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# Introduction—Reckoning with the East: Situating scholarship from Eastern Europe and Eurasia in criminology and socio-legal studies

OÑATI SOCIO-LEGAL SERIES VOLUME 16, ISSUE 5 (2026), 1944-1956: RECKONING WITH THE EAST: SITUATING SCHOLARSHIP FROM EASTERN EUROPE AND EURASIA IN CRIMINOLOGY AND SOCIO-LEGAL STUDIES
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## Abstract

In July 2022, the Law and Society Association met in Lisbon to reckon with colonialism. Russia had launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine five months earlier, yet the war was barely mentioned. This introduction takes that silence as its starting point. It describes how a 2024 workshop in Oñati brought together scholars from Eastern Europe and Eurasia to ask whether frameworks built elsewhere can explain socio-legal dynamics there. We outline the Global East concept and the critiques contributors made of it. We summarize the articles and a Latin American commentary. Three themes recur. Positions of colonizer and colonized are unstable. The effects of imperial and state-socialist legacies depend on how they are activated. States perform legitimacy or compliance for audiences that reflect their place in the world economy. We conclude that

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the Global East is best understood as a problem space that extends southern criminology to nested and reversible relations of domination.

## Keywords

Global East, southern criminology, Eurasia, Eastern Europe, decolonization

## Resumen

En julio de 2022, la Law and Society Association celebró en Lisboa su reunión global, dedicada a ajustar cuentas con el colonialismo y sus legados. Rusia había lanzado su invasión a gran escala de Ucrania cinco meses antes y, sin embargo, apenas se mencionó la guerra. Esta introducción toma ese silencio como punto de partida. Describe cómo un taller celebrado en 2024 en el Instituto Internacional de Sociología Jurídica de Oñati reunió a investigadores de Europa del Este y Eurasia para preguntar si los marcos teóricos construidos en otros lugares pueden dar cuenta de las dinámicas sociojurídicas de la región. Presentamos el concepto de Este Global que orientó el taller y las críticas que le formularon los autores de este número. A continuación resumimos los siete artículos, todos escritos por investigadores de la región, y un comentario desde América Latina. Una lectura transversal de la colección permite identificar tres temas recurrentes. Las posiciones de colonizador y colonizado en la región son inestables y pueden invertirse. Los efectos de los legados imperiales y del socialismo de Estado dependen de cuándo y cómo se activan. Los Estados escenifican legitimidad o cumplimiento ante públicos que reflejan su lugar en la economía mundial. Concluimos que el Este Global se entiende mejor como un espacio problemático que amplía el proyecto de la criminología del Sur hacia relaciones de dominación anidadas y reversibles.

## Palabras clave

Este Global, criminología del Sur, Eurasia, Europa del Este, descolonización

## Table of contents

1. Introduction: Searching for Ukraine in Lisbon ..... 1947
2. From Lisbon to Oñati ..... 1947
3. The Global East as provocation ..... 1949
4. Legacies ..... 1950
5. Performing politics in the present ..... 1951
6. A view from Latin America ..... 1953
7. Cross-cutting themes and conclusion ..... 1954
References ..... 1955

## 1. Introduction: Searching for Ukraine in Lisbon

In July 2022, several of the people involved in this special issue travelled to Lisbon for the Global Meeting on Law and Society. It was the seventh such meeting convened by the Law and Society Association (LSA) and, with over four thousand delegates from almost one hundred countries, the largest to date. The theme was *Rage, Reckoning, and Remedy*. The call for papers put race, colonialism and the legacies of slavery at the centre of the meeting and asked how socio-legal scholarship might help build more equitable societies in the wake of these histories (LSA 2022).

Five months earlier, on 24 February 2022, Russia had launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine. By the time delegates gathered in Lisbon, Russian forces occupied large parts of southern and eastern Ukraine and Mariupol lay in ruins. Evidence of the killing of civilians in Bucha had been public since April. Russian penal colonies were being used as sites of filtration and detention for Ukrainian civilians and prisoners of war, and the recruitment of Russian prisoners to fight in Ukraine was about to begin in earnest (Piacentini and Slade 2024). Yet at a meeting dedicated to reckoning with colonial violence, the war was barely mentioned. Frederick Cooper (2025) has described the war as a blatant instance of 're-imperialization'. Even so, a meeting of experts explicitly committed to decolonizing law and society had little to say about it.

The LSA's global meetings have done a great deal to internationalize socio-legal studies, and the intention here is not to single the association out. The silence in Lisbon was symptomatic of something broader. The societies of East-Central Europe and Eurasia (ECEE) sit awkwardly, if at all, within the maps of the world that decolonizing and southernizing scholarship has drawn. Over two decades ago, David Chioni Moore (2001) identified a 'double silence' on the region. Postcolonial studies had left it out, while area studies scholars had treated its societies as anything but postcolonial. The later rise of the Global North and Global South as organizing categories added a 'dual exclusion', in which societies that fit neither side of the binary are passed over (Piacentini and Slade 2024). Ukraine is a case in point, a country that is, as Müller (2020) argues, too rich to be in the South, too poor to be in the North.

This special issue is one response to these exclusions. It brings together seven articles and a commentary that grew out of a workshop held at the International Institute for the Sociology of Law in Oñati in April 2024. The authors of the articles all come from the region itself, from Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, Moldova, Kazakhstan and Russia. The papers take different theoretical positions, but each questions whether frameworks built elsewhere can account for socio-legal dynamics in the region. In what follows, we first describe how the collection came about. We then set out the concept of the Global East that animated the workshop and the critiques of it that emerged there. We go on to summarize the contributions and draw out their common themes, before turning to a Latin American reading of the collection, and then concluding with some further thoughts on the utility of the Global East concept.

## 2. From Lisbon to Oñati

After Lisbon, a group of us involved with this special issue applied to the LSA's funding call for Global Collaboration Projects, a small grants programme for workshops intended to build networks of scholars outside the Global North. Noting the lack of attention to

Ukraine at the Lisbon meeting, we applied for funds to hold a workshop on criminology and socio-legal studies in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Unfortunately, that application was rejected. Naturally such funding calls are very competitive but we felt at the time that the rejection illustrated how hard it can be to make the case for the region to institutions whose priorities have been set by the North/South frame, even when those institutions are committed to decolonizing the field.

Despite this setback, we then applied to hold a workshop at the International Institute for the Sociology of Law in Oñati. The Institute agreed to host the workshop and provided the venue, administrative support and the other in-kind benefits of an Oñati workshop, including a route to publication in the *Oñati Socio-Legal Series*. Our application, prepared with Matthew Light, Kaja Gadowska, Erica Marat and Lauren McCarthy, set out three goals. The first was to understand and correct the erasure of ECEE from southernizing and decolonizing movements in criminology and socio-legal studies. The second was to redistribute knowledge production towards the region by building an 'eastern' southernizing network. The third was to develop a conceptual language for thinking about coloniality and knowledge production in what we tentatively called the 'Global East'. In line with the second goal, we gave priority to early-career scholars from Ukraine, the Caucasus and Central Asia, the parts of the region with the most recent experience of colonial rule.

Getting people to Oñati was a separate problem. For a scholar in Tbilisi or a lecturer from Kharkiv, the cost of travel to Spain was prohibitive, and the absence of such scholars would have reproduced the very silences we set out to address. Matthew Light (University of Toronto) and Anne-Marie Singh (Toronto Metropolitan University) secured a Connection Grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) to cover participants' attendance. They also did the time-consuming work of administering those funds and organizing the workshop's logistics, with assistance from Diego Tuesta (University of Toronto), so that everyone could be in the same place at the same time. Without them, the workshop would have been much smaller and would have included far fewer scholars from the region.

The workshop took place over two days in April 2024. Mónica Serrano of El Colegio de México opened proceedings with reflections on transitional justice in Latin America and its lessons for the ECEE region. Papers covered municipal policing as well as penal reform in Ukraine, corruption in Poland, prisoner self-governance in Moldova, legal gender recognition across the region, punitiveness in Kazakhstan, and politics and violence in the South Caucasus. Some of these papers have since been published elsewhere (e.g. Light *et al.* 2025, Slade 2026). Many of the papers presented became the articles of this special issue. For the purposes of the special issue, Matthew Light, Anne-Marie Singh, and Kaja Gadowska worked with us as co-editors of the articles before and after they were passed for external review. We acknowledge and appreciate their work in supporting the authors and helping develop these pieces for publication. The papers all address in some way or another the central question of the workshop: how might we imagine a Global East in criminology and socio-legal studies, and what would these fields gain from it?

## 3. The Global East as provocation

The organizing idea of the workshop was the Global East, a term with several genealogies. The historian Jie-Hyun Lim (2022) writes of 'Global Easts' in the plural. For Lim, the East is not a fixed geographical or historical entity. It is a 'problem space' in which the East is always a problem, and the supposed solution is to become the West. Lim arrived at this view through his own move between two Easts, from anticommunist South Korea to postcommunist Poland. In both places, he found that nationalist and Marxist historians alike measured their national pasts by how far they deviated from a Western norm. In human geography, Martin Müller (2020) used the term for the societies that fall between North and South. These are the societies that took part in the twentieth century's attempt to build communism, and he argues that they are overlooked because they do not fit the frame through which the global is usually imagined.

In criminology, Piacentini and Slade (2024) took up Müller's arguments to suggest that punishment and society studies had largely ignored a region that produced, by some distance, the most extensive systems of convict settler colonialism and mass incarceration in modern history. They defined the Global East as a relation of betweenness, a shorthand for power relations that cannot be sorted neatly into colonizer and colonized. Following Tlostanova (2012), the concept drew on the notions of double difference and subaltern empire, a condition, often attributed to the Russian Empire, of being subjugated by more powerful empires while simultaneously expanding and othering one's own colonial possessions. The Global East concept also sought greater recognition for peoples subjugated by regimes that opposed the West and espoused emancipatory ideologies while imprisoning and killing millions in their name. As such, and following Spivak (1988) and Müller (2020), Piacentini and Slade proposed the Global East as a form of strategic essentialism, a banner under which heterogeneous and marginalized groups could impact on disciplines that had overlooked them.

Lim (2022) concedes that his problem space is limited by its Northern Hemisphere focus, and that the relationship between the Global East and the Global South remains an open question. The workshop started from that question. We presented the Global East to participants as a provocation, and two contributions to this issue in particular address this provocation directly.

Ivan Shmatko's article is the issue's most forceful statement of intent. It opens in the Ukrainian town of Kherson in June 2023, where Shmatko volunteered after the destruction of the Kakhovka dam by Russian military forces. The flood drowned hundreds of people and left up to a million without drinking water, and Russian artillery continued to shell the landing points where survivors came ashore. When Shmatko turned to the critical traditions of criminology and socio-legal studies, the fields of his doctoral research, to understand what he had seen, he found empirical work that overlooked Ukraine and theories that did not fit the realities there. Where the region did appear, Russia was sometimes portrayed as a victim of European aggression or as a welcome alternative to Northern hegemony. His diagnosis is that southern criminology remains attached to the idea of place, despite its declarations that North and South are metaphors for relations of power. Place-based thinking is necessarily synecdochic. A part is chosen to stand for the whole, and the parts chosen are those with the most symbolic capital. The South comes to mean Brazil, India and China rather than Malawi

or Tajikistan, and Europe comes to mean Britain and France rather than Moldova or Montenegro. Eastern and South-Eastern Europe resist this kind of synecdoche. Their histories are of nested orientalisms and overlapping empires, including the Ottoman, Habsburg and Russian, in which the same place may be postcolonial in relation to one empire and imperial in relation to another. Shmatko does not discuss the Global East directly, but the implication of his argument is plain. If the problem lies in tying knowledge to places, then any new geographical banner, the Global East included, risks reproducing the same erasures with a different set of privileged parts. From Shmatko's piece we learn that if we are to use the Global East as a term, it should not be a shorthand for any region.

Konstantine Eristavi's critique of the Global East concept comes from another direction. He credits the Global East with exposing the region's exclusion from criminological knowledge production. He argues, however, that Piacentini and Slade overemphasize the state-socialist past at the expense of neoliberal globalization, treat liminality as an essential feature of the East, and flatten inequalities within and between Eastern societies. In his terms, the concept offers a politics of recognition and neglects redistribution. It also risks depoliticizing anti-communism, which has served across the region as a language of power that legitimizes the inequalities of the new order. Eristavi proposes instead a *postsocialist Global East* that attends to the region's unequal incorporation into the world economy. He extends the concept of 'regimes of permission' from the literature on state-corporate crime (Whyte 2014) into a multi-scalar framework and applies it to Chiatura, a manganese mining town in western Georgia whose output makes up a tenth of the country's exports. There, zero-tolerance policing, mass incarceration, weakened labour protections and environmental deregulation, justified as a 'mental revolution' against Soviet thinking, made possible a local regime of extreme permission. Villages are subsiding into the mines beneath them and the Kvirila river runs black. Miners who protest meet with police intimidation.

Eristavi convincingly argues that the concept of the Global East leans towards recognition and does not yet provide a satisfying account of harm where Soviet legacies mix with peripheral placement within global capitalism. We consider this a productive extension to the Global East idea. Placing the two articles side by side, we see that Shmatko insists that critical scholarship must recognize the role of Russian imperialism, and the long shadow of overlapping colonialisms, in producing what we understand as a region in the first place. Eristavi warns that colonial history should not distract from the blunt postsocialist realities of how global capital impacts lives and communities. We read the remaining contributions as working between these two positions.

## 4. Legacies

Two articles make the clearest case for the lasting weight of Soviet colonial legacies. In line with Eristavi's warning, both also show how those legacies are activated in particular contemporary circumstances. Burciu writes as a former insider, having advised on prison reform with the Norwegian Mission of Rule of Law Advisers to Moldova and later served as the State Secretary responsible for corrections at the Ministry of Justice. The article traces the rise and fall of a pilot project to create a 'model prison for juveniles according to European standards' at the Goian correctional facility. The conditions for success seemed to be in place. The prison was small and newly

refurbished, and new staff were recruited and trained. Dormitories gave way to double-occupancy cells, and Norwegian practices of dynamic security and individual case management were introduced. In May 2015, three young prisoners escaped. Within months most of the reform-minded staff had gone and the 'Norwegian model' was abandoned. Later that year, the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture found evidence of ill-treatment by staff. Burciu treats the escape as the trigger and the persistence of what Piacentini and Slade (2015) called 'carceral collectivism' as the underlying cause for this reversal. The result is a hybrid in which European-style architecture houses an informal, originally Soviet, prisoner caste system that staff and prisoners continue to observe. The juveniles are now locked in their cells, and Burciu links this to rising frustration, violence and self-harm. Burciu places Moldova within and across North, South and East, as an EU candidate state with a long history of colonial subjugation by various powers, including the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union. The case study shows how thin Europeanization can be when local reformers equate a 'European prison' with shiny new infrastructure that they expect donors in richer countries to the West to fund, but do not invest in the changes to governance and management that Council of Europe standards demand in return.

Nona Shahnazarian's contribution turns from the prison to wartime violence. She asks why soldiers in the 2020 war over Nagorno-Karabakh filmed and circulated videos of their own war crimes, at evident cost to their own reputations and that of their state. Her material includes publicly available videos, forty-five biographical interviews and affective maps drawn by displaced residents of Hadrut, a town in Nagorno-Karabakh. Drawing on Lee Ann Fujii, Randall Collins and Roger Gould, she develops the concept of *exhibitionist violence*. Following Gould, she argues that violence becomes more extreme and more performative where the status hierarchy between conflicting groups is unclear. In the case of Armenians and Azerbaijanis, she traces this uncertainty to Soviet nationalities policy, which promised the equality of peoples while institutionalizing titular entitlements and leaving contests over territory and status unresolved. Both sides developed what she calls 'genealogies of humiliation', which were released when Soviet order collapsed. On this reading, the filmed atrocities carried messages to several audiences. To the victims, they signalled subordination. To the perpetrators' own group, they were a costly display of loyalty that silenced dissent. Meanwhile, the state projected a humane image abroad. The legacy Shahnazarian identifies is a structure of status injury built up over a long period, colonial in origin, that has shaped how violence was staged and read when war broke out.

## 5. Performing politics in the present

The three remaining articles deal with present dynamics. We suggest that they share a concern with politics as performance, in which states stage their legitimacy, compliance or defiance before particular audiences. In each case, the audience and the script are shaped by the country's position in the world economy and the international order, in particular what scholars of the Global East have called the condition of subaltern imperialism (Tlostanova 2012; Morozov 2015; Piacentini and Slade 2024).

Leonid Kosals asks what Russia's war against Ukraine does for the Russian regime at home. He argues that the war should be seen as the latest link in a chain of social transformation that began with the traumas of the 1990s, and not as an aberration or a

miscalculation. Those traumas produced a dysfunctional socioeconomic and political system and led many Russians towards ressentiment and an imagined imperial past. In 2023, eighty per cent of Russians regarded their country as a great power, while only thirty per cent said the same of the United States. In 2002, the figures had been 43 and 62 per cent respectively. Since elections can no longer confer legitimacy, the regime has had to find it elsewhere. Kosals builds a legitimacy index that combines polling on whether the country is heading in the right direction with data on politically motivated criminal cases in Russia. In his models, full-scale war has a larger positive effect on regime legitimacy than any other variable. He identifies four mechanisms at work: forced integration through new repressive legislation, propaganda of 'traditional values' and a 'besieged fortress' mentality, new material opportunities for marginalized groups, and the revival of Soviet practices of denunciation. This legitimacy is contested, however, and Kosals argues that it is eroding, which locks the regime into a cycle of increasing repression. In his account, the war has military objectives, but its causes lie in the regime's need to shore up its own legitimacy.

Mukasheva compares penal reform in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and China, three states that inherited the Soviet model of punishment. She develops the concept of *compliance performance* to explain why they have diverged. Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have ratified the core UN human rights treaties, established National Preventive Mechanisms against torture, accepted donor-funded reform projects and partly opened their prisons to civil society. China has done none of this. Mukasheva locates the difference in the audience each state performs for. The Central Asian states are precariously placed in the world economy. They depend on foreign investment and on Western markets to sell their oil, gas and gold, and they have to balance between much more powerful neighbours, China and Russia. They therefore perform compliance with international norms for audiences in Europe and North America while maintaining many features of the old Soviet models of correction in practice. China, a superpower in its own right, performs compliance but only for the Chinese Communist Party and only with that Party's ideological model of correction. In Central Asia, the result is a set of hybrid penal systems in which Soviet disciplinary practices coexist with selectively adopted global norms. The finding echoes Burciu's account of Europeanization as a façade that gives way when funding fails to arrive.

Yana Kirey-Sitnikova traces legal gender recognition across all fifteen post-Soviet states from the 1920s to the present, and the history she uncovers confounds expectations. Soviet regulations permitted legal gender recognition from 1926. In the 2000s, when the issue was treated as a technical medical matter, most successor states borrowed these provisions, often word for word, as part of Russian templates for civil status legislation. A colonial legacy thus provided the legal basis for trans rights. From the mid-2000s, trans activists looked west for models, drawing on international standards of care and British clinical guidelines. Following Kiossev (2010), Kirey-Sitnikova describes this as a form of self-colonization. A backlash followed: in 2023, Russian lawmakers banned legal gender recognition and gender-affirming care. They presented the ban as liberation from the West's colonization of a weakened Russia in the 1990s, although their arguments were borrowed from Western anti-LGBT+ movements. Georgia followed in 2024, borrowing directly from Russian legislation. As a result, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan still permit legal gender recognition, at least on paper, while Russia and Georgia do not.

For Kirey-Sitnikova, Russia here fits the idea of a subaltern empire closely, as both colonizer and colonized.

Taken together, these articles suggest that each performance is shaped by the state's global position. Kazakhstan performs compliance for European human rights bodies because it needs European investment, markets and goodwill. Russia performs the role of the protector of traditional values and defender of the Global South against Western military (in the case of its war on Ukraine) and cultural (in the case of its war on trans rights) hegemony. The opposition is stronger in discourse than in practice, since Russia imports some of the very scripts it uses to frame its opposition to the West.

None of these case studies fits easily into a North/South binary. The papers reveal complicated relationships with colonialism. Apart from China, all the states covered were once part of the Soviet Union, a state that for most of the twentieth century made claims to represent world-revolutionary models of economy, society and criminal justice, as well as ostensibly being at the vanguard of the liberation of the Global South from Western colonialism. At the same time, the Soviet Union produced its own forms of domination the legacies of which are compounded by the precarious position these states occupy in the world economy today. This condition, we contend, might be best termed one of the Global East, existing in the liminality and betweenness, beyond North and South, of how law and society operate in these cases.

## 6. A view from Latin America

Latin American scholars have been among the main drivers of the southernizing turn in criminology and socio-legal studies, so we wanted to know how the collection reads from there. Mónica Serrano, who opened the Oñati workshop with a discussion of transitional justice in Latin America, closes the issue with a commentary.

Serrano begins with the response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Mexico was then serving on the UN Security Council. Mexico and Brazil abstained on the General Assembly resolution of 2 March 2022 condemning the aggression. They abstained again on 7 April, when the Assembly voted to suspend Russia from the Human Rights Council despite mounting evidence of war crimes. Mexico refused to join sanctions. President López Obrador used his daily press conferences to recall past invasions of Mexico and his government's commitment to non-intervention, and declined to condemn the invasion itself. Serrano concludes that states which guard their own sovereignty closely chose not to invoke international law on Ukraine's behalf. For her, this was a failure of international politics more than of international law.

In our reading, Serrano's account shows that many Latin American states remain unsure quite what to make of the order of things in Eurasia, which is itself a function of the region's liminality and complex relationship to colonial power. Their ambivalence about the war may reflect the memory of a power that long claimed to stand with the colonized. During the Cold War, the Soviet Union supported national liberation movements and competed with the West for influence across Africa, Asia and Latin America. As Serrano notes, it also exported its models of correction and re-education to Cuba and Nicaragua (see also Mark and Betts 2022; Piacentini and Slade 2024). For a continent whose memory of foreign intervention is mostly of the United States, Russia can still look more like a counterweight to the hegemon than a colonizer. This brings out the liminality of the

Global East. Russia is a colonizer that sees itself as colonized by the West and presents itself as the liberator of other colonized peoples. From the South, the Global East is visible, but through a Cold War lens that obscures its imperial character.

Serrano also finds parallels between the two regions. Shahnazarian's exhibitionist violence resembles the staged brutality of criminal groups in Mexico and Colombia, where violence is likewise addressed to particular audiences in a bid for status. The 'dirty togetherness' that Kosals identifies in wartime Russia has an analogue in the social effects of Latin America's wars on drugs. Eristavi's regimes of extreme permission are familiar wherever foreign mining has boomed in the Americas (Tuesta and Paredes 2025). But there is also a contrast that Serrano draws attention to. The donor-supported, if uneven, penal reforms of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Moldova differ markedly from Latin America's turn to mass incarceration and mega-prisons such as those in El Salvador. Many countries of post-Soviet Eurasia have decarcerated for the past couple of decades while prisons in Latin America have boomed. On this point, there may be lessons to transfer from East to South.

## 7. Cross-cutting themes and conclusion

We see three themes running through the collection that, for us at least, are indicative of the Global East. The first is the instability of the positions of colonizer and colonized. In Shmatko's paper he describes the Black Sea slaving zone where Tatars and Cossacks were raiders and captives in turn. Shahnazarian's Armenians and Azerbaijanis were both subjects of the Soviet nationalities regime, and the status injuries it produced between them later fuelled atrocity. Burciu places Moldova within and across North, South and East. Kosals and Kirey-Sitnikova describe an empire that imagines itself as the West's victim, and Serrano's commentary recalls that the same empire long claimed to be the liberator of what used to be called the Third World. In the region, domination is nested and positions can reverse, which a binary of North and South has difficulty registering.

The second theme is that the effects of legacies depend on how and when they are activated. Carceral collectivism reasserted itself at Goian after an escape gave defenders of the old way of doing things an opening. Genealogies of humiliation were released when Soviet rule collapsed and were fuelled by long-standing grievances produced by the official policies of that rule. In Georgia, as Eristavi shows, the Soviet past was used to justify neoliberal reform. In Kirey-Sitnikova's account, a Soviet legacy provided the legal basis for trans rights, which Russia's anti-Western turn is now dismantling. Legacies matter, then, but their effects depend on how they are shaped by social and political actors and to what end they are invoked.

The third theme is performance and the global conditions that shape it. States in the region stage compliance, defiance or restraint for particular audiences, and the audiences they choose reflect their place in the world economy and the international order. Kazakhstan's human rights reforms and Russia's anti-Western campaigns look like opposites. We would argue that both respond to the same question of where a state stands in relation to Western power and capital.

The concept of the Global East is sharpened by Shmatko's critique which warns against treating the concept as a region. Eristavi shows that it cannot rest on recognition alone,

since the region's harms are also produced by its peripheral place in global capitalism. In conclusion, we think that the special issue shows that the concept can offer what Lim (2022) calls a problem space. In this regard, the Global East should not be seen as a separate way of thinking beyond the North and South. We see it as an extension of the southernizing project in criminology that aims at developing theory from overlooked sites and amplifying indigenous voices from those sites. But in contrast to the southernizing tradition, the Global East directs attention to relations of domination that are nested, shifting and reversible, in which the colonized can become the colonizer and an empire can claim the mantle of the oppressed with real present-day consequences for socio-legal realities. Naturally, this means the East can be anywhere where such relations, and the attributes just ascribed to them, exist. We believe the articles collected here show what becomes visible when such relations are taken seriously.

Finally, the articles also show the value of scholarship by those closest to these relations for the purpose of studying them. To give just three examples, we have in our collection a wartime volunteer in Kherson, a former reformer in Moldova's Ministry of Justice, and an anthropologist working with people displaced from a small town in Nagorno-Karabakh. These voices are distinct and insightful, and we hope they will be brought more fully into the conversations occurring in northern and southern criminology.

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