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Title: Does TJ help or hurt democracy? A disaggregated approach

Abstract: In an era of democratic backsliding, getting TJ right cannot be overstated. When fragile new democracies are at risk of reverting back to dictatorship, the question arises: Can mechanisms set up by new democracies to deal with former authoritarian elites – prevent such backsliding from happening? Or is backsliding occurring despite extensive TJ provisions? To date, scholars’ findings about the effects of personnel TJ on democratic consolidation have been ambiguous at best. In this study, we uncover the complexities of how TJ affects democracy. Just as indicators of the quality of democracy are complex and multifaceted, so are the mechanisms making up transitional justice and their attributes. To date, many scholars pooled together the effects of two very different vetting mechanisms: lustration, which improves the quality of democracy monotonically, and purges, whose effect is contingent on attributes of the ancient regime. We first show that lustration, truth commissions and purges affect different indicators of democracy differently. But different attributes of these mechanisms—severity in contrast to urgency or volatility—may also have differential impacts on different aspects of democracy. This article builds on distinct set of theoretical models to evaluate how the variety of TJ impacts varieties of democracy. In addition to using dependent variables from existing datasets, such as V-Dem, DALP, and Polity, it also utilizes the newly created dataset “Survival of Authoritarian Elites”.