

Cameroon

Vanderbilt

Cameroon is coded as a non-democracy throughout the observation period. Cameroon is considered a single-party-personalist-hybrid regime at independence, ruled by Ahmadou Babatoura Ahidjo of the Union du Camerounais (UC) party. In 1966 UC becomes part of UNC (Cahoon 2010) and Ahidjo's SOLS changes from UC to UNC. The UC becomes a part of UNC (the country's only legal party 1966-1985) as a result of a transition to unitary government, which designed to meet the challenge posed by Cameroon's racial, tribal, religious and political diversity (Muller et. al., 2011: 222). This is not a SOLS change because he continues to head the same single-party-personalist-hybrid regime. In 1982 Ahidjo is succeeded (Gros 1995, 115) by his Prime Minister Paul Biya, also of the UNC party. The year after Biya assumes power, in 1983, Geddes codes the end of the single-party-personalist Ahidjo system and the beginning of a personalist regime under Biya. Whether the transition to Biya should be coded as a SOLS change (major or minor) or not is tricky. On the one hand, Biya was from the same party as Ahidjo and was his PM. Thus, he could be considered Ahidjo's pre-designated successor. According to Takougang (2004, 428), Biya essentially inherited the Ahidjo government and cabinet. Initially Biya did not replace the old regime that Ahidjo had put into place (Takougang 2004, 102-105). Moreover, Ahidjo remained the party leader of the Cameroon National Union (CNU) (DeLancey Neh Mbuh 2010, 28-30) at the time. On the other hand, Biya, almost immediately following his assumption of office, put forward a platform of change. Consequently, the majority of the CNU officials, "regretted" the leadership change (Takougang 2004, 428) as they feared to lose their benefits (102-105). As a result, Ahidjo and the UNC attempted to remove Biya by a coup, which failed (U.S. Department of State). The coup of 1984 was an important event for Biya, who became more cautious and highly reliant on the military and his Beti clan (Takougang 2004 106, 108-9; Konings 1996, 251-252). Specifically, Biya was from the Beti clan and Ahidjo was from the Garoua clan and the Beti replaced the Gaoua in important posts over time. This suggests that initially Biya's SOLS was the same as Ahidjo's but he phased out the old regime over time (Takougang 2004, 106-107), which is presumably why Geddes codes him as having his own personalist regime. We code a major SOLS change here.

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