Central African Republic
Vanderbilt

The Central African Republic gained independence from France in 1960. At that point, the President (who had been the leader of the transitional government since 1959) was David Dacko, a member of the Movement for the Social Evolution of Black Africa (MESAN). GWF classify Dacko's government as personalist. It lasted until 1966, when Dacko was overthrown in a military coup led by Col. Jean-Bedel Bokassa, who was also a member of MESAN. This is classified as a SOLS change because Bokassa was not a predesignated successor of Dacko. Bokassa's SOLS is identified as MESAN/MIL. Bokassa abolished the constitution and assumed both executive and legislative power. In 1976, Bokassa declared that the CAR was a monarchy, and proclaimed himself Emperor Bokassa I.

In 1979, Bokassa (MESAN/MIL) was overthrown by Dacko (MESAN), in a French-sponsored coup, resulting in a SOLS change. He changed his affiliation from MESAN to UDC in 1980. This change does not represent a SOLS change because Geddes codes the country as a pure-Personalist regime from 1960 to Sep. 1, 1981. Dacko, however, was unable to remedy the economic and political situation in the country, and was himself overthrown in a bloodless military coup led by General Andre Kolingba. This is a SOLS change. Geddes classifies Kolingba's government as a military/personalist hybrid. In 1985, he created a political party, the Central African Democratic Rally (RDC), and his affiliation changed accordingly. But this change does not represent a SOLS change because Geddes codes the country as a military-Personalist hybrid since 1981 to Oct.1993. There is only one leader from September 1, 1981 to 1993: Kolingba. Some progress was made towards democratization during his time in office, however, culminating with presidential elections held in 1993. The winner of the elections was Ange-Felix Patasse, a member of the Liberation Movement of the Central African People (MLPC). This is a SOLS change.

Patasse was reelected in 1999, but faced increasing economic difficulties and social unrest. These events culminated in his being overthrown in a military coup on 15 March 2003, resulting in a SOLS change. There is a leadership change from Patasse to Bozizé Yangouvonda. The SOLS for the Bozizé Yangouvonda is Mil/Non-party. Bozize Yangouvonda, restored order to the country and passed a new constitution. He was officially elected President in 2005, though Geddes continued to code the CAR as being a personalist government.

In March 2013, a rebel coalition called Séléka forced Yangouvonda to flee the country and overtook the presidential palace. Michel Djotodia Am-Nondroko, leader of the Séléka, named himself president (Ngoupana 2013). The Central African Republic is considered a non-democracy until 2016, so we use the predesignated successor rule to determine SOLS changes. The transition from Bozize to Djotodia is coded as a SOLS change because Djotodia overthrew Bozize and was not a predesignated successor. Facing international criticism, Djotodia resigned on account of his failure to bring stability and restore order on January 10, 2014 (VOA 2014). Alexandre-Ferdinand Nguendet, the Parliament leader, was named interim president until a new interim could be selected that would oversee elections (VOA 2014; Nossiter 2014). Less than two weeks later, the interim parliament elected Catherine Samba-Panza as the new interim president (BBC News 2014). Although Samba-Panza was named an interim leader, she was in

office for longer than 18 months so she is not considered an interim in our coding rules. Because Nguendet is considered an interim according to the coding rules, the transition from Djotodia to Nguendet is not considered a SOLS change. The transition from Nguendet to Samba-Panza is considered a SOLS change because Samba-Panza was not part of the rebel coalition led by Djotodia, the leader prior to the interim Nguendet.

Elections were eventually held in February of 2016 and the Central African Republic became a democracy. Faustin-Archange Touadéra, former prime minister under Bozize, was elected president (BBC News 2016). Touadéra ran as an independent and Bozize KNK party supported another candidate in the election, though Touadéra did receive some support from Bozize former allies (EIU 2016). His election is coded as a SOLS change because it does not appear that Samba-Panza designated him as her preferred candidate nor do they share the same source of support as Touadéra was directly elected while Samba-Panza was eleted by the inteirm parliament.

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