

## **When Politicians Cede Control of Resources: Land, Chiefs and Coalition-Building in Africa**

Kate Baldwin

Why would political leaders ever cede control over the distribution of resources to community leaders? This behavior challenges an important tenet of political science – that politicians seek to maximize control of resources. But in recent years, traditional chiefs in Africa have seen a resurgence in their power, including their responsibility to allocate land. Why have politicians allowed these leaders greater power to allocate resources?

Most of the existing literature views the power of chiefs as a historical holdover, rather than a political choice to be explained. In this view, governments haven't chosen to empower chiefs, they simply haven't had the institutional capacity to displace the powers bestowed on them during earlier periods.<sup>1</sup> In contrast, this article argues that political leaders consciously choose how much power to allow traditional leaders based on electoral calculations. Specifically, I argue that political leaders cede power to traditional chiefs as a means of mobilizing electoral support from non-coethnic groups.

The article tests the explanatory power of this argument using a new dataset that examines how the power of chiefs over land varies with the characteristics of subnational regions. The subnational dataset constructed for this project also permits the testing of alternative explanations for chiefs' continued power, and it is an important research contribution in its own right, measuring land administration, geography, social structure and ethnicity in approximately 180 subnational regions of 18 countries. The results show that political leaders are not completely captive to historical and geographic constraints; they often devolve power to traditional leaders in positions to mobilize support from groups who are ethnically unaligned with the major

political parties in a country. The cross-sectional analysis is complemented by an analysis of the dynamics of the devolution of power to chiefs. I draw on time-series country-level data and case studies to show that the prospect of competitive elections often triggers decisions to devolve power to chiefs of politically unaligned groups.

### **Traditional Leaders and Land Administration**

Traditional leaders are local authorities who have status by virtue of their association with the customs of their communities.<sup>2</sup> Their positions are typically hereditary, with leaders selected from within “royal families” according to local custom. In Africa, the colonial powers often chose to rule indirectly through these leaders, giving them the power to raise taxes, preside over courts, and allocate land. At independence, many governments reduced the formal powers of chiefs or eliminated traditional authorities all together; however, even in cases where traditional leaders were officially banned, they often continued to be recognized within local communities.<sup>3</sup>

This article focuses specifically on the amount of power traditional chiefs have over the allocation of land. Because the authority of traditional leaders stems in part from informal community customs, rather than their position in the formal state apparatus, devolving power to chiefs is a more dramatic decision than allocating power to local governments or local administrative bodies, which are more clearly subordinate to the central government in the administrative hierarchy. In the agrarian economies of sub-Saharan Africa, land is the critical resource for the majority of citizens’ livelihoods, so politicians should attach particular importance to controlling this resource, and the devolution of power to chiefs in this sphere is particularly puzzling.<sup>4</sup>

I analyze differences in the power of traditional leaders over the administration of land both within and between countries. As Catherine Boone has demonstrated, governments often employ different administrative strategies in different parts of the same country.<sup>5</sup> Sometimes, this is because of de jure administrative differences – different laws apply in different regions of the country. The legal position of land in areas that were formerly protectorates is often different from the legal position of land elsewhere (i.e. Barotseland, Northern Nigeria), and governments have sometimes passed laws applying to particular chiefdoms (i.e. the Asanti Stool Land Act, 1958 and the Akim Abuakwa Stool Revenue Act, 1958 in Ghana, and the Ingonyama Trust Act, 1994 in South Africa). However, more often this is because of de facto administrative differences – the government takes advantage of ambiguities in the laws governing land and the position of traditional leaders to engage in different levels of de facto devolution of power to chiefs.

The countries in this study are those where the Afrobarometer survey was conducted in 2008/09 – Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.<sup>6</sup> Figure 1 indicates the percentage of respondents in the subnational regions of these countries that said traditional chiefs, rather than the national or local government, had primary responsibility for administering land in their community. Although the state monopolizes the administration of land in some countries, such as Madagascar and Tanzania, a majority of citizens believe traditional chiefs have primary responsibility for allocating land in regions of Burkina Faso, Ghana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Namibia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The map shows significant variation in the perceived influence of traditional chiefs over land allocation within countries in sub-Saharan Africa. For example, in Zambia, less than 10 percent of respondents in Lusaka province believe that chiefs are primarily

responsible for allocating land, whereas in Northern and Central provinces, more than two thirds of respondents say chiefs have this power.

[Figure 1]

The existing literature largely views the power of chiefs as a historical holdover from earlier periods that political leaders have not been able to displace. In this view, colonial governments gave traditional leaders vast and unprecedented powers to tax their subjects and distribute land.<sup>7</sup> The powers of chiefs were particularly great in former British colonies, which favored strategies of indirect rule.<sup>8</sup> In the post-colonial period, political leaders *wanted* to reduce the power of traditional leaders but *lacked the institutional capacity* to administer rural areas without them. According to Jeffrey Herbst's well-known explanation, political leaders' attempts to displace customary authorities, particularly in the area of land administration, failed because states were unable to project power over the scarcely populated territories within their boundaries.<sup>9</sup>

Yet this doesn't appear to be the full story. It is true that after independence some governments passed legislation that either entirely abolished chiefs or created bureaucratic committees to manage land administration, only to find they could not fully eliminate chiefs' powers due to their weak administrative capacity. For example, "régulos" continued to wield power in Mozambique after they were formally abolished, and the government of Malawi never established land boards to oversee land transactions in rural areas.

However, numerous African governments have *actively* introduced laws increasing chiefs' power over the allocation of land. For example, in Ghana, the 1979 constitution gave traditional leaders power over land in the north of the country, in South Africa, the 1994 Ingonyama Trust Act put one third of the land in the province of Kwa-Zulu under the trusteeship of the Zulu king, and in Zambia, the 1995 Land Act formally recognized chiefs' roles in land administration for

the first time. New policies adopted in Cote D'Ivoire, Mozambique, Niger and Zimbabwe have also increased the formal powers of traditional leaders over land administration. Thus, particularly in recent decades, many political leaders have actively ceded power to chiefs.

In viewing the devolution of power to traditional leaders as an institutional choice made by political leaders, this work builds on Boone's analysis of institution-building in West Africa.<sup>10</sup> As in her explanation, politicians consider the authority structures and resources controlled by traditional leaders in different communities, and then decide whether devolving power to them will advance or hinder their goals. Where the article departs from Boone's analysis is in the primary goals it attributes to politicians. The leaders in Boone's analysis (which focuses largely on the colonial and immediate post-independence period) are primarily driven by the economic goal of "extracting the agricultural surplus."<sup>11</sup> In contrast, this article (which focuses largely on the period after 1990) emphasizes politicians' *electoral* goals. The premise that electoral motivations drive decisions to devolve power has been shown to have explanatory power in other regions of the world.<sup>12</sup> This article analyzes the electoral incentives of politicians in Africa, where electoral fortunes are highly dependent on a factor that has not been emphasized in the literature on decentralization elsewhere – the ability of political leaders to build multi-ethnic coalitions.

The next section of the article explains how the need to build multi-ethnic coalitions to win electoral majorities encourages political leaders to devolve power to chiefs. The following section shows that the characteristics associated with the devolution of power to chiefs at the subnational level are consistent with the theory's predictions. Finally, I draw on time-series data and case studies to show how electoral pressures drive the devolution of power to chiefs.

### **An Electoral Explanation: Multi-Ethnic Coalition Building**

This article proposes an electoral coalition-building explanation for variation in the amount of power devolved to traditional leaders within and between countries in Africa. Particularly in the past two decades, African political leaders have faced the challenge of building winning electoral coalitions. The concentration of power in the office of the president makes competition for executive office most relevant.

Political leaders need to build coalitions encompassing a majority of voters if they are to be confident of winning the presidency.<sup>13</sup> They can build part of this coalition by making ethnic appeals. There is a large literature demonstrating that voters in Africa prefer co-ethnic candidates, which may be because they provide them with “psychological” benefits, because they share similar policy preferences, or because they find promises of redistribution more credible if they are made by coethnics.<sup>14</sup> As a result, candidates can usually count on the votes of their own ethnic group.<sup>15</sup> But in the multi-ethnic countries of sub-Saharan Africa, there are few politicians who are from ethnic groups that make up a majority of the population.<sup>16</sup> As a result, presidential candidates typically need to find ways of appealing to voters beyond their own ethnic group.

One option is to promise redistribution to these groups in return for votes. But, in contexts like sub-Saharan Africa where party institutions are weak, politicians and voters from different ethnic groups face difficulties exchanging resources for votes.<sup>17</sup> Politicians and voters of different ethnicities rarely share the expectation of repeated interaction necessary to overcome the commitment problem inherent in sequential exchanges. Once voters have supported a politician, the politician has little incentive to provide resources to them; conversely, once the politician has provided resources to voters, voters have little incentive to support the politician. It

is particularly difficult for politicians to make clientelist appeals to other ethnic groups, promising resources to individual voters contingent on how they cast their ballots, because it is difficult to monitor how voters behave when politicians are not part of the same ethnic network. Also, norms of reciprocation may be weaker among non-coethnics. Thus, politicians are often ineffective in making distributive appeals to voters from other ethnic groups.<sup>18</sup>

Given that political leaders cannot make ethnic or distributive appeals to voters of other ethnicities, how can they win their support? They can cede power over the distribution of resources to intermediary ethnic leaders such as traditional chiefs.<sup>19</sup> Exchanges between politicians and traditional chiefs are not subject to the same level of commitment problem as exchanges between politicians and voters due to the greater expectation of repeated interaction among leaders. Furthermore, the devolution of power to traditional chiefs can increase politicians' support among voters either indirectly, by turning chiefs into powerful vote brokers who can make clientelist exchanges with voters, or directly, in so far as the devolution of power to chiefs affects voters' evaluations of politicians.

First, incumbent political leaders can benefit electorally from the devolution of power to traditional leaders if this *gives chiefs political influence over other voters*, and it occurs in a context in which *chiefs are inclined to support the political leader initiating the devolution of power*. Empowered traditional leaders are often in a position to make clientelist exchanges with voters. Unlike politicians from different ethnic groups, traditional leaders are enmeshed in the networks of their local communities, and so they do not face the same commitment and monitoring problems. They are more likely to be able to monitor how individuals vote, and their threats to withhold access to resources based on how individuals vote are more credible. As a result, voters may support the candidate preferred by their traditional leader for fear of losing

access to resources the chief controls if they do not.<sup>20</sup> In so far as the chiefs to whom power is devolved are supportive of the incumbent political leader – which governments can usually ensure in the immediate aftermath of devolutions of power – the empowerment of chiefs can increase electoral support.

Alternatively, the decision to empower traditional chiefs may mobilize votes because voters approve of the policy of devolving power to their chiefs. Voters may value the empowerment of their traditional leaders for symbolic reasons, or they may have material motivations. For example, African governments are generally more effective in delivering local infrastructural projects when they work through traditional chiefs, and so the empowerment of traditional leaders may lead to improved government performance at the local level.<sup>21</sup> The promise to devolve power to particular chiefs may also signal that the chiefs' groups will be favored over other groups in future resource allocations.<sup>22</sup>

The mechanisms outlined above indicate how giving administrative power to traditional leaders can mobilize political support. But this strategy of mobilizing votes is a costly and risky one. Political leaders lose the power to allocate whatever resources they devolve to traditional leaders, at least in the short to medium term, because policy reversals take significant time and resources. In addition, the first mechanism only results in more votes for the president/prime minister if the newly empowered chiefs subsequently tell voters to support him or her; this may be likely in the immediate aftermath of a promise to devolve power, particularly if the chief is from an ethnic group that is not affiliated with a major opposition party, but a political leader has no guarantee how long chiefs will stay in his or her camp.

Thus, empowering chiefs is a measure taken only by political leaders facing competitive elections. Furthermore, leaders will typically devolve power unevenly to chiefs within their

countries, only empowering those chiefs who are likely to deliver significant numbers of votes the leader could not otherwise win.

Given a competitive political environment, which chiefs will political leaders empower? They have no need to empower coethnic chiefs because they can directly appeal to voters from their own ethnic group. In addition, given the importance of ethnic appeals in Africa, political leaders are likely to see limited returns from empowering chiefs of the same ethnicity as their major political opponent; regardless, chiefs and voters that are ethnically aligned with the major opposition leader will probably support the opposition. Instead, political leaders will empower chiefs of unaligned ethnic groups, who are not allied with the government or the major opposition, and therefore do not have ethnic motivations for supporting either party. The empowerment of chiefs complements ethnic voting.<sup>23</sup>

In addition, political leaders will consider the ability of chiefs to mobilize votes from significant numbers of voters before devolving power to them. Chiefs of very small or amorphous ethnic groups are unlikely to be able to turn their control of resources into significant numbers of votes, and so politicians will not empower these chiefs, even if they are non-aligned. Politicians only receive significant electoral returns from empowering chiefs of centralized ethnic groups, who are organized into kingdoms or paramount chieftaincies with authority over a large population. Thus, politicians should choose to empower chiefs of centralized ethnic groups that are not ethnically aligned with the government or the opposition, as table 1 describes. Given electoral competition and high levels of ethnic fractionalization, political leaders should cede power to chiefs of politically non-aligned ethnic groups with centralized institutions. The next section tests this theory against alternative explanations using a new subnational dataset.

[Table 1]

### **The Geography of Chiefs' Empowerment**

This article uses a new dataset including approximately 180 subnational units to examine the characteristics of regions in which traditional chiefs have higher influence over land administration. The sample is limited to the countries included in the fourth round of the Afrobarometer survey, which have the most competitive elections in Africa and are therefore the places where electoral calculations should have the largest impact on decisions to devolve power. Most Afrobarometer countries are also ethnically diverse, forcing most political leaders to appeal to multiple ethnic groups to build majority coalitions. This dataset was constructed by combining data from the Afrobarometer survey with geographical data, anthropological measures of social structure, and information on the political history of each country, and it provides one of the first sources of information on subnational units in Africa.

The subnational units in the dataset are generally the highest administrative levels within each country; for example, in Benin, they are departments, in Ghana, they are regions, and in Zambia, they are provinces. The reason for using these units is practical; the Afrobarometer survey is designed to be representative within these units, but not at lower levels of aggregation. In addition, when governments vary their land administration practices within their countries, we would expect the greatest amount of variation to be between official administrative units.<sup>24</sup>

The cross-sectional analysis examines differences in the power of traditional leaders over the administration of land within and between countries. The differences in chiefs' power within countries are partly due to differences in the legal position of chiefs across regions (de jure differences) and partly due to differential implementation of laws (de facto differences). As a

result, one would ideally use a measure of the devolution of power to traditional chiefs that captures differences in administrative practices in different communities, not simply differences in the laws on the books.

The measure used in the cross-sectional analysis is based on responses to a question about land administration practices, and therefore encompasses both de jure and de facto differences in the power of chiefs over the allocation of land.<sup>25</sup> Specifically, the measure is based on a question from the fourth round of the Afrobarometer survey (2008-2009) that asks respondents who is primarily responsible for allocating land – “the national government”, “the local government”, “traditional leaders” or “members of your community.” This article is interested primarily in the power of traditional leaders vis-a-vis the government, whether the central or local government, because local governments in Africa are largely an appendage of the central government.<sup>26</sup> As a result, I collapsed responses into two categories, the government or traditional leaders.<sup>27</sup> This measure is limited in that it is based on voters’ perceptions of chiefs’ power, rather than actual practices. I address this weakness at the end of this section by showing similar results obtain in the one country for which I have data on administrative practices.

I assess the strength of different explanations for traditional leaders’ power by combining this survey measure with variables measuring the geography, social structure and political history of different countries and subnational units. The dataset is described in full in an on-line appendix.

The widely accepted view is that post-independence leaders in Africa would like to remove traditional leaders’ administrative powers but do not have the capacity to disempower them. Colonial rulers, particularly the British, established vast powers for chiefs, and chiefs remain powerful in outlying areas due to the difficulty post-independence governments have projecting bureaucratic power over sparse population densities and long distances.<sup>28</sup> According to this logic,

chiefs should have more power in countries that are former British colonies (*British Colony*), larger (*Area (log)*) and less spatially compact (*Non-Compactness*)<sup>29</sup>, and in subnational units that are farther from the capital (*Distance from Capital (log)*) and more sparsely populated (*Population Density*).

The alternative view is that political leaders actively choose to devolve power to traditional chiefs. In particular, several scholars have argued that leaders consider regions' economic value when deciding whether to rule them directly or indirectly.<sup>30</sup> In the dataset, I use the agricultural potential of each subnational unit as a proxy for its economic value. The measure *Land Quality* is based on a metric created by the Food and Agriculture Organization rating the suitability of land for agriculture on a scale of 0 to 8.

Finally, this article argues that political leaders decide to devolve power based on the political utility of different regions with regards to expanding governing coalitions. The coalition-building explanation predicts that leaders should devolve power to politically non-aligned ethnic groups with centralized authority structures. The measure *Centralization* is an indicator variable taking the value of 1 if the largest group in a region (as determined by respondents' self-identification during the Afrobarometer survey) has senior chiefs with jurisdictional power above the village level (as determined from anthropological sources) *and* it makes up more than 5 percent of a country's population; otherwise the variable takes a value of 0. The variable *Proportion Decade without Political Alignment* measures the proportion of years in the past decade in which neither the country's president/prime minister nor the leader of the largest opposition party was from the region's dominant ethnic group.<sup>31</sup> Because a political leader may not be able to devolve power immediately to traditional chiefs upon assuming power, the measure of political alignment

considers not simply the alignment of groups in the year of the Afrobarometer survey but over each of the years in the previous decade (1998-2007).

An interaction term is needed to test the key prediction of the coalition-building theory, which is that power will be devolved to groups that are *both* centralized *and* politically non-aligned. The term *Centralization without Political Alignment* captures the proportion of years centralized groups have been without political alignment. It is equal to:

$$\text{Centralization w/out Pol. Alignment} = \text{Centralization} \times \text{Prop. Decade w/out Pol. Alignment}$$

A region always receives a value of 0 on *Centralization without Political Alignment* if the dominant group in the region doesn't have centralized authority structures. In cases where the dominant ethnic group is centralized, the measure indicates the proportion of the previous decade in which neither the president/prime minister nor the leader of the largest opposition party was from that ethnic group, increasing by .1 for each year in which neither of these leaders belonged to the region's dominant ethnic group.

I analyze the influence of national and subnational variables on the amount of power allocated to traditional leaders using multilevel models. Multilevel models take account of the clustering of subnational regions within countries, modeling the effects of variables and residual components at both levels.<sup>32</sup> The models take the form:

$$y_i = \alpha_j + X_i\beta + \varepsilon_i$$

$$\alpha_j = Z_j\gamma + \eta_j$$

where  $i$  indexes subnational units and  $j$  indexes countries. The dependent variable ( $y_i$ ) is the proportion of respondents in each subnational unit who said traditional leaders have primary responsibility for allocating land. It is modeled as a function of country-level intercepts ( $\alpha_j$ ), a vector of subnational variables ( $X_i$ ), and a normally distributed error term at the subnational unit

level ( $\varepsilon_i$ ). The main advantage of multilevel models in this context is that they permit the inclusion of country-level variables *and* country random effects. They do this by modeling country-level intercepts ( $\alpha_j$ ) as a function of a vector of country-level variables ( $Z_j$ ) and a normally distributed error term at the country level ( $\eta_j$ ). In this dataset, two thirds of the variation in chiefs' perceived power is at the country level and one third is at the subnational level (variance components reported in the ANOVA model at the bottom of table 2), so an analysis that failed to account for variation in the outcome at both levels would be incomplete.

What national and subnational variables help explain the power of traditional chiefs over the allocation of land? Table 2 shows that the historical holdover theories have limited purchase in explaining differences in chiefs' power across countries. In model 1, as expected, about 14 percentage points more people report chiefs are responsible for allocating land in countries that were colonized by the British, an effect that is statistically significant at the 90 percent level. But against expectations, chiefs appear to have *less* influence over the allocation of land in large and non-compact countries.

Arguments about state capacity have more power in explaining differences in chiefs' power within countries. Chiefs appear more likely to allocate land in places that are sparsely populated and far from the capital. Model 1 indicates an increase in population density of 1000 people per kilometer is associated with a 6 percentage point decrease in people who believe chiefs allocate land, an effect that is statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level. The distance variable is logged, making a substantive interpretation of its coefficient more difficult, but a one standard deviation increase in the logged distance from the capital is associated with almost a 2 percentage point increase in people who believe chiefs are responsible for allocating land. This

effect is statistically significant at the 90 percent confidence level. At the subnational level, geographic constraints on bureaucratic development have some explanatory power.

Is there any evidence that political leaders are actively choosing to devolve power rather than failing to centralize it? The revenue hypothesis suggests governments will choose to administer territory directly in areas where land is of high value. Surprisingly, model 1 shows that chiefs' power is positively associated with land quality. A one point increase in land quality is associated with a 3.5 percentage point increase in people who believe chiefs administer land, an effect that is statistically significant at the 99 percent confidence level. This suggests governments have not been able to centralize the administration of land even when this would be economically advantageous.

But what about the electoral considerations of political leaders? Are the subnational regions where traditional leaders have greater influence those where calculating political leaders should have sought support to broaden their electoral coalitions? Model 2 tests whether chiefs of centralized ethnic groups that are not politically aligned have more power over the allocation of land by analyzing the interaction between the proportion of the previous decade the dominant group in a region was politically unaligned and the group's centralization.

[Table 2]

The interaction effect estimated in model 2 is depicted graphically in figure 2. The left panel shows the size of the effect of a change in *Proportion Decade without Political Alignment* from 0 to 1 by whether the group is centralized or not, with the vertical lines through the point estimates indicating the 95 percent confidence intervals. When groups are not centralized, the effect of being politically unaligned on the perceived power of chiefs is negative but statistically insignificant. In contrast, when groups are centralized, a change from being politically aligned

throughout the entire decade to being politically unaligned for the whole period is associated with a 6.5 percentage point increase in people who perceive chiefs to allocate land, an effect that is statistically significant at the 90 percent confidence level. The right panel shows the size of the effect of group centralization at different levels of political alignment. The difference in powers between chiefs from centralized groups and their counterparts from uncentralized groups is only statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level when ethnic groups have been without political alignment for more than three quarters of the previous decade; when a group has been politically unaligned for the entire decade, centralization is associated with more than a 7 percentage point increase in people who believe chiefs allocate land. Thus, chiefs of centralized groups that are not politically aligned are thought to be significantly more powerful than chiefs of groups without *both* of these traits.

[Figure 2]

The data also demonstrate that current political considerations are more important than past political incentives in explaining chiefs' power over land, consistent with the coalition-building theory. To compare the effects of past versus present political considerations on land administration, model 3 examines whether chiefs have greater power in regions with large hierarchical groups that were not politically aligned during the 1980s. There is a high degree of correlation between political alignment in the 1980s and political alignment between 1998 and 2007 ( $r=.5$ ), suggesting political power passes slowly between ethnic groups in Africa, and making it difficult to disentangle the effects of the two variables. Still, as the electoral coalition-building explanation would expect, the coefficient on the interaction term in model 3 is smaller than the coefficient on the interaction term in model 2, and the interaction effects are not statistically different from 0.

One concern with the Afrobarometer data is that it presents people's perceptions of their chiefs' power, rather than their chiefs' actual involvement in administering land. For one country – Zambia – I have data on the involvement of chiefs in the administration of land from a survey of chiefs conducted in three provinces in 2007. My measure of chiefs' involvement in administering land is whether they approved the sale of land at least once per year. I also have measures of how centralized their chiefdoms are (as proxied by whether the chief has 100 or more headmen with whom he meets regularly) and what proportion of their subjects belong to ethnic groups that were not aligned with one of the major political parties during the 2006 Zambian election.<sup>33</sup> For ease of comparison with the cross-national study, model 4 is an OLS model, with standard errors clustered at the district level. The results largely confirm the results from the cross-national study. The effect of centralization on chiefs' power over land is positive and statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level only when more than 50 percent of the voters in a chiefdom are ethnically unaligned with political parties. Similarly, the effect of having more ethnically unaligned voters on chiefs' power over land is only positive in centralized chiefdoms (though, even in centralized chiefdoms, the effect is not statistically significant).

Thus, the analysis in this section suggests that political leaders are not completely captive to historical decisions or geographic constraints. Low population densities and distance from the capital partly determine within-country variation in chiefs' power, but they are not the full story. Ethnic groups who are particularly useful political allies also have more power. This is consistent with politicians devolving power to chiefs based on political considerations. However, the above analysis is limited in its ability to analyze why politicians devolve power by the lack of data for

multiple time periods at the subnational level. The next section analyzes the timing of changes in chiefs' power drawing both on time-series country-level data and case studies.

### **The Dynamics of Devolving Power to Chiefs**

This section examines the dynamics of the devolution of power to traditional chiefs across time. The coalition-building theory predicts that leaders who face electoral competition will consider ceding power to chiefs, particularly if their own ethnic group doesn't make up a majority of the electorate. I test this with a new dataset indicating which of the approximately 100 post-independence leaders in the set of African countries analyzed above initiated legislation increasing the power of chiefs over land. This measure doesn't capture all efforts of politicians to increase the power of chiefs, as it excludes initiatives to permit chiefs more influence over the allocation of land that are not enshrined in new law. The measure is also crude in that it doesn't consider the extent of the country to which the new law applied. However, it is a first step towards testing the dynamic predictions of the coalition-building theory.

I coded whether political leaders initiated legislation that increased the power of chiefs by reviewing dozens of primary and secondary documents.<sup>34</sup> Countries are considered to have increased the power of traditional leaders if they passed laws or decrees that (a) increased the power of traditional leaders (or their appointees) over the allocation of land from the previous law/official policy, (b) recognized previously unrecognized traditional authorities and gave them power over the allocation of land, (c) increased the amount of land held in trust by traditional leaders, or (d) reversed an earlier decrease in the power of traditional leaders over land.

I then combined this information with data on whether competitive elections were held during the leader's time in office and the size of the leader's ethnic group. I used the NELDA dataset created by Hyde and Marinov to determine whether at least one opposition party was

allowed to contest legislative or executive elections during each leader's tenure. I collected data on the ethnicity of each leader drawing on a variety of sources but leaning particularly heavily on the dataset created by Fearon, Kasara and Laitin. Data on the size of each group was obtained from the fourth round of the Afrobarometer survey.<sup>35</sup>

The simple cross-tabulation in table 3 suggests that political liberalization is a necessary (but not sufficient) condition for leaders to devolve power to chiefs. The bottom row shows that no leaders introduced legislation devolving power to chiefs in the absence of political competition; however, 17 percent of leaders facing political competition introduced legislation devolving power to chiefs, a difference that is statistically significant at the 99 percent confidence level. Given that leaders of countries generally prefer to keep power centralized, it is not surprising that politicians avoid devolving power in the absence of elections. But when facing electoral competition, many leaders decide that ceding power to chiefs is a worthwhile gamble.<sup>36</sup> A comparison of the first and second rows of table 3 suggests that only leaders whose own ethnic group doesn't constitute a majority of the population devolve power to chiefs, although the small number of cases where leaders are from groups making up more than 50 percent of the population prevents too much emphasis on this pattern.

[Table 3]

As a second method of testing the dynamic predictions of the coalition-building theory, I examine the contexts in which politicians introduced legislation increasing traditional leaders' power to allocate land, drawing on secondary historical research on each of the countries in the dataset. In Uganda, Museveni's decision to restore the traditional kingdom of Buganda and its property in the early 1990s was triggered by the need to broaden his base of support in the run-up to elections for a constituent assembly. Since the guerrilla war in the 1980s, Museveni's National

Resistance Army (NRA) drew its strongest support from his own ethnic group, the Banyankole. The core supporters of the Obote government were northern ethnic groups, such as the Acholi and Lango. Many Baganda also had serious grievances against Obote, who had banished their king in the 1960s, but they were initially suspicious of the NRA, instead supporting a Bagandan guerilla group, the Uganda Freedom Movement. Museveni's military victory depended on his ability to rally the Baganda behind the NRA, which he did in part by building good relationships with the exiled king and promising to reconsider his constitutional position.<sup>37</sup> However, upon taking office, Museveni initially took no action toward fulfilling these promises.

Yet, with elections for a constituent assembly planned in the early 1990s, Museveni realized he would require a broader coalition of support to maintain control of the assembly. In 1993, his government announced that the kingdom of Buganda would be restored, along with the property and land it owned before 1967. The haste with which the coronation was arranged was viewed by many commentators as confirmation that "by and large, the restoration of the kingdom took place in exchange for the Buganda vote in the 1994 elections for the constituent assembly."<sup>38</sup> Interestingly, three of the other traditional kingdoms in southern Uganda, Bunyoro, Toro and Busoga, have subsequently been re-established; the only kingdom that had not been restored by 2012 was the Ankole kingdom, suggesting Museveni saw less political utility in restoring a traditional leader from his own ethnic group.

In Ghana, General Acheampong made a similar deal with chiefs from the country's Northern and Upper regions prior to a national referendum in the late 1970s. Under pressure to return the country to civilian rule, Acheampong's government proposed the introduction of a no-party Union Government subject to approval by voters in a referendum in 1978. Acheampong had an even more precarious basis of support than Museveni, as his own ethnic group, the Ashanti, were

among the most vocal opponents of the “unigov” proposal; the Ewe and the Ga regions of the country were also hotbeds of opposition.<sup>39</sup> Instead, the president made a deal with a group of chiefs from northern Ghana. Unlike land in southern Ghana, which was vested in individual owners and stools after 1969, land in northern Ghana continued to be vested in the state. In late 1977, the Acheampong government agreed in principle to revert ownership of northern lands to traditional owners, hoping this promise would result in a “yes” vote from northern chiefs and their subjects.<sup>40</sup> Acheampong himself was forced out of office in mid-1978, before the recommendations of the committee established to oversee the process had been enacted, but the 1979 constitution fulfilled his promise, reverting all lands in northern Ghana to their traditional owners.

Even if politicians cannot hope to win the support of an ethnic group outright, they may devolve power to chiefs in the hope of dividing the group politically. For example, in the run-up to the 1994 elections in South Africa, Mandela sought to make inroads among Zulu voters, the largest ethnic group in South Africa. Many of the senior members of the ANC, including Mandela, were Xhosa, and the leadership of the ANC was anxious to dispel criticisms of the party as a “Xhosa clique.” In order to increase his support from Zulu voters, Mandela decided to reach out to the Zulu king.<sup>41</sup> As part of this strategy, Mandela lobbied the National Party government to give the king control of 28,000 square kilometers of land that had previously been administered by the KwaZulu legislature. On the eve of the 1994 elections, de Klerk signed the Ingonyama Trust Act, which transferred control of the land to the king.<sup>42</sup> This decision was particularly striking, given the ANC’s previously stated intention of removing traditional leaders with the introduction of democracy; ideological preferences gave way to electoral imperatives within the ANC.

In Mozambique, the Frelimo government also reversed its attitude toward traditional leaders with the introduction of multiparty elections. Historically, Frelimo had extremely hostile relationships with the “régulos”, whom they had targeted for assassination during the war of independence and banned upon taking power in the late 1970s. During the civil war, Frelimo’s core support came from urban areas and Mozambique’s southern regions, while Renamo’s core support came from rural areas, particularly in north-central Mozambique. In the run-up to the 1994 elections, President Chissano began meeting with groups of traditional leaders as part of an initiative to “charm the régulos,” and just weeks before the election, his government passed the Municipalities Law (1994), stating that local governments would work with traditional authorities in numerous areas, including land management.<sup>43</sup> This law was later revoked and replaced by Decree 15/2000, a law that called for the selection of one “community authority” in each group of rural villages, with power over land allocation, policing, taxation and other matters. The law indicated that two actors were eligible to be designated as the “community authority” – the régulo or the local Frelimo party secretary. In practice, the designated community authority tended to be the party secretary in Frelimo strongholds and the “régulo” in areas held by Renamo during the war.<sup>44</sup> According to the logic of this article, the law was ingenious in that it allowed the government to keep power in the hands of party members in its areas of core support, while devolving power to traditional leaders in other locations.

The case of Burkina Faso is also instructive in that it shows politicians of different ethnic affiliations have different propensities to devolve power to particular traditional leaders. Half of the population in Burkina Faso identify as Mossi, a hierarchically organized ethnic group. As expected, the political leaders who have most explicitly courted the support of the Mossi chiefs have been non-Mossi politicians facing elections. Maurice Yameogo, the first president of

Burkina Faso, was of Mossi origin, and he adopted a confrontational stance toward the Mossi chiefs, abolishing chieftaincy positions, and forbidding the replacement of chiefs in the case of their death or removal from office. In contrast, General Lamizana, who led the coup that ousted Yameogo in 1966, was not Mossi, and he initially went to great efforts to win the support of the Mossi chiefs. His government faced a referendum on the continuation of its rule in 1970, and in the run-up to this vote, it re-recognized chiefs, replaced deceased chiefs and encouraged chiefs' leadership of agricultural activities.<sup>45</sup> The power of the Mossi chiefs was again reduced in the 1980s under the military rule of Thomas Sankara, who was not Mossi but never faced an election or referendum during his short period in office. The current president, Blaise Compaoré, is of Mossi origin, and although he has taken a more conciliatory approach towards traditional chiefs than Sankara, his government doesn't officially recognize them.<sup>46</sup>

Patterns in the devolution of power to chiefs in other countries in the study are generally supportive of the coalition-building theory. Political leaders, particularly those from small ethnic groups, often devolve power to traditional leaders of non-aligned ethnic groups with hierarchical structures when they face political competition. Countries that have experienced minimal devolution of power to chiefs are either those where a group with an ethnic majority has been in power and this type of coalition-building has not been necessary (ie. Namibia), or where there are few hierarchically structured but politically non-aligned ethnic groups (i.e. Kenya, Liberia, Tanzania). In some countries, a slight variant of the theory plays out, with politicians cultivating the support of non-coethnic groups not by empowering chiefs but by devolving power to religious leaders; for example, Englebert suggests that in Nigeria, the southerner Obasanjo tolerated the introduction of Sharia law in the north as part of a bargain with religious leaders in which they were given autonomy in return for their political support.<sup>47</sup> In addition, in countries

like Madagascar, with a long history and particularly high prevalence of private land titling, it is difficult for the government to devolve power over land administration to local notables.<sup>48</sup> Yet, overall, the pattern of political leaders empowering customary leaders of hierarchically organized but non-aligned groups around elections is remarkably consistent across the cases.

## **Conclusion**

During the past two decades, a number of governments in sub-Saharan Africa have devolved substantial power over the allocation of land to traditional leaders. This article provides an explanation for the apparently puzzling decision of political leaders to cede power over the allocation of resources to community leaders. The answer challenges the existing literature, which views the continued power of chiefs as a historical holdover rather than an active political choice. Facing elections, many leaders have chosen to devolve power to traditional chiefs. They have introduced legislation and policies that empower powerful chiefs who are not ethnically aligned with the main political cleavages in the country in order to expand their electoral coalitions.

How effective is this strategy in mobilizing votes? There are thorny methodological challenges to providing a decisive answer to this question, and this is left for future research. Because the decision to devolve power to traditional leaders is a strategic decision made by leaders concerned that they will not otherwise win the election, it is difficult to identify the effects of these institutional choices on electoral outcomes. In addition, the short-term and long-term effects of the decision to devolve power to traditional chiefs may differ. In the immediate aftermath of their empowerment, chiefs are likely to use their power to the governing party's

political advantage, but in the long-run, there is nothing to prevent them from aligning themselves with opposition parties.

This article focuses on particularly puzzling examples of politicians ceding power. In the cases analyzed, governments gave up control over land, an extremely valuable resource in sub-Saharan Africa, to traditional leaders, who are community leaders who are particularly challenging to control, given that they fall outside of the state's formal administrative hierarchy and are not explicitly incorporated into party organizations. However, the theory put forward may also help explain decisions to cede control of other resources to other community leaders in Africa and beyond. In general, politicians whose group of core supporters do not constitute a majority use redistributive promises to mobilize additional support. But Dixit and Londregan remind us that these tactics may not be effective in winning "swing" voters in instances where political parties have weak organizational capacity.<sup>49</sup> In these contexts, politicians need to find other ways to extend their coalitions.

A possible solution is to devolve power over the allocation of resources to intermediaries – such as local-level politicians, party officials, religious leaders and customary chiefs – who are better embedded in local communities and can better translate resources into electoral support. Although these decisions to cede power appear puzzling on first glance, they may actually be savvy decisions by political leaders who need to expand their electoral coalitions.

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Bratton, *The Local Politics of Rural Development: Peasant and Party-State in Zambia* (Lebanon, NH: University Press of New England, 1980); Jeffrey Herbst, *States and Power in Africa* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Elliot Skinner, "The 'Paradox' of Rural Leadership: A Comment," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 6 (August 1968), 199-201.

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<sup>2</sup> The term “traditional” is used by convention and is not meant to imply their positions have not changed over time. For a similar definition, see Carolyn Logan, “Selected Chiefs, Elected Councilors and Hybrid Democrats: Popular Perspectives on the Co-existence of Democracy and Traditional Authority,” *Journal of Modern African Studies* 47 (March 2009), p. 104.

<sup>3</sup> Herbst.

<sup>4</sup> Boone makes a similar point about the political importance of land in Africa in Catherine Boone, “Property and Constitutional Order: Land Tenure Reform and the Future of the African State,” *African Affairs* 106 (October 2007), 557-586.

<sup>5</sup> Catherine Boone, *Political Topographies of the African State* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Catherine Boone, “Decentralization as Political Strategy in West Africa,” *Comparative Political Studies* 36 (May 2003), 355-380.

<sup>6</sup> Unfortunately, most questions about traditional leaders were not asked in Mozambique, so this country is excluded from figure 1 and table 2. Cape Verde is entirely excluded from the analysis for similar reasons.

<sup>7</sup> Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

<sup>8</sup> Michael Crowder, “Indirect Rule: French and British Style,” *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 34 (July 1964), 197-205.

<sup>9</sup> Herbst; see also Bratton; Skinner.

<sup>10</sup> Boone, *Political Topographies of the African State*; Boone, “Decentralization as Political Strategy in West Africa.”

<sup>11</sup> Boone, *Political Topographies of the African State*, p. xi.

<sup>12</sup> The literature on electoral motivations for decentralization in Latin America is most developed. See, for example, Kent Eaton, “Risky Business: Decentralization from Above in Chile and Uruguay,” *Comparative Politics* 37 (October 2004), 1-22; Christopher Garman, Stephan Haggard and Eliza Willis, “Fiscal Decentralization: A Political Theory with Latin American Cases,” *World Politics* 53 (January 2001), 205-236; Maria Escobar-Lemmon, “Political Support for Decentralization: An Analysis of the Colombian and Venezuelan Legislatures,” *American Journal of Political Science* 47 (October 2003), 683-697; Kathleen O’Neill, *Decentralizing The State: Elections, Parties, And Local Power In The Andes* (New York: Cambridge University Press 2003).

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<sup>13</sup> Most countries in Africa have two-round presidential electoral systems. In countries like Malawi and Zambia with one-round systems and more than two political parties, this is not strictly necessary.

<sup>14</sup> Kanchan Chandra, *Why Ethnic Parties Succeed* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Karen Ferree, "Explaining South Africa's Racial Census," *Journal of Politics* 68 (November 2006), 803-815; Donald Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985); Daniel Posner, *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

<sup>15</sup> Pippa Norris and Robert Mattes, "Does Ethnicity Determine Support for the Governing Party?" Afrobarometer Paper No. 26 (March 2003).

<sup>16</sup> Leaders may strategically decide which ethnic cleavages to emphasize, as argued in Posner. But most party leaders in Africa must also make cross-group appeals.

<sup>17</sup> Nicolas van de Walle, "Meet the New Boss, Same as the Old Boss? The Evolution of Political Clientelism in Africa," in Herbert Kitschelt and Steven Wilkinson, eds, *Patrons, Clients and Policies: Patterns of Democratic Accountability and Political Competition* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 50-67.

<sup>18</sup> On the coethnic advantage, see James Habyarimana, Macartan Humphreys, Daniel Posner and Jeremy Weinstein, "Why Does Ethnic Diversity Undermine Public Goods Provision?" *American Political Science Review* 101 (November 2007), 709-725. On the effectiveness of redistributive appeals to ethnics and non-coethnics, see Leonard Wantchekon, "Clientelism and Voting Behavior: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Benin," *World Politics* 55 (April 2003), 399-422.

<sup>19</sup> René Lemarchand, "Political Clientelism and Ethnicity in Tropical Africa: Competing Solidarities in Nation-Building," *American Political Science Review* 66 (1972), 68-90; Dominika Koter, "King-Makers: Local Leaders and Ethnic Politics in Africa," *World Politics* 65 (April 2013).

<sup>20</sup> For further exposition of this logic, see Luis Fernando Medina and Susan Stokes, "Monopoly and Monitoring: An Approach to Political Clientelism," in Herbert Kitschelt and Steven Wilkinson, eds, *Patrons, Clients and Policies: Patterns of Democratic Accountability and Political Competition* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 68-83.

<sup>21</sup> Kate Baldwin, *Noble Partners: Traditional Chiefs, Development and Democracy in Africa*, Unpublished manuscript, University of Florida. The empowerment of traditional chiefs also gives voters an incentive to support political candidates with strong relationships with their chiefs in order to ensure the two leaders can work together.

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See Kate Baldwin, "Why Vote with the Chief? Political Connections and Public Goods Provision in Zambia," *American Journal of Political Science* (forthcoming).

<sup>22</sup> This technique has been used to win support from indigenous groups in Côte D'Ivoire, according to Catherine Boone, "Electoral Populism Where Property Rights Are Weak: Land Politics in Contemporary Sub-Saharan Africa," *Comparative Politics* 41 (January 2009), 183-201.

<sup>23</sup> The on-line appendix demonstrates that the effect of a chief's relationship with politicians on electoral results is more than twice as large in places that are not ethnically aligned with the leaders of the major political parties in Zambia.

<sup>24</sup> Details on the units of analysis in each country are in the on-line appendix.

<sup>25</sup> The on-line appendix shows similar results obtain using a second measure that asks about chiefs' influence over the governance of their communities.

<sup>26</sup> Arun Agarwal and Jesse Ribot, "Accountability in Decentralization: A Framework with South Asian and West African Cases," *The Journal of Developing Areas* 33 (Summer 1999), 473-502; James Wunsch, "Decentralization, Local Governance and Recentralization in Africa," *Public Administration and Development* 21 (October 2001), 277-288.

<sup>27</sup> I omitted the small percentage of respondents (7 percent) who said members of their communities were primarily responsible for allocating land.

<sup>28</sup> The classic statement is Herbst; see also Michael Hechter, *Containing Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), p 58.

<sup>29</sup> The latter is measured using Schwartzberg's measure, which indicates how much longer a shape's perimeter is than the perimeter of a circle of equal area. Joseph Schwartzberg, "Reapportionment, Gerrymanders, and the Notion of 'Compactness'," *Minnesota Law Review* 50 (1966), 443-45.

<sup>30</sup> For more on leaders' revenue incentives, see Boone, "Political Topographies of the African State"; Hechter, p. 58.

<sup>31</sup> In the event that no significant opposition party exists – i.e. no opposition party won more than 15 percent of the vote in the last election – no groups are considered aligned with the opposition.

<sup>32</sup> For an introduction to multilevel models, see Marco Steenbergen and Bradford Jones, "Modeling Multilevel Data Structures," *American Journal of Political Science* 41 (January 2002), 218-237.

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<sup>33</sup> I consider Tonga speakers aligned with the UPND, Bemba speakers aligned with the Patriotic Front, and individuals who speak other languages unaligned.

<sup>34</sup> Details are in the on-line appendix.

<sup>35</sup> Susan Hyde and Nikolay Marinov, "Which Elections Can Be Lost?" *Political Analysis* 20 (Spring 2012), 191-210; James Fearon, Kimuli Kasara and David Laitin, "Ethnic Minority Rule and Civil War Onset," *American Political Science Review* (February 101), 187-193.

<sup>36</sup> The finding that politicians only devolve power during periods of political competition is not driven by the increased prevalence of democratization and decentralization over time. If the dataset is divided between leaders who came to power before and after 1980, there is a statistically significant correlation between political liberalization and empowering chiefs in both halves of the data; leaders never devolve power to chiefs in the absence of competitive elections, but 15 percent of leaders facing competitive elections did prior to 1980 ( $p=.059$ ), and 18 percent did after 1980 ( $p=.037$ ).

<sup>37</sup> Nelson Kasfir, "Guerrillas and Civilian Participation: The National Resistance Army in Uganda, 1981-86," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 43 (June 2005), 271-29.

<sup>38</sup> Pierre Englebert, "Born-Again Buganda or the Limits of Traditional Resurgence in Africa," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 40 (September 2002), p. 351.

<sup>39</sup> Naomi Chazan, "Ethnicity and Politics in Ghana," *Political Studies Quarterly* 97 (Autumn 1982), p. 470.

<sup>40</sup> Hippolyt Pul, "Exclusion, Association and Violence: Trends and Triggers in Northern Ghana's Konkomba-Dagomba Wars," *The African Anthropologist* 10 (March 2003), p. 59.

<sup>41</sup> Nelson Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom* (New York: Back Bay Books, 1994), p. 502.

<sup>42</sup> Jo Beal and Nduduzi Ngonyama, "Indigenous Institutions, Traditional Leaders and Elite Coalitions for Development: The Case of Greater Durban, South Africa." Crisis States Working Papers Series No. 2 (2009), p. 13.

<sup>43</sup> Harry West and Scott Kloeck-Jenson, "Betwixt and Between: 'Traditional Authority' and Democratic Decentralization in Post-War Mozambique," *African Affairs* 98 (October 1999), p. 262.

<sup>44</sup> Lars Burr and Helene Maria Kyed, "Contested Sources of Authority: Re-claiming State Sovereignty by Formalizing Traditional Authority in Mozambique," *Development and Change* 37 (July 2006), p. 852.

<sup>45</sup> Claudette Savonnet-Guyot, *État et Sociétés au Burkina* (Paris: Editions Karthala, 1986), p. 153-157.

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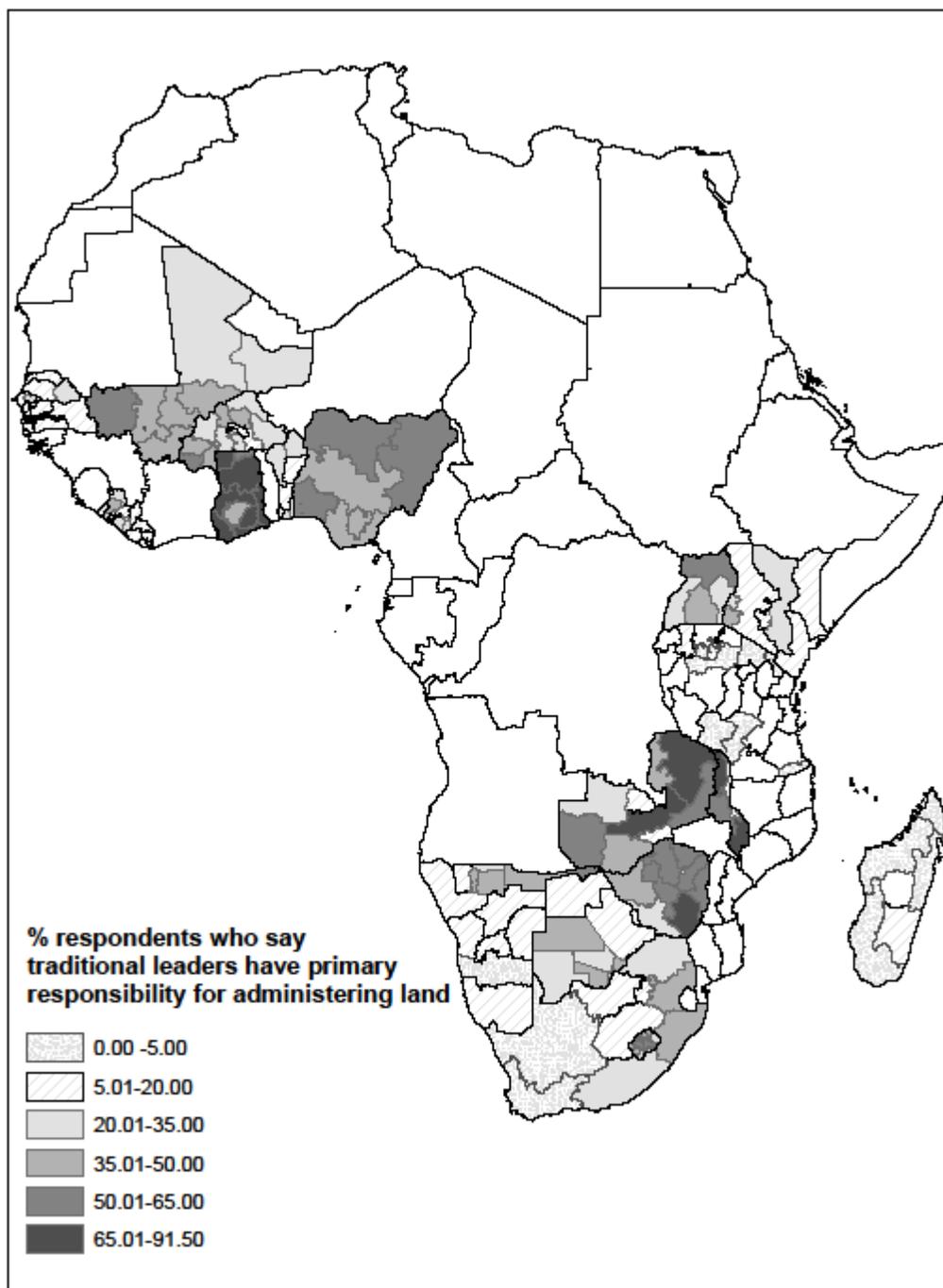
<sup>46</sup> Sten Hagberg, "Traditional Chieftaincy, Party Politics and Political Violence in Burkina Faso," in Lars Buur and Helene Maria Kyed, *State Recognition and Democratization in sub-Saharan Africa* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), p. 136.

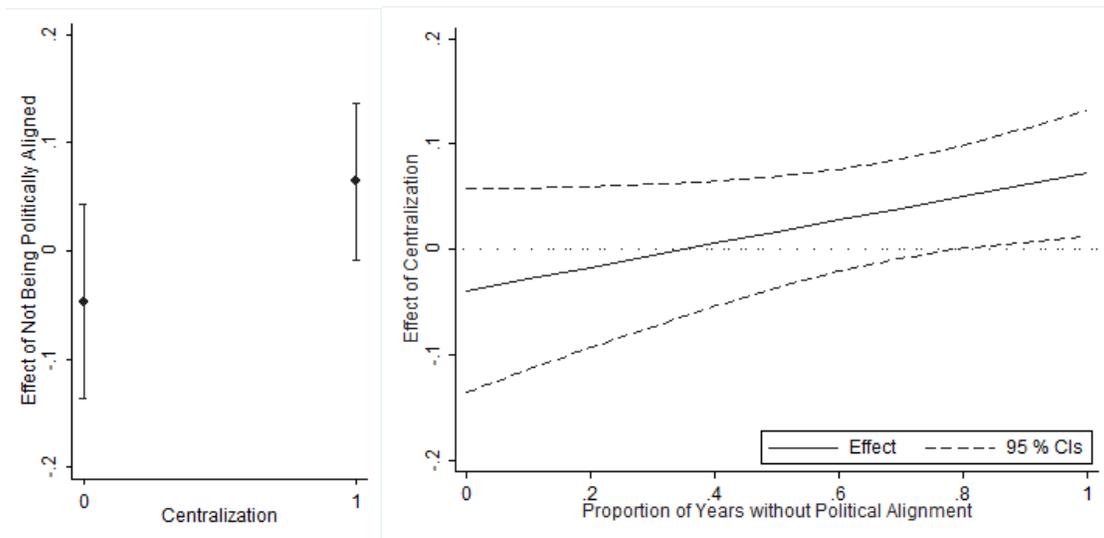
<sup>47</sup> Pierre Englebert, "Patterns and Theories of Traditional Resurgence in Tropical Africa," *Mondes en Développement* 30 (2002), 51-64.

<sup>48</sup> Marc Bellemare, "Sharecropping, Insecure Land Rights, and Land Titling Policies: A Case Study of Lac Alaotra, Madagascar," *Development Policy Review* 27 (January 2009), 87-106.

<sup>49</sup> Avindash Dixit and John Londregan, "The Determinants of Success of Special Interests in Redistributive Politics," *The Journal of Politics* 58 (November 1996), 1132-1155.

**Figure 1. Power of Traditional Leaders over Land by Subnational Region**



**Figure 2. Interaction Between Centralization and Political Alignment**

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**Table 1. Predictions about which Chiefs will be Empowered\***

	Not Centralized Group	Centralized Group
Ethnically Aligned with Major Political Party	Low Power	Low Power
Ethnically Unaligned with Major Political Party	Low Power	High Power
*Given situations were presidents/prime ministers face elections and are not from ethnic groups making up a majority of the population.		

**Table 2. Explaining the Power of Traditional Leaders in Administering Land**

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4) Zambia data	
<b>Country Predictors</b>					
British Colony	.137 (.082)	.123 (.078)	.144 (.080)		
Area (log)	-.058 (.036)	-.061 (.034)	-.064 (.036)		
Non-Compactness	-.113 (.124)	-.131 (.119)	-.118 (.121)		
<b>Subnational Predictors</b>					
Population Density	-.059 (.026)	-.065 (.026)	-.062 (.027)	-.001 (.001)	
Distance from Capital (log)	.017 (.010)	.017 (.010)	.017 (.010)	-.110 (.131)	
Quality of Land	.035 (.009)	.032 (.009)	.034 (.009)		
Centralization		-.039 (.049)	-.041 (.081)	.026 (.179)	
Proportion Decade/Population without Political Alignment*		-.047 (.046)		-.137 (.226)	
Centralization without Political Alignment		.111 (.062)		.409 (.206)	
Proportion 1980s without Political Alignment			-.039 (.066)		
Centralization without Political Alignment 1980s			.082 (.086)		
<b>Variance Components</b>					
Country-level Variance	.0207	.0187	.0196		
Subnational-level Variance	.0140	.0137	.0138		
N	178	178	178	91	
J	18	18	18		
<b>Model Fit</b>					
	Variance in ANOVA Model	% Variance Explained <sup>^</sup>	% Variance Explained	% Variance Explained	R-squared
Country level	.0318	34.9	41.2	38.4	
Subnational level	.0162	13.6	15.4	14.8	.135
<i>Note:</i> Table displays regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Models 1, 2 and 3 are multilevel models. Model 4 is an OLS model with standard errors clustered at the district level.					
*In model 2, the variable indicates the proportion of the previous decade the largest group in the subnational unit was not politically aligned. In model 4, the variable indicates the proportion of the population that is not from a politically aligned ethnic group.					
<sup>^</sup> The percentage of the variance explained is calculated by comparing the variance component in each model with the variance component in the ANOVA model.					

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**Table 3. Percentage of Political Leaders Who Devolved Power to Chiefs**

	No Political Competition	Political Competition
Leader's Group Not Majority	0 % N=38	18 % N=49
Leader's Group Majority	0 % N=5	0 % N=4
All Leaders	0 % N=43	17 % N=53