Colombia
Rice

After the independence from Spanish authority in 1813, Simon Bolivar was elected the first president with Francisco de Paula Santander as the vice president. Later, disagreement between Bolivar and Santender led to the formation of two major parties that have dominated Colombian politics. Bolivar's supporters formed the Conservative Party (PCS), and sought strong centralized government and alliance with the Roman Catholic Church. In contrast, Santender's supporters created the Liberal Party (PL) and sought decentralized government and improved social welfare. Throughout the modern political history of Colombia, each party held the presidency for similar periods of time (U.S. Department of State 2012).

Late 1910s and the 1920s marked the last years of the Conservative Republic. While the other parts of the world were changing rapidly, Colombia was still an underdeveloped rural nation, with its economics based mainly on agriculture, especially coffee plantation. Interactions with the West started to change economic atmosphere of Latin America, and Colombian economy also shifted from agriculture with foreign investment. This movement was triggered by the establishment of SCADTA in 1919, by a group of Colombian and German investors (Osterling 1989).

While the Colombian government looks fairly democratic with a tradition of civilian government and regular, free election, it has a Polity IV (Marshall and Jaggers 2002) score of -5 at this time, so it is not close to democracy. Our regional expert suggested that oligarchy is probably the best regime category for the period of 1919-1929.[1] Thus, we code this period as an oligarchic rule and code no SOLS changes during this period based on our oligarchy rule. Indeed, every leader of this period was from PCS.[2]

Colombia suffered from severe economic recession during the late 1920s. In 1929, the drop in the price of coffee and the collapse of the US stock market and the world economic crisis that followed exacerbated the domestic economic depression. Abadia administration was discredited from reviving the economy, and the recession encouraged rivalries against PCS to emerge. Numerous organizations of workers unions or farmers unions were formed during this era. Establishment of parties such as National Leftist Union(UNIR), the National Agrarist Prty, PAN(Partido Agrista Nacional) followed. By 1930, incumbent president Abadia was completely discredited, and the dominant party PCS lost in 1930 election to Enrique Olaya Herrera from the Liberal Party (Osterling 1989). This is a SOLS change.

From 1930 through 1945 Colombia is considered a presidential democracy (see Kline 2012:354, Osterling 1989: 76). The period between the election of Olaya and the 1946 election that elected Mariano Ospina Perez of PCS is called the Liberal Republic. President Herrera is the first 20th century Liberal Party president. He is known for his effort in economic development,

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[1] Some sources suggest the influence of the Conservative Party. For example, U.S. Department of State (2012) states that the government had actually been a single-party regime with a strong president for a long period before 1930.

[2] The period between the approval of the constitution of 1886 and the 1930 election of the Liberal party president Enrique Olay Herrera is called the Conservative Republic (See Osterling 1989).

and social reforms. He laid the groundwork for reforms including women's rights movements and export oriented economy based on coffee plantation. This era was democratic, unlike the previous Conservative Republic. Competitive election existed, and the opposition parties were not suppressed (Osterling 1989).

In the 1934 election, Alfonso Lopez Pumarejo of PL was elected. He was faced by strong PCS opposition. However, the president and the PL began a series of reforms that would modernize the nation. He emphasized the separation of church and state, industrialization, and education. He implemented his reforms democratically in the period of a rapid socio-economic change. We did not code a SOLS change for the leadership change from Olaya Herrera to Lopez Pumarejo because Lopez and Olaya were from the same party (Osterling 1989).

In 1938 election, Eduardo Santos of the PL was elected (Osterling 1989). However, I did not code a SOLS change for this date, because Santos and Pumarejo were both from PL. In 1942 election, Pumarejo was reelected president. Colombia in 1940s was characterized by continued political and social conflict, coup d'états. The nation's economic elites pressured the government to abolish regulations, while the working class people suffered from the recession. Overwhelmed by a series of political conflicts, Pumarejo resigned in 1945. Alberto lleras Camargo, Pumarejo's direct successor, succeeded him in office (Osterling 1989). We did not code a SOLS change for this date, because Pumarejo and Camargo were both from PL and Camargo was a direct successor of Pumarejo.

In 1945, Colombia was a presidential democracy. At the beginning of the year, the president was Alfonso López Pumarejo, a member of the Liberal Party (PL). In August 1945, López Pumarejo resigned and was replaced by Alberto Lleras Camargo, also of the PL, who served as "acting president." This is not a SOLS change. Lleras Camargo was in office until elections were held in 1946, leading to the election of Luis Mariano Ospina Pérez, of the Social Conservative Party (PCS). This is a SOLS change. Ospina Pérez was president during the outbreak of civil strife known as La Violencia, which would last until 1957 and would claim over 300,000 lives. In 1948, Polity IV (Marshall and Jaggers 2002) stops considering Colombia a democracy, and in 1949 Geddes (2003) starts coding it as a single party system. In 1950, PCS leader Laureano Gómez Castro became president, which is not a SOLS change. In 1951, Gómez Castro suffered a heart attack and was incapacitated. Roberto Urdaneta Arbeláez, also of the PCS, stepped in as "acting president." (We do not code him as interim because the single-party regime is ongoing.) Due to the government's inability to control the violence, Urdaneta Arbeláez was ousted in a military coup led by General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla in 1953, which is a SOLS change. Geddes (2003) considers the government from 1953-1958 a military-personalist system. Rojas Pinilla proved equally incapable of restoring peace, and was also accused of corruption (U.S. Department of State 2012). He was ousted in a military coup in 1957, which was supported by both the PL and the PCS. The new military leader of Colombia became Gabriel París Gordillo. This is not a SOLS change since this was still the same regime according to Geddes (2003). During his presidency, the PCS and the PL were able to sign a power-sharing agreement known as the National Front, ending La Violencia. This power-sharing agreement allowed for direct election of the president every four years, with the PCS and the PL having parity in all other elected and appointed offices (U.S. Department of State 2012). This system was phased out in 1978.

Polity IV (Marshall and Jaggers 2002) considers Colombia a democracy beginning again in 1957. The National Front period was a period of rotating presidency, however, and according to our coding rules, we code no SOLS change during the period of cooperative governance. The National Front (NF) was composed of PL and PCS. According to Banks et al. (2011, 288), "the two major parties; PL and PCS agreed in power-sharing Pact of Sitges in 1957 and established a National Front under which they would participate equally in government, to the exclusion of other parties." The NF lasted until 1974. Therefore, for the period of 1957 to 1974, the leaders in either PL or PCS headed a government but all these leaders were in the NF and there is no SOLS change. Under this system of NF government, the presidency was determined by regular elections every 4 years and the two parties would have parity in all other elective and appointive offices. The National Front officially ended in 1974 (US Library of Congress 1988; Encyclopædia Britannica n.d.). We code a SOLS change (Mil, PL) when Lleras Camargo (PL) comes to power in 1958. In 1962, the PCS candidate, Guillermo León Valencia Muñoz, took over the seat. The PL captured the presidency again in 1966, with its candidate Carlos Lleras Restrepo assuming office in that year. This was followed by PCS rule in 1970, in which Misael Eduardo Pastrana Borrero became president.

A return to free elections occurred in 1974. PL won the next two elections—with Alfonso López Michelsen in 1974, which is a SOLS change, and Julio César Turbay Ayala in 1978, which is not a SOLS change. In 1982, PCS was again victorious, and their candidate, Belisario Betancur Cuartas became president. This is a SOLS change. PL then captured the next three elections—first with Virgilio Barco Vargas in 1986, which is a SOLS change, then with César Augusto Gaviria Trujillo in 1990, which is not a SOLS change, and finally with Ernesto Samper Pizano in 1994, which is not a SOLS change either. PCS won the 1998 elections with Andrés Pastrana Arango. This is a SOLS change. In 2002, Alvaro Uribe Valdez ran as an independent candidate, on the specific platform of combating the FARC rebel group, and won the presidency. This is a SOLS change. According to Schlager et al. (2006, 280), although Alvaro Uribe was a longtime Liberal Party (PL) member before being a candidate in 2002 election, he ran presidential election in 2002 as an independent candidate. His SOLS is listed as "unknown" since Cahoon (2010) lists him as non-party.

In 2006, Uribe was reelected, this time as the leader of the Colombia First Party (PC). This is not a SOLS change. The PC is not a political party that existed before or after Uribe's presidency, nor did it have a platform other than the support for Uribe.

In 2010, the Constitutional Court blocked President Uribe's effort to seek re-election to a third term by overturning the constitutional limit of two consecutive terms through a referendum (Reuters 2010). President Uribe abided by the ruling and did not run for re-election. After meeting with Uribe, Juan Manuel Santos resigned as Uribe's defense minister in order to run for president (Colprensa 2012). Uribe supported his campaign and Santos was considered Uribe's chosen successor (Carlsen 2010). Colombia is coded as a presidential democracy during this period, so we use those coding rules. While the political affiliations of the two men are different, we consider them having the same source of leader support. Uribe's party, Colombia First (CPPC), ended in 2010 and Santos' party, the Social Party of National Unity (PSUN) was established by Santos and other Uribe supporters (Cahoon; Kline et al. 2019). As a result, we do not code a SOLS change between Uribe and Santos in 2010. We recognize that following the

election, Santos turned against Uribe and adjusted policy direction, especially with regards to the FARC (Murphy 2014). However, given the coding rules and the information available to voters at the time of the election, we consider the transition between Uribe and Santos not a SOLS change.

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