Nigeria
Vanderbilt

Nigeria is considered a democracy between 1960 and 1966, and then turns autocratic until 1979, when democracy takes hold until 1983. From 1983 until 2008 the country again becomes non- democratic. Nigeria is a parliamentary democracy at independence in 1960 until 1966, ruled by Abubakar Tafawa Balewa of the Northern People's Congress (NPC) in coalition with the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC). The December 30, 1964 elections (Anglin 1965, 173) changed the composition of government from a NPC/NCNC coalition to a NPC/NCNC/NNDP (Nigerian National Democratic Party) coalition (Adamolekun and Ayo 1989, 159). This is a minor SOLS change. In 1966 there were two military coups, the first by Johnson Thomas Umurakwe Aguiyi-Ironsi, a southerner, and the second by Yakubu Gowon, a northerner and a Christian (Hunwick 1992, 148). The first leadership change is a SOLS change, since the country becomes a pure military regime in this year (Geddes). The second is a minor SOLS change, because while Ironsi and Gowon were both military figures, they were supported by different reign/ethnic groups. The military regime lasts until 1979.

In 1975 younger military officers overthrew Gowon (Elaigwu 1991, 136), accusing him of delaying transition to democracy, and selected Murtala Ramat Muhammad to lead. Muhammad announced that the country would transition back to democracy by late 1979. Despite the coup, this is not a SOLS change both Gowon and Muhammad were military figures and the same military regime persists according to Geddes. In 1976 Ramat Muhammad was assassinated and the military chose Olusegun Obasanjo, Muhammad's chief of staff, to replace him (Elaigwu 1991, 138). This is not a SOLS change either since Obasanjo is also a military leader. In 1979, Obasanjo successfully transitions the country to a democracy. Elections are held. Alhaji Shehu Shagari of the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) wins and becomes president under the new presidential system. This is a SOLS change since he does not derive support from the military like his predecessor. Shagari rules until 1983 when there is another military coup and Muhammadu Buhari takes power. This is a SOLS change, since this marks the beginning of a pure military authoritarian regime which lasts until 1993.

In 1985 Buhari is overthrown by Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida, his army chief of staff (Elaigwu 1991, 141). This is not a SOLS change since both leaders derive support from the military. In 1993, when the elections produce an outcome undesirable to Babangida, he cancels the elections. Under pressure, he retires and creates an Interim National Government with Ernest Shonekan as interim president. This is not a SOLS change. Later in the year, his top military officer and the Defense Minister, General Sani Abacha, forced Shonekan to resign and took power himself (Sakah 1993). This is a minor SOLS change since Abachi creates a military-personalist-hybrid regime. Thus he continued to rely on the military, similar to Babangidam the last regular leader, but established a personalist support basis in addition. In 1998 Abacha died suddenly "in the arms of two Indian prostitutes, possibly from an overdose of Viagra" (The Economist 2007). The ruling military council hastily names Abdulsalami Abubakar as his successor, not prepared for the sudden handover of power. (Lewis 2003, 132). This is not a SOLS change since Geddes's coding suggests that Abubakar can be seen as part of Abacha's regime. Geddes (1999) is missing information for 1998 until 2008, signaling that no particular regime

was in place and institutions are in flux. (Interestingly, Cheibub et. al. have coded these years as presidential democracy, though we code authoritarian following Polity.) Abubakar prepared the country for elections. In 1999 elections are held and Olusegun Obasanjo of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) wins (The Economist 1999) in marred elections. This is a SOLS change since Obasanjo was not Abubakar's pre-designated successor although Abubakar had freed him from prison beforehand and Obasanjo was retired general. Obasanjo rules until 2007. In 2007 fraudulent elections rigged by Obasanjo bring his pre-designated successor Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, also of the PDP, to power (The Economist 2007). This is not a SOLS change.

President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua died due to illness in 2010, and Vice-President Goodluck Ebele Azikiwe Jonathan became acting president until elections held in 2011 (Al Jazeera 2010). Jonathan won the presidential elections in April 2011 (BBC News 2011). In accordance with the coding rules, we code him as taking power when he became acting president. There is no SOLS change from Yar'Adua to Jonathan as both were from the same political party and Jonathan was an official in Yar'Adua's regime.

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