

The Effects of Recent Social Changes on the Socialization of Mande Children

: A Study of “*denmsèni ton*”, Children’s Association in Southwestern Mali

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Background and objectives of this research

This is a preliminary report of the research on *denmsèni ton* in Southwestern Mali, which I have conducted from July 23 to September 30. In Mande, the traditional association “*ton*” has been an important social institution for integrating people, who are known to have been stratified by kinship or caste. Despite most of traditional social institutions in relation to children (e.g., caste, age class, and circumcision) have declined as a result of modernization and Islamization, *denmsèni ton* has increased since 1968. In 1968, coup d’état overthrown the socialist government that had made use of *ton* in accordance with a particular political intention.

The democratic characteristics and flexibility of *ton* organization allow children to reinterpret the traditional institution “*ton*”. Indeed the recent flourish of *denmsèni ton* is one of the consequences of modernization and Islamization.

In this study, I will further discuss the effects of recent social changes on the socialization of Mande children.



【Mali】 Children’s association “*sadam*” works in a cornfield



【Mali】 Public school in research village



【Cameroon】 Baka pygmies's dance