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Counter-Colonial Criminology: A Critique of Imperialist Reason. Biko Agozino. London: Pluto, 2003. 281 pp.

This book will undoubtedly provide much discussion in criminological circles, but it should not be confined to such a narrow field. Indeed, Biko Agozino has ushered forth a call, among other things, for former European colonies of Europe to adopt a new criminological theory to aid in the liberation of millions from human misery. According to the author, presently "...there is no single such [Criminology] department in the numerous universities in Africa (except in South Africa), the Caribbean, Asia and, to a lesser extent, South America" (9). He warns African and other former colonial nations, however, not to imitate the "mother countries'" criminology apparatuses that are steeped in imperialistic philosophy and practice. For Agozino, western criminological technology has either directly or indirectly stifled the development of those very societies in colonial, postcolonial, and even post-postcolonial times.

Moreover, he contends that western criminologists need to adopt a less arrogant approach to criminology by listening to the voices of the voiceless and powerless from past and present. At its base, the book is bold and iconoclastic. Because of this it is refreshing to read and very informative. The author pulls no punches in his critique of western imperialism as it has intersected and defined much of the so-called Third World's judicial systems. Agozino writes:

Criminology was developed primarily as a tool for imperialist domination and it continues to operate largely as a repressive technology. Other technologies of domination crafted by imperialism, such as the army, the police and the prison, have been generally appropriated by neocolonial regimes around the world. (228)

Agozino is particularly critical of the dearth in western criminological insights into contemporary forms of imperialism and human subordination due to the continued hegemony of the West. Criminological theory tends to emanate from the metropolises of the West and this negatively influences the empowerment of the disempowered—who tend to be most often, but not exclusively, people of color.

What makes *Counter-Colonial Criminology: A Critique of Imperialist Reason* an interesting and informative read is its use of an interdisciplinary perspective, or what Agozino deems as "a transdisciplinary theoretico-methodological intervention" (1). Thirteen chapters, plus an incisive foreword from Stephen Pfohl, and an elaborate conclusion make up the structure of the book. The topics range from a critique of The Enlightenment and Euro-American Theories of the Judicial Process, to Feminist Perspectives and Critical Criminology, to Executive Lawlessness and the Struggle for Democracy in Africa, to an analysis of the late reggae star Peter Tosh. Crucially, Agozino offers a wide-ranging and eclectic scholarly work that is unequivocally "counter-colonial" in its approach. It will no doubt irk the sensibilities of those scholars embedded in European canons and white-approaches to criminological discourse, which are currently the staple diet in most university courses.

In regard to chapter twelve, most Americans will probably not be very familiar with the analysis of Stephen Lawrence, the case of a young middle class black British male murdered by five racist young men in England (April 22, 1993). It is a powerful chapter that interacts with the public inquiry report into the killing, along with James Baldwin, and key theoretical perspectives, including: Marxism, Functionalism, Rationalism and Poststructuralism. A useful table (198) helps the reader situate the theories and writers that adhere to such schools of thought. This will be particularly useful to both undergraduates and graduates.

However, although I am in full agreement with Agozino's overall critique of westernized notions and practice of criminology and its claim to "objective" science that does very little to enable the powerless to attain justice, he still does not fully "escape" the Eurocentric canon. To put it another way, there is a strong and admirable attempt by Agozino to disassociate himself from the theoretical quagmire of Eurocentric discourse, but there is not enough engagement with alternative schools of thought, particularly from the perspective of Africans. Yes, there are the contributions of Nkrumah, Cabral, Fanon, Sivanandan, Hall, Davis, hooks and other black theorists, but most of these scholars were, or are, either Marxist and/or black Feminist. What about scholars who want to research African culture and social experience without the ghost of Karl Marx hanging on their shoulder? Or those like Clenora Hudson-Weems who seek an Africana womanist rather than feminist approach to social theory? This, however, is merely constructive criticism that should enhance in due course, I would hope, Agozino's already laudable theoretical position. Indeed, he admits that his research will need further exploration (247) and contemplation, provided that he can obtain the funding for such counter-hegemonic research endeavors in these draconian conservative times.

Overall, this is a book that deserves to be on all criminological reading lists, and it would be at home in any African centered studies course. It offers a generous amount of scholarly inquiry into an area that has paid scant attention to African and other "people of color's" perspectives in the criminological discourse. It is therefore groundbreaking and a must read.

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