

NOTRE PARTI ÉTAIT PRÉDESTINÉ À GÉRER TOUS LES BOURNOIRS

ECAS 2017

Political impact of decentralization in urbanizing Africa

July 1, 2017

Takuo IWATA
(Ritsumeikan Univ, Kyoto, Japan)
t-iwata@fc.ritsumei.ac.jp

Source: *Journal du Jeudi* (No.1289, June 2-8, 2016)

#BidoungChallenge in Cameroon

Profile

1972: Born in Osaka, Japan
1994-96: Japanese Embassy to Senegal
2000-01: University of Bordeaux (Science Po)
2003: Ph.D. in **Political Science** (Kobe University, Japan)
2011-12: Centre Emile Durkheim, IEP Bordeaux (Visiting fellow)
2013- : Associate Prof at Ritsumeikan University, Japan

◆ Research subjects (African politics & Int'l relations):
Democratization, **Decentralization**, Power & Symbol, Witchcraft and politics, Asia-Africa relations, African studies in Asian countries, Border, **Local govt's int'l cooperation**, SNS in Politics, Laughter in politics, Eating acts (manducation) in politics etc.

◆ Field work area: West Africa (**Benin, Burkina Faso**, Togo, occasionally Ghana, Mali), Asian countries

Source: Africa Daily News (@AfricaDNews, Feb 8, 2017)

Today's content

1. Introduction
2. Decentralization Process in African Countries
3. Political Impact of Decentralization
4. Development of Decentralized Cooperation
5. Political Turbulences in Decentralizing Local Governance
6. Conclusion

Interview with Mayor of Abomey (Benin) [October 2005, Cotonou]

1. Introduction

1-1. Research question

◆ How decentralization & urbanization affect local political power balance, then national politics in African countries (with[out] ongoing democratization process)?

1-2. Research approach & objective

◆ Focusing on politics in urban local governments (*communes*)

1-3. Research topic

- ◆ Politicizing local governance in decentralization reform
- ◆ Decentralization in urban Africa, decentralized cooperation (local diplomacy), Storm of discharges of Mayors
- ◆ Case studies in Benin & Burkina Faso

4

2. Decentralization Process

2-1. Overview of decentralization in Africa

- ◆ Decentralization as aid conditionality
- ◆ Creating new local political dynamisms
 - ☞ Not necessarily bringing local democracy
- ◆ Various (unlinear) Passes in African countries
- ◆ Process of deconcentration & decentralization
- ◆ Correlation btw decentralization & democratization

5

2. Decentralization Process

2-2. Brief history of politics and decentralization in Benin and Burkina Faso

- ◆ Contrasted experience between Benin & Burkina Faso in terms of democratization & decentralization in three decades
 - ☞ Model of democratization (Benin) & decentralization (decentralized cooperation, BF)
- ◆ Democratization first (Benin) or decentralization first (BF)
- ◆ Turning point in political transformation after common political experiences (e.g. Military coups, Revolutionary regime)
 - ☞ Sovereign National Conference (Benin, 1990) & Popular insurgency (Burkina Faso, 2014)
- ◆ Local elections in democratization & decentralization

6

2-2. Basic information about decentralization in Benin and Burkina Faso

- ◆ Local administrative units are revised into
 - ☞ *Communes* as the basic local govt body (Benin: 77, BF: 359) & the supervising body (*Département, Province*).
- ◆ Municipal election: Councilors (*conseiller*) of commune are elected in the proportional system.
 - ☞ Mayor of commune is elected among elected councilors.
- ◆ Governor of supervising local body is still appointed by the central government.
 - ☞ Keeping a certain control by the central government
- ◆ Ambiguous stipulations in decentralization-related law especially (financial, human resource) devolution from the central government to commune
 - ☞ Having caused the dispute regarding the local market management & land sale ☞ Politicized local governance

7

3. Political Impact of Decentralization

3-1. Local governance after decentralization & globalization

- ◆ Decentralization & urbanization activate local politics.
 - ☞ more crucial (through devolution)
- ◆ Politics of belly (*ventre*) in local govt & community
- ◆ Revival of “traditional” authority under decentralization (*fiis de terroir*)
 - ☞ Influencing elections
- ◆ Poor local budget (& insufficient devolution)
 - ☞ Looking for resource outside
- ◆ More meaningful to become mayor for politicians

[Figure] Request from the local government association to increase the financial devolution (Photographed by the author, February 2017, Cotonou, Benin)



9

3. Political Impact of Decentralization

3-2. Election under decentralization time

- ◆ Local politics costs higher than before decentralization started.
- ◆ Election of the night: *l'achat de conscience* (buying the spirit)
- ◆ Local govts become more exciting political battlefield.

10

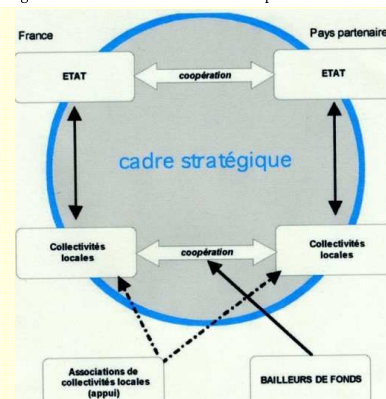
4. Decentralized Cooperation & local politics

4-1. Decentralized cooperation in globalization

- ◆ Decentralization activates local govts' international cooperation.
- ◆ Insufficient financial & technical devolution from central govt to local govts (*communes*)
 - ☞ Looking for foreign local partners to supplement resources to reply residents' requests
 - ☞ Expanding gap btw urban & rural local govt
- ◆ Decentralized cooperation (*coopération décentralisée*) as the second French diplomacy in Africa
 - ☞ *Co-financement*: Financial support to French local govts to conduct their own project in Africa

11

[Figure] Strategic framework of Decentralized Cooperation in French government



Source: *Coopération décentralisée et développement urbain* (2007, 65)

12

4. Decentralized Cooperation & local politics

4-1. Decentralized cooperation in globalization

- ◆ From “traditional” Western local partners [e.g. Cotonou-Crétail/Paris, Abomey-Albi, Ouagadougou-Lyon] to “emerging” Asian (especially Chinese) local partners [Cotonou-Ningbo (China), Ouagadougou-Taipei, Abomey-Gwandju (S.Korea)]
- ◆ (Not only financial) Decentralized cooperation expected as a political resource for local politicians
- ◆ Decentralized cooperation related-associations (*Association des municipalités du Burkina Faso*, *Association nationale des communes du Bénin*) as a political resource machine

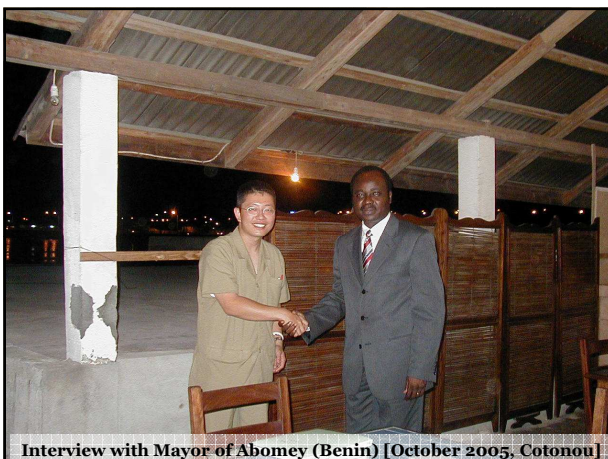
Source: Congress of local governments (Journée des communes burkinabé, December 4, 2007, Ouagadougou), photographed by author

4. Decentralized Cooperation & local politics

4-2. Politicization of decentralized cooperation

- ◆ Revival of traditional (cultural) legacy in local diplomacy
- ◆ Abomey (160km north from Cotonou, the economic capital): Ancient capital of Dahomey Kingdom
- ◆ Mayor (Blaise Glele-Ahanhanzo) as the descendant of Royal family
- ◆ Decentralized cooperation as a political resource
- ◆ Political ambition
Mayor ⇄ President of ANCB ⇄ Minister ⇄ ?
- ◆ Beyond traditional (French & other European) local partners ⇄ Looking for Emerging region (Asia)
Partnership with Korean local govt (Gwandju)
- ◆ Visit of Mayor of Abomey to China (Zibo city)

Tapestry of Kings of Dahomey



Interview with Mayor of Abomey (Benin) [October 2005, Cotonou]



Visit of Mayor of Abomey to the representative of Zibo city, China

Source: Facebook of Mr. Marc Kpatcha, Director of decentralized cooperation at Abomey commune [posted on April 24, 2017]

5. Political Turbulences in Decentralizing Local Governance

5-1. Political impact of decentralization

- ◆ Politicizing local governance in democratization friendly countries
- ◆ Local democracy not in nonlinear process
- ◆ Expanding gap btw urban & rural local govts
⇄ Dissatisfaction among rural leaders & slowing down devolutions in favor of rural local govts
- ◆ Rapid urbanization's influence in local govts
⇄ Capital city becoming the state in state (e.g. Cotonou)
- ◆ Political excitement in the election of mayor & important posts
⇄ Over-politicization of local governance before local development

17

5. Political Turbulences in Decentralizing Local Governance

5-2. Storms of discharge (destitution) of Mayors after local elections

- ◆ Politicized local election & selection of mayor
- ◆ Intertwined situation btw local & national politics
- ◆ Selection of mayor: Mayor selected among commune councilors directly elected in [proportional] election (Introducing French local administration system)
- ◆ Frequent political disputes in commune councils
⇄ Paralyzing local governance

18

5-2. Storms of discharge (destitution) of Mayors after local elections [Benin]

- ◆ Storm of discharge motions against mayors (almost the seasonal political event in Benin)
e.g. 7 mayors (former dominant party, *Force Cauris pour un Bénin Emergent, FCBE*) discharged in Benin in 2016, but not the first time, repeated after each election of 2003, 2008)
- ◆ Unexpected election of President Talon (March 2016) trembled local politics
 - ☞ Tug of war btw Pres. Talon & opposition mayors
- ◆ Pro-Yayi (former President) & Zinsou supporting Mayors were targeted to be discharged
- ◆ Exceptional survival cases (e.g. Ouidah, **Abomey**)

19

5-2. Storms of discharge (destitution) of Mayors after local elections [Burkina Faso]

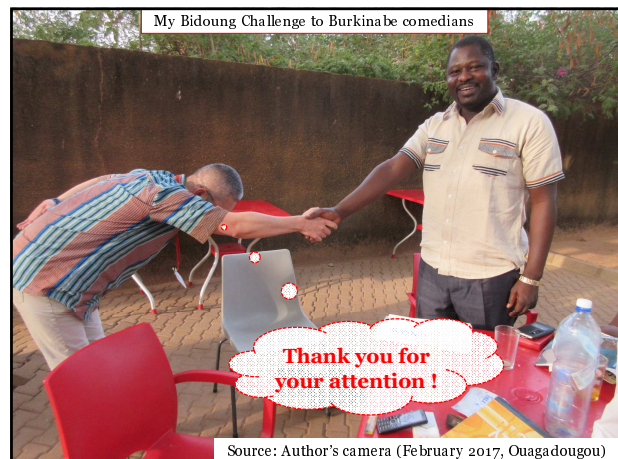
- ◆ Power vacuum after sudden designation of Pres. Compaore (Oct 2014) ☞ Dissolution of commune councils to eradicate Compaore's influence (e.g. Former dominant party, CDP)
- ◆ The first local election in post-Compaore time (May 2016)
 - ☞ Disputes inside local govts after elections.
- ◆ New dominant Party (MPP: Mouvement du peuple pour le progrès) cannot establish comfortable majority in local election.
- ◆ Malfunction of commune council
 - ☞ Discharge of mayor, selection of mayor from minor party
 - ☞ Division even inside the dominant party (e.g. Banfora)
 - ☞ Violent incident after discharge of Mayor (e.g. Ouagadougou)
 - ☞ Reorganization of (partial) election in 19 communes in order to normalize local governance

20

6. Conclusion

- ◆ Focusing on political impact of decentralization from local to national politics
- ◆ Decentralization significantly stimulated & activated local politics
- ◆ Political power from local to state examining politicizing local governance (especially in urban local govts)
- ◆ Rethinking about correlation btw decentralization and democratization
 - ☞ Local politics becoming more focal issue to study the political future in Africa

21



【Bibliography】

- Bierschenk, Thomas. Olivier de Sardan, Jean-Pierre ed. *Les pouvoirs au village: le Bénin rural entre démocratisation et décentralisation*, Paris: Karthala, 1998.
- Boko, Sylvain H. *Decentralization and Reform in Africa*, Massachusetts: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002.
- Dangon, Victor. *La décentralisation au Bénin; Mémoires d'un premier quinquennat*, Cotonou: Tunde, 2009.
- Freedom House, *Freedom in the World* 2016, 2016.
- Gratz, Tilo. *Tanguéta : facette d'histoire et de vie politique d'une commune béninoise à la veille de la décentralisation*, Cotonou: Les Editions du Flamboyant, 2006.
- Iwata, Takuo. *Democratic Transition and Civil Society in Africa*, Tokyo: Kokusai Shoin, 2004. (published in Japanese)
- Iwata, Takuo. *Decentralization and Political Change in Africa (Afurika no Chiho-Bunkenka to Seiji Henyo)*, Kyoto: Koyo Shobo, 2010 (published in Japanese)
- Iwata, Takuo. "Decentralization and Election in Benin," *Insight on Africa* (African Studies Association of India), 3, No.2 (2011): 101-15.

23

- Iwata, Takuo. "Political Sphere of Mayor in the Time of Decentralization," in Kawabata, Masahisa. Ochiai, Takehiko. ed. *Africa and the World (Afurika to Sekai)*, Kyoto: Koyo Shobo, 2012: 144-64. (published in Japanese)
- Iwata, Takuo. "Border and Regional Security in Local Governments' Cooperation in West Africa: Case Studies in Burkina Faso," *Ritsumeikan Annual Review of International Relations*, 15 (2016a): 1-25.
- Iwata, Takuo. "Laughter in Political Transition in Africa," *Ritsumeikan Studies in Language and Culture*, 27/4 (2016b): 133-155.
- Marie, Alain. *La coopération décentralisée et ses paradoxes*, Paris: Karthala, 2005.
- Métodjo, Alain Kisito. *Devenir Maire en Afrique*, Paris: Harmattan, 2008.
- Laleyé, Mouftaou. *Les enjeux économiques de la décentralisation au Bénin*, Cellule d'Analyse de Politique Economique, République du Bénin, 2002.
- Olowu, Dele. Wunsch, James S. *Local Governance in Africa - The Challenges of Democratic Decentralization*, Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2004.
- Saito, Fumihiko ed. *Foundations for Local Governance - Decentralization in Comparative Perspective -*, Heidelberg: Physica-Verlag, 2008.
- Yatta, François Paul. *La décentralisation fiscale en Afrique : Enjeux et perspectives*, Paris: Karthala, 2009.
- World Bank, *Africa's Cities: Opening Doors to the World*, 2017.

24

[website]

Africa No.1 website, "Bénin : vague de destitutions des maires pour 'mauvaise gestion'," <http://www.africa1.com/spip.php?article72030>, September 23, 2016 (accessed December 27, 2016).

Afrique sur 7 website, "Bénin : Patrice Talon fait destituer des Maires de l'Opposition,"

<http://www.afrique-sur7.fr/29405/benin-patrice-talon-fait-destituer-des-maires-de-lopposition>, September 7, 2016 (accessed December 27, 2016).

Aouaga.com website, "Commune de Saponé : les conseillers municipaux de l'UPC et du CDP refusent de siéger,"

<http://news.aouaga.com/h/100139.html>, July 26, 2016 (accessed March 2, 2017).

Bénin monde infos website, "Bénin : le maire d'Abomey, Blaise Ahanhanzo Glèlè sous menace de destitution,"

<http://beninmondeinfos.com/index.php/benin/19-politique/3447-benin-le-maire-d-abomey-blaise-ahanhanzo-glele-sous-menace-de-destitution>, September 14, 2016 (accessed December 30, 2016).

25

Benin Medias website, "Phénomène de destitution des maires au Bénin: L'appel de l'Anch au gouvernement,"

<http://beninmedias.com/news/phenomene-de-destitution-des-maires-au-benin-lappel-de-lanch-au-gouvernement>, (accessed December 27, 2016).

Bénin Web TV website, "Présidentielle 2016 : Une rébellion inquiétante contre Blaise Ahanhanzo à Abomey,"

<http://beninwebtv.com/2016/02/presidentielle-2016-une-rebellion-inquietante-contre-blaise-ahanhanzo-a-abomey>, February 4, 2016 (accessed December 30, 2016).

Bénin Web TV website, "Bénin: destitution en série des maires «anti-Talon»,

<http://beninwebtv.com/2016/09/benin-destitution-serie-maires-anti-talon>, September 1, 2016 (accessed December 30, 2016).

Bénin Web TV website, "Destitution en série des maires : guerre des privilégiés contre Ahanhanzo,"

<http://beninwebtv.com/2016/09/destitution-serie-maires-guerre-privilegies-contre-ahanhanzo>, September 16, 2016 (accessed December 30, 2016).

Bénin Web TV website, "Bénin: le maire Sévérin Adjovi conserve son fauteuil à la tête de la mairie de Ouidah,"

<https://beninwebtv.com/2017/02/benin-vote-de-defiance-a-la-mairie-de-ouidah-severin-adjovi-conserve-son-fauteuil>, February 6, 2017 (accessed February 26, 2017).

26

Le blog de la presse béninoise website, "Elections communales du 28 Juin 2015 : Les résultats communiqués par la CENA,"

<http://pressedubenin.over-blog.com/2015/07/elections-communales-du-28-juin-2015-les-resultats-communiques-par-la-cena.html>, July 16, 2015 (accessed December 27, 2016).

Burkina24 website, "Burkina : Les élections municipales partielles prévues pour le 28 mai 2017,"

<https://burkina24.com/2017/03/01/burkina-les-elections-municipales-partielles-prevues-pour-le-28-mai-2017>, March 1, 2017 (accessed March 2, 2017).

Burkina24 website, "Burkina : Les élections municipales partielles prévues pour le 28 mai 2017,"

<https://burkina24.com/2017/03/01/burkina-les-elections-municipales-partielles-prevues-pour-le-28-mai-2017>, March 1, 2017 (accessed March 2, 2017).

Burkina24 website, "Arrondissement n° 8 de Ouaga : Après la destitution du maire, les machettes ont parlé,"

<http://burkina24.com/2016/12/07/arrondissement-n8-de-ouaga-apres-la-destitution-du-maire-les-machettes-ont-parle>, December 7, 2016 (accessed March 6, 2017).

27

Burkina24 website, "Arrondissement n° 8 : Ce qui est reproché à l'ancien maire Mahamadi Zongo,"

<https://burkina24.com/2016/12/10/arrondissement-n8-ce-qui-est-reproche-a-lancien-maire-mahamadi-zongo>, December 10, 2016 (accessed March 6, 2017).

Burkina24 website, "Municipales 2017 : Les résultats provisoires des 19 communes,"

<https://burkina24.com/2017/05/29/municipales-2017-les-resultats-provisoire-des-19-communes>, May 29, 2017 (accessed June 7, 2017).

Burkina24 website, "Municipales partielles à Bobo-Dioulasso : Le MPP se taille la part du lion à Dandé,"

<https://burkina24.com/2017/05/31/municipales-partielles-a-bobo-dioulasso-le-mpp-se-taille-la-part-du-lion-a-dande>, May 31, 2017 (accessed June 7, 2017).

Contrepoints website, "Bénin : pour un encadrement de la destitution des maires,"

<https://www.contrepoints.org/2016/10/20/269442-benin-encadrement-de-destitution-maires>, October 20, 2016 (accessed December 27, 2016).

Le fasonet, "Mairie de Saponé : Vers une dissolution du conseil municipal ?,"

<http://lefaso.net/spip.php?article75760>, February 14, 2017 (accessed March 2, 2017).

28

Informateur website, "Destitution des maires au Bénin : Ouidah, une ville plus que spécifique,"

<http://www.linformateurbenin.info/destitution-des-maires-au-benin-ouidah-une-ville-plus-que-specifique>, February 14, 2017 (accessed February 26, 2017).

Informateur website, "Guerre au conseil communal de Ouidah : La justice pour trancher,"

<http://www.linformateurbenin.info/guerre-au-conseil-communal-de-ouidah-la-justice-pour-trancher>, February 15, 2017 (accessed February 26, 2017).

Le Monde website, "Elections communales au Bénin : Boni Yayi n'est ni mort ni enterré," http://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2015/07/20/elections-communales-au-benin-boni-yayi-n-est-ni-mort-ni-enterrer_4690940_3212.html, July 20, 2015 (accessed December 27, 2016).

La nouvelle tribune website, "Abomey : Blaise Ahanhanzo-Glèlè reprend les rênes de la cité des Houégbadjavis,"

<http://www.lanouvelletribune.info/benin/politique/24846-abomey-blaise-ahanhanzo-glele-reprend-les-renes-de-la-cite-des-houegbadjavis>, July 30, 2015 (accessed December 30, 2016).

29