**Venezuela**
Rice

Venezuela gained independence from Spain in 1821. Venezuela politics in the 19th century can be marked by periods of political turmoil, dictatorship, and the revolution. The first half of the 20th century, followed by the political instability of the previous decades, Venezuela was marked by authoritarianism. In the early 20th century, Venezuelan government was dominated by the personalist regime of Caudillista region (U.S. Department of State 2010). In 1899, Cipriano Castro overthrew the government by marching to Caracas, and became the president. His health and moral problem, however, led him to exile from Venezuela, and his revolutionary colleague Juan Vicente Gomez of Partido Liberal Restaurador (Liberal Restoration Party) succeeded Castro (Martz 1966).

We code Gomez administration as a personalist, based on Geddes' (2003) classification scheme. He was a military general of the Revolutionary, and lacked the support of their party except for his followers in Tachira region of Venezuela. Gomez allowed elections, but it was without competition, while the successor to the leader was pre-designated personally. For example, between 1914 and 1922 he formally left the presidency in the hands of a provisional president while he remained "president elect" and head of the army (Kavanagh 2013). He also systematically removed all internal challenges to his authority. He repressed several uprising, including the student uprising, "generation of 28." He installed number of spies on his payroll to weed out anyone against his power (TIME Magazine 1935). Access to high offices depended on the personal favors of the leader; he appointed his brother as first and his son as second vice president (Kavanagh 2013). He also personally controlled the security apparatus; Venezuelan army was appointed by who had committed their loyalty to Gomez, while Gomez allowed them to exploit the country by seizing land and oil share, as long as they did not interfere with his share (Encyclopedia of World Biography 2004). Moreover, by personally appointing army officials, he disorganized military hierarchy.

Gomez tried to improve Venezuela's economy by expanding national petroleum industry, and granting concessions to foreign oil companies. In return, he won support from them, and maintained economic stability, while he also increased his personal wealth enormously. The petroleum industry did help Venezuelan economy, but it had serious setbacks. The petroleum income polarized the Venezuelans, creating unbalanced occupational and economic condition. Gomez also did not solve problems of the agriculture, including the landed aristocracy. These social, economic and political setbacks discredited Gomez administration. Opposition force against Gomez grew, and an uprising in 1928 by angry university students so called "generation of 28" emerged. Gomez ruled until 1935, when he died on December 17, 1935 (Martz 1966).

After the death of Gomez, there were outbursts by people who were angry of the tyranny, and General Eleazar Lopez Contreras, Gomez' Minister of War, acted rapidly to quell the demonstrations. Like Gomez, Lopez Contreras was a Tachirense and a trusted aid of Gomez that Gomez had wanted to succeed him (Ewell 1984, 74). Lopez Contreras thus had the support of Gomez clique and in fact "after he finished Gómez's term of office in 1936, the Congress, all the members of which had been appointed by Gómez, selected López Contreras to serve his own five-year term in office (US Library of Congress)." However, Lopez Contreras' source of support

extended beyond Gomez in that he also relied more heavily on the military. Lopez' Contreras rule thus has elements of a military regime in addition to personalist features. Firstly, he was an active general when he became the president. He refrained from creating a political party, while the military hierarchy had been maintained during his presidency; personal loyalty did not take most part in appointment, as it did in Gomez administration. During his presidency, he founded National Guard, which was one of the four components of armed forces in Venezuela, and Contreras became the commander in chief. The National Guard participated in operating national security by collaborating with the state and municipal political bodies; it attempted to control the protests and any upbringings against the presidency (Martz 1966). Trinkunas (2006, 33) confirms that several number of high-ranking officers were in their government, although the number was declined from 19 in 1937 to 4 in 1941. Given the continued influence of Gomez' clique and the features of a military regime, we code Lopez Contreras assumption of office as the beginning of a military-personalist hybrid. His entry into office is this a minor SOLS change.

In the 1941 election, Lopez Contreras chose Minister of War Isaias Medina Angarita as his successor. The Partido Democratido Nacional (PDN), the biggest leftist party against the current government, participated in election with Romulo Gallegos as a candidate. He was not expected to win, and eventually lost the election. Medina Angarita became the president of Venezuela on May 5, 1941 (Martz 1966). We did not code a SOLS change for this leadership change, because he was a pre-designated successor of Lopez Contreras, and the military-personalist regime continued.

The period from 1941 to 1948 is characterized by construction of modern political parties in Venezuela. Medina supported legalized all parties in 1941. After 1941, Acción Democratica (AD), founded by Betancourt, began to increase its influence. In 1945, AD overthrew Medina in conjunction with military officers. Consequently, Betancourt became the president in 1945. He is known as the father of Venezuelan democracy and he accomplished many social reforms, including universal suffrage (Martz 1966). We code a SOLS change, since Betancourt was not the pre-designated successor of Medina Angarita and, while helping him to office, military officers, played little role in politics. We code a non-specific authoritarian regime under Betancourt.

In 1947, presidential elections were held. The AD candidate, Rómulo Gallegos Freire won the elections, and assumed office in February 1948. We do not code a SOLS change for the transition from Betancourt (AD) to Gallegos (AD). At this time, Venezuela is not coded as a democracy by Polity IV (Marshall and Jaggers 2002) and is not coded as a particular type of autocratic regime by Geddes (2003), so we use the pre-designated successor rule. Betancourt remained head of the AD, and Gallegos was the AD candidate, so we consider this a pre-designated successor. Gallegos' time in office was limited. In November 1948, he was ousted in a military coup led by Carlos Delgado Chalbaud Gómez, which is a SOLS change. This began a ten-year period of military/personalist government in Venezuela.

Delgado Chalbaud was the chairman of the ruling junta until November 1950, when Marcos Pérez Jiménez assumed control, which is not a SOLS change. Pérez Jiménez was in power until 1958. In January 1958, student demonstrations led to popular uprisings supported by the Church and much of the military, which in turn led to the overthrown of Perez Jiménez. A new junta, made up of both military and civilian members, took control of the country, led by

Rear Admiral Wolfgang Larrazábal Ugueto. In November 1958, Larrazábal Ugueto ceded leadership of the junta to Edgar Sanabria Arcia, also a member of the military. Larrazabal and Sanabria were both interim leaders in place until elections could be organized (see Nichols and Sala 2010, 127; Ellner and Morse 2007, 52), and thus we do not code SOLS change when they enter office. Presidential elections were held in December 1958, and Betancourt Bello, still a member of the AD, was elected to office. He assumed office in February 1959, which is a SOLS change. From 1958, Polity IV (Marshall and Jaggers 2002) codes Venezuela as democratic.

In 1964, after presidential elections, Raul Leoni Otero, a member of AD, formed a government in coalition with the Democratic-Republican Union (URD) and the National Democratic Front (FND). This coalition was known as the "Broad Base," and assumed power in 1964. In 1968, elections led to a victory for the Social Christian Party of Venezuela (COPEI) and its candidate, Rafael Caldera Rodriguez. This is a SOLS change. In the next presidential election in 1973, the AD candidate, Carlos Andrés Pérez Rodriguez won an absolute majority and was elected. This is a SOLS change, too. He assumed office in 1974.

Pérez nationalized both the iron and the petroleum industry in Venezuela, leading to a massive increase in government revenues. However, in the next presidential elections in 1978, the COPEI candidate, Luis Herrera Campins, was elected to office, with a term beginning in 1979. The AD was victorious in the next elections, with its candidate Jaime Ramón Lusinchi taking office in 1984. In the following elections, Pérez Rodriguez was again elected to the presidency as the AD candidate. This is not a SOLS change. He assumed office in 1989, but found himself in the middle of social and economic instability, as well as institutions stymied by corruption. This led to two coup attempts in 1992, the second of which was led by the armed forces. Although both were unsuccessful, they sparked a massive opposition movement to Pérez, who was, in turn, suspended by the Venezuelan Congress on May 21, 1993. He was then prosecuted by the Supreme Court on charges of corruption and found guilty. He was initially replaced by Octavio Lepage Barreto. Since he was a member of the AD, we do not code a SOLS change here. Lepage is not listed on the spreadsheet. On June 5, Lepage was replaced by the non-partisan Ramón José Velásquez Mujica, who served as "interim" president to oversee new elections in December 1993. As he was an interim leader, this is not classified as a SOLS change, either.

Former President Rafael Caldera, now a candidate for the Democratic Convergence party (CD-a splinter group of COPEI), won these elections and assumed the presidency in 1994. This is a SOLS change. In the 1998 elections, Hugo Chavez Frías, formerly a member of the military and a leader of one of the 1992 coup attempts, ran as the candidate from the Movement for the Fifth Republic (MVR) party, and won the presidency. This is a SOLS change. With his populist agenda, Chavez created a new unicameral National Assembly, replacing the bicameral Congress, and created a new constitution. Chavez was ousted from office for three days in 2002, after a coup by the military, but as the time out of office was so brief, the leaders who took over during that period are not coded by Archigos (Goemans et al. 2009) or us.

In 2005, Polity IV (Marshall and Jaggers 2002) stops considering Venezuela a democracy. In 2007, Chavez's MVR party joined with several other leftist parties to create the United Socialist Party of Venezuela. Geddes, Wright, and Frantz (2013) code his regime as a personalist regime.

In October 2012, Chavez was reelected as president. On October 11, 2012 Chavez named foreign minister Nicolas Maduro as his vice president amid rumors about the state of Chavez's health. In December 2012, Chavez announced his cancer had returned and left the country to undergo surgery in Cuba. He named Vice President Nicolas Maduro as his handpicked successor, should he become unable to rule (Council on Foreign Relations). Chavez missed his January 2013 inauguration, sparking a debate over whether he was still legitimately president. Chavez returned to Venezuela on February 18, 2013 to continue his treatment in Venezuela (Council on Foreign Relations).

Vice President Nicholas Maduro announced on March 5, 2013 that Hugo Chavez had died. Maduro served as acting president from March 5 until elections were held on April 14, 2013 (Shoichet and Ford 2013).[1,2] On April 14, 2013 Maduro narrowly won the presidential election with just 50.6 percent of the vote (Council on Foreign Relations). Because Maduro was the pre-designated successor of Chavez, this is not considered to be a SOLS change. In May 2018, Maduro was reelected to another six-year term in a vote marred by an opposition boycott and claims of vote-rigging (BBC News 2018).

**Sources**

"Juan Vicente Gómez." 2004. Encyclopedia of World Biography. 2nd Edition. Volume 6. Detroit: Gale. 417-8. Accessed via Gale Virtual Reference Library. (December 7, 2010).

"Juan Vincente Gómez." No Date. Encyclopædia Britannica. http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/238196/Juan-Vicente-Gomez (September 3, 2013).

"Venezuela." 2010. U.S. Department of State. http://www.state.gov/outofdate/bgn/venezuela/156163.htm (September 2, 2013).

BBC News. 21 May 2018. Venezuela election: Maduro wins second term amid claims of vote rigging. https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-44187838?intlink_from_url=https://www.bbc.com/news/topics/cjmz4pg98zpt/venezuela-presidential-election-2018&link_location=live-reporting-story

---

[1] According to Archigos v 4.1, Maduro took office on March 5, 2012. This is a coding error. Multiple sources, including Worldstatesmen.org, the US Council on Foreign Relations, BBC News (2018), Reuters (Wallis 2013), and CNN (Shoichet 2013), Moros served as acting president after Chavez's death, from March 5 until April 14, 2013. Accordingly, we code the leader transition from Chavez to Maduro as occurring on March 5, 2013.

[2] Because Hugo Chávez was prevented by illness from taking the oath for his next presidential term, which he nevertheless was deemed to have begun on January 10 2013, it was initially unclear whether the vice president, Nicolas Maduro Moros (as provided in the constitution for the regular case of the death of a sitting president), or the president of the National Assembly, Diosdado Cabello Rondón (as provided for in the case of an elected president dying before being sworn in), became acting president. The government adopted the first interpretation. This was confirmed by the Supreme Court on March 8, 2013, when it ruled that Maduro became acting president immediately on the death of Chavez and ceased to be vice president at that time. We follow this interpretation.

Council on Foreign Relations. No date. Venezuela's Chavez Era: 1958 – 2013. CFR Timeline. https://www.cfr.org/timeline/venezuelas-chavez-era

Ellner, Steve, and Miguel Tinker Salas, eds. 2007. Venezuela: Hugo Chávez and the Decline of an "exceptional Democracy." Lanham, MD: Rowland and Littlefield.

Ewell, Judith. 1984. Venezuela: A Century of Change. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Geddes, Barbara, Joseph Wright, and Erica Frantz. 2013. "New Data on Autocratic Breakdown and Regime Transitions." http://dictators.la.psu.edu/pdf/gwf-code-book-1.1 (August 31, 2013).

Geddes, Barbara. 2003. Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Goemans, Henk E., Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, and Giacomo Chiozza. 2009. "Introducing Archigos: A Dataset of Political Leaders." Journal of Peace Research 46(2): 269-283.

Haggard, Stephan Mark, and Robert R. Kaufman. 2008. Development, Democracy, and Welfare States: Latin America, East Asia, and Eastern Europe. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Kavanagh, Dennis, and Christopher Riches, eds. 2013. "Gomez, Juan Vicente." In A Dictionary of Political Biography. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Oxford Reference Online. http://www.oxfordreference.com.ezproxy.rice.edu/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t85.e275 (September 3, 2013).

Marshall, Monty G., and Keith Jaggers. 2002. Polity IV Dataset. College Park, MD: Center for International Development and Conflict Management, University of Maryland.

Martz, John D. 1966. Acción Democrática: Evolution of a Modern Political Party in Venezuela. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Nichols, Elizabeth Gackstetter, and Kimberly J. Morse. 2010. Venezuela. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO.

Palimo, Simon. 1935. "Venezuela: Death of a dictator." TIME Magazine, Dec. 30, 1935. http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,848393,00.html (September 3, 2013).

Schlager, Neil, and Jayne Weisblatt, eds.; and Orlando J. Pérez, consulting ed. 2006. World Encyclopedia of Political System and Parties. 4th Edition, Volumes 1. Facts on File Lineraity of World History.

Shoichet, Catherine E. and Dana Ford. 5 March 2013. Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez dies. CNN. https://www.cnn.com/2013/03/05/world/americas/venezuela-chavez-main/index.html

Shoichet, Catherine E. 16 April 2013. Hugo Chavez's political heir Nicolas Maduro named Venezuela's president-elect. CNN. https://www.cnn.com/2013/04/15/world/americas/venezuela-elections/index.html

Tarver, Hollis Michael, and Julia C. Frederick. 2005. The History of Venezuela. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Trinkunas, Harold A. 2006. Crafting Civilian Control of the Military in Venezuela: A Comparati ve Perspective. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.

Daniel Wallis. 6 March 2013. Venezuela's Maduro: from bus driver to Chavez's successor. Reuters. https://www.reuters.com/article/us-venezuela-chavez-maduro-idUSBRE9250PO20130306

Wright, Winthrop R. 2008. “López Contreras, Eleázar (1883–1973).” In Encyclopedia of Latin American History and Culture, Volume 4. 2nd Edition. Eds. Jay Kinsbruner and Erick D. Langer. Detroit: Charles Scribner's Sons, 262. Accessed via Gale Virtual Reference Library. (December 7, 2010).

Pre-1945 coded by Jee Yun Oh (no date)
Post-1945 coded by Meera Krishnan (Rice) on September 24, 2010
Pre-1945 revised by Ashley Leeds on January 31, 2011
Pre-1945 revised by Naoko Matsumura on August 16, 2013
Post-1945 edited by Ashley Leeds on October 4, 2011
Post-1945 updated by Mariana Rodriguez on February 14, 2012
Post-1945 updated by Naoko Matsumura on June 1, 2012
Post-1945 updated by Naoko Matsumura on June 12, 2012
Combined by Ahra Wu (Rice) on September 7, 2013
Edited by Andrew Wood (Rice) 05/24/2014
Edited by Michaela Mattes on September 26, 2014
Edited by Michaela Mattes on 8/4/2015
Edited by Kristin Bryant to include information about 2009-2018 period coded by Alex Pugh and Kristin Bryant on 08/08/2020