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Traditional Chiefs and Decentralization in the Region of Tahoua in Niger

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The initiative could solve the excessive centralization of government powers in African countries. In order to understand the decentralization process in Niger, we should not only refer to the democratic context but also we should understand certain historical facts. Besides the context of democracy, it should be noted that the claims of the armed rebellion (1989) based on federalism have led to peace agreements, in the October 9, 1994 and April 24, 1995 between the organization of armed resistance (ORA) and the Government of Niger, to adopt decentralization as a form of governance. The option is a full communalisation by changing the townships (sedentary and area nomadic) in commune status. The communes are headed by an elected mayor. The logic is to make these structures as real poles of local development. But in the same way and during a long time at the head of same township there is a leader who administered his people according to traditional mode. This two kind of powerful can create a social conflict if some rules are not defined. I am interested to region of Tahoua, particularly the two urban communes.

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I. Introduction

Since the independence of Niger, each government needs to involve the population achievements development. From Diori Hamani, Niger's first president - 1960 the August 03 to April 15, 1974- to now, each one tried to organize the people in the national development process. Although, the contents of the mobilization and approach differ from one system to another, it leads to the same result: the ability to organize local people within the structures of their own where they can decide about their own affairs but according to the logic of administrative supervision.

This kind of organisation was named decentralization. But it is important to note that despite the ambition engaged by both of political authorities since the independence; the implementation of decentralization has been taking a long time. The five successive constitutions have all endorsed the principle.

In 1962, were created district councillors, whom in reality had little power because Niger country is belong on a single party (see Law 61-50 of 31 December 1961, according to the organization of local governments that builds the old unit circles and subdivisions from territorial constituencies in the colonization and the Law 64-023 of 17 July 1964, establishing administrative districts and local authorities who organized the country into departments, districts and communes).

Except the reform of territorial administration under General Seyni KOUNTCHE (April 15, 1974-november 1987), the decentralization process was stalled until the National Conference in 1991. From this time (order of March 27, 1992) an institutional high commission for administrative reform and decentralization has been created. The work done by the members of this institution result in a report dealing with four main issues: the territorial division, the principle of decentralized management, community resources and future stages of implementation. After a hiatus from 1996 to 1999 due to a military coup, the process is start only under the Fifth Republic. The option chosen by the government with the help of donors is communalisation.

The Niger territory is divided into 266 municipalities, (Law No. 2002/012 of 11 June 2002 which determines the basic principles of the free administration of regions, departments and communes). This division was based on custom entity, the township which has itself been divided geographically by a number of villages. On the basis was held the election of the 266 communes on July 24, 2004, officially proclaimed by the Constitutional Court on August 5, 2004.

This act is the recognition of new communes by citizens. But the implementation of the process provokes reactions and protests as noted ZANGAOU Moussa "these reactions are both positive and negative. They relate to all people leaving the region. (....) Heads are, in the districts, very active in these series of challenges. "

In this paper, we try to understand, what has happened according to the relationship between traditional authorities and new mayors in the Region of Tahoua particularly in the urban commune. Which solution could find different actors?

II. A Problem

Most African states, since the early of the 1990 years, were engaged in institutional reform including

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decentralization because "*the initiative and the implementation of these reforms are based on a number of assumptions relating to the nature and the function of postcolonial states*"(Elsa ,2003). They are supposed to perform all the functions devolved to them but apparently their centralized management is a barrier as noted by Albert TEVODJRE, "*a centralized state has a heavy bureaucracy which annihilates any initiative at the base*" (TEVODJRE, 1978). But for Kadre Desire OUEDRAGO, we should look about the context of the birth of the African state. Because he said that "*the African state is the product of a double misunderstanding, a state built on the basis of ulterior thoughts"* (OUEDRAGO, 2001). According to the synthesis of these theories we understand that the African state refers not only to its past history, i.e. the time of kingdoms but also its contact with the colonization system. Then Kadre Desire OUEDRAGO concludes that "*ultimately, none could annihilate each other, and the post-colonial African state continues to coexist with the colonial legacy and the traditional*" (OUEDRAGO, 2001). That is why this misunderstanding of the essence of the African state which partly explains its central character that blocks any development initiative at the local level. In this case, the aim of decentralization is to correct this problem and to include the African state as Niger's country in the concert of developed nations.

In Niger, the implementation of decentralization process does not only point to the above mentioned fact but also in its relation to certain historical facts. *The macro sociological* (OUEDRAGO,2001*)* context is marked by the political pluralism opened by the speech of the Baule with the holding of the Sovereign National Conference and the claim of the armed rebellion in the northern part of Niger where uranium and other natural resources are operated based on federal arrangement. This claim has led to peace agreements, on 9 October 1994 and 24 April 1995 between the organization of the Resistance Army (ORA) and the Government of Niger, which state that the Republic of Niger is divided into administrative districts which are Region, Department, District and commune (High Commissioner for administrative reform and decentralization, Final Report on the administrative division of the Republic of Niger, in January 1996).

Since then, the Niger government, with the support of donors, has being working in creating communes. Proposals and laws were adopted and promulgated culminating with the holding of municipal elections on the 24 July 2004. "*The legislative framework of this administrative reform is based on the communalization of all the headquarters of cantons (fee the customary chiefs sedentary) and certain groups (nomads)"* (HAHOUNOU, 2002*).*

In this case, the Law 2002/012 of 11 June 2002 is the reference of this reform which determines the fundamental principles of free administration of regions, counties and municipalities taking into account the administrative authority that characterizes the state of Niger. However at the present time, the scheme only applies to the municipal level with the creation of 266 municipalities including 52 urban and 214 rural, each with a headed by a mayor who chairs the council. "*The aim is to transfer the decision-making powers of the central government to local level*" (HAHOUNOU, 2002). The objective is to promote good governance at local level. This approach is called the normative theories of decentralization. According to this view; "*decentralization could be considered as a necessary condition for improving the planning and implementation of development"* (OUEDRAGO, 2001). But if we observe the various theories involved, you realize of course that it is diffusion. This character of diffusions postulates that the progress realized in modern societies (western) must extend in the society through a process of diffusion of consumer products, technology, mode of behaviour, short of the institutions. But when you observe at a practical level, you realize of course that the different reaction of the component of the Niger society is a source of concern for a success of the process. Four years later, the decentralization in Niger which is consider being a transfer of skills and resources from central level of the state to municipalities, is akin "*to a transfer of a pyramid of problems"(*ADJI,2008*)*. Elected people and citizens of the 266 municipalities in the country cannot become familiar with the process. The reform coupled with the administrative division, citizen can't distinguish the electoral circumscription with the local collectivity. The communes of Tahoua are not an exception to the rule. In this case, Zangaou Moussa, citing Nahiou Mamoudou, reported that "*in the congress, representatives of traditional chiefs have called this process of decentralization and a hasty readjustment of communalisation unbridled*." *At the same meeting, some from the region of Tahoua nomadic dominance has even rejected all the results of the redistricting commission* (ZANGAOU, 2002).

In the same way, in order to find a response to decentralization system particularly in its disruption of the existing system, civil society via the association of pastures from the north region of Tahoua have queried about impacts of communalization on the lifestyle and the natural areas of the pastures. By the fact, pastoralism and communalization evoked two opposite systems of social organization, which are economic and political respectively. Communalization will create two problems for transhumant pastoralists:

- The redefinition of their space of belonging
- Investment and other subsidies for the State in the context of the communalization.

Only the determination of legal rules will resolve this problem which generates reactions, because for nomads the space is open and infinite.

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It is clearly there are some problems in the implementation of the decentralization process which must be analyse. The traditional chief want to conserve their powerful but the new mayors should work about modern logic according to the supervision authority. In this case how to harmonise the different views?

III. Methodology

In order to report an analytical study, we firstly conduct a review of literature, identify the main concepts in the second part and third the aims and the objectives of the study.

IV. Review of Literature

In the implementation of development programs of African countries including Niger, governments have adopted mechanisms for development according to the situation of the moment (from the proclamation of the republic to now). Capitalist or socialist programs through structural adjustment program, they managed to achieve decentralization as a way of managing the local power by creating databases of a national development. But between theory and practice, there are steps to be crossed. It never once crossed would make the wish. Precisely, in this step, an extensive literature exists for this purpose. We shall do the synthesis of the latter in order to identify the theories involved. Thus, our literature review is structured around the following central themes:

- Decentralization and democracy;
- Decentralization and development;
- Decentralization and the socio-historical
- Decentralization and Issues
- Decentralization and Challenges:

a) Decentralization and Democracy

Speaking about of the relationship between decentralization and democracy, Jean POIRIER, (2001), note that decentralization policies have occurred one or two decades are presented as a more democratic because it is actually a consequence of the serious deficiencies that represent all the schemes Democracy in the West because they are too often unaware of the specifics and values of African societies. The author focuses on a particular aspect. Whoever is to consider the socio-economic development of Africa in the implementation of decentralization? For him, if the content is not appropriate to the context, needs and specific potential of society to decentralize, it is likely to become an additional element of instability, or simply be unnecessary. This overcomes a concept of decentralization Universalist improperly or functionalist.

The interest of this study lies in the fact that it not only refers the decentralization in a democratic context, but also recommended to take account of specific society to decentralize.

Rene OTAYECK, (1999), meanwhile, in a study on "democracy protests between identity and state needs. There is there an "African exception? »Asks about the crucial question in relation to decentralization in Africa. He said the decentralization of the state, it means the divestiture of the center of its regulatory functions and distribution, and transfer of certain powers of the most crucial, according to the credo of donors funds, represent a major strand of the institutional reconstruction of the State in Africa?

For this author, is certainly required but decentralize state must remain a strong state because civil society has not reached a high degree of maturity, but also it is a great risk of leaving the management to fully local officials inadequately prepared for the tasks of command.

The analysis is interesting by the fact that the reform to be successful must be supported by an awakened civil society and local officials can ensure that their work. It is not the case in Niger because the country that has just begun the experience in 2004. Nevertheless, the game is worth the candle. But the term "strong state" should not encroach on the part of the administrative supervision because it must remain the reference in the conduct of any administrative action.

All these authors make their analysis according to the relationship between democracy and democracy. Certainly it must have a democratic system in order to claim a local election (which does not exist in states of emergency) but they do not show how democracy should strengthen decentralization at the base. Therefore with regard to democratic progress in African countries must emphasize the need to involve local people in managing state affairs. Involve local people requires the involvement of this important population in our countries in the development process through appropriate institutional mechanisms. To this reflection, we must add those about the relation between decentralization and development.

b) Decentralization and Development

Dele Olowu, (2001), after having identified the three major steps that have characterized the decentralization shows that only a polycentric government is likely to promote decentralization. In this perspective, it reveals that decentralization is linked to the ability to consolidate the socio-economic ties within local communities witch have a defined territorial basis. His study concludes by noting that development, democracy and decentralization are linked because the development in the context of decentralization is seen as expanding the economic and social democracy. This study are interested for our paper because, it emphasizes the fact that decentralization is to consider the initiatives of local people to recognize their rights to

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use resources which would enable them to participate in defining and implementation of development policies. In another sense, Albert TEVODJERE, (1978) shows that decentralization is intended firstly to provide communities with basic villagers, for example, full power to ensure all issues of local interest. He further notes that the municipalities as basic units for planning contribute to the development and implementation of the strategy development and regionalization plan. This study is also interested in the sense that the author places the local people especially women as actors for local development.

All these authors consider decentralization as an engine of local development, but they do not really show how local people really need to be involved in the process of development.

According to the connotations given to development in our societies, we must simultaneously placing decentralization in the development perspective to redefine the meaning of the conception of development. It will not be question about approach distance of local cultures in the development process. It must be adopted in our societies, an alternative approach that places in a central position the cultural environment, whether the city or village and focuses on individuals and their participation. Ultimately, it is through in the implementation of local development, to know who can answer the following questions. Who should be asking? What are the unconditional positive, negative fans, and intermediaries? Consideration of this principle is fundamental to the success of decentralization in our states but not enough. It should be completed by the contribution according to the relation between decentralization and the socio-historical values.

c) Decentralization and the Socio-Historical Values

According to this relationship, Jean GUILLEMIN, (1984), notes that rural areas which represent in most cases more than 80% of the population of African states in the south of the Sahara remain attached to their tradition. By education and tradition, rural structures respect traditional customary. For this population, the modern administration issue from the settlement is mostly abstract and it is difficult for us to understand it. But, the traditional chief collaborator of t this administration appears to them not only more accessible but also better able to understand their particular problems because they are familiarly with them.

This study is interested in the sense that it focuses on the reaction of rural population face to modern structures.

This reaction proves that any reform on the environment must reflect this balance of power. In addition to this reflection, MALAM Souley (1984), in a study of political sociology of Touareg in Niger shows that local elites have a real power; their subjects are still with them especially they represent the tradition and they know about people situation.

This study is interesting by the fact it encourage to respects not only the role of local elites in Niger but also it explain the role of values to be respected when a State engaged reforms in the direction of the local population.

In conclusion, Eric Komlavi, Hahonou, in a study of traditional leaders and the decentralization project in a west locality of Niger, stresses the importance of traditional authorities in their subject but also how they are rehabilitated meet new reforms. He also note that the leaders are brokers institutionalized for the government and para public one. For him, to access to justice is a good example of the strategic position occupied by the leadership in resolving internal affairs. He tells us a fact that he was told..... *For example if stolen made by someone, the victim cannot come directly go to the police station to complain. He will go to his chief. The other sends it to the cluster head. ... The cluster head will touch the competent authority.... Nomad does not come directly to the administration or the gendarmerie. He always has a support.... Through is the guide. He is indispensable..... He knows the administration even if he has not done school.*

This example emphasized the antagonism between the leaders and their citizens, because for him in order to make affair easy, it becomes complicated. He concluded by saying that despite the redistribution of the political, traditional leaders have in the local arenas central and hegemonic positions of power that, they do not intend to lose. The interest of this study is that it places the traditional authorities in their area in a strategic position.

It is clearly that, these authors in their analyze are favorable to respect the traditional authorities and local people reactions according to any reform, but we insist that any reform, any action towards the public must take account of socio-historical values, because developers cannot get away with the entire arsenal of a socio-cultural society in order to impose their own vision of development.

So, decentralization must respect its values because it has a lot of issues.

d) Decentralization and Issues

Relating about the issue of decentralization in African countries, Raogo Antoine Sawadogo, observe that the African state is centralized. The aim of decentralization is to correct that anomaly. He said the current conception of African state does not correspond to reality. It is not comparable to other states, because there isn't a national consciousness of citizens. He also emphasizes that it never had sufficient means to

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accomplish its mission by fostering public support and the emergence of a citizen behaviour.

For him, it must rebuild the post-colonial state. We can analyze about the situation of African societies and institutions in place, analyze also the problems in the short, medium and long term in order to identify and establish the foundations for a viable and sustainable. In other words, we must take into account the situation of African societies in order to create the basis for real development to meet the aspirations of the people.

Another study on the issues of decentralization is reported by Michel Bassard and al.1984, in a study on housing policy in Switzerland including the need for municipalities to implement a policy of social housing. The authors note that it has as purpose to overcome the negative consequences of economic policy in housing, characterized by the gradual abolition until 1970 for control and monitoring of rent. According to these authors, the common focusing on public assistance to social housing, it is therefore for her to increase the number of accessible housing for people on low incomes particularly the elderly and large families should be the main beneficiaries of such housing.

To this end, incentives for building housing mainly financial are adopted. They are lowering rents by about 30 percent while allowing owners to get a rental yield normal.

These authors by considering the values of return on capital invested in such operations on the one hand, and control conditions set to get public assistance, on the other hand, believe that the motivations of the actors and encouraged to attend this action will be more social and economic policy. In addition, the active participation of municipal authorities to implement federal policy depends on the local political dynamics or between local councils.

This study applied even in part in our municipalities is very important when you know how the problem of housing in towns and villages dominated by traditional property land. We need in our towns and villages to adopt a social housing capable of securing most vulnerable in the society.

e) Decentralization and Challenges

Decentralization as an administrative system of management but also a kind of planning development activities for the government is not apply in the same way. It can be different from one country to another, from one political regime to another, but also from a constitution to another. What is applied in Niger is not apply in a country which has opted capitalism, socialism or communism system. In this case, Niger's constitution notes in its articles 127 and 128 that "The territorial administration based on the principles of decentralization and deconcentration. Local governments are created by an organic law. The law determines the fundamental principles of the free administration of local government, skills and resources. (Article 127). The State shall ensure the harmonious development of all local authorities on the basis of national solidarity, regional potentials and equilibrium inter - regional. (Article 128). "

In addition, Niger was a French colony did not suddenly opt for its own model of development. All policies initiated have reference to the metropolis. This situation proves the originality of the study compared to other models of development. In this context, the country should apply not only to its constitution but also its administration in the comity of developed nations. The adoption of decentralization is one of these pathways. It must implement a public administration capable of challenges based on priorities.

In this case, IRA SHARKANSKY, speaking about public administration, noted that the administrative staffs belong to the government. The quality of the population affects the quality of government. Also, the author defined the public administrators. According to one view, all people who work for the government are public administrators. As, another conception, the administrators are those who administer or manage other employees.

About public policy, the author notes that public policies are important decisions of government. For specialists in political science and public administration, the study of public administration offers the opportunity to integrate their interests in government and politics with the study of how it is made.

In this context, the budget in the context of the administration, he said that he is not simply a tool of government. He underwent stages of planning, compilation and review at the executive and legislative branches, and its implementation regularly extends over 28 months for each fiscal year.

The author also wondered why the budget is established and how it is established. Several perspectives can be envisaged to these two questions. A specialist in economics could say that we establish a budget to save money, or to maintain existing resources according to their importance. In other words, it must establish priorities based on needs.

A political scientist might accept this definition of economists with scepticism. Appreciating the struggles for power that is still raging in and around the government, the political scientist can say that the budget is established to maintain the score, or show what interests has gained or lost in the establishment of a budget. Political scientist thinks more in terms of conflict in the budgeting process.

A specialist in public administration in turn may differ somewhat from both economists and political scientist, adding the perspective of organizational integration and accountability. For policy, budgeting is a great opportunity to define how the government will

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have to do to protect the important details of the image of his commitment.

The budget is an opportunity for politicians to send signals to their protagonist: more money for programs that are highly valued and for those less favored by the opposition. Also in the context of the administration, the author notes that Roberto Michels, organization and management are inevitable to ensure consistent management of public affairs. But for Max Weber, who is a prolific writer, whose essays have covered a wide range of geographical and historical time through ancient China with his German contemporary, we rather describe the main modes of power that exist in organizations Based on its scheme of the ideal type of bureaucracy.

The major contribution of Max Weber to the study of public administration is its description of the ideal bureaucracy. By the ideal, Weber does not desirable. For him, an ideal type is the archetype or the pure manifestation of the bureaucracy.

The Weberian model of bureaucracy has shaped much of what has been written on the bodies, since his time. This is an image of a specialized staff; each working in a narrow segment of the business organization, making decisions based on detailed manuals of procedures, and communicates with colleagues based solely on the official channel command. But this model is not the best one. This is a design that can be rehabilitated in different contexts.

It is clear that the theory developed here refers to developed countries have either opted for federalism and capitalism. The interest of this study for us is that it places the human resources related to their activity in a process of finding a business model capable of meeting the challenges that an administration has fixed. There is no predetermined plan or theories. Therefore, in seeking to describe or explain the structures of government, there is no single organization theory predominates.

A quick overview of these writings reveals that decentralization as an institutional reform is depend on a democratic system and has provoke reactions. For the political (government-developers-donors), it is to promote a new dynamic in the management of state affairs by empowering local people. But according to our analysis, we claim that the success of such reform must not only be within a democratic context, but also the logic of developers must not supplant the local realities. We need the feedback and social values are taken into consideration so that development does not remain as advocated in its theoretical context, but a reality because the government rarely takes into account the cultural factor when developing policy. Because cultural mix that characterizes Africa; various factors including religious, linguistic, cultural and social concerns should be taken into account when drafting the general policy of the government. This can be done by allowing local people to have their own local representatives who would serve as their liaison with the central government.

This is what can be learning about our literature review. In order to situate our study, we must identify the main concepts because it is very important to understand, what we want to do.

V. Conceptual Approach

a) Decentralization

The concept of decentralization has been the subject of much analysis. Several authors have attempted to define the concept. In the Concise Oxford Dictionary (1983), Decentralization is defined as an act of decentralizing some powers to local communities, spread across an entire country governments, industries, organizations, etc.., which were grouped into a same direction. This is a nominal definition. It does not allow us to characterize the concept of decentralization, because decentralization is a multidimensional process. Some kinds of typologies have been developed by researchers. The first typology established by Rondinelli in 1981 and repeated in all studies of the 1980s, distinguished between the concepts of decentralization, delegation, devolution and privatization. In 1995, Parker adopted the typology of Rondinelli and proposes to reduce to 3 the concepts included from the concept of "decentralization". First, it excludes privatization defined as the transfer to the private sector tasks formerly carried out by the state, partly because it involves a transfer of decisions outside of public systems and, secondly, because private enterprises newly competent in size Large in Africa. Secondly, it excludes the functional delegation to others agencies apart government since it was rarely initiated or when it was, fail to facilitate the implementation of a real transfer of decision making. Therefore, the three forms of decentralization used are: administrative decentralization, and fiscal policy.

b) The Administrative Dimension

It is a redistribution of administrative responsibilities of the top level of the hierarchy of the central state to its lower levels, mostly through geographical dispersion of state agents.

c) The Budgetary Dimension

Fiscal decentralization is a dual phenomenon and is defined as "the delegation of taxing powers and expenditure commitment at lower levels of the administration." It involves first, an advance sharing of fiscal resources and, secondly, a division of accounts and functions between central and local governments.

d) The Political Dimension

Democratic decentralization is defined as the simultaneous transfer of power and resources to authorities largely independent of central government and democratic in some respects. For MANOR (1998),

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decentralization can be considered democratic in the following cases:

1. Local officials (mayor, councillors) are directly or indirectly elected by secret ballot;
2. Local communities involved in the management of local affairs, not through the vote, but by work supervisors. This review generally informal, however, is considered less powerful than the electoral control;
3. Local institutions are making efforts to learn about people's needs. This can result for example, by establishing local committees to boost popular participation, organize and coordinate community involvement in development projects.

The main originality and strength of this type of decentralization is to make local officials responsible face to their electors. But, populations, with a limited transfer of skills and resources, the expected effectiveness of local governments are compromised. This is why decentralization should be considered from three angles: administrative, fiscal and democratic in order to provide financial and bureaucratic resources and population control is exercised over local institutions.

In Niger, the official documents, characterized as devolution of power by the state to territorial entities existing or new (there were 35 municipalities under devolution). It is conditioned by the existing of five (5) essential elements:

1. A significant portion of the territory with clear boundaries;
2. A legal personality of public law;
3. An own elected bodies: a deliberative and an executive body;
4. Local Affairs sensible to express the needs of local residents, the general affairs of the executive branch of the State;
5. Guardianship with subsequent verification done by representatives of central government on the actions and those of local authorities.

In this case, Idi DAOUDA civil administrator and Director of the High Commissioner for administrative reform and decentralization (UNHCR / D) at the time said that, "decentralization in Niger is a technique which consists of administrative management was transferred to entities legally recognized that other State, a number of powers to independently manage their own affairs.

There is a territorial decentralization for local government and technical decentralization for specialist public institutions In the case of Niger, in addition to existing communes, the government has set up further by transforming the cantons in commune and in some cases villages retained after the redistricting of 1996.

e) The Township

A township is the traditional socio-political organization that prevailed at the base in Niger since the days of the kingdoms. It includes a number of villages and a population in a located area like Tahoua for example. It is administer by a traditional chief. This chief have a court composed of notable, griot, wise men, which help him to accomplish his mission and the mode of succession is by lineage. The traditional chief has a reputation indisputable from his population level which worships responding to the virtues of ancient traditions. But now this township is transformed as a commune with elected mayor. So that, there are some problems which must be analysed in this study.

f) Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to relate the different position of actors involved in the process of decentralisation in the region of Tahoua, particularly in the two urban communes. About the objectives, we try to improve how to harmonize the different views according to the administrative supervision because our reference in this study is ideal bureaucracy for Max Weber and the role of social values from Raogo Antoine Sawadogo.

VI. Geographical Context and Human

a) Presentation of Niger

Niger is a landlocked country in Western part of Africa, sharing border with Nigeria and Benin to the south, with Mali and Burkina Faso to the west, with Algeria and Libya to the north and Chad to the east. Niger is the largest nation in West Africa with an area of about 1,267,000 km2; also, the population of Niger is estimated at about 15,000,000.

Niger is a developing country with over 80% of its territory covered by the Sahara desert. The economy is concentrated around the subsistence and some export agricultural and of natural resources especially uranium. Niger remains handicapped by its landlocked position, poor education, infrastructure, healthcare, and environmental degradation. Since independence, Nigeriens have lived under six constitutions and five periods of military rule, but have maintained elected multiparty rule since 1999. A vast majority of the population lives in rural areas, and has little access to advanced education. Niger is divided into 7 regions and a capital district, Niamey; the regions are subdivided into 36 departments. As of 2006 the 36 departments are splitted into 266 communes. There are 52 communes' urbaines (urban communes) and 214 communes' rurales (rural communes).

In Niger, the process of decentralization follows the socio-political history of the country. The process of decentralization has started with a law which was passed on 1st December 1961. Since then the process of decentralization has undergone many changes, the 1961 law was amended later with the 1964 Act, which itself underwent a process of reform since 1996. Finally, it was the full communalization of the chief-town of

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canton (stronghold of the customary chiefs sedentary) and certain groups (nomads) was the legislative framework of the reform. Under this framework, the government organized the local elections on 24 July 2004 and was the starting point of decentralization. But between theory and practice, there are realities to be taken into account according to the several logics.

b) The Region of Tahoua

i. *General Data*

As we said, this study, related the relations with characterize traditional chiefs with the new mayors in the decentralization process. It should be noted that part of the region of Tahoua is composed with 8 departments, 9 urban communes and 32 rural communes (*cf. Acts 2002-014/2002-015/2002-016 of 11 June 2002 and the laws 98-30 / 98-031 of September 14, 1998).*

The Metropolitan Tahoua is located in the heart of the Republic of Niger in the region whose name it bears. It is distant some 550 km from the capital Niamey. Covering an area whose radius varies between 10 and 19 km, the Metropolitan Tahoua has a population estimated in 2009 to 73,002 habitants. This population, mainly composed of agro-pastoralists is distributed in 20 districts in urban areas and 7 administrative villages, and semi urban .The urban center is characterized by a core old with a high concentration of population and housing the extension zones Most of the buildings and infrastructure.

The local economy is mainly based on agriculture, livestock, handicrafts and trade. The poor performance of these sectors our valiant people forced to live in poverty like the other cities in the country. More than 70% of the population lives below the poverty line. Economic activity is characterized by:

- Agriculture subject to unfavourable weather conditions in the absence of surface water and deep groundwater.
- A huge traditional breeding
- A small business sector organization and Crafts
- Unemployment and underemployment of youth.
- However, the Metropolitan Tahoua has many strengths and potentials that are:
- The availability of developable land
- Significant reserves of groundwater quality
- The existence of numerous infrastructure and facilities (markets, banks, roads, paved roads, telephone system, water companies and electricity, health services, etc ...)
- The existence of a minimum equipment hygiene and sanitation
- The existence of a network of supply and distribution of drinking water in urban areas and boreholes and wells in some outlying villages and hamlets
- The presence of an abundant labour and cheap
- The presence of numerous technical and public and private institutions.

ii. *Organizational Context and Institutional*

The Metropolitan Tahoua is one of four (4) urban communities in the country. It is established by law 98 32 and 2002-016 establishing the organization and functioning.

After the local elections held on June 24, 2004, installation of new elected authorities intervened in February 2005. The Metropolitan Tahoua is composed of two (2) urban municipalities. Each municipality has an urban council chaired by the mayor assisted by two (2) members elected from the councillors. Metropolitan Tahoua headquartered housed the town hall also has a council consisting of fifteen (15) and four councillors elected law councillors (2 representatives of traditional chiefs and 2 national deputies). This council is the governing of the urban community. It is headed by a president supported by two (2) Vice Presidents, all elected from among the managing directors of two (2) urban communes.

The chairman of the Metropolitan Tahoua's mission is to conduct municipal politics therefore responsible for implementing council decisions municipal. He relies on municipal services (ninety (84) agents including six (6) frames), the decentralized services, civil society and traditional leaders to implement development programs and daily management of the municipality.

The financial resources of the Metropolitan Tahoua came from:

- Taxes and direct and indirect taxes
- Compensatory tax
- Income domain and Heritage
- Products Property Disposition
- Other products and exceptional resources
- Borrowings
- Donations and bequests

But in this new administration, we should note that in this town coexists a traditional power whose origin dates back to the settlement of the area.

iii. *The Traditional Chiefs*

About the settlement of the town of Tahoua and installation of traditional leaders, we can consider the statement of Mr. Abdul Ouhou Dodo, currently Chairman of the Metropolitan on his interview by Issaka Saidou from Sahel newspaper of Sunday n°1335, which is a Niger weekly, 10 April 2009, saying that around the 17th century that two groups of hunters created what later became the city of Tahoua.

These two groups of hunters are Fakaoua to east and west Bilbissaoua. In those days, Tahoua was a collection of huts of hunters and farming hamlets. Heads of Tahoua were called "Maggagi" (meaning mayor). They were assisted in their duties by a council

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of elders composed of a priestess and seven (7) officials. The first "Maggagi" of Tahoua was Gardo Dari.

Around 1674, all the principalities of the Tahoua region fell under the tutelage of Sarkin Darey (regional supreme authority), against Aggaba. And it is from this time that the region took the name of Ader. Illéla is capital in 1733. It would be headed by a""Maggagi enjoying a relative autonomy. The supreme power was exercised by Illéla will now proceed with the appointment of "Maggagi" Tahoua. In 1900, the colonial administration moved to Tahoua. It is going to build the city into a township and the first Chief was Tankari. From the beginning of the twentieth century is the dynasty of Salifou Galabi will be the primary holder of the throne. Since then several leaders have succeeded at the head of the chiefdom of Tahoua, who's current Mahamadou Elhadj Moussa, who took over in 2007. The current chief, Moussa Elhadj Mahamadou is assisted in his duties by the local chiefs and village chiefs.

It must be remembered; in general the traditional chief in Niger has been regulated since independence. It is regulated by the Law No. 64-23 of July 17, 1964, establishing administrative districts and local governments and modifying texts and subsequent Ordinance No. 93-28 of 30 March 1993 on the status of traditional chiefs of the Niger which makes her as a collaborator of Niger administration. But with the decentralization process, observers agree that, this role has to be replaced by the presence of a municipal council at the county level which is converted into commune.

This duality of power could be a source of conflict as a conflict of culture (democratic culture - succession by lineage)? How about interaction in a society undergoing democratization?

VII. Analysis of a Confrontation with a Duality of Power in Administrative Entity

a) *Decentralisation and Traditional Authorities' Reaction*

The implementation of decentralization in Niger has been marked by various reactions including from some Niger actors in society in general and particularly in the urban commune of Tahoua. If in other localities (Bankillare in western Niger, for example) reactions relate to challenges about the location of the town at the Metropolitan Tahoua, we try to understand their reaction according to the new reform because they have strategic position in Niger society as an institution of government in Niger. What can we learn about?

The answer to this question is related first to the history of the chief and second to social considerations. In Niger, Souleymane ABBA note, "*the traditional leadership is a key institution in the power structure of pre-colonial administration"* (ABBA, 1990). This means that the leadership was in business before the arrival of settlers. With this arrival, it was used in performing the work as auxiliaries of the colonial administration and benefit with advantage about their function.

Also, in this sense, Salifou ANDRE notes that "the chief is the representative, the running of the administrative authority; he is the only representative and accountable to the community over which he is placed". (ANDRE,1989).

The role and place of these authorities did not profoundly changed even with the attainment of political independence so that the different authorities which govern them have been adopted texts in order to regulate them. Souleymane ABBA qualifies them as "*a"political issues"and"an electoral machine,"because for him, "being in good terms with it, you win any election."*(ABBA, 1990). A simple fact of political life in Niger shows that all regimes have used.

Currently, traditional chiefs are governed by the constitution of October 31, 2010 which defines the status of the traditional chiefs of the regulations implementing this order and ministerial orders.

This brief history of our traditional leadership proves that the reaction of these authorities is a sense to maintain their power begun since long time.The existence of the elected mayor may appear as a kind of duality of power in any entity and can be detrimental to the symbolism that the leader in its area of governance.

In this case, we can talk about of a malfunction occurred in a system established since pre-colonial times. For example in the two townships of the urban community of Tahoua, traditional leaders are responsible for collecting the poll tax which is 700 CFA francs ($ 1.4) per person taxed in their locality over the collection of taxes on the steps insured by their relatives.

By making an accumulation with the number of the total population and the rate of poll tax in the two cantons, the two traditional authorities could collect annually for example around 51,101,400 CFA francs ($ 102,202).

By doing that, they are entitled to material and social benefits as provided by sections 26, 27,28,29,30 of Ordinance No. 93-028 of 30 March 1993 according to the status of traditional chiefs in Niger. Others social benefit witch are no less important that, for any conflict between the villagers within the township must spend in court before the Chief of referring to an administrative authority (police or justice) and even in the case, we must go before an administrative authority, belligerents will be accompanied by representatives of the traditional authority.

Also, the movement of these traditional authorities in the villages forming areas of the township are celebrated with pomp by the local people. It is clearly that the desire to elect a mayor in such a situation even if it is according to logic of development its presence might be likened to a dualism and a

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disruption of an old order. Although with decentralization, traditional chiefs is a member of law in the advisory council, the new mayors should know how to work with her because despite the vicissitudes of recent history, the traditional chief remains as a social institution and a living symbol because with the persistence of certain cultural values at the same time it is the repository of customary authority. In addition there are local populations' reactions.

b) Decentralization and Popular Reactions

Apart the reaction of traditional authorities, those of the local population, civil society, political parties and others in the region will enrich the debate on the decentralization process initiated by the political authorities with the support of donors. These reactions show the societal logic that characterizes many Niger villages. It should be noted that because natural boundaries, many villages located on the border of several townships, have been limited arbitrary.

What effect the erection of some villages in communes in favour of others in the eyes of local people does not deserve. This is due to a logic linked to the history and prestige of our various villages. For local people, although "local governments are created by law", the decentralized state must take into account certain socio-historical values to the risk of creating"phantom"communes. These considerations are in a logic for people to support their leader because beyond partisan of these considerations, it should be noted that this is related to a sub same information on issues of decentralization, which have risen further.

By the fact that it takes place on the 1267000 km^2, decentralization coupled with redistricting, comes as a new reform so that many in the urban community of Tahoua who confuse with the local authority constituency. Is it merely a sub information or can we speak of a lack of civic education in the population level? The response may be tempered because even if the rate of illiteracy is high in the region (75%) and (25%) for the enrolment rate of the reaction function of these populations is that the policy gives meaning to his action. In the same way, that is to say in response to decentralization including the appearance of disorganization in the existing system, civil society via the association of pastors of the Metropolitan (North) asked compared to the impact of communalisation on lifestyle, natural areas of these pastors. By the fact that pastoralist and communalisation evoke two systems of social organization, economic and political opposites, communalization will pose two problems for transhumant herders: the redefinition of their space of belonging and that of investment and other subsidies the state in the context of the communalisation. Only a definition of legal rules will resolve this problem, which arouses so many reactions because for the pastors, the space is open and infinite.

In this sense, the responsibility of the government is engaged. Aware that the hydraulics, education and health are the three elements of rural concerns, these executives are wondering whether the state can really help all people or it will be a management of variable geometry, the rulers' priorities areas that are favorable to them because you are in a democratic context.

It is clear from the foregoing that although the logic of the developers (state donors) reflects the fact that empowers local people to be sovereign in their development, the reactions of these people are numerous. These reactions show how these people could be heard because their socio-economic and policy are going to be taken into account. Despite all this reactions, municipal elections were held on July 24, 2004. What inventory do you do?

VIII. A State of Place

The first municipal elections were held in July 24, 2004. The independent electoral commission announced the results of 3747 seats to be filled for all 265 municipalities gave the turnout, which is 43.56% against an abstention rate of 56.37%. The main idea that we can remember is that these elections mark a specially point for political and social history of our country. Indeed, with the organization of these elections, it ended a system of appointment of managing directors who prevailed. They are now elected and could possibly be removed by the local population through counsel if perjury. Because, there is the presence of two authorities on the same administrative entity of which one obeys the logic of democracy is i.e. after an election and the other has the logic of succession by lineage. By this company is to manage our modern local government defined as a human grouping geographically located on a portion of the national territory with power to administer by the elected authorities. It enjoys legal personality and financial autonomy. They come from different cantons, or groups of Niger. This logic would infuse dynamism in the various actors. In other words, the organization and establishment of new municipalities and the local implementation of welfare depends on the involvement of all stakeholders concerned. This is new for local authorities to develop and implement a municipal development plan (CDP) is a planning document that defines simplifies according to priorities and resources available locally, the principles of stock, planning, economic and social development of the town over a period of time (3,4,5 years) and who should be the sole reference framework for all development in the town while not forgetting enrol in the logic, the spirit and letter of the Rural Development Strategy (RDS) in Niger, in which its axis n4 reflects good governance, strengthening of capacity and decentralization. But the development thereof as noted Mahaman ABBA, is accompanied by partners than the municipalities

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themselves, since the manufacturing cost is high. In our case, the municipality of Kalfou (one of the townships of the urban community of Tahoua) was able to achieve in 2005 for a total of15 blow, 8 million CFA francs ($ 31,600) with the support of a project called fight against poverty (LUCOP), cons by the two municipalities of Tahoua (within one township) of the said locality could not elaborate because of the partners because it is equivalent to the sum of 11.5 million CFA francs ($ 23,000), while its annual budget barely exceeds the 40 000 000Fcfa ($ 80,000).(ABBA,2009).

This could be a factor in the non-completion of the planned and therefore requires the collaboration of all stakeholders (local elected officials, citizens, authorities customary, state).

About, our aim and objectives, we can note that decentralization in Niger is planning about administrative supervision. The bases of the reform being thrown out with the organization of local elections, which type of reports that municipalities will maintain with the State if indeed that decentralization does not mean privatization or functional delegation? In analyzing the Act No. 2002-012 of 11 June 2002 establishing the fundamental principles of the free administration of regions, departments and municipalities as well as their skills and resources, we realize that the pattern of future relationships between the State Public appears as a double dynamic of support: mentoring and advisory support.

Guardianship is a key element of decentralization. It is not presumed. In other words, there is no guardianship without texts. In the current context of Niger, one of the decentralization reform, the law No. 2002-012 states that the aforesaid events through judicial review and inspection. As traditional leaders, they are part of the law of the right member of council of the spring commune. Their voices are not deliberative, which is not without playing on their symbolic.

But, we should remember that, the decentralization process is a reality in the country. The commune functioned according to administrative supervision. The ministry on charge elabore a code of working for all actors involved. Since then, in the urban communes of Tahoua, there is no conflict between traditional chiefs and mayors but only the change of role. The new mayor control administration as Webber define his ideal bureaucracy even there are different and the role of traditional chief is respected because there are members of municipal council

IX. Conclusion

The desire to involve people in their own development through decentralization could be achieved according to the administrative supervision but also from the dynamism of the different actors. Indeed, despite plans micro-and macro-economic and institutional designs associated with logic of territorial development of opinions and reactions were observed in the population to which the action is intended. This situation stems from the fact that there are societal logic that development must consider in their action. These reactions show that this is not so much the desire that drives people to join but rather taking into account their realities in the implementation of various development projects. The process of decentralization should be a synthesis of different approaches mentioned above and not as an opposition to the defense of strategic interests for the full measure of its content and the achievement of its objectives. It is possible that having the good method to educate the public. Now, the foundations for reform are implemented, what are the issues and challenges as well as the structuring of the socio-political mandate after a new joint exercise? What interests for these towns in a decentralized cooperation through the Partnership Agreement ACP-EC?

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