

## **Making Nationalists out of Frenchmen?: Substate Nationalism in Corsica**

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*This article analyzes the electoral performance of the nationalist movement in Corsica. First, we ran an ecological analysis of a new dataset, including observations from all Corsican towns for all regional elections from 1992 to 2004. Second, we complemented the ecological findings with individual-level data. Our results show that the classical combination of economic-based and identity factors that account well for nationalist voting is conditioned in the Corsican case by the existence of two specific phenomena: the tendency of the nationalist movement to experience internal divisions and party splitting, and the extraordinary electoral resilience of local notables, the traditional French-loyal political leaders on the island.*

### INTRODUCTION

Research on substate nationalism has been overwhelmingly biased towards its most successful cases. There are many more studies on Catalan or Scottish nationalism than on Aragonese or Cornish nationalism, because positive cases are always more attractive than negative ones. What is striking, however, is the consistent lack of fine-grained analysis about Corsican nationalism. Since the early 1990s, Corsica has received academic and media attention more due to the existence of episodes of nationalist political violence, than to the fact that Corsican nationalists have been able to win over around 20 percent of the electorate in each regional election; they are well represented in several branches of society—the unions, the University

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of Corsica Pasquale Paoli, sports associations, and the media; and they have deeply changed political competition by introducing nationalist issues into the regional agenda and forcing all parties to take sides on local issues such as the protection of the regional language.<sup>1</sup> Despite this influence, nationalists have not yet held regional offices.

This mismatch between the social presence of nationalism and its political feebleness has much to do with the strength of clan politics at the local level in Corsica.<sup>2</sup> The combination of an agriculture-based economy with a constant flux of natives emigrating to thrive abroad allowed local notables to create networks of personal support the rationale of which was the exchange of votes for (given or promised) political favors from the public administration. The major structural shifts that the independence of the former French Maghreb countries brought to the island weakened clan power and helped to activate regional awareness.

This article is the first empirical attempt to analyze the electoral roots of Corsican nationalism. After describing the main electoral forces within the nationalist camp, we follow a twofold empirical strategy. On the one hand, we have created a town-level dataset with information about the electoral results in Corsican regional elections for both rounds from 1992 to 2004—that is, 1992, 1998, 1999, and 2004. On the other hand, we take advantage of the 1997, 1998, and 2001 Corsican surveys to investigate if these “ecological” findings also match individual opinions and behavior about nationalism. According to our results, nationalist voting in Corsica resembles the electoral pattern of other European nationalist movements in having two main dimensions: a protest vote, related to the scarcity of economic resources that are politically controlled by mainly antinationalist notables; and an identity vote, related to the defense of the Corsican culture and people. Despite being damaged by its tendency towards fragmentation, Corsican nationalism remains solid, as the recent 2010 territorial election shows, where it just got a record 35.7 percent of the vote.

## THE STRUCTURE OF THE NATIONALIST FIELD IN CORSICA

Corsican nationalism has its roots in the short period of quasi-independence the island experienced in the 18th century. Led by a relevant part of the native upper class, the Corsican Revolution against the then holder of the island, the Republic of Genoa, started in 1729.<sup>3</sup> In 1755, the triumphant revolutionary leaders passed a constitution promoting a sort of representative democracy.<sup>4</sup> Genoa, unable to defeat the rebellion, transferred its sovereignty rights over the island to France, whose military power brought the period of independent Corsica to an end in 1769, after the Battle of Ponte Novo. Despite an ephemeral Anglo-Corsican Kingdom during the Convention wars (1794–1796), Corsica remained solidly French until the 1970s.<sup>5</sup> The absence

of political contestation did not conceal the existence of grave problems of public order on the island; the French authorities were unable to stop secular practices of retribution—better known as vendettas.<sup>6</sup>

Regionalists in Corsica took their first steps during the interwar period.<sup>7</sup> Around *A Muvra* and the *Partitu Corsu d'Azione*, a regionalist movement was formed that was very virulent in its political positions but scarcely influential. Unable to fight against the local notables, regionalist leaders opted to leave the movement electorally untested.<sup>8</sup> The fact that some leaders remained sympathetic to the Italian fascist-led irredentist project—which included Italian-speaking Corsica—also contributed to burying nationalist goals for the time being.<sup>9</sup>

The new regionalist movement in Corsica was born in the 1960s. Regionalists played the “grievance” card and framed ethnic claims in economic terms. The economic theme was very convenient for the regionalists, since it allowed them to avoid the past association between Corsican ethnic identity and Italian irredentism by raising their concern with the fate of the island and the economic and cultural survival of the Corsicans. Indeed, this theme favored the regionalist attack against the foundations of local notables’ power by emphasizing the bad economic shape of the island. Corsican notables had kept local power in their hands and worked as brokers between the central administration and the island in exchange for loyalty to the French institutions.<sup>10</sup> Through a widespread system of patronage, notables ran the island without external opposition.<sup>11</sup> The arbitrary allocation of perquisites allowed them to build a strong clientele dependent on state largesse and thus reluctant to complain.<sup>12</sup>

Founded in 1966, the Regional Front of Corsica (FRC) was the first relevant organization. It initially gave shelter to two different ideological leanings. On the one hand, the left-wing group was made up of the Corsican Union (created in 1960) and the National Union of Corsican Students (1962), the presence of which remained limited to continental France. On the other hand, the Committee for the Study and Defense of the Interests of Corsica (CEDIC), founded in 1964 in Bastia, declared itself ideologically neutral. These two currents broke apart very quickly because of differences about participating in elections. The left-wing group rejected any participation, since “the polls did not reflect the true will of the Corsican People.”<sup>13</sup> The apolitical group, on the contrary, was tempted to run. It fought the legislative seat of Bastia in 1967, with a meager electoral return of 2.3 percent of the votes. Some weeks later the group quit the FRC and founded a new regional force called the Corsican Regionalist Action (ARC).

The incapacity of regionalists to make inroads radicalized the movement. The ARC became in 1973 Action for the Revival of Corsica (ARC) and abandoned regionalism to embrace a new autonomist platform. In 1975, its leader, Edmond Simeoni, after refusing to field candidates to the legislative election, led the armed occupation of a wine cellar owned by a farmer

resettled from Algeria.<sup>14</sup> The outraged French government reacted repressively illegalizing the ARC. The intransigence of the government encouraged Corsicans to feed the, until then, tiny clandestine organizations that pursued independence through the use of terrorist violence. The Corsican National Liberation Front (FLNC) was born in 1976 and its political front in 1980.

The presidential and legislative victories of the French Socialist Party (PS) brought extremely important changes to Corsica, given that the party had declared itself in favor of granting a special statute to the island even before the radicalization of the regionalists.<sup>15</sup> Against the opinion of the local notables, the French government passed in 1982 the so-called “statut particulier” for Corsica that foresaw the creation of a regional assembly elected with a nationalist friendly PR electoral rule without entry threshold. Whereas the autonomist Union of the Corsican People (UPC), heir of the former ARC, called for participation in the 1982 regional election, those supporting the FLNC fight, formed around the Union of Nationalist Committees (CCN), repudiated the “trap” and opted for abstention. The UPC, led by Simeoni, took advantage of the CCN’s abstentionist position and gathered 10.6 percent of the vote and 7 seats out of 61. Other minor left-wing autonomists gathered 2.1 percent and another seat.

The confusion of the local notables contributed to fostering ideology-based politics in the formation of a majority in the assembly. A left-wing coalition was proposed whereby nationalists would collaborate with one of their *bête noire*, the leader of the Radical party and uppermost critic of the recognition of the institutional specificity of Corsica, François Giacobbi.<sup>16</sup> However, the UPC imposed some conditions that the Radical party did not accept. Thus, the UPC decided to support the election of the candidate of the left for the presidency, but without forming part of the new cabinet. This strategy did not work well, and it favored the short life of the assembly. When a new election was called in 1984, the UPC vote was halved, since the CCN decided this time to run and challenge the UPC monopoly of nationalist representation. Despite this strategic switch, nationalism did not increase its support in the election.<sup>17</sup> The incapacity of both radicals and moderates to grow electorally forced them to leave aside their differences regarding the use of violence and field joint lists for the 1986 regional election.<sup>18</sup> This did not work either and the nationalist union survived until 1989–1990, when the FLNC split into three different organizations with their respective political fronts.

The electoral boom of the nationalist parties took place in 1992. One year before, the French Parliament passed a new statute for the island,<sup>19</sup> which granted additional powers to the assembly and recognized the existence of the Corsican people; although the Constitutional Council later overruled this article of the law. Since the first regional elections of the *Collectivité Territoriale* held in 1992, the nationalists have fared much better—between 14.9 percent in 2004 and 35.7 percent in 2010. However, their results are often negligible in legislative, cantonal, and municipal elections.<sup>20</sup>

The relative consolidation of nationalism in Corsica has surprisingly come hand in hand with an intriguing tendency for party splitting. In the late 1990s, there were more than 15 nationalist political forces. Thus, at least six nationalist lists fought the 1998 regional election, even though the number of parties thereafter decreased. It is intriguing because classical cleavages on support for violence, secession, and left-wing policies do not cut across the fragmentation of the nationalist camp (see Table 1). Rather, many conflicts seem to be related to leadership infighting around spheres of influence, which end with the setting up of a new splinter group led by the rebellious leader. The weakness of the party machines in Corsica makes it easier for mavericks or fallen leaders to build new political organizations rather than acquiescing in party positions. The high rate of attrition in party nominees for the presidency of the assembly speaks for this tendency, since only 3 *capopartiti* out of 25 nationalist lists have repeated their nomination for heading a party list in regional elections. As a consequence, the proliferation of nationalist lists seems to depress the number of nationalist votes. In some regional elections, the nationalist lists reaching the second round won less than the combined vote of all nationalists gathered in the first round. This is one of the most demanding problems nationalists face in Corsica.

## HYPOTHESES

In this section we discuss the hypotheses we will test in the rest of the article. Literature on substate nationalism has consistently singled out two main sets of explanations to account for nationalist voting: identity issues and economic grievances.<sup>21</sup> On the one hand, cultural factors—such as speaking a regional language or being a native—have proved to be important predictors of the preference for a nationalist ballot.<sup>22</sup> As nationalists claim to be the best representatives of the inhabitants of the region under dispute, they will need to defend those regional resources that give the region its specificity—such as a particular language or religion—if they want to attract votes from citizens concerned about those resources. Thus, we hypothesize that voters with more ethnic resources will vote for the nationalist parties:

H1: The more weight a voter places on one's ethnic resources, the greater the chances of voting for nationalist parties.

Secondly, economic factors have also been identified as motives to vote nationalist, since nationalist parties can take advantage of citizens' complaints against the performance of state-wide parties. The connection between nationalism and the economy has not been clear, though. On the one hand, some authors have argued that nationalists will do better in those regions whose fiscal contribution to the state is higher than the transfers

**TABLE 1** The Composition of the Nationalist Camp (1992–2010)

	Position on violence: support (+), rejection (–), or indeterminacy (0)	Position on secession: pro-independence (+), pro-autonomy (–), or indeterminacy (0)	Position on ideology: left-wing leaning (+) or indeterminacy (0)
1992	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Corsica Nazione (0)</li> <li>● MPA (+)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Corsica Nazione (0)</li> <li>● MPA (–)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Corsica Nazione (0)</li> <li>● MPA (0)</li> </ul>
1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Corsica Nazione (+)</li> <li>● Corsica Viva (+)</li> <li>● A Manca Naziunale (–)</li> <li>● Edmond Simeoni (–)</li> <li>● MPA (Corsica Democrazia) (–)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Corsica Nazione (+)</li> <li>● Corsica Viva (0)</li> <li>● A Manca Naziunale (0)</li> <li>● Edmond Simeoni (–)</li> <li>● MPA (–)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Corsica Nazione (0)</li> <li>● Corsica Viva (0)</li> <li>● A Manca Naziunale (+)</li> <li>● Edmond Simeoni (0)</li> <li>● MPA (0)</li> </ul>
1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● I Verdi Corsi (0)</li> <li>● Corsica Nazione (+)</li> <li>● Uniti (–)</li> <li>● Rinnovu Naziunale (–)</li> <li>● UPC (–)</li> <li>● A Manca Naziunale (–)</li> <li>●Unione Naziunale (0)</li> <li>● Rinnovu Naziunale (+)</li> <li>● A Manca Naziunale (Unità Populare) (–)</li> <li>● Femu a Corsica (–)</li> <li>● Corsica Libera (+)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● I Verdi Corsi (0)</li> <li>● Corsica Nazione (+)</li> <li>● Uniti (0)</li> <li>● Rinnovu Naziunale (–)</li> <li>● UPC (–)</li> <li>● A Manca Naziunale (0)</li> <li>●Unione Naziunale (0)</li> <li>● Rinnovu Naziunale (+)</li> <li>● A Manca Naziunale (0)</li> <li>● Femu a Corsica (–)</li> <li>● Corsica Libera (+)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● I Verdi Corsi (0)</li> <li>● Corsica Nazione (0)</li> <li>● Uniti (0)</li> <li>● Rinnovu Naziunale (0)</li> <li>● UPC (0)</li> <li>● A Manca Naziunale (+)</li> <li>●Unione Naziunale (0)</li> <li>● Rinnovu Naziunale (+)</li> <li>● A Manca Naziunale (+)</li> <li>● Femu a Corsica (0)</li> <li>● Corsica Libera (0)</li> </ul>
2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A Manca Naziunale (–)</li> <li>●Unione Naziunale (0)</li> <li>● Rinnovu Naziunale (+)</li> <li>● A Manca Naziunale (Unità Populare) (–)</li> <li>● Femu a Corsica (–)</li> <li>● Corsica Libera (+)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A Manca Naziunale (0)</li> <li>●Unione Naziunale (0)</li> <li>● Rinnovu Naziunale (+)</li> <li>● A Manca Naziunale (0)</li> <li>● Femu a Corsica (–)</li> <li>● Corsica Libera (+)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A Manca Naziunale (+)</li> <li>●Unione Naziunale (0)</li> <li>● Rinnovu Naziunale (+)</li> <li>● A Manca Naziunale (+)</li> <li>● Femu a Corsica (0)</li> <li>● Corsica Libera (0)</li> </ul>
2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A Manca Naziunale (Unità Populare) (–)</li> <li>● Femu a Corsica (–)</li> <li>● Corsica Libera (+)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A Manca Naziunale (–)</li> <li>● Femu a Corsica (–)</li> <li>● Corsica Libera (+)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A Manca Naziunale (+)</li> <li>●Unione Naziunale (0)</li> <li>● Rinnovu Naziunale (+)</li> <li>● A Manca Naziunale (+)</li> <li>● Femu a Corsica (0)</li> <li>● Corsica Libera (0)</li> </ul>

*Note.* MPA = Movimentu per l'Autodeterminazione; UPC = Union of the Corsican People.

they get in exchange. The mismatch between economic power and political powerlessness strengthens the nationalists' demand for decentralization and independence.<sup>23</sup>

On the other hand, it has also been argued that if a region is affected by persistent unemployment or an increasing wealth gap between the region and the metropolis, its inhabitants may think that casting a ballot for a party out of mainstream politics might signal a wish of change and help set a different economic path.<sup>24</sup> Given the state of economic dependency of these regions, voters unhappy with the status quo could turn to nationalist parties with the objective of forcing the state to give more resources to the region. In this sense, nationalist voting would resemble more a "protest" act than a clear-cut commitment to full secession.

Corsica has not only been consistently poorer than the mainland but also has embodied a large public system with most of its jobs being discretionally allocated by the local politicians.<sup>25</sup> The resilience of institutional clientelism could have encouraged the "losers" of the patronage system to rally behind the nationalist flag as the best instrument to change the state of affairs within the island. Therefore, we expect that nationalism will be more successful in those towns where good economic conditions are missing.

H2: The more weight a voter places on the mismanagement of the economy, the greater the chances of voting for nationalist parties.

After reviewing general factors that are related to nationalist mobilization everywhere, we consider the special features of the Corsican political system. As aforementioned, Corsica is characterized by the existence of very powerful local elites that control most of the regional offices and leave little room for nationalists to win votes.<sup>26</sup> The consolidation of the "notable" system took place in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the French government stepped into the unending conflict between the main local families to empower some Corsican clans in exchange for loyalty to the French regime.

Adapting themselves to the changing economic and institutional conditions, local notables have always based their force on the construction of hierarchical coalitions of local politicians whose main asset is the trade of votes for jobs and political favors.<sup>27</sup> The outcome of this equilibrium is that the main notables presided in legislative elections, whereas notable-dependent politicians kept their offices at the local level in cantonal and municipal elections. Wherever coalitions of this sort are also at work in regional elections, nationalists will be in "electoral" trouble.<sup>28</sup>

H3: The more dependent a voter is on networks of patronage, the lesser the chances of voting for nationalist parties.

However, as the size of the town increases, it is likely that those politicians relying on networks of patronage to collect votes will be less electorally

efficient. The argument is twofold. On the one hand, in large cities it is more difficult to please everybody without hindering potential voters. On the other hand, the higher anonymity of the vote in cities makes direct control of the vote almost impossible, which favors ideological politics.<sup>29</sup> Consequently, it follows that cities should be less affected by notables' power, and nationalists should get more votes, all other things being equal.

H4: The greater the size of the city, the greater the chances of voting for nationalist parties.

### EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS: THE TOWN-LEVEL PERSPECTIVE

In this section we test the hypotheses by using a dataset with town-level data. First, we present the data and explain how the hypotheses are proxied. Then we show some descriptive statistics on the relationship between the different nationalist parties. Finally, we discuss the main findings of the statistical models accounting for nationalist voting in Corsica.

We have built a dataset with electoral observations for all regional elections in Corsica from 1992 to 2004 (1992, 1998, 1999,<sup>30</sup> and 2004—both first and second rounds) at the town level. As in Corsica there are 360 towns, statistical methods can be satisfactorily used to test our hypotheses. The dependent variable is the electoral share of nationalist parties in each town. As independent ones, we have compiled information on several variables that give us some leverage to test the hypotheses properly.

Regarding H1, the best way to proxy the amount of ethnic resources available at the local level would be to have information about the number of speakers of the regional language in each town. Unfortunately, these data are not available,<sup>31</sup> so we control for the number of “natives” living in the town. By “native” we mean those who were born on the island. Thus, continental French citizens whose residences are in Corsica do not qualify as “natives.”<sup>32</sup> *Nativity* measures the percentage of Corsican people in each town.

Regarding H2, we account for the situation of the economy by including variables related to the level of town unemployment in 1990 and 1999 (data for 2003 were not available) as well as the state of the housing market.<sup>33</sup> As data on per capita income are not available, we use the housing market to proxy the increase in economic activity. We have created two indicators. Firstly, we have measured the number of houses in each town per 100 inhabitants. The population-weighted number of houses in a town is an indicator of its wealth, but it may also capture the existence of higher income inequality. Secondly, we have calculated the ratio of first houses against second houses in each town for 1990 and 1999. In the Corsican context, the tourist demand for second houses overheats the price for first houses,



generating complaints from locals unable to afford the increasing cost of a new house.<sup>34</sup>

H3 is no doubt the most interesting hypothesis for the Corsican case; but it is also the most difficult to capture. We have built two proxies to investigate whether the town was under notables' control. First, a dummy variable is included to indicate if the mayor of the town was running for the regional assembly on some of the party lists. If yes, we expect she was able to pull their voters towards her list with the consequence of leaving no room for nationalist voting. Second, we built an index of electoral fragmentation at the local level.<sup>35</sup> The idea here is that the larger number of competitive parties should reflect the lower capacity of notables to deter party rivals. With more competition at play, nationalists should be able to get their fair share of the vote.

Two corollaries follow from H3. On the one hand, if voters were used to voting along clientelistic lines, then we could expect more nationalist voting in those towns that host a larger number of nationalist candidates. Some anecdotal evidence seems to indicate that the local origin of nationalist leaders could explain a large share of variation in electoral results.<sup>36</sup> To control for this factor, we have included a variable measuring for each town the number of nationalist candidates who were born or live there. On the other hand, internal fragmentation should be penalized by voters in those towns where notables are strong. If citizens exchange votes for political favors, they could punish those ideological groups that run heavily fragmented because of their failure to gain a majority and allocate perquisites. As we showed in the previous section, internal fragmentation has been a key feature of the Corsican nationalist movement. We test this by measuring the number of effective nationalist parties at the local level in the first round.

Finally, H4 is straightforwardly tested. We control for the size of the town in population terms for any electoral year. Instead of being continuous, our "size" variable has four values: less than 300 inhabitants; between 300 and 1,000; between 1,000 and 3,000; and more than 3,000 inhabitants. Besides, we also control for the department (province) to which the town belongs in order to see whether nationalist votes are unevenly distributed among the two Corsican departments (Haute-Corse and Corse-du-Sud).

Table 2 shows the performance of nationalist parties in all regional elections from 1992 to 2004. Looking at the nationalist total, it is worth indicating that nationalists performed better in the second round when their number of parties contesting the first round was small. Thus, the 1992 (two lists) and 2004 (three lists) regional elections saw nationalists get more votes in the second round than their combined vote in the first round. Quite the opposite, internal fragmentation in 1998 and 1999 damaged nationalists' performance. Although the existence of five lists in the first round of 1999 granted the nationalists their best result up until then in that round (23.5 percent), the result of Corsica Nazione, the only party reaching the second round, fell to

**TABLE 2** Electoral Results of Nationalist Parties in Corsica. Regional Elections, 1992–2010

	1992		1998		1999		2004		2010	
	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd
Corsica Nazione*	13.66	16.85	5.21	9.85	10.41	16.76				
UPC (Edmond Simeoni)			4.97		3.85					
Unione Naziunale**							12.14	17.34		
Femu a Corsica									18.4	25.9
Corsica Libera									9.36	9.85
MPA (Corsica Demucrazia)	7.43	7.98	3.4							
A Manca Naziunale (Unità)			0.65		0.79		0.58			
I Verdi Corsi			1.15							
Corsica Viva			1.94							
Uniti					3.97					
Rinnovu Naziunale					4.44		2.19			
<b>Nationalists</b>	<b>21.09</b>	<b>24.83</b>	<b>17.32</b>	<b>9.85</b>	<b>23.46</b>	<b>16.76</b>	<b>14.91</b>	<b>17.34</b>	<b>27.76</b>	<b>35.75</b>

\*In 1992, Corsica Nazione was a coalition of five nationalist organizations, among which were included the radicals of the Cuncolta Naziunalista (successor of the illegalized CCN) and the moderates of the UPC. However, in 1998, Corsica Nazione involved only the Cuncolta and I Verdi Corsi (Corsican Greens), whereas in 1999 the Cuncolta stood alone under the label.

\*\*Unione Naziunale was a coalition made up of the PNC, founded by former UPC and MPA members, Corsica Nazione, another nationalist group formed around the figure of Edmond Simeoni called A Chjama Naziunale, and a number of tiny nationalist groups.

Note. CCN = Union of Nationalist Committees; MPA = Movimentu per l'Autodeterminazione; PNC = Partitu di a Nazione Corsa; UPC = Union of the Corsican People.

16.8 percent of the vote. The fact that Corsica Nazione represented the most supportive nationalist branch of the FLNC could have dissuaded moderate nationalists from voting for this party in the second round. But it seems more important that the other nationalist lists, all of them from moderate parties, suffered the consequences of fragmentation: Although all together they won more votes in the first round than the radical nationalist branch, none of the four moderate lists was able to overcome the 5 percent threshold to take part in the second round. Thus, fragmentation within the moderate side helped to overestimate the support for radical nationalists in Corsica during the late 1990s.

Table 3 includes additional descriptive information to check the consistency of the nationalist electorate. It collects the  $p$  correlations between the accumulated figure of nationalist votes for each election and each round. It is again remarkable the relatively low capacity of nationalists to transfer their votes between rounds when the number of nationalist parties contesting the election is large. Internal fragmentation damages the electoral prospects of nationalism. The 1992 and 2004 elections saw a high transfer of votes between rounds (.94 in 1992 and .87 in 2004). However, in 1998 and 1999 nationalists failed to coordinate themselves to successfully move all their first

**TABLE 3** Correlations among Nationalist Electoral Scores in Different Rounds and Years

	1R 1992	2R 1992	1R 1998	2R 1998	1R 1999	2R 1999	1R 2004
2R 1992	.94						
1R 1998	.57	.59					
2R 1998	.36	.39	.65				
1R 1999	.52	.55	.70	.53			
2R 1999	.48	.48	.65	.73	.77		
1R 2004	.42	.40	.52	.39	.57	.54	
2R 2004	.46	.46	.52	.39	.57	.57	.87

*Note.* All coefficients are significant at the 1 percent level.

round votes to the nationalist lists reaching the second round (*p* correlations: 1998 = .65; 1999 = .77).

Besides, the correlation between the first round of 1992 and following first rounds is decreasing (.57 in 1998, .52 in 1999, and .42 in 2004), which could indicate a change in the type of electorate voting for nationalist parties. Regarding the second round, the trend is less obvious, but the correlations tend to remain low—perhaps an indication of the problems nationalists face to avoid the “evil” of tactical voting in favor of non-nationalist parties in the second round. In general, this electoral shift over time could also be signaling the instability of the nationalist electorate. In other words, nationalist-rich towns in the early 1990s do not seem to be the same towns 10 years later: They have changed either their structural characteristics (natives, size, unemployment, and so forth) or their share of votes cast for nationalist parties.

Table 4 collects the empirical results of our regression models. There are two models for each election year due to the French runoff system. The dependent variable is the share of nationalist votes in regional elections for each Corsican town.

The effect of “natives” is not consistent with the expectations from H1. Far from being positive, the link between the number of natives living in the town and the number of votes going to the nationalist parties is negative, but rarely significant—only in 1992<sup>37</sup> and the first round of 1998. This indicates that nationalists do better in the towns with the largest number of immigrants, compared to their performance in the towns where only natives live. In these latter towns, loosely populated and budget dependent, the notables’ networks seem to control the elections and successfully deter the entry of nationalist candidates. However, we cannot identify with this type of ecological data if nationalist voters are natives uneasy about the level of immigrants in their town or non-natives dissatisfied with the state of affairs in the island. We further investigate this issue in the next section, where we use individual-level data.

Regarding the economic conditions, there seems to be some support for the idea that nationalist voting abounds in unemployment-rich towns. The variable does not work for the 1998 and 1999 elections, but it turns out to be

**TABLE 4** Regression Models of Nationalist Voting in Corsica, 1992–2004

	1R 92	2R 92	1R 98	2R 98	1R 99	2R 99	1R 04	2R 04
% of natives	-0.12 <sup>†</sup> (0.06)	-0.16* (0.07)	-0.11 <sup>†</sup> (0.07)	-0.06 (0.06)	0.03 (0.08)	-0.06 (0.06)	-0.05 (0.05)	-0.03 (0.05)
Unemployment	0.08 <sup>†</sup> (0.04)	0.12* (0.05)	0.05 (0.06)	-0.02 (0.05)	0.12 (0.09)	0.02 (0.06)	0.13* (0.06)	0.14* (0.07)
Houses per 100 inhab.	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.02)	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.04* (0.02)	0.01 (0.01)	-0.02 <sup>†</sup> (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)
House ratio	-0.04 (0.16)	-0.04 (0.18)	0.01 (0.10)	-0.13 (0.10)	-0.03 (0.14)	0.02 (0.12)	-0.09 (0.13)	-0.19 <sup>†</sup> (0.12)
Mayor	0.73 (1.34)	0.43 (1.56)	3.44* (1.70)	1.71 (1.40)	3.83 <sup>†</sup> (2.18)	-0.63 (1.33)	-0.24 (1.37)	1.06 (1.61)
Fragmentation	1.81*** (0.32)	3.23*** (0.54)	2.80*** (0.32)	4.61*** (0.63)	4.43*** (0.36)	3.09*** (0.49)	0.85*** (0.23)	2.25*** (0.46)
Nat. candidates	0.55 (0.39)	0.47 (0.38)	0.04 <sup>†</sup> (0.02)	0.05*** (0.01)	0.35 (0.33)	0.15 (0.19)	0.26 (0.17)	1.11 (0.89)
Nat. fragment.			-1.19* (0.59)		-2.69** (0.86)		-3.13* (1.34)	
Size	-0.91 (0.99)	-0.52 (1.08)	-0.93 (0.82)	-0.80 (0.62)	-1.54 <sup>†</sup> (0.89)	-0.32 (0.77)	-2.38** (0.78)	-1.83* (0.87)
Department	-2.39 <sup>†</sup> (1.26)	-2.67 <sup>†</sup> (1.36)	1.23 (0.96)	2.79** (0.85)	2.52* (1.23)	2.17* (1.00)	-1.14 (1.09)	-4.12*** (1.14)
Constant	9.12** (3.33)	6.41 <sup>†</sup> (3.59)	1.10 (2.79)	-5.40* (2.26)	4.88 (4.11)	0.81 (2.69)	17.84*** (3.54)	12.38*** (3.66)
R <sup>2</sup>	.14	.20	.20	.17	.27	.13	.09	.12
p	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
n	360	360	353	359	353	358	354	359

Note. Standard errors in parentheses.

<sup>†</sup> $p < 0.1$ . \* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

significant again in 2004. Besides, the share of houses in town per 100 inhabitants shows a very erratic behavior, with positive (1R in 1998) and negative (1R in 2004) significant coefficients. Finally, the ratio between the number of first and second houses in town is only significant in 2004. The negative coefficient points to larger nationalist inroads in towns where second houses overweigh first houses—in other words, where seasonal inhabitants make up a relevant part of the local economy. However, this does not fit well with the finding on unemployment, since the latter is lower in the towns with more second houses.

Regarding clientelistic politics, the results offer remarkable evidence to support H3: Nationalists get more votes wherever notables' lists are weaker. "Fragmentation" displays a significant positive coefficient for the entire range of elections. This means that towns with the average effective number of parties in the first round of the 1999 election (four parties) gave on average around 16 percent points more to the nationalist lists. Thus, electoral fragmentation benefits nationalists, rather than punish them.

Nationalist fragmentation, on the other hand, does not benefit nationalism: Actually, voters heavily penalize it. If internal divisions hamper the

possibilities of nationalist electoral mobilization, it would be no wonder that nationalists try to unite in those towns where they have expectations of becoming the largest party. Congruent with this is the fact that the best nationalist electoral results came in 1992 and 2010, when two nationalist parties ran in both rounds.

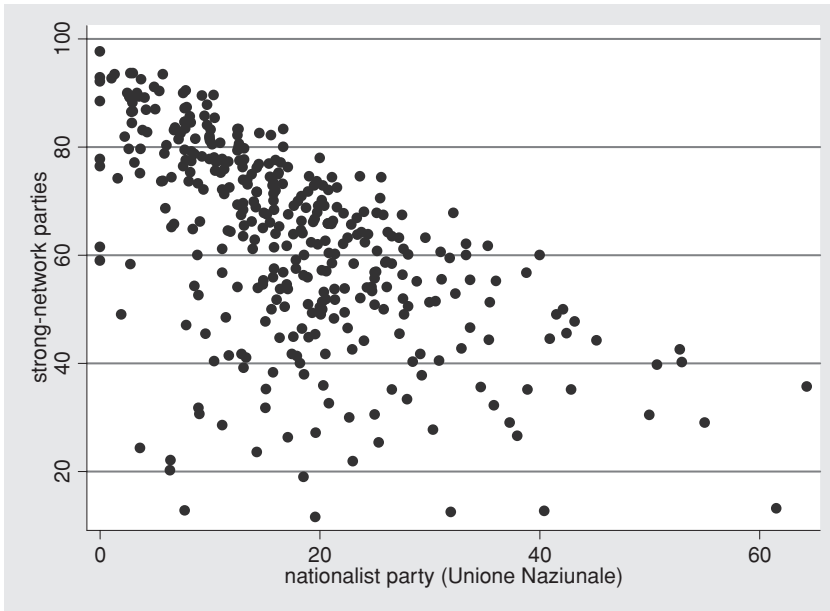
The presence of the local mayor on a party list has less predictive power. Unexpectedly, it reports positive and significant coefficients in 1998 and 1999. However, “mayor” becomes negative and significant if the regressions do not include “fragmentation” (results not reported). The presence of locals in nationalist lists also positively influences the number of votes nationalists gather, although the effect is small and rarely significant.

Finally, nationalists got more votes in Corse-du-Sud in 1992 and 2004, whereas their results were better in Haute-Corse in 1998 and 1999. Regarding the impact of population, the expected positive relationship between the size of the town and the number of votes cast for the nationalist parties does not work. Quite the opposite, nationalists have become stronger in the smallest municipalities in the 2000s. This result sheds more light on the effect of the economy on nationalist voting. Nationalist parties could be attracting the “losers” (the unemployed) of the clientelistic system in small towns and the natives annoyed with the increasing cost of living in the most economically dynamic towns—those relying on the tourist industry.

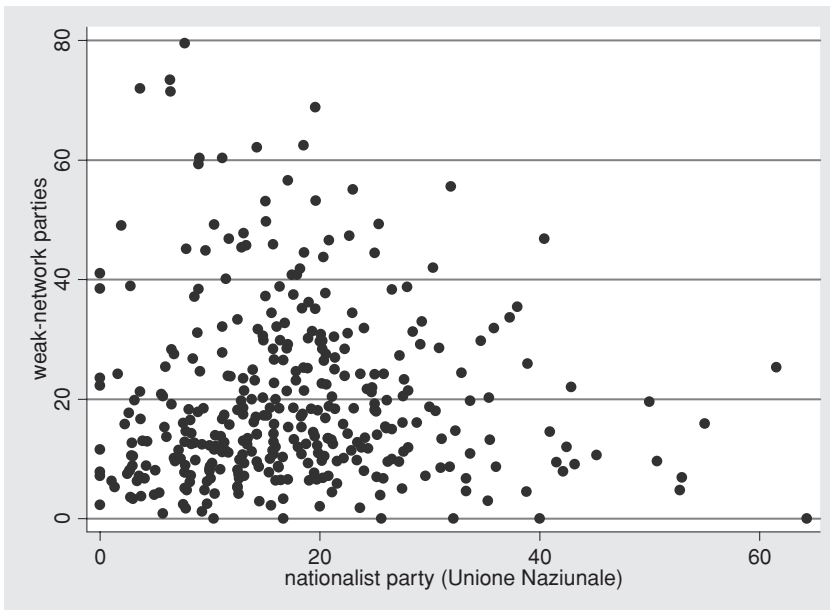
There is some room to sustain this interpretation. However, it is necessary to discuss first who the current inheritors of the old Corsican “clans” are. Some authors have distinguished between traditionalist-oriented “clans” and pro-modernist “neoclans,” by looking at party positions on the new sources of economic development.<sup>38</sup> The distinction is very attractive, but the rule is tricky, since it is possible to argue that all Corsican parties include a traditionalist dimension and a modernist one, making their characterization within a binary variable difficult. Another rule of distinction, such as being a pure “regionalist” force, does not work either, because some of the political heirs of the eldest “clans” run for countrywide political parties, whereas others lead regionalist platforms.

An alternative we pursue here is to look at the composition of the party list in the regional elections with the intention of screening out those political forces the lists of which are made up mostly of local politicians—local and cantonal councilors. “Clan” parties still openly craft their electoral lists based on the aggregation of local politicians rather than on ideological politics. We consider those parties with more than 25 percent of the party list composed of mayors and cantonal councilors as “strong-network” parties in opposition to “weak-network” parties.

Figure 1 shows the outstanding substitution effect between the votes of the strong-network parties and the votes of *Unione Naziunale*—the only nationalist party reaching the second electoral round in 2004. Figure 2 shows a more nuanced image, though. The relationship between weak-network



**FIGURE 1** Strong-network party votes with regards to Nationalist ones, second round 2004. *Note.* “Strong-network” parties include PRG-Zuccarelli, UMP, and Giacobbi’s list. PRG = Parti radical de gauche; UMP = Union pour un Mouvement Populaire.



**FIGURE 2** Weak-network party votes with regards to Nationalist ones, second round 2004. *Note.* “Weak-network” parties include Divers Droite, Divers Gauche, Front National, and Parti Communiste Français.

**TABLE 5** Share of Nationalist Votes in Towns with Less than 300 Inhabitants, by Number of Effective Parties (Rows) and Rate of Unemployment in Town (Columns)

	9%	17%	27%
2.5 parties	14.15	15.26	16.59
3.75 parties	17.11	18.23	19.55
5 parties	19.94	21.06	22.38

parties and the nationalist one is growing until a certain point and then declines. The question then is why competitors successfully override notables' grips in some places but not in others. Perhaps it could be the case that electoral challenges against the old notables are more successful where the latter cannot keep the local sources of wealth under their control.<sup>39</sup>

If we take the levels of unemployment as a proxy of the embeddedness of tourism in town, under the assumption that low-unemployment figures depict a more dynamic tourism-based local economy, then it is possible to simulate the combined effect of "clientelism" and economic factors on nationalist voting in the smallest towns. Table 5 runs this simulation exercise. It includes the predicted nationalist share of the vote in towns with less than 300 inhabitants (66 percent of the total number of towns, including around 10 percent of the population) for selected levels of unemployment and political fragmentation in town.<sup>40</sup>

We have discussed before that the smallest municipalities received the largest share of votes for the nationalist parties in 2004. Table 5 shows this share is not evenly distributed: The more plural the electoral competition, and the worse the economic conditions in the town, the more votes nationalists got. Firstly, there is a 6 percent gap between the most plural towns—those whose effective number of parties is around five—and the least plural towns—those with around 2.5 effective parties. Second, there is a 2.5 percent gap between the worst off and the better off towns in terms of unemployment. In brief, nationalists do better in small towns where unemployment is high and local notables are unable to deter other candidates from running. For notables, unemployment discourages "clientelistic" voters, but the big threat seems to be political competition.

To complete this ecological analysis, nationalist parties in Corsica have experienced a considerable stability in their patterns of electoral support. Although the share of their vote has oscillated between the low 17 percent obtained in the second round of the 1999 election—leaving aside the invalid 1998 election—and the high 25 percent collected in 1992, the characteristics of the towns where nationalists collect more votes have not changed substantially. Against H1, nationalists do better where there are more immigrants in the town. Still, we need individual data to investigate if nationalist voters in those towns are immigrants or natives fearful of cultural and/or economic

competition. Secondly, H2 received some support, since unemployment affects positively nationalist voting. Again, we cannot establish whether this result is produced by individual despair with the local state of the economy or by complaint with an institutional setting wherein resources are allocated in a “clientelistic” basis. What we can say is that “clientelism” matters (H3), because nationalists get more votes in towns where there is real political competition (more fragmentation). On the other hand, nationalist fragmentation is penalized by the voters, since more nationalist lists always translate into fewer votes. Finally, H4 did not receive support in this analysis. Although in absolute terms more nationalist votes come from the Corsican cities, nationalists have become stronger in the smallest towns since the 2000s. However, this finding must be qualified: Nationalists attract more support in small towns when there is large unemployment and open political competition.

### EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS: THE INDIVIDUAL-LEVEL PERSPECTIVE

In this section, we seek to complement the ecological analysis with individual-level data. The goal here is to unpack some of the correlations discovered in the previous section, such as the link between nativity and nationalist voting, and to analyze the effect of individual factors, such as social class, on the propensity to vote for nationalist parties, since these effects cannot be properly investigated with ecological data. In order to do so, we take advantage of a number of surveys run in Corsica by the Observatoire Interrégional du Politique (OIP) since 1985. Unfortunately, many of the surveys did not have the variables we needed to check the reliability of our previous results. Thus, we are left with the 1997, 1998, and 2001 surveys, because these include variables on nativity (1997/1998), social class/income (1997/2001), ideology (1997/1998/2001), territorial distribution of the vote (habitat and department: 1997/1998/2001) as well as demographic controls (sex, age, education) within the time span considered in this article. Another caveat is that the dependent variable, voting for a nationalist party, is significantly underestimated in these surveys, since few interviewees admitted voting for a nationalist party (8 percent of the sample in 1997 and around 10 percent in 1998 and 2001). All these limitations notwithstanding, we think it is worth pursuing this empirical effort to investigate further the link between nativity, social class and ideology, and nationalist voting at the individual level.<sup>41</sup>

Table 6 shows the results of the regression models. Unlike the ecological analysis discussed in the previous section, being a Corsican native seems to be a very relevant factor to account for nationalist support. Besides, nationalists prefer identifying themselves as neither left-wing nor right-wing (what we call “ideologically undefined” voters),<sup>42</sup> a feature rarely affecting other nationalist movements. In the context of Corsican politics, this ideological



**TABLE 6** Regression Models of Nationalist Support in Corsica, 1997–2001

	1997	1998	2001
Corsican native?	0.72** (0.32)	0.79** (0.38)	
Ideologically undefined?	0.53 <sup>†</sup> (0.3)	0.85** (0.32)	0.75** (0.28)
Age	-0.03** (0.01)	-0.04*** (0.01)	-0.02** (0.01)
Sex	-1.21** (0.38)	-0.58 <sup>†</sup> (0.36)	0.13 (0.34)
Income	-0.21** (0.1)		-0.09 (0.08)
Size of town	-0.05 (0.17)	0.07 (0.16)	0.38** (0.16)
Department	-0.42 (0.29)	0.01 <sup>†</sup> (0.004)	-0.49 <sup>†</sup> (0.27)
Technical studies		-0.02 (0.41)	-0.27 (0.36)
General studies	-0.33 (0.42)	-0.23 (0.55)	-0.07 (0.37)
Superior studies	1.37** (0.64)	0.23 (0.55)	-0.19 (0.5)
Petite Bourgeoisie/Artisan	-0.64 (0.65)	-0.48 (0.7)	-1.48** (0.73)
High cadre	-2.43** (1.01)	-0.3 (0.78)	-1.62** (0.78)
Intermediate professional	-1.47** (0.74)	-0.49 (0.7)	-1.78** (0.72)
Employee	-1.25 <sup>†</sup> (0.62)	-0.59 (0.63)	-1.81** (0.63)
Worker	-1.20 <sup>†</sup> (0.64)	-0.46 (0.64)	-0.8 (0.61)
Inactive	-1.31 <sup>†</sup> (0.74)	-0.76 (0.86)	-1.47** (0.73)
Unemployed	0.32 (0.43)	-0.62 (0.33)	0.86 <sup>†</sup> (0.49)
Constant	11.37 <sup>†</sup> (6.36)	-0.80 (1.02)	9.85 <sup>†</sup> (5.56)
<i>n</i>	629	640	660
Prob>Chi <sup>2</sup>	.000	.000	.000
Pseudo <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.17	.12	.10

*Note.* The omitted category in “education” is “primary or fewer studies.” The omitted category in “economic activity” is “farmer.” As few cases of technical studies are included in the 1997 survey, they are added to the omitted category. Standard errors in parentheses.

<sup>†</sup>*p* < .1. \**p* < .05. \*\**p* < .01. \*\*\**p* < .001.

ambiguity is very convenient, since it allows nationalists to skip ideological debates that could jeopardize their main position on devolution. Furthermore, this ambiguity gives them more leverage in their dealings with the rest of the political parties.<sup>43</sup>

Regarding economic activity, being unemployed is a significant predictor of nationalist voting in 2001, which matches our expectation from the

ecological analysis. Besides, the 1997 and 2001 results show that most labor categories are underrepresented within the nationalist constituency compared to the base category—the “farmers.”<sup>44</sup> High-level cadres and employees are particularly biased against voting for nationalist parties. *Income* also shows a clear-cut negative relationship with nationalist voting in 1997; although the negative coefficient is no longer significant in 2001 (unfortunately, this question was not asked in 1998). The “farming” effect is somehow in contradiction with the fact that those interviewees with higher education were overrepresented within the group of nationalist supporters in the 1997 sample. However, it could be the case that Corsican nationalism relies electorally on native farmers living in small towns but also on well-educated youngsters living in the cities. Some evidence supports this claim. For instance, in all three surveys nationalist voters are consistently younger than the rest of the population.<sup>45</sup>

If we bring together the individual and the ecological data, there are some interesting complementarities. Firstly, although nationalists collected more votes in towns with relevant numbers of non-Corsicans, natives seem to be the ones voting for them (H1). Secondly, bad economic conditions seem to favor nationalist voting in two directions: On the one hand, voters concerned about the short-term state of the economy, such as the unemployed and the low-income workers, could vote more for nationalist parties as a way to signal concern (H2); on the other hand, the “losers” of the patronage system—such as local farmers and well-educated youngsters—could also endorse the nationalist message as a way to erode the notables’ structures of power (H3). In both cases, the reluctance of nationalist supporters to place themselves in the ideological dimension seems a very convenient device: The lack of ideological loyalty can make the electoral switch easier. Finally, the size of the town did not show a coherent link to nationalism across analyses (H4). In the absence of available data from the recent 2010 regional election, we can only conjecture if this mismatch was due to sample procedures or to more substantive factors.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

This article has investigated the electoral patterns of Corsican nationalism by using a combination of ecological and individual data. Given the close-knit relation between the local institutions and the management of the economy in Corsica, nationalists have been able to attract a protest vote from those most harmed by unemployment or the rising cost of living, but also an identity vote from Corsican natives fearful of a demographic takeover in the island. The negative effect of clientelism on nationalist voting is also very recognizable. Corsican nationalists have remained largely out of power,

because of the local notables' reliance on office control for their electoral survival. Wherever nationalists have been able to break notables' veto on their participation in the government of local institutions, their electoral prospects have grown—as in Ghisonaccia, the tenth largest town on the island. However, this town also reflects well the capacity of reaction of the notables. Nationalists got 24.5 percent of the vote in the first round of the 2004 election in this town, compared to 12.25 percent for the Giacobbi list. Six years later, the Giacobbi list got 40 percent of the votes in the first round of the recent 2010 election, whereas nationalists collected 28 percent. Soon before the 2008 municipal election, Giacobbi, taking advantage of his control of the provincial government, succeeded in gaining the mayoralty by creating a relevant number of public jobs in the town.

This example illustrates well that the increasing electoral competitiveness of new political actors has forced the local notables to spend more resources to maintain their networks of support. Given that large cities yield positive scale economies in the production of territorially targeted public goods, it is no surprise that local notables have opted to attract voters by spending the budget in middle-size towns and cities, giving up parts of the countryside.<sup>46</sup> For nationalists, access to the public budget could be crucial to becoming a real alternative.

The final finding is that nationalist voters avoid taking a clear-cut position in the ideological dimension. This correlates with a low level of party institutionalization, but it could also bear a strategic dimension, since some degree of ideological ambiguity could be useful to keep the two main groups supporting nationalist parties—farmers and youngsters—together. Although these groups have experienced in Corsica the arbitrariness of the clientelistic networks of local power, the recipes to fix their grievances are not necessarily compatible with each other.

With a record 35.7 percent of the vote in the second round of the recent 2010 territorial election, Corsican nationalism has shown its capacity to grow. The arrival of more immigrants to the island, bringing the scarce local economic resources under increasing pressure, has certainly intensified the complaints of those not covered by clientelism and reinforced the nationalist discourse and its electoral chances. The rise of the minimum electoral share to access the second round—from 5 percent to 7 percent—also contributed to the nationalist success, since it has weakened many small regional parties, the voters of which seem to have switched to nationalism. Last but not least, nationalists have avoided this time the fragmentation trap. By fielding two lists, one moderate and another radical, nationalists have given choice to voters but also avoided the electorally penalized proliferation of lists within their camp. Short of governmental participation, nationalists' aim for the near future will be to show they can practice a responsible opposition and assume more defined positions with regards to socioeconomic issues without yielding party unity.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## NOTES

1. One year after the establishment of the first Corsican Assembly, in 1983, a motion was unanimously passed demanding the generalization of bilingual education—French and Corsican—on the island. In 2000, a new proposal was endorsed by 48 out of 51 Assembly members calling again for the compulsory teaching of Corsican in primary education.

2. There is a second factor accounting for this mismatch: the persistence of nationalist violence on the island. Less lethal than the IRA (Irish Republican Army) and ETA (Euskadi Ta Askatasuna), the FLNC (Fronte di Liberazione Naziunale di a Corsica) and its several splinters have helped legitimize notables' efforts to block the access of nationalists to the institutions. We do not discuss in detail the role of violence in this article for two reasons. First, there is already interesting literature on the FLNC (see Xavier Crettiez, *La question corse* [Bruxelles: Éditions Complexe, 1999]); and secondly, unlike Northern Ireland or the Basque Country, violence has rarely raised an insurmountable barrier between moderates and radicals in Corsica.

3. Fernand Etori, "La Révolution Corse," in Paul Arrighi, ed., *Histoire de la Corse* (Toulouse: Privat, 1971), 307–368.

4. Marie-Thérèse Avon-Soletti, *La Corse et Pascal Paoli. Essai sur la Constitution de la Corse* (Ajaccio: La Marge, 1999).

5. Desmond Gregory, *The Ungovernable Rock: A History of the Anglo-Corsican Kingdom and its Role in Britain's Mediterranean Strategy During the Revolutionary War (1793–1797)* (Cranbury, New Jersey: Associated University Presses, 1985).

6. Stephen Wilson, *Feuding Conflict and Banditry in Nineteenth-Century Corsica* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

7. Antoine Leca, "A Muvra' ou le procès de la France par les autonomistes corses (1920–1939)," in Michel Ganzin and Antoine Leca, eds., *L'Europe entre deux tempéraments politiques. Idéal d'unité et particularismes régionaux* (Aix-en-Provence: Presses universitaires d'Aix-Marseille, 1994), 525–544.

8. "Statuts du Partitu Corsu d'Azione," art. XX, al. 3, in *Quaderni di u cursismu*, no. 1 (Ajaccio: Stamperia di a Muvra, 1935).

9. Antoine Leca, "A Muvra, ou l'autonomisme corse de la réhabilitation de l'Italie à la tentation fasciste," in Michel Ganzin and Antoine Leca, eds., *L'Europe entre deux tempéraments politiques. Idéal d'unité et particularismes régionaux* (Aix-en-Provence: Presses universitaires d'Aix-Marseille, 1994), 545–564.

10. Canonical works on clan politics in Corsica are: Gérard Lenclud, "De bas en haut, de haut en bas. Le système des clans en Corse," *Études rurales* 101–102:137–173 (1986); Georges Ravis-Giordani, "L'alta pulitica et la bassa pulitica. Valeurs et comportements politiques dans les communautés villageoises corses (XIXe-XXe siècles)," *Études rurales* 63–64:171–189 (1976).

11. The success of clan structures of power in doing so is remarkable. In the dataset that Tilly built on violent disturbances taking place in France from 1830 to 1860 and from 1930 to 1960, only three times does Corsica appear as experiencing contentious political behavior (see *Disturbances in France, 1830–1860 and 1930–1960: Intensive Sample*, principal investigator: Charles Tilly, ICPSR, ed., [Ann Arbor, MI: ICPSR, 1998]).

12. Potential internal competitors to notables' power decided to emigrate by taking advantage of meritocratic job opportunities found in the state bureaucracy (see Francis Pomponi, "L'impiegho comme relation des élites corses à l'État," *Peuples Méditerranéens*, 38–39:57–72 [1987]).

13. FRC, *Main basse sur une île* (Cassano: Accademia d'i vagabondi, 1971), 104.

14. Edmond Simeoni, *Le piège d'Aléria* (Paris: Éditions J.-C. Lattès, 1975).

15. Parti socialiste, *Changer la vie* (Paris: Flammarion, 1972), 106.

16. Actually, Giacobbi did not run for the assembly in protest of its creation. Still, although the assembly leader of the Radical party, Prosper Alfonsi, had better relations with the nationalists, there was no doubt that Giacobbi pulled the party strings.

17. Nationalists got 11.4 percent of the vote in 1984, 9 percent in 1986, and 8.5 percent in 1987 (this year there were elections only in the Northern department of Haute-Corse).

18. The nationalist union also followed strategic motivations, since the extreme representativeness of the electoral system was reduced from 1986 by imposing a minimum threshold of 5 percent of the valid vote. Another innovation was the establishment of two electoral districts corresponding to the Northern (Haute-Corse) and Southern (Corse-du-Sud) departments.

19. Loi n° 91-428 du 13 mai 1991 portant statut de la collectivité territoriale de Corse. This new law established the runoff system for all those lists gathering at least 5 percent of the votes.

20. Legislative and cantonal elections in France follow the first-past-the-post rule, and municipal elections have a PR rule corrected with a 50 percent-seat premium to the largest list. As only regional elections have a proper PR electoral system, this explains why nationalists only win seats regularly in regional elections.

21. See, for instance, James Fearon and Pieter Van Houten, "The Politicization of Cultural and Economic Difference: A Return to the Theory of Regional Autonomy Movements." Paper prepared for presentation at Stanford University, 2002; Jorge P. Gordin, "The Electoral Fate of Ethnoregionalist Parties in Western Europe: A Boolean Test of Extant Explanations," *Scandinavian Political Studies* 24(2): 149-178 (2001); Michael Hechter and Margaret Levi, "A Rational Choice Approach to the Rise and Decline of Ethno-Regional Political Parties," in Edward A. Tyriakian and Donald Rogowski, ed., *New Nationalisms of the Developed West* (Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1985), 128-146; and Jason Sorens, "The Cross-Sectional Determinants of Secessionism in Advanced Democracies." *Comparative Political Studies* 38(3): 304-326 (2005).

22. See, for instance, Jan Mansvelt Beck, *Territory and Terror, Conflicting Nationalism in the Basque Country* (London: Routledge, 2005); Colin H. Williams, "Separatism and the Mobilization of Welsh National Identity," in Colin H. Williams, eds., *National Separatism* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1982), 145-202.

23. The father of this argument is Peter Gourevitch. According to him, if the region has a clear economic advantage in comparison with the rest of the country, nationalists will play the *privilege* card and use regional devolution as a barrier to economic redistribution. See Peter Gourevitch, "The Re-Emergence of Peripheral Nationalisms." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 21(3): 303-322 (1979).

24. See Donald Horowitz, "Patterns of Ethnic Separatism." *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 23:165-195 (1981). For more recent cases, see for instance, Daniele Petrosino, "National and Regional Movements in Italy: The Case of Sardinia," in John Coakley, ed., *The Social Origins of Nationalist Movements* (London: Sage, 1992), 124-146, on Sardinia; and Keith Dixon, "Le retour du chardon: nationalisme et dévolution en Écosse (1967-1999)," *Études anglaises* 59(4): 441-452 (2006), on Scotland.

25. See, for this strong link between clientelism and poverty, Francis Pomponi, "Pouvoir et abus de pouvoir des maires corses au XIXe siècle," *Études rurales* 63-64:153-169 (1976); and Gérard Lenclud, "De bas en haut," 143-146.

26. Briquet analyzed data on the kinship lineage of the main regional politicians during the first half of the 1980s and showed that whereas 62 percent of politicians from clan forces had some close relative who had already held an office before them, the proportion was zero for nationalist politicians (see Jean-Louis Briquet, *La tradition en mouvement: Clientélisme et politique en Corse* [Paris: Belin, 1997], 172).

27. See John Loughlin, *Regionalism and Ethnic Nationalism in France: A Case Study of Corsica* (Florence: European University Institute, 1989), especially chapter 6.

28. Note that we are assuming nationalists cannot become "notables." Theoretically, nationalists could also win power and create their own structures of clientelism to attract fresh supporters and local politicians ready to switching loyalties. Empirically, however, this is very unlikely: Absent loyalty incentives, Paris has not fed the few local offices held by nationalists with the necessary resources as to help them become pure "notables."

29. For the first argument, see Anthony Downs, *An Economic Theory of Democracy* (New York: Harper, 1957); and for the second argument, Luis A. Medina and Susan Stokes, "Monopoly and Monitoring: An Approach to Political Clientelism," in Herbert Kitschelt and Steve Wilkinson, eds., *Patrons, Clients and Policies: Patterns of Democratic Accountability and Political Competition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 68-83.

30. The 1998 regional election was denounced by Edmond Simeoni, in need of 41 votes to reach the second round and was subsequently declared null under allegations of irregularities on vote counting. The State Council found 826 irregular votes and called for a new election, which was held in 1999.

31. Despite the unhealthy state of the Corsican language, neither the French government nor the regional assembly has created a linguistic census of its knowledge on the island. A recent study found that only 30 percent of students in the Corsican University could speak the language. See Romain Colonna, "La langue corse auprès des étudiants de l'Université de Corse: l'état des lieux," *Économie Corse* 115:16–22 (2007).

32. If not indicated otherwise, all the town-level data came from Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques. We have constructed the nativity variable from the 1999 Census. Unfortunately, the 1990 Census did not gather systematic information about the distribution of native Corsicans on the island. However, we contend that the largest demographic changes in Corsica have taken place since 2000, so we should not expect strong biases because of the imputation of the 1999 data on nativity to the 1992 regional election.

33. We also included in the dataset the share of people working in each economic sector in the town, but these variables did not produce any meaningful results. Thus, we explore the relation between economic sector and nationalist voting in the last section, where we use individual-level survey data.

34. It would have been better to calculate these ratios for the years strictly before the regional election. Unfortunately, this is not possible because of a lack of data.

35. We use Rae's index of fragmentation, which measures the effective number of parties at the town level (see Douglas Rae, *The Political Consequences of Electoral Laws* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967]).

36. See Briquet, *La tradition en mouvement*; Pierre Dottelonde, "Pour une nouvelle approche du nationalisme corse: étude sur la diffusion du phénomène dans l'espace insulaire," *Études corses* 23:73–112 (1984); and Marianne Lefevre and Joseph Martinetti, *Géopolitique de la Corse* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2007).

37. Following Susan Olzak's theory of ethnic competition, by which nationalist mobilization will be higher in those places where the competition for jobs is more acute, we checked whether there is a nonlinear relationship between the number of Corsicans in town and the votes collected by nationalist candidates (see Susan Olzak, *The Dynamics of Ethnic Competition and Conflict* [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992]). To account for this possibility, we inserted the squared term of nativity in the regression model. The results only supported the relevance of this hypothesis for the 1992 election. Calculating the cutpoint of the inverted U-shape link between nativity and nationalist voting, the number of votes nationalists got in 1992 increased until reaching 68 percent of natives. Towns with more than 68 percent of natives, on the contrary, voted in lower numbers for the nationalist parties in 1992. As this result did not work for the rest of elections, we do not report it in the models included in Table 4 (results available on request).

38. See Marianne Lefevre, *Géopolitique de la Corse: le modèle républicain en question* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000).

39. Lefevre and Martinetti have indicated this substitution effect among networks of patronage, but without offering consistent data for dubbing nationalists "neoclanic."

40. The base model corresponds to Model 8 (2R in 2004) in Table 4. We selected this baseline because there was only one nationalist ballot in this round, which reduced the risk of overdetermining the level of fragmentation in town by the number of nationalist lists in choice. All variables were set on their means, and unemployment and political fragmentation were allowed to vary around three values—the 15 percent, 50 percent, and 85 percent values of their respective distributions. We also selected the smallest size of town, those towns with less than 300 inhabitants. The values were calculated with the software clarify.

41. Regrettably, it is not possible to test the hypotheses on party competition at the local level since the interviewees' place of residence remains anonymous in the survey. Besides, the number of observations of the survey is small, so that it is predictable that many towns do not have any observations at all. Otherwise, it would be possible to run a multilevel analysis with individual and town-level data to find out if local fragmentation has an influence on the voter's decision.

42. The variable has eight categories, from 1 (far left) to 7 (far right), with 8 corresponding to "nor left nor right." Note this category is different from "center," which corresponds to 4 in the scale.

43. See Isidre Molas, "Partis nationalistes, autonomie et clans en Corse," Working Paper 181 (Barcelona: ICPS, 2000).

44. Farmers were involved in the very origin of the renaissance of the nationalist movement in the 1960s, when the massive arrival of former settlers from Algeria put a lot of stress on the natural and social ecology of the island. The fact that local farmers were largely kept on the sidelines of the large public plans to improve the economic conditions of the agriculture sector in Corsica added fire to the aggrieved native population (Jean-Paul Delors and Stéphane Muracciole, *Corse. La poudrière* [Paris: Alain Moreau, 1978], 137–165).

45. Although it is a common pattern that youngsters vote more for parties with more "radical" platforms, in the case of Corsica this bias may have two additional sources. On the one hand, the memory of the aim of Corsican autonomists for union with Italy during World War II could have had a long-lasting impact on the eldest voters in their reluctance to vote for nationalist candidates. On the other, the nationalist movement was the first to introduce postmaterialist issues—such as the protection of the environment—into the political agenda, and this attracted many young voters towards the nationalists.

46. Some anecdotal evidence points to the consolidation of nationalists in the countryside. For instance, in the canton of Fium'Alto, nationalists won 12.4 percent of the vote in 1992, 16.3 percent in 2004, and 29.1 percent in the recent 2010 election.

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