Albania
Rice

Albania is considered authoritarian from 1919 to 1945. The lack of formal political institutions resulted in a strong executive and a factionalized political environment. There is really no classification to be made of Albania—there was no national military (as most individuals were loyal to their tribal affiliation), and there were no political parties (making a single-party state impossible). We are hesitant to say that Albania is personalist, however, because it would appear that the government itself was so unstable that no leader actually concentrated his power to be able to do any of the things that Geddes lists as characteristics of a personalist state. The closest regime type for Albania in this period (1919-1924 before Zogu create his personalist regime) is warlordism. Several sources describe about a serious ethnic division between Muslim and Catholic, which also corresponded to a geographical structure of South and North and hindered Albania's unity (see Jelavich 1983, 178; Vickers 1995:, 101, 107; Webb 2008, 215-16). Accordingly, all SOLS during this period (1919-1924) are coded as unknown. We code no SOLS changes since no government is making effective policy for the country during warlordism.

In 1919, Albania's territorial integrity had just been confirmed at the Paris Peace Conference (U.S. Department of State). The government that was created in the wake of that declaration was an "emergency" government, led by the non-partisan Turhan Pashë Permeti. There was no legislature, and the government was barely able to hold control over the country, as its purpose was mainly to "save the country from partition" (Vickers 1999, 94). In January 1920, a group of "influential Albanians" got together to create a National Congress, which resulted in Sulejman Bej Delvina becoming President. Delvina's support base came from a group that called themselves the Liberals, but were not a traditional political party. They were opposed by a group of "the traditional and more conservative elements within Albania's ruling class" (Vickers 1999, 94).

Delvina's presidency did not last long—the political instability of Albania led to his cabinet collapsing and a new government being formed under Ilias Bej Vrioni in December 1920. Vrioni is also listed as being non-partisan, and as no Prime Minister could remain in power without the support of the afore-mentioned Albanian ruling class. Vrioni's government lasted almost a year—until October 1921. It then collapsed and was replaced by a government headed by Pandeli Evangjeli. Evangieli's government lasted until 6 December 1921, when it collapsed and was briefly replaced by a government headed by Hasan Bej Pristina. On 12 December, Pristina's government was replaced by a government led by Idhomene Kosturi. At this point, Xhafer Ypi, became Prime Minister on 24 December 1921.

Ypi's government was in power until 4 December 1922, when he ceded power to one of the original leaders of the wealthy Albanian group—Amet Zogu. This transition occurred because Albania was still not unified as a country, and resentment against Ypi's government had begun to grow, especially in Northern Albania (Vickers 1999, 107). Zogu had been a member of several Cabinets, and had held a great deal of political power throughout this entire period.

Zogu's government was similarly unable to unify the country, or create a functioning legislative system. A Constituent Assembly was formed, and elections were held, but no party had a clear majority. Zogu's cabinet only maintained a slim margin of support, and two weeks after the elections, on 5 March 1924, he resigned. He was replaced by Shefqet Vërlaci (party unknown). The Vërlaci's government was still controlled by Zogu, and the opposition to Zogu continued to oppose his successor (Vickers 1999, 109). Shortly thereafter, opposition to Zogu reached a breaking point when a member of the opposition was murdered outside of Parliament. The opposition then withdrew its deputies from the Constituent Assembly, which paralyzed the government, and gathered in the city of Vlore (Vickers 1999, 110). From there, they demanded the dismissal of Vërlaci (and thereby Zogu as well). The ruling group attempted to stall by making Vrioni Prime Minister once again on 2 June, but he was forced to resign on 16 June because it became evident that Zogu and his supporters could no longer hold out against the opposition (Vickers 1999, 111). At that point, the leader of the Democratic Party, Theofan "Fan" Noli, became Prime Minister.

Noli's government was also not democratic. Noli refused to hold elections in order to legitimate his takeover of the government, and quickly set up a political court that sentenced his political opponents to death, or harsh punishment (Vickers 1999, 114). His government did not last long, however. On 26 December, 1924, both the military and Zogu led forces into the capital city—leading Noli and his followers to flee the country. The government was turned over to Vrioni once again. Vrioni's government was known as the Regency (but is not noted as provisional on Worldstatesmen), and lasted until 6 January 1925, when Albania was declared a Republic, and power was turned over to Zogu once again. This ended the warloadism and opened Zogu's personalist regime. This is a SOLS change.

Zogu also quickly established a dictatorial, personalist regime. His main support base was his Muslim tribe (the Mati tribe) (Pearson 2004, 213; Jacques 1995, 383). He immediately consolidated power into the executive, and either exiled or ordered the assassination of his political enemies. Zogu also disbanded any militia troops who were loyal to Noli, and placed Albania under martial law, giving himself "unrestricted power of veto over any laws passed in the new government" (Vickers 1999, 117-118). He allied Albania closely with Italy, and, with their encouragement, declared Albania to be a monarchy on 1 September 1928. Zogu then renamed himself "Zog I, King of the Albanians". To gain domestic support for himself, Zog then offered army officers an advance in rank, along with a pay raise (Vickers 1999, 124). Zog then created a new constitution that officially made Albania a monarchy, and placed the King (himself) in charge of a unicameral parliament. We do not reclassify Albania as a constitutional monarchy (or even a monarchy), because Zog rigged elections to ensure that only candidates who supported his cause were elected. Further, he dismissed and appointed new cabinets whenever he desired (Vickers 1999, 125). These are still tendencies of a personalist state.

The Library of Congress Country Study says this about Zogu's Albania: "Zogu quickly smothered Albania's experiment in parliamentary democracy. Looking after the interests of the large landowners, clan chiefs, and others with a vested interest in maintaining the old order, he undertook no serious reform measures. The parliament quickly adopted a new constitution, proclaimed Albania a republic, and granted Zogu dictatorial powers that allowed him to appoint and dismiss ministers, veto legislation, and name all major administrative personnel and a third of the

Senate. On January 31, Zogu was elected president for a seven-year term. Opposition parties and civil liberties disappeared; opponents of the regime were murdered; and the press suffered strict censorship. Zogu ruled Albania using four military governors responsible to him alone. He appointed clan chieftains as reserve army officers who were kept on call to protect the regime against domestic or foreign threats."

Albania under King Zog became even more closely tied to Italy. By 1938, Italy dominated every sector of the Albanian state—almost all of Albanian exports and imports were to/from Italy, for example (Vickers 1999, 137). The Italian government began to form new plans for Albania based on this dependency. In 1936, Count Ciano, the Italian foreign minister, began advocating for an Italian invasion and occupation (eventually resulting in annexation) of Albania, in order to raise Italian morale (Vickers 1999, 136). An ultimatum was delivered on 25 March 1939, ordering Zog to give up his throne, but Zog did not respond. Italy then invaded Albania on 7 April. The Albanian defenses quickly fell apart, and the Royal Family fled into exile. From 1939 until 1944, Albania was under occupation and is not coded.

During World War II, the Albanian Communist Party (PCS, later PPS) was founded, and began a resistance movement against the occupying forces. They came into conflict with Nationalist groups, but eventually prevailed in founding the new government of Albania once German occupying forces were withdrawn in 1944. This government, which Geddes classifies as a single-party state, was led by Enver Hoxha (SOLS change). Hoxha would remain in power until his death in 1985.

Ramiz Alia, who had been predesignated as Hoxha's successor, then became First Secretary and the leader of Albania (no SOLS change). Alia was in office during the fall of communism in 1991. He was subsequently elected President in the first democratic elections, held in April 1991 (no SOLS change, even though Alia ran as a 'nonpartisan' candidate).

One year later, following the overwhelming victory by the Democratic Party of Albania in legislative elections, Alia resigned. On 9 April 1992, new presidential elections were held and Sali Berisha, a member of the Democratic Party of Albania (PDS) became President (SOLS change). In 1997, after stalled reforms and a financial crisis led to armed revolts and near- anarchy throughout Albania, the UN intervened to restore peace and Berisha stepped down as President. At this point, Archigos stops listing the President as the head of state, and starts listing the Prime Minister. (Note that the office of President was not abolished and there was no constitutional change which changed executive authority from the President to the Prime Minister.)

When Berisha stepped down, general elections were held and the PSS (Socialist Party of Albania) was returned to power. The Socialists then elected Rexhep Meidani as President (this would be coded as a SOLS change if the President is considered the head of state). Meidani remained in office until 2002, when, through a consensus between ruling and opposition parties, Alfred Moisiu, a nonpartisan candidate, became President (this would also be a SOLS change). Moisiu remained in power until 2007, when Bamir Topi, a member of PDS, was elected by Parliament to succeed Moisiu (this would be a SOLS change as well). Topi remains in office in the present day.

There were several changes in the Prime Minister during the 1997-2008 period, though most of them were PSS governments. Fatos Nano is the first Prime Minister listed on the spreadsheet—he came to power on 24 July 1997, and remained in office until 2 October 1998. He was

then replaced by Pandeli Majko, also of the PSS (no SOLS change), who remained in office until October 1999. Majko was then replaced by Ilir Meta, who remained in office until February 2002 (no SOLS change). At that point, he was replaced by Majko again (no SOLS change). Majko was only in office until July 2002, when elections were held and Fatos Nano resulted in the PDS winning the majority. Berisha, still the leader of the PDS, became Prime Minister (SOLS change) and formed a coalition government composed of his party, PDS, the PAA, the PBDNJ, and the ALDM (Lansford 2019).

Following parliamentary elections in 2009, Berisha named a new cabinet composed of his Democratic Party (PDS), the Socialist Integration Movement (LSI), and the Republican Party (PR) (Stoyanova 2009). Because the composition of the governing coalition changed while the prime minister stayed the same, we code a minor SOLS change in 2009.

The 2013 parliamentary elections resulted in a new prime minster, Edi Rama from the Socialist Party (PSS). This transition is coded as a SOLS change because Rama and Berisha are from different political parties. A governing coalition was formed between the PSS, LSI, PBDNJ, and the PKDSH (Armakolas 2013).

The 2017 parliamentary elections resulted in a majority for Rama and the PSS, resulting in a cabinet composed of only PSS members (Mejdini 2017). Because the governing coalition changed as a result of the election but the prime minister remained the same, we code a minor SOLS change in 2017.

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