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Research Statement

Within comparative politics, my research explores the intersection between inequality and political development, from a political economy perspective.

In "Aiming Right at You: Group versus Individual Clientelistic Targeting in Brazil" (Journal of Politics in Latin America) I used **matching techniques** for observational data. Do parties target individuals or groups? This is a question fundamental to understanding clientelism, yet the literature does not offer an answer. This paper argues that depending on certain conditions, brokers target individuals when they are identifiable and groups when brokers need to rely on the spillover effects of clientelism. Both identifiability and spillovers depend on individual poverty, group poverty, and political competition. Though the theory I outline focuses on targeting, the paper also argues that structural factors, such as the density of the poor, should be considered in the vote-buying literature. Structural factors are one of the few observables upon which brokers can base their decision regarding investment in clientelism. Using survey and census data from Brazil, the paper exploits variations in personal incomes within contexts of differing levels of poverty. I find that political parties engage in segmented or ad-hoc strategies, targeting individuals when identifiability is high, and groups when there are economies of scale. Importantly, non-poor individuals can also be offered clientelism.

In addition to that, and with the support of a generous grant, I designed in **Qualtrics** two **experiments** in the U.S. out of a series of experiments to be fielded in Latin America for further comparison. In "Still for Sale: The Micro-Dynamics of Vote Selling in the United States, Evidence From a List Experiment" (Acta Politica), I looked at the tipping points at which a sample of U.S. citizens (N = 1,479) prefer a monetary incentive rather than keeping their right to choose whom to vote for. In nineteenth-century United States politics, vote buying was commonplace. Nowadays, vote buying seems to have declined. The quantitative empirical literature emphasizes vote buying, ignoring the micro-dynamics of vote selling. We seem to know that vote buyers can no longer afford this strategy; however, we do not know what American voters would do if offered the chance to sell their vote. Would they sell, and at what price, or would they consistently opt out of vote selling? A novel experimental dataset representative at the national level comprises 1,479 U.S. voters who participated in an online list experiment in 2016, and the results are striking: Approximately 25% would sell their vote for a minimum payment of $418. Democrats and Liberals are more likely to sell, while education or income levels do not seem to impact the likelihood of vote selling.

The second experiment is a **conjoint experiment** and it is being analyzed in a separate paper entitled "Vote Selling in the United States: Introducing Support Vector Machine Methods to Analyzing Conjoint Experimental Data" (*in preparation*). My coauthor and myself are developing a new methodology to analyzing conjoint experiments via **machine learning** techniques, particularly, **support vector machines**. Democracy has traditionally been theorized as a multidimensional concept (Dahl, 1971). Yet, the quantitative

study of clientelism—as a democratic failure—has been mostly studied from a unidimensional perspective. We argue that to better understand clientelism, quantitative studies should situate the phenomena within the multidimensionality of democracy to understand which specific subdimension should fail to explain vote selling. By leveraging a conjoint experiment on hypothetical vote selling in the United States—a traditionally considered consolidated democracy—this paper makes both methodological and substantive contributions to the literature. Using machine learning techniques, the paper identifies that among the five conjoint attributes considered in this study, the one related to the co-dependence of the Presidency on Congress is the only one that explains individual levels of vote selling. These findings are particularly relevant to the study of American democracy given the fact that the data were collected during the campaign period where Donald Trump was elected.

Finally, and within the same project, we are currently designing an **economic experiment** in the lab. This paper explains that the literature asserts that Chilean parties no longer buy votes. While those are good news, the bad news are that we are rather ignorants about a number of other interesting, and yet, unanswered questions. First and foremost, the approach used by most quantitative scholars focuses exclusively on vote-buying. That is, parties offering to buy votes, completely ignoring the ones who sell their votes (i.e. voters). This is a rather important distinction. What would voters do if offered the chance to sell their votes? Would voters still sell their votes to their own party of preference? We developed an experiment within the experimental economics tradition. Exploiting these novel data we shed some light on these questions.

My book manuscript entitled *"Structural Transformations in Latin America: State Building and Elite Competition 1850-2010"* explains that the economic structural transformation in Latin America—the secular decline of agriculture and substantial expansion of manufacturing—imposed tight constraints on the way politics was run by the incumbent landowning class. This was a major change due to the advantage the landed elites enjoyed since colonial times. Where the expansion of the industrial sector was weak, post-colonial norms persisted due to institutional inertia, perpetuating the advantaged position of the agricultural class. Leveraging economic sectoral outputs dating back to 1900 until 2010, for a sample of Latin American countries, I use **panel data methods** (particularly, Cox-proportional hazard models), time series analyses (VAR models, impulse response functions, and Granger-causality tests), and fine-grained qualitative data to support my argument. **Another major contribution of the book** is in measurement. One of the biggest gaps in the literature is the lack of a measurement of state capacities able to capture variations of *stateness* over time. Using a novel dataset, the book proposes measuring state capacities using earthquake data. The rationale is very intuitive: the capacity to enforce quake-sensitive building codes throughout the territory is a *reflection* of the overall (*in*)capacity of states of solving both logistic and political limitations at the subnational level. *Why does a 7.0 magnitude earthquake flatten Haiti. leaving at least 100,000 deaths, while a 8.8 earthquake in Chile in the same year leaves just 525 deaths?* By exploiting variations on earthquake death-tolls and local population to weight the number of deaths since 1900, I measure state capacities over time. Keeping magnitudes constant, casualty differentials should be attributed to the *lack of state capacities*. The paper version of the book is entitled "Income Taxation and State Capacity in Chile: Measuring Institutional Development Using Historical Earthquake Data" (*in preparation*).

In one of the **sections of the book**, I explain that the structural transformation required both sectors to grow in a *balanced* fashion, *leveling both elites in their relative political, economic, and military capacities*. Leveraging the dual sector model of economic growth, I sketch a theory of political and economic development that stresses the structural economic dependence of both sectors. The agricultural sector supplied labor and cheap foodstuff—which the industrial sector demanded, promoting balanced economic development of both sectors. The political consequence of balanced economic growth was the mutual political dependence and the need of inter-elite compromises that fostered both economic and political development in the long-run. The paper version of the chapter (currently *in preparation*) can be downloaded here.

Summary and Future Research In summary, my book manuscript, job market paper and working papers on vote buying and experiments on vote selling work toward exploring the effects of inequality in political development from a comparative perspective. I use a broad methodological approach, historical comparisons, time series analyses and experimental and quasi-experimental methodologies. My goal is to use this toolkit to keep asking "big" questions that are fundamental to our discipline.

My future research will seek to study the connection between elite competition and democratic regimes, exploring the connection between state building and democratic institutions. The first paper within this wave of publications is entitled "Inclusive Institutions, Unequal Outcomes: Democracy, State Capacity and Income Inequality" (Inclusive Institutions, Unequal Outcomes: Democracy, State Capacity and Income Inequality. *European Journal of Political Economy*, forthcoming.). This study argues that democratic rule

combined with high state capacity pro-duce higher levels of income inequality over time. This relationship operates through the positive effect of high-capacity democratic context on foreign direct investment and financial development. The second paper is entitled "Skyrocketed Inequality and (Un)lockdown Political Elites in Chile: Aerodrome Usage during Pandemic Times" (in preparation). This paper explores a novel dataset on daily arrivals and departures of a small aerodrome in Santiago de Chile, one of the most unequal countries in the world. It particularly shows how elites were able to bypass lockdown policies aimed to restrict mobility during the pandemic using a small aerodrome located in the heart of the richest municipalities in Santiago. While most Chileans were under heavy lockdown policies, economic elites were able to travel during weekends to their vacation houses and cottages located in other parts of the country. While the Chilean state deployed with some degree of success both the army and police members throughout its territory, it was not able to control air traffic (strictly used by the elites). These findings go in line with the recent "politics of weakness" literature. In fact, this paper shows how local authorities faced high political pressures to systematically ignore overseeing traffic control policies during the pandemic. The paper exploits a novel dataset, time-series methods, regression discontinuity designs and key informant interviews.

Please check my teaching portfolio and see how my **research and teaching interests match**. More information, syllabi, my research, teaching and diversity statements, as well as other papers are available on my website: www.HectorBahamonde.com. Thank you for considering my application. I look forward to hearing from you.