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Historical Everyday Geopolitics on the Chile-Peru Border

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Geopolitics is increasingly seen by scholars as occurring in everyday spaces and performed by ordinary people. This paper extends this idea to historical work to examine how citizens themselves (re)produce geopolitics at the time of historical events. It does so through a case study of geopolitical tension on the Chile-Peru border in the 1970s. Through oral histories and newspaper analysis, a historical everyday geopolitics approach reveals how those living in the Chilean border city of Arica played a part in promoting national and border security. This centres the embodied and emotional experiences of those affected by violence and conflict.

Keywords: Everyday geopolitics; Chile; Peru; militarisation; borders; security

In the 1970s the Chilean city of Arica, 18km from the Peruvian border, was on the brink of war. Weaponry and soldiers were moved to the border as tensions rose between the Chilean dictator General Augusto Pinochet Ugarte and the Peruvian dictator General Juan Velasco Alvarado. This is an infamously contentious border region and the 1970s was just one period

of escalating tensions. This paper illustrates how these fractious years and the people who experienced them can be studied through the lens of historical everyday geopolitics.

Emerging from critical and feminist geopolitics, everyday geopolitics forms part of interventions in political geography to shift the focus away from large-scale geopolitical events and actors to lived, embodied experiences and emotions that affect and are affected by geopolitics (Kuus, 2017; Dowler and Sharp, 2001). This approach has allowed geographers to understand people's geopolitical presents and legacies of geopolitical pasts but this paper goes further to explore the benefits gained by applying everyday geopolitics to studying historical events. It proposes a framework for historical everyday geopolitics that, in tandem with work within Latin American studies on the politics of memory and oral history, opens up marginalised and overlooked historical perspectives.

Through everyday geopolitics, the border is a site through which the lived experiences of militarisation can be examined. Contemporary work in border studies has highlighted the violent consequences of border militarisation (Jones, 2016; Nevins, 2001) and often illustrates borders as 'hot' spaces of exceptionalism. But borders are *also* sites of the banal and mundane. The fractious decade discussed in this paper concerns the fear of violence but it was also an elongated period where people got on with their lives; fear can exist amidst the mundane, banal, and ordinary. The border city, during a period of potential warfare, was still home and an everyday space for those who lived there.

The Chile–Peru border has been disproportionately studied from the 'top-down' with a focus on the military and 'traditional' geopolitics without understanding the politics of this complex border 'from below' (García Pinzón, 2015). In order to study the 'everyday' of Arica in the 1970s this research is based on in-depth interviews and newspaper analysis. This approach centres the lives and experiences of citizens living in this militarised border city who have been ignored in earlier geopolitical work. A key contribution of this research is to

include soldiers who had been conscripted under Pinochet's administration as these young, non-career soldiers blur the soldier/civilian distinction and were a vital part of understanding daily life during this period. This is concurrent with feminist geopolitics scholarship that has led to a reconsideration of *whose* experiences and perspectives are considered worthy of investigation and how the everyday and the geopolitical are connected (Dowler and Sharp, 2001; Sharp, 2011).

When employed historically, everyday geopolitics can better explore previously marginalised experiences and emotions of geopolitical pasts and include a diverse range of spaces. In geopolitical scholarship, the 'margins' encompass those spaces far from the 'core', the perspectives of those seen as below or outside, and theoretical approaches that have been overlooked (Sharp, 2011). By taking these margins seriously in geopolitics, it is possible to move away from binary distinctions in geopolitical categories. In making this argument, this paper first considers how a historical everyday geopolitics fits within geopolitics more broadly and what it looks like methodologically before providing a brief background to the tension of the 1970s. This is followed by empirical examples of what a historical everyday geopolitics perspective can provide through focussing on the experiences of citizens and conscripted soldiers and how they themselves (re)produce geopolitics.

Historicising Everyday Geopolitics

While geopolitics has become increasingly attuned to problematic binary categories, hierarchies, and the spaces of geopolitics, there has still not been a sustained *historical* focus on ethnographic work and the everyday. The nascent body of literature on everyday geopolitics emerged from the influences of critical geopolitics and feminist geopolitics. This

section will examine the braiding between these theoretical approaches and will bring together key ideas that inform historical everyday geopolitics.

Critical geopolitics explores how geopolitical imaginations and identities are constructed and the social effects they go on to have (Müller, 2008). It is a field of scholarship that questions the ways in which power has been exerted over territory and the people who inhabit it and some work in this vein has focussed on Latin America (Dodds, 1993; Nolte and Wehner, 2015). A significant aspect of critical geopolitics has been the increasing recognition of the importance of the everyday aspects of geopolitics; that geopolitics is not *only* (re)produced by policy-makers and academics (Dittmer and Gray, 2010).

Despite being highly influential as a field of research, critical geopolitics has come under criticism for being disembodied and lacking a grounding in place (Hyndman, 2007; Dowler and Sharp, 2001). While critical geopolitics has expanded what and where can be studied, feminist geopolitics has gone further as a grounded critique of geopolitics that better attends to gender but also to race, class, sexuality and other differences: it has redefined what 'counts' as geopolitics (Massaro and Williams, 2013). This redefinition attends to geopolitics' gendered and elitist asymmetry that has focussed on who exerts power as opposed to those upon whom power is exerted (Koopman, 2011). This asymmetry had created an assumption that ordinary people do not wield geopolitical influence and fostered a disproportionate focus on elite men.

One key issue that has been raised by this work within feminist geopolitics is security. Feminist geopolitical work on security has been 'a potential route through which to connect … global issues and everyday voices more firmly' (Pain et al., 2010: 973). Hyndman (2004) has grounded her work on security in individual bodies instead of the nation-state which has shown the everyday experiences of security through lived realities. This shift from national

security to human security exemplifies how feminist geopolitics has moved the focus of geopolitics from the state to the everyday. In this way, feminist geopolitics has paved the way for a grounded and embodied everyday geopolitics.

The 'everyday' refers to ordinary, often overlooked, or taken-for-granted activities and experiences. The 'everyday' is a useful concept, argue Jones and Merriman (2009), because it moves beyond *either* the 'banal' *or* the 'hot' and instead allows for them to exist at the same time. The everyday geopolitics of Arica highlights the liminality of geopolitics and illustrates how it is possible to take the margins seriously without denying the role of state politics or the everyday-ness of the state (McConnell, 2017). Throughout this paper the blurred relationships between the state and non-state, civilian and soldier, and peripherality and centrality are emphasised. Arica is a geographically peripheral city, 2000km from the capital, but due to the threat of invasion from Peru it became paramount for national security and Chilean sovereignty. The liminal city and its inhabitants exist in the 'in-between' (Wood, 2012: 337), where the state and the everyday are both important geopolitically.

To date, everyday geopolitics has not explicitly dealt with historical issues. Whilst the continuing *legacies* of geopolitical events are often studied, there is a lack of work within everyday geopolitics that explores how they were experienced at the time. Benwell (2016), for example, is interested in how past events shape geopolitical subjectivities in the present whereas the argument of this paper is that a shift in focus in order to explore geopolitical subjectivities *at the time of those events* would be fruitful. There is some recent work on historicising popular geopolitics (see Harby, 2018) but this tends to concern material objects, texts, and representations. Representations are often created and disseminated by 'cultural elites' (Pinkerton and Benwell, 2014), so there is a need to focus more genuinely on ordinary people. Pinkerton and Benwell (2014) use the term 'citizen statecraft' to highlight the varied ways in which citizens (re)produce geopolitical discourses. This fits within Megoran's (2006:

622) call for political geographers to ‘re-people’ the sub-discipline through ethnography to avoid ‘relegating or even erasing people’s experiences and everyday understandings’.

This paper builds on these debates by exploring everyday (re)productions of geopolitics historically. Flint (2016) has shown how geopolitics influences and affects the working and lived experiences of non-elites but an increased focus on how these people are part of (re)producing geopolitics and how they have been so historically is needed. This paper calls for a historical geopolitics that is anti-elitist, that is grounded and focuses on bodies, emotions, and experience, and that includes a diverse range of spaces. The following section examines the methodological challenges of employing these ideas and presents my approach to doing historical everyday geopolitics.

Doing Historical Everyday Geopolitics

Everyday geopolitics centres people’s lived experiences and emotions but there has been little reflexive discussion of the experiences and ethics of doing research on everyday geopolitics (Benwell, 2014). As Kuus (2017) outlines, political geography is engaging more with ethnography yet there are questions over how to study people’s emotions and experiences when looking at geopolitical pasts rather than geopolitical presents.

My own interest in everyday geopolitics comes from my struggles to redirect focus from masculinist, militaristic, and elitist renderings of geopolitics, which were certainly more visible and accessible to me, and yet which did not convey the lived experiences of those in Arica in the 1970s. Therefore, I instead sought to study these historical events through the experiences and emotions of the people who lived through them in order to move towards a less hierarchical geopolitics that blurs geopolitical binaries and is grounded in a liminal space: the border. For Hyndman (2004: 309), feminist geopolitics should add ‘a potentially

reconstructive political dimension' and I believe that there is potential here to follow Koopman's (2011) call to explore the ways that academics and activists can intervene in geopolitics for reparative and emancipatory purposes. Particularly in terms of reparation and reconciliation, a historical everyday geopolitics can centre the experiences and emotions of those who have been affected by violence, conflict, and political upheaval.

This paper is based on one year of fieldwork in Arica between 2013 and 2014 where I conducted oral histories with citizens and conscripted soldiers who had been living in Arica during the 1970s to engage with their experiences and everyday understandings of that time. This paper draws on interviews with fourteen Chilean residents of Arica, three of whom were women. I contacted these participants through social media and snowball sampling and they all lived in Arica during the 1970s. They come from a diverse cross-section of society and many of the participants who appear in this paper were involved in the military at that time. All names used here are pseudonyms.

Within the Chilean context, the struggles over remembering the Pinochet dictatorship are highly contested and sensitive (Weeks, 2002). Stern's (2010) work on Chile as a 'memory box' unpacks the painful and contentious ways in which Chileans have confronted the dictatorship. 'Memory' during Chile's transition to democracy has been highly contested with the 'top-down' approach of the National Commission for Truth and Reconciliation creating divisions within the nation (Stern, 2010). The official rhetoric of 'reconciliation' that came after the Pinochet dictatorship has often meant forgetting the past (Lazzara, 2006). This is not consistent with how people process the past in their everyday lives, which is often through story-telling. Story-telling is a universal art form that in Latin America has aided how people make sense of their lives, and crucially how they construct a sense of place (Huff, 2006). Memory-work must therefore incorporate the lives and experiences of those who were silenced by such regimes from the 'bottom-up', particularly given that grassroots

memory-work in Chile has often defined itself in opposition to 'top-down' state narratives (Collins and Hite, 2013).

Alongside oral history interviews I also undertook archival research in the local newspaper archives. Newspaper reports, predominantly from the right-wing, pro-military *La Defensa*, show the everyday reporting on Chile–Peru relations. Critical discourse analysis was a necessary approach to deal with articles written in the particular environment of the dictatorship. Newspaper articles were analysed for their content but also for how meaning was being created and power was conveyed. This provides an opportunity to explore the discourses that citizens were receiving. The Pinochet administration decimated freedom of the press, numerous newspapers were destroyed, and journalists formed part of the 'disappeared' (Reyes Matta, Ruiz and Sunkel, 1986). The notoriously secretive Pinochet regime never revealed official documents and so oral histories and newspapers are integral to uncovering the fractious years between Chile and Peru. Bringing together oral histories and newspaper analysis I consider how the experiences and emotions of those who lived in Arica during the period of tension between Chile and Peru in the 1970s can be explored. I consider how fear is spatialised in sites such as Arica and that this border city is a site where geopolitics was being (re)produced.

Chile and Peru in the 1970s

The Chile–Peru border has a violent and contested history. Arica was Peruvian until the War of the Pacific between 1879 and 1883 when Chilean forces stormed north taking territory from Bolivia and Peru (Farcau, 2000; Milet, 2005). When the war ended, the provinces of Arica and Tacna remained as 'captured territory' for 50 years, a period marked by violence and attempts to 'Chileanise' the provinces. These attempts were often being made by the ordinary inhabitants of Tacna–Arica but not in homogenous ways; while some were

furthering the nationalist cause, others (particularly Aymara communities in Arica) were rejecting national identities (Díaz Araya, 2006). With no clear resolution in sight, in 1922 it was decided that a plebiscite would be held to decide the rightful sovereignty of the provinces. While this plebiscite failed due to the extreme violence in the region, it did lead to the 1929 Treaty of Lima with which the province of Arica was awarded to Chile, and Tacna was returned to Peru (Skuban, 2007; Freeman, 2015). The subsequent decades were relatively peaceful with large amounts of cross-border movement for employment, to visit family and friends, and for commerce and leisure. This came to a halt in the 1970s when Chile and Peru came to the brink of armed conflict.

The governments of the elected Marxist President Salvador Allende in Chile and the non-elected left-wing dictator Juan Velasco Alvarado in Peru had been civil during their period of overlap between 1970 and 1973. Both were focussing on agrarian reform, the nationalisation of resources, and the control of business. Allende recognised that although they had taken power differently, the Chilean through democratic means and Velasco through a military coup in 1968, both were 'leading their people to the great avenues of authentic democracy and freedom' (Rodríguez Elizondo, 2004: 559). Both were opposed to US intervention and were keen to maintain good border relations in order to keep the US from meddling in South American affairs (Hurtado, 2017).

Relations between Peru and Chile were transformed overnight when General Augusto Pinochet, along with the armed forces, overthrew Allende's government. In 1973 Chile and Peru were headed by two generals: Pinochet and Velasco, military dictators and political enemies who squared off on the border, entangled in global Cold War geopolitics that disrupted Chile–Peru relations. The centenary of the 1879 War of the Pacific was approaching and memories of the swathes of territory taken from Peru by Chile remained fresh. Velasco, a fervent nationalist, was obsessed with reclaiming northern Chile as Peruvian

and the 1970s seemed to be the ideal moment: the Peruvians saw Chile as weak, a country politically divided between Pinochet and Allende supporters.

The tensions on the border began on 11 September 1973, the day of the military coup in Chile. The border was closed and an arms race began. The appearance of the fervently anti-communist right in Chile caused the Soviet Union to intensify ties with the strongly anti-US Velasco in Peru and over the following six years it sold tanks, planes, and armaments to Velasco, financed by loans at low interest rates (Philip, 2013; Meneses, 1982). While the relationship between Chile and the US in the 1970s was not always smooth, between 1973 and 1976 US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger was a steadfast supporter of Pinochet's regime and acted in the belief that it was vital to the US national interest (Harmer, 2013). Seeing the growing influence of the USSR in Peru (Berríos and Blasier, 1991), the junta reversed Allende's policy of building ties with Lima, and relations between the two countries soon deteriorated into talk of war. Pinochet (1974) was convinced that strong borders were vital for a strong nation and so as the decade progressed Chile fortified its frontiers and the border city of Arica became heavily militarised.

There is clearly a Cold War story to be told here; a global split being played out in microcosm between two Latin American nations. However, my aim here is to examine the impact of this on those who were living on the ground that was literally being fought over; the increasingly militarised border city of Arica. The purpose of this paper is to consider the everyday geopolitics of this situation for the citizens and conscripted soldiers who lived in Arica. It does so firstly by examining the emotions felt by the citizens of Arica in the 1970s and secondly through the blurring of the soldier-civilian dichotomy.

Security & Fear: Everyday Life for Citizens

Amidst the geopolitical struggles being played out at the global and national scales between Chile and Peru, the everyday lives of those who lived on the border were being transformed. The geopolitics of emotion in Arica is ambivalent: while some civilians understood militarisation as security, others were fearful. This was partly controlled by the local press in Arica; the dominant way in which geopolitical discourse was disseminated amongst citizens.

Firstly, some citizens I interviewed spoke of their ignorance of the possibility of conflict with Peru in the 1970s. Amongst them, the general consensus was that 'we had no idea' (interview with Gabriela Torres, 2014). Civilians were able to move freely across the border and during the 1970s it was not uncommon to make the short trip across the border to the Peruvian city of Tacna for a meal or shopping or even illicit reasons; one of my interviewees managed to fund his university studies by smuggling calculators which were manufactured in Arica into Peru, for example (interview with Joaquin Pérez, 2014). This border region has particularly been a space of mobility for indigenous communities and the border has been a space of porosity and connection, not a barrier (Tapia Ladino, 2015; Guizardi and Garcés, 2013; Freeman, 2015; Rodríguez and Freeman, 2016). This culture of cross-border mobility was apparent in the local press with one Peruvian restaurant advertising its services with 'When you travel to Tacna visit Calana bar and restaurant' (La Defensa, 5th January 1974).

This mobility and sense of 'friendly neighbourliness' meant many ordinary citizens were unaware that Arica could potentially be in danger. One interviewee who was a citizen but had close links to the armed forces stated that non-military citizens 'had no idea how serious the situation was' (interview with Tomás Morales, 2014). Another interviewee who was Peruvian but moved to Arica when she married her Chilean husband recalled that she returned once a year to visit her family in Peru and that there was 'no problem, at least none that I was aware of' (Interview with Catalina López, 2014). The civilians who remained

unaware of the dangers at the border were sheltered from the anxieties of living in a potential warzone, one interviewee remarked that there was some news being disseminated in the press about the situation but the city was 'so militarised that everyone felt safe' (interview with Vicente Díaz, 2014). An overt military presence can be a reassuring sight for some. For Julia Welland (2018: 439), war 'encompasses a plurality of experiences and works across a range of affective registers'. She uses joy and pleasure as experiences that exist amidst war to contest narratives that war is universally experienced through pain and suffering. The examples here similarly illustrate how militarisation can be experienced as security.

Fear is relational and is so enmeshed with other emotions that it cannot be easily compartmentalised (Pain, 2014). As these interviews show, even in a border city on the brink of war, fear was not a homogenous emotion. While soldiers were prohibited from crossing the border, for the majority of the decade citizens were able to travel and this, along with the feeling of military security in the city, made some Ariqueños believe that the outbreak of war could not be imminent.

However, other citizens of Arica noted the militarisation of the border and linked it to the possibility of war. Some interviewees recalled how Peruvians would station their tanks and cannons near the border which they would discharge throughout the night to demonstrate their strength under the guise of routine exercises. One interviewee who lived close to the border told me 'we could not sleep some nights… they were firing, there were gunshots all night, to show what they had' (interview with Pablo Martínez, 2014). Peru was engaging in a spectacle of war in a tangible fashion, literally shaking the earth with their power, and the Chileans could feel and hear these manifestations of strength. Another citizen remembered how 'there was always the latent possibility of war, so of course there was fear. Chile had a clear military disadvantage. And you could see [Peruvian] tanks on the hills in front of you' (interview with Hernán Rodríguez, 2014). One more vividly remembered living in fear,

saying, ‘there were some moments of fear during the 1970s when there were a lot of military exercises, lots of troop movements, when it felt like military conflict was close’ (interview with Jaime Sepúlveda, 2014). For these citizens, militarisation was not security, it was fear.

Whether the citizens knew the extent of the danger they were in or not, their lives were militarised in both practical and symbolic ways. Oral histories illuminated how school children were given first aid training to deal with potential violence but legacies of violence even altered their clothing: their school uniform was changed to be reminiscent of that worn by soldiers during the War of the Pacific. One of the challenges of historicising everyday geopolitics comes to the fore here; it is not possible to know the role of hindsight or to what extent first aid training and school uniforms would have been identified as markers of geopolitical changes at the time. However, these seemingly mundane experiences tell an important geopolitical story. As Juanita Sundberg (2017) has shown through her work on the ‘trash’ left by migrants as they cross the US–Mexico border, borders are drawn through the most mundane of practices. School uniform is not just clothing, it is a form of geopolitical posturing even if its wearers are oblivious to that.

With this militarisation of everyday life, how did more citizens not know how close Chile and Peru came to war? Many citizens of Arica remained largely oblivious to the threat of war; they were aware of the growing military presence at the border but it coincided with the ascent of Pinochet’s military government, so it didn’t appear singular to their city. Moreover, borders are often sites where the presence of the state is at its most visible (Grimson, 2004). But importantly they were also fed a story of security by the local newspapers. While the Chilean national press would report on international news to create ‘moral panics’ during the Pinochet years (Alvear and Lugo-Ocando, 2018), the local press was doing quite the opposite. Right-wing newspaper *La Defensa* ran numerous articles describing the ‘fraternal’ relationship between Chile and Peru and documenting the many

official events marking this good neighbourliness; under the Pinochet dictatorship, Peru and Chile were heralded as the best of friends, on the border if not in the capitals. These messages were highly engineered, the lack of freedom of the press resulted in a space whereby knowledge was mediated and processed before being disseminated and consumed. The military government was able to dictate which stories would become known to the public and the tone that would be used (Munizaga, 1983).

The vast majority of articles reported on positive aspects of border relations with military officials from both sides celebrating their relationship as the 'best of friends' and 'geographic brothers' (La Defensa, 29th August 1974; La Defensa, 5th December 1974). Any claims otherwise were declared to be 'malicious rumours' that were the 'product of international Communism' (La Defensa, 18th March 1974). Members of the armed forces of Peru and Chile held many ceremonies and meetings 'to reaffirm ties', the largest and most well-known of which was the 'Abrazo de Concordia'. Through the Abrazo de Concordia both Chile and Peru could broadcast a message of goodwill but also of assured sovereignty and strength. Such symbolic displays of friendship with the adjoining positive reporting and engineering of media was for the benefit of the Ariqueños who were living on this tense border. Their perspective of the border and knowledge of Peru–Chile relations was being controlled by the military government who did not want the public to be aware of the potential conflict. Mitzen (2006) has illustrated the state's role in promoting ontological security, security of the self, and this is what was at play here. The Chilean state was using the press to avoid fear and chaos which would have undermined the civilians' sense of themselves as secure Chilean citizens. The identity of 'citizen' required an ordered and stable border.

These citizens were not just receiving geopolitical discourse through the media, they were also (re)producing geopolitics. If geopolitics is produced through performance then the way that citizens continued to cross the border to Peru and consider themselves 'friendly

neighbours' performed the border as a space of security. As shown above, many non-military civilians were largely unaware of tensions at the national level as Arica did not 'feel' in danger. The secrecy around the possibility of war was orchestrated by the right-wing local press to keep citizens unaware of the danger they were in and to promote messages of harmony and fraternity between Chile and Peru. Whether citizens who were unaware of the tension or those who were afraid, the performed peace is part of what kept a violent conflict from occuring, thereby shaping geopolitics at a global scale.

Blurring the Soldier–Civilian Dichotomy

To speak of 'citizens' can homogenise the complex group of people inhabiting a city. If everyday geopolitics centres lived experience and non-elite actors, then conscripted soldiers sent from the rest of Chile to the *Norte Grande* during the 1970s can provide an important perspective. Just as tanks, planes, and weaponry were being brought to the border from other areas in Chile so too were the soldiers manning these arms. In Chile they were numerous, with approximately 370,000 young men drafted under Pinochet (Passmore, 2016). These soldiers are liminal actors, not fully soldier but not fully civilian. These were not men brought into a dangerous battle zone for combat, they were drafted into the military and sent to the far north of their country to live and work. This emerges from Cowen's (2008: 255) work where she figures the soldier as the ultimate citizen worker and encourages academics to think about 'the military through labor and citizenship'. Moreover, Howell's (2018) critique of the concept of militarisation puts forward 'martial politics' as a way to trouble the distinctions made between war and peace. Through drawing on Cowen and Howell and understanding the work-lives of these men who were citizens and simultaneously more-than-citizens, it is possible to blur the soldier–civilian dichotomy.

There are three ways in which the soldier–civilian dichotomy was blurred during this

time and it is this blurring that means that conscripted soldiers are an important group to study from an everyday geopolitics perspective and are part of the ordinary life of Arica as opposed to being the military elite. These three ways are: that conscripted soldiers were young, male civilians who were drafted into the military under a dictatorship rather than career soldiers; that the families of soldiers straddle the line between civilians and soldiers; and that, due to the nature of living under a military dictatorship, everyday life became imbued with militarism and civilians were asked to undertake tasks that would benefit the military.

Firstly, conscripted soldiers blur the dichotomy of soldier and civilian. These soldiers were often not career soldiers, they were not fully militarised, nor were they the elite. They tended to be young men who were drafted into the military at some point during this period and so shifted from being a civilian to being a soldier where they learnt about the conflict. One interviewee stated that citizens had no idea about the tension with Peru and he only realised it when he was conscripted in 1976. He says he learned years later that his Peruvian friends were more worried and 'wrote their wills', ready to come over to Arica to fight while Chilean citizens had 'no clue' (interview with Sebastian Rojas, 2014). On the question of Arica's proximity to war he told me, 'we had no idea, we did not have the least idea, we laughed, we said that the Peruvians will never attack us, we had no idea' (interview with Sebastian Rojas, 2014). Another who joined the army aged 18 and was stationed in Arica also reflected on the difference between his civilian and his later military life stating, 'in military circles we spoke a lot about the potential of the Peruvian army but in my civil life in Arica before I joined the army, the issue of Chilean–Peruvian relations was completely ignored' (interview with Nicolás Soto, 2014). Their spatial location did have some bearing on the news they received as one interviewee who was predominantly stationed in the rural altiplano to the East of Arica in the 1970s recalled that the altiplano was so isolated that they didn't

receive newspapers or information. Just as these men shifted from being citizens to soldiers as they were conscripted, so too did their knowledge of their proximity to war. Their geopolitical understandings changed but they were still 'workers' with everyday lives and relationships with those outside of the military (Cowen, 2008). Moreover, leaving or entering the military did not happen just once, one interviewee served in the Chilean military until 1974 but was brought back into active service in 1976 due to the ongoing tension with Peru. Soldiers in Arica were privy to some military knowledge at some times without entirely leaving the role of 'citizen'.

Blurring can secondly be seen between those who had 'military knowledge' and those who did not. The knowledge that the soldiers possessed leaked into their family lives as war extends far beyond the battlefield (MacLeish, 2013). One interviewee, the wife of a soldier, had greater knowledge of the risks and recalled how 'it was impossible to live calmly, because the order could come at any moment and the city would be evacuated and the vulnerable people would have to leave the city. And I, as a military wife, was a priority to be evacuated' (interview with Constanza Sepúlveda, 2014). With soldiers stationed in barracks these families were physically separated with this military wife recalling that 'even when I went to the hospital to give birth he wasn't there, and he thought he would never meet his son because war could break out at any moment' (interview with Constanza Sepúlveda, 2014). Contrary to the non-military citizens who were unaware of the possibility of war, military wives were aware and one told me, 'I knew other military wives and we were all scared, we were so young, we thought we would go to war and lose our husbands' (interview with Valentina Araya, 2014). Security does not always mean national security (Hyndman, 2007), and these interviewees were also embedded in understandings of security in the familial and domestic sphere. Under the Pinochet dictatorship, gender relations in Chile underwent considerable socio-economic transformations and women were not simply victimised

(Tinsman, 2000). It also cannot be overlooked, of course, that women were performing social reproductive labour that enabled their husbands, sons, fathers to carry out their military duties.

This embodies the ways in which women's lives have been militarised (Enloe, 1983), in this case through being cognisant to (some) military knowledge. Despite gendered distinctions separating men as 'warriors' and women as 'worriers' (Yuval-Davis, 1997: 94), in military contexts the militarisation of the everyday elides such simplistic dichotomies. As Victoria Basham (2016: 891) has shown, '[f]eminist geopolitical analyses reveal … how the very possibility of war relies on everyday militarisms as well as geopolitical practices and their profoundly gendered logics'. The everyday geopolitics of military families therefore had its own internal dimensions and these families were not quite as informed of the tensions as soldiers or elites but also not as unaware as those of citizens with no ties to the military.

The third way in which the soldier–civilian dichotomy was blurred was through the ways in which non-military citizens were asked to do tasks that would benefit the military. Under the military dictatorship, everyday life became imbued with militarism. This can be seen through the subtle examples mentioned in the previous section of first aid training and militarised school uniforms but in very overt ways too. One interviewee whose work in the 1970s entailed trips abroad to Peru, Bolivia, and Argentina was employed by the military to bring back information that could give Chile an advantage if war came. The civilian, who had experience flying planes, was asked to fly to foreign locations when he had legitimate reasons to travel abroad for work but to take detours and record information about military bases and any anomalies he noticed, a request he said he refused (interview with Alejandro González, 2014). Military knowledge is not procured only by those formally in the military. Howell's (2018) 'martial politics' provides a framework for understanding this. This citizen was not instantly 'militarised' by this request, his profession and hobby (flying aeroplanes) were

already imbued with war-like relations. Under the dictatorship, the everyday lives of non-military citizens were entwined with inter/national geopolitics.

These liminal actors were part of everyday geopolitical life in Arica and are worth including in everyday geopolitics research precisely because a firm dichotomy of soldier versus civilian cannot be drawn. The soldiers were (re)producing geopolitics and reaffirming Chilean sovereignty in the far north through embodied acts, everyday practices, and performative displays. Mark Salter (2008) has argued that borders are spaces of performativity, it is through repeated acts that they are brought into being. As Nancy Wonders (2006) has also shown, these citational acts are performed by ordinary people as well as by state actors. It is therefore through repeated acts such as wearing uniforms, supporting your military husband, or being asked to spy that border geopolitics are enacted. There has never been a tidy division between soldier and civilian and exploring the everyday experiences of living on the brink of war helps to unpack the already-present aspects of militarisation in Arica. The tendrils of war weave into spaces far beyond the battlefield, into the lives of those beyond the military, and blur any neat divisions of war and peace that we may imagine.

Conclusion

Despite coming close, war never broke out between Chile and Peru. This was due to multiple factors including the passing of the 'psychological date' of the centenary of the War of the Pacific, the overthrow of Velasco by Francisco Morales Bermúdez in 1975, the increasing international sanctions being placed on Chile, and that both countries were having border problems elsewhere. However, the actions of those living in Arica also played a part in promoting national and border security.

Through the two examples of citizens and conscripted soldiers in Arica during the 1970s this paper has shown how everyday life is a site where geopolitics is produced and reproduced. These people were not only *affected by* global geopolitical events, they were also part of *shaping* them and sustaining geopolitical narratives. Through using a historical everyday geopolitics approach the focus is shifted away from the military elites and towards the lives, emotions, and experiences of civilians and soldiers. But this does not mean ignoring the role of the state, in fact the actions of civilians and soldiers consolidated the role of the state and Chilean sovereignty in the *Norte Grande*. This highlights the liminal nature of geopolitical actors; under a dictatorship, conscripted soldiers are not a traditional site of geopolitical scholarship, instead they are a group who blur the division between civilian and soldier. Moreover, this perspective shows how borders are not solely sites of 'hot' geopolitics, borders are at once peripheral *and* central, tense *and* mundane. It is this focus on experience and a deconstruction of scalar dichotomies that is important for understanding a grounded historical everyday geopolitics.

Historical everyday geopolitics can be of crucial political importance. Between state-led initiatives and grassroots work, the 'afterlife' of political violence in Chile continues to be contested (Gómez-Barris, 2009). Art and media have been a key space for societal contemplation of the Pinochet dictatorship with the 2004 film *Machuca*, Fuguet's 1999 novel *Mala onda* and exhibitions of arpilleras (patchwork pictures produced under the dictatorship) just some examples. As important as such cultural representations are, there is also a political imperative to speak directly with those who experienced the dictatorship. This centres the embodied and emotional experiences of those who have been affected by violence, conflict, and political upheaval as well as those who (un)knowingly participated. Historical everyday geopolitics complicates state-led narratives of remembrance and instead focuses on the geopolitical work engaged in by citizens and non-elites. This supports 'bottom-up' forms of

memory-work and advocates everyday perspectives. Historical everyday geopolitics is therefore well situated to be applied as a framework to research a diverse range of historical events in Latin America and elsewhere.

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