

multilayered federated structures, where veto powers abound and entrenched interests are ready to pounce.

Among possible reforms to Brazil's political system, they suggest party and campaign finance and judicial reform, albeit acknowledging the "necessarily vague" (218) nature of their proposals. Against the glamour and overreach of big pushes, especially those driven by the judicial system, they argue the benefits of incrementalism and of reconceptualizing accountability "as a process more than an outcome" (219). Conceived thus, they argue, challenges can be broken into more bite-sized, less provocative pieces. Developing "transparency law, improving audits, passing laws governing corporate behavior and improving bureaucratic coordination . . . did not pose a direct threat to dominant political and economic elites, as they ran in a direction orthogonal to those elites' interests" (221).

Given my critique of Lava Jato elsewhere (*Journal of Law and Society*, vol. 47, 2020), it is unsurprising that my reading occasionally diverges from Da Ros and Taylor's. Their direct criticism of judicial pseudo-objectivity and excessive proceduralism is, in places, overdone and contrasts markedly with their woefully inadequate suggestion that "the media's role in oversight may have been less neutral than desirable" (84). As for the unleashing of civil society's anticorruption zeitgeist, its association with longstanding authoritarian tendencies has helped put not just politics but also Brazilian democracy itself on trial, with attendant and grave risks. That said, the book offers a nuanced, insightful, distinctive, and plausible reading of events. It represents an invaluable contribution to the literature. Backed by an encyclopedic knowledge of the area, the authors largely succeed in their ambitious attempt to analytically shape and systematize a field of bewildering complexity without overwhelming readers. Rather than a celebratory reading of anticorruption efforts and achievements, characteristic of too much literature on the subject, Da Ros and Taylor offer a sober, and therefore welcome, assessment of Brazil's recent past and the challenges that undoubtedly lie ahead.

George Mészáros
University of Warwick

Eduardo Moncada, *Resisting Extortion: Victims, Criminals, and States in Latin America*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2022. Maps, figures, tables, abbreviations, appendix, bibliography, index, 300 pp.; hardcover \$99.99, paperback \$34.99, ebook \$28

Eduardo Moncada's *Resisting Extortion* is a careful, thorough, and extraordinary reexamination of how people create security where the state cannot ensure the rule

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of law. Moncada's multicountry ethnography of extortion and security networks should be on the reading list of any scholar working with themes of security, violence, organized crime, the rule of law, or qualitative political science.

Resisting Extortion begins with a puzzle from the headlines of Michoacán, Mexico: in Tancítaro, avocado growers resisted extortion from a cartel by organizing a community self-defense force. The self-defense force armed growers and townspeople and successfully expelled the cartel from the area. In another town in Michoacán, berry growers also organized self-defense forces, but these were ineffective and did not wrest control from the cartel. Adding four more cases of resistance from El Salvador and Colombia, Moncada asks, why do victims resist similar forms of criminal victimization in contrasting ways (6)?

Most people experience organized crime through everyday victimization by crimes such as extortion (8). In Latin America, extortion is big business, but it is rarely reported: for example, estimates put extortion in El Salvador at 15 percent of the country's GDP, but over 95 percent of extortion is not reported to authorities (9). People who are extorted do not experience victimization passively. In every case that Moncada examines, he finds resistance to victimization. Moncada demonstrates that what varies is the strategies of resistance that people have available to them. People continually renegotiate victimhood, victimization, and the terms of extortion.

Moncada argues that a community's ability to resist extortion from criminal organizations depends on an interactive process between the community, local law enforcement, and organized crime (13). The structure of the community's political economy can facilitate organization if it is unified or can complicate responses if it is fragmented. Organized crime's structure and time horizon also matter: communities have an easier time resisting groups with shorter time horizons. What's more, local law enforcement can help community organizations or help organized crime, depending on whether criminal groups have captured local law enforcement institutions. However, in the name of resisting extortion, many community self-defense groups become organized criminal groups themselves and perpetuate violence in their communities.

Resisting Extortion is a tour de force through six ethnographic case studies in three countries. Moncada compares two towns in Michoacán, Mexico; two towns in El Salvador; and two city markets in Bogotá and Medellín, Colombia to develop a typology of resistance to extortion. He argues that where local businesses have strong ties, they construct a unified front against extortionists, leading to collective vigilantism. Where businesses have weak ties, organized resistance to extortion fragments, creating piecemeal resistance. Where extortionists have long time horizons, they build complex organizational structures that are more effective at extorting communities long-term and capturing local institutions. When organized crime has a long time horizon, individuals forego collective resistance and engage in nonviolent everyday resistance (57).

The book is divided into three parts. Part 1 introduces the project and develops concepts. Moncada posits victimization as a process in which one person hurts another

and the hurt person responds (20). Resistance refers to any observable strategies outside of the rule of law that victims use to negotiate, end, or prevent victimization (23). These can, in turn, victimize someone else. Victims and law enforcement may or may not work together to coproduce order through resistance. Moncada develops a specific conceptualization of the coproduction of order: the ability of governments and police to do their jobs while enabling victims to maintain informal privileges that violate the law (6).

Part 2 examines cases of everyday and piecemeal resistance in Colombia and El Salvador. In street markets in Medellín, vendors work under the less-than-effective protection of a local gang. Street vendors resent the gang's extortion but feel that they have no real alternative because the gang colludes with police and has shot a dissenting vendor. The vendors negotiate extortion by bargaining with the young men who collect payments. Moncada demonstrates that what appears at first to be submission to extortion is instead an asymmetric negotiation, with elements of everyday resistance.

Part 3 delves into cases of piecemeal resistance and collective vigilantism in El Salvador and Mexico. On the other end of theoretical outcomes from everyday resistance, avocado growers in Tancítaro harness the region's established agricultural organizations to oust the Knights Templar cartel. This effort does not happen when the Knights Templar arrive in Tancítaro; the organization extorted avocado growers for years before it was ousted. When the Knights Templar face increasing pressure from the federal government and other cartels, they increase extortion and aggressive tactics, and at that point, the avocado growers engage in collective resistance (126–27).

While *Resisting Extortion* thoroughly documents and presents an impressive array of cases and fieldwork, it only lightly addresses alternative explanations to its theoretical framework and does not return to them with more evidence. At points, the reader wonders if variables like federal policy or cartels' tactical choices explain as much or more than time horizons or other variables in the theoretical framework. The argument would appear stronger if the book included evidence against alternative explanations alongside the existing evidence for the argument.

Moncada's book complicates categories of victim, crime, criminal, and security. In many cases, people who were initially victims of extortion become vigilantes who kill other community members. In one case, the vigilantes then became a murder for hire organization. In that case, self-defense morphed into violent organized crime. The various resistance practices and gray areas that Moncada documents resemble a contemporary take on James Scott's *Weapons of the Weak*. *Resisting Extortion* is a thoughtful examination of what it means to experience and resist crime.

Calla Hummel 

Department of Political Science, University of Miami, Coral Gables, Florida
33124-6914