



Introduction

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Introduction: Engaging geopolitics through the Lens of the Intimate

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Abstract

In this introduction to the special section on “Engaging Geopolitics through the Lens of the Intimate”, we first locate the papers collected here in the context of developing an ‘Intimate Geopolitics’ project at the University of Manchester. We then review the importance of ‘intimacy’ and the concept of ‘the intimate’ across an array of disciplinary studies, drawing especially on the rich body of work by critical geopolitics scholars who have long challenged categorical binaries and territorial boundaries. Our focus here is exploring what insights we can bring to understanding the nexus of intimacy and global politics (Pratt and Rosner 2012), or ‘intimacy-geopolitics’ (Pain 2014), by deploying the lens of the intimate--understood as a variety of processes of attachment and relationality--in six globally dispersed case studies. Collectively, the papers presented here not only engage a wide range of issues and locations, but rather than continuing the predominance of studies at a ‘broad conceptual’ level, they contribute to research engaging geographically “specific spaces and practices” (Little 2019, 2). We note that the papers ‘cluster’ around issues of migration, borders, ‘home’, asylum and visa regimes, prompting us to suggest that the papers productively inform three foci of inquiry. Specifically, the papers 1) enrich our understanding of bordercrossing beyond simple association of this with the movement of people, things and ideas; 2) deepen our understanding of how geopolitics is constituted by forms of attachments and relationality that are *integral* to forms of governance; and 3) help us explore how attachments are not simply additive but *productive* of geopolitical concerns.

Introduction

This special section considers how we can think about geopolitics through the lens of the intimate and explores doing so in case studies that produce multiple insights. The papers are some of those presented at a workshop on 3-4 November 2016 on the topic ‘Intimate Geopolitics’ that took place in the People’s History Museum in Manchester.¹ Two of the editors, Aoileann and Elena, became interested in ‘the intimate’ as a topic through their own research on the geopolitics of mobility, which links questions of nationality, citizenship, migration and border crossing to issues of marriage, birth(right), social reproduction, familial relations and language acquisition (Barabantseva 2015; Barabantseva and Grillot 2018; Ní Mhurchú 2016a, 2016b). Having identified their common interest, they were keen to work with V. Spike Peterson, whose early and ongoing research on ‘intimacy in/and IR’ explores how socio-cultural processes and regulatory practices of governance produce, and are produced by, (racialised) sexual/marital/familial arrangements, householding practices, accumulation processes and citizenship logics. Our collaboration was made possible through a six-month Leverhulme Visiting Professorship² that brought Spike to the University of Manchester. This provided the opportunity to stimulate interest in intimacy as an area of inquiry, to enable sustained scholarly exchanges, and to develop a new ‘Intimate Geopolitics’ project. We were

¹V. Spike Peterson’s keynote address, ‘The Love of Marriage: Intimacy, Geopolitics and the State,’ examined how marriage has worked to shape racial politics and global inequalities; it can be viewed via the following link along with a summary of the conference and papers presented: <https://politicalhorizons.wordpress.com/2016/11/28/intimate-geopolitics-workshop-03112016-04112016/>

² Grant reference VP2-2015-014.

particularly interested to explore the dynamic ways in which ‘the intimate’ can be understood as a terrain of inquiry which re-centers research, study and knowledge about geopolitics and international relations as a relationship across thinking and feeling self/selves and a wide array of practices of regulation and governance.

In this special section we adopt the concept of ‘lens’ beyond its instrumental application as a device that focuses on a particular situation at a given moment in time. Rather, we use it to consider how the intimate is productive as a heuristic tool of enquiry enabling a kaleidoscopic view of geopolitics. From this perspective, a focus on the intimate extends inquiry beyond more familiar ‘personal’, ‘private’ attachments to encompass the variety of complex, protean power relations operating in our (neo)colonial present. The latter references the persistence of coloniality in current practices of biopolitical regulation and late liberalism’s sexualized, racialized (neo)imperial projects (Lowe 2015; Povinelli 2006; Stoler 2016). Our expansive view of the intimate thus foregrounds multi-scalar connections across global-local and past-present continuums, as well as connections across sites of desire, sexuality, marriage, family, (re)production, biopolitical governance, and geopolitical power relations. Not least, a focus on the intimate draws attention to how intense emotional attachments -- typically relegated to the ostensibly ‘private’ domain of sexuality, family and household -- in reality shape and are contoured by historical residues, socio-cultural norms, state-centric policies and global economic dynamics.

Recognizing that the politics of research practices raise questions of complicity, resistance and reproduction of existing power relations, we understand the lens of the intimate as a methodological stance that fosters awareness of, and attention to, the thinking/feeling subjectivities of researchers when engaging in research (Bondi 2005; Peterson, Barabantseva and Ní Mhurchú 2018). This extends to reflecting on power relations at work during fieldwork activities, and how these have both immediate and more enduring effects on those participating in and/or affected by the research process (Ackerly, Stern and True 2006; Sylvester 2011). A key point is the importance of closer attention to the lived experience and thought processes of those who are subjects of, and subjected to, the researcher’s interpretation of dynamic, complex practices occurring in historically embedded but also historically unique and interactive contexts (Kuusisto-Arponen and Gilmartin 2015; Sharp 2009). This perspective foregrounds the importance of ‘engag[ing] with others, to work through ethical issues of trust, responsibility, empathy and compassion.... so that we are able to recognise how space and power are differentially experienced and embodied” (Dixon and Marston 2011, 446; Makarychev 2018). Together, these points suggest how the intimate as a lens helps make visible the emotional attachments, relational sites, governing modes, and the substance and qualities of complex relationships that the ‘private’ and the structural produce *through* intimacy.

Collectively the papers in this special issue aim to highlight the diversity of ‘political work’ that intimacy does and how it pervasively shapes geopolitics. Our focus on the intimate, as such, encompasses but also goes beyond interest in the embodied, everyday manifestations of geopolitics to trace and understand more broadly how lived experiences are intrinsically embedded within *and* productive of wider historical, cultural, socio-economic and geopolitical processes.

The Intimate and Geopolitics

The space to work the intimate into analyses of geopolitics has been enabled by a proliferation

of writing in feminist, queer and postcolonial studies (Ahmed 2004; Bell and Binnie 2000; Berlant 1998; Browne, Lim and Brown 2007; Dixon and Marston 2011; Dowler and Sharp 2001; Hyndman 2004; Ling 2002; Lowe 2015; Pain 2009, 2014; Peterson 1999, 2017; Pratt and Rosner 2012; Staeheli, Kofman and Peake 2004; Stoler 2002, 2016; Valentine 2008; Wright 2006, 2010). We build on this wide-ranging literature and especially the rich body of work by feminist scholars who have “challenged the boundaries of the (geo)political, illustrating how even the seemingly apolitical and intimate sites of the home and body are fundamental loci at which geopolitical power is made and contested” (Williams and Massaro 2013, 752). Similarly, Kate Botterill, Peter Hopkins and Gurchathen Sanghera (2018, 1-2) write: “geopolitics is not defined as macro-scale political discourse and action that impacts *on* intimate, embodied and emotional life, rather the two are co-constituted and entangled.” As these points suggest, it is the nexus, co-production, or mutual constitution of the intimate and geopolitics that our contributors investigate in six culturally and geographically diverse case studies.

A key strength of this field of inquiry is that it allows us to think about geopolitics beyond specific spaces and/or definitively bounded categories and territories. We suggest multiple, overlapping ways that this productively expands and enriches our understanding of intimate geopolitics.

As already noted and feminists have long argued, emotions and affective attachments are not separable from but variously permeate *all* sites, spaces, levels and scales of social interactions and power relations (Cowen and Story 2013; Davidson, Bondi and Smith 2005; Sharp 2009; Valentine 2008). In this sense, the intimate operates not only in or as ‘embodied social relations’ (Mountz and Hyndman 2006, 447) but also more broadly as a variety of processes of attachment and relationality. These processes are variously understood in terms of familiarity and comfort (Berlant 1998), spheres of subjectification (Oswin and Olund 2010), extreme emotions (Pain 2009; Pain and Smith 2008), and affective investments in ‘regimes of the normal’ (Eng, Halberstam and Muñoz 2005, 1; Peterson 2014; Wright 2010). A contribution of recent scholarship is the exposition of how emotions and affect are inseparable from political geographies (Navaro-Yashin 2012; Pain 2009; Pain and Staeheli 2014; Peterson 2017) and state governing practices (Harker and Martin 2012; Laszczkowski and Reeves 2015; Oswin and Olund 2010).

By rejecting the premise of categorically bounded distinctions, this literature offers an alternative starting point for interrogating simplistic binaries, social hierarchies and levels of analysis. Rather than fixity, this is a starting point that foregrounds fluidity, complexity and interconnection. A particular aspect of the intimate pointed to here is the way in which it does not sit in a dichotomous relationship to the global as ‘the local’ ostensibly does. It therefore avoids false opposition, allowing us to consider the co-constitution of scales and spheres of (re)production (Dowler and Sharp 2001; England 2003; Hyndman 2004), and how the global draws meaning from and gives meaning to the concept of the local (Pratt and Rosner 2012, 16–17). As Geraldine Pratt and Victoria Rosner (2012) and Natalie Oswin and Eric Olund (2010) variously discuss, the intimate is not simply private or personal, but infused with worldliness beyond the personal while it is also differently shaped by particular cultural, social and political contexts. These starting points and conceptual innovations, now widely adopted in interdisciplinary research on geopolitics, are central to troubling the presumption of hierarchies and their differential valorizations when referencing social status, levels of analysis and/or geographical scales.

We also draw on inter-disciplinary research to foreground an intimate-geopolitics connection

that is rarely acknowledged but figures in our papers and profoundly shapes geopolitical concerns. The point is not to privilege states but to recognize how the juridical powers that *only states have* are used to regulate intimacy in ways that produce global inequalities--and all that that entails geopolitically. In brief, we note that all states (in pursuit of inter-generational continuity) regulate intimate relations by *legally* sanctioning specific sexual, marital and 'family' forms, and the state's preferred forms are 'enforced' both by socio-cultural norms *and* the juridical power of the state. Regulating 'family' also regulates inheritance and accumulation of resources, which manifests today in stark between-nation inequalities. These inequalities – as well as the insecurities, conflicts, refugees and migration issues they involve – are then exacerbated by birthright (inherited) citizenship, which is based on the *state's* determination of which intimate marital and family relations are 'legitimate'.³ Moreover, in pursuit of stability, states expect and cultivate appropriately socialized citizen-subjects. These commitments are evident in governing practices that emphasise competence and conformity with regard to cultural norms, heteropatriarchal families, language proficiency, and national allegiance.

Drawing on this background and insights, we posit an understanding of the intimate as attachments and complex relationships spanning realms of emotion, interactive experiences and governance that are co-produced and mutually constitutive, rather than simply opposing each other in binaries or co-existing on various levels that can be ordered hierarchically. And we posit its importance for more adequately interpreting the spatial and temporal complexities of geopolitics. In what follows we consider some key ways in which this set of essays contributes to understanding geopolitical dynamics by adopting the intimate as a lens.

Attachments, Bordercrossing and Geopolitics

The papers in this special section link 'the intimate' to a variety of relational processes and attachments. Specifically, they relate affective sites of desire, family, the pursuit of self-realization and search for belonging to geopolitical concerns regarding order and borders, surveillance and biosecurity, identity and community. Doing so, they demonstrate how starting with attachments enables us to see and interpret the world in terms of fluid and interactive relations across the global-local and past-present, and to connect – through their reliance on and co-production of each other – terrains of governing and state regulation *with* individual and familial aspirations and affective desires.

Using the intimate as a lens – by way of these processes of attachment – our papers open up and make visible important aspects of the everyday and embodied practices that produce and reflect geopolitical dynamics. Rather than general, expansive explorations of geopolitics, the papers draw attention to the specificity of particular milieu. Geopolitical grounded-ness is studied through a combination of particular geopolitical issues and their manifestations in specific attachments in specific spatial-temporal contexts. This includes embodied and

³The vast majority of people acquire citizenship by birthright: being born on a nation's soil or of a citizen parent. The principle of inheriting citizenship in a nation translates into inheriting the average income in that nation, which today means stark differences in life chances and well-being simply based on the *location* of one's birth. If citizenship determines 80% of one's life chances (Milanovic 2012), and birthright – involving state-sanctioned 'family' relations – determines citizenship, then the intimate relations codified as 'family' are enormously consequential for geopolitics (see also Brubaker 2015; Isin 2012; Peterson 2014, 2018; Shachar and Hirschl 2007; Stevens 1999).

racialised everyday injustices towards refugees in Calais (Tyerman); the logics of transnational familial relationships in Cumbria (Ní Mhurchú); the negotiations of parental rights and children's citizenship across the China-Russian border (Barabantseva); the entanglements of heteronormative power, citizenship, and affect in the UK family visa process (Turner and Vera Espinoza); the 'dilemmatic space' of home and the role of language acquisition for belonging in a foreign community (Shindo); as well as bordering practices and their circumvention through embodied resistances and affective-sexual liaisons in Cuba (Daigle).

Importantly, these papers all demonstrate how deploying the intimate provides an expansive starting point that is *neither* the individual nor a nuanced understanding of 'victim', which are too often posed in contrast to the (implicitly efficacious) 'agent' of global processes. Through a lens on the intimate, the papers explore a series of geopolitical issues and their co-production of affective attachments, embodied experiences and material practices. In doing so, they illuminate geopolitical dynamics as complementary, conflictual and even contradictory relationships across thinking and feeling self/selves and an array of governance practices. More specifically, the papers expand our understanding of geopolitical dynamics through the lens of the intimate in three ways.

1. Bordercrossing as processes of negotiation

Firstly, the papers enrich our understanding of bordercrossing beyond an association with the movement of people, things and ideas. Rather, bordercrossing is revealed as negotiations in pursuit of individual aspirations that are *at the same time* rehearsals of affective attachments. The papers illuminate this by pointing to the manner in which concepts traditionally conceived as static – including home, the body, self, marriage, family, community and nation – are sustained *and* transformed by negotiating conflictual aspirations and attachments. For example, several papers draw attention to desired yet fragile and continuous constructions of 'home'. This may entail practices of belonging and loss that simultaneously energise transnational solidarities, widen kinship connections and deploy multiscalar connections beyond the country of origin and domicile, even while 'home' remains an ambiguous space of doubt and uncertainty (Ní Mhurchú; Turner and Vera Espinoza; Shindo). In particular, several of these papers emphasise the role of wide-ranging emotional dynamics at play in bordercrossing. These extend beyond love or fear (which have tended to be prioritised in international studies [D'Aoust 2014; Pain 2009]) to include disappointment, despair, loss, vulnerability, anger, and uncertainty as well as desire, affection, familiarity and hope, which highlights the complexities of negotiations in attachment and aspiration that underpin bordercrossings (Barabantseva; Ní Mhurchú; Turner and Vera Espinoza). Other papers specifically draw attention to how 'community' and 'bodies' are materialised through emotional struggles across sexual pleasures (Daigle), language use strategies (Shindo), as well as daily necessities such as eating, sleeping, and washing (Tyerman).

The papers as such draw attention to the importance of understanding bordercrossing and its entanglements as inseparable from strategies of survival and resourceful ways of being. They do so, for example, by considering the ways in which borders are crossed and the foreign is experienced through sexual-affective relations and pleasure (Daigle); dislocated family attachments (Ní Mhurchú); foreign marriage experience and citizenship strategies for children (Barabantseva); mastering the host community's language (Shindo); struggling to access food, shelter, and bodily security (Tyerman); and emotional anguish in representing conjugal

relationships as ‘adequately conforming’ to state sanctioned practices (Turner and Vera Espinoza).

Negotiating intimate processes of transgressing borders and norms, encountering and defying the regulatory and disciplinary power of the state, and reinvention of subjectivities are shown here to be closely connected with resistance to ‘being contained’. For example, Shindo notes how the migrant desire to integrate into the host community through the mastery of their language is in tension with a desire to remain socio-culturally deviant. In her analysis immigrants remain ‘suspicious’ of their new home where they cannot express their emotions easily in the local language, which renders their feelings ‘untranslatable,’ hence contextually illegible and effectively invalidated. Elsewhere, Turner and Vera Espinoza explore emotional dilemmas of those who transgress a particular configuration of the British norm of ‘white familial domesticity’ and confront daunting negotiations of the British visa regime. They observe that to qualify for inclusion in the visa regime, norm transgressors (such as same-sex couples) have to mimic practices of reproductive domesticity legitimated by the state – thus constantly escaping and being (re)contained by it. In addition to these, Barabantseva examines how post-Soviet women in China transgress marital norms and traditional family structures through a desire to retain the choice of leaving their marriage without having to leave their children behind. Finally, Daigle explores how transgressing the Cuban government ban on sexual-affective relations with foreigners is linked to desire for experiences of the international, as well as acquiring linguistic and cross-cultural competencies.

2. *Geopolitics as constituted by attachments in processes of governance*

Second, the papers enhance our understanding of geopolitics as constituted by forms of attachments that are integral to forms of governance. They do so by signalling deep connections across spheres of governance, emotions, norms, rationalities and the everyday, which criss-cross social relations more generally and are never simply focused in particular areas and/or among certain types of peoples. They explore how forms of attachment are not discrete from forms of governance; rather, they continually complement, complicate, resist and change practices and norms that affect society as a whole, including those who are inadvertently or unintentionally participating in them. The papers expose, for example, how heterosexual family norms are reproduced in visa regimes and the state’s regulatory practices – notably, through child-rearing and consumptive domesticity as a qualifying condition for family visa in the UK (Turner and Vera Espinoza). At the same time, they document how such norms are potentially eroded and somewhat undermined through illicit personal connections and relationships of pleasure (Daigle) and alternative conceptions of ‘familial’ affiliations – such as friendship, linguistic or solidarity networks (Ní Mhurchú; Shindo; Tyerman).

Processes of negotiation and transgression pointed to in these papers therefore open up space for expressions and reinventions of attachments that shape and (re)define geopolitical practices. As noted earlier, codifications of intimacy in marriage and family laws generate global inequalities that increase transnational migrations as often the most promising way to improve one’s life chances (Milanovic 2012). And migration is a *family* matter, as virtually all migrants strategise and act not as lone individuals but in relation to their emotional attachments and participation in contexts of intimate family/household relations (Peterson 2014). ‘Global householding’ is increasing worldwide and figures in most of our papers (Barabantseva; Ní Mhurchú; Shindo; Turner and Vera Espinoza; Tyerman). This references multiple ways in

which continual processes of *social* reproduction – pursuing marriage, earning income, accessing care, escaping persecution and militarised conflicts – extend beyond ‘immediate family’ and/or a single household location and occur across national boundaries (Douglass 2006; Peterson 2010). The scale and reach of these transnational processes – involving as much as one-sixth of the world’s population – signals their geopolitical significance.⁴

Migratory journeys are complicated and have varying effects. They often reconfigure processes for migrants and the societies that they move through, transforming familial norms (Ní Mhurchú 2015), labour relations, and the provision of care (Barabantseva 2015; Friedman and Mahdavi 2015). The contributions in this special section document how family and marriage migrations reproduce structural inequalities in the local labour market (Barabantseva; Ní Mhurchú) as well as renew the patriarchal norms and heteronormative practices instituted in marriage and immigration policies (Turner and Vera Espinoza). At the same time, they suggest that when dependency on family relations is broken and the imaginary stability of home and family is undermined, migrants reinvent their subjectivities, relationships and labour roles (Barabantseva; Ní Mhurchú; Shindo).

As states amplify regulation of intimate relations (Boehm 2012; Turner 2014), families and migrants affected by these practices are compelled to problematically reproduce the gendered, patriarchal and heterosexual norms of state-sanctioned marriage. This plays into a long history of circulating and expanding centralised state control regarding practices and claims to property, citizenship, and group identity. The papers here offer important insights regarding processes of governance that are underpinned by attachments. They do so in part by revealing how desires for inclusion, emotional belonging, and citizenship involve contradictory logics. Nation-states intentionally forge -- because they *depend on* -- individual and collective attachments to the ‘ontological fantasy’ of national identity, community, and inclusiveness’. Yet their actual governing practices include community ‘renewal’ through maintaining the ‘purity’ of the nation, radical exclusion or mandatory assimilation of migrants, and policing intimate relations through cultural and legal regulation of heteropatriarchal family norms and practices.⁵

3. *Geopolitics as produced through attachments*

Third, and closely related, these papers explore and illuminate how attachments are not simply additive but *productive* of geopolitical concerns. More specifically, they allow us to think about the manner in which attachments – such as desire for sustaining the ‘purity’ of the nation (Cuba), improving the socio-cultural ‘quality’ of the population (China), expecting language competence as a sign of successful immigrant assimilation (Australia), promoting ideas of romantic love and home as a necessary safe space (UK) – contribute to geopolitical concerns of reproducing and securing a community in ways that are exclusionary but beyond simple control. They also demonstrate how forms of attachment produce forms of resistance which circulate around them. Resistances described here appear in various forms: in particular, as sexual-affective economies of tourism through which isolated Cuban youth circumvent state disciplinary and border regimes by seeking relations with foreigners that connect them with

⁴**Error! Main Document Only.** Using different calculations, Douglass (2010) and Saffra and Graham (2010, 108-109) reach a similar estimate.

⁵While not highlighted here, we note the racial logics operating especially in producing and maintaining nationalisms and their exclusionary practices.

the international (Daigle), and also as alternative solidarities – in tension with the national spatial community – formed by immigrants responding to the territorial functioning of their host community as well as its expectations of integration through language mastery, romantic love, population quality, and the need to see home as a safe space (Barabantseva; Ní Mhurchú; Shindo; Turner and Vera Espinoza).

Furthermore, by revealing how forms of governance are deeply connected and overlap, affective attachments and everyday lives are revealed in the authors' own reflections on geopolitical knowledge and practices. This includes the researcher's complicity in reproducing geopolitical practices through migrations, visa applications, and marriage registration. Stated differently, the papers demonstrate how geopolitics is coproduced through attachments such as desire for integration -- on behalf of migrants *and* the state -- as well as state-centric codifying and policing of boundaries through marriage and familial norms. They also draw attention to the ways in which webs of attachments entwine the researchers with their subjects of inquiry in relationships of complicity and mutual dependence. These points illustrate how authors of this special section share a methodological orientation that attends to experiences and perspectives of those who have been too often cast as 'objects of postcolonial desire' and orientalist 'Others.'

Several authors reflect on their emotional investments in particular research topics, for various and complex reasons beyond mere academic interest. Turner and Vera Espinoza are actively affected by the UK family visa regime and acknowledge their discomfort with being implicated in the reproduction of the heteronormative state's ideas regarding 'the right way' to act as a family. They recognize, and regret, how their compliance with regulations makes it possible for the visa and bordering practices attached to it to continue in exclusionary ways. Tyerman reflects on his position of privilege in Calais, while making a case for solidarity with refugees there. For him, mundane acts of support, advice and shared living with refugees amid the bordering of everyday life become a way of resisting the racialised violence and injustices of borders. Despite feeling repulsed by one participant's behaviour, Daigle considers research priorities and concludes that for a deeper understanding of Cuban sexual-affective economies, it is important to include her record of their encounter. And beyond emotional investments that are directly experienced, researchers acknowledge those which circulate around them in response to their research topics. Ní Mhurchú reflects upon the emotion of surprise – that there is multiculturalism in northern England – which she experienced when talking with others about her research regarding the Cumbria Multicultural Women's Network (CMWN). She argues that this is an important indicator of how identity and belonging have been framed in limited ways – by confining the presence of multiculturalism to large urban areas *in contrast to* less urban and more rural ones – thus reproducing dichotomised ways of thinking about culture in the UK.

Conclusion

Collectively, the papers in this special section point to the spatial and temporal complexities of geopolitics and the integral nature of attachments within, permeating, and variously constituting geopolitics. In clarifying how we deploy the lens of the intimate, we highlight concepts of attachment and co-production. Rather than simple proximity, these can be understood as working to different degrees of intensity and linked to different modes of interaction. Emphasizing the lens of the intimate as a methodological stance, the papers explore emotional attachments that pervade and are produced by bordercrossings, as well as the

attachments of ‘crossers of borders themselves’ (Hyndman 2012, 243). This orientation takes account of the thinking/feeling subjectivities of the researchers *and* those around them, thus making connections with ‘objects’ of geopolitical study through co-constitutive attachments.

This set of papers is relatively unique in being based on fieldwork in globally dispersed and culturally diverse sites. The research generated by this wide array of cases thus contributes by expanding the body of work engaging spatially *specific* locations and practices. At the same time, these starting points afford exploration of geopolitical issues in relation to everyday, emotional and embodied practices, as rendered legible here in managing migration, pursuing citizenship, negotiating asylum, engaging crossborder intimacies, and producing ‘home’ and ‘family’ at multiple sites. Among the papers’ instructive insights, we note the complexities posed by the simultaneity of transgressing borders while also clinging to bordering logics that pervade governing practices and individual survival strategies.

We hope that these explorations of the intimate as an analytical and methodological lens will inform and contribute to future research, especially inquiries seeking to illuminate entanglements of thinking/feeling subjectivities within global dynamics of attachments and bordercrossings. Collectively, the papers in this special section illuminate geopolitical dynamics as complementary, conflictual and even contradictory relationships across thinking and feeling self/selves and a range of governance practices. Recognizing and reflecting on these complexities, we believe, opens up possibilities for geopolitical inquiry in novel and productive ways.

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