

## **Abolitionists' perspectives in criminology**

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Abolitionism - certainly the most consistent derivation of "anti-criminology" (Cohen) from the rebellious sixties - is a relatively marginal orientation in contemporary criminology. However, this does not mean that the theoretical (as well as practical) impact of abolitionist views on criminological and criminal policy conceptions - and especially in the endlessly developing area of critical criminology) should be neglected. Abolitionism invites a "substitute" discourse, that is, an alternative reflection about "crime" and its criminal law treatment. Abolitionism is in no way a conceptually uniform "criminological" orientation. It is nevertheless possible to recognise certain common stresses in various abolitionist contributions, such as a pronounced critical attitude toward criminal law dealing with interpersonal relations which are labelled as "problematic", "violent", "harmful" or "conflicting". Abolitionists, however, do not stay at the level of radical criticism, but propose several daring alternative solutions, although some of them seem entirely utopian, which does not minimise their value as a long term orientation. Looking from the short and long-term perspective, the abolitionists pursue the ideal of "minimal criminal law" (Baratta), that is criminal law which could be justified by constitutional legal norms, i. e. norms of a contemporary state, founded on respect for human subjectivity and basic - economic, political, cultural, social and other - human rights, among which the right of the individual to self-determination is one of the most important.

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