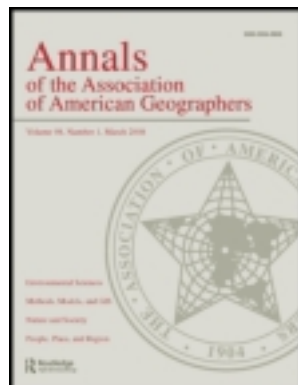


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Intimate Geopolitics: Religion, Marriage, and Reproductive Bodies in Leh, Ladakh

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Bodies not only *are* territory but also *make* territory. Recent scholarship interrogates the utility of hierarchical scale, attends to everyday practice and geopolitical strategy, and thinks through geographies of religion in terms of intersectionality and embodiedness. I build on these developments by reading them through the lens of territory and territoriality to explore how babies and reproductive bodies are caught up in geopolitical projects and religious narratives in the Leh district of India's contested Jammu and Kashmir State (J&K). J&K's Ladakh region has experienced the politicization of religious identity over the course of the twentieth century, culminating in the Buddhist majority's social boycott of Ladakhi Muslims and the subsequent territorialization of marriage and reproduction as sites of geopolitical possibility. This research explores the territorial logic manifest in a pronatal campaign and a ban on religious intermarriage, as well as the ways that people respond to this logic. The research draws on seventeen months of fieldwork conducted between 2004 and 2010, including a survey and interviews, as well as two oral history and photography projects with Ladakhi youth. *Key Words:* *feminist political geography, Jammu and Kashmir, religion and conflict, South Asia, territory.*

生育机构不仅是领土的一部分，它们也产生领土。最近有关规模层次效用的科研，考顾到日常实践和地缘战略，并通过宗教地理的交叉性和体现性来进行思考。我在这些学术发展的基础上，通过领土和属地的镜头来阅读它们，以探讨婴儿和生育机构是如何在印度有争议的查谟和克什米尔邦（J 和 K）乐园区，陷入地缘政治的项目和宗教叙事中的。J 和 K 的拉达克地区已经历了二十世纪过程中的宗教身份的政治化，最终作为地缘政治的可能性地点，在拉达克穆斯林的佛教多数的社会抵制，和随后的婚姻和繁殖疆域化过程中达到高潮。本研究探讨，在提倡高出生率的运动中，领土的逻辑表现和对宗教间通婚的禁止，以及人们应对这种逻辑的方式。研究利用了 2004 年和 2010 年之间进行的 17 个月的实地考察数据，包括调查和采访，以及两种口述的历史和对拉达克青年的摄影项目。关键词：女性主义的政治地理学，查谟和克什米尔，宗教和冲突，南亚，领土。

Los cuerpos no solamente *son* territorio sino también *hacen* territorio. La erudición reciente se pregunta sobre la utilidad de la escala jerárquica, atiende a la práctica cotidiana y la estrategia geopolítica y a través de las geografías de la religión piensa en términos de interseccionalidad e incorporeidad. Mi contribución respecto a estos desarrollos la hago leyéndolos a través de la lente del territorio y la territorialidad, para explorar cómo los bebés y los cuerpos reproductivos se ven atrapados en proyectos geopolíticos y narrativas religiosas del distrito Leh, en el disputado estado Jammu y Cachemira (J&K) de la India. La región Ladakhi de J&K ha experimentado la politización de la identidad religiosa durante el curso del siglo XX, culminando en el sabotaje social promovido por la mayoría budista de los musulmanes Ladakhi y la subsiguiente territorialización del matrimonio y la reproducción como sitios de posibilidad geopolítica. Esta investigación explora la lógica territorial manifiesta en una campaña pro nacimientos y un veto al matrimonio entre contrayentes de diferente religión, lo mismo que la manera como la gente responde a esta lógica. La investigación se desarrolló a través de diecisiete meses de trabajo de campo en 2004 y 2010, incluyendo estudios en la región y entrevistas, lo mismo que dos proyectos de historia oral y fotografía con jóvenes ladakhies. *Palabras clave:* *geografía política feminista, Jammu y Kashemira, religión y conflicto, Asia del Sur, territorio.*

When I last saw Fatima and Paljor together, they were sitting close together by a sunny window.¹ We were having lunch in their rented rooms on the edge of Leh town and they had prepared a feast; a love of cooking is one thing they shared. As we sat down, Paljor asked us to take a picture. Fatima put her arm through Paljor's and gazed at him for several seconds, the photo thus inadvertently

recording the kind of overt display of affection that guidebooks caution tourists is culturally inappropriate. As the two giggled and teased each other over questions of religion and politics, their affection, so complicated outside their flat, seemed simple and incontrovertible. But Fatima is a Shia Muslim, and Paljor a Buddhist. They fell in love far from Leh town, the political and economic center of Ladakh's Leh district, when they

were posted in the same remote village for their government jobs.

Out in that cold and dusty border town, their desire for one another teemed with possibility: They wanted to marry and share a life together. But only a few months after that lunch, I ran into Fatima in town: "Please tell Paljor, I'm pregnant. I want to be with him. Why is he ignoring me?" she pleaded. Paljor's family insisted she could not be trusted. Years later, Fatima and Paljor are firmly entrenched within their own religious circles, having consented to marriages arranged by their families. Fatima had an abortion, and each now has children with a new spouse. Their desire for one another caused them to defy family, religious nationalism, and state institutions that proved inextricable from these forces, but in the end that desire was defeated. Paljor had foreshadowed these events when he told me their marriage was politically problematic from the point of view of Shia Muslims, because it would result in children who would take the religion of their father, and thus, "from [Fatima], there will be three or four Buddhists."

On that summer afternoon, I was convinced that Fatima and Paljor would overcome political pressures; this hope turned out to be naïve. As the nineteen-year-old daughter of a Buddhist mother and Muslim father recently told me, such marriages are impossible today. In tandem with a reproximal (Warner 1991; Friedman 2000) reading of desire, religious identity has become inescapably political. With every body counted and written into religious-political and heterosexed nationhood (Nast 1998), the meeting of differently marked bodies is now forbidden, and desultory tea-time chatter chances on the topic of bodily rates of multiplication. Births and love affairs: Read through the lens of territorial sovereignty and an uncertain future, they cannot be untangled from geopolitical strategy.

Wedge between the conflicted borders of Pakistan and China, Jammu and Kashmir State (J&K) has been subject to territorial dispute since its inclusion in independent India in 1947 (Figure 1). J&K consists of three regions: the Kashmir valley with a Sunni Muslim majority; Jammu with a Hindu majority; and Ladakh, split between Tibetan Buddhists and (mainly Shia) Muslims. This formulaic description is itself a symptom of the territorialization of religion. In Ladakh's Buddhist majority Leh district,² political struggles have increasingly been voiced in the language of religious identity, culminating in the 1989 "agitation," in which the Ladakh Buddhist Association (LBA) imposed a social boycott on Ladakhi Muslims to get the attention of the national government (Bertelsen 1996; van Beek 2000; Aggarwal

2004). Buddhists were forbidden from social and economic interaction with Muslims under threat of physical coercion or monetary penalties (despite kinship and marital ties across the Buddhist-Muslim line). This action was part of an ongoing political movement in Leh district demanding independence from J&K (but not from India).

In the wake of this politicization of religious identity, Buddhists and Muslims have been abandoning once locally prevalent practices to conform more closely to modernizing discourses premised on the neat taxonomies of world religions. This shift from idiographic religiosity to more homogenized formulations is palpable in the architecture and location of new or remodeled mosques and temples, in bodily practices such as increased vegetarianism among Buddhist youth and stricter veiling among some Muslim women, and in the repudiation of syncretic practices as un-Islamic, un-Buddhist, and old-fashioned. Reaching deeper into the body are LBA anticontraception campaigns in rural areas, pressure on doctors at Leh's main hospital to discontinue sterilization surgeries, the promulgation of new interpretations of Buddhist doctrine that condemn family planning, the distribution of anti-abortion stickers, and interference with the provision of reproductive health services in rural areas.³ Although it was widely adopted in the late 1980s, many Buddhists now describe birth control as a sin, a disruption of the cycle of reincarnation, and a capitulation to the perceived threatening growth of the Muslim population. This is a struggle to manage birth, the body, and desire. Buddhist-Muslim intermarriage, once unremarkable, is now forcefully prevented, and Buddhist leaders claim that marriages of Buddhist women to Muslim men are part of a strategy of deliberate demographic aggression.

In Fatima and Paljor's story, love and babies are sites at which geopolitical strategy is animated and made material. The birth of a child contributes to territorial projects: The number of future voters, the number of future soldiers, and the demographic distribution of citizens populating and constituting state territory are determined by this complicated decision. Ethnic and religious boundaries are enforced or blurred by decisions about whom one can love or marry and with whom one can bear children, and babies become one way to speak about the geopolitical. In other contexts, these logics have resulted in catastrophic sexual and other forms of violence, as examined by Tyner (2008, 2009), contributors to edited volumes by Giles and Hyndman (2004), Mayer (2000), and Gregory and Pred (2007), and V. Das (1995), Menon and Bhasin (1998), and Butalia (2000)



Figure 1. Context map, produced by Timothy Stallmann. (Color figure available online.)

on partition. Here I have not addressed rape and other forms of sexualized violence encountered in war and other conflicts but rather the more subtle moments in which the geopolitical becomes entangled with the intimate. It is not my intention to disregard catastrophic violence but rather to attend to understated forms that can be overlooked despite the crucial ways that they reshape everyday life.

Recent scholarship calls for abandoning or reconfiguring hierarchical scale (Marston, Jones, and Woodward 2005; Mountz and Hyndman 2006; Pratt and Rosner 2006), attending to the lived experience of geopolitics (Dowler and Sharp 2001; Hyndman 2001, 2007; Secor 2001), and thinking geographies of religion through intersectionality, embodiedness, and subjectivity (Kong 2001; Holloway 2006; Hopkins 2007; Gökarişel 2009). The events of 11 September 2001 and the subsequent U.S. “war on terror,” geopolitical assumptions about deterritorialized threats, and the proliferation of states of exception require that geographers attend all the more to the making and unmaking of territory (Sparke 2005; Elden 2007, 2009; Gregory and Pred 2007; Hyndman and Mountz 2007; Ingram and Dodds 2009; Martin 2010).

I build on these developments through a reading of how reproductive bodies and potential babies are caught up in geopolitical projects, as entities that can not only be territory but can also make territory. How are political and territorial aspirations enacted and confounded

bodily practices? How is the geopolitical known through the body? The pronatal campaign and ban on interreligious marriage in Ladakh exposes both the territorializing potential of bodies and the force of the body’s corporeality, its subjectivity a material effect of circulating discourses, as well as the site of supple autonomy. This is a story about biopolitics, about disciplinary power working through the body, and about the instrumentalization of bodies but also about embodied knowledge of the geopolitical. I proceed by identifying relevant developments in the scholarship of geopolitics, religion, and territory, before tracing the articulation of geopolitical and potentially countergeopolitical understandings of bodies, babies, and love. It is also important to note that the representations of territory spiraling out of the war on terror rely on Orientalist readings of particular places and the religion of Islam as pathological and that this geo-graphing of space to bolster geopolitical objectives in turn relies on a set of discourses around bodies, particularly women’s bodies (Gregory 2004; Nagel 2005; Hopkins, Kwan, and Aitchison 2007; Oza 2007; Fluri 2009). I intend to disrupt, rather than reinforce, these Orientalist discourses through a nuanced account of women’s choices.

This research draws on seventeen months of research conducted between 2004 and 2010. The fieldwork includes life history interviews, a survey of 192 Ladakhi women,⁴ two oral history and photography workshops with Ladakhi youth, as well as interviews with

Table 1. Survey participants

Religion and residence	Number of survey participants ^a	Average age
Buddhist Leh residents	48	47
Shia Leh residents	22	37
Sunni Leh residents	35	41
Total Leh residents	105	
Buddhist rural residents	20	41
Shia rural residents	36	39
Sunni rural residents	31	41
Total rural residents	87	

^aThis refers only to those to whom I asked a standard set of survey questions. These are all women. Around fifty of these women were asked (and were generous enough) to spend an hour or so with me answering more in-depth questions about their lives. In addition to those who participated in this survey, I spoke with twenty-two others between 2007 and 2009 who were religious, political, or other leaders or who were gynecologists and obstetricians in Ladakh. Some of the interviews in this article come from a series of twenty-eight interviews that I conducted in 2004. Other information was gleaned from two youth projects conducted in 2008 and 2010.

politicians and religious leaders. Demographic information about the women who participated in the survey and the people quoted within this article is recorded in Tables 1 and 2. The survey was accomplished with the assistance of Hasina Bano (Maski). I conducted the survey and interviews in Ladakhi (a Tibetan dialect), unless the interviewee preferred English. Everyone I spoke with has been given a pseudonym, and identifying details have been removed.

Opening Up Territory

Since the turn of the millennium, calls for counter-geopolitics (Secor 2001), antigeopolitics (Routledge 2003), subaltern geopolitics (Sharp 2009), emotional geopolitics (Pain and Smith 2008; Pain 2009), feminist geopolitics (Dowler and Sharp 2001; Hyndman 2001, 2007; Secor 2001; F. M. Smith 2001; Staeheli 2001), and attention to the global intimate (Mountz and Hyndman 2006; Pratt and Rosner 2006) have been met by promising work. This movement builds on the critical geopolitics turn of the 1990s (Ó Tuathail 1996; Ó Tuathail and Dalby 1998) by treating geopolitical understandings of the world as produced knowledge and power, taking seriously the everyday lives of geopolitical practice, and questioning the lines between war and peace. Aggarwal and Bhan's (2009) work on securitization and civil society bears this trend out in a different disciplinary context, by articulating how development becomes a geopolitical project. The *Annals* issue on peace and armed conflict (Kobayashi 2009) reveals the fruitfulness of these approaches, through explorations of the child as a political object (Kleinfeld 2009), the rescaling of geopolitics and security to reflect the experience of migrants (Coleman 2009), and the health implications of the militant microbe (Loyd 2009). Formulations opposing health to violence obscure their coarticulation and allows health to be part of geopolitical strategy and legitimate specific forms of violence (Ingram 2005; Loyd 2009). This opening up is evident in the global politics of reproductive health (Ginsburg and Rapp 1995; Pigg and Adams 2005), manifest in a variety of political strategies and popular movements

Table 2. Demographic information for people quoted in the article

Participants quoted in the article	Age	Place of residence	Marital status	Number of children surviving childhood
Fatima	—	—	Married	—
Paljor (male)	—	—	Married	—
"19-year-old daughter"	19	Chushot	Unmarried	N/A
Nargis	49	Leh ^a	Married	One daughter
Diskit	68	Leh	Married	Three sons
Dolkar	40	Leh	Married	Two daughters
Laila	45	Leh	Married	Two daughters, four sons
Amgmo	66	Leh	Married	One daughter, five sons
Bilqis	41	Choglamsar	Married	One son
Muhammad (male)	77	Chushot	Married	Five daughters, one son
Nilza	57	Leh	Married	Two daughters, one son
Yangdol	45	Leh	Married	Two daughters, one son
Razia	49	Leh	Married	Two sons

^aWithin Leh, I balanced the various Leh neighborhoods (e.g., Changspa, housing colony, Chubi). I have omitted that information here as it might identify the women and men who spoke with me.

across the globe, from the European nationalist anti-immigrant politics to discourses on right-wing radio in the United States comparing red state–blue state fertility and abortion rates.

In Bialasiewicz's (2006) compelling examination of civilizational rhetoric in the United States and Europe, she observed parallel tropes: an emergent moral geography in which immigrants are portrayed as a "demographic-reproductive menace" (701). This narrative makes women's bodies a primary site of cultural defense. Loyd's (2009) and Bialasiewicz's (2006) work, taken together with that of Tyner (2008, 2009) and Lunstrum (2009), indicates the ways that territoriality relies on a geopolitics of bodies in the plural: their presence, their absence, and their state of health. When women and men are confronted with political rhetoric encouraging them to relate decisions about love and babies to conflict, a more nuanced understanding of geopolitics and territory must be deployed, one that accounts for both the territorial instrumentalization of bodies and the embodied knowledge of the geopolitical.

As bounded, ostensibly controlled space, the constitution of territory is crucial to state formation (Sack 1986; Agnew 1994, 2003; Taylor 1994; Paasi 1996, 2003; Storey 2001), and territorial sovereignty marks a key component of definitions of the state (e.g., Flint 2009). Elden's (2009, xxxi, drawing on Agnew 1994 and Brenner 2004) examination of terror and territory demonstrates that territory is one of today's most pressing questions, "one of the 'constitutive dimensions' of geopolitical struggle rather than 'a static background structure.'" Alongside the deterritorializing forces and "borderless worlds" associated with global flows of capital, territorializing impulses and their material effects are entrenched and extended (Sparke 2005).

The utility in thinking of territory as a particular form of spatial production is in its evocation of the drive to bound space and tie that bounded space to exclusive sovereignty. The practice of territoriality—of seeking to bound space in this manner—is manifest in state policing of borders but also in more mundane practices from the home to the socialization of citizens (Sack 1986; Paasi 1996, 2003). Such practices imply a crucial relationship among bodies, the territory that they inhabit, and the subjectivities produced by their relationship with that territory. Work by Tyner (2008, 2009) and Lunstrum (2009) explored the role of extreme violence and genocide as a political project deployed by radically altering, destroying, or undoing this relationship. State tools of visibility and enumeration underwrite these territorial forms of governmentality

(Foucault 1990; Hacking 1990; Appadurai 1996; Scott 1998). The composition of aggregates of bodies produces particular territories: The possibility of engineering territory through bodies is the premise on which the chilling logic of ethnic cleansing and eugenics is built.

Although not necessarily relying on the language of territory, work on embodied nationalism touches on links among state formation, the territorialization of the body, and the instrumentalization of women's reproductive bodies in particular (Jayawardena and de Alwis 1996; Yuval-Davis 1997; Nast 1998; Korac 1999, 2004; Mayer 2004; Morokvasic-Müller 2004). Research on the partition of India and Pakistan has been especially important, as scholars have painstakingly documented the logics and practices that render women's bodies a territory in dispute and put their symbolic protection ahead of their own desires (V. Das 1995; Menon and Bhasin 1998; Butalia 2000). Postpartition, "cartographic anxiety" and patriarchal nationalism are reiterated and reinscribed in maps, landscapes, and territories that are read and made through gendered and sexualized fears and desires in South Asia and among the Diaspora⁷ (Krishna 1994; Nagar 1998; Bacchetta 2000; Oza 2001; R. Das 2004). The concern over women's bodies in Ladakh conforms to colonial and nationalist narratives that conflate women's bodies, the nation, and religious identity (V. Das 1995; Menon and Bhasin 1998; Nagar 1998; Nast 1998; Puri 1999; Bacchetta 2000; Butalia 2000; Oza 2001; R. Das 2004; Mody 2008).

The state–subject–territory formulation is vivid in South Asia, where the borders of the three largest states were drawn on and through bodies inscribed with religious identity. The independent states born through this bloody colonial legacy of biopolitics (Foucault 1990) are now challenged by these bodily calculations, as territories within territories reveal themselves as a set of never-ending Russian dolls: South Asia, divided into Pakistan and India in 1947, reveals J&K as India's sole Muslim state, within which Hindus and Buddhists find themselves minorities. In Leh district, members of the Shia Muslim minority declare themselves the most minority of all. These struggles and narratives hinge on the tallying of bodies and the assigning of territory to states that claim the loyalties of the largest number of those people that claim an affinity with other bodies of a certain religion, ethnicity, or other inscribed marker. Research on geographies of religion indicates trends parallel to the increasingly nuanced approaches to geopolitics and territory. In her latest appraisal of geographers working on religion, Kong (2010) noted the importance of balancing between the micropolitics of

religious practice and the ways that these microgeographies match up with macrogeopolitical questions. The work of Gökariksel and Secor (Gökariksel 2009; Gökariksel and Secor 2009) provides an illustration of the richness of such an approach by linking transnational narratives and economies of Islam to the “most intimate space” of the body. Moving beyond the “officially sacred” provides a deeper understanding of the role of religion in the production of subjectivities through the body, and an understanding of the bodily practices of religion makes it possible to think through its coarticulation with political forces and its deployment at a variety of scales (Gökariksel 2009).

Through these logics, bodies become territory in a struggle to control what happens to each body (whether each reproduces or not, whether each is allowed to live or not) in the interest of projects of national territorialization. After situating Ladakh in the national context, I discuss the political and geopolitical narratives around reproduction in Ladakh and then the ways that these narratives are complicated in the materialities of everyday life. In addition to understanding “just what it means to count a body” (Elden 2009, 180), here I explore what it means to count a birth and what it means to live as a body with the potential to be counted. In my reading of the politics of birth and bodies, it is important to pay attention to both the ways that bodies are understood to work on territory and the embodied experience of the geopolitical. In 2004, when I asked questions in Leh about religion and politics, most answers I received were not about politicians or the states of India and Pakistan. Instead, I heard many stories about broken hearts and territorial babies. In speaking about others’ and one’s own body, bodies were described in instrumental terms. These descriptions, however, fall apart when many women tell the stories of their own bodies: The embodied knowledge and experience of birth as a bodily hardship or of love and desire as partly unknowable or unmanageable comprise knowledge set in tension with the postpartition body’s territorial meanings.

The considerations around childbirth and marriage for the most part play out in a milieu in which parents discuss and plan the future of their families, keeping in mind practicalities but also joyful affective associations with children. As mentioned earlier, this set of stories is not meant to obscure the violent logic at the heart of territorial instrumentalizations of the body. These stories unfortunately also gloss over the everyday violence of heteronormative and reprosexual expectations around desire, love, and reproduction in ways that I

have not yet been able to grapple with in this context (Warner 1991; Nast 1998; Friedman 2000).⁵

Fertile Territory: Political and Religious Incitements to Reproduce

Context and Background

The population problem is our top priority right now. We have been telling Buddhist women they must avoid family planning. . . . They have become proud, and want to send their children to private schools. If they sent their children to our government schools, which are fine, then they could afford more children. (2008 interview with LBA member)

Members of both the LBA and the LBA Youth Wing, historically important in the movement to gain autonomy, cite the “population problem” as their most pressing issue. In this locus of power, women’s bodies are a critical site through which territorial sovereignty can be defended. The conditions of possibility that engender this linkage are the colonial techniques of governance that culminated in partition,⁶ the ongoing struggle for J&K, territorial vulnerability, and the assumption that territory is linked to majority and sovereignty (religion, linguistic, ethnic); that is, that body counts determine sovereignty. The strategy runs aground on the rocky terrain of embodied subjectivity and the material constraints, hopes, dreams, and fears that make up life. The parents who spoke to me about their children vehemently protest the notion that government and private schools are equivalent, and I read into the preceding quote the consolidation of class power: a Leh resident with economic and social capital suggesting that government schools are good enough for poor and rural people. After setting the context, this section discusses the territorial reading and animation of bodies before going on to the materialities that make the terrain of the body so difficult to navigate.

Recent pronatal actions are the culmination of a slow-building demographic strategy on the part of a few key figures in the urban elite and the LBA.⁷ In the 1940s, a ban on polyandry—the formerly common practice among Ladakhi Buddhists of one woman marrying two or more husbands (usually brothers)—was followed quickly by a ban on primogeniture (van Beek 2001). Couched in the language of modernity and the realignment with global Buddhist practices, these bans also had a strong undercurrent of demographic strategy (van Beek 2001). The drive for Scheduled Tribe status, the 1969 agitation for autonomy, and the 1979 split

of Ladakh into the Leh and Kargil districts only reinforced an equation that linked up identity, peopleness, and sovereignty (van Beek 2000, 2001). Hindu nationalism was taking hold in India in the late 1980s and early 1990s with the increasing success of parties espousing nationalist rhetoric, as well as staged spectacles such as the campaign to destroy the Baburi Masjid in Ayodhya. The 1980s also saw the deepening of separatist conflict in Kashmir, armed insurgency, and the subsequent influx of Kashmiri economic migrants; these contributed to Buddhist and Muslim Ladakhis' sense of vulnerability and reinforced the knowledge that Ladakhis would have negligible input in decisions about the future of J&K. In this charged atmosphere, the LBA made a strategic decision to portray their quest for autonomy within the state as the movement of a persecuted religious minority (van Beek 2001). Pointing to the well-documented marginalization of Ladakh by the leaders of J&K, they declared Ladakh a fundamentally Buddhist region, oppressed by the Muslim majority in the state, and declared the social boycott of Ladakhi Muslims. Political narratives and religious identity became fused and explicitly territorialized. Enforced restrictions on interaction marked all Ladakhis as members of two antagonistic political entities.

This is a complicated story. The Buddhist agitation was a strategic decision made after other attempts to secure autonomy failed (not the result of long-standing animosity); many Buddhist leaders who participated in the agitation have close Muslim friends or relatives; some Buddhist leaders resisted the agitation; and the perception of territorial vulnerability is not unfounded. As long as Leh's fate is tied to that of J&K, its future remains uncertain. Religion-based political blocs were never inevitable (van Beek 2000). The boycott ended in 1992, and in 1995, Leh district was accorded the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, giving it a semiautonomous status within J&K. There have been several instances of schisms between Buddhists: the 1960s and 1970s split of the Congress party and the 2007–2008 schism over leadership of the LBA. Today Buddhists are split between political parties dominating Leh: the Congress party, the Ladakh Union Territory Front, and more recently the Bharatiya Janata Party. Buddhist politicians also seek out alliances with Muslim leaders. All major Muslim leaders in Leh today support the movement for Union Territory.

During the end of the social boycott, representatives of the LBA and the Ladakh Muslim Association (an ad hoc coalition of Muslim groups) negotiated a ban on intermarriage. In my survey, every participant was aware

of this unwritten agreement. Each side is responsible for the regulation of its own young people—if a Muslim girl runs away with a Buddhist boy, each side is expected to forcibly return “their” daughter or son to their family, which is then under considerable pressure to continue to keep the couple apart. In my 2008 survey, I found that 83 percent of women living in Leh town and the vicinity had relatives across the Buddhist–Muslim divide. In 75 percent of these cases, these relatives were within one generation (a mother, father, aunt, or uncle). That 80 percent of the women also professed themselves to be against intermarriage suggests a significant shift in thinking in the space of one generation. Stories circulate about the enforcement of this agreement—some with apparently happy endings, some tragic. It has become impossible to legitimate desire for someone of the “wrong” religion through marriage, but anecdotes about broken hearts and secret affairs point to the difficulty of regulating desire itself (S. Smith 2011). The anti-intermarriage agreement rejects desire across religious identity and separates bodies of different religious identification, a means of conflict prevention and a means to prevent women from converting and producing babies of a different religion from the one in which the women themselves were born.

Demographic strategy has become explicit in the LBA actions of the last five years through measures such as awareness campaigns about the religious and political repercussions of using birth control and attempts to ban tubal ligation at Leh's Sonam Norbu Memorial Hospital. Gutschow (2006) reported that health workers in Zangskar have had trouble stocking contraceptives such as intrauterine devices (IUDs) and condoms due to interference. Anecdotal evidence in Sham and events in Nubra suggest that sentiment against family planning might be interfering with health workers' ability to make contraceptives available. These public actions reflect on and draw on widely held Buddhist beliefs that Muslims do not use family planning (Aengst 2008; S. Smith 2008, 2009). The imaginary of aggressive Muslim fertility references national and global tropes: what Jeffery and Jeffery (2005) have termed “Saffron Demography,” at the national level and what Bialasiewicz (2006, 701) describes as new moral geographies of birth, bodies, and “demographic-reproductive menace” at the global level.

Geopolitical Stories About Bodies and Babies

Pronatal geopolitical strategy targets the fertile potential of bodies and the territorial potential of babies.

This section deals with the territorial reading of fertile bodies and babies. When Nargis talks about the fragmented 1989 attempt to exile Muslims from their natal villages, she is speaking of women's bodies as territory. The burning of Muslim houses, including her husband's childhood home, slips into a discussion of women's bodies.

Question: Why did they burn down the houses?

Nargis: They were just thinking to put an end to the Muslims. They said to get out, for the Muslims to get out, that's what they were saying. . . . Where would we go? And in Kashmir, there are Kashmiris.⁸ Where would we Ladakhis go? The older people would say, "What are they saying? People who were born right here, telling them to get out, how can they get out?" Land and fields and houses, we all have them . . .

Question: Why would they do that?

Nargis: There are some who say, "The Muslims are taking all of our girls," there's this, there's that. That's one thing. Then, simply saying to get rid of the Muslims, some must have been thinking like that.

An anonymous letter circulated during the spring of 2008 echoes Nargis's connection between bodies and territory by portraying a territory under threat, from which Buddhists will soon be exiled. *Closed birth doors* refers to use of tubal ligation to limit women's fertility.

Countless birth doors have been closed. Buddhists are going to be finished. We're at the end of time. Glaciers have melted away. Untimely floods have come. Grasshoppers have eaten half the country. . . . The knife is at our throat and we are blaming each other for murder. Religion has been harmed. Hey Buddhists, think about it. Still you have time to think. One day you'll have to leave this place. One day you will have to convert to another religion. (Excerpt from an anonymous letter distributed in Leh bazaar 17 April 2008)

This millennial language reflects the fear that has engendered pronatal actions. Buddhist and Muslim women now frame their decisions in accordance with the new moral narratives in circulation. The decision to have a tubal ligation, once something "everyone was doing," is now justified through explanations of compromised or vulnerable bodies, limited incomes, and the need to produce modern, well-educated children. Women enthusiastically embraced family planning in the 1980s and 1990s after the arrival of the first well-qualified obstetrician-gynecologist. The explanations women currently employ for their use of family plan-

ning suggest that this need to justify family planning is leading to shifts in the technology used—away from tubal ligation toward use of the IUD to limit births rather than to space them. The intimate space of the body cannot be completely extracted from the territory of the district, as the potential of the fertile body to extend itself into territory makes it a target. It is not that the body is a microscale embedded within or shaped by geopolitical forces from above: The body is the site where the geopolitical is produced and known.

Ordinary women and men who espouse the rhetoric of territorial demographics as a means of maintaining sovereignty now link women's bodies and sexuality to territory. The territorial reading of the body is summed up by Diskit, a proponent of the pronatal movement, who reads the history of contraception in Ladakh as one of demographic aggression, fear, and failure.

Question: Do you think that birth control is useful for Leh?

Diskit: In the past, everyone did it because they thought it was useful. They didn't understand. Now the *rinpoches*⁹ have given teachings, and they have said not to do it. Last year, with LBA, twenty-five of us went on a tour, to explain to people not to do it. Because, the *chipa* [Muslims],¹⁰ they totally don't do it. Not at all. And for that reason, their population is growing. Their population is really big now. That's what people say. Now they say, in Turtuk, from one house, they had thirty grandchildren. Now, our Buddhist population is going to be cut off. In the past, the [Sunni Muslims]¹¹ were few, but now there are many. In the past we didn't understand, and we did that family planning. Now that we did that, there are fewer children. Then, last year, listening to the *rinpoches'* advice, about twenty of us, and the LBA, went to Sham up to Dachok, in Nubra up to Yarma, to say, don't use birth control. . . . I really feel like it's not okay. I don't know what happened, in the past, people didn't understand and they just only gave birth to two or three children. Now, everyone is scared. Now when there are prayers in the temple¹² if there is a *rinpoche* . . . they say not to do it.

Buddhist, Shia, and Sunni women have all heard that family planning goes against their religion and struggle to balance family needs with ethical demands. Despite the stories about differential fertility, my 2008 survey found very similar fertility practices among most women in and around Leh town (see Table 3).¹³ There is a strong preference for smaller family sizes. Although women disagree on whether spacing children with IUDs is acceptable, all of the women with whom I spoke described tubal ligation as a sin. Women marshal a variety

Table 3. Mean number of children (ever-married women)

Age range	Religion	M	Number of participants
18–39	Buddhist	2.00	24
	Sunni	1.72	32
	Shia	1.25	28
	Total	1.64	84
40–59	Buddhist	2.94	17
	Sunni	2.83	23
	Shia	3.57	21
	Total	3.11	61
60 and above	Buddhist	4.50	18
	Sunni	3.67	6
	Shia	4.60	5
	Total	4.34	29
Total	Buddhist	3.03	59
	Sunni	2.33	61
	Shia	2.46	54

of theoretical, theological, and empirical arguments to defend their own personal choices: health, professional reasons, quality of children versus quantity, and the discourse of modernity. Most of all, they stressed the pressure to provide a private school education for their children. The majority of women, regardless of religious identity, stated their desired number of children, and the ideal number of children, as two to three.

This public campaign against birth control has attempted to limit access to family planning and shifted the discourse about family planning, but whether this will result in the rejection of family planning is difficult to predict. Some Buddhists, like Dolkar, a forty-year-old Buddhist mother of two girls, believe that family planning practices are changing.

Dolkar: Some talk about Buddhists and Muslims and say that Buddhists have had fewer children and as a result our population is smaller. With that in mind, some are now having more children.

Question: Really, they say that?

Dolkar: Since Baltis [Shia Muslims] don't use family planning, they just let them all be born, so they have had so many children and their population is really growing.

Question: Do you think that is really having an impact? Do you think that some women hear that and then have a lot of children?

Dolkar: There are those who do. Older Buddhists are saying don't use family planning, just let your children be born. Later, something is going to happen with our Muslim population. . . . Those who are thinking about our religion are having children, like four or five.

Among the sixty-eight Buddhist women I spoke with about contraception, only one had refrained from using birth control for religious or political reasons. Both Buddhist and Muslim women suggest that extremely pious people would not use family planning but do not personally know anyone avoiding contraception for either religious or political reasons (with one exception).¹⁴ Some Muslim women suggested that the wife of a Mullah would be pressured not to use family planning because it would bring shame to her family if she herself could not follow religious restrictions. Such narratives indicate the tightening of regulation around the body and shifting constellation of meaning around religious identity. The statement by one young woman that her husband is, in her words, a "Mullah-type" but that she would defy him if he wanted her to forgo contraceptive technologies indicates the degree to which these formulations are contested.

Pronatal strategies and prohibitions on intermarriage are built on imaginings of the territorial future of Leh district. Pronatal Buddhists imagine a future in which Buddhist women have defended the territory's Buddhist majority by marrying Buddhist men and birthing Buddhist babies who grow up as part of a Buddhist voting bloc. Should Buddhists fail to heed the pronatalist call, an alternative dystopian imagining is projected in which Buddhists lose their majority, "are cut off," "die out," or "are finished." In this narrative, the birth of a baby is more than a family event; it is part of a struggle to populate space with the right kinds of bodies. It is less than a family event because this reading of birth is focused so tightly on the macro scale that it elides the multiple meanings of children for their parents and families.

Thus far, I have outlined political pressures bearing down on the bodies of women. In the next section, I sketch the complex ways that the meaning of babies for women's bodies, lives, and sense of self intersects with the politics of fertility. The focus on babies themselves is not meant to privilege their import above that of their mothers but rather to attend to the ways that the geopolitical is evoked or rejected through discussions about the meanings of babies and children. Despite heightened anxiety around and policing of women's reproductive bodies, the commitment to pronatalism by the LBA, and the firm conviction of most women that the use of family planning goes against their religion, women continue to use contraception. In this, and in other ways, the body matters.

Territories of the Self and Family

Living the Geopolitical

She had been staying in a Muslim household, and then she got a message, “you better empty your room.” . . . but she didn’t do it. One day when she was in the main bazaar, they said, you have to come in *gonpa soma* for a little bit, and then she went. She went in, and they asked her, “You are hanging around with [Sunni Muslims] and you are staying in a [Sunni Muslim] room, why are you doing that?” . . . So she told them, “Where would I go, I’m poor, and where else would someone let me stay for free?” Then, they really slapped her, one of the boys, he slapped her, and she says that she still remembers the feeling of that slap, his name was ———, he just really slapped her, you know how someone might? And she just fainted. She had hair, what pretty hair she had. It was this long, fell to here. . . . They cut it all off, even worse than a boy’s hair. Then she just went to her mother’s house in Shey, and she stayed there for a while. Then her sister and so on, they came where she had been staying and took all her things, and they put her in a Christian’s house, here in Leh. After a while, a Muslim came and then she just converted to Islam and married him. Because she said, “They did this to me, they cut off my hair, and how would I stay Buddhist?”

In this well-known event of the social boycott, a Buddhist woman who had not conformed to established boundaries is punished through public, bodily humiliation by being slapped and having her hair, in this context a gendered sign of sexuality, chopped off. I read this disciplinary action as a struggle to bring the territory of her body back into the fold: It is not only that she was staying in a Muslim household but also that this family had taken her in after the dissolution of her marriage to a Muslim man. As told to me by her Shia Muslim childhood friend, rather than reterritorializing Buddhist identity onto her body, this punishment leads her to abandon her Buddhist identity altogether. As a site of lived experience, through which the self is made, the body is susceptible to disciplinary action but never completely so. Individuals can transform, escape, or participate in the instrumental use of the body over the course of a day. Religious and political narratives compel women to put their bodies, and their economic resources, on the line, but women find themselves working against them in the micropractices that make up daily life and through which the geopolitical is experienced.

The territorialization of reproductive bodies and babies with new geopolitical meanings meets with an already existing multiplicity of hope, love, and anxiety.

My focus here is on the ways that materiality (school fees, uniforms, constrained employment opportunities, previous cesarean section deliveries) impinges on the implementation of pronatal geopolitical strategies, but it is important to begin with the ways that geopolitical desire for children meets up with other desires. I have included this discussion as acknowledgment of the ways that hopes and fears of parents for their children exceed geopolitical instrumentalization.

In nearly every interview, the desire for children was described as though it did not need explanation. Although the questions, “Do/did you want to have children? Why?” would generate laughter, I persisted in asking them (satisfied with the decision only when two women, one Buddhist, one Shia, did explain why they did not want to marry or have children).¹⁵ Aside from Buddhist women who decide to join the monastic life,¹⁶ motherhood was central to making a meaningful life for many (but not all) of the women with whom I spoke. Women expressed a desire for children because they simply liked children or because a house without children would be empty. They described children as *skitpo* (“happy”) in and of themselves. In interview after interview I heard sentiments like those of Laila, emphasizing the cherished and delicate nature of children and human life: “Will they remain or not?” When I asked how many children were ideal, Laila explained:

Once they are grown, and even have a job, they might end up underneath a car, they might get a disease—with God, we can’t say anything. He will give and he will take them Himself. If after we have been sterilized he takes them? As many as you have, it is good. . . . If you have one child, you can’t be confident. Even if you have two, you still can’t be confident. Later, if we say we need children, where will we bring them from? Is there a place from which you can bring children? Is there? There is no place.

In addition to the affective joy attributed to children, children are valued as future caregivers. The ideal of two or three children is often explained as reducing the likelihood of abandonment in old age, without being excessively expensive. Everyone has a story of a relative whose child does not care for him or her or whose child died. In the terms I heard, “one could turn out bad,” or “if the sons don’t look after you, the daughter will.” These responses signal the complex interplay between collective territorial fear and individual fears. At an abstract level, women worry about the future of Leh, but more immediately, they worry about their own bodily integrity as they age. The geopolitical case for having more children aligns with fears of

being abandoned in old age and thus the impulse to have more rather than fewer children. The border between these two reasons for having children was blurred in a few interviews: Grandmothers and grandfathers wished for more grandchildren, mentioning both empty houses and a potentially empty territory.

Women describe a complicated combination of economic pressures and bodily fears that lead them to use family planning despite religious injunctions or political incitement. Women continue to see the increased options for women's reproductive health as a boon, as did this sixty-year-old Buddhist mother of six surviving children when describing her decision:

Angmo: Dr. ——— scolded me, "You're a farmer, so you work so hard, and then every two years you're having another child?" and I said, "Thank you, please do something about it." And then she did it. I was in the hospital for one day and then I left. I did the operation. Having given birth to seven boys, really!

Her forty-year-old niece: Having two, I just feel like they will kill me, it's so much trouble.

Angmo: [to husband in the doorway] Don't come in! She's asking me questions!

Question: Then, between those children, did you put gaps?

Angmo: I didn't put gaps, and at that time they didn't have the thing to put gaps [IUD]. But it just kind of happened that there were gaps. There are those who take care and intentionally put gaps, but we're farmers, we don't know anything about that. All we know how to do is how to work. About children—even when I was pregnant, I wouldn't realize I was pregnant, after three or four months, then I would realize.

Angmo's pragmatic description of her family planning decisions in the early 1990s, when there was not yet a need to defend this choice, is mirrored in the preferences indicated by Buddhist and Muslim women for small families, as indicated in Table 1.

The Difficult Terrain of Intimate Territory

The positive meanings of children, as future sources of care, joy, and status, are weighed against the bodily and economic costs of childbearing and rearing. Describing their decisions, women emphasized the impossibility of bearing many children based on arguments about health. Invoking bodily and familial vulnerabilities, women made materialist and empirical arguments citing specific medical conditions such

as high or low blood pressure, the risk of giving birth, constrained financial circumstances, and the thousands of rupees of school fees they dedicated to each of their children. Against moral judgments and the abstract territorial potential of birth, they counterpoise embodied understandings of birth and lived experience of raising children in constrained circumstances.

Tahira, after eleven pregnancies and with seven surviving children, indicated her body when I asked what the ideal number of children would be, saying, "It's better to have fewer! Just look at me, look at my health." For women in their fifties, sixties, and seventies today, limited access to the hospital, relatively poor nutrition, and other factors made childbirth and child survival risky propositions (Wiley 2004). Some women lost as many as half of their children—giving birth to nine or ten children to have only four or five survive infancy and childhood. The memory of these losses, those faced by mothers, aunts, sisters, and friends, as well as the stories about those who died during difficult labors or soon after childbirth remains vivid for the women I spoke with; some days I bitterly regretted my research choices when the recounting of young motherhood brought tears to women's eyes. Experiences of pain and loss comprise an embodied understanding of the potential costs of the geopolitical instrumentalization of fertility and provide a language through which defense of the body is justified.

Most Buddhist women felt that spacing births with two to five years between pregnancies was acceptable to promote health and differentiated between spacing and permanent methods—identifying a moral scale on which avoidance of contraception was ideal, spacing was acceptable, and permanent methods were the most sinful. Several Sunni and Shia women told me that it was a religious duty to preserve and care for their own God-given body, and that as the doctor had told them they were too weak for additional pregnancies, it was acceptable for them to use family planning. Other Muslim participants insisted that any such weakness could be cured by adequate nutrition or medical treatment, after which the body's reproductive capacity should no longer be controlled. Identifying contraception as morally problematic did not correlate with changes in practices. Bilqis, a forty-year-old Shia woman from Chushot with one child, described the dilemma, after a question about whether it is acceptable to space children.

We can't just let them be born—if we don't put a gap [between pregnancies]¹⁷ that is damaging to ourselves. So,

that is okay. Our own bodies, they don't have the ability to have a child one after another. If you have a child every year, we ourselves won't survive. For that reason, it is okay to put a gap. That's what they say now. Otherwise you will have high blood pressure or you will have low blood pressure, you will have all kinds of diseases. . . . For that reason, now in our religion, spacing is okay. Abortion, that is totally forbidden. If you are really healthy, you shouldn't put a gap, they will say you should just have the children.

Asked if it would be difficult to avoid limiting family size, Bilqis said:

Yes, exactly. Nowadays how could you not? Sterilization, they say it is like killing a person, but then looking at today's conditions, how can you avoid it? Now it's also difficult to get a job. If you have twelve children, you won't even be able to clothe them and keep them clean. Even taking care of two children, it reduces women to tears.

Bilqis's argument for limiting and spacing the number of births was a recurring theme across my survey sample for all levels of education, religion, and age. Recurring, too, was the emphasis on impossibility, a tactic that removes culpability from the women who deploy it. The discursive reframing of family planning as sinful and politically problematic alters the making of the self as women suffer guilt and anxiety over their choices and frame the stories of their lives defensively, justifying their actions on a spectrum of morality or through arguments about health, well-being, and economics. These embodied knowledges and their deployment against geopolitical narratives about bodies and babies point to the forever-incomplete territorialization of the geopolitical body.

The women with whom I spoke described themselves as being part of an unstoppable generational shift driving them to produce a particular family form: few children, well educated, who grow up to have salaried employment, rather than work in agriculture.

Question: In your opinion, what's a good number of children?

Angmo: Well, for me it already happened. But I think it seems like two or three is a nice number. I don't know, *chocho*,¹⁸ I don't know what to say. It just seems like nobody wants a lot of children. I think at the most, three.

Question: Why don't people want more children?

Angmo: Then, if they have more, how would they get an education? How would they be able to provide clothes? Tasty, good food, how would they get it? For those families in which both the mother and the father have a good job,

then it's okay. Otherwise, how will it be okay? If it's not okay, for those who don't have it, then it will be difficult for the children. Nothing will happen to the parents. . . . The children won't have a happy life, that's why people are doing that . . . [agreement from niece]. These days, it's chaotic, it's the time itself. It's happening like that. What it is, I just don't know. It's like that. If you have a lot of children, the children themselves won't turn out well.

By limiting reproduction, women understand themselves to be participants in the project of modernity—using the English word *modern* to describe their lives. In their natal families, most of the middle-aged women I spoke with were one of five to seven siblings, wore hand-me-downs, and went barefoot throughout childhood. If they attended school, it was a government one-room village school. These women contrast their histories with their own children and point out that standards have changed completely—if they were to send their children barefoot to government schools it would be shameful. Seeing their neighbors' children attending private schools or being sent “outside” to Jammu, Srinagar, Chandigarh, or Delhi, parents struggle to pay private school fees so their children have a chance of competing for scarce and highly prized government jobs. But they also tie the modern to the politicization of religion and thus, to the pronatal drive. Ideas about what it means to be modern are thus linked both to the pronatal campaign and to the need to use contraception. In describing their choices to me, women repeatedly depicted themselves as caught between the desire to send their children to expensive schools and provide them with the best food and clothing and the religious and political injunctions against contraception. They described their position as an impossible one.

On the roof of his house, wife and daughter listening in, Muhammad spoke to me about family planning.

Khuda konjok,¹⁹ however many he will give you, that is great. . . . But now the government has explained to us, and everyone understands, that there are a lot of people now. That being the case, having two or three children, that is nice. Otherwise, how will you educate them? Abi-le [his wife] had one boy and five or six girls, with all those, how will they get educated?

Question: So if you have nine or ten?

Muhammad: They won't get an education. . . . We say you have to give them each the same. Now, for instance, look at me. I am a father with five or six girls. I have to give them each the same, carving up everything. For those who have a lot of land, they will get a lot. If you only have a

little land, each one will only get one field. If they don't get much land, how will they take care of their children?

In interview after interview, women who indicated that they were against family planning suggested that the attempt to produce high-quality, healthy, well-educated children was futile, because each child would arrive with his or her own *sode* (luck, fortune). For Buddhists, this implied that the good and bad deeds performed in previous lives were accumulated in the children and would affect their lives more than any influence the family might have. For Muslims, bringing your own *sode* was a way to state that everything was in God's hands, or "written in the lines on your forehead." Women often told me that no matter how many children were in a family, their fates would be determined by this *sode*. Women who had completed their fertility used this theory to explain why contraception should be avoided, but women who had yet to complete their fertility repeated it with doubt: "They say every child comes with its own *sode*, but everything is so expensive these days." For Buddhists, the dystopian political future of Buddhist decline is mirrored in the disruption of the cycle of rebirth, as those waiting to be born are "blocked" from the birth doors that they were meant to pass through.

The circulations of those caught in the cycle of reincarnation and the economic considerations involved in educating children and providing an inheritance are crucial elements in a constellation of factors in decisions around reproduction. These contradictory understandings of what bodies and babies mean for the building of subjectivities and the future of families cannot be extracted from the territorial capacity attributed to the body in millennialist readings of demographic aggression and territorial strategy summarized in statements like that of Yangdol, a Buddhist mother of three:

In the past, the Buddhists were more. Now, it's the Buddhists, mostly, I think, who have used family planning. Among the [Shia Muslims], if you look in Kargil and Chushot, even now, they have nine each or eight each. *Rinpoches* say that our Buddhists are getting fewer, and then our Hill Council, in the future it's going to be run by [Shia Muslims]. What the Buddhist Association did, it said to all the Buddhists, "You should think. Up to four, or up to six, or up to five, let them be born. Don't sterilize after two."

Even as geopolitics and religious identity collide, and Yangdol draws a straight line between the birth of children and consolidation of political power, the territorial capacity of the body cannot escape the prosaic

concerns of Mohammad, who wants to provide land for his children, or Angmo, who fears for how she might dress and educate them. Like territory itself, forever in the process of being bounded and never solidified, as geopolitical meaning is written onto and into the body, bodies themselves have a role to play—forever escaping this overwriting, only to be confronted with new mechanisms of regulation and control.

Discussion

As the stories of men and women coping with territorial incursions into their intimate lives indicate, territorial narratives do not play out in a vacuum; they meet with the complications of emotions and economic calculations, fears, hopes, and apprehensions known through the body. Political geography is not only "discursive, technological and economic, but also . . . a collectively embodied process of affects, prejudices, anticipations and negotiations" (Saldanha 2008, 323). As individuals are caught up in the animation of geopolitical projects, love, fear, anxiety, and pain come to play a role; political and territorial projects relying on the participation of bodies can be thwarted—not through intentional resistance but through the materialities of "life itself" (Rose 2001).

Razia, only forty-nine, tells me that in her youth, "we were like one person. There were Buddhists who married with Muslims, and Muslims who married with Buddhists." When I ask Nilza, a fifty-six-year-old Buddhist mother of three, if she would have allowed her child to marry a Muslim, she answers that she "would beat him or her and bring him or her back." In this milieu, women consider what a baby means for them and its cost to their body but also what the choice means for territorial sovereignty. In discussions about the future, geopolitical and individual narratives come to be stories about intersecting and conflicting fears and anxieties.

Stories of people working through their desires for each other, their desire to have children, or their reluctance to do so, point to the value of confronting territory through the situated, complex, and dynamic practices that constitute it. A disembodied or body-less geopolitical approach to the current tensions in Ladakh would not only omit the experiences of those who bear the brunt of geopolitical practice but would actually misidentify the nature of the political practices altogether. It is not that macrolevel organized pressures bear down on the hapless individual; rather, bodies are sites

of geopolitical animation, and territoriality is known and refused primarily in corporeal enactments. Slaps in the courtyard of a Buddhist temple, well-cared-for hair hacked off and falling to the ground, a young couple driving over icy mountain passes to get a marriage license in a distant city, and a woman choosing to limit her family size with an IUD rather than tubal ligation are not the side effects of geopolitical practice but its principal manifestation for most Ladakhis.

Like the politicians and popular narratives described by Megoran (2008, 26) in Uzbekistan, Buddhist activists summon an “ever-present and all-pervading sense of territorialized danger,” to encourage Buddhist women to produce children who will territorialize Buddhist political identity onto the district. But the bodily nature of this act is where they run into problems. Territorial demands made on the body and day-to-day lived experience collide and can be congruent or work against each other. Geopolitical strategies and political narratives link women’s bodies to the fate of territory and community, but the day-to-day reality of getting by, providing for young children, and caring for the body shape how these strategies materialize on the ground. The struggle to provide for a family, the toll of pregnancy on the body or the intangible desire to give birth to a child unavoidably complicate the workings of geopolitical power through the territorialization of bodies.

Efforts to remake territory through the body comprise an attempt to materialize productive political representations of antagonistic communities by populating territory with citizens arranged in hostile and exclusive voting blocs. This intensifies the difference (as majority Buddhist) that marks Leh as distinct from J&K and thus serves as a means to protect the district from any renegotiation of the state’s sovereignty. With a crucial link then, among religious identity, sovereignty, and the subject, the imaginary of national identity is made and remade, produced, refused, and cast aside in a thousand actions and reversals. National territory is made in part by the claiming of bodies, but the materiality of the body, and the hopes and dreams that individuals have for their families, make the body a rugged, at times impenetrable, terrain. What this brings to bear on our understanding of territory is that the body, collectives of bodies, and their material circumstances can become a component of strategy and an unpredictable terrain that might eclipse rhetorical strategy and efforts to materialize new territories through the body.

As territory is always in the process of being bounded, so too the materialities of the body escape strategic demands. The question becomes this: How will

these bodies shape the geopolitical future? This question is especially salient for today’s generation of young people—the babies that are the focus of so much concern and disciplinary action. Their choices about love and family will continue or disrupt the current geopolitical trajectory and determine whether and how Buddhists and Muslims can shape a future together.

Territorial strategy impinges on what is and is not possible for bodies, what might or might not be justified in terms of bodily practice, and even in how the body itself is understood. This occurs not only in Ladakh but in maps of Iraq marked by ethnicity and religious sect, South Asia mapped into Hindu and Muslim majority regions in 1947, in the portrayal of immigrants as dangerous others. A young Buddhist woman’s loss of weight after the loss of her Muslim lover, the woman undergoing an abortion after using an IUD to unsuccessfully limit her family size instead of tubal ligation—in these instances, the geopolitical is an embodied knowledge of constraints on what is and is not possible. As boundaries between religions are marked on to the body, and the boundaries of the body are secured (the separation of young lovers, the steps taken to make sure that Buddhist women give birth to Buddhist children), the boundaries between territory and the body itself dissolve—the body exceeding its boundaries, refusing to be marshaled into an instrument of territory, even as territory seeps into the body.

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Notes

1. These are pseudonyms and identifying details have been omitted or changed to protect their identities.
2. An independent kingdom until the mid-nineteenth century, Ladakh was incorporated into India in 1947 as part of J&K. It was split into Buddhist majority Leh district and Shia majority Kargil district in 1979. In the 2001 Indian census, Ladakh's population was 236,539, approximately 47 percent Muslim (majority Shia) and 46 percent Buddhist, with minority Hindu, Christian, and Sikh populations (Census of India 2001). Kargil's population is approximately 80 percent Muslim and 15 percent Buddhist, and Leh's population is approximately 77 percent Buddhist and 15 percent Muslim. Leh district's population according to the 2001 census is 117,637.
3. For more on these events see Aengst (2008), Gutschow (2006), and S. Smith (2008, 2009).
4. The decision to speak primarily with women was not made lightly and is not intended to suggest that family planning and parenthood are "women's issues." The decision was primarily a methodological one due to the difficulty of doing research on sexual practices and contraception as a young woman.
5. I appreciate the anonymous reviewer who called my attention to the need to clarify these points.
6. A discussion of these techniques and the colonial trajectory is far beyond the scope of this article, but a good starting place is Pandey (2006).
7. Space constraints preclude anything but the most superficial gloss of this complicated history. For excellent analyses see the work of Aggarwal (2004), van Beek (2000, 2001), Bertelsen (1996), Bhan (2006), Gutschow (2006), Pinault (2001), and Srinivas (1998). For an insightful account placing events in Ladakh into the Jammu and Kashmir context, see Behera (2000), and for historical context see Rizvi (1996, 1999) and Fewkes (2008).
8. I am translating from *Kachul* and *Kachulpa*, the Ladakhi words for Kashmir and Kashmiri.
9. A *rinpoche* is a high monk, most often the reincarnated spiritual leader of a particular monastery.
10. *Chipa*, in this context, means Muslim. The terms *insider* and *outsider*, *nangpa* and *chipa*, are often used to refer to Buddhists and Muslims. This is mainly a Buddhist usage—Muslims are more likely to identify as *Musalman*. Gutschow (2006) made the same observation, and Aggarwal (2004) suggested that the *nangpa/chipa* language became more common after the social boycott.
11. Diskit used the word *Kache* to refer to Sunni Muslims. The terms *Balti* and *Kache* are frequently used to distinguish between Shia and Sunni Muslims. These terms are misleading as they are geographic markers—*Balti* means a person from Baltistan and *Kache* means Kashmiri. These terms are regularly applied to Ladakhis to denote their religious identity, but I have found that it is more common for Buddhists to deploy these words and

that Muslims more often differentiate using the terms Shia and Sunni. In interview excerpts I have translated *Balti* and *Kache* as Shia and Sunni; however, I have bracketed the term to indicate this substitution.

12. I'm translating from *gonpa soma*—literally "new monastery," which is the Buddhist temple built in the center of Leh town after 1956. The LBA has its office in the temple courtyard, and the site has become as political as it is religious (some would argue the same for the main Shia and Sunni mosques).
13. I do not claim that these figures can be generalized: Due to the sensitive nature of the topic and my determination not to compromise my rapport and opportunities for future research and collaboration in Ladakh, I relied on opportunistic rather than random sampling. To complete the survey, my research assistant, Hasina Bano, and I began in each neighborhood with one person whom we knew and proceeded to ask each neighbor or woman that we encountered in the neighborhood or village to speak to us. We visited a range of neighborhoods in Leh, as well as the neighboring villages of Chushot, Choglam-sar, Thikse, Shey, and Phyang.
14. One Buddhist woman gave the example of another Buddhist woman with four children, whom she had heard avoided family planning for religious reasons.
15. For married women, not having children is an unlikely decision. Of 192 women, I met only one who had never conceived. She and her husband had adopted a child from relatives. Infertility arose as a topic of concern in stories about relatives who had been unable to conceive, or about divorces that had occurred due to failure to conceive. The two women in their late thirties who had decided never to marry or have children told me they saw no appeal in marriage because they enjoyed their independence too much.
16. For an excellent description of the varied motivations for joining monastic life see Gutschow (2004).
17. I am translating *bar borches* as spacing, or "putting a gap." In Leh, *bar borches* almost exclusively refers to the use of IUDs to put two or more years between births.
18. *Chocho* is the equivalent of "sweetie," or "honey." Its more literal meaning is the honorific term for younger sister.
19. Mohammed, like many Ladakhi Muslims, uses a phrase that appends a Buddhist religious term, *konjok*, onto the Urdu term for God, *khuda*. *Konjok* refers to the Buddhist "triple gem," the Buddha, the Dharma (teachings), and the Sangha (the community of followers).

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