

## **El Salvador**

Rice

At the beginning of 1919, the acting president of El Salvador was Quiñonez Molina, standing in for Carlos Meléndez Ramírez, a member of the National Democratic Party (PND). Carlos Meléndez Ramírez had taken power upon the assassination of the previous president in 1912. His regime was characterized by “massive suppression of dissidence and oppression against the poor majority” (White 2011, 71), and in 1919, he passed the presidency to his brother, Jorge Meléndez Ramírez, also of the PND. This is not a SOLS change. These are two of the items on the “checklist” Geddes (2003) provides to classify a regime as personalist. Further, the presidency in El Salvador at that time was seen to be sustained through personal alliances between the president and local interests, the military and the oligarchy of wealthy landowners who controlled much of El Salvador’s economy (White 2011, 71). These characteristics of the political system of the time also fulfill several more of Geddes’ (2003) requirements to classify a system as personalist. For these reasons, I have adopted that classification. Following Jorge Meléndez’ time in office, power was passed to his brother-in-law, Alfonso Quiñonez Molina, also of the PND, in 1923. This is not a SOLS change. As Quiñonez Molina was the pre-designated successor of Meléndez, we have determined that the personalist regime continued with Quiñonez Molina. First, Quiñonez Molina had been used as a stand-in for Carlos Meléndez when the latter was unable to complete his duties as President. Second, he was a member of the same family as his predecessor, which is one of Geddes’ (2003) criteria for the personalist classification.

In 1927, Quiñonez’ chosen successor, Pío Romero Bosque, also of the PND, took office. This is a SOLS change. Romero was a pre-designated successor. However, he “isolated himself from the previous dynastic rulers,” and held a free and fair democratic election at the end of his term (Moodie 2011, 23; White 2011, 72). Since he broke from the prior personalist regime right away, we do not code him as a continuation of the personalist regime even though he is a pre-designated successor. Instead we code no consolidated autocratic regime for him.

In the elections of 1930, no candidate won a majority of the votes, which meant that the selection of the next President was turned over to the legislature. They selected the candidate who had received the most votes, Arturo Araujo Fajardo, a member of the newly formed Salvadoran Labor Party (PT). This is a SOLS change. Araujo was a member of the elite oligarchic economic class, and he appears to have been bound by political tradition to continue the same political tactics of his predecessors, including quelling any civil disturbance with force. This especially included suppressing the Communist Party of El Salvador (PCES) led by the popular revolutionary leader, José Martí, as well as any other organizations which called for greater democracy. He took office on March 1, 1931, but only remained in office until December 4, so it is hard to classify his regime as a particular autocratic type. That day, he was overthrown in a military coup led by his Vice-President, General Maximiliano Hernández Martínez. This is a SOLS change. The reason for this overthrow was that Araujo had agreed to hold free municipal

elections in which PCES could participate: a concession which angered the military and the economic elite (US Library of Congress 1988). This coup begins a period coded by Geddes, Wright, and Frantz (2013) as a military-personalist hybrid government that would last until 1948. In 1934, when Hernandez Martinez competed in elections, he turned over the presidency to A.I. Menendez for six months and then resumed the presidency, now affiliated both with the military and the National Pro-Patria Party (PPP, the only legal party at that time), which his supporters had organized (Krehm 1999, 62). These are not SOLS changes.

In 1944, a mass movement by students led to Hernandez Martinez being overthrown, and then replaced by A.I. Menéndez as provisional leader from May 9 to October 21, 1944. This is not a SOLS change since Geddes et al. code the same military-personalist hybrid regime as continuing. Leadership then passed to Colonel Osmín Aguirre y Salinas, a leader in the military overthrow of Hernandez. This is not a SOLS change, either, given the continuation of the military-personalist regime. Aguirre y Salinas suppressed the democratic movements that had sprung up with Hernandez' departure, and installed another military leader, Salvador Castañeda Castro (also a member of the Unification Social Democratic Party, PUSD, the successor of the PPP). This is not a SOLS change.

In 1948, Castaneda Castro was overthrown by officers after trying to extend his term by two years (White 2011, 80). This group of officers created the Revolutionary Governing Council, led by Manuel de Jesús Cordova. Geddes, Wright, and Frantz (2013) begin coding El Salvador as a military-single party hybrid at this point, and thus we code a minor SOLS change. The party is PRUD, or the Revolutionary Party of Democratic Unification. However, the PRUD was not created until September 1950, so we do not code the PRUD as part of the SOLS from 1948 to 1950, despite the fact that the country is coded as a single-party-hybrid regime.

Cordova (Mil) was replaced as leader by Oscar Osorio Hernandez (Mil), Osorio Hernandez was replaced by Oscar Adan Bolanos (Mil), both in 1949. These were other members of the council, and do not represent SOLS changes. In fact, the single party military system stays in place until 1982 according to GWF. In 1950, the military attempted to make the government have the appearance of a democracy. The first President under this new system was Oscar Osorio Hernandez, which is not a SOLS change. The government SOLS now includes the PRUD and the military.

In 1956, Osorio stepped down and was replaced by Colonel José María Lemus, which is not a SOLS change. During his tenure in office, political opposition to PRUD began to increase and Lemus instituted repressive tactics to keep his government in control. In 1960, Lemus (Mil/PRUD) was ousted in a military coup, led by Miguel Ángel Castillo (Mil). This is not a SOLS change, either. The government continued to be classified as a military/single party hybrid. Castillo and the military junta who assumed leadership were in turn ousted from office in an officer's coup in January 1961. The new military government established was headed by Colonel Aníbal Portillo Gonzalez, also a member of the Party of National Conciliation (PCN). According

to Cahoon (2009), the second leader Colonel Portillo was not a member of particular party. Instead, he headed the Civic-Military Directory (from January 25, 1961 to January 25, 1962), which is not a name of political party but a name of the military ruling body. Although PCN (Party of National Conciliation, center-right) was established in 1961 by Col. Adalberto Rivera, it was from 1962 when Rivera was elected as a president that PCN became influential and controlled elections and government with its close tie with military (see Schlager et al. 2006, 405 for more information). Therefore, we should not list PCN as an important component of government in 1961.

The PCN was a successor to the PRUD, and thus there is no SOLS change (Lauria-Santiago and Binford 2004, 74). Rivera headed the Civil-Military Directorate until 1962, when he was replaced in January, by the non-partisan Eusebio Rodolfo Cordon Cea. This is not a SOLS change. In July, Cordon Cea was replaced by the military Colonel Julio Adalberto Rivera, which is not a SOLS change, either. There were three leaders in 1962: Portillo (Mil), Rodolfo Cordon (Non-party), and Rivera (PCN). As mentioned, the PCN became influential when Rivera (a founder of PCN) was elected as a president. Therefore, only the third SOLS should be coded as “Mil/PCN.”

Rivera was in power until 1967, when he was replaced by Fidel Sanchez Hernandez, also a member of the military. This is not a SOLS change. In 1972, presidential elections were held, in which Sanchez Hernandez was not a candidate. Initially, it appeared that the candidate of the opposition parties, who had united to form the National Opposing Union, was going to win; however, the military put a stop to the elections and declared that its PCN candidate, Arturo Molina Barraza, was the victor. This is not a SOLS change. Molina remained in office until 1977. After elections marred by fraud, Molina was replaced by the PCN candidate, Carlos Humberto Romero Mena, which is not a SOLS change, either. In 1979, Romero was overthrown by a military coup led by Colonel Adolfo Arnoldo Majano Ramos. The government remained a military-single party hybrid, and therefore, this is not a SOLS change, although we do code a shift in SOLS from Mil/PCN to Mil. In 1980, the junta attempted to balance the government by incorporating one of the former opposition parties, the Christian Democratic Party (PDC). This was done by making the PCD’s leader, José Napoleon Duarte Fuentes, the president of the Revolutionary Military Junta, which signifies a shift in SOLS from Mil to PDC. Yet, Geddes, Wright, and Frantz (2013) continue to code the same single party/military system (based on their assessment that Duarte had little power), so we do not code a SOLS change. At the same time, conflicts between the government and revolutionary groups escalated into violence across the country.

The United States intervened, and helped to oversee elections in 1982. A new party, the Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA) was created by supporters of the military regime and won a majority of the seats in the legislature. The non-partisan Álvaro Alfredo Magaña Borja was named president signifying a shift in SOLS from PDC to non-party. Technically, Magaña is listed as “provisional.” However, he was in office from 1982-1984, which exceeds the eighteen-

month restriction on provisional leaders. Geddes, Wright, and Frantz (2013) classify El Salvador as a military-single party system until 1982, and then code indirect military system from 1983 to 1994. Thus, we code a minor SOLS change with Magaña Borja.

The violence in El Salvador continued. In 1984, elections were held once again, and Duarte Fuentes, this time solely a PDC candidate, was elected president. This is a SOLS change from non-party to PDC. At this point, Geddes, Wright, and Frantz (2013) switch their classification of El Salvador to “indirect military,” but as it is a democracy according to our rules based on POLITY, we code SOLS changes according to the guidelines for democracies. Duarte was in office until 1989, when elections resulted in a victory for ARENA and its candidate, Alfredo Cristiani Burkard. This is a SOLS change. Cristiani oversaw the peace process between the government and the main revolutionary group, the FMLN. In the elections of 1994, at which point Geddes (2003) no longer classifies El Salvador as an autocracy, ARENA was again successful and its candidate Armando Calderón Sol took office. This is not a SOLS change. Similarly, in 1999, ARENA’s candidate Francisco Guillermo Flores Perez won the presidency. This is not a SOLS change. In the last elections within the studied time frame, ARENA was once again victorious and its candidate, Elías Antonio Saca González became President. Saca González remained President until 2009.

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Pre-1945 coded by Meera Krishnan on February 19, 2011

Post-1945 coded by Meera Krishnan (Rice) on September 18, 2010

Pre-1945 revised by Ashley Leeds on June 11, 2013

Pre-1945 revised by Naoko Matsumura on August 4, 2013

Post-1945 edited by Ashley Leeds on October 5, 2011

Post-1945 updated by Mariana Rodriguez on February 14, 2012

Post-1945 updated by Naoko Matsumura on June 13, 2012

Combined by Ahra Wu (Rice) on September 7, 2013

Revised by Michaela Mattes on September 13, 2013

Edited by Andrew Wood (Rice) on May 23, 2014

Edited by Ashley Leeds on September 23, 2014