Codebook:

Traditional Political Systems & Index of Democraticness

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Background

This codebook describes the *Traditional Political Systems Dataset* including a new index for the measure of democraticness. The dataset contains the data of extensive web-based expert survey that took place in 2014 as part of the dissertation project of Daniela Kromrey at the University of Konstanz/ Department of Politics and Public Administration. About 300 academic experts from political science, anthropology, law, history and cultural studies participated in the web survey on "Traditional Political Systems in Africa" to gather information of prevailing traditional systems and their political attributes. 157 of 159 covered African ethnic groups in the dataset were identified using the data project of the ETH Zurich, the Ethnic Power Relation Dataset (version 2.0) for the year 2009, and can thus be linked to this data and other dataset using the EPR coding for ethnic groups. Data on two additional groups can be found in the data (see "sample" variable for details). For questions regarding the content of the dataset or information on the expert survey can be directed to daniela.kromrey@uni-konstanz.de.

Definition of Traditional Political Systems

Traditional political systems are ethnically defined political systems that base their legitimacy on culture and history, either real or invented. These political systems are still functional today and the data gathered relates to their present state. Political parties, trade unions and informal interest groups based on ethnic patterns do not define as traditional political systems.

Variables

tradpol Indicates if the ethnic groups is organized in a traditional political system as stated in above given definition. Values range between 0 and 1, due to the aggregation of expert opinions. 1 indicates that the ethnic group is still traditionally organized. A values of 0.5 shows that no clear opinion was stated in the expert survey. Corresponding question in the web survey: *Do the #group# currently have a traditional political system?*

att_... Provides more detailed information on the political attributes of the ethnic groups. A set of dummy variables indicate the existence of several traditional political structures. Corresponding question in the survey: *Which of the following attributes are still typical for the traditional political system of the #group# today?*

att_ageset Age-set, is defined as system of social organization based on shared age that cuts across structures of shared descent, e.g. junior, warrior and elder status.

att_kinship Kinship, is defined as system of social organization based on common descent i.e. family ties.

att_lineage Lineage, is defined as unilineal descent group that can be traced back to one common ancestor, either by line of the father (patrilineage) or the mother (matrilineage).

att_council Council of elders, is defined as body of power that consists of elder, 'wise', respected men/women.

att_segment Segmentary society, is defined as a system of social organization that is segemented, i.e. no central, higher level authority exists,.

att_chief Chieftaincy, is defined as the social stratification under a single leader (or a single group).

att_house National or Regional House of Chiefs, is defined as body of power that consists of several chiefs on a regional or national level with varying functions.

att_court Traditional court, is defined as judicial body of power that applies (un)written customary or traditional law within the community.

att_elders Elders, are defined as men and women performing political tasks, because they are considered knowledgeable and respectable by the community.

att_king Kingdom, is defined as form of government under the rule of s single person - king or queen.

Political Attributes of Traditional Political Systems

pol_decm Describes the decision-making procedure within the traditional political system, ranging between two categories: **consensual (1)**, i.e. decisions is made by a group of people and seek the consent of all participants, and **hierarchical (2)**, i.e. decisions are made at the top level of political leadership and communicated to lower levels. Corresponding question: *How are political decisions made within the traditional system of the #group#?*

pol_power Describes the predominant power structure within the traditional political system, ranging between two categories, **un-centralized (1)**, i.e. no unique centre of power exists. Social organization is defined by kinship, age-set and marriage. Each group is economically and politically independent, and **centralized (2)**, i.e. one or more distinct centres of power exist, i.e. political power and authority is concentrated. Corresponding question: *How would you describe the current structure of political power within the traditional society of the #group#?*

pol_murdock This variable is based on the *jurisdictional hierarchy* variable included in the Ethnographic Atlas (Murdock 1967), coding the political complexity of traditional political systems. It gives the number of organizational levels in the polity, ranging from **0** (groups lack any form of centralized political organization), **1** (“petty chiefdoms”), **2** (large paramount chiefdoms/small states) to **3 or 4 levels** (large states). Corresponding question: *How many jurisdictional levels above the local level does the traditional political system of the #group# have today?*

pol_legit… Codes the prevalent mode of legitimacy based on Weber’s (1958) *Three Types of Legitimate Rule*. Corresponding question: *What is the basis of legitimacy of the #group#? Multiple selection is possible. Please select the categories that fit best:*

pol_legit_c Charismatic legitimacy, i.e. “resting on devotion to the exceptional sanctity or heroism of an individual person“

pol_legit_t Traditional legitimacy, i.e. “an established belief in the sanctity of immemorial traditions”

pol_legit_l Legal-rational legitimacy, i.e. “the belief in the legality of rules”

pol_separ_vert Codes the mode of the vertical separation of powers in the traditional polity, ranging between three categories: **concentrated (1)**, i.e. political power rests with the central government and is delegated to subnational units, e.g. unitary systems, **distributed (2**), i.e. political power is distributed between central and regional authorities, e.g. federal systems, and **dispersed (3)**, i.e. political power is segmented. No central, higher level authority exists, e.g. segmentary lineage systems. Corresponding question: *Are political powers divided between central and peripheral authorities?*

office_... These series of dummy variables codes the prevalence of the respective political office in the traditional political system. Corresponding question: *What 'public offices' (functions, ranks, status) or leadership positions do exist among the #group#?*

office_chief	Chief	office_bigm	Big men/ local leader
office_king	King	office_ritual	Ritual office
office_vhead	Village headmen	office_heal	Traditional healer
office_shead	Senior headmen	office_adv	Advisor to the chief
office_fhead	Head of family/ kin-group	office_judge	Judges
office_band	Band leaders	office_council	Councillors
office_elder	Elders		

Democraticness Index

The expert survey contained 11 single democratic components. Those components were aggregated to a single index using a confirmatory factor analysis to test the underlying theoretic concept and select the most suitable components. For more details, see Neupert-Wentz, Kromrey, Bayer (forthcoming) The democraticness of traditional political systems in Africa, *Democratization*, https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2021.1953476

All questions related to the democratic components offered three-point interval answer scales. Three-point scales in this survey always referred to the labels “no”, “partly,” and “yes”.

Equal Empowerment (a)

a1_equality **Equality.** Codes the equality within the traditional political system with respect to (a) political participation, i.e. to partake in the political decision-making process, (b) political ownership, i.e. to voice an opinion or opposition to political issue, (c) legal impeachment and defence, i.e. to be subject to the same laws of justice, and (d) rights an interest, i.e. to have their preferences and interests considered. The variables gives the aggregated value for all four specification. Corresponding question: *Is every member of the #group# treated as fully equal before the traditional law of the community?*

a2_rights **Political Rights.** Codes the prevalence of political rights within the community, looking at whether the rights are (a) guaranteed by (un)written law, (b) adequately enforced, and (c) not deliberately/ violently prevented from exertion. The variables

gives the aggregated value for the three specification. Corresponding question: *Are freedoms and rights granted to the members of the #group# by their leaders within the community?*

a3_access **Access to office.** The variable gives the aggregated information on the inclusiveness of the political offices (see preceding variable *office_...*) present within the traditional polity. Corresponding question: *Who is eligible to run and hold a 'public office' (function, rank, status)? Please indicate for every position whether the access to office is restricted to few selected persons (i.e. is exclusive), to many but pre-defined persons or a specific group of people, or is open to everyone (i.e. is inclusive).*

Preference Input (b)

b1_leader **Leadership selection.** Observes if the members of the ethnic community are involved in the selection process of their leadership. More specifically, it asks for all political offices stated earlier (see preceding variable *office_...*) if members are able to select and abolish their leadership. The variables offers an aggregate of both dimensions of leadership selection. Corresponding question: *Are members of the #group# engaged in the leadership selection within the traditional community?*

b2_agenda **Agenda-Setting.** Looks into the agenda-setting capacity within the traditional political system with regard to three dimensions: (a) place issues on the agenda, (b) remove topics from the agenda, and (c) prioritise issues discussed. The variable gives the aggregated value for the three dimensions per ethnic group. Corresponding question: *Are members able to influence the political agenda of the #group#?*

b3_parti **Participation**. Codes the participation capacities of members within a traditional polity. It distinguishes whether participation is (a) not allowed nor facilitated, (b) restricted to exclusive issues, (c) restricted to a specific participation mode, and (d) curtailed by political leaders. The variable provides the aggregated value for all inquired shapes participation. Corresponding question: *Can members of #group# take actively part in the decision-making process of their community?*

b4_decm **Decision-making.** Counts the number of persons holding a political office (see preceding variable *office_...*) that partake in the decision-making process, plus an additional category for “all members are included”. The values assigned are (1) if only one office e.g. the chief is mentioned, (3) if all member can decide and (2) for values in between. Corresponding question: *Among the #group#, who makes the final decision? Please identify who is allowed to rule and thus is involved in the final decision-making process.*

Process control (c)

c1_separ **Horizontal separation of powers.** Inquires after the independent political bodies, i.e. executive, legislative, and judicative. The following values can be chosen: (1) no, (2) partly, and (3) yes. Corresponding question: *Are the political powers of the traditional system of the #group# separated between independent bodies?*

c2_rule **Rule of law.** Codes whether the rule of law is guaranteed and effectively applied within the ethnic community. It looks at three dimensions: (a) Fair and public hearing, (b) Impartial and independent court, and (c) Prosecution of the abuse of power. The variable provides the aggregated value. Corresponding question: *Are the*

members of the #group# effectively protected from the unwarranted infringement of their leaders?

c3_trans **Transparency.** Looks into the transparency of the decision-making process within the ethnic group with regard to three dimensions: (a) information is freely accessible, (b) meetings are open to the public, and (c) no censorship or selective information channels exist. The variable provides the aggregated value. Corresponding question: *Is the decision-making process within the traditional community of the #group# transparent?*

c4_account **Accountability.** Codes the responsibility of the leaders of the ethnic group towards their community member with regard to (a) the possibility to voice critique, and if so (b) how leaders react upon this critique. The variable provides the aggregated value. Corresponding question: *Are the leaders of #group# responsible for their actions towards the community members? How do the political leaders of the #group# react on the criticisms? Are consequences demanded and implemented?*

democracy **Subjective democracy measure.** The variable codes the democraticness of the traditional political system on a 5-point scale (1) undemocratic to (5) democratic. No definition of democracy was given on purpose. Corresponding question: *In your opinion, is the traditional political system of the #group# democratic? Please indicate on the scale below the extent of democratic values inherent in the traditional political system of the #group#.*

dem_index_sum **Index of Democraticness.** Aggregated index to assess how the democraticness of traditional political systems. All 11 components were used to construct the index based on a subset of the data excluding all observations that have no traditional systems (tradpol<0.5) and have missing values on all 11 democratic components (newN=142). Simple sum scores. See Neupert-Wentz et al.

dem_index_11 **Index of Democraticness.** Aggregated index to assess how the democraticness of traditional political systems. All 11 components were used to construct the index based on a subset of the data excluding all observations that have no traditional systems (tradpol<0.5) and have missing values on all 11 democratic components (newN=142). Factor scores. See Neupert-Wentz et al.

dem_index_8 **Index of Democraticness.** Aggregated index to assess how the democraticness of traditional political systems. Eight components were used to construct this main index relying on the results of a Confirmatory Factor Analysis based on a subset of the data excluding all observations that have no traditional systems (tradpol<0.5) and have missing values on all 11 democratic components (newN=142). Factor scores. See Neupert-Wentz et al.

Variables on State Relations

The next set of questions enquires into the relationship between the nation state and the traditional political systems. It especially tackles the experts' subjective opinion in the area of democracy, power and control as well as the legal integration.

demo_compare If the preceding question (variable *democracy*) was answered **affirmative**, i.e. traditional political systems are democratic (values 4 or 5), this variable gives the democratic likeness of the systems in comparison to the respective nation state: (1)

	less democratic or (2) more democratic, compared to the national political system. Corresponding question: *Is the traditional system of the #group# more or less democratic than the political system of #country#?*
demo_intervene	If the preceding question (variable *democracy*) was answered **negative**, i.e. traditional political systems are not democratic (values 2 or 1), this variable asks if the nation state should intervene: (1) yes, and (2) no. Corresponding question: *What do you think, should the state intervene in the traditional system of the #group# to make it more democratic?*
inte	Codes the experts' assessment of the legal integration of the traditional political systems within the state structures. Four integration dimensions could be selected: (1) Integration, i.e. the traditional political systems are part of the state, (2) Dualism, i.e. the traditional political systems exist next to the state, (3) Recognition of traditional and cultural rights, i.e. the traditional political systems are not officially recognised, but tolerated, or (4) Ignorance or abolishment, i.e. the traditional political systems are ignored or even banned by state law. Corresponding question: *To what extent does the constitution of #country# provide for the exclusion or inclusion of the traditional political system of the #group#?*
inte_y_control	Assuming that traditional systems are integrated (variable *inte* values 1 or 2), the variable gives the consequences on the power relations between the two polities on a 5-point scale: from (1) state control to (5) political freedoms for #group#. Corresponding question: *Does the legal integration/ dualism of the #group# give the state more control of traditional leaders or more freedoms to the traditional leaders?*
inte_y_tdemo	Assuming that traditional systems are integrated (variable *inte* values 1 or 2), the variable gives the consequences on the level of democracy of the traditional polity on a 5-point scale from (1) traditional leaders more democratic to (5) traditional leaders less democratic. Corresponding question: *What consequences does the legal integration/dualism of the #group# have on the level of democracy in #country#?*
inte_y_sdemo	Assuming that traditional systems are integrated (variable *inte* values 1 or 2), the variable gives the consequences on the level of democracy of the nation state on a 5-point scale from (1) state more democratic to (5) state less democratic. Corresponding question: *What consequences does the legal integration/dualism of the #group# have on the level of democracy in #country#?*
inte_n_control	Assuming that traditional systems are not integrated (variable *inte* values 3 or 4), the variable gives the consequences on the power relations between the two polities on a 5-point scale: from (1) state control to (5) political freedoms for #group#. Corresponding question: *Does the #inte# of the #group# give the state more control of traditional leaders or more freedoms to the traditional leaders?*
infl_state	Assesses the experts' opinion on the influence the state has on traditional political systems, on a 5-point scale: from (1) not at all to (5) very much. Corresponding question: *From your point of view, who has more influence on whom in #country#: the state or the traditional political system?*
infl_trad	Assesses the experts' opinion on the influence the traditional polity has on the state, on a 5-point scale: from (1) not at all to (5) very much. Corresponding question: *From*

	your point of view, who has more influence on whom in #country#: the state or the traditional political system?
expert_n	Gives the number of experts that participated in the survey per ethnic group.
sample	Provides details on the sample. In total, information on 159 ethnic groups of 44 African countries was collected. Of these 159 groups, 157 are included in the EPR dataset (Cederman et al. 2010). Additional information could be gathered for the Tuareg of Algeria and the Pokot of Kenya. Four of the 159 EPR groups are coded as politically irrelevant groups (Gur of Burkina Faso, Somali of Somalia, Swazi of Swaziland and the Sotho of Lesotho) and were collected during the prototype phase of the survey
miss_obs	Counts the number of missing observation for each ethnic group.
miss_obs	Counts the number of missing observation for each ethnic group for the 11 democratic components.

Other variables in the dataset that are not based on the expert survey

ethnicid	Ethnic group code given in the Ethnic Power Relations (EPR) dataset (version 2.0) based on the Correlates of War (COW) project coding. Cederman, L.-E., A. Wimmer, and B. Min (2010) Why do ethnic groups rebel? New data and analysis. *World Politics.* 62(1): 87-119
groupid	Ethnic group id given by the EPR dataset (not country specific)
group	Name of the ethnic group as stated in the EPR dataset
country	Gives the country name in which the respective group mainly resides
stateabb	Abbreviation of country name
cow	Correlates of War (COW) code of country
year	Year of observation of the political relevance of the ethnic groups based on the EPR data. Note that the groups were identified using the list given in the EPR dataset in 2009. The data on the traditional political systems for all these ethnic groups was gathered in 2014.
size	Population size of the ethnic groups as given in the EPR dataset.
status	Power status of the ethnic group in 2009 as given in the EPR dataset..
relevance	Indicates whether the ethnic group was politically relevant in 2009 based on the EPR dataset.