

Burkina Faso

Rice

Burkina Faso gained its independence from France in August 1960. The first President, Maurice Yameogo, a member of the Democratic Union of Volta, banned opposition political parties soon after taking office, and consolidated his power, making Burkina Faso a personalist state from 1960 until 1966. In 1966, Yameogo was overthrown in a military coup led by Lieutenant Colonel Aboubakar Sangoule Lamizana, resulting in a SOLS change. Lamizana was initially backed solely by the military, but later created the National Movement for Renewal (NMR) to provide a party base. This was not a SOLS change since Geddes codes the country as pure-Personalist regime since 1960 to 1974. Lamizana remained in office, largely in a personalist system, until 1980. However from 1978 to 1979 (contrary to Cheibub et al. 2010) we code his rule as a mixed system democracy according to several sources ("Historical cases"; Nijzink et al. 2013).

In 1980, Lamizana was ousted from power by Colonel Saye Zerbo, beginning a period of military rule. This is a SOLS change. Zerbo came to power with the support of the unions and various civil groups, but was also overthrown in 1982 by Major Dr. Jean-Baptiste Ouedraogo, who became the Chairman of the Committee of Popular Salvation, indicating a SOLS change. Ouedraogo was only in power for one year until he too was overthrown in 1983 by the Prime Minister, Captain Thomas Sankara. This does not represent a SOLS change. Sankara established a personalist system under the National Revolutionary Committee, and was in power until 1987. The reason that we code a SOLS change with Ouedraogo, but not with Sankara is based on our notion that Sankara was already strong when Ouedraogo was in power. We can consider Ouedraogo to be the end of military regime (GWF code the military regime until 1982, then code the personalist regime until 1987).

In 1987, Sankara was assassinated in a coup orchestrated by Captain Blaise Compaore, who created another personalist system. This is a SOLS change. Compaore remains in power in the present day. He was initially a member of the military and a member of the Marxist Organization for People's Democracy- Worker's Movement (ODP-MT). In 1991 Compaore's SOLS changes from Mil/FP to ODP-MT (Organisation pour la Démocratie Populaire-MT). However, this is not a SOLS change because throughout this period, his regime is coded as a pure-personalist regime. In 1996, the ODP-MT abandoned Marxism and changed its name to the Congress for Democracy and Progress (CDP). As Burkina Faso has a personalist system throughout this, the party affiliation of the leader is almost irrelevant. Compaore has won reelection three times, in 1991, 1998, and 2005. In 1998, the election results were contested, but Compaore emerged the victor. In 2005, the elections were deemed free and fair, but the dominance of the CDP means that it is difficult for smaller parties to win support.

References

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