

Research Article

Displacing Northern Dominant Criminological Discourse: The Importation of Southern Criminology into Criminological Literature and Its Implications

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Abstract

Through a carefully selected set of criminological case studies from both the Global North and the Global South, this article takes on a critical approach on how hegemonic Northern criminological theories have fallen short in their attempts at formulating universally-applicable causative theses. It demonstrates how the field of criminology can be sharpened and brought to compelling new heights through the importation of the alternative Southern criminology, which reifies the need to consider individual, localised contexts on top of global influences in criminological inquiries. Vastly different historical contexts seen in the Global South mean that while the region may produce criminal justice outcomes similar to the Global North, how it derives at such outcomes may diverge greatly from the North. Likewise, countries appearing to share notable commonalities in the South may not produce similar criminological outcomes as one another, unlike what one would usually expect from the North. This cautions against undertaking comparative research based on resemblances and similarities across nations alone, and highlights the need to reconsider the starting points of comparative research and any attempted universalisation of theories. Lastly, criminological trends seen in the North are also responses to what is being brought in from the South in this age of advanced globalisation. Understanding criminological trends already extant in the South allows for a sharpened analysis of modern day Northern law enforcement and

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why Northern states have responded in certain manners. In its challenging of Northern hegemony and its providence of alternative de-colonial causal theses, as well as its refreshing coverage of what Northern criminology may have overlooked, Southern criminology should be enthusiastically welcomed and incorporated into the field as a means to further refine criminology as a discipline.

Keywords Global North • Global South • criminological theories • ethnocentrism • decolonisation

1. North-South Dynamics: A Background

The criminological theories of the Global North have long been the dominant discourse of the field. This presence of a dominant narrative alludes to an ongoing power imbalance within the field of criminology that should be deconstructed if the discipline is to be furthered. Such discourses are produced whenever a dominant power prescribes particular rules and categories that define the criteria for legitimating knowledge and truth. These rules are continuously reiterated within society, which solidifies these rules as ahistorical, universal, scientific facts that are stable and objective. In reality, however, they are anything but so.² The longstanding narrative that the Global North is the epicentre of modernity and development, while the Global South lies merely in the periphery given its ‘developing’, ‘less developed’, or ‘underdeveloped’ status is the heartbeat behind the reproduction and dominance of said Northern (also known as Euro-American) theories.³

The terms ‘Global North’ and ‘Global South’ are used to distinguish nations worldwide through the lens of political systems and socio-economic statuses. The North refers to the metropolitan states of Western Europe and North America, while the South is an umbrella term for the nations of Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Oceania.⁴ The relationship between both regions has long been posited as one where the peripheral

² Mark GE Kelly. *Foucault's History of Sexuality Volume I, the Will to Knowledge: An Edinburgh Philosophical Guide.* Edinburgh University Press, 2013.

³ Raewyn Connell. *Southern theory: The global dynamics of knowledge in social science.* Routledge, 2020.

⁴ Lara Braff and Katie Nelson. *The global north: Introducing the region.* In *Gendered Lives*, 2022.

societies of the South, should they wish to successfully modernise, must learn from and emulate the examples shown in the North because the North is the epitome of economic and modernisation successes.⁵ This is seen in examples throughout history, such as when the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund offered Southern states monetary aid on the condition that they adopt Northern neoliberalist economic models because these models are keys to economic growth.⁶

Beyond the economic realm, such assumptions are reflected in the social sciences as well. They result in ethnocentrism, – where one sees their views and methods of doing things as universally right for everyone,⁷ – on the part of the Global North. *If* criminological phenomena are investigated in the Global South, it is done through the lens of theories that have been formulated by the Global North. This assumed universality and imposition of Northern theories is myopic because like any other dominant discourse, it excludes, marginalises, and oppresses realities that make equally (if not more) valid claims to the question of how power can be exercised.⁸ It perpetuates the false narrative that Northern theories are the only right explanations, and fails to account for the colonial legacies that so vibrantly colour criminological trends in the South. It also fails to recognise the widespread circulation of ideas brought about by globalisation. In truth, the North is influenced by the South as much as the South has been affected by the North.⁹

Against this backdrop, this article will discuss the contemporary relevance of Southern criminology. It will posit that looking beyond Northern perspectives to Southern ones can sharpen the discipline because it addresses both aforementioned failures. It will first spotlight the pitfalls of Northern ethnocentrism and highlight the importance of taking

⁵ Kerry Carrington, Russell Hogg, John Scott, Máximo Sozzo, and Reece Walters. “*Southern criminology*.” Routledge, 2018.

⁶ George Baylon Radics. “(Cr) Immigration and Merit-Based Migration in Singapore: The Permanent “State of Exception””. In *Criminal Legalities and Minorities in the Global South: Rights and Resistance in a Decolonial World*, pp. 105-125. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2023.

⁷ Maureen Cain. “*Orientalism, occidentalism and the sociology of crime*.” *British Journal of Criminology* 40, no. 2 (2000): 239-260.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁹ David S. Fonseca. “*Reimagining the sociology of punishment through the global-south: Postcolonial social control and modernization discontents*.” *Punishment & Society* 20, no. 1 (2018): 54-72.

into account individual contexts when formulating causal theories. Afterward, it will delve into how Southern criminology decolonises the literature, and in so doing supports the aforementioned importance of considering individual contexts. It will also show how criminological phenomena observed in the North can and have been shaped by contexts in the South through the global movements of peoples, histories, and cultures. In this manner, the introduction of alternative Southern criminological studies to the literature brings to the table more than just a challenge to the claims of universality often made by the Global North. It also sharpens and complements extant works by introducing new perspectives that enhance the inclusiveness and comprehensiveness of the field.

2. The Pitfalls of Northern Ethnocentrism

2 (a). The Failure of Northern Theories in Niche Contexts

Extensive comparative studies in the North have brought forth elegant theories and theses of causation behind several phenomena in criminology (such as explanations for the rise of punitiveness, crime rates, the targeting of certain population demographics by the criminal justice system, etc.). At first glance, these theories often seem to apply seamlessly to all contexts. It would seem that countries in the North often share enough characteristics with each other that they also end up sharing independent variables behind various criminological trends. One such example is found in studies comparing the U.S. and the UK. Scholars have observed that both countries share similar criminal justice features, such as zero-tolerance policies (where low-level crimes are cracked down upon), curfew implementations, private prisons, and electronic monitoring systems.¹⁰ Such shared characteristics are derived from their similar political ideologies. Both the U.S. and the UK leaned towards neoliberalism at the same time under the administrations of George Bush and Margaret Thatcher respectively. This gave them the same lens to define their problems and justify their solutions. Furthermore, both

¹⁰ Tim Newburn. "Atlantic crossings: 'Policy transfer and crime control in the USA and Britain.'" *Punishment & Society* 4, no. 2 (2002): 165-194.

countries also have significant influence on each other. In the U.S., Bill Clinton's campaign slogans featured promises that were tough on crime, such as 'zero-tolerance' and 'prison work'. This usage of war metaphors, in turn, brought him great electoral success. To appeal to the public, UK politicians followed in Clinton's footsteps and adopted similar strategic political manoeuvres and heightened punitive measures for crime.¹¹

Such comparative analyses do lend credence to the position that Northern theories of causation can be universalised – other countries that politicise crime the same way as the U.S., for example, may see similar punitive trends. However, this narrative changes when we expand the scope of the countries studied, and rightfully so. Upon bringing in a more diverse range of countries, even within the Global North where countries are expected to be more or less equally modernised and developed and hence similar, we start to see that sweeping theories of causation do not apply universally after all. There often is a pressing need to look into localised contexts to adequately explain certain phenomena. Cavadino and Dignan, for example, came up with a cogent political system theory where they argued that a country's punitiveness is a result of its political economy.¹² They categorised Global North political systems into neoliberal, conservative, social democratic, and oriental corporatist political economies, and posited that these different typologies all produce their respective punitive trends. Neoliberal societies, for example, produce the highest prison rates as their socioeconomic policies reproduce exclusionary cultural attitudes towards the marginalised, who often end up imprisoned. Corporatist societies and social democratic societies, on the other hand, adopt more inclusive economic and social policies that protect their citizens economically and prioritise the re-socialisation of offenders. Hence, they produce the lowest incarceration rates.

Elegant theories like this are often taken to be universal ones as well. Many may think that such a theory of punitiveness does seamlessly apply to all contexts because every

¹¹ Ibid., 9.

¹² Michael Cavadino and James Dignan. "Penal policy and political economy." *Criminology & Criminal Justice* 6, no. 4 (2006): 435-456.

country has a political economy that falls within the aforementioned typologies. However, this typing of political economies falls short as an independent variable and key defining causation of punitiveness when we zoom into specific countries within the Global North itself. This is saliently displayed in the comparison between Italy and the Netherlands. Focusing on political economies is not relevant at all in the case of Italy. Despite having the same punitive level as the Netherlands, Italy's low incarceration rates do not result from the regulatory role of the state and its resulting political economy like the Netherlands' does. Instead, we see a converse lack of respect for state legality in Italy. What actually brought the country's punitiveness down were the local cultures of forgiveness, solidarity, and fraternalism – all of them stemming from Catholic traditions and left-wing ideological influences that are both unique to Italy alone.¹³

The need to look at unique, specific, and localised contexts becomes even more prominent when we move out of relatively similar countries of the Global North with its limited variance. The idea that criminological procedures can actually be independent of one's political and socioeconomic contexts is reified when we bring in analyses of countries in the Global South. China, for example, had steered clear of neo-liberalist ideologies, and yet its incarceration rates remain infamously high. On the other hand, Russia has adopted neoliberalism but its incarceration rates have since dropped significantly.¹⁴ These trends in the Global South are classic foils to the universality of Cavadino and Dignan's theory. They also highlight also the dangers of ethnocentrism and the assumed universality of Northern theories in general. While many of these theories do provide accurate explanations for certain criminological phenomena, they do not necessarily work in all contexts despite positing to do so.

2 (b). The Failure to Consider Southern Influences on the North

¹³ David Nelken. "Comparative criminal justice: Beyond ethnocentrism and relativism." *European Journal of Criminology* 6, no. 4 (2009): 291-311.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 12.

Furthermore, there is also a need to consider the phenomenon of globalisation and how porous the nation-states have become in this era of advanced capitalism. There are constant movements of technology, resources, capital, information, and knowledge, as well as people and crime all over the world every second of every day.¹⁵ Assuming that globalisation is simply the extension of Northern trends across the globe and believing that Northern theories can and should hence be applied all over the world is myopic – it dismisses the fact that the North is itself an entity that is immune to the influences of the South.¹⁶ In truth, criminological happenings and trends in the South often get brought into the North. This means that before we can even begin to impose Northern theories on everyone else, these Northern theories can and should be formulated with the South in mind in the first place. There is a need to look at phenomena in the North and ask ourselves this: On top of Northern characteristics, what is going on and has been going on in the South that are often brought into the North and has contributed to the said phenomena of study?

3. The Functions of Southern Criminology

3 (a)(i). The Context of Decolonisation in the Global South

When we move away from critiquing Northern theories to looking at Southern studies alone, we see that the study of Southern criminology reifies the aforementioned need to pay attention to individual contexts. Its value lies in its ability to show how local cultures, on top of global influences, have contributed to a criminological end result that may be found elsewhere in the world. The Global South possesses historical trajectories that diverge completely from that of the Global North, and while they may produce the same kinds of criminal justice outcomes as the North, how and why they get there could be entirely different. In the very first place, the philosophies of modern Western thinkers like Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Immanuel Kant, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau that

¹⁵ Zygmunt Bauman. *“Wasted Lives”* Cambridge. Polity 41 (2004); .

David S. Fonseca. *“Reimagining the sociology of punishment through the global-south: Postcolonial social control and modernization discontents.”* Punishment & Society 20, no. 1 (2018): 54-72.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 4.

characterise the Westphalian-type modern nation-state in the North are completely irrelevant to the South.¹⁷ While the North has naturally formed nation-states with sovereignty observed and upheld between one another, many nations in the South were simply given their independence and had their boundaries dictated by their former colonial masters. More often than not, these borders were drawn up without consideration by said colonial powers for local populations, dynamics, and tensions. Many diverse communities were also intentionally kept separate to prevent cohesion.¹⁸ It was not surprising then that the periods following decolonisation for many of these countries were marked by utter chaos and violence. Regimes often adopted coercive measures to enforce unitary and homogenous visions of nationhood in nation-building, and such measures led to violence against minorities, secessionist movements, and even civil wars in the Global South.¹⁹ Lasting colonial legacies in the region also consisted of nationalist ideals being influenced by what their previous colonial masters had thought about civilisation, modernity, and progress. In attempts to meet these misconstrued ideals, minority groups often end up becoming seen as shameful relics of the past and threats to the nation that must be eradicated.²⁰ All of these had spillover effects into law and enforcement as well. Unlike in the North, laws did not spring from mutual agreements, constitutional promises, legitimacies of authorities, and notions of inherent individual rights.²¹ In the South, laws were sometimes inherited directly from their colonial masters, and other times they were enacted in ways that ended up causing chaos and disorder as groups in society saw their rights being robbed in favour of others.²²

¹⁷ James Tully. "Strange multiplicity: Constitutionalism in an age of diversity." No. 1. Cambridge University Press, 1995; .

George B. Radics. "(Cr) Immigration and Merit-Based Migration in Singapore: The Permanent "State of Exception"." In *Criminal Legalities and Minorities in the Global South: Rights and Resistance in a Decolonial World*, pp. 105-125. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2023.

¹⁸ Ibid., 5.

¹⁹ Will Kymlicka, and He Baogang, eds. "Multiculturalism in Asia." OUP Oxford, 2005.

²⁰ Ibid., 5.

²¹ Ibid., 5.

²² Seymour Martin Lipset. "Some social requisites of democracy: Economic development and political legitimacy." *American political science review* 53, no. 1 (1959): 69-105; .

Walt Whitman Rostow. "The stages of economic growth: A non-communist manifesto." Cambridge university press, 1990; .

Luis Eslava. "Local space, global life." Cambridge University Press, 2015; .

3 (a)(ii). Decolonisation and Criminological Outcomes

As mentioned, histories like this mean that though we may see similar criminal justice outcomes in the North and South, the means to these ends often look vastly different. For instance, Northern criminological theories often delve into economic inequalities (in some cases, tied to neoliberalism) and how minorities and disadvantaged communities experience strain. These communities, being unwanted and statistically more likely to turn to crime due to said strain, often become collateral damage when politicians use them as scapegoats when politicising crime as a means of solidifying their legitimacies.²³ This has led to the disproportionate imprisoning of minority groups, the perpetuation of inequalities, heightened punitiveness, and the aforementioned policies like zero-tolerance where low-level dramatic street crimes are targeted.

Such criminological outcomes and trends are also seen in the South, as they also disproportionately crack down on minorities. However, instead of political cultures, social inequalities, or performative politics (or rather, the combination of all three), this phenomenon in the South is often intrinsically tied to decolonisation violence and painful colonial legacies. In the recent history of Colombia, for example, approximately 10,000 civilians were estimated to have been killed between 2002 and 2010.²⁴ Its oppressive, authoritarian regime – a result of decolonisation – was determined to solidify its position

George B. Radics. "(Cr) Immigration and Merit-Based Migration in Singapore: The Permanent "State of Exception"." In *Criminal Legalities and Minorities in the Global South: Rights and Resistance in a Decolonial World*, pp. 105-125. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2023.

²³ Jeffrey Reiman, Jeffrey and Paul Leighton. *Rich get richer and the poor get prison, the (subscription): Ideology, class, and criminal justice.* Routledge, 2015; .

Ruth Garland. *"Between media and politics."*, 1997; .

Richard Young. *"The Culture of Control: Crime and Social Order in Contemporary Society."* (2002): 143-147; .

Richard Sparks. *"States of insecurity: punishment, populism and contemporary political culture."* In *The use of punishment*, pp. 149-174. Willan, 2013.

²⁴ Gustavo Rojas-Páez. *"Between Denial and Memory: A Socio-Legal Reading of Securitization Narratives in Transitional Colombia."* In *Criminal Legalities and Minorities in the Global South: Rights and Resistance in a Decolonial World*, pp. 63-82. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2023.

of power by getting rid of potential opposing guerrilla forces.²⁵ The regime does so by incentivising military units to deliver high body counts through offers of money, medals, and additional holiday leaves.²⁶ In doing so, the extrajudicial execution of civilians – most of them unwanted minority males falsely painted as guerrilla fighters – occurred on a massive scale. To then justify these killings, the government trumped up charges of drug trafficking and other dramatic street crimes associated with these minorities, amping up the regime’s punitiveness on paper.²⁷ Hence, we see that the cracking down on low-level crimes and corresponding marginalised groups happen both in the North and South, but for vastly different reasons. Northern theories pin the cause of this phenomenon on political performances to appease democratic crowds. In the South, however, targeting minorities could be but a façade to cover up prolonged periods of state-sponsored violence that had long oppressed citizens.

Even when we steer clear of extreme cases like the ones seen in Colombia, we see once again a different kind of struggle tied to past legacies of colonialism undergirding the criminological tyranny towards the minorities in other Southern nations. In British Malaya, the British brought labourers from China and India into Singapore. During this process, they constructed this notion of a ‘Malay problem’, which is essentially the narrative of the “lazy native”. The Chinese and Indian populations in the land were regarded as hardworking while the original Malay population was seen as lazy, unwilling, and unable to contribute to the economy.²⁸ This creation and perpetuation of such stereotypes had long-lasting impacts on the Malay community as members internalised such notions while also facing lessened opportunities within society. At the same time, the importation of labour also meant that some other migrant communities

²⁵ Ibid. Gustavo Rojas-Páez. “*Between Denial and Memory: A Socio-Legal Reading of Securitization Narratives in Transitional Colombia.*” In *Criminal Legalities and Minorities in the Global South: Rights and Resistance in a Decolonial World*, pp. 63-82. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2023.

²⁶ Mariana Palau. “*The ‘False Positives’ Scandal That Felled Colombia’s Military Hero.*” *The Guardian*, December 7, 2020. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/nov/19/colombia-false-positives-killings-general-mario-montoya-trial>.

²⁷ Ibid., 23.

²⁸ Syed Hussein Alatas. “*The Myth of the Lazy Native: A Study of the Image of the Malays, Filipinos and Javanese from the 16th to the 20th Century and Its Function in the Ideology of Colonial Capitalism.*” Routledge, 2013.

(i.e., the Indian foreign workers) have historically come to be seen as second-class citizens associated with poverty and manual labour. This status degradation has also tied them to stereotypes of vices and illegal activities.²⁹ Law enforcement is then coloured by all of these structural inequalities, and we see a disproportionate representation of minority groups in prison as race-based discrimination towards Malays and Indians that began with British rule continues to proliferate in Singaporean society.³⁰

These examples highlight how the study of the Global South decolonises the same kinds of phenomena seen in the Global North. This decolonisation lens bring forth vastly different, alternative causal explanations to Northern theories, henceforth serving as a foil to their universality and a testament to the need to analyse localised contexts within the discipline of criminology.

3 (b). Sharpening of Northern Theories and Affirming the Need to Look at Individual Local Contexts

This is not to say that theories of the North cannot be applied to the South. If anything, studying the South can also serve as a welcome surprise whenever results affirm Northern theories and hence sharpen extant knowledge in the field. At the end of the day, it is a sweeping statement to conclude that Southern criminology completely rejects Northern theories; and Northern theories sometimes do not even work in the North, let alone a vastly different South. After all, a hint of Cavadino and Dignan's theory can be seen in how the rise of neoliberal ideology is positively correlated with the rise of punitiveness when we examine Southern territories like Brazil.³¹ Exciting results like this only serve to further affirm why there is a need to look at local contexts in research agendas because even studies in the South should be undertaken on a case-by-case

²⁹ Ibid., 5.

³⁰ Narayanan Ganapathy and Lavanya Balachandran. *“Racialized masculinities”: A gendered response to marginalization among Malay boys in Singapore.* *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Criminology* 52, no. 1 (2019): 94-110; .

Narayanan Ganapathy. *“Racial Minorities and Crime.”* In *Gangs and Minorities in Singapore*, pp. 29-59. Bristol University Press, 2023.

³¹ Loïc Wacquant. *“The militarization of urban marginality: Lessons from the Brazilian metropolis.”* *International political sociology* 2, no. 1 (2008): 56-74.

basis. Just like how it is problematic to assume that Northern theories will work when applied across similar Northern nations, it is also problematic to assume the same of Southern theories in the South. It is integral to acknowledge that the South is no more one place or experience than the North is, and hence similar experiences or characteristics between two Southern countries may not necessarily produce the same criminological or legal outcomes.

A prominent example lies in Pakistan and Bangladesh, both formerly part of British India. Both countries inherited Section 497 of the Penal Code, where sexual intercourse between a man and another man's wife is criminalised, from the British. Yet, they had come to take on drastically different approaches to this same law over time.³² The law remains enforced to this day in both countries, with Bangladesh interpreting it as favourable towards women and sentencing perpetrators to up to five years in prison along with a fine. On the other hand, Pakistan took an extreme, religious stance towards adultery following the influence of Islamisation in the country. Adulterers, both men and women, have been subjected to honour killings, where they get stoned to death in their communities, ironically producing a new category of crime in their attempts to uphold the law and its tenets.³³ Such drastic differences undermine the principle of looking out for similarities as a basis for comparative studies. Similar colonial legacies in different countries may provide comparative prospects in the Global South, but caution must still be undertaken. Bangladesh and Pakistan have shown that the notion of identifying what is similar in different countries, proceeding with comparative studies based on such similarities, and then applying resulting theories to other similar contexts could potentially sabotage the criminological inquiry.

Hence, importing Southern criminology into the literature first serves the very function of rectifying any loophole or omission that 'universal' Northern theories had overlooked. This is seen in the alternative causative theories of minority oppression produced in Colombia and Singapore. It also challenges the feasibility and boundaries of

³² Anisur Rahman. "Criminalising adultery in colonial India." In *Criminal Legalities in the Global South: Cultural Dynamics, Political Tensions, and Institutional Practices* (2019).

³³ *Ibid.*, 30.

comparative research common to the North. Comparative studies based on similarities may work with the U.S. and the UK, but Southern countries like Pakistan and Bangladesh paint a different picture. In this sense, the South, as a dynamic entity that provides many interesting permutations of the same outcomes, brings about a broader expansion of the criminological research agenda as our knowledge becomes stretched and more diverse.

3 (c). Globalisation and How the South Affects the North

Finally, beyond the politicisation of crime observed in the North, the marginalisation of minorities in the North can be explained by the reiteration of colonial anxieties, this fear of an exotic other. Globalisation and porous borders have brought about influxes of immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, and cultures across borders. The Global North finds itself receiving sojourners, displaced individuals, and victims of the war from the South.³⁴ This, unfortunately, but also unsurprisingly, brings back the return of colonial logic, where migrant populations, racial minorities, and the underclass are marginalised and disproportionately incarcerated in attempts to control and subjugate these groups.³⁵

Studying criminological trends in the South would allow for the uncovering of any notable subculture, cultural differences that may lead a Southerner to be perceived as deviant and dangerous in the North, citizens' attitudes, war, and political conflicts, as well as displacement. This will then allow for a better understanding of what could be contributing to the 'othering' and colonial logic that so characterise modern-day Northern law enforcement.

4. Conclusion

³⁴ Zygmunt Bauman. *Wasted Lives* Cambridge. Polity 41 (2004).

³⁵ Dario Melossi. "In a Peaceful Life' Migration and the Crime of Modernity in Europe/Italy." *Punishment & Society* 5, no. 4 (2003): 371-397; .

Mary Bosworth. "Can immigration detention centres be legitimate? Understanding confinement in a global world." In *The borders of punishment: Migration, citizenship, and social exclusion* (2013): 149-165.

In sum, the field of criminology stands to benefit when dominant Northern criminological discourse becomes displaced. The self-proclaimed universality and subsequent imposition of Northern theories fall short because criminological phenomena are as much shaped by local contexts as they are by global trends. This (unintentional) side-lining of said individual contexts and Southern criminology robs the discipline of its grand potential and rigour. Importing Southern criminology allows for supplementing research gaps and methodology in providing alternative independent variables undergirding certain phenomena. Some of these independent variables may not even be found in the North itself – this is true for those pertaining to decolonisation and post-colonial nation-building struggles, henceforth allowing theories of the South to challenge Northern theoretical hegemony.

In some cases, concepts that have already emerged out of the North can also be supplemented by Southern criminology as well. For example, neoliberalism does indeed affect punitiveness in some parts of the South as it did in some parts of the North. When Southern case studies support Northern theories, it allows for a further sharpening and honing of relevant theories in question. Southern criminology also stretches the boundaries and bases for comparative studies by reifying how countries with similar historical backgrounds may not produce results that are as homogenous as we would expect to find them in the North. Finally, it also allows for a better understanding of Northern phenomena given that the North is constantly importing the peoples and characteristics of the South.

Hence, it can be said that Southern criminology challenges Northern dominant discourses, but in so doing, it fills in gaps overlooked by the North and simultaneously brings Northern theories to compelling new heights rather than simply rejecting completely Northern works. It should be seen as a much-welcomed expansion of the horizons within the discipline of criminology.

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