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FROM A POLITICAL TO AN IM-POLITICAL COMMUNITY: ¹

THE END OF THE COMPANY TOWN (TOCOPILLA, CHILE, 1915-1996)

DE COMUNIDAD POLÍTICA A COMUNIDAD IM-POLÍTICA:
EL FIN DEL COMPANY TOWN (TOCOPILLA, CHILE, 1915-1996)

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A partir de una metodología histórica y antropológica, se describe y analiza un caso de estudio urbano situado en Tocopilla (Chile), ciudad que, por efecto de la industrialización de la mina de Chuquicamata en 1915, a través de The Chile Exploration Company, atestiguó la instalación de una poderosa termoeléctrica que incluyó un *Company town*, el cual operó con las mismas normas aplicadas en el campamento de Chuquicamata. La termoeléctrica, que fue nacionalizada en 1971 y quedó bajo la gestión de CODELCO, fue privatizada en 1996. Así, la nueva empresa se desligó del rol paternalista y de control obrero y habitacional que ejercía, lo que permitió el surgimiento de un proceso que finiquitó el *Company town*. Nos interesa caracterizar el tránsito organizacional, material y semántico que se evidenció en dicho campamento desde 1996, entendido como un proceso que se desarrolló en una escena neoliberal y que hemos denominado la transición de una *comunidad política* hacia una *comunidad im-política*.

Palabras clave: *Company town*, minería, generación de eléctrica, Tocopilla, im-política.

By using a historical and anthropological methodology, this paper describes and analyzes the urban case study of Tocopilla, Chile, a city that, as a result of the industrialization of the Chuquicamata mine in 1915 by The Chile Exploration Company, saw the installation of a powerful thermoelectric power plant that included a Company town, which operated under the same rules as the Chuquicamata camp. The thermoelectric plant, nationalized in 1971, remained under the management of CODELCO, before being privatized in 1996. Thus, the new company dissociated itself from the paternalistic control of workers and their housing, permitting the emergence of a process that brought an end to the Company town. This paper looks to characterize the organizational, material, and semantic transition seen in the settlement since 1996, understood as a process that took place under a neoliberal setting, which the authors have called the transition from a political to an im-political community.

Keywords: company town, mining, electricity generation, Tocopilla, im-politics.

I. INTRODUCTION

Mining processes in the Atacama Desert under the hegemony of the technical systems inaugurated since 1915 by the Guggenheim family and its two major companies, The Chile Exploration Company (copper) and the Anglo-Chilean Consolidated Nitrate Corporation (saltpeter), brought as a substantive byproduct a new way of inhabiting through the Company town. These new ways of living were seen in Chuquicamata (copper mine), Tocopilla (thermoelectric plant for the mine), and in the saltpeter offices of the Guggenheim system³, such as María Elena (since 1926) and Pedro de Valdivia (since 1931).

Those Company towns were the expression of an innovation in paternal and capitalist management that included, in addition to the urban and materiality, a political and biological imprint as a way of controlling life in an intimate or non-work territory (Sierra, 1990). Thus, American mining capitalism was building a city, landscape, and new sociability in the desert, based on functional materiality and the new parameters of social relationship, which became a kind of small country within another (Gutiérrez & Figueroa, 1920; Pérez & Viches, 2014; Weinberg, 2021; Olivares et al, 2022; Galaz-Mandakovic, 2020a; Galaz-Mandakovic & Tapia, 2022; Tapia & Castro, 2022).

This article looks to characterize a case study located in the city of Tocopilla, a town which, due to the industrialization of the Chuquicamata mine in 1915 through The Chile Exploration Company, witnessed the installation of a powerful thermoelectric plant to power the distant mine 140 kilometers away (Galaz-Mandakovic, 2017). The installation of that power plant included the implementation of a Company town, which operated with the same rules applied in the Chuquicamata camp.

The Tocopilla thermoelectric plant, nationalized in 1971 during the government of Salvador Allende, came under the management of CODELCO and, 25 years later, in 1996, was finally privatized. Thus, the new company that took over the energization detached itself from the paternalistic role initially applied in the Company town. The idea here is to characterize the constitution and the organizational, material, and semantic path that was seen in that camp, a process that brought the end of the Company town's political project.

The hypothesis presented is that the Company town was an ideological project derived from large-scale copper mining

that sought to set up a disciplined and functional community, but within the alteration framework of management regimes and that of an anthropological aporia, the housing and neighborhood political project dissipated and it was materiality that archived and witnessed a social intervention and agency. Thus, it is considered that, since 1996, the Company town transited from a political community to an im-political community, the latter expressed in the opening and tearing down of identity limits and systems (Espósito, 2006).

In this article, samples of a transition that arose with the privatization of the company will be given, seeing how that process generated the emergence of a reality that became incomprehensible, unrepresentable, and undisciplined to the control of its original limits.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Company town as a political project

The political community is understood here as the business project of a closed, absolute, and controlled identity that seeks unity of neighborhood meaning (Gravano, 2009). Without these structures, mining projects would be interfered with or impaired in their productivity. It is considered that politics are an attempt at domestication, of production of an ontological unity of meaning, but that always coincide with "its fracture", with its own limit: "Living together should not be interpreted as the production of community life, based on the existence of common principles that identify and determine a proximity of fusion between individuals" (Gudiño, 2011, p.34).

The construction of capitalist landscapes and, above all, the need to produce and maintain collective goods, requires the establishment of some system of government, preferably formalized to constitute a territorial management system: "If a state did not previously exist, capital will have to create something similar to facilitate and manage its own collective conditions of production and consumption" (Harvey, 2015, p.152). Thus, the so-called **Company town** acted as an urban project that had a sociological institution as its ideological horizon through a community program that facilitated the processes of labor fulfillment and productive optimization (Harvey, 2015; Le Gouill, 2018). With this objective "they are reflected urbanistically as a social manufacture oriented to a single productive activity, which generated a social group limited to any other urban diversification" (Olivares et al., 2022).

³ The Shanks system was a saltpeter production method, characterized by leaching caliche at high temperatures and was the system that determined an entire saltpeter industry from the Tarapacá to the Taltal areas, involving the establishment of large processing plants with a respective workers' camp. In 1926, the Guggenheim system emerged in the Department of Tocopilla, thanks to a mining family that revolutionized the industry through the mechanization and electrification of all extraction processes, leaching at a lower temperature, better crystallization, and the transfer and mechanical shipment of nitrates (Galaz-Mandakovic, 2020 b).

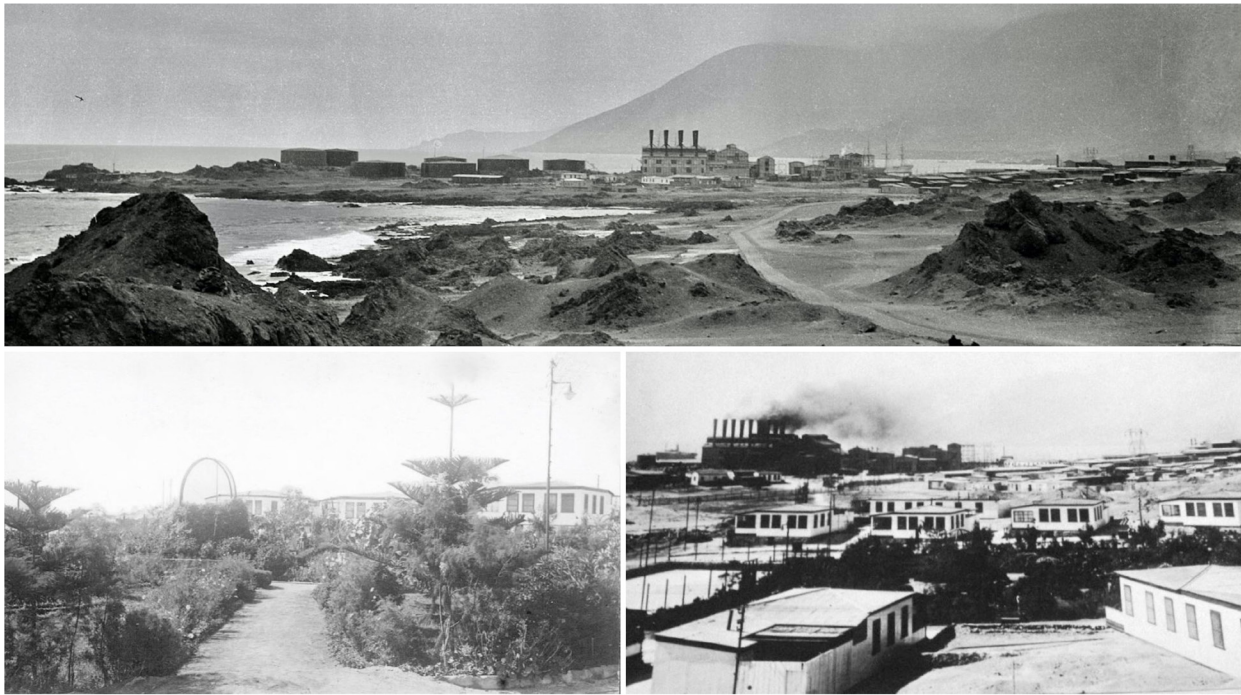


Figure 1. Above: The electric power plant of the Chuquicamata mine, located in the Algodonales Bay of Tocopilla (1923). Left: The thermoelectric plant and the mine were avant-gardes in terms of their production scale. Right: A section of the Company town, named Villa Americana (1928) along with its groves and the everyday life of pollution from the combustion of crude oil. Source: ACECCh, Preparation by the author.

It was then that historically consolidated cities were constituted as material, functional, and semiotic otherness, including the production “of a set of condensed and shared values” (Gravano, 2009, p.42). In that production, the camps for workers and employees in the Atacama Desert were the improved version of the French *Cité ouvrière*, the Spanish Industrial Colony, the industrial towns implemented in England, the *Burg* Company town in Bayreuth, Lowell, in Massachusetts, or the *Arbeiten Siedlungen* in Germany. The new mining populations established innovation for the saltpeter camps of the *Shanks* cycle (El Toco Canton) because they inaugurated new more profound elements of neighborhood life management, adding a specific urban design as a device and new materiality that, in this case, expressed an early rationalism (Vilches, 2018).

III CASE STUDY

The material constitution of the Company town in Tocopilla

The implementation of the Company town was a process of urban expansion, with a materiality and semantics of innovation. The newspaper La Prensa de Tocopilla

commented in 1928: “Simultaneously, with the development of industrial plants, the very beautiful working-class neighborhood of Villa Covadonga (...) equipped with gyms, sports fields, boxing ring, etc. has been built in the port *by Chile Exploration*” (La Prensa de Tocopilla, December 13th, 1928). The newspaper portrayed the camp located two kilometers south of Tocopilla as an organic territorial project that truly became a new city due to its extension, appearance, and organization. Its streets were spacious, on flat and homogeneous grounds. It had several public facilities. (Figure 1). The built surface area in the Company town of Tocopilla, completed on June 20th, 1925, was 11,500 m². In total, the camp had 190 buildings intended for residences (AGT, Official Letter No. 285, to the Governor, November 12th, 1927).

As in Chuquicamata, the new coastal city had a block layout based on a labor hierarchy. In this case, it had: 2 Type C blocks for lower-level bosses; 22 (6 houses each) Type D blocks for workers; 1 block (staff) for single workers; Manager’s house and administration buildings (Welfare Department) (Table 1). In addition, it had a Cooling House - known as a Grocery Store-, plus a hospital, a school, private beaches, a recreation house for the workers of

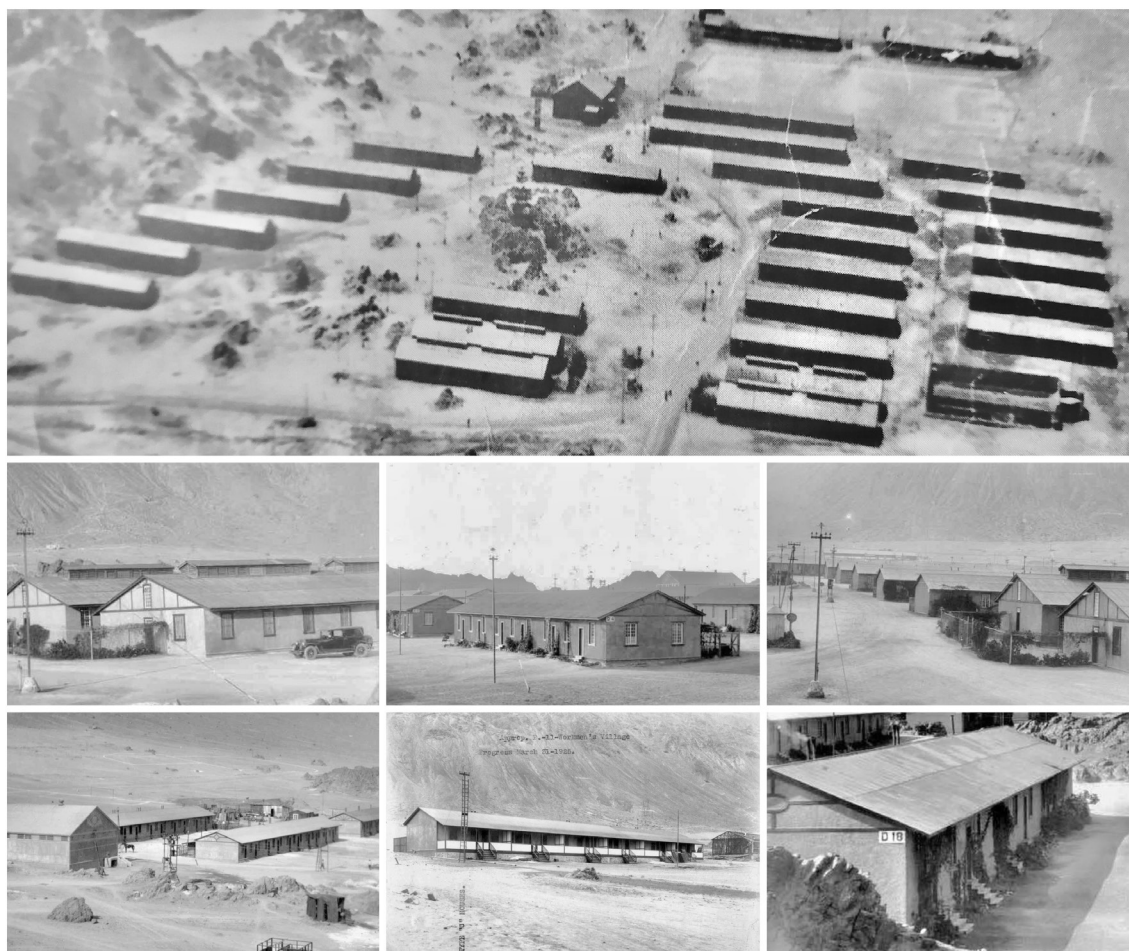


Figure 2. The initial Company town of Tocopilla, completed in June 1925. The housing blocks for the workers and their families are seen. Source: ACECCh, Preparation by the author.

Chuquicamata, sports and social clubs, football and baseball pitches, a golf course, tennis courts, a stadium, a ballroom, and an extensive and well-distributed electrification system. For their part, the Americans enjoyed exclusive use of a swimming pool located in the highest sector of the neighborhood. The Guggenheim Brothers, who were Jewish, installed a Catholic church for their workers and also a Crypt where residents visited the image of the Virgin of Lourdes (Figure 2).

The newspaper *La Prensa de Tocopilla* commented that the camp was located:

On an open field, between parched mountains and the black crags of the coast. The Americans have built a camp with the little houses of the company's bosses and a hotel hung from the crags, like bird

Units	Divisions and users
12 houses	4 rooms each for employees
142 houses	3 rooms for married workers
2 houses	31 rooms for single workers
1 house	Resident Engineer
1 house	Assistant Resident Engineer
4 houses	First class type A
12 houses	Second class type B
4 houses	Third class type C
12 houses	For single employees with 15 rooms each

Table 1. Specifications of the Tocopilla Company town in 1927. Source: AGT. Official Letter No. 285, to the Governor, Tocopilla, November 12th, 1927, prepared by the author.

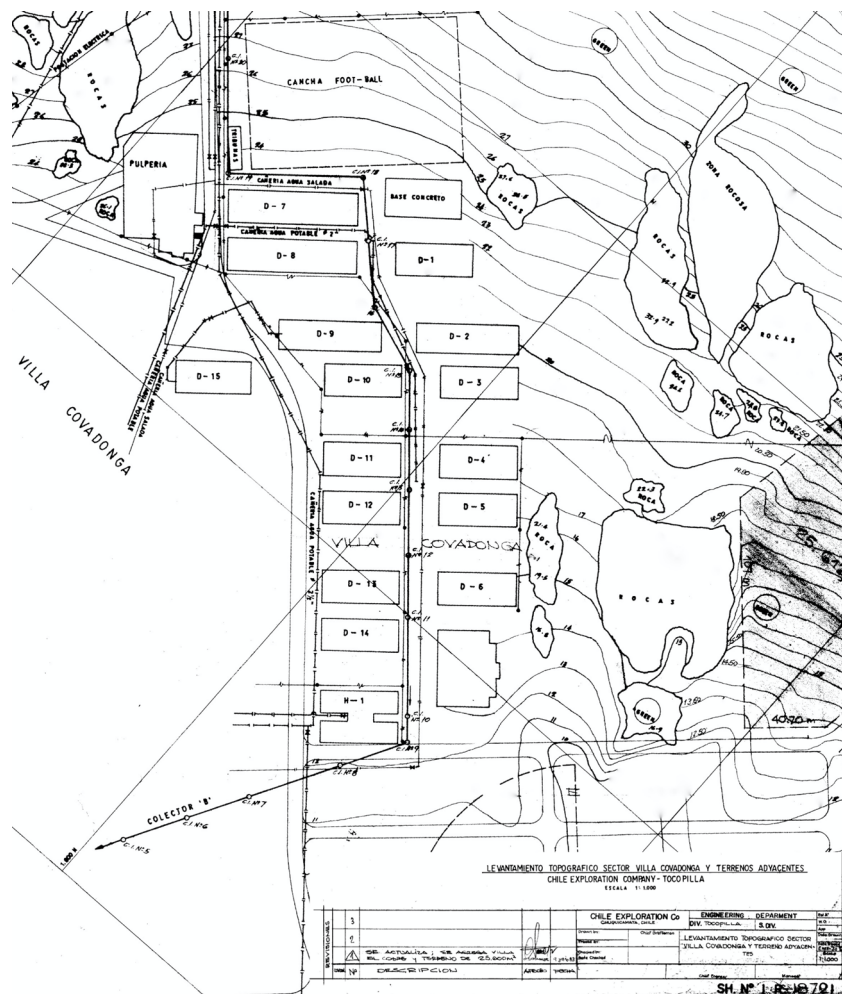


Figure 3. Fragment of an update of a topographic survey of the Villa Covadonga camp and adjacent lands. Source: ACECCh.

cages. The little houses of the workers with a one-meter front yard on which vines climb and at whose feet geraniums grow have given this horrid landscape a lovely note (La Prensa de Tocopilla, May 26, 1928).

The Tocopillano camp had a police and private security system led by watchmen. In the sector known as Villa Americana, a square was installed that stood out for its dense grove and exotic decoration for the desert coast.

In a mail sent to the governor, Tocopilla's Mayor in 1927 indicated that the worker neighborhoods that The Chile Exploration Company had built had the services provided for in Art. 46, "to which the circular of the Ministry of the Interior refers, namely drinking water, electric lighting, and hygienic drains" (sic) (AGT, Official Letter No. 285, to the

Governor, November 12, 1927). This information was relevant in comparison with Tocopilla, where drinking water was scarce, and with very low pressure, where drains did not exist in the 1920s, with cesspools being the most commonly used devices (Figure 3 and Figure 4).

This new neighborhood, thanks to its sanitary and lighting technologies, was also an otherness concerning its materiality because many of these houses were made from reinforced concrete with half-timbered wood, signifying a break with the memory of Tocopillana architecture. The rooms of the houses were boarded with an insulation system against heat and cold, with large fenced patios. It must be pointed out that in most of the houses, mainly those of the workers, although there was a sewer connected to the sea, the bathrooms were communal.

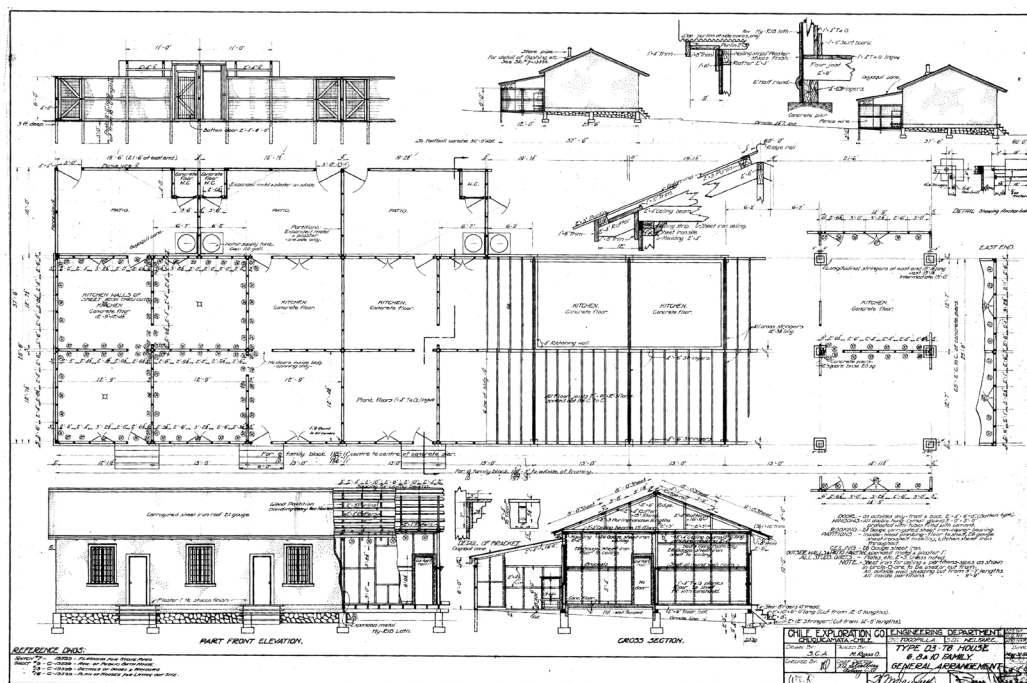


Figure 4. Constructive details of the Company town's houses. Source: ACECCh, May 31, 1924.

The organizational and semiotic constitution of the Company town

The setup of the Company town was the promotion of a certain biopolitization of the territory in terms of ordering the bodies, the control of circulation, available in the camp, its discipline, pedestrian movement times, hygienic rules, prohibition of dipsomaniacs, spaces for food, recreation, separation by marital status, by segment and labor hierarchy, also by nationality.

If the categories of Augé (2005) are considered, this would be an anthropological place in the differentiation with "space", because it was a concrete and symbolic construction that could not by itself account for the vicissitudes and contradictions of social life (Augé, 2005). In the words of Gravano (2009), there is a scene efficiency in place, namely a neighborhood that brings together "a problem" in its setting (Gravano, 2009, p.59). That is, the architecture and its neighborhoods were semiotically densified. The planning of the territory correlated with the physical space, such a situation would allow an understanding of the correlation between the location in the territory and the rank⁴. As Bourdieu

would say, the social space is built in such a way that the agents or groups are distributed in it "according to their position in the statistical distributions according to the two principles of differences: economic capital and cultural capital" (Bourdieu, 2003, p. 30).

In this territory's management, an otherness (Gravano, 2009) was formed, namely: the undisciplined, the delinquent, the insane, the unhygienic, the drunk, prostitutes, etc. All these were constituted as synonymous categories, being considered as opposed and harmful to the company's project if they enter the company town. For this reason, they were categorizations of people and attitudes that became incompatible with the community due to their supposed power of danger and indiscipline that, in the end, would mean a stumbling block for the capitalist process, assuming them, then, as vectors of risk for the society that The Chile Exploration Company projected, as a potential for degeneration and infection.

Coercion was prevalent in this group of people, for that reason control and examination were applied to the actions of daily life

⁴ For example, in the Chuquicamata camp, living at a higher geographical altitude was indicated by the job rank. Therefore, the houses located near the so-called Casa 2000, The General Manager's House, were occupied by important people in the company. The ones that were located geographically lower, near the entrance to the camp, were those destined for the lower hierarchies within the labor divisions in the mining company. In the Tocopillano case, the manager (Resident Engineer) lived on the highest part of a rocky hill.

to monitor and correct, which allowed developing multiple and conflicting alliances, for example, between mayors, governors, judges, doctors, the police, military, and inspectors. Those agents imagined the workers as eccentric subjects who dealt with a minimal gradation between normality and abnormality, between lack of control and the power of diseconomy. Therefore, it was necessary to guide them towards the new semantic center that represented being a worker and inhabitant of a territory designed from outside national borders. It added an adjectival stamp of Indians and communists to the conflictive workers (Galaz-Mandakovic & Rivera, 2021). In this context, the company became a political police (Agamben, 2003). The role of the company's Welfare Department can be understood as moral police and that for outside the Company town, it fed the respective fears of being an uncontrolled or supposedly uncontrolled territory. The socio-economic and labor disjunction arose where the Company town was the territory of closure, segregation, and the respective morality according to American parameters. These neighborhoods were a machine of discipline at labor, recreational, educational, health, and moral levels. A device that made the rules explicit was the Regulations for the Workers' Room, a statute that circulated both in Chuquicamata and Tocopilla and that was jealously guarded and cited when facing any breach (AGT, Regulations for the Workers' Room, The Chile Exploration Company, January 28, 1925).

As commented by Gutiérrez and Figueroa (1920), racism was a structuring axis:

Harry Guggenheim considers (...) that the Chilean worker was a ragged vagabond, who could not be trusted because of his mental and physical degradation, who lived in slums (...) he expresses that now they are encouraged to bathe and wash, and to keep their clothes free of parasites. He recognizes the innate intelligence of the Chilean workers whom he calls natives by the derogatory epithet (Gutiérrez & Figueroa, 1920, p.7).

When analyzing this process of neighborhood innovation, the inclusion of the company's paternal exercise is evidenced, based substantially on a set of operations for the reproduction and control of life, which was manifested through the coverage of community demands in health, housing, roads, education, sports promotion, social welfare and the promotion of healthy neighborhood life. This whole process had no other purpose than to mold a good citizen; a citizen who would always be good when he was a good worker, namely: punctual, clean, orderly, calm, with family, submissive, docile, and disciplined. These methods targeted a new ethnicity: the worker and the employee who gave his job to the Americans became a recipient of the project for the new ethnic model of the disciplined citizen. Thus, in Nancy's (2000) words, the political was the community space, the place of a specific and common coexistence, where exclusion and closure from outside dangers

arose (Nancy, 2000).

Likewise, metaphors of social ties emerged that overlaid hypothetical realities, for example, the notion that the power plant and mine workers were the regional upper class, what Eric Hobsbawm (1987) called the constitution of a labor aristocracy. This, in relation to otherness, was an obvious form of governmentality because the workers themselves reproduced the discursivity and imaginaries produced by the company, promoting the emergence of a destructuring of traditional ways of life.

On an internal plane, to paraphrase Nancy (2000), this type of community "strives to confer a dubious intersubjective nature, which would be endowed with the virtue of linking (...) one with the other" (Nancy, 2000, p. 40). It evidenced the emergence of a theory as to which community would be the opposite of one's own, and that is explained by the obligation or duty to others (Espósito, 2003), where the community itself is the vacuum due to the effect of limits, "the public thing is inseparable from nothing" (Espósito, 2003, p. 33). Thus, as in Chuquicamata, the existence of this camp "generated a great sense of belonging" (Weinberg, 2021, p.205).

According to Scranton (1984), the idea of worker infantilization is revealed in these business considerations: in fact, they were built as people who require a certain polishing and guidance. Sierra (1990) mentions that these processes targeted the project of the dreamed worker, as a project of industrial paternalism, where the worker must project himself to the places of non-work, that is, to the spaces of socialization and family reproduction. Namely, an invention of a model worker, as a regenerationist employers' program of a new man full of social and work virtues.

The success of the process, therefore, would consist in the reproduction of each norm outside of work, outside of industry, it is there, then, that the far-reaching program manifests itself. Everything would begin in the company, there, in the production space of the worker's habitus through continuous disciplines, that is, a domiciled and locatable, law-abiding worker, with a family role and without vices (Sierra, 1990).

IV. METHODOLOGY

The historical processes that relate the evolution of architecture, urbanism, and the management of massiveness linked to copper mining in the Atacama Desert during the twentieth century, do not exclude adding an interdisciplinary analysis from political anthropology and the social history of extractivism itself.

Regarding this, the work here consists of a case study located in the city of Tocopilla (Antofagasta Region), a city where a thermoelectric plant was implemented to power the Chuquicamata mine. For this reason, it included the construction

of a Company town. This paper looks at analyzing the finalization of that urban project.

The time range considered runs from 1915, when the mining project was established, to 1996, the period that saw the end of the Company town in question.

The approach in this study has a historiographic methodology, for this reason, it resorts to data collection through the examination of unpublished primary sources (review of documentary archives, press archives, historical plans, and photographic archives), which are analyzed from a diachronic perspective. In terms of hermeneutics, theoretical frameworks typical of political anthropology are used, in particular, the considerations of im-politics (Agamben, 2003; Espósito, 2006; Gudiño, 2011).

This includes the visual record of the studied area through fieldwork carried out in the former Company town.

V. RESULTS

End of the Company town: new consortium and new territorial organization

Once copper was nationalized in Chile in 1971, CODELCO took over the mine and the thermoelectric plant with the respective Company towns of Chuquicamata and Tocopilla, maintaining the tradition of internal hierarchization and the diverse semantics and semiotics typical of the American era. The Tocopillano camp was expanding, with the emergence of Villa El Cobre and Villa Carlos Condell in the throes of the 1970s (Galaz-Mandakovic, 2017). However, in 1996 the Tocopillana thermoelectric plant was privatized and saw the impairment of the socio-economic benefits that workers received, but also the end to the preponderance of the company over the Company town. In this way, the company Electroandina⁵ detached itself from the disciplinary, welfare, and life management character of the workers that was established in the camp with the North American company which had been maintained by CODELCO.

In everyday events, privatization meant the end of the grocery store, which became a supermarket with access for all kinds of public. Workers and their families had to buy with cash, no longer with cards, or vouchers, and no discounts from the pay slips. In addition, the neighborhood surveillance system disappeared, ending controls and administration over neighborhood behaviors.

At the same time, many of the camp's houses were transferred to workers, and the residence of neighbors not connected

with the thermoelectric plant was allowed with the sale of some properties and the appearance of rental properties.

Social agency and the new materialities

An important fact is that the houses could be intervened and extended to develop a self-construction process of rooms and residential spaces. This situation had been prohibited by the American company, as well as by CODELCO. In this sense, the functional architecture (sheds with half-timbered wood, partitions, rectangular trusses, and gabled roofs) moved towards a DIY architecture, with an indeterminate language, towards the loss of the neighborhood's homogenization. The neighborhood began to show new colors, new shapes, extensions, and significant deformation of the original neighborhood, strongly impacting the visual. It was a uniform deconstruction. The resistance to similarity was manifested by the effect of an agency of the resident subjects. The foundation of front yards, garages, fences, new windows, new paint, extensions in height, etc., was the manifestation of this material and architectural postmodernity and the demonstration of multiple stylistic singularities.

At the same time, in the crucial year, 1996, a neighborhood adjacent to the Company town called Padre Alberto Hurtado, which was built by SERVIU, was inaugurated by the same promoter of the thermoelectric plant's privatization, President Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle, meaning another deconstruction process by the arrival of hundreds of families from the lowest socioeconomic strata that surrounded the old thermoelectric camp (Galaz-Mandakovic, 2013).

This process of concluding the Company town was immersed in the domestic economy's neoliberal process, which had an impact on a new form of local capitalist relationship, resulting in new internal fragmentation in the thermoelectric industry expressed in staff reductions, several internal reconversions, and also marked by a profound flexibilization of work regimes and the introduction of contractors and subcontracted workers who received lower wages, many of them workers from central and southern Chile.

The workers who managed to get around the privatization process were able to continue living in the old Company town, but little by little the status projected by the Americans and maintained by CODELCO was being dismantled. The notion of an upper class little by little was breaking down when, in 1996, families had to start paying with their own resources for electricity, telephone, and water, to pay for their children's university studies, to shop at the supermarket without greater privileges, etc. Then, their economic reality was made precarious by the new privatization process. (Figure 5 and Figure 6).

⁵ The property was acquired by Tractebel (Belgium), Iberdrola (Spain), and Enagás (Chile). In 2000, the firm Iberdrola and ENAGAS sold their entire stake to Tractebel.

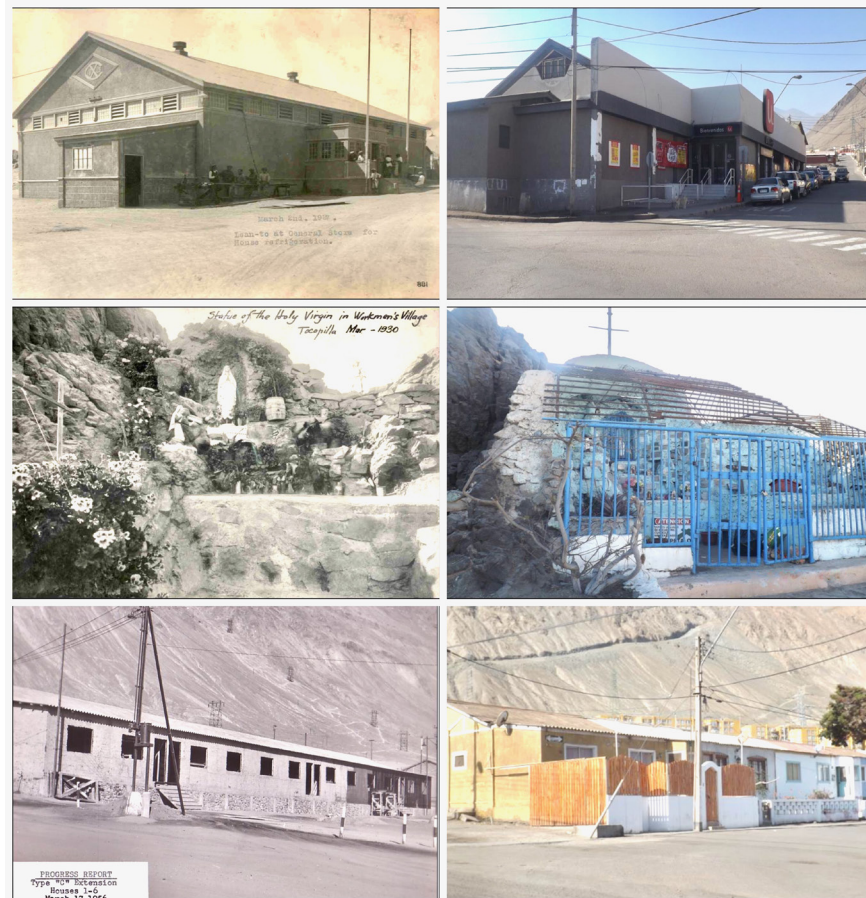


Figure 5. Original facilities of the Company town compared to the current situation. It shows the grocery store, the crypt, and houses of the Type C block and the respective self-construction interventions once the business control over the camp had dissipated. Source: Author's files, preparation by the author.



Figure 6. Comparative panoramas between the buildings and original neighborhoods of The Chile Exploration's Company town and the contemporary scene that expresses the urban expansion of Tocopilla, a consequence of the dissipation of the thermoelectric company's territorial control. Source: Author's files, preparation by the author.

VI. DISCUSSION

A new semantic: from political community to im-political community

As has already been explained, the workers' camp was the constitution of a political community, that constituted an identity closure, signifying the confrontation and expression of the difference with the historical city. In that sense, when the disciplinary and community control of the company was diluted, the path of a political community to an im-political community arose (Espósito, 2006). This is because, with the emergence of the breakdown and the passage to a certain fusion and emergence of the heterogeneity of the company neighborhood, arose an exposure to the different, emergence of singular and diverse existences, an ineradicable process that meant the opening to otherness, to an innovation in community coexistence. This process can also be understood as the irruption of fragments of Tocopilla towards a sector where there was no labor diversity, towards a sector that was closed for many years by the management of a company that projected homosociability with a strong semantic load.

In that scenario, the company aimed at living together under the same controls, namely that living together is the opposite because it is not the production of a political and identity closure of the community on itself, "but the possibility of exposing ourselves and living together in non-identification, in otherness, and in constant openness to the other" (Gudiño, 2011, p.35). In this context, it is confirmed that the "real" coexistence began when otherness broke into the old camp and the essentialist limit of what it meant for the rest of the different population was broken down. In this framework, "the im-political rests on the institutive liminality that crosses the interaction between these two dimensions" (Espósito, 2006, p.14).

Thus, the political project coincides with the order of its fracture, understanding that the general idea of politics and also of culturalists and essentialists is to see the difference, deriving in discourses of identity defense to construct unitary orders (Agamben, 2003, p.43). According to Espósito (2006), the community inhibits the subject and a de-democratization emerges since it hinders the formation of a full identity.

Once the rules of the Company town dissipated, identities of living emerged through the material agency in the dwellings. With these transformations, the idea of a city becomes tangible, its public and private spaces "do not remain static or immutable (...) they take on new meanings attributed by their inhabitants" (Fuentes & Cerda, 2022, p.4), as has happened in multiple contexts. Finally, "the im-political has a particularly emancipatory nature" (Lucero, 2022, p.71), that is, the effective community is constituted in the heteroclite, with a polysemic dimension emerging.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

It can be said that the development of mining capitalism in the north of Chile was not only an economic, technological, and extractive imprint but also had a strong substrate of ideology and political subjectivity when designing new sociological and urban horizons.

Thus, as has been pointed out, the Company town of Tocopilla originally became a way of living that helped the intensity of difference, with images held by the actors (Gravano, 2009, p.266), of status, of classism; that is, an ideologized expression of the company's policy in its desire for discipline and biopolitical management of the territory, called political community, which established a persistent struggle against the possibilities of the project breaking down, stemming from abhorrence to the others from a specific architecture. From the Company town, it was sought to inhibit the emergence of deviations or dystopias detrimental to productive development.

This process of discipline began to collapse in 1996 with its privatization from CODELCO, as a result of the neoliberal policies of the Concertación governments. It was then that, faced with this privatization, a process of dislocation and paradigmatic rupture arose, making the static dimensions that were intended to structure the unity of meaning in the neighborhood impossible. In other words, new materiality emerged, a heterogeneous intervention that broke from the originality of the neighborhood, germinating a plural form of coexistence with an inscription of the multiple.

The end of the Company town's management offered a dynamic impossible to be confined and irreconcilable with the institutional discursive order of the original business policy, with a way of coexistence with an absence of identity emerging, not intervening in dispersion or the multiple. This is where the im-political community is identified. According to Agamben (2003), an im-political community is never defined because everything is to come, that is why it is infinite and dynamic and it resists being identified, avoiding every instance of representation. It is there that architecture began to archive the transformation agencies in the hands of the subjects who modified the materiality or incorporated others. That same character or condition of unrepresentability constitutes it as the reverse, as the antithesis of the overwhelming processes of identity and the regimes of truth that represented the original project of Company towns in the Atacama Desert.

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