

Long Lasting Differences in Civic Capital: Evidence from a Unique Immigration Event in Italy.

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Abstract

We examine the persistence of cultural differences focusing on the Arberesh in Italy. The Arberesh are a linguistic and ethnic minority living in the south of Italy. They settled in Italy at the end of the XV century, following the invasion of the Balkans by the Ottoman Empire. Using a large dataset from the Italian parliamentary elections of the lower chamber of the Parliament, taking place from 1946 to 2008, we compare turnout in Arberesh municipalities with turnout in indigenous municipalities located in the same geographical areas. We also use two alternative different indicators of social capital like turnout at referendum and at European Parliament Elections. We find that in Arberesh municipalities turnout and compliance rates are higher compared to indigenous municipalities located in the same area.

I. INTRODUCTION

A range of evidence now exists that demonstrates the relationship between social capital and a range of important socio-economic outcomes. Using a variety of proxies, social capital has been shown to have predictive power across a range of domains, including economic growth (Helliwell and Putnam, 1995; Knack and Keefer, 1997; Zak and Knack, 2001), trade (Guiso et al., 2004), well-functioning institutions (Knack, 2002), low corruption and crime (Uslaner, 2002; Buonanno et al., 2009) and well functioning financial markets (Guiso et al., 2004a). While this literature demonstrates large and long-lived within and across country differences in values, social and cultural norms rather less is known about the origins of these differences.

Recently, a body of research has developed that aims to examine the formulation of different types of social or civic capital. Generally this literature examines the relationship between historical events or historical variation and current levels of social capital. For instance, Durante (2010) demonstrates how trust developed in preindustrial times as a form of mutual insurance for agrarian societies to cope with climatic risk. He demonstrates that contemporary surveyed variation in trust across Europe is positively related to higher temporal volatility in climatic conditions in the 16th century. In a similar vein, Nunn and Wantchekon (2010) relate current levels of trust within Africa to historical variation in the geography slave trade related raids. Likewise Tabellini (2008, 2010) demonstrate a link between the quality of political institutions and current civic values in Italy. Other Italian research examines the link between geographical variation in casualties during Italian unification that may have undermined trust towards authorities and election turnout (Amodio, 2012); or the emergence of free-city-states in the Middle Ages, the formation of informal pacts and social capital (Guiso, Sapienza and Zingales, 2008). Finally, Jacob and Tyrell (2010) show how the density of Stasi informers in the former GDR is negatively related to social capital levels in today's East Germany.

There does, however, exist a literature that suggests that civic capital should be influenced by contemporaneous factors, and hence should be malleable. Much of this literature shows how civic capital can be adversely affected by increasing 'openness', migration and mixing of communities. For instance, Di Pasquale and Glaeser (1999) show that expected mobility reduces social capital, while Alesina and La Ferrara (2000), Costa and Kahn (2001) and Freire and Li (2013) argue that social capital is affected by inequality and the heterogeneity of communities. These results are in line with the theoretical model proposed by Glaeser et al. (2002) according to which social capital investment increases when the return to social skills is higher and in communities with higher aggregate social capital, while it tends to decrease with age and relocation to a different

community. According to these arguments the increased mobility that has been witnessed over the past two centuries should act to dissipate differences in social capital across individuals or groups of individuals.

This paper contributes to this literature but takes a different tact. Specifically, we focus on a unique immigration event in Italy that was geographically concentrated. This allows us to ask a number of questions related to how persistent initial variations in social and civic capital are over time, but at the same time shed light on issues related to the cultural/social assimilation of immigrant groups. We focus on the settlement of large groups of Albanians into southern Italy following the invasion of the Balkans by the Ottoman Turks in the late 16th century. Importantly, these groups moved to geographically clustered villages within Italy. There are now around 40 villages scattered in the southern part of Italy that still preserve a distinct language (they speak Arbërisht, an old variant of Albanian) and a distinct religious rite (Greek Byzantine). The main thrust of our paper is to demonstrate that this group of individuals displays significantly different, and higher, levels of civic capital than comparable ‘Italian’ groups. Moreover, this is observable for a period (immediate post war) where there was limited inter-regional mobility and interaction with other areas; but has not diminished in the following half century as mobility has substantially increased. This result is important as it demonstrates how substantial variations in civic capital can be created by specific historical episodes, and that these differences may be very long lasting. This latter point is of clear interest if one considers (as per the literature highlighted above) that civic capital has a key role in explaining cross-country and within-country variations in institutional and economic performance. In addition, our result is of interest insofar as it has implications for the role of large scale immigration on social norms.

The paper is organized as follows. In section 2 it is provided information on the historical background. Section 3 discusses the identification strategy, while section 4 presents the data and the details on the treated and control municipalities. Section 5 presents the main results. Section 6 offers some robustness checks and section 7 concludes.

II. BACKGROUND

We focus on a unique migration event that occurred in Italy in the late sixteenth century following the invasion of the Balkans by the Ottoman Turks. The main immigration wave occurred after the defeat of the Albanian resistance and when the hope of victory over the Turks began to fade. Different historical sources report that in the seventeenth century about 94 Italian villages were primarily populated by Albanians. However, some groups of Albanians were already present in

Italy and immigration continued in the later centuries (up to the eighteenth century) with the arrival of new groups (Scaldaferri, 1994).

The earlier migration waves were the consequence of the political alliance between the Albanian chieftain George Kastrioti Skanderbeg (6 May 1405- 17 January 1468), who unified the Albanian tribes against the Ottoman invasion, and the Italian aristocracy (Pedio, 1943). This alliance was aimed at opposing Islamic invasion. Skanderbeg military intervention in favor of Ferdinando I, the Aragonese king of Naples, against the Angevings, played an important role in the establishment of Arbëresh settlements. Albanian were granted hospitality, protection and some privileges, such as speaking their own language and tax relief. They were directed towards specific territories based on the necessity of repopulating some areas and to fill the lack of labor in some feuds, avoiding, at the same time, too much concentration of Albanians and contrasts with local populations.¹

The Albanians were well accepted by the Roman Catholics, by the local barons and the Pope allowed them to keep the Greek-Byzantine rite and exempted them from paying tributes to the Church². There are no reliable historical sources allowing us to establish whether these migrants, compared to native populations living in the same areas, were from a better social background. Modern historians, in contrast to what was previously thought, argue that Albanians high caste dignitaries were not present among neither the refugees of the 15th century nor among the other migration waves. Instead, these immigrants were ordinary people accompanied by a few Orthodox priests. Similarly to the other populations living in the area, they were mainly shepherds, farmers, peasants, while nobles and wealthier people moved to major towns, such as Venice, Naples and Palermo (Bugliaro, 2010).

Probably because their way of life did not disturb the status quo, and because they have been in many circumstances loyal to the Italian state, they were accepted and they have lived peacefully in southern Italy for more than 500 years. The Arbëresh actively participated to the civic life of their hosting country. They never had a political or ethnical controversial with the Italian State and never claimed or desired separation. but they have always considered themselves Italians who in addition

¹ This process is at the origin of several communities in Molise (Campomarino, Colle di Lauro, Montecilfone, Portocannone, Santacroce di Magliano, Sant'Elena Sannita and Ururi), Apulia (Casalvecchio, Chieuti, Faeto, Faggiano, Martignano, Monteparano, Panni, San Marzano di San Giuseppe and San Paolo), and Basilicata (Barile, Ginestra, Maschito, San Costantino Albanese and San Paolo Albanese), Calabria (Acquaformosa, Amato, Andalo, Arlette, Carfizzi Castoregio, Cavallerizzo, Cervicati, Cerzeto, Civita, Falconara, Farneta, Firmo, Frascineto, Gizzeria, Lungro, Macchia, Mongrassano, Pallagorio, Plataci, Porcile, Rota, San Basile, San Benedetto, San Cosmo, San Demetrio, San Giacomo, San Giorgio, San Martino, Santa Caterina, Santa Sofia, Spezzano, Vaccarizzo, Vena, Zangarona), Sicily (Biancavilla, Bronte, Contessa Entellina, Palazzo Adriano, Piana degli Albanesi, Mezzoiuso, Santa Cristina di Gela, San Michele di Ganzaria, Sant'Angelo).

²Thanks to the intervention of Pope Paul II many local barons granted them land at better conditions than those granted to autochthonous Italian populations.

have Albanian origins (Dehremi, 2002)³. Arbëresh strongly contributed to the Italian Risorgimento and to the military campaigns that lead to the country unification in 1861. To give an idea of the role played by this minority for the Italian unification process it is useful to report that three⁴ of the six ministers appointed by Garibaldi (who commanded and fought in many military campaigns that led to the formation of a unified Italy) for his provisional government were from Arbëresh villages⁵.

In current times, the Albanian minority is estimated to be approximately 90,000-100,000 people located in a range of villages scattered across the southern part of Italy, between Molise, Puglia, Basilicata, Sicily and Calabria. Not all the villages populated by Albanians have maintained their cultural characteristics. However, about 40 villages still preserve some peculiar traits (Altimari and Savoia, 1994). After more than 500 years from their arrival in a region where they had almost no contact from their homeland, these people have demonstrated an exceptional cultural resilience in preserving a distinct identity recognizable in the conservation of a distinct language (they speak Arbërisht, an old variant of Albanian) and religious rite (Greek Byzantine)⁶. On the other hand, the Italo-Albanians are in many ways similar to the Italians of southern Italy, as argued by Nasse (1964) there are no differences in the house type, land use, diet, clothing, education. These villages are a subset of all original villages that were settled by the Arberesh, and is likely to be non-random.

This contention, that there are not differences in underlying confounding characteristics between Arbëresh and non-Arbëresh Italian villages is critical to our empirical approach. As a result, we explore this point here. A first issue is that as the Arbereshe municipalities are a small minority living in very specific areas of Italy, there is difficulty in finding a clean counterfactual group to compare their behavior to. Our initial starting point is to restrict our attention to those municipalities with less than 8,700 inhabitants – the population of the largest Arbereshe village - that are located in a region where there is at least one Arbereshe municipality. In practice, this restricts our sample to about 1,000 municipalities, located in five different regions (Molise, Basilicata, Puglia, Calabria and Sicily). In this selected sample there are 47 Arbereshe municipalities (treated group). Unfortunately we do not have information on the characteristics of these municipalities in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries immediately after the Albanian migration. Instead, we compare Arbereshe and autochthonous municipalities considering a number

³Arbëresh elite families actively sought integration in Italian society through intermarriage, mainly involving members of the Italian elite. Francesco Crispi (1818-1901), one of the former Italian Prime Ministers after the unification of Italy and Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) a founding member and leader of the Italian Communist Party, were of Albanian descents.

⁴ Luigi Giura, Pasquale Scura and Francesco Crispi.

⁵ Their commitment to these political causes is also reflected in their popular songs in which they compare the Italian hero Garibaldi to the Albania hero Skanderbeg (Serra, 1947).

⁶ A great contribution to the preservation of the Arbëresh culture comes from the institution, in the XVII century of two seminars. In these seminars were educated the members of the Arbëresh clergy and a quite large number of professionals, who took an important role in Italian political life.

of demographic characteristics (population, years of schooling, percentage of illiterates, percentage of elderly people,) taken from the 2001 Italian Census⁷, together with data on income per capita (average declared income, Ministero dell'Economia e delle Finanze, 2010) poverty index (share of taxpayers with less than 7,500 Euros of, Ministero dell'Economia e delle Finanze, 2010) and altitude in meters and surface in hectares of territory under the jurisdiction of each municipality.

INSERT TABLE 1

In the first two columns of Table 1, means of the municipal demographic characteristics are reported, by Arbereshe and non-Arbereshe groups. Differences in means between Arbereshe municipalities and non-Arbereshe municipalities are presented in column 3 (standard errors are reported in parentheses). Results show that Arbereshe and non-Arbereshe municipalities are comparable as regards a number of observable characteristics: there are no significant differences between the two groups in terms of average schooling, poverty index and altitude. On the other hand, there are some statistically significant differences in terms of income-per capita, percentage of elderly people, percentage of illiterates and size of the territory under the jurisdiction of each municipality. Arbereshe municipalities tend to be smaller and to have a lower income per-capita and a higher percentage of elderly people.

The Arberesh have lower levels of income, demonstrated in terms of lower income per capita and a higher poverty rates. Our expectation, in terms of our subsequent empirical analysis, is that this difference should lead to, at worst, a conservative (i.e. biased towards zero) estimates of the effect of civic capital on behavior. For instance, one would expect lower income levels to lead to a lower propensity to pay television tax, while it is difficult to a priori think of the relationship between income and referendum / voting turnout.

While this suggests a lack of observable confounding factors between our villages of interest and comparison villages, unobservable confounding factors may still exist. One can think of two related potential sources of selection on unobservables. First, individuals who reside in Arberesh villages may not be a random subsample of those born there. That is, there may be selective out migration that is correlated to characteristics the influence behavior such as tax compliance and voting turnout. Second, those villages that maintained Arberesh traditions may be unobservably different from those who were initially settled by Albanians but have since stopped observing these traditions. In subsequent analysis we demonstrate that the Albanian effect is concentrated solely in those villages that have maintained the Arbereshe traditions. In an attempt to address these issues of

⁷ Data from Census 2001 are accessible through the Communes Statistical Atlas (Atlante Statistico dei Comuni) (ISTAT, 2009).

endogeneity we adopt an IV strategy using historically given locations of two Greek-Albanian seminaries as a source of exogenous variation in the maintenance of Arbereshe traditions.

III. DATA AND EMPIRICAL METHODOLOGY

A key issue in examining social capital is measurement. As highlighted by Guiso *et al* (2010), it is increasingly clear that social capital is an ambiguous term that has been invoked in a range of ways that are not necessarily consistent. This raises concerns regarding the measurement of social capital, how it can be ‘accumulated’, and more fundamentally the comparability of research that often uses vastly different proxies to measure its effect. Guiso *et al* (2010) address this and suggest the alternative concept of ‘civic capital’ as a set of values and beliefs that facilitate co-operation. Specifically, it is these “persistent and shared beliefs and values that help a group overcome the free rider problem in the pursuit of socially valuable activities” (*op cit*, p 3).

Existing empirical work aimed at measuring civic capital focuses on one of two approaches. Survey responses on questions regarding trust, such as those commonly included in the major values /social surveys. Or, alternatively, revealed preference style proxies that are connected to civic capital by some view of socialization; such as charitable giving or election turnout. In this paper, we focus on these latter types of measures as we believe that these measures are more convincing as stakes are attached to this behavior. We focus on two groups of measures related to election turnout and tax compliance, respectively. Both of these measures appear to fit with two key concepts of civic capital as they proxy, in turn, attitudes towards free riding and cheating (tax compliance) and the propensity to cooperate and help in the creation of collective goods (turnout) (Newton, 1997; Putnam, 1995, 1996; Putnam, Leonard and Nanetti, 1993; Seligson, 1999).

Specifically we focus on a range of turnout measures that importantly are not directly related to the provision of local public goods (such as mayoral/local government elections). These are standard measures aimed at capturing the propensity to cooperate and help in the creation of collective goods (Guiso, Sapienza and Zingales, 2004, 2008b, Putman, 1993, Guiso et al. 2010 and Amodio, 2012). We consider turnout at the 2011 Italian referenda,⁸ participation at the European Parliamentary Elections and participation at National Parliament Elections from 1948 to 2008. Voting can be considered both as a right and a moral duty. It entails some costs, while benefits in non-local elections tend to zero and then from a purely rational viewpoint one should not vote and free ride. In addition, at referenda as well as at European Parliamentary elections contaminations of electoral results related to clientele and patronage are null or very limited: referenda is not a

⁸ Unfortunately, data on important Italian referenda asking people to express their views on issues such as the legalization of divorce (1974) and abortion (1981) are only available at provincial level and as a result we cannot use them for our analysis.

political election and as a consequence there are no incentives for exchange votes, similarly since the European Parliament is a supranational institution and has limited scope of intervention the relevance of exchange votes is very modest. We also examine participation at the Italian parliamentary elections of the Lower House of the Parliament (“Camera dei Deputati”), in general elections. Existing research demonstrates that generalized interpersonal trust and norms of reciprocity are strongly correlated to turnout (Newton, 1997; Putnam, 1995, 1996; Putnam, Leonard and Nanetti, 1993; Seligson, 1999). Even if this kind of political involvement could be subject to contaminations due to political patronage there is no reason to believe that this phenomena would be more relevant in Arbereshe municipalities compared to indigenous municipalities in the same area. A key advantage of this data is that it covers a relatively long period (1948-2008) which allows us to investigate if civic behavior has changed across the post-war period.

The empirical analysis involves estimation of variants of (1)

$$Y_i^j = \alpha_0 + \beta' X + \gamma Arb_i + \lambda^j + \varepsilon_i \quad (1)$$

Where Y is the outcome variable (voter turnout) for municipality i that is located in region j . X is a vector collecting municipality controls, while Arb indicates that a municipality contains an Arbërese community. We recognize that there may be unobserved variables correlated with both being an Arbëresh municipality and outcomes such as tax compliance and voter turnout. As an initial step towards addressing this issue we include first regional level fixed effects and then subsequently provincial (i.e. more disaggregated) fixed effects.

Subsequently we estimate an analogous model using a large dataset from the Italian parliamentary elections of the Lower House of the Parliament (“Camera dei Deputati”) taking place from 1946 to 2008, we compare turnout rates in Arbëresh municipalities with turnout rates in indigenous municipalities located in the same geographical areas. We estimate by OLS several specifications of the following model, where a key point of interest is whether bl varies over time (fix notation and add time trends).

$$Y_{it} = \beta_1(Arbreshe_i) + \beta_4 X_{it} + \mu_p + \lambda_t + \varepsilon_{it} \quad (2)$$

where Y_{it} is the dependent variable measuring the *Turnout* rate (number of effective voters on the number of electors) in municipality i in election year t ; $Arbreshe_i$ is a dummy variable for municipalities with Albanian origins; X_{it} is a vector of municipal characteristics, such as population size, percentage of illiterates, percentage of the employed population, fraction of elderly people, size of the geographical area, sea level; μ_p is a vector of provincial dummies, λ_t is a vector of year dummies and ε_{it} is an error term.

Finally, while we have argued that the location of initial migration where quasi-random there is clearly the potential for non-randomness in the subsequent main of *Arbreshe* communities. To examine this we use distance to two seminaries, where the clergy of the Greek-Albanian communities were formed. The Arbreshe religious tradition, albeit their belonging to the Catholic church, is more similar to the Greek Orthodox tradition. For example priests can marry, and also the vestments and rites are closer to the Orthodox than to the Roman Catholic tradition. The two seminaries where the clergy of the Albanian community were formed were much more than places of priestly education: they were fundamental in protecting and maintaining alive the Arbreshe culture along the centuries and formed the great part of Arbereshe secular intellectual elites. These two seminaries are located in the villages of San Demetrio Corone in Calabria, and Piana degli Albanesi in Sicily. We use this information as the basis of a 2SLS estimation strategy, where we also include regional fixed effects and allow for non-linear (quadratic) effects of distance on the ‘strength’ or Arbreshe tradition. In this way we utilise within region variation in distance to seminaries where this distance is treated flexibly. This leads to the following equation:

(INSERT 2SLS EQUATION).

IV. RESULTS

Table 2 provides estimates of the conditional correlation between a community historically being in receipt of Albanian immigration and voter turnout behavior. We report a set of increasingly complete specifications for European Union (EU) election and the 2011 Italian Referendum turnout, respectively. In the first column we report the association between Arbreshe communities and turnout behavior. For both turnout measures these reveal a statistically significant, and large, relationship. For instance, EU turnout is 4 percentage points higher in Arbreshe communities, on a

base of 63%. The corresponding relationship is 1.5 percentage points for turnout at the referendum (on a base of 53%). Models (II) introduce controls for a range of potential confounders, and in the case of EU turnout, year dummies. These explanatory variables are related to voter turnouts in a manner that fits with previous literature and intuition. For instance, the illiteracy rate is negatively related with turnout, while per capita income is positively related with turnout. Introducing these controls substantially improves the ‘fit’ of these models but does not substantially change the key estimate of interest. These remain statistically significant and actually increase slightly in magnitude (5.2 percentage points and 2.7 percentage points, respectively).

INSERT TABLE 2

While large, these relationships are essentially conditional associations and a number of factors exist that may prevent them from being treated causally, related to variations in unobservable characteristics between Arbreshe and non-Arbresehe communities that may be correlated with turnout behavior and civic capital in general. Our first attempt to address this is to restrict the level of comparison by introducing province level fixed effects to our estimates. In this way we seek to wash out unobservable factors influencing turnout behavior that relate to specific areas of Italy. The resultant estimates are provided as models (III) in Table 2. Our key estimate now can be interpreted as the within province variation in turnout behavior associated with a community being Arbreshe. While there is some movement in the point estimates, there remains a positive and statistically significant relationship between Arbreshe communities and voter turnout behavior.

As an alternative approach to within-province estimation we also looked at successively more restriction geographic comparisons. Again the underlying idea is that more proximate areas should differ less in terms of unobserved characteristics civic capital and voter turnout. A difficulty with the provincial fixed effects is that this implicitly throws out comparison municipalities that, while proximate, are across provincial boundaries. Here instead, we use only regional fixed effects but estimate variants of our models from Table 2 where we successively reduce the comparison group to municipalities within 60kms, 40kms and 20kms of an Arbreshe municipality.⁹

INSERT TABLE 3

These estimates are reported in Table 3. These reveal that our initial results remain even in the most narrow geographic comparison group, albeit with some loss in precision. It is also

⁹ The National Statistical Office (ISTAT) provides the geo-coding of all the Town Halls of the 8101 Italian municipalities. Through these data, for each municipality the “crow’s flight” distance with each of the Arbëresh municipalities is calculated. If the minimum of these distances is larger than the threshold, the municipality is discarded from the analysis.

noticeable that there is some reduction in the magnitude of the voter turnout effect in the narrowest band, however this remains statistically significant at the 1% level. Taken together this is supportive of a causal difference insofar as neighbouring provinces, controlling for observed differences, differ markedly in their turnout behavior. This evidence, combined with the estimates from the final models in Table 2 is suggestive of differences of behavior that reflect higher levels of civic capital within Arbreshe municipalities.

Having established a contemporaneous relationship between Arberesh communities and our indicator of civic capital, a natural question is whether this difference in behavior represents a diminished differential compared to, for instance, initial larger differences from the native population. In this sense, we are interested in whether there is an indication of assimilation of immigrant behavior towards the norms of the recipient country. To investigate this we investigate turnout behavior across the post-war period. Specifically, we use data from the Italian parliamentary elections of the lower chamber of the Parliament, i.e. the House of Representatives (“Camera dei Deputati”), from 1946 to 2008 and compare turnout rate in Arbëresh municipalities and autochthonous municipalities located in the same geographical areas. We estimate by OLS several specifications of the following model:

$$Y_{it} = \beta_1(Arbreshe_i) + \beta_4 X_{it} + \mu_p + \lambda_t + \varepsilon_{it}$$

where Y_{it} is the dependent variable measuring the *Turnout* rate (number of effective voters on the number of electors) in municipality i in election year t ; $Arbreshe_i$ is a dummy variable for municipalities with Albanian origins; X_{it} is a vector of controls as per Table 2 and 3; μ_p is a vector of provincial dummies, λ_t is a vector of year dummies and ε_{it} is an error term.

INSERT TABLE 4

Estimates of this model are reported in Table 4. The initial estimates are analogous to the final models in Table 2 in terms of the control vector, the inclusion of provincial fixed effects and the magnitude of differences between the turnout behavior of the Arbereshe and non-Arbereshe individuals. They have just under a 2 percentage higher level of turnout, which is similar to results for the 2011 referendum reported earlier.

The key issue of interest is whether this difference in behavior has changed over time, with the expectation being that there may have been convergence across communities. To investigate this, we first introduce a time trend (reported in column 2) which reveals a general decline in turnout over the period of approximately 1 percentage point per year. In the final column we

introduce an interaction between Arbreshe municipalities and the time trend with the aim of establishing whether there is any evidence of differential trends in turnout for this group. As reported it is clear that there is not, the point estimate is essentially unchanged while the Arbereshe dummy and time trend estimates remain essentially unchanged. We contend that this, in addition to earlier estimates, is a powerful result insofar as it demonstrates the ability of initially different civil capital to persist even during a period of increasing mobility and interaction.

INSERT TABLE 5

Despite our attempts to investigate the sensitivity of our results to appropriate comparison areas we cannot rule out that our results are driven by underlying differences in unobservable characteristics that relate to the area in which the Arbreshe settled rather than differences in civic capital. A particular concern is that we are measuring the effect of *ex post* being an Arbreshe community. This is a concern as this is a subset of areas where initial settlement occurred and the maintenance of tradition is likely to be non-random. Most critically, those areas where differences in underlying civic capital were greatest may be those municipalities where we might expect these communities to survive as recognizable groups. We seek to directly examine this source of bias using an instrumental variable approach that aims to exploit exogenous variation in the likelihood of maintaining traditions. The instrument we use is the location of seminaries, one at San Demetrio Corone in Calabria and the other at Palermo in Sicily, which are key to the preservation of traditions. Whilst the location decision of these seminaries is not random, they occurred in the years 1794 and 1734 and there is a likely quasi-random relationship between initial location choice and current communities continued observations of traditions and choice of civic behavior. As there is no time-variation in our instrument, we revert to our two original measures of turnout behavior. Our instrument enters as distance from the municipality to these seminaries. As one may expect the effect of proximity to be non-linear we introduce a quadratic in distance.¹⁰

Table 5 provides the IV estimates. The first column provides the first stage estimates which are common to both models of interest. This reveals a strong relationship between seminary location and the being a Arbreshe community, that diminishes with distance. The square term is positive, but the turning point is out of sample. Our instruments pass standard tests of [...]. The resultant estimates of interest are, for both outcomes, positive, large and statistically significant.

¹⁰ In a similar vein, we revert to regional rather than provincial fixed effects as there is too little within province variation in distance to generate precise estimates.

This suggests that our estimates are not the result of non-randomness in the maintenance of tradition.

V CONCLUSIONS

There is an increasing body of research, which tries to understand the extent to which differences in social, and particularly civic, capital lead to differences in economic and social behavior. This paper adds to this literature focusing on a unique historical immigration event in Italy in the 15th Century. This event is informative insofar as it represents the mass settlement of a group with markedly different traditions into an established society. Focusing on an established measure of civic capital, voter turnout, our initial results suggest that despite the time since this event these communities still display different, higher, civic capital than other comparable Italian communities. This survives a number of robustness checks including focusing on very small geographic points of comparison and instrumental variable estimation aimed at addressing the non-random maintenance of traditions.

The other main thrust our paper, and a point of novelty from previous literature, is to consider how this variation in behavior has evolved over the past 60 years. This is motivated by the belief that initial differences in attitudes and behavior are likely to be eroded over time, especially in recent decades when regional mobility and the general level of regional interaction has increased. We find no evidence that there has been a change in the difference in civic capital between our communities of interest and Italian communities. Specifically, the difference in voter turnout apparent in the late 1940's, early 1950's remains in the 21st century. This finding has implications for our view of the likelihood of assimilation of immigrant groups, particularly in cases of large scale migration.

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Table 1. Demographical and Geographical Characteristics across Arbereshe and Autochthons Municipalities

	Mean		Difference
	(1)	(2)	(3)
	Autochthons Municipalities pop<10,000	Arbereshe Municipalities pop<10,000	
Population	2862.684 (2085.078)	2260.488 (1850.716)	602.1961* (335.984)
Income per-capita	17018.890 (1892.398)	16248.310 (1473.153)	770.579*** (302.850)
Poverty index	0.095 (0.042)	0.104 (0.040)	-0.009 (0.007)
Years of Education	7.063 (0.640)	7.114 (0.472)	-0.050 (0.102)
Illiterates	0.050 (0.029)	0.059 (0.031)	-0.009* (0.005)
Elderly people (over 65)	0.222 (0.060)	0.244 (0.055)	-0.022** (0.010)
Altitude	527.761 (240.808)	500.439 (186.018)	27.322 (38.524)
Area size (squared-km)	44.950 (36.256)	34.723 (27.547)	10.2268* (5.796)
Observations	503	41	

Notes: Standard errors are reported in parentheses. In the last column we report the F -stat and p -value for a test of equality of variable means across all three groups.

Table 2. Voter Turnout and Arbreshe Areas, OLS

	European Union Elections (1999,2004,2009)			Referendum (2011)		
	(I)	(II)	(III)	(I)	(II)	(III)
Arbreshe Community	0.0420*** (0.0125)	0.0515*** (0.0131)	0.0387*** (0.0125)	0.0154* (0.00780)	0.0266*** (0.00727)	0.0217*** (0.00821)
Population		-3.28e-06 (2.48e-06)	-1.64e-06 (2.53e-06)		-3.45e-06** (1.61e-06)	-3.58e-06** (1.43e-06)
Altitude		-3.31e-05** (1.61e-05)	3.46e-06 (1.70e-05)		3.67e-05*** (1.33e-05)	5.02e-05*** (1.41e-05)
reddito_proc		1.30e-05*** (2.13e-06)	1.35e-05*** (2.08e-06)		1.14e-05*** (1.26e-06)	1.21e-05*** (1.24e-06)
Illiteracy Rate (%)		-5.074*** (1.617)	-4.543** (1.756)		-0.834 (1.175)	-0.0176 (1.021)
Area (km ²)		9.65e-05 (0.000107)	-6.38e-05 (9.47e-05)		-3.48e-06 (7.11e-05)	6.99e-05 (6.14e-05)
Constant	0.630*** (0.00291)	0.400*** (0.0376)	0.444*** (0.0387)	0.530*** (0.00191)	0.302*** (0.0243)	0.402*** (0.0284)
Fixed Effects		Year	Year & Province			Province
Observations	3,799	2,942	2,942	1,309	1,015	1,015
R-squared	0.004	0.107	0.219	0.002	0.161	0.282

Notes: *, **, *** indicate statistical significance at the 10%, 5% and 1% level, respectively.

Table 3 Robustness Checks, Narrower Geographic Areas

VARIABLES	European Union Elections (1999,2004,2009)			Referendum		
	<60km	<40km	<20km	<60km	<40km	<20km
Arbreshe Community	0.0410*** (0.0134)	0.0330** (0.0140)	0.0225 (0.0154)	0.0282*** (0.00767)	0.0226*** (0.00773)	0.0155* (0.00882)
Population	3.15e-06 (3.22e-06)	2.13e-06 (3.85e-06)	-5.26e-06 (4.48e-06)	-3.25e-06 (2.05e-06)	-7.22e-07 (2.13e-06)	4.82e-07 (2.24e-06)
Altitude	-9.16e-06 (2.30e-05)	-2.75e-05 (2.76e-05)	-5.57e-05 (3.60e-05)	3.65e-05** (1.64e-05)	7.37e-05*** (1.74e-05)	0.000103*** (1.92e-05)
Income pp	1.07e-05*** (2.76e-06)	1.14e-05*** (3.15e-06)	1.07e-05*** (3.72e-06)	1.32e-05*** (1.49e-06)	1.38e-05*** (1.77e-06)	1.16e-05*** (2.19e-06)
Illiteracy Rate	-2.965 (2.100)	-3.053 (2.802)	-10.14*** (3.246)	0.289 (1.471)	2.509 (1.771)	2.331 (1.691)
Area (km2)	0.000143 (0.000135)	0.000258 (0.000178)	0.000152 (0.000282)	0.000114 (9.25e-05)	0.000103 (9.67e-05)	-0.000174 (0.000142)
Constant	0.465*** (0.0496)	0.464*** (0.0601)	0.547*** (0.0790)	0.260*** (0.0291)	0.221*** (0.0337)	0.259*** (0.0413)
Fixed Effects	Year – Region	Year – Region	Year – Region	Region	Region	Region
Observations	1,950	1,459	858	683	510	297
R-squared	0.185	0.188	0.220	0.199	0.255	0.352

Table 4 Election Turnout over the Post-War Period, 194X-2008

	(I)	(II)	(III)
	<8,000 pop	<8,000 pop	<8,000 pop
Arbereshe_Municipality	0.0183** (0.0087)	0.0177** (0.0086)	0.0199*** (0.0075)
Time trend		-0.0094*** (0.0006)	-0.0094*** (0.0006)
Arbereshe_Municipalities*t			-0.0003 (0.0009)
Alititude	-0.0000* (0.0000)	-0.0000* (0.0000)	-0.0000* (0.0000)
Population	0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)
Population Squared	-0.0000 (0.0000)	-0.0000* (0.0000)	-0.0000* (0.0000)
Geographical size	0.0002** (0.0001)	0.0002** (0.0001)	0.0002** (0.0001)
Employed Population	0.0100 (0.0153)	0.0006 (0.0151)	0.0005 (0.0151)
Percentage of populatione over-65	-0.4793*** (0.0713)	-0.4176*** (0.0655)	-0.4172*** (0.0657)
Illiterates	-0.0147 (0.0173)	0.0097 (0.0103)	0.0097 (0.0103)
Observations	8200	8200	8200
Adjusted R-squared	0.461	0.357	0.357

Standard errors clustered at the municipality level, all models include province fixed effects.

TABLE 5 IV ESTIMTES

VARIABLES	First Stage	(3) Turnout EU	(6) Turnout Ref
Distance to Seminary (kms)	-0.022*** (0.0024)		
Distance (kms ²)/100	0.000037*** (0.00005)		
Arbreshe		0.409*** (0.0427)	0.0859** (0.0335)
Population '000s	-0.065** (0.033)		
Altitude (100 metres)	-0.050** (0.020)		
Per-capita income '000 euros	-0.100*** (0.024)		
Illiteracy Rate	-57.056** (25.27)		
area_sqkm	-0.0025 (0.0016)		
Constant	1.979 (0.464)		

Fixed Effects		Year & Region	Region
Observations		2,942	586
R-squared	0.113	0.251	0.316
