

## **Bolivia**

### **Rice**

Based on Polity (Marshall and Jaggers 2002), we consider the entire pre-1945 period non-democratic and our regional expert suggests that this period, with exception of short periods during which the military held power, should be considered an oligarchy. Referring to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Scully (1995, 400) writes: “the emergent tin elite quickly merged with the traditional land elite, forming a relatively coherent oligarchy that dominated the nations’ political and economic life until the 1930’s. Bolivia became a prime example of a formal democracy with legally limited participation. Literacy and property requirements excluded the Indian masses and most of the urban working class from participation in politics; political life was the preserve of a tiny upper class and a relatively small urban middle class.” Geddes (2003, 248) suggests that when more than 60% of the population is illiterate, we should code oligarchy. Indeed, the population of Bolivia was about two million at the time, and about 83,000 votes were cast in the 1917 presidential election, meaning less than 5% of the population.

Within this oligarchic system there were two parties, the Partido Liberal (PL) and the Partido Union Republicana (PR). The Partido Liberal ruled without any formal opposition parties from 1904 until 1914, at which point a new party, the Partido Union Republicana (PR), was founded. Gamarra and Malloy (1995, 400) write: “Bolivia became a prime example of a formal democracy with legally limited participation....During the first decade of the twentieth century, superficially Bolivia settled into a stable liberal democratic political system dominated by the Liberal party. In reality, the system was characterized by intra-elite factional politics in which personalistic cliques formed around dominant personalities who vied for power and the patronage it offered. In short, although caudillismo had been supplanted by an institutionalized political order, job and office oriented personalistic factional politics remained. Party labels and programs meant little.”

After it’s formation, the PR had a hard time breaking into the Bolivian political sphere, due to the long-standing power of PL, and the fact that Bolivia’s president from 1913-1917, Ismael Montes, had remedied some of the economic problems that had given rise to the PR in the first place (Klein 1969, 52). When presidential elections were held in 1917, the PL candidate, José Gutierrez Guerra, beat the PR candidate by winning 73,000 votes to his opponent’s 9,000 (Klein 1969, 53). Gutierrez Guerra was in office until July 1920. During this time, the PR determined that it could only gain political power through revolutionary action, and began inciting such actions during Gutierrez Guerra’s time in office (Klein 1969, 57).

On July 12, 1920, the Republicans staged a mass revolt in all of Bolivia’s major cities, which led to the downfall of Gutierrez Guerra’s government later that day. The Republicans then tried to institute their own Republican regime (which used the same program as the Liberals had when they had achieved power in the early 1900s), with the leadership of Bolivia held by three individuals working together in a “Government Junta” (Klein 1969, 64). This junta was led by

Rosa Bautista Saavedra, working with José Maria Escalier and Daniel Salamanca. The three were in conflict constantly, but Saavedra dominated the situation by controlling the *Guardia Republicana* military organization and by founding his own party newspaper (Klein 1969, 65). The party soon split, with Saavedra and Salamanca leading separate groups. In 1921, the PR gave up on the Junta model of leadership and elected Saavedra to the presidency.

While in 1920 the Republican Party took over from the long-ruling Liberal Party, we do not code a SOLS change here. Both parties were supported by the countries' elite. Bethell (1986, 573) points out the strong political power in the business community, which eventually supported the Republicans and ended Liberal rule. We code no SOLS changes in an oligarchic system.

Saavedra's chosen successor, José Gabino Villanueva, won "government-controlled" presidential elections in May 1925, but did not ever end up taking office (Klein 1969, 85). This is because he indicated publicly that he would issue a general amnesty and create an all-party government once he took office, which would completely remove him from Saavedra's control. Therefore, Saavedra forced a cancellation of the election results in September 1925, using a legal technicality (Klein 1969, 85). This, in turn, angered the Bolivian Congress so much that they demanded Saavedra step down as president, which he did. Congress then elected Felipe Segundo Guzman to be the provisional president. Because this occurred under the oligarchy we do not consider this a SOLS change and we do not code Guzman as an interim leader. Congress then recalled an exiled PR leader, Hernando Siles, to be the new party nominee for President.

Siles won an unopposed election in December 1925 and assumed office on January 10, 1926. We code no SOLS change, as the oligarchy continued. Siles was also Saavedra's chosen successor (Malloy 1970, 65). Throughout his time in office, Siles did try to assert some personal power relative to his party. Several sources point out the further splintering of the PR at that time (e.g., Di Tella 2005, 55). Alexander (1982, 142) also states that "soon thereafter [of a coup of 1920] the party began to erode internally over personal ambitions of its leaders". Indeed, Siles created his own Nationalist Party (see Bethell 1986, 576; Morales 2010, 97). Second, at the end of his term, Siles tried to continue in office beyond his presidential term. In the middle of 1930s, he announced plans to have parliament elect him for a new term. He then handed the government over to a military junta to oversee his formal re-election (Bethell 1986, 577).

Siles was unable to accomplish much during his time in office, due in part to the global economic depression, and to a Paraguayan invasion of Bolivia, which Siles did not counter effectively (though eventually Paraguay was forced to withdraw after international arbitration) (Klein 1969, 106). When he began to think of extending his time in office, he was countered by the PR, but continued with his plans to do so. There apparently were several steps in his plan to prorogue, but the plan did not go through. First, however, Siles resigned May 28, 1930. His government was then taken over by a "Council of Ministers", which Archigos does not list. This resignation prompted mass demonstrations and violence all over Bolivia, which then led to a

military junta overthrowing the Council and establishing a provisional military government led by General Carlos Blanco Gallindo. Because the oligarchy remains in charge, we code no SOLS change and Blanco Gallindo is not considered as interim leader. His government was in power until elections could be held in 1931.

The circumstances of these presidential elections were different, in that the three major parties in Bolivia—which represented the interests of the elites—agreed to run a common presidential slate, though each party then ran their own legislative slate of candidates (Klein 1969, 115). This led to the election of PR leader Daniel Salamanca Urey. We do not code a SOLS change as the oligarchy continues. Though elected unopposed, because of his support from all Bolivian parties, Salamanca began constructing a government that supported his personal beliefs. The PR did not win many seats in the legislative elections, and so Salamanca named only members of his party to his cabinet. After that, he worked to suppress the growing Bolivian labor movement through his own “decidedly reactionary...policies without resorting to official legislation” (Klein 1969, 132). Later on in his term of office, Salamanca brought Bolivia into the Chaco War, and overruled the decisions of the military in order to further Bolivia’s involvement (Klein 1969, 151). He then used the war as a justification for exiling or imprisoning many of Bolivia’s intellectuals (Klein 1969, 155).

In 1934, following Bolivia’s defeat in the Chaco War, Salamanca became increasingly unpopular. The military in particular, which had faced mass desertions in the last days of the war, was unhappy with Salamanca’s leadership and staged a coup in November 1934, arresting Salamanca and placing his Vice President, José Luis Tejada Sorzano (of the Liberal Party) in power. This is not a SOLS change since Tejada had become VP as a result of the deal the parties had made to run together in 1931. Tejada is part of the oligarchic regime.

During Tejada’s time in office, there was instability due to economic malaise and, perhaps more importantly, the rise of several new parties which wanted to be included in the government. The PL’s resistance to this demand led to strikes and agitations, culminating in the General Strike of May 1936. Tejada’s government collapsed in the face of the strike, and the army, led by Colonel David Toro, took over the government. This is a SOLS change and we code the beginning of a military regime.

Toro’s government worked with the organized labor movement in order to increase the rights of workers. Their manifested ideology was “military socialism,” indicating that they had established a military government. Toro himself lost popularity and was overthrown by a fellow military leader, Colonel Germán Busch Becerra. This is not a SOLS change. Busch oversaw the creation of the 1938 Constitution, which was very radical, especially in its definitions of private property (Klein 2003, 193). Busch then declared Bolivia to be a dictatorship in April 1939: abolishing all political parties, the scheduled congressional elections, and the new constitution (Klein 2003, 193). Busch suddenly committed suicide in August 1939, and a provisional military

government was quickly formed under General Carlos Quintanilla Quiroga. This is not a SOLS change, since Quintanilla was also a military leader. We thus also do not code him as interim.

After Busch's suicide, "the leaders of the traditional parties hastily joined forces, forgetting past differences in favor of an arrangement call La Concordancia, a name that reflected their general agreement on one fundamental point: to continue to maintain the status quo by wielding the power that had been temporarily snatched away from them by the short-lived government of German Busch (Andrade 1969, 10)." Quintanilla, who was promised the rank of Marshall did the traditional parties' bidding. Upon demands by the political parties that Bolivia return to a "democracy" (or, the 1938 Constitution), he called elections in 1940. In those elections, the traditional parties all gathered around one presidential candidate, General Enrique Peñaranda, who was then elected to office. "Peñaranda's support came from the traditional parties, the Liberals, and the two wings of the Republicans, who had formed a concordancia to stem the growth of the movement toward reform (US Library of Congress 1989)." Even though Peñaranda was also a military man, his support base included more conservative elements, essentially the elites that been in charge of Bolivia prior to Busch's coup. As Morales (2003, 117) writes: "After Busch's death, the oligarchy and conservative parties seized control. Peñaranda can thus be regarded as a return to the oligarchic rule and is a SOLS change.

Peñaranda allowed for multiple congressional elections. However, the political situation in Bolivia was fragile, and by the end of 1943, the government was losing control over the armed forces (Klein 2003, 201). A coup, led by the members of the National Revolutionary Movement (MNR), along with the RADEPA group of the military (called the "single most politically aware group in the army," and both groups were inclined to fascism and populism) (Klein 2003, 201), brought the single-party/military government of Major Gualberto Villarroel to power. This is a SOLS change. This government lasted until 1946. Two provisional leaders (first Néstor Guillén Olmo, then Tomás Monje Gutiérrez) under a junta government took control after Villarroel was deposed. Elections in 1947 gave Enrique Hertzog Garaizabal of the Party of the Republic Socialist Union (PURS) the presidency. GWF code an oligarchy from July 21, 1946 until May 16, 1951. By our rules, we do not code any SOLS changes during the period of oligarchy. Thus, the changes from Guillen to Monje, and then to Hertzog are not SOLS changes. We also do not consider Guillen and Monje interim leaders.

By 1949, Hertzog's health condition was in decline, and vice president Mamerto Urriolagoitia Harriague took over. This is not a SOLS change as he was also a PURS member and he was still in the period of oligarchy. Unrest was on the rise towards the end of Urriolagoitia's regime, and he urged the military to step in rather than give the country over to popular revolution. Accordingly, in 1951, General Hugo Ballivián Rojas took control of the government and began a military regime. This is a SOLS change.

In 1952, the army and Rojas's government fell to the revolutionary forces of the MNR. The ascendancy of Hernán Siles Zuazo for a week ultimately began a single party regime that

would last until 1964, which is a SOLS change. The first official president under the regime was Ángel Víctor Paz Estenssoro, who served a term until 1956, when he lost a bid for re-election against Siles Zuazo. After Zuazo's term ended in 1960, Estenssoro won a second presidency that lasted until 1964.

The MNR was divided and unstable by the time Estenssoro's second term ended, leading to a military takeover in November of 1964. General Alfredo Ovando Candía very briefly took over the government. However, popular demonstrations demanded that a charismatic co-conspirator of his named René Barrientos Ortuño (Mili) take power. The next five years Barrientos Ortuño established a personalist regime. From May of 1965 Barrientos Ortuño and Ovando Candía became co-presidents, to ensure military backing. Moreover, in preparation for elections, Barrientos Ortuño shortly stepped down in favor of Ovando Candía from January to August of 1966. However, we consider Barrientos Ortuño to be fully in control of the government during these periods. Finally, from August 1966 to his death in a helicopter crash in 1969, Barrientos was once again in charge: now with the backing of not just the military but also the FRB, or Front of the Bolivian Revolution party coalition which he organized.

Barrientos' vice president, Luís Adolfo Siles Salinas, took power briefly after his death, indicating no SOLS change from the personalist regime that began in 1964 as Salinas was a member of the FRB and the Partido Socialista Democrática (Social Democratic Party: PSD), which was member of FRB. However, Salinas was a weak leader, and he was soon displaced by Ovando Candía who no longer had to compete with Barrientos for power. This transition was a SOLS change because Ovando Candía assumed the position of leadership as the military's commander, thus instituting a military regime.

Ovando Candía was soon forced out of office by the military for failing to garner popular support, and in 1970, General Juan José Torres was installed as the president. However, Torres soon proved an ineffective leader, and a military coup in 1971 removed him from office and installed Colonel Hugo Banzer as Bolivia's new leader. Banzer's regime was coded as a minor SOLS change because it was a hybrid of military and personalist regime.

Banzer lasted in office for six years, and towards the end of his regime, was pressured into announcing presidential elections. However, his handpicked successor, General Juan Pereda Asbún, executed a coup during the time the country was arguing over how fraudulent the elections were. This coup occurred in July of 1978, and was not coded as a SOLS change because Pereda was so close to Banzer. Pereda was ousted in November of the same year, still indicating no SOLS change as his replacement, General David Padilla, was backed by essentially the same forces. Padilla called for elections to take place in 1979.

No candidate successfully received a majority of votes in the 1979 election, so the Congress appointed Wálter Guevara Arze as a civilian provisional leader of the government. He was a member of the MNR, but his appointment was temporary and thus not a SOLS change.

Colonel Alberto Natusch Busch took control of the government in a coup in November, but stepped down after two weeks due to lack of popular support. The next provisional president to be appointed was Lidia Gueiler Tejada, who served until 1980. Her ascension was not coded as a SOLS change, though she was a member of the Revolutionary Party of the Nationalist Left (PRIN). Gueiler Tejada was in the process of presiding over free elections in 1980 when General Luis García Meza Tejada executed a brutal coup. We follow Geddes (2003) and consider the period following Pereda as provisional. All the rulers were military officers or transitory leaders. Therefore, we code no SOLS changes until Meza takes power heading a pure military regime, which we code as a minor SOLS change.

Meza's regime silenced any and all opposition violently and at times arbitrarily. The military eventually pressured the general to resign, and he left office in 1981 to General Celso Torrelio Villa. Torrelio Villa was reluctant to call for elections, so he was replaced in 1982 with General Guido Vildoso Calderón. Strikes, protests, and unrest finally pushed to the brink of civil war, and the military collectively stepped down from government, ending their regime. The 1980 Congress came together to install former president Hernán Siles Zuazo, the man who ought to have taken office back in 1978, of the Nationalist Revolutionary Movement of the Left (MNRI) to the presidency.

Siles Zuazo called for elections in 1985, a year before his term was to expire, on account of civil unrest and weak leadership. Elections again failed to produce a majority candidate, so Victor Paz Estenssoro became president via congressional runoff. As he was a member of the Nationalist Revolutionary Movement (MNR), his rise to power was coded as a SOLS change. The next election also ended up in congressional runoff, with Jaime Paz Zamora assuming the presidency. As he represented the Movement of Revolutionary Left (MIR), this was a SOLS change.

The next president elected, in 1993, was Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada of the MNR. This indicated another SOLS change for Bolivia. Four years later, former leader General Banzer came to power by means of fair elections, representing the Nationalist Democratic Action (ADN) party. This was also a SOLS change. In 2001, Banzer resigned upon being diagnosed with cancer. His vice president and fellow ADN member, Jorge Quiroga Ramírez, took over for the remainder of his term. This is not a SOLS change.

In 2002, elections were held that reinstated former President Sanchez de Lozada of the MNR in power. Internal conflict eventually forced his resignation in 2003, and his vice president, Carlos Mesa Gisbert, took control of the government. Gisbert was a non-party politician. The MNR should not be considered as Mesa's primary source of support. First, according to Webber (2010, 53), "Mesa owed his presidency to the mass left-indigenous mobilizations of September and October 2003 and took up variations on the key slogans of those mobilizations as his own. He promised, for example, to reform the hydrocarbons industry and to convoke a constituent

assembly.” Considering that MNR was a right-wing grouping, it seems that Mesa did not rely on MNR’s support at least at the time when he was appointed to president by Congress.

Second, according to the Europa World Year Book (2011, 929), “Upon taking office, President Mesa appointed a Cabinet largely composed of independent technocrats, and notably restored the indigenous affairs portfolio abolished in February 2003.” This implies that he tried to differentiate his administration from previous administration based on MNR and tried not to use support from any political parties. Third, after Sanchez de Lozada resigned in October 2003, political power of MNR declined rapidly. According to Banks et al. (2011, 153), “the party was virtually annihilated in the 2004 municipal balloting. In the December 2005 poll it secured 1 Senate and 7 Chamber sets.” Because of Mesa’s non-party status and the fact that he did not rely on the MNR like his predecessor, we code a SOLS change here.

Mesa served until 2005, when further demonstrations forced his resignation. Eduardo Rodríguez Veltzé, the leader of the Supreme Court (Non-party), took over the government. Rodríguez announced his intention to be a transitional president, which is not a SOLS change, and called elections in six months. In 2005, Juan Evo Morales Ayma was elected Bolivia’s president. He represents the Movement towards Socialism (MAS) Party, and is still in power.

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Pre-1945 coded by Meera Krishnan on April 29, 2011

Post-1945 coded by Graham West (Rice) on July 22, 2010

Pre-1945 revised by Ashley Leeds on June 14, 2013

Pre-1945 revised by Naoko Matsumura on August 16, 2013

Post-1945 revised by Eelco van der Maat on February 06, 2012

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

Revised by Michaela Mattes on September 13, 2013

Revised by Andrew Wood March 2, 2014



Revised by Naoko Matsumura on May 9, 2014  
Edited by Andrew Wood (Rice) on May 22, 2014  
Edited by Michaela Mattes on September 26, 2014  
Revised by Michaela Mattes 11/13/2015