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## Dealing with Dictators: Negotiated Democratization and the Fate of Outgoing Autocrats

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*Forthcoming, International Studies Quarterly***Abstract:**

This paper examines how the circumstances of democratic transition affect the consequences of losing office for outgoing dictators. Using data on constitutional origins and democratization from 1875-2004, we find that outgoing dictators who are able to retain a holdover constitution through democratization and beyond are less likely to face severe punishment upon relinquishing their rule. These results hold after accounting for alternative explanations of autocrats' post-tenure fate and after using instrumental variables to adjust for potential endogeneity. We also document several mechanisms by which this occurs: proportional representation, the election of right-wing executives, post-transition military influence, and elite control over local politics. The findings suggest that for dictators who fear their ousting in the face of domestic unrest or potential instability, democracy can provide a plausible avenue for protecting their most basic interests.

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