In Strongman We Trust: The Political Legacy of theNew Village Movement in South Korea

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Abstract

This study explores how authoritarian distributive policies may not only generate political support for the autocrat but may also help to sustain powerful and lasting authoritarian legacies. We use micro-level data from South Korea's New Village Movement, a 1970s rural development program implemented under dictator Park Chung-hee and widely touted as contributing to the country's rapid economic development. Our analysis shows that townships receiving larger cash transfers cast more votes for Park's incumbent party in the subsequent election. More importantly, we show that the effects of the subsidies still appeared almost four decades later in 2012, when the dictator's daughter was democratically elected as the president of South Korea. We show that these effects were not driven by villagers' long-term income gains or enhanced social capital due to the program, but instead by the unwavering support of the beneficiary villagers for the dictator, whose legacy remained strong long after democratization.

Replication Materials: The data, code, and any additional materials required to replicate all analyses in this article are available on the American Journal of Political Science Dataverse within the Harvard Dataverse Network, at:https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/MWS8QF.

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1 Introduction

A growing literature on authoritarian legacies has shown that democratization is not necessarily a clear departure from past autocracy. Not all authoritarian rulers go through a process of transitional justice or bear any other legal or political consequences as an outcome of democratization (Capoccia and Pop-Eleches 2020; Nalepa 2010). Former authoritarian parties not only survive and thrive in new democracies, but they are able to do so often due to accomplishments they made during their dictatorial rule (Langston 2017; Levitsky 2003; Loxton 2018; Miller 2021; Riedl 2014). We even observe that these parties promote individuals who were authoritarian leaders or who are family members of the former dictator to a key role, such as party leader or presidential candidate, frequently long after democratization. Mahathir Mohamed, who ruled Malaysia from 1981 to 2003, returned as a democratic leader in 2018. Bongbong Marcos, whose father was dictator of the Philippines from 1965 to 1986, lost the vice-presidential election in 2016 by a small margin and is expected to run for office again in 2022. Recently Muammar Gaddafi's son, Saif al-Islam Gaddafi is running for presidential office in the Libyan election.

Still, it is puzzling why and how some dictators' legacies persist or are resurrected long after the end of the often infamous dictatorships, even in consolidated and stable democracies. Although a dictator may evade the post-democratization transitional justice process and maintain their network and power base, this does not necessarily entail support from a majority of the population in a democratic election. In this study, we focus on the long-term political legacy effect of a large-scale distributive program that occurred

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under a dictatorship. When Park Geun-hye, the eldest daughter of the former dictatorial leader Park Chung-hee (1961–1979), was democratically elected president of South Korea in 2012, 25 years after the country's democratization, numerous observers pointed to nostalgia for the period of her father's rule as a main contributing factor. Scholars commonly point to the state-driven industrialization and economic growth that occurred during the Park Chung-hee regime as the source of such political nostalgia (Chang, Chu and Park 2007; Kang 2018). Using the case of a nationwide rural development program that took place under this regime, we examine how a distributive program targeting a marginalized rural population during the period of rapid industrialization left a strong political legacy that remains salient in a new yet stable democracy.

For analysis, we collect micro-data on cash transfers from the authoritarian government to villages as part of a 1970s rural development program known as the "New Village Movement" (*Saemaul Undong*, NVM hereafter). This program was a community-based self-help campaign under the Park Chung-hee regime. Through the program, the government conditionally provided villages with the resources for the production of public goods. Villagers collectively produced these, competing with other villages to be awarded a larger share of government resources in the following year. While the government provided conditional materials and financial assistance, all projects were carried out with voluntary labor and material contributions from village residents. Although many development economists have studied the economic effects of such rural development pro- grams on agricultural production, public hygiene enhancement, and public goods provision (Ruttan 1984), few studies have systematically investigated the long-term political impact of such policies. To examine the political effects in the long run, we combine the cash transfer data with population and agricultural census data spanning five

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decades starting with the 1970s, and include the electoral outcomes from the authoritarian elections in the 1970s and the recent democratic elections.[1]

Our analyses provide several critical and novel findings regarding the rural development pro- gram and electoral outcomes during the dictatorship and later during the democratic period. First, the townships[2] that received larger benefits from the development program in the year before an election were more likely to support candidates from the authoritarian incumbent party. The increase in support from rural areas that were beneficiaries of the program was politically critical to the dictator in 1978. Owing to the regime's mounting unpopularity at the time, his party received fewer popular votes than the opposition party for the first time. More interestingly, we find that the political effects of the authoritarian development program have persisted despite the country's democratization in 1987. We show that townships that received more benefits from the program in the 1970s were more likely to vote for Park Geun-hye in the 2012 presidential election. This persistent effect is specific to Park Geun-hye herself, and is not explained by a legacy effect through the conservative party that succeeded the former authoritarian ruling party after democratization.

To explain the legacy of the rural development program in substantive terms, we explore the potential mechanisms through which the benefits of the program may have influenced politics four decades later. We find that the persistent support cannot be explained by a long-term improvement in economic conditions in the rural areas that

[1] As the autocoup in 1972, called the October Reform (*Siwol Yushin* in Korean) abolished the direct presidential election, we employ the outcome of legislative elections for the analysis of the 1970s elections.

[2] All of our analyses are at the township level, i.e., the *eup-myeon-dong* (EMD) level in Korean. It is the third layer of administrative units following the province and the county, and above the village (*li* or *maeul*). The EMD level is the lowest common unit shared by both the NVM cash transfer data and the election data, which extend to the village level and the polling station level, respectively. As of 2017, there were 3,503 townships in South Korea.

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benefited more from the program. On the contrary, our analyses show that today the beneficiary townships are less economically developed and are focused on agriculture, a sector in which South Korea has largely lost its comparative advantage. We also confirm that the support is not explained by non-material communal benefits from the NVM, i.e., social capital. From three different surveys of rural residents, we find no evidence that the beneficiary villages enjoy greater social capital today either in terms of perception (communal satisfaction) or behavior (interactions with neighbors, participation in community activities). Instead, we provide evidence that a relative lack of rural-to-urban migration from beneficiary villages and a stronger affinity for the former dictator among the remaining residents may explain the political legacy effects. Where the agricultural infrastructure was improved due to the NVM, mechanized cultivation increased agricultural profitability, which discouraged young people from migrating. In other villages, a notable share of young villagers migrated to urban districts to pursue better economic opportunities. However, with Park's death, the government-driven rural development movement petered out, and the economic environment for the agricultural sector has since deteriorated. These structural economic changes may have intensified Park's political legacy among the rural residents who had a positive experience with the NVM, regardless of the regime change. Our analysis of census data and national survey results support these demographic and psychological mechanisms.

Our study speaks to the broad literature on authoritarianism and post-democratization politics. In particular, it contributes to our knowledge of how authoritarian distributive policy toward rural districts, without explicit vote-buying, can nevertheless influence citizens' political behavior in favor of the incumbent dictator and the dictator's family members who become politicians in the long run. As the growing number of studies on democratic transition and transitional justice have shown, the transition to democracy often involves complicated negotiations and political calculations be- tween outgoing rulers and their followers and incoming democratic elites (Nalepa

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2010; Nalepa and Pop-Eleches forthcoming). In that process, authoritarianism often casts a long shadow over democracy, not just through institutional channels including political parties (Kistchelt and Singer 2018; Loxton 2015; Miller 2021; Riedl 2014) and bureaucracy (Albertus 2019), but also through nostalgia and citizens' policy preferences (Neundorf 2010; Neundorf, Gerschewski and Olar 2020; Pop-Eleches and Tucker 2017). Although the existing literature offers critical insights drawn from broader contexts, it rarely pins down the micro-level mechanisms through which the legacy of a former illiberal regime influences individuals and communities and thus electoral outcomes after democratization. Our study demonstrates how an authoritarian legacy built on a development pro- gram that targeted an economically marginalized population may have long-lasting effects on a new democracy.

2 Rural Development Program and Election

Distributive politics exist regardless of regime type. Many studies of both developed and developing countries describe how government subsidies for specific groups benefit the incumbent government (Brazys, Heaney and Walsh 2015; Catalinac and Motolinia 2021; De La O 2013; Park and Jensen 2007; Pop-Eleches and Pop-Eleches 2012). Although most studies examine these effects in democracies, dictators also selectively co-opt certain population groups using the resources under their discretion. Scholars of authoritarian politics have indeed shown that distributive politics work in favor of the ruling party and the leader, particularly when elections are relatively competitive (Mares and Carnes 2009). Often, distributive programs under dictatorships specifically target underprivileged political or social groups such as ethnic minorities, unprotected workers, or the poor with or without explicit electoral calculations, leading to political effects that are distinct from those of universal policies in the long run (Kim and Gandhi 2010).

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South Korea's NVM program in the 1970s is comparable to these distributive policies targeting marginalized groups. The beneficiaries, rural villages, were mostly engaged in the agricultural industry at the time, which was rapidly losing its comparative advantage vis-à-vis other industries, including the manufacturing and service sectors in urban areas (Hwang 2006). Furthermore, in addition to providing cash transfers directly to villages and promoting agricultural development, the NVM program also functioned as a channel through which the dictatorial regime's political propaganda could spread at the grassroots level (Ban, Moon and Perkins 1982). While the literature disagrees on how much the NVM was motivated by political intentions, scholars have agreed that Park himself cared much about the propagandization of the NVM. Hence, our empirical analyses first examine short-term electoral gains by the regime as an outcome of the NVM subsidy.

HYPOTHESIS 1 **[Short-term effect on an authoritarian election]**: *Rural townships that benefited more from the NVM transfers are more likely to vote for the authoritarian ruling party in the next election, compared to other rural townships.*

We claim that the political legacy of a massive distributive program can linger long after its economic effects have faded away. This legacy effect may lead voters in beneficiary areas or sectors to support candidates who are connected to the former leader or who inherited their legacy. Scholars have shown that an authoritarian past is not necessarily a burden to politicians or political parties after democratization, but can actually function as an asset to build on (Albertus 2019; Loxton 2015; Miller 2021; Riedl 2014). Using cross-country data from new democracies, Miller (2021) and Jhee (2008) find evidence that a policy success in the past, for example an achievement in economic development, can provide an advantage to the authoritarian successor party. Pop-Eleches and Tucker (2017) and Neundorf, Gerschewski and Olar (2020) further argue that

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the legacy effect of a past dictatorship significantly affects individual voter preferences. Expanding the previous literature on authoritarian legacy, we design our analysis to distinguish the legacy effects from a personal connection to the former dictator (Dal Bó, Dal Bó and Snyder 2009) from more institutional channels such as the political party (Loxton 2015; Miller 2021).

HYPOTHESIS 2. **[Long-term effect on democratic elections]**: *Rural townships that benefited greatly from the NVM transfers cast more votes for the candidate connected to the dictator in a later democratic election, in comparison to other rural townships.*

We argue that the long-term electoral effect of the NVM stems from the political legacy of the program among rural villagers rather than any long-lasting economic gains from the program. This argument is relevant to South Korea's economic development since the Park regime. Beginning in the 1960s, the regime aggressively pursued industrialization, concentrating particularly on the export-oriented manufacturing industries (Wade 1990). This industrialization process induced many rural dwellers to migrate to urban areas to work in other industrial sectors. As a result, agricultural production as a share of total national economic production declined from 30 percent in 1970 to 2 percent in 2012, and the share of employment in the agricultural sector dropped from over 50 percent to approximately 5 percent during the same period. However, the NVM discouraged the direct beneficiaries of the program, farmers in successful villages, from migrating, and shifted the beneficiary villagers' agricultural income upward in the short term (Hwang 2011). Yet such an increase did not, in the long run, exceed the income increase among those who switched to secondary or tertiary industries.

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Although no economic gains remain, it could be possible that beneficiary villages still enjoy long-term non-material benefits from the NVM. One of the possible benefits is enhanced social capital among the villagers (Putnam 2000). Because the NVM emphasized collective labor input and co-investment in a village's public goods by all its villagers, the villages that achieved greater progress during the NVM likely boasted greater social capital among villagers, which could still re- main. Alternatively, villagers may have a greater psychological affinity for the political leader who initiated and supported the rural development program to which they devoted significant time and labor, and which achieved progress to some extent (Neundorf 2010; Neundorf, Gerschewski and Olar 2020). This affinity might have continued or even intensified over time because of the shifts in the economic environment since the Park regime. After Park's death, the government discontinued performance-based financial support for the rural development program, and the agricultural sector became increasingly marginalized as the country achieved a high degree of industrialization and globalization after democratization. These long-term changes might have strengthened the legacy of the former dictator over time among the villagers who benefited from the NVM. Our mechanism analyses examine all these channels of authoritarian legacy in the context of rural South Korea.

Our study expands the pertinent literature in several ways. First, we extend the scope of distributive politics to encompass development programs, especially those targeting marginalized groups. While many scholars have treated development programs as a representative example of programmatic distribution or an efficiency-based form of resource allocation (Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007), our study illustrates the selective and distributive nature of a rural development program and its lasting political effects. Moreover, while most studies have investigated distributive politics within a democratic context (Golden and Min 2013) or a non-democratic setting (Blaydes 2010; Magaloni 2006), our study evaluates long-term effects that cut across regime types. Adding to the cross-national studies showing the cross-regime effects of development policies (Jhee

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2008; Miller 2021), this study provides micro-level evidence from sub-national analyses over several decades. By illustrating the persistent long-term effect of a rural development program, we also contribute to the growing literature on authoritarian nostalgia in new democracies (Dinas and Northmore-Ball 2020; Neundorf, Gerschewski and Olar 2020).

More broadly, our study highlights variation in how authoritarian pasts are seen and how they cast shadows over new democracies. Policies under dictatorships are often revisited and re- assessed through a transitional justice process after democratization (Capoccia and Pop-Eleches 2020; Nalepa 2010; Park and Hong 2021), and this process affects citizens' attitudes toward the authoritarian regime and toward democratic values (Balcells, Palanza and Voytas forthcoming; Di- nas and Northmore-Ball 2020; Nalepa 2012). However, the implementation of transitional justice is not always straightforward (Kaminski, Nalepa and O'neill 2006; Nalepa 2010). In South Korea, the last dictator, Chun Doo-hwan, stood trial immediately following the election of the first civilian democratic leader and was sentenced to life imprisonment for the military coup that brought him to power. In contrast, the preceding dictator Park, who also came to power as the result of a military coup and frequently relied on repressive measures, including an autocoup in 1972, never went through any transitional justice process due to his sudden assassination and succession by Chun, which contributed to the strength of Park's authoritarian legacy. This contrast tells us that authoritarian legacies vary not just based on the actions of authoritarian rulers but also based on the ways past regimes are handled during the transition to democracy and beyond.

Furthermore, we explore the channels through which the legacy of an authoritarian development program is transmitted in the long run. One obvious channel is through an authoritarian successor party (Langston 2017; Loxton 2015, 2018; Miller 2021; Riedl 2014; Slater and Wong 2013). Studies suggest that party brand, territorial organization, clientelist networks, financial resources, and party cohesion are useful legacies (Cheng

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and Huang 2018; Kistchelt and Singer 2018; Lox- ton 2015; Self and Hicken 2019). The conservative party that succeeded the authoritarian party in South Korea has been exceptionally successful in the period since democratization based on its credentials in having spurred past economic growth (Cheng and Huang 2018; Miller 2021).[3]Our study adds another channel for legacy transmission besides political party, showing that an individual figure with a strong connection to the dictator, e.g., a family member, may benefit most from the authoritarian legacy (Geys and Smith 2017; Querub´ın 2016). This distinction highlights potential differences in authoritarian legacies between personalistic dictatorships and dominant party dictatorships. While most studies examining psychological channels for authoritarian legacies draw evidence from former authoritarian communist or socialist regimes (Dinas and Northmore-Ball 2020; Neundorf, Gerschewski and Olar 2020; Pop-Eleches and Tucker 2017), our study demonstrates that the transmission of authoritarian legacies from a personalistic dictatorship deviates from that of more institutionalized party dictatorships.

3 The New Village Movement

[Figure 1 about here]

The New Village Movement (NVM) initiated by Park Chung-hee in the early 1970s was the most extensive rural development program in the history of South Korea. The nationwide launch of the NVM overlapped with drastic political change — an autocoup in 1972 that concentrated Park's power and further suppressed the opposition. Figure 1 illustrates a

[3] Over the 25-year period from democratization to the 2012 election in which Park's daughter was elected president, the conservative party lost only two presidential elections (1997 and 2002) and one legislative election (2004).

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brief timeline of relevant events. This section summarizes the unique political economic features of the NVM, while we provide the political background relevant to this research in Appendix A (page 1 in the Supplemental Appendix).

First, the NVM was a community-based self-help campaign targeting rural villages, which encompassed about 60% of the national population. While the government directed the overall movement, village members jointly decided on the details of projects through village meetings. There was a clear preference for projects related to improving infrastructure for agricultural production, such as widening village roads (which was critical for the adoption of mechanical cultivators), building bridges over creeks, and constructing water drainage systems along village roads (Yang 2019). Other projects related to public goods construction that increased social capital, such as community centers, common laundry facilities, and public wells (Ministry of Home Affairs 1983). Village members had to contribute labor and sometimes their own assets such as land or equipment to complete the projects. Depending on each village's degree of achievement in their projects, they were classified into three groups, which determined the subsidy they received in the subsequent year. The grades were determined by local officials according to specific targets set beforehand and villages' annual progress, and publicly announced each year.

Second, the NVM was a government-driven program strongly supported by the national leader. Historical documents indicate that the initial idea came from Park Chung-hee, and that he also set the official objectives of the movement (National Archives of the Republic of Korea). The Ministry of Internal Affairs, the most powerful ministry at the time, supervised villages' progress. It directed local governments to assess progress annually and managed the transfer of cash and other materials to villages. At the beginning of the movement, the government facilitated village projects through transfers of materials such as cement bags or steel rods. Soon, cash transfers became the primary means of support. Local civil servants in a township office were given the task of checking

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the NVM progress in specific villages.[4] The Ministry of Internal Affairs also created and managed the national network of New Village Leaders, who were in charge of the planning and implementation of NVM projects in each village.[5] Although the nominal institutions of the NVM survive to this day, the end of the movement as a government-driven campaign involving large-scale resource transfer and mobilization coincided with the end of Park's regime in 1979.

Despite the historical significance of the NVM, systematic empirical research on the political and economic impacts of the movement has been limited. Numerous scholars have focused on identifying policy implications for other developing countries, such as the factors of the program that led to successful economic outcomes (Park 2009). Studies have also found that the collective experience of the NVM projects boosted village members' social capital and improved their standards of living (Asian Development Bank 2012). Others have taken a more critical view of the program. Looney (2020) and Moore (1984) along with many others have pointed out the overwhelming role of state-driven mobilization in the program. Hwang (2011) showed that the psychological and moral effects of the movement were more crucial than the income-boosting effects, which only lasted a few years. Oh (2003) critiqued the NVM's heavy reliance on village residents' own re- sources and its ineffectiveness at reducing rural-to-urban migration. Other critics have noted the political motivations behind the program, suggesting that NVM resource transfers were intended to bolster political support from rural voters (Lee 2011) through political indoctrination and patron- age (Moore 1984). Regardless of the conclusions, however, most research to date has been based on aggregate statistics or case studies of

[4] Figure D1 in the Appendix D (page 20) shows a sample list of village leaders and local officials assigned to each village. The data show that each village has one male and one female NVM leader and one designated local official.

[5] Approximately 200,000 NVM leaders existed in the 1970s (Han 2010).

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a few villages. Our study is among the first attempts to provide a systematic micro-level analysis of the NVM program's short- and long-term effects.

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4 Data and Empirical Strategy

We incorporate various datasets to evaluate the long-term legacy of an authoritarian rural development program. For the amounts of subsidy received by villages, we use the *Statistical Yearbook of Saemaul* from 1974 to 1978. A sample of the raw data in Figure 2 shows how the amount of cash transfers to villages under the NVM program were recorded. We employ these NVM subsidies as a proxy for villagers' benefits from the government under the program.[6] We aggregate the number of villages and the amount of funds they received at the township (EMD) level to correspond to the election data. The election data come from the National Election Commission.[7] We aggregate the polling station–level data at the township (EMD) level to merge it with the subsidy data. Additionally, for the confounding variables, we rely on census data from 1966 to 2010. As the election year and the census year do not overlap, we match the census data from the year closest to an election year. Finally, to analyze the mechanism, we utilize night-time luminosity data extracted from satellite images from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and data from the *Census of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries* (agricultural census, hereafter).

[6] While all villages were affected by the nationwide NVM program, the extent of the program's influence and benefits varied significantly across villages. Each year, approximately 10–15% of villages received the subsidy. Out of over 34,665 villages, 17,433 received government subsidies via the NVM. Among these villages, about 93% received a cash subsidy (of varying amounts) a single time. The amount of the subsidy varied substantially, from 100,000 Won each to two villages in 1974 to 3,000,000 Won to each of 14 villages in 1978

[7] http://www.nec.go.kr

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One challenge in creating a township-level panel dataset spanning more than four decades is tracking changes in administrative boundaries. We use the administrative boundary from 1970 as the base and trace administrative units over time. For example, if a township split into multiple townships after 1970, we combine the fragments and treat them as one unit to prevent those data from being coded as missing. To accurately track administrative unit changes, we use various methods, such as verifying city and county ordinances related to administrative boundary changes and cross-checking GIS boundary maps from different years.[8]

[Figure 2 about here]

Our first empirical specification is a township-level cross-sectional analysis using two consecutive authoritarian legislative election outcomes from the 1973 and 1978 elections.

$$\text{IncumbentVoteShare}_{i,c,1978} - \text{IncumbentVoteShare}_{i,c,1973} = \beta_1 \text{NVMSubsidy}_{i,c,t} + X_{i,c,t}\,\eta + \tau_c + \varepsilon_{i,c,t}. \quad (1)$$

Our dependent variable, $\text{IncumbentVoteShare}_{i,c,1978} - \text{IncumbentVoteShare}_{i,c,1973}$, captures the change in the authoritarian ruling party's vote share in township *i* in county *c* between 1973 and 1978 in the legislative election. The key independent variable, $\text{NVMSubsidy}_{i,c,t}$, is the logarithm of the NVM subsidy amount per voter distributed to villages in township *i* in county *c* between 1974 and 1978. We investigate different time spans, yearly amounts and transfer sums to determine whether the timing of a cash transfer affected its impact on electoral outcomes. Figure 3 illustrates the spatial distribution of the total funds townships received between 1974 and 1978 under the NVM

[8] Statistics Korea's Statistics Geographic Information Service (https://sgis.kostat.go.kr).

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program.[9] $X_{i,c,t}$ includes control variables that allow us to address various features of each township. We first control for each township's area size (km^2) and whether the township was the county capital (*eup*) in a county in 1970 (*Control 1*). We then expand the controls to account for a township's development level *before* the beginning of the NVM program, including the proportion of women, the proportion over age 15, the share of the population that was illiterate in 1966, and the population change from 1966 to 1970 (*Control* 2). We also include county (*si-gun-gu*) fixed effects (τ_c), which refer to the layer above the township, to address time-invariant omitted variables at the county level. We cluster the standard errors ($\varepsilon_{i,c,t}$) at the county level.

[Figure 3 about here]

In subsequent analyses, we use a similar model to estimate the effects of past subsidy that took place as part of the dictatorial regime's rural development program on democratic elections.

$$\text{IncumbentVoteShare}_{i,c,2012} = \beta_1 \Sigma_{t=1974}^{1978} \text{NVMSubsidy}_{i,c,t} + X_{i,c,t}\,\eta + \tau_c + \varepsilon_{i,c,t}. \quad (2)$$

We use the vote share of the conservative party candidate, Park Geun-hye, in the 2012 election as the dependent variable. Figure 4 illustrates geographic variation in this variable. While control- ling for various township-level traits, we also control for the conservative party's vote share in the 2007 election, when the conservative party candidate Lee Myung-bak was elected president. If any detected support for the conservative party candidate is a function of the authoritarian legacy, the candidates in 2007 and 2012 would be expected to benefit from the legacy in the same manner. If,

[9] Missing observations are either city districts, which were ineligible for the NVM subsidy, or districts that were untraceable due to a complete administrative boundary change.

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instead, the legacy is conferred to a specific person connected to the dictator who launched the pro- gram, support would be detectable in the 2012 election for the candidate with a direct connection to Park Chung-hee. Table B1 in the Supplementary Appendix (page 2) presents the descriptive statistics for all variables.

[Figure 4 about here]

5 Empirical Findings

5.1 The short-term effects on authoritarian elections

We first examine the direct short-term electoral effects of the NVM subsidy. In Table 1, we use the per voter cash transfer in the year before the 1978 legislative election as the independent variable and the incumbent party's vote share change from the 1973 election to the 1978 election as the dependent variable. We find that cash transfers under the rural development program are positively associated with support for the ruling party in the next legislative election. A 1 percent increase in the cash transfer amount per voter is associated with a 3.3 percentage-point (15.7% of the standard deviation) increase in the incumbent party's vote share, compared to the election held prior to any cash transfer (Column (4)). Given the electoral success of the opposition in legislative elections in the 1970s despite the repression and institutional obstacles set by Park's regime, the magnitude of the boost from the NVM subsidies was substantial for the ruling party.

We examine various lags to understand the logic of citizens' voting behaviors in authoritarian elections as a response to material benefits. Table B3 on Appendix page 4

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presents the results with different time gaps between the transfer year and the 1978 election. Interestingly, we find that only those cash transfers that occurred in the year prior to the election have an effect. Subsidies in other years, including the year of the election, have no significant impact on the election outcome in 1978. These results imply that voters in rural townships at the time reacted to immediate benefits, not to the overall transfers, consistent with the findings of previous studies of pork-barrel politics in non-democratic settings (Costa-i Font, Rodriguez-Oreggia and Lunapla 2003; Hong and Park 2016).

[Table 1 about here]

Additionally, we conduct several robustness checks (Table B4 on page 5 in the Appendix). First, instead of the amount of funds, we use the number of beneficiary villages within each township (Column (1)). Second, instead of using the number of voters as the denominator, we use the total population (Column (2)). Finally, we use the difference between the incumbent's vote share and the combined vote share of all the opposition parties as the dependent variable (Column (3)). The results remain similar across all specifications. We also discuss the potential non-randomness of the 1970s subsidy and how it affects our estimation using empirical tests that can be found in the Table B5 on Appendix page 6.

5.2 The long-term effects on democratic elections

To estimate the long-term effect of the NVM's legacy, we employ the share of votes for Park Geun-hye in the 2012 presidential election. If the rural development program

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contributed to a lasting positive image of the authoritarian ruler who initiated the program and distributed subsidies to improve village environments and infrastructure, such legacy effects would lead the voters in villages that benefited to support the dictator's daughter as president. To differentiate the legacy effect of the NVM from political support for conservatism and other authoritarian legacies inherited through the successor party, we control for the vote share in the 2007 presidential election, which was won by a different candidate from the same conservative party, Lee Myung-bak.[10] If the voters in a township support the conservative party for ideological or partisan reasons, they are likely to have supported the conservative candidate in 2007 as well as in 2012. Including the variables from the 2007 election potentially bias the estimation as post-treatment variables (Rosenbaum 1984). For this reason, we present the results without the conservative party candidate's share in 2007 in Column (3) in Table 2, before presenting the results from including the variables. The results in Table 2 demonstrate that the legacy effect of the NVM on Park Geun-hye's vote share is consistent when we control for support for the conservative party thusly. A 1 percent increase in subsidy per voter during the 1974–78 period leads to a 1.5 percentage-point (5.4% of the standard deviation) increase in Park's vote share. In the race between Park Geun-hye and Moon Jae-in, there was only a 3.6 percent difference in total vote share.

[Table 2 about here]

The overall positive findings with regard to the NVM's long-term effects are notable in several respects. First, primarily due to rapid industrialization and urbanization, which accelerated in the 1970s, many formerly rural townships became urban districts, and

[10] We include the other conservative candidate Lee Hoi-chang's vote share (15.1%) as a control and confirm that the results remain similar.

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served as destinations during the large-scale domestic migration. Secondly, due to political regionalism, particularly after the Gwangju Massacre in 1980 under the Chun Doo-hwan regime, the Honam region (two Southwest- ern provinces) became a strong base for the opposition party, and candidates from the formerly authoritarian party routinely receive only a small share of votes there. In contrast, in the Youngnam region (two Southeastern provinces) a strong support base for the conservative party has emerged (Horiuchi and Lee 2008).

To address the critical feature of regional voting patterns in Korea and their potential interference in this analysis, we conduct a few additional analyses. First, we check the regression results from Youngnam and Honam to examine whether the results differ substantially in the two regions. The subset analysis shows that the outcomes are not entirely determined by the regional factors (Table B7 on Appendix page 8).[11] The short-term effects from the 1970s are significant in Honam but not in Youngnam, while the long-term effects in 2012 are significant in Youngnam, but not in Honam. To address the effects of regionalism more systematically, we use the linear mixed effects model, which al- lows different intercepts of each groups and is widely used when the data contain a hierarchical structure. Hence, the mixed-effect model can account for both the country-level and region-level observable and unobservable variations to estimate the township-level effect of the NVM subsidies. The results are consistent with our previous findings (Columns (1) to (2) in Table 3).

As another critical robustness check, we employ an instrumental variable approach. One potential concern is that omitted variables that affect the villagers' performance in the NVM program may also affect their political ideologies and voting choices. To address this bias, we employ the exogenous geographic terrain elevation and slope as instruments for the NVM subsidies.[12] The logic behind this choice is as follows: each

[11] Our data also show that the annual average per capita subsidy to Youngnam and Honam were 1,113 and 1,135 Korean won, respectively, indicating that the amount of benefits did not differ regionally.

[12] The terrain elevation and slope data are from Nunn and Puga (2012).

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village's performance in the NVM is evaluated based on their baseline conditions. Therefore, an unfavorable terrain before the movement likely indicates an initial lack of infrastructure in a poorer environment, and thus gives a village an advantageous benchmark from which to generate a notable and visible improvement within a short period, compared to other villages. The first stage results in Table 3 suggest that those villages with tougher geographic conditions tend to receive larger subsidies. The government transfers under the NVM program instrumentalized based on unfavorable terrain conditions increase a township's vote share for Park Guen-hye in the 2012 presidential election. We also provide an empirical test to determine whether the exclusive restriction assumption holds in our case. If the geographic variables affect the voting outcomes other than through the NVM, they would significantly affect other voting out- comes than the election that elected Park Chung-hee's daughter. We test this possibility using the previous 2007 election outcomes. The IV regression result from the 2007 election is not significant, implying that the geographic IVs work through the political legacy of the NVM program (Column (4)).[13] We conduct the robustness checks with the alternative measures of NVM benefits and electoral outcome used in Table B4 and confirm that the results remain qualitatively similar to those in Table 2 (Table B10 on Appendix page 11).

5.3 Mechanism Analyses

Next, we present a series of analyses to elucidate the mechanism of the long-term effect. As the NVM was a rural development program, we first examine the economic channel. In

[13] This null result also addresses the concerns of post-treatment bias to some extent, which we discuss above regarding the inclusion of the 2007 election result as a control variable. We also review the campaign strategies of both candidates regarding rural areas and the agricultural sector and confirm that their strategies did not vary across the terrain conditions.

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the 1970s, rural villages that received larger NVM transfers could successfully improve their economic conditions by expanding infrastructure, acquiring advanced agricultural technologies, and enhancing house- hold income (Hwang 2006). If the economic advancement induced by the NVM program persisted through 2012, at least compared to other rural areas, the voters in the NVM beneficiary villages would rationally be expected to vote for Park Geun-hye, rewarding her for the direct economic gains they received from her father's policy.

[Table 3 about here]

Since no local GDP data is available at the township level, we employ night-time luminosity data drawn from satellite images collected by NOAA as a proxy for economic activity and development (Henderson, Storeygard and Weil 2012).[14] We construct the night-time luminosity data for multiple years within the available period of data—1992, 1996, 2002, 2006, and 2011—to trace the levels of local economic activity over a substantial period. Table 4 displays the results from the regression analyses, in which we find the NVM transfers from 1974 to 1978 per voter (log) are negatively associated with the average intensity of night-time luminosity. These findings strongly support our theoretical argument. Although the beneficiary villages were able to share more public goods and advance the mode of production in their primary industry, by the early 1990s this comparative advantage vis-á-vis other rural areas disappeared as the country transformed into an industrialized economy. Hence, the reason voters in beneficiary villages supported Park Geun-Hye was not because the program made those villages significantly richer than other rural areas as of 2012.

[14]NOAA's night-time image data (http://ngdc.noaa.gov/eog/dmsp.html) consist of geocoded 1-square-kilometer pixels. We use the 1970 administrative boundary GIS data and the "zonal statistics" command in QGIS 3.10 to calculate average night-time light intensity values for each township.

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[Table 4 about here]

Next, we turn to the demographic and industrial structure of townships as a potential mechanism. First, we evaluate the direct effect of NVM subsidies on technological advancement in the short- and long-term using the share of households that own a mechanical cultivator. In the 1970s, mechanical cultivators were considered a critical technological breakthrough that could enhance agricultural productivity, and they remain the primary agricultural machine today. Naturally, the adoption of mechanical cultivators was one of the main objectives of farmers who participated in NVM projects (Yang 2019). According to the agricultural census, the share of households who owned a mechanical cultivator increased dramatically during the NVM period, from 0.3% in 1970 to 10.5% in 1980. Column (1) in Table 5 shows that townships with larger NVM transfers had a greater increase in the number of households that owned a mechanical cultivator. The trend continues to this day. As Column (2) shows, townships that received more NVM funds in the 1970s had more households with mechanical cultivators in 2010. We further estimate the degree of agricultural concentration in townships' economic activities. As shown in Column (3), townships that received larger subsidies in the 1970s are more committed to agricultural production today. Combined, these results support the argument that NVM benefits encouraged villagers to specialize in agricultural production, which in the long run did not lead to their relative economic advancement.

[Table 5 about here]

Then we examine the population structure of townships to gauge whether the cohorts that directly benefited from the NVM subsidies tended to stay in those townships

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as farmers. While much of the rural population moved to newly emerging urban or suburban districts, larger benefits from the NVM program may have dissuaded residents of beneficiary villages, especially young residents, from moving out and instead encouraged them to take advantage of opportunities in their hometowns. We directly examine the changes in the agricultural population from 1970 to 1980. Column (4) in Table 5 shows that the agricultural population in 1980 compared to 1970 is larger in beneficiary villages, providing evidence of the discouraging effect of the NVM benefits. Next, to test the long-term demographic mechanism, we use the population over 55 in the 2010 census as a proxy for the direct beneficiaries of the NVM program, as these cohorts were aged 15 years or older in 1970.[15]

Column (5) demonstrates a strong positive association between the government NVM transfers and the share of the population over 55 in rural townships in 2010. Given that the migration pattern has been largely one-directional, from rural townships to urban districts, the positive correlation indicates a relative lack of migration among the young cohorts in beneficiary townships.

Although the beneficiary villagers are not economically better off than other rural dwellers and are more likely to work in agriculture, it is possible that they enjoy other long-term gains from the NVM that are not necessarily material. One strong candidate for such non-material benefits is social capital within a village. Since the movement put a heavy emphasis on collective and cooperative actions among villagers to complete the self-help projects, it is possible that the NVM generated greater social capital within villages, and the enhanced social capital could still be present today. In this case, the residents might favor a candidate connected to Park Chung-hee because Park made the village a "happier place" to live. To address this question, we use data from two surveys,

[15] Fifteen is the approximate age when people entered the labor market in the early 1970s given the educational attainment trend at the time (http://kostat.go.kr/).

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the Residential Satisfaction Survey (Committee of Rural Life Quality Improvement 2019-2020) and the Rural Village Survey (Song 2020), both conducted by the Korea Rural Economic Institute (KREI), a government research institute focusing on rural districts and residents in South Korea. Both surveys contain questions that assess forms of social capital, such as relationships with neighbors, satisfaction in the community, and participation in communal activities. Using numerous items from the surveys, we find no significant associations between the NVM subsidies and the current level of social capital in villages (Columns (1) to (4) in Table 6).

[Table 6 about here]

Finally, we investigate whether the beneficiary villagers evaluate Park Chung-hee's ruling and policies differently. For this, we use another national survey, the Survey on Korean Identity con- ducted by the East Asia Institute in 2015, which includes many questions regarding respondents' assessments of the political economic development of the country. The survey reveals several distinct perceptions among beneficiary villagers, which helps explain their votes in the 2012 election. We find that beneficiaries of the NVM are more likely to believe that Park contributed not only to the economic development of South Korea, but also to its political development (Columns (5) to (6) in Table 6). The beneficiary villagers' favorable evaluation of Park is not driven by their conservative ideology or policy preference, as we find no significant correlation between these variables (Table C4). Critically, when we analyze respondents' evaluations of the seven other former presidents, both authoritarian and democratic, the beneficiary villagers' assessments did not differ significantly from those of other villagers (Table C5), suggesting that the former group has a greater affinity specifically for Park Chung-hee.

Anecdotal evidence captures how Park Guen-hye used the resonance of NVM experiences to call to mind her father's legacy and appeal to those voters who

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remembered benefitting from the NVM. When she began her political career running in the legislative by-election in 1998, her camp used the NVM song as its main campaign song (Sonn 2011). In 2012, on the last day of the presidential election campaign, her speech referenced the famous NVM slogan, "Let's live rich," as she emphasized that her presidency would revive her father's economic success (Kim 2013). The Korean public, especially older generations who experienced the Park Chung-hee era, perceive the NVM to have been a monumental achievement in the country's development. In a 2010 poll conducted by the largest newspaper in South Korea, *Chosun Ilbo*, the nationally representative sample chose the NVM as the most influential policy in the nation's development.[16]

6 Conclusion

Economic development is a key mission of political leaders in developing and less-developed countries, contributing significantly to the legitimacy of their rule and often their political survival. For authoritarian leaders, political survival does not directly depend on electoral support, and they enjoy great discretion with regard to resource allocation. Hence, understanding how the distribution of economic resources to the population affects their political survival and other political dynamics is not a straightforward enterprise. In this paper, we examine the short- and long-term political and economic effects of a rural development program in South Korea, the New Village Movement, which targeted economically underprivileged rural areas during the 1970s, a period of rapid industrialization and urbanization in the country.

[16] https://bit.ly/2LhgWUs (last accessed on 19/1/2022).

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Our analyses reveal several critical rationales linking the allocation of government subsidies to electoral outcomes both under authoritarianism and since democratization. Rural voters appear to reward the authoritarian government and its ruling party in a nuanced way. In the 1978 election that was critical for the dictator's legitimacy, only those rural voters who received an increase in government transfers in the prior year showed greater support for the authoritarian ruling party. In contrast to that reaction during the authoritarian period, we find a long-lasting legacy effect that appeared in a democratic election more than thirty years later. In the presidential election where the dictator's daughter was the candidate of the conservative party that succeeded his party, the rural townships that benefited more from the 1970s development program cast more votes for her.

In our analyses of potential mechanisms, we find that this support for the dictator's daughter was not a reward for long-term economic gains or enhanced social capital among villagers. Instead, we find that the NVM benefits incentivized beneficiaries to remain in the agricultural industry in rural areas, while at the national level, the secondary and tertiary industries were rapidly replacing agriculture as the major contributors to the economy. The beneficiary villagers, however, show a stronger affinity specifically for Park Chung-hee. This exceptional evaluation of Park Chung-hee and his regime explains the political legacy effects of the NVM program that led numerous rural residents to vote for the younger Park in a democratic election.

A few critical issues of scope conditions need to be considered in discussing the generalizability of our findings. First, the transitional justice process after democratization affects authoritarian legacies. In South Korea, the last dictator, Chun Doo-hwan, went through several transitional justice trials soon after the regime change, while the preceding dictator Park never went through any transitional justice process due to his sudden assassination and succession by Chun. The second factor is how succeeding governments treat the trademark policies of previous authoritarian leaders. Although the

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government subsidy that villages received during the rural development program were discontinued, the succeeding governments maintained the structure and campaign activities of the NVM even after democratization. Combining these conditions, this particular authoritarian development program was able to exert a significant influence on a democratic election. Although this study focuses on a rural development program, various other authoritarian policies may leave similar legacy effects among different groups in the population.

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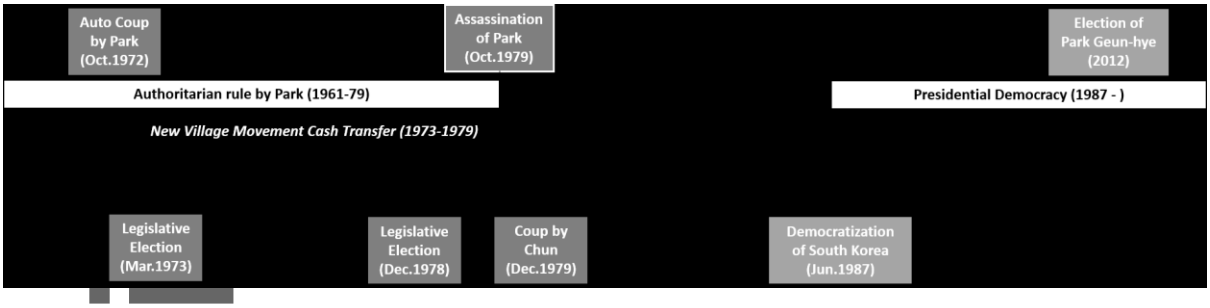
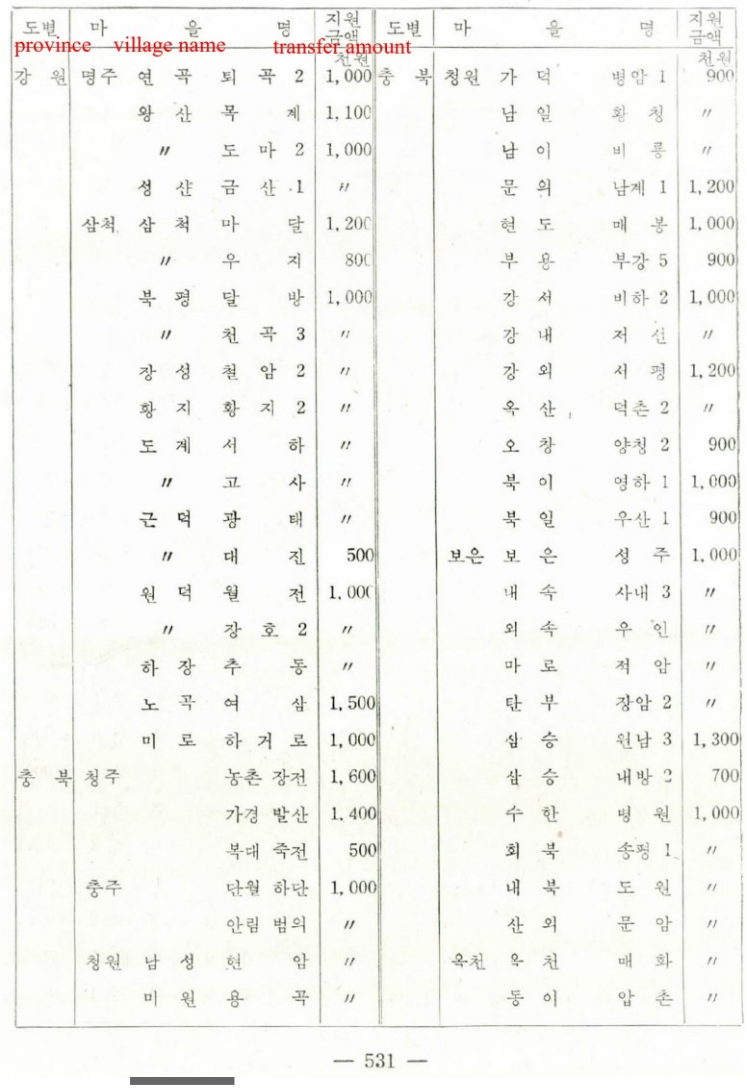


Figure 1 Timeline of the New Village Movement and Key Political Events

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도별	마을명	지원금액 (천원)	도별	마을명	지원금액 (천원)
강원	명주 연곡 퇴곡 2	1,000	충북	청원 가덕 병암 1	900
	왕산 목계	1,100		남일 황청	〃
	〃 도마 2	1,000		남이 비룡	〃
	성산 금산 1	〃		문의 남계 1	1,200
	삼척 삼척 마달	1,200		현도 매봉	1,000
	〃 우지	800		부용 부강 5	900
	북평 달방	1,000		강서 비하 2	1,000
	〃 천곡 3	〃		강내 저산	〃
	장성 철암 2	〃		강외 서평	1,200
	황지 황지 2	〃		옥산 덕촌 2	〃
	도계 서하	〃		오창 양청 2	900
	〃 고사	〃		북이 영하 1	1,000
	근덕 광태	〃		북일 우산 1	900
	〃 대진	500		보은 보은 성주	1,000
	원덕 월전	1,000		내속 사내 3	〃
	〃 강호 2	〃		외속 우인	〃
	하장 추동	〃		마로 적암	〃
	노곡 여삼	1,500		탄부 장암 2	〃
	미로 하거로	1,000		삼승 원남 3	1,300
충북	청주 농촌 장전	1,600		삼승 내방 2	700
	가경 발산	1,400		수한 병원	1,000
	복대 죽전	500		회북 송평 1	〃
	충주 단월 하단	1,000		내북 도원	〃
	안림 범의	〃		산외 문암	〃
	청원 남성 현암	〃		옥천 옥천 매화	〃
	미원 용곡	〃		동이 압촌	〃

province village name transfer amount

— 531 —

Figure 2 Raw Data on the NVM Cash Transfer (1974)

Notes. This figure is a sample of the raw data to show how the amount of cash transfers to villages under the NVM program were recorded in the *Statistical Yearbook of Saemaul*, published by Ministry of Home Affairs. The figure shows province, village name, and the amount of cash transfer for each recipient village.

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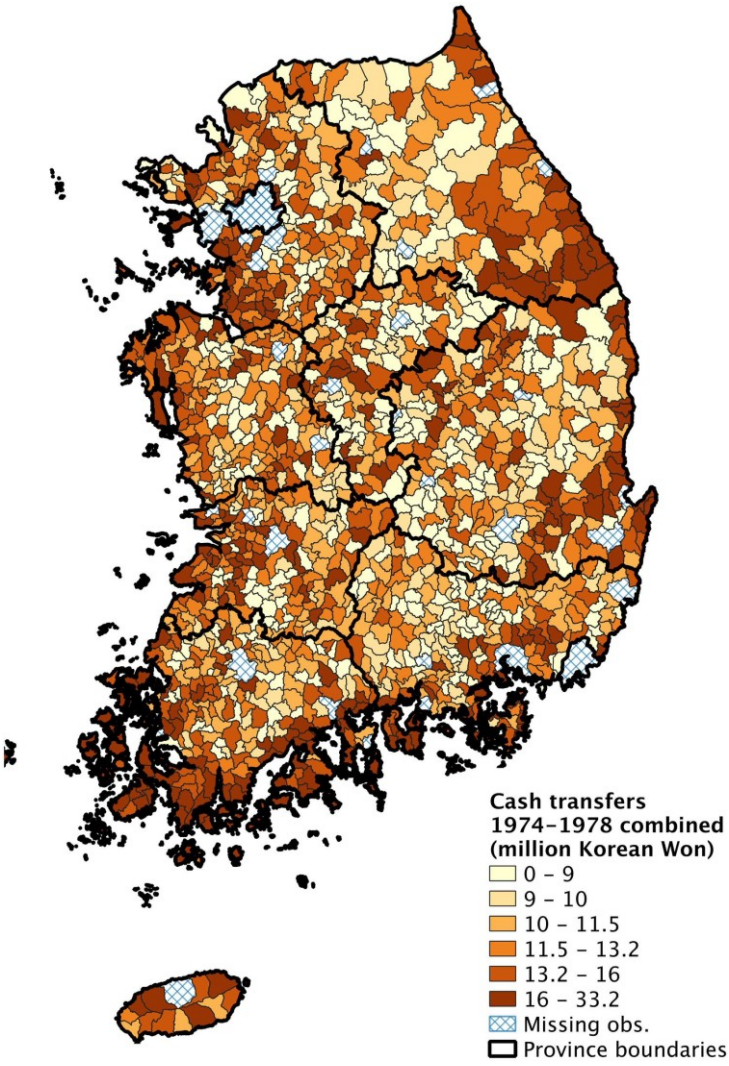


Figure 3 Cash Transfers from 1974 to 1978

Notes. Figure 3 illustrates the spatial distribution of funds under the NVM program townships received between 1974 and 1978. Source: *Statistical Yearbook of Saemaul*.

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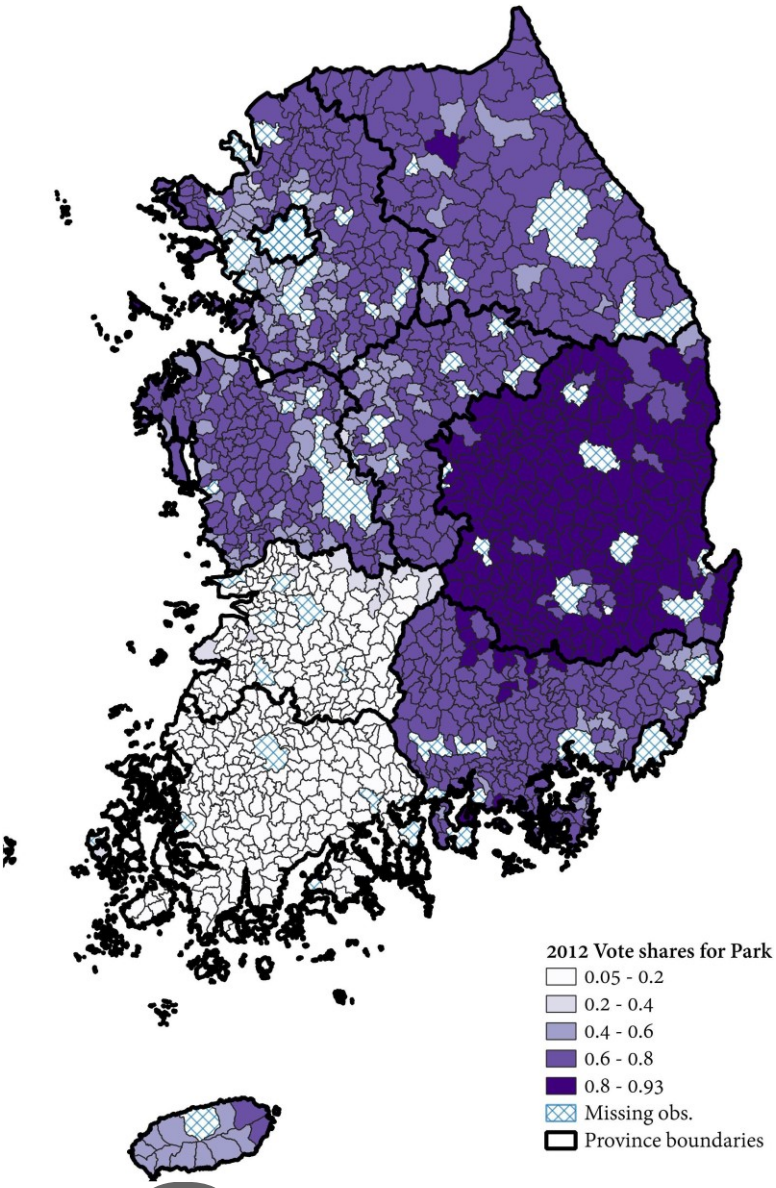


Figure 4 Vote Share for Park Geun-hye (2012)

Notes. Figure 4 illustrates the geographic distribution of the vote share that Park Geun-hye obtained in the 2012 Presidential Election at the township level. Source: National Election Commission.

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Table 1: Cash Transfer and Authoritarian Election Outcome (NVM Year: 1977)

	Dependent variable: Δ Incumbent vote share 1978 - 1973 (mean -0.042, s.d. 0.205)			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
NVM subsidy per voter (log)	0.081**	0.030*	0.033*	0.033*
(1977)	(0.031)	(0.015)	(0.016)	(0.017)
Controls 1	N	N	Y	Y
Controls 2	N	N	N	Y
County FE	N	Y	Y	Y
No. of counties	129	129	129	129
Adjusted R^2	0.004	0.838	0.838	0.839
Observations	1,339	1,339	1,339	1,337

Notes. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Standard errors are clustered at the county level when the county fixed effects are used. ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$, † $p < 0.1$. Table B2 on Appendix page 3 presents the full results.

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Table 2: Cash Transfer and Democratic Election Outcome

	Dependent variable: Park's vote share in 2012 (mean 0.547, s.d. 0.282)			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
NVM subsidy per voter (log) (1974-1978)	-0.054† (0.028)	0.020** (0.007)	0.014† (0.008)	0.015† (0.008)
Control 1	N	N	Y	Y
Control 2	N	N	Y	Y
Lee's vote share	N	N	N	Y
County FE	N	Y	Y	Y
No. of counties	131	131	131	131
Adjusted R^2	0.002	0.967	0.967	0.971
Observations	1,302	1,302	1,300	1,300

Notes. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Standard errors are clustered at the county level when the county fixed effects are used** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$, † $p < 0.1$. Table B6 on Appendix page 7 presents the full results.

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Table 3: Robustness Checks: Mixed Effects Model and Instrumental Variable

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Mixed Effects Model		*Instrumental Variable*	
Dependent variable:	Park's vote share in 2012		Park's vote share in 2012	Lee's vote share in 2007
NVM subsidy per voter (log) (1974-1978)	0.018*	0.017*	0.060*	-0.005
	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.026)	(0.031)
First stage				
Terrain Elevation			0.328*	0.330*
			(0.143)	(0.141)
Terrain Slope			0.017**	0.017**
			(0.006)	(0.006)
Controls 1	Y	Y	Y	Y
Controls 2	Y	Y	Y	Y
Lee's vote share	N	Y	Y	
County FE			Y	Y
No. of counties	131	131	131	131
Adjusted R^2			0.970	0.966
F -statistics			31.00	34.55
Observations	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,305

Notes. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Standard errors are clustered at the county level in Columns (3) and (4). ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$, † $p < 0.1$. Table B8 and B9 on Appendix pages 9-10 present the full results.

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Table 4: Mechanism Analysis: Economic Development

	Dependent variable: *night-time luminosity* (log)				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	1992	1996	2001	2006	2011
NVM subsidy per voter (log) (1974-1978)	-0.433**	-0.439**	-0.401**	-0.429**	-0.415**
	(0.060)	(0.057)	(0.051)	(0.060)	(0.059)
Controls 1	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Controls 2	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
County FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
No. of counties	131	131	131	131	131
Adjusted R^2	0.763	0.760	0.771	0.740	0.751
Observations	1,368	1,368	1,368	1,368	1,368

Notes. Robust standard errors clustered at the county level are in parenthesis. ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$, † $p < 0.1$. Table B11 on Appendix page 12 presents full results.

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Table 5: Mechanism Analysis: Agricultural and Demographic Changes

Dependent variable:	(1) ΔShare of households w/ mechanical cultivator (1970-80)	(2) Share of households w/ mechanical cultivator (2010)	(3) Share of full-time farming households (2010)	(4) ΔAgricultural population (log, 1980-1970)	(5) Share of population age 55 + (2010)
NVM subsidy per voter (log) *(1974-1978)*	0.015* (0.007)	0.072** (0.015)	0.085** (0.016)	0.080* (0.036)	0.115** (0.016)
Controls 1	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Controls 2	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
County FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
No. of counties	131	131	131	131	131
Adjusted R^2	0.575	0.598	0.624	0.265	0.600
Observations	1360	1303	1303	1357	1305

Notes. Robust standard errors clustered at the county level are in parenthesis. ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$, † $p < 0.1$. Table B12 on Appendix page 13 present full results.

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Table 6: Mechanism Analysis: Social Capital and Affinity for Former Leader

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Local life satisfaction	Sense of belonging	Social interactions	Community activity participation	Park's contribution to economic development	Park's contribution to political development
NVM subsidy per voter (log) (1974-1978)	0.154 (0.173)	-0.031 (0.239)	-0.199 (0.232)	-0.533 (1.830)	0.348* (0.165)	0.327† (0.167)
Individual controls	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
County FE	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Survey Source	Residential Satisfaction Survey			Rural Village Survey	Korean Identity Survey	
Survey Year	2019 & 2020	2020	2020	2020	2015	2015
Observations	3836	2076	2076	1858	360	360
Adjusted R^2	0.126	0.268	0.243	0.158	0.224	0.229

Notes. Demographic features such as age, gender, household income and education are controlled in all models. Refer to Appendix C on Appendix page 14 for more information on data source and variable coding procedures. Column additionally controls for the year fixed effects. Robust standard errors clustered at the county level are in parenthesis. Table C1 presents summary statistics of survey variables and Table C2 reports full results (Appendix pages 15-16). Table C3 and C4 present additional analyses using other measures of social capital and political attitudes (Appendix pages 17-18). Table C5 (Appendix page 19) analyzes the rural respondents' evaluation of the other former presidents. ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$, † $p < 0.1$.

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