BOOK REVIEW

Fourchard, Laurent. *Trier, exclure et policer: vies urbaines en Afrique du Sud et au Nigeria*. Domaine gouvernances. Paris: Les Presses des Sciences Po, 2018.

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i.

By the end of the 1990's, theories of the World City and the Global City had become predominant in the analysis of urbanization. Scholars had embraced the "world city" as the most fundamental geographical unit of analysis (Friedmann 1986). Their research agenda rejected the national boundaries that seemed to enclose previous analyses of urbanization. To better understand the economic, demographic and sociocultural changes at the city level, it became necessary to "examine the many ways in which they articulate[d] with the broader currents of the world economy" (Timberlake 1985:3). Scholars set up rankings to categorize cities based on their degree of insertion into the world economic and financial networks. *The Global City*, Saskia Sassen's widely read study of New York, London and Tokyo enshrined the idea that the world economy rested on an archipelago of Global Cities defined as highly integrated control centers. Within the field of urban studies, these concepts and methods also faced vigorous criticism. Some scholars, notably from non-Western cities rejected the ethnocentric and developmentalist underpinnings of the World City and Global City approaches. These approaches, despite their global pretense, had failed to provide adequate analytic tools for examining most of the cities of the world, and carried misleading assumptions about the so-called Third-World cities. Geographer Jennifer Robison's landmark article "Global and World Cities: a View from Off the Map" articulated this critique and offered an alternative theoretical framework (Robinson 2002). Robinson, whose work focused on South Africa's cities encouraged researchers to develop inquiries of all cities as if they were *ordinary*. The "ordinary city" was not yet another ideal type, rather it offered a path for formulating questions outside of the rigid narratives of chaotic modernization and pathological urbanization. It was in this context of the emergence of a counter-research agenda on Africa's cities that historian and political scientist Laurent Fourchard began the empirical study that provides the material for *Trier, exclure, et policer : vies urbaines en Afrique du Sud et au Nigeria*.[1] This book marks the culmination of almost two

[1] in English: Sorting, Excluding, Policing: Urban Lives in South Africa and in Nigeria

decades of ethnographic and archival research in Lagos and Ibadan (Nigeria), and in Johannesburg, and Cape Town (South Africa). Every student of large metropoles will appreciate, and certainly take inspiration from, this very carefully designed comparative and historical project. *Trier, exclure, et policer* is also an important publication for scholars engaged or interested in "ordinary city" research because it suggests ways of crafting and conducting research that do not rely on ethnocentric binaries (i.e. developed/developing, modern/modernizing, informal/state-sanctioned) and hold space for temporal gaps, patchwork descriptions and unanswered questions.

ii.

Trier, Exclure, et Policer is a study of metropolitan governance in South Africa and Nigeria from the 1930's until the 2010's. To help us grasp the tensions shaping and shaking Lagos, Ibadan, Johannesburg, and Cape Town, Laurent Fourchard, Professor at the Center for International Studies (Sciences Po) traces the genealogies of the categories of inclusion and exclusion in and across these cities. Various governing bodies (national States, local governments, neighborhood watch organizations, unions) construct and actualize *categories* to govern a city, a neighborhood, a market, or a street. In other words, these categories determine who will be allowed in, and who will be incarcerated, who will be acknowledged as a rightful city dweller, and who will be denied rights and services. This creative methodological orientation allows the author to weave astutely in one book very diverse empirical threads: from the laws relative to rural migrants in South Africa, to the debates around juvenile carceral institutions, to the taxation of bus drivers in Lagos, to local officers asking questions about lineages and ancestors. Drawing from a Foucauldian understanding of power relationships, the author shows how the categories of population management have defined the boundaries of inclusion, exclusion and policing since the 1930's. The book is organized in three sections. The first section examines the policies of sorting at the metropolitan level. The second section studies policing from the vantage point of neighborhood-based organizations. The third section looks at the politics of classification and policing at the street-level. It is the argument of the book that examining the emergence of these tools of sorting and policing – as well as their contestation or lack thereof – allows for a sharper analysis of urban governance.

iii.

The first section centers on metropolitan governance in the decades 1930s-1950s. At the time, both Nigeria and South Africa were under the domination of the British Empire. Governing the population meant addressing a dilemma at the core of capitalist extractive regimes: how to recruit and discipline workers to exploit their labor, while circumventing resistance and uprisings? In the eyes of the colonizers, Nigerians and South Africans leaving the country to work in the metropoles represented a threat of political upheaval. This section argues that the authorities addressed this challenge through the development of a bureaucracy i.e. through the classification and sorting of the population. Following anthropologist James Scott, Laurent Fourchard shows how the policies of *making legible* (Scott 2008) were consubstantial to the policies of exclusion and oppression. The section begins with the policies barring rural migrants and non-natives from employment in the city. In the 1940's, South Africa was engaged in a vast enterprise of mapping of the urban population. The Black rural population migrating to the city was required to possess various certificates to be allowed to work. The negotiations between the local governments and the white employers determined the conditions of access and employment. In 1959, to tighten its grip over the urban population, the Department of Indigenous Affairs shifted its mandate from the country to the city. Highlighting the bureaucratization of governance allows Laurent Fourchard to re-interpret the landmark massacre of Sharpeville and the Langa March of 1960. Against the dominant narrative, he argues that the events were the outcome of the local struggles of female and migrant workers whose rights to reside and work in the city were at stake. Similarly, the author argues that the uprisings of 1953 in Kano, Nigeria were not the mark of inter-ethnic conflicts but a

reaction to British policies imposing stricter distinctions between natives and non-natives. In both cases, Laurent Fourchard refutes the thesis of spontaneous eruption of urban violence and insists on replacing these uprisings in the context of a governmental tightening over people's right to the city. This section also explores the policing of the urban youth. It unpacks the construction of the "dangerous youth" through an excavation of the debates that accompanied the penal reforms in both countries. In South Africa during the 1930's and 1940's, under the influence of Chicago School theorists, a series of racial laws constructed a subset of the youth as "dangerous" and "criminal." The 1937 law facilitated the placement of white children in rehabilitation programs, foster families, and psychometric medical centers, and the punishment of Black children. The author shows how partisans of rehabilitative justice gradually embraced coercive measures such as corporal punishment, forced labor and incarceration. In return, the mass incarceration of Black children led to the exposure of many young people to the violence of the jails which the author identifies as one of the factors behind the subsequent development of gang violence. In Nigeria after the 1945, the initial efforts to individualize and medicalize the judicial treatment of the "dangerous" young people led to the bureaucratization of social services. Soon after, however the system was confronted to a disciplinary backlash. The newly established bureaucracy facilitated a criminalization of behaviors, and whipping became widespread. In both countries, the emergence of instruments to classify and pathologize behaviors paved the ways for the later punitive turn. Laurent Fourchard mobilizes this history to argue that the violent state-sanctioned repression of the 1960's was not natural: it was the result of the long transformation of the 1930's rehabilitation programs into carceral and punitive institutions.

iv.

The second section of the book examines urban governance from the perspective of neighborhood-based organizations: neighborhood watches, night patrols, and vigilante groups. This section is rich in ethnographic vignettes and firsthand accounts. Particularly, we learn about what differentiates each group, their relations with local governments, their roles in local politics, their professionalization, and changing demographics. When these groups emerged during the colonial period, the British governors tolerated their activities, which were located primarily in poor neighborhoods. In Nigeria, members of these groups were authorized to carry weapons. In South Africa, they were allowed to use corporal punishment. However, whenever these groups appeared to be affiliated with adverse political parties, they faced restrictions, and some were outlawed. In the 1990's with the end of the military regime in Nigeria and the end of apartheid in South Africa, new legal frameworks regulated the practices of neighborhood watch and vigilantism. In South Africa, the state condemned the violent practices of pro-apartheid vigilante groups and invested in community policing to increase its control over the population. As previously in his work, Laurent Fourchard warns the readers against clear-cut and anachronic oppositions between vigilantism and community policing, pointing at the continuities and overlap between the practices (Fourchard 2011b, 2016). Both community policing and vigilante groups construct categories to exclude and oppress. At the neighborhood level, they identify and target the young people from the townships, the rural migrants who stayed in hostels, or the outsiders. In doing so, these organizations contribute to the construction of threats, in ways that are distinct but never totally disconnect from the policies enacted by the official metropolitan authorities.

v.

How does one grasp the contradictions of urban governance in Lagos and Ibadan since the end of the military regime? There is an ongoing debate between political commentators, especially in the case of Lagos. Some have emphasized the unresolved crisis of the infrastructure and the spread of corruption, while others praise Lagos as a model of good governance. The third section of the book offers to trouble this debate by looking at the inner workings of bus stations (known as motor parks), markets, and the local governments' offices. Laurent Fourchard examines the conflicts and negotiations arising in these settings as another entry

point to uncovering tools of exclusions and policing. In this section we learn that the distinction between state-sanctioned and informal policing is often irrelevant to grasp the dynamics of local governance. For instance, Alhaji Musiliu Akinsanya who was never elected nor appointed to run the market and the bus station of Oshodi, nevertheless considered himself to be "the state." The section narrates the personal trajectories of *big men* like Alhaji Musiliu Akinsanya and other governing agents like the union representatives to reflect their direct involvement in policy making and political patronage. These men coordinate tax collection, enforce security regulations, and sponsor protests ahead of elections. Laurent Fourchard details their role and encourages us to center political patronage in the analysis of urban governance. The last chapter interrogates practices of inclusion and exclusion through the study of certificates of indigeneity. Despite the large body of work on indigeneity in Nigeria, there remains few examinations of the nitty-gritty procedures of granting the certificates to applicants (Fourchard and Segatti 2015). Here, the author mobilizes strong evidence to document these procedures and argues that their bureaucratization has contributed to de-politicize indigeneity and to naturalize the discrimination between indigenous and non-indigenous. Conflicts can arise and the legitimacy of the granting procedures is sometimes questioned, but the very idea that society can be divided into competing categories remains mostly accepted.

vi.

Scholars of South African and Nigerian cities will welcome *Trier, exclure, et policer* for its rich empirical material and its critical engagement with the literature. What are the implications of this book for the study of urban governance outside of Nigeria and South Africa?

First, the book makes a convincing case for studying the rule-makers. This epistemological orientation – understanding societal norms by looking at those who construct and carry them, and not those who transgress them – has remained marginal in studies of social control and policing. To understand exclusion and policing, the book focuses on the institutions, vigilante groups, *big men*, and administrative staff in charge of setting the rules and boundaries. The book helps us understand better what a constructivist approach to security-making looks like – an orientation that was already central Laurent Fourchard's scholarship (see for instance Fourchard 2012, 2018). In this vein, the chapters on the dangerous youth and policing are to be place alongside Tony Platt or Geoff K Ward's remarkable studies of the construction of the U.S. juvenile justice system (Platt 1977; Ward 2012), or Alex Vitale's study of U.S. police reforms (Vitale 2017). From the offset of the book, Laurent Fourchard clearly states that his project is not to excavate the voices of the *subaltern other* (the young children, the migrant workers, etc) but to look at the policies that constructed them as threats. Does this approach negate the intellectual, ethical, political imperatives to take seriously mundane city dweller's daily practices and resourcefulness - what AbdouMaliq Simone and Edgar Pieterse call the "details of what residents do with each other" (Simone and Pieterse 2017:23)? Not at all. Instead, it is an frank acknowledgement of the author's contributions to the field that certainly speaks to what a French researcher in Africa's cities can and cannot do and know.

Second, the book shows the benefits of thinking *vertically* about urban governance. In other words, paying close attention to the relations between levels of governments (street, neighborhood, metropole, state) helps us to move behind blanket terms like "urban crisis", "informality", or "state formation." Yes, of course the *horizontal* relationships between the local *big men* controlling the Nigerian markets are important, but it is only through the analysis of their relations with the municipal office, the state governors that one can gain an accurate understanding of the governance of the market. In the case of the Nigerian markets, this helps to dispel the romanticized vision of self-governed autonomous spaces completely out of state control (see also Fourchard 2011a) and draws

that these markets are and draws a more sophisticated picture of informality (neither idealistic nor chaotic). Similarly, the relationships between the vigilante groups and the metropolitan and national government demonstrates that their activities are not a sign or a the product of state decline, nor the mark of neoliberalism. Instead focusing on their relationship (always contested, negotiated) shows how political institutions always shape and constrain initiatives for security at the community level (see also Bénit-Gbaffou, Fourchard, and Wafer 2012). Examining these relationships (against a vision of urban governance as a superposition of independent layers) to complexify our analysis of the production of violence, racial and gender difference, and security is an important teaching of this book.

Last, the book provides inspiration for crafting comparative urban studies. What purposes does it serve to bring Cape Town, Johannesburg, Ibadan and Lagos, which are all very different metropoles, together in one book? Drawing from his earlier work, Laurent Fourchard explains that the goal is not to highlight similar patterns across cities (Bekker and Fourchard 2013). Comparison in this book serves a heuristic function: it allows to formulate questions without falling into essentialist visions of the "colonial city" or "post-colonial city." Laurent Fourchard seems wary of scholars looking at metropoles in search of the material traces of global forces (capitalism, racialization, neoliberalism) and uses comparison as a safeguard against totalizing narratives. Therefore, it appears that the selection of cases in the book is primarily based on the availability and quality of empirical sources and avoids the pitfall of attempting to build parallels between cities. This comparative approach allows the book to cut across policy sectors: from housing to transportation to employment and across time periods – reader already familiar with Laurent Fourchard's work will recognize many of these case studies from previous publications. Perhaps because governance is composite and multifaced, *Trier, Exclure, Policer* is a complex book presenting an alternative to the existing accounts these metropoles bounded by historical landmarks (the independences, the end of the military regime, the end of apartheid) or looking for best practices.

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