* » (Taïba Info, Dec. 80/Jan 81, p.20).

problem. The use of cars, firm property and given to managers for their daily transport to work was recognized as excessive in many cases.³⁵⁹

The negative evolution evoked further restrictions and added more written documents full of codes and rules. On one hand the comfortable and cozy paternalistic frame - well adapted to the social needs of the Senegalese workforce - was breaking apart, on the other hand everybody had to go through the struggle of adaptation to new rules. In this period, these processes absorbed most of the social energy.

In January 1981, the former Prime Minister Abdou Diouf replaced President Senghor. The new president established constitutionally the multi-party system, which had been prepared by Senghor since 1976.³⁶⁰ The ‘*democratic opening*’ (as it was called) allowed the legalization of many parties as well as trade unions. Numerous political groupings and trade unions also with Marxist-Leninist orientation had worked under cover for many years.³⁶¹ In 1981, well-prepared trade unionists went into industry and business and started talking about workers’ rights. A worker remembers:

„Before 81 the people were not interested in the union, from 1980 on you could feel the presence of political opposition parties in the company, there was a political opening from the eighties on. The opposition parties held seminars with the workers. This is which pushed towards the company committees.“³⁶²

At the same time, some important clients canceled their orders for 1982. The lack of orders forced the company to reduce the phosphate production from 1.800.000 tons in 1981 to 840.000 tons in 1982. The management decision to avoid dismissals caused idleness among the staff. A workforce habituated to strive for production records and efficiency was now asked to carry out menial jobs as sweeping floors, cleaning windows, tidying workshops and the like. Although the directorate managed to assure the salary basis of the staff, the numerous primes were removed. An activist remembered:

³⁵⁹ Doc. 22.09.80, and doc.17.10.81.

³⁶⁰ Hesseling 1985, p 273ff.

³⁶¹ See the interviews with Landing Savané, Majhemout Diop, Amath Dansokho, and Abdoulaye Bathily (in Ndiaye, Prinz, Tine 1990).

³⁶² Original version: « *Avant 81 les gens ne s’orientaient pas vers le syndicat, à partir de 1980 on a senti la présence des partis d’opposition politique à l’usine, il y’avait une ouverture politique à partir des années ‘80. Les partis oppositionnels ont fait des séminaires avec des ouvriers ce qui a pousser d’avoir des comités d’entreprise*» (Q14, 10/64).

*"1982 was a test year for the workers, a test which they succeeded by showing their capacity of sacrifices to save the company, even for the loss of their purchasing power of 1/12th."*³⁶³

In 1982, presumably, workers had much less work and thus, more free time. However, in contrast to the directorate's first impression, trade unionists managed to organize the workforce very quickly. To be able to control these new processes, the directorate called the trade union 'National Confederation of workers in Senegal' (C.N.T.S.) - aligned to the state party PS - to get reorganized in the region.³⁶⁴ End of May 1982, elections for the local representatives of the C.N.T.S. were held in the school building of Darou Khoudoss, a village in a 2.5 kilometers distance to the company entrance. Many employees had not been member of the trade union in the past, but were now willing to pay the necessary subscription to be able to vote or be elected as representative.³⁶⁵ The institutions of the trade union, which had slumbered along in the company for so many years, were now brought back to life. Accordingly, the new movement was called "*the rebirth*".³⁶⁶ By contrast to the directorate's intention, the new local C.N.T.S. representatives were not willing to play the role the state party reserved for them. In fact, a former employee of the company (Tamsir Sene), dismissed for troublesome trade union activities before, got now elected as general secretary of the C.N.T.S. regional union.

In a letter to the directorate on the 10th of June 1982, the new local C.N.T.S. representatives asked to meet, but got no reply. Thus, on the 15th of July, the local C.N.T.S. representatives asked the 'Regional Work Inspector' to intervene on their behalf. The local authority, thus, pushed the directorate to react. In a first meeting on the 19th of July, the trade unionists insisted mainly on five points, according to a directorate document:³⁶⁷

³⁶³ Le délégué personnel, St. Barbe 1983: « *L'année 1982 a été une année test pour les travailleurs. Test qu'ils ont réussi en montrant leur capacité à consentir des sacrifices pour la sauvegarde de l'entreprise, même au prix d'une diminution de leur pouvoir d'achat de l'ordre de 1/12e.* » (Taïba-Info 1/84).

³⁶⁴ The ,*Confédération Nationale des Travailleurs Sénégalais*' was founded in 1968 by the minister of technical and professional education and was integrated into the state party UPS (later PS) in 1969 (see Hesselting 1986, p. 333ff.).

³⁶⁵ Doc. 20.01.83. The document talks about an 'important participation' of the workers.

³⁶⁶ According to Diop and Diouf (1990), the 'rebirth of syndicalism' ('renouveau syndical') was announced by the C.N.T.S. short after Abdou Diouf became President. Madia Diop created the idea and was elected as general secretary of the C.N.T.S. on the 18th April 1983 (Diop & Diouf 1990, p. 225).

³⁶⁷ Doc. 20.01.83.

- Regular meetings with the company directorate
- Fair economic restrictions for the entire staff (not only for workers)
- Thorough revision of the health institution I.P.M.
- The destruction of the co-op shop because of the directorate's cessation of pre-financing.
- The 'alleged' refusal of the directorate to receive the delegates and to renew their mandates

The mandates of the company's personnel delegates had, in fact, been expired since August 1981. In the following correspondence, the C.N.T.S. headquarters in Dakar and the company directorate agreed on the 4th of November for the election of personnel delegates within the company.

After the July-meeting, trade unionists were working hard to implement a proletarian identity and to give a home to the workers' needs and complains. Regular meetings were held to strengthen the bondage between all different sections of the workforce. On various occasions, company busses were stopped by activists to inform the workers with hand-outs and spontaneous speeches. By contrast to the agreement of the C.N.T.S. headquarters in Dakar and the company directorate, the local trade union office organized 'primary elections' without the knowledge of the central office, presumably in August. By this time, the directorate was firmly convinced that the activists were only pretending to be C.N.T.S. adherents. In reality, in the directorate's opinion, they were externally manipulated agitators of suspicious political groupings only aiming at the destruction of the industrial enterprise. We listen to some passages of internal company documents:

*"In this entire period, we didn't stop to draw the attention of the responsible C.N.T.S. agents to the confiscation of the trade union section at Taïba by subversive elements who were without any doubt members of political groupings."*³⁶⁸

In a later passage of the same document is said:

³⁶⁸ Original version: «*Pendant toute cette période, nous n'avons cessé d'attirer l'attention des responsables de la C.N.T.S. sur la confiscation de la cellule syndicale de TAIBA par des éléments subversifs dont l'appartenance à des groupuscules politiques ne faisait pas l'ombre d'un doute*» (doc. 20.01.83, p. 5).

“A group of agitators formed with the not-admitted aim to degrade the social climate at Taïba. This was supposed to develop into a crisis which would destabilize the firmness of the company with foreseeable consequences for the national economy.”³⁶⁹

In another document the directorate explained:

“[T]his real political party disguised as trade union which unfortunately managed to drown the C.N.T.S. section at Taïba.”³⁷⁰

The trade union ‘section’ was in fact at first lead by a few intellectuals, but was very soon supported by the great majority of the workers. No evidence was found to back up the directorate’s assumption that those leaders were members of subversive political groupings. One of the leading trade union activists in that period, hired in 1980, explained in an interview his entrance into political activities as follows:

„I came to take my service [...] I visited a bit the mine, the environment and what really stroked me most was the tremendous fright among the people in front of the boss. This impressed me very much. Me, I was used to give my point of view whatever was the person’s position in the hierarchy. [...] I was used to express my feeling, to give my technical opinion about questions, about the work relations. This really impressed me and I’ve asked, why the people.... In these times there were many exp.... not too, too much compared to the past years, but there were expatriates. And the people really feared the hierarchy, because the system was structured in a way that - in my opinion - the boss was always right. [...] So ehh, it is so that from day to day, there were maybe problems, which I could observe. I am also a man who..., somebody who does not stand injustice, this is right, this is in my nature. So, when we saw these things there, I asked if there was a trade union. People told me ‘yes, but it is a ‘yellow’ (= dead) trade union, a trade union of the hierarchy. I said, okay, in any case, I will ‘unionize’ myself [...] I had no trade union experience also.”³⁷¹

³⁶⁹ Original version: « Un group d’agitateurs s’est constitué, dont les buts inavoués étaient la dégradation du climat social à TAIBA qui devrait aboutir à une situation de crise qui ébranlerait la solidité de la Compagnie avec les conséquences prévisibles sur l’économie nationale» (ibid. p. 9).

³⁷⁰ Doc. 00.02.83.

³⁷¹ Original version: « Je suis venu prendre le service [...]. J’ai visité un peu la mine, de l’environnement et ce qui m’avait le plus frappé, c’est la peur bleue parmi les gens devant le chef!! Ca m’avait beaucoup impressionné. Moi, j’étais habitué a donner mon point de vue, quelque soit le [poste] dans la hiérarchie. [...] J’étais habitué à donner mon sentiment, donner

On the 4th of November, the ‘official’ elections for the new workers’ representatives took place in the company with an ‘*overwhelming, participation never obtained before*’.³⁷² In the official election the delegates nominated before in the ‘primary election’ were entirely confirmed. Thus, the local trade unionist had in fact managed to enforce their favored candidates and to outstrip the PS loyal C.N.T.S. headquarters.

A) The catalogue of claims

On the 19th December, the trade union committee organized a ‘day of investigation’ (*‘journée d’étude*). With questionnaires workers were asked to openly express their dissatisfaction and what kind of changes they wished. The participation on this inquiry was huge, according to an internal paper of the trade union.³⁷³ It was maybe the long tradition of inquiries for the company journal, which paid off now. The result of this kind of collective brainstorming was a catalogue of 110 (!) claims. The original catalogue was reduced to a more official one of 37 claims. Nevertheless, the long version apparently remained the guideline of later trade union activities:

„This is a platform which was presented which concerned in about 60% the working conditions.[...] Okay, this platform [...] we revised it to try to cut it down to an acceptable size, 110 points concentrated in a plan of 47 points [he is mistaken here] But, let me tell you, this is it. The platform of 110 points was for me and for certain other comrades our golden board. [...] It is from there on that we’ve tried to work since we are here! All these points, this was... this was... the demands of the workers, this was... this was... the workers’ sentiment

un avis technique sur des questions, sur des relations au travail. Ca m’a beaucoup impressionné et j’ai demandé pourquoi les gens... quand il y avait à l’époque aussi, il y avait beaucoup de ex.... pas trop trop trop, par rapport aux années passé, avant, mais il y’en avait des expatriés. Et les gens avaient vraiment peur de la hiérarchie, parce que le système était tel que - a mon avis - le chef avait toujours raison [...] Donc ehh, c’est ainsi que de jour en jour il y eu peut-être des problèmes que j’ai pu percevoir. Je suis un homme aussi qui n.. [une] personne qui ne souffre pas l’injustice, ça c’est vrai, ça c’est dans ma nature. Donc, eh quand on a vu cette chose-là, j’ai demandé s’il y avait un syndicat. On m’a dit ‘oui, ...mais c’est un syndicat jaune, un syndicat [one word incomprehensible] de la hiérarchie. Je dis, bon, quelque soit alpha, moi je vais me syndiquer, parce que moi, ma tradition, je dis qu’on travail à se syndiquer, c’était ma philosophie. Je n’avais pas une expérience syndicale aussi » (M.G., B: 50-72).

³⁷²

Exact figures are not given (doc. 02.06.83).

³⁷³

Doc. 20.01.83. Exact numbers were not mentioned.

*which was expressed through... in those agitations. They have judged it necessary to review often the points which had been sorted out and the points which hadn't [...] Up to this moment we are working on this.*³⁷⁴

Both catalogues reveal a careful study of the Senegalese law of employment applied in 1983. Numerous claims made directly allusion to particular articles. In both versions the first paragraph remained in the following negotiations the most important demand. In the first catalogue, the first paragraph was:

*“Correct payment for extra hours and their increase for the shift workers (Art. 42).”*³⁷⁵

Fused with several other claims, the first paragraph of the second version changed into the following formulation:

*“Immediate application of the Collective Interprofessional Convention: articles: 4, 8, 9, 13, 14.4, 19.2, 38, 42, 43, 48, 49, 50, 51, 56, 65, and 67.2.”*³⁷⁶

In the following debates, the emphasis was mainly put on article 42 of the ‘National Collective Interprofessional Convention’ from the 27th May 1982. Article 42 was primarily a combination of article 134 and 142 of the former ‘Law of employment’ (‘Code du Travail’), order n° 70-184 from the 20th of February 1970.³⁷⁷

³⁷⁴ Original version: „C’est une plate-forme qui a été posé, qui intéresse a peu près a 60% les conditions de travail [...] Bon, cette plate-forme [...] on l’a revue pour essayer de la ramener à le niveau plus acceptable, 110 point en impact sur un plan de 47 points. Mais je vais vous dire, c’est ça. La plate-forme de 110 points a été pour moi et pour certains camarades notre tableau d’or. [...] C’est a par de là nous avons essayé de travailler depuis que nous somme là! Tous les points-là, c’était... c’était ...des demandes des travailleurs, c’était.. c’était la sensibilité des travailleurs qui était exprimer a travers... dans ces agitations, ils ont estimés qu’il était nécessaire de projeter souvent les points qui sont réglés et les points qui ne le sont pas[...] Jusqu’à présent, on travail là-dessus.“ (M.G., A: 132 -45).

³⁷⁵ Original version: «1 – Paiement correct des heures supplémentaires et leur majoration pour les travailleurs postés (Art. 42)» (doc. 19.12.82).

³⁷⁶ Original version: „1er Point: Application immédiate de la Convention Collective Interprofessionnelle: articles : 4, 8, 9, 13, 14.4, 19.2, 38, 42, 43, 48, 49, 50, 51, 56, 65 et 67.2 » (doc. 24.01.83).

³⁷⁷ (Wiederholung, ggf. ganz weglassen oder mit dem anderen zusammenführen). The article 134 was not unknown to alert readers of the company journal. It had been discussed in detail while explaining a new form of pay slips, primes, advances and remuneration of extra hours in August 1978.

Article 134 fixed the maximum of weekly working hours on 40 in a maximum of six consecutive workdays; article 142 fixed the obligatory weekly break of 24 hours minimum. These articles were designed for enterprises running 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Article 42 dealt mainly with the payment of overtime:

„In compensation of the legal obligatory weekly rest, the shift worker who has exceptionally done seven shifts in a row within a week, receives a minimum payment of 60% of his normal salary for the length of one shift [sic].“³⁷⁸

In the past, extra hours were remunerated with 10% of the normal salary from the 41st to the 48th hour inclusive on a normal working day during daytime. Above the 48th hour, each hour on a working day during daytime was remunerated with 35%, with 50% during nighttime (22pm to 6am) and on holydays and Sundays during daytime, and with 100% on holydays and Sundays during nighttime.³⁷⁹

Thus, in the past the directorate had ignored the ‘exceptional’ case of the seventh shift, which must have been quite frequent in periods of high production demands. Having done extra hours on Sunday for instance, workers would be expected back to work on Monday morning to begin their normal working week, by ignorance of the legal minimum of 24 hours rest. Thus, the resolution revealed an abuse of human resources by the company directorate since foundation.

Many other claims dealt with aspects of ‘payment’ and ‘time’. The employees’ perception of these parameters had undergone a considerable change since Senegalese superiors dominated the management. Some interesting examples of the new perception of time usage are shown below (claims of the original long version):

„8 - Observance of the vacation program (Art. 56)“

³⁷⁸ Original version: *«En compensation du repos hebdomadaire légal obligatoire, l’ouvrier de poste ayant accompli exceptionnellement dans la semaine sept postes de travail consécutifs au minimum reçoit une rémunération supplémentaire égale à 60% de son salaire normal pour la durée d’un poste de travail »* (Convention Collective Nationale Interprofessionnelle du 27 mai 1982).

³⁷⁹ Out of three weeks, two had 48 hours and one had 42 hours of work. The shift time schedule and the modes of remuneration, including extra hours on normal days, night shifts, holydays and Sundays is explained in detail in a series of articles published in the company journal in 1978 (3-11/78).

„14 - Observance of the half hour breaks (Art. 42)“

„24 - Payment of the hours passed in the company to the employees on stand-by duty and increase of the prime of the stand-by at home (Art. 51)“³⁸⁰

The devotion of free time, formerly a noble sign of work endeavor, was now replaced by the strict minimum under the condition of legal remuneration. In interviews, workers refer with a certain pride to their great readiness to sacrifice free time in situations of technical necessity during the ‘golden era’. Employees directly involved in the production process were purported to have remained in a stand-by aspiration around the clock. Many claims of the catalogue’s long version demand to formalize aspects of the work process which were handled rather casually in the past, build on the workers volunteer loyalty to the company and on their alleged intrinsic interest for the general progress. In the new catalogue, many claims insisted heavily on the company’s responsibilities towards their employees.

Another species of claims refer to the contact between the management and the workforce, some examples:

„45 - Abundance of massive arbitrary punishments in the mine [...]“

„67 - Equity of workers and their families in all institutions of the company“

„76 - Creation of a department for human relations“³⁸¹

The demand to create a department for human relations was now, after the departure of the majority of expatriates, assessed as necessary. The claims probably reflected the daily work experiences.

On the 29th December, the personnel delegates handed the reduced catalogue of 37 claims to the exploitation director while workers marched in front of the directorate building to support this act. The first meeting to discuss the claims took place on the 12th January 1983.

³⁸⁰ Original version: « 8 - respect de l’organisation du congé (Art. 56)»; „14 - Respect de la demi-heure de pause (Art. 42)»; «24 - Paiement des heures d’astreinte passées à l’usine pour les agents de permanence et augmentation de la prime d’astreinte à domicile (Art. 51). »

³⁸¹ Original version: « Suppression des sanctions arbitraires et massives particulièrement à la mine et au Pool Chauffeurs»; «Egalité des Travailleurs et de leurs familles dans toutes les institutions de la CSPT»; « Création d’une Section chargée des relations humaines.»

The meeting inside was accompanied by masses of workers standing outside for support. On this day, the general director had very little time and only the first claim was partly discussed. In consequence, a second meeting was arranged for the 18th January. For both meetings, the general director of the C.N.T.S. headquarters in Dakar and the regional work inspector was present. For the second meeting, the directorate had, additionally, called the local constabulary for help. While 35 local gendarmes were prepared to intervene from early morning on, another 150 gendarmes were called from Dakar and arrived during the day.

In this reunion of high tension, the C.N.T.S. headquarters representative made the attempt to sooth the atmosphere as intended by the directorate. The discussion marathon of 8½ hours went on from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. According to the directorate, four aspects of priority crystallized:

- “1) – Payment of the remaining bonus for economic circumstances in 1981;*
- 2) - Replacement of this uncertain bonus by a 13th month salary much less insecure for the workers;*
- 3) – General increase of salaries in correspondence with the daily costs of living;*
- 4) – Increase of the production bonus minimum from 5 to 25%, thus an augmentation of 20% for the actual salaries.”³⁸²*

Interestingly, the payment of extra hours (first claim of both catalogues) was not listed in the above-cited document, although it later became the most important issue (we come back to it below). During this reunion, the general director first agreed on an augmentation in principle of first 10%, and later on an additional 8%, but the parties could not agree on the dispersion of those 18%, how much should the conventional salaries fixed by the government augment, the actual salaries by categories of the company, and how much was designed to increase the annual production bonus. This point caused the definite disagreement of the different interest groups. However, in the directorate’s opinion, a common agreement between

³⁸² Original version: «1)- Paiement d’un éventuel ,reliquat’ de la prime conjoncturelle; 1981; 2) – Remplacement de cette prime très ‘fluctuante’ par un 13^e mois beaucoup moins aléatoire pour les travailleurs ; 3) – Augmentation générale des salaires en rapport avec le coût de la vie ; 4) – Relèvement du plancher de la prime de production de 5 à 25% soit une augmentation de 20% sur les salaires réels » (doc. 00.02.83, p. 2).

the two parties was from beginning on not intended.³⁸³ The personnel delegates decided the strike on the same day. At 8 p.m. the workers left the work halls and mining installations, machines and ovens still running.³⁸⁴ The next day, the minister of industrial development and handicraft (*Ministre du Développement Industriel et de l'Artisanat*) called the strike parties to a reunion for negotiations. The protocol of this meeting was not found in the archives and, thus, the points of discussion remains unknown to the author. Doubtless is that the strike end was concerted for the 20th of January. But on that day, the directorate observed an “*ambiguity in the position of the two responsible managers of the drying section*”³⁸⁵ and decided to call three specialists from France to take over their function. The directorate spread the rumor that with the help of those French experts the company would be able to dry the current stock of 600.000t of humid phosphate and sell it on the world market and in consequence:

“[...] we could close the mine to our advantage and would irreversibly give up the workers.”³⁸⁶

However, those French specialists did not arrive at the company. But the rumor weakened the workers' resistance considerably and from the moment of the above announcement many workers started immediately to question the movement. The directorate shrewdly used this moment of irritation to declare that the workers were in fact in the grip of evil powers, which had anyhow never really fought for workers' interests. Also, the general secretary of the C.N.T.S. headquarters called the general director at 9 o'clock in the evening and tightly confirmed this impression.³⁸⁷ Two hours later, the employees of the harbor

³⁸³ Original version : « *Ses exigences devaient de toute manière aboutir à la rupture, puisque la volonté d'aboutir était absente de ses interventions malgré les concessions successives faites par la Direction de TAÏBA sur le problème des augmentations de salaires* » (doc. 20.01.83).

³⁸⁴ An observer described it as follows: « *A 20H. donc, tous les travailleurs avaient quitté leurs postes sur la demande expresse des délégués, laissant les installations en marche commettant ainsi l'abominable crime d'abandon des chaudières, des fours de séchage et toutes autres installations sous haute tension pouvant donc sauter d'un moment à l'autre et engendrer des conséquences catastrophiques pour l'outil industriel mais encore et surtout pour la vie des milliers d'hommes des villages environnants* » (doc. 20.01.83).

³⁸⁵ Original version: « *Le Directeur des Exploitations constate une certaine ambiguïté dans la position des deux cadres sénégalais du Séchage. C'est alors que la décision de faire descendre de France 3 chefs de poste de séchage est prise, leur arrivée était alors prévue le Dimanche 23 janvier* » (doc. 00.02.83, p.5).

³⁸⁶ Original version: « [...] *on pouvait avantageusement fermer la Mine pour 7 à 8 mois et les travailleurs auraient irrévocablement cédé* » (doc. 00.02.83, p 5).

³⁸⁷ Possibly, some frightened workers pleaded for help at the C.N.T.S. central office. This remains nevertheless in the realm of speculation.

department announced to the directorate their return to work the following morning at 8 o'clock a.m., the employees at the extraction territory went back to work at 3 o'clock p.m. the same day (Friday, 21st of January). The directorate interpreted the cessation as a victory over the influence of the subversive groupings and their indoctrination.

In January 1983, the social climate in large enterprises all over Senegal was agitated.³⁸⁸ Also on Friday the 21st, the director of work and social security within the ministry of public function, of employment and work addressed an open letter to the presidents of three large trade unions already founded before independence and which represented in majority entrepreneurs of enterprises created on foreign capital (UNISYNDI, SCIMPEX, and SYPAOA³⁸⁹). On three pages, the director dealt with the delicate issue of the legally correct payment of extra hours and referred in great detail to the 'Law of employment', articles 134 and 142, from 20th February 1970 and the 'National Inter-professional Collective Convention', article 42, from 27th May 1982. He concluded:

*"In consideration of the above explications it is proven indispensable that the attention of your adherents concerned gets drawn to this delicate question and additionally you should point out that any other interpretation would contradict the sense of the texts on this issue. It is, in consequence, the responsibility of the employers, who want to continue not paying extra hours for internal reasons, to organize the work in such a way to avoid that a worker is obliged to do a seventh shift. You insist finally on the fact that the current work organization in enterprises which run 24 hours is indisputably a violation of the right to a weekly rest."*³⁹⁰

The quotation indicates that a seventh shift without correct payment and by ignorance of the obligatory weekly rest of 24 hours must have been a common phenomenon also in

³⁸⁸ Magatte Lô talks about 'relatively serious events' during the tour of the 'rebirth' delegates in the CSS (Sugar Company) in Richard Toll in January 1983 (Lô 1990, p. 74). The C.N.T.S. representatives were torn between PS principles and opposing interest groups. See the interview with the C.N.T.S. General Secretary Madia Diop in 1989 (Ndiaye, Prinz, Tine 1990, p. 198).

³⁸⁹ It was namely the 'Union des Syndicats d'Industries' (UNISYNDI) replaced by the 'Conseil National du Patronat du Sénégal' (CNP) in 1987, the 'Syndicat Patronal de l'Ouest Africain' (SYPAOA), and the 'Syndicat des Importateurs et Exportateurs' (SCIMPEX).

³⁹⁰ Original version: «Compte tenu de ce qui précède, il s'avère indispensable que l'attention de vos ressortissants concernés soit attirée sur cette délicate question en leur indiquant par ailleurs que toute autre interprétation serait contraire à l'esprit des textes régissant la matière. Il appartient, en conséquence, aux employeurs ne tenant pas à payer, pour des raisons propres à leur entreprise, des heures supplémentaires, d'organiser le travail de manière à éviter qu'un travailleur soit amené à accomplir un septième quart. Vous insisterez enfin sur le fait que l'organisation actuelle du travail dans les entreprises à feu continu constitue incontestablement une violation au principe du repos hebdomadaire» (doc. 21.01.83, Circulaire nr. 26, p. 3).

other continuously running enterprises in Senegal at that time. This letter informed the directorate about the ‘violation’ of workers’ rights since foundation within the mining company. This awareness eased the way for further negotiations with the workforce.

On Monday the 24th of January, the negotiations between the personnel delegates of the mining company on one side, the directorate on the other, and three C.N.T.S. representatives somewhere in between³⁹¹, continued.

In this reunion, the catalogue of 37 claims was discussed point by point. The protocol of the meeting was signed by all participants (directorate, C.N.T.S., and personnel delegates). This gives evidence that they had reached a consensus on single claim for augmentation, amelioration, and / or further action. The accorded results were – at least on paper – veritably impressive. On 28 decision results 21 were positive³⁹², supporting the workers’ requests, only 7 were negative; an additional 2 claims were only partly accorded, another 2 were answered by a ‘maybe, we will see’. Three claims were rather an expression of current worries and two claims were classified as ‘without object’ (claims 1 and 25). Does that mean that those two claims were justified without question and will be applied accordingly? For claim 1 this conclusion seems probable, since claim 1 dealt – as we have seen (see citation above) - with 16 different articles of the ‘Convention Collective Interprofessionnelle’, article 42 included. For claim 25, the explanation seems less likely, because the workers demanded here: “*participation on the capital of the company*”.³⁹³

In any case, soon after, on the 11th February 1983, the personnel delegates addressed a letter to the directorate and claimed to respect the monthly meetings with the personnel delegates as foreseen by law.³⁹⁴ In this letter, the personnel delegates focus solely on article 42 of the CCI as part of the first claim of the catalogue and also in reference to the letter of the

³⁹¹ As mentioned above, there was a remarkable rupture between national and local C.N.T.S. representatives. At this particular reunion were namely present Ismaila Diagne, General Secretary of the C.N.T.S. headquarters in Dakar, Tamsir Sene, General Secretary of the local C.N.T.S. branch in Thiès (former employee of the mining company, dismissed for trade union activities), and Abdou Niang, General Secretary of the local C.N.T.S. branch in Tivavouane (doc. 24.01.83).

³⁹² Some examples: the directorate agreed to augment some bonuses (4), amelioration of the state of the transportation busses as well as a wider net of stops (5), participation of the directorate in case of death in the region by financial and transportation means (7), for employees particularly exposed to dust, steam and/or smoke regular health investigation every six months (13), infrastructure on drinking water and toilets on the mining territory (15), financial aid for the construction of an education center for workers in Tivaouane (19) (doc. 24.01.83).

³⁹³ Original version: «25ème point : Représentation des travailleurs au C.A. [Conseil Administrative] et participation au capital de la Compagnie – Sans objet» (doc. 24.01.83).

³⁹⁴ Doc. 11.02.1983.

ministry from the 24th January 1983 (cited above). The appendix, attached to the letter, titled ‘calculation mode of extra hours for shift workers’ showed in detail the correct payment of extra hours in the three different shifts applied in the mining company. For the first shift (4 a. m. to 12 a. m.) a supplement of 14 extra hours was due for payment, the second shift (12 a.m. to 8 p.m.) another 16 extra hours should be paid, and for the third shift (8 p.m. to 4 a.m.) 20.8 extra hours were calculated for payment. All three shifts were calculated on the basis of seven complete workdays per week. This calculation points again to the high frequency of seven-days working weeks.

The personnel delegates thoroughly calculated those non-paid extra hours for shift workers and expressed in per cent of the monthly basic salary since 1963! Interestingly, although reaching 20 years into the past, no allusion to French management was ever made concerning that point. In summary, the personnel delegates came to the following conclusion:

RECAPITULATION OF EXTRA HOURS PAYMENT³⁹⁵

	<u>SHIFT WORKER</u>	<u>NORMAL POSTS</u>
from July 1982	27.6 %	31.6 %
from 1976 to June 1982	24 %	28 %
from 1963 to Dec. 1975	24.42 %	28.42 %

From that moment on, the application of article 42, thus, the correct payment of extra hours and the obligatory weekly rest became the center of attention for further trade union activities and negotiations.

In consequence, the directorate developed apparently a new shift schedule, which foresaw the continuous work process in four teams each working three days in a row on the same shift.³⁹⁶ The personnel delegates immediately communicated the new schedule to the director of work and social security Mamadou Cissé (ministry of public function, employment and work) for further negotiations on that point. In their name, the state functionary asked the

³⁹⁵ Doc. 11.02.1983, appendix, p. 4.

³⁹⁶ An internal note n 809, mentioned in doc. 21.04.83, was circulated in the mining company, which explained the new shift schedule. Unfortunately, the document was not found in the archives. Presumably, by the system of rotation the directorate had managed to preserve the shift workers habitual toll of extra hours by adding more night shifts than before without exceeding the six days working week now requested. Being usually in a rather tense financial situation, workers were keen to do extra hours and night shifts to earn more money.

company directorate to delay the decision in order to give time to the personnel delegates to commend and amend the schedule eventually. In response to the directorate schedule, the personnel delegates had developed a contra proposition. Apparently, the delay was not accorded. Therefore, Cissé called to a new reunion for negotiations between the company directorate and the personnel delegates, which took place in his office on the 21st of April 1983. At that moment, 17 expatriate managers remained in high positions of the company. However, in the substantial April-reunion, no expatriate manager was present. Interestingly, it was a taciturn consensus of both ethnic groups that this was a conflict among Senegalese only, although the issues concerned reached far in the company's past of French management. Apart from the inviting ministerial member, three Senegalese top managers and six delegates from the company were present; further three representatives of the CNTS.

For this meeting, the general director of the mining company had done his homework; he was very well prepared. After his profuse greeting and thanking everybody, showing great appreciation for everybody's good will, he rejected the delegates' contra proposition, because *“it tends to diminish the workers' salary”*³⁹⁷ and this is to avoid at all cost in order to maintain their purchasing power. Instead, he insisted on the directorate's time schedule for shift work meeting all restrictions fixed by law. The delegates on their side accused the new schedule to diminish the purchasing power of the workers. Interesting is, however, that the debate focused on the best way to *maintain* the salary amount, but seemingly *without* the increase of the salary basis. In this reunion, the augmentation of salary was no subject.

The member of ministry favored the directorate's proposition – according to the reunion protocol - before anybody else had said a word. His talk made the delegates look ridiculous as if the directorate was more concerned of the workers' well being than the personnel delegates. The functionary ended the reunion by moralizing the personnel delegates with the following words:

„He understands even less this attitude of distrust from the personnel delegates, because we know that they can take legal action at the different institutions for work or at the court to get their rights. In the opinion of Mister Cissé, the delegates of the personnel should do their best from now on in order to achieve the return of the prior climate of the honest collaboration in Taïba. By leaving here, he adds, you should put an end to all your divergences and go to

³⁹⁷

Original version: « *Il regrette néanmoins de ne pouvoir accepter la contre proposition des travailleurs parce qu'elle tend à diminuer le salaire de ceux-ci* » (doc. 21.04.83, p. 1).

work, because you know very well that Taïba holds an important position in the country's economy. It is therefore not good to have constantly conflicts in this company, because if Taïba is in danger one day, it is the loss of the Senegalese Nation, but you as well, because it is from Taïba that you receive your base of existence. You will thus understand,[...] that the public authorities are getting anxious because of the bad social climate that constantly reigns in Taïba and one is not far from believing that there is the presence of troublesome elements, who want to sabotage systematically the Senegalese economy."³⁹⁸

The humiliated delegates, thus, left the meeting after being accused to ruin the country's economy by causing senseless animosity. This outcome was not designed to ease the tension.

One month later, on the 20th Mai 1983, the trade union branch of the mining company invited the workers to a meeting on the 29th of May to celebrate one year of "*workers' fight for their legitimate claims confronted with employers allergic to changes and aligned to corrupt opportunists*".³⁹⁹ The meeting aimed at an analysis of trade union activities in the company since their '*rebirth*' one year ago and to elucidate the gains and losses. In their hand out, the trade union section emphasized the constant mobilization of the workforce and prepared for "*further battles even worse*".⁴⁰⁰

In lack of further information on the workers' reunion on the 29th of May, we can only speculate that the atmosphere must have been stirred up. Certainly on this occasion, the personnel delegates widely published their calculation of incorrect payment for extra hours in past years and announced that the directorate is now obliged to reinstall justice and, in

³⁹⁸ Original version: « *Il comprend d'autant moins cette attitude de méfiance des délégués du personnel lorsque l'on sait que ces derniers peuvent se pourvoir devant les différentes instances des services du travail ou devant les tribunaux pour rentrer en possession de leurs droits. Selon Monsieur Cissé, les délégués du personnel se doivent de tout faire à partir de maintenant pour que le climat de franche collaboration d'antan revienne à Taïba. Au sortir d'ici, ajoute-t-il, vous devez mettre un terme à toutes vos divergences et vous mettre au travail car vous n'êtes pas sans ignorer que Taïba occupe une place importante dans l'économie du pays. Il n'est donc pas bon qu'il y ait constamment des conflits au niveau de cette société car si Taïba périssait un jour, c'est la nation sénégalaise qui perdrait mais vous aussi, puisque c'est de Taïba que vous tirez vos sources de subsistance. Vous comprendrez donc, précise Monsieur Cissé, que les pouvoirs publics commencent à s'inquiéter de ce mauvais climat social qui règne en permanence à Taïba, et l'on n'est pas loin de penser qu'il y a la présence d'éléments perturbateurs qui veulent saboter systématiquement l'économie sénégalaise* » (doc. 21.04.83).

³⁹⁹ Original version: « *Mais globalement, l'année écoulée a été dominée par la lutte des travailleurs pour leurs revendications légitimes face à un patronat allergique au changement et allié aux opportunistes corrompus* » (doc. 20.05.1983).

⁴⁰⁰ Original version: « *En clair, il nous faut consolider l'Unité et le Syndicat pour engager d'autres batailles encore plus dures* » (doc. 20.05.1983).

consequence, is forced to refund. Taking into account the difficult financial situation of the majority of workers it is easy to imagine the emerging rage.

Two days later, Mamadou Cissé addressed a letter to the company directors of four large enterprises (CSPT, SSPT, SIES, ICS), including the mining enterprise. All of them went through similar debates on the refund of correct payment for extra hours done in the past. In his letter, the functionary director justified the workers' request for refund and fixed the date for remuneration of retroactivities on the 27th May 1979. Although, the delegates claimed the lack of correct payment since 1963, four years of refund would have been a fabulous result for the workers and a great victory for the personnel delegates and trade unionists.

However, the money was never granted. In his letter, the director of work and social security left enough room for interpretation concerning the necessity of reimbursement:

„The difficult situation known to the country's economy and my desire to see social peace emerging in your enterprises I decided to fix the date of effect on the 27 May of 1979. Useless to say that the extra payment is actually only due if the former calculation method did harm to the interests of the workers concerned.“⁴⁰¹

Of course, the directorate decided at the end that the prior manner of payment did *not* harm the workers' interests. Many of the shift workers had presumably already dreamed of huge amounts of money. After all those quarrels and fights the result was a great deception. The workers formed delegations to seek support from their traditional 'fathers' and the more powerful marabouts.⁴⁰² Doubts arose among workers over the competence and the real intention of the young trade unionists. Many tended secretly to assume that the directors' rendition that subversive elements were striving for the mines destruction to harm the national economy was possibly true. By the new defeat, the credibility became endangered. To quit fighting would have meant to give room to the image of treacherous troublemakers. A powerful action was needed to meet the overall frustration.

⁴⁰¹ Original version: « *La conjoncture difficile que connaît l'économie du pays et mon souci de voir la paix sociale s'instaurer dans vos entreprises m'ont amené à fixer la date de prise d'effet au 27 mai 1979. Il va sans dire que la majoration n'est effectivement due que si le mode de calcul antérieurement pratiqué lésait les intérêts des travailleurs concernés* » (doc. 31.05.83).

⁴⁰² Which part they took in the consolidation is unclear.

B) The June-strike

The personnel delegates announced a general strike on the 2nd of June 1983. On that day, a Monday, workers of all categories left their working places at 11.45 a.m. and gathered in huge crowds in front of the managers' offices. In workers memories this date stands as a symbol of an overwhelming solidarity.

All expatriates and the great majority of Senegalese managers did not participate in the strike. The managers maintained the production process as good as possible, but it eventually slowed down considerably. For the first time in 23 years of export, an order of 10.000 tons of phosphate had to be rejected. A Chinese container ship left Dakar's harbor uncharged. Here some passages of the official trade union announcement during the strike:

“The elections of the personnel delegates showed an unjustified delay of one and a half years: the pressure of the Trade Union was necessary to force the board of Directors to respect the law. They refused to hold the obligatory monthly reunions with the delegates during two months. The holding of several posts are frequent, the reclassification in case of definitive interim are not respected as well as the internal changes in case of a free post: each time they use blackmail: accepting the demotion or being dismissed abusively. The Directorate's refusal to apply the rules is lined with a strong distrust in texts and laws and this is actually not surprising. Didn't we not often hear the general director [...], signer of the Collective Convention, say that it is premature and full of mistakes? In the same line of arguments, the exploitation director [...] talks about 'your convention' by exposing an indescribable distrust. But the top is reached with the administration director [...] who doesn't speak about texts at all: he prefers to invent or to improvise! [...] A management, which does not respect the law cannot have a positive attitude towards the workers' representatives whom it considers frankly to be subversive elements. [...] The board of directors leads a systematic campaign of provocations and sanctions of the delegates and unionists. [...] We cannot conceal the impressive economic waste supported by the management through the abusive use of currency at a time when our Government fights for an economic deflation. The purchase of machines, which are not used, the unjustified recourse to an expensive subcontracting, the deluge of luxurious cars for the extraction field, the refection of the swimming pool and the road leading to the beach. Those are some examples of expenses among many others, which we do not understand, if the management refuses to fix the workers' ten years old transportation busses, which defeat any norm of security. We also don't understand the reasons for these

*expenditures, if the management grants an annual loan of 13.500 FCFA!... and for the managers 13 millions: 3 millions for the purchase of a car and 10 millions for building a house. [...] We denounce this and work to make them leave the place to other citizens more conscious of their high responsibilities entrusted to them, better able to accomplish the leading tasks which have been devolved to them. - The Workers of the C.S.P. Taïba.*⁴⁰³

On the 3rd of June, the workers of another smaller phosphate mine Lam Lam went on strike for similar reasons. Other groups, like the local section of the trade union of teachers (SUDES)⁴⁰⁴, supported the strike.

The great majority of managers did not participate in the strike. So each morning, large crowds of women and children – family members and friends of the mine workers – gathered in front of the entrance gate of the managers' living site Mbaye Mbaye and tried to hinder the managers leaving for work by sitting and lying on the street. The company guards and local police officers were obliged to push and carry them away to clear the way.

⁴⁰³ Original version: « *Les élections de délégués du personnel ont accusé un retard non justifié d'un an et demi: il a fallu la pression du Syndicat pour que la Direction se plie aux lois. Elle a refusé de tenir pendant deux mois les réunions mensuelles obligatoires avec le collège de délégués. Les cumuls de fonction sont courants, les reclassement en cas d'intérim définitif ne sont pas respectés, aussi bien que les mutations internes en cas de postes vacants: à chaque fois, elle use de chantage: accepter le déclassement ou être licencié abusivement. Ce refus de la Direction d'appliquer la réglementation est doublé, ce qui n'est d'ailleurs pas surprenant, d'un mépris souverain des textes et lois. N'avons-nous pas souvent entendu Monsieur le Directeur Général, signataire de la Collection Collective dire que celle-ci est prématurée et plaine d'erreurs? Dans la même lancée, le Directeur des Exploitations parle de „Votre Convention“ en affichant un mépris indescriptible. Mais le clou est atteint avec le Directeur administratif qui ne parle même pas des textes: il préfère inventer ou improviser! [...] Une direction qui ne respecte pas les lois ne peut avoir une attitude positive devant les représentants des Travailleurs qu'elle considère d'emblée comme des éléments subversifs. [...] La Direction poursuit une campagne systématique de provocations et de sanctions des délégués et des syndicalistes.[...] Nous ne pouvons taire l'impressionnant gaspillage économique que cautionne la Direction par la sortie abusive de devises, au moment même où notre Gouvernement se bat pour la relance économique. L'achat de machines inutilisées, le recours non justifié à une sous-traitance coûteuse, la pléthore de voitures luxueuses pour le chantier, les réfections de piscine et de piste pour accéder à la plage, voilà quelques exemples de dépenses parmi tant d'autre que nous ne comprenons pas quand la Direction refuse de réformer les cars de transport des ouvriers vieux de 10 ans et qui défient toute norme de sécurité. Nous ne comprenons pas aussi les raisons de ces dépenses quand cette même Direction accorde pour les travailleurs un prêt annuel de 13.500 FCFA!...et pour les Cadres 13 millions: 3 millions pour l'achat de voiture et 10 millions pour la construction de maisons. [...] Nous les dénoncerons et oeuvrerons de sorte qu'ils cèdent la place à d'autres citoyens beaucoup plus conscients des hautes responsabilités qui leur sont confiées, plus aptes à mener bien les tâches dirigeantes qui leur sont dévolues. - Les Travailleurs de la C.S.P. Taïba » (doc. 02.06.1983).*

⁴⁰⁴ Trade unionists produced a flyer with the following point of view: « *Les ouvriers de Taïba, encore une fois, sont allés en grève le Jeudi 2 Juin 1983. Ceci a été la seule réponse qu'ils pouvaient donner aux vexations du patronat, `son refus d'appliquer les lois en vigueur. Pour le patronat, les ouvriers sont des bêtes de somme, des machines à produire des bénéfices énormes, mais il ne leur reconnaît aucun droit»* (doc. 02.06.83).

The military was called to intervene and to force the workers back to work. According to narrations of the local population, one early morning before dawn the armed soldiers broke into the workers' homes in Tivavouane and dragged the undressed workers out of their beds onto the street where they were beaten up in front of the growing crowd of spectators. In those clashes workers got also killed, but the number was never published.⁴⁰⁵ On the eights of June the management took the decision to dismiss seventeen employers who were accused to have caused the strike without any proceeding information. Two unionists were imprisoned and sentenced to six months.⁴⁰⁶

The directorate tried to create a discord among the workforce by numerous means.⁴⁰⁷ Still during the strike, the general director announced the foundation of a 'comity of wise' ('comité des sages') and tried to convince individual workers to join the comity by promising promotion or other materialistic advantages, for instance radios. One of the movement leaders, in prison at that moment, advised the workers to take the radios, but to continue the strike.

The strike lasted 24 days until the 25th of June, thus, an enormous loss of capital and production. The most serious concern for the directorate, however, was less the financial harm, but the company's reputation and position both tediously achieved on the world market:

“Taïba represents only 1.5% of the worldwide production and enters with less than 2% in the exportation market which means an insignificant role; and it is only due to the quality of its product, but especially thanks to the reputation to respect its engagements that our Company is able to hold an honorable place in the round of exporters. [...] Today the harm of this strike exceeds by far the pure financial aspect, because it made clear that social problems can exist in the Taïba Company and our credits of before are well exhausted. [...] A new proof of that would be enough to loose all credence from its clients...”⁴⁰⁸

⁴⁰⁵ Only one hint was found concerning this fact: *“After the processes came the aggressions, the murders, to slow down the endeavour of the workers' fight and to implement the confusion within our rows.”* Original version: « *En effet, des éléments déçus de la Centrale mais appuyés par des forces réactionnaires tentent délibérément de déstabiliser la C.N.T.S., Centrale la plus représentative et créer ainsi les conditions pour la démocratiques et syndicales acquises de haute lutte. Après les procès, ce sont les agressions, les assassinats, pour freiner l'élan de lutte des travailleurs et créer la confusions dans nos rangs* » (Taïba-Info, 8/85).

⁴⁰⁶ With the intervention of the C.N.T.S. both were released within two days (doc. 08.10.83).

⁴⁰⁷ Original version: « *Les manœuvres du patron dans la Grève ont été nombreuses mais les Travailleurs ont été vigilants* » (doc. 24.07.83).

⁴⁰⁸ Original version : « *Taïba ne représente que 1,5% de la production mondiale et intervient pour moins de 2% sur le marché des exportations c'est dire son poids insignifiant et ce n'est que grâce à la qualité de son produit mais surtout grâce à son image de marque dans le respect de*

We have seen that the reasons for the strike were polyfold. The directorate's disrespect of legal texts was a legitimate motive to go on strike. The directorate was accused to have widely ignored the evolution of the law of employment since independence. But surprisingly, those insights did not belittle the flawless expatriates' reputation among workers. Instead, the new Senegalese directorate was solely the target of accusations. But the Senegalese directorate had only continued an old established mode of conduct inherited by the formerly ruling French expatriates. Interestingly during the entire period of open divergences on legal texts, the former French management style was at no time a subject of further reflection or discussion. The French managers stayed completely out of the conflict. Obviously it was a taciturn consensus that the company was dealing with a discord among Senegalese only, workers on one side, the new managers on the other; it was none of the expatriates' business.

The former French exploitation director (1970 – 1980) was aware of the divergence between the legal texts concerning the 40-hours week and the 48-hours week until 1976 and from then on the 46-hours week applied in the mining company. He himself had successfully asked for the official permission to exceed the legal maximum of weekly working hours on various occasions.⁴⁰⁹

However, the disrespect of legal texts was only one aspect of the growing frustration and dissatisfaction among the staff. As we have seen above, the formerly open communication, transparency and certainly the constant appreciation for working efforts, enshrined in expatriate management, was painfully missed in particular by elder workers. The former policy of reinforcement on various levels gave way to a silent obscurity under Senegalese management.

The success of the June-strike for the workforce remained unclear to me. Apparently, salaries were not increased. On the contrary, the directorate's decision not to dismiss the entire workforce was outlined as an act of grace taken into account the great financial damage the strike had caused to the company. The estimation of profit losses and expenses was

ses engagements que notre Compagnie arrive à trouver une place honorable dans le forum des exportateurs. [...] Aujourd'hui le préjudice de cette grève dépasse de loin l'aspect purement financier car il est établi que des problèmes sociaux peuvent exister dans l'entreprise de Taïba et notre crédit d'antan est bien entamé, [...] Il suffirait que Taïba connaisse une nouvelle épreuve pour perdre tous crédits au niveau de sa clientèle...» (doc. 18.06.83).

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See discussion in chap. 7.4.1.

around 133.100.000 FCFA.⁴¹⁰ The working schedule also remained to be 46 hours weekly.⁴¹¹ This decision was presumably also in the workers' interest who would have suffered from a salary decrease with the decrease of weekly working hours.

8.2.2 Strike analysis and the directorate's cure

The June-strike in 1983 marks an important turning point in employees' recall. The traces left in their memories a clear time cut: *'before the strike'* and *'after the strike'*. This time subdivision is almost as important as the two terms *'before'* and *'after the French had left'* for elder employees.

The June-strike hit the top management completely unexpected. The directorate's shock over the vicious action went so deep that it wanted to prevent further conflicts of such an extent at all costs. The measurements taken in the aftermath served foremost to divide the staff. In August 1983, the general director himself undertook an investigation of 33 interviews⁴¹² with employees of the company short after the strike and formulated a personal conclusion:

"Practically all the 33 conversations put the accent with more or less emphasis on the "friction" the direction introduced in 1979/1980 between the expatriate top and midrange managers on one side and the Senegalese midrange managers on the other. In end of 1979, in the moment of the annual augmentation of salaries of 1980, we decided that the Senegalese midrange managers should be detached of their expatriate colleagues and top managers of the enterprise; this decision was very reasonable, foremost because the expatriate midrange managers were called to leave and then because the salaries of our Senegalese midrange managers had reached an unbearable level in comparison to what happened in other enterprises of the country (despite this detachment in the beginning of 1980, the average of the midrange managers' salaries exceeds more then 80% of the conventional salaries). [...] For

⁴¹⁰ Doc. 18.06.83, p. 5.

⁴¹¹ Doc. 15.01.85.

⁴¹² It is not clear which methods was used to gather data in this investigation. The French terms *'entretiens'* and *'fiches'* are used in the analysis. *'Entretien'* could mean any session of communication between investigator and research subject, whereas *'fiche'* refers to any piece of paper, probably a questionnaire.

me, there is not the slightest doubt that the origin of the profound discontent of the Senegalese midrange management was in fact this change of policy in terms of salary augmentation."⁴¹³

In his analysis, the general director ignored the fact that only few midrange managers participated in the strike, but all of the workers. The discontent of the workers was apparently less important to the general director. Instead, he saw in the Senegalese midrange managers the future top managers and was interested in their full loyalty and cooperation. Further, he pictured the mastery as a very useful element for the protection of the directorates' interests. The general director felt especially aligned to this socio-professional group of Senegalese midrange managers for the following reason:

"In order to regain the balance in the company, I am certain that we have to win back the midrange management which has shown on several occasions its efficiency in the resolution of social problems; in fact, we were always able to eradicate the agitators and to dismiss them thanks to the support of the midrange managers (strike of the dragliners, the 100-tons- lorry drivers, the 18 agitators on the Sainte-Barbe festival 1980)."⁴¹⁴

What the general director called 'efficiency' of the midrange management was the role of a spy for the directorate. The list of occasions he presented to his top managers proves a certain tradition in this respect. Whether midrange managers played the denunciatory role voluntarily or whether they were pushed to do so through various circumstances remains unclear. However, it is comprehensible that employees of lower echelons disliked certain

⁴¹³ Original version: « *Pratiquement tous les 33 entretiens ont mis l'accent avec plus ou moins de vigueur sur la "cassure" que la direction a introduite à partir de 1979/1980 entre d'une part les cadres et agents de maîtrise expatriés et d'autre part les agents de maîtrise sénégalais. En fin 1979, au moment des augmentations annuelles 1980, nous avons estimé que les agents de maîtrise sénégalais devaient être décrochés de leurs homologues expatriés et cadres de l'entreprise; cette décision était tout à fait raisonnable d'abord parce que les agents de maîtrise expatriés étaient appelés à disparaître et ensuite parce que les salaires de nos agents de maîtrise sénégalais atteignaient des niveaux insoutenables par rapport à ce qui se passait dans les autres entreprises du pays (malgré ce décrochage début 1980, la moyenne des salaires réels de notre maîtrise dépasse aujourd'hui de plus de 80% les salaires conventionnels). [...] Pour moi, il ne fait pas l'objet d'un doute que l'origine du profond mécontentement de la maîtrise sénégalais était bien se changement de politique en matière d'augmentation salariale*» (doc. 09.08.1983).

⁴¹⁴ Original version: « *[Comme vous], je suis sûr que pour faire revenir l'équilibre dans l'entreprise, il faut que nous récupérions la maîtrise qui a montré à plusieurs occasions son efficacité dans la résolution des problèmes sociaux; en effet, nous avons pu toujours extirpé les agitateurs et les avons licenciés grâce au soutien de la maîtrise (grève des dragueurs, des conducteurs de 100 T, des 18 agitateurs lors de la fête de la Sainte-Barbe 1980)* » (doc. 09.08.1983, p. 3).

midrange managers in this function. The general director closed his personal analysis by the following propositions (two are cited out of 5):

"1. *The Senegalese midrange managers certainly felt a lot of bitterness since they have been detached from the other members of the management in terms of the annual augmentations. In our opinion we shouldn't look to the past, but we have to find a procedure, which is perceived as "not alienating", "not discriminating", or "anti-apartheid", to use the terms of some midrange managers.*

2. *Concerning the group of midrange managers itself, we could maybe install differences, for instance the AM 5, at the moment 3 or 4, could be assimilated to the Senegalese top management for certain social advantages (the AM 5's will probably never exceed 6 or 7)."*⁴¹⁵

In proposition n° 3, he claimed the request for access to private property through larger bank credits most important for the workers and for the AM 1 and AM 2. He showed his motivation to examine such a possibility.

In proposition n° 4, the general director uttered the necessity to *"follow our policy [of Senegalization] in favor of the young Senegalese top managers for their permanent settlement and to undertake maybe even more audacious actions."*⁴¹⁶ In proposition n° 5, he signaled agreement to an investigation of external experts already contacted. The directorate decided the focus of the investigation of the external experts, which followed only a few months later.

For the first time, a clear division was made - although yet in thoughts - between 'lower' (AM 1, AM 2) and 'upper' (AM 3 to AM 5) midrange management. The division mark was well chosen. It drew the line between the French trained and 'over-promoted' workers who could not go any further than AM 1, utmost AM 2, and the young graduates, beginning

⁴¹⁵ Original version: «1. *Les agents de maîtrise sénégalais ont certes éprouvé beaucoup d'amertume depuis qu'ils ont été décrochés des autres membres de l'encadrement pour ce qui est des augmentations annuelles. Il ne faut cependant à notre avis plus revenir sur le passé, mais on doit imaginer une procédure qui passerait pour "non-aliénante", "non discriminatoire" ou "anti-apartheid" pour reprendre les termes de certains agents de maîtrise.*2. *Au sein même de la maîtrise sénégalaise, on pourrait peut être faire des différenciations par exemple les AM-5 actuellement 3 ou 4 pourraient être assimilés pour certains avantages sociaux aux cadres sénégalais (les AM-5 ne dépasseront probablement jamais 6 ou 7) »* (doc. 09.08.1983, p. 4).

⁴¹⁶ Original version: «*Dans la situation actuelle de l'emploi et des mesures envisagées pour la Sénégalisation nous devons poursuivre notre politique en faveur des jeunes cadres sénégalais pour leur sédentarisation et même peut être entreprendre d'autres actions plus hardies*» (doc. 09.08.1983).

their career usually in AM 3, designed to rise from there. The general director seemingly wished to push the French-pampered and haughty elders back on their place where they - in his opinion - belonged.

8.2.3 The ESGE investigation

In end of 1983, the company directorate decided to engage an institution specialized on industrial management to analyze in depths the devastating social situation. In previous years, the directorate had usually chosen French consulting institutions for the analysis of any matters concerning the personal management. This time, by contrast, the board of directors favored to take Senegalese consultants who are familiar of the cultural background and mentality of the employees. For the delicate investigation the directorate chose the Senegalese '*superior school of enterprise management*', short E.S.G.E (*Ecole Supérieur de Gestion des Entreprises*), located in Dakar. The consultants produced a report with the title "Diagnostic study of the social problems within the Senegalese Taïba phosphate company".⁴¹⁷

Four Senegalese E.S.G.E.-consultants carried out the investigation: one specialist of sociology and social African anthropology, one specialist of industrial management, and two social workers. The team carried out an examination on various levels for one month (16th of Nov. to the 13th of Dec. 1983). Despite the team's declaration of emphasizing a profound field study, the period of data collection within the company was limited to seven days.

The data were primarily collected by quantitative questionnaires with yes/no-questions. The social workers filled out each questionnaire in cooperation with the employee and also took notes about additional remarks made by participants. The sample contained 140 employees of all different departments (representing 11% of the entire staff). Each inquiry session lasted about one hour. The staff was divided into the following three professional sub-groups: top managers (*les cadres*), midrange managers (*les agents de maîtrise*), and workers and employees (*les ouvriers et employés*). The percentage of each group was representative for the company personnel.

Another questionnaire concerned only the social policy and was carried out with the personnel managers and the trade unionists of the mining enterprise. The social policy

⁴¹⁷ Original version: '*Etude-Diagnostic des problèmes sociaux de la Compagnie Sénégalaise Des Phosphates de Taïba*', 29 pages.

questionnaire was also done with the equivalent positions of three other large enterprises in Senegal. The objective of the latter was to compare the social policy of the company with policies of other similar enterprises and also to find out how the trade unionists perceive the social policy applied in each company.⁴¹⁸ The company statistics about the promotion practice and the evolution of salaries in all three professional sub-groups was a further tool for analysis. In consideration of the limited time, the report presents expectantly mostly statistical data and only curt introductions and conclusions on each issue investigated. The outcome of the ESGE-analysis and the consultants' recommendations shaped the further conduct in personal management of the mining company for the following few years. For its sustainable impact the ESGE-report deserves a more precise portrayal.

A) Introduction

According to the ESGE-report, the directorate requested the rapid amelioration of work relations and the proposition of recommendations. It was:

„the capacity of understanding and considering a complex psycho-social reality in a limited time. It is precisely a psycho-social analysis of the representation of different work categories of the staff in order to reveal the profound meaning of the conflicts that agitate the company.“⁴¹⁹

In the consultation report, the list of research issues is arranged by their importance in the following order:

- 1) Length of service and promotion,
- 2) Social situation of the staff
- 3) Training
- 4) Information and communication
- 5) Work relations and work conditions
- 6) Perception of the authorities
- 7) Perception of the company
- 8) Formal structure and the consultation mechanisms in the company
- 9) Opinion about the strike

⁴¹⁸ Unfortunately, neither of the questionnaires was available for the present study, therefore the reliability of the reported results is difficult to judge.

⁴¹⁹ Original version: « *la capacité de comprendre et de rendre compte d'une réalité psychosociale des représentations des différentes catégories de personnel en vue de dégager la signification profonde des conflits qui agitent la compagnie* » (ESGE-report, p. 2).

In the introduction of the ESGE-report, the consultants elaborated their comprehension of those issues, and what significance they hold in their opinion within personnel management. Only one will be outlined here to depict the ideological frame in which the consultants perceived and analyzed data.

Issue n° 3) 'training' has for the consultants the following meaning:

"The level of school education can inform about certain compartments or attitudes in respect to work. The lower the level is, the more the ideas and the values which guide the individual have to be sought within the local culture to which the modern enterprise with its functioning and production represents a new reality."⁴²⁰

The simplistic assumption that a low level of school education is likely to get in conflict with the functioning of a modern enterprise does not stand reality of previous years. Instead it reveals a profound lack of information about the undeniable successes in personnel training in earlier periods.

The same assumption is frequently made in scientific literature on personnel management in African enterprises.⁴²¹ For the majority of the workers of the mining enterprise under study here, however, the '*modern enterprise*' was anything else but a '*new reality*'. It was, to the contrary, an entity, which many of them had helped to build and develop over so many years.⁴²²

The consultants' perception, whatsoever, went confirm with the new company policy of promotion and recruitment, which favored school education more than acquired practical knowledge and training within the company. It was the shift to another focus in personnel management and not the '*modern enterprise*' which was a veritable annoyance for the established work force with no or only rudimentary schooling, because their promotion possibilities had dwindled. They felt their efforts in striving for profound practical knowledge betrayed.

⁴²⁰ Original version: « *Le niveau de scolarisation peut être révélateur de certains comportements ou attitudes face au travail. Plus ce niveau est bas, plus les représentations et les valeurs qui gouvernent la vie de l'individu sont à chercher dans la culture du terroir vis-à-vis de laquelle l'entreprise moderne avec ses normes de fonctionnement et de production constitue une réalité nouvelle* » (ESGE-report, p. 5).

⁴²¹ See chapter 10.

⁴²² The style and results of the former training policy have been shown in chap. 6.2.

Thus, the above-cited conception of '*training*' might have considerably narrowed down the consultants' scope for the analysis of the conflict. Additionally, the citation reveals the absence of interest in any historical background. The conflict was obviously seen as a pure Senegalese matter by the consultants and the directorate likewise. It is therefore not surprising that no allusion is made in the ESGE-report to the expatriate past and present in the enterprise.

B) Statistics and Conclusions

Not all statistics of the report will be presented here. The focus is on the ones, which are also interesting for the analysis of the present study.

The issue n° 1 '*length of service and promotion*' was the primordial concern of employees laid open by the questionnaires of the investigation. The statistics shown in the ESGE report (p. 7) are presented as such:

"a) the top managers: 38% of the population have between 31 and 46 years of age and 31% have more than 46 years of age. For 54% the seniority in Taïba turns around 2 and 5 years. 69% declare a regular promotion. Those who say that they have not been promoted regularly explain this by favoritism and the poor definition of roles.

b) the mastery/ midrange managers: The majority of the population (63%) is between 31 and 45 years of age. 51% have more than 11 year of service and 56 % think that they have not been promoted regularly. The following reasons are given to explain this:

- the bad social policy;*
- the limitation of posts;*
- the neglect of the superiors in hierarchy;*
- the assumed syndicate responsibilities.*

c) Workers and employees: 56% of the population have between 31 and 45 years of age. 48% have more than 11 years of seniority and 29% have between 6 and 10 years.

53% assert that they have not been promoted regularly. Several reasons were given for explanations, in particular the bad social policy and the superiors' neglect."⁴²³

In terms of the criterion *work experience*, the results of the expertise in 1983 show indeed significant differences among the three professional groups. Concerning the top management, 54% had at this moment only 2 to 5 years of service in the company and only 15% had undergone internal training whereas 51% (!) of the midrange management had more than 11 years of experience and 46% (shown in the statistics about training) had undergone training programs in this mine. So indeed as the '*elders of Taïba*' had feared: little experience and little internal training corresponded in tendency with high educational degrees (necessary for top management) and accordingly high positions; on the other side, long work experience and internal training corresponded in tendency to lower positions.

Not surprisingly, *training* was an urgent demand of workers and midrange managers. 35% of the workers demand courses in alphabetization (this percentage represents at the same time the amount of illiterate workers).⁴²⁴ Although all three socio-professional groups claim the 'bad social policy', the expertise lacks in a profound analysis of what is exactly meant by this term.

The top managers name the '*poor definition of roles*' as a cause for not being promoted properly. It is presumably a hint to the confusion about task responsibilities, which accompanied the management changes in those years. For the issue n° 4 '*information and communication*' the consultants concluded:

"The investigation reveals that only the top managers are relatively well informed. The mastery and the workers in general are moderately informed as well about the objectives and

⁴²³ Original version: « a) Les cadres: 38% de la population ont entre 31 et 46 ans et 31% plus de 46 ans. Pour 54 % l'ancienneté à Taïba se situe entre 2 et 5 ans. 69 % déclare avoir avancé régulièrement. Ceux qui disent n'avoir pas bénéficié d'avancement régulier, expliquent cela par le favoritisme et la mauvaise définition des rôles. b) Les agents de maîtrise: la majorité de la population (63%) se situe dans la tranche d'âge 31 - 45 ans. 51% ont plus de 11 ans d'ancienneté et 56 % estiment d'avoir pas avancé régulièrement. Sont invoquées comme raisons pour expliquer cela: - la mauvaise politique sociale; - le plafonnement des postes; - la négligence des chefs hiérarchiques; - les responsabilités syndicales assumées. c) Ouvriers et employés: 56% de la population se trouvent dans la tranche d'âge de 31 à 45 ans. 48% ont plus de 11 ans d'ancienneté et 29 % de 6 à 10 ans. 53% déclarent n'avoir pas avancé régulièrement. Diverses raisons sont données pour l'expliquer dont essentiellement la mauvaise politique sociale et la négligence des chefs. » (ESGE-report, p. 7f).

⁴²⁴ ESGE-report, p. 23.

the policy of the enterprise, as about the economic performance, as also about the decisions, which concern directly their professional activities.

Equally, a problem exists between the directorate and the workers who proclaim often the absence of flexibility of certain managers. [...] Various times, workers have declared observations about the fact that the diffusion of the journal, if it occurs, is limited to the 7th category. They regret the absence of the [formerly] regularly held information reunions and the consultation which allowed them to be informed about the evolution of problems and to feel involved in the life of the enterprise.⁴²⁵

The above citation depicts that the diffusion of the company journal was limited to the 7th category. Although it is presumably an exaggeration it is nevertheless an indication that, indeed, the 7th category played a particular role in the company at this time and after. The workers openly regretted the absence of regularly held information reunions. The ESGE investigation and the later resulting management interventions could or did not change this verity.

Within the period of changes, the ‘sandwich’ position of the midrange management between the directors and the workers was doubtless the most precarious one. In the section about ‘conditions and relations at work’, 88% of the midrange managers’ answer that collaborators trust them in terms of work, but 38% claim that the hierarchy is not always respected by subordinates. When asked about the difficulties at work, the most cited problem is the lack of consideration by the upper management.

This leads to another interesting aspect of the ESGE report: *'the perception of the authorities'* (*'perception de l'autorité'*) which reveals that distrust must have reigned heavily between the different levels of hierarchy. Here the original version:

„Perception of the authority

⁴²⁵ Original version: *«Il ressort de l'enquête que seuls les cadres sont relativement bien informés. Les agents de maîtrise et les ouvriers dans l'ensemble le sont médiocrement, tant sur les objectifs et la politique de l'entreprise, sur les performances économiques, que sur les décisions qui concernent directement leurs activités professionnelles. De même les problèmes de communication existent entre la Direction et les travailleurs qui dénoncent souvent le manque de souplesse de certains dirigeants. [...] Plusieurs fois, des observations ont été émises par les ouvriers sur le fait que la diffusion du journal, quand il paraît, est limitée à la 7^{ème} catégorie. On regrette les réunions d'informations régulières et les concertations qui permettaient d'être tenu au courant de l'évolution des problèmes et de se sentir impliqué dans la vie de l'entreprise»* (ESGE-report, p. 24).

a) The upper management ('Les Cadre'):

The qualities of a boss are by order: competence, the feeling for relations, the feeling for commanding.

54% estimate that their superiors have those qualities

46% of no

b) The midrange management:

The qualities of a boss are by order: the competence, the social sense, the trust in the colleagues, and the respect of the subordinates.

56% think that their bosses have those qualities against 44%

c) The workers and employees:

The qualities of a boss are presented as such by order: the sense of the human relations and the respect for the subordinates, the generosity and the competence.

[Blank]⁴²⁶

The workers put the 'sense of the human relations' on top of their list of adequate qualities for their boss. This is followed by 'respect for the subordinates'.

Interestingly, the report omitted to show the percentage of workers who think that their superiors have the listed qualities. Instead of an answer or explanation: no comment! The questionnaire was the same for all three socio-professional groups, so there must have been a figure for the group of workers as well. It is unlikely that the omission is an oversight. In the 'conclusion and recommendations' under the same subtitle 'image of the enterprise and of the authorities', however, the listing of mentioned qualities a boss should have is repeated. Here also, the same strange omission was made. On the third page set to show the remarks made by workers, the sentence drops of incomplete „for the workers and employees: the norms are essentially...“.

A few further speculations of an intentional blank are legitimate. If the omitted number had been positive or 'not so bad', a deliberate omission would not make sense. More

⁴²⁶

Original version: « a) Les cadres: Les qualités du Chef sont dans l'ordre: la compétence, le sens des relations, le sens du commandement. 54% estiment que leurs supérieurs possèdent ces qualités contre 46% de non. b) Les Agents de maîtrise: Les qualités de Chef sont dans l'ordre: la compétence, le sens social, la confiance aux collaborateurs, le respect des subordonnés. 56% pensent que leurs chefs ont ces qualités contre 44%. c) Les ouvriers et employés: Les qualités de chef se représentent aussi dans l'ordre: le sens des relations humaines et le respect des subordonnés, la générosité et la compétence» (ESGE-report, p. 12).

likely is the assumption that the percentage of negative answers given by workers was too high to be shown. Presumably the workers thought that their superiors lacked totally the mentioned qualities. The relatively high figure of 88% positive answers of the midrange management, that they were trusted at work, appears now in another light. They were either not aware of the true situation or glossed over the painful truth in the questionnaire.

The ambivalent feeling of employees towards their company is best shown by the answers given for the investigated issue '*perception of the enterprise*':

"a) Top managers:

69% prefer to stay in the company instead of changing it.

77% estimate the company as a good enterprise against 15%.

39% estimate that they have fewer advantages as somewhere else, and 23 % think they have more. They are all proud to be at Taïba (100%).

The reasons of pride for being at Taïba are:

- the place of the enterprise in the national economy*
- the material advantages*

b) The midrange management:

55% would stay at Taïba even if they had another choice of work, against 45%.

56% think they have fewer advantages at Taïba than somewhere else, against 22%.

For 44% the company is a good enterprise, 37% do not know, and 19% think Taïba is not a good enterprise.

62% are proud to be in Taïba, but the feelings concerning the enterprise are ambivalent: the company is prestigious, because of its place in the national economy, but disappointing and frustrating in respect to its social policy.

c) The workers:

53% would stay at Taïba, if they had another choice against 47%.

47 % think they earn less at Taïba then somewhere else and 33% do not know.

77% are proud to be at Taïba.

The attitudes concerning Taïba are variable:

- prestige of the enterprise, - personal satisfaction, - bad social climate.*

For 42%, Taïba is a good enterprise against 56%.⁴²⁷

Regarding the results, it is striking that a high percentage in each social professional group is 'proud' to be in Taïba (100%, 62%, and 77%). As justification was mentioned most often the company's prestigious place in the national economy. Thus, the employees judged by a criterion, which is not connected to the social policy in the current situation of the company, but is based on a long performance of good economic results.

The least 'proud' group is the midrange managers who had the critical 'sandwich position' described above between the upper management and the workers. This is well reflected by their outwardly uttered ambiguous feelings towards the company. More people in this group (56%, compared to 39% in upper management and 47% among workers) think that they have fewer advantages in the mining company than elsewhere.

Among the attitudes listed for the group of workers, '*personal satisfaction*' was mentioned. Despite the fact that almost half of the total sample would change the job, if they could, and the consciousness of the bad social climate, they nevertheless claim to have an internal contentment to a certain extend (to what extend is not said in the expertise). Yet, for only 42% of the workers, the mine is a good enterprise.

Also other sections revealed that the midrange managers felt most uncomfortable among the staff. For the issue n° 9 '*attitudes concerning the strike*' ('*attitudes face à la grève*') the answers of this group are particularly interesting and deplore feelings of great uncertainty and almost slight paranoia:

"b) the mid-range managers:

44% think that pressure groups exist,

⁴²⁷

Original version: «*Perception de l'entreprise: a) Les cadres: 69% préfèrent rester à Taïba plutôt que de changer d'entreprise. 77% considèrent que Taïba est une bonne entreprise, contre 15%. 39% estiment qu'ils ont moins d'avantages qu'ailleurs et 23% plus. Ils sont tous fiers d'être à Taïba (100%). Les raisons de fierté d'être à Taïba sont: - la place de l'entreprise dans l'économie nationale, - les avantages matériels. b) Les agents de maîtrise: 55% choisiraient de rester à Taïba, s'ils avaient le choix d'aller dans une autre entreprise contre 45%. 56% estiment qu'ils ont moins d'avantages à Taïba qu'ailleurs contre 22%. Pour 44%, Taïba est une bonne entreprise, 37% ne savent pas et 19% pensent que Taïba n'est pas une bonne entreprise. 62% sont fiers d'être à Taïba, mais les sentiments à l'égard de l'entreprise sont ambivalents: elle est prestigieuse à cause de sa place dans l'économie nationale, mais décevante et frustrante sur le plan de sa politique sociale. c) Les ouvriers et employés: 53% resteraient à Taïba, si le choix leur était offert d'aller ailleurs contre 47%. 47% estiment qu'ils gagnent moins à Taïba et 33% ne savent pas. 77% sont fiers de travailler à Taïba. Les attitudes à l'égard de l'entreprise sont variables: - prestige de l'entreprise, - satisfaction personnelle, - mauvais climat social. Pour 42 %, Taïba est une bonne entreprise contre 56%» (ESGE-report, p. 13).*

19 % do not think so,
37% do not know.

Those groups are consistent of the directorate and their remote-controlled agents, certain ethnic groups, certain political groups, which are infiltrated into the trade union, the directorate and the work force.

The reasons for the strike would be:

- *the rigidity of the directorate concerning the collective convention and the catalogue of strike demands;*
- *the marginalization of the midrange managers;*
- *the lack of information.*"⁴²⁸

The impressive list of pressure groups shows that the majority of midrange managers must have felt distrust towards practically everybody in the mine except midrange managers. But everyone else could possibly be a '*remote-controlled*' agent. Accordingly, they perceived themselves as the victims of a rigged marginalization.

Among the workers, by contrast, only 19% believed in the existence of particular pressure groups, against 56% who do not believe so. For this group, only one simple reason is given for the strike: '*one estimates to be a victim of exploitation by the directorate*'.⁴²⁹

Presumably following the request of the directorate, the consultants focused in their final conclusion heavily on the situation of the midrange managers. They made the following remark:

"The major problem lies in the collision between the mastery and the workers. The mastery is not any more the relay of the hierarchical authority and of the communication within the

⁴²⁸ Original version: « *b) Les agents de maîtrise: 44% estiment qu'il y a des groupes de pression, 19% disent non, 37% ne savent pas. Ces groupes sont constitués par la Direction, et des agents téléguidés par elle, certains groupes ethniques, certains groupes politiques infiltrés dans le syndicat, l'encadrement et les ouvriers. Les causes de la grève seraient: - la rigidité de la Direction face à la convention collective et à la plate forme revendicative; - la marginalisation des agents de maîtrise; - le manque d'information* » (ESGE-report, p. 15).

⁴²⁹ Original version: « *on s'estime être victime d'une exploitation de la part de la Direction* » (ibidem).

enterprise; it is not any more the representative of the directorate for workers and employees."⁴³⁰

Compared to the other large enterprises of the sample, the mining enterprise was about average. Only minor differences in dealing with gratification and primes were found; social services were practically the same, except that Taïba had no social service of assistance. Such a service was integrated in all other enterprises investigated. On the other hand, Taïba was the only enterprise of the sample, which offered a prime to employees on pension.

The ESGE-report is an insufficient instrument to engender a deeper comprehension of the complex and polyfold conflicts within the mine's staff. The descriptions and explanations remained rather superficial without any attempt to embed the current problems within a historical viewpoint. The consultants were unable (or unwilling) to distinguish the staff into old-established employees (who had lived and internalized the paternalistic expatriate interaction pattern) and newcomers. Possibly, this would have helped to see the conflicts from a more fruitful angle. The consultants made 10 recommendations. Some of them will be outlined and analyzed here, because of their obvious impact on personnel management in the following years.

C) The recommendations

Before giving any recommendation, the consultants concluded:

*"Concerning Taïba, the effort should focus in priority on checking the heavy psychological blockage which isolates today the management and the personnel in sliced positions."*⁴³¹

The experts rightly observed an isolation of the existing socio-professional groups, which should be solved. But interestingly, they nevertheless advised the top management in

⁴³⁰ Original version: « *Le fait majeur réside dans la collusion entre la maîtrise et les ouvriers et employés. La maîtrise n'est plus le relais de l'autorité hiérarchique et de la communication dans l'entreprise; elle n'est plus le représentant de la direction auprès des ouvriers et employés*» (ESGE-report, p. 25).

⁴³¹ Original version: «*En ce qui concerne Taïba l'effort devra, en priorité, porter sur l'apurement du lourd passif psychologique qui isole aujourd'hui l'encadrement et le personnel dans des positions tranchées*» (ESGE-report, p. 21).

their first and most important recommendation to adapt a policy which led in the future to a much deeper friction of personnel than ever before in the company's history. In their own words:

"It seems to us of prior importance to reestablish the confidence between the mid-range management and the top management. We suggest assimilating the upper midrange management (AM5, AM4) to the top management; to do so, it is necessary to view for the hole of the midrange management:

- a transport system which is different from the one for workers,
- a procedure for according advances which is different than the one for workers,
- information channels (department notes, flyers, opinion sheets...) which differ from those of the workers."⁴³²

After 140 interviews with employees of all different categories and departments, the consultants certainly got an idea of the miserable state of the internal hierarchy. As shown above, some workers had more responsibilities and decision power than some engineers, because of their indispensable know-how and experience. Also some employees earned more than their direct superiors because of their pecuniary privileges, a heritage from their former expatriate bosses. Some young engineers on AM4 and AM5 positions had been pushed over time in rather marginalized and sometimes ridiculous positions.

The consultants were confronted with and presumably most struck by the despair and bitterness of those upper midrange managers and their psychological burn-out-syndrome. Accordingly, they stand by this particular group in their first recommendation, following the proposition made by the general director in August.

The measurements they recommend now show that the consultants believed in the re-establishment of the 'correct' hierarchy. An official distinction in transportation means, advance procedure, and information channels was supposed to, firstly, put a visible distance

⁴³² Original version: «*Il nous semble primordial de rétablir la confiance entre la maîtrise et l'encadrement supérieur. Nous suggérons d'assimiler la maîtrise supérieure (AM5, AM4) aux cadres. L'objectif est de manifester plus de considération aux agents de maîtrise; il faudra, pour ce faire, envisager pour l'ensemble des agents de maîtrise: - un système de transport différent de celui des ouvriers et employés, - une procédure d'octroi des prêts différents de celle des ouvriers et employés, - des canaux d'information (note de services, circulaires, avis...) différents de ceux des ouvriers et employés* » (ESGE-report, p. 27).

between them and the irksome workers⁴³³, secondly, give them more financial advantages, and thirdly, give them information as a means of power.

Although the consultants had suggested different information channels for lower and upper echelons, they nevertheless advised in recommendation n° 2 '*a global policy of amelioration of the communication within the enterprise*'⁴³⁴, but based on the (in majority) maroon midrange managers. Also, three other recommendations (n° 3, n° 6, and n° 10) advise in one way or another to pay particular attention to the midrange managers, two of them did so in combination with the top management (n° 3 and n° 10). Recommendation n° 6 is worth mentioning here:

*"As a relay of the directorate and the top management, the midrange management should be trained in management techniques (cost price, budget, production management) and in modern methods of command (human relations in the enterprise, leadership, and communication)."*⁴³⁵

Recommendation n° 7 concerns only the top management; it is particularly expressive:

*"The upper managers of Taïba are in majority engineers who have above all experiences in the functioning of a bureaucratic organization. From there comes probably the lack of warmth and the rigidity the personnel blames them for. The guidance of an enterprise like Taïba implies a long experience of the workers' world and to take into consideration the African cultural values. That is why we suggest to the top management a training program which consists training periods in other mining enterprises and seminars in management and African culture."*⁴³⁶

⁴³³ This should certainly also limit the workers' possibilities to snub superiors and to show overtly their disdain and contempt.

⁴³⁴ Original version: «*une politique globale d'amélioration de la communication dans l'entreprise*» (ESGE-report, p. 27).

⁴³⁵ Original version: «*En tant que relais de la direction et de l'encadrement supérieur, la maîtrise devra être formée dans les techniques de gestion (prix de revient, budget, gestion de la production) et dans les méthodes modernes de commandement (relations humaines dans l'entreprise, leadership et communication)* » (ESGE-report, p. 28).

⁴³⁶ Original version: «*Les cadres supérieurs de Taïba sont le plus souvent des ingénieurs possédant surtout l'expérience du fonctionnement d'organisations bureaucratiques. De là viennent probablement le manque de chaleur et la rigidité que le personnel leur reproche. La direction d'une entreprise comme Taïba implique une expérience prolongée du monde ouvrier et la prise en compte des valeurs culturelles africaines. C'est pourquoi nous suggérons, pour l'encadrement supérieur, un programme de formation comportant des séjours dans d'autres entreprises minières et des séminaires sur le management et la culture africaine* » (ESGE-report, p. 28).

The consultants made no distinction between French and Senegalese managers. End of 1983, the ethnic dispersion of top managers was 10 French to 35 Senegalese (= 78%)⁴³⁷. We have to keep in mind that French managers were about to leave definitely the enterprise at this moment. The recommendations, thus, were mainly addressed to Senegalese top managers.

Remarkably, Senegalese 'upper managers'⁴³⁸ were advised to take seminars in African culture and values, as if an alienation from their own roots had taken place.

8.2.4 The separation policy '*divide et impera*'

Both, the general director's preference of an authoritarian commanding style and the ESGE-recommendation n° 1 of the above cited ESGE-report were mainly responsible for the politics of separation which followed short after the analysis. In particular, employees remember the separation of the transportation busses, taking the employees to the work places and back home, for each socio-professional group vividly. In the perception of the employees, this move seemingly became a symbol for the end of intercommunication.

The total cohesion of the staff before and during the strike was perceived as a veritable threat to the top management. An employee explains:

"We made a strike in 84, the 4th of June in '84 [he is mistaken about the year and date]. This I explain to you, because I want to understand it myself. And yet we talk about levels to understand. This was aligned to the personnel's unity, to the total cohesion of the personnel. Well, there are the top managers; each worker entered the bus he wanted, with his boss or without his boss. The people were mixed together. But there was this strike, there. There was this withdrawal of the bosses who had been requisitioned. So, they were obliged to come to work, and so, when they got on the busses for going home, some workers provoked them in the busses, insulted them, did things to them. The guy, he is there, he doesn't see, he knows it's us who are not turning, but he can't. Therefore, those people there [the bosses] were bothered. Those people who were in the situation of nuisance informed the directorate: "It is like this!"

⁴³⁷ Doc. 23.12.1983.

⁴³⁸ According to the new structure, 'upper managers' presumably includes all categories above AM 3.

And the directorate said "Well, from now on we need a bus for the mastery only. They won't be bothered any more since it is not the same vision any more." That's what they started to do. And it must be said that that is also understandable, because this is not in the company's interest any more, [it is] saving the reached goals of the enterprise, how should I say, [it is] dividing for ruling! Me, I know this is normal!"⁴³⁹

The mastery was divided - as recommended - in the 'mastery' (AM 1, 2, and 3) and the 'superior mastery' (AM 4 and 5). The top management installed a definite distance between the young engineers and the established work force.

Taking advantage of the propitious moment, the new identity group of the 'upper mastery' held a first reunion on the 2nd of January in 1984, only a few days after the ESGE-report had come out. Their aim was:

"On one hand, to make an objective appraisal of their social merit during the last years, and on the other hand, of their present situation and to try to make a future projection by taking into consideration their level of responsibility. We have to emphasize that we are not talking about any kind of demands, nor gifts. We also have no intention to erect us as an isolated group being conscious of the fact to be the indispensable link between the directorate and the execution.

The objective of our move is only to draw the attention of the directorate to the social preoccupation of the upper mastery."⁴⁴⁰

⁴³⁹ Original version: « On a fait une grève en 84, le 4 Juin en 84! Ça je vous l'explique parce que, moi, je veux le comprendre. Déjà on parle de niveau pour comprendre. C'était lié à l'unité du personnel, à la cohésion totale du personnel. Alors, il y a les cadres, chaque travailleur se mettait dans le car qu'il voulait, avec son chef ou pas avec son chef. Les gens étaient mélangés. Mais quand il y a eu cette grève-là, il y a eu des désistements des chefs qui étaient réquisitionnés. Alors, ils étaient obligés de venir travailler, et donc, quand ils venaient dans les cars [pour] descendre, il y a des ouvriers qui les provoquaient dans le car, qui insultaient, qui faisaient des choses. Le gars, il est-là, il ne voit pas, il sais que c'est nous qui ne tournons pas, mais il ne peut pas! Alors, c'est gens-là ont été gênés. Les gens qui étaient en situation de gêne sont aller le dire à la direction: 'c'est comme ça!' Et la direction a dit que, 'donc, à partir de maintenant il faut le car pour les agents de maîtrise. Ils ne soient plus dérangés, comme ce n'est plus la même vision.' C'est comme ça qu'on a commencé à faire. Et il faut dire que ça se comprend aussi, parce que ce n'est plus dans l'intérêt de l'entreprise, préserver des acquis de l'entreprise, comment dirai-je, de diviser pour régner! Moi, je sais que c'est normal! » (N.S., B: 192-223).

⁴⁴⁰ Original version: « ...d'une part, faire un bilan objectif de leurs acquis sociaux pendant ces dernières années, et d'autre part, à partir de leur situation présente et compte tenu de leur niveau de responsabilité essayer de faire une projection sur l'avenir. Nous devons cependant préciser qu'il ne s'agit en aucune manière, de revendications ni de doléances; nous n'avons pas non plus l'intention de nous ériger en groupe isolé conscients que nous sommes, d'être le maillon indispensable entre la Direction et l'exécution. Notre démarche a seulement pour but de

The employees belonging now to the 'upper mastery' quickly tried to validate and protect their newly acquired position with concrete rights and advantages. In the first paragraph, they put emphasis on their '*social merit during the last years*' and '*their level of responsibility*' (which both, apparently, was so hard to see for anybody else), but no further explanation fills these bold terms.

In the next paragraph, they obviously felt the necessity to clarify that they are '*indispensable*' for the correct flow of information and cooperation between the directorate and the work force. They outlined that they do not claim anything, presumably to distance themselves from the 'irksome troublemakers' depicted by the directorate as responsible for the harmful strike. The 'upper mastery' demanded for the following advantages:

- an augmentation in medical insurance
- free transport to Dakar for a better and individual medical treatment for the employee and his family
- advance possibilities to buy cars on credit with the company's help
- the possibility to join a private pension scheme with the help of the company.⁴⁴¹

Request 1 and 3 were accorded soon after. A few months later, in June 1984, the credits for construction or buying immobile goods were prepared for agreement with a large Senegalese bank specially designed for the company's top management and the upper mastery.⁴⁴² The policy of separation was certainly a great relief for the insecure young engineers, but only solved their personal problem. The work force, however, took the new separation amiss. In interviews, employees accused the directorate's policy of separation as the major cause for an insufficient and unproductive intercommunication.

Latest from 1984 on, the 'upper mastery' was perceived as the directorate's darling. This reputation hindered more then ever the communication between workers and managers. By contrast, this socio-professional group became even more suspicious in workers' eyes. We listen to some of the remarks made in interviews:

sensibiliser les Responsables de la Compagnie sur les préoccupations sociales de la maîtrise supérieure» (doc. 02.01.1984).

⁴⁴¹ Doc. 02.01.84.

⁴⁴² Doc. 06.06.84.

*"Before '83, the team boss already held a mastery degree. After the strike, the personnel policy had changed. With the mastery, they try to install a difference in consideration. They created a rivalry. They dissociated the busses by the policy of Taïba."*⁴⁴³

Another employee made the following remark:

*„We were really united until 1983, until the strike. The management installed means to divide the people. AM 4 and AM 5 became the ‘superior AM’, assimilated to the top management. Up to now they split up the categories. This is what causes tremendous difficulties in communication."*⁴⁴⁴

Also the company tradition of games and sports, a former means to resemble the staff in a more private and relaxed context had apparently ceased from then on:

*"With the games, the football, they had entertained you well. This stopped in '83. After the strike, the people had been dispersed."*⁴⁴⁵

Interestingly, not only workers, but also managers identified in retrospective the accorded privileges as an important cause for discontent. The following speaker, a manager of AM 4, was hired in 1977:

"I think, for instance, too many privileges are given to me, to a minority. The managers have too many privileges and this, this is not good. This, this is frustrating for the personnel. [...] Yes, because I say for example, I am not a particular manager. [...] Take the advantages for cars. The manager, not only he has his car of service, but if he wants to buy a car, he has the possibility to get a loan of 8 million FCFA. But it's only him who gets that, all the others, nobody has that! [...] Nothing has been done for car loans for the others. Despite the fact he

⁴⁴³ Original version: « Avant 83 le chef d'équipe avait déjà une maîtrise, après la grève la politique du personnel avait changée. Avec la maîtrise ils essayent d'implanter une différence de considération. Ils ont créés une rivalité. On a dissocié les cars par la politique de Taïba » (Q39, 11/76).

⁴⁴⁴ Original version: « On était très soudé jusqu'a 1983, jusqu'a la grève. La direction a mis des moyens pour séparer les gens. AM 4 et AM 5 était maintenant les 'AM supérieurs' et assimiler au cadre. Jusqu'à présent on morcelle des catégories, ce qui donne énormément des difficultés de communication » (Q37, 4/76).

⁴⁴⁵ Original version: « Avec les jeux, le football, on t'a bien divertit. Ça a cessé après '83. Après la grève, les gens se sont disloqués » (Q26, 6/73).

*has his service car, he also has the possibility to buy another car. There are too many privileges!*⁴⁴⁶

The time period from 1980 to 1983 was indeed very difficult for the company in economic terms, because the phosphate price had fallen considerably on the world market within this period.⁴⁴⁷ The difficult economic situation of the company was outlined countless times to the staff in order to acquire an understanding for bonus removals or other financial shortages. But at the same time, the directorate granted privileges to the ‘upper mastery’ apparently impossible to understand by the lower echelons. On the 5th of October in 1983, another strike was announced, but soon stopped because of feeble participation.⁴⁴⁸

In 1984, the Chemical Industries of Senegal (ICS) had finished the construction of a new industrial complex adjacent to the phosphate mining company and started their phosphate consumption. In 1983 it was estimated that ICS takes 520.000 tons per year (about 40% of the total annual production). The phosphate mine represented at that time 1.3% of the world production.⁴⁴⁹

For the ICS management another living site was constructed next to the established management living site of the mining company. The directorate of the mining company took it as an opportunity to build a wall around Mbaye Mbaye, additional to the guarded entrance installed in May 1980.

On the 10th of April in 1984, the correctional division of the court of appeal summoned eight employees of the mining company to present themselves on the 13th of June at the court.⁴⁵⁰ Those employees were depicted by the directorate as the strike leaders and were in consequence dismissed in June or short after.⁴⁵¹ Most workers were convinced that

⁴⁴⁶ Original version: « *Je trouve, par exemple, qu'on me donne trop de privilèges, à une minorité. Les cadres ont trop de privilèges et ça, c'est pas bon ça. Ça, ça frustre le personnel [...] Oui, parce que je dirais par exemple, je suis pas un cadre particulier. [...] Prends les avantages du véhicule. Le cadre, non seulement il a le véhicule de fonction, mais quand il veut acheter une voiture, il a la possibilité d'avoir un prêt de 8 millions. Mais il y a que lui qui a ça, tout le reste, personne ne l'a! Il y a pas de [???*] On a rien mis en place pour des prêts véhicule pour les autres. Malgré qu'il a sa voiture de fonction, il a la possibilité pour acheter une autre voiture. Il y a trop de privilèges! » (A.N., B: 70 – 85).

⁴⁴⁷ The price drop stopped only in 1983. Additionally, the company had lost two of its most important clients. Spain had shifted to the Moroccan producers and England also turned to other markets. In 1983, however, the company had fixed contracts with a Philippine enterprise, which opened the production in 1984 (estimation of purchase: 200.000 tons per year).

⁴⁴⁸ Doc. 31.07.84.

⁴⁴⁹ Doc. 23.12.83.

⁴⁵⁰ Doc. 10.04.84.

⁴⁵¹ There is no doubt that those employees were dismissed, but the exact date is unknown.

the dismissals of the movement leaders were unjustified and arbitrary acts of the management. The climate remained agitated.

In the years of crisis, many external observers - regardless if they were members of government or administration, local authorities, parties, journalists, or marabouts - pointed out that the company used to be an example of well functioning, harmony and prosperity, but had mutated to a center of vicious conflicts within a few years. Critics arose that the company was not well integrated into the local environment. The bad reputation might have motivated the directorate to give a financial aid for the construction of mosques to the Tidjaniya brotherhood and to donate four water pumps to the community of Mboro in 1985.⁴⁵² Also at that time, the directorate promised to the local population to install electricity in certain rural areas.⁴⁵³ The directorate aimed now to reestablish the old reputation and invested to polish up the image of the company.

For this purpose the 25th anniversary of the company in April 1985 was a fabulous occasion. On the 10th of April, the board of directors held a meeting. The Senegalese minister of industrial development, Serigne Lamine Diop, opened the meeting followed by a speech of Senegal's president Abdou Diouf. The directorate had also invited the most important shareholders of the company and their representative (Lespine) also contributed a speech. Unsurprisingly, in all three speeches, later published in their essentials in a special edition of the company journal, no allusions were made to the alleged damaged reputation of the company on the international scenery. By contrast, the prominent speakers eulogized the concerted efforts of public and private sector as equal partners (50/50 since 1974) to the overwhelming success of the company and to the profit of Senegal's national economy. The minister of industrial development dug out the company's old image of 'we-are-all-a-big-family' (buried latest since June 1983) towards the shareholders by saying:

“His [A. Diouf] satisfaction is confirmed in the decoration [with a medal of honor] of some among you. For him, his government, and his people the most beautiful homage to all of you: the board of directors, personnel of the big family of Taïba which is a model of a rigid

⁴⁵² President Diouf wrote in a personal letter: « *Je vous adresse mes vifs remerciements pour ce geste qui contribue efficacement à la promotion socio-économique des populations. Ainsi par ce geste, la Compagnie sénégalaise des Phosphates de Taïba donne l'exemple d'une unité industrielle harmonieusement intégrée à son environnement*» (doc. 00.00.86).

⁴⁵³ This promise was not held until the fusion with the chemical industry in October 1996.

management, participative to the benefit of its social partners, its shareholders, the government, the union of employers, and trade unions.”⁴⁵⁴

On the 11th of April, the celebration continued in the mining installations also with numerous speeches, but also with cultural performances. In his speech addressed to the entire staff, the administration director made no open comments to the tremendous conflicts between the directorate and the workforce since over three years or to the actual social climate. But instead, he subtly called his subordinates to order by saying:

„We have to make our affirmation that social peace, the relentless work, and the devotion to our enterprise, are the key to our success now and in particular in the future. Because, as wrote so rightly the Franco Senegalese writer, Gaston Berger, father of the prospect: „tomorrow is not to wait for, but to invent“. And yet, to invent „tomorrow“, which means a prosperous future for Taïba, is for us the absolute duty to conserve an intact confidence of our clients. For this we need to double the fervor, to be disciplined, fulfill our tasks in our jobs with consciousness and self-sacrifice, to cultivate the taste of well done work and to be devoted to our company.“⁴⁵⁵

The religious leader of the Tidjaniya brotherhood, Abdoul Aziz Sy Junior, was one of the guests of honor. On this occasion, the marabou thanked the company directorate for the grateful financial aid in front of the staff. He was cited in the anniversary booklet with the following words:

„By this move, the leaders of Taïba prove once more their fervent desire to participate in the development of the nation. It adds to others, which had been already achieved. We will be

⁴⁵⁴ Original version: «*Sa satisfaction se manifesterà par la remise de décoration à certains d'entre vous. C'est pour lui, son Gouvernement et son peuple, le plus bel hommage rendu à tous : membres du Conseil d'Administration, Personnel de la grande famille de Taïba qui est un modèle de gestion rigoureuse, participative au bénéfice des partenaires sociaux, actionnaires, gouvernement, patronat et syndicats* » (Taïba-Info, 10/85, p.6).

⁴⁵⁵ Original version: «*Nous devons faire notre affirmation selon laquelle la paix sociale, le travail opiniâtre et le dévouement à notre entreprise sont la clé de nos succès présents et surtout futurs. Car, comme l'écrivait si justement le philosophe franco-sénégalais, Gaston Berger, père de la Prospective, „demain n'est pas à attendre, mais à inventer“. Or, inventer „demain“, c'est-à-dire un avenir prospère pour Taïba, c'est, pour nous, le devoir absolu de conserver intacte la confiance, de nos clients. Il nous faut, pour cela, redoubler d'ardeur, être disciplinés, remplir nos tâches à nos postes respectifs avec conscience et abnégation, cultiver le goût du travail bien fait et être dévoués à notre compagnie*» (Taïba-Info, 10/85, p 3).

very thankful to them and ask the workers to double their efforts in order to gain the prosperity of Taïba for the profit of all. ⁴⁵⁶

By the presence and thankfulness of the beloved marabou, the directorate's intention was certainly to lift up its image in the workers' eyes.

Some weeks later, however, worried about the impending dismissals of the eight trade unionists accused of illegal agitation, the workers went again on strike from the 3rd to the 8th May. Having so profusely praised social peace on the company's anniversary celebration, the directorate reacted to the new agitations again with a military intervention. A journalist described in 'Daan Doole', a bulletin of the PIT party (Parti de l'indépendance et du travail du Sénégal) the situation as such:

„Tivavouane, Mboro and Darou where hundreds of workers are living was literally put under the state of emergency with a huge display of force of the L.G.I armed from head to toe: interdiction of gathering of the general worker assemblies, curfew. [...] During the five days the complete cordoning off of the Fogny quarter of Tivavouane, where it was practically impossible to go in and out, the members of the 'P „S“ enterprise committee' were there with the police going into the houses to get the strikers out of their beds at any time of day or night. ⁴⁵⁷

Many workers got seriously injured through beating and kicking. Tear gas bombs were used. Parallel to the violent actions, the directorate tried to convince individual workers to back up from the movement by promising goods, money, and/or promotion. The chiefs of the surrounding villages were given radios by the company direction in case they were willing to denounce the strike. Also, the directorate talked to the local marabous in Tivavouane to call their disciples to order.

⁴⁵⁶ Im Original: « Par ce geste les dirigeants de Taïba, prouvent une fois de plus leur désir ardent de participer au développement de la nation. Il vient s'ajouter à d'autres qu'ils ont déjà réalisés. Nous ne saurons les remercier assez et demander à tous les travailleurs de redoubler d'efforts afin que Taïba devienne toujours plus prospère au bénéfice de tous. » (Taïba-Info, 10/85, p. 22).

⁴⁵⁷ Original version : « Tivavouane, Mboro et Darou où habitent des centaines de travailleurs furent littéralement placés sous le régime de l'état d'exception, avec large déploiement des L.G.I. armée jusqu'au dents: interdiction d'attroupement, des assemblées générales des travailleurs, couvre-feu. [...] Pendant les cinq jours que durèrent le bouclage complet du quartier Fogny de Tivavouane, d'ou il était pratiquement impossible de rentrer et sortir, les membres du 'comité d'entreprise P“S“ étaient là avec la police, rentrant dans les maisons pour sortir des grévistes de leur lit à n'importe quelle heure du jour et de la nuit» (Daan Doole, 31st of June 1985).

As a consequence of the strike, 248 workers were dismissed, according to the above-cited article. However, the directorate's will to negotiate with the trade union section about rights, conventions and laws had come to a definite end for the time being. They were more than ever convinced that the company was the victim of a malicious subversive agitation.

In the following months the workforce apparently gradually went into a state of resignation. In 1986, workers and trade unionists alike outwardly showed good will to engender anew a positive social climate. The local CNTS office regained control of the 'laborious basis' and depicted the difficult period for the staff of the phosphate mine in Dakar in 1986 (exact date is unknown) as such:

*„Finally, the workers of the CSPT just reached the end of a dissension period, evoked by a **misunderstanding**. This reunion was profusely welcomed by all worker members of our Federation as well as of the assembly of the National Confederation of the Workers of Senegal. [...] The workers of the Taïba phosphates, firmly decided to increase their work condition, are nevertheless more attached to the development of their enterprise. [...] They know that the Company belongs to the Nation, of which they are full members. In this respect they are willing to abandon any egoism and machinations in order to help their enterprise to occupy the position it deserves [my emphasis].“⁴⁵⁸*

The paper is designed to show the workers' great sense of responsibility and their consciousness about the importance of the company and it puts emphasis on the unity and harmony between the CNTS representatives, the Federation office and the worker members.

Under the condition of this attitude, the Senegalese government started a program of a closer cooperation between 'credible' trade unions and the public services and organizations. This policy was meant to give the trade unions a greater possibility for negotiation instead of pushing them to take violent actions. In 1986, the catalogue of claims from 1985 was indeed analyzed in weekly sessions by the CNTS in cooperation with an association of top managers,

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Original version: «*Enfin les travailleurs de la Compagnie Sénégalaise des Phosphates de Taïba viennent de se retrouver auprès une période de dissension créée par un mal entendu. Cette retrouvaille a été accueillie avec une joie immense par tous les travailleurs membre de notre Fédération ainsi que l'ensemble de la Confédération Nationale des Travailleurs du Sénégal. [...] Les travailleurs des Phosphates de Taïba, fermement décidés à améliorer leur condition de travail, sont cependant plus attachés à l'épanouissement de leur entreprise. [...] Ils savent que la Compagnie appartient à la Nation, dont ils sont membres à part entière. A cet effet, ils engagent à bannir tout égoïsme et à oeuvrer pour que leur entreprise occupe la place qu'elle mérite.* » (Taïba-Info).

the CNPS ('Conseil National du Patronat Sénégalais'). Opposition groups and associations of the country saw this 'responsible participation' rather critical.⁴⁵⁹

The official discourses from then on became friendly, showing the ambition to get along with each other. But internally this simply meant to distance from each other. The transparency of decisions, a former principle of the company, vanished now practically completely. Information became gradually centralized and a means of power and domination. The frequency of the company journal, in former times published monthly, dropped to 4 annual issues within this period respectively.⁴⁶⁰

In 1985 and 1986, the production results stayed far behind the set objectives. The objective was 1.920.000 tons extraction of raw material per year, the actually quantity produced was in 1985 1.735.000 tons, and in 1986 only slightly more with 1.737.000 tons.⁴⁶¹

In the same time span, the four last highest department positions became Senegalized, namely the department 'usine', the supply department, harbor department, and the mining department. The directorate had long hesitated to Senegalize these positions, because those departments were considered as being the most difficult to rule.

The tone in the company journal of some articles in those years is reminiscent of teachers patronizing their disciples. It had gradually become a directorial tool of admonition. In October 1987, the head of the administration department frankly expressed his opinion about the reasons for the degradation of the production process and listed four fundamental causes. Here, the 2nd and 3rd causes are cited:

„2) The constant fall of the productivity which is due to laziness, to a lack of professional consciousness, and the propensity of many workers to strife for a salary without the contribution of equivalent work. Thus, it is necessary to reduce the delay of executing orders

⁴⁵⁹ The PIT was in opposition to the state-near CNTS and did not hide their attitude: « *Enlisée dans le borbier des „Congrès“ des Union régionales au cours desquels aucun des problèmes brûlants du monde du travail n'est traité, les responsables de la Rue Escarfait [bureau Fédéral de la CNTS] ne se rendent même pas compte que le 1er Mai - de cette année et celui du Centenaire et qu'il nécessite une préparation à la mesure de sa signification. [...] En effet, l'amère expérience des travailleurs atteste qu'on ne peut absolument rien attendre de bon de la ligne de conduite suivie jusqu'ici par la Direction confédérale de la CNTS face à la politique du pouvoir à laquelle elle souscrit du reste* » (doc. 01.05.86).

⁴⁶⁰ Number 94 was published in February 1984; n° 98, the special edition for the 25th anniversary was published in October 1985.

⁴⁶¹ Remember that important investments in technical equipment of 9 billion FCFA were made in 1984 and 85 in order to produce 2.200.000 tons per year. (Taïba Info, 10/85). This program was firstly announced to the workforce in January 1984 (Taïba-Info, 2/84, p. 24).

to a minimum, to increase the standards of their planning and to cultivate the love for a well-done work.

3) The irresponsibility of numerous management agents (top and midrange managers) who seemingly have no clear image of discipline and the necessary procedures in general, the strict supervision of the work and of the workers, the good maintenance of the installations, and the preservation of the company material of which they have the responsibility. Those are the elements forming the basis for a healthy enterprise and in consequence the basis for their social situation."⁴⁶²

Indeed, the assurance of the control system had become a swelling problem from the 1980s onwards.

8.2.5 Seminars in personal management after 1983

"Jaang du wees, xam xam du doy"⁴⁶³

The investigation in December 1983 ended in a catalogue of recommendations, which have been mentioned in chapter 8.2.1. Recommendation n° 6 was an important basis for the initiation of several rounds of seminars in personnel management in the following years. Thus, recommendation n° 6 is cited here again:

"As a relay of the directorate and the top management, the midrange management should be trained in management techniques (cost price, budget, production management) and in

⁴⁶² Im Original: «2) La baisse constante de la productivité qui est essentiellement due à la paresse, au manque de conscience professionnelle, et à La propension de beaucoup de travailleurs à vouloir gagner un salaire sans fournir un travail équivalent. Il nous faudra donc réduire au minimum possible les délais d'exécution de nos tâches, améliorer les standards de planification de celles-ci, et cultiver l'amour du travail bien fait.3) L'irresponsabilité de nombre d'agents d'encadrement (cadres et agents de maîtrise) qui semblent ne pas avoir une conscience claire que le respect de la discipline et des procédures par tous, la surveillance stricte des travaux et des hommes, la bonne tenue des installations et la sauvegarde des matériels de la Compagnie dont ils ont la garde sont autant d'éléments qui constituent le substratum de la bonne santé d'une entreprise et par conséquent de la pérennité de leur situation sociale» (Taïba-Info, 10/87).

⁴⁶³ The translation of this Wolof proverb is "education never ends, knowledge is never enough".

modern methods of command (human relations in the enterprise, leadership, and communication).⁴⁶⁴

From 1983 on, it was clear to the top management that the feeble position of the midrange management, in particular the categories which were now called 'superior mastery' from 1984 on (AM 4 and 5), needed urgently to be strengthened if they were to fulfill their tasks. Their most important task was to assure the quick and effective flow of information between the directorate and the executive. This included, of course, a successful communication with their subordinates.

Interestingly, the same ESGE consultants who proposed to separate information channels for the three socio-professional groups were now asked to help improving the communication by seminars. In cooperation with the company directorate the following objectives were defined:

- "- Amelioration in every sense, [amelioration in] the outcomes of the "binome" Directorate-Personnel in respect to the efficiency of the enterprise and a better social consensus.*
- Mobilization of the human energies towards structures of progress, new forms of work organization, the handling of indicators of workshops and departments, groups of progress, quality circles, suggestion systems, the purview of top management training, etc.*
- Development of the cooperation and the participation of all on common projects.*
- Precise definition of a communication strategy and the support of corresponding information.*
- Better capacity to solve social problems*
- Management of conflict situations.⁴⁶⁵*

⁴⁶⁴ Original version: « *En tant que relais de la direction et de l'encadrement supérieur, la maîtrise devra être formée dans les techniques de gestion (prix de revient, budget, gestion de la production) et dans les méthodes modernes de commandement (relations humaines dans l'entreprise, leadership et communication)* » (ESGE-report, p. 28).

⁴⁶⁵ Original version: « *- Amélioration sur tous les plans, des performances du "binome" Direction-Personnel en vue de l'efficacité de l'entreprise et meilleur consensus social. - Mobilisation des énergies humaines tendues vers des structures de progrès, de nouvelles formes d'organisation du travail, la maîtrise des indicateurs de marche d'atelier ou de service, les groupes de progrès, les cercles de qualité, des systèmes de suggestion, les dispositifs d'animation de l'encadrement, etc. - Développement de la concertation et de la participation de tous aux projets communs. - Définition précise d'une stratégie de communication et les supports d'informations correspondants. - Facilitation de la résolution des problèmes sociaux. - Gestion des situations conflictuelles* » (Taïba-Info n° 101, 10/87).

In 1984, a great variety of regular reunions (weekly or fortnightly, depending on the estimated importance) was decided for all hierarchical levels from foremen on to assure a constant and effective flow of information and a frame for intercommunication.

In 1985, five seminars were held which focused on social dynamics and the circulation structures of information and their rationality. The attendants included the general director, the General Secretary, the heads of each department, and the entire 'superior mastery'. Further, seven engineers attended a seminar for one week in June/July 1986 to become trainers in social dynamics. From July 1986 until May 1987, each engineer trainer trained the superior mastery in skills of personnel development in 4-hours seminars fortnightly. A total of 55 superiors were trained in this manner. In August 1987, a similar program aimed to train eight groups of eight agents each (= 64) for twenty 4-hours seminars fortnightly. Thus, a minimum of 135 top and superior managers were trained in 1986 and 1987 in human resource management. Despite all those efforts, the social climate within the company and the intercommunication did not improve. The directorate then raised the question if the quality of the technical training was still as good as it was before.

Presumably as a reaction of those speculations, the head manager of the training center defended the high training standard as good as ever and argued instead in October 1987:

„But the human being, this other tool, essential for the production, „beginning and end of the development“, „which does all and for which all is done“ is of such a complexity that the sciences dealing with it are called „imprecise Sciences“.

The laws formulated by the human sciences to define and grasp the behaviors of a human or of humans (in a given moment, in a given context) are called "laws of big numbers".

They are approximation, despite the efforts and extraordinary progress achieved in human psychology within the 20th century. In fact, the questions were asked, are asked, and will continue to be asked.

- Can the human problem be put on equation? Whatsoever, in our opinion, even if this would be possible, this equation would contain several complex variables often impalpable.

- Can we foresee with exactness the reactions, the [one line is missing here, obviously due to manipulation. K.K.] of work every day and every place?

- Do we have the possibility to unite and to apply all needed conditions to motivate every day every employee of our team in order to achieve the production objectives, which had been set for the survival or development of the enterprise?

*Those are the reasons which explain that, after a careful evaluation of the level of competence of our management and certain events which tormented our enterprise, the top management made the logical decision to complete their capacities by an important effort concerning the human resource management.*⁴⁶⁶

Between lines we can trace the defensive position of this top manager. Certainly, the directorate did presumably not appreciate those thoughts, diplomatically wrapped in rhetoric questions. Although he claimed to show how difficult and "*often impalpable*" the human resource management is, he also draws the connection between '*certain events*' (clearly referring to the brutal clashes during strike periods) and the necessity to train the managers in human resource management (which was not in his resort). The intentional omission in the text may give evidence that the directorate was not in tune with his opinion.⁴⁶⁷

In this article, the head of the training department attempted to prove a perfect training quality. He outlined in detail the old principles of the company's internal training, in particular for Senegalese successors of French managers who were under question now, which remained the same on their basis. After 1983, external periods of practical training in other enterprises were added, following the recommendation n° 7 of the ESGE-report.

However, two years later in June 1989, the same top manager investigated again the current social climate and state of intercommunication with a devastating result. In an internal

⁴⁶⁶ Original version: « *Mais l'homme, cet autre outil primordial de production, 'début et fin du développement', qui fait tout et pour qui tout est fait, est d'une complexité telle que les Sciences qui s'évertuent à l'étudier sont qualifiées 'Sciences non exactes'. Les lois formulées par les Sciences humaines pour définir et cerner les comportements d'un homme ou des hommes (à un moment donné, dans un contexte donné) s'appellent "Lois des grands nombres". Elles sont approximatives malgré les efforts et les progrès extraordinaires réalisés par la Psychologie humaine durant ce 20e siècle. En effet, des questions se sont posées, se posent et continueront à se poser. - Le problème humain peut-il être mis en équation? En tous cas selon notre avis, même si cela était possible, l'équation serait à plusieurs variables complexes et souvent impalpables. - Peut-on prévoir avec exactitude les réactions, les [one line is missing here, possibly due to manipulation] de travail tous les jours et en tout lieu? - A-t-on les possibilités de réunir et mettre en action toutes les conditions pour motiver chaque jour, chacun des hommes de notre équipe pour réaliser les objectifs de production qui nous sont fixés pour la survie ou le développement de l'entreprise? Voilà ce qui explique qu'après avoir évalué le niveau de compétence technique atteint par notre encadrement, et réfléchi autour de certains événements qui ont secoué notre entreprise, la Direction de l'Entreprise prit la décision logique de compléter la formation de l'encadrement par un apport appréciable dans le domaine de la gestion des hommes » (Taïba-Info n° 101, 10/87, p. 14).*

⁴⁶⁷ Still holding this position in 1996, the top manager of the training center handed me another expressive paper of the same issue with the words "certain top managers wouldn't want me to give this to you". This document is analyzed below (doc. 00.06.89).

document addressed to the top managers, he raised the same critics of the ESGE-report which have engendered the great training efforts in human resource management in 1985, 86, and 87. Special attention is drawn to the old consensus of the importance of regularly held reunions on all management levels. The manager recalled in his paper the old decisions taken in 1984 in this respect:

"The execution of those plans [= training seminars of human resource management, K.K.] should have been accompanied by a structure of meetings as a means for information, discussions, coordination, reflections, or decisions. The adopted structures were named:

- *Department reunion*
- *Division or Service reunion*
- *Subdivision reunion*
- *Reunion of superiors*

This assembly, if working correctly, would have allowed obtaining a number of objectives:

- *A profound knowledge of methods and analytical tools for situations and management on the managers' side.*
- *An improved capacity of top managers to guide.*
- *An adherence to techniques and practices of management methods of all managers.*
- *The emergence of a common responsibility feeling of all managers.*
- *The ability to master a dialogue, information, and communication.*
- *The conviction of everybody that work efficiency is not a synonym for strictness and compulsion.*
- *The alignment of the mastery to the company and its rational consciousness of the problems of its personnel in order to reduce the tension.*
- *A more independent enterprise to face future challenges.*⁴⁶⁸

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Original version: « L'exécution de ces volets devait s'accompagner de mise en place de structures de rencontres pour véhicule des informations, discussions, concertations, réflexions ou prises de décisions. Les structures conçues et adoptées avaient pour dénomination: - Réunion de Département; - Réunion de Division ou Service; - Réunion de Subdivision; - Réunion des Dirigeants. Cet ensemble fonctionnant correctement aurait certainement permis d'atteindre une série d'objectifs: - Une connaissance approfondie, de la part de l'encadrement, des méthodes et outils d'analyse de situation et de management. - Une capacité accrue des cadres à manager. - Une adhésion aux techniques et pratique des méthodes de management par toute la ligne d'encadrement. - L'émergence d'un sentiment de responsabilité collégiale de tout l'encadrement. - La maîtrise de la pratique du dialogue, de l'information, de la communication. - La conviction peut tous que l'Efficacité du service n'est plus synonyme de rigueur et d'imposition. - L'adhésion de la Maîtrise à la compagnie et sa prise en compte rationnellement des problèmes de son

The investigation in 1989 unveiled that the adherence to information reunions was very feeble and in fact even nonexistent in large parts of the enterprise. In many sections, those reunions were held on a regular basis only in the beginning of 1984, but soon failed to maintain the designed rhythm. According to the new investigation, time intervals between reunions became gradually larger and had in most cases dwindled within two years. In 1989, only a few smaller sections still held information reunions on a regular basis. In his paper, the training manager openly questioned the will of Senegalese superiors to inform. He chose again the style of rhetoric questions to nail down his arguments:

"- The top managers, engineers and service or division leaders, have they been trained in management styles by persons who had been trained in the "Bossard"⁴⁶⁹ type"? Have they been engaged in practicing those styles? (Questions asked by the mastery).

- Why are the other recommended reunions not held?

- Did the directorate adopt the style of participation? Does it practice it? Is it not rather for the style of imposition (mode I)? Does it play the game?

- Did the directorate not take amiss unpleasant information coming from below? Did the directorate not believe (according to the rumor) in a certain manipulation of the midrange managers by top managers?

- Did the engineers give all the needed information?

So, on the whole, conviction and confidence is absent."⁴⁷⁰

Very frankly here, untypical for Senegalese communication, the head of the training department raised questions pertaining to the social situation and atmosphere in 1989. He was obviously not convinced that the directorate bolstered communication, transparent information, or considerate participation. According to his rhetoric questions, the directorate

personnel pour une réduction des tensions. - Une entreprise plus autonome pour faire face aux futurs défis[sic] » (doc.00.06.89).

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Bossard Institute was another name for the ESGE Institute.

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Original version: « *Les Cadres, Ingénieurs et Chefs de Services ou Divisions, ont-ils été formés aux styles de management des hommes enseignés à pratiquer ces styles? (Questions posées par les AM). - Pourquoi les autres types de réunions préconisées ne se tiennent-elles pas? - La Direction a-t-elle adopté le style participatif? Le pratique t-elle? N'est-elle pas plutôt pour le style imposition (mode I)? Joue-t-elle le jeu? - La Direction ne s'est-elle pas offusquée des informations désagréables à entendre qui remontent? N'a-t-elle pas cru (d'après la rumeur) à une certaine manipulation des AM par des Cadres? - Les Ingénieurs ont-ils disposé de toutes les informations requises? Dans l'ensemble donc, conviction et confiance ne règnent pas » (doc. 00.06.89, p. 5).*

itself betrayed its own ostensible objectives. The fourth paragraph indicates a certain strategy the directorate presumably used to turn down offensive information.

In contrast to the ESGE-recommendations and also to his own analysis in 1987, the training manager proposed in his new analysis to pay closer attention to subordinates, in other words: the work force. In this respect, he stressed the Senegalese mentality:

"This management of Senegalese has to take into account one sure and well known fact: the Senegalese [people] put in most cases the consideration on top of their needs. This consideration can be confirmed in various ways:

- the grade, the title awarded*
- the entrusted responsibility*
- the confidence granted*
- the space of individual initiative permitted*
- the transferred information (the technique, the quality, the quantity, and the appropriateness play essential roles).*
- the invitation to the analysis of problems and the taking of decisions.*

It is obvious that the subordinate who profits from those or some of those considerations from the side of his superiors, has first to fulfill certain basic conditions (competence, loyalty, the potential for taking initiative) and then respect the rational rules which embed the work relations at all moments."⁴⁷¹

The training manager well understood, that the work force felt disrespected and their acquired knowledge and skills ignored by their superiors. In his opinion, the emphasis put on the midrange managers in past years and their empowerment caused a harmful and destructive degradation on the side of the workers. In fact, this policy had installed a profound ditch between the work force and the entire management. He advised to initiate anew reunions and

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Original version: « *Ce management des hommes Sénégalais doit tenir compte d'une donnée réelle, sûr et bien connue: Les Sénégalais placent le plus souvent en tête de leurs besoins, celui de considération. Cette considération a des manifestations multiples: - le grade, le titre que l'on décerne; - la responsabilité confiée; - la confiance accordée; - la marge d'initiative individuelle que l'on permet; - les informations livrées (la technique, la qualité, la quantité et l'opportunité jouant des rôles essentiels). - l'invite à l'analyse des problèmes et à la prise de décision. Il est évident que le subordonné bénéficiant de tout ou partie de cette considération de la part de sa hiérarchie doit d'abord satisfaire à des conditions de base de départ (compétence, loyauté, potentiel d'initiative) et ensuite respecter les règles rationnelles régissant les relations de travail à tout moment* » (doc. 06.89, p. 6).

seminars to *"detect the blockage to the application of the learned techniques and to define means to remove the blockage"*.⁴⁷²

The directorate gradually understood that important information was not only in the hands of the educated managers, but also in those of the experienced workers. It became apparent that the current production process suffered much from the lack important technical information from below with costly effects. The policy of monopolization of knowledge by managers had engendered the unwillingness of subordinates to inform the top.

In 1989, seminars on human resource management were held again to improve the vertical information flows in both ways: top-down and bottom-up. But apparently, all efforts remained futile.⁴⁷³ In 1995, the directorate was in a state of resignation and apathy in respect to information and communication problems among the staff.

8.3 Reactions to changes

Forced to account for a certain time period of the most essential changes, the years between 1978 until the June-strike in 1983 would be most appropriate.

However, each section had its own rhythm of Senegalization, depending heavily on the presence or absence of capable and well-trained Senegalese successors. Sometimes the set objective of Senegalization could not be achieved out of lack of specialized personnel. Once in function and in full responsibility of the job, the Senegalese successors were well prepared in technical terms. They were, by contrast, not prepared for the social heritage the French expatriates had left. The subchapter 8.3 attempts to depict the consequences of this reality after the management changes for workers and managers.

⁴⁷² Original version: « Proposition n° 4: La Direction donne l'ordre au SFP de rencontrer les AM qui ont déjà bénéficié de la formation pour déceler les blocages à l'application des techniques apprises et définir les moyens de lever ces blocages » (doc. 06.89, p. 7).

⁴⁷³ No documents could be found about any training efforts from 1989 on. I got the information from the director of the training department in a conversation.

8.3.1 Workers reactions: Invisible resistance

The outcome of strikes and claim catalogues discouraged the trade unionists and workforce alike to proceed further in this direction. The battle between the Senegalese management and the workforce now shifted to hidden arenas.

Workers developed various strategies to cope with the dissatisfying situation and in some way to take revenge for the brutal injustice of the directorate. The term 'invisible resistance' summarizes a number of behaviors which was harmful for the company's productivity, namely absenteeism, carelessness, feeble concentration on the job, alcoholism, robbery, intentional botching and/or acts of sabotage, and monopolization of information.

For the early years of the management changes before the large June-strike, so from 1978 to 1983, nine archived documents bear witness of the growing appearance of those behaviors.⁴⁷⁴ The annual gratification for the production results was cut down considerably and not attached to individual efforts any more in 1985. Each employee of the entire staff got the same percentage of gratification. Thus, striving for records of individual work teams with an inexperienced young Senegalese superior became dissatisfying and even senseless. An employee remembered:

"I can say if I remember quite well, from '87 on until today, really, the good times of the company had changed. The promotions had much, much, much diminished, and the advantages in general had diminished. I think, the people finally started to give up as well. Because many people who were real workaholics, who really worked, who expected to get something at the end of the year and couldn't achieve it, finally because of that repetition, started to say that it's not worth it any more to rack the brains. You rack your brain to earn something at the end of the year! But now we see that it is for nothing, or also to be thrown into the same sack with the people who gave it a shit. It's not worth to exhaust you!"⁴⁷⁵

⁴⁷⁴ Namely documents: 15.09.1978; 29.05.1979; 06.11.1979; 15.09.1980; 22.09.1980; 24.08.1981; 17.10.1981; 01.12.1981; 09.03.1982; and 13.03.1982.

⁴⁷⁵ Original version: « *Je peux dire, si j'ai vraiment bonne mémoire, de 87 à nos jours, vraiment, les temps forts de la compagnie avaient changés, les promotions avaient beaucoup, beaucoup, beaucoup diminuer, et les avantage en général avaient beaucoup diminuer. Finalement les gens aussi, je crois, commençaient à baisser les bras. Parce que beaucoup de gens qui étaient des vrais bosseurs, qui travaillaient, qui s'attendaient à avoir quelque chose a la fin d'année, qui n'arrive pas a l'avoir, finalement a cause de ce répétitions-là, commençaient à dire que ce n'est plus la peine de se casser la tête. On se casse la tête pour gagner quelque chose en fin d'année, mais maintenant on voit que c'est pour rien avoir, aussi, ou être dans le même sac que les gens qui n'ont rien foutu. Ce n'est pas la peine de se casser la tête!* » (A.G., A: 379-98).

Another employee had a very similar vision of the problem:

"An employee, if he works he is tired, you have to know that he's tired, you see! An employee, it is necessary to encourage him to have... to come out with [good] results. That's what makes those people work! During the times of the Whites, honestly, I tell you: the elders worked themselves to death. The output of the production, you could see how it bore fruits, yes! [...] You need to recompense them to make them working [...], but if you don't recompense the energy they had before, it diminishes, it diminishes!"⁴⁷⁶

After 1985, the acts of sabotage, apparently, increased. An employee explains, under which circumstances such a behavior is likely to occur:

"I still think the results were better [before the management changes, K.K.]. But the fact to give responsibility to the workers, but still the workers.... but they are laborers. But you [the boss], to whom the responsibility is given, to be, for instance, the boss of such an individual, and that individual is better instructed in technical terms.... well, he does sabotage to you!"⁴⁷⁷

In the above citation, the speaker refers to the former philosophy to delegate the responsibility to workers and to imply each individual worker directly to the production results.⁴⁷⁸ He speaks in fact about the former expatriates' aim to make the subordinate feel as an integral part of the mine's functionality. He then refers to the new management style according to which the new Senegalese superiors took over the responsibility for the working

⁴⁷⁶ Original version: « Un agent quand il travail, il est fatigué, tu dois savoir qu'il est fatigué, voyez! Un agent, il faut toujours l'encourager pour avoir... pour emmener des résultats; c'es- ce qui fait travailler ces gens-là. Aux temps des Toubabs, honnêtement, je vous dis: les vieux travaillaient à mort. Le rendement de la production, on le voyait comme ça apportait, oui! [...] Il faut les récompenser pour qu'ils travaillent [...] mais si tu les récompense pas la force qu'ils avaient avant, ça diminue, ça diminue » (A.F., B: 164-78).

⁴⁷⁷ Original version: « Je crois que quand même les résultats c'était mieux, mais le fait de responsabiliser les ouvriers, mais quand même les ouvriers.... mais c'est des travailleurs. Mais vous, qui étés responsabilisé pour être par exemple un chef d'un tel individu, et cet individu il est beaucoup mieux coté sur le plan technique... Mais il te fait du sabotage » (A.F., B: 180-5).

⁴⁷⁸ This section is similar to a text, which has been published about the principles of delegation in Taïba-Info in March 1970: "Isn't the subordinate the right person to propose interesting ideas and ameliorations about his own work? And yet, don't these new ideas only emerge if the subordinate knows that he is entirely responsible?" Original version: « Le subalterne n'est-il pas le mieux placé pour avoir des idées intéressantes sur les améliorations qu'il peut apporter à son propre travail? Seulement, ces idées nouvelles ne jailliront que si ce subalterne sait qu'il est pleinement responsable? » (Taïba-Info, 03/70).

process, but were actually not really apt to fill it out with sufficient competence. Another employee explains the same phenomenon in the following citation:

"When the people have difficulties, he [the superior] has to be prepared to solve it there where they all have difficulties. But if it is the contrary.... you see what kind of problem occurs! Even if he is still the boss, he is still responsible, he has a certain weakness in front of the members of his team in situations [I: hmhm] Because since those times [of the management changes], you can meet people on the work sites today, if they are not satisfied, that can cause a blockage!"⁴⁷⁹

This speaker depicts well the causes for the workers' loss of respect for their superiors. The lack of competence is judged as a trite weakness and, thus, the superior is not worth to be respected. In the last sentence, this employee makes allusion to the large group of workers ("*people*") in the enterprise who are taciturn considered as the real experts and who have to be pleased in order to assure a good working progress. Presumably a large proportion belonged to the 'strong seventh', the group of workers who expected to be promoted to management positions under French management and who were then stopped by the new promotion restrictions under Senegalese management.

Those 'wises' became at the same time subliminal power holders. They often used their power to take revenge for the workers' lost privileges after the management changes. Since the directorate ignored the workers' needs and withdrew traditional rights (removal of former financial advantages, promotion possibilities, no access to used material, and others) they used the power they had and developed a certain defiance towards their superiors.

The knowledge of elder workers became a means of power and, thus, something worth to defend and to protect. Disappointed in the new management style, they withheld their know-how. The outcome was a monopolization of information in order to hinder everybody else to use this knowledge to his personal advantage. An employee explains:

⁴⁷⁹ Original version: « *Quand les gens ont des difficultés, il doit être près à résoudre là où tous le monde a des difficultés. Mais si c'est le contraire... Vous voyez ce que ça pose comme problème! Même s'il est toujours chef, s'il est toujours responsable, il a une certaine faiblesse devant des membres de son équipe aux situations [I: hmhm] Parce que vous pouvez rencontrer des les temps des gens dans le chantier aujourd'hui, s'ils sont pas constants ça peut causer un blocage!* » (A.G., A: 80-9).

"The elders keep their secret of experience for not advancing the others."⁴⁸⁰

It is also true, however, that the transfer of important information from subordinates to superiors about the correct treatment of the equipment or other issues which demand a technical comprehension was often delicate to utter. In particular in public, in front of other team members, bright remarks were not welcomed. The following speaker tells us why:

"Sometimes it's better to shut up, because if you're not listened... Because, also, sometimes your direct superior, if there are too many comments, too much reflection, the guy, he sees, he supposes it's his incompetence which is about to be laid on the table instead of a positive gain for everybody."⁴⁸¹

The blockage of important information was a combination of mainly two phenomena: firstly, the will of instructed employees to keep their 'secrets' as a means of power, and, secondly, the fear of superiors to expose their ostensible incompetence.

For the majority of the work force it was incomprehensible, why the directorate suddenly was not interested any more in their laboriously acquired knowledge and capacities. Some workers had found their own private theory for this fact. The following speaker, a retired mechanic, mounted the mine's first installations:

"We who were there since the beginning, who had seen how it all worked, we were not listened! The young managers left school... [pause] If you ask the mechanics, the workers, we ask for employees with experience! If you ask the top management, one says... [pauses, falls in contemplation, then concludes:] Because they don't want that it works! So, they will take the youngsters at school, they bring them here! [...] The Whites, they were privileged here, the French. They wanted that the Senegalization fails, so they, they can return. Therefore they designed a plan of discrepancies that we, beginners... [leaving the sentence incomplete]"⁴⁸²

⁴⁸⁰ Original version: « Les anciens gardent leur secret d'expérience pour ne pas avancer les autres » (Q11, 8/64).

⁴⁸¹ Original version: « Des fois il vaut mieux se taire parce que si on n'est pas écouter... Parce que aussi, des fois la hiérarchie directe, quand il y a trop de commentaires, trop de réflexion, le gars il voit, il suppose c'est son incompetence qui est en train d'être mis sur la table, au lieu d'un apport positive pour tous le monde » (A.G., A: 52-8).

⁴⁸² Original version: « Nous qui étaient là depuis le début qui voyait comment ça marchait, on n'était pas écouté! Les jeunes cadres ils ont quitté l'école..... Quand c'est des mécaniciens, les ouvriers, on demande des agents avec expérience! Quand c'est la hiérarchie cadre, on dit... [falls into contemplation, then continues:]...parce qu'ils veulent pas que ça marche! Donc, on va

The directorate's decision to engage young engineers from 'school' without practical experience appeared illogical. From his perspective, the only possible explanation for this puzzling comportment was that the French prompted intentionally this bad way of conduct to the naive Senegalese directorate before they left to cause failure of Senegalization. Under those conditions, it is easy to understand that the flow of information was quite disturbed.

8.3.2 Managers' reaction: power centralization and laxity of work control

Also Senegalese superiors in upper management positions started to quarrel over decision rights and domains of responsibility among themselves.⁴⁸³

Despite the growing amount of rules and restrictions accompanying the ongoing process of Senegalization, control became a tremendous problem. Often in interviews, employees confirmed observations like the following:

"In former times the equipment was in a good state."⁴⁸⁴

The young Senegalese engineers, apparently, became progressively terrified of the instructed workers. Unsurprisingly, they tried to avoid the contact to their subordinates as much as possible. The frequency of the upper midrange managers' inspections in the working halls decreased over time to the absolute minimum. The 'superior masters' tried to control the work processes from their offices. This behavior widened the gap of practical knowledge between superiors and subordinates even more. As a consequence, erroneous decisions augmented respectively. This again damaged the reputation and respect of the superiors among their subordinates. A vicious circle!

Employees who showed loyalty and obedience to those frightened superiors and who did not question the superiors' competence and authority became now the winners of the game. Hated by the majority of the work force, but loved by the stressed superiors, they were

prendre les jeunes a l'école, on les emmène! [...] Les Toubab, ils étaient bien cotés ici, les Français! Ils voulaient que la Sénégalisation soit loupé pour que, eux, ils reviennent! Donc, ils sont tracés un plan de désaccords que nous, débutants, [pause] » (L.S., B: 250-63).

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Doc. 04.01.80, and doc. 07.01.80.

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Original version: « *[Au temps] le matériel se trouvait dans des bonnes conditions* » (Q45, 6/78).

more likely to get promoted than anybody else. Many remarks in interviews of the following content bear witness:

"The midrange managers do not promote correctly. They promote their friends, not those who deserve it."⁴⁸⁵

"I am disappointed by the culture of the people. It is not the merit, which brings a promotion, but the nepotism, the sensibilities and subjectivity. All this happens on the client's back. You see complete numskulls; it goes from bad to worse."⁴⁸⁶

Whereas in former years an arduous engagement in the work was reinforced by financial advantages and promotion, a contrary tendency apparently slowly crept into the midrange managers' personnel policy. Employees willing to ingratiate with their superiors were now in tendency most likely to get advantages. Work effort was not any more the prior criterion for career.

Over time, the staff below top management fell into two camps: the more experienced employees who had lived the expatriate period and the striving for records, and the new midrange or upper managers and their usually less instructed and experienced 'friends'. A mechanic explained in an interview the following observation:

"Me, I have seen somebody who was brought in here, but it was to arrange a problem which had nothing to do with his competence. He is here now, he is team chef, but he is less competent than the entire team he rules! And everybody knows this. He is not respected. We cannot respect him! [...] Naturally, it's maybe him who gets listened by the superiors, but we cannot respect him. This causes problems for the work quality. But always, who ever will go on training, we noticed always among them - at least some of them - we knew why they were there, we could imagine, other than their competence."⁴⁸⁷

⁴⁸⁵ Original version: « Les agents de maîtrise n'avancent pas correctement. Ils avancent leurs amis, pas celui qui le mérite » (Q40, 11/76).

⁴⁸⁶ Im Original: « Je suis déçu par la culture des gens. Ce n'est pas le mérite qui emmène un avancement, mais de copinage, de susceptibilité et subjectivité. Tout ce fait à la tête du client. On voit des nullards, ça va de mal en pire » (Q58, 10/88).

⁴⁸⁷ Original version: « Moi, j'ai vu quelqu'un qu'on a emmené ici, mais c'était pour régler un problème qui n'a rien à avoir avec sa compétence. Il est là maintenant. C'est un chef d'équipe, mais il est moins compétent que toute l'équipe qu'il dirige! Et c'est connu par tout le monde, on le respecte pas! On ne peut pas le respecter! [...] Bien que c'est peut-être lui, qui va être écouter par la hiérarchie, mais on ne peut pas le respecter, ça crée des problèmes dans la qualité du

The great benefit of this policy for the managers was, of course, that their own position was not endangered by this kind of employees. The managers' withdrawal from work places resulted in a dangerous neglect of work control. To be able to understand the full meaning of this new development, we take a short look back to the old fashion to control.

Special systems were installed wherever possible to measure quality and quantity of each action. This *modus operandi* allowed a close control of the entire production process at all times. The analysis of faults or hold-ups within the production process was rapidly known and measurements were taken quickly to correct it. For illustration, three indicative examples of control systems will be explained in some more detail.

A) The draglines

In the old times, a counter was installed in the driver's cabin of the draglines next to the driver's seat. The counter recorded the time periods, the dragline ran properly and each shovel of extracted phosphate. Thus, the miner had an exact control and an objective measurement over his own actual working speed. The results of each shift were noted in the miner's personal production booklet as well as on special production lists kept in the office of the mining department. The management had an overall control of the machines' as well as of the dragliners' production capacity. The causes for production hold-ups were easy to evaluate within this system. Each worker felt personally responsible for the extraction amount.

During my field research in 1995/96, most of those counters were removed from the dragline driver cabins, some were out of order, and some rare were still intact but out of use. Experienced dragliners would date the end of the control era in 1985 or 1986. However, the dragliners were unable to explain why the control system was given up. In interviews it was often said that the discipline and former striving for records had simply vanished.⁴⁸⁸ One of the former heroes of the 'key of the production' explains:

*travail. Mais toujours, quel que soit le groupe envoyé en formation, on constatait toujours parmi eux, une partie quand même, on savait pourquoi ils étaient là - on pouvait l'imaginer, quoi-
autre que la compétence! » (A.G., A: 126- 144).*

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This was also my own impression during my occasional visits through the mine's installations and extraction fields. One morning, I went with the first shift to the extraction field and assisted

"At those times, the draglines hardly ever stood still, only for maintenance or repair. You came, prepared yourself outside of the dragline, then you climbed in and took over. Your colleague wouldn't even stop the engine. Today, you come to your machine, the other one has already gone. You first pray, then you make your coffee with all possible tranquility in your cabin, and if you feel quite like it, you start the engine."⁴⁸⁹

This was also my own impression during my occasional visits through the mines installations and extraction fields. One morning, I went with the first shift to the extraction field and assisted at the usual morning ritual of praying and drinking coffee. Shift started at six o'clock, the dragline engine started at 6.45 a.m.

B) Mechanical tools

The mechanic section (*'Division Electro-Mécanique'*) was responsible for the repair and maintenance of the technical equipment, machines, engines and the like. Therefore, a large corpus of tools was provided for the mechanics. From May 1968 on, a rule booklet was handed to each new staff member and outlined the internal rules of the enterprise in detail.

According to the booklet, each employee had to sign a paper that he is entirely responsible for the tools and the equipment he uses and is obliged to pay the missing items. The employee is further asked to keep his working place clean and tidy.

To know if the written directions corresponded to any practical reality, I spoke to the man who was responsible for the maintenance and for the organization and replacement of broken or damaged tools over the last two decades. I found him engrossed in writings of Ahmadu Bamba (the Saint of the Mourid brotherhood) in the tool room of the mechanic hall. He showed to me the two large tool boards, which were practically empty. In most cases, only the picture painted in red or gray of the tool's shape would unveil the character of the missing

at the usual morning ritual of praying and drinking coffee. Shift start was at six o'clock, the dragline engine was started at 6.45 a.m.

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Original version: « *Au temps, les draglines s'arrêtaient presque jamais, seulement pour maintenance ou pour réparer. Tu viens, tu te prépares devant la drag, ensuite tu monte et tu prend la relève. Ton collègue n'arrête même pas la machine. Aujourd'hui tu arrives à la drag, ton collègue est déjà parti. Tu pris d'abord, ensuite tu prépares tranquillement ton café dans ta cabine. Maintenant, si tu te sens à l'aise, tu allume le moteur* » (Dragliner in a private conversation, field diary II, p. 35).

item. He explained to me with profuse passion the old control system for the usage of mechanic tools:

Each mechanic had 10 tokens with a personal registration number. Each tool was attached to the tool board by hooks. In the need of a particular tool, the mechanic attached one token with his personal registration number on the tool hook. Everybody else could, thus, see who was in use of which tool. At the end of each shift, the tools had to be cleaned and put back in its place on the tool board.

The elder responsible for the surveillance, expressed to me his great sorrow for the deterioration of the token system. Since then, he had practically nothing really to do any more. To my question when the system vanished he replied: „*as soon as the foreman Toubab left*“. The departure of the French expatriate foremen must have been end of the 70s. Among company documents, a note of a company guard in March 1982 said:

“Since some time the S.E.M. [Electro-Mechanical Service] uses the showers as parking and stores in there necessary material, in particular electrical motors of all kinds.”⁴⁹⁰

C) The maintenance of stock

In former times, a well-elaborated stock system used to be in operation. On the terrain of the mechanic division, a large area was preserved for spare parts and tools. The company’s technical equipment came from all over the world.

Machines, engines, and spare parts from overseas companies (mainly in France, Germany, and United States) were usually shipped from the country of origin to Senegal. In consequence, the technical equipment was commanded long in advance (two to six months) in order to assure a smooth and non-interrupted production process. The superiors to be able to keep track with the technical state of machines, engines, and tools carefully examined the shift reports of all shift leaders.

The system of shift reports assured that the communication of missing or damaged parts traveled quickly to the stock center, where the replacing spare part was already waiting

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Original version : « *Depuis un certain temps le S.E.M. [‘Service Eléctro-Mécanique’] emploie la devanture des douches comme parc et y place du matériel nécessaire en particulier des MOTEURS ELECTRIQUES de toutes sortes* » (doc. 13.03.82).

to come in action. Since the overall focus of the ‘industrial family’ was put on a successful production, new records could only be achieved, if the time periods of the machines’ standstill could be reduced to an absolute minimum.

As well as each post described in detail, for each machine existed a clearly defined list of the spare parts needed for an eventual repair. Those items were supposed to be available at all times. The list also includes the particular tools necessary to repair each machine of the enterprise. For instance, a list of spare parts for a small dragline⁴⁹¹ consists of 44 different items only available from overseas. Often more than one or two pieces of each item were recommended for stock. The ideal number of spare parts is defined by 102 items which are exclusively needed on that particular machine. The existing stock was regularly checked and balanced with these control lists.

In 1978, a young specialist for stock management was called from Belgium. He was supposed to determine the ideal quantity of spare parts to avoid the standstill of machines and engines as much as possible, but also to avoid a futile stocking, which would produce additional costs of maintenance.⁴⁹² In November 1978, a new employee was interviewed about his first impressions of the mine. Among other statements he replies:

"I found its principle of systematic maintenance very fascinating. The employees are exemplary in terms of discipline and punctuality, and this is maybe the strength of Taïba in comparison to other enterprises."⁴⁹³

In 1996, when I visited the DEM accompanied by a mechanic who had entered the mine in 1984, the stock area gave the impression as if it was no longer in use. It was not only poorly equipped but also in a complete snafu. The stock area was basically a large shelf under a tin roof in the back yard of the mechanic hall. The shelf was more than half way empty, the earthy floor was covered and crowded with dusty spare parts of all kinds reminiscent of a scrap-heap. Tufts of grass flourished here and there and little bushes had conquered the terrain.

⁴⁹¹ Doc. 00.00.73: ‘contrôle pièces de rechange 7 W’.

⁴⁹² M. Collet, Taïba-Info ‘management 8/78.

⁴⁹³ Original version: « *Son principe de l’entretien systématique me fascine beaucoup. Les employés sont exemplaires quant à la discipline et à la ponctualité, et c’est peut-être ce qui fait la force de Taïba devant les autres entreprises* » (Taïba-Info 11/78).

The mechanic explained that workers would not dare to enter the stock section any more, because of the danger of snakes. Instead of stocking, people would now command spare parts only at the moment of brake down. This sometimes caused long delays within the production process. Although this evolution gave employees a lot more time to laze around, most of them were not satisfied.

"In the times of the colonists [speaking of the expatriates] it was more modern then nowadays. When there was a brake down, the intervention was more rapid, because the material was available. The stand-stills are longer now."⁴⁹⁴

8.3.3 Tacit arrangements: the sub-contracting

In the mid 80s, the policy of sub-contracting increased considerably. A growing number of particular tasks were subcontracted to small local enterprises. The creators of those enterprises were, in majority, former employees of the company on retirement with a working experience of usually several decades. The new entrepreneurs were, thus, the former 'elders of Taïba' who had been so unsatisfied with the company's promotion policy after 1978. Sometimes their assistants were equally former company employees like their bosses who also had retired or had left the mining company for other reasons. Working independently now, those experienced workers could use their acquired know-how to their own profit without risking conflicts with the superiors of the mining company. The new bosses could freely choose the right way to achieve the desired results.

The upper midrange managers, on the other side, were able to delegate particular tasks within the production process entirely, which they themselves were unable or unwilling to supervise. The delectation to an independent enterprise bore no risk to be accused of incompetence. A total shift of responsibility from (former) superior to (former) subordinate could now take place without creating any social annoyances. Thus, a parallel structure of commanding power was tacitly installed over time.

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Original version: « *Au temps des colons c'était plus moderne qu'actuellement. Quand il y avait une panne, l'intervention était plus rapide parce que le matériel était sur place. Les arrêts sont plus longs maintenant* » (Q27, 2/74).

The severe communication problems between instructed and experienced subordinates on one side and of graduated, but less experienced superiors on the other, found its solution in the practice of sub-contracting. The situation superiors tried to avoid is well explained by an employee during interview:

"One day, I followed the discussion of a mechanic and his boss; I defended the youngster there against his boss. When he had given ideas concerning a motor, the boss refused completely, he commanded to do something else instead. But when he couldn't find any solution for three days, finally he withdrew a bit. The youngster did what he had proposed, the problem was solved and everybody knew that the problem was solved. But when he had said about the problem 'it's like this, it's like this!' he was not listened. Because me, I feel that in general the ... direct responsible, in general the team leader, he thinks that if he follows the consult of someone, maybe it is his competence which is in question."⁴⁹⁵

This situation blocked the free exchange of essential information necessary to accomplish the tasks within the production process. Hence, by subcontracting, the problem was solved and the work could be done. Nevertheless, the solution of the communication problem engendered other problems in consequence.

The small enterprises had usually no other client then the mining company and no need to install their own workshop territory. The small enterprises would not bring their own tools, but would use the tools of the mining enterprise. Thus, the subcontractors would in general not repair a broken part outside the work sites of the mining company. This meant in practice that small independent work teams would work on a particular machine or engine separately, but aside with workers under permanent contract of the mining enterprise. The first inconvenience for the mine's employees was that the present 'enterprises' would use the same space within the workshops as well as the same tools.

⁴⁹⁵

Original version: « J'ai suivi la discussion un jour d'un mécanicien et de son chef, étant donné, ce jeune-là je le défendais, je l'ai suivi par rapport à son chef. Quand il a donné des idées concernant un moteur, le chef a complètement refusé, a demandé de faire autre chose, mais quand il est resté trois jours, il n'est pas arrivé à faire ... à apporter une solution, finalement il se retirait un peu, le jeune a fait ce qu'il avait proposé, le problème est réglé et tous le monde a su que le problème est réglé. Mais au moment où il criai sur le problème-là c'est comme ça, c'est comme ça [...] il n'était pas écouté. Parce que moi, je sens que généralement le ... responsable directe, en général le chef d'équipe, il dit que quand il suit un débouché d'un autre, peut-être c'est ça compétence qui est mise en jeu » (A.G., A: 105-14).

In 1990, an impressive amount of small enterprises was present in all work sites of the enterprise. The practice of sub-contracting had, seemingly, created an unbearable snafu, according to company documents of this period. Apparently, Senegalese superiors delegated unsystematically tasks to small enterprises without any control or supervision. In July 1990, the directorate created a project for the '*procedure of managing the subcontracting on the Taïba territory*'. In the introduction for the project the following remarks were made:

„The ceaseless increase of enterprises under subcontract on the site has led to a situation which necessarily calls for purification and organization of that activity. In this respect it was decided to install a commission of approval. The present procedure aims at the small subcontracts entrusted to service providers who work on a flat-rate basis on the TAIBA territory. [...] The recourse to this practice of subcontracting has to be justified solely by an overcharge of work or an urge which exceeds our momentary capacities.“⁴⁹⁶

Although these attempts were made since 1990, the practice of sub-contracting had not changed considerably up to 1996. The small independent work teams of local enterprises wore the same blue working suits as the employees of the mining enterprise; their appearance allowed no distinction. The directorate tried to reduce the practice of sub-contracting in the past in various ways, but without great success, because it solved in a way a communication problem, which could not be solved otherwise.

It should be mentioned here, that sub-contracting is a common operation particularly for large industrial companies like the one under study here. Also, a senior executive estimated that the budget for sub-contracting of the company is relatively small, presumably less than 5% of the total investment. Presumably due to lack of objective information on that point, most employees overestimated the 'waste of money' through the practice of sub-contracting within the mining company. Nevertheless, the purpose as well as the rules for the sub-contracting remained completely unclear for most employees.

⁴⁹⁶

Original version: « *Le nombre sans cesse croissant d'entreprise évoluant sur le site dans le cadre de la sous-traitance est tel que la nécessité s'impose d'assainir et d'organiser cette activité. C'est dans cet esprit qu'il a été décidé la mise sur pied d'une commission d'agrément. La présente procédure concerne la petite sous-traitance confiée à des prestataires évoluent au forfait ou en régie sur le site de TAIBA. [...] Le recours à cette sous-traitance doit être justifié exclusivement par une charge de travail ou une urgence dépassant nos capacités du moment* » (doc. 13.07.90).

Long-term Consequences: The 90s

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9 Long-term consequences: the 90's

The following analysis attempts to show some aspects of the evolution after 1988 until the company fused with the adjacent chemical industry ICS and became part of a new industrial complex in September 1996. It describes, thus, the last few years of the phosphate mining company called '*Companie Sénégalaise des Phosphates de Taïba*'.

Most company documents of those years were kept under secret in the office of the exploitation director and, thus, not accessible for the present study. Therefore, the analysis is mainly based on some last editions of the company journal, which only appeared until 1993, and the information given in interviews and questionnaires for the present study. Fatou Fall Ndoye (1996) investigated the physical and mental state of the company's conductors during my field research. Her work and results will also be discussed below.

9.1 Effects on salaries after the 50% FCFA Devaluation (1994)

In January 1994, the West-African currency CFA franc was devaluated to 50%. It was an integral part of structural adjustment policy and an outcome of the long-term overestimation of the CFA franc.

In response to devaluation, the company directorate had increased salaries only one year later between 6% and 10% (see lists below). While devaluation enhanced competitiveness of phosphate products on the World market and lead to an increase in the company benefit, the employees struggled over the doubling of their living costs and the reduction of their purchasing power. Devaluation drew the company staff into deeper economic plight and increasing poverty.⁴⁹⁷ As we have seen in previous chapters, the economic resources of the staff decreased already considerably in the 80s when salary augmentation became less frequent compared to the 70s. Also other economic resources were removed or restricted. After devaluation in 1994, the economic situation of the majority of the

⁴⁹⁷ Ndiaye concluded: "*In effect, if devaluation of the CFA Franc has yielded an apparent spurt of growth in export-oriented productive sectors mainly peanut-related, phosphatic fertilizer, fishing, food processing and textile activities the trickle down effect on household incomes remains poorly distributed*" (Ndiaye 2000: 2).

staff became even more precarious. The company salary increases of January 1995 are shown in the table below (only gross income) for shift workers paid by the hour (H1 to H7), other workers paid on a monthly basis (M1 to M7), and midrange and top managers (AM1 to AM5).⁴⁹⁸

Category	Company Basic Salary (per hour) Jan 1994	Company Basic Salary (per hour) Jan. 1995	Increase in %	Senegalese Salary convention since Jan. 1994
H1	250,00	275,01	10%	250,01
H2	278,70	306,57	10%	278,70
H3	297,44	327,18	10%	295,27
H4	343,16	374,04	9%	325,19
H5	358,73	391,02	9%	329,15
H6	406,49	439,01	8%	360,91
H7	485,75	519,76	7%	409,88

Salary per hour of shift workers ('les horaires' = H1 to H7).

Category	Company Basic Salary Jan 1994	Company Basic Salary Jan. 1995	Increase in %	Senegalese Salary convention since Jan 1991
M1	53.238	58.562	10%	53.238
M2	57.627	63.390	10%	57.627
M3	61.640	67.805	10%	61.066
M4	73.946	80.602	9%	69.626
M5	81.748	88.697	8,5%	73.919
M6	89.544	96.708	8%	78.888
M7	107.120	115.155	7,5%	89.857

Salary of paid monthly employees ('les mensuels' = M1 to M7).

⁴⁹⁸

Category	Company Basic Salary Jan. 1994	Company Basic Salary Jan. 1995	Increase in %	Senegalese Salary convention since Jan. 1994
AM1	116,274	124.995	7,5%	89.481
AM2	140.795	150.651	7%	103.406
AM3	165.374	176.124	6,5%	116.156
AM4	191.049	202.512	6%	127.356
AM5	193.860	205.492	6%	129.545

We take a short excursion back into the 70s to contrast the wage policy in those two eras. According to the pay slip shown in chap. 7.4.1, the normal hour wage for H4 was 314.87 FCFA in November 1982. In January 1995, as listed above, the wage for a normal working hour for shift workers in category H4 was 374.04 FCFA. The salary had, thus, increased only 18.8% in 12 years despite the 50% devaluation in 1994. By contrast, in the period from 1974 to 1979, the payment for a normal working hour increased *each year* 26.25% in average.

In correspondence, the staff had accumulated debts on the company account of 106.304.302 FCFA in 1995. This amount was split in different portions shown in the table below:

Salary advances	total amount	number of beneficiaries	debts in average per employee
Religious festivals	86.450.000	1280	67.539
Exceptional Adv.	14.619.302	292	50.066
Irregular Adv.	440.000	3	146.666
Funeral Adv.	4.795.000	164	29.237

Ndiaye (2000) explained the interdependence of SAP and poverty in Senegal:

Poverty indices used for this study are, for 1992, a threshold revenue of 4.748 CFA francs per month and per adult-equivalent in a household (being 33% living below this threshold in 1992), this amount being 11.760 CFA francs per month in 1995. A total of 58% of the

*population live below the above defined poverty threshold in 1995. Rural areas are more affected than urban areas.*⁴⁹⁹

In the questionnaire of the present study, question 41 dealt with the eventual effect of devaluation on the employees' daily life circumstances. Some of the given answers follow:

*“We suddenly felt an augmentation of commodities, but the salary remained the same. Bread is now forbidden at home; [we eat] Fondé [traditional millet breakfast cereal]. We cook couscous instead of rice.”*⁵⁰⁰

*“Since the devaluation it's over! If you have a sick child at home, you can't do anything, because you have nothing. But they count on you in the production!”*⁵⁰¹

*“Before the devaluation I had everything. [Now] I don't take milk, tomatoes, coffee etc. any more, only the essential. But despite of that I have problems.”*⁵⁰²

*“The devaluation brought a lot of problems in the work, because we don't have enough to eat.”*⁵⁰³

*“There was only a general increase of salary of 5%, but the prescriptions tripled in price. Four children at school, that makes 72.000 franc [CFA] of school fees last month.”*⁵⁰⁴

“Normally, I traveled every other month to Dakar to see my brother. Now I don't move any more. We cut down the commodities, what the children took to school. [...] The Taïbaciens

⁴⁹⁹ Ndiaye 2000 :6.

⁵⁰⁰ Original version : « *On a senti subitement une augmentation des marchandises, mais le salaire restait le même. Le pain est maintenant interdit à la maison [on mange du] fondé. On fait le couscous au lieu du riz* » (Q2, 5/61).

⁵⁰¹ Original version : « *Depuis la dévaluation c'est fini! Si tu as un enfant malade tu ne peux rien faire, parce que tu n'as rien. Mais ils comptent sur toi dans la production!* » (Q19, 5/70).

⁵⁰² Original version : « *Avant la dévaluation je ne manquais de rien. [Maintenant] Je ne prends plus de lait, tomate, café etc., seulement l'essentiel. Malgré ça il y a des problèmes* » (Q32, 7/74).

⁵⁰³ Original version : « *La dévaluation a amené beaucoup de problèmes dans le travail, car on n'a pas suffisamment à manger* » (Q34, 1/75).

⁵⁰⁴ Original version : « *Le salaire avait seulement une augmentation générale de 5%, mais les ordonnances ont triplé le prix. Quatre gosses à l'école ; ça fait 72.000F de scolarité le mois dernier* » (Q39, 11/76).

*don't have money; the mutual [micro economic bank] is expensive. We fall into a trap. If you have many sick people [at home] you're submerged".*⁵⁰⁵

The questionnaire of the present study allowed to some extent the evaluation of the financial situation of the sample. Two factors were important: firstly, the employee's income and, secondly, the amount of people who are financially dependent on the employee's salary.

From 55 married male employees were 18 polygamous; the three youngest employees were still unmarried. The average amount of children of all married employees ($n = 57$) was about 7 (7.035).⁵⁰⁶ The number of persons depending on the employee's salary was in general higher than the total of wives plus children. In average, about 5 other persons (4.78) were financially dependent on the employee's salary apart from his wives and his children. Interestingly, the best earners of the sample were usually not the ones with the highest financial responsibility for others. By contrast, the employees with better wages had in tendency less dependents. The number of financially dependent persons tended to corresponded to a rather low work category ($r = -.31$).⁵⁰⁷ The financial burden was in tendency, although weak, higher for earners of lower wages than for earners of higher wages. Moreover, employees of middle and upper management positions (AM 3 to AM 5, senior executives) could profit from more materialistic gratifications than the workers. Housing was free in the upper living site Mbaye Mbaye, and company owned cars were at the managers' disposition. This made the gap of living standards and life style between workers and managers even broader and the financial difference between the two groups, in consequence, more visible and obvious. It is understandable, that these circumstances created growing annoyance among the workforce and did not favor a relaxed climate between workers and Senegalese managers.

⁵⁰⁵ Original version: « Normalement j'ai voyagé tous les 2 mois à Dakar pour voir mon frère. Maintenant je ne bouge plus. On a diminué la marchandise, ce que les enfants prenaient pour l'école. [...] Les Taïbaciens n'ont pas de moyens, la mutuelle est chère. On rentre dans le trou. S'il y a beaucoup de malade [à la maison] tu es noyé » (Q40, 11/76).

⁵⁰⁶ Only one married male employee of 42 years of age had no children; three male employees said that they had 20 children or more.

⁵⁰⁷ I used the Pearson-product-moment correlation coefficient. Standard deviation for the number of dependents was 7.44, for the level of hierarchy 2.06. The correlation of financially dependent persons with the educational level of the employee was even stronger ($r = -.41$).

9.2 Reflections on security

In end of the 80's, security at work was one of the main concerns of the directorate. Several vicious accidents at work sites killed and injured a significant number of employees and, additionally, destroyed costly equipment.⁵⁰⁸

The directorate decided to dedicate the year 1990 to pay special attention to this issue in order to ameliorate the degree of work security. The only company journal published in 1990 (July) carried the title: “*all together to take up the challenge for security*”.

In the introduction, the company journalists summarized the results from an investigation they had done among the workforce. Many workers said, the reason for so many accidents was ignorance of security obligations, others claimed the rush at work, and some thought it was simply due to destiny. The directorate, apparently in search of a simple answer, accused again the insufficient training of the staff.⁵⁰⁹ Thus, the head manager of the training center was once again the culprit. The head manager of the training center analysed the situation in some more depths and found quite similar answers as the journalists before. But instead of claiming the workers' low level of instruction, he depicted the workers' cultural background as an important source for the ignorance of security means:

“The Taiba man is a reality. He is in average 40 years old and has a working experience of 13,5 years in the company. Thus, he has a history, a culture. His essential trait is his strong concentration on a significant production result, to dump a phosphate tonnage at the stock, or to supply functioning production material at all costs. The Taibatien is a Senegalese Moslem, but he did not detach from his pagan origins. He believes in extraordinary mystic powers different from those of God “the only powerful”. For him, his “Djinées”⁵¹⁰ or “Rabs”⁵¹¹ are everywhere and they are capable to change all of a sudden the process of any event and to throw curses. In his strong focus on the production goal, he has a tendency to let himself be

⁵⁰⁸ It was impossible to evaluate the exact number, but deaths were from 88 until 1996 not less than 10.

⁵⁰⁹ We recall that the head manager of the training center was also accused for the midrange managers' incapacity to communicate with their subordinates in previous years. See chap. 8.2.3.

⁵¹⁰ Djinée = jinne ji: supernatural being; can be good or evil, depending on the circumstances. They avoid the light and thus, rather stick to rural areas, so the Senegalese belief. Invisibly, they are supposed to be out particularly in the midday's heat and during twilight just before sunset. Superstitious Senegalese avoid leaving the house at those times.

⁵¹¹ Rab = rab wi: a sprit in animal or human form attached to a person or more often family and village. In Senegalese beliefs, if the family takes good care of the rab with sacrifices, the rab protects the family members (see also Sylla 1978: 52-3).

guided by fate. Often he forgets that he possesses knowledge and know-how, the only way to achieve his objectives.”⁵¹²

It is interesting that the workers’ cultural background never seemed to matter in the 70’s under expatriate management. Or better: cultural beliefs were never stressed to explain the behavior of the Senegalese workforce. Under Senegalese management, by contrast, this argument was taken up whenever the workers’ conduct was alleged to be irrational.

This line of argument, however, did not explain, why the security degree was so much better in the old days, although the current workforce was in tendency younger and better instructed than fifteen years before and presumably less rooted in traditional pagan customs. The head of the training center concluded his reflection with the following words:

*“In one word: this training has to change a mentality. Therefore it cannot be the task of a training center and a security section. It should be the charge of all sections of the company. Every one of the 275 managers (midrange and top managers) should be conscious about his role as a ‘security man’.”*⁵¹³

In another article of the same journal, several weak points in the daily work conduct of the company were outlined which have actually nothing to do with the workers’ cultural background. According to the author, alleys in workshops were often not well cleared of heavy machines and other technical equipment, security advices (like “*carry your helmet*”, “*carry your gloves*”, “*carry your boots*” etc.) were poorly respected and deprived of any control, cables were often deficient, the lighting was insufficient in work shops, but particularly feeble on numerous dirt tracks within the extraction area. During my field

⁵¹² Original version: « *L’homme TAÏBA est une réalité. Il est âgé en moyenne de 40 ans et porte 13,5 ans d’ancienneté dans cette Compagnie. Il a donc une histoire, une culture. Sa caractéristique essentielle est sa tension vers l’objectif production signifiant un tonnage de phosphate à déverser au stock humide ou une mise à disposition du matériel de production à tout prix. « LE TAÏBATIEN » est un Sénégalais qui se déclare musulman mais qui ne s’est pas départie de ses origines paëennes. Il croit à des puissances mystiques extraordinaires autres que celles de Dieu « le tout et le seul Puissant ». Pour lui ces « Djinéés » ou « Rabs » sont présents partout et sont capables de changer subitement le cours de n’importe quel événement et de jeter des sorts. Dans sa forte tension vers l’objectif « production », il a tendance à se laisser aller par le destin. Il oublie fréquemment qu’il possède un savoir et maîtrise un savoir-faire, seuls gages des résultats à obtenir » (Taïba-Info 07/90:5).*

⁵¹³ Original version: « *En un mot, cette formation doit changer une mentalité. Elle ne peut donc être l’affaire d’un Service Formation et d’un Service Sécurité. Elle devra être prise en charge par tous les Secteurs de l’entreprise. Chacun des 275 agents d’encadrement (Maîtrise et Cadres) doit être conscient qu’il est « homme sécurité »* (Taïba-Info 07/90:5).

research five years later, the situation had seemingly not much changed. Especially at night, poorly lightened cart roads were a constant danger, because ditches or steep slopes often lined them. Although much discussed, apparently since 1990, the lighting system had not been changed, according to remarks made by employees. Also true during field research was a feeble adherence to protective clothes, glasses, gloves, boots etc. An employee gives the following short but pertinent explanation for this situation:

“The people, they give them a working suit. Instead of wearing it, they sell it! [...] This, it’s for two years. You wear it at least one year. Okay, if you have another working suit you can give it to your brother or your cousin. But a completely new working suit, you sell it! Well, this is bad!”⁵¹⁴

However, the author of the above-cited article – in search of a solution to these problems - proposed to take into consideration the so long neglected point of view of the elders. It is quite obvious that he addressed his message to the midrange and top managers of the company at the time. In his own words:

“Any investigation aiming to improve the security and the working conditions or aiming at a modification of work sites or of working conditions, has to listen to workers with a long professional experience. The decomposition of the work process in simple and well-known elements allows a critical analysis by each competent worker. It is also desirable to allow the participation of competent workers on tests and try-outs, because they will often see what the technicians may overlook. To have an idea about the work process, to expose it, to defend it, to test it, and to apply it can be most satisfying and motivating for the individual. But to listen to the others’ ideas means to approve also their origin without ambiguity. One should also know how to recompense profitable ideas.”⁵¹⁵

⁵¹⁴ Original version: « Les gens, on leur donne des tenues, au lieu de les mettre, ils les ventent. Ca c’est pour deux ans, tu mets ça pendant au moins un an. Bon quand tu as une autre tenue tu peux donner ça à ton frère ou bien ton cousin. Mais la tenue tous neuf, tu vent ça! Mais ça, c’est grave! » (M.D., A: 248-53).

⁵¹⁵ Original version: « Toute étude portant sur l’amélioration de la Sécurité et des conditions de travail, ou ayant pour but une modification des lieux ou des conditions de travail, doit faire appel aux idées des ouvriers titulaires du poste ou ayant une bonne expérience professionnelle. La décomposition du travail en éléments simples bien connus permet de faire appel aux ouvriers compétents pour l’analyse critique de chacun d’eux. Il est aussi souhaitable de faire participer des ouvriers compétents aux essais et mise au point car ils verront bien souvent ce qui peut avoir échapper aux techniciens. Avoir une idée concernant son travail, pour l’exposer, la défendre, l’essayer et l’appliquer satisfait les besoins les plus motivant de l’individu. Mais faire appel aux

This author was presumably a worker in the company's era of open communication in the 70's, because he repeated in the article in 1990 (maybe subconsciously) many of the old management principles under expatriate guidance. It was one of numerous attempts of experienced employees to push the Senegalese managers into the direction of a former management conduct by which the workers' opinion was taken into consideration. The last two cited phrases reveal a harsh critic on the Senegalese superiors' arrogance, unwillingness or incapacity to recognize the workers' know-how. Because of the known blockage in communication between superiors and subordinates, a journalist proposed to engage special agents to control security issues. He wrote:

“Those agents report to the midrange manager the stated abnormalities, or better, they are authorized to do or to let be done the necessary action in well defined limits.”⁵¹⁶

Workers' propositions to ameliorate the working conditions or to increase the security were apparently not listened, *because* workers had made them. To overcome this situation it was quite logical to propose a third authority, independent of the two sides. A similar method was successfully applied by sub-contracting to avoid a blockage within the production process (see chap. 8.3.3). In security issues, by contrast, this proposition was never accepted.

The next issue of the company journal came out in May 1991. It also dealt in priority with security problems. We can assume that this edition was motivated by the directorate's desire to raise consciousness among employees for the poor security results, because only in April 1991 a large extraction machine had burned down. A welder did not pay attention and a sparkle fell on a carpet underneath the machine and caught fire. In the introduction, the following appeal was addressed to the staff:

“But the most important effort is naturally the one we expect from you: workers, employees, midrange managers, and senior executives. The demanded effort is threefold. It is first of all to prove the capacity to overcome the circumstances in which we live. [...] It means then to prove

idées des autres exige d'en reconnaître la paternité sans ambiguïté. Il faut aussi savoir récompenser les idées rentables » (Taïba-Info 07/90:7).

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Original version : « Ces « délégués » signaleront à l'agent de maîtrise les anomalies constatées, ou aux mieux, ils auront délégation pour faire ou faire faire le nécessaire, dans les limites bien définies » (Taïba-Info 07/90:7).

[the capacity] to be creative. The Taïba man was never subjected to fate; he never allowed destiny to strangle him. [...] Finally, it means to prove solidarity. Together we have to build a solid block around the general director to win the game of survival and expansion. We are capable of that and there is, thus, no reason that it could be otherwise. Our most noble moral weapon to win the game is our profound belief in ourselves and in what we represent in this country.”⁵¹⁷

Supposingly, most employees must have perceived the directorate’s message as follows: ‘we want all your possible efforts, but we have nothing to give. Instead, you have to overcome the devastating life circumstances in which we (but in particular you, the employee of lower echelons) live and keep your mind on the production’.

Presumably, the introduction did not get much of the staff’s attention for its unattractive gist. The next article, to the contrary, titled “*the security perceived and lived in the workshops*” was certainly much more interesting, because it published interviews with seven employees of mainly lower ranks. The following three questions were asked: which are the causes for insecurity, what is in the managers’ responsibility; what is in the workers’ responsibility. Here again, the untidiness of workshops was claimed to be a constant source of danger, but also dysfunctional tools. Workers were claimed to be unaware of risks at workplaces, they would often not use the security equipment. Interestingly, employees had a decisive opinion about a good management of security issues. Concerning the superiors’ role, one employee held an insightful discourse:

“To avoid accidents, the upper and top managers play a very important role especially by the prevention of risks. Thus, they must eliminate or limit all dangerous situations, identify and list all risks in each sector and apprise the work teams. After each accident, even minimal, they must thoroughly analyse the causes and judge all possible consequences it could have for workers nearby. They should then sensitise their subordinates before taking the necessary

⁵¹⁷ Original version : « *Cependant l’effort le plus important est naturellement celui que nous attendons de vous: ouvriers, employés, agents de maîtrise et cadres. L’effort qui est demandé revêt un triple caractère. Il s’agit d’abord de faire preuve de dépassement dans le contexte que nous vivons. [...] Il s’agit ensuite de faire preuve de créativité. L’homme Taïba n’a jamais subi le sort; il ne s’est jamais laissé étrangler par son destin. [...] Il s’agit enfin de faire preuve de solidarité. Tous ensemble nous devons faire bloc autour du Directeur Général pour réussir le pari de la survie et d’expansion. Nous en sommes capables et il n’y a donc pas de raison qu’il en soit autrement. Notre plus noble arme morale pour gagner ce pari est notre profonde conviction en nous-même et ce que nous représentons dans ce pays* » (Taïba-Info 05/91:3).

dispositions for prevention. The managers also have to assure with rigidity the keeping of security advises.”⁵¹⁸

Taking into consideration that accidents were frequent, this speaker subtly accused the upper managers as unprofessional and even ignorant. Another employee of the sample had a very similar opinion about the managers’ role.⁵¹⁹ One employee gives – among others – the following reason for security defaults:

*“The disdain, which obliges to fiddle along alone instead of asking for assistance”*⁵²⁰

Here again, communication barriers are seen as an important source of insecurity within the work processes. However, apparently, the efforts of sensitization did not result in the desired decrease of accidents. The majority of my interview partners linked the issue to the incapacity of superiors on one side, but on the other side to the poor mental state of the employees caused by their daily financial struggle. The following sequences stem from two employees with long working experience, hired in the early 70’s:

“They are indebted here and there; they take engagements arbitrarily, and so forth. Finally, you have your head full of problems. When you come to your work place, you’re unable to work. This is what also causes work accidents. You see a guy [standing] by a machine having problems. Well, he can be standing there, thoughtful, that’s why! It is very important for the mental state of the individual, it’s very important. Because here are dreamers [...]. You [can]

⁵¹⁸ Original version: « *Pour empêcher les accidents, les agents de l’encadrement ont un rôle très important à jouer surtout dans le domaine de la prévention des risques. Ainsi, ils doivent éliminer ou protéger tous les situations dangereuses, identifier et recenser tous les risques dans un secteur et faire une large information au sein des équipes. Après chaque accident, même banal, ils doivent analyser à fond les causes et mesurer toutes les conséquences qui pourraient en découler pour un travailleur qui serait à proximité et après faire une sensibilisation de leurs agents avant de prendre les dispositions nécessaires pour la prévention. Les agents de l’encadrement doivent aussi faire respecter les consignes de sécurité avec la rigueur qui s’impose* » (Taïba-Info 05/91:7).

⁵¹⁹ He said: « *Par leurs fonctions, les agents d’encadrement ont un rôle important à exercer, A mon humble avis, ils doivent servir d’exemple pour faire véhiculer, rappeler, prévenir et faire appliquer les règles qui conditionnent une sécurité parfaite du personnel, des lieux et des matériels tout en assurant une bonne productivité dans une organisation et une ambiance saine au travail.[...] Es si nous pouvions laisser à la maison la “valise” des problèmes sociaux auxquels nous devons trouver des solutions, je pense que plusieurs risques d’insécurité seraient atténués* » (ibid.).

⁵²⁰ Original version : « *L’orgueil qui oblige l’individu à se débrouiller tout seul au lieu de demander une assistance* » (ibid.).

see somebody passing by right now, talking to him; he gesticulates alone, and so forth. But this causes problems. [...] They don't know what they're doing, they are not conscious. »⁵²¹

“The crisis lies somewhere else. The families should have been studied. It should have been looked into the families, what happens there, trying to understand the people. In order to assure a better production process, one should... . That's why there are so many accidents. The people here talk about security, but security, it's first of all at home. If the guy gets up in the morning and doesn't know how to feed his family, he has nothing to buy the bread...; when he comes, when he puts on his [one word incomprehensible], he doesn't know [two words incomprehensible]. The worker should be put in security, sheltered in all his needs. ”⁵²²

The same employee emphasized anew this argument some thirty minutes later in the interview:

“How can you expect that the people don't do mistakes, if you present important production documents to people who didn't have any breakfast? Well, it's impossible. But when somebody like me says it, they don't believe me, because they say 'look, the little [fool]!’ ”⁵²³

⁵²¹ Original version : « *Ils s'endettent un peu partout, ils prennent des engagements n'importe comment, ainsi de suite, finalement tu as des problèmes entasser dans ta tête, arriver dans ton service tu ne peux pas travailler. C'est ça qui emmène aussi des accidents de travail. Tu vois un type qui a des problèmes devant la machine, mais il peut rester là, être pensive, mootax! C'est très important pour la psychologie, pour l'individu psychologiquement c'est très important. Parce que... il y a des rêveurs, il y a des gens qui marchent en parlant. Tu vois quelqu'un toute suite qui marche là, il est entrain de parler seul, il gesticule seul, ainsi de suite. Mais ça cause des problèmes, mais ce gars-là il te voit toute suite il foute ça en l'air. Ils ne sont pas conscients de ce qu'ils font, sont pas conscients » (A.F., B : 26-32).*

⁵²² Original version : « *La crise est toute autre, c'est dans les familles qu'il fallait rechercher, dans les familles il fallait voir qu'est-ce qui se passe, essayer de comprendre les gens. Parce que pour mieux assurer une production il faut... c'est pourquoi il y a beaucoup d'accidents. Des gens ils parlent de sécurité, mais la sécurité, c'est d'abord dans la maison. Quand le type il se lève le matin, il n'a pas de quoi se nourrir sa famille, il n'a pas de quoi acheter le pain... ; quand il vient, quand il met son [... ? = 1] a l'eteaux oder so??. il ne sais pas [zwei Worte = ?] Il faut sécuriser le travailleur, le mettre a l'abri de tous besoins » (N.S., A: 436 – 44).*

⁵²³ Original version : « *Comment voulez-vous que les gens ne fassent pas d'erreurs, si vous mettez à certains postes des saisis de documents de références, des gens qui n'ont pas mangés le matin? Mais c'est pas possible, mais quand c'est un gars comme moi qui le dit, on me crois pas, parce que on dit que voilà ce petit! » (N.S.,A: 461-69)*

9.3 Superiors versus Subordinates

In this sub-chapter we return to the intercommunication between Senegalese superiors and subordinates already mentioned in previous chapters. Here, I attempt to show how the negative blockage of intercommunication sowed in the late 70's, growing in the 80's, flourished and hardened in the 90's.

9.3.1 Patronizing Senegalese superiors

It was shown in chapter 8.3.1 that employees had sometimes a clear image of the right way of personnel management. Some could explain very well, how superiors should delegate responsibilities, ask the right questions, find effective solutions, and so forth.

This specialized knowledge was a remnant of an intense period of open reflection on management guidelines during the French ruled period in the company. Employees felt that the ancient knowledge, so profusely cherished in former times, had not simply come out of use in general terms, but were overtly rejected and sometimes sanctioned by Senegalese superiors. The workers felt sentenced to silence, cooped up in a prison of rejected abilities. For them personally, however, these abilities served as an internal anchor to assure to themselves that they had seen better and less humiliating times. They had participated in the mine's production successes in former times and were convinced that the poor productivity of recent years was not their fault. The workers had built an inner defense against the tacit accusation of their incapacity and laziness.

The perceived discrepancy between the old and the new management style without possibilities to change anything to the better festered on the employees' well being. Some mitigation of their plight were the casual little lectures the braver ones among them taught to superiors, although they were certainly aware about the impotence of such acts. We take a look at some examples of this kind:

"Recently, I had a reunion with mister Ndiaye. You know, here the people are not listened. And yet, there are everywhere intelligent people. Well, because here in Taïba... to be intelligent you need to be engineer or superior or I don't know what, ...masters. These are the people who are listened. [Besides those] Nobody is listened! So me, I attended a reunion in

which my department manager said to the people: 'there are too many mistakes, you have to pay attention to this and that'. So me, I took the floor. I started by asking my department boss a question. I said: 'Mister Coré, did you ask why there are so many mistakes?' He looked at me, I said: 'One always needs to ask questions!' This is my old boss, Mister Pascale, who taught me that. You always have to ask questions like why, how, when [names are changed]."⁵²⁴

Actually, the employee explained old management guidelines to his Senegalese superior. In particular the culture of '*open questioning*' occasionally returned in employees memories and still seemed to represent a significant frame of reference in 1995 and 1996.⁵²⁵

The situation was particularly annoying when employees foresaw an accident, informed their superior, but did not get a positive reaction in consequence. In those cases, the superior showed in a way open disapproval of the given information. He did not honor the effort, but instead tended to ignore it. We discussed such a reaction already in chap. 8.1.1. A mechanic who had been hired in 1981 gave another example. Here is his experience:

"I will tell you what happened to me. I noticed a problem one day on the material. I asked the entire team, I showed them, I told them: 'there is that, that doesn't work. If we let this material go to the work site, it will come back with a brake down. We will loose again a lot of money. I came, I brought it to the bosses attention. He said to me: 'No, well, okay, but leave it like this!' Me, always, I have a habit. I always have a booklet [takes out of his overall a little note book]. It is always with me, I take it, I note: this material number so and so, on day so and so. But confidentially, I will see one of my old superiors in whom I have really confidence, who is on a superior level. [...] I say to myself 'attention! I noticed this situation on this engine number so and so on day so and so. I told to the boss, I come here, I tell you again, I am not listened. I told this, but it is not my problem. I know in a few days it will be returned here, the material will come back!' He tells me 'okay!' [...] Seven days later, they come and announce the brake

⁵²⁴ Original version: « *Dernierement j'ai eu une reunion la recemment avec M. Coré-là, vous savez. Ici, les gens, on ne les ecoute pas. Alors que les gens intelligents, il y en a partous. Bon, parce qu'ici a Taïba pour être intelligent, il faut être ingenieur ou cadre ou je ne sais quoi, agent de maîtrise, ce sont ces gens-là qu'on ecoute. [En dehors de ca,]On ecoute personne! Alors moi, j'ai assisté a une reunion ou mon chef de service disait aux gens: 'il y a trop d'erreurs! Il faut faire attention et pour ceci et pour cela' alors moi, j'ai pris la parole. J'ai commencé par poser une question a mon chef de service. J'ai dit 'M. Goré, est-ce que vous avez demander pourquoi il y a un tant d'erreurs?' il m'a regarde, j'ai dis ' il faut toujours poser des questions' ca c'est mon anciens chef, M. Penin, m'a appris. Il faut toujours se poser des questions pourquoi, comment, quand » (N.S., A: 431-55)*

⁵²⁵ See chap. 7.2.3.

down! The inspector comes to me and says: 'Ahh, what you said was right. Now the engine is completely damaged. He wasted everything. I say: 'yes, here is the date, I have taken notes.' But when the guy came to see my boss to tell him 'yes, you knew it' and so on, when he [the boss, K.K.] came directly from the work site, he called in a reunion in his office: 'Well, comrades, come here! Well, I think there are some obscure things happening here. We are here among ourselves; we are working together. If we have problems and someone among us will tell somebody else this and that, me, I don't like that! If we have our problems they should be treated among ourselves!' I said: 'wait a minute! It is not 'someone', this someone is me! This day I noticed a problem, I told you, you gave the instruction to ignore it. Me, I told the other one, my inspector. I told him: Attention, there is this problem, but I know it will cost us a lot. Me, what I also want is if we give our ideas that we are listened!' And it was finished; the reunion was over right there. Me, I don't hide! I haven't said that to hide or to give problems to anybody. I have said this in the interest of every one of us! [90-96] I can help to avoid certain things. And this, this is not the first time. I have a multitude of ideas, which I have given to my direct superior for the amelioration of our work, but up to now nothing has been done. But for me, this is not my problem!"⁵²⁶

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Original version: « Vous venez de me dire que l'interview est confidentielle. Mais je vais vous raconter ce qu'il m'est arrivé. J'ai constaté un problème un jour sur le matériel. J'ai demandé à toute l'équipe, je leur ai montré, je leur ai dit 'il y a ceci, ça ne va pas. Si nous laissons ce matériel partir au chantier, il reviendra avec plus de casse. On va perdre encore beaucoup d'argent. Je suis venu, je l'ai signalé au chef. Il me dit: 'non, bon, okay, mais laisse comme ça!' Moi, toujours, j'ai une habitude, j'ai toujours un carnet [sort son carnet de la poche poitrine du bleu]. Il est avec moi tous le temps, je prends, je note: matériel numéro tel, ranger numéro tel, tel jour. Mais confidentiellement, je vais voir un de mes anciens chef a qui j'ai vraiment confiance, qui est encore d'un niveau supérieur [...]. Je me dis que 'attention! J'ai constaté tel chose sur tel engin numéro tel et tel à tel jour, je l'ai signalé au chef, je viens, je vous le dis encore, je ne suis pas écouté, et je l'ai dit, mais ce n'est pas mon problème. Je sais que dans quelques jours, il va revenir ici, le matériel va revenir ici!' Il me dit, okay. [...] Sept jours après, on vient, on signale la casse! L'inspecteur, il vient, il me dit que 'Ahh, ce que tu avais dit, tu as raison. Maintenant l'engin est foutu. Il a foutu tous en l'air. Je dis 'oui, voici la date, je l'avais marqué, je l'avais bien noté'. Mais quand eh quand le gars est aller voir mon chef-là pour lui dire que, oui, ça tu le savais, ceci cela, quand il est revenu directement du chantier, il a convoquer la réunion dans son locale: 'Bon, camarades, venez ici. Bon, je crois qu'il y a des choses qui ne sont pas sérieuses. Nous some là entre nous, nous travaillons. Si on a des problèmes et que quelqu'un parmi nous va dire à un autre que ceci cela, moi, je n'aime pas ça! Il faudrait que si on a nos problèmes qu'on les traite entre nous!' J'ai dit que 'attendez! Il n'y a pas quelqu'un, ce quelqu'un c'est moi! Tel jour j'ai constaté un problème, je vous l'ai dit, vous avez dit de laisser tomber, moi j'ai informé l'autre, mon inspecteur, j'ai lui dis que: 'Attention, il y a tel problème, mais je sais il va nous coûter cher. Moi, ce que je veux aussi quand on donne des idées qu'on nous écoute!' Et c'est terminé, la réunion est finie là-bas. Moi, je me cache pas! Je ne l'ai pas dit pour cacher ou pour créer des problèmes à quelqu'un. Je l'avais dit pour l'intérêt de nous tous! [90-96] Je peux aider à éviter certaines choses! Et ça, ce n'est pas la première fois! J'ai une multitude, multitude d'idées que j'ai mis en observation à ma hiérarchie directe pour l'amélioration de notre travail, mais jusqu'à présent il n'y a rien qui a été fait. Mais moi, ce n'est pas mon problème! » (A.G., A: 12-43).

The speaker is aware that he broke a taboo in this situation. He did not - as expected - keep silence, but told the problem to someone in a higher position. But although the midrange manager was informed, he also did not react to the problem. According to the citation, he also waited until the damage was announced, before he talked to the responsible superior. He avoided an immediate intervention, presumably, because the social convention among superiors said not to interfere within each others commanding realm - by ignoring the production necessities.

Furthermore, apparently, the direct superior was unable to draw a lesson from the situation. As soon as it became clear that his desire to hold problems within his work team was contradicted, he simply ended the reunion. He deliberately withdrew the possibility of open analysis and discussion about the issue. Most employees were aware that such interventions of subordinates were usually futile and would only endanger the individuals who uttered problematic issues.

9.3.2 Hiding qualifications

In the 90's, a number of university dropouts were hired and put under the supervision of well-experienced, but uneducated superiors. This was an ideal constellation to cause great irritation and uneasiness on both superiors' and subordinates' side. To be able to live in relative peace with his subordinate, the better instructed subordinate avoided to 'threaten' his superior and tried to appear '*not too smart*'.⁵²⁷

On one of my first visits through the mine's installations and in search of new interview partners, I was surprised to find a young man (born in 1963) with a high school degree and one year of university experience in only 3rd work category. The 3rd work category corresponds to a '*specialized worker, first level (OS 1)*', for instance a '*stone breaker*' or an '*operator of simple machines without know-how of repair or maintenance*'.⁵²⁸

The particular employee had a working experience of three years in the company and had not been promoted since. Accordingly, he felt a great deception. We listen to some of his utterances during interview:

⁵²⁷ Original version: « *J'ai tout fait pour ne pas apparaitre trop malin, pour avoir ma paix, quoi!* » (M.S., B: 225-27).

⁵²⁸ See also chapter 7.3.1.

"I was disappointed. They divided the workers and created a ditch between us. My boss has no intellectual level, whereas me, I even went to university."⁵²⁹

Although he had not lived the period of expatriate management, which had practically ended ten years before he entered the company, apparently the elder workers' perception about the 'good old times' had dyred onto his own firm conviction:

"If it would be the period of the Whites, I would be in sixth or seventh category right now."⁵³⁰

After the interview (which took place in a separate room of the work hall), the foreman of the employee called me in his office and asked me why I had chosen this particular employee for an interview. Before I could even answer, he assumed that I chose him, because I found him to be particularly *intelligent*. The tension and the rivalry between the young employee and his foreman of the old generation became apparent. The elder apparently feared my (anticipated) power to intercede a promotion on behalf of the young employee (which he thought I could influence).⁵³¹ The promotion of the younger represented a threat to the higher hierarchical position of the elder employee. Thus, competence based on a higher educational level than the level of the direct superior was useless for the production process, because it caused threat.

The case just cited was not a unique phenomenon, but to the contrary quite common. Another 'victim' of the 'young-and-educated' trap revealed the following insight on that issue:

"A superior who does not hold a diploma tries to value the experience in comparison to a diploma. The boss does not want to validate the work of a graduated, if he doesn't have a diploma himself. A graduated is hidden, has a bad reputation."⁵³²

⁵²⁹ Original version: « *J'étais decu, on a divisé les travailleurs et crée une fosse entre nous. Mon chef, il n'a aucun niveau intellectuel, pourtant moi, je suis aller jusqu'à l'université* » (Q59, 4/93).

⁵³⁰ Original version: « *Si c'était maintenant la periode des toubabs, j'étais à la 6ème ou 7ème categorie en ce moment* » (Q59, 4/93).

⁵³¹ Under these circumstances it was impossible to ask the superior's level of education!

⁵³² Original version: « *Un chef qui n'a pas de diplome essaye de valoriser l'experience par rapport au Diplomé. Le chef ne veut valoriser le travail d'un diplômé, s'il n'a pas de diplome. Un diplômé est caché, es mal vue* » (Q55, 4/85).

In 1996, thus, a high level of education could be a serious problem for young employees who had entered the company only recently. They often felt obliged to hide their grades of education to avoid jealousy and therefore enemies. It was not unusual to find youngsters with a fairly high educational level but who were not allowed to show their capacities. This engendered resignation and lack of motivation already in a very early stage of career, because it smothered every hope for professional evolution.

The sequence cited below stems from a young employee hired in June 1993 at the age of 26. His father was hired as worker in 3rd category and ended his career as a midrange manager in AM3. During school holidays, he had often worked as day laborer. He had graduated from high school with a specialization in electrotechnology ('Bac F2'). He had continued in the 'National Superior University School of Technology' (ENSUT⁵³³) and had acquired teaching experience as a high school teacher for mathematics and physics. Then, he had done two stages in other Senegalese enterprises and two stages in the mining enterprise before employment. In one of the two other enterprises he had invented a particular machine to ameliorate the production process of that enterprise. In short, he was a well-instructed, intelligent and creative young man and had additionally shown initiative to ameliorate a given process. Although the young lad had seen the deterioration of the social climate in the company, he hoped to rise quickly because of his instruction and experience. But instead, listen to that:

„In the workshop I am the youngest, but also the best instructed, even my foreman boss holds only a 'certificate of professional capacity' [CAP]. I became more a laborer than everybody else here to avoid enemies. In the beginning I concealed my level [of instruction]. I did the dirtiest jobs. My bosses, it's my father who had trained them. The people here are not ambitious. Many people feel blocked at Taïba. Taïba pushes the people to give up their ambition!“⁵³⁴

⁵³³ ENSUT: 'École National Supérieure Universitaire de Technologie', Institute of the Cheikh Anta Diop University / Dakar.

⁵³⁴ Original version: « *Dans l'atelier je suis le plus jeune mais aussi le plus formé, même mon contre-maître chef s'arrête aux CAP ['Certificat aux aptitudes professionnelles'] Je suis devenue plus ouvrier que les autres pour ne pas créer des ennemis. Au début j'ai caché mon niveau! Je faisais des travaux les plus sales. Mes chefs, c'est mon père qui les a formé. Les gens ici ne sont pas ambitieux. Beaucoup de gens se sentent bloqué à Taïba. Taïba force les gens à ne pas être ambitieux!* » (Q60, 6/93).

The young man was hired in 1993 in 5th category as a 'professional worker first level (OP 1)' and was not promoted since. For him as an electro-technician the definition of responsibility was:

„Electrician executing all jobs concerning the canalization, the currant devices and the current repairs/ supervisor of a whole of simple devices, controlling the well-functioning but not assuring repair or maintenance.“ ⁵³⁵

At the moment of interview he had come to the conclusion that a striving for excellence was not only a waste of time but dangerous and risky. According to the company doctor, those kind of situations caused psychosomatic symptoms among young, well-instructed employees. In his own words:

"So, ehm the big worries the people had, it was less purely medical problems [...], but it was rather problems of human relations. [K.K.: "Of what kind?"] Well, actually, it's in face of the hierarchy. For instance, someone is somewhere, there is the work he is doing; there is the content of work. For example, he is ehm he is he is electrician, this means the work he is doing, it is something he learned in school. He has a diploma for that. So, this, this is the content of work. But when he comes here by contract, they tell him: 'Well, you do that!' He might be asked to do something, but in fact he has competencies, which extend this. And by all this, he has his relations with his direct superior. All this encloses the work. This means, all those little psycho-social factors which surround the work itself, this means which create often problems on which the guy is not well adapted and the guy, he is not integrated! So, he lives in a disconnection between all what represents him and what the system imposes on him." ⁵³⁶

⁵³⁵ Original version: « *électricien exécutant tous travaux de pose de canalisation, d'appareils courants et dépannage courants/ surveillant d'un ensemble d'appareils simple, contrôlant le fonctionnement mais n'assurant ni dépannage ni entretien* » (Classification des ouvriers, Additiv à l'annexe I).

⁵³⁶ Original version: « *Donc, eh les grands soucis que les gens avaient, c'était moins des problèmes purement médicaux lié à une pathologie quelconque, mais c'était plus des problèmes des relations humaines. [K.K.: quelle sorte?] Bon enfin, c'est vis à vis de la hiérarchie. Par exemple quelqu'un est quelquepart, il y a le travail qu'il fait, il y a le contenu du travail. Par exemple il est eh il est eh il est électricien, c'est-à-dire le travail qu'il fait, c'est quelque chose qu'il a appris à l'école. Il a un diplôme pour cela. Donc, ça, c'est le contenu du travail. Mais quand il vient ici en contrat, on lui dit: 'bon, tu fais ça!' On peut lui demander de faire quelque chose, alors il a des compétences qui dépasse de-là. Et tous cela il y a ses rapports avec son chef direct, tous cela c'est ce qui tourne autour du travail. C'est-à-dire tous ces petits facteurs psycho-sociaux, qui tourne autour du travail même, c'est-à-dire qui crée souvent des problèmes sur les-quels le gars il n'est pas bien adapté et le gars il ne s'intègre pas! Donc il vit dans un découplage entre toute ses représentation et puis ce que le système lui impose* » (Company doctor I, A: 264–80).

The reasons, why the directorate in later years hired young intellectuals in low work categories remained unknown to me. If this was because those employees bore high potentials for further training, it is paradoxical why they were not trained any further in consequence. However, this decision engraved even further the difficult situation between superiors and subordinates in the 90's

9.4 Failure of responsibility transfer

During my field research in 1995 and 1996, the time factor did not seem to matter. I saw people wandering around, seemingly aimless. There was obviously no rush to get things done. The ostensible neglectance of the time factor is one of the classical examples to explain economic failure of African enterprises and can also be found in scientific literature.⁵³⁷ If this is true, one should expect that Africans would be perfectly at ease with the slow pace of work alleged to be appropriate for African customs and values.

However, the great majority of the company's employees did not feel comfortable with the slow pace of work. Instead, most employees perceived the current conduct as a dangerous waste of time harmful for the enterprise. The neglectance of the time factor was among employees not seen as 'typical African', but rather as an outcome of the incompetence of the current management. What I was willing to accept as the culturally adapted 'African' rhythm of work at first, was perceived by an experienced top manager, the company doctor, in the following manner:

"Honestly speaking, one has often the impression that certain workers don't know their role in the enterprise. They don't dawdle voluntarily, but because they don't know what are actually their professional tasks."⁵³⁸

Ndoye (1996), in her research on conductors, came to a very similar conclusion:

⁵³⁷ See chapter 10.

⁵³⁸ Original version: « *Honêtement parler, souvent on a l'impression que certains travailleurs ne savent pas quel est leur rôle dans l'entreprise. Ils traînent pas par plaisir, mais parce qu'ils ne savent pas quelles sont en fait leurs tâches professionnelles* » (conversation with the company doctor, 13th of April 1996, Field Diary).

"The aging worker knows poorly what is expected of him in the work sites, his efficiency and his self-confidence is in danger to be diminished. [...] The results from the psychological data show certain uneasiness, conflict of the conductors in face of their enterprise. In fact, the majority sees its professional future with anxiety and does not master the situation any more."⁵³⁹

Apparently, the serious communication problems with superiors made it difficult to find out ones own job tasks within the work process. Asking concrete information about exact job tasks bore mainly two risks: firstly, the asking employee could be regarded as incompetent, and, secondly, the superior could think that his subordinate wants to test his level of competence. Both results endangered the employee's social status within the company community. The employee was trapped in this dilemma and practically forced to play the game and to hide his insecurity.

We recall that in the years 1977 and 1978, more young Senegalese intellectuals were hired in order to increase the 'think tank' of the enterprise.⁵⁴⁰ In particular in the electro-mechanic department (D.E.M.), numerous young managers were employed in correspondence to the creation of new jobs. Instead of an increase of work productivity, the outcome was apparently less satisfying. The phenomenon is explained as such by a former foreman of the electro-mechanic department, in 1996 on retirement:

"The mechanic maintenance, the mechanic who does the maintenance of a machine, the one who goes to the installations, he took the machine, he brings it to the workshop, he revises the machine, he puts it back in and takes the responsibility. [...] I told you that there was an engineer and an assistant before [in the work hall of the mechanic department]. Now, they brought in an electrical engineer, an engineer for electronics, an engineer for the immobile installations, an engineer... an engineer for the rolling equipment... All these engineers there are necessary in order to compensate the expatriate salary, plus the plane ticket, plus ehh... and on top of that for causing a misunderstanding in the work place. Because the mechanic

⁵³⁹ Original version: « *Le travailleur vieillissant sent mal ce qu'on attend de lui sur les lieux de travail, son efficacité et sa confiance en soi risquent de s'en trouver diminuées. [...] Les résultats des données psychologiques traduisent un certain malaise, conflit des conducteurs vis à vis de leur entreprise. En effet la majorité envisage son avenir professionnel avec inquiétude et ne maîtrise plus la situation* » (Ndoye 1996:56-7).

⁵⁴⁰ The directorate called it "in search of the grey substance" (= "à la recherche de la matière grise") (doc. 08.06.1979:6).

who revises is not the same as the one who has to bring the piece. [...] When the machine starts, if it doesn't work, it's not this one and not the other one; it's a combat! [...] It's always like that, nobody reacts!"⁵⁴¹

The following speaker, working in the company since May 1973, made a very similar observation:

"In 1973, there was one single foreman superior for the entire electro-mechanic department, Mister LeClaire. Now, there are at least four or five engineers, but they don't do the work as good as he did."⁵⁴²

According to the two speakers cited above, the job of one former engineer became divided into several different sub-sections of tasks. For each sub-section, a new engineer was hired. If this was so and since there was no significant extension of equipment, the newly created different job realms, logically, must have decreased in size after the splitting. In consequence, the numerous new jobs became less time consuming than the more complex job before. The work teams also, each one under a different specialized superior, were now asked to only do one particular detail instead of completing the entire repair process from the beginning to the end.

The old job descriptions, meticulously logged in 1974 and 1975, became incorrect and, thus, useless. There were no job folders any more for a quick glance and a better understanding of a particular job. Although the organization of work and job responsibilities changed completely, an evaluation and description of the new jobs was not made. This analytical work would have demanded a team of specialists, trained to observe and describe, like the precedent superiors had been trained for the thorough evaluation a couple of years

⁵⁴¹ Original version: « *L'entretien mécanique avant, le mécanicien qui fait l'entretien d'une machine, celui qui va sur les installations, il déposait la machine, il l'emmenait à l'atelier, il revisait la machine, il la remontait et il en prenait la responsabilité. [...] Je vous avais dit qu'il y'avait un ingénieur et un adjoint avant [dans toute l'atelier, K.K.]. On a emmené maintenant un ingénieur electricien, un ingénieur electronicien, un ingénieur installations fixes, un ingénieur --, un ingénieur materiel roulant..... Tous ces ingénieurs-là, c'est pour que ça puisse compensé le salaire expatrié plus le billet d'avion, plus ehh.... et en plus emmener des desaccords dans le travail. Parce que le mecanicien qui doit reviser n'est pas pareil avec le mecanicien qui doit aller emmener la piece. [...] Quand on démarre, si ça va pas, c'est ni l'un, ni l'autre, c'est la guerre! [...] C'est toujours comme ça, personne ne reagit!* » (L.S., A: 260-75)

⁵⁴² Original version: « *En 1973, il y avait un seul contremaître chef pour toute la D.E.M, Monsieur LeClaire. Maintenant, il y a au moins 4 ou 5 ingenieurs, mais ils ne font pas le travail aussi bien que lui* » (Q19, 5/70).

before. But taking into account the quarrels over rights and privileges at the time there was no room for reflection over the correct and meticulous description of jobs. The issue would have needed a strong communal effort and an established firm guidance, both not available at the time. Luckily, the work force was not only well trained and experienced, but also accustomed to take over responsibility. For the next couple of years the workers fulfilled the necessary work without much interference of their anyhow most of the time absent superiors. But over time, the clear job responsibilities blurred continuously:

*"Today really, it is chaos! You don't even know who is responsible sometimes, we don't understand. Normally, a big enterprise like Taïba should function on a clear basis. Nothing is respected here any more; there are no rules. It's sad! The reason why Taïba is not yet fallen, it's because they make a lot of benefit."*⁵⁴³

Not surprisingly, in 1995 it was very difficult for newcomers to integrate into the work process. Often, new workers were not correctly trained on the job by their superiors, but taken under the wings of the competent elders who only taught them whatever they wanted them to know. At a certain moment, the elder and more experienced workers took on the responsibility for the work process and many little aspects belonging to the inner order. A worker, hired in August 1964, explained:

*"We received a very solid training which gave us a great experience. The white bosses did investigations about the security, planing and so on. Today, it's the initiative of the workers."*⁵⁴⁴

Not all workers were engaged in those activities. Many of them just simply dropped out of the usual work circuit and were apparently not much missed either. Frustration emerged gradually and endangered on the long run the employee's health and well being. Ndoye

⁵⁴³ Original version: « *Aujourd'hui vraiment, c'est le chaos! On ne sait même pas qui est le responsable par fois, on ne comprend pas. Normalement une grande usine comme Taïba doit fonctionner sur des bases claires! On ne respecte plus rien ici, il n'y a plus des règles ici. C'est triste! La raison pour la quelle Taïba n'est pas encore tombé, c'est parce que c'est une boîte qui fait beaucoup de bénéfices.* » (Q23, 6/ 73).

⁵⁴⁴ Original version: « *On a une bonne formation très solide qui nous a donné une grande expérience. Les chefs toubabs faisaient des études sur la sécurité, planification et certera. Aujourd'hui c'est l'initiative des ouvriers.* » (Q11, 8/64).

reveals in her work the widespread problem of alcoholism, consumption of tobacco, and drug abuse.⁵⁴⁵

Not only those serious problems, but also other apparently less harmful behaviors took their toll. The disoriented employees suffered from deconcentration and laxisms. Absenteeism increased considerably and the workers were more than ever, according to interviews, in the search of sexual side activities. The latter seriously damaged the reputation of the company employees in the local surroundings.

9.5 Resource management

The mining company suffered from numerous internal as well as external expenses which were not related to the phosphate production necessities, but which constantly reduced the company's budget for reinvestment and therefore the capacity to compete on the world market. The external expenses represented a financial support of local institutions outside the company; the internal expenses represented an unnecessary abuse of company resources caused by the personnel.

The company directors tried to install restriction on both internal and external financial drains, but apparently, it was much easier to limit the external expenses than the - in some cases - outrages abuse of internal resources. One reason may be that the internal abuse included top and midrange managers and it was more difficult to convince them to give up their habitual privileges or to sanction them. The following subchapter attempts to show three examples for the internal waste of resources and two examples for the directorate's combat to limit some regular external expenses.

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Among 234 conductors and drivers, 65 admitted to be addicted to alcohol (= 25.78 %), 51.28% said that they smoked regularly cigarettes (7.22 cigarettes in average since 10.38 years in average), and 5.98% admitted to be toximanic. Ndoye estimates a higher percentage of alcoholism and toxicomania in reality than the admitted cases (Ndoye 1996:53 ff.).

9.5.1 Squandering internal resources

Employees often complained that the company directorate allows, especially to managers, a tremendous waste of company resources. Obviously, the employees of lower echelons could hardly feel the directorate's efforts to combat the abuse. Out of various aspects, I chose three for an illustration in some more detail; those are telephone, cars, and the I.P.M.

A) Telephone

The living site Mbaye Mbaye was originally equipped to suit the needs of the expatriate staff. Therefore, each household had access to an international telephone connection. The company paid the phone bills. The change from expatriate to Senegalese inhabitants of the site was not a sudden, but a gradual replacement. The last expatriate family left only in 1994. One important struggle of Senegalese managers in the beginning and mid 80's was the equal treatment of expatriate and Senegalese managers in their daily living conditions.

Thus, up to the period of the present field study, the international telephone line was never suppressed and phone bills were still paid by the company. An operator was the only rudimentary control noting the name of the telephone owner calling international numbers. This has - so I was told - no further consequences. Of course, Senegalese employees also have brothers, cousins, nephews etc., living abroad (mainly France, Italy, United States). It was sufficient to have the permission of an inhabitant of the managers' residential site to use the telephone for international calls. The favor, the manager friend does to the employee, may or may not be rewarded by a '*sign of appreciation*'.⁵⁴⁶

Monthly phone bills soared extensively with the increasing number of Senegalese managers, but not solely to their own profit, but because they could hardly refuse to related or acquainted employees of lower categories the use of their company advantages.

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Original version: 'un signe d'appréciation'. An employee whose uncle lived in the residential estate used this formulation.

B) Cars

In October 1979, the directorate decided to accord credits ‘to our young senior managers’.⁵⁴⁷ To benefit from the credit, the manager should have a permanent work contract, more than one year but less than three years of seniority in the mining company. The car had to be new or a maximum of two years of age and was only for private usage, thus, all commercial activities excluded. The credit represented a maximum of 75% of the car’s price (maximum 1.500.000 FCFA) and was payable in a maximum of 36 installments on the manager’s salary.

Nevertheless, the company also put service cars to the managers’ disposition. Officially, the service cars were only designed for the transportation within the firm territory and the transportation between the manager's home and his work site.⁵⁴⁸ For those work itineraries the company paid fuel. However, the service cars served also and often extensively for purely personal usage without the risk of any negative consequences.⁵⁴⁹ An employee explained to me:

“The top managers and the superior AM’s are privileged with the fuel of the company. Each senior executive and superior AM (AM3, AM4, and AM5) has a car at his disposal. They do their personal affairs with it. The professional trajectories are widely exceeded without permission. The top managers were never sanctioned if they caused damage or accidents. In 1995, it changed a bit; there is amelioration. But the workers were immediately and always sanctioned. Some were even fired.”⁵⁵⁰

C) The medical insurance IPM

In January 1996, the company held 1280 employees under permanent contract. The employees’ contract included also the medical treatment of close family members. This

⁵⁴⁷ Doc. 11.10.79.

⁵⁴⁸ Doc. 24.08.81.

⁵⁴⁹ See also chap. 8.2.3.

⁵⁵⁰ Original version: « *Les cadres et les AM supérieurs sont privilégiés avec l’essence de la compagnie. Chaque cadre et AM supérieur (AM3, AM4, AM5) a un véhicule à sa disposition. Ils font leurs affaires personnelles avec. Les itinéraires professionnels sont fortement dépassés sans autorisation. Les hauts cadres n’étaient pas sanctionnés au cas du dommage ou accident. En ’95, ça a changé un peu, il y a une amélioration. Mais les ouvriers étaient toujours et toute suite sanctionnés. Il y avait même des licenciements.* » (A.G., notes taken on a private conversation on the 27th of August 1996).

meant in 1977, when the IPM system was installed, the legal wife or wives and children living permanently in his household. The total number of persons legally beneficiary of the IPM system was already 9685.⁵⁵¹ After 1977, the ‘definition’ of ‘close family members’ had never been adapted to social realities of the extended family. In chapter 7.4.2 D) was explained that the medical insurance institution was a self-paying system. Only what the staff turned in (3000 FCFA per employee each month) was in theory available for treatment costs. But the incoming amount did not cover the costs produced each month by employees and their family members. In consequence, the IPM was since many years indebted. Its creditor was, of course, the company.

The company doctor made an analysis of the IPM system and depicted a number of factors widening the gap between IPM incomes and expenditures. Among the main reasons, he concluded, for example, the insufficient earnings of the employees, the number of beneficiaries of IPM exceeding by large the ‘legal’ close family members per company definition and applying instead ‘*the notion of the Senegalese “African” family*’.⁵⁵² Furthermore, he asserted that the progress of medical services steadily increased the costs for health matters. However, apparently, people found ways to abuse the IPM system for enrichment. The way to get some extra money out of the IPM was best explained by the company doctor:

"The basic principle of the medical conduct in Senegal, it's the free choice. The patient is free to choose the practitioner of confidence. So, in this respect he can have access to an external treatment other than the medical service of the enterprise, which offers him the advantage of treatment free of charge. [...] Only the medicine is charged. [...] But if someone wishes, let it be a worker or his wife or his child, he can address himself to another doctor. And to have access to another doctor he has to get the so-called 'letter of guarantee' at the IPM. That's a title of charge for one third. Instead of giving the money in cash, he brings with him this letter, which is a guarantee, with what the practitioner bills his acts and which will return to the IPM. [...] Well, each employee who has a metrical number at Taïba, who is under contract, the IPM gives him a health booklet. And in this booklet there are the names and the photos of his wives and children. So, each time he needs an external treatment other than the company facilities, he takes this booklet with him with this title [...] which is the guarantee letter. So, he gets the external treatment, everything is written down in the booklet and he comes back to the

⁵⁵¹ Doc. 00.00.96c.

⁵⁵² Original version : « *La notion de la famille sénégalaise ‘Africaine’* » (doc. 00.00.96c:2).

[company] facilities. Therefore, he does not get any cash money; there is no payment. But normally, in the law responsible for the IPM, the service is done on the basis of refund, normally. The patient - or the worker or his profiteers - they pay the treatment and it is only afterwards that he comes to ask for the reimbursement. But there has been a shift which has taken place which makes that ehh... well, they bring in the pay cheques, the guarantee letters. In consequence, it avoids the payment, which means that there is a moral dimension of expenses involved, which cannot.... Because if the guy pays directly out of his own pocket, you know well that usually from the seventh or the tenth [of the month] the people are broke, so they will think before they take treatments. Therefore, there is very little waste. Whereas now, if he only needs to bring a little piece of paper and he gets the treatment, he doesn't care! [...] For the people who are morally not really clean, this is often the occasion to do little misappropriations of funds, because from the moment the guarantee letter is given to you, it's like a blank cheque. You can do anything! And it's a pity that there are doctors who are willing to play this little game."⁵⁵³

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Original version: « Le principe de base de la pratique médicale au Senegal, c'est le libre choix. Le malade est libre de choisir le médecin de confiance. Donc a ce titre pour accéder a des soins ailleurs autre qui est le service médicale de l'entreprise qui leur offre l'avantage de donner des soins gratuitement [...] Il y a que le médicament qui est facturé et pour laquelle il y a d'ailleurs une cote par. Mais si quelqu'un le desir, soit un travailleur ou bien sa femme ou bien son enfant, il peut s'adressé a un autre médecin et pour pouvoir accéder a un autre médecin il lui faut chercher ce qu'on appelle une lettre de garantie au niveau de l'IPM. C'est un titre de tier payant. Au lieu de donner l'argent comme ça cash, il depose cette lettre qui est une garantie sur le quel le praticien va facturer ces actes et qui von revenir à l'IPM. [...] Donc, chaque agent qui a un numero matricule a Taiba qui est embauché, l'IPM lui delivre un carnet de santé et dans ce carnet il y a le nom et les photos de ses femmes et le nom et les photos de ses enfants. Donc chaque fois qu'il doit accéder à des soins ailleurs autre que la structure de l'entreprise, il emmene ce carnet de santé avec ce titre de (???) qui est la lettre de garantie. Donc il consomme des soins là-bas, toute est notifié dans le carnet et il revient dans la structure. Donc il ne sort pas de l'argent liquide, il n'y a pas de payement. Alors que normalement, la loi qui fixe les IPM, les prestations se font sur la base de remboursement, normalement. Le malade, ou bien le travailleur ou bien ses beneficières, ils payent les actes et c'est après qu'ils viennent de demander le remboursement. Mais il y a eu un glissement qui c'est fait qui fait que ehhh... bon on dépose les cheques payants, les lettres de garantie. Donc ça divers le payement, ce qui veut dire qu'il y a une dimension de moralisation des dépenses qu'il ne puisse.... Parce que si le gars, il paye directement de sa propre poche, tu sais très bien qu'en general à partir du sept ou du dix les gens sont fouchés, donc ils réfléchireraient avant d'aller de consommer des soins. Donc, il y a très peu de gaspillage. Alors que maintenant quand il lui faut déposer un petit bout de papier et puis on lui donne des soins, il s'en fou! [...] Pour des gens qui ne sont pas tellement clean, c'est l'occasion souvent de faire des petits malversations (Veruntreuung), parce que à partir du moment ou on te donne une lettre de garantie, c'est comme une cheque en blanc. On peut tous faire! Et c'est dommage qu'il y est des médecins qui se pretent souvant à ce petit jeux » (Company doctor II, A: 116- 52).

9.5.2 Limiting external expenses

The external expenses were either casual donations for singulary matters (canalization, roads, new office equipment for the local administration, etc.) or represented in general a regular financial support (usually monthly or annual or both) for the maintenance of local institutions. For the latter, the company had taken up the function, which would under normal conditions be fulfilled by the state.

Already in the 80s, the Senegalese directorate perceived most of those expenses as an outcome of the paternalistic management policy in the 70s and as an abuse of the company's investment budget. The directors tried to limit at least some of them in the early 80s. But the staff's riots and strikes in the 80s clearly showed that it was not the appropriate time for a sudden change and that those well established local dependencies were not easy to give up. Instead, they planned on a long-term basis to gradually reduce the company's engagement in those local activities. One first step in this direction was that the company directorate hired a French engineer as production director and delegated to him the task to reply (negatively if possible) to those local demands in 1987.⁵⁵⁴ But it was only in 1993 that serious attempts were made to stop some traditional *regular* expenses, to exert more control on others, and to delegate the responsibility for local institutions to the rural communities and the state, to which it belonged in their opinion.

The regular external expenses mainly supported communal institutions like the schools of the surroundings, the local administrations of Tivaouane, Mboro, and Taiba Ndiaye, the constabulary in Mboro, and the local brotherhood facilities. For an illustration, two examples of disengagement will be given, namely the waste disposal in Mboro and the restriction of supply for the local schools.

A) The carbage collection in Mboro

Until 1994, the company took care of the household garbage of the community of Mboro. The local population collected their household garbage in large baskets, which were emptied on a large publique place on the edge of town. Once, sometimes twice a year, the

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See chapter 8.1.3.

rural community of Mboro asked the company to do the cleaning for them. An excavator and a truck removed then the garbage from the public place and brought it to an official disposal site. Since a couple of years already, the directors had explained to the local administration that this was actually not the task of the enterprise and that they would do so only one last time. In 1995, the local representative asked the same question, intentionally during the visit of a minister at the mining enterprise. But this time the exploitation director refused. In the following sequence he explains:

“Yesterday, I passed by to go to Dakar. I took the road of the Niayes. And each time I pass by the road of the Niaye I look to the right. Before I went on vacation there was still plenty [of garbage]. Yesterday I went and it was clean! I said to myself ‘old buddy, you won the game!’”⁵⁵⁵

B) Restriction on school donations

Before we proceed to the restrictions, it is important to note that the local high school was built by the company. The exploitation director explained the new restrictions on school donations installed in 1995:

“This year [1995], for example, it happened something which is extraordinary and which is a precedent in the life of Taiba. We defined the annual donations for the whole of the schools in the region. We selected the schools for which we wanted to do something. Thus, we eliminated all the others. And whenever the others ask for money it is rejected by definition. We selected the schools [...] and we said how much per school: this one will have 50.000 [FCFA], this one will have 100.000, this one will have 200.000. And we wrote to all the school directors and told them ‘you will never have, you will never see the slightest deviation. You are granted a donation of 200.000 for the operation. Express your needs of supply and material. We will order them and pass them on to you.’ Well, I can tell you that some people were really pissed, because before we told them: ‘you have the right to receive 200.000 [cash money]’. We gave them the 200.000 and the 200.000 ... I don’t need to explain to you ... [...] But to the contrary

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Original version : « Je suis passé hier pour aller à Dakar, je suis passé par la route des Niayes. Et chaque fois je passe à la route des Niayes je regarde en face de la gare de taxis, je regarde à droite. Avant de partir en vacances il y en avait encore plain. Hier je suis passé, c’était net ! Et je me suis dis ‘mon vieux, tu a gagné la parti ! » (Dex, A: 225 – 33).

of what one could think, the people did not hurry to buy cement or to buy things to build let's say additional classrooms, although they had asked to build additional classrooms. And when I say 'you have 200.000 francs, but you tell us how much cement, how much iron etcetera', much less people are in a hurry. So, if you want, we proceed towards a disengagement of Taïba in respect to the local population and more and more towards the consciousness of the responsibilities of the [rural] communities."⁵⁵⁶

9.6 Shifting to other economic activities

During the first explorative conversations it became evident that a significant number of employees were engaged in many pecuniary activities besides their wage labor in the company.

However, article 5 of the permanent work contract clearly excluded the right of any economic activities other than the wage labor in the mining company.⁵⁵⁷ But apparently, those side activities did not seem to be a problem for anybody. By contrast, little vegetable plots of tomatoes, beans and the like were growing here and there outside the work halls and

⁵⁵⁶ Original version : « *Alors, on est arrivé au point où cette année par exemple, il est arrivé une chose qui est extraordinaire et qui est un précédent dans la vie de Taïba, c'est qu'on a défini la dotation annuelle à l'ensemble des écoles dans la région. On a sélectionné les écoles pour lesquelles on allait faire un geste. Donc on a éliminé toutes les autres. Et toutes les autres si elles font des demandes par définition c'est rejeter. On a sélectionné des écoles pour lesquelles on voulait faire un geste et on a dit combien par école, celle-là aura 50.000, celle-là aura 100.000, celle-là aura 200.000. Et on a écrit à tout les directeurs d'écoles et on leur a dit 'vous n'aurez jamais, vous ne verrez jamais l'ombre d'ambient. Vous avez droit à une dotation de 200.000 pour l'exercice. Exprimez vos besoins en fourniture et en matériel, nous allons les commander et nous les vous ferons passer.' Alors, je peux vous dire que ils y en ont qui font des geules d'enfer, parce que avant on leur disait 'vous avez le droit de 200.000'. On donnait 200.000 et puis les 200.000 ... j'ai pas besoin de vous expliquer... Moi, maintenant, je fais des lettres à toutes les directions d'écoles ... Je dis : 'Vous avez droit à une dotation' et j'ai expliqué les conditions dans lesquelles ces dotations ce font executer. Mais contrairement à ce qu'on peut penser, les gens se sont pas précipiter pour acheter du ciment ou pour acheter des choses pour faire dis-on des classes supplémentaires, pourtant on avait demander pour faire des classes supplémentaires. Et quand je dis 'vous avez 200.000 franc, mais vous nous demanderez combien de ciment, combien de fer etcetera, il y a beaucoup moins de gens pressés. Donc, si vous voulez, on va ver un desengagement de Taïba vis-à-vis des populations locales et une prise de plus en plus de conscience des responsabilités des communautés » (Dex I, A : 186-206).*

⁵⁵⁷ Article 5 in original version: « *L'agent s'engage à consacrer, pendant la durée de son contrat, toute son activité professionnelle au service de la Compagnie et, par conséquent, à ne faire aucune opération commerciale pour son propre compte et à n'accepter d'un tiers aucune fonction meme temporaire, ni aucune renumération, sauf accord écrit de la Compagnie » (doc. 00.00.70:3).*

installations. Also on the company territory, numerous commercial activities could be observed during the day and transformed the work sites also into a market place. By hearsay, information were passed on that one employee would sell this particular item and another one that. Many employees revealed in interviews and questionnaires an opinion, similar to the one, which follows:

"The salary is not sufficient any more; you're obliged to do something aside."⁵⁵⁸

A friendly dragline conductor took me one day after work to his potato field in the nearby Mboro marshlands (*'niayes'*), which he had bought in 1977. He explained to me his farming activities throughout the year and the harvest profit in average of 150.000 FCFA three times a year. Additionally he had opened up a little kiosk (boutique) in 1993 in which neighbors and visitors of the quarter could buy the customary items of daily use.

To be able to get a clearer picture of the employees' side activities, questions n° 40 treated the issue: "Evolution of other economic activities besides the wage labor / year in which the activity was started:" Out of the questionnaire-sample of 60, two were excluded because of retirement (therefore n = 58). The results of the given answers show that farming and horticulture plaid by far the most important role among an impressive variety of 11 different side activities. 22 employees made no comment on that question. The remaining 36 employees were engaged into the following economic activities.

Farming: 20

Breeding: chicken, sheep, cows, rabbits, pork: 5

Commercial activities (some holding a little kiosk or market stand): 12

Selling the following items:

- Cereals: rice, millet,
- Vegetables: tomatoes, potatoes, onions, beans, etc.
- Other alimentary goods, palm oil, peanuts
- Domestic animals: chicken, sheep, cows, rabbits, pork
- Tissues, cloths,
- Tapes

Electrical and/or mechanical items:

- Watches, radios, cameras, television, video, refrigerators, freezers, air-conditioners, stoves,
- Cars

Creators of little enterprises with one to five employees: 5

⁵⁵⁸ Original version: « *Le salaire ne suffit plus, on est obligé de faire quelquechose à coté* » (Q48, 3/79).

- Renting rooms, apartments, houses: 2
- Creators of training centers (tailor, salesmen): 2
- Public transportation: 1
- Photography: 1
- Painter / artist: 1
- Phone center: 1
- Jeweler: 1

In total, these entrepreneurial employees initiated 56 times an economic side activity. According to the given answers, only five of these 56 economic undertakings failed or were given up for other reasons.⁵⁵⁹ Employees who had already at least one economic side activity abandoned three of those five activities. One employee had bought a field in 1979 for farming, but sold it again in 1980, because the profit was insufficient. In 1987, this employee decided to rent out his house in Tivavouane. One employee from those 36 initiated only once an economic activity, which failed and decided not to try again until his retirement.

According to the answers of the sample, most initiative for other economic activities was shown in the years 1986 (5), 1987 (5), and 1995 (7), whereas no new initiative was taken in the years 1971, 73, 75, 78, 83, and 1984. Only one activity was started in the years 1970, 72, 77, 82, 85, and 89. The majority of economic side activities were started after the year 1985. Ten new activities were started in the years 1986 and 87 alone, so just after the period of conflicts and social clashes in the company in 1983, 1984, and 1985. Although no written document could be found, it is highly probably that it became evident to the work force in 1985 or 1986 that no remuneration would be paid for the underpaid extra hours of previous years, one important reason for the large strike in 1983.⁵⁶⁰ This certainty in combination with the anyhow devastating financial situation of the staff might have pushed employees to turn to other economic resources.

Six initiatives were taken in 1995, maybe as a reaction to the 50% devaluation of the CFA-franc in January 1994 for former French ruled Westafrican countries. In Senegal, the recompense for devaluation only resulted in an augmentation of salaries of around 7%. The focus of the employees' attention shifted from the endeavor to perform well for the company's profit to other economic activities in order to assure their base of existence.

⁵⁵⁹ Two undertakings failed after one year, one after two years, one was given up after four years, and one was given up after seven years.

⁵⁶⁰ On this matter see in particular chap. 8.2.1. A.

9.7 The phenomenon of self-discrimination

In a more general sense, the nature of discrimination is the attitude about persons, which is not based on individual achievement, but on group affiliation and the alleged characteristics ascribed to members of that group. The term discrimination is generally reserved for the devaluation of 'the others'. Although the discriminator is usually seriously convinced about the inferiority of 'the others, the ultimate aim of discrimination is to legitimate the exclusion of individuals belonging to that group from rights, social and / or materialistic privileges that the discriminator (consciously or subconsciously) wants to preserve for him or herself and his or her own kin.

During field research, the negative attitude of Senegalese employees towards Senegalese or sometimes Africans in general represented – in my opinion – an important column of the predicaments of intercommunication. In absence of a better term, I call this phenomenon '*self-discrimination*'.⁵⁶¹ In the case of the personnel of the mining company, many Senegalese employees regretted the departure of the French. The opinion that the Senegalization process was a mistake was widespread. For illustration, here are some examples:

*"If we'd known, we wouldn't have asked the Senegalization. Now, they are my parents, but well... question mark."*⁵⁶²

*"At the moment I'm not comfortable. Taïba is way behind. They have to return!"*⁵⁶³

*"At the beginning, I was pleased. Later, we knew that the area is rotten. The people are false, not cooperative. Everybody sticks to oneself! The black, he doesn't want his next to advance!"*⁵⁶⁴

⁵⁶¹ Bukola (2001) calls the same phenomenon 'lack of self-esteem'.

⁵⁶² Original version: « *Si on le savait [avant], on avait pas demandé la Senegalisation. Maintenant, ce sont mes parents, mais daal... [Pause] point d'interrogation* » (Q7, 9/63).

⁵⁶³ Original version: « *Maintenant je ne suis pas content. Taïba est très en arrière. Il faut qu'ils reviennent* » (Q50, 11/79).

⁵⁶⁴ Original version: « *Au départ j'étais content, après on a su que c'est un coin pourri. Les gens sont faux, pas coopérative. Chaque un pour soi! Le noir, il ne veut pas que son prochain avance* » (Q53, 9/ 84).

"The people don't like each other and they are big cheaters. It's all about bringing people in discredit behind their backs."⁵⁶⁵

In particular, the phenomenon of self-discrimination deserves special attention, because it is more than anything else a burden for progress in the Senegalese society and is, thus, the most destructive heritage the French colonizers have left behind.

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Original version: « *Les gens s'aimaient pas et c'est des grands tricheurs. C'est yaq der ici!* » (Q60, 6/93).

Summary & Discussion of Results

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10 Summary and discussion of results

The meaning of the term management is to guide, lead and handle institutions of all kinds. The root of the term is the Latin word for hand ‘manus’. In this general definition, management can be considered as something that has existed since the emergence of the human kind.⁵⁶⁶ Various disciplines have made contributions on management in African contexts. The most relevant, however, stem mainly from economics, comparative management studies, social and cross-cultural psychology, social anthropology, history, sociology, and social geography.

Although a large corpus of literature has been produced in recent years⁵⁶⁷, theoretical thinking is still random and unsystematic and not sufficiently backed by empirical evidence.⁵⁶⁸ In African contexts, empirical research has been carried out mainly on managerial thinking and behavior⁵⁶⁹, on management training⁵⁷⁰, on environmental factors of management⁵⁷¹, on indiginization of management⁵⁷² and on leadership⁵⁷³. Also, a number of studies looked on the issue from the workers’ and employees’ perspective⁵⁷⁴. Case studies are scarce, although case studies bear the possibility to investigate these aspects and their interconnectedness in one organization only. Hardly any emphasis has been put on the genesis of an organisation and its management evolution over time.⁵⁷⁵ Studies on management in Africa usually draw a momentary picture of the current state found during the period of data collection. With the

⁵⁶⁶ Peter Drucker, often considered as the godfather of modern management, stated in one of his earlier books: “*Management as a discipline and management as a practice were tackled from the beginning by men of many nationalities and races. It was a temporary aberration in the years of the management boom to forget this and to believe instead – against all evidence – that management was an American specialty, if not an American invention*” (Drucker 1974:xii).

⁵⁶⁷ Blunt and Jones (1992) provide an impressive overview about the scientific literature on management in Africa, although contributions in French or other languages on the subject are omitted.

⁵⁶⁸ Pogobanagnana (1997) investigated the various predicaments in particular for African scholars in doing management research in African enterprises.

⁵⁶⁹ Blunt and Jones 1986; Jones 1988; Bourgoin 1985; Kuada 1994, Leonard 1988; Seibel 1986; Vengroff, Belhaj, Ndiaye 1991.

⁵⁷⁰ Balogun 1986; Blunt & Jones 2002; Gershenberg 1987; Safavi 1981; Sauboin 1985.

⁵⁷¹ Leonard 1987; McLoughlin 1963.

⁵⁷² Seddon 1985b; Jørgensen 1975; Himbara 1994; Wilson 1990.

⁵⁷³ Wohlgemuth, Carlsson, Kifle 1998.

⁵⁷⁴ For example Blunt 1985, Burawoy 1972, Bourgoin 1984, Orpen 1979.

⁵⁷⁵ An exception is Burawoy’s study about the Zambian copper mine Rokana. He replies to a study of the same mine carried out by Bates in 1971 (Burawoy 1972).

present case study, I attempt to bridge this gap by looking at both historical context and the underlying causes and circumstances for the development into certain management styles. In this chapter, I will focus on some main aspects within both French and Senegalese management eras and probe into the question of *why* things developed the way they did.

10.1 Does African management exist?

Scholars have often struggled with the question: ‘does African management exist’⁵⁷⁶ or is it just ‘a myth’?⁵⁷⁷ It is a commonplace that management styles are culture-bound. Drucker (1974) pointed out: “*While management is a discipline – that is, an organized body of knowledge and as such applicable everywhere – it is also “culture”. It is not value-free science. Management is a social function and embedded in a culture – a society – a tradition of values, customs, and beliefs, and in governmental and political systems. Management is – and should be – culture conditioned; but, in turn, management and managers shape culture and society*” authors concluded that the particularities of African culture are homogenous and influential enough to speak about a specific style of African management.⁵⁷⁸ Some authors concluded that the particularities of African culture are homogenous and influential enough to speak about a specific style of African management.⁵⁷⁹ Others stressed the diversity of social structures on the African continent.⁵⁸⁰ I agree with a number of other authors that it is not very helpful to speak of *the* African manager or *the* specific African management style.⁵⁸¹ N’Daw (1966), for example, states that “*the great diversity of our civilization and the considerable number of languages spoken would be enough to discourage the most tenacious analyst who is preoccupied with seeing upon the singleness of African thought*”.⁵⁸² Likewise, it is not possible to speak about one specific Western management style without losing analytical sharpness. The United States differ considerably from Europe in employment laws and workers’ rights, which result in quite different styles of personnel management, notwithstanding mentality differences. Even within one country, we may find a great variety

⁵⁷⁶ Damachi 1978, Delalande 1986.

⁵⁷⁷ Dia 1990.

⁵⁷⁸ Drucker 1974: xii.

⁵⁷⁹ Ahiauzu 1986, Nzeliibe 1986, Sauboin 1985, Noorderhaven 1996.

⁵⁸⁰ N’Daw 1966, Bourgoïn 1984, Potholm 1981.

⁵⁸¹ For example Carlsson (1998:9), or Ugwuegbu (2001:34ff.).

⁵⁸² N’Daw 1966:18, cited by Ahiauzu 1986:40.

of management styles and organizational structures in large enterprises. Just as managers elsewhere on the globe, managers in Africa also lead all sorts of organizations and institutions with differing styles and varying degrees of success.

In the present case study it was even unclear, who can be considered as being African. What criteria should stand for being African? Should it be nationality? In this case the first exploitation director of Senegalese descent (in office from 1980 to 1992) has to be considered French. Or should it be the territory on which one grew up? In this case the last exploitation director (1992- 1996) who was white and a French citizen, but grew up in Algeria, would be considered African. This example alone shows the intricacy with these terms. In multinational enterprises like the one surveyed it is common that senior executives have mixed cultural backgrounds and different cultural experiences on which their values, perceptions, and behaviors were shaped in the past. As a result of the market expansion and globalization, local and global arenas are often closely interconnected. I agree with Evers (1995) that in any kind of globalization process emerge similar transnational and transcultural groups of actors. Top managers, salesmen, and business partners on international interaction often share similar lifestyles, views, and expert know-how.⁵⁸³

I suggest that we should not speak about *African* management, but management placed in an African context. The environment in which managers operate is indeed of crucial importance. It shapes and limits the managers' frame of action. It is composed of all social, political and economic institutions with specific rules. All those institutions have been shaped in historical processes, which have to be taken into account. More relevant than the often alleged homogeneous African culture is the fact that most African countries were dominated by European nations for long periods. Dependency and inequality are crucial determinants for emerging structures and mentalities. In West Africa, all societies suffered from major destruction and disorientation because of transatlantic slave trade and colonialism. Those two key experiences do in fact unite West African societies on a common ground.⁵⁸⁴

⁵⁸³ Evers 1995: 8.

⁵⁸⁴ Surprisingly, in scholarly thinking on African societies, these major influences are often omitted. By contrast, intellectuals easily agree on the significance of much shorter experiences in European societies on their thinking. The few years of World War II and the Holocaust, for example, had a tremendous impact on German and Jewish mentality and behavior in various ways. But in comparison with the centuries of transatlantic slave trade and colonialism, those two experiences must be considered as fairly limited in time.

10.2 Traditions of colonial culture

For the mining community under survey here, it was an interesting paradox that French managers practicing industrial paternalism in the 70s were apparently more successful to act appropriate to local Senegalese culture than their Senegalese successors in the 80s and 90s. French managers were not particularly trained to work with an African work force. They had been trained to be engineers and technicians and their knowledge of Senegalese cultural beliefs and values was – although certainly increasing over time – fairly limited.

Born into local culture, interestingly, Senegalese managers found the French management conduct inappropriate for modern business and tried to eradicate paternalistic practices, but evoking harsh counteracts from the Senegalese workforce.

The results of the present study indicate that French industrial paternalism was not particularly adapted to African – or precisely Senegalese culture, but appropriate to the long tradition of master-servants relationship established under colonial rule. The colonial tradition had shaped the interaction patterns between Black and White so as to become a natural routine. To illustrate causes for Senegalese mismanagement, some employees used the following proverb in interviews:

*One White can make one hundred Negroes move, but one hundred Negroes cannot make one single White move.*⁵⁸⁵

The statement refers to the genuine colonial situation. One imagines a White colonial officer with a rifle who supervises a brigade of Africans doing some kind of hard work under the scorching sun. It refers originally to a coercive situation that is the armed violation of human rights on one side and the battered and injured loser, forced to submission, on the other. As colonial domination went on for generations, the Africans' acceptance of their own lack of power went on as well. Ultimately, it became an internalized belief. The longer the African populations lived under colonial rule, the fewer colonial officers were needed to command them. Memmi (1985, 1957) points to the same psychological phenomenon by saying:

“He has forgotten how to participate actively in history and no longer even asks to do so. No matter how briefly colonization may have lasted, all memory of freedom seems distant; he

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Original version: Un blanc peut faire marcher 100 nègres, mais 100 nègres ne peuvent pas faire marcher un seul blanc.

forgets what it costs or else he no longer dares to pay the price for it. How else can one explain how a garrison of a few men can hold out in a mountain post? How a handful of often arrogant colonizers can live in the midst of a multitude of colonized? The colonizers themselves are amazed, and it follows that they accuse the colonized of cowardice."⁵⁸⁶

In the Senegalese proverb, the coercive character of the situation is concealed. Instead, the capacity of the white officer to make other people work stands out. The higher the number of obedient people, the more extraordinary appears the capacity of the white person to lead. In the light of the employees' statement, the White bears a natural authority, which enables him (or her) to lead a large group of Black people. On the other hand, the 'negroes' appear simply as stupid, their submissive obedience sheepish. This also implies that *the African* has no capacity to lead. Even if he is supported by 99 of his kind it makes no difference. The implicit equation is thus: one zero plus 99 zeroes makes zero. The colonial situation and the intricate relationship between colonizer and colonized in the past inevitably led to an over-estimation of European people's capacities and an underestimation of African people's capacities. The coercive colonial situation had psychological effects on both the colonizer and the colonized with regard to self-determination, belief in the self, the role in interaction with the other, and numerous other aspects.⁵⁸⁷ Underlying assumptions about Black and White alleged personality traits were one important basis for Black-White and Black-Black interaction in the mining company. It was thus an outcome of *colonial culture*.

10.3 The psychological contract

Ugwuegbu (2001) has pointed out the significance of the concept of *psychological contract* to understand organizational ineffectiveness in African contexts.⁵⁸⁸ In my view, it

⁵⁸⁶ Memmi (1991:92-3). More pertinent is the original version: « *Il [le colonisé] a fini par perdre l'habitude de toute participation active à l'histoire et ne la réclame même plus. Pour peu que dure la colonisation, il perd jusqu'au souvenir de sa liberté; il oublie ce qu'elle coûte ou n'ose plus en payer le prix. Sinon, comment expliquer qu'une garnison de quelques homes puisse tenir dans un poste de montagne? Qu'une poignée de colonisateurs souvent arrogants puissent vivre au milieu d'une foule de colonisés? Les colonisateurs eux-mêmes s'en étonnent, et de là vient qu'ils accusent le colonisé de lâcheté* » (Memmi 1985:113-4).

⁵⁸⁷ For psychological effects of colonialism see also Franz Fanon's 'The Wretched of the Earth' ('Les damnés de la terre';1961).

⁵⁸⁸ Ugwuegbu 2001:38 (referring to Argyris, 1960; Kolb, Rubin, McIntyre, 1971; Schein 1970).

provides a helpful tool to analyze and understand the social processes within the mining company.

The psychological contract comprises all expectations that exist between an organization and its employees from both sides. The expectations also include all rights, privileges and obligations between the organization and the employee. Schein (1980, 1965) stated: *“whether people work effectively, whether they generate commitment, loyalty, and enthusiasm for the organization and its goals, and whether they obtain satisfaction from their work depends to a large measure on two conditions:*

- 1. The degree to which their own expectations of what the organization will provide to them and what the organization’s expectations are of what it will give and get in return.*
- 2. The nature of what is actually to be exchanged (assuming there is some agreement) – money in exchange for hard work and loyalty; opportunities for self-actualization and challenging work in exchange for high productivity, high quality work, and creative effort in the service of organizational goals; or various combinations of these and other things.”⁵⁸⁹*

The psychological contract consists of two different parts. The first part is the legal employment contract defining in written text how much pay will be given for how much work. It is the transparent (readable) and fixed outcome of a conscious decision from both the organization and the employee. The second part of the psychological contract includes all tacit, unspoken, sometimes subconscious expectations, which may remain beyond any attempts of diagnosis, ‘yet they operate very powerfully as determinants of behavior’.⁵⁹⁰

Organizational circumstances (politically, socially, economically, culturally) may change over time just as the situation of the employee may change. Thus, the psychological contract is an ongoing fluid interactive process of complex interdependent factors. While a psychological contract can be assumed to exist in any organization around the globe, the content of those expectations is culture-bound and shaped by convictions and beliefs of the individuals involved. In the following subchapters, I attempt to show that the cooperation with the French expatriates was rewarding for Senegalese employees as a result of their perception of the French higher social and moral status. Senegalese employees did not judge and perceive French and Senegalese behavior objectively but biased to the advantage of French image and behavior. Thus, the mutual expectations shaping the psychological contract

⁵⁸⁹ Schein 1980:99.

⁵⁹⁰ Ugwuegbu 2001:39 (referring to Argyris 1960).

between the mining enterprise and its employees were much influenced by powerful convictions of alleged Black and White characteristics and ascribed roles established under colonial power.

10.3.1 Psychological circumstances for French managers

Everyone in Mboro and the vicinity would agree on that the French extraction manager, in office from 1970 to 1980, was indeed an exceptional person. Until today people refer to him as the ‘father’ of the region. Undoubtedly, the staff as well as the local population considered him as a veritable leader in the true sense of the word. He managed to bring the physical and psychological needs of his employees of both ethnical groups in complete congruency with the economic objectives of the mining company. But effective leadership is a combination of both personal skills and a favorable environment. In the case of the French (white) exploitation director, he could rely on important favorable circumstances, which much helped him to pilot the mining company as well as its personnel.

When he began his ‘mission’ in Senegal’s phosphate mine, he was already an experienced and highly qualified manager. Senegal gained independence in 1960. With respect to the slow pace of societal and mentality changes in societies, the post-colonial era had only just begun. The mine was located outside the former four communities, but as a coastal area its population was particularly exposed to colonial rule and domination. The French extraction manager found a Senegalese workforce, which had still grown up under colonial rule. Their parents, grandparents and grand-grandparents had been socialized under domination and oppression. For more than a hundred years (in psychological terms about four to five generations), the population of the area was accustomed to be dominated and to be considered as *sujets*.⁵⁹¹

The French engineer, who came to function as exploitation director in 1970 found an established company with well-organized departments and subunits. The restructuring of the mining installations had just been completed and the technical equipment was new, powerful and appropriate to the environmental conditions (other than a decade before). As he stated in

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The difference between *sujets* and citizens has been outlined in some more detail in chapter 3.2.

his interview: he was positively surprised to find such a well-organized company in Africa revealing his low expectation at the beginning of the engagement in the mining company. As to the Senegalese workforce, he discovered that they were punctual, reliable, obedient, and used to hard work. If one showed them respect and appreciation for work efforts, they were grateful and easy to direct. This gave him a favorable position of departure, because he could concentrate on human resource management and capacity building in order to achieve the best production results and to foster the Senegalization process.

In the 70s, the great majority of the Senegalese workers had been members of the local peasant communities of former *sujéts*, accustomed to be regarded as second-class citizens during the colonial era. Senegalese employees subconsciously compared their relationship with the French expatriates in the work places with the circumstances under colonial rule. And, of course, since independence the relationship had improved. The expatriates were not only willing, but had the official task to develop Senegalese professional capacity. As a result, French expatriates had an interest in explaining the work processes in detail, to render it comprehensible, and to delegate responsibility and decision making power. Despite their usually low educational level, Senegalese employees felt that they were taken seriously and treated like human beings, not like an idiotic working mass. This experience alone was apparently a positive surprise for Senegalese employees and evoked their thankfulness and loyal devotion, because they had a different cultural experience with French under colonial rule. French expatriates operated on an unquestioned authority in cooperation with their subordinates. From their cosy pedestal position and their ‘natural’ authority they could easily behave however they wished: give advice, seek advice, be generous, be strict, be commanding, be participative, granting rights, refuse rights, and whatsoever. Everything expatriates gave to their subordinates was cherished. Expatriates’ kind attention was rewarding for Senegalese employees. The close cooperation with the ‘naturally superior’ French expatriates increased over time Senegalese self-confidence and self-esteem.

In short, the mutual expectations were low in the beginning. The psychological contract was balanced from the beginning on, because expectations were not only met, but over-achieved. The discovery to get more from the other side than expected was a positive surprise and resulted in a high level of satisfaction.

10.3.2 The psychological background for Senegalese managers

It is generally assumed that African managers are preoccupied to bolster their social status and prestige in their private social networks. That means that they are less concerned with the objectives of the organization and those of the public for which the organization is supposed to serve.⁵⁹² However, in this case study, I can say that the overwhelming majority of Senegalese senior executives and managers were firmly sewed with the mine's objective and worked hard to achieve it. They were not happy with the bad social climate and the malfunctioning of many work processes. Throughout the 80s and 90s, considerable amounts of money were spent on training to increase in particular the managers' social skills in order to ameliorate the communication and flow of crucial information.

In the 80s and 90s, the situation for the Senegalese successors of expatriate positions was full of twists and turns. Senegalese managers were confronted with a number of negative consequences resulting from the French paternalistic management before. The main aspects were:

- high employees' indebtedness
- overpromoted aged workforce
- employees' unrealistic expectations of promotion
- employees' take mentality

The competition system of French management had a similar structure like a sports festival. It had been designed to create a strong bond between the Senegalese workforce and the expatriate manager, the 'coach'. The subordinates were used to the personal conduct and characteristics of 'their coach'. The departure of their coach left the Senegalese workforce in a state of depression and insecurity. This was combined with the disappearance of many small rewards of which the subordinates had grown fond of over time. The scornful and skeptical subordinates questioned whatever the Senegalese successors did. Many Senegalese successors of expatriate positions were caught up in a classical mobbing situation. Just imagine...

... suppose it is your first management position, you are fairly inexperienced and you don't really know what to expect. The work teams you supervise have worked in more or less the same constellation for many years. They work in a well-adjusted routine. Additionally, you have to expect to supervise a few workers who had been promised your position by the

⁵⁹² See also Carlsson 1998:18.

expatriate boss, but were stopped with the new promotion restrictions. After each interaction with those subordinates, you hear comments of this kind: 'But Monsieur Le Blanc did it always like this and not like that! He did it otherwise then you do it.' The evident implication is: you do it wrong! Of course, you would thoroughly explain things on work issues, show your own competence, your knowledge. While giving exhaustive explanations, some subordinates would just lean on some equipment, arms crossed, and look at you with a side-glancing stare. Some others would look somewhere else. Still others would just go on with their work pretending they were too buisy to pay attention to your explanations. As soon as you end your explanation, people turn around and walk away. If the workers feel unobserved, they gather in little groups and speak in half voice to each other. Every now and then you would think to hear your predecessor's name. If you go through the working hall, people would not greet pretending they don't see you. And so on, and so on... How long do you think would you be able to stand this situation? How long would the most self-confident person be able to bear it?

This was more or less the situation of Senegalese successors who took over expatriate positions. Hardly anybody gave them a positive feedback. Those who dared risked to be ostrasized from the workers' network. Different managers had different ways to deal with the situation. Some of course attempted to do the same that French managers had done before: ask workers' opinion about the best way to operate, how to do things right. But this evoked reactions among workers of the content: He doesn't even know this himself, although he is our supervisor! Asking workers' opinions, thus, boosted the workers' apprehension that Senegalese managers were actually incompetent and had unjustified attained their positions. Presumably some managers spoke openly to their superiors about this and maybe got advices like: 'show them who is the boss, they have to accept' in other words: impose your power. However, this initial dilemma evoked a chain reaction of negative consequences in the following years and was one important pitfall for communication between ranks. Managers learned to avoid close contact with their subordinates as much as possible. This elusive behavior confirmed in a way employees' perception of managers' incompetence. Senegalese managers began their career in the mining company usually with a high standard of technical knowledge through intense training, often including periods of practical training abroad (visiting mines in Togo, France, United states, and others). The absence from the shop

floors gradually reduced the managers' skills and practical know-how. All this undermined the self-confidence of both managers and subordinates even further.

Interestingly, the French management took over functions that normally would be the responsibility of the state. Even in the perception of the local population, the implementation of - or at least support - public institutions like schools, constabulary, health centers etc. was the expected role of the mining enterprise. Senegalese managers tried to cut external expenses in the early 80s, but failed at first. They could only gradually cut back external expenses in the late 80s and in particular the early 90s. Their aim was to concentrate on their economic activities and cease to play the role of a social institution, which in their eyes was the responsibility of the state and the local community administration respectively.

The major problem between Senegalese managers and Senegalese employees in later years was the inability to take each other seriously. Senegalese employees showed a high degree of respect and courtesy. Senegalese society provides clear rules and sets of behavior in this respect. But often behind this facade, there was distrust, suspicion, and disdain. Senegalese employees, managers and subordinates alike suffered from a lack of sympathy and goodwill towards each other. But dramatically, the diagnosis of this psychological phenomenon remained omitted.

10.3.3 Management changes

A) Changing recruitment criteria

Under French management, numerous recruitment methods were used. Recruitment was practicably always based on achievement. Only in rare cases people were recruited for other reasons, mostly for charity reasons. For example, expatriates were going to technical colleges in Senegal and offered the best school leavers a position in the company. But 'achievement' was a fluid term under French management and could mean any specialized knowledge. Not only technical knowledge, but also skills, which could serve to improve the entertainment culture would count. People were hired, because they were good football players, good wrestlers, good photographers, knew something about scouting, equitation etc. It was always implied that they teach their skills to other interested members of the mining

family. Under Senegalese management, officially, the applicants' results of the professional entrance test for each professional group was the only means to get employed.

B) Changing rules for internal training and promotion

In the 70s, the training efforts under French management integrated all work processes in the company. Superiors evaluated in close cooperation with subordinate the particular needs for qualified personnel for each department, sub-unit, and workshop. To rise to management level, a two years training period was usually necessary. This period included theoretical and practical training of 'appropriateness' (*sur mesure*). At the end of the training period, the applicants were examined and had to prepare an outline on the evaluation of some current work problem that had occurred in the workshop. In front of a committee of engineers and technicians, the applicant had to defend his solution for the evaluated problem.

In any case, this was the official version. In practice, however, employees were sometimes promoted to management positions without going through the training period. An evaluation in 1978 revealed that almost one third (40) of a total of 128 employees in midrange management had not gone through any training. Nine of those 40 were illiterate employees. This practice was certainly an outcome of the expatriates' enthusiasm to reward extraordinary working efforts and devotion, sometimes without hesitation. French managers focused on employees who showed extraordinary work efforts, produced good results and were able to take initiative in the working process. The educational level of the employee was less important. This practice under French management left the Senegalese managers in later years with two main consequences. Firstly, many Senegalese employees were convinced that they could mount to whatever level in the hierarchy they wanted, if they only worked hard enough. And secondly, the Senegalese managers had to deal with a large group of midrange managers (AM 1 and AM2) who only had a limited realm of specialized knowledge difficult to adapt to new equipment. These midrange managers saw no reason to absolve the two-years training period in later years since they had already attained the desired positions.

The Senegalese managers countered this problem with the installment of barriers for promotion. Expatriate bosses had promised a number of employees the promotion to midrange management positions after some time. These promises were broken after the Senegalese management had taken over. Employees who had already counted on those

positions were deeply disappointed. Under Senegalese management, applicants with professional certificates and degrees from technical schools or universities were chosen for midrange management positions more often than employees internally trained in the company. Thus, the options for professional career and personal growth for elder employees diminished considerably. In consequence, work motivation and efforts sank and the disappointed employees were not willing to cooperate with the newly hired midrange managers.

10.4 Biased perceptions: three examples

10.4.1 French ‘Generosity’

In the 70s, French management regularly augmented salaries each six months. This was an important means to increase the employees’ satisfaction at work. Additionally, the directorate installed an enigmatic system of allowances and gratifications. Another important incentive for work efforts was the bonus system, which allowed each department, sub-unit, and work team to be rewarded in correspondence to the quality of its communal efforts and productivity. All those aspects gave the Senegalese employees a high security to receive extra amounts of money above their basic salaries.

In parallel in the 70s, French management expanded the point system of merit installed in the 60s to an all-imbuing system of competition much organized like an eternal sports festival. The outcome of each work team, each sub-unit and each department was measurable and was rewarded with a bonus on salaries in correspondence to the outcome. The leading managers, mostly expatriates, were rewarded at the end of each year for the department productivity under their supervision. Thus, those managers had a strong personal interest to incite their subordinates to intense work efforts. Expatriates were quite inventive to motivate their subordinates with extra treats. They praised their workers for good work results. For extraordinary team efforts, usually including extra hours, expatriate bosses sometimes paid their work teams an extra round of cool beverages and warm sandwiches.

On the other hand, French management accorded salary advances on a regular basis for numerous reasons, foremost the fixed amounts for religious events (Korité, Tabaski,

Christmas, Easter). Employees were free to get salary advances for personal reasons to such an extent that from the mid-70s on a growing number of employees were heavily indebted. Although the excessive lending practice contradicted legal rules, the French exploitation director convinced the local authorities that the company lending style was only to the benefit of the Senegalese workers. Furthermore, the expatriates took the habit to offer money to employees in a situation of personal hardship, unintentionally boosting a take-mentality within the Senegalese staff. While Senegalese employees later cherished this custom as European charity, expatriates invested in their subordinates' flawless commitment to production records and, thus, into their own substantial annual production bonus at the end of each year.

10.4.2 Senegalese 'Nepotism'

The term nepotism (lat. *nepos* for grandchild, descendant, nephew) refers to the casting of jobs with or the fraudulent overcharge of family members. In my interviews, employees often mentioned that Senegalese managers had the tendency to choose 'their own people' for further training, thus, giving them the possibility to rise to midrange management. Senegalese superiors sometimes favored individual employees for other than professional reasons. I described the circumstances in which such a managerial behavior was most likely to occur in chapter 8.1.2. Nevertheless, under Senegalese management in the 80s, the two years training period was obligatory for everybody in order to become midrange manager, no matter for what reason one had been chosen for training. I could not figure out, how often those cases occurred. Doubtlessly, favoritism was not accepted among the workforce, even less tolerated by the exploitation director.⁵⁹³ Usually, Senegalese managers had to find devious ways to conceal such machinations, much like in Western societies.⁵⁹⁴ French managers, by contrast, promoted illiterate workers to management positions, sometimes in spontaneous arbitrary acts without clear criteria. Likewise, French expatriates jauntily employed their wives as secretaries, nurses, teachers and the like and were never questioned in this personnel policy also. Expatriates could employ or promote who ever they wished for whatever reason, it was simply not perceived as nepotism.

⁵⁹³ See also the personal conduct of the first exploitation director of Senegalese descent.

⁵⁹⁴ In Western societies, no one would seriously deny that knowing the right people in the right places is one of the surest ways leading to professional success. Yet, in Western societies we call it 'networking'.

10.4.3 Spiritualism: a fictional example

At the end of 1983, external consultants prepared an analysis of the tremendous communication problems in the company. The consultants concluded that Senegalese managers should pay more attention to the employees' African cultural values and beliefs.⁵⁹⁵ Unfortunately, they failed to explain how Senegalese managers could act appropriately to employees' African cultural beliefs. Maybe integrate the spiritual beliefs of the Wolof culture into managerial behavior?

We will construct a fictional example. Most of the surrounding villages take care of their supernatural village patron ('*rab*'). They do so by regularly sacrificing certain foodstuff on an altar ('*xamb*'), usually placed under an impressive baobab. Would it have made any difference for the workforce if the management had installed an altar for the company *rab* and regularly sacrificing offers in communal rituals? I don't think so.

The Senegalese workforce would have certainly appreciated such an initiative of French management, not because they thought that expatriate really believed in those things, but as an indication for their respect to Wolof culture. By contrast, the majority of employees would possibly have accused Senegalese management of total backwardness in case they did the same thing, notwithstanding the conflicts arising among managers themselves on the matter.

10.5 Western management techniques and African values

Although there is still a lack of empirical research on industrial management in large organizations, scholars widely agree that African managers as well as African workers 'lack the proper orientation required for modern business enterprises'⁵⁹⁶. While some authors speak

⁵⁹⁵ See chapter 8.2.3 C).

⁵⁹⁶ For critical view on this point see Seibel (1986).

about a general ‘organisational ineffectiveness’ in African enterprises⁵⁹⁷ others bluntly assert that ‘Africa’s management is sick’.⁵⁹⁸

One important line of argumentation claims that management techniques applied in African enterprises have mostly been imported from industrialized countries and were thus developed for and within Western values and beliefs inappropriate to African values.⁵⁹⁹ In the discourse on the inappropriateness of imported management techniques, various dichotomies ascribed to ‘Western’ and ‘African’ values respectively are relentlessly stressed.

Roughly speaking, the three mostly cited dichotomies of *Western* and *African* characteristics in management are: *modern* – *traditional* (or even *tribal*); *individualistic* / *egocentric* – *communal*; and *rational* / *systematic* – *relational* / *social*. It is not difficult to guess that these current ascriptions are the disguised echoes of the former colonial doctrines, imposed and established by the all-imbuing colonial educative and administrative institutions. The custom to attribute inferior characteristics to others, in this case ‘the African’, gives evidence of a long tradition of the European superiority belief.⁶⁰⁰ It does certainly not prove any true nature of ‘*the African*’, nor of any ‘*others*’, respectively.

Let us take a quick glance at the contrasting terms ‘modern’ and ‘traditional’. In this combination, the adjective ‘traditional’ has a pejorative connotation, because as opposed to ‘modern’ it implies ‘non-modern’, ‘old-fashioned’, ‘out-dated’. Likewise, the correct opposite of ‘systematic’ is not relational, but ‘unsystematic’. These dichotomies, thus, bear an unspoken negative content for African management. Their tacit implications are concealed and therefore difficult to contradict. That is what makes these dichotomies so dangerous. In scientific discourses, dichotomies should be avoided. Furthermore, the attributes ‘modern’ and ‘traditional’ seem to strictly exclude each other. The unspoken assumption is that a given management conduct cannot be both. It is either ‘modern’ – and we have learned it is then ‘Western’ – or it is ‘traditional’ and therefore ‘African’. Obviously, these terms are considered as consensual and self-defining for they are not thoroughly discussed. One observes an astonishing agreement among some Western and African scholars on these

⁵⁹⁷ Blunt and Jones 1992.

⁵⁹⁸ Bourgoin 1984.

⁵⁹⁹ Bourgoin 1984; Dia 1990; Kiggundu 1986; Nzelibe 1986; and many others.

⁶⁰⁰ Blaut brilliantly elaborated the superiority belief within European culture in ‘The Colonizer’s Model of the World’ (1993). The same phenomenon in respect to the Islamic world was shown by Said in ‘Orientalism’ (1993).

dichotomies.⁶⁰¹ The dominance of those ascriptions reveals a remarkable extent of unfruitful over-simplifications and quick assumptions. Usually, assumptions of that kind are not based on empirical research.⁶⁰² But even if empirical research provides evidence of results opposing established ascriptions, they still tend to last. If Africans behave effectively, systematic and take initiative, some researchers tend to claim that these actors represent an ‘Occidental type’, are ‘Western-oriented’ or ‘Westernized’. Those labels deny once again a genuine African capacity to act ‘modern’, ‘systematic’, ‘rigorous’, etc. In consequence, habitual dichotomies remain intact. This argumentation – in a way – pushes Africans back in their customary place, hindering meanwhile changes in the global perception of African actors.⁶⁰³

Some of authors pointed out that large organizations of a social, political and economic character existed in pre-colonial Africa. In particular Anthony Hopkins showed in his outstanding work *An Economic History of West Africa* in great detail that the organization of labor in pre-colonial West African societies was not only efficient, but was highly strategic and flexible in order to meet the demands of changing environmental and societal circumstances. Hopkins findings convincingly challenges some imperishable myths about pre-colonial Africa, among them the still prevailing assertion that more complex work organization and efficient entrepreneurship was practically absent.⁶⁰⁴ Walter Rodney argued that European colonialism resulted in underdevelopment in African countries.⁶⁰⁵ Surprisingly,

⁶⁰¹ African scholars tend to insist on Western individualism and selfishness, whereas for Western scholars, African communalism and / or traditionalism seem to be of greater importance.

⁶⁰² Sauboin, for example, sees in the industrialisation process a veritable struggle and almost over taxation for the unprepared African peoples. In his opinion « cette implantation de techniques de management dans un environnement socio-culturel peu préparé a favorisé l’apparition de styles de gestion assez hétéroclites penchant entre le moderne : rigoureux, rationnel, méthodique et le traditionnel : personnel, relationnel, social » (1985:52). A. L. Dia places the attributes in a slightly different order. Instead of Western, he named it the ‘Occidental type’, which is ‘modern, strict, rational, and systematic’. The African type, on the other hand, is, according to Dia “traditional, personal, relational, and social” Dia 1990:69.

⁶⁰³ In respect to this phenomenon, Ugwuegbu asserts: “The cultural explanation is the last vestige of the colonial, stereotypic view of Africans and African workers. The unfortunate thing about this is the extent to which some African intellectuals bought these untested, early, Western views”(Ugwuegbu 2001: 34).

⁶⁰⁴ Hopkins wrote: „Allegations about the inefficiency of the traditional labour force are the product not only of an inadequate appreciation of the historical evidence relating to Africa, but also of an exaggerated sense of the superiority and modernity of labour organisation in Europe” (Hopkins 1973, p 22). He also stated: “Non-Specialists may be surprised to learn that pre-colonial West Africa had a range of manufacturing industries which closely resembled those of pre-industrial societies in other parts of the world. The composition of the manufacturing sector in West Africa, as in pre-industrial Europe, reflected the embryonic nature of the market, and was based on clothing, metal working, ceramics, construction, and food processing” (ibid.:48). He further showed that “subsistence economy was an exception rather than the rule” (ibid.:51).

⁶⁰⁵ Rodney 1972.

Hopkins' and Rodney's insightful historical research remains up to now largely unacknowledged in scholarly literature on management in Africa. Maybe, the ancient history is considered by most scholars as too long ago as to be of relevance today. But then why the more recent colonial past and its consequences also play a minor role. Too seldom, scholars (from Africa or other parts of the world likewise) take the effort to thoroughly investigate forms of management of genuine local institutions in African countries. Kiggundu argued on colonialism that *"its effects were the destruction of the indigenous organisation and management systems, some of which were situationally more appropriate, and the psychological destruction of the African self-esteem, the subtle but debilitating impact of which manifests itself in different forms at different levels of African society. It is, therefore, recommended that the foreign trainer should include confidence building and self-esteem enhancement in designing management development programs for Africa."*⁶⁰⁶ Kiggundu justly stated: *"One cannot be helpful to Africa in shaping its future without understanding its distant past and painful present."*⁶⁰⁷

10.6 Conclusion

Differences in wealth, status and power between French expatriates and Senegalese employees fostered paternalism. The French expatriates had an interest to engender the feeling of loyalty and a high work motivation among their Senegalese subordinates.

The behavior of both ethnic parties cannot simply be explained by the expatriates' search for economic profit within the company, but has to be analyzed in a broader historical context. The French-Senegalese relationship has grown over many generations within a colonial setting. In this setting fixed roles have been established for both sides: the French on the 'commanding' and 'giving' side and the Senegalese on the 'executing' and 'taking' side. This clear distinction of roles was imposed upon the Senegalese population first. But apparently, it underwent a process of internalization and still seems to be deeply rooted in both, self-perceptions and the perception of 'the other'. The attitudes of both parties are so firmly established that they appear almost like a law of nature. This phenomenon makes the recognition of the artifact so difficult, even many decades after Senegal's political

⁶⁰⁶ Kiggundu 1991:35.

⁶⁰⁷ Kiggundu 1991:32.

independence. Up to now it prevents the '*Decolonizing the African mind*'⁶⁰⁸. This, in consequence, has a negative impact on the emergence of the creative and innovative potential necessary to evoke societal progress.

It is assumed here, that the decline of the mine's well functioning had not much to do with particular capacities and purported cultural characteristics of both ethnic groups involved. Instead, it was the outcome of certain expectations and roles of superiors and subordinates created in an unequal ethnical setting of French and Senegalese actors. The different actors brought along all their colonial and post-colonial heritage of beliefs as a mental package and frame of action. Considering the long time span since Senegal's political independence in 1960, it seems that the Senegalese people have been exceptional good pupils. They managed – willing or unwilling – to integrate over time the French colonial ideology into their concept of the world order.⁶⁰⁹ Senegalese people have well learned their lesson in the past and still keep rehearsing it up to the present.⁶¹⁰ It is a known fact, that formerly long-term oppressed people struggle – once liberated – over raising self-consciousness in order to liberate themselves, their own minds, from negative ascriptions.

In African societies, wealth is an indication for power. It goes along with social status and prestige. In the dawn of colonial conquest it was particularly important to establish ties with power holders in order to live in peace. Potential power holders were colonial officers, other members of the colonial society (clerks, missionaries, salesmen, etc.) or persons who had close ties with them. Through the period of the transatlantic slave trade and colonialism, white skin colour became a synonym for power, high social status and prestige.

Until today, the cooperation of members from former colonizing societies with members of former colonized societies leads inevitably to the resurrection of polarized roles and characteristics which were shaped under colonial rule to facilitate colonial domination. (modern- traditional, rational-social, individual-communal, etc.) These insights may shed some new light on the sustainability problem of development aid projects in Africa.

Development aid projects are often planned for a cooperation of 'helpers' and 'help receivers' for a period of two or more years. After this period, so the prospect, the help receivers should know the rules of the game and take over the steering. But within the time period of cooperation between helpers and help receivers, the old communication and

⁶⁰⁸ Chinweizu (1987).

⁶⁰⁹ See also Fanon 1963.

⁶¹⁰ Bukola 2001:5.

interaction patterns of masters and servants may sneak back in and get reestablished. Thus, the European ‘helpers’ may often have more authority and commanding power than their actual function and position reflects. Their realm of power may not correspond to their objective know-how and qualification, but may exceed it. Additionally, the European helpers usually dispose of insignias of power and wealth, like cars, nice houses with flowering gardens, air conditioners, other expensive household devices, and so on; whereas their indigenous colleagues and so called ‘target group’ does not. While helpers and help receivers achieved good results during the period of cooperation, the sustainability of project is often short once the helpers have departed. The cooperation pattern tacitly based on the old ‘superior-inferior’ belief still alive within the members of both ethnic groups does, of course, not suit the communication and interaction pattern between ‘help receivers’ only. Once the ‘help receivers’ have taken the leading positions they are not able to rely on the same high authority and power status as their departed European predecessors. Thus, these projects often fail on a long-term basis. The project failure ostensibly proves once again in the minds of both groups the incapacity and / or irresponsibility of the help receivers. In a relationship between members of two ethnic groups with differences in power and status in the past, it is not possible to substitute the as superior perceived interaction partner with the as inferior perceived interaction partner without causing changes within the entire cooperation pattern.

Effective development has to start within the members of the former oppressed society. Managers in Africa are not chained to a rockbound, changeless tradition. They can and do react to circumstances and change their environment likewise.

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Annex

The Questionnaire for Employees (Translated English Version)

**University of Bielefeld
Fakulty of Sociology**

**Sociology of Development
Research Center**

Questionnaire

- 1.) male ___ female ___ 2.) religion _____
- 3.) permanent residence _____
- 4.) permanent residence of family _____
- 5.) origin of family _____
- 6.) year of birth _____ 7.) place of birth _____
- 8.) place of childhood _____
- 9.) ethnic group affiliation _____ 10.) caste _____
- 11.) father (ega) _____ 12.) mother (ega) _____
- 13.) marital status _____ 14.) monog. _____ polyg. _____
- 15.) number of wives _____ number of children _____
- 16.) how many persons live in your household? _____

17.) how many persons do you support financially? _____

18.) Do other persons contribute financially to the household?

Contributors	amount of contribution

19.) Do you own immobile goods (fields, houses etc.)?

_____ where? _____

_____ where? _____

_____ where? _____

20.) Are you sometimes in the situation to give your money as a gift to other people in the need? Tell me a recent situation of this kind:

21.) Tell me a recent situation where you have got money from somebody without having asked:

22.) How often do you give? _____ 23.) - receive? _____

24.) Do you belong to a religious brotherhood? Which one _____

25.) How often do you visit your religious leader? _____

26.) Do you exchange goods or money with your religious leader? _____

goods / money	quantitiy	frefuence

27.) For what kind of reasons do you visit your religious leader?

28.) Do you participate in a lottery?

28.a) Do you have good friends of confidence among:

the workers? How many? _____

the midrange managers? How many? _____

the top managers? How many? _____

the directors? How many? _____

the peasants? How many? _____

the neighbours? How many? _____

others? How many? _____

29.) Level of education _____

30.) Professional career before working at the mine:

activity	period	last salary	reason for changing	parallel econ. activities

31.) What was your most important activity before working at Taïba?

32.) How did you get in contact with Taïba? _____

33.) When did you come to work at Taïba? _____

34.) Evolution of your career at Taïba:

kind of work	period	category	salary

Actual situation:

--	--	--	--

35.) How much (in %) does your salary cover your monthly expenses? _____

36.) With what kind of activities or resources do you complete the expenses?

37.) What did you experience when you first came to Taïba? (economic, technical performance, staff, ambiance, etc.)

38.) How many expatriates did you find here? _____

39.) What personal experiences did you have with expatriates?

40.) Do you have other economic activities besides your wage work?

economic activity / year of start	initial situation

41.) Did you experience a change in everyday life after the devaluation?

42.) Are you financially indebted? How much? _____

43.) Where do your debts stem from?

44.) What do you do to reduce your debts?

45.) Do you have commercial relations with somebody?

46.) What are your projects for your future?