Gilles FAVAREL-GARRIGUES et Laurent GAYER, *Fiers de punir. Le monde des justiciers hors-la-loi* (Paris, Le Seuil, 2021, 352 p.)

Over the past few years, Gilles Favarel-Garrigues and Laurent Gayer have led a seminar at Sciences Po on vigilantism—a term that describes civilians who take it upon themselves to maintain order outside of legal institutions. In *Fiers de punir* (Proud to Punish), they continue and expand their investigation by describing the full range of extrajudicial and "vigilante" penal practices. In so doing, they show that the penal field should not be conflated with penal institutions and policies.

Each of the book's six chapters focuses on a form of extrajudicial penal practice. The book's data draws on a large number of cases that provide a global overview of vigilantism, with a focus on the United States, Latin America, Russia, India, Pakistan, and the Philippines. As they rightly note, the authors' empirical vignettes are often based on press articles that are prone to sensationalism and denunciation. The book also uses secondary sources such as ethnographic work. Gilles Favarel-Garrigues and Laurent Gayer frequently link the practices they document to cultural representations—particularly cinematographic ones—and suggest that fiction sometimes fuels these practices.

The first chapter focuses on vigilantism, from the American vigilantes of the Western conquest to contemporary examples in India and other areas, such as pedophile hunters in Russia. Vigilantism is not the same as lynching; it is an organized activity that unfolds over time and generally involves a graduated penal response. This chapter shows how vigilantes constantly seek both validation from authorities and popular legitimization of their extrajudicial practices.

Chapter 2 focuses on mass lynching. From the examples of the United States in the early 20th century, an Indonesian village, and West African sex thieves in the early 2000s, Gilles Favarel-Garrigues and Laurent Gayer show that lynching follows a script wherein the fundamental elements of legal proceedings (accusation and judgment based on community consent) are present. "WhatsApp lynching" in India shows how social media has ushered in new ways of coordinating and disseminating lynching today.

Chapter 3 discusses civilian attacks on law enforcement using the case of the "Primorsky Partisans" in Russia's Vladivostok hinterland. The

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in-depth study of the Partisans shows how marginal forms of vigilantism spotlight social and political relations in the very remote periphery. The chapter also briefly discusses *copwatching* (filming police officers in action to report possible abuse) and *doxxing* police officers (revealing their identity or address on social media).

Chapter 4 focuses on "popular justice" and shows how revolutionary groups often have a low-cost and expedient conception of justice that is close to that of the vigilantes. Chapter 5 covers death squads in Colombia and Brazil who carry out "social cleansing" operations by killing marginalized people, drug dealers, and unemployed youth. This chapter is striking for the sheer number of people who are brutally murdered with the tacit consent of the authorities and a large part of the population.

Chapter 6 discusses extrajudicial actions by police officers, particularly in India, Pakistan, Brazil, and the Philippines. In these countries, police routinely and semi-publicly commit extrajudicial killings. In India, for example, when the press reports a chance "encounter" between police officers and criminals that unfortunately results in the latter's death, everyone knows that what actually occurred was an assassination. In Brazil and the Philippines, voters massively voted for police death squad candidates. Gilles Favarel-Garrigues and Laurent Gayer describe how these killer cops often turn to crime for profit.

The epilogue addresses vigilantism in France, which the authors consider to be rather limited. They could have mentioned several events worth examining, such as the racist attacks against Algerian immigrants in the Marseille area in 1973 (which probably resulted in dozens of deaths) or, more recently, incidents in Dijon in 2020 when 100-200 Chechens from all over France led a punitive expedition apparently motivated by the aggression of a Chechen man by local drug dealers; the events lasted three consecutive nights. The authors conclude that the greatest challenge facing the rule of law is not so much the vigilantes as the State itself, especially with the indefinite extension of provisions that were supposed to be deployed in exceptional circumstances only. In their chapter on attacks on police officers, Gilles Favarel-Garrigues and Laurent Gayer write, "Very rarely seen outside of civil war situations, attacks on law enforcement are the ultimate transgression" [134]. The book could have discussed the ambush of police officers in Viry-Châtillon in 2016 by a score of individuals who threw Molotov cocktails into a police car (four police officers were injured, including two who were seriously burned).

In their approach, the authors chose not to artificially structure this empirical abundance. The book does not contain graphs, diagrams, or

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tables of figures, and does not seek to provide a typology of the different forms of vigilantism. The authors do not propose a precise definition of the phenomenon they examine. On the upside, this approach encompasses a broad range of extrajudicial penal practices in many contexts. On the downside, in the absence of a definition limning the phenomenon, almost all forms of violence can be equated with a form of vigilantism or policing. Donald Black argues as much in his article "Crime as Social Control" (*American Sociological Review*, 1983): insofar as a significant share of what the law classifies as criminal violence is a matter of score settling, retaliation or punishment for perceived deviant behavior, crime can be considered a form of social control. The lack of a restrictive definition leads the reader to wonder why the authors have not mentioned honor killings, or the difference between lynching and pogroms, or the reason why death squads are not considered a form of vigilantism.

That these remarks call on the authors to say more and deepen their work shows how much food for thought this very rich book offers on an original, understudied, and important topic. It marks the birth of a new field in francophone penal studies.

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