Benin
Rice

In 1960, Benin gained its independence from France. The first twelve years of independence were a volatile time in Benin, with several military coups. Initially, the government was based around three people (Hubert Maga, Sourou-Migan Apithy, and Justin Adhomadegbe), each of whom represented a different region of Benin (then called Dahomey). The first government (classified as personalist by GWF until 1963) was under President Hubert Maga, a member of the Dahomey Democratic Rally Party (RDD).

In 1963, due to riots opposing Maga's presidency, the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, Cristophe Soglo, took over the presidency, but with the official title of Head of the Provisional Government. I therefore do not code this as a SOLS change, because of both the short duration of the government and the provisional status it claimed. Soglo then turned over the Presidency to Sourou- Migan Apithy, a member of the Democratic Party (PD), who had been the Prime Minister during the Maga administration, in January 1964. Because GWF codes Apithy's government as a separate personalist regime (1964-1965) that is distinct from Maga's personalist regime (1961-1963), I code a leader change from Soglo (or Maga) to Apithy as a SOLS change. While Apithy was the Prime Minister in Maga's government, Seely (2009: 31) states that a political alliance between Maga and Apithy fell apart in the coup.

In 1965, Apithy came into conflict with his Vice-President, Justin Adhomadegbe over who was responsible for nominating individuals to the Supreme Court. After some argument, Apithy was asked to resign, and when he refused, Adhomadegbe took control of a unit of the Army headed towards the capital city. At this point, Soglo, who had been on vacation, arrived in the capital and decided that affairs had spiraled out of control. He called all major military officers together, and convinced the group to call for the resignation of both Adhomadegbe and Apithy. Control of the government was then given to the Speaker of the National Assembly, Tahurou Congacou (who was a member of the PD, so no SOLS change). Congacou, who was only in power for one month (between November and December 1965) attempted constitutional reform and new elections, only to find that Apithy and Maga's followers were boycotting the National Assembly session meant to decide these issues. (Ronen, 1975, 198-200) This, in turn, led to the military (led by Soglo) intervening again, and this time taking control of the government, resulting in a SOLS change.

In 1967, Soglo, after a failure to cope with an economic crisis, was overthrown in a coup led by a young military officer, Maurice Kouandeté. Kouandeté handed over power after two days to Soglo's former Chief of Staff of the Army, Alphonse Alley, and thus Kouandeté is not listed in the data set. We code a minor Change with Alley. According to GWF, he started a separate military regime that is distinct from a prior military regime under Soglo. By our rules, we code minor SOLS changes between different military regimes. Alley attempted to hold elections, but was overshadowed by Kouandeté, who headed the Military Revolutionary Committee. After the elections were boycotted by supporters of Apithy and Maga, the Committee decided to turn over leadership of the country to non-partisan and, more importantly, non-regionalist, civilian leader Emile Zinsou in 1968. This is not coded as a SOLS change, however, because GWF continue to code Benin as a military state during this period. Zinsou was

actually appointed by the military regime, meaning that there is no SOLS change (Lentz 1994: 88).

Sixteen months later, the army, led by Kouandeté, overthrew Zinsou and regained control over the government, this time under Kouandeté himself. Three days later, on 13 December, Koundaté handed over control of the government (which was now led by a Military Directorate) to Lieutenant- Colonel Paul Emile De Souza (the highest ranking military officer at that time). We code a minor SOLS change with Kouandeté because GWF code a separate military regime starting with Kouandeté.

The Military Directorate then scheduled both a presidential and legislative election for 1970. Maga, Apithy, Ahomadegbe and Zinsou were the candidates for President, and Maga won the election (SOLS change). Regional tensions again began to rise, and to stop conflict from occurring, Maga, Apithy and Ahomadegbe decided to form a Presidential Council, the leadership of which would rotate between them every two years. Maga was the first leader, and on May 7, 1972, he transferred power to Ahomadegbe (not a SOLS change, as a switch between members of a rotating presidency is not coded). A few months later, in October 1972, Ahomadegbe was overthrown in a military coup led by Mathieu Kerekou (SOLS change). There are three leadership changes in 1972 : Maga (RDD), Ahomadegbé- Tomêtin (PDD), and Kerekou (MIL, PRPB). Geddes codes Kerekou's regime as a pure-Personalist regime throughout his term. We don't have a specific coding rule for what to call the leader's SOLS in a case of a Personalist regime. Worldstatesmen lists Kerehou's SOLS as Mil/PRPB. However, while Kerekou came to power as a military leader, he then created a communist party, and thus these were sequential rather than simultaneous SOLS.

Kerekou, who at first was solely a member of the military, created a communist party known as the Popular Revolutionary Party of Benin (PRPB). GWF codes Benin as a personalist regime from 1973 to 1990. In 1990, the name of the PRPB changed to the Party for the Rebirth of Benin (PRB). After being encouraged by France and other democratic powers, Kerekou held an international conference that composed a new, democratic constitution for Benin (US Department of State). Presidential elections were then held, and Kerekou lost to Nicephore Soglo (the cousin of the military leader Cristophe Soglo), a member of the PRB. Though Soglo was a member of the same party as Kerekou, his election meant the end of the personalist state (as he was not the predesignated successor of Kerekou, and ran against him in elections), and therefore I have coded it as a SOLS change. In 1996, Kerekou defeated Soglo in presidential elections, now as a member of the Action for Renewal and Development Party (FARD) (SOLS change). His second time in office was within the guidelines of democratic rule, and after losing the 2006 presidential elections, he handed over power to Yayi Boni, a non-partisan leader (SOLS change).

The transition between Boni Yayi and Talon in 2016 is coded as a SOLS change. Benin is considered a democracy during this period so we use political affiliation to determine whether a SOLS change occurred. However, both Boni Yayi and Talon were non-party leaders, requiring us to look at pre-designated successors and the supporting coalition. In the 2016 presidential, Boni Yayi could not run for re-election and Talon defeated Boni Yayi's preferred candidate Lionel Zinsou (BBC 2019). As a result, we do not consider Talon as a pre-designated successor and code a SOLS change.

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