Nepal
Rice

In 1920, Nepal was under the control of the Rana family. The Ranas had overthrown the legitimate royal family, the Shahs, in 1885, and had installed themselves as Prime Minister. Archigos lists the PMs instead of the king, Maharadja, as effective leaders. Thus, we code Nepal from 1920 to 1944 as being under the control of Rana family (rather than the royal Shah family) because the PMs held power rather than the king. Since the Rana family ruled Nepal, and the succession was limited to members of the family, we do not code any SOLS changes in the pre-1945 period. Geddes codes Nepal as a monarchy until 1951.

In 1920, Nepal's hereditary monarch dynasty, the Shahs, had been deposed (since the 1840s). The Rana family, who had gained power in 1846, had gained control of the country's political system. The regime they constructed was autocratic, and retained power within the family through making the office of Prime Minister a hereditary position.[1] For that reason, I did not code any SOLS changes during the times when leadership changed to a different member of the family. In 1920, the Prime Minister was Chandra Rana. Chandra Rana was in office until his death in 1929, when he was succeeded by his brother, Bhim Rana. Bhim Rana was, in turn, succeeded by another brother, Juddha Rana, in 1932. In 1945, due to ill health, Juddha Rana resigned his office and passed it to his nephew (the son of Bhim Rana), Padma Rana. The Rana family was not one united group by this point—they had become factionalized over various issues, from the line of succession to the introduction of more political freedoms.[2] The last of the Ranas, Mohan Rana (son of Chandra) assumed the office of Prime Minister in 1948.

Opposition to the Ranas was manifested in the creation and growth of an opposition group known as the Nepali Congress (later, the Nepali Congress Party, or NCP), which was founded in India, and encouraged (though not openly) by the Indian government.[3] This group aspired to depose the Ranas and reinstall the Shah family as ruling monarchs over Nepal. On 6 November 1950, the deposed King, Tribhuvan, and most of his family, sought refuge in the Indian embassy in Nepal, and were later evacuated to India, where they began to organize resistance against the Ranas. The Nepali Congress launched several armed attacks across the border, and after negotiations, the Ranas agreed to have Tribhuvan put back on the throne as King (SOLS change). From 15 February 1951 on, therefore, Geddes classifies Nepal as a monarchy, under the control of the Shah dynasty.

The Shahs ruled Nepal until 1990 (and therefore there are no SOLS changes between 1951 and 1990), but it is important to note the democratic reforms that were made gradually over this period. Mahendra, son of Tribhuvan, succeeded his father to the throne in 1955. In 1959, he issued a new constitution that allowed for democratic elections, forming a National Assembly. However, eighteen months later, King Mahendra dissolved the parliament, and created a new system of hierarchical, nonpartisan councils. This system, known as the Panchayat system,

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[1] United States Department of State

[2] Whelpton, 69

[3] Ibid, 70-71

cemented into place the absolute power of the monarchy, with the King as the Head of State.[4] King Mahendra was succeeded by his son, Birendra, in 1972. In 1980, after student and anti-regime demonstrations, King Birendra held a referendum to determine if the Panchayat system should be replaced by the establishment of a multiparty system. The Panchayat system won, but some democratic reforms were carried out anyway.

In 1990, the political parties in Nepal united to stage the "Movement to Restore Democracy." Though the monarchy suppressed these demonstrations, King Birendra capitulated to demands, and dissolved the Panchayat system. He also lifted the ban on political parties. An interim government, under the leadership of Krishna Prasad Bhattarai (NCP) took power on April 19, 1990 and was tasked to organize elections and create a new constitution. Because GWF only code the monarchy ending after the elections, we consider Prasad Bhattarai part of the monarchy and code neither a SOLS change nor interim leader. The constitution, which was co-written with the King, gave the King a constitutional obligation to "appoint as Prime Minister the leader of the party—or combination of parties—with an absolute majority in the [new bicameral legislature] and, in the case of a hung parliament, to appoint the leader of the largest single party."[5] The new constitution went into effect in November of 1990, and elections were held in May 1991. On 26 May 1991, Girija Prasad Koirala (NCP) became Prime Minister (SOLS change).

The fact that the King technically appointed the prime minister, as dictated by the 1990 Constitution, perhaps explains why Nepal is not coded as a democracy during this period. However, elections were held, and the King abided by the rules set out for him without exercising executive authority (at least until 2002, but that will be addressed later on). Therefore, Nepal is coded as though it was a parliamentary democracy, because it has also been indicated that, though it was not technically a democracy, Nepal did have a parliamentary system in effect. The legislature was given power and the King did not interfere in the legislative process during that time.

Koirala's government was in power until 1994, when dissent within the NCP led to new elections. When the elections were held, in November 1994, no party won a majority, and the Communist Party of Nepal (CPN-UML) formed a minority government, with Man Mohan Adhikari as Prime Minister (SOLS change). Nepal then became the world's first communist monarchy. Adhikari's government was not in power long—after a vote of no confidence in 1995, he was replaced as Prime Minister by Sher Bahadur Deuba of the NCP (SOLS change). In March 1997, Deuba was also replaced after a vote of no confidence by Lokendra Bahadur Chand, of the Rastriya Praja Party (RPP) (SOLS change). His coalition included the UML, NSP, and the Nepal Workers' and Peasants' Party (NWPP) (Europa World Year Book 2004, 3045). Later, in October 1997, Chand's government was also dissolved after a vote of no confidence, and he was replaced by Surya Bahadur Thapa (also a member of the RPP, but of a different faction). While his coalition included the NSP (Europa World Year Book 2004, 3045), this is not a minor SOLS change, since it is considered a non-democratic period by us. In December 1997, the NCP joined

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[4] United States Department of State

[5] Whelpton 2006, 116

the coalition (Europa World Year Book 2004, 3045). This is not a minor SOLS change for the same reason.

Apparently in accordance with a previous understanding,[6] Thapa handed over leadership of the coalition to the NCP in April 1998. The NCP, still under the control of Girija Koirala, then dissolved the coalition and assumed full leadership of the government (SOLS change). Elections were held in May 1999, in which the NCP won a majority and Krishna Prasad Bhatterai became Prime Minister. This is a minor SOLS change since Nepal is democratic at the time and Bhatterai, unlike his predecessor, have a single-party government. Infighting within the party led to Bhatterai being forced out of office,[7] and Koirala taking power again on 22 March 2000 (not a SOLS change). On 26 July 2001, Koirala was replaced by Deuba (not a SOLS change).

During all of this political upheaval, there was a more serious problem taking place in Nepal. Beginning in 1996, a group known as the Maoist United People's Front began a violent insurgency that included killings, torture, extortion and bombings, which killed more than 13,000 people.[8] The government attempted to negotiate with the insurgents in 2001, but the negotiations failed. At the same time, the royal family came under attack from within, when Crown Prince Dipendra murdered his father, King Birendra, and several other members of his family before committing suicide on 1 June 2001. Gyanendra, the brother of the deceased king, assumed the throne on 4 June 2001, and oversaw the peace negotiations that took place later in the year. When the last of these negotiations (in November) failed, King Gyanendra declared a State of Emergency (which was approved by the National Assembly). On 22 March 2002, on recommendation from Prime Minister Deuda, King Gyanendra dissolved Parliament. Then, in October 2002, King Gyanendra removed Deuda from office and assumed executive power (SOLS change).

Though there were Prime Ministers (appointed by the King) between October 2002 and 2006, Geddes classifies this period in Nepal as again being a monarchy. Three cease-fires between the Maoists and the government occurred during this period, with the final one being in 2006. That ceasefire then led to a peace agreement ending the insurgency being signed on 21 November 2006.

In April 2006, the political parties again united and rallied for the King to restore democracy, which he did on 24 April, reinstating the 1999 Parliament under the leadership of Koirala. This interim government created a new constitution, which officially dissolved the monarchy and scheduled elections for the Constituent Assembly. The new constitution allowed for the inclusion of the Maoist party in elections and in the Cabinet. When the Maoist ministers resigned due to an impasse over how the new Nepali government was to be structured, the constitution was again amended in December 2007. Because Koirala's government lasted for two years, we cannot code this an interim government and thus code a SOLS change. Elections for the Constituent Assembly were held in April 2008. The Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) won

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[6] Whelpton 2006, 197

[7] Whelpton 2006, 209

[8] United States Department of State

the majority, and their leader, Pushpa Kamal Dahal "Prachanda" was sworn in as Prime Minister in August 2008 (SOLS change).

In May 2009, Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal "Prachanda" resigned after political struggle with president over the firing of an army chief (Rahman & Bowcott 2009). Madhav Kumar Nepal was elected PM (Shrestha 2009). Nepal is coded as a democracy, so we political affiliation to determine SOLS changes. The transition from "Prachanda" to Kumar Nepal is coded as a SOLS change as "Prachanda" is from the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (CPM-M) while Kumar Nepal is from the Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist-Leninist (CPN-UML).

In June 2010, Kumar Nepal resigned in the face of political pressure, primarily from the CPM-M (Shrestha 2010). He remained as prime minister in a caretaker capacity for 7 months until Jhalanath Nath Khanal was elected prime minister in February 2011 (BBC News 2011a). The transition from Kumar Nepal to Khanal is not coded as a SOLS change because both were from the same political party, the CPN-UML.

Unable to form a consensus concerning the constitution drafting and peace process, Khanal resigned in August 2011 (BBC News 2011b). Baburam Bhattarai of the CPM-M was elected prime minister (BBC News 2011c). Because of their different political affiliations, the transition is coded as a SOLS change.

In 2013, Bhattari resigned as part of political deal to overcome deadlock in creating a constitution, and Khil Raj Regmi, chief justice of the Supreme Court, took over as acting PM to lead country to elections (Magnier 2013; Sharma 2013). In February 2014, Sushil Koirala of the Nepali Congress Party (NCP) was elected PM (BBC News 2014). The transition from Bhattari to Regmi is not coded as a SOLS change because Regmi is considered an interim leader. The transition from Regmi to Koirala is coded as a SOLS change because Koirala is from a different political party than Bhattari, the leader prior to the interim Regmi.

A constitution was adopted in 2015. In accordance with the constitution, Koirala stepped down as PM, and Khadga Prasad Sharma Oli was elected PM (Associated Press 2015). The transition from Koirala and Oli is coded as a SOLS change because Koirala is from the NCP and Oli is associated with the CPN-UML.

In July 2016, Oli resigned before a no confidence vote could take place (Sharma 2016a). In August 2016, Pushpa Kamal Dahal "Prachanda" (CPN-M) was elected PM (Sharma 2016b). The transition from Oli to Prachanda is coded as a SOLS change because of their different political affiliations.

After nine months, Prachanda resigned as PM. His resignation was not unexpected as he had created a power sharing deal with the Nepali Congress Party (Sharma 2017a). Sher Bahadur Deuba of the Nepali Congress Party was elected prime minister for the fourth time but resigns after poor showing in parliamentary elections (Sharma 2017b; Economic Times 2018). The transition from Prachanda to Deuba is coded as a SOLS change because of their different political affiliations.

In 2018, Khadga Prasad Sharma Oli (CPN-UML) was appointed PM (Al Jazeera 2018). The transition from Deuba to Oli is coded as a SOLS change because of their different political affiliations. Shortly after his appointment, the CNP-M and CNP-UML merged to re-form the Nepal Communist party (Dev Bhattarai 2018). While Oli's affiliation changes, this is not a minor

SOLS change since the two parties in coalition supporting him merged into one party. The Nepal Communist Party is often abbreviated NCP in sources, but I advise using CNP as to not get it confused with the Nepalese Congress Party (NCP).

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