List of Dictators

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The following is a list of national leaders (Heads of state and/or Head of government) commonly regarded as modern dictators. This usage usually carries a pejorative sense and refers to a ruler who:

is an absolute ruler of a sovereign state;

governs outside the otherwise accepted rule of law;

commonly (but not necessarily) gained power through fraud or a coup d'état, or resorts to them to stay in power;

may develop a cult of personality;

may be autocratic, oppressive, despotic or tyrannical.

Some so-called "benevolent dictators" may be viewed as beneficial and their leadership seen as a "necessary evil". The modern usage of the term 'dictator' developed largely in response to instances of autocratic rule in republics, so traditional monarchs are not usually described as dictators in historical commentary. Also excluded from this list are those who held absolute power during national emergencies, but restored the rule of law soon thereafter. Otherwise those included have been widely cited by historians or described by the media as dictators. Any controversy surrounding such characterisation is mentioned in the notes.

The list is sorted according to when each dictator began their years in power. This refers to any years in office as a head of state, government or the like before their dictatorship was established. Any years of elected and judicial rule may be indicated parenthetically.

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Africa

Name Country Years

in power Notes

Gamal Abdel Nasser Egypt 1954–1970 Prime Minister of Egypt 1954-1962; President of Egypt 1956-1970. Part of a group of officers in control of Egypt after the coup against British supported King Farouk in 1952; In February 1954, Nasser forced President Muhammad Naguib to appoint him prime minister and give up most practical power to him; later in that year Naguib resigned and Nasser became president by self-appointment; elected by popular vote (as only candidate) in 1956, and subsequently. Many personalistic elements to Nasser's rule, but nominal parliamentary system under Nasser's 1956-1970 presidency, until his death in 1970.

Ahmed Sékou Touré Guinea 1958–1984 President of Guinea. Widely described as a dictator (see [1], [2]) with estimates of up to 50,000 extra-judicial killings during his rule (see [3]) and 250,000 Guineans fleeing his rule ([4]).

David Dacko Central African Republic 1960–1966

1979–1981 President of the Central African Republic. Banned opposition (see [5]); Gained power by coup in 1979, though subsequently stood for election (see [6]).

Modibo Keita Mali 1960–1968 Schoolteacher and first president of Mali. Forced socialization and extensive protectionism severely harmed the economy and continued the country's dependence on aid donors. Discontent with these policies led Keita to implement his own "Cultural Revolution" and establish a network of people's militias to inform on and punish dissent. In the last few years of his presidency, full powers were vested in an extralegal "National Committee for Defense of the Revolution". He was deposed in a military coup.

François Tombalbaye Chad 1960–1975 Head of State 1960-1962; President of Chad 1962-1975. Never fought a contested election; imprisoned opposition leaders. Launched a "Cultural Revolution" in the early 1970s encouraging authenticité.

Félix Houphouët-Boigny Côte d'Ivoire 1960–1993 President of Côte d'Ivoire. Ruled until 1990 with all opposition banned, but not considered particularly repressive. Relocated the official capital to his home village of Yamoussoukro and constructed the Basilica of Our Lady of Peace of Yamoussoukro, the largest religious structure in Africa.

Milton Obote Uganda 1962–1972

1980–1985 Prime Minister of Uganda 1962-1966; President of Uganda 1966-1971 and 1980-1985. Suspended the constitution and declared himself President and Prime Minister in 1966.

Hastings Kamuzu Banda Malawi 1963–1994 Prime Minister of Malawi 1963-1966; President of Malawi 1966-1994. Banned all opposition in 1966; declared himself President for Life in 1971; exiled and killed opposition leaders. Ordered that a letter bomb be sent to exiled opposition leader Attati Mpakati; suspected of being involved in the car crash deaths of senior Congress Party leaders; violently crushed an attempted rebellion. Aged 98, he allowed and lost a free election in 1994.

Kenneth Kaunda Zambia 1964–1991 President of the Republic of Zambia 1964-1991.Elected 1964, banned all political parties in Zambia, viewed himself as "WAMUYAYA" (eternal President).Accused of torturing political opponents.Defeated by Frederick Chiluba in 1991.

Houari Boumediene Algeria 1965–1978

President of Algeria from June 19, 1965 to his death, (December 27, 1978); Chairman of the Revolutionary Council until December 12, 1976).

In June 1965, Boumédienne seized power in a bloodless coup. Initially lacking a personal power base, he was seen as a weak ruler. But after a botched coup attempt against him by military officers in 1967 he tightened his rule, and then remained Algeria's undisputed ruler until his death in 1978.

Modibo Keita Mali 1960–1968 Schoolteacher and first president of Mali. Forced socialization and extensive protectionism severely harmed the economy and continued the country's dependence on aid donors. Discontent with these policies led Keita to implement his own "Cultural Revolution" and establish a network of people's militias to inform on and punish dissent. In the last few years of his presidency, full powers were vested in an extralegal "National Committee for Defense of the Revolution". He was deposed in a military coup.

Jean-Bédel Bokassa Central African Republic 1966–1979 President of the Central African Republic 1966-1976; Emperor Bokassa I of the Central African Empire 1976-1979. Bokassa overthrew the autocratic Dacko in a swift coup d'état and assumed power as president of the Republic and head of the sole political party, the Mouvement pour l'évolution sociale de l'Afrique Noire (MESAN). Bokassa abolished the constitution of 1959 on January 4 and began to rule by decree. He proclaimed himself emperor in 1976 (see [7]).

Gnassingbé Eyadéma Togo 1967–2005 President of Togo. Gained power in a coup; never fought a contested election until 1998; banned, tortured and killed opposition. Fostered a cult of personality that was reinforced after he was the sole survivor of an airplane crash in 1974. In late 1991, troops loyal to Eyadéma closed a constitutional conference that had shifted most executive power to a new transitional government and banned Eyadéma's RPT party. January 1993 saw a mass exodus of residents to neighboring states after security forces fired on pro-democracy demonstrators. Further repression followed a purported 1994 coup attempt (see[8]).

Omar Bongo Gabon 1967–2009 As vice president, he acceded to the presidency following the death of President Léon M'ba. In 1968, Bongo decreed a one-party state under his Gabonese Democratic Party and was thrice elected unopposed in the 1970s and 1980s. He became very wealthy during the country's oil boom. Open elections were held in 1990 and Bongo was re-elected in 1993, 1998 and 2005. Observers have criticized the elections as unfair and corruption watchdogs have accused the president of nepotism. Riots resulting from the mysterious death in 1990 of prominent dissident Joseph Rendjambe in a government hotel room were put down by French troops.

Moussa Traoré Mali 1968–1991 Chairman of the Military National Liberation Committee 1968-1969; Head of State 1969-1979; President of Mali 1979-1991. Seized power in a coup; banned all opposition; installed a police state; established one-party state in 1979.

Francisco Macías Nguema Equatorial Guinea 1968–1979 President of Equatorial Guinea 1968-1979. Elected in 1968 but declared himself President for Life in 1972; "extreme personality cult"; over a third of population fled his regime. Banned fishing and sanctioned the deaths of most of his pre-independence political rivals, including ex-prime minister Bonifacio Ondó Edu and foreign minister Atanasio Ndongo Miyone. Declared an atheist state by Spanish dictator Francisco Franco. As many as 50,000 civilians were killed, in particular those of the Bubi ethnic minority on Bioko associated with relative wealth and intellectualism.

Gaafar Nimeiry Sudan 1969–1985 Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council 1969-1971; President of Sudan 1971-1985. Gained power in a military coup, banned opposition, dissolved southern Sudanese government, imposed sharia law. Executed several leading communists (the most prominent being Abdel Khaliq Mahjub and Joseph Garang after a botched 1971 coup attempt.

Mohamed Siad Barre Somalia 1969–1991 Chairman of the Supreme Revolutionary Council 1969-1976; President of Somalia 1976-1991. In 1969, during the power vacuum following the assassination of President Abdirashid Ali Shermarke, the military staged a coup and took over. Barre was to rule for the next twenty-two years. He attempted to develop a personality cult; large posters of him were common in the capital Mogadishu during his reign, many of which can still be seen today. He dreamed of a "Greater Somalia" and tried unsuccessfully to annex the Ogaden—legally Ethiopian territory—in 1977 to realize this end (see Ogaden War).

Anwar Sadat Egypt 1970-1981 President of Egypt 1970-1981. Unelected, suppressed opposition in what was termed "The Corrective Revolution". Assassinated.

Idi Amin Uganda 1971–1979 President of Uganda, later (1976) declared as for Life. Deposed in 1979 after declaring war on Tanzania.

Mengistu Haile Mariam Ethiopia 1974–1991 Chairman of the Provisional Military Administrative Council (Derg) in 1974 and 1977-1987; President of Ethiopia 1987-1991. One-party state; repression of opposition; tens of thousands of extra-judicial killings.

Olusegun Obasanjo Nigeria 1976-1979 Head of the Federal Military Government of Nigeria between 1976 and 1979. Elected President of Nigeria in 1999. Chairman of the African Union 2004-2006.

Jean-Baptiste Bagaza Burundi 1976–1987 President of Burundi. Widely described as a military dictator (see [9], [10]).

Albert René Seychelles 1977–2004 President of Seychelles. Deposed the elected president Sir James Mancham and promulgated a one-party constitution after a period of rule by decree. Created the National Youth Service (NYS), a compulsory educational institution that included traditional curricula interlaced with political indoctrination and paramilitary training.

Daniel arap Moi Kenya 1978–2002 President of Kenya. Changed constitution to establish a de jure one-party state; resorted to repressive rule, including torture and imprisonment without trial.

Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo Equatorial Guinea 1979–current Chairman of the Supreme Military Council 1979-1982; President of Equatorial Guinea 1982-current. Deposed his uncle in a violent coup; opposition is banned in all but name.

José Eduardo dos Santos Angola 1979-2017 President of Angola. One-party state; did not stand for election until 1992 (see [11]).

João Bernardo Vieira Guinea-Bissau 1980-1984 and 2005-2009 become president by a coup. killing and exiled opposition. faoumes for the Guinea-Bissau Civil War.

Samuel K. Doe Liberia 1980–1990 Chairman of the People's Redemption Council 1980-1984; President of Liberia 1984-1990. Gained power in a military coup that killed President William R. Tolbert, Jr., a reformer. Promoted Krahn chauvinism and "died a multi-millionaire and proud owner of mansions and estates" (see[12]).

Robert Mugabe Zimbabwe 1980-2017

Gained power through election, and repeatedly re-elected, but criticized for steps used to maintain power. From 1999 on, used police and militant groups like the War Veterans Association and Border Gezi Youth to enforce ZANU-PF policies and to prevent opponents from voting; called "king" by his aides.[13] Arrested and tortured opponents and human rights activists; gave amnesty to murderers of his political opponents in 2000; ignores court rulings.[14] Criticized as dictator by Desmond Tutu[15] and Vladimir Putin[16].

Jerry Rawlings Ghana 1981-1992 Gained power in a military coup during 1979 but handed it over. Re-took power in another coup of 1981. Elected President in 1992 and again in 1996 before standing aside as per the constitution.

André Kolingba Central African Republic 1981–1993 Chairman of the Military Committee of National Recovery 1981-1985; President of the Central African Republic 1985-1993. Gained power in a coup; persecuted opposition; allowed (and lost) free elections in 1993. Attempted second coup in 2001.

Hosni Mubarak Egypt 1981-2011 President of Egypt. Did not stand in a contested election until 2005, when a highly-restricted democratic process was allowed.

Paul Biya Cameroon 1982–current He served under President Ahmadou Ahidjo and became Prime Minister in 1975. Ahidjo resigned on November 6, 1982 and Biya became president. After years of totalitarian rule, he allowed the creation of opposition parties in 1990 but his re-elections have been marked by widespread fraud and intimidation.

Hissène Habré Chad 1982–1990 Chairman of the Council of State 1982; President of Chad 1982-1990. Gained power in a coup; abolished post of Prime Minister; executed opposition leaders.

Thomas Sankara Burkina Faso 1983-1987 President of Upper Volta 1983-1984; President of Burkina Faso 1984-1987. Gained power in coup. Lead millitary regime. Overthrown and killed in coup.

Maaouya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya Mauritania 1984–2005 Deposed the military head of state, Mohamed Khouna Ould Haidalla, on December 1984 and declared himself Chairman of the Military Committee for National Salvation. Deposed by Ely Ould Mohamed Vall in a bloodless coup d'état.

Ibrahim Babangida Nigeria 1985-1993 Annulled the most free and fair presidential election in the history of Nigeria, leading to the death of the presidenstial candidate Moshood Kashimawo Olawale Abiola.

Zine El Abidine Ben Ali Tunisia 1987-2011 President of Tunisia. Although he announced political pluralism in 1992, his Democratic Constitutional Rally (formerly Neo-Destour party) continues to dominate the national politics and there is no genuine open political debate. In 1999, although two unknown alternative candidates were permitted for the first time to stand in the presidential elections, Ben Ali was re-elected with 99.66% of the vote. A controversial constitutional referendum in 2002 allowed him to seek re-election and contemplate the possibility of remaining in office until 2014. On October 24, 2004, he was again re-elected, officially taking 94.48% of the vote. Certain books, periodicals and internet sites are banned or blocked. The National Television frequently show his actions during a week, but often the President only appears in passing on television.

Omar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir Sudan 1989–2019 President of the Revolutionary Command Council for National Salvation 1989-1993; President of Sudan 1993-2019. Took power in a military coup and increasingly centralized power into himself. Widely believed to be implicated in the Darfur Janjaweed pogroms.

Idriss Déby Chad 1990–2021 Head of State 1990-1991; President of Chad 1991 to date. Gained power in a coup; continues to suppress opposition and press (see [17]).Died after a rebel attack on the frontline

Sani Abacha Nigeria 1993–1998 Chairman of the Provisional Ruling Council 1993-1998. Seized power in a coup; persecuted opposition; never stood for election. Jailed Chief Moshood Kashimawo Olawale Abiola, the presumed winner of the annulled 1993 presidential election; presided over execution of activist Ken Saro-Wiwa.

Paul Kagame Rwanda 1994-current Vice-President of Rwanda 1994-2000; President 2000-current. Brouhgt to power by a guerilla movement which plunged the country into bloodshed and led to the Rwandan Genocide in 1994. Responsible of the the killings of innocent civilians, women and children in Kibeho refugee camp. Responsible of the killings of 4 millions congolese. Responsible of the killings of Priests and Archbishops in Kabgayi.

Yahya Jammeh The Gambia 1997-2017 President of The Gambia. Gained power in coup d'état. Right to the press and free speech supressed. Stood for three elections (1996, 2001, and 2006); last election deemed unfair by opposition.

Laurent-Désiré Kabila Congo-Kinshasa 1997–2001 President of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Overthrew Mobutu Sese Seko in coup. No elections held during ongoing, interstate First and Second Congo Wars.

Charles G. Taylor Liberia 1997–2003 President of Liberia 1997-2003. Elected, but widely described as a dictator (see[18], [19], [20]). Linked to "blood diamonds" and illegal arms trading. Believed to have interfered frequently in the internal affairs of neighboring states while a warlord, before his election to the presidency.

François Bozizé Central African Republic 2003-2012 President of the Central African Republic 2003 to date. Gained power in a coup and suspended the constitution, though he has restored some democracy (see [21]).

Ely Ould Mohamed Vall Mauritania 2005-2007 Chairman of the Military Council for Justice and Democracy. Gained power via a military coup. Though he has said to relinquish power to an elected government in 2007.

The Americas

North America

Name Country Years

in power Notes

Agustín de Iturbide Mexico 1822 - 1823

Shortly after the Mexican War of Independence, he was declared Emperor of Mexico in 1822. Repressive, cracked down on free speech and any opposition. Desposed when popular opposition forced him to abdicate.

Antonio López de Santa Anna Mexico 1833 - 1855

(intermittent) President or Provisional President of Mexico 1833-1837, then 1841 to February 1844, June to December 1844, March to September 1847 and finally 1853-1855. When Anastasio Bustamante led a coup overthrowing and killing President Vicente Guerrero, Santa Anna seized power and then was elected President in 1833. At first he gave a free hand to his vice-president Valentín Gómez Farías, a liberal reformer. Later he dismissed Gómez Farías, declared the Constitution suspended, disbanded the Congress and worked to concentrate power in the central government. He was overthrown and restored to power several times before his final overthrow in 1855.

Porfirio Díaz Mexico 1879 - 1910 Interim president 1876-1877; President of Mexico 1877-1880, 1884-1911. De facto ruler 1880-1884. Gained power in a coup, after his Revolution of Tuxtepac overthrew his predecessor, Lerdo. He did not run for reelection after his first term in order to keep his one-term promises that he made during his revolution. However, he retook the presidency a few years later and did not leave from power until the Revolution of 1910 kicked him from the Presidency. His rule saw the rapid modernization of Mexico, progress mainly caused by Diaz's encouragement of foreign investment in the country's infrastructure. However, the poor became quite miserable during this time. Political opposition was squelched and rebellions were put down by the rurals, Diaz's personal guard. He was eventually overthrown by the Revolution which lasted 10 years.

Lázaro Cárdenas Mexico 1934-1940

president of Mexico. gained power by elections establishing an authoritarian goverment.

Central America

Name Country Years

in power Notes

Rafael Carrera Guatemala 1844–1848

1851–1865 President of Guatemala. Gained power in a coup; styled himself President for Life.

William Walker Nicaragua 1856-1857 An american fillibuster takes over and proclaims himself President of Nicaragua. Tried to conquer several central american countries. Eventually executed.

Justo Rufino Barrios Guatemala 1873–1885 President of Guatemala. Gained power in a bloody coup, but introduced reforms.

Manuel Estrada Cabrera Guatemala 1898–1920 President of Guatemala. Never elected; subverted constitution; widely described as a dictator (see[22], [23]). Constructed numerous large Hellenic-style temples as monuments to his rule.

Maximiliano Hernández Martínez El Salvador 1931–1934

1935–1944 Acting President 1931-1934; President of El Salvador 1935-1944. Gained power in a coup; suppressed opposition; oversaw massacre of between ten and forty thousand suspected opponents. Presided over La Matanza in 1932, a massacre genocide) of communists, suspected communists, campesinos and Pipil Indians (see [24]).

Jorge Ubico Guatemala 1931–1944 President of Guatemala. Elected, but suppressed opposition and "assumed dictatorial powers".

Tiburcio Carías Andino Honduras 1933–1949 President of Honduras. Banned opposition and set up a rubber-stamp congress; suppressed unions (see[25]).

Anastasio Somoza García Nicaragua 1937–1956 Somoza used his position as head of the National Guard to overthrow President Juan Bautista Sacasa; centralized constitutional authority under his control; alternately rigged elections for himself or installed relatives in his place; kleptocrat.[26][27].

Carlos Castillo Armas Guatemala 1954–1957 Junta Chairman, 1954; President of Guatemala 1954-1957. Gained power in a coup; banned the popular Communist party; purged trade unions of leftist influence; declared himself president in 1956. Assassinated.

Oswaldo López Arellano Honduras 1963–1971

1972–1975 Head of Military Government 1963-1965; President of Honduras 1965-1971; Head of State 1972-1975. Military officer who allowed elections in 1971 before re-seizing power the next year. According to Clara Nieto in Masters of War: Latin America and United States Aggression from the Cuban Revolution through the Clinton years, p. 114 (ISBN 1-58322-545-5): "During this second term (1972-1975) López governed without a congress and by decree."

Anastasio Somoza Debayle Nicaragua 1967-1979 Succeeded his somewhat more liberal brother Luis; stepped down briefly in 1972, then resumed the presidency after an earthquake; outlawed several opposition parties; declared martial law in response to guerilla opposition; oversaw brutal repression by the National Guard.

Omar Torrijos Panama 1968–1981 Commander of the National Guard. Gained power in a coup; banned opposition, unions and free press.

Efraín Ríos Montt Guatemala 1982–1983 Chairman of military junta 1982; President of Guatemala 1982-1983. Dictator during a military coup. Known for scorched earth counter-insurgency strategies. Since then was Head of Congress for many years and made several failed attempts to be elected democratically. Used his declared conservative evangelical Christian beliefs to portray dissent as an attack against God.

Manuel Noriega Panama 1983–1989 Commander of the National Guard and de facto military leader, widely described as a dictator (see [28], [29], [30]).

South America

Name Country Years

in power Notes

José Gaspar Rodríguez de Francia Paraguay 1813-1814 and 1814-1840 gained power in election. Outlawed all opposition. Installed a police state. Cult of personality; citizens forced to raise their hats or a brim when he passed by; styled himself with the position name "El Supremo".

Simón Bolívar Gran Columbia 1821-1830 Though an admirer of classical liberal democracy, the founder and president of Gran Colombia proclaimed himself dictator in 1828 after an unsuccessful constitutional convention. Resigned eighteen months later.

Juan Manuel de Rosas Argentina 1835–1852 Governor of Buenos Aires 1829-1832, 1835-1852; Supreme Chief of the Argentine Confederation 1851-1852. Assumed dictatorial powers; exiled opponents.

Carlos Antonio López Paraguay 1841–1862 First Consul 1841-1844; President of Paraguay 1844-1862.

Manuel Belzu Bolivia 1848–1855 Provisional President of Bolivia 1848-1850; President of Bolivia 1850-1855. Unelected military ruler; caudillo. A populist and nationalist who voluntarily relinquished power after 1855 elections, described in (ISBN 0-13-524356-4), p.131, as the "cleanest ever held" in (early) Bolivian history.

Francisco Solano López Paraguay 1862–1869 President of Paraguay. Inherited power from his father; had himself awarded immense powers by a congress he had packed with supporters. Killed in the War of the Triple Alliance (which Lopez had caused by invading Brazil), along with 90 per cent of the Paraguayan adult (age 14+) male population.

Mariano Melgarejo Bolivia 1864–1871 Provisional President 1864-1870; President of Bolivia 1870-1871. Gained power in a coup and ruthlessly suppressed opposition. In 1869 he sent the army to suppress an uprising by Huaichu Indians attempting to regain land privileges they enjoyed under President Belzu (see ISBN 1-55753-324-5).

Antonio Guzmán Blanco Venezuela 1870–1888 Acting President of Venezuela 1863, 1865; General-in-chief April-July 1870; Provisional President of Venezuela 1870-1873; President of Venezuela 1873 - 1877; Supreme Director 1879; Provisional President of Venezuela 1879 - 1880; President of Venezuela 1880 -1884, 1886 -1888. Described, perhaps inaccurately, as a "benevolent despot"; other sources mention his "long dictatorship" (see[31]).

Cipriano Castro Venezuela 1899–1909 Supreme Chief 1899-1901; Provisional President 1901 - 1902, 1904 - 1905; President of Venezuela 1902 - 1904, 1905 - 1909. Took over in a military coup (see [32]).

Rafael Reyes Colombia 1904–1909 Microsoft Encarta 2003)

Juan Vicente Gómez Venezuela 1909–1914

1922–1929

1931–1935 Provisional President 1909-1910; President of Venezuela 1910-1914, 1922-1929, 1931-1935. Gained power in a coup; never elected; kleptocrat; widely described as a dictator (see [33], [34], [35]).

Óscar Benavides Peru 1914–1915

1933–1939 Junta Chairman 1914; President of Peru 1914-1915, 1933-1939. Twice gained power by coup.

Augusto Leguía Peru 1919–1930 President of Peru. Gained power in a coup; ignored constitution; suppressed and exiled opposition.

Carlos Ibáñez del Campo Chile 1927–1931 Acting President 1927, President 1927 - 1931. Democratically elected to a six-year term in 1952.

Getúlio Vargas Brazil 1930–1934

1937–1945 Head of provisional government 1930-1934 after revolution; indirectly elected as Constitutional President 1934-1937; launched a coup in 1937 and became dictator 1937-1945; democratically-elected President of Brazil 1950-1954.

José Felix Uriburu Argentina 1930-1932 President of Argentina. He organized a coup to topple democratic president Hipólito Yrigoyen.

Gabriel Terra Uruguay 1931–1938 President of Uruguay. Suspended congress and dissolved constitution in 1933.

Higinio Morínigo Paraguay 1940–1948 Provisional president 1940-1943; President of Paraguay 1943-1948. Seized absolute power; ruled by diktat until 1946.

Manuel Odría Peru 1948–1956 Chairman of military junta 1948 - 1950; President of Peru 1950 - 1956. Gained power in a coup; restricted civil rights; allowed election in 1956.

Marcos Pérez Jiménez Venezuela 1948–1958 Member of military junta 1948 - 1952; Provisional president 1952 -1953; President of Venezuela 1953 - 1958. Never elected; pursued opposition violently; credited with improvements to the country's infrastructure.

Gustavo Rojas Pinilla Colombia 1953–1957 President of Colombia. Gained power in a coup.

Alfredo Stroessner Paraguay 1954–1989 President of Paraguay. He took over in a military coup (see[36], [37],[38]).

Humberto Castelo Branco Brazil 1964–1967 President of Brazil. Gained power in a coup; abolished most opposition; subsequently appointed by congress.

René Barrientos Bolivia 1964–1969 Chairman of the military junta, 1964-January 1966 (jointly with Alfredo Ovando 1965-1966); President of Bolivia, August 1966 - 1969. Gained power in military coup; kleptocrat; responsible for Catavi massacre and execution of Che Guevara (ISBN 0-85345-991-6), p.136.

Forbes Burnham Guyana 1966–1985 Prime Minister 1966 - 1980; President 1980 - 1985. Elected, but became increasingly dictatorial; held dubious elections and encouraged leftist religious cults (such as the Peoples Temple) to settle in the Guyanese interior (see [39], [40]).

Artur da Costa e Silva Brazil 1967–1969 President of Brazil 1967-1969. Elected in 1966, but centralised power; closed the Congress; banned opposition; suspended free press. Decreed Institutional Act No. 5, described as "the most unconstitutional, anti-democratic, arbitrary, and repressive decree in Brazil's history." (ISBN 1-58322-545-5), p.167.

Emílio Garrastazu Médici Brazil 1969–1974 President of Brazil. Appointed by congress, but instituted a military government; suppressed press and opposition (see[41]).

Hugo Banzer Bolivia 1971–1978 President of Bolivia. Gained power in a coup; suppressed opposition; closed universities; 3,000 opponents arrested, 200 killed.

Juan María Bordaberry Uruguay 1972–1976 President of Uruguay 1972 - 1976. Elected, but installed a military government, dissolved Congress, suspended civil liberties and banned unions.

Augusto Pinochet Chile 1973–1990 disappearances" and 28,000 tortured.

Ernesto Geisel Brazil 1974-1979 Congress-appointed President of Brazil. The fourth of the military dictators; party and union freedom were still inexistent during his term; had oppositionists like journalist Wladimir Herzog and factory worker Manoel Fiel Filho tortured and murdered.

Jorge Rafael Videla Argentina 1976–1981 President of Argentina. Gained power in a coup; never elected; between ten and thirty thousand opponents killed.

João Baptista de Oliveira Figueiredo Brazil 1979-1985 Congress-appointed President of Brazil. Society won some democratic measures these years, but there was still a major fraud during 1982 State government elections. His government was responsible for the 1983 bomb in the Riocentro.

Dési Bouterse Suriname 1980–1988 Chairman of the National Military Council 1980-1988. Gained power in a coup; never elected; widespread misrule. Most infamous atrocity is the Decembermoorden.

Luis García Meza Tejada Bolivia 1980–1981 President of Bolivia. Gained power in the "Cocaine Coup" aided by Klaus Barbie; highly repressive; over 1,000 killed.

Gregorio Conrado Álvarez Uruguay 1981–1985 President of Uruguay. Ignored constitution; extensive human rights abuses (see [42]).

Leopoldo Galtieri Argentina 1981–1982 President of Argentina 1981-1982. Gained power in a coup (see[43], [44]). Deposed after failed invasion of the Falkland Islands in 1982.

Alberto Fujimori Peru 1990-2000 President of Peru 1990-2000, widely critizised for his political authoritarism. [45][46] [47]. After enjoying a certain degree of popular support, Fujimori was forced from office following controvertial third term re-election[48]. In 2000 political opponent Mario Vargas Llosa called Fujimori a "dictator" [49]. His government was also marked by the influence of the director of the SIN, Vladimiro Montesinos [50][51]. Currently in Peru, Fujimori is in trial for presumed charges ranging from corruption to participation in crimes against humanity. [52].

Hugo Chávez Venezuela 1999-2013 Appointed special powers including reshaping and controlling the National Assembly and personally controls the courts, removed term-limits, nationalized the oil companies, harrasses free-speech and the press and shut down opposition media.

Caribbean

Name Country Years

in power Notes

Jean-Jacques Dessalines Haiti 1804-1806 Governor-General of Haiti 1804; Emperor of Haiti (as Jacques I) 1804 - 1806. Ruled autocratically.

Henry Christophe Haiti

(northern) 1806-1820 Provisional Chief of the Haitian Government 1806-1807; President of Haiti 1807-1811; King of Haiti (as Henry I) 1811-1820. Ruled autocratically.

Pedro Santana Dominican Republic 1844-1848, 1853 -1856, 1858 - 1861 Never elected; suppressed opposition; widely considered a dictator.

Buenaventura Báez Dominican Republic 1849-1878 (intermittent) President of the Dominican Republic five times. Gained power following coups; never elected.

Ulises Heureaux Dominican Republic 1882-1899 (intermittent) President of the Dominican Republic three times. Never elected; widely described as a dictator (see[53], [54], [55]).

Gerardo Machado Cuba 1925-1933 President of Cuba. A follower of Benito Mussolini, he is widely described as a dictator (see [56], [57]).

Rafael Trujillo Dominican Republic 1930-1961 President of the Dominican Republic 1930 - 1938, 1942 - 1952; de facto ruler 1930-1961. Gained power in a coup; cult of personality (renamed the capital Ciudad Trujillo); promoted racism against Haitians and ordered the massacre of 20,000 blacks.

Blanton Winship Puerto Rico 1934-1939 Govenor of Puerto Rico 1934-1939. He ordered the Ponce Massacre after the Puerto Ricans Nationalist party assasinated colonel Francis Riggs.

Luis Muñoz Marín Puerto Rico 1949-1965 Govenor of Puerto Rico. he gained power by democratic elections but his regimen his better known about the 1949 repression against the Puerto Rican Nationalist party.

Paul Magloire Haiti 1950-1956 President of Haiti. Gained power in a coup; never elected.

Fulgencio Batista Cuba 1952-1959 President of Cuba 1940-1944; 1952-1959. Gained power the second time in a coup; suppressed opposition violently. Use of torture and collective punishment. Mafia ties.

François Duvalier Haiti 1957-1971 President of Haiti. Elected in 1957, but banned opposition; declared himself President for Life in 1964; highly repressive.

Fidel Castro Cuba 1959-2006 Prime Minister of Cuba 1959-1976; President of the Council of State and the Council of Ministers from 1976. Gained power after revolution. Castro was elected President after 1976, but within a one-party Communist state.

Jean-Claude Duvalier Haiti 1971-1986 President of Haiti. Inherited presidency aged 19 from his father; never elected.

Eric Gairy Grenada 1974-1979 Prime Minister of Grenada 1967-1979. Widely described as a dictator (see[58], [59], [60]).

Raoul Cédras Haiti 1991-1994 De facto ruler for a relatively short period of time. Gained power in a coup (see [61]).

Raúl Castro Cuba 2006-current Appointed successor by his brother of the Communist Party of Cuba.

Asia

West Asia ("Middle East")

Name Country Years

in power Notes

Mohammad Reza Pahlavi Iran 1941/1953–1979 Installed over his father Rezah Shah Pahlavi by Allied occupation forces. Fled Iran in 1953 amid a power struggle with Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh and was restored with help from the United States and Great Britain. Abolished all rival political parties and used a secret police, Savak, to torture and imprison thousands of political dissidents; yet, modernized Iran.

Abdul Karim Qassem Iraq 1958–1963 Gained power by coup; viewed by some as benevolent (see [62]).

Abdul Salam Arif Iraq 1963–1966 Gained power in a coup; military ruler.

Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr Iraq 1968–1979 Gained power in a coup; never elected.

Hafez al-Assad Syria 1970–2000 Gained power in a coup; totalitarian;Template:Fact cult of personality; oversaw Hama massacre yielding twenty to forty thousand dead (see [63]).

Ruhollah Khomeini Iran 1979–1989 As Supreme Leader, held ultimate and uncontested authority over all government matters under the principle of Guardianship. Created the extra-constitutional Special Clerical Court system in 1987, accountable only to the Supreme Leader and used principally for suppression of political dissent. Instituted routine torture, beheadings for children.

Saddam Hussein Iraq 1979–2003 Pressured Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr to resign in 1979 and formally became president. Repressive; developed extensive personality cult; deposed by United States and coalition forces in an invasion.

Bashar al-Assad Syria 2000–current No opposition permitted in election following death of his father; widely described as a dictator (see[64], [65], [66]).

Central Asia

Name Country Years

in power Notes

Askar Akayev Kyrgyzstan 1990–2005 Appointed but became increasingly authoritarian; widely described as a dictator (see [67], [68], [69]).

Islom Karimov Uzbekistan 1991-2016 Described as authoritarian who is increasingly centralizing power (see [70], [71]). Elections essentially uncontested and unmonitored. Opposition repressed.

Saparmurat Niyazov Turkmenistan 1991–2006 Declared President for Life in 1999; cult of personality; his book Ruhnama is to be treated with reverence (see [72], [73]).

Ilham Aliyev Azerbaijan 2003–current Dubious election; opposition suppressed (see[74]).

South Asia

Name Country Years

in power Notes

Ayub Khan Pakistan 1958–1969 Gained power in a coup. Subsequent elections considered dubious (see[75], [76]).

Yahya Khan Pakistan 1969–1971 Military ruler, gaining power from coup (see [77],[78], [79]).

Maumoon Abdul Gayoom Maldives 1978–2008 Autocrat; widely considered to be a dictator; no opposition or free press allowed.

Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq Pakistan 1978–1988 Took over following coup. Claimed government to be legitimate because it was Islamic (see [80]).

Rahimuddin Khan Balochistan (Pakistan) 1978–1984 Appointed supreme Martial Law Governor of Balochistan by central Pakistani military government following coup. (see [81]).

Hossain Mohammad Ershad Bangladesh 1982–1990 Gained power in a coup; declared martial law; never elected.

Pervez Musharraf Pakistan 1999-2008 Deposed Nawaz Sharif in a military coup, calling it a necessity during a state of emergency. Governed directly as commander in chief until Parliament reconvened in November 2002. Assumed the title of President upon Rafiq Tarar's resignation and stood in a referendum in 2002. Opposition parties state that the rule of law in his custody has deteriorated further.

East Asia ("Far East")

Name Country Years

in power Notes

Tokugawa Ieyasu Japan 1600-1616 Shogun of Japan and founder of the long reigning Tokugawa shogunate. Gained power by unifying the warring clans during Japan's long period of civil unrest. He also created an "alternate attendance" system to pacify the daimyo warlords, as well as closing and isolating trade and the economy, in order to retain his power. His rule was also marked by persecution of european missionaries and japanese christians.

Emperor Meiji Japan 1868-1912 Founder of the Empire of Japan, and made the Meiji Restoration.

Emperor Taishō Japan 1912-1926 Ordered the mass capturing of Islands during World War I.

Yuan Shikai Republic of China 1912–1916 President of the Republic of China 1912 - 1915, self-proclaimed Emperor of China, 1916. Ignored legislative consent as defined by the Constitution; dissolved the National Assembly; assassinated Song Jiaoren; disbanded the Kuomintang.

Roman von Ungern-Sternberg Mongolia 1921

Born, Baron Roman Nicolaus von Ungern-Sternberg (Роман Фёдорович Унгерн фон Штернберг), in Graf, Austria of Prussian nobility, von Ungern-Sternberg fought, against his own Prussians, in the Imperial Russian Army during World War I and fought the Bolsheviks, in Siberia, after 1917. A rabid monarchist, von Ungern-Sternberg soon thereafter became an independent warlord with the intention of establishing an independent Russo-Sino-Mongolian monarchy in Urga under the nominal rule of Bogd Khaan (the Living Buddha). Although considered the paragon of bravery, von Ungern-Sternberg was reckless, brutal and mentally unstable. After a savage battle against occupying Chinese republican forces, on March 13, 1921, Mongolia was proclaimed an independent monarchy, and Ungern von Sternberg became Mongolian dictator. His brief rule of Mongolia was characterised by looting, raping and a reign of terror by his army. Eventually, the Bolsheviks invaded Mongolia and after a series of battles, von Ungern-Sternberg was defeated in a August 1921, captured by his own soldiers, and handed over to the Red Army on August 21, 1921.

Emperor Hirohito Japan 1926-1989 Emperor of Japan during the WW2, accomplice and responsible of war crimes in East Asia.

Chiang Kai-shek Republic of China 1927-1975 Known as the "Generalissimo". Gained power by military force. Leader of anti-communist one-party state under the Kuomintang. Rule on mainland China repeatedly undermined by powerful regional factions, civil wars, and the war against Japan. Ruled with an iron-fist following his retreat to Taiwan in 1949.

Horloogiyn Choybalsan Mongolia 1936–1952 Unelected; opponents purged; cult of personality.

Hideki Tojo Japan 1940-1944 Japanese prime minister responsible of millon of deaths in China.

Kim Il-sung North Korea 1948–1994 Appointed prime minister in 1948; purged rivals in the Workers' Party of Korea to consolidate power in 1956 (see [82]); introduced "Juche" ideology demanding absolute loyalty to him and the party; created most pervavise cult of personality in recent history. Declared "Eternal President" on his death.

Sukarno Indonesia 1949-1968 First President of Indonesia. Consolidated his powers, and got proclaimed President for LIfe. Was overthrown by the then Dictator of Indonesia, Suharto.

Mao Zedong People's Republic of China 1949–1976 Chairman of the PRC (1949 – 1959), Chairman of the Communist Party of China (1945 – 1976), Chairman of the Central Military Commission (1936 – 1976). Immense cult of personality; purged members of government; silenced opposition. Circumvented Communist Party hierarchy after the 1966 Cultural Revolution; imprisoned head of state Liu Shaoqi. Millions of Chinese citizens killed or murdered as a result of his policies and repression.

Ngô Ðình Diệm South Vietnam 1955–1963 Unelected; autocratic; oppressed Buddhists (see[83]).

Park Chung Hee South Korea 1961–1979 Took power in 1961 coup. Although initially welcomed by much of the population, he suspended the constitution in 1971 and introduced a new constitution that greatly increased his power.

Ne Win Burma 1962–1988 Seized power in a coup; instituted extreme repression (see [84], [85]).

Thanom Kittikachorn Thailand 1963–1973 Military dictator, known as one of Thailand's so-called "Three Tyrants". Oppressed student-led uprisings in October 1973 and 1976.

Suharto Indonesia 1967–1998 His New Order imprisoned Communists and alleged Communists; repressed Chinese inhabitants; made existing parties subordinate. Also a cleptocrat (with personal and family's assets at least worth US$ 15 billion, based on Time Magazine investigation in 1998). Described as a dictator in many sources (see[86], [87], [88]).

Lon Nol Cambodia 1972–1975 Gained power by coup; not elected.

Pol Pot Democratic Kampuchea 1975–1979 Unelected; led a Khmer Rouge dictatorship; responsible for deaths of at least 1 million Cambodian citizens during his rule.

Chun Doo Hwan South Korea 1980–1988 Gained power in a coup; declared martial law; oversaw Gwangju Massacre.

Mahathir bin Mohamad Malaysia 1981-2003 Authoritarian; suppresed opposition, media.

Khamtai Siphandon Laos 1992–2006 Unelected; one-party state (see[89]).

Than Shwe Burma 1992-2011 Unelected; persecution of minorities (especially Karenni and Rohingya groups [90]) leading 250,000 to flee, either becoming IDPs or moving across the border to Thailand; consolidated power into himself from the SPDC- he moved to a new capital in Kyat Pyay in 2006 , &renamed it as Nay Pyi Daw ,i.e the Royal Palace City"; gained power via a military coup and announced that he would not hand over the power to Aung San Suu Kyi's Elected Party (the NLD); no free press (see [91]).

Kim Jong-il North Korea 1994-2011 Became General Secretary of the Workers' Party of Korea and Chairman of the National Defense Commission (the highest state offices) on his father's death. Continues his father's "Juche" ideology.

Sonthi Boonyaratglin Thailand 2006–2008 Army chief seized power while Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra was out of the country. A state of martial law was declared, parliament was dissolved and the constitution abrogated. Instituted press censorship and restrictions on protests. The first Muslim in charge of the mostly Buddhist army.

Europe

Name Country Years

in power Notes

Oliver Cromwell Commonwealth of England 1653-1658 A Puritan general in the English Civil War who quickly rose through the ranks to become de facto head of the Parliamentary forces. After the Royalist defeat and the execution of Charles I the newly constituted Rump Parliament was overthrown by Cromwell who refused the Crown, choosing instead the title of Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland, and Ireland. After his death the monarchy was reinstated. [92].

Maximilien Robespierre France 1793–1794 Head of the Committee of Public Safety during the French Revolution. To purge french society of "Counter Revolutionaries", he instituted the heavily repressive Reign of Terror, a period which killed thousands of french citizens, many of those killed were simply killed under mere suspicion, with little or no proof. Desposed when the National Convention declared him an outlaw.

Napoleon Bonaparte France 1799–1814 First Consul, 1799-1804. Emperor of the French 1804-1814. Declared himself "First Consul for Life" in 1802 and then Emperor in 1804.

Klemens von Metternich Austria 1821-1848 Imperial Chancellor of Austria, he tried to restore the old regime which existed before the french revolution in Europe after Napoleon's defeat, at the end he failed and left power after the 1848 revolution.

Józef Grzegorz Chłopicki Poland 1830–1831 Held official title of dictator for one year only.

Charles Louis Napoléon Bonaparte France (1848–1851)

1851–1870 President of France from 1848 to 1852. In 1851 he launched a coup against the legislature, making himself absolute ruler. From 1852 to 1870 he styled himself Emperor of the French under the name Napoléon III from 1852 to 1870. Later during his reign constitutional liberties were gradually restored. In 1870 he was captured during the abortive Franco-Prussian War and deposed in his absence by the Third Republic of France.

Romuald Traugutt Poland 1863–1864 Held official title of dictator for one year. Succeeded Marian Langiewicz who had declared himself dictator previously, but only lasted less than a year in 1863.

Leopold II Belgium 1865–1909 King of Belgium during the colonial era. He was responsable on the deaths of millions of congolese.

Otto von Bismarck German Empire 1871-1888 Chancellor of Germany 1871-1888. He was the man behind the German Unification.

Tsar Alexander III Russia 1881-1894 Tsar of Russia between 1881 and 1894, he persecuted jews in anti-semitic pogroms in all European Russia.

Kaiser Wilhelm II German Empire 1888-1918 Emperor of Germany 1888-1918. He was the most authoritarian head of state of the German Empire, his colonial ambitions started the First World War. At the end he abdicated and died in exile in 1941 .

Enver Pasha Turkey 1914-1918 Bey of the Ottoman Empire. He was the mayor responsible of the armenian genocide.

Vladimir Lenin USSR 1917-1924 Head of Bolshevik Revolution took power in 1917. Secured victory in the Russian civil war. Headed effort to transform the Russian economy to a socialist model.[93]

Friedrich Ebert Weimar Republic 1918-1925 First president of Germany between 1918 and 1925. The country suffered from hyperinflation during his goverment and a lot of people died from starvation.

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk Turkey 1918-1938 Led the Turkish national movement. Transformed Turkey into a secular republic through broad authoritarian reforms.

Benito Mussolini Italy 1922–1943 Prime Minister of Italy 1922-1943; head of the so-called Italian Social Republic until 1945. "He introduced strict censorship and altered the methods of election so that in 1925–1926 he was able to assume dictatorial powers and dissolve all other political parties" (see [94],[95]).

Miguel Primo de Rivera Spain 1923–1930 Prime Minister of Spain. Gained power in a coup; suspended the constitution; established martial law; imposed strict censorship; banned all political parties. Widely described as a dictator (see[96], [97], [98]).

Aleksandar Tsankov Bulgaria 1923-1926 Established Right wing nationalist, anti communist coup against Stamboliyski’s democratic elected Agrarians. Forced out of power by Tsar Boris III. [99].

Joseph Stalin USSR 1924–1953 General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, 1922 - 1953; Premier of the Soviet Union 1941 - 1953. Never elected; cult of personality; heavily repressive; responsible for deaths of millions of Soviet citizens (see [100], [101],[102]).

Ahmet Bej Zogu Albania 1925–1939 Originally elected Prime Minister of Albania 1922-1924 and 1925; President of Albania 1925-1928; crowned himself King of the Albanians (as Zog I) 1928-1939. Described as a dictator (see[103], [104], [105]). Forced to flee with his wife, Queen Geraldine, the imminent takeover of the country by Italy under Benito Mussolini.

José Mendes Cabeçadas Portugal 1926 Leader of Ditadura Nacional during the first part of June immediately after the 28th May 1926 coup d'état

Gomes da Costa Portugal 1926 Succeeded Cabeçadas as head of the Ditadura Nacional for less than a month

António Óscar Carmona Portugal 1926-1928 Head of Ditadura Nacional

Józef Piłsudski Poland 1926–1935 Polish Head of State 1918-1922, but regained power in 1926 via coup. Prime Minister of Poland 1926-1928 and 1930; Commander in Chief of the Army 1926-1935. Initiated authoritarian Sanacja government; often described as a "benevolent dictator".

Antanas Smetona Lithuania 1926–1940 President of Lithuania. Seized power in a 1925 military coup (see [106]); authoritarian rule. His description as a dictator is common (see[107]), but not universal.

António de Oliveira Salazar Portugal 1928–1968 Prime Minister of Portugal. Established an anti-democratic, anti-parliamentarian, ultra-clericalist, corporativist, extremely conservative, repressive and authoritarian dictatorship, connoted with the Italian fascism, highly supported by the Roman Catholic Church. Longest right-wing dictatorship ever (four complete decades).

Alexander I Yugoslavia 1929-1934 King of Yugoslavia from 1921. On January 6, 1929 he abolished the constitution, prorogued parliament and established the so-called "January 6 Dictatorship." A new constitution in 1931 left all significant political power in the hands of the King.

Franz von Papen Weimar Republic 1932 Chancellor of Germany 1932. Ruled Germany for one year under an authoritarian and pro-military democracy.

Engelbert Dollfuss Austria 1933–1934 Chancellor of Austria 1932-1934. Suspended parliament indefinitely in March 1933, governing thereafter by decree. Rule sometimes compared to Mussolini or Franco (see [108]).

Konstantin Päts Estonia 1933–1940 State Elder 1933 - 1937; State Protector 1937 - 1938; President of Estonia 1938-1940. Established authoritarian rule following a coup. Allowed (and won) election in 1938.

Adolf Hitler Germany 1933–1945 Chancellor of Germany 1933-1945; Führer (Leader) 1934-1945. The 1933 Enabling Act suspended most of the constitution and allowed Hitler to rule by decree. Heavily repressive; ordered imprisonment of millions of political opponents and members of ethnic minorities in concentration camps, where they were abused and killed.

Kimon Georgiev Bulgaria 1934 Took power in coup. Overthrown by Tsar Boris III.

Tsar Boris III Bulgaria 1934-1943 Overthrew Kimon Geogiev. Took power him self ruled through puppet Prime Ministers Georgi Kyoseivanov. His Regime banned all opposition parties. Took Bulgaria into alliance with Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy.

Kurt Schuschnigg Austria 1934–1938 Chancellor of Austria. Maintained his predecessor Dollfuss' oppressive rule.

Kārlis Ulmanis Latvia 1934–1940 Prime Minister of Latvia 1934-1940; President of Latvia 1936 - 1940. Gained power in a coup and dissolved parliament; generally viewed as a "benevolent dictator" (see [109], [110], [111]).

Ioannis Metaxas Greece 1936–1941 Prime Minister of Greece. Never elected; banned political parties; arrested opponents; criminalized unions; censored media. Widely described as a dictator (see[112], [113], [114]).

Francisco Franco Spain 1936–1975 Prime Minister of Spain 1938-1975 and Head of State 1939 - 1975 (in the Nationalist Zone, both only to 1939). Purged opposition; often referred to as a dictator or caudillo (see[115], [116],[117], [118]). Strongly supported by the Roman Catholic Church worldwide.

Carol II Romania 1938-1940 King of Romania from 1930. In January 1938 he abolished parliamentary government and pushed through a new constitution putting all executive power into his own hands.

Jozef Tiso Slovakia 1939–1945 President of WWII Slovak Republic. Led a partly Roman Catholic clerical, partly pro-Nazi, one-party state. Described by some as a dictator (see [119], [120], [121]).

Ion Antonescu Romania 1940–1944 Prime Minister of Romania. Two days after his appointment, forced King Carol II (see above) to abdicate in favor of his son, Mihai. Named himself Conducător (Leader), assumed dictatorial powers and relegated monarchy to decorative role.

Philippe Pétain Vichy France 1940–1944 Prime Minister of France 1940 - 1942; Head of State 1940 - 1944. The Assemblée Nationale of Vichy France suspended the Third Republic and granted Pétain dictatorial power, although ultimately he was answerable to the German Nazi hierarchy.

Josef Torboven Norway 1940–1945 Put in by Hitler. Established concentration camps including Falstad and Bredtvet and led a brutal police force. Answerable to no one but Hilter and had absolute control over a soveregn nation. Established

Ante Pavelić Croatia 1941–1945 Poglavnik ("Leader") of Croatia. Not elected; ordered massacres of Serbs, Jews, Gypsies and dissidents; hundreds of thousands slaughtered; led the genocial, devoutly Roman Catholic Ustase (see [122], [123], [124]). Supported by most, if not all, of the Roman Catholic church in Croatia.

Ferenc Szálasi

(Szálasi Ferenc) Hungary 1944–1945 Leader of the fascist Arrow Cross party, Szálasi was installed as a fascist ruler by the Nazis following their overthrow of regent Miklós Horthy.

Josip Broz Tito Yugoslavia 1944–1980 Secretary-General of the Yugoslav Communist Party 1937 - 1963; Prime Minister of Yugoslavia 1945–1953; Premier of Yugoslavia 1953 - 1963; President of Yugoslavia 1953 - 1980; President of the Presidium of the League of Communists from 1963 until 1980. Declared himself President for Life in 1963. Viewed favorably in Yugoslavia despite authoritarian rule.

Enver Hoxha Albania 1944-1985 General Secretary of the Albanian Party of Labour. Leader of single-party Communist state; extensive personality cult; Declared his nation to be the world's only officially atheist state and banned all practice of religion in 1967.

Klement Gottwald Czechoslovakia 1948-1953 Stalinist leader of Communist Party of Czechoslovakia.

Mátyás Rákosi Hungary 1949-1956 General Secretary of the Hungarian Workers Party and Prime Minister of the Hungarian People's Republic. Leader of single-party Communist state; nicknamed "Stalin's best Hungarian disciple"; Invented the phrase "salami tactics" to describe piecemeal assumption of power.

Walter Ulbricht German Democratic Republic 1950/1960-1971 General Secretary of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany 1950-1971 and Head of State 1960-1973.

Nikita Khrushchev USSR 1953-1964 First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union between 1953-1964. Allowed limited liberalisation in the arts and media later on.

Todor Zhivkov Bulgaria 1956-1989 Head of pro soviet communist regimen in Bulgaria. Became party secretary in 1956 and prime minister in 1962. Forced out of power in 1989 by communist party to comply with demands of protesters.

Antonín Novotný Czechoslovakia 1957-1968 Antonín Novotný, the First Secretary of the Communist Party and President of the Republic, was leader of Czechoslovakia during the Stalinisation of the country, resulting in the replacement of the Czechoslovakian democracy by a one-party communist state. His dictatorship centralized power and used force to protect his regime which lasted fifteen years.

Leonid Brezhnev USSR 1964–1982 First/General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union between 1964-1982. Formed a cult of Personality later on.

Nicolae Ceauşescu Romania 1965–1989 General Secretary of the Romanian Communist Party, 1965-1989; President of Romania, 1974-1989. Leader of single-party Communist state; extensive personality cult developed during the 1970s. Lived lavish lifestyle while country was still using donkey carts.

George Papadopoulos Greece 1967–1973 Prime Minister of Greece 1967 - 1973; Regent 1972 - 1973; President of Greece 1973. Gained power in a coup; lead military regime. Widely described as a dictator (see [125], [126], [127]).

Marcelo Caetano Portugal 1968–1974 Prime Minister of Portugal 1968 - 1974; Upon the death of António de Oliveira Salazar he continued the dictatorial regime. Some liberties were improved but the situation of the country and the colonial wars lead to the Carnation Revolution.

Gustáv Husák Czechoslovakia 1969-1987 Came into power through soviets, Crushed the Prague spring. Headed brutal secret police stepped down from power in 1987 two years before communism fell.

Erich Honecker German Democratic Republic 1971-1989 General Secretary of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany 1971-1989 and Head of State 1976-1989.

Phaedon Gizikis Greece 1973-1974 President of Greece 1973-1974. Gained power in coup. Lead millitary regime installed by previous head of state.

Wojciech Jaruzelski Poland 1980-1990 Imposed martial law in Poland in 1981 in response to Solidarity party led strikes. Made himself head of the "Commission for National Salvation." Stated his actions were taken in order to prevent a Soviet invasion of Poland. Was President of Poland until his resignation in 1990.

Slobodan Milošević Serbia-Yugoslavia 1989-1997-2000 President of Serbia in 1989; president of Yugoslavia 1997 till 2000. Very repressive genocidal dictator, which resulted in the torture, rape and murder of Albanian ethnic muslims.

Aleksandr Lukashenko Belarus 1994-current President of Belarus. Said to have an "authoritarian ruling style". Lack of democratic standards. Human rights violations. Referred to as "Europe's last dictatorship."

Oceania

Name Country Years

in power Notes

Charles Hotham Australia 1854-1855 Appointed by Queen Vctoria as Governor of Victoria State in Australia. During his goverment the Eureka Rebellion happened.

Wilhelm Solf Samoa 1900-1910 Appointed by Kaiser Wilhelm as Governor of German Samoa.

Sitiveni Rabuka Fiji 1987–1992 Twice gained power through coup, allowed elections in 1992, which he won.

Frank Bainimarama Fiji 2006-current Launched a coup d'etat in December 2006 after weeks of threats against the elected government.

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