The Military Purges in Dictatorships (MPD) Dataset Codebook Version 1.

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When you cite the MPD dataset, please cite:

- Jun Koga Sudduth. Forthcoming. "Purging Militaries: Introducing the Military Purges in Dictatorships (MPD) dataset." *Journal of Peace Research*

- Jun Koga Sudduth. 2017. "Strategic Logic of Elite Purges in Dictatorships." *Comparative Political Studies*. 50 (13): 1768-1801.

General Description:

- The MPD dataset contains information on the timings and characteristics of military purge events in dictatorships from 1965 to 2005. MPD contains 1,007 military purge cases and codes for 566 political leaders in 116 autocratic countries.

- The MPD dataset comes with two formats – (a) the event data format and (b) the leader-year panel format dataset.

- To create MPD, we gathered information using (i) Keesing Record of World Events and (ii) Lexis-Nexis news searches (Associated Press, BBC, New York Times and Washington Post). For cases in which we need additional information, we also consult with (iii) Periodicals Archive Online (ProQuest) and (iv) literatures on individual countries.

Theoretical Background:

- In dictatorships, the mechanisms of political accountability and power dynamics are ultimately backed by a credible threat of a coup d'état -- an attempt by regime elites to remove political leaders using unconstitutional/violent means--, even when nominally democratic institutions such as parties and legislatures exist (Svolik 2009). A dictator's decision-making and behaviours are constrained to the extent that regime elites can credibly threaten the use of force and deter the dictator's opportunism. Elites' abilities to successfully oust a dictator using violence thus define their bargaining power and abilities to hold him accountable.

- Though many authoritarian leaders face powerful regime elites who are willing and able to remove leaders via coup, some dictators have successfully eliminated enough rival elites from key positions so that they no longer face powerful audiences who can credibly threaten to stage a coup. Without having strong elites to hold them accountable, these dictators – typically called *personalist* dictators -- are found to be more likely to initiate a costly international conflict and invest in nuclear weapons than political leaders in other forms of autocracies or democracies (Weeks 2008, 2012).

Definition:

- Our primary interest in this project is to identify cases in which a dictator purges their militaries. We define military purges as incidents where a dictator eliminates individual elites who have legitimate access to the use of armed forces.

- **Target of elimination:** The MPD data focus on individuals who have legitimate access to physical forces capable of violence. They thus include (1) military officers in the military or other security apparatus (including the army, navy, air force,

police force and paramilitary), and (2) civilian elites that are at the top of the security apparatus such as the defence minister or interior minister.

We focus on purges of members in the military and other security apparatus because these officers are most critical in organizing a coup. Although the initial stage of coup attempts frequently involves civilian elites alone, whether these civilian coup-plotters can successfully replace the incumbent leader crucially depends on whether they can gain (at least implicitly) support from the military or other security apparatus. Thus eliminations of elites that have access to physical forces - officers in the military or other security apparatus and civilian elites that are at the top of the security apparatus such as the defence minister or interior minister - are considered to be the most crucial in reducing the elites' capabilities to successfully oust a dictator and hold him accountable.

- **Manner of elimination**: We focus on cases in which autocratic leaders force individuals out of their positions. Thus, a dictator's action to dismiss, replace, demote, arrest, jail or kill officers, as well as forced resignations are coded as purges.

- **Dictators' motivations behind elimination:** We want to distinguish dictators' actions to expand their power at the expense of elites from incidents where dictators dismiss officers purely because of their incompetence or other non-political/technical reasons. The difficulty is, though, that dictators can justify their actions by emphasizing that purged officers were incompetent or had committed crimes, even when their intention to consolidate their personal power is clear (a case in point is China's Xi Jinping). MPD therefore takes an inclusive approach, that is, it includes all cases where a dictator eliminates officers, but in addition it codes the dictator's motivations (i.e. background reasons) for each case. Users thus can operationalize their purge variables by focusing only on cases with certain background reasons appropriate for their studies.

Even Format Dataset:

This dataset contains 1,007 military purge events and their data and characteristics information. The unit of observation is an event.

Variables:

obsid*:* A unique ID for each leader (taken from Archigos 4.1)

year: The year of the purge event

month: The month of the purge event

day: The day of the purge event

multievent: Coded 1 if the same leader-year observes multiple purge events, and 0 otherwise.

ccode: Correlates of War country code

idacr: The abbreviation of country names

leader: Name of Political Leader

Purge Variables :

purge: Coded 1 if a purge occurs (i.e. all the observations are coded as 1 in the event dataset.)

violent_purge : Coded 1 if a purge involves arresting, jailing or killing of officers, and coded 0 otherwise.

Ranks of Purged Officers:

top_officer_event:
Coded 1 if targets of a purge include the top-ranking positions such as the army chief of staff, chief of general staff, commander of the army (or navy or air force), or ministerial positions such as the defense minister or interior minister.

deputy_officer_event:
Coded 1 if the targets of a purge include the deputies for the top-rank positions such as deputy chief of staff or deputy defense minister.

high_officer_event:
Coded 1 if the targets of a purge include mid-level officers and senior officers such as the commander of the regional command, army general or colonel generals.

low_officer_event:
Coded 1 if the targets of a purge include junior officers or soldiers.

rank_officer_event:
This is an aggregated categorical variable and captures whether the highest-ranked target of a purge is (a) the top-ranked officers ("top-rank officers purged"), (b) high-ranked officers ("high-rank officers purged"), or (c) only low-ranked officers ("low-rank officers purged"). Specifically, if either "*top_officer_event*" or "*deputy_officer_event*" is coded as 1, this variable is coded as "top-rank officers purged." If "*high_officer_event*" is coded as 1, but neither "top_officer_event" nor "deputy_officer_event" is coded as 1, this variable is coded as "hig

h-rank officers purged". Finally, if only "*low_officer_event*" is coded as 1, this variable is coded as "low-rank of ficers purged."

Positions of Purged Officers

position_year:

This variable lists all the positions targeted by purges in a particular leader-year (This is not an event-specifi c variable. We list all the positions targeted in the same leader-year and thus it can include multiple purges.)

Size of Purges

size_purge_event:

Coded to capture whether the number of purged officers is (a) only one individual ("One officer", (b) betwee n 2 and 10 ("less than 10"), (c) between 11 and 100 ("less than 100"), or (iv) more than 100 ("more than 100").

organization_purge_event:

Coded 1 if the target of the purge is the entire organization.

Background Reasons of Purges

We create several variables that capture the background reasons or a dictator's motivation behind purges. The se categories are not mutually exclusive and thus a single purge case can have multiple reasons.

anti_previousgov_event

Coded 1 if the purpose of the purge is to diminish the influences of the previous leader/government. A dictator excludes or demotes those officers who are close to the previous leader/government. Coded 0 otherwise.

anti_rivals_event:

Coded 1 if the purpose of the purge is to diminish the influences of a dictator's rivals. This includes a purge of individuals who are popular among other elites, are considered potential successors, or those individuals who are closely connected to, or are loyal to the dictator's rivals. Cases where a dictator replaces them with those officers who are more loyal to the dictator, or takes these positions by himself are included in this category.

ethnic_purge_event:

Coded 1 if a dictator eliminates officers based on their ethnicity.

obtainposition_event:

Coded 1 if a dictator purges individuals and takes their positions by himself.

policydifference_event:

Coded 1 if a dictator eliminates individuals due to the *policy differences* they have. This category includes cases where a dictator excludes officers who have policy preferences different from the dictator's, who criticized or challenged the dictator's policies, or who refused to implement the dictator's policy orders. We use the term policy very broadly here and include purges based on differences in political philosophy in this category (such as anti-communist purges).

cabinetreshuffle_event:

Coded 1 if a leader eliminates individuals via cabinet reshuffle, and the security-related portfolios are affected by the cabinet shuffle. There are several criteria to code this variable. First, to code this variable as 1,

there is at least one individual who previously held the security-related portfolio and lost the portfolio, or who was assigned to a clearly lower-ranked portfolio via the cabinet reshuffle. Second, if the individual who previously held the security related portfolio (Minister) is assigned to a different but similarly important portfolio (Minister) in the cabinet, we do NOT code this event as a purge. However, as an exception to the above criteria, we code this variable as 1 if an individual who had previously held multiple portfolios lost some of these positions including security–related positions and still remained in the cabinet with a smaller number of positions, as a consequence of the cabinet reshuffle. If there is a clear indication that the cabinet members agree to resign and then a new cabinet is formed, we do not code the event as a cabinet reshuffle purge.

international_purge_event:

Coded 1 if a dictator eliminates officers due to political pressures from the international community or foreign countries. This includes cases where a dictator eliminates military officers in the process of implementing the peace agreement with former rebels.

threat_rumor_event:

Coded 1 if a dictator eliminates officers who reportedly planned to challenge him (via coup or assassination). This includes cases where a leader dismisses officers because the leader fears a potential coup. Note that this event refers to coup rumours. We do not include post-failed coup punishments in this category.

failedcoup_purge_event:

Coded 1 for cases where a purge happens after the attempt to challenge a dictator or the regime fails. In these events, dictators purge and punish officers who plotted or participated in a (failed) coup or a military rebellion, or those who are related to the coup plotters.

rebel_purge_event:

Coded 1 if a dictator purges officers who cooperated with rebel groups or opposition groups to challenge t he government/dictator.

civilcontrol_purge_event:

Coded 1 if the purpose of purges is to promote the civilian control of the military. Purges are meant to reduce the military's influences on politics.

incompetence_purge_event:

Coded 1 if a dictator purges officers due to their incompetence, poor performances, failures in impleme nting strategies or achieving policy goals and negligence.

crimepunish_purge_event:

Coded 1 if a dictator eliminates officers to punish them for the crimes they had committed (such as b ribery, smuggling and violations of citizens' human rights etc.).

newgovern_purge_event:

Coded 1 if a dictator eliminates individuals who had positions in the previous government, from the new government s/he organizes.

noinfo_reason_event:

Coded 1 if there is no information to code specific reasons behind purges.

Types of Purges

We create several variables to capture different types of military purges. These variables build on our coding of the *background reasons for purges* discussed above.

purge_sub1:

Coded 1 for all purges except cases where "*international_purge_event*" is coded as 1.

purge_sub2:

Coded 1 for all purges except cases where "incompetence_purge_event" or "crimepunish_purge_event" are coded as 1.

purge_sub3:

Coded 1 for all purges except cases where "newgovern_purge_event" is coded as 1.

purge_sub4 :

Coded 1 for all purges except cases where "failedcoup_purge_event" or "rebel_purge_event" is coded 1.

purge_sub5:

Coded 1 for all purges except cases where "noinfo_reason_event" is coded as 1.

purge_sub6:

Coded 1 for all purges except cases where "anti_previousgov_event" is coded as 1.

purge_sub7:

Coded 1 for all purges except cases where "international_purge_event" , "incompetence_purge_event", "crimepunish_purge_event", or "noinfo_reason_event" is coded as 1.

purge_sub8 :

Coded 1 for purge events where at least one of the following variables is coded as 1. "anti_rivals_event", "policydifference_event", "threat_rumor_event", "anti_previousgov_event", "ethnic_purge_event", "obtainposition_event", "failedcoup_purge_event", "rebel_purge_event", "civilcontrol_purge_event", "cabinetreshffle_event", "newgovern_purge_event".

purge_sub9 :

Equivalent to "purge_sub8" except that "newgovern_purge_event" is not included in the criteria (i.e. Whether "newgovern_purge_event" is coded as 1 is not relevant in creating this variable.)

Leader-Year Format Dataset

This dataset has leader-year unit of observations and includes 566 political leaders for 116 authoritarian countrie s from 1965 to 2005.

obsid:
A unique ID for leaders taken from Archigos 4.1

year:
Calendar year

ccode
COW's country code

tenure:
Tenure in years.

leader:
Leader names

Start dates and End dates of Tenure
The variables on start dates and end dates of tenure are taken from Archigos 4.1. However, we had changed the codings for Syria's Al-Jadid and Al-Assad tenure so that we can reflect the fact that the effective power shifted f rom Al-Jadid to Assad after February 26, 1969 coup.

syear:
Start year of a leader's tenure.

smonth:
Start month of a leader's tenure

sday:
Start day of a leader's tenure

eyear:
End year of a leader's tenure

emonth:
End month of a leader's tenure.

eday:
End day of a leader's tenure.

transleader:
Coded 1 for those leaders who are in power in the transition year (i.e. multiple-leaders in the same year).

GWF regime type
The following variables are from GWF and identify different types of autocratic regimes. Note that though both GWF and CGV are country-year, I assigned proper regime types for each dictator in transition years (i.e. multipl e leaders/regime types exist in the same year.)

gwf_party
gwf_military

gwf_monarchy
gwf_personal
gwf_nonautocracy

CGV regime types:

The following variables are taken from CGV and identify regime types. Note that though both GWF and C GV are country-year formats, I assigned proper regime types for each dictator in transition years (i.e. multiple le aders/regime types exist in the same year.)

cgv_regime
cgv_democracy
cgv_gwf_democracy"

Purge Variables:

The following variables are binary variables to capture whether a certain type of military purges occur in a leade r-year. For the definitions of each type of military purge (i.e. sub1 v.s. sub2), see the descriptions of the event da taset.

purge_sub1_year:
purge_sub2_year:
purge_sub3_year:
purge_sub4_year:
purge_sub5_year:
purge_sub6_year:
purge_sub7_year:
purge_sub8_year:
purge_sub9_year:

The following variables are binary variables to capture whether a certain type of violent purge occurs in a leader -year. Violent purges involve arresting, jailing and killing of officers. For the definitions of each type of military purge (i.e. sub1 v.s. sub2), see the descriptions of the event dataset.

violentpurge_p1_year
violentpurge_p2_year
violentpurge_p3_year
violentpurge_p4_year
violentpurge_p5_year
violentpurge_p6_year
violentpurge_p7_year
violentpurge_p8_year
violentpurge_p9_year

The following variables are binary variables that capture whether a certain type of nonviolent purge occurs in a l eader-year. For the definitions of each type of military purges (i.e. sub1 v.s. sub2), see the descriptions of the ev ent dataset.

peacepurge_p1_year
peacepurge_p2_year
peacepurge_p3_year
peacepurge_p4_year
peacepurge_p5_year
peacepurge_p6_year
peacepurge_p7_year
peacepurge_p8_year

peacepurge_p9_year

The following variables are binary variables to identify whether the targets of purges include top-ranked officers ("top_officer_p1"), deputies for the top-rank positions ("deputy_officer_p1"), high-ranked officers ("high_officer_p1"), or low-ranked officers ("low_officer_p1"). # indicates the types of military purges (See above for the definitions of each type of purges).

top_officer_p#
deputy_officer_p#
high_officer_p#
low_officer_p#

The following variables are binary variables to identify whether the targets of nonviolent purges include top-ranked officers ("top_officer_p1"), deputies for the top-rank positions ("deputy_officer_p1"), high-ranked officers ("high_officer_p1"), or low-ranked officers ("low_officer_p1"). # indicates the types of military purges (See above for the definitions of each type of purges).

peacepurge_p#_top_officer
peacepurge_p#_deputy_officer
peacepurge_p#_high_officer
peacepurge_p#_low_officer

The following variables are binary variables to identify whether the targets of violent purges include top-ranked officers ("top_officer_p1"), deputies for the top-rank positions ("deputy_officer_p1"), high-ranked officers ("high_officer_p1"), or low-ranked officers ("low_officer_p1"). # indicates the types of military purges (See above for the definitions of each type of purges).

violentpurge_p#_year
violentpurge_p#_deputy_officer
violentpurge_p#_high_officer
violentpurge_p#_low_officer

The following are aggregated categorical variables that capture the ranks of purge officers/positions. Specifically, the variable identifies whether the highest-ranked positions of the target officers include (a) the top-ranked officers ("top-rank officers purged"), (b) high-ranked officers ("high-rank officers purged"), or (c) only low-ranked officers ("low-rank officers purged"). # indicates the types of military purges (See above for the definitions of each type of purges).

rank_officer_purge#
rank_violentpurge#
rank_peacepurge#

The following variables capture whether the number of purged officers is (a) only one individual ("One officer", (b) between 2 and 10 ("less than 10"), (c) between 11 and 100 ("less than 100"), or (iv) more than 100 ("more than 100"). # indicates the types of military purges (See above for the definitions of each type of purges).

size_purge#
size_violent_purge#
size_peace_purge#

The following variables code whether the purge eliminates the entire organization or not.

organization_purge#
organization_violent_purge#
organization_peace_purge#

position_year:

This variable lists the names of all the positions affected by purge event in a certain year.

References:

Svolik, M. W. (2009). Power sharing and leadership dynamics in authoritarian regimes. *American Journal of Political Science.* 53. 477-494.

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