

# Southern Green Criminology

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# **Southern Green Criminology: A Science to End Ecological Discrimination**

BY

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# Contents

About the Author	<i>viii</i>
Preface	<i>ix</i>
Acknowledgements	<i>x</i>

## **Part I: Theoretical Pillars of a Southern Science to End Ecological Discrimination**

<b>Chapter 1 Introduction to a Southern Green Criminology</b>	<b>3</b>
Green Criminology	3
Tenets of Green Criminology	4
Green Criminology as a Sub-Discipline of Criminology	4
Characteristics of Green Criminology	6
What Falls Under the Purview of Green Criminology?	7
North–South Divides as a Key Driver of Environmental Harm	7
A Southern Green Criminology	9
<b>Chapter 2 Ecological Discrimination: A Science to End Discrimination and the Science of the Discriminated Against</b>	<b>13</b>
Ecological Discrimination and Its Types: Culturism and Speciesism	13
A Science to End Discrimination and a Science of the Discriminated Against: Their Meanings, Targets and Motivations	17
Barriers and Motivations in the Development of a Science to End Ecological Discrimination	19
<b>Chapter 3 The Two Major Philosophies</b>	<b>21</b>
Ultimate Questions in Academia	21
Green Criminology’s Philosophical Basis	23
The Two Major Philosophies About Nature	25

A Case for a Gestalt Philosophy as the Basis of a Southern Green Criminology	28
<b>Chapter 4 Green Activist Criminology</b>	31
Research for Its Own Sake and Research for the Sake of Others	31
Green Criminology and Activism	33
Specious Abysses	35
Southern Green Intellectuals	38
<b>Chapter 5 Green and Southern Criminologies before Green and Southern Criminologies Existed</b>	41
Southern Criminological Amnesia	41
Green Criminological Blindness	47
Southern Green Criminological Epistemicide	50
<b>Chapter 6 A Stereoscope of Ecological Discrimination</b>	53
The White Man's Burden	53
Western Science, Criminology and the Perils of Epistemological Colonialism	56
Green Criminology on the Margins of Criminology	57
Decolonial Basis for a Southern Green Criminological Method	58
A Stereoscope of Ecological Discrimination	60
Extrinsic and Intrinsic Ethical Considerations	63
<b>Part II: Empirical and Applied Southern Contributions to End Ecological Discrimination</b>	
<b>Chapter 7 Small Voices for the Biggest Question</b>	67
Warming the Earth's System: Altering Society	67
A Glocal Ecocide	68
Climate Change and Criminology	70
A Southern Green Criminological Road of Transition	71
The Colombian Río Negro Basin Case	74
<b>Chapter 8 Discourses and Practices in Land-Grabbing</b>	79
Legal and Illegal Takeover of Land	79
The Modern Reincarnation of Providers of Private Physical Force	80
Discourses of Conservation and Development	82
Legal Farming Methods and the Takeover of Land	85

<b>Chapter 9    The Ever-Increasing Spiral of Biopiracy</b>	<b>89</b>
Building Identity and Sovereignty Around Seeds	89
Biopiracy or Bioprospecting?	91
The Harms of Biopiracy	93
The Ever-Increasing Spiral of Biopiracy	95
Losing Control Over Seeds, Culture, Tradition and Identity	98
 <b>Chapter 10    The Disturbance of the Human–Non-human Continuum</b>	 <b>101</b>
Not a Scientific Position but a Life Stance	101
Motives of Abuse	103
Of Hypochondriasis, Heroes and Medical Abuse	105
Biotechnological Abuse	108
The Human–Non-human Continuum: Denial and Acknowledgement	109
 <b>Chapter 11    The Monopolisation of Humans and Their Resistance</b>	 <b>111</b>
The Six Monopolies of the Centre	111
The Theory of Resistance	113
Southern Frames of Resistance	115
The Dangers of Tactics Rebounding and Foreign Intervention	118
 <b>Chapter 12    A Seedbed of Southern Green Criminology</b>	 <b>121</b>
The Culturist Substratum of Alienated Societies	121
A Pedagogy of Southern Creativity	122
The Biases of Education	125
A Seedbed of Southern Green Criminology	128
 References	 131
 Index	 153

## About the Author

**David Rodríguez Goyes** is a Post-doctoral Researcher at the University of Oslo, Norway. He holds a PhD in Criminology from the University of Oslo, Norway. He is a Lawyer by training, with postgraduate studies in Criminal Law and a Master's in Sociology. His main field of research is green criminology, with a focus on biopiracy. His greatest contribution to the field is in the development of a Southern green criminology.



# Preface

Green criminology was officially inaugurated 29 years ago. Since then, it has largely enriched the criminological discipline by introducing new critical perspectives, theories, concepts and areas of research. In the past five years, the attention of green criminologists has been directed at the Global South as the geographical site that experiences the severest consequences of harmful environmental practices. This book presents in an ordered and reader-friendly way, an inclusive overview of the basic pillars of a Southern green criminology, providing a comprehensive theoretical, philosophical and methodological description of them. Such criminological direction is simultaneously a scientific and a political endeavour, aimed at combating the environmental harms that affect the geographical and the metaphorical Souths.

The main topic of this book is the conflicts that arise in the interaction between human beings and our natural environment, seen from a Southern perspective with a focus on the victimisation of the South. The book is divided into two parts. The first part presents the pillars of a Southern green criminology from a theoretical perspective. The six chapters in Part I outline the elements that comprise the scientific paradigm I lay out: ontology (Chapter 2), epistemology (Chapter 3) and methodology (Chapter 6). Part II addresses key topics of interest to green criminologists: climate change, land-grabbing, biopiracy, animal exploitation and human environmental victimisation. I conclude with a proposal for how to prevent Southern green criminology from losing its relevancy and for transforming the many social dynamics that produce ecological discrimination into contributing constructively to a just future. This conclusion draws inspiration from my knowledge exchanges with members of more than 20 Colombian Indigenous communities.

This is the first book exclusively dedicated to the topic of a Southern green criminology. Its appearance is propitious, thanks, first, to the strength of the umbrella project of a Southern criminology and second, because of the pressing nature of environmental threats that are pushing the entire world to seek alternatives to prevent and curb environmental harms in every corner of the globe (Næss, 2008).

# Acknowledgements

One of the memories that most often comes to mind from the time when I was conducting fieldwork in Colombia was my visit with Wayra, ‘Wind’ in Quechua (a pseudonym). To visit Wayra, I took a plane from Bogotá, a bus from the airport to the nearest city, a motorbike to the end of the road and from there a horse. We sat on two wooden chairs inside her humble home and began talking about seeds. With clarity and simplicity she told me about the events that led her to the situation in which she was about to lose her house and land to the bank. When I first arrived, Wayra opened a tap in the kitchen, but nothing came out. After an hour-and-a-half of conversation, water finally began to drip from the tap. It took five minutes for a cup to fill. Showing great generosity, Wayra used that water to prepare coffee for me, not without apologising for the long time it had taken.

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I have spent hours and hours in front of my computer, reading and re-reading the transcripts of the interviews I conducted, working with the most sophisticated theories and software to analyse the material. During long walks through the Norwegian forest, I thought about how to best theorise my findings. The days were also filled with new articles to read, new books to get a hold of, another conference to attend, and more invitations to write articles and books. Little by little, I immersed myself in the world of academia. Developing concepts, highly abstract discussions, revising, editing, applying for funding, peer reviewing and much more, and the image of Wayra began to fade. Although I have thought about her often, I have not yet found the time to call her and ask if she managed to save her small farm from the hands of the bank.

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There is much confusion in my mind. The distance and differences that exist between the academic world and the rural worlds of my research are not easy to reconcile. Academia demands a constant increase in the pace of production to gain academic credentials and climb the academic ladder. Colombian rural populations offered me what they had despite struggling to find the minimum means to survive (food, water, health services and hopefully electricity). The comfort found in academia seems immense when compared to the hardships endured by rural communities in Colombia – the daily problems faced in academia seem minute in relation to those experienced by Indigenous communities. My confusion arose

because I was able to enjoy the comforts offered by the academic world thanks to the generosity of the Colombian rural populations, while they were still immersed in serious problems. Nonetheless, the passion that was awakened that 17th day of December in 2012 when, for the first time, I heard several peasants talk about the problems they were experiencing because of the way nature was being monopolised, was still there. But that passion is not the only thing that remains: the challenge to determine how best to use my academic credentials and the resources of the academy to contribute positively to the situation of the marginalised groups I worked with is also present. I am keenly aware of the peril of publishing for the sake of publishing, of falling into an industrial machine that seeks to obtain economic profit from knowledge instead of producing knowledge to prevent harms. As part of the project of contributing to the structural transformation of the harmful contexts of many in impoverished locations through green criminology research, this book aims to inspire further scientific research that not only exposes ecological discrimination for what it is, but that also actively opposes and curbs its reach.

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This book is the product of more than a decade of research. I have been fortunate to have been mentored by excellent scholars who are also great friends. I thank Alejandro Gómez Jaramillo and Catalina Toro for their guidance and support during the earlier stages of my education. John Braithwaite, Avi Brisman, Nils Christie, Katja Franko, Thomas Mathiesen, Hanneke Mol, Sveinung Sandberg, John Todd-Kvam, Rob White and Tanya Wyatt were also important in shaping the underlay of my work through friendly and highly inspirational conversations. I thank them for many coffees, a good many chess games and innumerable conversations. My editor, Kerry Fast, has in this book, as in previous works, helped me express myself with clarity. I thank her for helping me better convey the message of my work.

I dedicate this book, first, to my parents, Gloria and Hernando, who despite the challenges of being part of the metaphorical and geographical Souths, covered my every need. Second, to Ragnhild Sollund and Nigel South, who have been my friends, mentors and academic parents during my academic studies in which I shaped a Southern green criminology. It was during my collaboration and friendship with Ragnhild and Nigel that the ideas that I present on this book matured. I cannot express the appreciation I have for them: they changed my life. Third, I dedicate this book to my students who many times when I was about to give up, inspired me to keep on hoping and working for a better world. This book is not only mine, but also belongs to the Colombian Indigenous, peasant and Afro-descendant communities whose bounteousness and value are almost as expansive as the injustices they face. I hope these pages help change that situation in some way. This work is also dedicated to you.

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## Part I

# **Theoretical Pillars of a Southern Science to End Ecological Discrimination**

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## Chapter 1

# Introduction to a Southern Green Criminology

### Summary

In this first chapter, I present green criminology as a project based on three pillars and characterised by two traits. I explain how one cultural model and one economic theory have inspired most green criminology undertakings. But mainly, I argue that it is time for the structured appearance of a Southern green criminology, given that recent developments in green criminology show that North–South divides are a key driver of environmental harm.

*Keywords:* Consumerism; decolonial theory; epistemologies of the South; geographical South; green criminology; harm perspective; metaphorical South; multi-scalar analyses; North–South divides; Southern criminology; treadmill of production

### Green Criminology

There are many insightful articles, books and book chapters written with a green criminology framework and about green criminology. Among the latter, authors like Avi Brisman and Nigel South (2013) have done an excellent job in summarising and organising the extensive green criminology knowledge produced thus far. The aim of this chapter is much less lofty than trying to provide a full overview of all intellectual green criminology production. I aim to present the main traits and key concerns of green criminology. The reader is invited, nonetheless, to explore in depth what green criminologists have written. Let me begin by offering a tentative definition of green criminology. I understand green criminology to be a sub-disciplinary conceptual framework that relies on criminology knowledge to study transgressions committed against ecosystems, human beings and non-human beings in the interactions between humans and their natural surroundings (Goyes, 2018b).

Definitions are a dangerous business. They establish borders that include and exclude, and not everyone feels comfortable in them. Furthermore, as Katja Franko points out in her discussion about terrorism, definitional processes reflect the interests of the one doing the defining (Aas, 2013, now Franko). This is evident in that several definitions for green criminology exist, and in most cases, green criminologists are in disagreement about them. Ragnhild Sollund (2013c) argues that only the criminology endeavours that acknowledge the intrinsic value of *all* species on the planet can be regarded as green criminology. Paul Stretesky, Michael Long and Michael Lynch (2014) propose that green criminology is the study of the systematic production of harms brought about by the capitalist treadmill of production. Rob White (2012b) goes further and proposes changing the name of green criminology to eco-global criminology to draw attention to the global nature of green crimes. Gary Potter (2018) agrees with the idea of changing the name of the discipline. He suggests the label 'eco-criminology' instead, arguing that not only one arm of criminology, that is, green criminology, should be concerned with the natural environment, but the entire discipline should also involve itself in the discussion. These diverse suggestions show the difficulty of defining green criminology; however, they also signal that green criminology is not merely theoretical but rather an orientation that directs the study of the actors, drivers and consequences of detrimental human interactions with their natural surroundings. Arguably, it is because green criminology is primarily an orientation and not a theory that accounts for its fruitfulness: by not having only one overarching explanation for every environmental harm, it borrows conceptual tools from all fields and types of knowledge to develop deeper and more complex understandings of the issue (Brisman, Goyes, Mol, & South, 2017).

### **Tenets of Green Criminology**

Despite these definitional differences, the conceptualisations I discussed above contain the three fundamental tenets shared by most green criminologists:

- (1) Green criminology is located within the discipline of criminology.
- (2) Green criminology is concerned with how human action and agency elicit harmful ecological consequences.
- (3) Green criminology expands the category of victim to include ecosystems and non-human animals.

### **Green Criminology as a Sub-Discipline of Criminology**

That green criminology is a sub-discipline of criminology means that the former shares broad interests of the latter. Then again, clearly defining the interests of criminology is filled with challenging pitfalls, mainly because criminology, more than any other discipline, is a post-disciplinary discipline (Pavlich, 2000) that does not have a clear core and whose boundaries, if they exist, are indeterminate. Pat Carlen (2011) has reproached those who try to impose a definition of



criminology for being evangelists. This may be harsher than necessary because we can agree that criminology is roughly concerned with studying a set of processes and a set of entities related to criminality. Among the processes are those of defining crime, producing crime, reacting to crime and victimising. Among the entities, which are more static phenomena, are criminals, victims and the consequences of criminality (Lomell & Skilbrei, 2017). If we adopt such a non-specific definition of criminology, we can say that green criminology is concerned with studying those processes and entities that concern environmental conflicts. Examples of the consequential questions that green criminology explores are: what are the social processes by which an environmental action is labelled 'legal' or 'criminal'? What are the processes of committing environmental crimes? Why does a society react the way it does to environmental criminality? Who can be labelled as an environmental criminal? What groups are most often environmentally victimised? What short-term and long-term social consequences do environmental crimes have?

### ***Human Action and Agency in Green Crime***

Environmentally destructive events that are not the product of human intervention are not considered to be within the scope of green criminology. Criminology as sociology is concerned with human social action, which Max Weber (1922/1997) defined as that which is executed in the framework of human co-existence and has a specific social intention. Consequently, social action is meaningful, affected by cultural and economic elements, and simultaneously affects those elements. Green criminologists study the complex social webs where environmental crime is conceived and executed. So, for instance, lions eating zebras in the normal course of their lives is not of interest to green criminologists because no human action is involved; it is not, per se, environmentally destructive. However, the reach of the tentacles of humanity is so widespread on this planet that it is difficult to identify an environmentally destructive event in which humans are not involved. Nonetheless, because of its focus on the natural environment, green criminology must also understand and use the knowledge of scientific disciplines studying the organisms that inhabit earth, whether that be zoology, ecology or genetics.

### ***The Category of Victim Includes Ecosystems and Non-human Animals***

In orthodox criminology, legal and victimology studies, the victim is defined as a person who fits into the legal definition of victim. Scholars in these disciplines have critiqued this legalistic approach as being too narrow and not always in line with reality. This radical adjustment takes as victims all those who suffer, whether directly or indirectly, the harmful consequences of an event regardless of legal definitions (Skilbrei, 2017). Humans are not the only species on earth that have the capacity to suffer. Non-human animals are sentient beings who feel pain, experience fear and anxiety, and are aware that they are being hurt (Regan, 1983; Sollund, 2014). Seeing only humans as victims does not stand to reason

when animals can suffer in equal measure. Furthermore, green criminology recognises ecosystems as a third kind of victim. As I explain in Chapter 3, many Latin American Indigenous communities see Mother Earth, or Pachamama, as the living body on which they live (Zaffaroni, 2012). In physics, the Gaia hypothesis asserts that all beings on planet earth are interconnected (Sheptycki, 2016), and the butterfly effect claims that the flapping of a butterfly wing on one side of the globe can result in a tornado on the other side (Hilborn, 2004; Lorenz, 1972). Both indigenous philosophy and these concepts developed in physics stress that all species on planet earth, no matter how small, depend on the wellbeing of the whole. Likewise, Robert Ezra Park (1925/1999), one of the most influential criminologists of all times, warned almost a century ago that the biotic equilibrium of an ecosystem guaranteed the wellbeing of its components. For Park, of course, this was a metaphor for the vibrancy of the city as an ecosystem. But ironically, Park's idea is most apt in its literal sense: we depend for our survival on the wellbeing of the ecosystem that hosts us and of which we are a part. In this sense, ecosystems can also be victims.

## **Characteristics of Green Criminology**

While the above three tenets form the basis on which green criminology is built, it can be further distinguished by two characteristics.

### ***The Adoption of a Harm Perspective***

Green criminology does not depend on legal definitions of what constitutes a crime to outline its research interests. Rather, it takes its lead from 'the harm perspective' that is interested in all sources of environmental destruction and victimisation whether they are legally recognised as criminal or not. Such a way of defining the scope of criminology has its origin in the broader field of critical criminology, and has gained a new force and relevance with the emergence of green criminology.

Almost six decades ago, Schwendinger and Schwendinger (1970) drew attention to the double standard of criminology in that it did not study racism and imperialism because they were not legally defined as crimes, in effect calling for a revision of the definition of crime. Pearce (1976) and Davies, Francies, and Jupp (1999) have further highlighted the fact that even though an act is not punished by law does not necessarily mean that the action is not harmful or undesirable. Hillyard, Pantazis, Tombs, and Gordon (2004) showed that legally defined acts of crime occur very seldom compared to harmful acts that are not legally considered criminal. It follows that if criminology depends on legal definitions of crime to determine its object of study, many of the most harmful acts committed on earth would escape its radar.

### ***The Development of Multi-scalar Analyses***

Many social scientists are by now aware that the social world is shaped by complex interactions of events taking place in diverse geographies even as they have

specific local effects. In sociology of law, 'legal pluralism' indicates that multiple legal systems operate in a territory or a state (Santos, 2009c); indigenous communities, states and the global community, all have legal systems in place that affect specific geographies. Even if originating in diverse geographies, these legal systems intersect and operate simultaneously in a specific location resulting in unique constellations of legalities.

In a similar vein, globalisation scholars have coined the term 'glocal' to signal that no cultural, economic or political event is absolutely global or absolutely local; rather, it occurs at the intersection of the two geographies (Aas, 2013). For biological phenomena, the interweaving of different geographies is even more important. The entire planet is a system composed of climate, oceans, land surfaces, ice masses and vegetation in a complex interrelation. This means that an ecological event in one location affects other geographies as well. Forestry in the Amazon not only affects Amazonian ecosystems but also the entire earth system because the carbon dioxide emitted when the trees are felled contributes to the warming of the atmosphere of the entire planet. With these considerations in mind, Rob White (2012b) calls for the interactions between the local, the national, the regional and the global to be situated centrally in the development of green criminological studies.

## **What Falls Under the Purview of Green Criminology?**

Given these three pillars and two traits, transgressions against ecosystems, humans and non-humans produced in the interactions between humans and their natural surroundings are of concern to green criminology. Commentators may consider this too imprecise, but it is this latitude that makes green criminology a stimulating and fertile field while simultaneously worrisome. The seemingly never-ending stream of human activities that harms the natural environment allows for endless scope for research, including even the most innocuous of human activity. Take for instance the apparently innocent yacht expeditions to the famous Balearic Islands that Morelle Hungria (2018) has shown contribute to the destruction of *Posidonia Oceanica*, a sea grass that is vital for the health of the marine ecosystems of this Mediterranean archipelago.

## **North–South Divides as a Key Driver of Environmental Harm**

The two most influential theoretical perspectives used by green criminologists in their research of environmental destruction and victimisation are cultural and economic. Stretesky et al. (2014) have developed a political economy approach to explain how global structural economic forces lead to environmental harm. They characterise contemporary capitalism in three ways: the constant expansion of production in order to increase profit, the manipulation of production systems to create surplus profits and the unlimited expansion of capital. Capitalism harnesses nature for its treadmill of production first, by extracting raw materials and energy resources necessary for production, and second, by creating production

waste (pollution), that is, production cannot be 100 per cent efficient. While natural systems, in their pristine state, have a productive function that follows natural laws of energy transformation, capitalist production, with its extractions and accumulations, alters those natural processes by accelerating entropy, contributing to global ecological disorganisation.

Brisman and South (2014) have looked at the cultural aspect of environmental degradation, focussing on consumerism as one of the most important drivers of environmental harm. Humans around the globe are experiencing ontological insecurity, doubting the existence of a stable self-identity. Contemporary capitalism exploits this insecurity by offering not only goods but also culture, so that commodity consumption becomes the construction and reassurance of the self. Advertising campaigns offer love, creativity and purpose in their products or promise to deliver courage, determination and uniqueness. However, marketing is directed at constructing unfulfillable desire leading to a 'world of never-quite-satisfied-aspirations' (Brisman & South, 2014, p. 55). The 'aspiration to consume more and more seems to be the norm' in a world where the affluent have set the benchmark for the desirable (p. 52). The perpetual cycle of creating unfulfillable desires that lead to unrestrained consumption and then to dissatisfaction and then to new desires, creates excessive waste that degrades nature. Furthermore, obsolescence is achieved not only by investing commodities with it but also by rapidly expiring fashion trends. The regular overconsumption in Western societies results in an 'almost bulimic disposal of the waste arising from it' (p. 58). The internet, with its immediate and far-reaching invitation to consumerism, only increases the serious harmful consequences for the environment.

More recently, green criminologists have identified North–South divides as fundamental in the production of environmental harm. Indeed, a peculiar legacy of colonialism and neocolonialism is that most colonising countries are located in the Global North while most colonised countries are located in the Global South. Such division between colonisers and colonised has meant that many countries in the Global North have been economically enriched by the environmental plundering of the countries in the Global South.

The uneven distribution of political, economic and epistemological power between the Global North and the Global South expands the possibility of abusive and destructive practices considerably. For instance, the political North–South divide gives Northern countries, mainly the USA and the countries of the European Union, the power to frame the international legal instruments globally regulating human interaction with nature. As Northern countries are mainly preoccupied with furthering their economic interests and those of the corporations they host, they overlook the deleterious global environmental consequences of their legal frameworks. Illustratively, the international intellectual property laws based on USA and European models oblige Southern countries to drastically decrease the variety of seeds used in cropping, counteracting biological diversity (Shiva, 1997). Even when Southern countries refuse to accept the imposition of these legal frameworks, the superior political and economic power of Northern countries renders resistance meaningless (Goyes, 2017; Walters, 2011).

The uneven wealth distribution between the North and the South also allows Northern citizens to fulfil their desires for environmental products at the cost of creating environmental destruction in Southern countries. For instance, most ivory, bird and reptile collectors are located in the Global North, but their ‘collectables’ are individuals of endangered Southern species (Sollund, 2019). The economic strength of the North also enables Northern investors to capitalise on land purchases in the South, disregarding the forced displacement of Southern indigenous communities (Goyes & South, 2016b). Northern countries also use their economic power to transfer harm to the South. For instance, non-recyclable electronic appliance parts constitute an environmental hazard and are regularly offloaded on the Global South for processing (Ruggiero & South, 2010b).

The uneven capital distribution between the North and the South is not only political and economic, but also epistemological. The Global North is credited with producing most of what is socially qualified as scientific knowledge despite containing only 15 per cent of the world’s population (Carrington, Hogg, Scott, Sozzo, & Walters, 2019; Carrington, Hogg, & Sozzo, 2016). This confidence in the North’s capability to produce knowledge has prompted the imposition of scientific ways of relating to nature to the detriment of local methods (Goyes, 2018b). A telling example, which I discuss in detail below, is the green revolution initiated by Borlaug (1968), who promised to eliminate the global food shortage using scientific methods but whose proposition led to the creation of ideal conditions for pests, floods and droughts in the Global South.

## **A Southern Green Criminology**

The North–South divide also exposes important differences in the discipline of criminology as it exists in the Global North and the Global South. The most evident variations lie in how criminology is taught. In many Northern countries, criminology is offered as undergraduate and graduate programmes. This means that by acquiring a degree in criminology in the Global North, one can become a professional criminologist. Meanwhile only a few countries in the Global South offer undergraduate programmes in criminology. In most Latin American countries, criminology is a minor subject in law curricula. This difference may seem insignificant, but is, nonetheless, important because it gives rise to a second and deeper one, namely, that most criminology theories studied as universal in scope are, in fact, produced by authors from the Global North. Southern courses in criminology usually go through the classics, starting with the Italians Beccaria (1738–1794) and Lombroso (1835–1909), moving on to North Americans Park (1864–1944) and Merton (1910–2003), and finally arriving at more contemporary British scholars like Young (1942–2013) and Cohen (1942–2013). The point is clear: most criminology knowledge considered as universal is produced in the Global North, although it is worth mentioning someone like Braithwaite (1984), whose brilliant contributions position him among the key criminologists despite coming from the Global South. Consequently, the content of Northern universities’ criminology programmes is attuned to their contexts in a way not possible

for universities in the Global South. While this is not meant to mitigate differences among Northern universities, the difference between most Northern and Southern countries is substantially greater when it comes to the production of criminology knowledge.

There are also differences in how criminology knowledge production is perceived and treated depending on its site of production. First, criminology knowledge produced in the North is assumed to be universal (Aas, 2012). In contrast, Southern knowledge is 'exceptional' and only locally relevant. For instance, in their list of 50 key criminologists, Hayward, Maruna, and Mooney (2010) include only one from the Global South. This renders Southern criminology knowledge invisible, and thereby overlooked by scholars. Adding to the invisibility of Southern criminology is the language difference, which parallels criminology knowledge production more generally. Northern 'universal' knowledge is produced in English and local, particular knowledge in other languages. (I return to this issue in Chapter 5.) The consequences of the difference between criminology as existent in the Global North and Southern criminology are that, first, Southern knowledge production barely registers in the standard criminology canon; second, Southern criminologists are neglected to the detriment of the discipline. There are Southern criminological contributions well ahead of their time, but they remain unknown because they were not published in English (Goyes & South, 2017a); and third, the discipline in the South remains inchoate because potential Southern criminologists receive the tacit message that they are recipients of knowledge rather than producers of knowledge.

However, these dynamics do not reflect the reality of crime. It is, in general, in the Global South where most and the most atrocious crimes and harms take place (Carrington et al., 2019), a fact that holds true for environmental crime as well. Despite this, Southern criminology has remained largely invisible to the international community up to now. As I describe in Chapter 5, there have been many calls to reinvigorate Southern criminology and make it more visible, but unsuccessfully. The one exception is Carrington et al. (2016), who, building on Connell's *Southern Theory* (2007), reactivated the call for a Southern criminology that redresses the inequitable production/visibility of academic knowledge by making Southern criminological knowledge prominent.

Southern criminology is a perspective that seeks to produce knowledge that is attentive to the contextual and spatial differences of the site of knowledge production and that also challenges Northern dominance in the production of criminological knowledge by facilitating the inclusion of voices from the South. Furthermore, a Southern criminology seeks to address the historical neglect of the South by providing innovative, refreshing and original criminological knowledge that challenges the Anglo-dominance in criminology, and most importantly, that allows for a deeper and more nuanced understanding of criminological topics. The ideas and goals of this criminology project are fundamental in the shaping of a Southern green criminology.

A Southern green criminology encompasses both the geographical and the metaphorical Souths. While Southern criminology provides important tools to focus on the geographical dimension, decolonial theory offers a way to include

the metaphorical one (see e.g. Escobar, 2006; Grosfoguel, 2007). Decolonial theorist Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2014) coined the term 'epistemologies of the South' to refer to the knowledge that the discriminated and marginalised produce and their ways of producing it. Their knowledge is urgent and necessary for their survival, minimising their suffering and fulfilling their most basic needs. The people of the metaphorical South produce knowledge while fighting for their survival and do not stop to differentiate between theoretical and applied knowledge; they identify sources of harm and respond to them in praxis. To be sure, Santos uses both 'epistemologies' and 'the South' metaphorically. The South is a metaphor for the marginalised, oppressed and impoverished; it is peripheral voices, wherever they are located. This metaphorical South encompasses a diversity of beings (human and non-human), a diversity of origins (including some in the geographical North) and diverging approaches. Santos's metaphorical South is his way of asserting that different ways of knowing and being coexist and are equally valid.

Santos's use of 'epistemologies' as metaphor is more unusual. Philosophically, as I discuss in Chapter 3, the epistemological question refers to the nature of the relationship between the knower and what can be known. Epistemologies, then, can be either dualist or transactional (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Santos, instead, sees epistemologies as a political, discursive tool to even out current imbalances in the distribution of what is valid knowledge. He highlights the importance and validity of the knowledge produced by the discriminated against, marginalised and impoverished, who are usually considered having no knowledge. For Santos, epistemology has two interconnected meanings. First, epistemology as a method: knowledge can be produced in the daily struggle of the marginalised, impoverished and oppressed to survive. Second, epistemology as valid knowledge: the oppressed, impoverished and marginalised carry with them a large store of valid and useful knowledge. Accepting the contributions of the epistemologies of the South as criminologists means that we will have to 'take seriously the epistemic force of local histories and to think theory through from the political praxis of subaltern groups' (Escobar, 2003, p. 61). Instrumentally, this can be done by extending the academic engagement with the experiences and knowledge of the subaltern and showing how their worldviews and knowledge are valid and carry weight (Santos, 2009b). To be sure, the act of listening to voices from the metaphorical South and enlarging its knowledge is not a uniquely decolonial action. Such a way of proceeding has been implemented before, as I discuss in Chapter 5.

Combining all these elements, I define a Southern green criminology as the science that is attentive to the dynamics and contexts of the Global South and grows out of the epistemological power of the marginalised, impoverished and oppressed. I explain the ontological, epistemological and methodological bases of this enquiry in Chapter 3. For the moment, suffice it to say that the metaphorical South exists because of acts of discrimination and a large part of the metaphorical South is situated in the geographical South because of the structural discrimination of the North against the South. More precisely, ecological discrimination is what has created the current abyss between the North and the South, whether these be geographies or metaphors. I dedicate the next chapter to an explanation of the concept of ecological discrimination.