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

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Abstract
This paper explores the link between infrastructures built by autocratic regimes and political values. In Fascist Italy (1922-43), Mussolini founded 147 "New Towns." I document that the New Towns enhanced local electoral support for the Fascist Party; and that the effect persisted through democratization and until recent times, enhancing local support for Italy's neo-fascist party. Survey data show positive effects on preferences for stronger leaders, for nationalism, and other extremist views. The findings suggest that authoritarian leaders may exploit public investment programs to induce a favorable view of their ideology, which persists across institutional transitions and over the long term.

Keywords: Infrastructures, Political Identity, Cultural Change, Autocracy, Voting.

JEL Classification: H54, N94, Z18.

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Nationalism, racial resentment, xenophobia, and preferences for strong leaders are widespread. In the U.S., for instance, more than 30% of respondents to the 2010 World Value Surveys say that "it would be "good" or "very good" to have a "strong leader" who doesn't have to "bother with parliament and elections" (Foa and Mounk, 2016). Such views are anything but new. They resemble the Fascist ideologies of the 1920s and 1930s, and so should recall memories of the disastrous experiences of those regimes, loss of freedom, and war. The persistent popularity of a rhetoric echoing such a dark past is puzzling.

The explanation may lie partly in the long-lasting impact of historical institutions on beliefs. But such an effect is ambiguous, ex ante. While institutions may complement beliefs (Alesina and Fuchs-Schundeln, 2007; Becker et al., 2016), they may also crowd out parental investment in transmitting those beliefs to their children (Lowes et al., 2017), so the effect of institutions on values is ambiguous. In this context, the empirical challenge in establishing the direction of causality compounds the difficulty of identifying the mechanisms by which historical institutions may affect beliefs.

This paper examines these issues by investigating the relationship between infrastructure built by the Italian Fascist regime and political beliefs.[1] Authoritarian leaders often exploit infrastructure to expand their popular support.[2] I explore the case of Mussolini's New Towns (*Città di Fondazione*) — a major infrastructural program running from 1922 until the early 1940s — and investigate whether it led to a more favorable view of Fascism and its ideology, possibly influencing the formation of political beliefs that persisted in the face of democratization and over the long run. Differences in the exposure to the infrastructures provide the ideal variation for empirical identification of a novel mechanism whereby historical institutions may have an enduring influence on political beliefs, which may persist via cultural transmission, in turn, casting new light on the persistent popularity of extremist, anti-democratic ideologies.

In line with the hypothesis, I find *(i)* that the foundation of the New Towns enhanced local electoral support for the Fascist Party at the onset of the regime; *(ii)* that this effect persisted through democratization, favoring the emergence and persistence of one of the largest neo-fascist parties in the West; and *(iii)* that the Fascist New Towns explain differences in current political and cultural attitudes that can be traced back to the Fascist ideology, including preferences for a strong leader, nationalism, and racial resentment.

When the Fascist Party came to power, a substantial part of the country consisted in swampland. An extensive program of land reclamation was instrumental for Mussolini to show the economic and technological competence of the regime. As the Party advertised, draining the swamps

[1] For an overview of the persistent effects of autocratic institutions, see Simpser et al. (2018). On the origins of autocracies, see e.g. Bentzen et al. (2017); Galor and Klemp (2017).

[2] See e.g. Geddes et al. (2018), p.133. Examples include the *Autobahn* in Nazi Germany (Voigtlaender and Voth, 2014), roads in Kenya (Burgess et al., 2015), the infrastructures for the 1980 Olympic games in the USSR (García and Magnúsdóttir, 2019), as well as the New Towns founded by the Swedish Crown (Cermeño and Enflo, 2019) and more recently in China.

was an achievement of the Fascist government that neither the Roman Empire nor the Papal State had been capable of. Reclamation entailed massive infrastructural investment that was unprecedented in the history of the country, including dewatering plants, canals, bridges, roads, and buildings. These infrastructures formed the New Towns.

The towns of Littoria, whose name was rendered into English as "Fascistville" (Snowden, 2008), and Mussolinia are two of the 147 New Towns built by the regime in Fascist Italy. The foundation of modern cities constructed on former swampland was a key motif of Fascist propaganda and resonated internationally (Ghirardo, 1989; Kargon and Molella, 2008). After the end of the dictatorship, despite legal restrictions and social stigma against fascist principles, the political landscape saw the emergence of the Italian Social Movement (*Movimento Sociale Italiano*, MSI), a political party advocating ideological positions directly rooted in the Fascist regime. This neo-fascist party, while a political pariah and never in government, enjoyed steady electoral support of around 5%. Its ideological roots and its limited influence on policy offer a unique opportunity to investigate the ideological legacy of Italian Fascism. In the cities founded by the regime, the fairly substantial electoral support for the MSI is associated with neo-fascist rallies, which are the norm rather than the exception.[3]

The empirical analysis uses a rich dataset at the level of Italian municipalities and at the individual level. Novel data on the location of the Fascist New Towns augmented with information digitized from primary sources on the historical map of the largest catchment area of the New Towns, as well as on the historical presence of malarial swamps — a key determinant of their location. These data are combined with a rich set of socioeconomic data from several censuses and detailed geographic information.

Support for the Fascists is measured by three sets of data. First, I use voting data to measure the electoral support for the Fascists in the two elections that took place before the institution of the dictatorship, in 1921 (the year before the initiation of the New Towns project) and 1924. Second, I investigate the footprint of the New Towns on voting choices after the demise of the dictatorship, gauged by the electoral support for the neo-fascist Italian Social Movement (MSI) in the eleven elections from the party's formation in 1948 to its dissolution in 1992. Third, I use contemporary individual surveys on political and cultural values from the Italian National Election Studies (ITANES), which ask about respondents' preferences for a stronger leader, their attitudes towards immigrants, electoral choices of the respondents and their parents, as well as other measures of preferences for fascism, nationalism, and racial resentment.

In line with the hypothesis, I document that areas near the Fascist New Towns exhibited larger increase in the electoral support for the Fascist Party between the elections of 1921 and 1924. The estimated coefficient is large. A 1-standard-deviation increase in proximity to the New

[3] "A day of ordinary extremism" was *La Repubblica*'s description of a neo-fascist rally in the former "Fascistville" (following the collapse of the regime the name was changed from Littoria to Latina), on 18 January 2019.

Towns is associated with an increase in the Fascist vote of 10% of the average share in 1924. Next I investigate the persistent effect of the intervention, finding that areas near the Fascist New Towns exhibited significantly more electoral support for the neo-fascist party several decades after the demise of Fascism itself. For example, in the elections of 1992 a 1-standard-deviation increase in proximity to the New Towns was associated with an increase in neo-fascist electoral support of 20% of the party's average share of the vote.

The Fascists may have chosen the location of the New Towns on the basis of preexisting popular support. This would be a concern if they had targeted places already exhibiting strong support. However, the election data for 1921, the year before the initiation of the New Towns project, indicate that the relevant areas were *less* supportive of the Fascists, which suggests that the estimated effect is a lower bound of the parameter of interest. The New Towns were built in former swamplands, so their location may have had an independent effect on political views. The dates of foundation show that the support for the Fascist Party increased only in the municipalities near the New Towns constructed just before the 1924 elections, and not in those near the towns founded just afterward, which suggests that absent the new towns Fascist electoral support would not have increased in those areas. Furthermore, if characteristics explaining the locations chosen had influenced political preferences, then the areas where towns were planned but not built should also exhibit greater support for the Fascists. Reassuringly, however, this is not the case: those places did not show greater support for the Fascist or neo-fascist party, thus further mitigating identification concerns.

Finally, I exploit the fact that a subset of the New Towns was built within a large catchment area (*comprensorio di bonifica*). I take advantage of the discrete nature of the border of the catchment area and find a discrete increase in support for the neo-fascist party precisely at the border cutoff: specifically, up to 4 percentage points more support in municipalities just inside than in those just outside the area. This is quite a sizable effect, given the party's national average vote of 5%. The spatial Regression Discontinuity identification assumption requires that there be no other relevant factors exhibiting a discrete change at the border. Robustness tests and placebo checks support this assumption.

Different channels may explain the effect of the Fascist infrastructures on voting outcomes long after the demise of the dictatorship. An influential body of works examines the effect of institutions on political values.[4] Besley and Persson (2019a) show that autocratic institutions can influence the popular prevalence of political values that are then transmitted across generations. While persuasion has been shown to have important effects on beliefs also in democratic contexts (DellaVigna and Gentzkow, 2010), Guriev and Treisman (2019) emphasize that authoritarian

[4] Theories on the linkage between institutions and culture include Tabellini (2008), who emphasizes the effect of institutions in providing incentives for parents to transmit norms of good conduct to their children, Bisin and Verdier (2017), who formalize a model of the joint evolution of institutions and culture, and Besley (2020), who theorizes the role of political institutions and common interests in the emergence of civic culture.

leaders take actions designed to show competence and enhance popular support. A view that finds empirical support in the context of the highway construction in Nazi Germany (Voigtlaender and Voth, 2014). I build upon this literature and advance the hypothesis that the Fascist New Towns influenced citizens' opinion of the technological and economic competence of the Fascists, fostering partisan identification and shifting beliefs towards Fascism (Ortoleva and Snowberg, 2015), which persisted across generations, despite democratization, via cultural transmission.

I test this hypothesis on survey data on political and cultural attitudes in recent times. Individuals near the New Towns built more than 70 years ago turn out to be more likely to be hostile to immigrants, to voice racial resentment, and to express preferences for fascists (but not other extremist parties or groups), for stronger leaders, and for nationalism — the central ideological pillars of the Fascist regime. The estimated link between New Towns and political attitudes is higher for individuals who actually lived under Fascism. And I find evidence that these political views were transmitted across generations from parents to children, in line with the vertical transmission cultural values (Bisin and Verdier, 2011).

During the Fascist period migration was severely restricted. However, politically motivated migration would be an explanation if the settlers of the New Towns were already in favor of the fascists. Yet, the data show that the settlers' areas of origin did not exhibit higher preexisting support. Nor was the increased support around the New Towns associated with diminished support in the areas of origin. The results indicate that settlers were not already in favor of Fascism. In addition, *(i)* the settlers did not locate right at the discontinuity employed in spatial RDD; *(ii)* excluding the New Towns themselves and their immediate vicinity, the effect of distance from the towns is still significant; and *(iii)* individual survey data show that controlling for migration the estimates are nearly unchanged. These results do not point to migration as the main mechanism, indicating the scope for belief change.

This research mainly contributes to three strands of the literature. First, by exploring a novel mechanism whereby autocratic regimes may affect political attitudes, it may reconcile divergent views on the connection between institutions and political preferences and beliefs. For instance, Shiller et al. (1992) find no systematic differences in individual attitudes in surveys of three former communist and three capitalist countries. This concurs with the potentially slow-moving nature of cultural attitudes compared to institutions, as discussed by Roland (2004). Alesina and Fuchs-Schundeln (2007), by contrast, show that the exposure to communism in East Germany did influence redistributive preferences. The present paper indicates the role of heterogeneous exposure to regimes' interventions in explaining these contrasting findings. Such a mechanism may also shed new light on the nature of the relationship between institutions and cultural traits. In particular Becker et al. (2016), using spatial regression discontinuity across the historical Habsburg border, find that within contemporary national borders towns located in the former Habsburg Empire now exhibit greater trust in their local government, which suggests that institutions stimulate beliefs that complement institutions themselves. By contrast,

Lowes et al. (2017) show that the exposure to state centralization in the Kuba Kingdom induced *weaker* rule-following norms, suggesting that in some cases institutions may crowd out the transmission of norms. Such contrasting findings point to the need to identify these mechanisms empirically. Exploring the public investment programs exploited by autocratic institutions to influence political attitudes, this paper suggests a mechanism that complements the literature on the interplay between institutions and culture (Tabellini, 2008; Belloc et al., 2016; Bisin and Verdier, 2017).

Second, in exploring the link between infrastructures and political attitudes, this paper provides novel evidence on the long-term influence of historical events on cultural and political attitudes.[5] For instance, Nunn and Wantchekon (2011) show that the traumatic experience of African slavery persistently decreased subsequent trust. Using variation across counties in the American South, Acharya et al. (2016) find that the experience of slavery shaped racial norms and political attitudes, which have persisted to the present day. Guiso et al. (2016) show that the exposure to self-government in the Middle Ages in certain Italian localities led to the formation of more civic capital in the long term. Voigtländer and Voth (2012) find that differential exposure to the Black Death in German villages was a factor in the prevalence of pogroms, which explain greater support for the Nazi party and other indicators of anti-Semitism six centuries later.[6] Schindler and Westcott (2017) find that the greater presence of African American soldiers in different British localities during World War II reduced racial prejudice. On the effect of historical shocks on beliefs, Bentzen (2019) employs subnational data for the whole world to show that natural disasters may strengthen religious beliefs. Giuliano and Nunn (2017) find empirical support for a class of models of evolutionary anthropology suggesting that changes in the environment across generations explain cultural change. This paper adds to this body of work by exploring a change in the environment due to infrastructural investment, complementing a growing set of studies of traumatic episodes. For instance, Narciso and Severgnini (2016), using individual and county-level data, find that the Irish famine of the 1840s influenced political attitudes and induced a greater likelihood of individuals' joining the Irish Revolution (1913-21). Fontana et al. (2016) find that the Italian municipalities most exposed to the Nazi occupation subsequently showed stronger support for the Communist Party. Fouka and Voth (2013) show that the memory of the massacres perpetrated by German troops in Greece in World War II was a factor in lowering German car sales in Greece during the 2009 financial crisis.

Third, linking political ideologies to exposure to the Fascist regime's infrastructures, the present paper contributes to the literature on the persistent effects on political beliefs of authoritarian indoctrination and repression. For instance, Voigtländer and Voth (2015) find long-lasting effects of Nazi school indoctrination on antisemitic beliefs; Xue and Koyama (2016)

[5] On the long-term consequences of historical events, see the survey articles by Nunn (2009, 2014); Spolaore and Wacziarg (2013). Events with short-run impact on cultural norms and ideology may also have important effects, for example influencing conflicts (Depetris-Chauvin et al., 2018).

[6] On the economic origins of anti-Semitism, see Becker and Pascali (2019).

show that political repression during autocratic rule had a persistent adverse effect on social capital. Thus, the paper provides an explanation for the persistent popularity of extremist ideologies, complementing Cantoni et al. (2019), who show that German municipalities now exhibiting political support for the far right also supported the Nazi Party in the interwar period.[7] Furthermore, while a large body of work has shown that infrastructure, and public spending more generally, can gain electoral support (Cinnirella and Schueler, 2017; Drazen and Eslava, 2010; Levitt and Snyder Jr, 1997; Manacorda et al., 2011; Huet-Vaughn, 2019; Voigtlaender and Voth, 2014), my findings suggest that this effect may also come through their influence on political attitudes.

1 Historical Background

Seemingly of little significance at the time, an event that occurred in Milan on 23 March 1919 would shape the history of the world. Previously expelled from the Italian Socialist Party (PSI) for his nationalistic stance in favor of intervention in the Great War, a journalist named Benito Mussolini formed a new political movement called the *Italian Fasci of Combat*. The *Fasci* were composed of people from different social classes and political views, united by the principles of war interventionism and nationalism (Leoni, 1971; Lyttelton, 2004). The elections of 1921 saw the new party's debut on the national political scene. Only one year later, Mussolini, with his followers, conducted a "march on Rome" to become prime minister. The consolidation of Mussolini's power came with the 1924 elections. After another year dictatorship was officially instituted and all the other parties outlawed.

For centuries, the Roman Empire had sought unsuccessfully to drain the malarial swamplands. By implementing a major land reclamation, "where Caesars had fallen short the Duce prevailed" (Kargon and Molella, 2008, p. 50). Before the Fascist regime, the attempts to drain the swamps failed mainly because they dealt only with the problem of the excess of water in the swampland itself. By contrast, the Fascist reclamation project intervened also in the nearby territories (Ramadoro, 1930). To reduce the excess water they undertook hydraulic engineering both in the flat lands covered by swamps and also in the nearby mountainous areas, reforestation, and rearrangement of rivers and canals for drainage. On these canals they built bridges, and then roads and buildings. These major infrastructural investments formed the New Towns.

Mussolini founded them with the objective of exhibiting Italy's power to the rest of the world and forging nationalistic sentiment and political support for the Fascist Party. The towns were populated with settlers recruited directly from areas with similar environmental and agricultural conditions — mainly the Veneto region (Pennacchi and Caracciolo, 2003; Protasi and Sonnino, 2003; Snowden, 2008; Treves, 1976). While the limited benefits of the sharecropper contract offered to the settlers (Treves, 1976, p.76) and the inhospitable environment

[7] For works emphasizing the link between economic forces and the recent rise of populism, see e.g. Colantone and Stanig (2018); Guiso et al. (2017); Halla et al. (2017); Rodrik (2018).

induced dissatisfaction and the desire of many to return home[8] (Ipsen, 1996, p. 107) "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).

After the demise of the dictatorship, the Italian political scene saw the emergence of the neo-fascist Italian Social Movement. Founded in 1946 by veterans of Mussolini's Italian Social Republic, the party, though politically marginal, was the fourth largest in Italy and "possibly the strongest neo-fascist Party in the advanced industrial countries" (Ferraresi, 1988). It was rooted in the ideology of the former regime: hierarchy, obedience to the leader, and nationalism.

The MSI's electoral support was relatively stable throughout the second half of the 20th century, with an average of about 5% of the vote, but it never formed part of any government coalition. Its ideological proximity with the Fascist regime, together with its limited role in policy implementation, provides a unique opportunity to investigate the ideological legacy of Italian Fascism in postwar politics and develop novel evidence on the persistence effect of the New towns on political attitudes.

2 The Data

This section describes the data used for the empirical analysis. They cover more than 7,000 municipalities over almost a century, combined with contemporary survey data for over 3,000 respondents and geographic information. To a substantial degree the historical data have been digitized from primary sources. What follows is a brief description of the main variables and sources. For greater detail, see Appendix E.

For decades the historical literature dealt chiefly with the land reclamation and infrastructural investments in the Pontine Marshes southeast of Rome, while research into the New Towns built in the rest of the country was limited. However, Pennacchi and Caracciolo (2003) and Pennacchi (2008) have now presented an inventory of the New Towns, that builds on archival sources and previous works, including Protasi and Sonnino (2003), as well as Mariani (1976); Nuti and Martinelli (1981); Fagiolo and Madonna (1994). The New Towns are defined as new urban settlements planned from their inception (Martinelli and Nuti, 1978; Pennacchi and Caracciolo, 2003). The inventory includes a total of 147 of them built over the study period, and another 15 were planned but not built because of the war (Protasi and Sonnino, 2003).[9]

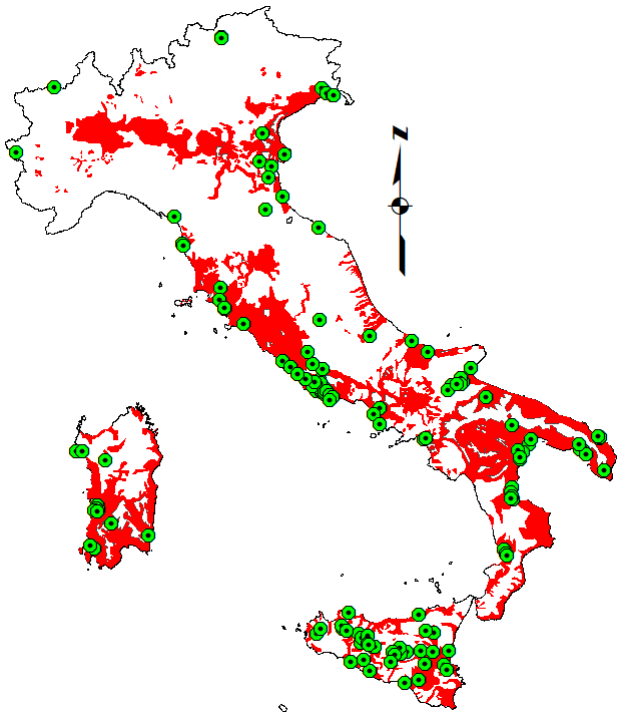
[8] It has been also argued that the New Towns were planned to prevent the creation of social networks between farmers (Ghirardo and Forster, 1985), in line with the objective of dissuading any organization of dissent (Ghirardo, 1996).

[9] It is not obvious which of the 147 should be considered as Fascist towns. For example, *Mussolinia* (now *Arborea*) was the first inaugurated (in 1928) and thus it is often considered to be the first New Town (Ipsen, 1996, p. 109). However, it was built on land reclaimed during the Fascist government (in 1924) where 6 New Towns were initiated in that same year (e.g. *Tanca Marchese* and *Sassu*). Thus, in order to prevent the Fascist propaganda to influence the definition used in this study, I consider New Towns as "Fascist" if they were completed over the fascist period: from 1922 until 1943. For greater detail on definition see Appendix E. For descriptive evidence of New Towns

The data on infrastructure location also include the historical map of the largest catchment area of the New Towns (comprensorio di bonifica) from the official records of the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (Tassinari, 1939). Reassuringly, as shown in the following, the empirical evidence based on these alternative sources is in line with the hypothesis.

Figure 1 shows the location of the towns together with the prevalence of malaria in 1870. Consistently with the literature, the figure shows that the presence of malarial swamps was a key factor in the location of the New Towns, and this is taken into account in the empirical analysis.

Figure 1: Malarial Swamps in 1870 and the Location of the Fascist New Towns



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

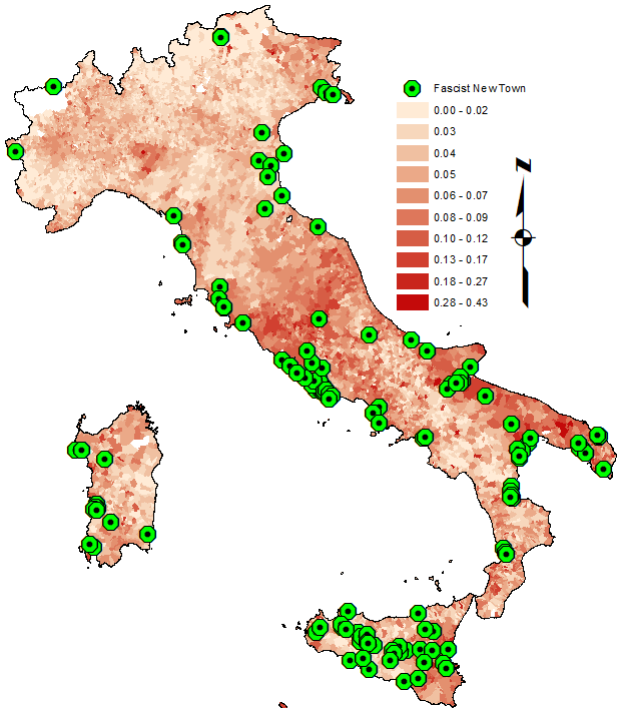
To investigate the enduring influence of the Fascist New Towns on political attitudes, I explore electoral outcomes and survey data. Electoral outcomes are the share of votes won by a party in the elections for the Chamber of Deputies. The parties considered are the Fascist Party, before and during the construction of the New Towns, and the neo-fascist party (MSI) for the period after the end of the dictatorship. The data are drawn from Corbetta and Piretti (2009).

The main analysis is based on outcomes for the period after the dictatorship. I employ voting records for more than 7,000 municipalities. Electoral outcomes are measured as the share of the vote for the neo-fascist MSI in the 11 general elections from 1948 (the first time the neo-fascists were admitted to the polls) to 1992. After 1992, the scandals that affected the Italian political environment caused the dissolution of most political parties in their original form, including the MSI.

location and construction dates, see Appendix C, Figures C6 and C7.

Figure 2 depicts the electoral support for the neo-fascist party in 1992, the last elections in which it participated, and the location of the New Towns, which were built up to seven decades earlier under Fascism. As is evident from the map, greater support for the MSI is associated with proximity to the New Towns. This is particularly evident on the west coast of the peninsula, where several New Towns were built, but also on the east coast, in western Sardinia, and the North-East.

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



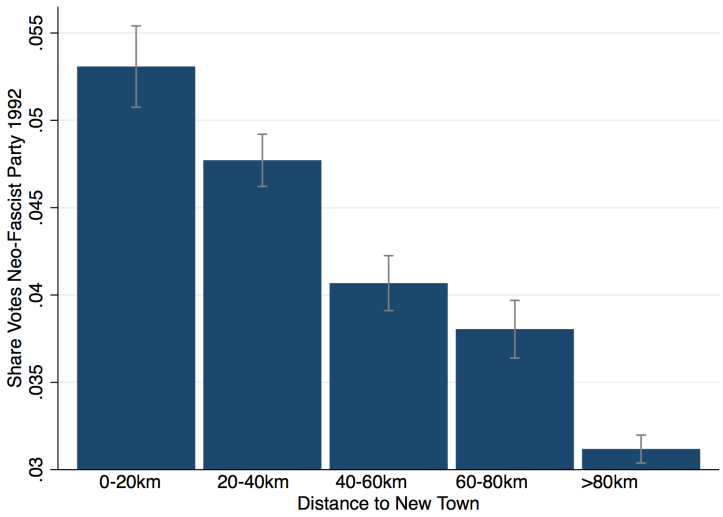
Notes: This figure shows the share of votes for the neo-fascist party (MSI) in 1992 and the location of the Fascist New Towns.

To better visualize the relationship between proximity to the New Towns and the neo-fascist vote, Figure 3 depicts the average neo-fascist vote at different distances from the nearest New Town. Consistently with the hypothesis, greater distance is negatively associated with support for the MSI in 1992.

I complement long-run results with evidence on the short-term effects of the New Towns. I use voting records for the 1921 and 1924 elections, which cover more than 2,000 municipalities. The Fascist Party took part in the 1921 elections as a part of larger political entities (electoral slates). These slates (lists) are indicated in the official electoral statistics[10] and in Leoni (1971), as explained in detail the Appendix E. Among these slates, the right-wing coalition called National Blocs, included the Italian Nationalist Association, the former Prime Minister Giolitti, and the Italian Fasci of Combat led by Mussolini. I measure popular support for fascist views in 1921 as the total vote for this right-wing coalition. As is shown below, the validity of this gauge

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

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 (MSI) in 1992 for different distance intervals to the nearest New Town. A similar diagram with a larger set of distance intervals is depicted in Appendix C, Figure C5.

is empirically supported by its strong positive correlation with the vote for the Fascist Party in 1924, when the Party took part independently, in its own name. In Appendix A.3, I show that the electoral results of 1924 are highly correlated with those of the free elections of 1921 and 1948. This suggests that heterogeneity in the 1924 voting share, despite the potential effect of Fascist intimidation, does reflect differences in electoral preferences for the Party.

In the empirical analysis I control for a host of observable characteristics to allay concerns about potential confounding factors. 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 of 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, population and market access before the intervention, and distance to the closest major urban centers.

In addition to voting outcomes, I measure differences in political attitudes and cultural values using individual survey data from the Italian National Election Studies (ITANES) for 2001, 2004, and 2008. The surveys ask several questions that can be used to measure the similarity of individual political preferences to Fascist ideology: measures of nationalism, preference for a stronger leader, for the fascists, for racists, measures of feelings against migrants and others. The surveys also provide an extensive set of demographic characteristics, information on migration, socioeconomic status of the respondent and the respondent's parents, and more.

3 Empirical Framework

To lay the basis for the analysis of the long-term effect of the fascist infrastructures on voting patterns and political values, Section 3.1 explores their short-run effect on electoral support for the Fascist Party. The main hypothesis of the long-run effects will be explored in Sections 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4.

3.1 New Towns and Support for the Fascist Party

Mussolini became prime minister in 1922, so there is no reason to believe that the New Towns should have had a positive effect on support for the Fascist Party before that date. Figure 4a shows a scatter plot of the electoral support for the Fascist Party in 1921 and the log of the distance to the closest New Town: the relationship between these two variables is clearly not negative and instead is actually positive. That is, the areas in the proximity of the New Towns displayed *less* support for the Fascist Party. Thus the Fascist government built the New Towns in areas where the support for the Party was weaker. Such a selection rule would, if anything, underestimate the link between the New Towns and Fascist support in later periods.[11] In contrast, Figure 4b shows that in 1924, in line with the hypothesis, the correlation between electoral support and distance from the New Towns is negative. However, only a subset of the New Towns was built before 1924, so if the relationship were due to the infrastructure, then only the those built before the 1924 elections should be factors in the estimated coefficient.

For 83% of the New Towns, information on the year when construction was initiated is available.[12] I investigate the link between the electoral support for the Fascist Party in 1924 and the minimum distance to the New Towns built in or before 1924. As depicted in panel 4c the estimated relationship is negative. In addition, the downward slope is steeper than in panel 4b, were all the New Towns are considered.

Table 1 shows more formally the empirical analysis 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 coefficient is negative and statistically significant for the relevant outcome, namely electoral support for the Fascist Party in 1924. The coefficient also indicates that the effect is substantial. A 1-standard-deviation increase in the log-distance is associated with lower support for the Party in 1924 equal to 24% of a standard deviation (6 percentage points).

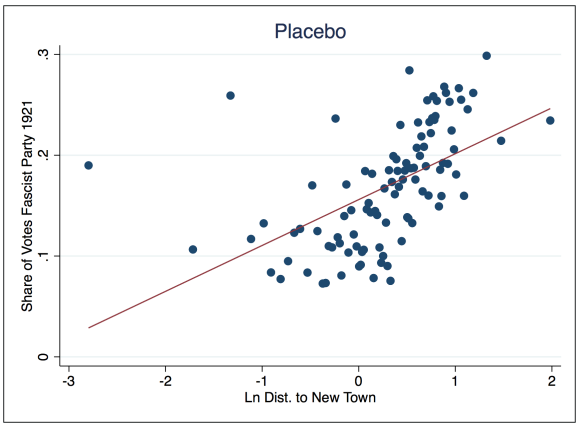
Column 3 restricts the computation of the distance measure to the New Towns already under construction in 1924. As hypothesized, the coefficient is negative and highly significant. As a falsification test, I employ as an explanatory variable the distance to the closest New Town

[11] Potential differences in voting patterns will be discussed in Section 3.1.1.

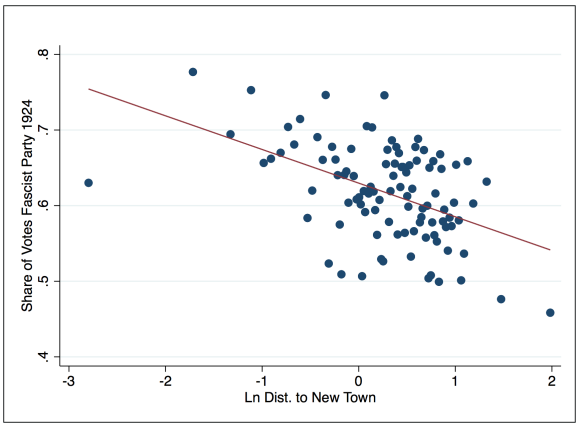
[12] Descriptive statistics on construction dates and location are provided in Appendix C, Figures C6 and C7.

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

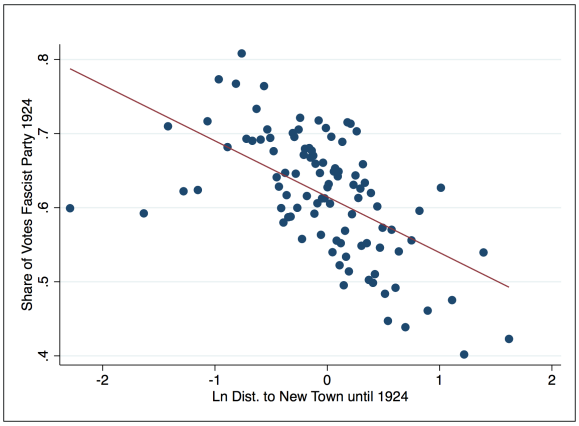
(a)



(b)



(c)



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

that was initiated after 1924, distinguishing in column 4 between the distance to the New Towns already under construction in 1924 and the distance to those initiated afterwards. Again, only the distance to the relevant New Towns is statistically significant.[13] Finally, column 5 regresses electoral support in 1924 on the minimum distance to New Towns planned but not built. Reassuringly, in this case the coefficient is statistically indistinguishable from zero, suggesting that the estimated coefficient is not due to confounding factors.

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		
	Placebo				*Placebo*
Ln (Dist. to NT)	0.2784***	-0.2402***			
	[0.093]	[0.077]			
Ln(Dist. $NT_{t<=1924}$)			-0.2858***	-0.2375***	
			[0.078]	[0.080]	
Ln(Dist. $NT_{t>1924}$)				-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 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 2 investigates the relationship between the distance to the New Towns that were already under construction and the share of votes for the Fascist Party in 1924, conditioning on the support in 1921 and other controls explained below. Column 1 shows the unconditional relationship between the two variables. The estimated coefficient is negative and statistically significant: a 1-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 support for the Party.

Column 3 takes into account the variables that the historical literature sees as the major determinants of the location of the Fascist New Towns. In particular, given that they were built after land reclamation of malarial areas, the disease may have induced higher support for the extreme political positions of the Fascist Party. Column 3 tackles this issue by controlling for a dummy variable that taking value 1 if the municipality was affected by malaria in 1871.[14]

[13] The negative sign of the coefficient for the New Towns built after 1924 is due to the New Towns for which the date of construction is unknown. While this coefficient becomes positive and insignificant when these New Towns are taken into account, the coefficient of interest remains negative and significant. See column 3, Appendix Table B7.

[14] The results are robust to using as a control for malaria the temperature suitability for the *Plasmodium falciparum*,

Furthermore, I control for market access in 1921 and distance to the closest major urban center (see Appendix E for variables 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, 2020), 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 not affected by these controls. Controlling for the size of the municipality, as measured by the logarithm of population in 1921, the coefficient remains negative and statistically significant (column 6). I correct inference by clustering standard errors at the provincial level.[15]

Column 7 controls for the change in the total number of votes between 1921 and 1924, which may have been also induced by migration to the new towns. The estimated coefficient is unaffected by this control.[16] Additional evidence of the limited role of migration is provided in Section 3.1.2.

Here we have seen that distance to the New Town is related to electoral support for the Fascists only when the project was already in being, not before. Moreover, only the distance to the New Towns that were already under construction (not those not yet initiated) is relevant to explaining the Party's electoral support in 1924. In what follows I analyze the timing of the construction of the New Towns and the relationship with Fascist support more closely.

3.1.1 The Timing of the Treatment

To introduce the empirical approach followed in this section, Figure 5 depicts a set of coefficients from two regressions. The squares are the estimated coefficients from a regression using as an outcome the share of votes for the Fascist Party in 1921 on a set of dummy variables taking value 1 if a New Town was initiated within 30 kilometers in each year from 1922 until

the predominant malaria parasite in Italy (Snowden, 2008), developed by Gething et al. (2011). See Appendix Table B8.

[15] Appendix Tables B11 and B12 demonstrate that results are robust to employing Conley (1999)'s standard errors with a 100 km-distance cutoff, where the choice of alternative cutoffs does not make any meaningful difference.

[16] The coefficient of interest is very similar even when restricting the sample to municipalities that did not exhibit an increase in the total number of votes between 1921 and 1924.

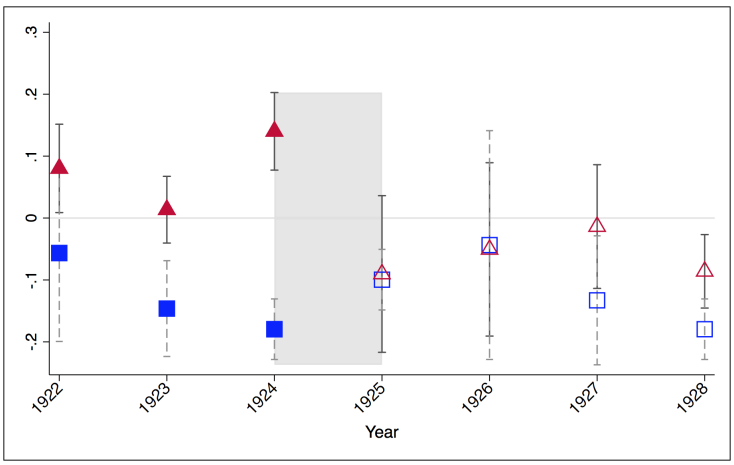
Table 2: The New Towns and the Electoral Support for the Fascist Party in 1924

Dependent Variable: Share of Votes for the Fascist Party in 1924							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Ln(Dist. $NT_{t<='24}$)	-0.2858***	-0.3159***	-0.2466***	-0.2488**	-0.2573**	-0.2517**	-0.2504**
	[0.078]	[0.075]	[0.079]	[0.094]	[0.106]	[0.103]	[0.103]
FP '21		0.1773***	0.1761***	0.1720***	0.1667***	0.1660***	0.1665***
		[0.061]	[0.054]	[0.056]	[0.054]	[0.053]	[0.053]
Observations	2,057	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	0.175
Malaria Controls	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Market Access Controls	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Geographic Controls	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Agricultural Controls	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ln Population 1921	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
$\Delta TotalVotes_{21-24}$	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes

Notes: Observations are at municipality level. Standardized coefficients are reported. See the main text and appendices for variables definitions and sources. The last column restricts the sample to municipalities that did not exhibit an increase in the total number of votes vetween 1921 and 1924. 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.

1928. The triangles are the coefficients from a similar regression but with the Fascist share of the vote in 1924 as outcome variable. Outcome variables are standardized and thus comparable. To get the appropriate control group, both regressions also control for a dummy indicating whether the construction of the New Town was begun in any year after 1928. The shaded area divides the estimated coefficients based on municipalities near the New Towns initiated before the 1924 elections (full symbols), from those near those built after that date (hollow symbols).

Figure 5: The Timing of the Treatment: Graphical Analysis



Notes: The figure shows estimated coefficients and 95% confidence intervals from two regressions. The squares are the coefficients from a regression of the share of votes for the Fascist Party in 1921 on dummy variables that take value 1 if the construction of a New Town was initiated within 30 kilometers in a given year. The triangles are the coefficients from a regression of the share of votes for the Fascist Party in 1924 on the same dummy variables. The regressions also include a dummy taking value 1 if a New Town was built within 30 kilometers in any year after 1928. The shaded area divides the estimated coefficients based on municipalities near the New Towns initiated before the 1924 elections (full symbols), from those near the New Towns built afterward (hollow symbols).

Three main elements emerge. First, full-colored squares for the years 1923 and 1924 tend to be below hollow squares in 1925 and 1926. Thus, not only were the New Towns built in places exhibiting low 1921 support for the Fascists; before the elections they were initiated in localities

exhibiting even weaker support, suggesting that the timing of the infrastructure investment was chosen to boost electoral support in 1924. Second, the full-colored triangles for 1923 and 1924 are above the full-colored squares. This vertical difference is in line with the estimates of Table 2, which only explores the change in electoral support. Third, this vertical difference is positive and statistically significant only for municipalities in the proximity of New Towns built in 1923 and 1924, not after.[17] This finding strongly supports the hypothesis that the increase in electoral support would not have taken place in the absence of the infrastructures. Furthermore, Appendix Figure C7 Panel (b) shows that no construction was completed in 1923 and 1924, which suggests that the initiation of the towns was sufficient to induce a more favorable view of the dictatorship in the local populations.

I now turn to a more formal analysis of the hypothesis by estimating the following regression model,

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

where $FP_{24,i}$ is the share of votes for the Fascist Party in 1924 in municipality i, $\mathbb{D}^{30km}_{(1923-24),i}$ is an dummy that takes value 1 if a New Town was initiated within 30 kilometers from the municipality in 1923 or 1924, while $\mathbb{D}^{30km}_{(1923-26)}$ takes value 1 if the construction started between 1923 and 1926.[18] To restrict the control group to municipalities where no New Towns were built within 30 kilometers, $\mathbf{X}$ includes a dummy taking value 1 if New Towns were built within 30 kilometers in any other year outside the interval from 1923 to 1926. In addition, depending on the specification, it includes electoral support for the Fascist Party in 1921.[19] The coefficient of interest, β, measures whether there is a significant difference in the difference between municipalities treated immediately before the elections (1923 or 1924) and the control group, versus those treated in 1925 or 1926 and the control group. The coefficient ϕ is an estimate of the differences in the average vote share for the municipalities in the proximity of the New Towns initiated in the years from 1923 until 1926, relative to the control group (see Appendix Section D). The results are illustrated in Table 3.

Column 1 of Table 3 shows the coefficients from estimating equation (1) using as an outcome 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 in the years 1923 and 1924 exhibited more than 65% of a standard deviation greater support for the Fascist Party than those exposed to construction immediately

[17] The positive differences observed later are not statistically significant and may be explained by the announcement effect which, as will be clear in the following, tends to produce an underestimate of the effect of the infrastructures.

[18] The 30-kilometer radius is chosen because it is the distance that maximizes the t-statistic of the coefficient of interest — see Table B16 and its graphical counterpart depicted in Figure C8 for alternative cutoffs.

[19] The difference in electoral support between 1921 and 1924 is not an appropriate outcome variable, because these two variables are not directly comparable (see Section 2).

after the elections. Interestingly, the estimated coefficient for ϕ is negative and statistically indistinguishable from zero, again suggesting that, if anything, New Towns were built in areas where support for the Fascists was low.

Column 2 shows that the estimated coefficient is higher when one controls for the Fascist vote in the 1921 elections. This 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-that is greater than that of the municipalities that would be treated in 1925 and 1926. Moreover, the statistical insignificance of the estimate of ϕ indicates that these municipalities exhibited no differential trend with respect to the control group. Column 3 excludes municipalities within a 10-kilometers radius from the New Towns. The coefficient is positive and significant, further suggesting that settling patterns in the towns are unlikely to explain the findings. Column 4 employs as a placebo outcome electoral support for the Fascist Party in 1921. The estimate of β is negative, again suggesting that the New Towns were initiated before the elections in areas where support for the Fascists was weak.

Table 3: The Timing of the Treatment: Regression Analysis

Dependent Variables: Share of Votes for				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
VARIABLES	Fascist Party '24			*Placebo* FP '21
$\mathbb{D}^{30km}_{(1923-24)}$	0.6573***	0.7313***	0.8486***	-0.5453**
	[0.167]	[0.187]	[0.179]	[0.249]
$\mathbb{D}^{30km}_{(1923-26)}$	-0.1792	-0.1338	-0.1540	-0.3341
	[0.160]	[0.179]	[0.178]	[0.257]
FP '21		Yes	Yes	
Dist.to NT$\geq 10KM$			Yes	
Observations	2,264	2,264	2,197	2,264
Adjusted R-squared	0.033	0.052	0.052	0.026

Notes: Observations are at municipality level. Each regression includes a dummy that takes value 1 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.

3.1.2 Migration and the New Towns Settlers

The Fascist regime ended Italian emigration (D'Amico and Patti, 2018) and imposed severe restrictions on internal migration (Bacci, 2015; Treves, 1980). To populate the New Towns, the new settlers were recruited directly. Recruitment was conducted predominantly in the Veneto region (Pennacchi and Caracciolo, 2003; Protasi and Sonnino, 2003; Snowden, 2008; Treves, 1976), which had a valuable medical advantage: a long history of malaria exposure, so that farmers from malarial areas there had experience in dealing with the disease, strategies of protection, and some acquired immunity (Snowden, 2008, p. 167). Given the limited data on migration patterns, I study differences in voting outcomes within Veneto between malarial and

non-malarial locations to capture potential differences in the political composition of the new town settlers (Appendix Table B6).

If malarial areas in Veneto exhibited strong previous support for the Fascists, then even if settlers had been selected randomly in malarial areas, they might have been more likely to favor fascist views. Instead, column 1 shows that in 1921 there were no systematic electoral differences between malarial and non-malarial places in Veneto.

Still, the settlers could have been selected based on support for the Fascists. If that had been the case, the migration of settlers from Veneto should have induced a smaller Fascist vote in malarial than non-malarial areas within Veneto. Given that the migration from Veneto started in 1921 (Treves, 1976), the decline in electoral support could have emerged already between 1921 and 1924. Column 2 investigates this aspect, taking as outcome the Fascist Party's share of the vote in 1924 and controlling for the share in 1921. The coefficient for malaria in that case is not statistically different from zero, suggesting that there was no decrease in the electoral support for the fascists due to emigration of the New Town settlers.

To consider the potential effect of migration in later periods, column 3 takes as outcome the share of votes for the neo-fascist party in 1948, controlling for the share in 1921. The regression also controls for distance to the closest New Town planned but not built (there was one in the region), which may have induced resentment and a decrease in support not due to migration. The estimated coefficient is not statistically distinguishable from zero. In view of the exceptionally weak support for the neo-fascist party in 1948, column 4 employs as outcome the vote share in 1953. Also in this case, the estimated coefficient is not statistically distinguishable from zero.

Overall, for what concerns migration as a possible explanation of the results, there are four sets of findings that are worth summarizing. First, the results of this section suggest that while New Town settlers may well have been chosen to maximize the probability of success of the project, they were not selected according to their political views. Second, Sections 3.1 and 3.2 show that the estimates are robust to excluding the New Towns themselves and their immediate vicinity, which were exposed to differential migration patterns. Third, the spatial RDD results of Section 3.2.1 show that the settlers did not locate right at the discontinuity, and thus cannot explain those findings. Fourth, survey data of Section 3.4 show that by directly controlling for migration the estimates are unchanged. Therefore, while politically or culturally motivated migration would be an interesting explanation (see e.g. Knudsen (2019) and Ochsner and Roesel (2020)) the findings of this study don't support this hypothesis as the only explanation of the effects of the fascist infrastructures.

3.2 New Towns and the persistence of Neo-Fascism

A number of works have shown that once political and cultural values are instilled they may be very persistent. Therefore, if the increased electoral support for the Fascist Party was

associated with an effect on political attitudes, one may expect the effect to have persisted even after the end of the Fascist regime, leading to persistent differences in voting choices. Here I explore this hypothesis by studying whether the Fascist New Towns can explain differences in the support for Italy's neo-fascist party more recently, when the regime was long gone. I then complement this analysis with Section 3.4, in which I explore the influence of the New Towns on measures of political attitudes.

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***	-0.2159***	-0.2012***	-0.2080***	-0.1773***	
	[0.050]	[0.058]	[0.054]	[0.054]	[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 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 regression of the share of votes for the neo-fascist party in 1992 on the log-distance to the closest New Town.[20] Column 1 shows the unconditional relationship between these two variables. As hypothesized, the coefficient is negative, statistically significant, and large. Specifically, a 1-standard-deviation increase in proximity to the New Towns is associated with a 20% reduction in voting support for the neo-fascists in 1992.

Column 2 takes into account the presence of malaria,[21] market access in 1921, and distance to the closest urban center (see Appendix E for definition of the variables 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, 2020). 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 not affected by these additional controls. Column 5

[20] Appendix Table B10 shows very similar results using as an outcome the votes for the neo-fascist party in 1948, the first elections in which the neo-fascist party was allowed to participate.

[21] Appendix Table B9 shows the robustness to using as a control the temperature suitability for malaria rather than the actual presence of the disease.

takes into account population in 1921 and in 1991. The coefficient is still of the hypothesized sign and statistically significant. Finally, column 6 takes as explanatory variable the distance to New Towns that were planned but not built. Consistent with the hypothesis, distance to these sites is not negatively correlated with the support for the neo-fascist party. Actually the estimated coefficient is positive, which may be due by resentment or by the effect of potentially confounding factors opposite in sign to the coefficient of interest.

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						
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
VARIABLES	OLS	OLS	OLS	OLS	OLS	OLS
Ln (Dist. to NT)	-0.2159***	-0.1166**	-0.2742***	-0.2568**		
	[0.058]	[0.048]	[0.067]	[0.120]		
NT within 30km					0.3734***	0.2420***
					[0.121]	[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 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.

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. The results are given in Table 5. Column 1 reports, for comparison, the coefficient of the baseline specification from Table 4, column 2, controlling 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.[22] The coefficient remains statistically significant, suggesting that the results are not driven by regional heterogeneity.

Migration is a possible explanation of the link between the New Towns and voting outcomes. For instance, people that migrated to them may have already been in favor of the Fascist ideology. As a first step in investigating the importance of this channel, column 3 excludes municipalities within 20 kilometers of the closest New Town. Within this sample differences in population growth potentially due to differential migration patterns are statistically indistinguishable from zero (see Appendix A.2). The coefficient remains high and statistically significant, thus not supporting migration as a predominant channel. Further steps in analyzing this issue include

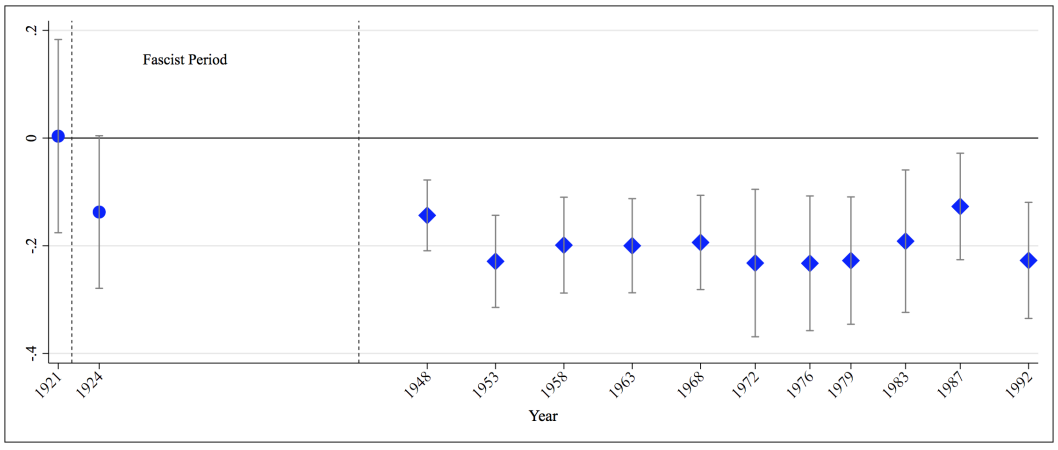
[22] The regions considered are at the NUTS 1 level and are: Northwest, Northeast, Central, South, and Insular Italy. Smaller regions are not appropriate, since as is shown in Table 5, the distance to the closest New Town becomes particularly relevant beyond a 20-km radius. In Section 3.2.1, I explore very local variation using a spatial regression discontinuity design, which minimizes concerns about potentially unobserved confounding factors.

Section 3.2.1, which shows that spatial RDD results are not driven by settlers locating at the discontinuity; Section 3.1.2, which shows evidence that New Towns settlers were not sepected based on preexisting support for the Fascists; Section 3.4, which uses individual-level information to control for migration. These analyses fail to indicate migration as a main explanation.

If the estimates were driven by areas far away from the New Towns, concerns on potentially unobserved confounding factors may arise. While this is partly taken into account with the use of log-distance, Column 4 further investigates this aspect 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 capturing some unobservable factors, column 5 employs as independent variable a dummy that takes value 1 if the closest New Town is within 30 kilometers. Consistent with the hypothesis, the coefficient is positive and statistically significant, meaning that municipalities within 30 kilometers of a New Town are characterized by greater support for the neo-fascist party, by 37% of a standard deviation. The coefficient is robust to the inclusion of regional fixed effects, as demonstrated in column 6. 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 towns and the evolution of the electoral support for the Fascist and neo-fascist parties.

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



Notes: This figure shows the estimated coefficients and 95% confidence intervals, from a set of regressions of the electoral support for the Fascist Party (1921, 1924) and the neo-fascist party (after 1946) on the distance to the closest New Town. The construction of the New Towns started in 1922. Each regression controls for malaria, market access, and agricultural suitability. See Appendix E and main text for variables definition and sources.

Figure 6 illustrates the estimated coefficients from regressing the electoral support for the Fascist Party (1921, 1924) or for the neo-fascist party (after 1946) on the distance to the closest New Town. While election-specific fluctuations may be explained by supply-side shocks (Cantoni et al., 2019), in line with the hypothesis of this paper distance to the New Towns is associated

with stronger support for the neo-fascist party from its onset (1948) to its dissolution (1992).

3.2.1 Spatial Regression Discontinuity Design

The New Towns were built in areas characterized by unfavorable geography. While Section 3.1 shows that the direct effect of geography on the increase in the Fascist Party's vote was unlikely, geography may still have influenced long-term voting outcomes. Given that distance to the New Towns may embed the effect of geography, this section explores a different econometric approach (and data) to investigate the effect of infrastructures between areas close in geographic proximity and thus very similar.

A key aspect of the Fascist land reclamation project was that, rather than only targeting the swamps, it extended to their surrounding areas. Draining the swamps without resolving the cause of their formation was considered the main reason why the previous attempts failed. Conversely, by extending canals, roads, and other infrastructures to surrounding areas, the Fascist Regime could ensure that swamps would not reform (Ramadoro, 1930).

In south-west Italy, constructions took place beyond the swamps and over a $4000km^2$ area: the so called *comprensorio di bonifica*. The foundation of the New Towns in this "catchment" area entailed the construction of more than 360 kilometers of roads, 20 kilometers of canals crossed by a number of bridges and dewatering plants (Tassinari, 1939). While geographic conditions vary continuously across the catchment borders, the location of the catchment's boundaries originated in a cost-benefit analysis, in turn, generating a plausibly exogenous spatial discontinuity in the allocation of infrastructures.[23]

I employ a spatial RD analysis across the catchment area's border for empirical identification of the effect of infrastructures on the support for the neo-fascist party. Figure 7 depicts a map of the study area and the study border, along with the location of the New Towns. While the swamps were located on coastal areas, the constructions took place also in the interior. The figure also shows that the segment adopted in the spatial RD design, which is chosen as it does not overlap with administrative or geographical boundaries. Appendix Figure C11 shows a map of the catchment borders and elevation, indicating the absence of discontinuity in geography at the study border, which is formally investigated in the following.[24]

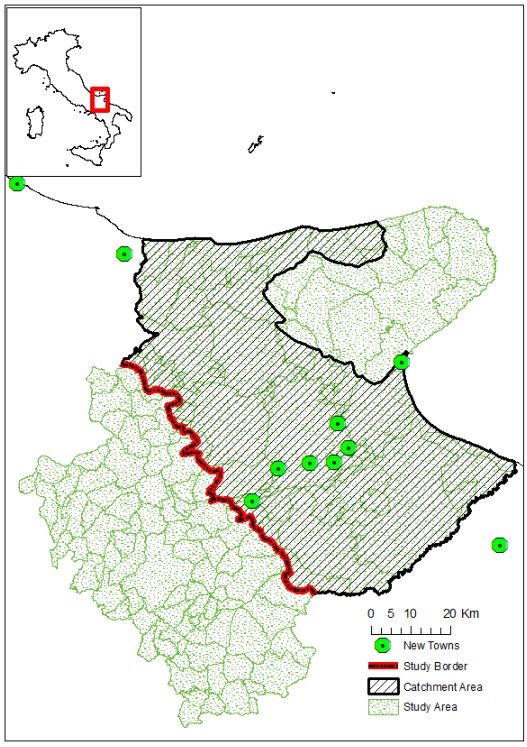
The model employed to estimate the spatial RD coefficients is the local linear regression model, the forcing variable being the distance to the study border (Keele and Titiunik, 2015; Cattaneo et al., 2019). The linearity assumption requires performing the analysis within a very small distance to the border (defined bandwidth). The identification assumption is based on the characteristics other than the outcomes that vary continuously at the border.[25] I investigate this

[23] Unfortunately, other *comprensori di bonifica* were smaller, thus not ideal for the empirical approach adopted here.

[24] Appendix Figure C11 also shows the other border segments, which overlap with geographic features such as a discontinuity in elevation (north-east segment), a valley (south-east segment), and a river (north-west segment) and thus are not ideal for a spatial RD design (Keele and Titiunik, 2015).

[25] Additionally, Appendix Figure C12 shows the absence of a discrete change in the density of observations at the

Figure 7: New Towns Catchment Area



assumption by studying whether observable characteristics that induced land reclamation and the location of the catchment border (Ramadoro, 1930) vary smoothly at the border. Table 6 shows these placebo estimates of the local linear regression approach to the spatial RD design at the study border.

The estimates given in Table 6 are calculated within the data-driven optimal bandwidth, which is chosen in automatic fashion to avoid ad-hoc decisions (Calonico et al., 2014). The first column reports the outcome variables, the second column the estimated coefficient with the local linear regression model, and the third column the conventional confidence intervals. The fourth and fifth columns report the conventional and bias-robust P-values.

The coefficients suggest that socioeconomic conditions, as proxied by population in 1921, vary smoothly at the border. This is indicated by the fact that the P-values are all above the conventional levels of significance, especially those based on bias-robust estimates, which display values that are far from the conventional levels of statistical significance. Importantly, also population in 1936 — after the construction of the towns in the area — vary smoothly at the border. Thus, suggesting that the settlers did not locate right at the discontinuity. This result suggests that the effect of fascist infrastructures on voting outcomes documented in the following may not be explained by relocation of the settlers in the area. As also suggested by the results presented in Sections 3.1.2 and 3.4.

study border, which is in line with the results from a formal test reported in the notes to the figure.

As shown in the table, also suitability for wheat and suitability for agriculture do not change discretely at the border. In other words, cross-border geographical differences that may have implied high returns for the regime from investing in those places are not statistically significant. Elevation and distance to water are important determinants of the presence of swamps. Reassuringly, the mean and the standard deviation of elevation, as well as of distance to waterways, vary smoothly at the border.

The presence of malarial swamps was one of the key elements of the land reclamation infrastructure. In the last row of Table 6, I show the absence of a discontinuity in malaria suitability. This is an important result, because the presence of malarial swamps was an important determinant of the towns' location but not of the location of the study border, thus strongly supporting the spatial RD identification assumption.[26] While these characteristics may vary significantly between treated and untreated areas, what is important in this setting is that they vary smoothly at the border. Overall, these results provide strong evidence in support of the identification assumption.

Table 6: Absence of a Discrete Change in Observable Characteristics: Spatial RD.

	RD Coefficient	Conventional St. Err.	Conventional P-value	Robust P-value
Population 1921	2942.681	1837.966	.109	.257
Population 1936	2547.18	1944.215	.19	.391
Suitability for Wheat	-26.625	108.963	.807	.864
Caloric Suitability Index	-.061	.109	.576	.971
Average Elevation	-79.464	48.679	.103	.357
Standard Dev. Elevation	-17.127	16.152	.289	.474
Distance to Waterways	1.833	3.551	.606	.82
Malaria Suitability	.012	.023	.599	.844

Notes: Observations are at the municipality level. The table supports the identification assumption of the spatial RD design by showing that geographic and socioeconomic variables measured before the treatment vary smoothly at the study border. The fourth and fifth columns provide the conventional and bias-robust P-values as per Calonico et al. (2014). Estimates are calculated with the optimal bandwidth.

Having shown evidence in support of the identification strategy, Table 7 investigates the presence of a discontinuous increase in the vote share for the neo-fascist party across the study border. Panel A gives the estimates from the linear local regression analysis. For completeness, Panel B gives the estimates based on a second-order local polynomial.

The estimate for the 1992 elections in panel A indicates that municipalities just inside the catchment gave 4 percentage points more of the vote to the neo-fascist party than those just outside. The estimated coefficient is statistically significant at least at the 5% level both with the

[26] As is shown graphically in Appendix Figure C13, the 1870 malaria dummy takes value zero in the proximity of the cutoff; that is, it exhibits insufficient variation around the cutoff and cannot be used as an outcome in the spatial RD design, so I apply the widely used standard of temperature suitability for the *Plasmodium falciparum* (Gething et al., 2011), which was the predominant malaria parasite in Italy (Snowden, 2008). As a robustness check, in Appendix Table B8 I employ this control variable also in the specifications that use distance to the New Towns as a variable of interest.

conventional and with the bias-robust p-values. Furthermore, it is large, equal to the party's average percentage in the elections that year (descriptive statistics are reported in Appendix Table E18). Note that the estimate is within a 17-kilometer bandwidth: that is, municipalities inside the catchment area within 8.5 kilometers of the study border are compared to those up to 8.5 kilometers outside the area. The small distance from the cutoff within which the municipalities are located, along with the lack of discrete changes in observable characteristics (Table 6), strongly supports the causal interpretation that the coefficients reflect the impact of the fascist infrastructures on support for the neo-fascist party.

The estimated coefficients for other elections too are positive and highly significant.[27] Panel B depicts the estimated coefficients with a quadratic polynomial. Apart from 1958, the estimates are very similar to the foregoing, or even slightly larger. Having non-linear specifications allows a larger sample (i.e. a broader bandwidth), which typically improves efficiency, at the cost of including observations that are further away and thus less comparable. For this reason, this is not my preferred specification, but in any case it is reassuring to see that the estimates are robust to this alternative specification.

Figure 8 displays several RD plots to visually investigate the presence of a discontinuity at the study border. For ease of visualization, each panel plots bins of data with average vote shares for the neo-fascist party against distance to the study border in kilometers, as well as a linear fit of the underlying data (for a non-linear fit, see Appendix Figure C14). Observations on the right-hand side of the border represent municipalities inside the catchment area. The panels show that there is a significant increase in electoral support for the neo-fascist party exactly at the cutoff.

Figure 9 shows the spatial RD coefficients for all the elections ordered by year. The coefficient is positive and statistically significant for most of the elections. The years when it is not statistically distinguishable from zero may be explained by election-specific conditions. For instance, in the aftermath of the war very strong social stigma attached to any expression of fascist ideology, which may explain why the coefficient for 1948 elections is statistically indistinguishable from zero. In line with this interpretation, the neo-fascist vote in 1948 was just 2%, compared with almost 6% in 1953. Overall, the positive effects estimated with the spatial RD design strongly support the hypothesis of long-term consequences of the infrastructure investment of the New Towns on voting choices.[28]

The findings presented in this section strongly corroborate a causal interpretation of the

[27] Given the sample size, outliers may confound the estimates and have accordingly been removed. The outliers analysis is depicted graphically in Appendix Figure C15 and explained in detail in the notes to the figure.

[28] As a falsification test, it would be ideal to run the same empirical analysis using as placebo outcomes the electoral support for the Fascists before the construction of the New Towns. Unfortunately, there are no observations in the study area for the 1924 elections, and only 9 for 1921. Nevertheless, in the Appendix Section B.1 I employ a broader definition of the study area and study border to perform such a placebo test with the 1921 elections data, which reassuringly and in line with the hypothesis exhibit no effect on pre-treatment voting outcomes.

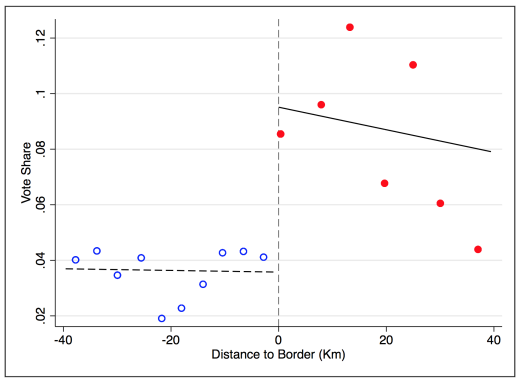
Table 7: The New Towns and the Votes Share for the Neo-fascist Party: Spatial RDD.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Dependent Variable:	Share of Votes for Neo-fascist Party in year:					
	1992	1983	1979	1968	1958	1953
	Panel A: *polynomial of order one*					
RD Estimate	0.0421	0.0267	0.0267	0.0221	0.0299	0.0464
Conventional Std. Error	0.018	0.011	0.008	0.008	0.014	0.017
Conventional p-value	0.022	0.013	0.001	0.006	0.034	0.006
Robust p-value	0.017	0.053	0.003	0.015	0.078	0.003
Observations	252	252	245	222	233	239
Bandwidth KM	17.351	19.906	15.776	13.466	27.144	11.395
	Panel B: *polynomial of order two*					
RD Estimate	0.0530	0.0324	0.0278	0.0288	0.0291	0.0764
Conventional Std. Error	0.021	0.013	0.010	0.010	0.026	0.030
Conventional p-value	0.011	0.014	0.005	0.006	0.258	0.010
Robust p-value	0.015	0.027	0.013	0.010	0.289	0.013
Observations	252	252	245	222	233	239
Bandwidth KM	18.989	19.147	21.310	17.157	19.164	23.088

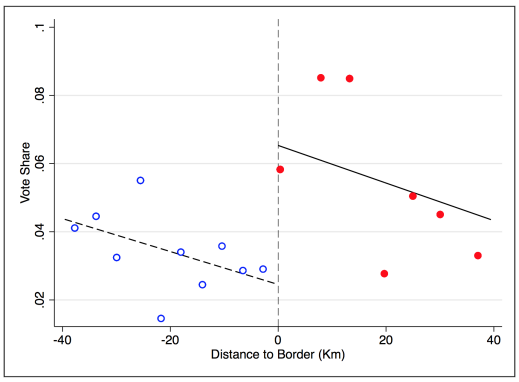
Notes: Observations are at municipality level. The table displays the estimates of the spatial regression discontinuity specification. Each column employs as an outcome the share of votes for the neo-fascist party in the relevant year. The top panel employs a local linear regression model. The bottom panel employs a local quadratic regression model. Estimates are based on the optimal bandwidth (Calonico et al., 2014), which is reported in the table for each outcome and each specification. Conventional standard errors are reported. Conventional and bias-robust p-values are reported.

Figure 8: The New Towns and the Neo-fascist Party: Regression Discontinuity Plots

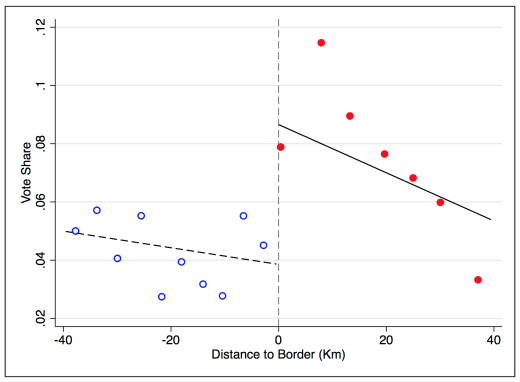
(a) *Votes Share in 1992*



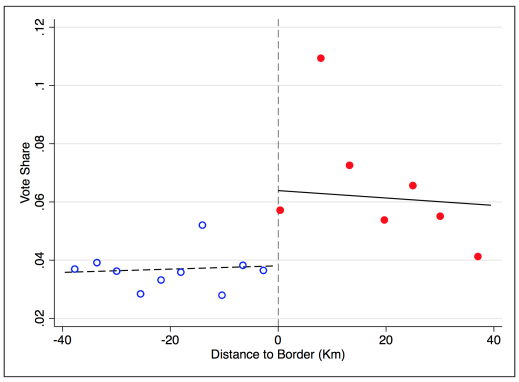
(b) *Votes Share in 1987*



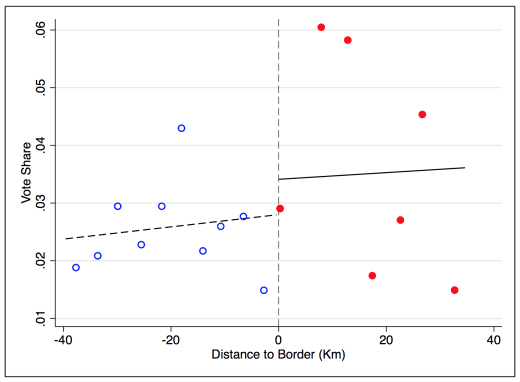
(c) *Votes Share in 1983*



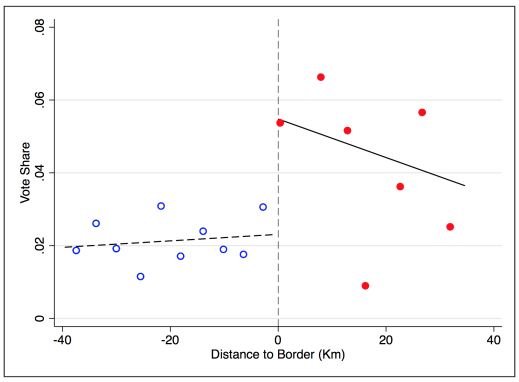
(d) *Votes Share in 1979*



(e) *Votes Share in 1968*

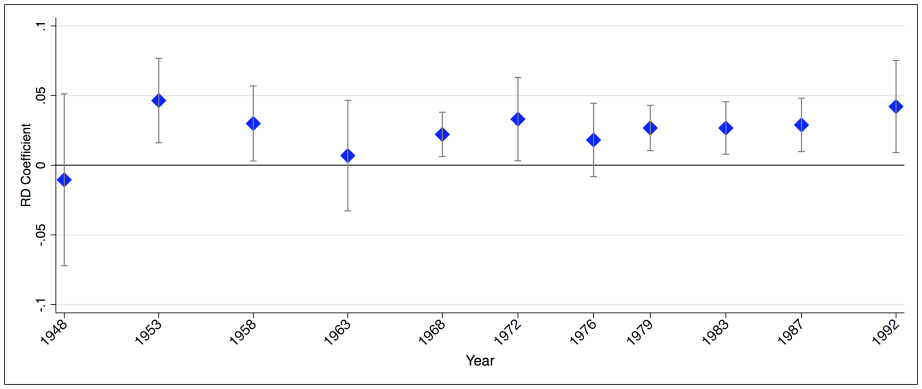


(f) *Votes Share in 1958*



Notes: The figures show the discontinuity in electoral support for the neo-fascist party at the border of the New Towns catchment area. The x-axis depicts distance to the cutoff in kilometers (positive within the area and negative outside it). Diagrams are qualitatively similar when a quadratic fit is used, as shown in Appendix Figure C14. For ease of visualization and consistency with the empirical analysis, plots are drawn within a small distance (40 kilometers) to the cutoff.

Figure 9: Spatial Regression Discontinuity Estimates by Election



Notes: The figure shows the estimated coefficients and 90% confidence intervals from a set of spatial regression discontinuity regressions employing as cutoff the study border of the New Towns catchment area and as outcomes the share of votes for the neo-fascist party in each elections.

relationship between the fascist infrastructures and electoral outcomes over the long term. They also show that these effects are not explained by the settlers, and point to the importance of benefiting from the infrastructures as a key element in the impact of the New Towns.

3.3 Exacerbating and Mitigating Factors

The New Towns built by the Fascist government can explain differences in voting patterns well beyond the end of the dictatorship, right up to quite recent times. The question is what mechanisms produced this persistent link. While various and possibly complementary channels may be at work, which may be investigated with various data and identification strategies, it will be of interest to cast light on some of these aspects empirically.

3.3.1 New Communities and the Size of the New Towns

By creating new communities the Fascists may have left a long-lasting cultural footprint in those places. This mechanism, which is in line with the hypothesis that public resources can be exploited by autocratic regimes to influence political support, may explain the estimated effect of distance if municipalities near the New Towns were exposed to the diffusion of political and cultural values from those communities. If this is the case, then larger communities in the New Towns may have led to larger electoral support for the neo-fascist Party. But large population in the New Towns may also be correlated with the size of the infrastructure investments, which may have independently induced a more favorable view of the Fascists in the neighboring communities. Appendix Table A1 investigates these mechanisms.

I employ population in the closest New Town to measure the size of the community in the New Town. Due to limited data, size of investment is proxied by the number of years it took to build the closest New Town. I find that the estimated effect of distance to the New Town is greater in places where construction took longer, which points to the effect of the infrastructure investment as a functioning mechanism. The interaction with population of the closest New

Town is insignificant, possibly because under Fascism any manifestation of dissent was severely punished and after the end of the dictatorship canvassing or explicitly supporting fascist ideology was illegal, which may have induced those values to diffuse through other channels rather than spatially.

Nevertheless, the recent loosening of these legal constraints made the presence of neo-fascist associations common knowledge. I explore as a measure of the diffusion of fascist ideology, the headquarters location of a nationwide neo-fascist association: *Casapound*. If the estimated effect of the New Towns functioned through the creation of fascist social capital in the New Towns communities, their effect may have been transmitted via neo-fascist associations (Satyanath et al., 2017), which may be still present today. Appendix Table A2 shows that neo-fascist headquarters are not located exactly in former New Towns (Column 1-3), not directly supporting the fascist social-capital channel in the New Towns communities. Nevertheless, in line with the hypothesis, the table shows that the presence of *Casapound* headquarters is negatively related with distance to the towns (Column 4). In turn, further suggesting that the estimated effect of distance to the New Towns goes beyond the New Towns communities themselves, influencing political views also in their vicinity, which in turn persisted through horizontal cultural transmission (for instance, via neo-fascist association) as well as vertical transmission inside the family (explored in Section 3.4.1).

3.3.2 New Markets, Local Institutions, and Agricultural Specialization

Over the Fascist period, citizens in the proximity of the New Towns that also experienced a rise in living standards — even if not necessarily induced by Fascism — may have been more likely to be impressed by the economic and technological competence of the regime. I explore this interaction of exposure to the technological innovation embedded in the New Towns with the perceived rise in living standard by interacting distance to the towns with the change in market access over the relevant period.[29] In line with the hypothesis, in column 1 of Appendix Table A3, I show that the effect of proximity to the New Towns on the support for the neo-fascist party is stronger where the increase in market access is greater. And in Appendix Section A.1, I show that this interaction term is statistically insignificant in all periods before the Fascist regime.

The strength of local Fascist institutions in the New Towns may explain the finding by virtue of a supply-side effect. For instance, Fascist leaders may have captured local power, influencing voting patterns even after the end of the dictatorship.[30] This mechanism may lead the effect of proximity to the New Towns to be larger in the new provinces created outright in 1927, given that local government there was created and administrators directly appointed by the Fascist regime (Sergi, 2011). I investigate this issue in column 2 of Appendix Table A3, finding that the interaction between distance to the New Towns and the Fascist provinces is not statistically

[29] On the link between infrastructures and market access, see e.g. Donaldson and Hornbeck (2016).
[30] Empirical evidence of elite capture in Soeharto's regime is studied in Martinez-Bravo et al. (2017).

different from zero, which suggests that the findings depend mainly on the hypothesized demand-side mechanism. The effect of the New Towns may differ based on specialization in agricultural vis-à-vis manufacturing sectors. To capture exogenous characteristics that may explain differential specialization patterns, columns 3 and 4 explore interactions with suitability for wheat production and for agriculture, respectively. The statistical insignificance of the interactions terms indicates that the results are not explained by channels of agricultural specialization or by wheat specialization and the "battle for grain" campaign (Carillo, 2020).

3.4 The Fascist New Towns and Political Attitudes

The investment undertaken in building the New Towns may have shaped political attitudes toward a more favorable view of the Fascist government and its political creed, ultimately influencing voting choices even after the demise of the dictatorship. While the estimated effects on voting behavior are in line with this hypothesis, four kinds of evidence would constitute strong support for an effect also on beliefs. First, neo-fascist voting preferences linked to the infrastructures could persist via a mechanism of cultural transmission. Second, individuals near the Fascist New Towns should display preferences in favor of the fascists as such. Third, they should exhibit political opinions that are close to Fascist principles. Fourth, the results should not be explained by individual migration patterns. In the following, I explore these hypotheses with rich individual-level survey data.

3.4.1 Neo-Fascist Voting Preferences and Transmission

The survey ITANES 2001 includes questions on whether the respondent has ever voted for the neo-fascist party, which I employ to cross-validate the results across municipalities.[31] Importantly, the survey also reports the voting behavior of the respondent's parents, which I use to consider the inter-generational transmission of voting choice. The results are illustrated in Table 8.

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

Column 2 controls for a dummy that takes value 1 if the individual is in the same region as the father was when he was 14 years old. If the estimated coefficient were entirely driven by migration towards (or from areas near) the New Towns, then the introduction of this control should annihilate the estimates. In contrast, the comparison between column 1 and column 2

[31] In 2001, the neo-fascist party had gone out of existence, so the analysis is restricted to respondents that were of voting age (18) in 1992 — the last year the party took part in the elections.

Table 8: New Towns and the Persistence of Neo-Fascism. Individual-Level Analysis.

Dependent Variable: Ever voted for the neo-fascist party (2001)							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
				Pr(Yes)			
VARIABLES						Mother	Father
Ln (Dist. to NT)	-0.0208*	-0.0242**	-0.0258**	-0.0271**	-0.0211*	-0.0122*	-0.0148*
	[0.011]	[0.011]	[0.011]	[0.011]	[0.011]	[0.006]	[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
Mean Outcome	0.157	0.157	0.157	0.157	0.157	0.0455	0.0831

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 provincial capital, a dummy for the presence of malaria in 1870, a measure of market access in 1921. Migrant dummy takes value 1 if the respondent is in the same region where 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 father was employed when the respondent was 14 years old, and a set of dummies for the sector in which the head of the household is employed. The neo-fascist party took part in 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.

shows that, if anything, the estimated coefficient increases in magnitude (in absolute value), minimizing the possibility of migration as a main mechanism.

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 these potentially confounding factors into account, column 3 introduces a set of individual controls: age, years of education, gender, an indicator for married or not, number of children, an indicator variable for employed, and a set of indicator variables for salaried, self- or atypical employment. The introduction of these individual controls further improves the estimated coefficient, suggesting that individual characteristics, if anything, may bias the coefficient towards zero.

The sector in which the respondent is employed may affect the propensity to support the neo-fascist party independently of the presence of the New Towns. Similarly, the sector of the parents' employment may determine cultural aspects that may influence the political propensities of the respondent. Column 4 controls for a set of indicator variables: sector in which the respondent is employed (agriculture, manufacturing, services, public administration), the sector in which the head of the household is employed, and the sector in which the father was employed when respondent was 14 years old (only available in the waves of 2001 and 2004). 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 restricts the sample to individuals who are in the same region in which their father was at the age of 14. Reassuringly, the estimated coefficient holds despite the reduction in the number of observations. This further suggests that the effect of the infrastructures goes beyond the potential effect of migration.

Column 6 employs as an outcome an indicator variable that takes value 1 if the respondent's mother ever voted for the neo-fascist party; column 7, if the respondent's father ever did. Interestingly, both coefficients are of the expected sign, in line with the hypothesis that proximity to the Fascist New Towns influenced political preferences of the parents that were then transmitted to children inside the family. The estimated coefficient for the mother (column 6) suggests that a 1-standard-deviation increase in log-distance to the town is associated with 1.22 percentage points lower probability of the respondent's mother ever voted for the neo-fascist party, roughly 27% of the mean. For the father the coefficient is 18% of the mean, so the estimated size of the effect for the mother is almost twice as great. This finding points to the importance of the mother in the socialization of the children.

While other channels of cultural transmission may also be important, the institutional setting, with its limitations on the transmission of fascist values outside the family, along with the empirical evidence shown, suggests that vertical transmission (i.e. from parents to children) was an important channel of persistence of the cultural footprint of the New Towns. Importantly, these results hold after controlling for migration or even excluding migrants altogether, suggesting that cultural change is a key mechanism, in line with findings in other contexts (Schindler and Westcott, 2017).

3.4.2 Preferences for the Fascists

I explore differences in preferences for the fascists via the survey 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. What do you think, for example, regarding the fascists?" This same question is asked for other groups: communists, racists, Muslims, homosexuals, and others.[32] The answer to the question embeds preferences for fascism together with preferences for giving the right to expression and demonstration. In fact, as shown in Appendix Table E20, despite the significant differences in political views between some of these groups, the answers to the question across groups are positively and significantly correlated. However, 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.

Ideally, in order to isolate preference for the fascists, one should account for individual preferences in favor of freedom of expression in general. I tackle this issue by employing as an outcome the answer to the question on whether the fascists should have the right to expression,

[32] The other groups are: Those expressing contempt of the President of the Republic; contempt of the Pope; those in favor of the secession of the North from Italy. For more information on the data, see Appendix E.

controlling for the answers to the same question for each of the other groups. Given that some are characterized by political attitudes related (positively or negatively) to fascism, controlling for all other answers is particularly conservative. Furthermore, given that the respondents are comparing extremist groups, they may be less likely to under-report, potentially underestimating preferences for the fascists. Table 9 illustrates the results.[33]

Column 1 uses as outcome whether the fascists should have freedom of expression, controlling for the answer to the same questions for each of the other groups. As hypothesized, the coefficient is negative, suggesting that respondents in the proximity of the New Towns are more likely to support fascists than any of the other groups.

Columns 2-8 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 fascists). None of the coefficients from columns 2 to 7 is statistically significant. The coefficient in column 8 is positive and significant: here the outcome variable is the answer to the question whether people who want the secession of the North from the rest of Italy should be allowed free expression. Thus, low values indicate stronger preferences for national unity. The positive and statistically significant coefficient shows that in proximity to the New Towns respondents are less likely to support the secession of the North from the rest of Italy, showing greater support for national unity — a central element of the fascist ideology.[34] The table supports the hypothesis that the New Towns influenced preferences for fascists.

In the last period of the dictatorship, the Fascist regime also embraced and espoused racism and anti-Semitism. These views may still be present in the proximity of the New Towns. However, column 5 in Table 9 shows that, controlling for the support for the neo-fascist group, the respondents close to the New Towns do not seem to favor racists. Nevertheless, if the New Towns positively affected racist views through preferences for neo-fascists, then the removal of the control variable that captures such preferences should make the coefficient negative and significant. Remarkably, this is indeed the case (Appendix Table B13).

3.4.3 Persistence of Fascist Values

I explore differences in political opinions and vicinity to 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 for a strong leader in politics. Table 10 investigates this hypothesis. Column 1 takes as outcome the answer to the question on whether the country needs a strong leader (higher values of the outcome indicate stronger agreement). The coefficient is negative

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

[34] The estimated coefficient in column 8 of Table 9 is statistically significant despite the fact that the regression controls for a measure of preferences for the fascists. This finding can be explained by a greater propensity of respondents to reveal preferences for national unity than for fascism.

Table 9: New Towns and Preferences for Fascism

Dependent Variable: Should Have the Right to Publicly Manifest (2004)								
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
		Other Groups						
VARIABLES	Fascists	Communists	Muslims	Homosexuals	Racists	Against the President	Against the Pope	Divide North from South
Ln (Dist. to NT)	-0.0395***	0.0181	0.0027	0.0160	-0.0152	0.0124	-0.0174	0.0638***
	[0.013]	[0.011]	[0.012]	[0.012]	[0.013]	[0.011]	[0.012]	[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. Municipality controls include the log of population in 2001, distance to the closest provincial capital, a dummy for the presence of malaria in 1870, a measure of market access in 1921. Migrant FE is a takes n value 1 if the respondent is in the same region as 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 employment. 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 dummies for the sector in which the head of the household is employed. See the main text and appendices for variable 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.

and significant, suggesting that respondents farther away from the New Towns are less likely to prefer stronger leaders.

The regime promoted the ideological principles of nationalism and also racism. Columns 2 and 3 employ as outcomes the answers to the questions whether immigrants are a threat to national culture/identity and employment, respectively. Higher values of the outcome indicate stronger agreement. In line with the hypothesis, both columns display negative and significant coefficients. Taken together, they indicate that proximity to the Fascist New Towns is associated with less tolerance for migrants and thus greater nationalistic sentiment.[35] While information on migration patterns is not available in the data employed in 10, these findings provide further evidence of the channel through which the fascist infrastructures persistently affected political and cultural values.

Table 10: New Towns and Political Attitudes. Individual-Level Analysis.

	(1)	(2)	(3)
	Stronger	Immigrants are a Threat to	
VARIABLES	Leader	Identity/Culture	Employment
Ln (Dist. to NT)	-0.0463***	-0.0681***	-0.0788***
	[0.015]	[0.023]	[0.023]
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 coefficients are the average marginal effects from an OLS regression weighted using survey weights. Municipality controls include the log of population in 2001, distance to the closest provincial capital, 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-employment, and atypical employment. 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.

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

The effect of the New Towns on political attitudes and beliefs may be stronger for population cohorts who actually experienced life under Fascism. For instance, the direct experience of the foundation of the New Towns may have instilled a favorable memory of the Fascist dictatorship that has persisted until the present day. Such an effect may also be due to indoctrination at school, which one cannot exclude having been stronger in the proximity of the Fascist towns. In the following, I explore these hypotheses.

Table 11 examines preferences for fascism by the same approach as Table 9. In column 1, I report for comparison the result from column 1 of Table 9. In column 2, I interact the

[35] The link between nationalism and attitudes to immigration is also considered in Besley and Persson (2019b).

distance to the closest New Town with the dummy "Lived under Fascism", which takes value 1 for respondents born before the end of the Fascist regime (1944). In line with the hypothesis, the coefficient of the interaction term is negative and significant, meaning that the link between New Towns and preferences for fascism is stronger among people who actually lived under the Fascist dictatorship. This effect may be driven by the direct effect of the New Towns, or possibly by stronger Fascist indoctrination at school 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-Age in Fascism", which takes value 1 for respondents aged 6 to 13 (the compulsory schooling age at that time) during the Fascist regime. The coefficient is negative but statistically insignificant.

Column 4 regresses both the foregoing interaction terms at once. Interestingly, the coefficient of the interaction term with "Lived under Fascism" increases in magnitude and statistical significance, whereas that of the interaction with "School-Age in Fascism" changes in sign and remains statistically insignificant. This result does not support the hypothesis that indoctrination at school is the main mechanism through which the New Towns influenced political and cultural attitudes.[36] In the following, I further explore the hypothesis taking as outcomes direct measures of political attitudes.

In Table 12, I investigate the role of the experience of life under the dictatorship and indoctrination at school on other political attitudes in tune with Fascist views. In column 1, the outcome is the measure of preferences for a stronger leader in politics. Interestingly, life under the dictatorship does not seem to matter here, as is indicated by the statistical insignificance of both the interaction term and the linear term of the variable "Lived under Fascism". By contrast, the interaction term of "School-Age in Fascism" and distance to the New Towns is actually positive and significant, suggesting that indoctrination at school was potentially different in the proximity of the New Towns, but with a negative effect on preference for a stronger leader. A possible explanation could be that the presence of authoritarian teachers in the Fascist schools may have counteracted the inculcation of strong-leader principles.

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 two measures of intolerance of immigrants. Interestingly, 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 for immigrants (in general) and that the effect was particularly strong 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 curricula, had persistent

[36] Albeit less precisely estimated, the findings are qualitatively similar if the outcome variable is the answer to the question "Have you ever voted for the neo-fascist party?" The results are illustrated in Appendix Table B14, where the lack of precision of the estimated coefficients may be due to the low propensity of respondents to reveal their voting choices.

Table 11: 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***	-0.0319**	-0.0375***	-0.0323**
	[0.013]	[0.013]	[0.013]	[0.013]
Ln (Dist. to NT) × Lived under Fascism		-0.0491*		-0.0743**
		[0.027]		[0.035]
Lived under Fascism		0.1027		0.1997
		[0.108]		[0.136]
Ln (Dist. to NT) × School-Age in Fascism			-0.0242	0.0447
			[0.031]	[0.041]
School-Age in Fascism			0.0511	-0.1794
			[0.123]	[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 are the average marginal effects from a Probit regression weighted using sample weights. The variable "Lived under Fascism" is a dummy taking value 1 for respondents born before the end of the Fascist regime (307 respondents in the sample). The variable "School-Age in Fascism" is a dummy taking value 1 if the respondent was of school-age (age $\in [6, 13]$) during the Fascist regime (166 respondents in the sample). Municipality controls include the log of population in 2001, distance to the closest provincial capital, a dummy for the presence of malaria in 1870, a measure of market access in 1921. Migrant dummy takes value 1 for respondents who are in the same region as their 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-, and atypical employment. 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 of employment of father when respondent was 14 years old, and a set of dummies 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 12: Life under Fascism, the New Towns, and Political Attitudes.

	(1)	(2)	(3)
	Stronger	Immigrants are a Threat to	
VARIABLES	Leader	Identity/Culture	Employment
Ln (Dist. to NT)	-0.0482***	-0.0576**	-0.0762***
	[0.017]	[0.025]	[0.024]
Ln (Dist. to NT) × Lived under Fascism	-0.0630	0.0246	0.0557
	[0.043]	[0.049]	[0.051]
Lived under Fascism	0.2493	-0.1356	-0.2303
	[0.166]	[0.195]	[0.201]
Ln (Dist. to NT) × School-Age in Fascism	0.1121**	-0.0906*	-0.0922*
	[0.052]	[0.054]	[0.055]
School-Age in Fascism	-0.2967	0.5120**	0.5117**
	[0.197]	[0.210]	[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 coefficients are the average marginal effects from an OLS regression weighted using survey weights. The variable "Lived under Fascism" is a dummy taking value 1 for respondents born before the end of the Fascist regime (1445 respondents in the sample). The variable School-Age in Fascism is a dummy taking value 1 if the respondent was of school-age (age $\in [6, 13]$) during the regime (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-, and atypical employment. 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.

effects on tolerance for immigrants.

4 Conclusions

Pharaoh Menes of Egypt (3100 BCE), Alexander the Great (356-323 BCE), and the kings of the Swedish Crown (1570-1810 CE) all "aimed for immortality" by founding New Towns (Cermeño and Enflo, 2019). Recently, China has founded new cities such as *Hallstat* and *Ordos Kangbashi*. The research presented here shows that these infrastructure investments may have long-lasting effects on political and cultural values, which persists across major institutional changes and over the long term. The economic and technological competence associated with the infrastructures may constitute an important element through which authoritarian leaders influence political beliefs, which in turn persist via cultural transmission.

These findings offer new insight into the persistent popularity of extremist political ideologies, including hostility to migrants, racial resentment, and nationalism. Furthermore, they shed light on authoritarian leaders' interventions and their potential long-lasting implications. Through its empirical investigation of a mechanism of co-evolution of institutions and culture, this paper may inspire future research into the forms of persuasion used by authoritarian leaders, their effects on beliefs, and their potentially enduring effects on the performance of institutions, possibly casting new light on the differential trajectories in living standards around the globe.

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Appendix A Additional Results

Table A1: The Size of the New Towns

Dependent Variables: Share of Votes for the Neo-fascist Party 1992				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Ln (Dist. to NT)	-0.1266**	-0.1278**	-0.1962***	-0.1186**
	[0.051]	[0.052]	[0.056]	[0.050]
Ln(Dist to NT) × Ln(Years of Construction)	-0.1507**	-0.1474**		-0.1605**
	[0.073]	[0.073]		[0.075]
Ln(Years of Construction)	0.0841	0.0851	0.0735	0.0755
	[0.065]	[0.067]	[0.068]	[0.065]
Population Closest NT 1936		-0.0106	-0.0359	-0.0204
		[0.034]	[0.037]	[0.035]
Ln(Dist to NT) × Pop. Closest NT 1936			0.0430	0.0572
			[0.037]	[0.040]
Observations	7,040	7,040	7,040	7,040
Adjusted R-squared	0.134	0.134	0.128	0.137
Malaria Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Market Access Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Agricultural Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Geographic Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Notes: Observations are at municipality level. Standardized coefficients are reported. All regressions include as controls the market access controls, malaria, geographic and agricultural suitability controls. 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 A2: New Towns and Neo-fascist Associations

Dependent Variables: Neo-fascist Headquarter within				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	5 KM	10 KM	20 KM	
NT within 10 KM	-0.0081	0.0347	0.0806	
	[0.014]	[0.046]	[0.055]	
Ln (Dist. to NT)				-0.0439**
				[0.021]
Observations	7,438	7,438	7,438	7,438
Adjusted R-squared	0.065	0.107	0.258	0.262

Notes: Observations are at municipality level. The table shows that, while the Neo-fascist headquarters are not located in the former New Towns, they are located in their proximity. The outcome is a dummy taking value one if a headquarter of a Neo-fascist association (*Casapound*) is within the distance indicated in column heading. Each regression includes malaria controls, market access controls, and the log of population in 2001. 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 A3: The Long-Lasting Shadow of the New Towns: Mechanisms

Dependent Variables: Share of Votes for the Neo Fascist Party in 1992				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Ln (Dist. to NT)	-0.1967***	-0.1776***	-0.1938***	-0.2023***
	[0.058]	[0.051]	[0.054]	[0.056]
Ln (Dist. to NT) × Gwth Mkt Access 1921-1936	-0.0701**			
	[0.034]			
Gwth Mkt Access 1921-36	0.0597			
	[0.055]			
Ln (Dist. to NT) × New Fascist Province 1926		-0.0284		
		[0.189]		
New Fascist Province 1926		0.3265*		
		[0.194]		
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]
Observations	7,761	7,761	7,758	7,761
Adjusted R-squared	0.110	0.110	0.099	0.109
Baseline Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Notes: Observations are at 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 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 A4: The New Towns and Market Access

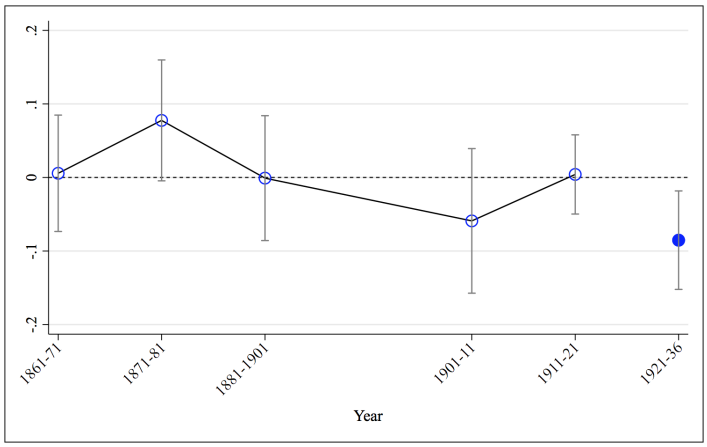
Dependent Variable: Share of Votes for Neo Fascist Party in 1992							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Ln (Dist. to NT)	-0.2072***	-0.1472***	-0.1859***	-0.1762***	-0.2014***	-0.1967***	-0.2593***
	[0.054]	[0.055]	[0.054]	[0.056]	[0.055]	[0.058]	[0.077]
Gwth Mkt Access 1861-1871	-0.1373***						
	[0.042]						
Ln (Dist. to NT) × Gwth Mkt Access 1861-1871	0.0057						
	[0.040]						
Gwth Mkt Access 1871-1881		-0.1228***					
		[0.046]					
Ln (Dist. to NT) × Gwth Mkt Access 1871-1881		0.0846**					
		[0.042]					
Gwth Mkt Access 1871-1881			0.1435***				
			[0.052]				
Ln (Dist. to NT) × Gwth Mkt Access 1881-1901			-0.0048				
			[0.042]				
Gwth Mkt Access 1901-1911				-0.1400***			
				[0.046]			
Ln (Dist. to NT) × Gwth Mkt Access 1901-1911				-0.0533			
				[0.047]			
Gwth Mkt Access 1911-1921					-0.1565***		
					[0.039]		
Ln (Dist. to NT) × Gwth Mkt Access 1911-1921					0.0034		
					[0.029]		
Gwth Mkt Access 1921-1936						0.0597	0.1280*
						[0.055]	[0.072]
Ln (Dist. to NT) × Gwth Mkt Access 1921-1936						-0.0701**	-0.1232**
						[0.034]	[0.056]
Dist.to NT $\geq$ 20 km							Yes
Observations	7,760	7,760	7,760	7,760	7,760	7,760	6,745
Adjusted R-squared	0.108	0.111	0.113	0.114	0.119	0.110	0.097

Notes: Observations are at 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.

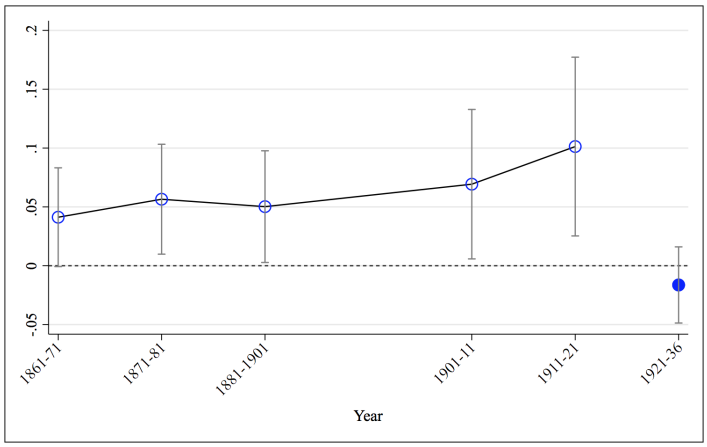
*** indicates significance at the 1% level, ** indicates significance at the 5% level, * indicates significance at the 10% level.

Figure A1: The New Towns and Growth in Market Access Over Time

(a) Neo-Fascist Party Votes 1992



(b) Neo-Fascist Party Votes 1948



Notes: This figure shows the estimated coefficient from a set of regressions of the share of votes for the neo-fascist party in 1992 (Panel a) and in 1948 (Panel b) on the interaction between distance to the closest New Town and the growth in market access in each year indicated on the horizontal axis. There is a clear reduction in the value of the interaction term that takes place specifically over the period of the New Towns constructions. Panel (a) shows that the interaction term turns from zero to negative precisely over the Fascist period. Panel (b) shows that the interaction term turns from positive to zero precisely over the Fascist period. This negative change in the interaction term right at the time of the New Towns construction suggests that the change in market access in the proximity of the New Towns was a mediating mechanism that may have influenced the effect of the infrastructures.

A.1 New Towns, New Markets

The significant interaction between distance from the New Towns and the change in market access may be due to an effect on citizens' beliefs that took place during the fascist period. If this is the case, then the interaction term should be significant only if interacted with growth in market access in the relevant period but not before.[37] I investigate this hypothesis in Table A4. 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 recent times. 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 finding strongly support the channel that the perception of improved living standards favored the fascist political views over the long term.

Finally, the last column investigates 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-standards 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 that Fascism is an important mechanism though which political views may persistently change.

The set of interaction coefficients using 1992 neo-fascist votes as an outcome, is depicted in Figure A1, Panel (a). For completeness, Panel (b) shows the same interaction terms using as an outcome 1948 neo-fascist votes. In this case, the interaction terms are positive before the relevant period, suggesting that increases in market access nearby the towns attenuated their effect on the votes for the neo-fascist party in 1948. Importantly, also in this case and precisely in the Fascist period there is a sudden decrease in the value interaction term, which from positive becomes null, in turn suggesting that market access in the proximity of the New Towns was a mediating mechanism that may have influenced the effect of the infrastructures on long-term political outcomes.

A.2 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.

Table A5 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.[38] The coefficient is negative, yet statistically insignificant.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.

[37] Growth in market access in subsequent periods would be endogenous to the events that took place over the fascist period.

[38] The Fascist Party was in power from 1922 to 1943.

Given that the Mussolini ruled until 1943, I perform the same exercise using as an outcome growth in population from 1921 until 1951. 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. 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.

Table A5: New Towns and 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)	-0.1061	-0.0580	-0.0869**	0.0430
	[0.078]	[0.082]	[0.039]	[0.053]
Observations	7,762	6,747	7,762	6,747
Adjusted R-squared	0.006	0.006	0.004	0.001
Baseline Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dist.to NT $\geq$ 20 km	No	Yes	No	Yes

Notes: Observations are at 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.

A.3 Intimidation and the 1924 Electoral Outcome

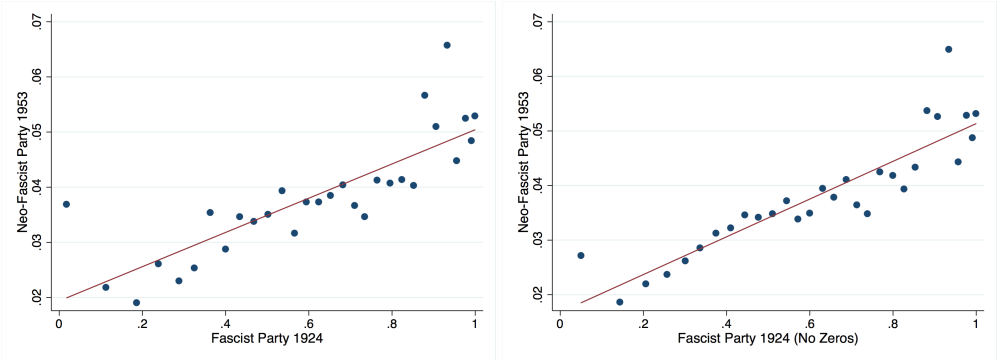
It is possible that violence and intimidation were employed by the fascists to enhance the support of the Fascist Party in the 1924 elections. In case of perfect intimidation, the support for the Fascist Party in those elections would be 100% in all municipalities. In contrast, there is significant variation 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 New Towns to boost popular support, then using 1924 electoral outcomes as a dependent variable may rise 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.[39] 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 A2 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.

Figure A2: 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.

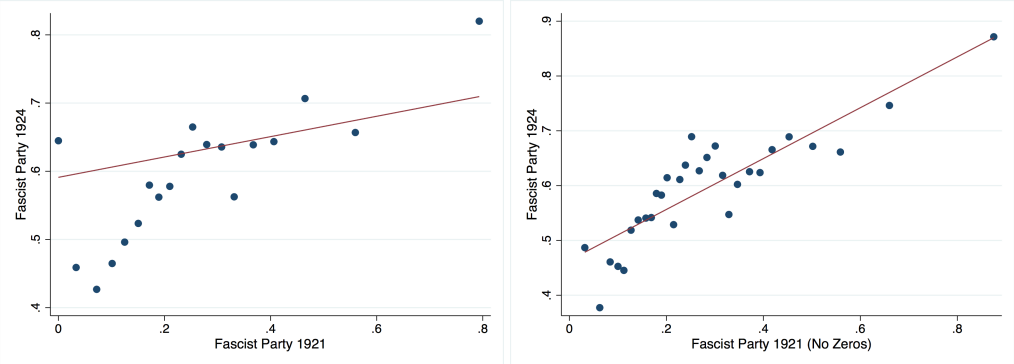
A similar approach can be used by investigating the relationship between the electoral support for the Fascists in the 1921 elections and that in 1924. Figure A3 shows the link between the electoral support for the Fascists in 1924 and 1921. The left panel shows a positive but moderate association between the two variables. However, it becomes 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 A4 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.

Appendix B Ancillary Tables and Robustness

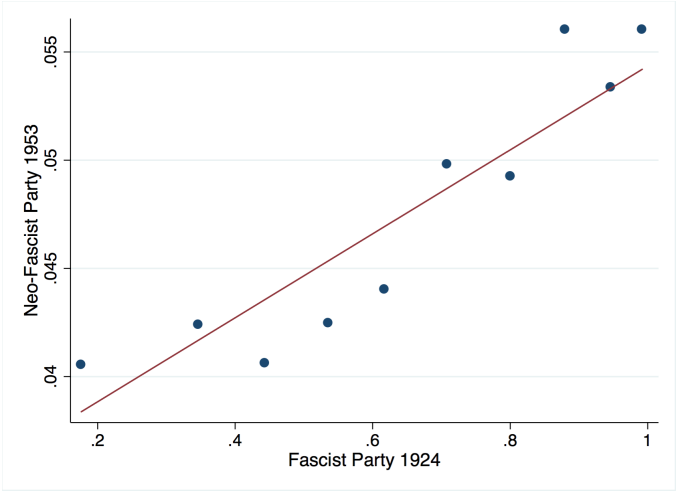
[39] Electoral support for the neo-fascist party was 2.1 % in 1948, 5.84 % in 1953, and 4.76% in 1958.

Figure A3: 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 A4: 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 B6: New Towns Settlers from the Veneto Region and Electoral Support

	Dependent Variables: Share of Votes for party:			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
VARIABLES	FP 1921	FP 1924	Neo-fasc. 1948	Neo-fasc. 1953
Malaria	0.0494	0.4002	-0.0379	-0.0261
	[0.134]	[0.319]	[0.042]	[0.097]
Observations	429	429	429	429
R-squared	0.002	0.062	0.079	0.034
Fascist Party 1921	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

Notes: Observations are at the municipality-level. The Table shows the absence of significant differences in the levels and changes in the support for the Fascist or neo-fascist party between malarial and non-malarial places within Veneto. Given that most New Towns settlers were from malaria areas in the Veneto region, the results suggest the absence of preexisting greater support for the Fascists among the settlers. Outcome variables are standardized. Columns 3 and 4 control for distance to New Towns planned but not built (there is one in the region). 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 B7: The Timing of the New Towns and Electoral Outcomes

Dependent Variables: Share of Votes for the Fascist Party:							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
	1921	1924					
	Placebo					*Placebo*	*Placebo*
Ln (Dist to NT)	0.2784***	-0.2402***					-0.2219***
	[0.093]	[0.077]					[0.073]
Ln (Dist. to NT until 1924)			-0.2858***	-0.2375***	-0.1504*		
			[0.078]	[0.080]	[0.083]		
Ln (Dist. to NT after 1924)				-0.1122	0.0232		
				[0.082]	[0.080]		
Ln (Dist to NT Unknown Year)					-0.3467***		
					[0.101]		
Ln (Dist to Placebo NT)						-0.1199	-0.0722
						[0.080]	[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 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 B8: Robustness to Controlling for the Suitability for Malaria: Short-term Effect

Dependent Variable: Share of Votes for the Fascist Party in 1924						
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	FP '24	FP '24	FP '24	FP '24	FP '24	FP '24
VARIABLES	OLS	OLS	OLS	OLS	OLS	OLS
Ln (Dist. to NT until 1924)	-0.2858***	-0.3159***	-0.2676***	-0.2059*	-0.2365**	-0.2342**
	[0.078]	[0.075]	[0.090]	[0.111]	[0.108]	[0.107]
FP '21		0.1773***	0.1731***	0.1804***	0.1730***	0.1723***
		[0.061]	[0.058]	[0.058]	[0.056]	[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 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: Long-term Effect

Dependent Variable: Share of Votes for Neo Fascist Party in 1992						
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Neo FP '92	Neo FP '92	Neo FP '92	Neo FP '92	Neo FP '92	Neo FP '92
VARIABLES	OLS	OLS	OLS	OLS	OLS	OLS
Ln (Dist. to NT)	-0.2663***	-0.1791***	-0.1847***	-0.1894***	-0.1665***	
	[0.050]	[0.058]	[0.053]	[0.053]	[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 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: Mussolini's New Towns and the Emergence of the Neo-fascist Party

Dependent Variable: Share of Votes for Neo Fascist Party in 1948						
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Ln (Dist. to NT)	-0.2319***	-0.1409***	-0.1361***	-0.1403***	-0.1404***	
	[0.027]	[0.036]	[0.037]	[0.034]	[0.035]	
Ln (Dist to Placebo NT)						0.0731**
						[0.032]
Observations	6,664	6,664	6,664	6,664	6,664	6,664
Adjusted R-squared	0.049	0.074	0.082	0.083	0.083	0.078
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 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: Robustness to Taking into Account Spatial Correlation: Short-term Effect

Dependent Variable: Share of Votes for the Fascist Party in 1924						
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Ln (Dist. to NT until 1924)	-0.2858***	-0.3159***	-0.2466**	-0.2488***	-0.2573***	-0.2517***
	[0.106]	[0.103]	[0.098]	[0.083]	[0.088]	[0.088]
FP '21		0.1773***	0.1761***	0.1720***	0.1667***	0.1660***
		[0.061]	[0.051]	[0.037]	[0.040]	[0.040]
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 municipality level. Standardized coefficients are reported. See the main text and appendices for variables definitions and sources. Conley (1999)'s standard errors with a 100 km-distance cutoff in brackets.
*** indicates significance at the 1% level, ** indicates significance at the 5% level, * indicates significance at the 10% level.

Table B12: Robustness to Taking into Account Spatial Correlation: Long-term Effect

Dependent Variable: Share of Votes for Neo Fascist Party in 1992						
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Ln (Dist. to NT)	-0.2664***	-0.2159***	-0.2012***	-0.2080***	-0.1773***	
	[0.060]	[0.071]	[0.064]	[0.054]	[0.067]	
Ln (Dist to Placebo NT)						0.1449*
						[0.088]
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	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Population Controls	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes

Notes: Observations are at municipality level. Standardized coefficients are reported. See the main text and appendices for variables definitions and sources. Conley (1999)'s standard errors with a 100 km-distance cutoff in brackets.
*** indicates significance at the 1% level, ** indicates significance at the 5% level, * indicates significance at the 10% level.

Table B13: New Towns and Racial Resentment

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	-0.0022	0.0151	-0.0288**	0.0101	-0.0168	0.0575***
	[0.012]	[0.012]	[0.012]	[0.014]	[0.011]	[0.012]	[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. 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 B14: New Towns and the Persistence of Neo Fascism. Individual-Level Analysis.

Dependent Variable: Ever voted for the Neo Fascist Party				
	(1) Pr(Yes)	(2) Pr(Yes)	(3) Pr(Yes)	(4) 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-Age in Fascism			-0.0174	-0.0053
			[0.014]	[0.024]
School-Age 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-Age in Fascism is a dummy taking value one if the respondent was of school-age (age $\in [6, 13]$) 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.

Table B15: 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)
	Placebo		*Placebo*										
	1921	1924	1948	1953	1958	1963	1968	1972	1976	1979	1983	1987	1992
$\mathbb{D}^{30km}_{(1923-24)}$	-0.5453**	0.6573***	-0.0419	-0.3086	-0.0192	0.2216	0.0904	0.4647	0.4324	0.4362	0.1691	-0.3119	0.0852
	[0.249]	[0.167]	[0.088]	[0.244]	[0.449]	[0.428]	[0.404]	[0.329]	[0.312]	[0.354]	[0.307]	[0.327]	[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 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 B16: 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)
$\mathbb{D}^{15km}_{(1923-24)}$	0.3244									
	[0.340]									
$\mathbb{D}^{20km}_{(1923-24)}$		0.4885*								
		[0.282]								
$\mathbb{D}^{25km}_{(1923-24)}$			0.5518***							
			[0.178]							
$\mathbb{D}^{30km}_{(1923-24)}$				0.6573***						
				[0.167]						
$\mathbb{D}^{35km}_{(1923-24)}$					0.6804***					
					[0.244]					
$\mathbb{D}^{40km}_{(1923-24)}$						0.5679**				
						[0.223]				
$\mathbb{D}^{45km}_{(1923-24)}$							0.3804*			
							[0.200]			
$\mathbb{D}^{50km}_{(1923-24)}$								0.3975*		
								[0.219]		
$\mathbb{D}^{55km}_{(1923-24)}$									0.2754	
									[0.198]	
$\mathbb{D}^{60km}_{(1923-24)}$										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 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 C8

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

B.1 Falsification test: Spatial RD before the New Towns

As a falsification test, it would be ideal to perform the spatial RDD performed in Section 3.2.1 using as placebo outcomes electoral support for the Fascists before the construction of the New Towns. Unfortunately, there are no observation in the study area for the 1924 elections and for 1921 there are only 9 observations in the study area. In order to use the 1921 data, I employ broader definitions of study area and study border.

Municipalities surrounded by the catchment and the coast may have benefited from infrastructure, especially transportation. Thus, I now include them in the study area as treated municipalities. Given that areas outside those borders received much more limited infrastructure investments,[40] as a study border I now employ the whole western border of the catchment area. Specifically, I add to the study border also the north-west segment and the south-east one (see Figure 7 in Section 3.2.1). Table B17 explores this broader definition of study area and cutoff.

The first two columns of Table B17 employ as a placebo outcome the electoral support for the Fascist Party in 1921 with polynomials of distance of order one and two, respectively. Columns 3 and 4 employ the electoral support for the neo-fascist party in 1948, the first election in which they were running. Reassuringly, columns 1 and 2 show that the RD estimates are actually negative and statistically indistinguishable from zero. In contrast, columns 3 and 4 show that for the relevant outcomes the estimated coefficient is positive and significant, at least with the conventional inference.

Table B17: The New Towns and the Votes Share for the Neo-fascist Party: Spatial RDD.

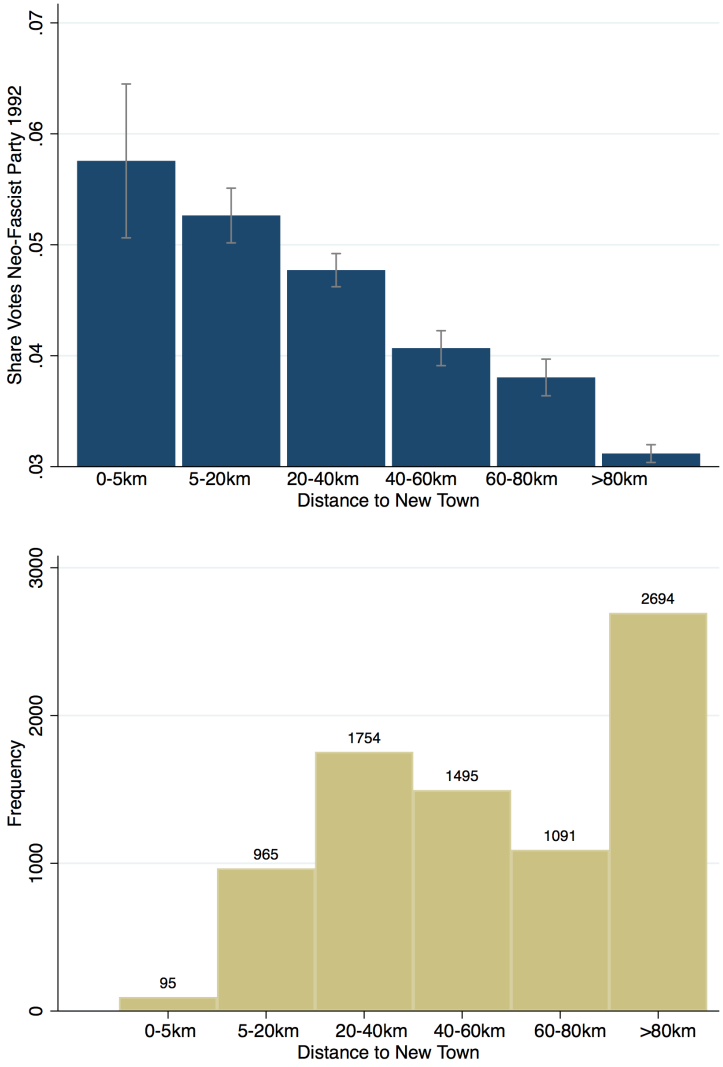
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Dependent Variable:	Share of Votes for			
	Fascist Party 1921 *(placebo)*		Neo-FP 1948	
RD Estimate	-0.0507	-0.319	0.0199	0.0184
Observations	138	138	138	138
Conventional Std. Error	0.257	0.339	0.008	0.010
Conventional p-value	0.843	0.346	0.019	0.072
Robust p-value	0.528	0.245	0.169	0.247
Order Loc. Poly.	1	2	1	2
Bandwidth KM	17.959	26.685	16.705	24.397

Notes: Observations are at municipality level. The first column displays the covariate employed as a placebo outcome variable. The second column displays the spatial RD coefficient estimated with local linear regression. The third column displays the conventional standard errors. The fourth column provides the conventional p-values. The last column provides the robust p-values. and the second column provide the coefficient from the local linear regression model and the conventional robust P-values. Estimates are based on the optimal bandwidth (Calonico et al., 2014).

[40] For instance, in the whole province of Campobasso (north-west of the catchment) new roads were less than 30 kilometers vis-à-vis the 350 kilometers inside the catchment (Tassinari, 1939, pag. 114).

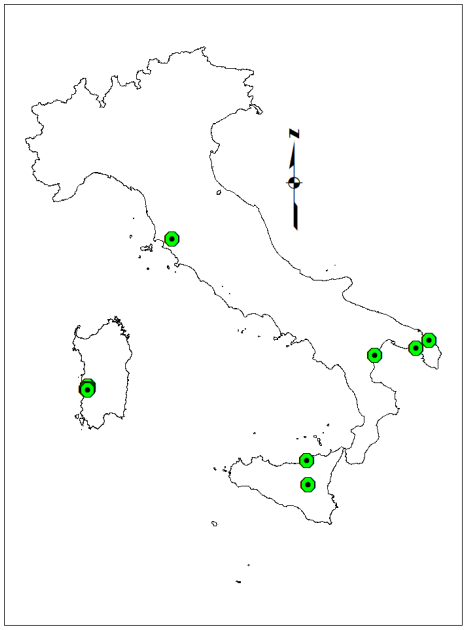
Appendix C Ancillary Figures

Figure C5: Support for the Neo-fascist Party in 1992 by distance to the New Towns

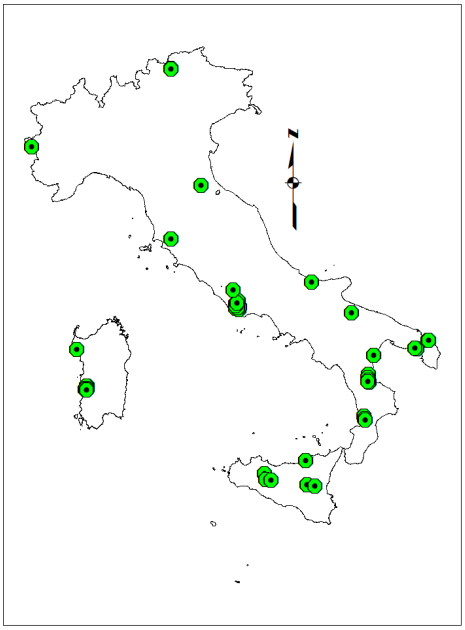


Notes: The top panel shows the share of votes for the neo-fascist party (MSI) in 1992 for different distance intervals to the nearest New Town. The 0-5km intervals includes the municipalities containing the New Towns. The bottom panel indicates the number of municipalities in each distance intervals to the nearest New Towns. In some cases more New Towns are contained within the same municipality.

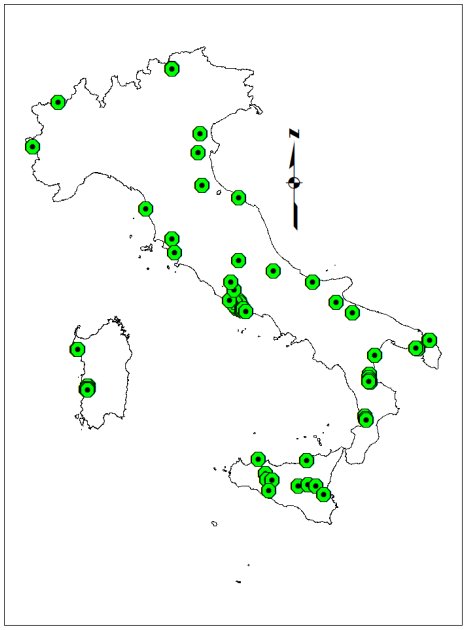
Figure C6: Maps of the New Towns by Year



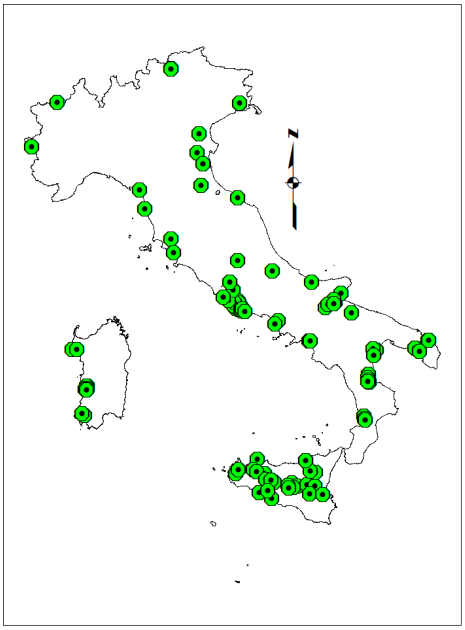
(a) 1924



(b) 1931



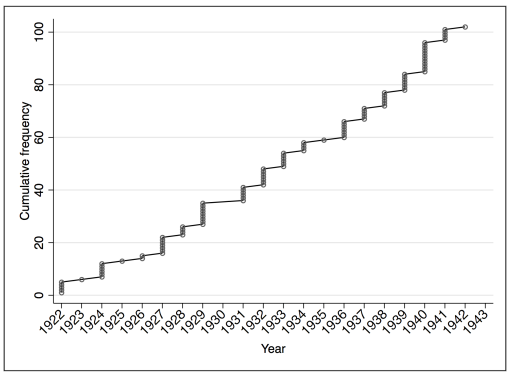
(c) 1936



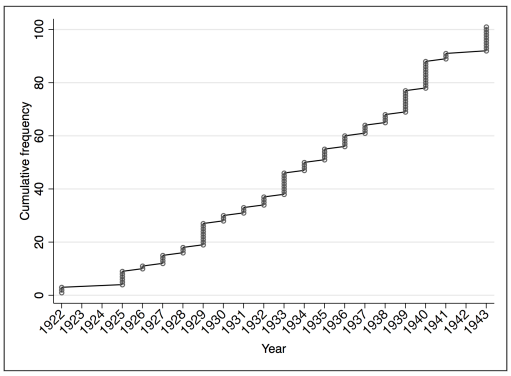
(d) 1940

Notes: The figures shows the location of the New Towns by the year in which constructions were initiated. Figure (a) displays the location of the New Towns in or before 1924. Figure (b) displays the location of the New Towns initiated in or before 1931. Figure (c) displays the location of the New Towns initiated in or before 1936. Figure (d) displays the location of the New Towns initiated in or before 1940. Data on the construction years are available for 83% of the New Towns.

Figure C7: Construction of the New Towns by Year



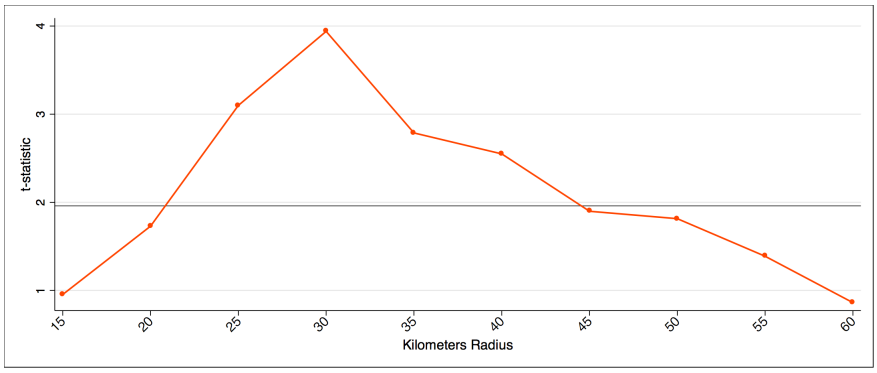
(a) Initiated New Towns



(b) Completed New Towns

Notes: Figure (a) displays the cumulative number of New Towns initiated in a given year. Figure (b) displays the cumulative number of New Towns completed in a given year. Data on the construction years are available for 83% of the New Towns.

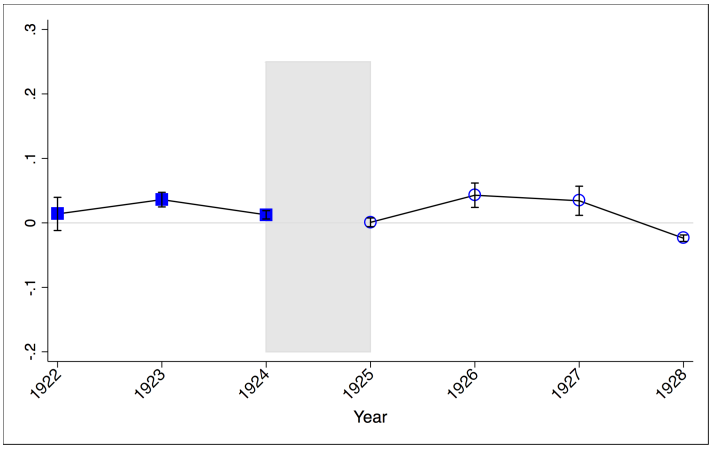
Figure C8: The Choice of the 30-Kilometers Cutoff



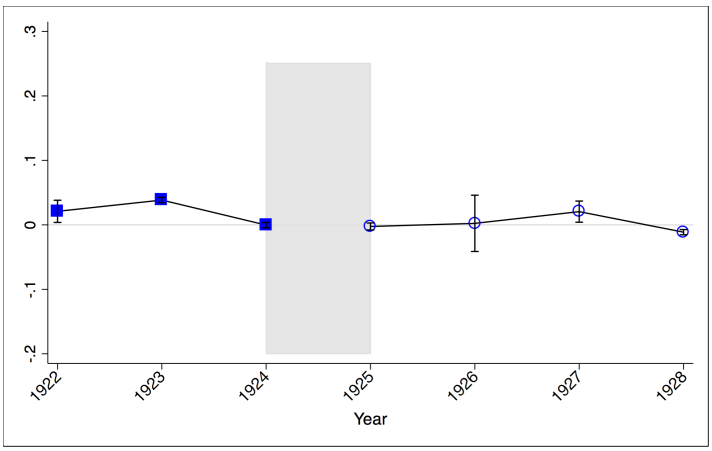
Notes: The figure depicts the estimated t-statistics from estimating equation 1 with different cutoffs. The figure shows that the t-statistic is maximized when the model is estimated with a 30-kilometers cutoff. Estimates are given by the coefficient of interest and standard errors reported in Table B16.

Figure C9: The Timing of the Treatment: Robustness

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

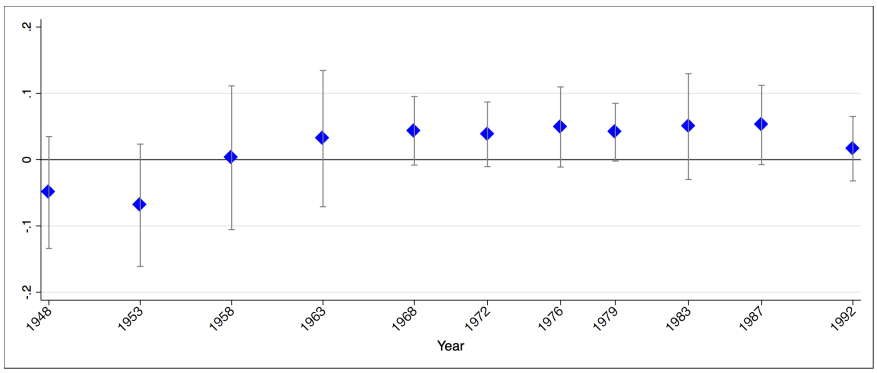


(b) Placebo: Share of Votes for the Neo-fascist Party in 1992



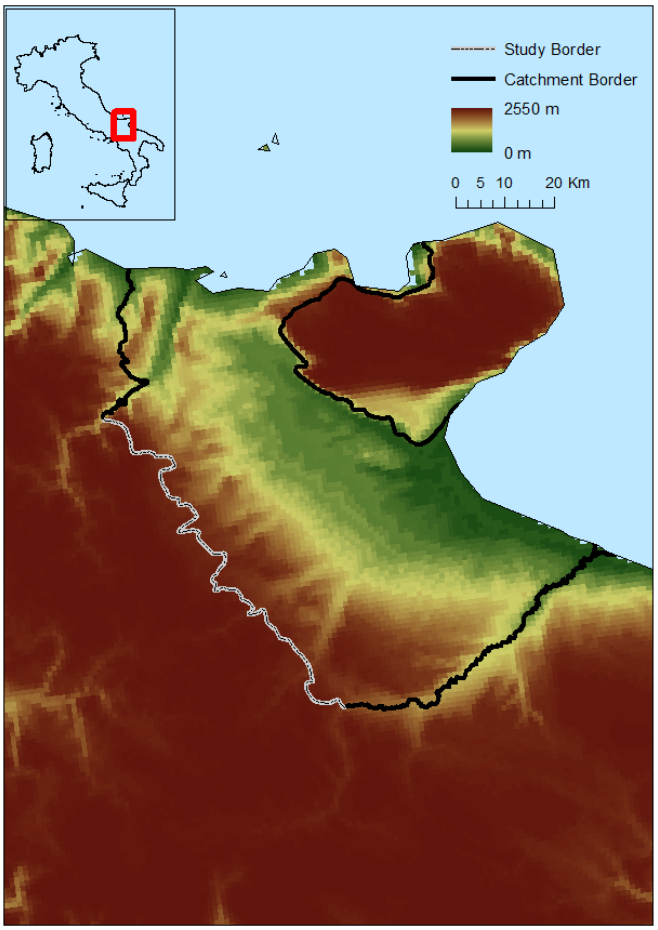
Notes: Each figure shows the estimated coefficients from a regression of the share of votes for the neo-fascist party in 1953 (top panel) and in 1993 on indicator variables that take value one if the construction of a New Town was initiated within 30 kilometers in each year. The figures show the absence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

Figure C10: Absence of a Link between the New Towns and Voter Turnout



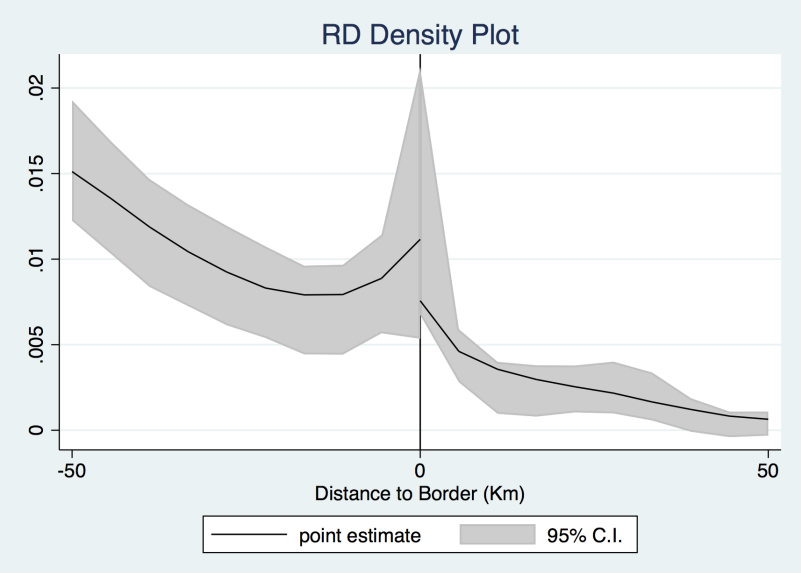
Notes: The figure shows the estimated coefficients and 95% confidence intervals from a set of regressions of the electoral turnout in each year on the log of the distance to the New Towns. All regressions include baseline controls.

Figure C11: New Towns Catchment Area and Elevation



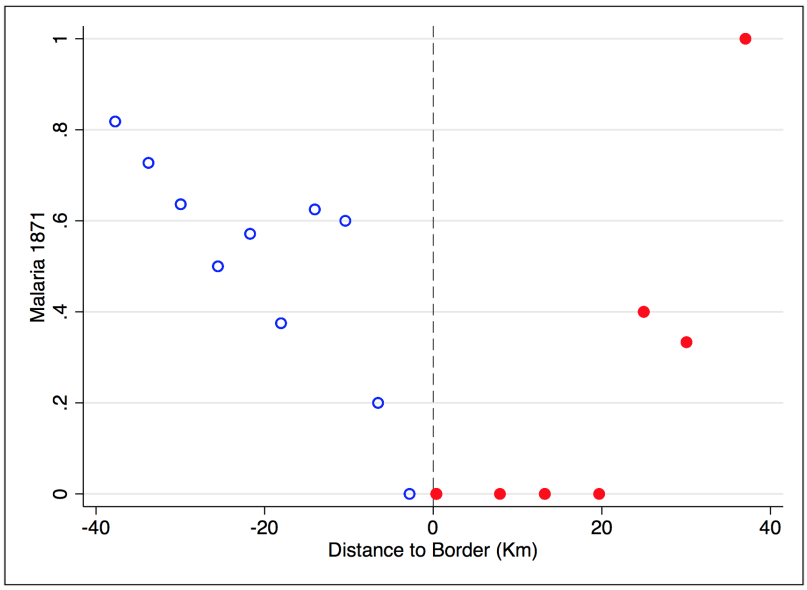
Notes: The map shows the absence of a discontinuous change in elevation at the study border. It also shows that other border segments overlap with geographic features and thus are not suitable for a spatial regression discontinuity design.

Figure C12: Absence of Discontinuity in the Density of Observations at the Study Border



Notes: The figure shows the absence of a discrete change in the density of observations across the study border. While this is evidenced by the overlap of the 95% confidence intervals at the border, I also perform a formal test of this hypothesis which provides a t-statistic of 1.2976 and a p-value of 0.1944. Thus, the test rejects the null hypothesis of a discrete change in the density of the number of observations at the study border.

Figure C13: Absence of Discontinuity in Presence of Malaria Swamps at the Study Border



Notes: The figure shows that the dummy taking value one if the municipality was affected by malaria in 1870 takes value zero around the discontinuity. Such a finding suggests that, even if the presence of malarial swamps was the major determinant of the location of the New Towns, it was not a determinant of the location of the study border of the catchment. In turn, strongly supporting the spatial RD identification assumption.

Appendix D The Timing of the Treatment: Empirical Model

Consider the model given by[41]

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

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.

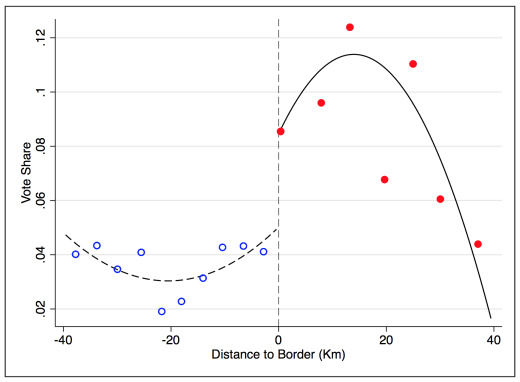
The parameter γ measures the difference in the electoral support for the Fascist Party in the 1924 elections in the municipalities treated right before the elections relative to the control group. The parameter ϕ measures the support for the fascists in 1924 from the municipalities treated *after* the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

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

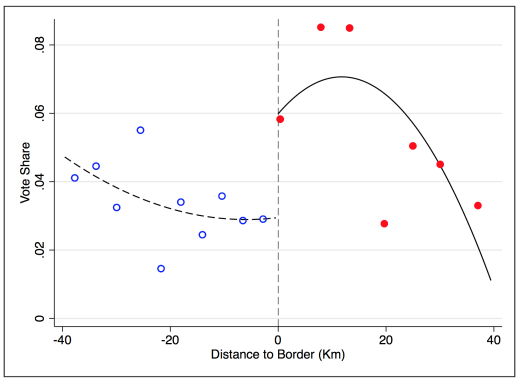
[41] For ease of exposition, but without loss of generality, I do not consider control variables.

Figure C14: *The New Towns and the Neo-fascist Party: Regression Discontinuity Plots:*

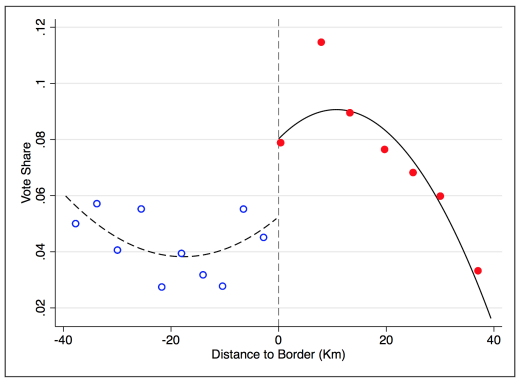
(a) *Votes Share in 1992*



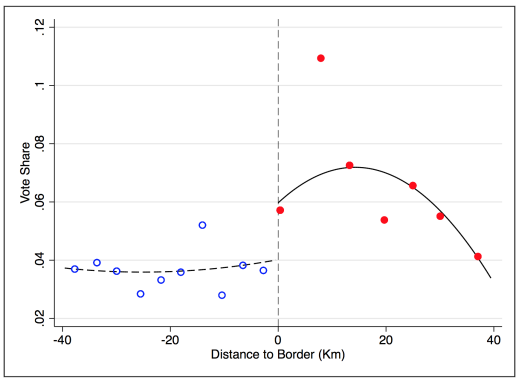
(b) *Votes Share in 1987*



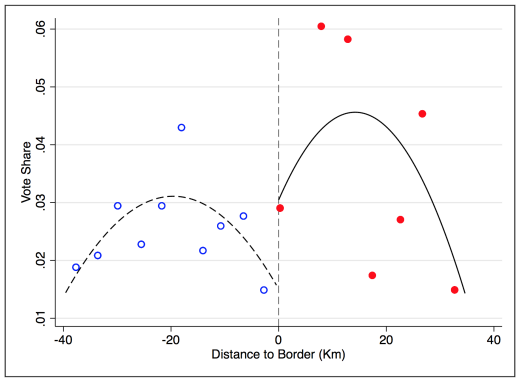
(c) *Votes Share in 1983*



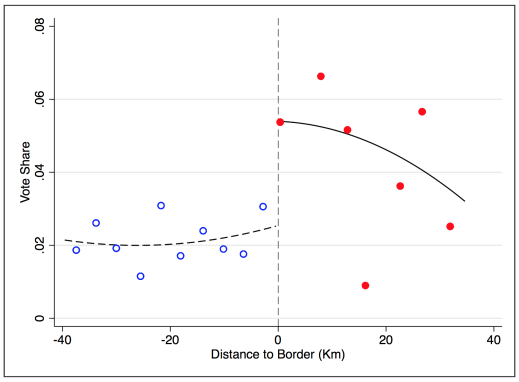
(d) *Votes Share in 1979*



(e) *Votes Share in 1968*



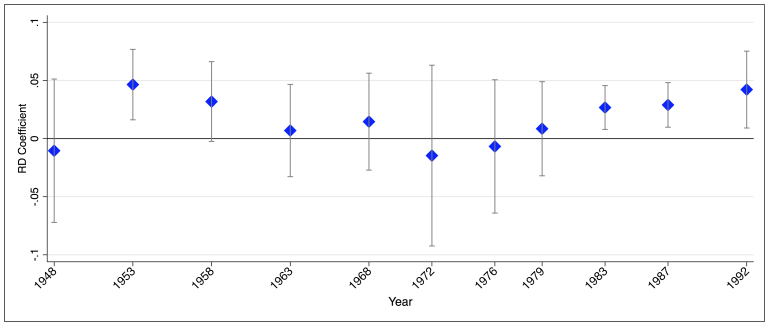
(f) *Votes Share in 1958*



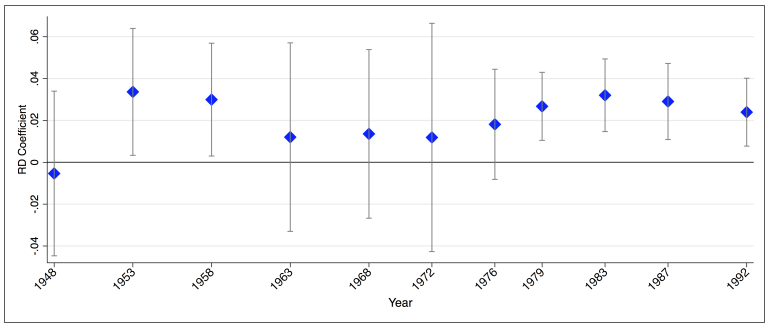
Notes: The figures show the discontinuity in the electoral support for the neo-fascist party at the border of the New Towns catchment over several elections. The x-axis depicts distance to the cutoff in kilometers with positive numbers indicating distance to the study border within the catchment and negative numbers indicating distance to the study border outside the catchment. For ease of visualization and to be consistent with the empirical analysis, plots are drawn within a small distance (forty kilometers) to the cutoff.

Figure C15: Spatial Regression Discontinuity Estimates by Election: Outliers Analysis

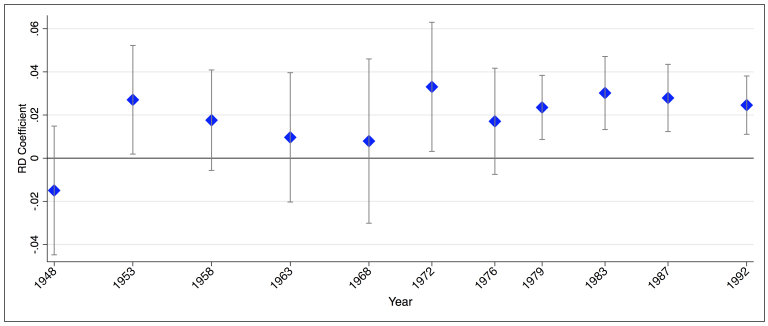
(a) *Full Sample*



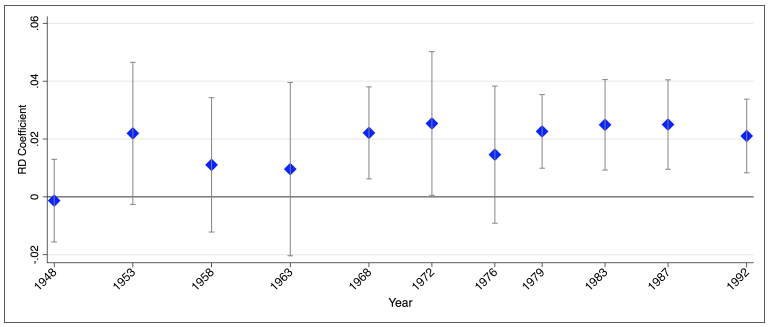
(b) *Excluding Above 99th Percentile*



(c) *Excluding Above 98th Percentile*



(d) *Excluding Above 96th Percentile*



Notes: The figures show the estimated coefficients and 90% confidence intervals from a set of spatial regression discontinuity regression the share of votes for the neo-fascist party across the study border of the New Towns catchment area with different samples. Panel (a) employs the whole sample. Panel (b) excludes observations above the 99th percentile of the distribution of vote shares. Panel (c) excludes observations above the 98th percentile. Panel (d) excludes observations above the 96th percentile. A comparison of the figures shows that the estimated coefficients for several years become significant once outliers are removed. Panel (b) shows that just by excluding observations above the 99th percentile of the distribution of vote shares the coefficients for 1958 and 1979 become statistically significant. Panel (c) shows that by excluding observations above the 98th percentile the estimated coefficient for 1972 becomes statistically significant. Panel (d) shows that by excluding observations above the 96th percentile the coefficient for 1968 becomes statistically significant. Given that year-to-year oscillations in voting outcomes are not the focus of this study, excluding outliers in those years is appropriate. Therefore, for the years 1953 and 1979, I account for outliers by excluding observations above the 99th percentile. For 1972 and 1968, I exclude respectively observations above the 98th and 96th percentile.

Appendix E Data Description, Sources, and Variables Definitions

Table E18: Summary statistics for major municipality-level variables

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.	N
Neo-fasc. '53	0.044	0.049	0	0.513	7199
Neo-fasc. '83	0.049	0.033	0	0.373	7987
Neo-fasc. '87	0.045	0.03	0	0.493	7981
Neo-fasc. '58	0.032	0.036	0	0.489	7248
Neo-fasc. '63	0.035	0.037	0	0.456	7242
Neo-fasc. '76	0.042	0.035	0	0.416	7963
Neo-fasc. '79	0.037	0.029	0	0.357	7964
Neo-fasc. '48	0.017	0.035	0	0.727	7088
Neo-fasc. '92	0.04	0.03	0	0.425	8002
Neo-fasc. '72	0.055	0.047	0	0.474	7894
Neo-fasc. '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-fasc. 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 E19: 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, 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 E21: Summary Statistics, Individual Survey Data (2001).

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.	N
Voted for Neo-fascist party	0.157	0.364	0	1	2729
Father voted for Neo-fascist party	0.083	0.276	0	1	1890
Mather voted for Neo-fascist party	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?", "Has your father ever voted for the MSI?", "Has your mother ever voted for the MSI?".

Table E20: 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.

E.2 Municipality-level Variables

Log of the distance to the New Towns. The natural logarithm of the geodesic distance, in kilometers, between the centroid of the municipality and the closest New Town whose construction (i) has been ascertained; (ii) was completed during the fascist period (1922-43); and (iii) was located within contemporary Italian borders. The total number of New Towns is 147. There are 16 New Towns, considered *sub judice* in Pennacchi and Caracciolo (2003), for which it is controversial whether they meet the requirements of the definition of a New Town. To make sure that these 16 uncertain New Towns are not driving the results, they are not considered in the empirical analysis. Furthermore, one New Town of the sample was completed in 1919, thus before the Fascist period and it is also excluded. Finally, the coordinates of 1 of the ascertained New Towns are unavailable, 4 of them were located outside of current Italian borders (in the provinces of Zara and Pola), and 3 of them were completed after the fall of the regime or were not completed at all. Thus, the distance to the New Towns is calculated on the remaining 122. I addition, there are 15 New Towns listed in Pennacchi and Caracciolo (2003) as not built. Protasi and Sonnino (2003) explain that the foundations were not undertaken because of the advent of WWII. However, historical documents show that 4 of these 15 were built at least in part and thus are excluded from the analysis of the placebo New Towns. Furthermore, the coordinates of 5 of these New Towns are unavailable. I use the coordinates of the remaining ones for calculating the distance to the location of the New Towns planned but not built, which I use for placebos.

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' $\times$ 5'. Data source: Galor and Özak (2016), 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.

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.

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.

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

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 $_{j\neq i}\frac{Pop_j}{d_{i,j}}$, where Pop_j is the population in municipality j and $d_{i,j}$ is the distance between municipality i and j (Harris, 1954).

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*.

Neo-fascist Headquarter. A dummy taking value one if the municipality is within 5 KM, 10 KM, or 20 KM (depending on the specification) from the closest headquarter of the neo-fascist association *Casapound*. Data on *Casapound* headquarters' location have been geocoded from the addresses of the 161 headquarters indicated by the official website of the organization (*casapounditalia.org*, accessed January 2021).