Resisting Protection:

Rackets, Resistance, and State Building

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The state occupies a central place in the study of a wide range of political, social, and economic outcomes.[1] The first wave of the contemporary study of the state conceptualized it as a collection of individuals linked together to fulfill key functions, while a subsequent wave understood the state as an autonomous apparatus reliant on coercion in pursuit of its own interests.[2] The Weberian turn toward the "monopoly on the legitimate use of physical force"[3] placed violence at the center of the study of institutional projects of extraction and domination.[4] This article contributes to an understanding of the conflictive dynamics of building order through a micro-level comparative analysis of resistance to criminal protection rackets, defined as sustained institutional arrangements through which dominant actors extract regular tribute from others actors in return for providing protection from both themselves and other threats.

Resistance to protection rackets varies in sharp and intriguing ways. Business firms in Medellín, Colombia and Ciudad Juárez, Mexico not only refused to pay tribute to protection rackets, but also openly coordinated with the state to end them via legal means.[5] In the city of San Miguel and neighboring municipalities in eastern El Salvador, business owners collaborated with police officers to execute gang members that coordinated protection rackets. By contrast, firms in La Ruana in the Mexican state of Michoacán organized a private armed group that, while enabling them to resist a protection racket linked to a drug trafficking organization (DTO), also had highly conflictive relations with local police. Resistance also varies dramatically across small stretches of space. A few city blocks from where firms openly mobilized to end a protection racket in Medellín, other firms negotiated the ongoing terms of their domination directly with racket coordinators. This empirical variation underscores a theoretical gap in the study of protection rackets and, more broadly, criminal politics: a lack of attention to resistance.[6] The puzzle of variation in resistance may also help

generate broader insights into the conflictive dimensions of extraction and domination central to the construction of institutional rule and order.

In this article, I develop a political economy framework to identify how the resources available to the victims of rackets help account for variation in the strategies of resistance pursued. Economic resources entail access to legal sources of capital that can be used to establish financial independence from rulers and/or invest in alternative purveyors of security. Political resources concern access to coercive state agents who are autonomous from criminal actors seeking to impose alternative forms of order. Distinct resource endowments condition the forms of resistance available to subordinates. I illustrate the framework's utility using novel micro-level data on resistance to criminal rackets from across Latin America.

Criminal violence in the developing world is drawing attention from social science scholars.[7] Much research focuses on explaining levels and patterns of criminal violence, but comparatively less is known about the nature of criminal governance.[8] A protection racket is arguably one of the purest expressions of criminal governance because it shares core dimensions with state building: dominant actors extract rents from subordinates through the threat and use of coercive force within a particular territorial locality over which they maintain control. This conceptual overlap is a promising opportunity to develop a dialogue between research on the state, order, and criminal politics.

A focus on criminal protection rackets also promises practical dividends. Concerned policymakers view protection rackets as a "generalized" phenomena in Latin America,[9] and rackets are prominent features in the landscapes of non-state security arrangements in parts of Africa and Southeast Asia.[10] Rackets have notable implications for economic development: in the center of Medellín alone, rackets extract an estimated one-third of a million dollars from firms every month.[11] More broadly, as I show here, unpacking criminal rackets highlights how politicians, street-level bureaucrats, and communities interact in ways that deviate from conventional expectations for state-society relations under democracy.

The Protection Racket: Concept, Origins, and Overlap with State Building

Protection Rackets as Relationships A protection racket is a sustained institutional arrangement where a dominant actor extracts tribute from a subordinate actor in return for providing protection from both itself and external threats. Rackets are territorially bounded, which means that the expectations that dominant and subordinate actors have of the other's behavior are limited to a mutually recognized spatial locale. How is this different from extortion?

The two concepts are often used interchangeably.[12] Even simple extortionists may eventually build protection rackets to satisfy demand from victims.[13] Varese defines extortion as taxation for "services that are promised but *not* provided."[14] While the service provided by a protection racket can vary significantly in frequency and quality,[15] it is different from extortion because it consists of an *ongoing* and *face-to-face* arrangement[16] where the payment of tribute offers security from some dangers. Two empirical examples drawn from judicial archives in Medellín help to illustrate this difference:

In the first case, a man named Gilberto[17] filed a report with the local police after an unidentified caller threatened to kill his son unless he received 200,000 Colombian pesos.[18] Gilberto protested, but the unidentified caller was unsympathetic: "You know that these days if someone doesn't like somebody they can just have them killed." After coordinating with the police, Gilberto scheduled a time and place to drop off the money. The anonymous caller was arrested during the exchange. The judicial record suggests that neither Gilberto nor his son had ever met the extortionist.[19] Contrast this with the case of the owner of a small bus company who reported to authorities that several of the firm's drivers had been paying a *vacuna* (vaccination) of 40,000 Colombian pesos to members of a gang every week for over two years. Drivers who paid the tax received safe passage through dangerous neighborhoods. The gang's collectors sometimes rode the buses to ensure that no harm came to the drivers or their passengers. A missed payment incurred a 50 percent "tax" increase, and refusal to pay risked assault or death.[20]

The first case is one of extortion: a one-off, anonymous, and purely predatory economic interaction. The second case, by contrast, is part of a broader relationship between two actors. This relationship is characterized by regular face-to-face interaction and expectations about each actor's responsibilities to the other within a particular territorial setting.

The Supply and Demand of Protection Extant research characterizes rackets as demand-side phenomena. Gambetta argues that the absence or inability of legal institutions to mediate transactions and enforce contracts generates the demand for protection that rackets then satisfy.[21] For example, institutional uncertainty during Russia's economic liberalization encouraged private "violent entrepreneurs" to sell protection to firms.[22] States foster demand for protection when they classify particular markets or goods as illicit.[23] Predatory[24] or excessive[25] market regulation can also push firms into economic informality where the inability to use the legal system fuels demand for protection rackets.[26] Yet the analytical focus on demand for protection overlooks the issue of supply.

After several Central American governments adopted *mano dura* (iron fist) policies against powerful *maras* (gangs) in the 2000s, gang activity shifted from involvement in petty crime to the establishment of protection rackets.[27] This institutional innovation was designed to generate revenue in order to pay legal fees, feed the families of jailed members, and purchase weapons.[28] In Michoacán, gangs linked to DTOs initially engaged in small acts of extortion while also providing security, but soon constructed protection rackets to scale up the extraction of rents in order to finance their fight against the federal government's increasingly militarized counter-narcotics efforts.[29] Firms were obligated to accept (and pay for) the forced supply of protection by groups pursuing their own strategic organizational objectives that required generating more rents from the territories under their control.

In this article, I focus on resistance to supply-side protection rackets, which differs from resistance to demand-side rackets given the contrasting nature of the distribution of power between the relevant actors.[30] Firms that demand protection likely enjoy greater influence over the terms of the relationship compared to firms that have the service forced upon them. Demand-side rackets resemble client-service provider relations.

Supply-side rackets are relations between subordinate and dominant actors.[31] The comparatively more uneven balance of power within supply-side rackets is precisely what makes them valuable for analyzing the conflictive aspects of building institutional order.

Rackets as State Building In drawing parallels between states and rackets,[32] scholars often reference Tilly's insight that both seek to monopolize violence and deliver protection in exchange for material rent,[33] but the pursuit of tribute can prompt defiance by those targeted for domination.[34] Hence rulers aim to maximize their "bargaining power" and sustain compliance.[35]

However, research on state formation often overlooks how social actors challenge domination.[36] Certainly scholars have challenged functionalist explanations of institutional origins by emphasizing the coercive underpinnings of institutions and the orders they impose,[37] but work remains to be done to sharpen our understanding of the micro-level dynamics and mechanisms that shape resistance to institutional rule.[38] Recent research in the study of civil war, for example, sets aside the notion of wartime settings as anarchic[39] and instead identifies variation in the governing arrangements forged between rebels and civilians[40] as well as rebels and state authorities.[41] Both veins of research on rebel governance dialogue with and contribute to the broader concerns with the origins and evolution of states and order.

In line with these studies, I argue that further insights can be gleaned by bridging research on state building and criminal politics. My focus on the role of resource endowments in explaining variation in forms of resistance to criminal rackets aligns with and extends a similar emphasis in studies that discuss social opposition to state building.[42] However, doing so requires an approach that can detect nuanced variation in the capacity of different populations to exercise agency against rule, and the micro-level evidence with which to evaluate hypotheses of the causes of variation in forms of resistance. As territorially anchored relations of extraction and domination, protection rackets provide the building blocks for exactly these tasks.

The Argument: Forms of Resistance

Resistance is often conceptualized in dichotomous terms, as coordinated rebellion or covert sabotage and evasion.[43] I construct a typology of resistance that identifies additional variants by disaggregating resistance along two dimensions: visibility and intent.[44] Visibility refers to whether resistance is carried out privately beyond the eyes and ears of dominant actors, or publicly as part of the interaction between rulers and subjects. Intent refers to whether the objective is to end the asymmetric relationship or to mitigate the terms of domination. The intersection between these dimensions yields the four overarching types of resistance shown in Table 1.

Everyday resistance consists of practices and discourses by subordinates to negotiate domination along three dimensions: the amount of material rent extracted, the social status of the subordinate vis-à-vis the dominant actor, and the ideological logic

Table 1 A Typology of Resistance

		Visibility	
		Public	*Private*
Intent	*Overthrow of dominant power*	Structural resistance	Subversive resistance
	Negotiation of terms of domination	Everyday resistance	Hidden resistance

that dominants use to justify their actions.[45] Structural resistance aims to end domination and is the focus of research on conflict, including revolution,[46] civil war,[47] and ethnic violence.[48] Hidden resistance consists of discourses and behaviors that subordinates construct and circulate far from the observation of dominants, what Scott calls the "hidden transcript."[49] Subversive resistance aims to end domination through surreptitious means, including "anonymous threats and violence, the anonymous letter, and anonymous mass defiance."[50]

Disaggregating resistance is a necessary first step for theorizing variation in the forms it can take. The typology shows that hidden[51] and subversive[52] forms of resistance are available to social actors regardless of their resource endowments because their limited visibility reduces the costs of resistance in terms of the necessary resources and the risk of punishment. Thus, differences in resource endowments are likely to have the greatest impact in shaping the specific form of *publicly* observable resistance that actors pursue.

Variation in Public Forms of Resistance: A Political Economy Framework Firms can access economic resources (i.e., legal capital) through public and private channels, from loans and grants provided by the public sector to private lines of credit from banks and suppliers. Capital can be used to improve productivity and spur growth, but a firm's ability to access legal capital also influences their degree of financial independence from protection rackets and/or their ability to invest in alternative sources of security. Existing research argues that the provision of security is only one of several services that protection rackets can provide.[53] In my research sites, the coordinators of protection rackets offer firms loans with short time horizons for repayment, high interest rates, and threats of violence for failure to make timely repayment. While reliance on the financial support of protection rackets increases firms' financial dependence on them,[54] access to capital can also be used to invest in alternative purveyors of security. Firms in Latin America invest the second highest level of revenue on private security in the world.[55] Research finds that firms can also use their economic resources to obtain tailored security services from the state by subsidizing or purchasing the equipment that weak state institutions lack to provide order, from motorcycles to gasoline for the police.[56] Yet, the availability of economic resources varies dramatically across firms. Those with limited access to legal capital are constrained in their ability to enlist these alternative providers of security.

Regarding political resources, a disaggregated approach to the state reveals complex relationships between the state and criminal actors across levels of the state as

well as territory and time.[57] Variability in access to a coercive element of the state autonomous from the criminal actors responsible for victimization impacts the nature of resistance. Firms able to access an autonomous state can undercut the need for a protection racket and shield themselves from retribution for their resistance. Firms that lack such access must either discard the potential of the state as an ally in their resistance or, in some cases, recognize that the state can act as a barrier to resistance.

What shapes variation in access to different resources? I distinguish firms along the lines of size and sector. All things being equal, the smaller the firm, the greater the economic disadvantage. Micro and small enterprises (MSEs) make up a substantial share of business enterprises in developing world regions,[58] but limited collateral and minimal credit histories restrict their access to financial credit. [59] Informal firms, defined as firms that operate outside legal regulatory frameworks and are not taxed by the state for their production of legal goods and services,[60] account for the absolute majority of employment in Latin America.[61] Like small formal sector firms, informal firms also lack ready access to legal sources of capital given their failure to pay taxes.[62] We should thus expect smaller firms and those operating in the informal sector to be the most disadvantaged in terms of economic resources.

Pre-existing characteristics offer some *a priori* insights regarding access to political resources. The comparatively more prominent position of larger firms within local economies can provide them with ties to political leaders that allow them to circumvent compromised elements of the state and instead connect with autonomous agents located elsewhere within the state apparatus. Smaller firms generally lack such linkages and must resign themselves to working with the coercive institutions operating in their locality. The local context in which firms operate is also important. Whether local coercive state institutions are autonomous from criminal actors can depend on several factors, including local institutional capacity,[63] regime type,[64] and the incentives that both actors face to maintain relative peace.[65] This suggests that we must pay careful attention to the contextualized nature of relations between the state and criminal agents when theorizing resistance to rackets—a point that aligns with the notion that explaining institutional outcomes requires that researchers "take seriously the political and socioeconomic context of institutional choice."[66] Table 2 synthesizes the explanatory framework.

Firms with high stocks of political and economic resources can openly mobilize to end protection rackets through close coordination with the state's coercive arm, or formal resistance. Those with high access to capital but limited political resources may

Table 2 Variation in Forms of Resistance: A Political Economy Framework

		Access to Autonomous Coercive State	
		High	*Low*
Access to Legal Capital	*High*	Formal Resistance	Private Vigilantism
	Low	State-led Vigilantism	Everyday Resistance

turn to private vigilantism, which here refers to the organization and execution of violence against those associated with a racket.[67] Formal resistance and private vigilantism both aim to end protection rackets, albeit via distinct channels as determined by variations in political resources. Firms with low levels of economic and political resources rely on everyday resistance. Limited access to legal capital can increase dependence on protection rackets for capital and/or security, while limited political resources rule out the possibility of enlisting the aid of the state. Firms with limited access to capital but that do have access to an autonomous coercive state engage in state-led vigilantism. In this context, firms offset limited economic resources by leveraging ties to the state's coercive apparatus in order to support extra-judicial violence as resistance. The next section illustrates the framework's utility through an analysis of resistance to rackets in Latin America.

Rackets, Resources, and Resistance to Domination

For my empirical analysis, I take a micro-level comparative approach.[68] Because the victims and perpetrators of a protection racket have few incentives to reveal its inner-workings,[69] I relied on multiple methodologies. I conducted field research in Medellín and Ciudad Juárez between 2011 and 2017 over periods of time that spanned from a few weeks to several months. I also carried out field research in El Salvador for nearly a month in 2017. I conducted archival research and interviewed the victims and perpetrators of protection rackets, police officers, civil society leaders, journalists, and government officials. I conducted nine focus groups with informal vendors from a large street market in Medellín that was under the control of a protection racket. I also conducted a focus group in the San Miguel area with a group of local police officers. I spent considerable amounts of time observing the functioning of rackets in informal street markets, public parks, and retail walkways. Together the data provide granular insights into resistance to extraction and domination.

Formal Resistance: Medellín and Ciudad Juárez In the center of Medellín is a pedestrian walkway known as the Pasaje Peatonal Calle Junín, lined with clothing retailers, restaurants, shoe stores, and supermarkets. In the late 1990s, a gang linked to a DTO based in a peripheral neighborhood established a protection racket on the walkway. And in the Zona Pronaf area of Ciudad Juárez, the Avenida Lincoln was designed in the mid-twentieth century as a destination for U.S. tourists and long featured restaurants, bars, and nightclubs. The avenue became a target for a protection racket during the drug wars of the 2000s when 90 percent of the city's businesses were paying tribute to gangs aligned with warring DTOs.[70] Of the nearly 100 firms on Avenida Lincoln, only thirty-two were left in 2011.[71] Yet, on both Avenida Lincoln and Calle Junín, firms openly refused to pay tribute and worked with the state to end the rackets. What explains these cases of formal resistance?

Firms in both cases operated in the formal economy and had access to legal capital, enabling them to reject financial assistance from the rackets. Firm owners on Avenida

Lincoln were offered short-term loans and proposals to make racket leaders silent business partners. As the owner of one restaurant recounted:

> One day a guy comes to my place with several armed bodyguards, and he tells me, "I'm the one you've been paying every week." He sits and tells me that I have a good business, but that I could be making more money. He offers to loan me money and help me get connections to get discounts. What he doesn't say, of course, is that he would also be making more money, and that it would no longer be *my* business. I respectfully told him "No, thank you." And we went on that way for some months. Business was bad, but I had enough saved to keep going . . . and keep the doors open for the few customers there were. Something had to change, but it wasn't going to be them owning me.[72]

A similar dynamic unfolded on Calle Junín, where firm owners juxtaposed their position to that of informal vendors a few blocks away. As the owner of a shoe store stated:

> At least I can go to the bank or use a credit card if [business] gets slow. Those other people [informal street vendors nearby] have two choices: work all day every day until they die or get into a *gota-a-gota* [i.e., "drop-by-drop," as the loan system operated as part of protection rackets is referred to in Medellín]. They [the protection racket] took my money, but I never accepted a cent from them. They would say, "Come on, old man, we can give you the money you need." But I always said, "No." If you accept, they own you. That meant that I could stand on my own and, eventually, tell them to go to hell.[73]

Firms joined their economic resources with political capital. On Calle Junín, firms worked with the Federation of Commercial Business Owners (FENALCO), a business association with historically close ties to local government,[74] to pressure authorities into providing tailored security before they refused to pay the security tax to the racket's collectors. The local government responded with increased police presence—partly financed with donations from firms—to dissuade everyday crime and the protection racket. FENALCO connected firms with the city's public prosecutor to help in the prosecution of members of the racket that were arrested on Calle Junín. During my interviews, firm owners would proudly point outside their storefronts to the uniformed police officers that now patrolled the avenue, a small bubble of security in which they could do business without fear of the racket or general crime.

Firms on Avenida Lincoln experienced a shift in their political resources when corrupt local police were replaced by autonomous coercive state institutions. Municipal police in Juárez were widely seen as co-opted by the gangs running protection rackets. Business owners on Avenida Lincoln had advocated for police reform since the 1990s, along with broader urban redevelopment through a private sector association called the *Plan Estratégico de Juárez* (PEJ). Frustrated with local government's indifference, the PEJ built lines of communication with state and federal officials to ask for interventions that would foster more responsive and accessible municipal governance, with little effect.[75] However, these links appreciated in functional value in 2010 when fifteen people were killed during a birthday party in Juárez and then President Felipe

Calderón's seeming indifference to the massacre prompted national outrage and thus a localized intervention by the federal government.

The *Todos Somos Juárez* (We Are All Juárez, or TSJ) initiative consisted of 160 programs to stem violence.[76] Programs were designed via thematically organized *mesas* (working groups) composed of local civil society groups, including the private sector, and representatives from federal and state governments. Private sector leaders, including owners of firms on Avenida Lincoln, assumed leadership roles on the *Mesa de Seguridad* (Working Group on Security). Firms from Avenida Lincoln strategically maneuvered to lead the commission on extortion and used their pre-existing ties to federal authorities, such as federal police commissioner Facundo Rosas, to advocate for the federal police to take over security on Avenida Lincoln.[77] The owner of one of the avenue's bars, who also became the president of the commission on extortion, explained: "We had the advantage that we already had good relations with the authorities from the federal government. These were people who we had invited to our restaurants and homes for barbecues and drinks."[78] Firms on Avenida Lincoln used their political resources to obtain personalized security in the context of the TSJ initiative. Over 200 federal police maintained militarized checkpoints around Avenida Lincoln for several months, and business owners received direct lines of communication to quick response teams that would arrest racket collectors when they entered the area. The result was a micro-zone of relative security forged through formal resistance reliant on ample economic and political resources.[79]

Private Vigilantism: La Ruana in Michoacán In southwestern Mexico, the state of Michoacán is one of the country's largest agricultural producers. It supplies the majority of lemons for domestic consumption and avocados for global markets. By 2011, the Knights Templar DTO controlled nearly two-thirds of Michoacán's 113 municipalities.[80] Among these was La Ruana, a town located in the state's *Tierra Caliente*,[81] where gangs affiliated with the DTO levied security taxes on the agricultural sector, from farmers to exporters.[82] Instead of formal resistance, however, agricultural firms in La Ruana pursued private vigilantism that reflected the pooling of substantial economic capital but limited access to an autonomous coercive state.

Nearly half of Mexico's lemon production takes place in *Tierra Caliente,* specifically in the Valley of Apatzingán, where La Ruana is located. The lemon sector has over 4,300 producers, sustains 17,500 permanent jobs, and exhibits high sectoral coordination under the Association of Citrus Cultivators of the Valley of Apatzingán (ACVA).[83] The ACVA was established in 2009 to organize the lemon sector and better integrate it into domestic and global markets, including coordinating the infusion of public and private financial capital to lemon farmers, transports, and exporters.[84]

State-sponsored provision of order in Michoacán was historically limited given the area's rugged mountainous terrain. Throughout the late twentieth century, the state's dominant Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD) had contentious relations with a central government controlled by the PRI[85] that oversaw the federal police.[86] In La Ruana, local government and municipal police forces were seen as beholden to the

armed gangs working for drug traffickers. As the leader of the town's self-defense group noted:

> The municipal president did not run anything here. The person in charge of security here in the municipality was at the command [of the Knights Templar]. He couldn't do anything without asking their permission. If the police caught someone, they would turn them over to the Knights Templar at a plot of land right here in town. I saw this. I saw two trucks filled with police, talking to the Knights Templar's men—smoking and drinking together. No one said anything. There were some people who went to denounce what was happening. They said, "Look, the Knights Templar did this." And two or three days later, at five or six in the morning, they took them, and we don't know where they are.[87]

Limited political resources coupled with high access to collective capital resulted in private vigilantism that took the form of a *grupo de autodefensa* (self-defense group).[88] The first self-defense group emerged in February of 2013. The founder, Hipolito Mora, was a well-known owner of a lemon farm who, together with other lemon farmers and several of the town's export firms, provided the financing to purchase weapons for local recruits, many of them laborers in the lemon sector.[89] The group also received support from other businesses in La Ruana that had been taxed under the racket.[90]

After dismantling the racket in La Ruana, including "arresting" known members and their local accomplices, the private vigilante group helped firms in neighboring towns dismantle their own protection rackets. This generated additional financial support from the "liberated" businesses, including those that had been purchased or taken over by members of the Knights Templar.[91] The group's success catalyzed a diffusion effect[92] as businesses in several of Michoacán's municipalities formed their own private armed groups to tackle protection rackets.[93] Thus agricultural firms with limited access to an autonomous coercive state leveraged their economic resources to resist protection rackets via private vigilantism.

State-led Vigilantism: Eastern El Salvador The *Mara Salvatrucha* (MS-13) in El Salvador was initially a street gang that engaged in small-scale crime.[94] During the 1990s, it used rents from protection rackets—mostly derived from operations in San Miguel and neighboring municipalities in eastern El Salvador—to expand its territorial scope.[95] Violent clashes with the National Civil Police (PNC) soon ensued.[96] Between 2014 and 2016, several business owners in the San Miguel area coordinated with local police officers to assassinate approximately forty gang members, many of them coordinators of the area's protection rackets.[97]

The firms in this case counted on comparatively limited economic resources. Most were small farmers and ranch owners along with micro-sized formal and informal retailers. One rancher, for example, provided the group with in-kind material support, including negotiating deals with local restaurant owners to pay for the police officers' lunches.[98] Firms compensated for their limited economic resources by leveraging a localized norm of ready access to the state's coercive arm.

During the 1990s and early 2000s, San Miguel was the birthplace of the *Sombra Negra* (Black Shadow), a group of police and military personnel that executed alleged

criminals with the approval and support of political leaders and business owners.[99] Though the group retreated from public view after several years, it represented the manifestation of a longstanding local norm of coercive state collaboration with businesses and political leaders against threats to local order.[100] For example, Wilfredo Salgado, the mayor of San Miguel from 2000–2015, was also prosecuted for being a member of the Black Shadow. Though his case was dismissed on appeal, rumors persist of his involvement in extra-judicial violence. During an interview I conducted with Salgado, he did not admit to participating in the Black Shadow, but did indicate that he would "play the fool" when the group operated in the city. When asked why, he answered: "Because extermination [of gang members] works."[101] A few days after our interview, Salgado filed paperwork to run for a sixth term as mayor, noting that his levels of public support during the decade and a half he was mayor had been among the highest of any elected official in the country.[102]

Data from a focus group that I organized with four police officers drawn from across the San Miguel area and each with over twenty years of experience working in the police revealed approval for state vigilantism and, most critically, underscored the importance of business as a collaborator. One participant noted: "There were other gangs before the *maras*. But the state dealt with them. How? This was the National Police during the [civil] war . . . they took care of them. And what I mean is that they didn't arrest the gangs. They killed them. And that took care of the problem."[103] The officers indicated that businesses helped the police to overcome information asymmetries, as evident in this exchange:

> *Participant SS_FG1_03:* Many people work with the gangs. They provide them with information on what the police are doing. Why? Sometimes money, but mostly fear when people have to live in the same place where the gangs have territorial control.
>
> *Participant SS_FG1_02:* That's why it's important for [the police] to get information too. When the police go into towns to work, the first thing they do is go to the little businesses—the old woman selling *pupusas* [traditional food], the man selling sodas and cigarettes, the little store that sells soap and anything else you might need. These little businesses don't have a lot of money, but they do have two things. First, they have anger that they have to pay these *lacras* [scourges, referring to gang members]. And second, they know everything that is happening in town, and who is charging them [tribute]. [The businesses] are like the circuits where all the information about who is who and who is doing what passes through.[104]

And indeed, firm owners supported the group that killed over forty gang members, providing vital information to enable the targeting of those involved in the protection racket. In one instance, police officers arrived at a nightclub located in plain view of a police station and read the names off a list of individuals alleged to be racket coordinators for the MS-13. Before executing them, officers told these individuals that their fates were a result of their choice to impose protection rackets on local businesses.[105] In brief, firms compensated for limited economic resources by using political resources to advance state-led vigilantism as resistance.

Everyday Resistance: Medellín's Informal Vendors Only a few city blocks away from the formal resistance that unfolded on Calle Junín is an open-air street market where about 400 informal vendors work. The vendors comb trash sites for merchandise to sell in the market where each vendor pays a weekly fee to a protection racket run by a gang allied with a DTO from a conflictive peripheral neighborhood. The underground nature of their economic activities limits vendors' access to legal capital. This facilitates financial dependence on protection rackets via unforgiving loans: forty-day repayment periods, interest rates at 20 percent, and violence as a penalty for missed payments.[106] Nonetheless, limited access to legal capital makes financial dependence on the racket a necessity:

> I'd like to say that I don't need [the loans from the rackets], but I do. I don't make enough to support myself, much less my family, and because we sell in the streets, we cannot get [financial] support elsewhere. Who is going to loan money to someone like me? A bank? Never.[107]

Informal firms have limited political resources given the police's complicity with the racket. Officers receive regular payments from the racket's coordinators to overlook the other illicit economies they manage in the market, including the sale of cocaine and marijuana. In the few instances that a vendor has reported a racket coordinator to the police, officers have allowed them to go free in return for a bribe, after which the vendors were physically attacked and sometimes killed. As a member of the protection racket told one vendor: "Of course, you could call the police, but even if they show up, it's more likely that they work for us than that they'll work for you."[108]

Extreme resource scarcity leads informal vendors to engage in everyday resistance. They contest material domination by appealing to the asymmetry of power dynamics between them and the racket's members, echoing Scott's point that the "safest and most public form of political discourse is that which takes as its basis the flattering self-image of elites."[109] We can see this in the response from a vendor during a focus group when I asked what happens if a thief succeeds in stealing something in the market: "I tell them [the racket collectors] when they come by. I tell them: 'I waited for you but you didn't come. So I hit them [the thief] myself. If you don't collaborate and help, if you only come on Saturdays, then you're just coming to charge the money. . .."'[110] At that point, the racket's collector will normally agree to accept 1,000 Colombian pesos instead of the 2,000 that each vendor is typically charged.[111] This strategy does not question the authority of the racket. It instead reminds the dominant actor of their authority and associated responsibilities as a way to reduce the material tax.

Racket coordinators belittle vendors socially through public humiliation, purposely stepping on their merchandise and shoving the vendors at will. These practices underscore the unequal social status between the two actors, but vendors resist. As one vendor reflected: "I tell them that 'No. We are in the same situation. Working on the streets, out here where *nobody* cares about *either* of us. Both of us work hard to make a living, to feed our families and to survive. We are not that different.'"[112] Interviews and focus groups indicate that vendors rely on this discourse to reject the notion propagated

by the racket's members that they are socially worthless. One vendor noted how he urges the racket's members to not insult him:

> They [coordinators] abuse you verbally, especially if you show fear. They say, "Hey, you need to pay, you gonorrhea." But I tell them, "Well, this gonorrhea is making himself be respected, him and his business." That's when they learn not to insult, to show some respect when they come by to do their business.[113]

Racket members also actively question the idea that the vendors enjoy the rights of citizenship and instead stress that the racket is their only guarantor amid state abandonment.[114] Collectors flaunt their co-optation of the police and taunt the vendors to "Call the police! Call the police!" while beating them for late payments of the security tax.[115] Vendors interpret this as a strategy of subordination[116] and indirectly resist by making their citizenship visible to the racket's members. While working at the market, vendors will openly discuss their right to work as one guaranteed by Colombian Constitution. Vendors hold rallies at the market where they demand respect from the state and society, and they strategically engage in these activities on the very day that tribute to the racket is collected. One vendor indicated:

> They [the racket coordinators] tell us that we are trash, like what we sell. But we show them. We mobilize, we talk about rights, about the Constitution—our bible. We celebrate it while we work, talk about it, laugh about it, so that they hear us when they're coming to collect their money.[117]

In sum, this case shows that despite limited economic and political resources, firms can engage in a circumscribed, though nonetheless public, strategy of resistance against protection rackets.

Conclusion

In this article, I have developed a political economy framework focused on the availability of economic and political resources to analyze variation in forms of resistance to protection rackets. I illustrated the framework's utility through a micro-level comparative study of resistance. Analyzing resistance to protection rackets generates conceptual and analytical insights into the conflictive processes associated with broader institutional projects of extraction and domination.

Existing research on the state acknowledges that the balance of social forces is decisive in shaping the state, but "the full significance and implications" of this point have yet to be established.[118] Dialogue between the study of the state and crime can help in this regard. Unpacking how social forces contest institutional domination requires conceptual reengineering to move beyond the dichotomy of outright rebellion and subtle defiance. Disaggregating resistance along the lines of visibility and intent shows that resistance can assume both private and public forms, where public defiance is more costly given the higher resource requirements and risk of reprisal. This move

provides the conceptual language to identify other variants of resistance. Subordinates can publicly contest rackets by coordinating with coercive institutions in formal resistance, negotiate the terms of their subjugation directly with dominant actors through everyday resistance, establish armed groups to eliminate rackets via private vigilantism, or informally align with the state to support targeted state vigilantism.

Studies of state building make clear that compliance with the extractive demands of rulers is neither a given nor static.[119] Rulers use varied strategies to maintain power, such as building additional layers of extractive institutions[120] and saturating society with conservative symbols.[121] We need equally granular understandings of how and why social forces negotiate domination in distinct ways.[122] To this end, attention to resource endowments can help. Access to legal capital impacts the degree to which societal actors are dependent on rulers and/or can invest in alternative providers of security, and access to coercive institutions autonomous from the forces that seek to subjugate them can provide societal actors with a valuable ally. While testing the framework's full capacity requires studying additional cases, my analysis demonstrates that a focus on resource endowments can help to deepen our understanding of variation in resistance. The analysis joins with growing research on the ground-level determinants of social resistance to formal political rule.[123]

This article also suggests ways that the study of criminal politics can fruitfully engage theories and conceptual approaches in the study of the state. The emerging subnational focus within research on the state[124] rests on the premise that the state's reach is unevenly distributed across territory.[125] This insight should prompt scholars to sharpen their conceptualizations of criminal governance. Criminal rulers that oversee protection rackets in one territory can pursue sharply distinct institutional arrangements of order in other territorial settings. Explaining the construction of distinct orders by a single criminal organization requires balancing conventional conceptualizations of criminal organizations as unitary actors with more disaggregated approaches. Analogous to the advances in research on the state,[126] a disaggregated approach attuned to the distinct levels and actors within a single criminal apparatus can help us to explore how multiple interests align or conflict within criminal organizations to generate equally variegated consequences for order and governance.

The literature on the state can also contribute to the development of hypotheses that could account for variation in criminal topographies. The inability of criminal rulers to project power uniformly across territory may reflect limited institutional capacities.[127] Spatial variation in the extent of criminal rule could also reflect a strategic choice by rational criminal rulers who weigh the costs and benefits of establishing territorial control, including the accessibility of distinct geographies and the demographics of local populations.[128] Easier to reach territories that have higher concentrations of business activities reliant largely on cash transactions, for example, may generate rents that outweigh the costs of establishing and maintaining control relative to sparsely populated and comparatively less economically productive territories. Research along these and related lines will help to extend our understanding of the state and criminal politics.

NOTES

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1. Kimberly J. Morgan and Ann Shola Orloff, "Introduction: The Many Hands of the State," in Kimberly J. Morgan and Ann Shola Orloff, eds., *The Many Hands of the State: Theorizing Authority and Social Control* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 2.

2. Karen Barkey and Sunita Parikh, "Comparative Perspectives on the State," *Annual Review of Sociology,* 17 (August 1991), 524. The catalyst for this theoretical shift is the edited volume by Theda Skocpol, Peter Evans, and Dietrich Rueschemeyer, eds., *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

3. Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation," in Hans H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, eds., *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (Oxford University Press, [1946] 1958), 78.

4. A focus on violent conflict also challenges functionalist interpretations of state formation. See Miguel Angel Centeno, Atul Kohli, and Deborah Yashar, "Unpacking States in the Developing World: Capacity, Performance, and Politics," in Miguel Angel Centeno, Atul Kohli, and Deborah Yashar, eds., *States in the Developing World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 8–9. A classic work that exemplifies this approach is Charles Tilly, "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime," in Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, eds., *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge University Press, 1985).

5. "Se Unen en Juárez para Frenar Extorsiones," *El Universal*, Dec. 2, 2010. Available at: http://archivo.eluniversal.com.mx/notas/727499.html. Accessed on September 2, 2016.

6. Studies of resistance to Mafia-sponsored protection rackets in Southern Italy consist primarily of single case studies. See Peter T. Schneider and Jane Schneider, *Reversible Destiny: Mafia, Antimafia, and the Struggle for Palermo* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

7. Eduardo Moncada, "The Politics of Urban Violence: Challenges for Development in the Global South," *Studies in Comparative International Development,* 48 (September 2013), 217–39.

8. Stathis Kalyvas, "How Civil Wars Help Organized Crime—And How They Do Not," *Journal of Conflict Resolution,* 59 (June 2015), 1533.

9. Oxford Analytica, "Central America/Mexico: Extortion Threats Will Evolve," OxResearch Daily Brief Service, January 25, 2016.

10. Khalil Goga and Charles Goredema, "Cape Town's Protection Rackets: A Study of Violence and Control," Institute for Security Studies Paper 259 (August 2014). Available at: https://issafrica.s3.amazonaws.com/site/uploads/Paper259_IDRC.pdf. Accessed on July 13, 2017; Human Rights Watch. "Indonesia: Reform of Military Business," A Human Rights Watch Background Briefing (February 16, 2007). Available at: http://pantheon.hrw.org/legacy/english/docs/2007/02/16/indone15325.htm. Accessed on July 13, 2017.

11. "Miembros de 'Convivir' de Medellín Ganan un Millón de Pesos Mensuales," *El Tiempo,* Aug. 12, 2014. Available at: http://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/CMS-14369716. Accessed on July 14, 2017. Under-reporting of criminal taxation to the state means that this figure likely underestimates the true extent of the rents generated.

12. See, for example, Rachel Sabates-Wheeler and Philip Verwimp, "Extortion with Protection: Understanding the Effect of Rebel Taxation on Civilian Welfare in Burundi," *Journal of Conflict Resolution,* 58 (September 2014), 1476–77.

13. Diego Gambetta, *The Sicilian Mafia: The Business of Protection* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), 29.

14. Federico Varese, "Protection and Extortion," in Letizia Paoli, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Organized Crime,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 350.

15. Ibid., 350.

16. Volkov, 35.

17. Pseudonym.

18. Roughly $65 USD based on the 2015 average exchange rate.

19. Republica de Colombia. Sistema Acusatorio Penal, Distrito Judicial de Medellín. CUI 05 0016000715201500195. February 24, 2015.

20. Republica de Colombia. Sistema Acusatorio Penal, Distrito Judicial de Medellín. CUI 050016000000201400340. August 25, 2014.

21. Gambetta, 17.

22. Volkov, 2002.

23. Gambetta, Ch. 9.

24. Timothy Frye, "Private Protection in Russia and Poland," *American Journal of Political Science*, 46 (July 2002), 572.

25. Simon Johnson, Daniel Kaufmann, Andrei Shleifer, Marshall I. Goldman, and Martin L. Weitzman, "The Unofficial Economy in Transition," *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity*, 2 (1997), 160.

26. Explanations for why firms go underground focus on excessive taxation (Hernando De Soto, *The Other Path: The Invisible Revolution in the Third World* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1989) and rent-seeking behavior by the state (Anne O. Krueger, "The Political Economy of the Rent-seeking Society," *The American Economic Review*, 64 (June 1974), 291–303).

27. Wim Savenije, *Maras y Barras* (San Salvador: FLACSO El Salvador, 2009), 57–58. Though early manifestations of maras did provide neighborhood-level security.

28. José Miguel Cruz, "Central American Maras: From Youth Street Gangs to Transnational Protection Rackets," *Global Crime*, 11 (November 2010), 379–98.

29. Antonio Fuentes Díaz and Guillermo Paleta Pérez, "Violencia y Autodefensas Comunitarias en Michoacán, Mexico," *Iconos*, 53 (September 2015), 175.

30. Scholars of state formation also highlight this factor. See Miguel Angel Centeno, *Blood and Debt: War and the Nation-state in Latin America* (Penn State Press, 2002); Centeno et al., 12; Margaret Levi, *Of Rule and Revenue* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 12; 19–20; Joel S. Migdal, *Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988); and Tilly, 99–101.

31. Firms participating in demand-side rackets may rely on them as one among several security strategies, including the use of social relationships and legal institutions (Hendley et al., 629).

32. Levi, 12; Peter B. Evans, "Predatory, Developmental, and Other Apparatuses: A Comparative Political Economy Perspective on the Third World State," *Sociological Forum*, 4 (December 1989), 561–87. On state-sponsored rackets, see Richard Snyder and Angélica Durán-Martinez, "Does Illegality Breed Violence? Drug trafficking and State-sponsored Protection Rackets," *Crime, Law and Social Change*, 52 (September 2009), 253–73. On how rackets between states and gangs preserve exclusionary rule, see Ian Douglas Wilson, *The Politics of Protection Rackets in Post-New Order Indonesia: Coercive Capital, Authority and Street Politics* (London: Routledge, 2015).

33. Charles Tilly, 1985.

34. Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European states, AD 990–1990* (Oxford, 1992), 100; See also Barbara Geddes, *Politician's Dilemma: Building State Capacity in Latin America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

35. Levi, 12–22, and see Chapter 4 on quasi-voluntary compliance.

36. A touchstone for this perspective is Joel Samuel Migdal, Atul Kohli, and Vivienne Shue, eds., *State Power and Social Forces: Domination and Transformation in the Third World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). See especially Chapter 1 by Migdal, "The State in Society: An Approach to Struggles for Domination" (pp. 7–36).

37. Kathleen Thelen, *How Institutions Evolve: The Political Economy of Skills in Germany, Britain, the United States, and Japan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 23–31.

38. Catherine Boone, *Political Topographies of the African State: Territorial Authority and Institutional Choice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Centeno et al., 12.

39. Ana Arjona, "Wartime Institutions: A Research Agenda," *Journal of Conflict Resolution,* 58 (September 2014): 1360–89.

40. Ana Arjona, *Rebelocracy; Social Order in the Colombian Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017); Zachariah Cherian Mampilly, *Rebel Rulers: Insurgent Governance and Civilian Life during War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011).

41. Paul Staniland, "States, Insurgents, and Wartime Political Orders," *Perspectives on Politics,* 10 (June 2012), 243–64.

42. Levi, 19; Tilly, 1992, 100; 105; Boone, 20–23; Michael Bratton, "Peasant-State Relations in Post-colonial Africa: Patterns of Engagement and Disengagement," in Joel Samuel Migdal, Atul Kohli, and Vivienne Shue, eds., *State Power and Social Forces*: *Domination and Transformation in the Third World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 233–36.

43. Levi, 49; Tilly, 1992, 100.

44. The analytic approach here draws on James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), Chapter 1.

45. Scott 1990, 198–201.

46. Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia and China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

47. Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, "Greed and Grievance in Civil War," *Oxford Economic Papers*, 56 (October 2004), 563–95; Macartan Humphreys, "Natural Resources, Conflict, and Conflict Resolution: Uncovering the Mechanisms," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 49, (August 2005), 508–37; and Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

48. James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," *American Political Science Review,* 97 (February 2003), 75–90; Ashutosh Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life: Hindus and Muslims in India* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003).

49. Scott, 1990.

50. Ibid., 140.

51. For example, 6–8 informal vendors participated in each of the focus groups that I organized in Medellín. We held the sessions in a small hotel conference room far from the informal market where the vendors normally operated under the watch of the protection racket. Several participants thus expressed how "nice it was to talk openly" about their daily interactions with the rackets. Focus groups 1 and 2 with informal vendors, Medellín, Colombia, July 6, 2016.

52. In both Ciudad Juárez and Medellín businesses leveraged social media to engage in subversive resistance, including anonymously reporting protection racket activities via social media platforms.

53. Frye, 2002, 578.

54. Boone summarizes this point in her analysis of the ability of rural farming populations to resist political centralization coordinated between state authorities and local elites: "Heaven help the farmer who must also depend upon the landlord for credit." See Boone, 22.

55. World Bank Group, *Avoiding Crime in Latin America and the Caribbean* (Washington, DC: World Bank 2014), 2.

56. Eduardo Moncada, *Cities, Business and the Politics of Urban Violence in Latin America* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2016), 9.

57. Enrique Desmond Arias, *Criminal Enterprises and Governance in Latin America and the Caribbean* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017); Moncada, 2016.

58. Donald C. Mead and Carl Liedholm, "The Dynamics of Micro and Small Enterprises in Developing Countries," *World Development*, 26 (January 1998), 61–74; Donald R. Snodgrass and Tyler Biggs, *Industrialization and the Small Firm: Patterns and Policies* (Harvard Institute for International Development, 1996).

59. Andean Development Corporation, *Financial Services for Development: Promoting Access in Latin America* (Andean Development Corporation, 2011), 41–44; Arturo J. Galindo and Fabio Schiantarelli, eds., *Credit Constraints and Investment in Latin America* (Inter-American Development Bank, 2003); Miriam Schiffer and Beatrice Weder, *Firm Size and the Business Environment: Worldwide Survey Results* (World Bank Publications, 2001).

60. Hernando De Soto, *The Other Path* (Harper & Row, 1989). See also Alejandro Portes and Saskia Sassen-Koob, "Making it Underground: Comparative Material on the Informal Sector in Western Market Economies," *American Journal of Sociology*, 93 (July 1987), 30–61.

61. Norman V. Loayza, Luis Serven, and Naotaka Sugawara, *Informality in Latin America and the Caribbean* (Inter-American Development Bank, 2009), 2.

62. Caroline Moser, "Informal Sector or Petty Commodity Production," *World Development,* 6 (September-October 1978), 1041–64.

63. Mark Ungar, *Policing Democracy: Overcoming Obstacles to Citizen Security in Latin America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011).

64. Kent Eaton, "Paradoxes of Police Reform: Federalism, Parties, and Civil Society in Argentina's Public Security Crisis," *Latin American Research Review*, 43 (2008), 5–32.

65. John Bailey and Matthew M. Taylor, "Evade, Corrupt, or Confront? Organized Crime and the State in Brazil and Mexico," *Journal of Politics in Latin America,* 1 (2009), 3–29.

66. Boone, 4.

67. For a conceptual analysis of vigilantism, see Eduardo Moncada, "Varieties of Vigilantism: Conceptual Discord, Meaning and Strategies," *Global Crime,* 18 (September 2017), 403–23.

68. On the micro-level approach in the study of civil wars, see Stathis N. Kalyvas, "Promises and Pitfalls of an Emerging Research Program: The Microdynamics of Civil War," in Stathis N. Kalyvas, Ian Shapiro, and Tarek E. Masoud, eds., *Order, Conflict, and Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 397–98. Key examples of this approach include Kalyvas, 2006; Elisabeth J. Wood, *Insurgent Collective Action and Civil War in El Salvador* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); and Ashutosh Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life: Hindus and Muslims in India* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003).

69. Frye, 2002, 582. Recent studies tackle this challenge through varied methods, including surveys (Jordan Gans-Morse, "Threats to Property Rights in Russia," *Post-Soviet Affairs,* 28 (May 2013), 263–95; Kathryn Hendley, Peter Murrell, and Randi Ryterman, "Law, Relationships and Private Enforcement: Transactional Strategies of Russian Enterprises," *Europe-Asia Studies*, 52 (July 2000), 627–56; Frye, 2002), semi-structured interviews (Mark Shaw, "A Tale of Two Cities: Mafia Control, the Night Time Entertainment Economy and Drug Retail Markets in Johannesburg and Cape Town, 1985–2015," *Police Practice and Research*, 17 (April 2016), 353–63; Volkov, 2002), and process tracing (Gambetta, 1996; Varese, 2001).

70. "Incendios a Quienes no Pagan Extorsiones; Calcinan dos Negocios," *El Excelsior*, Aug. 31, 2011. Available at: http://www.excelsior.com.mx/2011/08/31/nacional/765044. Accessed on August 5, 2016.

71. Author interview with Avenida Lincoln restaurant business owner (CJ_9201), Ciudad Juárez, June 9, 2012.

72. Author interview with CJ_8901, El Paso, Texas, June 7, 2012.

73. Author interview with MDE_CJ15, Medellín, Colombia, June 29, 2016.

74. On the role of the private sector in the politics of urban violence, see Moncada, 2016.

75. Author interview with President of the PEJ (CJ331), Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, June 10, 2012.

76. "Estrategia Todos Somos Juárez," Presidencia de la República, Estados Unidos Mexicanos, March 17, 2010.

77. Author interview with President of the *Mesa de Seguridad*, CJ211, Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, July 11, 2012.

78. Author interview with CJ9109, Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, June 9, 2012.

79. The increased security that resulted from formal resistance fostered a rebirth of economic activity in the area evinced by the return of customers and the opening of new firms. See *Fronteras,* "Stirrings of Nightlife Return to Ciudad Juárez." Available at: http://www.fronterasdesk.org/content/stirrings-nightlife-return-ciudad-ju%C3%A1rez. Accessed on November 21, 2017.

80. "Aguacate, el Oro Verde los Templarios," *Expansión*, Mar. 19, 2014.

81. La Ruana, also known as Felipe Carrillo Puerto, is located in the Buenavista municipality.

82. Enrique Guerra Manzo, "Las Autodefensas de Michoacán: Movimiento Social, Paramilitarismo y Neocaciquismo," *Política y Cultura*, 44 (September 2015), 16.

83. "El Negocio del Limon en Michoacán," *El Economista,* Dec. 2, 2009.

84. *El Economista*, "El Limón de Apatzingán," Mar. 7, 2017

85. Beatriz Magaloni, *Voting for Autocracy: Hegemonic Party Survival and Its Demise in Mexico* (Cambridge University Press, 2006).

86. Kimberly Heinle, Cory Molzahn, and David A. Shirk, "Citizen Security in Michoacán," Briefing Paper (Washington, DC: Mexico Institute, Wilson Center, 2015), 8–9.

87. Hipolito Mora, television interview by Adela Micha, journalist, La Ruana, Mexico. January 16, 2014.

88. For an argument linking self-defense groups to inequality, see Brian Phillips, "Inequality and the Emergence of Vigilante Organizations," *Comparative Political Studies,* 50 (September 2017), 1358–89.

89. "Auxilio, ¿Dónde Está el Estado?" *NEXOS*, Apr. 1, 2014.

90. Hipolito Mora, television interview.

91. The degree to which this transfer of financing from the DTO-sponsored protection racket to the militia was voluntary remains unclear. "Gobierno Enfrenta al Monstruo que Creo en Michoacán," *Associated Press,* Jan. 16, 2014.

92. Daniel Brinks and Michael Coppedge, "Diffusion is No Illusion Neighbor Emulation in the Third Wave of Democracy," *Comparative Political Studies,* 39 (May 2006), 463–89.

93. "Auxilio, ¿Dónde Está el Estado?" *NEXOS,* Apr. 1, 2014.

94. Cruz, 2010.

95. "San Miguel: El Municipio con Más Homicidios y Extorsiones," *La Prensa Grafica,* Apr. 11, 2012.

96. "Policías Asesinados Este Año Duplican los Caídos en 2013," *La Prensa Grafica*, Oct. 23, 2014.

97. "Capturan en Oriente a Grupo de Exterminio de Pandilleros," *El Mundo,* Oct. 21, 2016.

98. "El Ganadero Sospechoso de Financiar al Grupo de Exterminio en San Miguel," *ElSalvador.com*, Jul. 25, 2016.
99. "La Sombra Negra," *El Faro*, Apr. 26, 2014.
100. "Yo Fui de la Sombra Negra," *La Pagina*, Feb. 9, 2010.
101. Author interview with Will Salgado, former mayor of San Miguel, El Salvador, June 14, 2017.
102. "Will Salgado Mantiene Alta Aprobación," *La Prensa Grafica*, Jan. 19, 2015. Available at: http://www.laprensagrafica.com/2015/01/19/will-salgado-mantiene-alta-aprobacion. Accessed on December 1, 2016.
103. Participant SS_FG1_01 in police focus group, San Miguel area, El Salvador, June 15, 2017.
104. Police focus group, San Miguel area, El Salvador, June 15, 2017.
105. "Así Mató el Grupo de Exterminio a Cuatro Personas en Una Cantina en la Playa El Cuco," *ElSalvador.com*, Jul. 25, 2016.
106. Author interview with informal vendor (IV_MDE_1630), Medellín, Colombia, July 6, 2016.
107. Member of focus group 1 (FG_MDE_2) informal vendors, Medellín, Colombia, July 6, 2016.
108. Author interview with informal vendor (IV_MDE_1010), Medellín, Colombia, July 1, 2016.
109. Scott, 1990, 18.
110. Focus group 1 participant (IV_MDE_911), Medellín, Colombia, July 6, 2016.
111. Based on the 2016 exchange rate, 2,000 Colombian pesos are approximately sixty-eight U.S. cents. This translates into the racket generating nearly 290 USD weekly or about 1,100 USD each month from this market alone.
112. Author interview with informal vendor (IV_MDE_899), Medellín, Colombia, July 6, 2016.
113. Focus group 1 participant (IV_MDE_911), Medellín, Colombia, July 6, 2016.
114. Author interview with informal vendor (IV_MDE_911), Medellín, Colombia, July 6, 2016.
115. Author observations at informal vendor market, Medellín, Colombia, July 1, 2016. Also confirmed as a common practice during focus groups with informal vendors.
116. Focus groups 1 and 2 (July 6, 2016) and 3 (March 8, 2017), Medellín, Colombia.
117. Author interview with informal vendor (IV_MDE_911), Medellín, Colombia, July 6, 2016.
118. Boone, xi.
119. Levi, 62.
120. Robert Bates, *Markets and States in Tropical Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981).
121. Lisa Wedeen, *Ambiguities of Domination: Politics, Rhetoric, and Symbols in Contemporary Syria* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015).
122. Boone, 6; Migdal, 1994, 14–16.
123. Kevin O'Brien and Lianjiang Li, *Rightful Resistance in China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Lily L. Tsai, "Constructive Noncompliance," *Comparative Politics*, 47 (April 2015), 253–79.
124. Hillel Soifer, "State Infrastructural Power: Approaches to Conceptualization and Measurement," *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 43 (December 2008), 231. See also Agustina Giraudy, Eduardo Moncada, and Richard Snyder, eds., *Inside Countries: Subnational Research in Comparative Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019).
125. The point of departure here is Guillermo O'Donnell, "On the State, Democratization and Some Conceptual Problems: A Latin American View with Glances at Some Postcommunist Countries," *World Development*, 21 (August 1993), 1355–69.
126. For an example of how attention to the multiple levels and interests within a state can shape political outcomes, see Jonathan Fox, *The Politics of Food in Mexico: State Power and Social Mobilization* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993).
127. Boone, 4–6.
128. Jeffrey Herbst, *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).