

Routledge Studies in Crime and Justice in Asia and the Global South

SOUTHERNISING CRIMINOLOGY

CHALLENGES, HORIZONS AND PRAXIS

Edited by

Luiz Dal Santo and Carla Andrea Sepúlveda Penna

ROUTLEDGE


'Southernising Criminology is a three-part compendium of essays on theory, method and praxis, meticulously edited by Luiz Dal Santo and Carla Sepulveda. The authors do not shy away from the gargantuan challenges of democratising criminological knowledge that has privileged Northern-centric ways of thinking for more than a century. As the chapters illustrate this unfolding project is a plural and collectivist movement of multiples voices. The journey brings theory and praxis from the margins to the centre to bridge global divides in the pursuit of a more just and inclusive criminology and criminal justice systems around the world. *Southernising Criminology* is essential reading for students, activists, policy makers and scholars interested in the subject.'

—Kerry Carrington, *Adjunct Professor, School of Law and Society,
University of the Sunshine Coast*

'Southernising Criminology as a movement in contemporary criminology is too diverse and dynamic to be defined in a textbook or captured in an ordinary handbook but Santo and Sepulveda have organized a multi-generational and multinational group of leading and emerging scholars of comparative and critical criminology to provide the reader with the methodological and theoretical tools needed to join the discussion.'

—Jonathan Simon, *Lance Robbins Professor of Criminal Justice Law,
Center for the Study of Law & Society, UC Berkeley, School of Law*

'This is an urgent and important book. The editors have assembled an impressive range of scholars to interrogate the theoretical, methodological and political questions posed by the ambition to 'Southernize' criminology. It offers an invaluable resource for serious thinking about what it means to democratise criminological knowledge production.'

—Professor Ian Loader, *Director, Centre for Criminology,
University of Oxford*



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Southernising Criminology

This book introduces the ‘Southern criminology’ movement; explores its theoretical, methodological, and philosophical tools; offers analytical accounts on the development of criminological thoughts in marginalised regions; and showcases the cutting edge of criminological research from Southern settings.

Southernising Criminology is structured into three parts. The first part provides theoretical and methodological insights into how criminology can be Southernised, including renowned social scientists who share concerns for the need to reconceptualise the centre, the periphery, and their relations. The second part brings the reader up-to-date with the state of criminological research in different parts of the world and how far this landscape has changed when introducing Southern perspectives. The third part shows first-hand examples of how Southern criminology is done, with its challenges and transformative potential for criminological knowledge. Bringing together contributions from leading scholars working across the five continents and drawing on issues such as state criminality, violent crime, criminal justice practices, and state and non-state punishment, this book offers a critical account of the problems of metropolitan thinking, colonial and imperial power relations, and Western ethnocentric approaches to criminology. It offers a nuanced and grounded reflection on how things are being done differently and why that is important.

An accessible and compelling read, this book will appeal to students and scholars of criminology, sociology, politics, and policy makers from around the world who are interested in the field of criminology and are aware of the urgent need for it to be decolonised and democratised.

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and Carla Sepúlveda Penna

First published 2024
by Routledge
4 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge
605 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10158

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

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British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-032-39446-6 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-1-032-39447-3 (pbk)

ISBN: 978-1-003-34976-1 (ebk)

DOI: 10.4324/9781003349761

Typeset in Sabon
by Apex CoVantage, LLC

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Introduction

Carla Sepúlveda Penna and Luiz Dal Santo

*Yo diría que el Norte es el poder,
y el Sur es todo aquello que pelea contra lo injusto*
[‘I would say the North is the power,
and the South is all that fights against injustice’]

—Joan Manuel Serrat

The epigraph by this Catalan musician expresses one of the many forms in which North and South can be thought of as more than geographical locations. At the same time, it shows that they do not need to be seen as opposites, without denying that they are necessarily in asymmetric positions. This book shares that spirit.

This edited collection originates in the series of talks held at the Southernising Criminology Discussion Group at the University of Oxford. The speakers have been generous enough to transform their talks into written papers so that we can make them available to a wider audience. A few additional guests have been invited, in order to make this book a more comprehensive addition to the field.

‘Southernising criminology’ is a movement and a project. It is an invitation to expand the topics and methods used in the study of criminology and a call to create a joint programme where this research can flourish in the exchange of ideas. The Discussion Group contributed to that goal, and so does this book. As will become more apparent in the first chapter, the project of Southernising criminology does not, in our view, start nor end with any particular contribution. It entails not only a perspective but also some elements of a method and a form of dialogue, where every work becomes one utterance. The project continues elsewhere.

As a movement, Southernising criminology gathers scholars with common concerns and researching the periphery. Academics in different parts of the world feel part of the movement, and only a few could be invited to participate in this book. Also, we, as editors, have made an effort to invite some scholars who do not necessarily identify with the label, who we believe are

nevertheless directly or indirectly contributing to the project. All those interested in the debates here developed are welcome, even those with a critical view of the current form of this movement.

What is Southern criminology?

Southern criminology takes its name from the work of Kerry Carrington, Russel Hogg, and Máximo Sozzo. They coined the concept in an article published in 2016, using Raewyn Connell's contributions to the development of Southern theory. Connell's critique pointed at the mainstream theorisation in social sciences as one that posed as universal but was indeed very much centred on the approaches and problems of the North. Carrington, Hogg, and Sozzo applied this critique to the state of criminology and identified a set of assumptions developed within the framework of metropolitan thinking that deviate from the realities of the South.

Three significant themes arise out of the Southern criminological literature. One is a concern with global production and distribution of knowledge. The second is an effort to highlight the different topics and realities present in the Global South. The third is the analysis of the interconnectedness, in both historical and more contemporary terms, between the core and the peripheries, and how these relations have affected trends and patterns of crime, violence, punishment, exploitation, subordination, and inequality. This book addresses these three areas.

The first concern is not at all new – neither in the wider social sciences nor in criminology – but has been deepened and better explored in the past decade. The Global South was identified at best as a data mine, and it had been relegated to a marginalised position in terms of the development of knowledge. This is why Southern criminologists often call for the decolonisation and democratisation of knowledge production and dissemination. Differently from some other important efforts and projects to overcome the Northern-centric approach of criminology and to democratise knowledge production, the project of Southernising criminology does not deem knowledge produced in the North as automatically useless and invalid. However, in order to dialogue with it, it does require an essential critical engagement and awareness.

The second theme has generated an engagement with contents such as the foundations and build-up of the state, the concept of empire, the political economy, and the relations of inequality in different domains. States that move between authoritarianism and powerlessness, imperial power that lasts way beyond independence movements, international division of labour in a global capitalism and relations of dependency and subordination between the core and the peripheries, and inequalities based on characteristics aided by histories of foreign domination and internal stratification should not be approached and analysed from the same premises and perspectives usually

assumed from Global North. All these – and other – elements, powers, and relations impact in types of criminality, processes of criminalisation, and formal and informal social mechanisms of control, which have been the focus of attention of the Southernising criminology project. The variety of topics covered so far and those to come make this an open-ended project, as many have pointed out.

The third theme introduces the concepts of core and peripheries in interaction. This leads to a heavy emphasis on the idea that imperialism and colonialism have determined the practices of punishment and the dynamics of crime but also the notion that within the peripheries there are yet again metropolises and peripheries, such as the urban and the rural. The first idea is exemplified in the imposition of criminal justice systems through colonial rule and the inheritance of those systems in postcolonial societies. An example of the second is the relative positions occupied by different geographical areas in drug markets: their differing effects on violence rates, the gender of those involved in these markets, and the policy response (be it through militarisation, criminalisation, or public health approaches) to the phenomenon of drug markets and consumption. The interactions between core and periphery are dynamic and historically determined. They are relations of power that impact the object of study of criminology.

More on the movement and project of Southernising criminology is discussed in the first chapter by Dal Santo and Sepúlveda.

The aim of the book

The book aims to expand criminology's horizons and raise awareness of distinct patterns of crime, justice, and punishment experienced in peripheral countries and regions. It also aims to explore key contemporary criminological debates around the world, providing tools to reconceptualise the centre, the periphery, and their relations. Moreover, it intends to shed light on the unequal relations of power and knowledge production between the Global South and North and its effects on contemporary criminological knowledge. In so doing, the book expects to meet students' and academics' growing demands for decolonised and Southernised social sciences, reflecting on a more democratic, representative, and plural academia.

Contributions in the book are unanimously critical of the problems of metropolitan thinking, colonial and imperial power relations, and Western ethnocentric approaches to criminology. However, they do not rest there. They offer a nuanced and grounded reflection on how things are being done differently and why that is important for everyone. They explore state criminality, violent crime, criminal justice practices, transitional justice, and punishment from Southern perspectives, whilst challenging assumptions that have been adopted from a Northern perspective, sometimes uncritically.

The limitations

We would have been the most enthusiastic proponents of having a much more extensive collection with possibly all those who presented at the Southernising Criminology Discussion Group at the University of Oxford in its first two years, in addition to several guest writers. However, space limitations and agenda clashes restricted both the number of papers we could include and some speakers' capacity to deliver a written piece. In addition, some of the seminars delivered have already been published elsewhere, and so are not included in this edited volume. In any case, the resulting collection is most satisfactory in showing the breadth and depth of those discussions. The experience of the Discussion Group also allowed authors to revise their papers and include further reflections on their talks.

The thematic and geographical extent of the contributions is inevitably restricted. We have attempted to offer a balanced product, further developing the knowledge in regions and topics where the study with Southern lenses has picked up the pace and integrating some new ones. Certainly, this is an incomplete picture of the world and of criminological issues. As stated earlier, for different reasons we were not able to include all pieces we had originally planned and attempted to, which would have made this collection more diverse, representative, and complementary. For example, a number of contributions from regions such as Eastern Europe, the Balkans, Central and South Asia, and the Middle East were part of the seminar series but are not present in the book. We hope that future publications will complement and further develop this enterprise.

The content of the book

The book is divided into three parts, which organise its 12 chapters. The first part provides theoretical and methodological insights into how criminology can be Southernised, including chapters by some who have proposed the conceptual basis for the movement and renowned social scientists who share concerns for the need to reconceptualise the centre, the periphery, and their relations. The second part brings the reader up-to-date with the state of criminological research in different parts of the world and how far this landscape has changed when introducing Southern perspectives. The third part shows first-hand examples of how Southern criminology is done, with its challenges and transformative potential for criminological knowledge.

The first part is a contribution to the conceptual toolbox of Southern criminologists. The first chapter (Dal Santo and Sepúlveda) provides a general overview of the project of Southernising criminology. It situates the debate in relation to several other neighbouring and complementary projects, touches upon some of Southern criminology's current limitations, and further advances some of its yet-to-be-developed elements. The concepts of imperialism

and the different stages in the development of capitalism (see Callinicos and Zaffaroni), a proposal for social sciences at a global scale (Connell), and some methodological difficulties of comparative criminal justice more generally (see Nelken) are the objects of the following four pieces. The discussions that these papers generated among the participants of the Southernising Criminology Discussion Group revealed how crucial such issues can be for the project and, thus, why it made sense to include them in this volume. The contribution of these chapters is to serve as additional tools to those already integrated into the vocabulary of Southernising criminology, such as the ideas of Orientalism and epistemicide. The fact that these chapters utilise concepts and methods that are not part of the canonical criminological toolkit shows that there is room for growth in our discipline.

We hope that these contributions will be useful to all those who believe that criminology is not a closed area of knowledge but that it is still very much alive in its interaction with other social sciences. For this reason, the collection includes three chapters that may seem to divert from the field of criminology as more traditionally set. The pieces by Connell and Callinicos speak about knowledge production and other power relations. Nelken's piece encompasses problems that are framed as relevant for comparative work in various disciplines. Still, these three chapters provide us with analytical and conceptual resources, whilst opening a series of questions useful for Southernising criminology

To what extent can we expect that criminology will be able to introduce the problems and contexts of the Global South if the economy of knowledge production will continue to push for a pyramidal epistemology, and scholars in and from the Global South will sometimes promote a mosaic epistemology? In addition to her original relevance in developing the conceptual basis for Southern theory, Connell's recent contributions continue to highlight relevant concerns for criminology. Advances in the positioning of criminological knowledge created from and about the South may be seen as softening the slope of the pyramidal epistemology, but they are far from neutralising it. More problematic – as illustrated in the first chapter of this book by Dal Santo and Sepúlveda – is the potential creation of a mosaic epistemology and the fragmentation and even competition of a multiplicity of 'criminologies', which result in making them all less visible and impactful. For this reason, Connell's narration of previous experiences and her theorisation of the challenges in the social sciences more generally are applicable in particular to those who want to advance a way of doing criminology that is constructive yet (to put it in the words used by Esparza in her chapter) subversive.

How can a deeper concept of race in postcolonial contexts be integrated into the criminological theorisation of crime and punishment? What is the relationship between dominant classes and racism, and how do these impact crime, criminal justice, and punishment? The impact of political economy and class analysis in criminology is already established. The analysis of the

relationships between global capitalism and racial oppression, as offered by Callinicos, adds another layer to Southern criminology. The discussion on the relations between racism and capitalism, and on the historical evolution of imperialism, may well be helpful to better understand two of the nodes that distinguish Southern from metropolitan criminology: the position of indigenous populations and the inequalities under which they suffer and the position of migrants and refugees moving across the globe. Way beyond discrimination (which is not necessarily an exclusive approach of more critical and radical perspectives) and even beyond over-representation (an idea already addressed in the literature), the phenomenon of social and economic subordination impacts the position of indigenous and migrating people within the criminal justice, be it as crime victims or as subject to the control of criminal justice. In a similar way, the position of other racialised minorities (and majorities) in the crime and punishment spectrum is not yet sufficiently developed. Crucially for Southernising criminology is to consider that the subordinated position also defines the neglect of indigenous knowledge and practices. These have all been emerging topics in recent years, and Callinicos' chapter provides us with important tools to further advance the understanding of these issues.

Do the indicators used to assess 'progress' in criminal justice flatten the discussion around what are the aims that should be pursued and who is achieving them best? Nelken's chapter shows how inadequate some of these indicators are to identify what is relevant in terms of improving the situation of the criminal justice, and how decision-makers around the world might not want to blindly pursue a better positioning in indicators. First, these indicators may be criticised in themselves. But even if one sees some value in having and using them, one of Nelken's examples might suffice here to show how closer inspection is needed if standardised indicators are to be significant to a criminology that understands global challenges. The received narrative of worse indicators in the Global South in terms of respect for the rule of law might be masking the current trajectories in which these are moving; in fact, it seems that a relevant part of the Global South is *improving*, while a significant part of the Global North is *worsening* their performance here. The impacts on criminal justice of these realisations need to be further studied.

The second part of the book contains some highly detailed pieces on the state of criminological research in East Asia (Liu, Yu and Zhang), a pressing call for attention on topics relevant to the African continent (Agozino), and an ever more complex picture of criminology in Arab countries (Ouassini and Ouassini). Important books have recently been published covering certain regions' realities (see references in Dal Santo and Sepúlveda in the first chapter of this volume, for Latin American, Asian, Arab, Caribbean, African, and Pacific criminology). The chapters contained here provide some synthesis and also expose some of the remaining challenges, both content-wise and in terms of academic development in these regions. In the process of doing this,

the chapters also reflect on what it means to do Southern criminology, what has been done towards developing the concepts and areas of concern that are shared with the Global South and how their regions fit into the category of the South. They are, thus, significantly different from the contents of those other publications, and they are highly critical of the situation of criminology in their respective regions. At the same time, they are very diverse among each other, using different approaches and focusing on diverse issues, some more based on the areas neglected by criminology, others more concerned with a formal analysis of academic activity. It was a conscious decision of the editors not to distribute a questionnaire to the contributors. Part of the richness of this book is that each one of them can express, in their desired way and from their original perspective, how they see criminology in their region evolving.

Regional studies on criminology face one critical challenge, in that they may describe their own regions or other parts of the world in an overly simplified manner, appealing to generalisations or even stereotypes about the state of the discipline in different corners of the world. As Ouassini and Ouassini remind us, the problem goes two ways: Orientalism and Occidentalism are two forms of the same problematic approach to academia. For this reason, it is particularly important to highlight the efforts made by these three chapters in providing faithful accounts of their object of study and how counterpoints with other regions work. Liu, Yu, and Zhang use the term 'Western' to label academic ideas grounded and developed in Europe and the USA. They do not imply that these theories are valid across or throughout the West but only that they have originated there and that the conditions of reproduction of knowledge have granted them a privileged position which makes them influential in Asia (more so in some countries than in others, as they highlight). Agozino, on the other hand, is chiefly concerned with the Westernised tendencies within those students of Southern criminology. To not simplify the realities of the West or of Africa, he highlights specific criminological problems present in specific contexts. The tension, nevertheless, is patent and all Southern criminologists do well in remembering this dangerous pitfall.

The third part of the book covers research from the periphery. Ranging from Guatemala and Morocco (Esparza), Kenya (Wegh Weiss), Nigeria (Nwalozie), to Brazil (Dieter & Gomes), these examples of current research cut across geographies as well as methodologies. The first employs mostly archival and ethnographic work to uncover hidden logic in the use of indigenous peoples by the armed forces of the colonisers. The second is based on interviews, bringing the victims' voices to the foreground of the discussions on transitional justice. The third uses native language to better understand a specific form of criminality, engaging with established criminological thought whilst also addressing its limitations. The fourth is theoretical in nature and enquires how the canonical criminological thought on the relations between economy and punishment produced from core Western countries

can dialogue with other realities, not limiting their scope either to the core or to the periphery. In their diversity, these pieces of research show how some of the traditional challenges posed by Southern criminology can be overcome. For example, they question coloniality and racism inside their local settings and look at the insufficiencies in previous theorisation of the issues they discuss. They offer fresh criminological knowledge about previously understudied topics. Their diverse methodological approaches are proof of the non-dogmatic approach in Southernising criminology; it can be done in so many ways, as far as intellectual rigour is achieved. Importantly, all these four chapters also emphasise further challenges for Southernising criminology, enabling internal criticism and recognising that much remains to be done in the field.

Some tropes appear in more than one piece and across sections of the book, showing the great affinity that exists between the chapters. For example, Zaffaroni and Esparza deal with genocide. The former complains about the lack of incorporation of other social sciences in order to analyse the phenomenon, the latter uses history precisely to better understand state crime and mass violations of human rights. The concern for human rights is also present in Vegh Weis' piece, where she deals both with the problematic state response and with non-governmental intervention. On the subject of 'common criminality', Nwalozie uses linguistics to better understand the social relations underlying some forms of robbery, which probably at least in some cases correspond to what Zaffaroni calls the 'crimes of survival'. Vegh Weis deals with victims and Nwalozie with offenders, but both highlight characteristics of their marginalised positions, expressed in their access to a voice, including factors such as their low incomes, their literacy skills, and gender inequalities.

David Nelken addresses the issues and challenges for comparative criminology, while Zaffaroni highlights its role in overcoming the late-colonial reciprocal ignorance among the South. More specifically, Ouassini and Ouassini point out the need for an egalitarian dialogue in Southern comparative scholarship, an expression of what Connell calls a direct South-South linkage. Zaffaroni, Connell, and Dal Santo and Sepúlveda pay homage to early developments in criminology and the social sciences that predated what now is called Southern criminology.

There are further points of contact and dialogues between chapters. Connell and Liu, Yu, and Zhang speak about the challenges of doing academic work and the economy of knowledge production in and from the Global South. Ouassini and Ouassini; Agozino; and Liu, Yu, and Zhang highlight the divergences in terms of topics of interest to Southern realities as well as the topical gaps emerging from the adoption of Northern-centric biases.

All these links show in practice how Southernising criminology can be done, interweaving theories, methods, and data in ways that more faithfully reflect reality.

In addition to individual and more specific contributions from each of the chapters, there are a number of relevant lessons we can take from this book as a whole. For example, it shows us that there are plenty of significant theoretical developments from the wider social sciences that have not been included in the debates within the field of criminology, and also it shows why they should be. The book also demonstrates that there is no ‘recipe’ to Southernise criminology: some scholars do it by defining their research objects, trying to understand how the interconnectedness of the world affects issues on crime and violence in peripheral regions; some engage with the literature produced in and from the North, but do so whilst identifying the limitations of certain criminological canons; others do so by more directly theorising from the South. As well as raising awareness of issues and voices relevant to the South, this book is also a contribution in fostering South-South dialogues: often scholars from the South are unaware of the realities and scholarly work being developed in other regions in the South, despite being up-to-date with criminological trends, topics, and scholarships from the North. Here a South-South conversation is made possible.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Lucy Harry for her work as co-founder and co-convenor of the Southernising Criminology Discussion Group, Julian Roberts and Samuel Singler for their insights regarding this book, and the Oxford Centre for Criminology and the Global Criminal Justice Hub for housing this project. A final word of thanks is for all those who joined the seminars and who participated in the discussions, whose active engagement was the motivating factor for producing this collection.



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Part I

Theoretical, methodological,
and philosophical issues,
challenges, and possibilities



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Pressing questions, Southern answers

On Southernising criminology

Luiz Dal Santo and Carla Sepúlveda Penna

Introduction

‘Southernising criminology’ is a movement that has increasingly been spread across the globe. Since the publication of ‘Southern Criminology’, by Kerry Carrington, Russell Hogg, and Maximo Sozzo, in the *British Journal of Criminology* in 2016 (Carrington et al., 2016), some attention and space have been given to this matter. Scholars from different perspectives and backgrounds have acknowledged its traction and potential, referring to this movement as an ‘increasingly influential school’ (Anthony et al., 2021) and as ‘probably the most significant theoretical development in the recent period’ (Matthews, 2017: 581). As we will see in more detail throughout this chapter, the growing interest in this field is reflected in the foundation and establishment of several discussion groups and networks; the organisation of international conferences, workshops, and seminars; and the publication of books series, edited volumes, special issues, articles, and so on.

If the rise of Southernising criminology has been relatively widely and positively welcomed in the field of criminology, this does not mean this movement has not been scrutinised, problematised, and critically assessed. Some years ago, Leon Moosavi (2019a) correctly highlighted that one of the issues with Southern criminology was that it had not been properly interrogated. This is no longer the case. We can even see criticisms going in quite opposite directions. Some critiques have a more friendly and constructive tone, whilst others have a more conflictive and oppositional connotation. Criticisms have been made on different grounds: from its premises and research object to its methods, aims, and outcomes. Another issue that has often appeared in this debate on Southernising criminology is on a more terminological aspect, with some confusion on how exactly it differs from other critical (e.g., Postcolonial, Indigenous, Counter-colonial criminology) and more international (e.g., Global, Transnational, Comparative, International) perspectives.

This chapter deals with all these issues in an attempt to clarify some points that are still nebulous and to further elaborate this scholarship. For these purposes, the chapter is structured as follows. First, we provide a brief overview

on what Southernising criminology is and how it relates to other similar projects. Then, we engage more deeply with two significant aspects that have generated some debates: its (i) epistemological premises and (ii) possibilities, which then entail aspects such as conceptual resources, analytical tools, and pragmatic opportunities to Southernise criminology. Despite overlapping at some points, these topics have been divided in order to allow us to further develop clearer and more solid basis for Southernising criminology, whilst addressing some pressing questions. In so doing, we identify and reinforce some further challenges and highlight some potentialities of and possible horizons for Southernising criminology.

Southernising criminology: one among other criminological projects

Southernising criminology is a movement that has been labelled as such since the publication of a journal article titled ‘Southern Criminology’ (Carrington et al., 2016). On that occasion, its co-authors defined Southern criminology as a political, theoretical, and empirical project whose purpose is to ‘decolonize and democratize the toolbox of available criminological concepts, theories, and methods’ (Carrington et al., 2016: 1). Since then, and responding to some points and criticisms (e.g., Cunneen, 2018; Brown, 2018; Dimou, 2021; Blagg and Anthony, 2019; Moosavi, 2019a), several other pieces have been published to advance this project (e.g., Carrington et al., 2018, 2019a, 2019b; Ciocchini and Greener, 2021; Goyes, 2019; Goyes et al., 2021; Brown, 2021). Southernising criminology also aims to expand criminology’s gaze and horizons, to better understand historical and contemporary connections between the core and the peripheries, and to comprehend how these relations influence trends and patterns of crime, violence, punishment, and other criminological subjects. It does so by bringing certain concepts, categories, events, powers, and relations to the centre of the analyses and debates. This includes, for example, inserting empire and colonialism into criminological analyses. Finally, it also aims to promote knowledge and voices that have been unknown or neglected.

Although the term ‘Southern criminology’ is still widely used, the expression ‘Southernising criminology’ has been increasingly employed to highlight this movement as an open-ended, ongoing project, rather than a subfield of criminology (Carrington et al., 2019a, 2019b). Broadly speaking, Southernising criminology can be defined as a plural, collective movement or journey towards the decolonisation of criminology, which also means this collective movement has no owner or single voice (Goyes, 2019; Carrington, 2021; Moosavi, 2019a). It must be emphasised that Southernising criminology is one among other efforts and projects to overcome the Northern-centric approach of criminology and to democratise knowledge production (Goyes, 2019; Goyes et al., 2021; Aliverti et al., 2021; Carrington, 2021). All these

elements are further explored throughout the chapter but, for now, they provide a reasonable summary of what constitutes Southernising criminology.

From all these features and elements, one may genuinely ask what makes Southernising criminology different from what has been framed under similar labels. One can see calls for the decolonisation of criminology attached to names other than ‘Southernising criminology’. When it comes to critiques of Western-centric approaches in criminology, examples could be found in more recent terms such as ‘decolonising criminology’ (Blagg and Anthony, 2019; Moosavi, 2019b), Counter-colonial criminology (Agozino, 2003; Kitossa, 2012), Postcolonial criminology (Cunneen, 2011; Medina, 2011; Oriola, 2006), and Indigenous criminology (Cunneen and Tauri, 2016). Examples are also found on much earlier works (e.g., Sumner, 1982; Cohen, 1988; Del Olmo, 1981; Castro, 1987; Huggins, 1985; Zaffaroni, 1988; Cain, 2000; Boehringer and Giles, 1977) and on more contemporary works that have not engaged with any of the aforementioned labels (e.g., Lee and Laidler, 2013; Codino, 2015; Bosworth and Flavin, 2007). When it comes to looking more widely at different countries and regions, in addition to these previous terms, one could also think of International (Smith et al., 2011, França, 2021), Global (Van Swaaningen, 2011; Friedrichs, 2011; Karstedt, 2001; Aas, 2010), Transnational (Bowling, 2011; Sheptycki and Wardak, 2005), and Comparative criminology (Szabo, 1975; Nelken, 2010; Light and Singh, 2022). One could also think of efforts to establish more regional criminologies, such as Latin American (Castro, 1987; Olmo, 1981; Zaffaroni, 1988; Andrade, 2012), Asian (Liu, 2009; Liu et al., 2013a; Belknap, 2016), Arab (Ouassini and Ouassini, this volume), Caribbean (Pryce, 1976; Cain, 1996; Wallace, 2020), African (Igbinovia, 1989; Agozino et al., 2021; Olutola, 2014), and Pacific criminology (Braithwaite, 2013; Forsyth et al., 2020).

At first glance, all these brands and labels may seem too similar. Are they different enough to make a more careful analysis of their similarities and differences worthwhile? Our aim is not to meticulously untangle each of these brands nor to claim they should be disconnected or from each other. Although problems of an increasing fragmentation in the field of criminology have already been noticed (Bosworth and Hoyle, 2011; Sparks and Loader, 2012; Bruinsma, 2016; Moosavi, 2019a), a series of problems can emerge from taking all these movements and perspectives as essentially the same. Four cases illustrate this well. The first and maybe main thing to consider is what seems to be an ‘internal’ struggle in the field, in which scholars from other critical branches or perspectives have identified themselves as ‘opposed’ and ‘contesting’ voices. For example, in their book titled *Decolonising Criminology*, Blagg and Anthony (2019: 6) claim to ‘adopt a sceptical stance about the purposes of the “Southern turn” in criminology’, which has been considered by them ‘a defensive reflex, designed to exonerate Anglo-spheric theory from complicity in epistemic violence’. Second, and in a different tone from the previous example, some scholars (e.g., Brown, 2018; Cunneen, 2018) have

warned that for Southern criminology to thrive, it should not be a mere variant of comparative and transnational criminology. Third, Kerry Carrington et al. (2019a) have claimed that ‘the southernising of criminology is one step in the journey toward the development of a robust transnational criminology . . .’, which may sound contrary to the previous point presented.¹ Fourth, Dimou (2021) sustains that, although Carrington et al. position themselves against decolonial perspectives when elaborating Southern criminology, the authors actually draw on decolonial perspectives, mistakenly referring to them as postcolonial perspectives. In different ways, these four cases show us clarification is needed in this field. Clarification here may help us understand why there has been some sort of dispute over labels, and what premises and goals these projects have, so their methods and claims can be assessed even within their own coherency. This exercise should prevent criticisms that are actually based on wrong assumptions. For this purpose, all these expressions and brands need to be at least a little bit unpacked – something that has not yet been done in a more direct way within these debates.

Before we proceed with some definitions and differentiations between these terms, some caveats must be made. First, a more confrontational stance as in the first case pointed in the previous paragraph does not represent the usual relations among scholars from these critical approaches for the decolonisation of criminology. Second, and relating to the previous point, some of these terms have been used quite interchangeably in the field, when not used in a complementary manner. For example, Tauri and Deckert (2014) edited a special issue titled ‘Indigenous Perspectives and Counter-Colonial Criminology’; Cavalcanti et al. (2023) edited a book titled *Southern and Postcolonial Perspectives on Policing, Security and Social Order*; ‘decolonise’ and ‘Southernise’, ‘Northern’ and ‘Western’, ‘postcolonial’ and ‘counter-colonial’ or ‘decolonial’ and ‘Southern’ have sometimes been used as sort of synonyms (e.g., Cunneen, 2018; Moosavi, 2020; Carrington et al., 2019b; Esparza, this volume).² Third, and as mentioned earlier, none of these movements have ‘owners’ – they have been developed collectively by several scholars.³ For this reason, none of these movements should be considered a perfect unit, free of variation, differences, and contradictions. Any attempt to define them as such would surely caricature them and be reductionist. Finally, and possibly related to the previous point, scholars hardly ever provide an accurate, direct, and clear definition of the movement with which they identify. Our intention is not to engage in a dispute over labels, nor to claim there are better or more adequate projects, but to allow a better and clearer understanding of the ways such criminological projects approach and depart from each other, especially in relation to the Southernising criminology movement.

Let us start with criminological perspectives that openly challenge Western centrism, having the decolonisation of criminology as its main goal. In 2003, Biko Agozino started building what he frames as a ‘Counter-colonial’ criminology. Counter-colonial criminology works as a ‘critique of imperialist

reason', consisting of a 'transdisciplinary theoretical-methodological intervention towards theories and methods for the decolonisation of the imperialist reason in criminology' (Agozino, 2003: 1). It claims Western criminology has genealogical links with colonialism and, as a consequence of its imperialist reason, it has focused 'almost exclusively upon the actions of lawbreaking individuals, while turning a blind eye to the mass terrorism imposed upon innocent people by slavery, colonialism, and their continuing legacies' (Pfohl, 2003: xii; see also Deckert, 2014; Kitossa, 2012). In response, Counter-colonial criminology works in the opposite direction, not only inserting those elements in the study of criminology but making them its core elements. This leads to a significant change in criminology's research object. Another important issue exposed by Biko Agozino is the fact that even the colonised have reproduced and/or been silent on the imperialist reason. Consequently, criminology in postcolonial regions had remained relatively underdeveloped, mostly relying on uncritical adoptions of the imperialist reason. Finally, another key element of Counter-colonial criminology is the fact it refuses 'extreme cultural relativism', being actually for an 'exchange of knowledge' (Agozino, 2003: 246). Agozino works with an idea of possible committed objectivity, rejecting both 'value-neutral objectivity' and the use of 'identity' or 'experience' as criteria that either reject any notions of truth or, on the contrary, work as the only criteria that grant access to truth. Illustrating this position, Agozino (2019: 22) argues that 'the decolonization paradigm does not require DNA tests of authenticity before progressive scholars could make contributions in support of decolonization', a statement with which we entirely agree. On the basis of these epistemological premises and political commitments, we cannot find a more significant difference or incompatibility between what has been framed as 'Counter-colonial' and 'Southernising' criminology as wider projects – in spite of Agozino's (this volume) more critical tone on Southern criminology.

'Postcolonial' criminology has been another term used by scholars committed to the decolonisation of criminology. Broadly speaking, we can see again those same key features: denouncing Western centrism and the supposed universality of Western criminology, acknowledging the ongoing and enduring effects of colonialism and bringing them to the centre of investigation, and, consequently, changing criminology's focus or research objects. However, a more careful look may be needed here, especially owing to the different meanings attached to the terms 'postcolonial' and 'postcolonialism'. Making things a bit more nebulous, the concepts 'decolonial' and 'decoloniality' have also been used in the field, but still within an idea of 'postcolonial' criminology. A 'decolonial criminology' has not yet been conceptualised as such. We do acknowledge this may sound quite confusing and, as Dimou (2021) suggests, misunderstanding these concepts may also affect the development and the clarity of Southernising criminology. We now take a step back to deal with these terminologies.