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*Fascistville: Mussolini's New Towns and the Persistence of Neo-Fascism**

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Abstract

This paper studies the link between local public spending and popular support and investigates its persistence across institutional transitions and over the long term. I explore the foundation of Mussolini's New Towns (*Città di Fondazione*) in Fascist Italy, a major infrastructure investment which played a central role in the fascist propaganda. Employing municipality-level data before and after the intervention, together with information on the timing of each New Town construction, I find that the intervention enhanced the electoral support for the Fascist Party, favoring the emergence of the Regime. Furthermore, I document a positive link between the New Towns and the electoral support for the Neo-Fascist Party, which persisted until the present day. Using individual survey data, I document that respondents near the Fascist New Towns built 70 years ago currently display political attitudes in line with the fascist ideology. Results are not driven by the geographic conditions that induced the location of the New Towns, socioeconomic differences, and migration patterns. Furthermore, I find no spurious effect of the New Towns that were planned but not built. The findings suggest that public spending may have long-lasting effects on political and cultural attitudes, which persist across major institutional changes.

Keywords: Political attitudes, infrastructures, democratic transitions

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1 Introduction

Public spending can buy popular support. In democracies, political leaders may allocate public resources to increase the probability of getting re-elected. In non-democratic regimes, public spending may be used to stabilize the regime. Overall, a growing body of evidence suggests that public resources can be allocated to boost popular support and influence electoral choices.¹

Government transfers, for instance, have been shown to enhance the electoral support for the incumbent (Levitt and Snyder Jr, 1997; Manacorda et al., 2011). Furthermore, a growing literature points toward the significant effect of infrastructure investments in boosting local electoral support (Drazen and Eslava, 2010; Voigtlaender and Voth, 2014; Huet-Vaughn, 2019). Such findings invite questions on the mechanisms through which these effects unfold. While local public spending may buy votes, it may also influence citizens' political opinions and beliefs. Yet, empirically assessing whether political opinions and beliefs play a role is challenging because such a mechanism typically coexists with the vote-buying one.

This paper sheds light on this issue by studying infrastructures built by the Italian Fascist Regime and investigating whether their effect on local popular support persisted after the end of the dictatorship, when the vote-buying channel became irrelevant. I explore the case of Mussolini's New Towns (*Città di Fondazione*): a major infrastructure investment undertaken by the Italian Fascist Regime from 1922 until the early 1940's. Fascistville (*Littoria*) and Mussolinia are two of the 147 New Towns built by the Regime on the Italian peninsula. I present three main findings. First, the foundation of the New Towns enhanced the local political support for the Fascist Party. Second, such an effect persisted through democratization, favoring the emergence and persistence of the Neo-Fascist Party. Third, the Fascist New Towns explain differ-

¹ See, for instance, Levitt and Snyder Jr (1997); Manacorda et al. (2011); Curto-Grau et al. (2012); Quintana-Domeque (2012); Voigtlaender and Voth (2014); Adena et al. (2015); Cinnirella and Schueler (2017); Galofré-Vilà et al. (2017). I discuss the literature in more detail below.

ences in current political and cultural attitudes that can be traced back to the Fascist ideology. The findings suggest that public spending may have long-lasting effects on political and cultural attitudes, which persist across major institutional changes.

An extensive program of land reclamation of malarial swamplands was instrumental for Mussolini to show the economic and technological competence of the regime. As the Fascist Party advertised, the drainage of the swamps was an achievement of the Fascist government that neither the Roman Empire nor the Church had been able to achieve. On the newly reclaimed land, the Regime built the New Towns. The foundation of a modern city built from swamplands was crucial in the Fascist propaganda and resonated internationally (Ghirardo, 1989; Kargon and Molella, 2008).²

Towers shaped like the emblem of Fascism (*Torri Littorie*) and majestic buildings as headquarters of the Fascist Party (*Case del Fascio*) dominated the centers of the New Towns. While they were modern centers, their layout was inspired by the cities of the Roman Empire. Designed to stimulate a process of identification of the masses based on the collective historical memory of the Roman Empire, the New Towns were designed to instill the idea that Fascism was building on, and improving upon, the imperial Roman past (Ghirardo, 1989; Nicoloso, 2012).

I conduct the empirical analysis by employing a rich data-set at the level of Italian municipalities. I use novel data on the location of the Fascist New Towns, the historical presence of malarial swamps, as well as data from several censuses. I trace the evolution of the political environment from 1921 (before the intervention) until 1992 employing data on electoral outcomes from Corbetta and Piretti (2009). I combine the municipality-level data with contemporary individual-level survey on political and cultural values from the Italian National Election Studies (ITANES).

In the first step of the empirical analysis, I investigate whether the

²The New Towns were also built to “ruralize” the country and slowdown migration to large urban center. Such measures are often adopted to reduce accountability and the threat of rebellion (Campante and Do, 2014).

construction of the New Towns was effective in fostering the entrenchment of the dictatorship. I document that areas near the Fascist New Towns experienced a larger increase in the electoral support for the Fascist Party between the elections of 1921 and 1924. Importantly, they did not exhibit larger electoral support for the Party before the intervention.

In the second step of the empirical analysis, I turn to investigate how long-lasting the effect of the New Towns was. I study the link between the Fascist New Towns and the electoral support for the Neo-Fascist Party (MSI - Italian Social Movement). The Party emerged in the postwar period and advocated political and ideological positions directly rooted in the Fascist Regime, in turn providing a unique opportunity to investigate the political legacy of Italian Fascism. I document that areas near the Fascist New Towns displayed significantly larger electoral support for the Neo-Fascist party which persisted from its onset in 1948 until its dissolution in 1992.

Given that the New Towns were mainly built in areas historically characterized by malarial swamps, their location was predetermined with respect to the political process. Yet, it is possible that the geographic characteristics that induced the location of the New Towns had an independent effect on the adoption of the Fascist ideology. To minimize this concern, I employ two strategies.

First, I look at New Towns that were planned but not built. Consistent with the hypothesis, I find that municipalities in those areas did not display larger support for the Fascist Party or, after the end of the Regime, for the Neo-Fascist Party. Second, in investigating the short-run effect of the New Towns, I compare the difference in the 1924 electoral support for the Fascist Party between the municipalities treated right before the 1924 elections and the untreated ones with the difference between the municipalities treated right after the 1924 elections and the untreated ones. Such an approach has two advantages. First, it provides an estimate of the effect of the New Towns on the electoral support for the Fascist Party which is unaffected by potential bias due to the location of the New Towns. Second, it provides an estimate of the bias, which is statistically insignificant and opposite in sign to the coefficient of interest.

Proximity to the New Towns built in the Fascist era (1922-45) can explain differences in the electoral support for the Fascist (or Neo-Fascist) Party which lasted more than 70 years. Thus the effect of the New Towns persisted throughout the democratic transition, and over a long period of time. Such finding suggests that the vote-buying channel is unlikely to be a viable explanation.

An influential body of works emphasizes that historical events can affect cultural and political attitudes. Nunn and Wantchekon (2011), for instance, show that the historical traumatic experience of African slavery persistently influenced cultural norms. Recent works show the effects of historical “shocks” on political attitudes. For instance, Fontana et al. (2016) study the persistent effect of the Nazi occupation of Italy; Acharya et al. (2016) explore the legacy of American slavery. Narciso and Severgnini (2016) highlight the effect of the Irish famine. Even if beliefs may change, once they are instilled, they can be very persistent (Voigtländer and Voth, 2012; Guiso et al., 2016). I conjugate these views in the context of the New Towns and advance the hypothesis that such a major investment in infrastructure undertaken by the Fascist Government generated a more favorable view of Fascism and its tenets, which persisted across democratization and in the long run.

I test this hypothesis by employing contemporary survey data on political and cultural attitudes. I find that individuals near the New Towns built more than 70 years ago currently display preferences in favor of the fascists, for a stronger leader in politics, for nationalism, and for racism — the central ideological principles of the Fascist Regime. The analysis of cohort-level heterogeneity for individuals who lived under the dictatorship or were school-aged children in those years is in line with the hypothesis of the political and cultural legacy of the New Towns.

I assess the robustness of the results to a host of potentially confounding factors, including the determinants of the location of the New Towns (such as the presence of malarial swamps), various measures of population and market access (Harris, 1954b), and other policies such as the *Battle for Grain* (Carillo, 2018), and the emphasis of the Fascist Regime on the agricultural sector. The results are robust to excluding

municipalities within 20 kilometers from the New Towns, which had faster population growth during the Fascist Regime, most likely due to in-migration. Using individual data, I also show robustness to directly controlling for migration. These findings do not support the hypothesis of migration as a key mechanism.

This research mainly contributes to three strands of the literature. First, the emphasis of this paper on the persistent effect of historical policy interventions on political attitudes provides novel evidence on the long-term influence of historical events on political attitudes (Acharya et al., 2016; Fontana et al., 2016; Narciso and Severgnini, 2016), cultural traits (Nunn and Wantchekon, 2011), and behavior (Fouka and Voth, 2013). As well as to works that study the coevolution of culture and institutions (Alesina and Giuliano, 2015; Becker et al., 2016; Bisin and Verdier, 2017; Lecce et al., 2017; Lowes et al., 2017; Grompone and Sessa, 2016).

Second, by showing that policy interventions undertaken by autocratic regimes may have long-term effects on political attitudes, this research complements a growing body of literature on the effects of political regimes on political preferences and beliefs. For instance, Alesina and Fuchs-Schundeln (2007) show that exposure to communism in East Germany influenced preferences for redistribution; Voigtländer and Voth (2015) highlight the persistent effects of the Nazi indoctrination on antisemitic beliefs; Xue and Koyama (2016) show that political repressions during autocratic rule had persistent negative effects on social capital. A paper close to this one is Martinez-Bravo et al. (2017), which finds that the effect of Suharto's autocracy on elite capture persisted through democratization. This paper contributes to this view by emphasizing a complementary mechanism of the persistent effect of autocratic institutions on political attitudes, which may influence the functioning of future democratic institutions.

Finally, while a large body of works has shown that public spending can buy electoral support (Levitt and Snyder Jr, 1997; Manacorda et al., 2011; Huet-Vaughn, 2019), this paper contributes by evidencing that such an effect can persist. It suggests that the effect of policy on the

formation of beliefs (as explored in Di Tella et al. (2007)) is persistent, thus contributing to the broad literature that studies the long-lasting consequences of policy interventions (Rosenstein-Rodan, 1943; Murphy et al., 1989; Carillo, 2018)

2 Historical Background

2.1 The Emergence of the Fascist Party

Albeit seemingly of little significance at that time, the event that occurred in Milan on March 23, 1919 would shape the history of Europe. Previously excluded from the socialist party (PSI) because of his interventionist and nationalistic views, a journalist named Benito Mussolini formed a new political movement called *Italian Fasci of Combat*. The *Fasci* were composed of people from different social classes and political views brought together by the principles of war interventionism and nationalistic ideology (Leoni, 1971; Lyttelton, 2004). The elections of 1921 saw the onset of Mussolini's Party in the national political scene. Only one year later, he marched on Rome with his followers to become prime minister. The consolidation of Mussolini's power occurred with the last free elections of 1924. One year later, the dictatorship was officially declared and all other parties were outlawed.

2.2 The Foundation of Mussolini's New Towns

For centuries, the Roman empire had tried without success to drain the malarial swamplands. After a major program of land reclamation, "where Caesars had fallen short *il Duce* prevailed" (Kargon and Molella, 2008, p. 50). The control over the newly available land was heavily advertised and further established through the construction of the Fascist New Towns.

Mussolini started the foundation of New Towns with the aim to extol Italy's power to the rest of the World and stimulate nationalistic senti-

ments and political support for the Fascist Party across citizens. “The New Towns were of enormous propaganda significance for the government, whose ability to produce functioning towns from swamplands in a very short time, almost by magic, certainly enhanced the propaganda value of the reclamation” (Ghirardo, 1989, p.26).

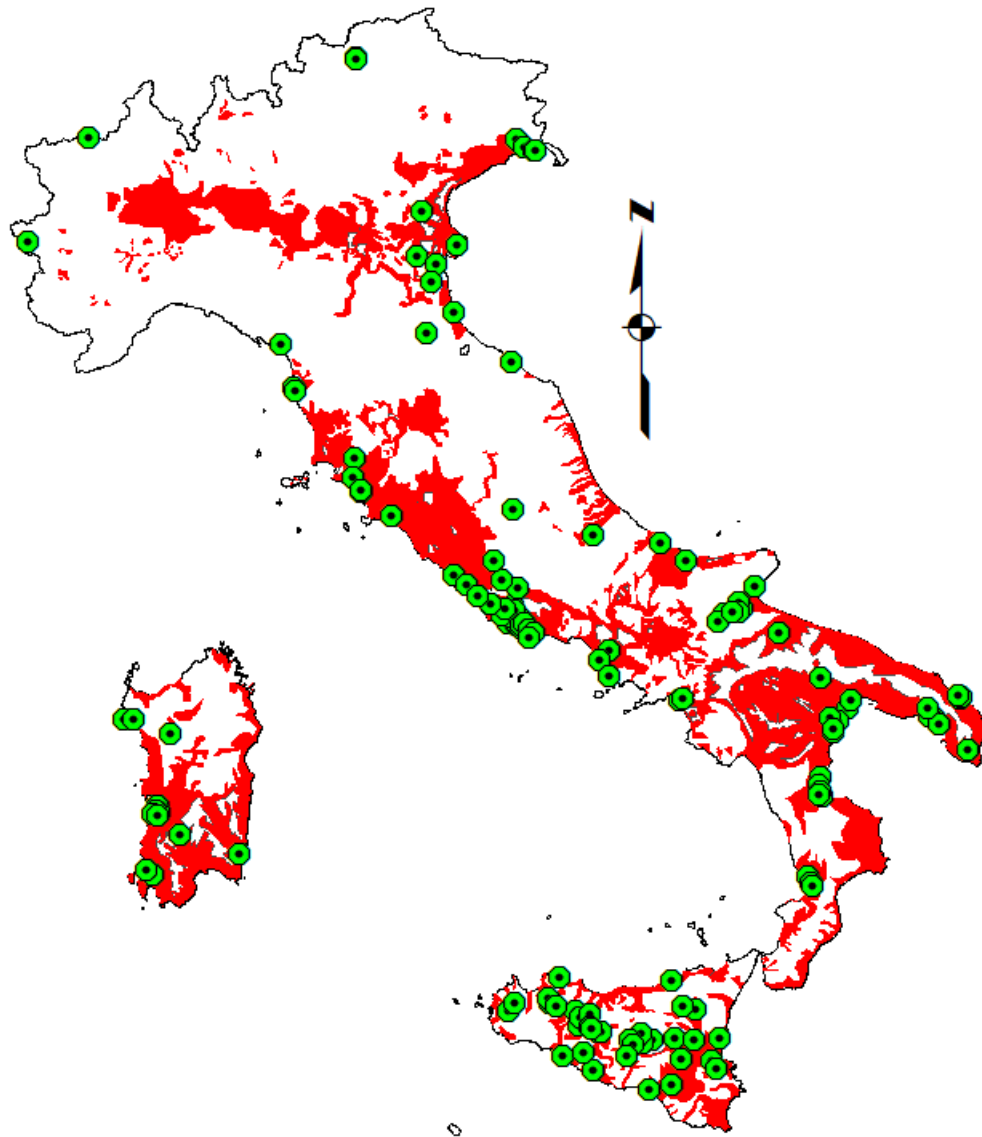
For decades, there was little knowledge of the extensiveness of phenomenon of the Fascist New Towns. The historical literature predominantly dealt with the area of the Pontine Marshes, south-east of Rome, and there was limited knowledge of New Towns built in the rest of the Country. Recently, Pennacchi and Caracciolo (2003) and Pennacchi (2008) present an inventory of the Fascist New Towns, which builds upon previous works including Protasi and Sonnino (2003). The Fascist New Towns were 147 centers built from 1922 until 1943. Figure 1 shows the location of the Fascist New Towns. It also depicts malaria prevalence in 1870. Consistent with the historical literature, the figure suggests that the presence of malarial swamps was a key factor in explaining the location of the New Towns.

2.3 The Onset of the Neo-Fascist Party

After the Second World War and the end of the dictatorship, the Italian political scene saw the emergence of the MSI (Italian Social Movement). Founded in 1946 by the veterans of Mussolini’s republic (RSI-Italian Social Republic), the party became one of the largest in Italy and “possibly the strongest Neo-Fascist Party in the advanced industrial countries” (Ferraresi, 1988).

The Party founded its roots in the ideology of the regime. The ideological principles emphasized by the Fascist regime were centered around the importance of hierarchy and obedience to the leader and nationalistic views. These principles were inherited by the Neo-Fascist Party (Ferraresi, 1988). The ideological proximity between the Fascist Regime and the Neo-Fascist Party provides a unique opportunity to investigate the ideological legacy of Italian Fascism in the postwar political environment and leverage novel evidence on the persistence effects of public

Figure 1: Malaria Prevalence in 1870 and the Location of the Fascist New Towns



Notes: The map shows that the location of the New Towns was predominantly explained by the presence of malarial swamps.

spending allocation on political attitudes.

3 Data

This section describes the data employed in the empirical analysis. Overall, the data cover more than 7000 municipalities over a period of almost century, which are combined with contemporary survey data for more than 3000 respondents, together with geographic information data. In a significant portion, historical data have digitized from primary sources. In the following, I briefly describe the main variables and sources. For more detailed information about the data, see appendix E.

3.1 Municipality-level Data

3.1.1 Electoral Data

This research investigates the long-lasting shadow of the Fascist New Towns on electoral outcomes and political attitudes. Electoral outcomes are given by the share of votes received by a political party in the political elections for the Chamber of Deputies. The political parties considered are the Fascist Party, before and during the New Towns construction, and the Neo-Fascist Party, for the period after the end of the dictatorship. Electoral data are from Corbetta and Piretti (2009).

For the fascist period, voting records cover more than 2000 municipalities at the 1921 and 1924 elections. The Fascist Party took part to the 1921 elections as a part of larger political entities (i.e. lists). Such lists are indicated in the official electoral national statistics³ and in Leoni (1971) (see appendix). I measure the 1921 popular support for the Fascist Party by employing the share of votes for such lists. As I show in the following, the validity of such an approach is empirically supported by the positive and strong correlation between such a measure the share of

³ *Statistica delle Elezioni Generali Politiche per la XXVI Legislatura (15 Maggio 1921)*, Ministero dell'Economia Nazionale - Direzione Generale di Statistica, 1924.

votes for the Fascist Party in 1924, year in which the Party took part to the election as an independent political entity.

For the period after the dictatorship, I employ voting records across more than 7000 municipalities. Electoral outcomes after the dictatorship are given by the share of votes for the Neo-Fascist Party (the MSI: *Movimento Sociale Italiano*) at 11 elections from 1948 (the first elections in which the Neo-Fascist Party was admitted to the polls) until the 1992 elections. After 1992, the scandals that affected the Italian political environment caused the dissolution of most political parties in their original form, including the Neo-Fascist Party.

3.1.2 Main Control Variables

To minimize concerns on the effect of potentially confounding factors, in the empirical analysis I control for a host of observable characteristics. I take into account geographic differences across municipalities including measures of elevation and distance to water. I calculate the municipality-level average suitability for agriculture (measured by the Caloric Suitability Index by Galor and Özak (2015)) and for producing wheat (from the Food and Agricultural Organization, Global Agro-Ecological Zones). The suitability data, which are originally in raster form, have been averaged within the boundary of each municipality. I take into account differences in the prevalence of (or suitability for) malaria, in population over time, in market access before the intervention, and in the distance to the closest major urban centers.

3.2 Individual-level Survey Data

I investigate the role of political and cultural attitudes in explaining the persistent effect of the New Towns on electoral outcomes. I measure differences in political attitudes and cultural values using individual survey data from the Italian National Election Studies (ITANES) for the years 2001, 2004, and 2008. The surveys provide several survey

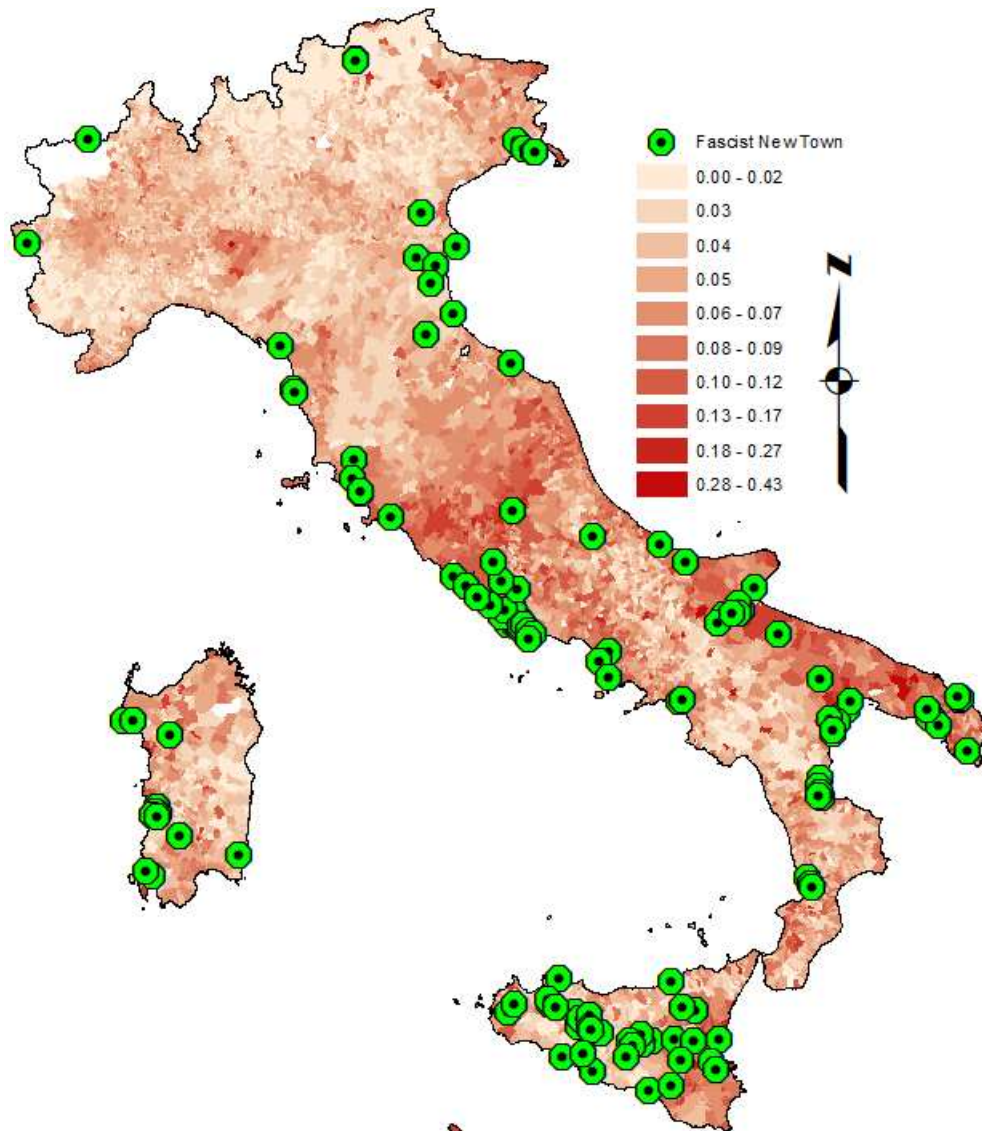
questions which I use to get a sense on whether individual political preferences are close to the Fascist tenet. I employ measures of nationalism, preferences for a stronger leader in politics, and others. The surveys also provide an extensive set demographic characteristics, information on migration within the country, socioeconomic status of the respondent and of the respondent's parents, and more. I employ these information as control variables in the empirical analysis.

4 Empirical Framework

In this section, I empirically investigate the importance of the Fascist New Towns in explaining differences in the support for the Fascist ideology which persisted into the transition to democracy and until today. Before showing the econometric analysis, I graphically illustrate the main findings.

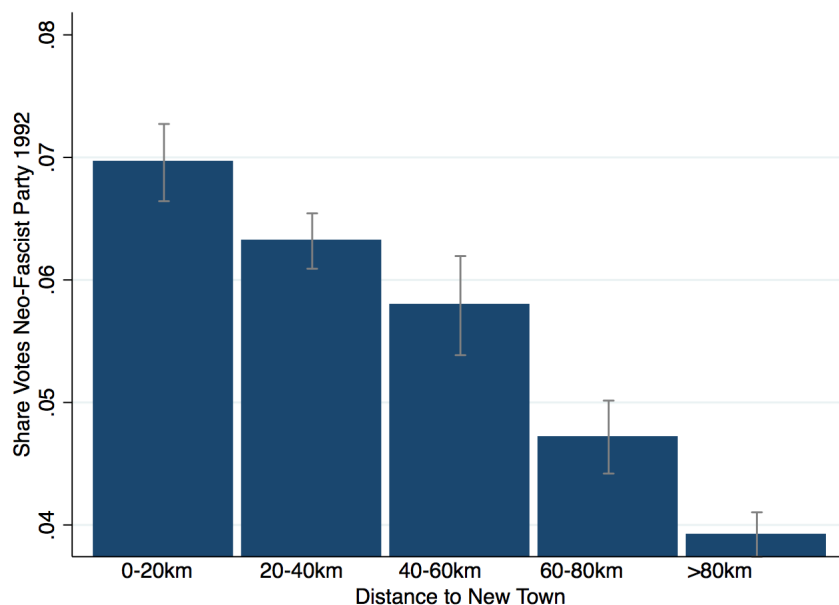
Figure 2 depicts the electoral support for the Neo-Fascist Party in 1992 and the location of the New Towns, which were built about 70 years before during the Italian Fascist Regime. As evident from the map, larger support for the Neo-Fascist Party is associated with proximity to the New Towns. This is particularly evident in the Lazio region, where several New Towns were built, as well as the Apulia region, West Sardinia, and the North-East. To better visualize the relationship between proximity to the New Towns and the support for the Neo-Fascist Party, figure 3 depicts the average share of votes for the Neo-Fascist Party for different distance intervals to the closest New Town. As evident from the figure, distance to the closest New Town is negatively associated with the support for the Neo-Fascist Party. Such a negative relationship is consistent with the hypothesis that the Fascist New Towns influenced political choices in favor of Italian Fascism, which persisted over the long term.

Figure 2: Mussolini's New Towns and the Electoral Support for the Neo-Fascist Party in 1992.



Notes: This figure shows the share of votes for the Neo-Fascist Party in 1992 and the location of the Fascist New Towns.

Figure 3: Support for the Neo-Fascist Party in 1992 by distance to the New Towns



Notes: This figure shows the share of votes for the Neo-Fascist Party in 1992 for different distance intervals to the closest New Town.

4.1 New Towns and the Support for the Fascist Party

In the following, I investigate whether the construction of the New Towns was effective in boosting the support for the Fascist Party, in turn favoring the emergence of the dictatorship.

The first constructions of the Fascist New Towns started in 1922, year in which Mussolini became prime minister. Therefore, prior to 1922, there is no reason to believe that the New Towns should have a positive effect on the support for the Fascist Party. Figure 4a shows a binned scatter plot of the electoral support for the Fascist Party in 1921 and the distance to the closest New Town. As evident from the figure, the relationship between these two variable is not negative. Actually, it is positive. Meaning that areas in the proximity of the New Towns exhibited a *lower* support for the Fascist Party. Thus the Fascist government built the New Towns in areas where the support for the Party was lower. Such a selection rule may, if anything, underestimate the actual link between

the New Towns and the support for the Fascist Party in later periods. In contrast, figure 4b shows the hypothesized negative link between the electoral support for the Fascist Party in 1924 and the distance to the New Towns. Yet, only a subset of the New Towns were built before 1924.

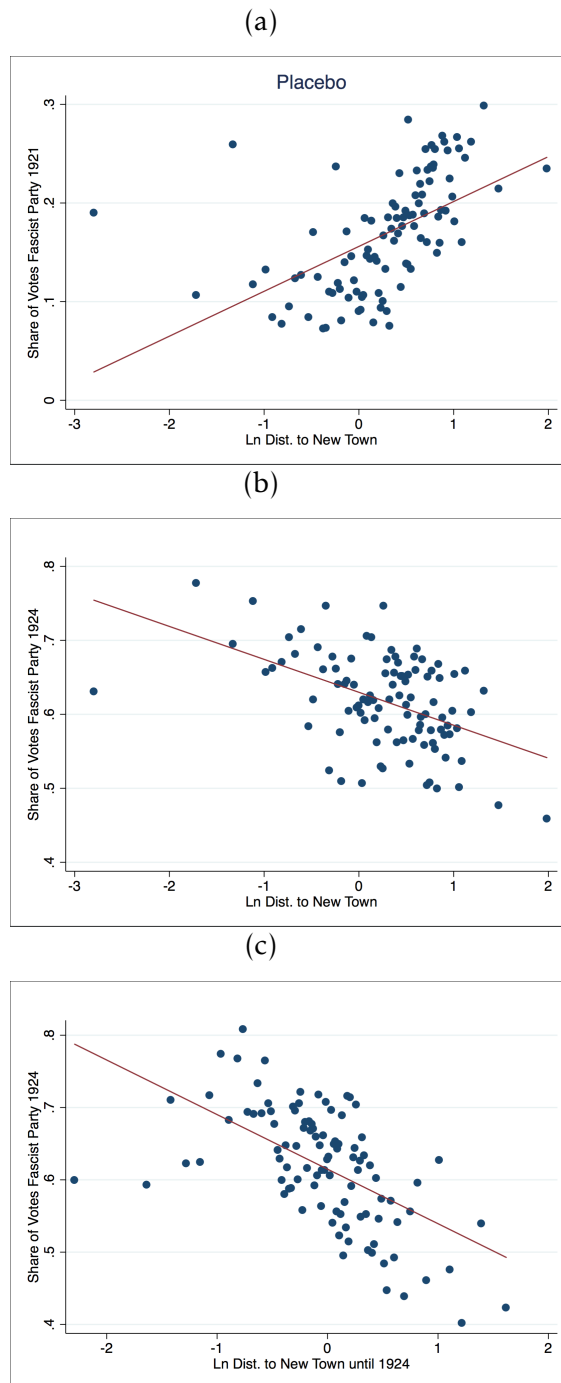
For 83% of the New Towns information on the year in which their construction was initiated are available (for the others the year is either uncertain or missing). Thus, I can investigate their link with the electoral support for the Fascist Party in 1924 and the minimum distance to the New Towns which were built on or before 1924, the year of the elections.⁴ As depicted in panel 4c the link between the electoral support for the Fascist Party in 1924 and the distance to the New Towns that were under construction up to 1924 is negative. In addition, it is steeper than in panel 4b, were all the New Towns are considered.

Table 1 shows more formally the empirical analysis graphically depicted in figure 4. Column 1, shows, as a placebo, the coefficient of a regression of the electoral support for the Fascist Party in 1921 (before the New Towns) and the distance to the closest New Town. The estimated coefficient is positive. Column 2 shows that, in line with the hypothesis, the estimated coefficient is negative and statistically significant when employing the relevant outcome: the electoral support for the Fascist Party in 1924. Column 3 restricts the sample of the New Towns to those already under construction in 1924. In line with the hypothesis, the estimated coefficient is negative and highly significant. As a falsification test, I employ as an explanatory variable the distance to the closest New Town that was initiated after 1924. Thus, column 4 distinguishes between the distance to the New Towns under construction in 1924 (or before) and the distance to those initiated after 1924. Consistent with the advanced hypothesis, only the distance to the relevant New Towns is statistically significant.⁵ Finally, in column 5, I regress the electoral

⁴ Such an analysis will be performed more formally in the following. In addition, in the appendix table B8, I show evidence that the results are not driven by the New Towns for which information on the year of the construction is unavailable.

⁵ The negative sign of the coefficient for the New Towns built after 1924 is due to the New Towns for which data on the construction year are unavailable. While such a coefficient becomes positive and insignificant when these New Towns are taken into account, the coefficient of interest remains negative and significant. See column 3,

Figure 4: The New Towns and the Emergence of the Fascist Party



Notes: The figure show binned scatter plots (100 equally-sized bins). Panel (a) plots the electoral support for the Fascist Party in 1921 (before the New Towns) against the distance to the closest New Towns. Panel (b) plots the electoral support for the Fascist Party in 1924 (during the New Towns construction) against the distance to the closest New Towns. Panel (c) plots the electoral support for the Fascist Party in 1924 against the distance to the closest New Towns which was initiated on or before 1924. The underlying regression takes into account population in 1921 (in logs), the presence of malaria, market access controls, and geographic controls.

support for the Fascist party in 1924 on the distance to the closest New Town that was planned but not built. Reassuringly, the estimated coefficient is statistically indistinguishable from zero, suggesting that the estimated coefficient of interest is not due to confounding factors.

In table 2, I investigate the link between the distance to the New Towns that were already under construction in 1924 and the share of votes for the Fascist Party in 1924, conditioning on the electoral support for the Fascists in 1921 and other controls which will be explained below. Column 1 shows the unconditional relationship between these two variables. The estimated coefficient is negative and statistically significant. The coefficient implies that a one standard deviation increase in the distance to the closest New Town implies 28% of a standard deviation lower support for the Fascist Party in 1924.

Column 2 includes as a control the electoral support for the Fascist Party in 1921. Thus, the coefficient is an estimate of the link between the distance to the closest New Town and the change in the support for the Fascist Party.

Column 3 takes into account the variables that, according to the historical literature, were the major determinants of the location of the Fascist New Towns. In particular, given that the New Towns were built after land reclamation of areas historically affected by malaria, the disease (or its eradication) may have induced higher support for the extreme political positions of the Fascist Party. Column 3 tackles this issue by controlling for an indicator variable that takes value one if the municipality was affected by malaria in 1871.⁶ Furthermore, the Fascist government may have had incentives to locate the New Towns close to areas characterized by large population and maximize the number of citizens exposed to the propaganda. To take into account the potentially direct effect of population in neighbor municipalities I control for market access in 1921 and distance to the closest major urban center (see appendix E for variables

appendix table B8.

⁶ Results are robust to using as a control for malaria the temperature suitability for the *Plasmodium falciparum*, the predominant malaria vector on the Italian peninsula (Snowden, 2008), developed by Gething et al. (2011). See appendix table B9.

Table 1: The Timing of the New Towns and Electoral Outcomes

Dependent Variables: Share of Votes for the Fascist Party:					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	1921		1924		
	<i>Placebo</i>				<i>Placebo</i>
Ln (Dist. to NT)	0.2784*** [0.093]	-0.2402*** [0.077]			
Ln (Dist. to NT until 1924)			-0.2858*** [0.078]	-0.2375*** [0.080]	
Ln (Dist. to NT after 1924)				-0.1122 [0.082]	
Ln (Dist to Placebo NT)					-0.1199 [0.080]
Observations	2,057	2,057	2,057	2,057	2,057
Adjusted R-squared	0.070	0.059	0.099	0.108	0.017

Notes: Observations are at the municipality-level. Standardized coefficients are reported. See the main text and appendices for variables definitions and sources. Robust standard errors clustered at the province level in brackets.

*** indicates significance at the 1%-level, ** indicates significance at the 5%-level, * indicates significance at the 10%-level.

definition and sources).

Column 4 takes into account additional potentially confounding factors. Over the period of the Fascist dictatorship the Regime emphasized the role of agricultural production, thus potentially stimulating support from areas more suitable for agriculture. I take into account this potentially confounding factor by controlling for the Caloric Suitability Index (Galor and Özak, 2015)— a measure of suitability of the soil for agriculture. The Fascist Regime adopted a policy called *Battle for Grain* which, by favoring wheat producing areas (Carillo, 2018), may have induced a local shift in their political support. I take into account this potentially confounding factor by controlling for land suitability for wheat production. The estimated coefficient is robust to the inclusion of these controls, further highlighting the importance of the foundation of the Fascist New Towns in explaining differences in the support for the Fascist Party.

Column 5 controls for geographic conditions that may have been favorable for the presence of malarial swamps, in turn leading to the location of the New Towns. In particular, it includes distance to water, median elevation, standard deviation of elevation, and elevation range. The coefficient is unaffected by these additional controls.

Column 6 takes into account the size of the municipality, as measured by the logarithm of population in 1921 (the year before the advent of Fascism). The estimated coefficient remains of the hypothesized sign and statistically significant.

In this section, I have shown that distance to the New Town has the hypothesized statistical relation with the support for the Fascists only when the New Towns' project was ongoing, but not before. Moreover, I show that only the distance to the New Towns which were under construction on or before 1924 (but not after) are relevant to explain the support for the Party in 1924. In the following, I dig deeper in the analysis of the timing of the construction of the New Towns and their link with the rise of Fascism.

Table 2: The New Towns and the Electoral Support for the Fascist Party in 1924

Dependent Variable: Share of Votes for the Fascist Party in 1924						
VARIABLES	(1) OLS	(2) OLS	(3) OLS	(4) OLS	(5) OLS	(6) OLS
Ln (Dist. to NT until 1924)	-0.2858*** [0.078]	-0.3159*** [0.075]	-0.2466*** [0.079]	-0.2488** [0.094]	-0.2573** [0.106]	-0.2517** [0.103]
FP '21		0.1773*** [0.061]	0.1761*** [0.054]	0.1720*** [0.056]	0.1667*** [0.054]	0.1660*** [0.053]
Observations	2,057	2,057	2,057	2,057	2,057	2,057
Adjusted R-squared	0.099	0.132	0.163	0.166	0.174	0.175
Malaria Controls	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Market Access Controls	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Geographic Controls	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Agricultural Controls	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Ln Population 1921	No	No	No	No	No	Yes

Notes: Observations are at the municipality-level. Standardized coefficients are reported. See the main text and appendices for variables definitions and sources. Robust standard errors clustered at the province level in brackets.

*** indicates significance at the 1%-level, ** indicates significance at the 5%-level, * indicates significance at the 10%-level.

4.1.1 The Timing of the Treatment

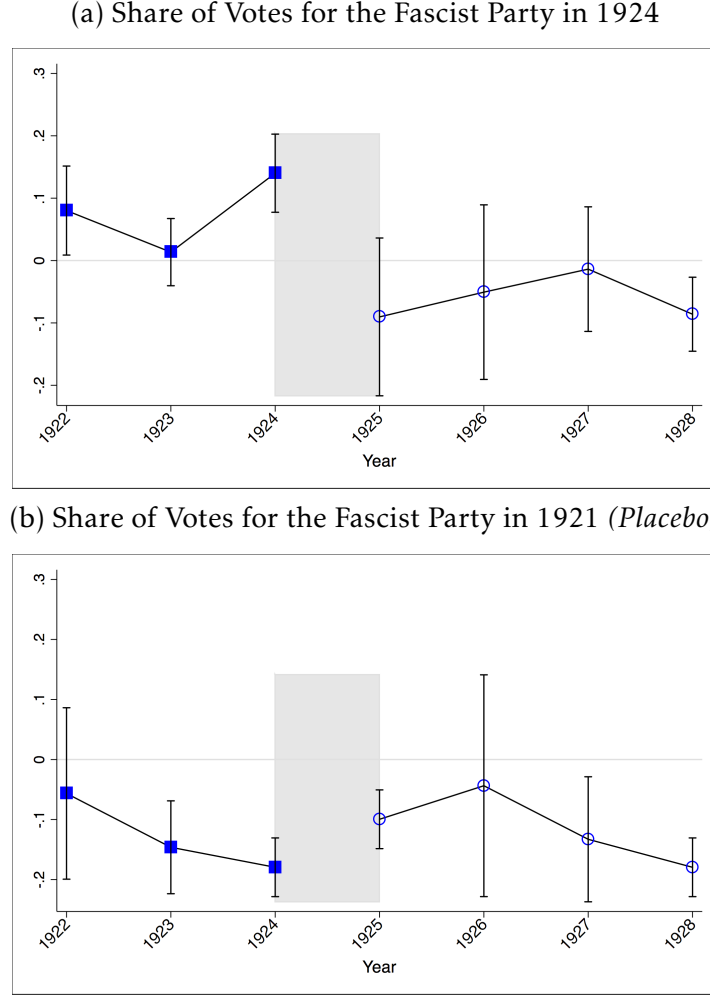
Before digging into the empirical analysis, figure 5 depicts a graphical representation of the importance of the timing of the New Towns' construction for the increase in the consensus for the Fascist Party. The figure depicts the estimated coefficients from regressing the share of votes for the Fascist Party in 1924 (or 1921) on a set of indicator variables. Each variable takes value one if a New Town' construction was initiated within 30 kilometers (18.6 miles) in each year from 1922 until 1928, along with an indicator variable taking the construction initiated in any year after 1928.⁷ Consider, for instance, the coefficient associated with the year 1924, which is about 0.13. Meaning that municipalities where a New Town was initiated in 1924 within 30 kilometers exhibited a 13% larger electoral support for the Fascist Party in the 1924 elections with respect to municipalities where no New Town was built within 30 kilometers (i.e. the control group).

Consistent with the advanced hypothesis, figure 5a shows that municipalities where a New Town was built within 30 kilometers on or before 1924 tend to display larger support in the 1924 elections with respect to those where the New Towns were built after the elections. Interestingly, the figure shows a significant difference between 1924 (the year of the elections) and 1925. If such a difference was due to the construction of the New Towns, then there should be no positive difference in the support for the Fascist Party in the 1921 elections, before the onset of the Fascist project of the New Towns. The hypothesis is supported by the analysis displayed in figure 5b, which employs as an outcome the electoral support for the Fascist Party in 1921. The comparison of panels 5a and 5b suggests that areas close to the New Towns built on or before 1924 experienced a positive *change* in the support for the Fascists, relative to the control group, which was not exhibited by municipalities close to the New Towns built on 1925 or afterwards. I turn to the empirical analysis of this hypothesis by estimating the following regression

⁷ The 30-kilometers cutoff is chosen so as to maximize the t-statistic of the estimated coefficient of interest —see table B13 and its graphical counterpart depicted in figure 11.

model

Figure 5: The Timing of the Treatment: Graphical Analysis



Notes: Each figure shows the estimated coefficients from a regression of the share of votes for the Fascist Party in 1924 (top panel), in 1921 (middle panel), and for the Neo-Fascist Party in 1953, on indicator variables that take value one if the construction of a New Town was initiated within 30 kilometers in each year. The regression also includes a dummy that takes value one if a New Town was built within 30 kilometers in any year after 1928.

$$FP_{24,i} = \alpha + \beta D_{(1923-24),i}^{30km} + \phi D_{(1923-26),i}^{30km} + \theta \mathbf{X} + \epsilon_i \quad (1)$$

where $FP_{24,i}$ is the share of votes for the Fascist Party in 1924 in municipality i , $D_{(1923-24),i}^{30km}$ is an indicator variable that takes value one if a New Town was built within 30 kilometers from the municipality in 1923 or 1924, while $D_{(1923-26)}^{30km}$ takes value one if the construction started

between 1923 and 1926. To restrict the control group to municipalities where no New Towns were built within 30 kilometers, \mathbf{X} includes a dummy taking value one if a New Towns was built within 30 kilometers in any year outside the interval from 1923 to 1926. In addition, depending on the specification, it includes the electoral support for the Fascist Party in 1921.⁸ The coefficient of interest, β , measures whether there is a significant difference in the difference between municipalities treated right before the elections (1923 or 1924) and the control group, versus those treated in 1925 or 1926 and the control group. One of the advantages of using as a reference the control group lies in estimating the coefficient ϕ which is an estimate of the selection bias in the location of the New Towns.⁹ The results are illustrated in table 3.

Column 1 3 shows the coefficients from estimating equation (1) using as an outcome the electoral support for the Fascist Party in 1924. In line with the hypothesis, the estimate of β is positive and statistically significant. In other words, municipalities exposed to the construction of the New Towns over the years 1923 and 1924 exhibited more than 65% of a standard deviation larger support for for the Fascist Party with respect to areas exposed to the New Towns construction right after the elections. Interestingly, the estimated coefficient for ϕ is negative and statistically indistinguishable from zero, in turn minimizing concerns on the presence of a positive bias due to the location of the New Towns.

Column 2 shows that the estimated coefficient of interest increases in magnitude when controlling for the support for the Fascist Party in the 1921 elections. This finding is consistent with the hypothesis that the construction of the New Towns induced an increase in the electoral support for the Fascist Party over the period 1921-1924 which is larger than that of the municipalities that will be treated right after 1924. Moreover, the statistical insignificance of the estimate of ϕ indicates that such municipality exhibited a trend in the support for the Fascist Party which is statistically similar to the control group.

⁸ Using the difference in the electoral support for the Fascist Party between 1921 and 1924 because these two variables are not directly comparable (see section 3).

⁹ On this point, see Appendix section D.

Column 3 employs as a placebo outcome the electoral support for the Fascist Party in 1921. The estimate of β is negative, suggesting that municipalities exposed to the New Towns right before the 1924 elections did not exhibit larger support for the Fascists before the treatment occurred.

The evidence shown in this section supports the hypothesis that the investment in infrastructure undertaken by the Fascist government influenced local voting outcomes, favoring the electoral support of the Fascist Party, which ultimately declared openly the dictatorship in 1925, the year after the elections.

Table 3: The Timing of the Treatment: Regression Analysis

Dependent Variables: Share of Votes for			
	(1)	(2)	(3)
VARIABLES	Fascist Party '24		Placebo FP '21
$\mathbb{D}_{(1923-24)}^{30km}$	0.6573*** [0.167]	0.7313*** [0.187]	-0.5453** [0.249]
$\mathbb{D}_{(1923-26)}^{30km}$	-0.1792 [0.160]	-0.1338 [0.179]	-0.3341 [0.257]
FP '21		Yes	
Observations	2,264	2,264	2,264
Adjusted R-squared	0.033	0.052	0.026

Notes: Observations are at the municipality-level. Each regression includes a dummy that takes value one if a New Town was initiated within 30 kilometers in any other year. Standardized coefficients are reported. See main text and appendices for variables definitions and sources. Robust standard errors clustered at the province level in brackets. *** indicates significance at the 1%-level, ** indicates significance at the 5%-level, * indicates significance at the 10%-level.

4.2 New Towns and the persistence of Neo-Fascism

With the transition to democracy, the Italian political scene saw the emergence of a Neo-Fascist Party (the *MSI*). In this section, I explore whether the Fascist New Towns can explain differences in the support

for the Neo-Fascist Party in recent periods, when the Fascist Regime is long gone.

Table 4: Mussolini’s New Towns and the Persistence of the Neo-Fascist Party

Dependent Variable: Share of Votes for Neo Fascist Party in 1992						
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Ln (Dist. to NT)	-0.2663*** [0.050]	-0.2159*** [0.058]	-0.2012*** [0.054]	-0.2080*** [0.054]	-0.1773*** [0.057]	
Ln (Dist to Placebo NT)						0.1469** [0.066]
Observations	7,438	7,438	7,438	7,438	7,438	7,438
Adjusted R-squared	0.067	0.087	0.118	0.118	0.127	0.127
Malaria Controls	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Market Access Controls	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Agricultural Controls	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Geographic Controls	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Population Controls	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes

Notes: Observations are at the municipality-level. Standardized coefficients are reported. See the main text and appendices for variables definitions and sources. Robust standard errors clustered at the province level in brackets.

*** indicates significance at the 1%-level, ** indicates significance at the 5%-level, * indicates significance at the 10%-level.

Table 4 presents the estimates from regressing the share of votes for the Neo-Fascist Party in 1992 (the last elections to which the Party participated) on the distance to the closest New Town (in logs). Column 1 shows the unconditional relationship between these two variables. As hypothesized, the coefficient is negative and significant. Column 2 takes into account the presence of malaria,¹⁰ market access in 1921, and distance to the closest urban center (see appendix E for variables definition and sources). The coefficient remains negative and highly significant. Column 3 takes into account suitability for agriculture (the Caloric Suitability Index by Galor and Özak (2015)) and for wheat production, to capture the potentially confounding factor of the *Battle for Grain* (Carillo, 2018). The estimated coefficient is robust to the inclusion of these controls. Column 4 controls for distance to water, median elevation, standard deviation of elevation, and elevation range. The coefficient is

¹⁰ Appendix table B10 shows the robustness to using as a control malaria suitability rather than actual presence.

unaffected by these additional controls. Column 5 takes into account population in 1921 and in 1991. The estimated coefficient remains of the hypothesized sign and statistically significant. Finally, column 6 employs as an explanatory variable the distance to New Towns that were planned but not built. Consistent with the hypothesis, distance to these sites is not negatively linked to the support for the Neo-Fascist Party. Actually the estimated coefficient is positive, which suggests that the effect of potentially confounding is opposite in sign to the coefficient of interest.

I take into account unobservable characteristics associated with the location of the New Towns by employing variation across municipalities that are close to each other and thus similar under several dimensions. Results are depicted in table 5. Column 1 reports for comparison the coefficient of the baseline specification from table 4 column 2, in which I control for the major determinants of the location of the New Towns. Column 2 takes into account differences in unobservable characteristics across regions by controlling for regional fixed effects.¹¹ The coefficient remains statistically significant, suggesting that the results are not driven by heterogeneity across regions.

Migration is a potential explanation of the link between the New Towns and voting outcomes. For instance, those who populated the New Towns may have been already in favor of the Fascist ideology. Column 3 excludes municipalities within twenty kilometers (about 12.5 miles) to the closest New Town. Within this sample differences in population growth potentially due to differential migration patterns are statistically insignificant (see section A.5). The coefficient remains large in magnitude and statistically significant. Such result does not support the role of migration as a predominant channel. Yet, in the following section I will dig deeper into this issue.

If the estimates were driven by areas far away from the New Towns,

¹¹ The regions considered are at the NUTS 1 level and are: Northwest, Northeast, Central, South, and Insular Italy. Smaller regions are not appropriate given that, will be shown in table 5, the distance to the closest New Town becomes particularly relevant above a 20 km radius.

concerns on potentially unobserved confounding factors may arise. Column 4 investigates this aspects excluding municipalities that are more than 80 kilometers (about 50 miles) from the closest New Town. Remarkably, the coefficient barely changes, suggesting that the identifying variation comes from municipalities close to the New Towns rather than by the low support for Fascism in places that are far away.

To make sure that the use of a continuous measure of distance is not picking up some unobservable factors, column 5 employs as independent variable an indicator variable that takes value one if the New Town is within 30 kilometers from the closest New Town. Consistent with the hypothesis, the coefficient is positive and statistically significant, meaning that municipalities within 30 kilometers from the closest New Town are characterized by 37% of a standard deviation larger support for the Neo-Fascist Party. The coefficient is robust to the inclusion of regional fixed effects, as demonstrated in column 6.

Table 5: Mussolini’s New Towns and the Persistence of the Neo-Fascist Party: Local Variation

Dependent Variable: Share of Votes for Neo Fascist Party in 1992						
VARIABLES	(1) OLS	(2) OLS	(3) OLS	(4) OLS	(5) OLS	(6) OLS
Ln (Dist. to NT)	-0.2159*** [0.058]	-0.1166** [0.048]	-0.2742*** [0.067]	-0.2568** [0.120]		
NT within 30km					0.3734*** [0.121]	0.2420*** [0.086]
Baseline Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Regional FE	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Dist.to NT \geq 20KM	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
Dist.to NT \in [20KM,80KM]	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
Observations	7,438	7,438	6,491	4,094	7,438	7,438
Adjusted R-squared	0.087	0.170	0.078	0.050	0.075	0.171

Notes: Observations are at the municipality-level. Standardized coefficients are reported. See the main text and appendices for variables definitions and sources. Robust standard errors clustered at the province level in brackets.

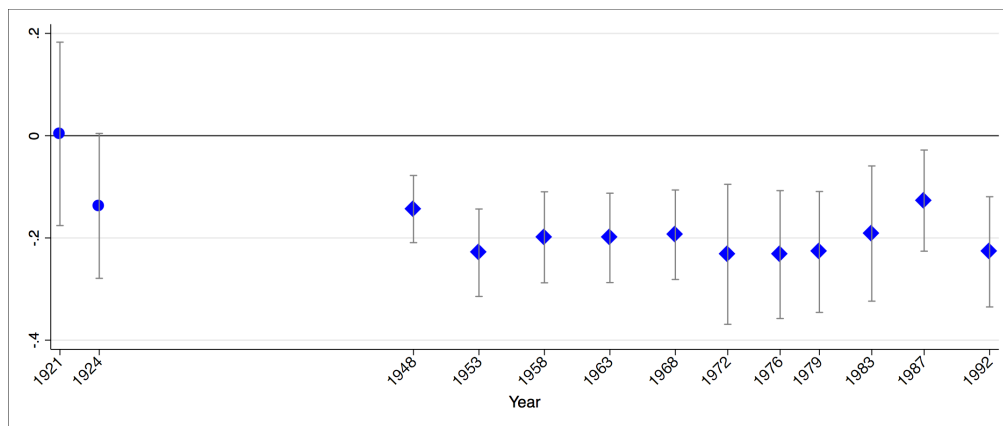
*** indicates significance at the 1%-level, ** indicates significance at the 5%-level, * indicates significance at the 10%-level.

The results show that the New Towns can predict differences in the support for the Neo-Fascist Party in 1992. In the following I explore the

link between the New Towns and the evolution of the electoral support for the Fascist and Neo-Fascist Party.

Figure 6 illustrates the estimated coefficients from regressing the electoral support for the Fascist Party (1921, 1924) or for the Neo-Fascist Party (after 1924) on the distance to the closest New Town. Consistent with the advanced hypothesis, distance to the New Towns is associated with larger support for the Neo-Fascist Party from its onset (1948) to its dissolution (1992).

Figure 6: The Evolution of the Support for Fascism and the New Towns



Notes: This figure shows the estimated coefficients, and the 95% confidence intervals, from a set of regressions of the electoral support for the Fascist Party (1921, 1924) or for the Neo-Fascist Party (after 1924) on the distance to the closest New Town. The construction of the New Towns started in 1922. Each regression controls for malaria, market access controls, and agricultural controls. See appendix E and main text for variables definition and sources.

4.3 The Fascist New Towns and Political Attitudes

The New Towns built by the Fascist government can explain differences in voting patterns beyond the end of the dictatorship and until recent periods. Such a finding rises questions on the mechanism through which such a persistent link unfolded. A growing body of literature emphasizes that historical events influenced individuals' beliefs in the past, thus shaped cultural and political attitudes, which were transmit-

ted over the long term. This mechanism explains the link between historical and differences in political and cultural attitudes at the present day. I explore this possibility in the context of the Fascist New Towns.

The local investment undertaken by the Fascist government in building the New Towns may have shaped individual beliefs toward a more favorable view of the Fascist government and its tenet, ultimately influencing voting choices even after the end of the Dictatorship. Two pieces of evidence would support this hypothesis. First, individuals closer to the Fascist New Towns should display preferences in favor of the fascists. Second, they should exhibit political opinions which are close to the principles of the Fascist Regime. I explore these possibilities by employing individual-level survey data.

First, I explore differences in preferences for the fascists by using the following survey question:¹² “There are groups of people whose opinions many people do not like. For each of these groups, tell me if you think they should be allowed or forbidden to publicly manifest. How do you think, for example, regarding the fascists?” This same question is asked for other groups: the communists, the racists, the Muslims, the homosexuals, and others.¹³ The answer to the question embeds preferences for fascism together with preferences for giving the right to manifest. In fact, as shown in appendix table E16, despite the significant differences in political views between some of these groups, the answers to the question across groups are positively and significantly correlated. Yet, there are significant differences in the magnitudes of the correlations, suggesting that these data also contain information on individual preferences towards each of the groups. Thus, in order to isolate preference for the fascists, I have to control for the individual preferences for giving the right to manifest to everybody.

I employ as an outcome the answer to the question on whether the fascists should have the right to manifest, controlling for the answers

¹² For more information on the data, see appendix section E.

¹³ The other groups are: who manifests against the President of the Republic; who manifests against the Pope; who wants the secession of the North from the rest of Italy.

to the same question for all other groups. Some of the other groups may be characterized by political attitudes related (positively or negatively) to the fascist ideology. Thus, controlling for all other answers is particularly conservative. Furthermore, given that the respondents are comparing extremist groups, they may be less likely to display by under-reporting, which may underestimate preferences for fascism. Table 6 illustrates the results.¹⁴

Column 1 uses as an outcome the answer on whether the fascists should have the right to publicly manifest, controlling for the answer to the same questions for each of the other groups. In line with the hypothesis, respondents located in municipalities close to the New Towns are more likely to support the fascists relative to all other groups.

Columns from 2 to 8 employ as outcomes the answer to the same question for each of the other groups, controlling for the answers for all the remaining ones (including the fascists). Interestingly, the coefficients from columns 2 to 7 are not statistically significant. The coefficient in column 8 is positive and statistically significant. The outcome variable in that case is the answer to the question on whether people who want the secession of the North from the rest of Italy should be given the right to manifest. The lower the value of this variable, the stronger preferences for national unity. The positive and statistically significant coefficients indicates that proximity to the New Towns implies that respondents are less likely to support secession of the North from the rest of Italy, thus they display larger support for national unity — a central element of the fascist ideology.¹⁵ The finding in this table supports the hypothesis that the New Towns influenced preferences for fascists. In addition, it points to the role of political attitudes an the Fascist ideology.

¹⁴ Within the restricted sample for which these data are available, the median distance to the closest New Town is about 36 kilometers, the average is about 51 kilometers, and the standard deviation is about 41.5 kilometers.

¹⁵ The estimated coefficient in column 8 of table 6 is statistically significant despite the fact that the regression takes a measure of preferences for the fascists. Such finding can be explained by the larger propensity of the respondents to reveal their preferences for national unity with respect to revealing their preferences for the fascists.

Table 6: New Towns and Preferences for Fascism

VARIABLES	Dependent Variable: Should Have the Right to Publicly Manifest (2004)							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
	<i>Other Groups</i>				Against the President	Against the Pope	Divide North from South	
	Fascists	Communists	Muslims	Homosexuals	Racists			
Ln (Dist. to NT)	-0.0395*** [0.013]	0.0181 [0.011]	0.0027 [0.012]	0.0160 [0.012]	-0.0152 [0.013]	0.0124 [0.011]	-0.0174 [0.012]	0.0638*** [0.016]
Municipality Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Migration FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Other Individual Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
# of respondents	1455	1455	1455	1455	1455	1455	1455	1455
# of municipalities	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240
Pseudo R-squared	0.417	0.449	0.396	0.411	0.370	0.451	0.471	0.305

Notes: Observations are at the individual level. The coefficients displayed are the average marginal effects from a Probit regression weighted using survey weights. All regressions control for whether the respondent is in the same region in which his or her father was at the age of 14. Municipality controls include the log of population in 2001, distance to the closest capital of the province, a dummy for the presence of malaria in 1870, a measure of market access in 1921. Migrant dummy takes on value one if the respondent is in the same region in which his or her father at the age of 14. Individual controls include age, years of education, gender, a dummy for married, number of children, a dummy for employed, and dummy variables for salaried, self employed, and atypical job. Additional individual controls include a set of dummies for the sector in which the respondent is employed (agriculture, service, industry, public administration), a set of dummies for the sector in which his or her father was employed when the respondent was 14 years old, and a set of dummy for the sector in which the head of the household is employed. See the main text and appendices for variables definitions and sources. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipality level in brackets.

*** indicates significance at the 1%-level, ** indicates significance at the 5%-level, * indicates significance at the 10%-level.

For instance, in the last period of the Regime, the Fascist tenet embraced the racist and antisemitic principles. Such views may still present in the proximity of the New Towns. However, column 5 in table 6 shows that, by controlling for the support for the fascist group, the respondents close to the New Towns do not seem to favor the racists. Nevertheless, if the New Towns positively affected racist views through preferences for the fascists, then by removing the control variable that captures preferences for the fascists should make the estimated coefficient negative and significant. Remarkably, this is indeed verified in table B11.

Second, I explore differences in political opinions and its vicinity to the Fascist views. For instance, “a central ideological tenet of Fascism was the cult of the omniscient and omnipotent leader” (Snowden, 2008, p. 143). Therefore, in areas more exposed to the Fascist New Towns, individuals may still display preferences in favor of a strong leader in politics. I investigate this hypothesis in table 7. Column 1 employs as an outcome the answer to the question on whether the country needs a strong leader in politics (higher values of the outcome indicate higher level of respondent’s agreement). The coefficient is negative and significant, suggesting that respondents farther away from the New Towns are less likely to exhibit preference for a stronger leader in politics.

The Regime promoted the ideological principles of nationalism and (at least in the last part of the dictatorship) racism. Column 2 and 3 employ as outcomes the answer related to whether immigrants are a threat to national culture or identity, and employment, respectively. Higher values of the outcome indicate higher level of respondents’ agreement. In line with the hypothesis, both columns display negative and significant estimated coefficients. Taken together, the results of column 2 and 3 indicate that proximity to the Fascist New Towns is associated with lower tolerance toward migrants.

4.3.1 Life under the Regime, Schooling, and the New Towns

The effect of the New Towns on political attitudes and beliefs should be stronger for those cohorts who directly experienced life under Fas-

Table 7: New Towns and Political Attitudes. Individual-Level Analysis.

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)
	Stronger Leader	Immigrants are a Threat to Identity/Culture Employment	
Ln (Dist. to NT)	-0.0357*** [0.014]	-0.0482** [0.020]	-0.0781*** [0.019]
Municipality Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes
Wave FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
# of respondents	5484	5484	5484
# of municipalities	1513	1513	1513
Adjusted R-squared	0.0566	0.0771	0.0852

Notes: Observations are at the individual level. The surveys were conducted in 2001 and 2008. The displayed coefficients are the average marginal effects from a OLS regression weighted using survey weights. Municipality controls include the log of population in 2001, distance to the closest capital of the province, a dummy for the presence of malaria in 1870, and a measure of market access in 1921. Individual controls include age, years of education, gender, a dummy for married, number of children, a dummy for employed, and dummy variables for salaried, self employed, and atypical job. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipality level in brackets.

*** indicates significance at the 1%-level, ** indicates significance at the 5%-level, * indicates significance at the 10%-level.

cism. For instance, the direct experience of the foundation of the New Towns may have instilled in people's mind a favorable memory of the Fascist dictatorship, which persisted until the present day. Such an effect may also be due to indoctrination at school, which have may have been stronger in the proximity of the New Towns. In the following, I explore these channels and their link with preferences for the fascists and political opinions.

In table 8, I explore preferences for the fascists by using the same approach explored in table 6. In column (1), I report for comparison the result from column (1) of table 6. In column (2), I interact the distance to the closest New Town with the dummy "Lived under Fascism", which takes value one if the respondent was born before the end of the Fascist Regime (1944). In line with the advanced hypothesis, the coefficient of the interaction term is negative and significant, meaning that the link between the New Towns and preferences for the fascists is larger in magnitude for those who lived under the Fascist Dictatorship. Such an effect may be driven by the direct effect of the New Towns, or by the fact that the Fascist indoctrination at school was stronger in the proximity of the New Towns.

In column (3), I investigate this possibility by interacting the distance to the closest New Town with the dummy "School-Aged in Fascism", which takes value one if the respondent was of age between 6 and 13 (the compulsory schooling age at that time) during the Fascist Regime. The estimated coefficient is negative but statistically insignificant.

Column (4) takes into account in the same regression both the interaction terms. Interestingly, the coefficient of the interaction term with "Lived under Fascism" increases in magnitude and statistical significance. In contrast, the coefficient of the interaction with "School-Aged in Fascism" changes in sign and remains statistically indistinguishable from zero. Such a result does not support that school indoctrination is the main mechanism through which the New Towns influenced political and cultural attitudes.¹⁶ In the following, I dig deeper into the analysis

¹⁶ Albeit less precisely estimated, the findings are qualitatively similar if I employ as an outcome the answer to the question "have you ever voted for the Neo-Fascist Party".

by using as outcomes direct measures of political attitudes.

Table 8: Life under Fascism, the New Towns, and Attitudes towards the Fascists.

The Fascists should have the right to publicly manifest				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Ln (Dist. to NT)	-0.0395*** [0.013]	-0.0319** [0.013]	-0.0375*** [0.013]	-0.0323** [0.013]
Ln (Dist. to NT) × Lived under Fascism		-0.0491* [0.027]		-0.0743** [0.035]
Lived under Fascism		0.1027 [0.108]		0.1997 [0.136]
Ln (Dist. to NT) × School-Aged in Fascism			-0.0242 [0.031]	0.0447 [0.041]
School-Aged in Fascism			0.0511 [0.123]	-0.1794 [0.156]
Municipality Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Migration FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Other Individual Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
# of respondents	1455	1455	1455	1455
# of municipalities	240	240	240	240
Pseudo R-squared	0.417	0.420	0.417	0.420

Notes: Observations are at the individual level. The coefficients displayed are the average marginal effects from a Probit regression weighted using sample weights. The variable “Lived under Fascism” is a dummy taking value one if the respondent was born before the end of the Fascist Regime (= 1 for 307 respondents in the sample). The variable School-Aged in Fascism is a dummy taking value one if the respondent was school-aged (age ∈ [6, 13]) during the Fascist Regime (= 1 for 166 respondents in the sample). All regressions control for whether the respondent is in the same region in which his or her father was at the age of 14. Municipality controls include the log of population in 2001, distance to the closest capital of the province, a dummy for the presence of malaria in 1870, a measure of market access in 1921. Migrant dummy takes on value one if the respondent is in the same region in which his or her father at the age of 14. Individual controls include age, years of education, gender, a dummy for married, number of children, a dummy for employed, and dummy variables for salaried, self employed, and atypical job. Additional individual controls include a set of dummies for the sector in which the respondent is employed (agriculture, service, industry, public administration), a set of dummies for the sector in which his or her father was employed when the respondent was 14 years old, and a set of dummy for the sector in which the head of the household is employed. See the main text and appendices for variables definitions and sources. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipality level in brackets.

*** indicates significance at the 1%-level, ** indicates significance at the 5%-level, * indicates significance at the 10%-level.

In table 9, I investigate the role of the experience of life under the dictatorship and the indoctrination at school on other political attitudes that are in line with the Fascist views. In column (1), I use as an outcome a variable which indicates preferences for a stronger leader in politics. Interestingly, life under the dictatorship does not seem to matter, as ex-

The results are illustrated in appendix table A6, where the lack of precision of the estimated coefficients may be due to the low propensity of respondents to reveal their voting choices.

plained by the statistical insignificance of both the interaction term and the linear term of the variable “Lived under Fascism”. In contrast, the interaction term of “School-Aged in Fascism” and the distance to the New Towns is actually positive and significant. Which suggests that indoctrination at school was potentially different in the proximity of the New Towns, but its effect on preferences for stronger leader was actually *negative*. A possible explanation could be that the presence of authoritarian teachers in the fascist schools may have counteracted the indoctrination of the strong leader principle.

In columns (2) and (3), I explore the interaction of the New Towns with the indoctrination-at-school effect, and the life-under-fascism effect, on the lack of tolerance towards immigrants. Interestingly, in this context, while the effect of life under fascism is not significant, the role of school indoctrination is negative and significant. Suggesting that the effect of indoctrination at school reduced tolerance towards immigrants (in general) and that such an effect was particularly effective in the areas of the Fascist New Towns. This finding may indicate that the racial laws implemented by the Regime, by influencing the composition of teachers, classmates, and the programs taught, had persistent effects on tolerance towards immigrants.

5 Concluding Remarks

This research shows that local public spending may have long-lasting effects on electoral outcomes which persists across major institutional changes and over several decades. Furthermore, it shows that the local effect of public spending on political attitudes may be an important mechanism to explain such persistence.

The findings that public spending may have long-lasting effects on cultural and political attitudes, in turn influencing the functioning of institutions in the future, has important implications for our understanding of the channels through which the coevolution of institutions and culture unfolds. Furthermore, it may inspire future research on the

Table 9: Life under Fascism, the New Towns, and Political Attitudes.

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)
	Stronger Leader	Immigrants are a Threat to Identity/Culture	Employment
Ln (Dist. to NT)	-0.0482*** [0.017]	-0.0576** [0.025]	-0.0762*** [0.024]
Ln (Dist. to NT) × Lived under Fascism	-0.0630 [0.043]	0.0246 [0.049]	0.0557 [0.051]
Lived under Fascism	0.2493 [0.166]	-0.1356 [0.195]	-0.2303 [0.201]
Ln (Dist. to NT) × School-Aged in Fascism	0.1121** [0.052]	-0.0906* [0.054]	-0.0922* [0.055]
School-Aged in Fascism	-0.2967 [0.197]	0.5120** [0.210]	0.5117** [0.223]
Municipality Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
# of respondents	5484	5484	5484
# of municipalities	1513	1513	1513
Adjusted R-squared	0.0577	0.0807	0.0873

Notes: Observations are at the individual level. The surveys were conducted in 2001 and 2008. The displayed coefficients are the average marginal effects from a OLS regression weighted using survey weights. The variable “Lived under Fascism” is a dummy taking value one if the respondent was born before the end of the Fascist Regime (= 1 for 1445 respondents in the sample). The variable School-Aged in Fascism is a dummy taking value one if the respondent was school-aged (age ∈ [6,13]) during the Fascist Regime (= 1 for 850 respondents in the sample). Municipality controls include the log of population in 2001, distance to the closest capital of the province, a dummy for the presence of malaria in 1870, and a measure of market access in 1921. Individual controls include age, years of education, gender, a dummy for married, number of children, a dummy for employed, and dummy variables for salaried, self employed, and atypical job. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipality level in brackets.

*** indicates significance at the 1%-level, ** indicates significance at the 5%-level, * indicates significance at the 10%-level.

study of whether policy interventions may be effective in promoting the adoption of growth-enhancing cultural traits.

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Appendices

A Additional Results

A.1 Channels of Persistence

In this section I further investigate the mechanism of persistence through which the New Towns may have influenced political choices over the long term.

The foundation of the New Towns and the new markets associated with it may have been perceived by citizens as growth enhancing, ultimately influencing their political views in favor of the fascists. Such an effect on perception would have been relevant independently on whether the New Towns were actually growth enhancing or not. Therefore, if this mechanism was a relevant one, the long-term effect of the distance to the New Towns on political choices should be magnified in municipalities that experienced an increase in market access over the fascist period.

I measure the improvement in living standards due to the creation of new markets by using the growth in market access over the period from 1921 to 1936. In particular, I employ the standard measure of market access by Harris (1954a), which is defined by the sum of the population in all neighbor municipalities weighted by distance.¹⁷ Then I investigate its interaction with the distance to the New Towns. The results are shown in table A1.

As shown in the first column of table A1, the interaction term of growth in market access over the fascist period and the distance to the New Towns is negative and significant. Suggesting that the growth in market access in the proximity of the New Towns instilled in citizens the idea that the fascist policy was indeed effective. I will further inves-

¹⁷ For each municipality i , market access is given by $\sum_{j \neq i} \frac{Pop_j}{d_{i,j}}$, where Pop_j is the population in municipality j and $d_{i,j}$ is the distance between municipality i and j

tigate this mechanism in the following.

The redistribution of the newly reclaimed land may have affected citizens in the New Towns through a direct wealth effect and, in turn, indirectly affected neighbor municipalities through, for instance, an increase in the demand for locally traded goods and services, or an increase in the supply of local amenities. These effects would be stronger in places where the distribution of land ownership was more unequal.

I investigate this mechanism by employing data from the Census of Agriculture in 1929 and calculate the Gini coefficient of farm size in 1931 as a proxy for inequality of land ownership. In column 2, I interact this measure of land inequality with the distance to the closest New Town. I find that the interaction term of this measure of land inequality and the distance to the New Towns to be statistically insignificant. This result does not seem to support the hypothesis of land redistribution as the main channel.

I dig deeper into this mechanism and investigate whether a larger share of colonists (the contract given to farmers in the newly reclaimed land) interacts with the New Towns. The interaction term is insignificant both using share of colonist families and the share of colonist population (columns 3 and 4, respectively). These results do not support the land redistribution channel as the main mechanism at work.

Literacy may have affected the exposure of citizens to the Fascist propaganda in the newspapers and posters. If the propaganda associated with the New Towns was the main channel, we may observe the coefficient of interest to be enlarged (in absolute value) by the interaction with literacy. In column 5, I find limited evidence of a significant interaction between literacy in 1921 and the distance to the closest New Town.

Furthermore, I find limited evidence of a significant interaction of the New Towns with the preexisting malaria (column 6), with the Battle for Grain (column 7), and with suitability for agriculture (column 8).

The results so far point to the effect of the New Towns on the “demand” for Fascism coming from individuals who updated their beliefs

towards a more favorable view of Fascism. Yet, the estimated effect may come from the “supply” of Fascism, as caused by the strength of the Fascist institutions, which might be greater in the areas of the New Towns. If this is the case, the strength of the Fascist institutions should be greater in the provinces that were created by the Fascists in 1927 as they were created and governed by individuals appointed by the Fascist Regime. I investigate this issue in column 9. In particular, the interaction between the distance to the closest New Town and a dummy that takes value one if the municipality falls within one of the new provinces created by the Fascist Regime in 1927 is statistically indistinguishable from zero. Suggesting that the effect of the New Towns unfolded predominantly through the individuals’ tendency to support the Fascists, rather than by the direct effect of stronger Fascist institutions in those places. Interestingly, the fascist provinces still display larger support for the Neo-Fascist Party, a finding in line with the persistent influence of local institutions. Yet, such an effect does not seem to be relevant for the study of the New Towns.

A.2 New Towns, New Markets

The finding of a significant interaction between the Fascist New Towns and the change in market access over the period of the policy provides evidence that the perception that the policy improved living standards may have played a role in influencing their attitudes in favor of the fascist views. If this was the case, growth in market access should interact with the New Towns only over the fascist period, but not before. I investigate this hypothesis in table A2.

As a falsification test, in columns from 1 to 4 I investigate whether the interaction between growth in market access in previous years and the distance to the New Towns can explain differences in the support for the Neo-Fascist Party in 1992. As evident from the table, the interaction term is statistically indistinguishable from zero in any census year before the policy. In line with the hypothesis, the interaction term becomes statistically significant precisely over the fascist period. Such

Table A1: The Long Run Shadow of the New Towns: Channels of Persistence

	Dependent Variables: Share of Votes for the Neo Fascist Party in 1992								
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Ln (Dist. to NT)	-0.1967*** [0.058]	-0.1858*** [0.055]	-0.2907*** [0.072]	-0.2912*** [0.072]	-0.1464** [0.056]	-0.1872*** [0.067]	-0.1938*** [0.054]	-0.2023*** [0.056]	-0.1776*** [0.051]
Ln (Dist. to NT) × Gwth Mkt Access 1921-1936	-0.0701** [0.034]								
Gwth Mkt Access 1921-1936	0.0597 [0.055]								
Ln (Dist. to NT) × Land Inequality 1931		-0.0144 [0.021]							
Land Inequality 1931		0.0185 [0.030]							
Ln (Dist. to NT) × Share Colonist Population 1931			0.0199 [0.033]						
Share Colonist Population 1931			0.0112 [0.040]						
Ln (Dist. to NT) × Share Colonist Families 1931				0.0225 [0.033]					
Share Colonist Population 1931				0.0141 [0.038]					
Ln (Dist. to NT) × Literacy 1921					-0.0337 [0.044]				
Literacy 1921					-0.1566*** [0.045]				
Ln (Dist. to NT) × Malaria 1881						0.0093 [0.070]			
Malaria 1881						0.1471* [0.080]			
Ln (Dist. to NT) × Wheat Suitability							-0.0526 [0.046]		
Wheat Suitability							0.0486 [0.049]		
Ln (Dist. to NT) × Suitability for Agriculture								-0.0529 [0.044]	
Suitability for Agriculture								0.1187** [0.046]	
Ln (Dist. to NT) × New Fascist Province 1927									-0.0284 [0.189]
New Fascist Province 1926									0.3265* [0.194]
Observations	7,761	6,635	4,004	4,005	7,291	7,761	7,758	7,761	7,761
Adjusted R-squared	0.110	0.093	0.117	0.117	0.111	0.097	0.099	0.109	0.110

Notes: Observations are at the municipality-level. Standardized coefficients are reported. All regressions include as controls the log of market access in 1921, the log of population in 1991, and malaria prevalence in 1881. See main text and appendices for variables definitions and sources. Robust standard errors clustered at the province level in brackets.

*** indicates significance at the 1%-level, ** indicates significance at the 5%-level, * indicates significance at the 10%-level. Differences in the sample size are due to data availability.

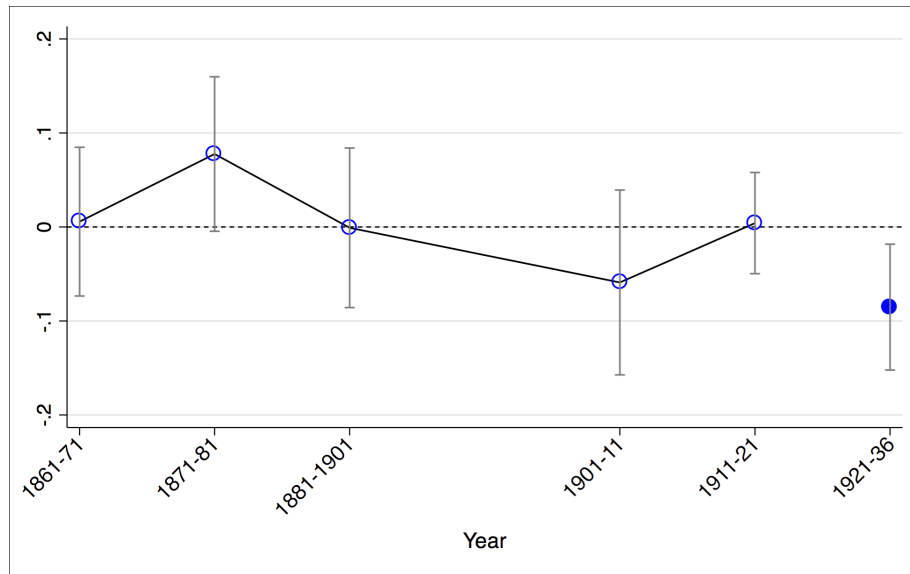
Table A2: The New Towns and Market Access

	Dependent Variable: Share of Votes for Neo Fascist Party in 1992						
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Ln (Dist. to NT)	-0.2072*** [0.054]	-0.1958*** [0.055]	-0.2200*** [0.051]	-0.1798*** [0.055]	-0.2091*** [0.052]	-0.2445*** [0.056]	-0.3203*** [0.075]
Gwth Mkt Access 1861-1871	-0.1373*** [0.042]						
Ln (Dist. to NT) × Gwth Mkt Access 1861-1871	0.0057 [0.040]						
Gwth Mkt Access 1871-1881		-0.1148** [0.047]					
Ln (Dist. to NT) × Gwth Mkt Access 1871-1881		0.0554 [0.042]					
Gwth Mkt Access 1871-1881			0.1547*** [0.054]				
Ln (Dist. to NT) × Gwth Mkt Access 1881-1901			-0.0099 [0.044]				
Gwth Mkt Access 1901-1911				-0.1459*** [0.046]			
Ln (Dist. to NT) × Gwth Mkt Access 1901-1911				-0.0527 [0.048]			
Gwth Mkt Access 1911-1921					-0.1849*** [0.047]		
Ln (Dist. to NT) × Gwth Mkt Access 1911-1921					-0.0006 [0.029]		
Gwth Mkt Access 1921-1936						0.0205 [0.053]	0.0932 [0.071]
Ln (Dist. to NT) × Gwth Mkt Access 1921-1936						-0.0814** [0.033]	-0.1318** [0.055]
Dist.to NT ≥ 20 km							Yes
Observations	7,760	7,760	7,760	7,760	7,760	7,760	6,745
Adjusted R-squared	0.108	0.107	0.116	0.114	0.117	0.106	0.091

Notes: Observations are at the municipality-level. Standardized coefficients are reported. All regressions include as controls the log of market access in 1861, the log of population in 1991, and malaria prevalence in 1881. The last column excludes municipalities within 20 kilometers from the closest New Town. See main text and appendices for variables definitions and sources. Robust standard errors clustered at the province level in brackets.

*** indicates significance at the 1%-level, ** indicates significance at the 5%-level, * indicates significance at the 10%-level.

Figure 7: The New Towns and Growth in Market Access Over Time



Notes: This figure shows the estimated coefficient from a set of regressions of the share of votes for the Neo-Fascist Party in 1992 on the interaction between distance to the closest New Town and the growth in market access in each year. The interaction term is negative and significant only in the fascist period but not before.

finding strongly support the channel that the perception of improved living standards favored the fascist political views over the long term. The interaction coefficients are depicted in figure 7.

Finally, the last column investigate the robustness of the finding to the exclusion of municipalities within 20 kilometers to the closest New Town. Reassuringly the estimated coefficient remains statistically significant. The coefficient of the interaction terms in columns 5 and 6 suggest that a one-standard deviation reduction in market access growth over the relevant years may reduce the relevance of the New Towns in explaining differences in the support for the Neo Fascist Party in 1992 by up to 40%. These findings support the hypothesis that citizens' perception of growth is an important mechanism through which political views may persistently change.

A.3 The Magnitude of the Investment in the New Towns

The estimated effect of the New Town May have been larger in places where the investment in infrastructure was larger. Due to data limitation, I employ as a proxy for the size of the investment the number of years of construction of the closest New Town, conditioning on its population. In line with the hypothesis, the effect of the distance to the New Town is larger in places where the closest New Town was built over a longer period of time. The results are shown in table A3.

Table A3: The Size of the New Towns

Dependent Variables: Share of Votes for the Neo-Fascist Party 1992					
VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	OLS	OLS	OLS	OLS	OLS
Ln (Dist. to NT)	-0.1262** [0.052]	-0.1249** [0.052]	-0.1262** [0.052]	-0.1209** [0.053]	-0.0995* [0.053]
Ln(Dist to NT) × Ln(Years of Construction)	-0.1570** [0.079]	-0.1557* [0.079]	-0.1570** [0.079]	-0.1653** [0.081]	-0.2823** [0.107]
Ln(Years of Construction)	0.0858 [0.068]	0.0858 [0.069]	0.0858 [0.068]	0.0834 [0.068]	0.1832* [0.105]
Population Closest NT 1936		-0.0066 [0.035]			
Population Closest NT 1951				0.0215 [0.035]	0.0291 [0.036]
Observations	6,790	6,760	6,790	6,760	6,506
Adjusted R-squared	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.143

Notes: Observations are at the municipality-level. Standardized coefficients are reported. All regressions include as controls the log of market access in 1861, the log of population in 1991, and malaria prevalence in 1881. The last column excludes municipalities within 20 kilometers from the closest New Town. See main text and appendices for variables definitions and sources. Robust standard errors clustered at the province level in brackets.

*** indicates significance at the 1%-level, ** indicates significance at the 5%-level, * indicates significance at the 10%-level.

A.4 Intimidation and the 1924 Electoral Outcome

It is possible that violence and intimidation were employed by the fascists to enhance the support of the Fascist Party in the 1924 elections. In case of perfect intimidation, the support for the Fascist Party in those elections would be 100% in all municipalities. In contrast, there is significant variation in the electoral support for the Party in 1924. For example, about 10% of the municipalities exhibited less than 20% of the votes for the Party. Suggesting that intimidation was far from perfect.

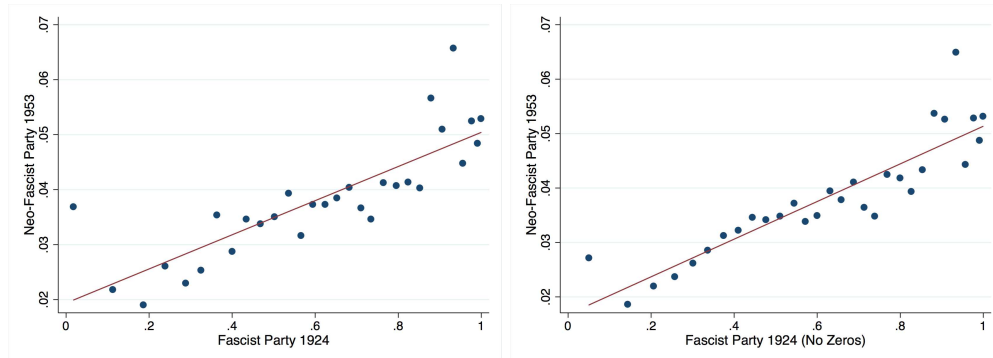
However, if investment in intimidation was complementing investments in the local public spending for the New Towns to boost popular support, then using 1924 electoral outcomes as a dependent variable may raise concerns on intimidation as a potentially omitted factor. In contrast, if intimidation was used as a substitute of the New Towns, then the estimated coefficient would be a lower bound of the true parameter of interest. Finally, it is possible that intimidation increased the average support for the country as a whole, in turn setting aside the role of intimidation as an omitted factor. The latter hypothesis would be corroborated if the support for the Fascists in 1924 were significantly correlated with the support for the Neo-Fascist Party in the post-war period, when no intimidation took place. In contrast, if intimidation were the main driver of the electoral support in 1924, then there should be no correlation between the electoral support for the Fascists in 1924 and for the Neo-Fascists in the postwar period.

In the first elections in which the Neo-Fascist Party was allowed to participate (1948), social pressure against the ideology of the Fascist Regime discouraged people from voting for the Neo-Fascist Party.¹⁸ Thus, I look at the relationship between the electoral support for the Fascist Party in 1924 and for the Neo-Fascist Party in 1953, when no intimidation occurred. Figure 8 shows a binned scatter plot of the electoral support for the Fascist Party in 1924 against the support for the Neo-fascist Party in 1953. The striking positive association displayed in the figure supports the hypothesis that intimidation was mainly enhancing the average support for the Fascist Party in the country as a whole, rather than being used as a complement of local public spending to enhance local political support.

A similar approach can be used by investigating the relationship between the electoral support for the Fascists in the 1921 elections and that in 1924. Figure 9 shows the link between the electoral support for the Fascists in 1924 and 1921. The left panel shows a positive but moderate association between the two variables. However, it becomes

¹⁸ In 1948, the Neo-Fascist Party received 2.1 % of the votes at the national level. In the 1953 and 1958 elections, it received 5.84 % and 4.76%, respectively.

Figure 8: Persistence in the Support for Fascism



Notes: The figures show the striking correlation between the support for Neo-Fascism and for Fascism. The left panel shows binned scatter plots (30 equally-sized bins) of the share of votes for the Neo-Fascist Party in 1953 and for the Fascist Party in 1924. The right panel shows the same graph excluding municipalities that exhibited no votes for the Fascist Party in 1924 and thus were presumably unaffected by the Fascist intimidation.

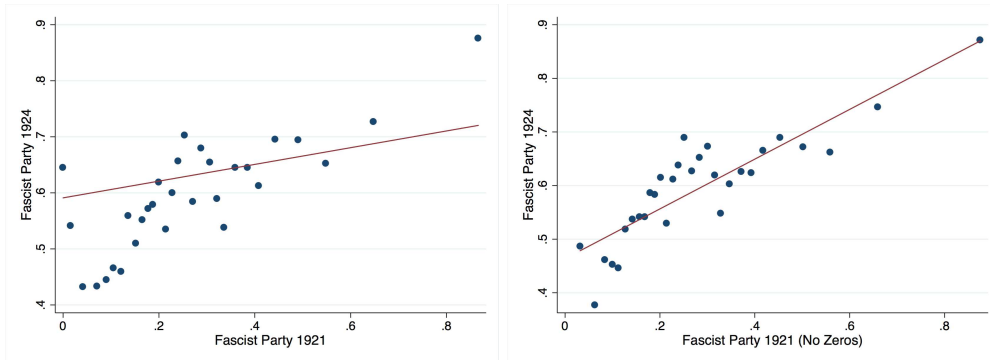
highly positive when I exclude municipalities that did not vote for the Fascists in 1921. In other words, on the intensive margin, there is strong persistence in voting patterns. Yet, in municipalities that did not support the Fascists in 1921 were presumably more likely to be targeted by intimidation in 1924 or by the New Towns construction.

To shed light on this issue, figure 10 shows the link between the share of votes for the Neo-Fascist Party in 1953 and that for the Fascist Party in 1924 only for the municipalities that exhibited no votes for the Fascists in 1921. Interestingly, even within this group, there is persistence in the support for the Fascist views as indicated by electoral outcomes, ultimately suggesting that their support in 1924 was not predominantly driven by intimidation.

A.5 Migration, Population Growth, and the New Towns

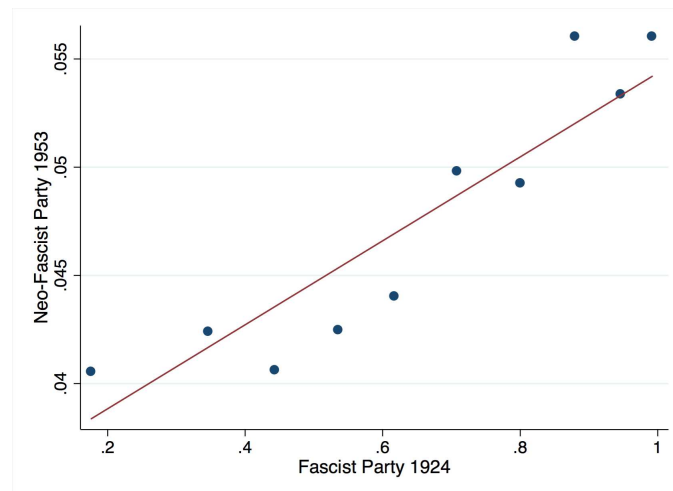
The New Towns were predominantly built in areas uninhabited due to the presence of malarial swamps (see figure 1), which were populated with citizens from other regions (mainly Veneto). The magnitude of this increment in population is debated (Treves, 1980). Using data from population censuses, I empirically investigate its statistical significance.

Figure 9: Persistence in the Support for Fascism



Notes: The figures show binned scatter plots (30 equally-sized bins) of the electoral support for Fascist Party in 1924 versus the one in 1921. While the left panel employs all the available data, the right panel excludes municipalities that exhibited no votes for the Fascist Party in 1921.

Figure 10: Persistence in the Support for Fascism



Notes: The figure shows the striking positive correlation between the support for Neo-Fascism in 1953 and for Fascism in 1924 across the municipalities that exhibited no votes for the Fascists in 1921 and thus were presumably more likely to be exposed to the Fascist intimidation in the 1924 elections.

Table A4 shows the estimates from regressing population growth over the period of the Fascist Regime on the distance to the New Towns. Column 1 employs as an outcome the growth in population between 1921 and 1936.¹⁹ The coefficient is negative, meaning that the municipalities in the vicinity of the Fascist New Towns experienced an increase in population that is higher than those further away. This result is in line with the historical literature on the migration to the New Towns. In column 2, I restrict the sample excluding municipalities that are within 20 kilometers from the closest New Town. Using this approach, I exclude municipalities that were directly affected by the in-migration due to the foundation of the New Towns. Within the restricted sample, differences in population growth are not statistically significant from zero.

Given that the Mussolini ruled until 1943, I perform the same exercise using as an outcome growth in population from 1921 until 1951.²⁰ Column 3 shows that, even considering a longer period of time, population growth is significantly larger in places near the New Towns. Column 4 performs the same sample restriction of column 2. Again, in this restricted sample, population growth is not statistically different from zero.

The results shown in this section suggest that the exclusion of municipalities within 20 kilometers from the closest New Town should minimize concerns on the potentially confounding effect of migration to the New Towns.

A.6 New Towns and the Persistence of Neo-Fascism: Individual-Level Analysis

The survey ITANES 2001 provides questions on whether the respondent has ever voted for the Neo-Fascist Party.²¹ In addition, the survey

¹⁹ The Fascist Party was in power from 1922 to 1943.

²⁰ The population census was not conducted between 1936 and 1951.

²¹ In 2001, the Neo-Fascist Party did not exist anymore, thus the analysis is restricted to respondents that were in their voting age in 1992— the last year in which the Neo-Fascist Party took part to the elections.

Table A4: Limited Importance of the New Towns for Population Growth

Dependent Variables: Population Growth over the years:				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	1921-36	1921-36	1921-51	1921-51
VARIABLES	OLS	OLS	OLS	OLS
Ln (Dist. to NT)	-0.0194* [0.011]	-0.0093 [0.018]	-0.0453** [0.017]	-0.0294 [0.029]
Observations	6,459	5,598	7,256	6,319
Adjusted R-squared	0.011	0.005	0.059	0.034
Baseline Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dist.to NT \geq 20 km	No	Yes	No	Yes

Notes: Observations are at the municipality-level. Standardized coefficients are reported. Baseline controls include an indicator variable for the presence of malaria in 1870, a measure of market access based on population in 1921, and distance to the closest provincial capital. See the main text and appendices for variables definitions and sources. Robust standard errors clustered at the province level in brackets.

*** indicates significance at the 1%-level, ** indicates significance at the 5%-level, * indicates significance at the 10%-level.

provides information on whether the respondent's mother or father ever voted for the Party. The results are illustrated in table A5.

Column 1 displays the estimates from regressing a binary outcome variable that takes value one if the respondent has ever voted for the Neo Fascist Party on the distance of the municipality to the closest Fascist New Town. The column controls for the baseline municipality-level controls: the presence of malaria 1870, distance to the closest provincial capital, and the standard measure of market access based on population in 1921, thus before the construction of the New Towns.

Column 2 controls for a dummy that takes value one if the individual is in the same region in which his or her father was when he was fourteen years old. If the estimated coefficient was entirely driven by migration towards (or from areas near) the New Towns, then the introduction of this control should severely affect the estimates.²² As evident from the comparison between column 1 and column 2, the estimated coefficient increases in magnitude (in absolute value), minimizing the concern of the relevance of migration as a confounding factor.

Average individual characteristics may differ in areas in the proximity of the New Towns and have an independent effect on the propensity of an individual to support the Neo-Fascist ideology. To take into account these potentially confounding factors, column 3 introduces a set of individual controls. In particular, it takes into account age, years of education, gender, an indicator variable for whether the respondent is married or not, number of children, an indicator variable for whether the respondent is employed, and a set of indicator variable that take into account whether the respondent has a salaried job, is self employed, or has an atypical job. The introduction of these individual controls further improves the estimated coefficient, suggesting that both individual characteristics, if anything, can bias the coefficient towards zero.

The sector in which the respondent is employed may affect the

²² Migration towards the New Towns was mainly inter-regional (Treves, 1980). Furthermore, note that the variable takes also into account the potentially confounding effect of migration after the construction of the New Towns.

Table A5: New Towns and the Persistence of Neo Fascism. Individual-Level Analysis.

Dependent Variable: Ever voted for the Neo Fascist Party (2001)							
VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
	Pr(Yes)				Mother		Father
Ln (Dist. to NT)	-0.0208* [0.011]	-0.0242** [0.011]	-0.0258** [0.011]	-0.0271** [0.011]	-0.0211* [0.011]	-0.0122* [0.006]	-0.0148* [0.008]
Municipality Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Migration Dummy	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual Controls	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Other Individual Controls	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Non Migrant Only	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
# of respondents	2729	2729	2729	2729	2221	1440	1535
# of municipalities	250	250	250	250	249	241	242
Pseudo R-squared	0.0163	0.0204	0.0381	0.0462	0.0430	0.0962	0.0542

Notes: Observations are at the individual level. The displayed coefficients are the average marginal effects from a Probit regression weighted using survey weights. Municipality controls include the log of population in 2001, distance to the closest capital of the province, a dummy for the presence of malaria in 1870, a measure of market access in 1921. Migrant dummy takes on value one if the respondent is in the same region in which his or her father was at the age of 14. Individual controls include age, years of education, gender, a dummy for married, number of children, a dummy for employed, and dummy variables for salaried, self employed, and atypical job. Additional individual controls include a set of dummies for the sector in which the respondent is employed (agriculture, service, industry, public administration), a set of dummies for the sector in which his or her father was employed when the respondent was 14 years old, and a set of dummy for the sector in which the head of the household is employed. The Neo Fascist Party took part to the elections for the last time in 1992, so the sample is restricted to those who had the right to vote in 1992. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipality level in brackets.

*** indicates significance at the 1%-level, ** indicates significance at the 5%-level, * indicates significance at the 10%-level.

Table A6: New Towns and the Persistence of Neo Fascism. Individual-Level Analysis.

Dependent Variable: Ever voted for the Neo Fascist Party				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Pr(Yes)	Pr(Yes)	Pr(Yes)	Pr(Yes)
Ln (Dist. to NT)	-0.0269**	-0.0217*	-0.0230**	-0.0215*
	[0.011]	[0.011]	[0.011]	[0.011]
Ln (Dist. to NT) × Lived under Fascism		-0.0181		-0.0138
		[0.013]		[0.022]
Lived under Fascism		0.0685		0.0450
		[0.055]		[0.085]
Ln (Dist. to NT) × School-Aged in Fascism			-0.0174	-0.0053
			[0.014]	[0.024]
School-Aged in Fascism			0.0889*	0.0464
			[0.053]	[0.087]
Municipality Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Migration FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Other Individual Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
# of respondents	2730	2730	2730	2730
# of municipalities	250	250	250	250
Pseudo R-squared	0.0461	0.0468	0.0471	0.0473

Notes: Observations are at the individual level. The displayed coefficients are the average marginal effects from a Probit regression weighted using survey weights. The variable “Lived under Fascism” is a dummy taking value one if the respondent was born before the end of the Fascist Regime (= 1 for 951 respondents in the sample). The variable School-Aged in Fascism is a dummy taking value one if the respondent was school-aged (age ∈ [6, 13]) during the Fascist Regime (= 1 for 613 respondents in the sample). Municipality controls include the log of population in 2001, distance to the closest capital of the province, a dummy for the presence of malaria in 1870, a measure of market access in 1921. Migrant dummy takes on value one if the respondent is in the same region in which his or her father was at the age of 14. Individual controls include age, years of education, gender, a dummy for married, number of children, a dummy for employed, and dummy variables for salaried, self employed, and atypical job. Additional individual controls include a set of dummies for the sector in which the respondent is employed (agriculture, service, industry, public administration), a set of dummies for the sector in which his or her father was employed when the respondent was 14 years old, and a set of dummy for the sector in which the head of the household is employed. The Neo Fascist Party took part to the elections for the last time in 1992, so the sample is restricted to those who had the right to vote in 1992. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipality level in brackets.

*** indicates significance at the 1%-level, ** indicates significance at the 5%-level, * indicates significance at the 10%-level.

propensity to support the Neo Fascist ideology independently of the presence of the New Towns. Similarly, the sector in which his or her parents worked may determine cultural aspects that may influence the propensity of the respondent to support the Neo-Fascist Party. Column 4 controls for a set of indicator variables that take into account the sector in which the respondent is employed (agriculture, manufacturing, services, and public administration), the sector in which the head of the household is employed, and the sector in which the respondent's father was employed when he was fourteen years old.²³ These additional controls further strengthen the estimated link between the Fascist New Towns and the propensity of the respondent to vote for the Neo Fascist Party.

Column 5 further minimizes concerns on the effect of migration. In particular, it restricts the sample to individuals who are in the same region in which his or her father was when they were fourteen years old. Reassuringly, the estimated coefficient holds despite the reduction in the number of observations.

Column 6 employs as an outcome an indicator variable that takes value one if the respondent's mother has ever voted for the Neo Fascist party. Similarly, column 7 employs as an outcome an indicator variable that takes value one if the respondent's father has ever voted for the Neo Fascist Party. Interestingly, both coefficients are of the hypothesized sign, which is in line with the hypothesis that proximity to the Fascist New Towns influenced political attitudes of the parents which have been transmitted to their children.

The results are qualitatively similar, yet less precisely estimated, when the sample is restricted only to individuals who were born during the Fascist Dictatorship. Such a reduction in precision may be due to the reduction in the sample size, together with the limited propensity of respondents to declare whether they have voted for the Neo-Fascist Party, which was characterized by an extreme position on the political and ideological spectrum. The estimates are illustrated in table A7.

²³ These control variables are only available in the waves of 2001 and 2004.

Table A7: New Towns and the Persistence of Neo Fascism. Respondents Born during the Fascist Era.

VARIABLES	Dependent Variable: Ever voted for the Neo Fascist Party (2001)						
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
	Pr(Yes)				Mother		Father
Ln (Dist. to NT)	-0.0198 [0.017]	-0.0228 [0.017]	-0.0285* [0.016]	-0.0274* [0.015]	-0.0239 [0.016]	-0.0164* [0.009]	-0.0134 [0.012]
Municipality Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Migration FE	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual Controls	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Other Individual Controls	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Non Migrant Only	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
# of respondents	991	991	991	988	777	522	543
# of municipalities	231	231	231	230	222	188	190
Pseudo R-squared	0.0351	0.0375	0.0621	0.0847	0.0690	0.171	0.153

Notes: Observations are at the individual level. The sample is restricted to respondents born before 1944. The displayed coefficients are the average marginal effects from a Probit regression weighted using survey weights. Municipality controls include the log of population in 2001, distance to the closest capital of the province, a dummy for the presence of malaria in 1870, a measure of market access in 1921. Migrant dummy takes on value one if the respondent is in the same region in which his or her father was at the age of 14. Individual controls include age, years of education, gender, a dummy for married, number of children, a dummy for employed, and dummy variables for salaried, self employed, and atypical job. Additional individual controls include a set of dummies for the sector in which the respondent is employed (agriculture, service, industry, public administration), a set of dummies for the sector in which his or her father was employed when the respondent was 14 years old, and a set of dummy for the sector in which the head of the household is employed. The Neo Fascist Party took part to the elections for the last time in 1992, so the sample is restricted to those who had the right to vote in 1992. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipality level in brackets.

*** indicates significance at the 1%-level, ** indicates significance at the 5%-level, * indicates significance at the 10%-level.

B Ancillary Tables

Table B8: The Timing of the New Towns and Electoral Outcomes

	Dependent Variables: Share of Votes for the Fascist Party:						
	(1) 1921 <i>Placebo</i>	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6) <i>Placebo</i>	(7) <i>Placebo</i>
				1924			
Ln (Dist to NT)	0.2784*** [0.093]	-0.2402*** [0.077]					-0.2219*** [0.073]
Ln (Dist. to NT until 1924)			-0.2858*** [0.078]	-0.2375*** [0.080]	-0.1504* [0.083]		
Ln (Dist. to NT after 1924)				-0.1122 [0.082]	0.0232 [0.080]		
Ln (Dist to NT Unknown Year)					-0.3467*** [0.101]		
Ln (Dist to Placebo NT)						-0.1199 [0.080]	-0.0722 [0.068]
Observations	2,057	2,057	2,057	2,057	2,057	2,057	2,057
Adjusted R-squared	0.070	0.059	0.099	0.108	0.155	0.017	0.064

Notes: Observations are at the municipality-level. Standardized coefficients are reported. See the main text and appendices for variables definitions and sources. Robust standard errors clustered at the province level in brackets.

*** indicates significance at the 1%-level, ** indicates significance at the 5%-level, * indicates significance at the 10%-level.

Table B9: Robustness to Controlling for the Suitability for Malaria: Short-term Effect

Dependent Variable: Share of Votes for the Fascist Party in 1924						
VARIABLES	(1) FP '24 OLS	(2) FP '24 OLS	(3) FP '24 OLS	(4) FP '24 OLS	(5) FP '24 OLS	(6) FP '24 OLS
Ln (Dist. to NT until 1924)	-0.2858*** [0.078]	-0.3159*** [0.075]	-0.2676*** [0.090]	-0.2059* [0.111]	-0.2365** [0.108]	-0.2342** [0.107]
FP '21		0.1773*** [0.061]	0.1731*** [0.058]	0.1804*** [0.058]	0.1730*** [0.056]	0.1723*** [0.055]
Observations	2,057	2,057	2,057	2,057	2,057	2,057
Adjusted R-squared	0.099	0.132	0.151	0.162	0.175	0.175
Malaria Suitability	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Market Access Controls	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Geographic Controls	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Agricultural Controls	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Ln Population 1921	No	No	No	No	No	Yes

Notes: Observations are at the municipality-level. Standardized coefficients are reported. See the main text and appendices for variables definitions and sources. Robust standard errors clustered at the province level in brackets.

*** indicates significance at the 1%-level, ** indicates significance at the 5%-level, * indicates significance at the 10%-level.

Table B10: Robustness to Controlling for the Suitability for Malaria: Long-term Effect

Dependent Variable: Share of Votes for Neo Fascist Party in 1992						
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
VARIABLES	Neo FP '92 OLS	Neo FP '92 OLS	Neo FP '92 OLS	Neo FP '92 OLS	Neo FP '92 OLS	Neo FP '92 OLS
Ln (Dist. to NT)	-0.2663*** [0.050]	-0.1791*** [0.058]	-0.1847*** [0.053]	-0.1894*** [0.053]	-0.1665*** [0.056]	
Ln (Dist to Placebo NT)						0.1430** [0.066]
Observations	7,438	7,438	7,438	7,438	7,438	7,438
Adjusted R-squared	0.067	0.098	0.119	0.122	0.129	0.130
Malaria Suitability	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Market Access Controls	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Agricultural Controls	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Geographic Controls	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Population Controls	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes

Notes: Observations are at the municipality-level. Standardized coefficients are reported. See the main text and appendices for variables definitions and sources. Robust standard errors clustered at the province level in brackets.

*** indicates significance at the 1%-level, ** indicates significance at the 5%-level, * indicates significance at the 10%-level.

Table B11: New Towns and Rascism

Dependent Variable: Should Have the Right to Publicly Manifest (2004)							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
VARIABLES	Communists	Muslims	Homosexuals	Racists	Against the President	Against the Pope	Divide North from South
Ln (Dist. to NT)	0.0074 [0.012]	-0.0022 [0.012]	0.0151 [0.012]	-0.0288** [0.014]	0.0101 [0.011]	-0.0168 [0.012]	0.0575*** [0.016]
Municipality Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Migration FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Other Individual Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
# of respondents	1455	1455	1455	1455	1455	1455	1455
# of municipalities	240	240	240	240	240	240	240
Pseudo R-squared	0.384	0.388	0.410	0.310	0.449	0.471	0.284

Notes: Observations are at the individual level. The displayed coefficients are the average marginal effects from a Probit regression weighted using survey weights. All regressions control for whether the respondent is in the same region in which his or her father was at the age of 14. Municipality controls include the log of population in 2001, distance to the closest capital of the province, a dummy for the presence of malaria in 1870, a measure of market access in 1921. Migrant dummy takes on value one if the respondent is in the same region in which his or her father at the age of 14. Individual controls include age, years of education, gender, a dummy for married, number of children, a dummy for employed, and dummy variables for salaried, self employed, and atypical job. Additional individual controls include a set of dummies for the sector in which the respondent is employed (agriculture, service, industry, public administration), a set of dummies for the sector in which his or her father was employed when the respondent was 14 years old, and a set of dummy for the sector in which the head of the household is employed. See the main text and appendices for variables definitions and sources. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipality level in brackets.

*** indicates significance at the 1%-level, ** indicates significance at the 5%-level, * indicates significance at the 10%-level.

Table B12: The Timing of the Treatment: Placebos

		Dependent Variables: Share of Votes for the (Neo) Fascist Party in the year:												
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
		<i>Placebo</i>		<i>Placebo</i>										
		1921	1924	1948	1953	1958	1963	1968	1972	1976	1979	1983	1987	1992
62	$\mathbb{D}_{(1923-24)}^{30km}$	-0.5453** [0.249]	0.6573*** [0.167]	-0.0419 [0.088]	-0.3086 [0.244]	-0.0192 [0.449]	0.2216 [0.428]	0.0904 [0.404]	0.4647 [0.329]	0.4324 [0.312]	0.4362 [0.354]	0.1691 [0.307]	-0.3119 [0.327]	0.0852 [0.583]
	Observations	2,264	2,264	2,125	2,120	2,127	2,124	2,257	2,259	2,262	2,257	2,261	2,259	2,263
	Adjusted R-2	0.026	0.033	0.003	0.039	0.022	0.027	0.021	0.061	0.053	0.034	0.014	0.010	0.012

Notes: Observations are at the municipality-level. Standardized coefficients are reported. See main text and appendices for variables definitions and sources. Robust standard errors clustered at the province level in brackets.

*** indicates significance at the 1%-level, ** indicates significance at the 5%-level, * indicates significance at the 10%-level.

Table B13: The Timing of the Treatment: Wider Radius

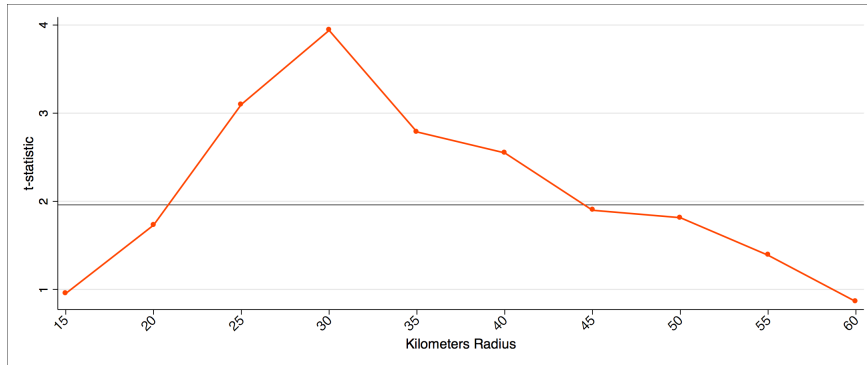
	Dependent Variables: Share of Votes for the Fascist Party 1924									
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
$D_{(1923-24)}^{15km}$	0.3244 [0.340]									
$D_{(1923-24)}^{20km}$		0.4885* [0.282]								
$D_{(1923-24)}^{25km}$			0.5518*** [0.178]							
$D_{(1923-24)}^{30km}$				0.6573*** [0.167]						
$D_{(1923-24)}^{35km}$					0.6804*** [0.244]					
$D_{(1923-24)}^{40km}$						0.5679** [0.223]				
$D_{(1923-24)}^{45km}$							0.3804* [0.200]			
$D_{(1923-24)}^{50km}$								0.3975* [0.219]		
$D_{(1923-24)}^{55km}$									0.2754 [0.198]	
$D_{(1923-24)}^{60km}$										0.1386 [0.161]
Observations	2,264	2,264	2,264	2,264	2,264	2,264	2,264	2,264	2,264	2,264
Number of Treated Obs.	19	39	63	82	102	113	140	162	184	197
Adjusted R-squared	0.009	0.013	0.023	0.033	0.041	0.048	0.055	0.057	0.054	0.053

Notes: Observations are at the municipality-level. Each regression includes a dummy that takes value one if a New Town was initiated within the relevant radius between 1923 and 1926, and a dummy that takes value one if it the New Towns was initiated in within the relevant radius in any other year. Standardized coefficients are reported. See main text and appendices for variables definitions and sources. Robust standard errors clustered at the province level in brackets. Estimated t-statistics are depicted in figure 11

*** indicates significance at the 1%-level, ** indicates significance at the 5%-level, * indicates significance at the 10%-level.

C Ancillary Figures

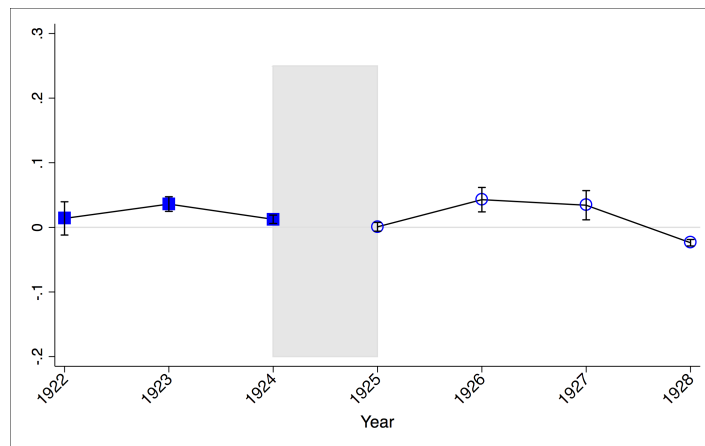
Figure 11: The Choice of the 30-Kilometers Cutoff



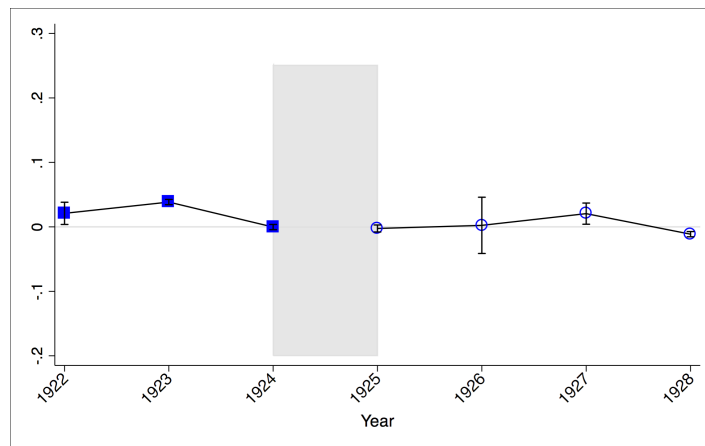
Notes: The figure depicts the estimated t-statistics from estimating equation 1 with different cutoffs. The figure shows that the t-statistic is maximized when the model is estimated with a 30-kilometers cutoff. Estimates are given by the coefficient of interest and standard errors reported in table B13.

Figure 12: The Timing of the Treatment: Robustness

(a) Placebo: Share of Votes for the Neo-Fascist Party in 1953

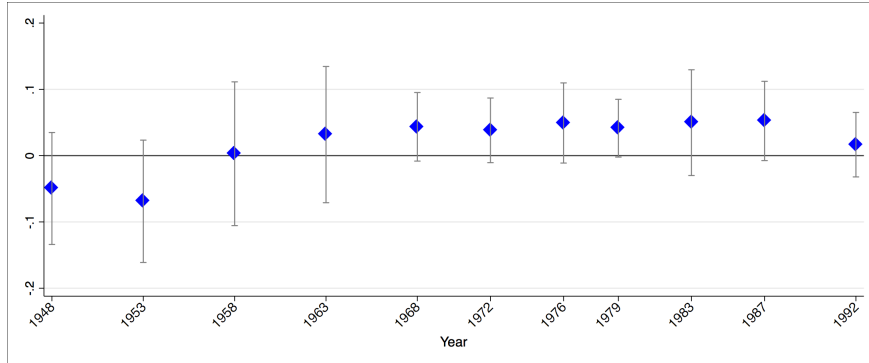


(b) Placebo: Share of Votes for the Neo-Fascist Party in 1992



Notes: Each figure shows the estimated coefficients from a regression of the share of votes for the Neo-Fascist Party in 1953 (top panel) and in 1993 on indicator variables that take value one if the construction of a New Town was initiated within 30 kilometers in each year. The figures show the absence of a positive differences in the outcome between the municipalities treated in 1924 or before and those treated right after.

Figure 13: Absence of a Link between the New Towns and Voter Turnout



Notes: The figure shows the estimated coefficients and 95% confidence intervals from a set of regressions of the electoral turnout in each year on the log of the distance to the New Towns. All regressions include baseline controls.

D The Timing of the Treatment: Empirical Model

Consider the model given by²⁴

$$FP_{24} = \alpha + \gamma \mathbb{D}_{(1923-24)} + \phi \mathbb{D}_{(1925-26)} + \epsilon \quad (2)$$

Where FP_{24} is the share of votes for the Fascist Party in 1924 in each municipality (subscript omitted), $\mathbb{D}_{(1923-24)}$ is an indicator variable that takes value one if a New Town was built within a given range (for instance, 30 kilometers) from each municipality between 1923 and 1924, while $\mathbb{D}_{(1925-26)}$ takes value one if the construction started between 1925 and 1926, thus right after the 1924 elections.

The parameter γ measures the difference in the electoral support for the Fascist Party in the 1924 elections in the municipalities treated right before the elections relative to the control group. The parameter ϕ measures the support for the fascists in 1924 from the municipalities treated *after* the elections, relative to the control group. In other words, the parameter ϕ is a measure of the selection bias associated with the location

²⁴ For ease of exposition, but without loss of generality, I do not consider control variables.

of the New Towns. To see this point, consider the case in which the locations of the New Towns took place in areas that already exhibited larger support for the Fascist Party. Then, the estimated ϕ would be positive. In contrast, if the location of the New Towns was chosen so as to target places that exhibited lower support for the Fascist Party, then the estimate of ϕ would be positive.

To derive the estimated model of equation (1), I add and subtract $\phi D_{(1923-24)}$ to the right hand side of equation (2). The result comes from noting that $D_{(1923-24)} + D_{(1925-26)} = D_{(1923-26)}$ and defining $\beta \equiv (\gamma - \phi)$.

E Data Description, Sources, and Variables Definitions

Table E14: Summary statistics for major municipality-level variables

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.	N
Neo FP '53	0.044	0.049	0	0.513	7199
Neo FP '83	0.049	0.033	0	0.373	7987
Neo FP '87	0.045	0.03	0	0.493	7981
Neo FP '58	0.032	0.036	0	0.489	7248
Neo FP '63	0.035	0.037	0	0.456	7242
Neo FP '76	0.042	0.035	0	0.416	7963
Neo FP '79	0.037	0.029	0	0.357	7964
Neo FP '48	0.017	0.035	0	0.727	7088
Neo FP '92	0.04	0.03	0	0.425	8002
Neo FP '72	0.055	0.047	0	0.474	7894
Neo FP '68	0.029	0.032	0	0.466	7936
FP '21	0.168	0.201	0	1	3712
FP '24	0.599	0.279	0	1	3654
Ln (Dist. to NT)	3.91	0.830	-1.076	5.33	8005
Ln Population 1921	7.845	0.974	4.06	13.555	7450
Ln Population 1931	8.012	0.962	4.804	13.96	6849
Ln Population 1951	7.952	1.036	4.304	14.317	7471
Malaria Prevalence in 1870	0.301	0.459	0	1	8007
Distance Major Urban Centers	28268.206	15815.117	0	209798.172	8007
Market Access 1921	171315.072	41531.94	53508.183	344320.129	7762
Caloric Suitability Index	4185.136	777.022	0	5636.359	8007
Land Suitability for Wheat	733.947	482.992	0	2180	8002

Notes: Neo FP and FP are the share of votes for the Neo-Fascist Party and the Fascist Party, respectively. FP '21 refers to the share of votes for the Fascist Party's coalition in 1921. Ln (Dist. to NT) is the log of the distance to the closest New Town.

E.1 Measures of Political and Cultural Values

Preference for Fascism: Based on the answer to the question “There are groups of people whose opinions many people do not like. For each of these groups, tell me if you think they should be allowed or forbidden to publicly manifest. How do you think, for example, regarding the fascists?” taken from the survey ITANES Panel 2001-2006, wave 2004. Coded 1 if “Permit” and 0 if “Prohibited”.

Preference for Communism: Based on the answer to the question

“There are groups of people whose opinions many people do not like. For each of these groups, tell me if you think they should be allowed or forbidden to publicly manifest. How do you think, for example, regarding the communists?” taken from the survey ITANES Panel 2001-2006, wave 2004. Coded 1 if “Permit” and 0 if “Prohibited”.

Preference for the President of the Republic: Based on the answer to the question “There are groups of people whose opinions many people do not like. For each of these groups, tell me if you think they should be allowed or forbidden to publicly manifest. How do you think, for example, regarding who manifests against the President of the Republic?” taken from the survey ITANES Panel 2001-2006, wave 2004. Coded 1 if “Permit” and 0 if “Prohibited”.

Preference for Homosexuals: Based on the answer to the question “There are groups of people whose opinions many people do not like. For each of these groups, tell me if you think they should be allowed or forbidden to publicly manifest. How do you think, for example, regarding the homosexuals?” taken from the survey ITANES Panel 2001-2006, wave 2004. Coded 1 if “Permit” and 0 if “Prohibited”.

Preference for the Pope: Based on the answer to the question “There are groups of people whose opinions many people do not like. For each of these groups, tell me if you think they should be allowed or forbidden to publicly manifest. How do you think, for example, regarding who manifests against the Pope?” taken from the survey ITANES Panel 2001-2006, wave 2004. Coded 1 if “Permit” and 0 if “Prohibited”.

Preference for Muslims: Based on the answer to the question “There are groups of people whose opinions many people do not like. For each of these groups, tell me if you think they should be allowed or forbidden to publicly manifest. How do you think, for example, regarding the Muslims?” taken from the survey ITANES Panel 2001-2006, wave 2004. Coded 1 if “Permit” and 0 if “Prohibited”.

Preference for National Unity: Based on the answer to the question “There are groups of people whose opinions many people do not like. For each of these groups, tell me if you think they should be allowed or

forbidden to publicly manifest. How do you think, for example, regarding who wants the secession of the North from the rest of Italy?" Coded 1 if "Permit" and 0 if "Prohibited".

Preference for Racists: Based on the answer to the question "There are groups of people whose opinions many people do not like. For each of these groups, tell me if you think they should be allowed or forbidden to publicly manifest. How do you think, for example, regarding the racists?" taken from the survey ITANES Panel 2001-2006, wave 2004. Coded 1 if "Permit" and 0 if "Prohibited".

Stronger Leader: Based on the answer to the question: "Now, I shall read some opinions often people hold on politics and economics. Please, tell me how much do you agree with each of them? Today Italy needs a stronger leader." Taken from the survey ITANES 2001 C6.8. Coded 0 if "Disagree completely", 1 if "Agree a little", 2 if "Agree fairly", and 3 if "Agree completely". The variable is also based on the question from ITANES 2008 "Now, I am going to read some opinions on politics and the economy that people sometimes express. Could you please tell me how much do you agree (not at all, a little, fairly much, very much) with each of them? Italy needs a strong leader nowadays" question D007_03. Coded 0 if "not at all", 1 if "a little" 2 if "fairly much", and 3 if "very much".

Immigrants are a Threat to Identity/Culture: Based on the answer to the question: "Now, I shall read some opinions often people hold on politics and economics. Please, tell me how much do you agree with each of them? Immigrants are a threat to our culture and identity." Taken from the survey ITANES 2001 C10.7. Coded 0 if "Disagree completely", 1 if "Agree a little", 2 if "Agree fairly", and 3 if "Agree completely". The variable is also based on the question from ITANES 2008 "Now, I am going to read some opinions on politics and the economy that people sometimes express. Could you please tell me how much do you agree (not at all, a little, fairly much, very much) with each of them? Immigrants are a threat to our culture " question D007_10. Coded 0 if "not at all", 1 if "a little" 2 if "fairly much", and 3 if "very much".

Immigrants are a Threat to Employment: Based on the answer to the question: “Now, I shall read some opinions often people hold on politics and economics. Please, tell me how much do you agree with each of them? Immigrants are a threat to employment.” Taken from the survey ITANES 2001 C10.8. Coded 0 if “Disagree completely”, 1 if “ Agree a little”, 2 if “Agree fairly”, and 3 if “Agree completely”. The variable is also based on the question from ITANES 2008 “Now, I am going to read some opinions on politics and the economy that people sometimes express. Could you please tell me how much do you agree (not at all, a little, fairly much, very much) with each of them? Immigrants are a threat to Italians? employment” question D007_11. Coded 0 if “not at all”, 1 if “a little” 2 if “fairly much”, and 3 if “very much”.

Table E15: Summary Statistics, Individual Survey Data (2004).

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.	N
Fascists	0.475	0.5	0	1	1455
Muslims	0.547	0.498	0	1	1455
Homosexuals	0.621	0.485	0	1	1455
Communists	0.699	0.459	0	1	1455
Against the President	0.478	0.5	0	1	1455
Against the Pope	0.391	0.488	0	1	1455
North \ South Divide	0.412	0.492	0	1	1455
Racists	0.302	0.459	0	1	1455

Notes: Individual Survey Data from ITANES 2004. Based on the answer to the question “There are groups of people whose opinions many people do not like. For each of these groups, tell me if you think they should be allowed or forbidden to publicly manifest. How do you think, for example, regarding the ...?” taken from the survey ITANES Panel 2001-2006, wave 2004. Coded 1 if “Permit” and 0 if “Prohibited”

Voted for the Neo-Fascist Party: Based on the answer to the question “As you may know, in 1994 there was a big change in the Italian political system: some old parties disappeared or changed their names. Can you please tell me for which of the following old parties you voted at least once and for which you never voted? Movimento sociale italiano.” Coded 1 if “ At least once” and 0 if “Never”. From ITANES 2001,

Table E16: Cross-correlation table, Individual Survey Data (2004)

Variables	Fascists	Muslims	Homosexuals	Communists	Against the President	Against the Pope	Racists	Divide North from South
Fascists	1.000							
Muslims	0.429	1.000						
Homosexuals	0.383	0.542	1.000					
Communists	0.527	0.494	0.481	1.000				
Against the President	0.443	0.411	0.440	0.436	1.000			
Against the Pope	0.427	0.484	0.439	0.412	0.649	1.000		
Racists	0.528	0.388	0.347	0.347	0.452	0.481	1.000	
Divide North from South	0.436	0.352	0.361	0.339	0.450	0.450	0.445	1.000

Notes: See Appendix for variables definition and sources. All correlation coefficients are statistically significant at the 1% level.

question E4.

Father/Mother Voted for the Neo-Fascist Party: Based on the answer to the question “Did your father tend to vote for a specific party? Which one? And your mother?” Coded 1 if “Msi”, and 0 otherwise. From ITANES 2001, question E2.

Table E17: Summary Statistics, Individual Survey Data (2001).

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.	N
Voted for N.F. Party	0.157	0.364	0	1	2729
Father voted for NFP	0.083	0.276	0	1	1890
Mather voted for NFP	0.046	0.208	0	1	1890
Same Region as Father at the age of 14	0.814	0.389	0	1	2729
Male Dummy	0.494	0.5	0	1	2729
Age	50.357	15.451	27	96	2729
Married Dummy	0.684	0.465	0	1	2729
Number of Children	1.476	1.241	0	9	2729
Years of Education	9.548	4.249	0	17	2729
No Employed	0.503	0.5	0	1	2729
Salary Job	0.701	0.458	0	1	2729
Self-Employed	0.264	0.441	0	1	2729
Atypical Job	0.034	0.182	0	1	2729
Works in Agriculture	0.091	0.287	0	1	2729
Works in Industry	0.329	0.47	0	1	2729
Works in Services	0.297	0.457	0	1	2729
Works in Public Administration	0.257	0.437	0	1	2729
Head of Household in Agriculture	0.012	0.109	0	1	2729
Head of Household in Industry	0.059	0.236	0	1	2729
Head of Household in Services	0.06	0.237	0	1	2729
Head of Household in Public Administration	0.045	0.207	0	1	2729
Father in Agriculture when Respondent was 14	0.235	0.424	0	1	2729
Father in Industry when Respondent was 14	0.311	0.463	0	1	2729
Father in Services when Respondent was 14	0.154	0.361	0	1	2729
Father in Public Admin. when Respondent was 14	0.153	0.36	0	1	2729

Notes: Individual survey data from ITANES 2001. First three variables are based on the answer to the question “Have you ever voted for the MSI?”, “Have your father ever voted for the MSI?”, “Have your mother ever voted for the MSI?”.

E.2 Municipality-level Variables

Log of the distance to the New Towns. The natural logarithm of the distance, in kilometers, between the centroid of the municipality and the closest New Town whose construction (i) has been ascertained; and (ii) took place during the Fascist period.

Electoral support for the Fascist Party in 1921. The Fascist Party took part to the 1921 elections as a part of larger political entities (i.e. lists). I measure the 1921 popular support for the Fascist Party by employing the share of votes for such lists. Such lists are indicated in the volume *Statistica delle Elezioni Generali Politiche per la XXVI Legislatura (15 Maggio 1921)*, Ministero dell'Economia Nazionale - Direzione Generale di Statistica, 1924; and in Leoni (1971). More specifically, the following political parties belong to the Fascists: *Fasci Italiani di Combattimento*, *Partito Fascista*. Moreover, as explained in (Leoni, 1971, p. 276) and the above-mentioned Ministry of Economics' volume, the Fascists were part of the lists *Blocco Nazionale* and *Alleanza Nazionale*. In addition, the Ministry of Economics' volume, at page XL, indicates that the Fascists were also in the lists that were characterized by the emblem of Fascism (the so called *fascio littorio*) in their symbol. By manually searching through the lists' symbols of the volume, I find that the following lists are characterized by the Fascist emblem: *Blocco Costituzionale*, *Blocco di Difesa Nazionale*, *Unione Nazionale* (but only in Roma, Padova, Treviso, and not in Catanzaro, Zara, Catania — the results do not depend on this finer distinction), *Fascio Democratico*, *Blocco Democratico*, *Concentrazione Liberale di Belluno*, *Concentrazione Liberale Udinese*, *Blocco Nazionale Triestino*, *Blocco Nazionale Istriano*. I measure the popular support for the Fascist Party in the elections of 1921 by employing the sum of the share of votes for all of such lists in each municipality.

Caloric Suitability Index. The index is a measure of suitability for agriculture based on the average potential agricultural output (measured in calories) across productive crops by cell of size 5'×5'. Data source: Galor and Özak (2014), Galor and Özak (2015). I calculate the average Caloric Suitability across the grid cells within each municipality using ArcGIS.

Suitability for wheat production. Wheat potential yield per hectare from the FAO GAEZ' v3 methodology with low inputs and rain-fed conditions. I calculate the average wheat suitability across the grid cells within each municipality using ArcGIS.

Malaria in 1870. Digitized map of malaria prevalence in Italy in 1870

from Torelli (1882), see figure 1. The variable takes value one if the centroid of the municipality is less than 5 kilometers away from malarial zones.

Distance to Major Urban Centers. distance between the centroid of the municipality and the closest provincial capital as of 2011 calculated in kilometers.

Market Access. For each municipality i , market access is given by $\sum_{j \neq i} \frac{Pop_j}{d_{i,j}}$, where Pop_j is the population in municipality j and $d_{i,j}$ is the distance between municipality i and j (Harris, 1954b).

New Fascist Province 1927. A dummy taking value one if the municipality is within one of the 17 provinces created by the Fascist Regime in 1927, Gorizia, Matera, Nuoro, Pescara, Pistoia, Ragusa, Rieti, Savona, Terni, Varese, Vercelli, Viterbo. Source: *Regio Decreto Legislativo del 2 gennaio 1927 n. 1*.

Malaria Suitability. Temperature suitability for *Plasmodium falciparum* transmission from Gething et al. (2011), averaged within the border of each municipality. The temperature data used was a time series across an average year (1950-2000) for every approximately 1km.

Median Elevation. Median elevation in the municipality calculated using ArcGIS software. Data source: Global 30 Arc-Second Elevation (GTOPO30).

Standard Deviation of Elevation. Standard deviation of elevation in the municipality calculated using ArcGIS software. Data source: Global 30 Arc-Second Elevation (GTOPO30).

Elevation range. Difference between the maximum and the minimum elevation in the municipality. Data source: ISTAT.

Distance to water. Minimum distance to the coastline and rivers.