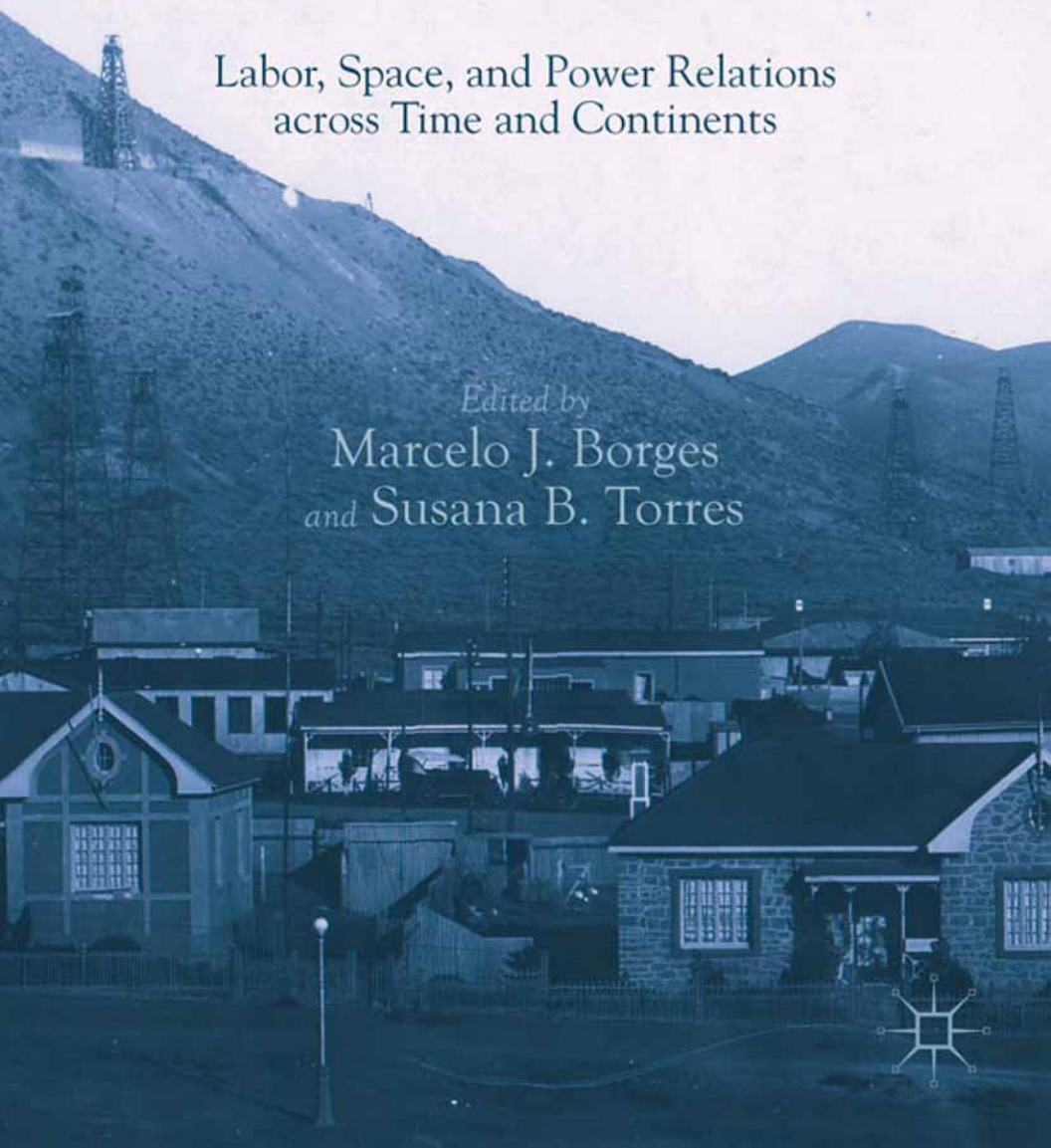


# COMPANY TOWNS

Labor, Space, and Power Relations  
across Time and Continents

*Edited by*  
Marcelo J. Borges  
and Susana B. Torres



# Company Towns

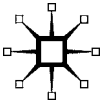
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COMPANY TOWNS

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With sadness, as the book goes to the press, we need to lament the untimely death of Susana Torres, who lived with cancer for several years. Prolonged treatments and difficult circumstances notwithstanding, Susana continued working on this and many other professional endeavors with defiant optimism and profound joy. At a personal level, it is impossible to convey the loss of a close friend with whom I have shared so much during so many years. At a professional level, Susana's premature departure leaves a vacuum that will be deeply felt by her colleagues and students. Despite her physical absence, the legacy of Susana's scholarship on company towns, labor and migration history, and the regional history of Patagonia will surely stimulate fruitful conversations and research for years to come. It is to her memory that this book is dedicated.

MARCELO J. BORGES

## CHAPTER 1

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# Company Towns: Concepts, Historiography, and Approaches

*Marcelo J. Borges and Susana B. Torres*

Under the headline “The Last Company Town,” *Newsweek* reported in 2011 the fate of Scotia, California, a town founded in the nineteenth century by the Pacific Lumber Company in the redwood forests of northern California.<sup>1</sup> In the hands of a Wall Street hedge fund, the town was slated to be sold and with it a distinctive way of life—characterized by the report as “a time when employers provided everything”—destined to end. Yet the same article noted the revival of the company town model in other industries in the United States and around the world, and it cited the transformation of the corporate campuses of Google and Facebook, in California, and the recent establishment of new factory towns in China. A creation of industrialization and capitalist expansion, company towns have proven resilient organizations. Company towns first appeared in Europe and North America with the industrial revolution, as a way to make manufacturing or mineral extraction possible in isolated areas and in places without easy access to established urban centers, and as devices to gain access to a stable labor force. As industrialization and capital investment expanded, company towns also emerged in Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, Oceania, and colonial territories throughout Asia—where they often acted as pioneering devices in broader Europeanizing efforts—as well as in China and Japan.<sup>2</sup> These settlements received many names: single enterprise communities, mill towns, factory villages, and enclaves; they have been called *colonias industriales* in Spain, *cités ouvrières* in France, *Arbeitersiedlungen* in Germany, *bruk* communities in Sweden, and *villas obreras* and *ciudades-empresa* in South America.<sup>3</sup> In the English-speaking world, they became known by the general name of company towns.

Company towns were residential and service centers built by companies near or adjacent to the places of extraction or production in which companies operated not only as employers but also as landlords, as de facto enforcers of security and social harmony, and often as providers of services and goods for workers' consumption. Specific characteristics varied according to the dominant economic activity, the location of the industry, the presence of private or state capital, the reliance on local or migrant labor, and the relative autonomy of company towns from local and national authorities. Working and spatial arrangements followed the logic of production but were also influenced by factors such as power relations, socio-occupational hierarchies, and the ethnic, racial, and gender composition of managers and the working population. The object of criticism for their control over labor, company towns were also at the forefront of urban experimentation; prime sites of paternalism and welfare practices, they were also contested terrains of negotiations and confrontations between capital and labor.

Building company towns required investment and some degree of planning. Why did entrepreneurs divert resources from production to build these settlements? Accessibility to raw materials, energy, transportation, and labor weighed heavily in their decision to invest in the creation of company towns. For example, textile mills in the early stages of mechanization were highly dependent on natural energy such as water. To access these sources of energy in an economical way, early industrialists built their factories where the power source was. Similarly, the need to transport the final product to the markets influenced the location of timber towns near rivers. In other cases, capitalists followed the source of production, building settlements in isolated areas where mining fields or forests were located. Mining and lumber companies frequently participated in the development of transportation infrastructure such as railroads. Finally, access to labor was crucial. Companies needed technicians and specialized laborers, and above all a reliable source of unskilled workers for general production. Company towns in remote locations had to provide housing and other services to attract and maintain a stable working population. Manufacturing and mining settlements located in rural areas with an already established population had to provide incentives for workers to settle near the workplace. Company towns included two distinctive but interconnected spaces: places of production (mines, oil fields, factories, textile workshops) and housing and services for workers. There was a fluid relationship between places of work and residence, as town dwellers were also part of the company labor force.

In addition to adjusting to the needs of location and facilitating access to resources and labor, other company towns resulted from the vision of entrepreneurs who wanted to create orderly, harmonious workers'

communities. Infused by ideas of social order and paternalism, these experiments in social engineering were less frequent but often left a lasting architectural and cultural legacy.<sup>4</sup> Commonly, these experiences followed both a capitalist logic that aimed at creating optimal conditions of production as well as larger ideas about the role of workers' housing and workers' communities as means of addressing the difficulties and inequalities created by industrialization. Industrialists and urban planners presented model towns as spaces of cooperation instead of conflict, as a way of transcending labor-capital confrontation. More common, however, were the cases of company towns that included some aspects of planning without embracing the full program of building model communities for company workers. In colonial societies or neocolonial situations, ideas of cultural and ethnic superiority commonly permeated these experiments, which were perceived of as a civilizing enterprise.<sup>5</sup>

Entrepreneurs and corporations developed company towns to fulfill specific needs of production, but states also participated in their development and management, albeit to a lesser degree. State-run company towns were established both in capitalist and socialist economies, in the industrialized and developing world. The reasons for state intervention varied from central planning and rationalization of resources in countries like the Soviet Union and China to the development of new industrial activities or the protection of strategic resources, such as the cases of early oil production in Argentina and steel in Brazil, or ammunition manufacture in the United States.<sup>6</sup> In other cases, state involvement in company town management occurred as a result of nationalization policies such as those that followed revolutionary changes in Iran in the 1950s and Peru in the 1960s.<sup>7</sup>

At the turn of the twentieth century—the heyday of the company town—some estimates for North America put the number of coal towns alone in tens of thousands.<sup>8</sup> The worldwide decrease in commodity prices that followed the Great Depression, the exhaustion of mineral deposits, the competition of synthetics, and an increased state regulation of working and labor conditions resulted in the first significant decline and eventual demise of many company towns. Overproduction also did its part, as mining and lumber towns were often victims of their own success—the more they produced, the more rapidly they depleted their resources. Extractive towns boomed and busted, leaving behind lasting marks on the landscape and a negative environmental legacy. Larger structural developments since the 1950s, such as the improvement of transportation, power lines, and communication networks also contributed to the decline of company towns. Even further decline resulted from profound changes in the 1970s and 1980s, as traditional industries took a sharp downturn. By the late twentieth century, many traditional company towns

became ghost towns that lived only in the memories of former workers; others survived, but in most cases losing their original characteristics as company towns; still others reinvented themselves by adapting to new economic activities, including leisure and industrial heritage tourism.<sup>9</sup> There were also cases of expansion in which early company towns evolved into large urban centers or were incorporated into nearby cities as neighborhoods.<sup>10</sup> Company towns proved resilient in peripheral and remote areas of both the developing world and industrialized nations, where new towns were built well into the last quarter of the twentieth century.<sup>11</sup> As the *Newsweek* article cited earlier indicates, this form of production is receiving renewed attention, not only through the nostalgic gaze of former residents and urban planners but also as a possible model for emerging industrial communities.

The history of company towns has attracted the attention of scholars, particularly in North America. Most studies have looked at the design and planning of workers' settlements and utopian communities or have explored the rise and fall of particular towns, especially mining centers and other single-enterprise communities. The global expansion of this type of industrial settlements that combined production and residence, and its adaptation to different contexts have received limited consideration. By analyzing historical cases from Europe, the Americas, Africa, and Asia, the essays in this volume examine the transnational nature of company towns. By looking at company towns in a variety of locales in contrasting political, economic, and sociocultural circumstances, the contributions of this volume shed light on common foundations as well as on historical and geographic variations. Far from the romanticized image of lost communities that pervade some contemporary popular treatment of the company town experience, these studies present company towns as contested spaces in which diverse interests, contrasting ideas of community, and unequal power relations coexisted. The discussion that follows provides a theoretical and historiographical overview that contextualizes the individual case studies.

### Concepts

According to John Garner, the concept of company town was a late-nineteenth-century creation, and it was first applied in the United States to mining camps and smelters in Appalachia.<sup>12</sup> One of the first scholarly definitions was proposed in the 1930s by Horace Davis, who stated that “a community is known as a company town when it is inhabited solely or chiefly by the employees of a single company or group of companies which also owns a substantial part of the real estate and houses.”<sup>13</sup> In the 1960s, James Allen provided a similar definition by characterizing the company town as a

space controlled by a single company that provides housing and services to its workers.<sup>14</sup> Early definitions also stressed the location of these settlements, which, in many cases, were in isolated areas where the mineral or raw material was to be found. Scholars also emphasized the autonomy of company towns from municipal authorities. In the United States, many were unincorporated towns, independent of any municipal jurisdiction.<sup>15</sup> Both isolation and autonomy served to underscore the multiple roles played by companies in these towns and the extent of company control. The company was not only the employer but also the landlord. As employer, it hired, fired, and organized personnel for production. As landlord, it created and managed the company town, controlled housing assignments for the majority of its working population, provided medical and sanitary services, supplied water and energy for consumption, established a company store and authorized the location of private stores or the activities of itinerant merchants, and oversaw workers' leisure and social life in the area under its control.

The classic concept of company town, however, leaves out a variety of arrangements and socioenvironmental conditions, as well as adaptations to different sociopolitical and historical contexts. Related concepts include mill villages, work camps, and communitarian settlements—all of them commonly referred to as company towns. Mill villages were common during the early years of the nineteenth century. Rolf Knight characterizes them as “several dozen cottages, loosely assembled around a mill building often situated no farther than a few miles downriver from a similar site.”<sup>16</sup> Mill villages were built close to the water, their main power source. In New England, for example, most were small settlements built in rural areas, but others evolved into larger communities, especially those in or near preexisting urban centers. Small mill villages relied on family work, while larger ones employed both female workers for the looms and male workers for the machine shops.<sup>17</sup> The cotton mill villages in the American South benefited from their proximity to both natural energy and the fields that provided the raw material. Developed during the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, these villages took advantage of new technologies and of access to abundant, inexpensive labor provided by landless workers, sharecroppers, and small proprietors in the nearby countryside.<sup>18</sup> Some of these villages became large company towns.

If the location of mill villages was determined by their access to sources of energy, that of work camps was the direct result of easy access to mining, extractive, and logging sites. Work camps constituted settlements of male workers in isolated regions with barrack housing provided by the employer. Some work camps lasted a short period of time and later disappeared, and others became company towns. In effect, as Price Fishback observes, the



nature of production often conditioned the expected life of these towns. In lumbering towns, for example, “timber was exhausted within a year or two, [and] the towns often consisted of temporary bunkhouses.”<sup>19</sup> In contrast, coal seams could last anywhere from ten to thirty years, which resulted in more developed residential settlements and services for workers.<sup>20</sup> There were, however, logging camps that developed into company towns with extensive residential areas and services for workers, such as the lumber towns built in the pine forests of eastern Texas or near the redwoods of the Pacific coast of northwestern United States.<sup>21</sup> Temporary settlements of workers are still common in mining production in isolated regions as well as in large building projects such as hydroelectric dams. But in general, today’s labor camps are better built and host some families, and their overall conditions are better than the all-male camps of the nineteenth century.<sup>22</sup>

Finally, industrial communitarian settlements were similar in size and population than mill villages, but their structure was more complex. They were utopian experiences of social and labor organization that appeared in the early nineteenth century as a result of the influence of the ideas of thinkers like Charles Fourier and Robert Owen. These ideas inspired urban experiments like New Lanark, in Scotland, and New Harmony (Indiana) and Hopedale (Massachusetts), in the United States, but most of them were short-lived and disappeared before growing into towns.<sup>23</sup>

Focusing on productive specialization and dependence on a single economic base, scholars also have used the concept of single-enterprise or monofunctional community as interchangeable with that of company town. These are towns in which most of the population depends heavily or exclusively on a single activity for jobs, but the company is not necessarily involved in the running of the community itself.<sup>24</sup> These concepts, however, lack the specificity of company town, as they can be applied to a variety of activities and dominant employers, including such diverse settlements as agricultural towns, fishing villages, and military barracks.<sup>25</sup> This loose usage of company town is prevalent in popular discourse. In the United States, the press commonly refers to single-enterprise communities as company towns, both in the case of small- or medium-size cities, such as Greencastle, Indiana, site of IBM, and of large towns in which the presence of a particular employer looms large in the local economy such as Boeing in Seattle, Washington. The same is true for other industrial nations, as is illustrated by the *New York Times*’ characterization of Turin, Italy, where the car company Fiat is located, as “probably the biggest ‘company town’ in the world,” and the common references to Toyota City and Kamaishi City, Japan, the home of automakers Toyota and Nippon Steel, respectively, as company towns.<sup>26</sup>

A variation of this usage can be found in references to towns that contained one dominant company or a few strong companies devoted to industrial activities.<sup>27</sup> Some of these industrial towns were located in the outskirts of larger cities; others grew out of rural villages. Within the larger urban space, entrepreneurs built housing for their employees that gave way to distinctive company spaces. The companies might have had a strong presence in other sectors of local society, such as politics and urban services, but they did not have exclusive control over them. This dependence on a limited number of employers and the companies' construction of residential spaces and provision of services for their employees recreated social and economic dynamics similar to the more circumscribed spaces of traditional company towns. Examples of a dominant presence of single industry in an industrial town that created company town-like circumstances include the Bata Shoes Company in Zlín, Czech Republic, and Bethlehem Steel in Steelton, Pennsylvania, in the United States.<sup>28</sup> There were numerous cases of industrial towns with multiple dominant industries that built their own productive and residential spaces in or near existing towns, especially in Europe. In Italy, for example, the early twentieth century witnessed a growth of medium-size urban centers that became factory towns, as well as the expansion of workers' neighborhoods around factories in larger centers like Milan and Turin. The case of Fushun, the industrial company town that grew from an early railroad town in Japan, discussed in this book, illustrates the global reach of this phenomenon during late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century industrialization. Reproducing to some extent the power structure of traditional company towns, the weight of company owners and administrators in these cases often transcended the limits of the company space, thus influencing local politics and urban growth.<sup>29</sup>

In colonial or neocolonial situations, scholars have also identified company town features in company estates and enclave economies. According to James Porteous, company estates are agricultural enterprises such as cotton and rubber plantations that share with company towns their factory-type organization of labor, reliance on outside workers, social isolation, and a degree of paternalism in labor-capital relations.<sup>30</sup> The major difference between company estates and company towns resides in their main production—agriculture in the first case, and mining and industry in the second—which resulted in a more transient nature of the workforce and a greater dependence on seasonal labor in most company estates, following the highs and lows of agricultural calendars, particularly the harvesting and cutting cycles. Access to a reliable labor force was as important in company estates or plantations as it was in company towns, but seasonal laborers were not under the

control of the employer all year long, and had access to alternative means of subsistence outside of company control. Complementary activities such as sharecropping and tenancy were a common feature both in company estates located in areas with preexisting rural communities and in those located in less populated areas that relied heavily on migrant laborers. While subsistence farming and dependence on workers' families in the home villages was widespread in the former, alternatives were not completely closed off for newcomers in peripheral rural areas. A case in point is the West Indian workers of the banana plantations of the United Fruit Company in Limón, on the Atlantic Coast of Costa Rica, for whom access to land as tenants or squatters was common—even though their tenuous claim to the land curtailed workers' autonomy vis-à-vis the company.<sup>31</sup> In the case of Cuban sugar, the division of activities between processing and cultivation was the central factor in the modernization and expansion of the sugar economy during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Tenant farmers and sharecroppers (commonly known as *colonos*) cultivated and cut cane for processing in the ever-expanding sugar mills (*centrales*). Therefore, not every single link in the production chain was under full control of the sugar mill. Residential settlements in the company estates were not necessarily as developed as in traditional company towns, as satellite workers' villages were also common around the fields and tenant farmers lived in their own lands. There were, however, large *centrales* that included a complex of administrative and industrial buildings, social and recreation spaces, schools, church, and residential areas divided along hierarchical lines and presided over by the owner's family mansion.<sup>32</sup>

The enclave concept was first used among scholars in Latin America to characterize a model of production for export created and managed by foreign capital.<sup>33</sup> It has been applied mostly to mining and extractive industries but also to tropical agriculture, both in Latin America and in other peripheral economies. Francisco Zapata defines an enclave by its location in isolated, sparsely populated places, whose production was not fully integrated to the national economy. U.S.-based corporations created many productive enclaves in Latin America during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, such as the Kennecott and Anaconda copper mines in Chile or the United Fruit Company towns in the banana-producing region of Central and South America.<sup>34</sup> The paradox of enclaves is that they represented a large share of the economies of the countries in which they were located, but with limited integration to them. The enclaves' main articulation lay abroad, where their sources of capital, technology, and management, as well as the main markets were located. Because of their isolation, enclaves also depended on external sources of labor—usually composed of internal migrants but, in some

cases, also of foreign workers. The concept of enclave shares with that of company town its emphasis on company control of production and labor through residential, services, and social complexes, resulting from their location on isolated areas close to resources and the need to attract and keep a stable workforce. The main difference is that whereas the concept of company town puts the organization of production and the interaction between company and labor at the center of analysis, the notion of enclave emphasizes the lack of integration and the *de facto* autonomy of these towns and estates. Enclaves' autonomy resulted from their peripheral location, their dependence on foreign capital and markets, and the weakness of government control over foreign corporations. Isolation and autonomy often translated into companies' discretionary power over workers and labor rights. As state regulation of labor developed during the twentieth century, some of these features of enclave settlements changed. Such was the case, for example, with the American-controlled copper mining settlements of Chile, with the changes to the national labor code and their impact on local politics in the 1930s.<sup>35</sup> In cases in which enclave economies constituted the dominant source of export revenue for the producing countries, the power and political clout of companies went beyond anything imaginable by traditional company town capitalists, even influencing national and international politics. The classic examples that illustrate the ascendancy of enclave economies in neocolonial or peripheral countries are the American sugar companies in Cuba and other Caribbean islands, and the United Fruit Company's banana enclaves in the larger circum-Caribbean region. Without questioning the defining feature of enclaves as satellites of foreign capital in dependent and peripheral economies, scholars have begun to consider enclaves also in cultural and social terms, as contact zones with multiple outside connections and larger regional interactions.<sup>36</sup>

### Historiography and Approaches

A basic characteristic of all company towns, regardless of the specific concept used, is the combination of places of work and workers' housing, and the consequent company control over both working and residential spaces. This is common no matter how large or small these settlements were—from the barrack housing of collieries in the coalfields of Europe and Appalachia or the timber towns of the American and Canadian Pacific Northwest, to the blue-collar and white-collar workers' lodgings built by companies in locations as diverse as the copper and coal towns of Spain, Wales, and the Australian outback, the textile towns of northern Italy and Bengal, or the oil towns of Argentine Patagonia, Peru, and the Middle East.<sup>37</sup> Moreover, as access to

housing was tied to work, workers' status as denizens of these towns was contingent upon their condition of company employees. Single workers living in company housing had to leave at the end of the period of employment and for families at least one member had to be employed in the company to have a right to company housing. It is precisely the extension of the company's control beyond the limits of production and the consequences of that enlarged power for labor-capital relations that define the specific nature of company towns. The dependence on one industry or economic activity strengthened the power of these companies beyond the workplace, including socioeconomic and political influence. But the social or political clout of a company alone did not suffice to create a company town.<sup>38</sup> In other words, without some form of company housing, there was no company town.

Recognizing the crucial link between work and residence, some scholars have characterized company towns as devices to secure labor through housing. José Leite Lopes makes this aspect the defining feature of what he calls a "factory with workers' village" productive organization. Lopes describes it as a means envisioned by companies to secure a regular labor supply by limiting workers' geographical mobility and sees it as a paradoxical weakening of the capitalist ideal of workers' freedom of movement.<sup>39</sup> In addition to housing, companies had other means of labor control, including managing access to resources, such as water, electricity, or wood for fuel, and imposing limits to changes in housing allocations and rules of behavior among workers and their families. While allowing for companies' use of housing as an instrument of power, other interpretations stress the economic logic of such a strategy, especially in company towns located in isolated areas.<sup>40</sup> Moreover, company town workers were far from powerless actors. High turnover was common and, in this sense, housing and services were meant as incentives as much as a mechanism to immobilize labor. In addition, the interaction between capital and labor can be thought of as a trade-off, because a loss of autonomy was compensated by some level of security. For example, in the textile factory of Navarro, near Recife, in northeast Brazil, studied by Lopes, the company favored the hiring of families as they were perceived to be more stable. The families, in turn, could take advantage of employment opportunities for men, women, and children and frequently very loosely interpreted who a family member was, including members outside the nuclear family in the same household who worked in the factory and had access to company housing. Here too it is possible to identify a trade-off for the company, which benefited from an abundant and reliable source labor, and working families, who could find ways of taking advantage of company's preferences and policies. As providers of work, housing, and other services, and as owners of resources and land in the space of the company town, the company's

presence went beyond the workplace to include the private world of family and daily life. It is this blurred line between public and private, production and reproduction that serves to underscore company town workers' loss of relative autonomy.

The double role of the company as employer and provider of housing and services created a multilayered relationship between capital and labor; it may have contributed to sustaining social order, but it also intensified social tension. In most cases, companies were the *de facto* local government and enforcer of community rules. This exercise of power became particularly obvious in times of conflict and labor upheaval. Most company authorities met strikes and other disturbances with decisiveness, including eviction from company housing and, for all practical purposes, from the towns. To be sure, workers were not mere pawns in companies' hands. Tensions created by the close contact between capital and labor in and outside the workplace, and by the exercise of company control, were met with a variety of reactions, ranging from accommodation to resistance and open confrontation. At the very least, workers could leave the company—and they often did, as the high rates of labor turnover in many mining and oil towns indicate.<sup>41</sup>

Company control of production and labor was the result of its power over space. The isolation of many company towns increased companies' influence over the community. In fact, in those cases in which isolation was more pervasive and lasted longer, the loss of workers' relative autonomy was more evident. With a growing presence of the state through labor regulations (forms of payment, labor organizations, living conditions, etc.) and with the existence of other alternatives for workers in or near the company town (for example, the establishment of other factories), the monopoly of the company over labor and the possibility of using housing to exert its authority weakened, resulting in a greater autonomy of workers. In the case of Navarro, in northeastern Brazil, for example, the loss of company control resulted from a stronger presence of the state in the 1940s and 1950s—which created a meeting place for a labor organization within the company and then expropriated land around the company town where a new, independent workers' neighborhood was created—and by the establishment of other factories in the proximity of the town that provided employment alternatives. Variations of this decline in some companies' upper hand over space and labor can be found in other places and periods, such as in the textile towns of the Orizaba Valley, in Mexico, as a result of the changes in political and labor rights brought about by the 1910 revolution, and in the United States of the 1930s and 1940s, where there was a heated debate over working and living conditions in mill and mining towns that led to state intervention through labor and housing legislation.<sup>42</sup> Stronger state presence, however, not always resulted in a loss

of company ascendancy over labor and the local community. In some cases, the state intervened not to undermine company's authority but to boost it toward the common goal of avoiding labor conflict and creating social peace, as the example of company towns during the years of Fascism in Italy and Francoism in Spain illustrate.<sup>43</sup>

Space was also an important element in companies' strategies of labor management. The organization of work and residential spaces through planning attracted the interest of many entrepreneurs. Company town planning had its origins in the search for ideal workers' communities that could serve as an antidote to the urban ills created by the industrial revolution.<sup>44</sup> Early examples of model industrial villages and planned company towns were usually the result of the zealous vision of individual entrepreneurs whose urban plans were imbued with ideas of moral order, social peace, and a healthy dose of paternalism. This phenomenon extended across communities in Europe and the United States undergoing rapid transformation as a result of industrialization. Cases such as Saltaire, built by Titus Salt in Yorkshire, England, for his textile mills; the iron works complex of Le Creusot, created by Eugène and Adolphe Schneider in Burgundy, France; and the Cheney Brothers' silk manufacturing town of South Manchester, Connecticut, in the United States illustrate these urban developments.<sup>45</sup> As industrialization expanded in the late nineteenth century, entrepreneurs recruited urban planners, and the creation of company towns took a new, more ambitious dimension. The intention was clear: creating better living conditions for workers to avoid conflicts, increase productivity, and boost profits. Perhaps no planned company town has received more contemporary and scholarly interest than the model community founded by the railroad entrepreneur George Pullman outside of Chicago, in the early 1880s. Its urban design received wide attention, including a prize for the "world's most perfect town" at the Prague International Hygienic and Pharmaceutical Exposition in 1896. Despite the praises from outside observers, Pullman's workers exposed some of the shortcomings of the founder's policies of labor control by staging a violent strike in 1894. At the heart of workers' grievances was the explosive cocktail of declining salaries and fixed rents.<sup>46</sup>

In the United States, the failure of Pullman's efforts produced a more resolute collaboration among industrialists, urban planners, and landscape architects to create what Margaret Crawford calls the "new company town."<sup>47</sup> In addition to planned spaces and extended social services, some of these new towns also facilitated home ownership among workers to promote their sense of belonging and loyalty to company and town. These new urban developments were a concerted effort at social engineering through the modification of workers' living and working spaces. By emphasizing a strong connection

between lived environment and behavior, this new phase in company town planning was part of and contributed to larger conversations about urbanism, workers' housing, social reform, and corporate social responsibility, including the "garden city" and the "city beautiful" movements.<sup>48</sup> The intervention in workers' environment through urban design was a true transnational development fostered by publications, meetings, and the participation of planners and architects in multiple projects. The examples of previous successful planned towns were carefully scrutinized and sometimes imitated.<sup>49</sup> As Marynel Ryan Van Zee's analysis of the German case in this volume shows, however, industrialists and urban reformers not always shared the same vision or agreed on how to adapt imported ideas to local circumstances. Ideas of social reform through urban renewal and the mission of the company town as an efficient labor management device were sometimes at odds.

Discussions about the modification of space to advance larger social, economic, and political goals, and its effects on labor-capital relations, outlived the period of urban experimentation that started with company towns and workers' towns. Similar ideas of "social engineering through spatial engineering" permeated later urban developments both in the capitalist and in the communist world, in industrialized as well as in developing societies.<sup>50</sup> As company towns expanded around the world in the twentieth century, they had to adapt to different traditions, sociopolitical contexts, and terrains. Even though few replicated the ambitious urban planning that characterized the new company towns of early-twentieth-century United States, most applied principles of spatial organization of work and residence, developed standardized housing along hierarchical lines, and created social spaces and at least a basic urban layout—in some cases including tree-lined streets, communal spaces, and green areas reminiscent of earlier plans. Examples are as varied as their location and specific historical context, such as the importation of exotic housing models illustrated by Henry Ford's rubber towns of Fordlandia and Belterra, in the Brazilian Amazon, the pink Portuguese-style houses of the Angolan sugar town of Catumbela, analyzed by Jeremy Ball in this volume, or the flexible adaptation to local conditions and topography of the copper towns of the Chilean Andes.<sup>51</sup>

By creating and administering residential spaces, company towns sought to build communities that ensured the provision of a dependable workforce and that avoided conflicts. As a way to solve the inherent tension between the ideal of a model community and the economic bottom line of profit, employers regularly resorted to using paternalistic practices. Paternalism was more clearly evident in the case of early company towns that were created and managed by individual entrepreneurs who acted as father figures over their employees. This was the case, for example, of the New England mill villages



that hired young females from nearby farms and assumed a de facto parental responsibility over them. Paternalism took the form of education, physical well-being, and moral control. In company towns with a more diverse working population, paternalistic practices manifested themselves in the provision of housing, services, and amenities. With the transition to corporate company towns, these strategies morphed into company-sponsored welfare practices to ensure employees' loyalty and cultivate a positive company image.<sup>52</sup> These practices were reinforced by social conventions and civic rituals meant to strengthen the bond between employer and worker. In the textile towns of Catalonia, Spain, and central Mexico, for example, it was common for employers to become the godparents of working families' children. In Catalonia, extended visits in the summer of the textile owners' families to their houses in the mill town served to solidify those links.<sup>53</sup> Similarly, the annual visit of the sugar mill owners to the *centrales* in Cuba punctuated the towns' social calendar. During their stay in the company towns, the owners and their families engaged in myriad social performances that highlighted their paternalistic role. In the sugar town of Tuinucú, in central Cuba, the owner Manuel Rionda would walk from his residence to the mill office handing out gold coins to the workers' children.<sup>54</sup> In towns administered by corporations or state enterprises, civic rituals also served as occasions to celebrate the idea of a larger family and workers' loyalty to the company. For example, company town families in places as distant as Canada's Pacific coast and central Patagonia participated in company-sponsored festivals that celebrated local spirit and identification with the company with picnics, parades, and the election of copper and petroleum beauty queens.<sup>55</sup> Similarly, the town of Jamshedpur, the site of Tata Iron and Steel Company in northeast India, celebrated Founder's Day with musical performances, processions, fireworks, and floats representing the different sectors of the steel mill.<sup>56</sup> The case of Tata Iron and Steel shows how the advent of corporate welfare did not necessarily mean the end of more traditional paternalism. Even more, it illustrates how in some social and historical contexts, these practices were used to facilitate the transition to the industrial world of a mostly rural labor force who lacked that experience, thus contributing to both harmonious labor-management relations and productivity. Tata Iron and Steel's Welfare Department protected working families' well-being reproducing client-patron relations common to the rural world from where most workers originated. It acted as a substitute for traditional social support systems and intervened in a variety of family matters, including family planning.<sup>57</sup>

Management considered paternalism and corporate welfare as the price for a stable and faithful labor force. Tata Iron and Steel's administration, for example, stated in a 1938 internal report that "the expenditure incurred

on welfare work . . . is very quickly remunerative, and in the long run actually profitable for the firm or company providing it.”<sup>58</sup> For the company, benefits were concrete—for example, increased efficiency and savings in recruitment—as well as intangible, such as “increased loyalty to the interest of the employer, and . . . an intensified *esprit de corps*.”<sup>59</sup> It was, however, a costly endeavor that was put to test in times of economic difficulty. Economic depression or increased market competition compelled companies to take a closer look at the costs and benefits of welfare policies. Companies generally decided to privilege their bottom line over any sense of obligation to their employees. The rhetoric of paternalism and welfare, however, ran deep, which sometimes led to workers’ reaction. As Mary Wingerd’s study of the mill village of Cooleemee in North Carolina shows, when companies breached the unwritten contract with their employees that sustained the idea of partnership in a common enterprise by implementing higher demands on labor and undoing workers’ protection, workers reacted with increased militancy and hostility (exactly what company-sponsored welfare sought to avoid).<sup>60</sup> Confrontation between labor and capital exposed the fragility of this tacit understanding and the existence of different, and sometimes opposing, ideas of community among employers and workers (this tension is further explored by Katharine Rollwagen in her analysis of labor conflicts in Britannia Beach, Canada, in this volume).

Claims to higher common sentiments, like religion or national pride, were embedded in paternalistic or welfare practices as means to fortify the link between workers and employers and to promote company loyalty and peaceful relations. Numerous examples attest to their widespread use in all types of companies and in different geographical and cultural settings. Stressing religious bonds between company and workers was easier in company towns whose religious composition was homogenous or that were located in countries with a predominant or official religion. A religiously diverse labor force weakened the place of religion in the framework of company paternalism. In the United States, for example, it was common in some early industrial villages in New England, but it became less important in company towns that received large numbers of immigrants from Catholic countries in Europe in the late nineteenth century.<sup>61</sup> David Corbin has discussed how, in the coal mining towns of West Virginia, despite management’s attempt to use religion to create a more stable labor force and instill work ethic among workers, the lack of interest in particular religious needs undermined its authority. It was the coal company that selected the town’s denomination, and miners had to adapt to it.<sup>62</sup> Two English cases further illustrate some of the limits imposed by religious diversity and how companies’ attempt to establish paternalistic control through religion could end in failure or even

backfire. William Hesketh Lever's soap factory and company town of Port Sunlight, in Cheshire, England, employed over 3,000 workers who had access to housing and services common in a traditional company town. In Lever's view, company welfare and religion reinforced each other to secure workers' loyalty. He personally selected the minister for the town's church and monitored membership, but despite his efforts workers did not embrace religious participation, and therefore he turned to other social institutions like the Masonic lodge.<sup>63</sup> For its part, the case of the railroad town of Crewe, also in England, shows how company's support of a particular denomination—in this case, official Anglicanism—was met with hostility among protestant workers who espoused nonconformity in both religious and political ways, thus questioning the company's paternalistic stance.<sup>64</sup>

Cases from other societies, on the other hand, show effective ways of reinforcing paternalistic and welfare practices with religion, namely in the predominantly Catholic countries of southern Europe and Latin America. Here too the practice was widespread. It is possible to find examples of company owners whose paternalism was infused with religious principles and who considered the church as an ally in establishing moral principles and social norms among workers, as well as corporations or state companies whose welfare system or whose approach to labor-capital relations was inspired by the principles of Catholic social doctrine. The Belgian entrepreneur Julio Steverlynck followed these general principles in his textile town of Villa Flandria, founded in the 1920s in a rural locality to the west of the capital city of Buenos Aires, Argentina. The company's extensive welfare system stemmed from the owner's conviction of his Christian duty toward workers and their families as well as from his aspiration of creating a model working community guided by Christian principles of work and family values. Religious education, the activities of Catholic labor organizations, and the presence of the church in social life helped foster these principles.<sup>65</sup> In Villa Flandria, a family-run enterprise, paternalism was facilitated by the owner's personal involvement in the community and his wife's philanthropic work among workers' families. A paternalism imbued in religious principles of labor was not incompatible with large organizations, as the steel city of Volta Redonda shows. Built in the early 1940s by the Brazilian government in the state of Rio de Janeiro, the steel company worked closely with the Catholic church, which had a central role in education and public life, as well as in social and labor relations through lay organizations and Catholic worker's circles.<sup>66</sup> This working relationship remained in place for two decades, until it was challenged in the 1960s by economic crisis, political changes at the national level, and contending understandings of welfare and Catholic paternalism by management and workers. Volta Redonda also exemplifies the power of nationalism as a

means to promote ideas of shared objectives between company and workers, what official publications dubbed the “steel family.” A similar strong connection with nationalism can be found in the case of the state-owned oil company YPF in Argentina, in which official discourse combined ideas of family and patriotism among workers. As the analysis of labor conflicts in the Patagonian oil fields in Chapter 5 shows, neither company welfare nor patriotic and family rhetoric necessarily avoided labor unrest. Moreover, paternalistic community-building efforts fostered ties not only between capital and labor, but among laborers themselves. As Daniel Walkowitz observes in his study of cotton and iron workers in nineteenth-century New York State, “company paternalism created conditions of dependence, while it simultaneously structured a common set of experiences upon which workers could draw and organize.”<sup>67</sup>

While entrepreneurs and corporations viewed welfare activities as a testimony of their commitment to workers’ well-being, contemporary critics and scholars have frequently considered paternalism as another instrument of company control. Revisions to these opposing views have proposed a more nuanced view that takes into account not only bosses’ power but also workers’ agency and benefits, as well as the need to view paternalism not as a monolithic phenomenon but as a managerial style that adapted to changing circumstances in labor relations and production.<sup>68</sup> Revisions have also focused on the degree of success of one of the main objectives of paternalism—the fashioning of a shared feeling of community. Here interpretations vary from those that emphasize workers’ possibilities of challenging the company ideal through open reaction as well as through subtle means such as the creation of alternative concepts of community, to those that stress mutual interests and benefits for management and labor. Case studies of company towns in different settings have also shown that there were limits to membership in the ostensibly large communal family envisioned by paternalistic entrepreneurs or corporations. Companies regularly chose to extend the full benefits of the community of workers to some employees and to exclude others. These distinctions were based on occupational, sociodemographic, and ideological factors. For example, some companies privileged married over single workers, as they were perceived as less transient and therefore key to labor stability, and labor activists were strictly monitored and often banished from company town premises. The analyses of Britannia Beach, Canada, and the Patagonian oil fields in this book illustrate these tensions.

Boundaries were more evident in racially segregated societies, in colonial contexts, and in neocolonial enclave company towns. In these cases, it was common for nonwhite workers or workers from subjugated populations to experience company control without the associated benefits of company

paternalism.<sup>69</sup> For example, blacks were not a part of the “family” in the southern textile towns in the United States, where segregation was strictly enforced in the workplace and in residential areas.<sup>70</sup> Some scholars argue that black workers served to enhance the ties of white workers with management through the common bond of white supremacy. Michelle Brattain has characterized the combination of village welfare and paternalism as “informal badges of racial privilege.”<sup>71</sup> African American men had limited employment possibilities outside of the mill and were not allowed in supervisory positions. For African American women, the only option was domestic work in white workers’ homes. The white/nonwhite divide not only determined occupational opportunities but also influenced the organization of space. If mills provided housing for African American workers, it was in separate settlements that did not benefit from the same services or amenities than white company town quarters. Labor and residential segregation were also the rule in company towns and company estates in colonial situations, as the case of the Catumbela, in Portuguese Angola, analyzed by Jeremy Ball in this volume illustrates. In Catumbela, as in other segregated towns, the benefits of paternalism were closely associated with the benefits of whiteness. Similarly, in enclave economies, race and a racialized perception of national origin created different opportunities for foreigners and locals, thus setting clear limits to the benefits of companies’ welfare. European and American companies organized their tropical agriculture, mining, and oil enclaves in Latin America along occupational hierarchies determined by race and nationality. During the first decades of the twentieth century, English and American oil companies near Tampico, in the Gulf of Mexico, for example, enforced strict segregation of labor and residence. Management, supervisory, and technical positions were open only to foreigners, thereby leaving Mexican laborers with the lowest occupations. A worker’s place in the occupational hierarchy determined working conditions, housing, and services. Mexican workers lived in segregated settlements in the most insalubrious locations and did not have access to services.<sup>72</sup> A comparable hierarchical organization of labor and residence based on race and nationality existed in the oil towns that sprang around Lake Maracaibo, in Venezuela, in the 1920s.<sup>73</sup> Differences were particularly evident in the spatial organization of the American oil towns, which became white-only settlements that recreated American housing, landscapes, and patterns of socialization and consumption. Barbed fences and guarded gates made the separation between the world of the company enclaves and local society more evident.<sup>74</sup> Excluded from the model towns of the corporate enclaves, the laborers of the lower rungs of the occupational ladder that lived in segregated neighborhoods and the floating population of temporary workers that settled in nearby makeshift settlements did not partake of the

full benefits of company welfare. Similar distinctions existed in other enclave economies, such as the “white zones” built in the early twentieth century by foreign companies in Central America and the Caribbean, or the planned compounds of the oil towns designed by the Anglo-Persian Oil Company in Iran.<sup>75</sup> Kuntala Lahiri-Dutt’s examination of the closed corporate compound for foreigners in a mining complex in East Kalimantan, Indonesia, in this volume, shows the continuation of this phenomenon in peripheral resource economies in the twenty-first century.

Authorities and management could exert control over company towns’ space, but workers also participated actively in the creation of meaningful spaces. This was the case both in planned communities and in company towns that grew haphazardly with the expansion of production. The commonality of a shared working and residential space was reinforced by company towns’ productive specialization. Both factors worked hand in hand to foster an identification with place and a sense of belonging. Working on a single product (textiles, coal, oil, timber, etc.) provided workers with a sense of participating in a joint enterprise. Employers frequently promoted such sentiments as a means of stressing the shared goal of capital and labor, but it also grew out of the laborers’ daily experience and transcended the workplace. Scholars have developed the concept of occupational community to refer to situations in which “the social relations of work carry over into non-work activity.”<sup>76</sup> The members of an occupational community identify with their work, feel proud of it, and value their skills.<sup>77</sup> Even though what some scholars call “true occupational communities” are not tied to a circumscribed space or geographic isolation,<sup>78</sup> the spatial factor was key to company towns. Autonomy and relative isolation contributed to a sense of community connected to work and space. The location of many towns in remote places and challenging conditions (such as harsh terrain or extreme weather) further contributed to this sentiment. In her study of the copper towns created by Anaconda in Butte, Montana, in the United States, and in northern Chile, Janet Finn shows how laboring in tough terrain and in isolated locales played an important role in the creation of a community of miners and a sense of place.<sup>79</sup> Similar connections have been identified in other company towns, especially in mining settlements.<sup>80</sup>

Cultural geographers have studied the relationships developed between residents and landscape that lead to the transformation of space into place (i.e., a space with meaning), and the impact this bond has on place identity and memory. At first glance, company towns may appear as the least likely candidates to inspire such sentiments among residents. Traditional depictions of company town life abound in examples of hard-working conditions, company control, and heavy-handed paternalism.<sup>81</sup> Many of these settlements

were conceived of as only transient places, and many ceased to exist once the productive activity that originated them declined. As numerous case studies show, however, company town workers and dwellers forged physical and cultural ties to the local environment that were crucial to building an attachment to place, and even a sense of pride rooted in local identity.<sup>82</sup> Moreover, the decline of company towns did not necessarily sever these ties, nor did the passing of the old timers whose work built those towns. Company town demise has taken many forms—from a transformation of their productive base, to a prolonged stagnation, to the literal disappearance of the town with the destruction of key company buildings and housing. Among former workers and residents of many company towns, this process of loss has resulted in a nostalgic reaction that reinforces their connection to place. It has also contributed to creating an idealized memory of life in the company town that David Robertson has dubbed the “utopian myth.”<sup>83</sup> Nostalgia for an idyllic life in the company towns is present in local histories, in preservation efforts, and in the growing phenomenon of social reunions among former residents discussed in Lisa Perry’s study of the memory of the town of Wheelwright, in the Appalachian coal country.

A limit of concepts like occupational community or sense of place is that they tend to erase socioeconomic, ethnic, and racial variations. Exploring the diversity of experiences is important for an understanding of company town life, as company towns were socially heterogeneous and highly hierarchical, in terms of both organization of production and social structure. Socio-occupational divisions were compounded by the ethnic and racial composition of the labor force. Labor opportunities attracted internal and international migrant workers to company towns, company estates, and enclaves. Migrant workers were a part of larger movements of labor migration both free and coerced. As the vast published literature confirms, there were important differences along national lines in terms of work, residence, and socialization—be it the segregated mill towns of the American South or the diamond towns of South Africa, the religious and caste divisions among the workers of Tata Iron and Steel in India, or the ethnic segregation of immigrant workers of Le Creusot in France, just to name a few examples.<sup>84</sup> Numerous studies also attest to management’s use of ethnic, racial, and occupational cleavages as a means of control. Equally important, however, were workers’ possibilities to recreate relationships and forge new ones along family, national, and ethnic lines, and to use them to their advantage. These ties were reinforced by the experience in the workplace and the sentiment of a shared space, but they also extended beyond the limits of the company town (e.g., national and international labor solidarity). The cases of colonial Angola, China under Japanese occupation, early twentieth-century Argentina, and

contemporary Indonesia discussed in this book present different uses of the racial and ethnic cleavages in company town settings. Moreover, the analysis of the wave of early-twentieth-century strikes in the oil towns of Patagonia and the strikes of Britannia Beach, Canada, provides evidence on the multiple ways in which management and workers negotiated this complex web of relationships and the different meanings of place.

Company towns were also gendered spaces. Gender composition varied according to the type of production. The presence of women and families was greater in textile mill towns, as female and child labor were common in the textile industry of many countries (the latter until child protection laws came into being in many places in the early twentieth century). Some of the earlier company towns in the northeast of the United States and in Europe were built to house young female laborers from rural areas, but most textile towns employed a mix of female and male workers.<sup>85</sup> The traditional view is that gender composition in mining stood at the opposite end of the spectrum and that women were absent or at best marginal in company towns associated with mining. This image of a strict division of gender roles in mining applied to the mining company towns of the late nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, but it was the end of a long historical process. Numerous studies from across the globe attest to the early presence of women in mining and of a steady process of masculinization of mining labor during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, when laws prohibiting women from underground work were passed. Before these restrictions, women miners could be found in places as diverse as Scotland, Turkey, India, and Japan.<sup>86</sup> Female participation in mining was a common feature in cases in which this activity was mostly small-scale and took place near established towns and rural settlements. In contrast, female labor was marginal or nonexistent in isolated outposts such as the camps of the North American western and northern frontiers, which attracted an overwhelmingly male labor force.<sup>87</sup> Restrictions were eased during periods of exceptional labor scarcity, such as World War I, and were slowly lifted in the second half of the twentieth century. A similar transformation occurred in heavy-industry towns, which had banned female work since their inception. In the United States and Canada, women also joined the ranks of traditional male labor forces in heavy industries when hiring restrictions eased as a result of external factors, such as World War II, or when policies changed later in the twentieth century.<sup>88</sup> Male workers were resistant to accept the intrusion of women into their space. Studies from the company towns of Sparrows Point, Maryland, and Homestead, Pennsylvania, in the United States, illustrate the various strategies women used to adapt to both the unfamiliar requirements of industrial work and a social world unmistakably defined as a man's domain.<sup>89</sup>



If the workplace of mining, extractive, and smelting towns was defined by custom and practice as a masculine world, women found alternative ways of earning a living—albeit at a lower pay—at the margins of the main productive activity and in the household. Studies from locations around the globe—from the copper fields of Chile and southern Africa to the coal and steel towns of North America and Australia to the oil towns Argentina and Mexico—attest to the myriad ways through which women's work contributed to the economic well-being of mining company towns.<sup>90</sup> Some women contested or circumvented company town rules and found a living through activities such as petty trade, tavern keeping, and prostitution, usually outside company towns' limits. Others did so within the accepted norms and the space of the company towns, thereby providing for the needs of a working population overwhelmingly composed of men alone by taking in boarders, cooking meals, and laundering clothes. There were also opportunities for women with formal education in clerical occupations, retail, and teaching. Women's experiences were not universal, as class, race, and ethnicity created opportunities and established clear limits to their possibilities, thus influencing the construction of gendered spaces. For example, the testimonies of workers' wives in many company towns attest to the effort required by such household chores as washing the heavily soiled work clothes of their family members, or the time required by just standing in line in the company stores—in addition to the home work for pay that many working families' women performed.<sup>91</sup> Lack of facilities like running water and the Sisyphean battle against soot and dust in mining and industrial towns added to the burden of cleaning.<sup>92</sup> In addition, household work, like life in the home in general, had to adapt to the schedule of rotating shifts common in mining and industrial towns.<sup>93</sup> The wives and daughters of managers and administrators, however, did not share these experiences. There were also differences among workers' families. In segregated company towns in the United States, for example, black women had to work more to compensate lower male wages and faced discrimination in female jobs.<sup>94</sup> Finally, the cultural norms of different groups also created opportunities and limits to female work and women's possibilities.

In addition to their impact on the household economy, women were important agents in the building of company towns' communities. In company towns characterized by high ratios of male laborers, management considered women—especially married women—crucial for creating stable communities. Companies instituted incentives such as family housing and family subsidies as well as strict moral control that prohibited cohabitation of common law unions. Management also conceived of female presence as a conservative force and a deterrent against workers' confrontation. In colonial,

neocolonial, and enclave contexts, where a clear division between white and nonwhite women was the norm, company authorities valued the role of women of European descent of the managerial and technical elite as cultural models. Their mission went beyond the confines of the corporate enclave. “Company wives” became the embodiment of domestic life, middle-class values, and civic behavior for local women and the company town community as a whole.<sup>95</sup> Management’s plan of fostering domesticity in order to promote stability and avoid conflicts between labor and capital did not always go as planned. Examples from company towns around the world show how the need to provide for a family added further incentives for workers’ actions. Consequently, it was common for household needs to be included in workers’ demands along with wages and working conditions. Workers’ wives joined their husbands to protect their right as community members and company town workers. Women played a crucial role by organizing reproduction at the family and community level during strikes, and they were also at the forefront of labor militancy and active in conflicts.<sup>96</sup> As Thomas Klubock explains, women from working families “came to equate their interests with those of their husbands . . . . Their political participation in community movements was structured by their economic reliance on male workers, acceptance of their own duties as wives and mothers, and identification with the ideology of female domesticity.”<sup>97</sup> At the same time, women’s active participation in labor conflicts in towns in which male wage labor was the norm also challenged customary gender roles.<sup>98</sup>

### Contributions of the Book

Born as a device to facilitate production in isolated areas of Europe and North America, and to manage labor and resources effectively with the expansion of industrialization, the company town became a truly transnational phenomenon and adapted to diverse geographical and historical circumstances. The contributions of this book recognize the common patterns of company towns across time and space, while highlighting their adaptations to specific historical, cultural, and political contexts. The essays illuminate the experiences of company towns in a variety of locales in Europe, the Americas, Africa, and Asia. The company towns examined in this book are not treated in isolation, but as products of particular historical conditions and as windows to discuss larger topics. Contributors explore such topics as the ideological and economic underpinnings of town planning for industrial settlements; the range of spatial arrangements, from work camps to workers’ neighborhoods to industrial cities; the influence of changing sociopolitical circumstances and colonial contexts; the possibilities and limits of labor accommodation and

resistance; the environmental consequences of mining and industrial production; the impact of gender, ethnic, and racial relations among workers and management in the confined spaces of company towns; and the nature of place-making and memory among former residents.

Marynel Ryan Van Zee examines the tension between model workers' communities and company towns in turn-of-the-twentieth century Germany. The furniture entrepreneur and reformer Karl Schmidt envisioned his town of Hellerau, near Dresden, along the lines of the Garden City model, popularized in England. By manipulating its space and built environment, Hellerau was to become an instrument of social reform, enhancing the lives of working families. The essay highlights Hellerau's central place in larger discussions over the multiple possibilities represented within the German social reform movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. In particular, conflicts over form and aesthetics revealed important differences between the goals of the leaders of the German Garden City Association and the German *Werkbund*, an organization devoted to applied arts reform. The main point behind these debates was whether it was possible to use the company town model as a vehicle for social change.

Limin Teh's essay focuses on the case of Fushun, China, under Japanese colonial rule. A semi-official agency of the Japanese government that functioned as the de facto colonial state in Japanese-occupied Manchuria, the South Manchuria Railway Company created the company town of Fushun in 1905 and transformed it into an industrial city with the diversification of its economic base during the first half of the twentieth century. Japanese investment and the close connection between the South Manchurian Railway Company and the Japanese state were instrumental in this transformation. Yet the economic benefits were not distributed equally. Expansion and imperial control created a multiethnic population in Fushun that included Japanese, Chinese, and Korean workers. Labor-capital relations recreated the unequal power structure of colonial domination, which was evident in an occupational organization that followed a strict racial hierarchy and in a segregated social space.

Jeremy Ball looks at the interplay between power and space in a company town and its adjacent sugar-producing estate in colonial Angola. The Cassequel Sugar Company recreated in Catumbela the aesthetics of a Portuguese town while enforcing strict social and racial segregation. Catumbela became a model company town for its white workers and their families. For their part, African workers inhabited separate spaces and experienced a different reality that included a grueling system of forced labor that remained in place with only cosmetic changes until 1961. When the international political tide turned against colonialism in the 1950s, making

European rule in Africa less secure, Portuguese authorities started a program of labor and social reforms, and Cassequel followed suit. Catumbela's built environment received special attention as did changes in labor conditions, sanitation, and social services. These reforms extended for the first time some benefits of the model company town to its African workers. The experiment ended with the independence of Angola in 1975 and the departure of most of Cassequel's white residents.

Susana Torres and Marcelo Borges analyze labor-capital relations in the oil company towns of Patagonia, Argentina. International and internal migrants formed the majority of the labor force in the company towns built by the Argentine state and by several private companies near the port town of Comodoro Rivadavia. Torres and Borges explore the interaction between class and ethnic solidarity, and the role of company management and the Argentine state in fostering accommodation or resistance among oil workers. In particular, the chapter focuses on labor organizations and activism of oil workers in the state-run company town during a series of strikes that took place from 1917 to the 1930s. Oil workers transitioned from an early period of confrontation to accommodation and identification with the company. The remoteness of the Patagonian oil fields and the proximity of management and workers in the confined spaces of the company towns exacerbated the tensions between capital and labor in times of conflict. Despite their distant location, the oil company towns were not isolated spaces. The chapter highlights the interaction of events in the oil fields with larger sociopolitical developments, and the connections of workers with national and international labor movements.

Katharine Rollwagen's study also examines labor-capital relations and labor activism. In particular, the chapter looks at the impact of changing notions of community on workers' solidarity by comparing the ways in which the residents of the copper town of Britannia Beach, in British Columbia, Canada, reacted to company shutdowns in the 1950s and 1960s. Confronted with the threat of the company's (and the town's) demise, workers reacted with resigned despair in 1958 and with decisive resistance in 1964. Rollwagen shows how changes in the composition of the labor force, the presence of national or foreign capital, and the physical characteristics of the company town shaped different experiences and ideas of community, which in turn resulted in contrasting levels of militancy. In this analysis, community is treated as a relational experience and a rhetorical tool—not a particular space, but a social process that was subject to different interpretations by management and workers. Working and living in the company town provided the foundation for a shared sentiment of belonging and struggle, but workers' understanding of community was not limited to the company town space.

Workers' successful use of community rhetoric in the 1960s included appeals to solidarity from unions and politicians. By then, the company was in the hands of an American corporation making economic nationalism an effective rallying cry to mobilize support for Britannia Beach workers.

Frank Meyer explores the historical development of two towns connected by a transnational commodity chain of aluminum production in the Brazilian Amazon, where bauxite was extracted, and in Norway, where it was smelted. On the Brazilian side of the bauxite-aluminum chain, Porto Trombetás developed as a company town in an enclave situation, while on the Norwegian side Årdal grew from an early rural settlement into an industrial town with a dominant economic activity. Meyer's comparative approach highlights differences and similarities in the social and ecological consequences of their incorporation to the commodity chain. Rhythms of development—and their impact on the local communities and the environment—were influenced by the relative position of the company in each town (either an exclusive or dominant presence), different levels of state intervention, and larger political circumstances such as periods of authoritarian or democratic rule. Despite these differences, both communities experienced comparable vulnerability to changes in corporate strategies and to the shifting interests of transnational capital.

Using the mining town of Sangatta, in East Kalimantan, Indonesia, where one of the world's largest coal mines has been in operation since the late 1980s, Kuntala Lahiri-Dutt brings an ethnographic approach to the analysis of the role of gender and race in social relations within the space of company towns. Mining created a multiethnic community including Indonesian workers and managers, and a multinational population of expats from Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, and more recently India. In particular, Lahiri-Dutt focuses on social relations in the gated community where most of the expats live and which is known locally as the mining camp. An enclave within an enclave, the gated camp occupies a special position as a site for performance of hierarchical relations defined along occupational, racial, and gender lines. It is a micro site in which larger social and spatial boundaries in the company town are defined and negotiated. The chapter highlights that social relations and performances of power within the camp were gendered because of the masculine nature typically associated with mining, but it also calls attention to the influence of race and national origin. Changes in ownership of the company—from foreign to Indonesian capital—and in the composition of the management led to redefinitions of these interactions over time. Similarly to Meyer's analysis of Porto Trombetás, Lahiri-Dutt's study shows the adaptability of the company town model to enclave and peripheral resource economies in the contemporary world—as

well as larger historical continuities in the ways in which hierarchical relations played out within the company town space.

Lisa Perry's essay closes the collection with a study on memory and nostalgia among former residents of a coal town in the Appalachian Mountains of Kentucky, in the United States. Rich in bituminous coal, the Appalachian region witnessed the construction of numerous mining towns that attracted local and migrant workers. Characterized by hard working and living conditions, coal towns seem hardly ideal places for nostalgic remembrance. Yet for over twenty years, the former residents of the town of Wheelwright have traveled from all over the United States for annual reunions in Kentucky. Perry recounts the evolution of Wheelwright from a rural community transformed by the extraction of coal in the early 1900s to a model company town when ownership transferred to Inland Steel in the 1930s. It is this last period—which ended with the sale of the company and the town in 1966—that former residents remember as a lost world of harmonious community life under the paternalistic care of the company. Using oral history and participant observation, Perry examines the making of this social tradition, the stories that inform a sense of shared identity and connection to place, and the motives of the participants. It is unclear if this practice, a phenomenon-in-the-making, will survive the last former residents who grew up in the company town. Its existence illustrates the fluidity of historical interpretation of the company town experience.

## Notes

1. Tony Dokoupil, "The Last Company Town," *Newsweek*, February 13, 2011, available online at <http://www.newsweek.com/2011/02/13/the-last-company-town.html>.
2. J. Douglas Porteous, "The Nature of the Company Town," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 51 (November 1970): 127–42; and Chapter 3 in this book.
3. John Garner, ed., *The Company Town: Architecture and Society in the Early Industrial Age* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992); Ignacio Terradas Saborit, "Les característiques històriques de les colònies industrials catalanes," *Revista de Catalunya* 5 (February 1987): 72–83; Jean-Pierre Frey, *Le ville industrielle e ses urbanites: La distinction ouvrieres-employés, Le Creusot, 1870–1930* (Liege: Mardaga, 1986); J. Ronald Shearer, "Shelter from the Storm: Politics, Production, and the Housing Crisis in the Ruhr Coal Fields, 1928–24," *Journal of Contemporary History* 34, 1 (1999): 19–47; Augusto Ciuffetti, *Casa e lavoro: Dal paternalismo aziendale alle "comunità globali": Villaggi e quartieri operai in Italia tra Otto e Novecento* (Perugia: Centro Ricerche Ambiente Cultura Economia, 2004); Fernando Neiburg, *Fábrica y villa obrera: Historia social y antropología*

- de los obreros del cemento* (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1988); Rosélia Piquet, *Cidade-empresa: Presença na paisagem urbana brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar Editor), 1998.
4. Garner, *The Company Town*; Margaret Crawford, *Building the Workingman's Paradise: The Design of American Company Towns* (London: Verso, 1995); Gillian Darley, *Villages of Vision: A Study of Strange Utopias*, rev. ed. (Nottingham: Five Leaves Press, 2007).
  5. See, for example, Ambe Njoh, *Planning Power: Town Planning and Social Control in Colonial Africa* (London: UCL Press, 2007), 188–200; Greg Grandin, *Fordlandia: The Rise and Fall of Henry Ford's Forgotten Jungle City* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2009); and Chapter 4 in this book.
  6. Greg Castillo, "Stalinist Modern: Constructivism and the Soviet Company Town," in *Architectures of Russian Identity 1500 to the Present*, ed. James Cracraft and Daniel Rowland (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003), 135–49; Duanfang Lu, *Remaking Chinese Urban Form: Modernity, Scarcity, and Space, 1949–2005* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 33–5; Oliver Dinius, *Brazil's Steel City: Developmentalism, Strategic Power, and Industrial Relations in Volta Redonda, 1941–1964* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011); Christopher Post, "The Making of a Federal Company Town: Sunflower Village, Kansas," in *Company Towns in the Americas: Landscape, Power, and Working-Class Communities*, ed. Oliver Dinius and Angela Vergara (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011), 111–33. For the case of Argentina, see Chapter 5 in this book.
  7. Kaveh Ehsani, "Social Engineering and the Contradictions of Modernization in Khuzestan's Company Towns: A Look at Abadam and Masjed-Soleyman," *International Review of Social History* 48, 3 (December 2003): 361–99; Edith Aranda Dioses, *Del proyecto urbano moderno a la imagen trizada: Talara 1950–1990* (Lima: Editorial de la Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, 1998).
  8. Gordon Dodrill, *20,000 Coal Company Stores in the United States, Mexico and Canada* (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne Lithographing Company, 1971).
  9. According to Eric Clements, in the 1990s there were over 2,000 abandoned settlements in Iowa and more than 300 mining ghost towns in Colorado. See Eric Clements, *After the Boom in Tombstone and Jerome, Arizona: Decline in Western Resource Towns* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2003), 2. This phenomenon was also common in other countries of the industrialized world. See Cecily Neil, Markku Tykkyläinen, and John Bradbury, *Coping with Closure: An International Comparison of Mine Town Experiences* (London: Routledge, 1992). In state-directed economies, such as the former Soviet Union, the decline of traditional company towns that relied on monoproduction was compounded by larger transformations of the political and economic models. See Leon Aron, "Russia's 'Monotowns' Time Bomb," American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, *Russian Outlook*, Fall 2009, available at <http://www.aei.org/docLib/RO-Fall-09-g.pdf>. For cases of reinvention through alternatives like tourism, see Donald Janson, "Chocolate Town, PA: A Sweet Smell of Success," *New York Times*, February 27, 1977; N. R. Kleinfeld, "Reinventing a Company

- Town,” *New York Times*, March 27, 1988; Karl Zimmerman, “The Town that Pullman Built,” *New York Times*, August 12, 1990; Janice Reiff and Susan Hirsch, “Pullman and Its Public: Image and Aim in Making and Interpreting History,” *The Public Historian* 11, 4 (Autumn 1989): 99–112; Michael Colin and Lee Jolliffe, eds., *Mining Heritage and Tourism: A Global Synthesis* (New York: Routledge, 2011). For analyses of alternative uses of former industrial sites in Europe, including company towns, see Ann Storm, *Hope and Rust: Reinterpreting the Industrial Place in the Late 20th Century*, Stockholm Papers of Philosophy and Technology (Stockholm: Royal Institute of Technology, 2008).
10. That was the case of one of the most cited examples of planned company towns—Pullman, in Chicago—and one of the largest steel mill towns in the United States—Sparrows Points, in Baltimore. Reiff and Hirsch, “Pullman and Its Public”; Deborah Rudacille, *Roots of Steel: Boom and Bust in an American Mill Town* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2010); Karen Olson, *Wives of Steel: Voices of Women from the Sparrows Point Steelmaking Communities* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005). There are many other cases around the world. See some examples for Italy in Ciuffetti, *Casa e lavoro*, and the analysis of Fushun, in China, in Chapter 3 of this volume.
  11. For examples of towns created in the 1960s and 1970s in places as diverse as Chile, Canada, Russia, and Australia, see Henry Raymond, “Chileans in Oil Area on Continent’s Tip Fight Boredom,” *New York Times*, April 17, 1965, 5; Arthur Davenport, “Instant Town,” *New York Times*, May 15, 1966, XX11; Hedrick Smith, “Building Siberian Oil-Boom Town is a Test of Endurance,” *New York Times*, April 3, 1974, 8; Ian Stewart, “A Brassy Old Town Brightens Australia’s Hinterland,” *New York Times*, July 6, 1974, 2. See also the examples of Porto Trombetás, in Brazil and Tanjung Bara, in Indonesia, analyzed in this volume.
  12. Garner, *The Company Town*, 3.
  13. Horace Davis, “Company towns,” in *Encyclopedia of Social Sciences* (New York: Macmillan, 1937 [1931]), 4:111.
  14. James Allen, *The Company Town in the American West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1966), 17.
  15. Davis, “Company towns,” 119.
  16. Rolf Knight, *Work Camps and Company Towns in Canada and the United States: An Annotated Bibliography* (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1975), 7–11; John Garner, *The Model Company Town: Urban Design through Private Enterprise in Nineteenth-Century New England* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1984), 4–5.
  17. Richard Candee, “New Towns of the Early New England Textile Industry,” in *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture*, vol. 1, ed. Camille Wells (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1982), 31–50; Jonathan Prude, *The Coming of Industrial Order: Town and Factory Life in Rural Massachusetts, 1810–1860* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983).
  18. David Carlton, *Mill and Town in South Carolina, 1880–1920* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1982); Jacquelyn Dowd Hall et al., *Like*



- a Family: The Making of a Southern Cotton Mill World* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1987); Robert Blythe, "Unraveling the Threads of Community Life: Work, Play, and Place in the Alabama Mill Villages of the West Point Manufacturing Company," in *Constructing Image, Identity, and Place: Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture*, vol. 9, ed. Alison Hoagland and Kenneth Breisch (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2003), 135–50.
19. Price Fishback, "Company Towns," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Economic History*, ed. Joel Mokyr (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 1:494.
  20. *Ibid.*
  21. Thad Sitton and James Conrad, *Nameless Towns: Texas Sawmill Communities, 1880–1942* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1998); James Buckley, "A Factory without a Roof: The Company Town in the Redwood Lumber Industry," in *Exploring Everyday Landscapes: Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture*, vol. 7, ed. Annmarie Adams and Sally McMurry (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1997), 75–92. Different extractive practices determined the fate of these towns too. While most lumber communities in Texas disappeared by the 1940s, company towns such as Scotia, in northern California, adopted sustainable logging practices that set the basis for a more stable community.
  22. Garner, *The Model Company Town*, 5.
  23. Darley, *Villages of Vision*; Edward Spann, *Brotherly Tomorrows: Movements for a Cooperative Society in America, 1820–1920* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989). Hopedale was transformed into a company town, see Garner, *The Model Company Town*, 117–219; Edward Spann, *Hopedale: From Commune to Company Town, 1840–1920* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1992); Anita Cardillo Danker, "From Christian Utopia to Company Town: Communal Life and Corporal Paternalism in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Hopedale, Massachusetts," *Utopian Studies* 4 (1991): 72–8.
  24. J. Douglas Porteous, *The Single-Enterprise Community in North America* (Monticello, IL: Council of Planning Librarians, 1971); Rolf Knight, *Work Camps and Single Enterprise Communities in Canada and the United States: A Working Bibliography* (Toronto: Scarborough College, University of Toronto, 1972); Rex Lucas, *Minetowns, Milltowns, Railtowns: Life in Canadian Communities of Single Industry* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977); Kiril Stanilov, ed., *The Post-Socialist City: Transformations in Central and Eastern Europe after Socialism* (Dordrecht, Holland: Springer, 2007). A related concept is that of resource-based communities also referred to as resource towns, which has been developed in particular by Canadian scholars. See John Bradbury, "Toward an Alternative Theory of Resource-Based Town Development in Canada," *Economic Geography* 55, 2 (April 1979): 147–66; Roy Bowles, ed., *Little Communities and Big Industries: Studies in the Social Impact of Canadian Resource Extraction* (Toronto: Butterworth, 1982); Roger Hayter, "Single Industry Resource Towns," in *A Companion to Economic Geography*, ed. Eric Sheppard and Trevor Barnes (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers 2000), 290–307.

25. For Porteous, single-enterprise communities are “pseudo-company towns.” See Porteous, “The Nature of the Company Town,” 130–1.
26. Kleinfield, “Reinventing a Company Town”; “Seattle Under Siege: The Troubles of a Company Town,” *Time Magazine*, January 4, 1971; Robert Doty, “The Italian Detroit,” *New York Times*, February 17, 1968; J. A. English-Lueck, “Silicon Valley Reinvents the Company Town,” *Futures* 32, 8 (October 2000): 759–66; P. P. Karan, *Japan in the Bluegrass* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 2011); Richard Wiltshire, “A New Future for a Company Town: Diversification and Employment in Kamaishi City,” *The Science Reports of the Tohoku University*, 7th Series (Geography), 41, 1 (June 1991): 1–22.
27. Knight, *Work Camps and Company Towns*, 7–11; Garner, *The Company Town*, 4.
28. Anthony Cekota, *The Stormy Years of an Extraordinary Enterprise: Bata, 1932–1945* (Perth Amboy, NJ: Universum Sokol Publications, 1985); John Bodnar, *Immigration and Industrialization: Ethnicity in an American Mill Town, 1870–1940* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977).
29. See, for example, Ciufetti, *Casa e lavoro*, chap. 2. Other examples of the usage of the concept of company town as a spectrum that contain different types of industrial towns characterized by a dominant company whose influence went beyond the limits of production can be found in a recent compilation that include the Santos Docks Company in the port city of Santos, Brazil, and an agricultural machinery factory in the rural town of Firmat, in the Argentine pampas. See Fernando Teixeira da Silva, “The Port and the City of Santos: A Century-Long Duality,” and Silvia Simonassi, “Labor and Community in Postwar Argentina: The Industry of Agricultural Machinery in Firmat, Santa Fe,” in *Company Towns in the Americas*, 68–90 and 198–220, respectively.
30. Porteous, “The Nature of the Company Town,” 127–8. See also Philip Bonner and Karin Shapiro, “Company Town, Company Estate: Pilgrim’s Rest, 1910–1932,” *Journal of Southern African Studies* 19, 2 (June 1993): 171–200.
31. Aviva Chomsky, *West Indian Workers and the United Fruit Company in Costa Rica, 1870–1940* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1996), 10, 11, 32, 42, 60–86. Unlike other common tropical products like cotton and sugar, bananas are a year-round crop.
32. César Ayala, *American Sugar Kingdom: The Plantation Economy of the Spanish Caribbean, 1898–1934* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 121–39, 167–74, 188–92; Gillian McGillivray, *Blazing Cane: Sugar Communities, Class, and State Formation in Cuba, 1868–1959* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), 29–34, 95–101, 123–7, 157–66. For sugar mill towns and sugar plantations in other contexts, see Michael Gonzales, *Plantation Agriculture and Social Control in Northern Peru, 1875–1933* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985); Daniel Campi, “Los ingenios del Norte: Un mundo de contrastes,” in *Historia de la vida privada en la Argentina*, vol. 2, ed. Fernando Devoto and Marta Madero (Buenos Aires: Taurus, 1999), 189–221; Ulbe Bosma et al., *Sugarlandia Revisited: Sugar and Colonialism in Asia and the Americas, 1800 to 1940* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007); Gail Hollander, *Raising Cane in*

- the *‘Glades: The Global Sugar Trade and the Transformation of Florida* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008); Patricia Juárez-Dappe, *Economy and Society in Northwestern Argentina, Tucumán, 1876–1916*, Ohio University Research in International Studies, Latin American Series no. 49 (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2010), chap. 4.
33. The concept was introduced in Latin American scholarship by Fernando H. Cardoso and Enrique Faletto, *Dependencia y desarrollo en América Latina* (Mexico City: Siglo XXI, 1979), who referred to a specific type of economic development in Latin America as “enclave economies.” See also Juan Sariego, *Enclaves y minerales en el norte de México: Historia social de los mineros de Cananea y Nueva Rosita 1900–1970* (Mexico City: Ediciones de la Casa Chata, 1988); Francisco Zapata, “Enclaves y sistemas de relaciones industriales en América Latina,” *Revista Mexicana de Sociología* 24, 2 (1977): 719–31; Honorio Pinto Herrera, *Un enclave minero: Marcota Mining Company, 1953–1975* (Lima: Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, 1981). For an application of the enclave approach to a different geographic space, see Daniel Glanday, “Le Domaine Colonial: Class Formation in a Natural Resource Enclave,” *The Canadian Journal of Sociology/Cahiers Canadiens de Sociologie* 9, 2 (Spring 1984): 159–77. The concept of enclave economy has been later used to characterize the dual economies of postcolonial nations in Africa—in which extractive export sectors have limited impact on the larger national economy—as well as to cases of direct foreign capital investment such as the Mexican information technology industry. See, for example, Brendan McSherry, “The Political Economy of Oil in Equatorial Guinea,” *African Studies Quarterly* 8, 3, available online at <http://web.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v8/v8i3a2.htm>; and Kevin Gallagher and Lyuba Zarsky, *The Enclave Economy: Foreign Investment and Sustainable Development in Mexico’s Silicon Valley* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007).
  34. Thomas Miller Kublock, *Contested Communities: Class, Gender, and Politics in Chile’s El Teniente Copper Mines, 1904–1951* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998); Eugenio Garcés Feliú and Angela Vergara, “El Salvador: A Modern Company Town in the Chilean Andes,” in *Company Town in the Americas*, 178–97; Chomsky, *West Indian Workers*; Catherine LeGrand, “Living in Macondo: Economy and Culture in a United Fruit Company Banana Enclave in Colombia,” in *Close Encounters of Empire: Writing the Cultural History of U.S.-Latin American Relations*, ed. Gilbert Joseph, Catherine LeGrand, and Ricardo Salvatore (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998), 333–68.
  35. Kublock, *Contested Communities*, 93–100.
  36. For example, Kublock, *Contested Communities*; LeGrand, “Living in Macondo”; Angela Vergara, *Copper Workers, International Business, and Domestic Politics in Cold War Chile* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008).
  37. Martin Dauton, “Miners’ Houses: South Wales and the Great Northern Coalfields, 1880–1914,” *International Review of Social History* 25 (1980): 143–75; Stephen Hughes, *Copperopolis: Landscapes of the Early Industrial Period in Swansea* (Aberystwyth: Royal Commissions on the Ancient and Historical

- Monuments of Wales, 2000); Crandall Shifflett, *Coal Towns: Life, Work, and Culture in Company Towns of Southern Appalachia, 1880–1960* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1991); Price Fishback, *Soft Coal, Hard Choices: The Economic Welfare of Bituminous Coal Miners, 1890–1930* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); Linda Carlson, *Company Towns of the Pacific Northwest* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2003); David Avery, *Not on Queen Victoria's Birthday: The Story of the Rio Tinto Mines* (London: Collins, 1974); Ciufetti, *Casa e lavoro*, 35–9; Leela Fernandes, *Producing Workers: The Politics of Gender, Class, and Culture in the Calcutta Jute Mills* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997); K. Gibson, “Company Towns and Class Processes: A Study of the Coal Towns of Central Queensland,” *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 9, 3 (1991): 285–308; Ehsani, “Social Engineering and the Contradictions of Modernization”; Aranda Dioses, *Del proyecto urbano moderno a la imagen trizada*; Susana Torres, “Two Oil Company Towns in Patagonia: European Immigrants, Class, and Ethnicity” (Ph.D. diss., Rutgers University, 1995); and Chapter 5 of this volume.
38. Based on their dominant role in local economies and labor markets, some companies recreated practices of traditional company towns without ever creating company towns. For example, some entrepreneurs devised both mechanisms of labor control and social programs for their workers, company administrations influenced local politics, and workers forged strong bonds of solidarity and a sense of identification with the companies. Based on this fluid understanding of company town experiences, Dinius and Vergara include one-company towns and company towns in their compilation. While considering a spectrum of industrial situations allows for interesting discussions and comparisons, it also diffuses the company town's historical and theoretical specificity and compromises somewhat the concept's methodological usefulness. See Dinius and Vergara, *Company Towns in the Americas*.
  39. Because of this paradox, and based on a Marxist reading of this labor device, José Lopes calls it “a form of bourgeois servitude.” José Sergio Leite Lopes, “Fábrica e vila operária: Considerações sobre uma forma de servidão burguesa,” in *Mudança social no Nordeste: A reprodução da subordinação: Estudos sobre trabalhadores urbanos*, ed. José Sergio Leite Lopes et al. (Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1979), 41–98; idem, “Formas comparadas de imobilização da força de trabalho: Fábricas com vila operária tradicionais e grandes projectos,” *Lusotopie* (1996): 285–98.
  40. For a review of the arguments and an analysis that emphasizes a cost benefits strategy, see Price Fishback, “The Economics of Company Housing: Historical Perspectives from the Coal Fields,” *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization* 8, 2 (April 1992): 346–65.
  41. Fishback, *Soft Coal, Hard Choice*; Torres, “Two Oil Company Towns”; Kublock, *Contested Communities*. See also Chapters 5 and 6 in this book.
  42. José Leite Lopes uses the concept of “spillover” to describe this process—by which he understands the loss of control of a company over its workers as a result of the

- coexistence of other labor alternatives, and the presence of outside influences and conflicts within the once-protected space of the company town (state regulation, organized labor, etc.). Lopes, "Fábrica e vila operária," 59–62, 85–7. For other cases, see Aurora Gómez-Galvarriato, "From Company Towns to Union Towns: Textile Workers and the Revolutionary State in Mexico," in *Company Towns in the Americas*, 45–67; Crawford, *Building the Working Man's Paradise*, 202–5.
43. Ciuffetti, *Casa e lavoro*, 111–47; José Babiano Mora, *Paternalismo industrial y disciplina fabril en España, 1938–1958* (Madrid: Consejo Económico y Social, 1998); Fernando Peña Rambla, "Paternalismo y control social en la industria franquista: La empresa Segarra de la Vall d'Uixó," *Sociología del Trabajo* 34 (1998): 109–32.
  44. Garner, *The Model Company Town*; John Reys, *The Making of Urban America: History of City Planning in the United States* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992); Crawford, *Building the Workingman's Paradise*; Darley, *Villages of Vision*.
  45. Jack Reynolds, *Saltaire: An Introduction to the Village of Sir Titus Salt* (Bradford, England: City of Bradford Metropolitan Council, 1976); Frey, *Le ville industrielle*; Louis Bergeron, *Le Creusot: Une ville industrielle, un patrimoine glorieux* (Paris: Éditions Belin Herscher, 2001); Garner, *The Model Company Town*, 30–5; Crawford, *Bulding the Workingman's Paradise*, 31–5. See also Claude Moindrot, "Types de domaines industriels en Grande-Bretagne," *Norwis* 43 (1964): 309–32; J. A. Jowitt, ed., *Model Industrial Communities in Mid-Nineteenth Century Yorkshire* (Bradford, England: University of Bradford, 1986).
  46. Stanley Buder, *Pullman: An Experiment in Industrial Order and Community Planning, 1880–1930* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967); Crawford, *Bulding the Workingman's Paradise*, 37–45; Richard Schneirov, Shelton Stromquist, and Nick Salvatore, eds., *The Pullman Strike and the Crisis of the 1890s: Essays on Labor and Politics* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999); Carl Smith, *Urban Disorder and the Shape of Belief: The Great Chicago Fire, the Haymarket Bomb, and the Model Town of Pullman* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).
  47. Crawford, *Building the Workingman's Paradise*, passim; idem, "The 'New' Company Town," *Perspecta* 30 (1999): 48–57.
  48. Stanley Buder, *Visionaries and Planners: The Garden City Movement and the Modern Community* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); William Wilson, *The City Beautiful Movement* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989); Susanna Magri and Christian Topalov, "De la cité-jardin à la ville rationalisée: Un tournant du projet réformateur, 1905–1925: Etude comparative France, Grande-Bretagne, Italie, Etats-Unis," *Revue Française de Sociologie* 28 3 (1987): 417–51; Paul Rabinow, *French Modern: Norms and Forms of the Social Environment* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989); José Sierra Alvarez, *El obrero soñado: Ensayo sobre el paternalismo industrial, Asturias 1860–1917* (Madrid: Siglo XXI, 1990); Crawford, *Building the Workingman's Paradise*; Morrell Heald, *The Social Responsibilities of Business, Company, and Community, 1900–1960* (Cleveland,

- OH: Case Western Reserve University Press, 1970); Gwendolyn Wright, *Building the Dream: A Social History of Housing in America* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1981), 177–92.
49. For example, in 1893–94, when George McMurtry was contemplating the foundation of Vandergrift, a new company town for his steelworks some forty miles northeast of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, he embarked on a tour of company towns in England, France, and Germany, including the Schneider family's Le Creusot and the industrial villages of Krupp in Essen. Anne Mosher, *Capital's Utopia: Vandergrift, Pennsylvania, 1855–1916* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 73–4. The transfer of experiences sometimes occurred in unpredictable ways. Greg Castillo argues that Soviet cotton industry representatives were inspired by the organization of the textile mill towns in the American South during their visit in the 1920s. See Castillo, "Stalinist Modern," 140.
  50. The expression belongs to Andrew Herod, "Social Engineering through Spatial Engineering: Company Towns and the Geographical Imagination," in *Company Towns in the Americas*, 21–44.
  51. Grandin, *Fordlandia*; Eugenio Garcés, "Las ciudades del cobre: Del campamento de montaña al hotel minero como variaciones de la company town," *EURE, Estudios Urbanos y Regionales* 29, 88 (December 2003): 131–48; Eugenio Garcés Feliú, Marcelo Cooper, and Mauricio Baros, *Las ciudades del cobre* (Santiago, Chile: Ediciones Universidad Católica, 2007).
  52. Crawford, *Building the Workingman's Paradise*, 12, 16–32, 45; Garner, *The Model Company Town*, 53–63, 77–82. For Europe, see David Roberts, *Paternalism in Early Victorian England* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1979); Patrick Joyce, *Work, Society, and Politics: The Culture of the Factory in Later Victorian England* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1980); Alvarez, *El obrero soñado*; Erik Aerts, Claude Beaud, and Jean Stengers, eds. *Liberalism and Paternalism in the 19th Century* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1990).
  53. Àngel Miralda and Sílvia Miralda, "Les colònies industrials a Catalunya, uns espais de vida," in *Colònies industrials: Catàleg de l'exposició* (Barcelona: Museu d'Història de Catalunya-Col·legi de Periodistes de Catalunya-Generalitat de Catalunya, 2009), 220–1. See also Gracia Dorel-Ferré, "La question de les colònies industrials: Un fenomen discutit de la història industrial de la Catalunya del segle XIX i XX," *Butlletí de la Societat Catalana d'Estudis Històrics*, no.14 (2003): 97–112; Mario Camarena Ocampo, *Jornaleros, tejedores y obreros: Historia social de los trabajadores textiles de San Miguel, 1850–1930* (Mexico City: Plaza y Valdés Editores, 2001), 78–9.
  54. McGillivray, *Blazing Cane*, 122–3.
  55. Katharine Rollwagen, "That Touch of Paternalism: Cultivating Community in the Company Town of Britannia Beach, 1920–58," *BC Studies* no. 151 (Autumn 2006): 60; Mariel Pacheco, "Las prácticas materiales e imaginarias del estado y la nación en un yacimiento petrolero de la Patagonia argentina: La puesta en escena de la Fiesta Nacional del Petróleo como mitografía atávica, 1907–1960," *Voces Recobradas, Revista de Historia Oral* 6, 17 (April 2004): 14–26; Edda Lía

- Crespo, "Madres, esposas, reinas: Petróleo, mujeres y nacionalismo en Comodoro Rivadavia durante los años del primer peronismo," in *Cuando las mujeres reinaban: Belleza, virtud y poder en la Argentina del siglo XX*, ed. Mirta Zaida Lobato (Buenos Aires: Editorial Biblos, 2005), 143–74. See also Chapters 5 and 6 of this book.
56. Blair Kling, "Paternalism in Indian Labor: The Tata Iron and Steel Company of Jamshedpur," *International Labor and Working-Class History* 53 (Spring 1998): 76.
  57. *Ibid.*, 71, 78.
  58. Vinay Bahl, *The Making of the Indian Working Class: The Case of Tata Iron and Steel Company, 1880–1946* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1995), 124.
  59. *Ibid.*
  60. Mary Lether Wingerd, "Rethinking Paternalism: Power and Parochialism in a Southern Mill Village," *Journal of American History* 83, 3 (December 1996): 872–902.
  61. Garner, *The Model Company Town*, 78. A classic study of the connection between church and company town paternalism, stressing the conservative role of the church in times of labor mobilization, is Liston Pope, *Millhands and Preachers: A Study of Gastonia* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1942).
  62. David Corbin, *Life, Work, and Rebellion in the Coal Fields: The Southern West Virginia Miners, 1880–1922* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 146–69.
  63. David Jeremy, "The Enlightened Paternalism in Action: William Hesketh Lever at Port Sunlight," *Business Review* 33, 1 (1990): 59–80.
  64. Diane Drummond, *Crewe: Railway Town, Company and People, 1840–1914* (Aldershot, England: Scolar Press, 1995), 133–52.
  65. María Inés Barbero and Mariela Ceva, "La vida obrera en una empresa paternalista," in Devoto and Madero, *Historia de la vida privada en la Argentina*, 3:141–67; Mariela Ceva, "Los mediadores religiosos en la inmigración de trabajadores friulanos en Villa Flandria en la segunda posguerra," in *De Europa a las Américas: Dirigentes y liderazgos, 1880–1960*, ed. Alicia Bernasconi and Carina Frid (Buenos Aires: Editorial Biblos, 2006), 113–25.
  66. Oliver Dinius, "Glory Days No More: Catholic Paternalism and Labor Relations in Brazil's Steel City," in *Company Towns in the Americas*, 134–57. See also Dinius, *Brazil's Steel City*.
  67. Daniel Walkowitz, *Worker City, Company Town: Iron and Cotton-Worker Protest in Troy and Cohoes, New York, 1855–84* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1978), 111.
  68. See, for example, Shifflett, *Coal Towns*, chap. 3; Wingerd, "Rethinking Paternalism"; Hall et al., *Like a Family*; Bryant Simon, "Choosing Between the Ham and the Union: Paternalism in the Cone Mills of Greensboro, 1925–1930," in *Hanging by a Thread: Social Change in Southern Textiles*, ed. Jeffrey Leiter et al. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), 81–100; Rollwagen, "That Touch of Paternalism"; Neil White, "Creating Community: Industrial Paternalism and Town



- Planning in Corner Brook, Newfoundland, 1923–1925,” *Urban History Review* 32, 2 (2004): 45–58.
69. Moreover, company control in these cases was compounded by the close links between management and political authority, and by the discretionary use of coercive power characteristic of racially segregated, colonial, and neocolonial societies. See the analyses of company towns in China under Japanese occupation and Angola under Portuguese rule in Chapters 3 and 4 of this book.
  70. Wingerd, “Rethinking Paternalism”; Blythe, “Unraveling the Threads”; Hall et al., *Like a Family*. See also Jane Collins, *Threads: Gender, Labor, and Power in the Global Apparel Industry* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 68–71.
  71. Michelle Brattain, *The Politics of Whiteness: Race, Workers, and Culture in the Modern South* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 39. See also Wingerd, “Rethinking Paternalism,” 882; Collins, *Threads*, 69.
  72. Myrna Santiago, *The Ecology of Oil: Environment, Labor, and the Mexican Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 6–7, 148–96.
  73. Miguel Tinker Salas, *The Enduring Legacy: Oil, Culture, and Society in Venezuela* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), 5, 48–52, 87–99, 102–5, 156–9, 173–5.
  74. Only after the mid-1940s did foreign companies begin hiring and promoting large numbers of Venezuelans, which was followed in the 1950s by the lifting of barriers and the incorporation of the oil towns into the surrounding communities. See Tinker Salas, *The Enduring Legacy*, 143–4, 185, 199–200.
  75. Ronald Harpelle, “White Zones: American Enclave Communities of Central America,” in *Blacks and Blackness in Central America: Between Race and Place*, ed. Lowell Gudmundson and Justin Wolfe (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 307–33; Ehsani, “Social Engineering and the Contradictions of Modernization”; Mark Crinson, “Oil and Architecture,” in *Modern Architecture and the End of Empire* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2003), 52–71. See also Grandin, *Fordlandia*.
  76. The concept was articulated by Robert Blauner, “Work Satisfaction and Industrial Trends in Modern Society,” in *Labor and Trade Unionism: An Interdisciplinary Reader*, ed. Walter Galenson and Seymour Lipset (New York: Wiley, 1960), 337. See also Martin Bulmer, ed., *Working-Class Images of Society* (London: Routledge and K. Paul—Social Science Research Council, 1975); Graeme Salaman, *Community and Occupation: An Exploration of Work/Leisure Relationships* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 18–9; Joel Horowitz, “Occupational Community and the Creation of a Self-Styled Elite: Railroad Workers in Argentina,” *The Americas* 42, 1 (July 1985): 55–81.
  77. A related concept is that of company or corporate culture. As a top-down approach developed by management to foster company loyalty, however, this concept represents the opposite of an occupational community. Companies used a vast array of strategies to promote corporate culture, including company publications. For some examples from diverse company town settings, see Jeremy Rowan, “Imagining Corporate Culture: The Industrial Paternalism of William Hesketh



- Lever at Port Sunlight, 1888–1925” (Ph.D. diss., Louisiana State University, 2003); Diana Davis Hinton, “Creating Company Culture: Oil Company Towns in the Southwest, 1920–1960,” *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 111, 4 (April 2008): 369–87; Claire Jamieson, “Change in the Textile Mill Villages of South Carolina’s Upstate during the Modern South Era” (master’s thesis, University of Tennessee, 2010).
78. Salaman, *Community and Occupation*, 20–1.
  79. Janet Finn, *Tracing the Veins: Of Copper, Culture, and Community from Butte to Chuquicamata* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), passim.
  80. See, for example, John Harner, “Place Identity and Copper Mining in Sonora, Mexico,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 91, 4 (December 1991): 660–80; David Robertson, *Hard as the Rock Itself: Place and Identity in the American Mining Town* (Boulder, CO: University of Colorado Press, 2006).
  81. For a recent overview of this perspective in the United States, see Hardy Green, *The Company Town: The Industrial Eden and Satanic Mills that Shaped the American Economy* (New York: Basic Books, 2010).
  82. Ben Marsh, “Continuity and Decline in the Anthracite Towns of Pennsylvania,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 77, 3 (September 1987): 337–52; Harner, “Place Identity”; Robertson, *Hard as the Rock Itself*; Karen Berscherer Metheny, *From the Miners’ Doublehouse: Archeology and Landscape in a Pennsylvania Coal Company Town* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2007); Post, “The Making of a Federal Company Town.”
  83. Robertson, *Hard as the Rock Itself*, 83–91. See also Metheny, *From the Miners’ Doublehouse*. For a critical discussion of nostalgia and selective memory in industrial towns, with examples from England and the U.S. South, see Jeanette Edwards, “The Need for a ‘Bit of History’: Place and Past in English Identity,” in *Locality and Belonging*, ed. Nadia Lovell (London: Routledge, 1998), 149–50; Leon Fink, “When Community Comes Home to Roost: The Southern Mill Town as a Lost Cause,” *Journal of Social History* 40, 1 (Fall 2006): 119–45.
  84. Hall et al., *Like a Family*; Peter Carstens, *In the Company of Diamonds: De Beers, Kleinzee, and the Control of a Town* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2001); Bahl, *The Making of the Indian Working Class*; Frey, *Le ville industrielle e ses urbanites*.
  85. For examples in different geographic and cultural contexts, see Garner, *The Model Company Town*; Susan Davis, “Women’s Roles in a Company Town: New York Mills, 1900–1951,” *New York Folklore* 4, 1–4 (1978): 35–47; Tamara Hareven and Randolph Langenbach, *Amoskeag: Life and Work in and American Factory City* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1995); Lopes, “Fábrica e vila operária”; Helen Harden Chenut, *The Fabric of Gender: Working-Class Culture in Third Republic France* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005); Leiter et al., *Hanging By a Thread; Colònies industrials: Catàleg de l’exposició*. There are also exceptions, such as the textile towns of central Mexico, in which male labor was the rule. See Gómez-Galvarriato, “From Company Towns to Union Towns.”

86. Christina Vanja, "Mining Women in Early Modern European Society," in *The Workplace before the Factory: Artisans and Proletarians, 1500–1800*, ed. Thomas Max Safley and Leonard Rosenband (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), 100–17; Donald Quataert, *Miners and the State in the Ottoman Empire: The Zonguldak Coalfield, 1822–1920* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2006), 7, 233–4; Kuntala Lahiri-Dutt, "Kamins Building the Empire: Class, Caste, and Gender Interface in Indian Collieries," in *Mining Women: Gender in the Development of a Global Industry, 1670 to 2005*, ed. Jaclyn Gier and Laurie Mercier (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 71–87; Regine Mathias, "Female Labour in the Japanese Coal-mining Industry," in *Japanese Women Working*, ed. Janet Hunter (London: Routledge, 1993), 99–122; Sachiko Sone, "Coal Mining Women Speak Out: Economic Change and Women Miners of Chikuhō, Japan," in *Mining Women*, 153–70. See also Kuntala Lahiri-Dutt and Martha Macintyre, eds., *Women Miners in Developing Countries: Pit Women and Others* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate Publishing, 2006); Kuntala Lahiri-Dutt, *Gendering the Field: Towards Sustainable Livelihoods for Mining Communities* (Australian National University E Press, 2011) available as an electronic book from <http://epress.anu.edu.au>.
87. George Blackburn and Sherman Ricards, "Unequal Opportunity on a Mining Frontier: The Role of Gender, Race, and Birth Place," *Pacific Historical Review* 62, 1 (February 1993): 19–38; Nancy Forestell, "Bachelors, Boarding-Houses, and Blind Pigs: Gender Construction in a Multi-Ethnic Mining Camp, 1900–1920," in *A Nation of Immigrants: Women, Workers, and Communities in Canadian History, 1804s–1960s*, ed. Franca Iacovetta (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 251–90.
88. See, for example, Laurie Mercier, *Anaconda: Labor, Culture, and Community in Montana's Smelter City* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001); Karen Olson, *Wives of Steel: Voices of Women from the Sparrows Point Steelmaking Communities* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005); and Suzanne Tallichet, *Daughters of the Mountain: Women Coal Miners in Central Appalachia* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006). See also, Laurie Mercier, "Bordering on Equality: Women Miners in North America," in *Gendering the Field*, 33–49.
89. Judith Modell and John Hinshaw, "Male Work and Mill Work: Memory and Gender in Homestead, Pennsylvania," in *Gender and Memory*, ed. Selma Leydeschorff, Luisa Passerini, and Paul Thompson (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2005), 133–49; Olson, *Wives of Steel*, 89–107.
90. Thomas Miller Klubock, "Morality and Good Habits: The Construction of Gender and Class in the Chilean Copper Mines, 1904–1951," in *The Gendered Worlds of Latin American Women Workers: From Household and Factory to the Union Hall and the Ballot Box*, ed. John French and Daniel James (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997), 232–63; idem, *Contested Communities*, passim; Jane Parpart, "The Household and the Mine Shaft: Gender and Class Struggles on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1926–64," *Journal of Southern African*

- Studies* 13, 1 (October 1986): 36–56; Erik Eklund, *Steel Town: The Making and Breaking of Port Kembla* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2002), 47–9, 62–9, 69–72; Shifflet, *Coal Towns*, 81–4; Olson, *Wives of Steel*, passim; Graciela Ciselli, *Pioneras astrenses: El trabajo femenino en el pueblo de una compañía petrolera patagónica* (Buenos Aires: Dunken, 2004); Myrna Santiago, “Women of the Mexican Oil Fields: Class, Nationality, Economy, Culture, 1900–30,” *Journal of Women’s History* 21, 1 (Spring 2009): 87–110.
91. See, for example, Eklund, *Steel Town*, 71; Finn, *Tracing the Veins*, 160–1.
  92. Corbin, *Life, Work, and Rebellion*, 92–3; Eklund, *Steel Town*, 70–1; Karaleah Reichart, “We’re to Stand Side by Side: Household Production and Women’s Work in Rural Mining Communities,” in *Labor in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, ed. E. Paul Durrenberger and Judith Martí (Lanham, MD: Altamira Press, 2006), 140, 144, 146–7; Olson, *Wives of Steel*, 59–62.
  93. For examples of the impact of rotating shifts on company town families and female household work, see Meg Luxton, *More Than a Labour of Love: Three Generations of Women’s Work in the Home* (Toronto: Women’s Educational Press, 1980), 47–50; Olson, *Wives of Steel*, 38–40, 87–8, 166–7; Betty Parker Duff, “Class and Gender Roles in the Company Towns of Millinocket and East Millinocket, Maine, and Benham and Lynch, Kentucky, 1901–2003: A Comparative History” (Ph.D. diss., University of Maine, 2004), 138, 158–9.
  94. See, for example, the experiences of white and African American women in the steel communities of Baltimore, Maryland, in Olson, *Wives of Steel*, 147–63.
  95. Finn, *Tracing the Veins*, 129–30, 137–9; Tinker-Salas, *The Enduring Legacy*, 5, 143–50, 174–5, 179–80; Santiago, “Women of the Mexican Oil Fields”; Ronald Harpelle, “Cooking Class: Order and the Other in the Corporate Kitchens of Latin America,” in *Negotiating Identities in Modern Latin America*, ed. Hendrik Kraay (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2007), 115–38. The interaction between local women and “company wives” also created tension. An analysis of this dynamic and its influence on social spaces appears in this volume in Kuntala Lahiri-Dutt’s study of the Tajung Bara mining camp in Kalimantan, Indonesia.
  96. Corbin, *Life, Work, and Rebellion*, 92–5; Robert Robson, “Strike in the Single Enterprise Community: Flin Flon, Manitoba, 1934,” *Labour/Le Travail* 12 (Autumn 1983): 74, 77, 79–80; Reichart, “We’re to Stand Side by Side,” 140–1; Finn, *Tracing the Veins*, 144–5, 149–55, 189–90; Klubock, *Contested Communities*, 240–6; Gier and Mercier, *Mining Women*. See also the analysis of strikes in Britannia Beach, Canada, in Chapter 6 of this volume.
  97. Klubock, *Contested Communities*, 288.
  98. For examples of these negotiations of gender roles in mining towns in southern Africa and North America, see Parpart, “The Household and the Mine Shaft”; Laurie Mercier, “Borders, Gender, and Labor: Canadian and U.S. Mining Towns during the Cold War Era,” in *Company Towns in the Americas*, 158–77.

## CHAPTER 2

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# Form and Reform: The Garden City of Hellerau-bei-Dresden, Germany, between Company Town and Model Town

*Marynel Ryan Van Zee*

In 1908, the master carpenter and entrepreneur Karl Schmidt established the “Garden City” of Hellerau-bei-Dresden in the eastern German countryside. The creation of Hellerau as a combination of a company town for Schmidt’s German Workshops for Handcrafted Art and a model reform settlement was the product of cooperation among different strains of the Wilhelmine reform movement. Under the Second Empire (1871–1918), and particularly during the “Wilhelmine period” between 1890 and World War I, a significant proportion of the German bourgeoisie embraced the idea of “social reform” and channeled its civic energy into a variety of organizations and projects.<sup>1</sup> The idea of the Garden City, which came primarily from England, appealed in particular to a diverse group that saw reform of the built environment as crucial to answering the so-called “social question” that had preoccupied state and civil-societal actors from the 1840s forward.<sup>2</sup>

Hellerau was, like other company towns, an example of “spatial engineering . . . for the sake of social engineering,” to use Andrew Herod’s recent formulation.<sup>3</sup> But Schmidt was more than just an entrepreneur; he was also a significant figure in the social reform movement. Schmidt’s desire to combine the Garden City model with the company town model prompted him to invite two groups of reformers with distinctly different goals for Hellerau’s social engineering into the planning and execution of his vision. Each group invested the built environment, from the level of the community down to the

level of the individual household and garden, with its often conflicting ideas of the relationship between order and freedom. Historians have examined the conflict between these two groups, primarily from the perspectives of design history and the tensions of Wilhelmine society and politics, and have highlighted the potential conflict between “traditional” style and “modern” goals.<sup>4</sup> This chapter examines the meaning of “traditional” and “modern” aesthetics as they relate to the conception of Hellerau as a company town attempting to employ the reform model of the Garden City, as Cheryl Buckley has done recently for the British industrial village of Dormanstown.<sup>5</sup> It also draws attention, for the first time, to how the single-family dwelling with a garden that promised a simultaneous domestication of working men’s leisure and of working women’s productivity figured in the minds of the reformers who worked together on Hellerau and other German cities. The appeal of that dwelling model to reformers lay in the possibility of recapturing elements of an older, “traditional” agricultural household model within a “modern” framework. The expectations that the reformers involved in Hellerau had of the social engineering that was possible through the built environment had their roots in the way that social reformers had already used the category of “culture,” intertwining economics, morality, and aesthetics, to frame their efforts to answer the “social question” over the course of the second half of the nineteenth century.

After the upheavals of 1848, and the unification of Germany in 1871, German Liberals struggled to manage the consequences of economic growth and the challenge of socialism. Reformers articulated various proposals for the improvement of workers’ lives that represented a middle ground between socialism and unfettered capitalism, including the possibility of state intervention in the economy. By the 1890s, one of the primary articulations of the “social question” was the *Wohnungsfrage*, the question of (worker’s) housing.<sup>6</sup> Earlier concern with urban housing in the 1860s and 1870s had led to the formation of building societies and other private efforts to deal with housing shortages in many German cities, and the economic depression of the later 1870s and early 1880s slowed the growth of demand. An economic upturn during the last decade of the century, however, led to intensified migration to the cities and the growth of the *Mietskaserne*, or “rental barracks.” The shortage of apartments and the high cost of rent for what was available were seen to encourage a variety of different problems that were dangerous to both health and morality, as it was not uncommon for all members of a poor family to sleep in the same room or take in lodgers who were usually young, single men.<sup>7</sup> The specter of the unattached male entering a family that included a wife whose morals might already be compromised by working in a factory environment, as well as vulnerable children, was one to which reformers often

pointed with (an occasionally salacious) alarm.<sup>8</sup> Their discourse interwove moral, psychological, and economic considerations, with little differentiation among them.

The variety of actors with an interest in the problem of workers' housing who came together in support of the German *Gartenstadtbewegung* (Garden City movement) in the first years of the twentieth century included economists, architects and planners, medical reformers, representatives of the bourgeois women's movement, and advocates of land reform and "internal colonization"—a cross section of the most important strains of the reform movement.<sup>9</sup> By 1906, the idea of the Garden City had also attracted a selection of men, including Schmidt, who were dedicated to a reform of the applied arts that linked social reform with economic development. Primarily, the collaboration between these men, associated closely with a German organization called the *Werkbund*, and the German Garden City Association (*Deutsche Gartenstadtgesellschaft*, hereafter DGG) made possible the creation and success of Hellerau as the first German Garden City. These groups of men shared, in particular, a vision of the built environment in the form of a Garden City as an agent in the regeneration of the working class and restoration of the social harmony or sense of community that seemed so badly damaged by industrialization and urbanization.

Fundamentally optimistic, these men acknowledged industrialization as an enormous step forward in terms of economic growth, and the benefits it had the potential to bring to humankind were highlighted repeatedly in the economic literature of the time—a literature produced by men also associated with both the DGG and the *Werkbund*, who also took leadership positions in the social reform movement.<sup>10</sup> The question for them was not whether to industrialize, but how to manage and encourage the process without exacerbating the growing social tensions that endangered German "culture." Culture was a catchall word, offering a field of analysis that was far less threatening than that of social class, which provided workers with other analytical and political options by the late nineteenth century.<sup>11</sup>

Reformers used an alleged threat to "culture" to emphasize the potentially dire consequences of poor living conditions for urban workers, but "culture" was also linked closely to aesthetics and form, which were in turn crucial to any discussion of the built environment. The intertwining of ideas and expectations surrounding the relationship between form and reform both allowed for and limited the possibilities of real cooperation between the important members of the DGG and the *Werkbund* in the creation of Hellerau. Shared arguments for a synthesis of pre-industrial and industrial forms in workers' housing, and in the shape of the settlement overall, were crucial to the creation of Hellerau. The use of traditional German aesthetics that were open

to different historical interpretations smoothed over early questions about the degree to which the goals of these two groups of men really coincided. For Schmidt and the *Werkbund* leadership, the traditional order represented in the built environment was intended to further a reform of taste and behavior suited to the reproduction of the Wilhelmine social order. Supporters coming from the DGG emphasized a different historical trajectory that connected the built environment with the possibility of expanded individual freedom and social change. Later, their fundamentally different social visions emerged, not surprisingly, in a controversy over the perceived significance of certain forms or styles in Hellerau's buildings that effectively ended the cooperation on which its creation as a Garden City had been based.

The story of their cooperation and disagreements reveals the tensions inherent in using the economic form of the company town as a potential vehicle for social and political change. Although Schmidt did not demand the level of control that many other industrialists who established company towns had, he did intend Hellerau as a particular kind of model. It was an experiment in forming a working-class consciousness that would lead to an acceptance of workers' position in the social structure, rather than a challenge to it. Inside Schmidt's workshops, the blending of craft tradition with modern innovation would produce "quality German work." Inside the houses of Hellerau, the blending of pre-industrial aesthetics with modern conveniences symbolized rewards for that work. The village environment in which they were embedded suggested that the social harmony of the (hierarchical) past could be regained in the present and might serve as an example to other reform-minded industrialists.

The reformers of the DGG had their own interest in shaping working-class consciousness, and in social harmony, but they wanted to achieve the latter by encouraging workers' self-perception as citizens and individuals. They depended on the ambiguity of Hellerau's aesthetic messages to justify their arguments that it could fulfill the social reform goals that were part of the Garden City idea—most importantly, the eventual growth of social equality. But the successful Garden City required the commitment of an industrialist, and even a reform-minded one like Schmidt had no intention of creating a settlement that even implicitly challenged the social hierarchy of Wilhelmine Germany. It became impossible, eventually, to contain the conflict between these very different expectations of the same model settlement using the aesthetic discourses that had earlier smoothed them over.

### Orderly or Free? Two Versions of Worker's Towns

The Garden City first appealed to these optimistic reformers from the DGG and the *Werkbund* as an alternative form of industrialization. According to

many commentators and social reformers, two economic phenomena were to blame for the problems exemplified in the “rental barracks”: concentration and speculation. In the Garden City, though, the most modern of industrial facilities could be embedded in a healthy, ex-urban environment that hearkened back to the simpler days of village life. The concept of the Garden City as articulated by the Englishman Ebenezer Howard, its best-known advocate, was one of a planned industrialization of the countryside. The problem, as described by Howard and his German admirers, was that the industrialization that had progressed without planning in England and was following suit in Germany had produced dark, polluted cities with high ground rents that were crowded with a weakened and potentially vicious working class.<sup>12</sup> Employers were drawn to the cities, despite these terrible conditions, because of the concentration of technology and labor, which had in turn been drawn by the opportunity to work. The Garden City, by contrast, would be a city planned in consultation with both industrialists and workers to meet their needs in an economical, healthy, and aesthetically pleasing way. A planned development limited to a maximum population of 32,000, each Garden City would be situated on land purchased by trustees “of responsible position and of undoubted probity and honor” who would return whatever remained of the ground rents paid beyond taxes and other expenses to a central council that would control the land.<sup>13</sup> Compact decentralization reflected an early form of environmentalism. Howard’s model included a central services area replete with green space, surrounded by concentric streets of houses and gardens that facilitated travel on foot between the core and the outer industrial belt connected to a railway line. Houses, businesses, workshops, and factories would be provided with electricity, running water, and sewerage—all the modern conveniences. The remainder of the adjoining land would be used for garden allotments, commercial agriculture, and social welfare institutions. Howard argued that his Garden City model was the means to achieve “a healthy, natural, and economic combination of town and country life, and this on land owned by the municipality.”<sup>14</sup> All land remained the property of the Garden City and was granted to residents and entrepreneurs only in leasehold.

This particular structure of ownership, and the experience of living in a tightly knit community with multiple opportunities for civic engagement, was supposed to offer “a life of equal freedom and opportunity . . . and a sense of the possibilities of a life at once both orderly and free.”<sup>15</sup> Howard contrasted his vision explicitly with those of others, which included hierarchical forms of spatial and social organization. The Garden City was to form the kernel of a new society and, literally, allow space for all sorts of associations formed on the basis of “free will and equality.”<sup>16</sup> Letchworth, the first Garden City built explicitly on Howard’s model, included a “Mrs. Howard Memorial Hall” constructed on the initiative of a women’s organization, intended to



serve “organizations and gatherings without regard to their political or religious leanings.”<sup>17</sup> Hans Kampffmeyer, one of the founders of the DGG, argued that “the most diverse goals of the social reform movement . . . would be easier to realize in this new city,” free from the “unfavorable conditions of life and traditional conflicts of interest” of existing cities.<sup>18</sup>

In both the English and German contexts, however, another model was also available for consideration. In England, Cadbury’s Bournville and Lever’s Port Sunlight appeared to combine some aspects of the Garden City model with greater employer control than that advocated by Howard and other reformers. In Germany, the primary example was Alfred Krupp’s Margarethenhöhe outside Essen. Like Howard’s ideal Garden City, all three of these company towns incorporated significant green space and planned housing in a somewhat uniform but traditional style.<sup>19</sup> A significant difference, though, was that occupancy of a home in Bournville, Port Sunlight, or Margarethenhöhe was tied to employment at the respective factory, and planning and ownership remained firmly the prerogatives of the industrialist in question. This paternalist model enabled Cadbury, Lever, and Krupp to take advantage of cheaper ground rents outside of city centers, and to enhance their control over and observation of workers.

German advocates of Howard’s Garden City model faced a number of obstacles as they sought to avoid the more paternalist versions created by Cadbury, Lever, and Krupp. First, the kind of ownership model that Howard had envisioned would be difficult to establish in the German context because of laws and traditions associated with land ownership.<sup>20</sup> Alternative arrangements would have to be developed; a number of options were proposed and discussed in the organs of the Garden City movement. Second, the DGG propagandized for garden cities as *private* concerns, not dependent on state involvement or support. Concern over the problem of workers’ housing had encouraged reformers to accept government intervention in the private economy.<sup>21</sup> But as Bernhard Kampffmeyer, one of the founders of the DGG put it, “our public bodies . . . work only sluggishly, and our political circumstances . . . city ordinances, three-class voting, and a parliament of landlords tie their hands for any prompt reform work.”<sup>22</sup> To succeed with little or no state involvement, the Garden City had to be economically viable and, ideally, nearly autarkic.<sup>23</sup> Unfortunately, Letchworth had failed to thrive because of a lack of investment; the returns were too small to guarantee participation for any but the most committed.<sup>24</sup> This meant that it was crucial to secure the support of industrialists who could see the financial advantages of moving to the countryside, but who would not seek the level of control over their workers (or ownership of the housing stock itself) that other industrialists had in their company towns.<sup>25</sup>

These problems were compounded by the fact that Bournville and Port Sunlight, in particular, were often held up as examples of Howard's ideas in action. Schmidt maintained close professional ties with Hermann Muthesius, a well-known architect and Prussian commerce minister who would go on to design parts of Hellerau and had published a very favorable review of Port Sunlight, which he identified with the Garden City movement, while on assignment as an architectural attaché with the German Embassy in London.<sup>26</sup> In actuality, he essentially ignored England's very active Garden City movement during the seven years he spent there reporting on architectural developments for the German government and published only the piece on Port Sunlight.<sup>27</sup> But even Hans Kampffmeyer, who tried to emphasize that Bournville and Port Sunlight were only "forerunners" of the Garden City movement, waxed poetic about Lever's factory community after his visit:

Images can provide only an insufficient impression of the beauty of this settlement. One must really stroll through the large parkway with its decorated houses [and] see the residents in the evening when they enjoy themselves in their gardens, to gain a real sense of the cultural work that is being performed here.<sup>28</sup>

On German soil, this was a different story. The Kampffmeyers and other progressive reformers criticized the Krupp settlement and others because "the linking of employment and tenancy was thought to restrict the worker's ability to form independent political opinions and to lay him open to deliberate efforts of regimentation."<sup>29</sup> Krupp himself revealed this as an underlying practical, antisocialist purpose of his efforts. In a brochure for residents titled *A Word to My Workers*, he warned the latter: "After the work is done, stay at home with your own—parents, wife, and children. Seek your relaxation there. Think about your household and raising your children. That, and your work, should be first and above all your politics!"<sup>30</sup> Although Kampffmeyer and many other founding members of the DGG might be considered "social democratic" in their orientation, their primary objection to a company town model like Krupp's Margaretenhöhe was that they saw it as essential to "avoid any ideological influence or moral education" of a Garden City's residents, who were supposed to develop their own ideas.<sup>31</sup> Krupp's priorities were in conflict with their ideal settlement, which should be established on "new land, socially [as well as physically] speaking."<sup>32</sup>

### **Healthy Households for Working Families**

Echoing the idealization of pre-industrial village life that was part of Howard's model, social reformers in Germany identified significant connections

between past and present at the level of the individual worker's household, where the most profound relationship between the built environment and social regeneration existed. As the structure of the Garden City satisfied the goals of reform at the level of the municipality—through decentralization and the inhibition of speculation—the structure of the individual dwelling was intended to satisfy the goals of reform at the level of the working-class family by addressing the negative consequences of life in the city.

Promotional literature would eventually bill Hellerau as the “practical solution to the ‘rental barracks,’” as “even the smallest of dwellings would be constructed as a single-family home.”<sup>33</sup> The single-family dwelling with an attached garden was linked to a simultaneous domestication of working men's leisure and working women's productive labor that hearkened back to a harmonious, orderly village of the past even as it could be described simultaneously as a source of the individuality and civic consciousness suited to free people.

Members and supporters of the DGG devoted considerable energy to describing these interwoven moral, psychological, and economic advantages of the single-family dwelling in the Garden City. They drew on traditional imagery that tied control over or ownership of property to men's well-being and contentment, and productive domesticity to women's protection and satisfaction. According to their propaganda, the source of moral danger within the “rental barracks” of the big cities was rooted in the lack of true single-family dwellings. If Germany's “entire cultural history” could be called “a history of the dwelling,” as the economist Heinrich Herkner asserted dramatically, there was no hope for the families whose lives were so dramatically compromised by their cramped and unsanitary quarters. Speculation fed by the urban housing shortage meant that, in Herkner's words,

many women and girls are forced from the sanctuary of the home into the struggle for existence, for daily bread. And when the members of the family come home in the evening, exhausted from the day's burden, to gather . . . what is left for the maintenance of family feeling? Soon [also] there are alien elements . . . and boarders, who come among them, soon the terrible lack of space and the unease that it causes drive the men of the family to the sparkling *Bierpalast* (tavern) in search of relaxation and distraction.<sup>34</sup>

Herkner also cited fellow economist Gustav Schmoller's more poetic formulation that “all human civilization grows and climbs like ivy” on physical structures.<sup>35</sup> The institution of the “rental barracks” encouraged the destruction of the family, as all members left the “sanctuary of the home” to work and its nature as a “sanctuary” was compromised further by the presence of outsiders. The idealization of the single-family dwelling of the Garden City

was an explicit response to this articulation of the “social question” and its solution.<sup>36</sup>

Because actual ownership of property in the Garden City was tied to cooperative structures, through which the control of speculation and development could be managed, much of the emphasis among reformers was on the “feeling of *Sesshaftigkeit* (or ‘settledness’).”<sup>37</sup> This positive feeling was presented explicitly as a benefit to the male, urban worker who might move to a Garden City. The single-family dwelling promised him a combination of responsibility and relaxation that would nurture “that which is lost in our democratizing age . . . the personality.”<sup>38</sup>

“Settledness,” discouraged by the arbitrary practices of city speculators, who might increase the rent or evict tenants with little notice or cause, was encouraged within the Garden City by rent control and regulations that prevented unjustified eviction. The value of stability of residence was immeasurable, because a man in his “own” home “found the greatest security for himself and his family.” The “consciousness” that he could remain on his own plot gave him “individual will, responsibility, [and] pride.”<sup>39</sup> He might develop, “along with his house and garden,” and “achieve control” in his life.<sup>40</sup> Even without unrestricted ownership, simple stability of residence could work wonders.

Amtmann Thiel, president of another Garden City and member of the DGG, found in the farmer the perfect example of “economic and personal independence” upon which the ideal Garden City resident could be modeled:

In order to see how the consciousness of security affects the man, we only need to look at the farmer as a comparison. The farmer . . . has the feeling of being master of his own farmstead, but also of being responsible for his family . . . in spite of some downsides, he has great, secure pride in himself.<sup>41</sup>

The farmer’s life was also associated with “multi-faceted and ever-changing” work, rather than the “deadly monotony” and alienation of his city counterpart’s daily tasks.<sup>42</sup> Although the male Garden City resident would still labor in industry, he might recapture some of the farmer’s “joy in the finished product” as he simultaneously satisfied the “psychological hunger” that man felt for the natural world, for “plants, air, light and soil.” This satisfaction would encourage men to spend their leisure time not “in the tavern, but rather in the garden.”<sup>43</sup>

In addition to the psychological and moral advantages identified by reformers, the garden offered an economic advantage that could also be associated closely with the moral regeneration of the working-class family. While the garden might serve as a site of a domesticated leisure for men, it was

perhaps more important as a site for the domestication of women's productive labor. Through small-scale agricultural production in the garden attached to the single-family dwelling, the woman in the Garden City could become a housewife, a situation that would solve the remaining economic and moral problems of the question of worker's housing at the root.

Advocates of the Garden City had repeatedly made the connection between the economic significance of the garden and women's labor. On a simple level, the garden provided fruits and vegetables at prices lower than the market: "things that the housewife would otherwise purchase rather dearly, and [which are] not usually that fresh," could be provided from the family garden. The "time-consuming trip to the market" might also be saved.<sup>44</sup> Working in the garden also helped to realize putative benefits such as closeness to the soil and exposure to air and sun—the lack of which in the "rental barracks" contributed to costly illness.<sup>45</sup> As she planted, weeded, and harvested, the woman gained not only a "pure joy in existence . . . but also the opportunity to combine a possibility for fruitful labor at home with the care and education of her children."<sup>46</sup>

That fruitful labor made it possible for the garden to "even out" the higher cost of the single-family dwelling in a Garden City over the city apartment. According to the secretary of a building society, the "income" from her work in the garden usually doubled what "the woman who earlier pursued industrial labor" had earned, while also improving her health and that of her children.<sup>47</sup> What the family did not use could be carried to market and sold, as an additional contribution to family income.<sup>48</sup> The "diligent wife" and children who helped in the garden, in turn, supported the well-being and development of the husband and father.<sup>49</sup>

If the move from the "rental barracks" to the single-family dwelling entailed a sense of control and responsibility for men, women enjoyed a similar possibility, at least as one Garden City resident described it.<sup>50</sup> Escape from the problems and demands of neighbors, the staircase that served as a "continuation of the street" into the individual home, and the lack of peace and quiet that characterized life in apartment houses brought the wife and mother a sense of security.<sup>51</sup> Like her husband, she could also achieve a form of "economic and personal independence" that hearkened back to an idealized, agricultural way of life. As the landscape architect and social reformer Leberecht Migge put it, in an appropriate turn of phrase, "women can regenerate their own field of activity from earlier times" through garden work.<sup>52</sup>

This was more than just a matter of individual satisfaction; it represented the return of the garden as the "social center" of life, just as it had been during the "time of our grandfathers."<sup>53</sup> In an early evaluation of the Garden City, the well-known feminist Käthe Schirmacher had reminded her readers that

the “heavenly roses,” since the beginning of time, were women’s domain.<sup>54</sup> For all these writers, the significance of women’s and girls’ work in the garden exceeded the artistic and inspirational value that the poets of the past had attached to it. The garden was a specific place for women’s work and its reevaluation. If the opportunity were missed, Migge argued, “a natural task of women would remain unfulfilled.”<sup>55</sup>

The medical reformer Max Gruber had lamented the fact that city living entailed “almost no household use for the capabilities of women and children” who were forced to make their contribution to the family by “seeking income outside” of the house.<sup>56</sup> From this unfortunate situation stemmed a whole variety of problems, including economic competition between men and women, the inclusion of lodgers within households, and the “alcohol abuse, avarice, and lust for sensual pleasure” that plagued the urban poor.<sup>57</sup> The garden was an ideal location for women’s and children’s labor in support of an integral and moral household that hearkened back to the agricultural household of the early modern past, which had been ordered by complementary gender roles. Rather than competing with her husband, the wife and mother contributed in a gender-appropriate capacity to the financial well-being of the family. The man so supported sought his relaxation and enjoyment in the garden, that “eternal source of pure pleasure,” when he returned, “tired from his daily labor,” rather than leaving his home and family for the pub.<sup>58</sup>

### Planning and Building Hellerau

In 1907, when Schmidt joined the organization, it seemed that a suitable entrepreneur with whom the DGG could make common cause in the building of a Garden City had been found. Schmidt was a master carpenter and the owner of a successful furniture workshop in Dresden. His business had grown dramatically since he set up shop in 1898, and he counted 250 employees by the time he decided in 1906 to leave the city proper. In repeated moves from location to location in Dresden, he had become well acquainted with the problem of ground rent. He envisioned relocating to a purpose-built workshop in the nearby countryside, but he was interested in more than simply taking advantage of cheaper land. Schmidt had developed a holistic vision of producing a skilled working class with the capacity to make and appreciate “quality German work.” Along with the well-known social liberal Friedrich Naumann, who shared his vision, Schmidt developed the organizational blueprint of the German *Werkbund* at the Dresden Arts and Crafts Exhibition of 1906 and helped found the organization in 1907.<sup>59</sup>

The *Werkbund* brought together master craftsmen, architects, economists, and others devoted to a reform of the applied arts that was explicitly linked

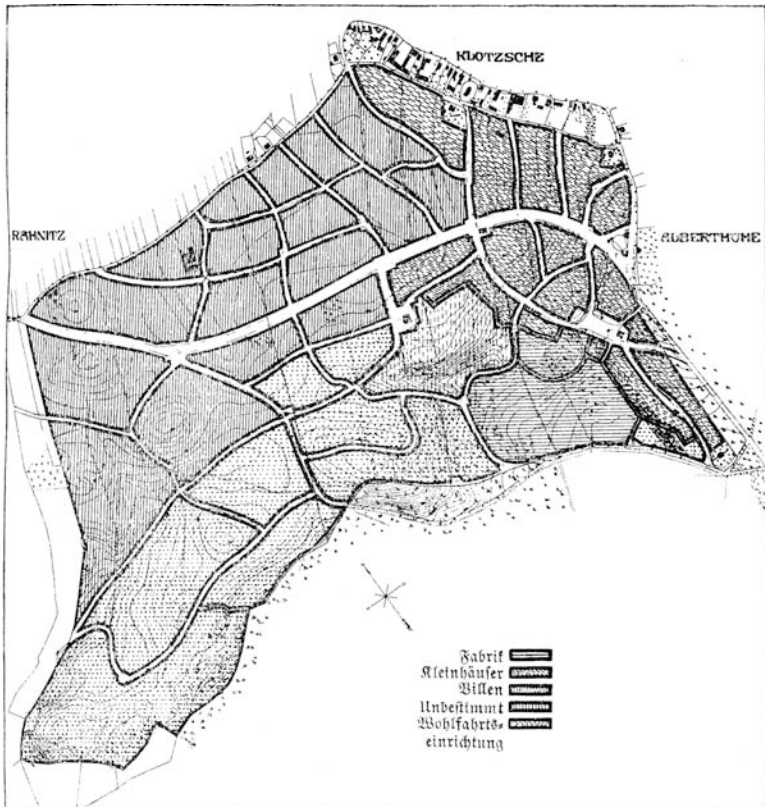
to broader ideas of social reform. As described by Fritz Schumacher, a professor of architecture in Dresden who gave the keynote address at the founding meeting, the *Werkbund's* objective was “to reform the German arts and crafts through a genuine rapprochement between artists and producers.” Together, they could achieve the “reconquest of a harmonious culture,” drawing from the past to create a “new cultural synthesis” suited to the contemporary context.<sup>60</sup> “Idealistic entrepreneurs” like Schmidt and economic thinkers like Naumann, who had published his *New German Economic Policy* in 1906, also hoped that distinctively German products would do well in the increasingly competitive world market, benefit workers and employers alike, and bring the profits that colonial expansion had promised but (as yet) failed to deliver.<sup>61</sup>

As early as 1901, Schmidt had already suggested that the goals of applied arts reform required a change to workers' housing and had recommended including “a little city or even a villa colony” as part of an arts and crafts exhibition, to stimulate “interest in arts and crafts among ever-broader segments of the population.”<sup>62</sup> Schmidt's choice to design the model housing was his brother-in-law, the architect Richard Riemerschmid, who also joined the *Werkbund*; his own workshops would provide the interior fittings and furnishings. Schmidt's ideas for a full model settlement based around his workshops were honed between 1901 and 1906 in conversation with other members of the applied arts movement and the wider network of reformers that included the DGG. The building process at Hellerau was supposed to reflect cooperation between entrepreneur and workers. In September of 1906, Schmidt therefore met with his workers and received their unanimous support for his plan and especially for his proposal of communal ownership of the housing.<sup>63</sup> He also set about securing the land, a long process of negotiation with the 73 individual owners of the property that would become Hellerau-bei-Dresden.<sup>64</sup> The land was close enough to Dresden that Schmidt sought and gained the support of the city for an electric streetcar link, reinforcing the understanding that Hellerau's residents need not be employed at the workshops. At the same time, Schmidt was hopeful that the “success of his workshops would attract the assistance and attention of influential and financially powerful people, so that the settlement would have a secure foundation.”<sup>65</sup> Naumann's support, in particular, was crucial; his contacts allowed Schmidt and his banker to found a stock corporation worth 1 million Reichsmarks. The establishment of the workshops as the primary industrial concern and a loan from the state of Saxony then enabled the founding of the *Gartenstadtgesellschaft Hellerau GmbH* (LLC), the Hellerau Garden City Society. Wolf Dohrn, first executive secretary of the *Werkbund* but also a longstanding member of the DGG, was working as an apprentice under



Schmidt at the time and became deeply involved with propagandizing for Hellerau and shaping its future.

The years between 1906 and 1908 were also dedicated to the development of a building plan and the recruitment of the architects who would design Hellerau. The planned structure reflected the fundamentally conservative social vision of the *Werkbund's* founders, and its distinctly German aesthetic reflected their desire to bring the sense of harmony and community allegedly associated with the pre-industrial past into “cultural synthesis” with modern efficiencies and economies of scale. Hellerau’s overall design even included a structural nod to the pre-industrial past, as it took the shape of a woodworker’s vise (see figure 2.1).<sup>66</sup>



**Figure 2.1** Plan of Hellerau, by Richard Riemerschmid, in Kampffmeyer, *Die Gartenstadtbewegung*, 31.



Riemerschmid worked in close consultation with Schmidt and his employees to develop the overall building plan and workers' house designs. He was also responsible for working with the "Commission of Seven," chosen from among Schmidt's workers, to create and analyze a set of questionnaires given to all employees in which they were to describe their current living situations and the living situations they wished to have. Partially on the basis of those responses, Riemerschmid designed the section of small homes that would house most of Hellerau's working-class residents by using architectural references to the premodern German village even as he satisfied the residents' demands for modern conveniences and fixtures (see figure 2.2).

Hermann Muthesius was responsible for the "villa quarter" to be occupied by middle-class people and possibly artists, along with a smaller quarter of workers' housing, and saw the design of Hellerau as a golden opportunity to meet his own goals for the *Werkbund* and applied arts reform in general through a "comprehensive, paternalistic design."<sup>67</sup> Riemerschmid, Muthesius, and other architects developed "house types" with interchangeable elements, in a variety of sizes and levels of decoration to fit the needs and budgets of a variety of residents.

This variety of residents, though, was to be organized in a setting that reproduced the existing social structure of Wilhelmine Germany. Muthesius seized on the opportunity to support the Garden City movement, and



**Figure 2.2** Riemerschmid's Village-Style Housing, in Kampffmeyer, *Die Gartenstadtbewegung*, Frontispiece.

Schmidt's project in particular, because his earlier work as both a practicing architect and a commerce minister had fallen short of his desire to use the built environment as a mode of comprehensive reform.<sup>68</sup> Following his service in London, Muthesius had designed scores of English-style suburban villas (*Landhäuser*) in Germany for the well-to-do. He was also able to effect real reform in Prussia's applied-arts schools and schools for the building trades, part of his ministerial purview. Hellerau offered the opportunity to realize his architectural vision with the same kind of control that had served him well in his educational reform program.<sup>69</sup> Muthesius's more "German-style" designs for Hellerau contributed to a settlement that, to echo his favorable review of Port Sunlight, "expressed properly the reigning social hierarchy 'in artistic terms of outstanding significance.'" <sup>70</sup>

Standards of taste in Hellerau were clearly set by Schmidt and his two main architects to do far more than just shape workers' taste. Despite one gushing review that described Riemerschmid's overall plan for Hellerau as providing "just the degree of intimate coherence due to companions [living] in freedom," the quarters created by Riemerschmid and Muthesius organized residents effectively by class position.<sup>71</sup> The houses differed in size and position on the land, but showed "the close relationship of older and younger siblings of a big family" that buildings in "the old villages" had.<sup>72</sup> The built environment hearkened back to the putatively more harmonious past of village (or family) life, underpinned by the use of an old German practice that allowed collective control of land prices based on the priority of community over individual needs.<sup>73</sup> As in the colonial towns described by Jeremy Ball and the coal town of Wheelwright in Appalachia analyzed by Lisa Perry, both in this volume, creating an integrated style for Hellerau and using communal practices of the past fostered the sense of the integrated, harmonious culture that was an expressed goal of *Werkbund* activities.

### Hellerau as Model: Orderly and Free?

As Schmidt's workshops, renamed the German Workshops by 1908, served as the most prominent and successful example of *Werkbund* ideas in action, so Hellerau came to serve as *the* example of a German Garden City. Wolf Dohrn's first report on the founding of Hellerau analogized the relationship between the German Garden City movement and Howard's ideal Garden City with the relationship between "the practical politics of social democracy and its final goal . . . the first steps from theory into praxis cannot yet bring the ideal . . . compromises must be made." Dohrn described Hellerau as really just a "step on the way."<sup>74</sup> Muthesius, on the other hand, referred to

Hellerau effusively as the “first really valid example of a model settlement in Germany in which the land reform and artistic principles [of the Garden City idea] have been realized.”<sup>75</sup> Hans Kampffmeyer hedged his own judgment around with the caveat that “several circumstances” existed in England that made the successful establishment of garden cities easier than in Germany, not least of which was “that labor relations had reached a more conciliatory level . . . creating a more developed sense that employers and workers have in many cases the same interests.” English industrialists had shown more eagerness to use the Garden City model. But Kampffmeyer identified increased enthusiasm in Germany by 1908, “thanks to the enormous business sense and strong social and cultural interest of Karl Schmidt.”<sup>76</sup> Hellerau was also very successful in attracting residents. By the end of 1913, it consisted of 400 houses and about 1,900 residents. Many of these were employees of Schmidt’s German Workshops, but enough of them were not to make clear the way in which Hellerau’s founders had not made “the mistake of confusing the employer-worker and landlord-tenant relationships.”<sup>77</sup>

Partially because of the success and renown of Hellerau, the Kampffmeyers and others pointed to it as progress toward their ideal on German soil and used it as a significant element in their propaganda.<sup>78</sup> In many ways, Hellerau *could* be understood as a German variation on the English idea. Industrialists represented the most likely investors for the creation of German garden cities, and Karl Schmidt was fully committed to the de-linking of employment and housing for which the DGG argued. Although he chose the architects who planned Hellerau and designed its houses, the “Commission of Seven” included the opportunity for working-class people to be “actively involved in the designing of their environment.”<sup>79</sup>

At the same time, Hellerau was certainly designed with the kind of hierarchical structure against which Howard had argued. Mapping the existing social order onto the new space of Hellerau, through the creation of separate quarters, had the potential to limit the spirit of equality that was so important to Howard and that had attracted German reformers to his ideas. DGG reformers had argued that residents of Hellerau and other garden cities “would exercise a positive influence over the whole of society, because they would . . . come into contact with a democratic atmosphere and an aesthetically stimulating environment.”<sup>80</sup> But whatever “democratic atmosphere” might be engendered by the ownership arrangements in Hellerau might be negated by the “aesthetically stimulating” environment produced by Riemerschmid’s and Muthesius’s designs. As Walter Gropius noted tartly, Riemerschmid’s German Workshop building hid a modern factory behind “farmhouse romanticism.”<sup>81</sup> The same might be said of the entire planned community, with its architectural encouragement of a premodern “harmony”

that denied historical conflict and disguised the continuity between the social structures of the past and the present.

The practice of drawing particular kinds of connections between past and present did not just provoke controversy, however; it could also be used to help to defuse controversies over the link between form and reform. The first of these arose early, with regard to the plans for Hellerau, over whether to model the settlement on premodern forms or follow the most “modern” techniques of city planning. Karl Osthaus, a member of the *Werkbund* who would later challenge Muthesius’s dominance, warned that historical city forms in Germany had “princely, one can almost say absolutist,” roots.<sup>82</sup> But the advocates of the Garden City consoled themselves with the idea that the historical referent of the medieval “free city” of the German past was what the architects of Hellerau had in mind. Hans Kampffmeyer emphasized both the collective spirit that such cities embodied, and their democratic structure of governance:

The fundament of city life in the medieval period was comradeship, not just in the political body but also in the entirety of economic life. It was characteristic of the organization of cities that a council, rather than an individual, played the leadership role—a council that was periodically subject to a vote and therefore owed an accounting to the citizens.<sup>83</sup>

Hellerau was organized to have something like the kind of self-governance that the “free cities” had enjoyed, and its success and renown encouraged Garden City advocates to continue to associate its built environment with economic cooperation and (the potential for) participatory democracy.

### **Model Types: Planning and People**

Aesthetic reference to the past had allowed for multiple interpretations of the meaning of form in Hellerau. The premodern household and the medieval city could signal both order and freedom, depending on the observer’s perspective. The leaders of the DGG and the *Werkbund* emphasized historical referents that contained, rather than exacerbated, controversy. When it came to more contemporary forms, however, a less ambiguous relationship was understood to exist between a nascent architectural modernism and a broader questioning of the political and social status quo. This questioning was among those “diverse goals of the social reform movement” that might be satisfied in the Garden City. Hellerau might look traditional in its architectural style, and be structured traditionally in a variety of ways, but it was constructed at a moment of extraordinary change and retained the potential

to serve as a foothold for alternatives to more than just the previous paths of industrialization.

For Schmidt and Muthesius, the premodern form of the buildings was related to their deep investment in a distinctly hierarchical and comprehensive idea of “types” that hearkened back to specific historical traditions and that became increasingly controversial in the years following Hellerau’s establishment within the *Werkbund* and at Hellerau. The idea of the type was both artistic and economic—when Muthesius first announced it to the *Werkbund* in 1911, it was understood in a variety of ways. One defender of Muthesius in the ensuing debate described it as a “concept . . . the type belongs to the realm of the ‘idea,’ and individual works approach more or less successfully this idea, which is never itself reached.”<sup>84</sup> But Karl Osthaus, a strong critic of Muthesius, argued that “the idea of types . . . emerged from workers’ housing constructions” of the sort created at Hellerau, and was then transposed to things like furniture construction, “pursued with the greatest enthusiasm by the German Workshops in Dresden.”<sup>85</sup> Although Osthaus identified the economic rationale behind the creation of types—which reduced costs and increased efficiency—the application by Muthesius, Schmidt, and Riemerschmid to housing, furniture, and other objects of everyday life was more than an economic matter. Muthesius’s stated goal in his work was to “re-educate the social classes of today in solidity, truthfulness, and simple civic values.”<sup>86</sup> Schmidt wrote to Else Meissner, an economist he hired to write a book on the development of types, that “the matter of types means nothing other than replacing disorder and lack of discipline with order and discipline.”<sup>87</sup> Muthesius and Schmidt collaborated, with Neumann’s support, in developing specifically “German” types to help architecture and other applied arts “recover that universal significance” they held “in times of harmonious culture.”<sup>88</sup> The lessons these applied arts had to teach would be transmitted through the built environment and its contents, leading to “the development of a universally valid, unflinching good taste.”<sup>89</sup>

These ideas smacked of the kind of “moral education” that the Kampffmeyers had been concerned to avoid in the construction of garden cities. Within Hellerau itself, a controversy over style erupted a bit earlier than the *Werkbund*’s debate over “types” that reveals the ways in which the forms of housing there carried similar baggage. Riemerschmid believed that an effective design had as its result that

inside and out, the homes reflect the same characteristics that we would like to see in their residents: honest and upstanding, unpretentious, modest, and also proud and calm, self-aware, cheerful and loyal. When one meets a group of worker-residents standing together on one of these lanes, not in a row or

in ranks, not dressed up, not in some way displaying themselves . . . without anyone pushing themselves burdensomely forward . . . one should have to think to oneself: “yes, they suit one another, these houses and these people.”<sup>90</sup>

But a third architect, Heinrich Tessenow, had designed quite a different set of workers’ houses for Hellerau. His designs were extraordinarily simple and austere, and he employed his own interchangeable “types” in materials and fixtures that kept costs low for the most modest of accommodations there. In comparison to the village style adopted by Muthesius and Riemerschmid, these houses seemed distinctly modern and urban in their aesthetics, and Tessenow’s use of the “type” seemed oriented distinctly toward cost-saving goals. The leadership committee, which included Schmidt, Muthesius, and Riemerschmid, somewhat grudgingly allowed the five groups of houses designed by Tessenow to be constructed in Hellerau. But in 1910, when Tessenow was chosen to design the Hellerau Institute of Rhythmic Movement—itself a subject of controversy—the leadership committee, which included DGG and *Werkbund* leaders, dissolved in the face of disagreement.<sup>91</sup>

Wolf Dohrn, the Kampffmeyers and others who “identified with the garden City movement’s . . . liberative potential” supported the establishment of an institute for Jacques Dalcroze, the father of eurhythmics, at Hellerau.<sup>92</sup> Schmidt was infuriated by the classical design topped by a Taoist symbol that Tessenow had proposed and that was entirely out of synch with the style he had worked so hard to establish: “[i]t is essential that the nice, idealistic people from the leadership of the Garden City Society, who have truly unclear heads, not prevail. These men, for example, have no architectonic judgment whatsoever.”<sup>93</sup> This was more than an aesthetic matter, of course. Schmidt, Riemerschmid, and Muthesius were “practical men” who hoped that Hellerau would be recognized for its “good, bourgeois character.” Instead, complained Schmidt, the “sober and bourgeois” idea of the Garden City could be “joined to all kinds of asceticism, natural healing, vegetarianism,” and other elements of “life reform.”<sup>94</sup> A move toward freer forms of expression seemed a slippery slope for these men who had developed a comprehensive model to produce people who suited their houses, their furniture, and their conception of social order.

Both the reformers of the DGG and the leaders of the *Werkbund* used the idea of “culture,” and of the Garden City itself, which were so closely associated with form and aesthetics, to represent entire conceptions of society and the basis for its reform. They buried their different goals within that capacious term even as they used the built environment as their shared vehicle to achieve them. It was therefore inevitable that the “nice, idealistic

people from the Garden City Society” with their hopes for a socially “new land” would come into conflict with Muthesius and others who saw garden cities as suited to the “fusion of modern business, a conservative and *bürgerlich* (bourgeois) Wilhelmine social hierarchy, and healthy suburban living through neotraditional design.”<sup>95</sup> Controversies over form, aesthetics, and other matters revealed the tensions inherent in their cooperation, as those who emphasized the “free” element of the “life both orderly and free” envisioned by Howard for the Garden City came into conflict with those who emphasized the “orderly.”

That the tensions were there from the beginning, as reformers from both the DGG and the *Werkbund* looked to both Letchworth and more paternalist settlements, and were further revealed in divergent interpretations of the meaning of the architecture at Hellerau points to the difficulties of realizing two distinct, if overlapping, visions in one built environment. Building some kind of company town appealed so much to Schmidt because it articulated well with his larger vision of regenerating the German worker, along with both his production of and appreciation for quality German goods. In Meissner’s formulation, the “natural accordance of one’s individual essence and the essence of things” around one should lead to both social and cultural harmony.<sup>96</sup> The reformers of the DGG advocated a Garden City model over a more traditional, paternalist company town model specifically to avoid the industrialist’s influence over the residents that they criticized in Margaretenhöhe. But for Schmidt and his architects, the form of the Garden City they built contained within it the concept and use of types that would, ideally, allow the “essence of things” to influence the development of “individual essences.” It was not through land ownership, but through control of the built environment, that Schmidt hoped to achieve his vision.

The reformers of the DGG clearly recognized that the English model could not be imported directly into the German context and that they required the assistance of industrialists like Schmidt. The acquisition of land and the creation of communal structures would proceed differently than they had in Letchworth, but the settlement would benefit from a greater chance of success and could serve as a new kind of model. It was in their interest to ignore the similarities that Hellerau shared with a more paternalistic company town and to identify with their preferred historical precedents when they evaluated the form that Hellerau took. But the meaning of form was far less ambiguous for those with a greater influence—the architects and the founding industrialist—on the development of Hellerau’s built environment. In accepting the architectural and spatial ordering of Hellerau, the DGG reformers acquiesced to a less explicit, but perhaps just as effective, model

of the subordination of workers' interests found in the company towns they criticized.

## Notes

1. For a general explanation of the "social question" and social reform, see Rüdiger vom Bruch, "Bürgerliche Sozialreform im deutschen Kaiserreich," in *Weder Kommunismus noch Kapitalismus: Bürgerliche Sozialreform in Deutschland vom Vormärz bis zur Ära Adenauer*, ed. R. vom Bruch (Munich: Verlag CH Beck, 1985), 61–118; for analyses of the new ground it opened up for bourgeois activity, see both Kevin Repp, *Reformers, Critics, and the Paths of German Modernity: Anti-politics and the Search for Alternatives, 1890–1914* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), and George Steinmetz, *Regulating the Social: The Welfare State and Local Politics in Imperial Germany* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993). On the problems of urban life as a point of departure for social reform, see Andrew Lees, *Cities, Sin and Social Reform in Imperial Germany* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2002). On the gendered elements of social reform, especially in relation to the women industrial workers who were seen as emblematic of the problems with industrialization, and working-class family life, see Kathleen Canning, *Languages of Labor and Gender: Female Factory Work in Germany, 1850–1914* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996).
2. The literature on the Garden City movement is varied and international in scope. For broad overviews, see Stanley Buder, *Visionaries and Planners: The Garden City Movement and the Modern Community* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), and Stephen Ward, ed., *The Garden City: Past, Present and Future* (Abingdon, England: Taylor and Francis, 1992). More recent work places the Garden City movement and model within the history of environmentally conscious urban planning; see, for example, Kermit Parsons and David Schuyler, eds., *From Garden City to Green City: The Legacy of Ebenezer Howard* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002). The question of domesticity and the gendered order that is treated as part of this chapter is also beginning to receive attention in the literature on the Garden City; see, for example, Cheryl Buckley, "Modernity, Tradition, and the Design of the Industrial Village of Dormantown, 1917–1923," *Journal of Design History* 23, 1 (March 2010): 21–41. The German Garden City movement has also generated significant scholarly interest. See, for example, Kristiana Hartmann, *Deutsche Gartenstadtbewegung: Kulturpolitik und Gesellschaftsreform* (Munich: Heinz Moos, 1976), as well as her somewhat misleadingly titled chapter, coauthored with Franziska Bollerey, "A Patriarchal Utopia: The Garden City and Housing Reform in Germany at the Turn of the Century," in *The Rise of Modern Urban Planning, 1800–1914*, ed. Anthony Sutcliffe (London: Mansell, 1980), 135–65. Another general and very useful work is Thomas Krückemeyer, *Gartenstadt*



- als Reformmodell: Siedlungskonzeption zwischen Utopie und Wirklichkeit* (Siegen: Carl Bösch Verlag, 1997). On Hellerau in particular, see Krückemeyer's chapter "Gartenstädtische Praxis," 78–92, as well as Michael Fasshauer, *Das Phänomen Hellerau: Die Geschichte der Gartenstadt* (Dresden: Hellerau Verlag, 1997); Klaus-Peter Arnold, *Vom Sofakissen zum Städtebau: die Geschichte der deutschen Werkstätten und der Gartenstadt Hellerau* (Dresden: Verlag der Kunst, 2001); and Thomas Nitschke, *Grundlegende Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Gartenstadt Hellerau; Band 1: "Die Gründerjahre"* (Leipzig: Engelsdorfer Verlag, 2005). The German Garden City movement is also included in other work on urban planning, the Wilhelmine reform milieu, and the *Werkbund*. See, for example, Joan Campbell, *The German Werkbund: The Politics of Reform in the Applied Arts* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978), 19–21 and 47; Repp, *Reformers*; and John V. Maciuika, *Before the Bauhaus: Architecture, Politics, and the German State, 1890–1920* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 217–48. Several of these works are cited below.
3. Andrew Herod, "Social Engineering through Spatial Engineering," in *Company Towns in the Americas: Landscape, Power, and Working-Class Communities*, ed. Oliver Dinius and Angela Vergara (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011), 21.
  4. See Maciuika, *Before the Bauhaus*, and Repp, *Reformers*, for representative examples of these respective approaches.
  5. Buckley, "Modernity, Tradition, and the Design of the Industrial Village," 22–3.
  6. See Brian Ladd, *Urban Planning and Civic Order in Germany, 1860–1914* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), 139–85.
  7. *Ibid.*, 143.
  8. See, for example, the literature cited in J. Brüggemeier, L. Niethammer: "Schlafgänger, Schnapskasinos und schwerindustrielle Kolonie," in *Fabrik – Familie – Feiernabend. Beiträge zur Sozialgeschichte im Industriezeitalter*, ed. Jürgen Reulecke and Wolhard Weber (Wuppertal: Peter Hammer, 1978), 135–75.
  9. For example, an early Executive Committee of the German Garden City Association (DGG) included the categories of "Economists and Social Reformers, Master Builders, Painters, Writers, Medical Doctors and Hygiene Officers, and Representatives of Industry and Agriculture," and contained the names of many well-known Wilhelmine figures; see "Aus der Gartenstadtbewegung: Deutschland," in *Gartenstadt. Mitteilungen der deutschen Gartenstadt Gesellschaft Zugleich ständige Beilage der Zeitschrift "Hohe Warte"* 1 Jg. (1907), no. 1, 4–5. Contributors to this publication, which was later established independently of *Hohe Warte*, also included such well-known reformers as Marie Baum and Fritz Staudinger (see Marie Baum, "Mutter, Kind und Wohnung," *Gartenstadt. Mitteilungen der deutschen Gartenstadt Gesellschaft Zugleich ständige Beilage der Zeitschrift "Hohe Warte"* 2 Jg. (1908), no. 5, 33–4; Fritz Staudinger, "Gartenstadt und Genossenschaft," *Gartenstadt. Mitteilungen der deutschen Gartenstadt Gesellschaft* 3 Jg. (1909), H. 2, 20–3). Other supporters of the establishment of garden cities published in non-DGG organs associated with

- the reform movement, such as *Neue Bahnen*, *Das Rote Kreuz*, *Der Städtebau*, *Sozialistische Monatshefte*, and *Soziale Praxis*.
10. The best English-language source on the “historical economists” who built the famous *Verein für Sozialpolitik* (Association for Social Policy) and were leaders in the social reform movement is Erik Grimmer-Solem, *The Rise of Historical Economics and Social Reform in Germany, 1864–1894* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003). See also Repp, *Reformers*, and Frederic Schwartz, *The Werkbund: Design Theory and Mass Culture before the First World War* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996), on the relationship between the “historical economists” and other reformers in the Garden City movement and the *Werkbund*.
  11. Schwartz, *The Werkbund*, 14. On pages 14–17 of this text, Schwartz offers a concise and lucid discussion of the meaning of “culture” for Wilhelmine reformers.
  12. The Garden City idea was developed around the same time that bourgeois observation of the working-class world revealed alarming truths about the dark side of the economic development that had produced the former’s prosperity. Cities became a special site of concern for reformers in England, Germany, and elsewhere. On England see, for example, Judith Walkowitz’s *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), chap. 1 (15–40), on urban spectatorship and the discourses of danger and degeneration associated with working-class districts and life, and Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York: Routledge, 1995), chap. 2 (75–131), on the growing surveillance and supervision of the working class by bourgeois actors in England. On the German side, see Lees, *Cities, Sin and Social Reform*, as well as Anthony McElligott, *The German Urban Experience, 1900–1945: Modernity and Crisis* (London: Routledge, 2001).
  13. Ebenezer Howard, *Garden Cities of To-Morrow, Being a Second Edition of To-Morrow, a Peaceful Path to Real Reform* (London: Swan Sonnenschein and Co., 1902), 21.
  14. *Ibid.*
  15. *Ibid.*, 110.
  16. Krückemeyer, *Gartenstadt als Reformmodell*, 37.
  17. Hans Kampffmeyer, *Die Gartenstadtbewegung*, 2nd ed. (Leipzig: Teubner, 1913), 19–20.
  18. *Ibid.*, 19.
  19. The architecture at Port Sunlight was actually quite varied, but the settlement was intended to provide a “showcase” of sorts for a set of historical styles. On Port Sunlight’s history and character, see David Jeremy, “The Enlightened Paternalist in Action: William Hesketh Lever at Port Sunlight Before 1914,” *Business History* 33, 1 (1990): 58–81.
  20. The subject of financing takes up most of the introductory section in Hans Kampffmeyer’s article for the important economics journal the *Jahrbuch*

- für *Nationalökonomie und Statistik*. See idem, "Die Gartenstadtbewegung," *Jahrbuch für Nationalökonomie und Statistik, Dritte Folge* 36 (1908): 577–609.
21. Ladd, *Urban Planning and Civic Order*, 141.
  22. Bernhard Kampffmeyer, "Zur Gartenstadtbewegung in Deutschland," foreword to E. Howard, *Gartenstadt in Sicht* (Jena: Eugen Diederichs), not paginated.
  23. See Nitschke, *Grundlegende Untersuchungen*, 41.
  24. Krückemeyer, *Gartenstadt als Reformmodell*, 43–4.
  25. This problem was acknowledged occasionally in the literature; see, for example: Unnamed author, "Der Zug der Industrie aufs Land: Eine Innenkolonisation," *Flugschrift 5 der Deutschen Gartenstadt-Gesellschaft* (Deutsche Gartenstadt-Gesellschaft: Schlachtensee bei Berlin, 1904), 5–9; B. Wehl, "Warum gibt es noch Keine Gartenstadt bei Berlin?" *Der Städtebau* 9 Jg. (1912), H. 3, 33–4; and unnamed author, "Die Förderung der Gartenstadtbewegung durch die Besitzer großer Vermögen," *Gartenstadt. Mitteilungen der deutschen Gartenstadt Gesellschaft* 8 Jg. (1914), H. 2, 122–5.
  26. The report on Port Sunlight appeared as "Das Fabrikdorf Port Sunlight bei Liverpool," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 19 (1899): 133–6 and 146–8.
  27. Maciuika, *Before the Bauhaus*, 223.
  28. Kampffmeyer, *Die Gartenstadtbewegung*, 11; 13.
  29. Bollerey and Hartmann, "A Patriarchal Utopia," 147.
  30. Wilhelm Kley, *Bei Krupp: Eine sozialpolitische Reiseskizze unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Arbeiterwohnungsfürsorge* (Leipzig: Duncker und Humblot, 1899), 45–6.
  31. Nitschke, *Grundlegende Untersuchungen*, 41 and 45.
  32. Hanna Glinzer, "Neue Wohnstätten," *Neue Bahnen* 19 (1909): 148. See also Bollerey and Hartmann, "Patriarchal Utopia," 150.
  33. Unnamed author, *Das Eigenhaus in Hellerau*, 7.
  34. Heinrich Herkner, "Wohnungsfrage und Bebauungsplan," *Städtebauliche Vorträge aus dem Seminar für Städtebau an der königlichen technischen Hochschule zu Berlin, I. Vortragszyklus* (1908), H. V, 10.
  35. *Ibid.*
  36. For example, Bernhard Kampffmeyer called the Garden City movement an answer to the "housing question," and particularly to the worker's housing question, in "Zur Entwicklung der Gartenstadtbewegung," *Konsumgenossenschaftliche Rundschau* Jg. 3 (1906), Bd. 50, 1368–9. The unnamed author of *Das Eigenhaus in Hellerau* called the founding of the *Gartenstadt Hellerau* an explicit effort at *Wohnungsreform* (unnamed author, *Das Eigenhaus in Hellerau* [Hellerau: Verlag der Gartenstadt, 1913]), 6.
  37. *Ibid.*, 5.
  38. Amtmann Thiel, in "Die Rechtsformen zur dauernden Sicherung der Gemeinnützigkeit von Gartenstadtsiedlungen," *Gartenstadt. Mitteilungen der deutschen Gartenstadtgesellschaft* 7 Jg., H. 2 (1913): 26.
  39. *Ibid.*, 25.

40. Heinrich Lotz, "Einfamilienhaussiedlungen," *Gartenstadt. Mitteilungen der deutschen Gartenstadtgesellschaft* 3 Jg. (1909), H. 3, 33.
41. Thiel, "Die Rechtsformen," 26.
42. Dr. Max Gruber, "Kolonisation in der Heimat," *Gartenstadt: Mitteilungen der deutschen Gartenstadt Gesellschaft Zugleich ständige Beilage der Zeitschrift "Hohe Warte"* 2 Jg. (1908), Nr. 3, 17.
43. W. v. Gizycki, "Der Wert des Hausgartens für die Volksgesundheit," *Gartenstadt. Mitteilungen der deutschen Gartenstadtgesellschaft* 5 Jg. (1911), H. 10, 139.
44. Unnamed author, "Vom Garten in Gartenstädten," *Gartenstadt. Mitteilungen der deutschen Gartenstadtgesellschaft* 5 Jg. (1911), H. 12, 174.
45. See Albert Kohn, "Arbeiterversicherung und Gartenstadt," *Gartenstadt: Mitteilungen der deutschen Gartenstadtgesellschaft* 5 Jg. (1911), H. 6, 68–72.
46. Gruber, "Kolonisation in der Heimat," 18.
47. Paul Schlegel, "Erfahrungen aus der Genossenschaftspraxis," *Gartenstadt: Mitteilungen der deutschen Gartenstadtgesellschaft* 5 Jg. (1911), H. 2, 15–6.
48. Adalbert Kelm, "Die volkswirtschaftliche Überlegenheit von Einfamilienhaus mit Garten gegenüber dem Etagenhaus," *Gartenstadt: Mitteilungen der deutschen Gartenstadtgesellschaft* 7 Jg., H. 7 (1913): 126.
49. Harry Maasz, "Zwei Reihengärten," *Gartenstadt: Mitteilungen der deutschen Gartenstadtgesellschaft* 6 Jg. (1912), H. 6, 102.
50. Unnamed author ("eine Arbeiterfrau"), "Ein Wort an die Frauen!" *Gartenstadt: Mitteilungen der deutschen Gartenstadtgesellschaft* 7 Jg. (1913), H. 10, 208.
51. Bernhard Kampffmeyer, "Zu den Baukosten des Kleinhauses," *Gartenstadt: Mitteilungen der deutschen Gartenstadtgesellschaft* 6 Jg. (1912), H. 2, 22.
52. Leberecht Migge, "Der Garten und die Frauen," *Gartenstadt: Mitteilungen der deutschen Gartenstadtgesellschaft* 8 Jg. (1914), H. 1, 8.
53. *Ibid.*
54. Käthe Schirmacher, "Die Rückkehr auf's Land," *Centralblatt des Bundes Deutscher Frauenvereine* 6 Jg. (September 11, 1904), 86.
55. Leberecht Migge, "Der Garten und die Frauen," 9.
56. Max Gruber, "Kolonisation in der Heimat," 17.
57. *Ibid.*
58. These lines come from a poem titled "Die Gronauer Wald Genossenschaft!" by Emmy Sünder, printed in *Gartenstadt: Mitteilungen der deutschen Gartenstadtgesellschaft* 7 Jg. (1913), H. 10, 211; an excerpt from the same poem is reproduced in Kruckemeyer, *Gartenstadt als Reformmodell*, 78.
59. Joan Campbell, *The German Werkbund: The Politics of Reform in the Applied Art* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978), 18.
60. Campbell, *The German Werkbund*, 10; the original citation is from Fritz Schumacher, "Die Wiedereroberung harmonischer Kultur," *Kunstwart* XXI (January 1908), 135–8. On the *Werkbund's* founding and history, see also Schwartz, *The Werkbund*, and Maciuika, *Before the Bauhaus*. Many figures associated later with the Bauhaus (including Walter Gropius and Mies van der Rohe) were first involved with the *Werkbund*.

61. See Maciuika, *Before the Bauhaus*, 220; Campbell, *The German Werkbund*, 18.
62. Arnold, *Vom Sofakissen zum Städtebau*, 42.
63. Maciuika, *Before the Bauhaus*, 220.
64. Wolf Dohrn, *Die Gartenstadt Hellerau: Ein Bericht von Wolf Dohrn* (Jena: Eugen Diederichs, 1908), 13.
65. Nitschke, *Grundlegende Untersuchungen*, 56–7.
66. Maciuika, *Before the Bauhaus*, 236.
67. *Ibid.*, 221. This model of separate quarters is very similar to those described by Ball for Portuguese colonial towns, and by Torres and Borges with reference to Patagonia, both in this volume.
68. See Maciuika, *Before the Bauhaus*, chap. 5 (171–216), in particular, on Muthesius's successes and failures.
69. *Ibid.*, 221.
70. *Ibid.*, 224.
71. Unnamed author, *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration* 27 (1910/11), 455, cited in Krückemeyer, *Gartenstadt als Reformmodell*, 82.
72. Unnamed author, *Gartenstadt Hellerau: ein Bericht über den Zweck, die Organisation, die Ansiedlungs-Bedingungen, die bisherigen Erfolge und die Ziele* (Hellerau-bei-Dresden: Verlag der Gartenstadt Hellerau, 1911), 22–31.
73. Kampffmeyer, "Die Gartenstadtbewegung," 596.
74. Wolf Dohrn, "Gartenstadt Hellerau, Bericht von Wolf Dohrn zur Jahresversammlung der deutschen Gartenstadtgesellschaft," *Die Gartenstadt* 3, 1 (1909): 5–6.
75. Hermann Muthesius, "Die Gartenstadt Hellerau," undated and unpaginated manuscript (Richard Riemerschmid papers), cited in Hartmann, *Deutsche Gartenstadtbewegung*, 49.
76. Hans Kampffmeyer, "Die Gartenstadtbewegung," 599.
77. Krückemeyer, *Gartenstadt als Reformmodell*, 81; Bollerey and Hartmann, "A Patriarchal Utopia," 152.
78. *Die Gartenstadt*, the official organ of the DGG, was filled with reports on Hellerau and its significance as a model for future German garden cities, and other articles on garden cities in non-DGG publications nearly always referred to Hellerau after 1908.
79. Bollerey and Hartmann, "A Patriarchal Utopia," 150.
80. *Ibid.*
81. Letter from Walter Gropius to Karl Ernst Osthaus, 1912, cited and translated in Maciuika, *Before the Bauhaus*, 237.
82. Cited in Hartmann, *Deutsche Gartenstadtbewegung*, 83.
83. *Ibid.*
84. Walter Riezler, cited and translated in Schwartz, *The Werkbund*, 122.
85. *Ibid.*, 123.
86. Hermann Muthesius, "Die Bedeutung des Kunstgewerbes," *Dekorative Kunst* 15 (1907): 184, cited and translated in Maciuika, *Before the Bauhaus*, 237–8.

87. Letter from Karl Schmidt to Else Meissner, March 10, 1916, cited and translated in Schwartz, *The Werkbund*, 127. Meissner's book appeared in 1918 as *Der Wille Zum Typus* (Jena: Eugen Diederichs Verlag).
88. Muthesius, cited and translated in Schwartz, *The Werkbund*, 122.
89. *Ibid.*, 126.
90. Cited and translated in Maciuika, *Before the Bauhaus*, 236.
91. See Maciuika, *Before the Bauhaus*, 245–7, on this controversy.
92. *Ibid.*, 246.
93. Cited and translated in *ibid.*
94. Karl Schmidt, in *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration*, Bd. 17 (1910/11): 447, cited in Krückemeyer, *Gartenstadt als Reformmodell*, 87–8.
95. Maciuika, *Before the Bauhaus*, 246.
96. Meissner, *Der Wille zum Typus*, 63.

## CHAPTER 3

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# From Colonial Company Town to Industrial City: The South Manchuria Railway Company in Fushun, China

*Limin Teh*

In his 1970 essay on company towns, the geographer J. Douglas Porteous distinguishes between two types of company towns: extractive and model. Extractive company towns, Porteous explains, are “essentially temporary pioneering device[s]” for exploiting natural resources such as coal and timber, while model company towns are built to reflect employers’ philanthropic desires or utopian visions.<sup>1</sup> Whatever the impetus for their creation, Porteous’s typology implies that the existence of company towns is intrinsically linked to the company or natural resource, and hence decline in the company or the availability of natural resources usually results in their demise. From the ghost towns dotting the Gold Rush Trail in California to the abandoned ruins of Henry Ford’s company town in the Amazon, countless examples of company towns affirm this trend.<sup>2</sup> However, some company towns escape this pattern of decline. Fushun, presently an industrial city in China’s Liaoning Province, is one such case.

In the first half of the twentieth century, Fushun transformed itself from an extractive company town dominated by coal mining to an industrial city with a permanent urban population engaged in production of various capital goods. The primary agent of this transformation was the South Manchuria Railway Company (SMR), a semi-official agency of the Japanese government that functioned as the colonial state in Fushun. Marcelo Borges and Susana Torres note in their historiographical essay in this volume that there are many

instances of colonial states or colonial companies establishing extractive company towns centered on mining or agriculture.<sup>3</sup> The difference lies in the fact that the Japanese colonial state played a central role in both the formation and development of Fushun. Accordingly, the case of Fushun presents a possible third category to Porteous's taxonomy: a colonial company town shaped by developmental rather than extractive motivations. And yet, despite Fushun's rapid and sustained development, its economic, social, and urban structures illustrate unequal power relations rooted in Japanese colonialism, and not the paternalism or utopianism of the model company town.

Two related issues drive this analysis of Fushun's transformation during the Japanese colonial period. The first issue concerns the neglected history of industrial activity in modern China, especially in the form of company towns. Regardless of the character it takes, the company town is an urban form that is native to an industrializing or industrialized economy. Only an economy with a high degree of specialization and division of labor can sustain a town whose existence is devoted solely to either the extraction of natural resources or the manufacture of one commodity. Given these criteria, it is difficult to find references to company towns in the social and economic history of early-twentieth-century China. For many scholars and observers of China in the West, the existence of Chinese company towns during this period amounts to a historical anachronism, since the long-held view is that China was primarily an agrarian society with little market or industrial activity. The enduring popularity of Pearl S. Buck's novel *The Good Earth* (1931) demonstrates this view. This prevailing narrative is changing with the publication of research on China's market towns and rural industries. Examples of such scholarship include the early work of G. William Skinner on market towns in rural Sichuan Province, and more recently Qin Shao's work on the political reformer and pioneering industrialist Zhang Jian's efforts to create a model factory community in Nantong.<sup>4</sup>

The second issue that informs this study pertains to the lack of scholarship on the role of colonialism in China's modern history of industrialization and urbanization. As noted above, colonialism—whether extractive or developmental—produced company towns, and colonial company towns crowded northeast China's urban landscape in the first half of the twentieth century.<sup>5</sup> Among them was Fushun. These company towns were products of Russian and later Japanese colonial expansion into the region. For Chinese scholars, it is likely that the colonial origin of these towns contradicts the nationalist narrative that emphasizes the party-state's contribution to China's industrialization and urbanization to the exclusion of other sources. This lacuna in the literature is only beginning to be addressed with the publication of several works on the Russian colonial origins of Harbin.<sup>6</sup>



This chapter builds on these new works on company towns in China and their colonial origins to illuminate the developmental yet exploitative aspects of a colonial company town. The first section discusses the features of Japanese colonialism and the SMR as a vehicle of Japanese colonialism. The second examines the SMR's role in the industrial development of Fushun. Finally, the third and fourth sections analyze the colliery's dual wage structure and the city's urban space as expressions of the unequal labor-capital relations characteristic of colonial development.

### Japanese Imperialism and the SMR

Historical records place the origins of Fushun in the fourteenth century as a military garrison established to protect the northern frontier of the Ming Dynasty from marauding “barbarians.” When these “barbarians” conquered China and established the Qing Dynasty in 1644, Fushun's strategic importance waned. Its descent into historical oblivion was reversed when coal mining began in 1901. Coal mining brought about unprecedented changes: Fushun's population grew exponentially, new roads and a railway line connected it to the rest of Northeast China, or Manchuria, and the Qing state elevated its administrative level to county seat in 1904.<sup>7</sup> The most significant change occurred in 1905. The 1904–1905 Russo-Japanese War, fought largely in the vicinity of Fushun, resulted in Russia's unexpected defeat. As the defeated party, Russia ceded control of its assets in Manchuria, from railroads to mining claims, to Japan. Fushun was among the ceded mining claims and came under Japanese control from 1906 to 1945. During this period, Japan managed the Fushun colliery through the SMR, a semigovernmental agency specially created to administer its newly acquired war booty. Under SMR management, Fushun became more than an extractive company town. By the 1930s, its industrial sector expanded to include chemical and steel manufacturing and oil shale refining. Moreover, its urban residents over time treated Fushun as their permanent place of residence. As more families settled in Fushun, the demand for schools increased, and the number of schools and variety of educational institutions grew.

For an extractive company town to avoid the fate of becoming a ghost town, its economic base must be diversified and integrated into larger transportation networks for better access to other markets. The SMR provided both of these conditions for Fushun. The beginning of oil shale refining in Fushun in 1926 marked an important step in diversifying its economy. In fact, the discovery of oil shale in Fushun coal deposits so interested the SMR that it made heavy investments in developing oil shale refining technology. Furthermore, because the SMR built railroad lines that crisscrossed the

entire region and operated shipping lines that linked Manchuria to Japan, Korea, and coastal Chinese cities, oil and coal from Fushun had guaranteed markets outside of Manchuria. Consequently, because of the SMR's investments in Fushun's industrial growth, Fushun escaped the pattern of decline common to extractive company towns. Japanese colonialism made possible Fushun's economic growth, and the success of Fushun's transformation was, concurrently, an indicator of the success of Japanese colonialism in Manchuria.

In many ways, the history of Japanese-controlled Fushun captures the complex and contradictory nature of Japanese colonialism. At the same time that Japanese colonial rule relied on violence and discrimination in Fushun in particular and East Asia in general, it also privileged the industrial development of local economies. Japanese colonial rule was more than the naked pillaging of natural resources and brutal exploitation of local society; it facilitated the modernization of local economies. Bruce Cumings calls attention to the developmental aspect of Japanese colonial governmentality in an essay comparing Japanese colonialism in Korea and Taiwan, and French colonialism in Vietnam.<sup>8</sup> Cumings observes that the French contented themselves with the level of surplus extracted from Vietnam without investments commensurable to their Japanese counterparts. This colonial policy resulted in an undeveloped Vietnamese economy and an illiterate population when the French withdrew from Vietnam. Cumings further argues that the Japanese colonial state, unlike the French colonial state in Vietnam, invested heavily in industrializing the Korean and Taiwanese economies largely by providing low-cost credit to local industrialists, and this investment resulted in the flourishing of heavy industries dominated by monopolies in Korea and light industries dominated by small, family enterprises in Taiwan. Cumings contends that the Japanese colonial state further contributed to the industrialization process through its program of mass education and a surveillance system that ultimately produced an educated yet disciplined labor force. In other words, the Japanese colonial state was vital to the creation of industries in Korea and Taiwan by providing cheap loans and cultivating and disciplining workers in both colonies.

The SMR played the role of colonial state in promoting industrial development in Manchuria, where a formal Japanese colony never existed.<sup>9</sup> Although the SMR was established as a joint-stock company whose main purpose was the management of railways and mining operations, it was the chief conduit for conveying Japanese investments to Manchuria. The SMR channeled Japanese capital investment to Manchuria so successfully that it made Japan the leading foreign investor for all of China from 1931 to

1936. In 1931, total Japanese investments in Manchuria, which were largely funneled through the SMR, amounted to \$850 million. In contrast, Russia's investments in Manchuria and England's direct investment in China reached \$295 million and \$569 million, respectively.<sup>10</sup> Through the SMR, Japanese investments were translated into the expansion and centralization of railways and construction of industrial centers in towns like Fushun.<sup>11</sup>

After the Japanese Kwantung Army invaded the region in 1931 and created the Manchukuo puppet regime in 1932, the Japanese state reorganized the SMR and transferred control of several of its departments to the Manchukuo state. This reorganization merely reflected the SMR's integration into the larger Manchukuo state apparatus, which replaced the SMR as the instrument of Japanese imperialism. In spite of this reorganization, the SMR remained a key participant in the region's economy. In the years 1932–45, the reorganized SMR retained supervision of its railway service, its research department, which was charged with converting the region's economy into a centralized planned economy, and some of its non-railway operations, including the Fushun colliery. Thus, Fushun was under SMR control for an uninterrupted period of almost forty years. Both before and after its reorganization, the SMR represented the expansion of Japanese colonialism in the region, even if it did not possess the attributes of a state, namely monopoly over the use of armed force and control over contiguous territories.

Given that the SMR was an instrument of Japanese colonialism, it was the search for natural resources in Manchuria and inroads into the Chinese market, not an altruistic desire to lift the region from "backwardness," that drove SMR's investments in the region. Consequently, the unequal power relations of Japanese colonialism shaped the character of industrial development in the region. In Fushun, the clearest expressions of colonial power relations were the Fushun colliery's dual wage structure and the construction of urban space. Under the dual wage structure, Japanese workers were paid considerably more than Chinese workers for doing the same job. In the colonial urban space, the city was racially segregated such that Japanese and Chinese residents rarely intermingled as equals. These by-products of Fushun's rapid development—the wage structure and the urban space—suggest that the dividends of development were not distributed equally, with Japanese workers and other urban residents enjoying a disproportionately larger share and the majority of Chinese workers excluded entirely. Hence the rapid industrial development that the SMR sponsored might have saved Fushun from historical oblivion, but this was done at the expense of Chinese workers.

### Fushun under the SMR

From the time of its creation, the SMR was a hybrid private-state institution that bore characteristics of a for-profit corporation and a state agency. The conditions of its founding partially explain the ostensibly paradoxical nature of the SMR. As noted above, the Japanese state established the SMR for the purpose of rebuilding and managing Russian assets ceded to Japan as a result of Russia's defeat in the 1904–05 Russo-Japanese War. These assets included railway lines, a port in Dairen, coal mines in Fushun and Yantai, and territories attached to the railway, ports, and coal mines. Perhaps to ensure that the SMR would always be accountable to the Japanese state, its head office was located in Tokyo, its board of directors was appointed by the Japanese state, and its president reported directly to the Japanese premier.<sup>12</sup> The first president selected by the SMR board was Gotō Shimpei, a civil servant experienced in managing a colonial bureaucracy as the former director of Civil Administration of Japanese Taiwan. Although the Japanese state controlled the company's management and civil servants dominated the company's management personnel, the SMR was not a state enterprise, because the Japanese state did not have complete ownership of the company.

The SMR was created as a joint-stock company, with half of the shares held by the Japanese state and the other half by the Japanese public.<sup>13</sup> As a company with publicly traded shares, the SMR was accountable to its public shareholders for its financial performance, and profits mattered. Indeed, the SMR proved profitable: between 1907 and 1933, its profit margin grew by 610 percent. During these years of operation, it never posted a loss and its shareholders consistently received annual dividends of at least 6 percent.<sup>14</sup> According to the historian Ramon Myers, the SMR enjoyed large profits because of management practices that included promoting the “ethos of hard work and efficiency,” monitoring the costs of operation, and being willing to invest in advanced technology.<sup>15</sup> The railway division exemplified these practices, earning the highest profits for the SMR. As it rebuilt railway lines inherited from Russia, the SMR expanded its existing railway service to encompass all of south Manchuria, imported the highest-quality rolling stock from the United States, and made sure its trains stayed on schedule. Consequently, the SMR rail service dominated passenger and freight transportation in south Manchuria.<sup>16</sup>

The fact that the SMR was a highly profitable company hardly compromised or contradicted its function as a vehicle of Japanese imperialism in Manchuria. Rather, the two goals of making profits and colonization were complementary, again exemplified by the SMR's railway business. As Yoshihisa Tak Matsusaka explains, railways are inherently “instrument[s]

of territorial power” since “railways managed as business enterprises have often become major factors in the power structure of a regional community, playing a part in the management of a territory and shaping its future.”<sup>17</sup> In the case of the SMR, its railways formed the backbone of the growing Manchurian economy: the extensive network of SMR railways facilitated the movement of goods and labor, linking producers to markets and laborers to jobs.

The SMR also possessed tremendous political power even before Japan occupied the region in 1931. The Qing state granted the SMR extraterritorial rights in Fushun in accordance with the 1905 Treaty of Portsmouth and at the same time sought to enhance its presence in Fushun by upgrading the local county government status and setting up a county-level court.<sup>18</sup> Following the dissolution of the Qing state in 1911, the warlord Zhang Zuolin seized control over Manchuria and established his government in Shenyang. Later, he gave allegiance to the Nationalist regime in Nanjing, thereby acknowledging the Nationalist state as China’s central government. Even under Zhang, the Chinese state in Fushun continued to expand its presence, though its functions remained constrained by extraterritorial rights that the SMR continued to enjoy. Despite this increased Chinese presence, the SMR behaved as the *de facto* state, particularly in its company towns. It did this in two ways. First, as with Japan’s colonial administration in Korea and Taiwan, the SMR was the main and sometimes sole financier of development in the industrial sector of these towns. Under SMR management, production output at Fushun rose steadily, peaking at 7.4 million tons in 1929 and 9.8 million tons in 1937, and declining after 1937. Its output in the 1930s accounted for a quarter of China’s gross output.<sup>19</sup> To achieve these tremendous output figures, the SMR systematically purchased land from surrounding villages, increased the number of working pits, and expanded existing pits.<sup>20</sup> These statistics also reflect the amount of capital that the SMR invested in Fushun, primarily in technology and machinery.<sup>21</sup> Second, the SMR provided social services such as education, public sanitation, and road building, services usually provided by the modern state. These attributes of a developmental state, though colonial in nature, are illustrated in the history of Fushun under SMR control.

When SMR staff first arrived in Fushun in 1906 their first task was the survey of the coal seam and the lands surrounding the coalfields. After completing its survey of coal deposits in 1907, one of its first executive decisions was to invite Takeichirō Matsuda, the director of Mitsubishi’s Namazuta Coal Mine, to head the mine and oversee its mechanization. There were two stages to the mechanization process. In the first stage (1907–12), the focus was to mechanize the existing pits—Qianjinzhai, Yangbaibao, and Laohutai—which involved installation of hoists and pumps, construction of

an electric power plant, and adoption of the newer coal-pillar method of extraction.<sup>22</sup> In the second stage (1912–27), the focal points were replacing gas engines by electric-powered engines and introducing the fine-sand-filling method.<sup>23</sup> In the meantime, new pits were opened and mechanization continued. By 1915, almost all aspects of coal extraction—from pumping water and ventilation to filling in excavated sites with fine sand—were mechanized, and six electric generators provided electric power for the machinery. The mechanization of actual extraction work took place in 1922 with the introduction of pneumatic drills. Until the outbreak of the Pacific War (1941–45), new tools and technology, particularly for coal cutting and transportation, were constantly integrated into the production process.<sup>24</sup>

In addition to mechanizing the mine, Japanese management was also interested in making Fushun self-sufficient. This goal was achieved by setting up factories that produced tools, equipments, and machinery used in the coal extraction process. For instance, in 1913, a lathe plant, a boiler-manufacturing plant, and an electrical machinery and appliance plant were established, and in 1927, a dump truck manufacturing plant was started. Concurrent with the steady expansion of factories was the proliferation of auxiliary industries in Fushun. Examples of auxiliary industries included iron, steel, and chemical production. Iron and steel plants were set up in 1913, 1927, and 1937, and an ammonium nitrate plant in 1928.<sup>25</sup>

The most important of the auxiliary industries was distillation of oil shale into gasoline. The distillation process produced by-products such as crude oil wax and ammonium sulfate, which were also sold as commodities. When it discovered oil shale in Fushun's coal deposits, the SMR started research on oil shale distillation but achieved success only after forming a partnership with the Japanese Navy, which was on its way to becoming one of Japan's major petroleum consumers.<sup>26</sup> With the navy's assistance, the SMR installed a dry-distillation oven that processed 40 tons of oil shale on its first trial, run in October 1926. Following this success, the SMR built its first oil shale refining plants in Fushun in 1928. In 1928, its first year of full operation, the first plant processed about 700,000 tons of oil shale.<sup>27</sup> Three more plants were built in 1934 and 1936, thereby increasing total capacity to over 2 million tons.<sup>28</sup> By 1943, Fushun oil shale accounted for over 70 percent of oil production in Japanese-controlled areas of China.<sup>29</sup>

The expansion of industries and diversification of Fushun's economy accelerated in the Manchukuo era (1932–45). The realities of a new regional order emerging in East Asia drove Fushun's development. Events in the early 1930s marked Japan's increasing isolation from world politics and global trade—a decline in global trade associated with Great Depression-era protectionist policies, and Japan's departure from the League of Nations following its

censure of Japan's invasion of Manchuria. Given the international climate, the idea of creating a regional economic bloc consisting of Japan and its colonies, Manchukuo, and China took hold among Japanese political and military elites. Within this new economic order, Manchukuo was envisioned as the main supplier of natural resources, food, and industrial goods to Japan. This vision was to be realized through the implementation of two Five-Year Plans (1932–36, 1936–42), in which the Manchukuo state undertook central planning of the economy, and companies within each industry consolidated into a single corporation. Large injection of financial investments in industries accompanied this structural reorganization of Manchukuo's economy. This shift in economic priorities created ripe conditions for Fushun's growth.

Because of these policies, during the Manchukuo era Fushun transitioned from a coal mining center into a thriving industrial city. The rapid expansion of coal production and increase in branch industries led to growth in secondary industries such as service and construction. In 1938, companies not controlled by SMR that had offices in the city of Fushun included branch offices of the Central Bank and the Xingye Bank, Fushun Paper Manufacturing Joint-Stock Company, Fushun Printing Joint-Stock Company, Nanchang Kiln Industry Joint-Stock Company, Fushun Cement Joint-Stock Company, Fushun Construction Joint-Stock Company, and East Asia Property Joint-Stock Company.

As the city's economy grew, government and other public services grew correspondingly, especially under the Manchukuo government. By 1938, the Manchukuo government had set up in Fushun its municipal and county offices, thirty-two police stations, seven post offices, local and district courts, telephone and telegraph bureaus, and a farmers' cooperative society. In addition, Fushun residents also had access to at least twelve schools (one Chinese elementary school, five Japanese elementary schools, one middle school, two vocational schools, and four high schools), three hospitals (a general hospital, a gynecological hospital, and a hospital for communicable diseases), and even a city gymnasium.<sup>30</sup>

This impressive expansion came to a halt as the Sino-Japanese War (1937–45) became protracted. Even though the entire Manchukuo economy shifted into high gear after Japan declared war on the United States in 1941, the economic situation in Fushun did not improve. Coal production output continued its steep decline, falling from 7.6 million tons in 1940 to 5 million tons in 1944.<sup>31</sup> When the fact that Fushun acquired more coal pits during this period, including two significant pits in Yantai and Jiaohe, is taken into consideration, the decline in production output is put in greater relief.<sup>32</sup> Even though coal production fell in the 1940s, the decline had little impact on Fushun as an industrial center. Indeed, Fushun's urban and

industrial infrastructure remained intact after the Japanese surrender and, ironically, was dismantled by the Soviet Red Army.

### Wages of Discrimination

Who benefitted from the amount of capital that the SMR invested in the region's industrial development? In its *Report on Progress in Manchuria, 1907–1928*, the SMR asserted that “the Chinese themselves are the chief beneficiaries” because the railway system provided Chinese farmers in Manchuria access to markets, the SMR through its various operations provided employment for innumerable Chinese workers whose wages in turn fueled expansion of local economy, and living standards of the Chinese increased.<sup>33</sup> However, a close study of the SMR wage structure in Fushun presents a reality that contradicts this claim. Although Chinese workers did find employment with the SMR, their wages and opportunities for promotion to managerial or technical ranks were frequently not in step with their Japanese counterparts. This racially segregated labor regime is an indicator of the unequal labor-capital relations characteristic of colonial development.

Accompanying the growth in production output and urban development was an increase in the working population. The number of employees hired in Fushun colliery and its affiliates, excluding civil servants, contractors, and laborers, rose from 1,143 in 1907 to 66,742 in 1944. From 1915 onwards, this figure did not fall below 20,000, peaking at 91,365 in 1942.<sup>34</sup> A comparison with the labor force in other Chinese cities offers a sense of the size of Fushun's working population. In 1929, there were 40,786 workers in Fushun, while there were 47,519 workers in the entire handicraft and mechanized industries of Tianjin.<sup>35</sup> In terms of numbers, the working population in Fushun was considerable. It is perhaps due to the SMR management's fear that this numerical strength might translate into political power that a racially segregated labor regime emerged.

Race played a central and unobtrusive role in determining a worker's position in the company and in colonial society. Within this racial hierarchy, Japanese ranked at the top and Chinese at the bottom.<sup>36</sup> This racial hierarchy remained largely intact even after the establishment of the Manchukuo regime in 1932, which took as a standard the promotion of racial harmony. The only change that came about after 1932 was a distinction drawn between Chinese from Manchuria and Chinese migrants from Shandong and Hebei. In SMR literature produced in the Manchukuo period, the former are called *manzhouren* or *manshūjin* and the latter *zhongguoren* or *chūgokujin*. Mariko Tamanoi argues that the creation of this new racial classification, *manzhouren*, is part of the Japanese colonizers' effort to further distinguish Manchuria from



China.<sup>37</sup> The implication of this distinction is that *manzhouren* held higher status in the racial hierarchy than *zhongguoren*. More importantly, this distinction articulates the racial logic of Japanese colonial rule, which was to divide its subject population along racial lines in order to control them effectively. This racial hierarchy is evident in two aspects of the labor regime: the unequal distribution of Japanese and Chinese employees in the employment category system and the dual wage structure.

When the SMR began coal extraction in Fushun in 1907, it created a system of employment categories for its company employees. The higher category was staff (Chi. *zhiyuan*, J. *shokuin*), which was further divided into six subcategories: secretary, researcher, bookkeeper, engineer, assistant engineer, and regular worker (Chi. *guyuan*, J. *kōin*). The latter category later became an independent category and was no longer a subcategory of staff (*zhiyuan*). The lower category was *yongren* or *yōnin*, which literally meant servant. This category was renamed full-time worker (Chi. *yongyuan*, J. *yōin*) in 1919.<sup>38</sup> As the Fushun operations increased in complexity and scale, the employment subcategories changed accordingly. The system revised in 1936 remained in place with few changes until 1945. Under this system, the three main categories of company employees were staff (*zhiyuan*), regular worker (*guyuan*), and full-time worker (*yongyuan*). The category of staff (*zhiyuan*) was divided into three subcategories: counselor (Chi. *canshi*, J. *sanji*), assistant counselor (Chi. *fucanshi*, J. *fukusanji*), and ordinary staff (Chi. *putong zhiyuan*, J. *futsu shokuin*). The category of regular worker (*guyuan*) was subdivided into daily and monthly salaried regular workers (*guyuan*), and that of full-time worker (*yongyuan*) was divided into two subcategories, No. 1 and No. 2.<sup>39</sup>

Within this system, there was a clear unequal distribution of holders of higher employment categories among Japanese and Chinese employees. The higher the employment category ranked, the lower the composition of Chinese employees in the employment category. Put differently, Japanese employees always held the highest positions, even if this meant transferring senior managerial and engineering staff members from Japan. Throughout the SMR's tenure at Fushun, no Chinese employee was ever hired in the staff category, though there were Chinese workers hired in the regular worker category to fill intermediate and junior managerial, office, and engineering positions. In fact, Chinese workers made up the majority of regular workers before management instituted changes in 1927 that led to a decline in the percentage of Chinese regular workers. Chinese workers made up 24.9 percent of regular workers in 1907. From 1907 onwards, this percentage increased steadily, reaching its peak of 64.8 percent in 1924 and then declining to 35.4 percent in 1936.<sup>40</sup> The implication of reducing the number of Chinese

*guyuan* workers was that Chinese workers were not given jobs with managerial responsibilities and jobs requiring specialized technical skills.

The employment category not only decided the type of job a worker held, but also controlled his benefits. Benefits enjoyed by company employees at Fushun included allowance for family members living with employees, allowance for visiting family members living apart from employees, compensation for enlisting in the army, and compensation and health care for employees killed or injured on the job. Employees also received nonmonetary benefits such as supplied work uniforms, vacation days and holidays, and subsidized company housing. As with most corporations, the higher the SMR employee ranked, the greater benefits he garnered. But benefits were also calibrated to race. For example, all Japanese employees regardless of employee category enjoyed twelve paid vacation days each year. The only other group granted a similar number of paid vacation days was the Chinese staff. In contrast, Korean and Chinese regular workers had nine days, and Korean and Chinese full-time workers had six days.<sup>41</sup>

In addition to the unequal distribution of employees, the dual wage structure also privileged Japanese employees over Chinese ones. The same employment category specified disparate sets of wages for Japanese and Chinese, Chinese wages being significantly lower than Japanese wages. For instance, a Japanese regular worker made about three times as much as a Chinese regular worker: the average daily wage of a Japanese regular worker in 1912–16 was 113.4 sen and that of a Chinese regular worker was 42 sen. Such wage differences also extended to the full-time worker category, in which some Japanese workers were employed. The average daily wage of a Japanese full-time worker in 1912–16 was 82 sen, while that of a Chinese full-time worker was 32.7 sen.<sup>42</sup>

A racially segregated labor regime was not exclusive to Fushun or the SMR; it was also evident in the Chikuho colliery in Fukuoka Prefecture, Japan. The Chikuho mine was one of the largest coalfields in Japan in the late nineteenth century. Its unique feature was a large number of Japanese female miners. However, most of these women were dismissed and replaced with Korean men when the mines were mechanized in the 1920s, an act that coincided with the state's increasing concern over the impropriety of Japanese women working as miners. As colonial subjects, Korean men were relegated to the worst jobs, and they neither worked nor socialized with the Japanese workers who remained.<sup>43</sup> There are other instances in factories in Japan and Korea with similarly structured labor regimes. Soon-Won Park reports that a dual wage structure existed in the Onoda cement factory in colonial Korea; Elyssa Faison observes that Japanese management separated Korean

workers from Japanese workers in Osaka textile factories during the prewar period.<sup>44</sup>

Park offers a possible explanation for the dual wage structure and unequal share of jobs that appear common in the Japanese colonial workplace. Park claims that the Onoda cement factory paid its Japanese employees as expatriates, which meant that they were compensated for living away from Japan and had to be paid according to wage standards in Japan.<sup>45</sup> Since the cost of living in Japan was higher than the cost of living in colonial Korea, Park contends that wages of Japanese employees were significantly higher than those of Korean employees. Given the common colonial context, this is a likely explanation for the dual wage structure in Fushun, though no SMR documents supporting this claim have come to light. As for the unequal share of jobs, the SMR justified the large number of Chinese workers in unskilled positions in its repeated assertion that the Chinese workforce in general was neither trained nor educated, and therefore unsuitable for the managerial and skilled positions that Japanese workers occupied.<sup>46</sup> Whether the SMR's assertion contained truth is irrelevant. What is relevant is that the SMR was compelled to justify its labor practices. Its justification was likely an attempt to persuade the majority to accept the minority's rule.

### Divided City

Racial segregation in colonial Fushun was not limited to the workplace; the city was equally segregated along racial lines. As Jeremy Ball's analysis of the town of Catumbela, in Portuguese Angola, illustrates in this volume, spatial manifestations of colonial power relations were common phenomena in colonial company towns and urban centers. Spatial segregation reinforced colonial subordination. Three factors shaped the evolution of Fushun's spatial layout: physical geography, economic growth, and racial segregation. The Hun River, which flows through the heart of the city, provides a natural division to the spatial layout of Fushun. The northern section, the original location of the Ming dynasty military fort, was the center of government administration, while the southern section, the location of the coal pits and commercial district, was the industrial core. Before the arrival of coal mining, the northern section was the more urbanized area of the two. However, as the local economy grew, the urbanization of the southern section picked up pace. During this later stage of urbanization, the division of the city took on racial characteristics.

The most distinctive aspect of Fushun's urbanization in the first half of the twentieth century was the emergence of exclusively Chinese and Japanese

enclaves. Chinese and Japanese communities coexisted in Fushun but rarely mingled. Chinese and Japanese residents might work together in the colliery, albeit in different positions, but they certainly did not live together. The separation of Chinese and Japanese communities was evident in exclusively Chinese and Japanese residential areas, recreational facilities, and commercial districts. The division of residential areas was evident in architectural styles: the single-story brick houses that housed SMR Chinese employees characterized the Chinese area, while the grander two-story houses that housed SMR Japanese employees characterized the Japanese area. (See figure 3.1) These residential areas contained recreational facilities constructed by the SMR that delineated separate social spheres for Chinese and Japanese inhabitants. For its Chinese employees, the SMR built a recreational complex consisting of several brothels, a theater, and a temple (*laojunmiao*).<sup>47</sup> The SMR even sponsored regular temple festivals that pertained to the worship of the local deity. For its Japanese employees, the SMR built a club for management-level employees, all of whom were Japanese. For Japanese residents, the SMR also dedicated a park, which is located between the commercial center and the Western Open Pit and which is now known as Laborers' Park (*laogong gongyuan*). Racial segregation of recreational facilities even extended to the prostitution sector. Although ownership of brothels in Fushun was mixed, the brothels almost exclusively served Chinese or Japanese clienteles, but seldom both simultaneously.<sup>48</sup> Spatial segregation is further illustrated in the



**Figure 3.1** View of Fushun, ca. 1920.

*Manchuria: Land of Opportunities* (New York: South Manchurian Railway, 1922).

construction of separate commercial zones. In 1906, according to the historian Zhao Guangqing, two streets where commerce and industries gathered emerged along the southern riverbed. Chinese merchants and small-scale industries concentrated on Qianjinzhai Street (*qianjinzhai jie*), named after the village that once stood at the spot. Five *li* away, Japanese businessmen set up shop on New City Street (*xinshi jie*).<sup>49</sup> The choice of street names suggests an underlying tension between both groups. The preservation of the old village name implies an organic tie to that which existed before, while the declaration of a new city indicates that the construction of a modern city required a break from the past.

One possible explanation for the segregation of residents is the migrant composition of the SMR workforce. The SMR Chinese employees came from Liaoning, Shandong, and Hebei provinces. Works on Chinese migrant groups in urban areas reveal a tendency for these groups to cluster in similar occupations or trades, share living quarters, and join related native-place associations.<sup>50</sup> The fact that native-place associations provided welfare services and commercial networking opportunities and that most migrants were recruited via native-place networks contributed to this tendency. It is unlikely that migrant workers in Fushun would escape this trend, since these workers were similarly recruited through native-place and kinship networks. Even though the tendency to rely on native-place associations and kinship networks insinuates that the Chinese enclave was a natural outcome of Chinese cultural practices, the principal driving force in creating these racially defined enclaves was the SMR, not Chinese culture. The SMR contributed directly to the creation of separate enclaves through two aspects of its labor policies: the recruitment and management system of unskilled Chinese labor, and the racial hierarchy of its labor regime. The system for recruiting and managing unskilled Chinese labor in Fushun Colliery was the contract labor system, or the *baotou* system, which was a common practice in China's mining industry.<sup>51</sup> At the heart of the *baotou* system was the Chinese cultural practice of mobilizing native-place or kinship networks to recruit and supervise labor. The *baotou* often recruited unskilled workers from his village or through familial ties. Once these workers arrived at the mine, the *baotou* was responsible for housing and feeding them, and supervising their work. The SMR used the *baotou* system until 1912, when it hired the *baotou* as company employees in the capacity of pit supervisors and took over the function of recruitment.<sup>52</sup> These changes did not displace the centrality of native-place or kinship networks in managing Chinese labor. The SMR ensured that these unskilled workers were grouped according to their native-place origins or kinship ties, and supervised by a *baotou* who shared the same native-place origin or kinship ties. In doing so, the SMR reinforced the tendency

within the Chinese community to stay within the bounds of its exclusive enclave.

SMR's racial labor hierarchy also contributed to the city's segregation, in that the logic of segregated residential and recreational facilities emanated from the unequal distribution of jobs. The segregation of residential and recreational facilities corresponded with the racial distribution of jobs among Chinese and Japanese employees, as described earlier. The majority of Chinese employees held lower paying and ranked positions while the majority of Japanese employees held managerial and highly skilled positions. Because the SMR rewarded its managers and skilled employees with better benefits such as superior housing and recreational facilities, racial segregation of residential and recreational areas can be seen as a direct result of the racial hierarchy of the SMR labor regime. In other words, racial segregation in Fushun was intimately linked to the protection of ruling elite's privileges.

Given that the segregated urban space was an expression of the unequal relationship between Chinese and Japanese populations in this colonial company town, urban conflicts such as resistance to relocation became political struggles against the SMR. The most significant urban conflict resulted from SMR's plan to expand its Western Open Pit at the expense of Qianjinzhai Street. Announced in 1919, the expansion required two stages. The first stage was the relocation of the train station in 1923. The subsequent stage was the relocation of Qianjinzhai Street in 1925. When the SMR implemented this plan in 1925, it sought to abate resistance by creating a committee to persuade the estimated 70,000 residents and businessmen living along Qianjinzhai Street to move. As incentives, the SMR promised residents and businessmen that their plots of land would remain the same, and offered them building materials at reduced prices. Although some residents and businessmen took up the SMR's offer, there remained an intransigent group that bargained with the SMR over the terms of relocation. When patience ran out, the SMR management sent bulldozers to tear up Qianjinzhai Street in 1930. This act galvanized the intransigent group even more, but the SMR prevailed in 1935, when the group was forced to leave Qianjinzhai Street and the SMR began its long-awaited pit expansion.<sup>53</sup>

Like the segregation of the workplace, the racial segregation of Fushun's urban space reflected the unequal power relations between Chinese colonial subjects and Japanese colonial authorities. As seen in the conflict over Qianjinzhai Street, the residents and businessmen affected by the SMR plan for pit expansion were not SMR employees, but they were equally at the mercy of the SMR. Since SMR was the *de facto* state in this colonial company

town, residents and businessmen were without recourse to courts of law. Nor could they appeal to a higher state authority.

### Conclusion

The Japanese Empire came to an end on August 15, 1945, when Emperor Hirohito announced over radio Japan's surrender to the Allies. By this time, Manchuria had already fallen to the Soviet Red Army, which had invaded six days earlier. Interestingly, Stalin saw Manchuria's industrial infrastructure as nothing more than war booty. As the Soviet Red Army retreated from Manchuria, it removed over \$2 billion worth of equipment and materials.<sup>54</sup> According to Edwin W. Pauley, who was commissioned by U.S. President Truman to survey Soviet removal of Japanese assets in Manchuria, the Soviet Red Army took all power shovels and railroad rolling stock from Fushun coalfields, and electric motors from the South Manchuria Railway Company's west oil shale plant.<sup>55</sup> They also took generators, pumps, crane, boilers, transformers, and switches from Fushun power plant and almost entirely stripped the Manchurian Light Metal Factory.<sup>56</sup> As a result of the equipment removal, average monthly coal output in Fushun fell by two-thirds of the output rate before Japan's surrender.

The decline in Fushun's production was only temporary. In spite of the removal, the industrial infrastructure that remained—buildings, railway tracks, harbors, workers—was left intact. Following the Communist victory in the Chinese Civil War (1946–49), the new Communist state was able to restore industrial capacity in Fushun specifically and Manchuria generally, with technical assistance and loans from the Soviet Union. Under the Communist regime, Fushun once again served as an important supplier of coal and oil, except that its “market” was no longer the Japanese Empire but the Chinese nation. As the Cold War unfolded in East Asia and Sino-Soviet relations deteriorated in the 1950s, energy security emerged as a critical issue and Fushun's oil shale reserves grew in importance. In fact, Fushun's oil production became so important to the Communist state that Fushun was made the focus of its First Five-Year Plan (1953–57). Under this plan, the Communist state committed significant resources to upgrading Fushun's oil shale refining facilities, which the SMR had built.<sup>57</sup> As Lim Tai-Wei points out, Fushun's oil shale refining, by the late 1950s, accounted for “40% of total oil production in China.”<sup>58</sup>

Today, Fushun's population of 2.23 million makes it the tenth largest city in Liaoning Province.<sup>59</sup> Coal mining continues, and the Fushun colliery remains in operation. Nonetheless, manufacturing has now replaced

coal mining as the largest sector of Fushun's economy. As labor statistics indicate, the working population of Fushun, which stands at 1.17 million, is mostly employed in manufacturing, followed by coal mining, education, and construction.<sup>60</sup> Products manufactured in Fushun's factories include chemicals, pig iron, steel, cement, sulfur, synthetic fiber, ethylene, and plastics—largely intended for the Chinese domestic market.<sup>61</sup>

That Fushun continues to exist as an industrial city is testament to both Communist economic policies and the legacy of Japanese colonial industrial development. From a colonial company town, Fushun developed into an industrial city, thus escaping the fate of historical oblivion relegated to many company towns around the world. Unlike purely extractive company towns, colonial company towns like Fushun were more than sites of natural resource extraction and places of residence for workers. Like model company towns, colonial company towns were manifestations of particular political agendas. Yet, Fushun was also a distinct model company town in that the company involved was a parastatal entity. The SMR performed certain statelike functions, such as providing social services, but it was not the state. As such, the company maintained an employer-employee relationship with the residents of the model company town and possessed a largely economic interest in the land where the town was located. In Fushun, the SMR clearly benefited from colonial expansion, but that was not its foremost objective. As a colonial space, social and labor relations in Fushun recreated the policies and values of the dominant power, which manifested clearly in a hierarchical socio-occupational structure and a spatial organization drawn along racial lines.

## Notes

1. J. Douglas Porteous, "The Nature of the Company Town," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 51 (November 1970): 129.
2. Greg Grandin, *Fordlandia: The Rise and Fall of Henry Ford's Forgotten Jungle City* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2009).
3. See Chapter 1 in this volume.
4. G. William Skinner, "Marketing and Social Structure in Rural China," *Journal of Asian Studies* 24, 1–3 (November 1964–May 1965); Qin Shao, *Culturing Modernity: The Nantong Model, 1890–1930* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003).
5. See Mark Elliott's excellent essay on the origins of "Manchuria" as a device that foreign powers used to challenge China's sovereignty over the region by suggesting its separation from China, and the eventual acceptance by Chinese of this ethnonym. I use "Manchuria" in this chapter because that usage was more common in the pre-1949 period. Mark Elliott, "The Limits of Tartary: Manchuria



- in Imperial and National Geographies,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 59, 3 (August 2000): 603–46.
6. James Carter, *Creating a Chinese Harbin: Nationalism in an International City, 1916–1932* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002); David Wolff, *To the Harbin Station: The Liberal Alternative in Russian Manchuria, 1898–1914* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999); Søren Clausen and Stig Thøgersen, *The Making of a Chinese City: History and Historiography of Harbin* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1995).
  7. *Xuantong Fushun xian zhi* [Xuantong Reign Fushun County gazetteer]. (1911).
  8. Bruce Cumings, “Colonial Formations and Deformations: Korea, Taiwan, and Vietnam,” in *Parallax Visions: Making Sense of American-East Asian Relations* (Durham, NC: Duke University, 1999), 69–94. See also Bruce Cumings, “The Origins and Development of Northeast Asian Political Economy: Industrial Sectors, Product Cycles, and Political Consequences,” *International Organization* 38, 1 (Winter 1984): 1–40.
  9. Manchuria held a curious position in the Japanese Empire. Even though Manchuria, especially the southern portion, was always in the orbit of Japanese influence from 1900–1945, it was never turned into a Japanese colony. Before the Japanese Kwantung Army invaded and occupied the region in 1931, the territories under Japanese controlled—Liaodong Peninsula and land along railway lines, in mining claims, etc.—were leased from China. In these leased territories, Japan was granted extraterritorial rights, which meant that the territories belonged to China in name but the land and its population fall under the jurisdiction of Japan and Japanese law. After 1931, the puppet regime Manchukuo that the Kwantung Army created in 1932 was formally an autonomous nation-state. From 1932 to 1945, the Japanese government treated Manchukuo as an independent nation-state and conducted its affairs with Manchukuo via its foreign affairs department.
  10. Ramon Myers, “South Manchuria Railway Company,” in *The Japanese Informal Empire in China, 1895–1937*, ed. Peter Duus, Ramon Myers, and Mark Peattie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 125.
  11. Foreign investments in themselves do not constitute imperial expansion. But in the case of the SMR, these investments accompanied a set of treaties between China and Japan that guaranteed Japanese advantage and, at times, nullified Chinese sovereignty.
  12. *Ibid.*, 102–4.
  13. *Ibid.*, 104.
  14. *Ibid.*, 115.
  15. *Ibid.*, 121.
  16. *Ibid.*, 110–6, 121–3.
  17. Yoshihisa Tak Matsusaka, *The Making of Japanese Manchuria, 1904–1932* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 140.
  18. *Shengjingshibao* (September 19, 1905).

19. Nisaburo Murakushi, *The Transfer of Coal-Mining Technology from Japan to Manchuria and Manpower Problem, Focusing on the Development of the Fushun Coal Mines* (Tokyo: United Nations University, 1981), 39–40.
20. Xueshi Xie, ed., *Mantie shi ziliao* [Materials on the History of the South Manchuria Railway] (Beijing: Xinhua shudian, 1984), 151–6, 373–5. There is no known study of farmers displaced by the land purchases and their fates thereafter.
21. There are also other factors that contributed to Fushun's sizable production capacity. According to Tim Wright, production capacity is affected by both supply and demand. Wright notes that the demand side factors that affected production for Chinese mines were the instability and complexity of the currency situation and the unreliability of demand. In the case of Fushun, the demand side factors that encouraged increased output include the stability of the Yen bloc that enabled expansion of market outside of boundaries of provincial currency, and a reliable source of demand from the rest of the Japanese Empire. Tim Wright, *Coal Mining in China's Economy and Society, 1895–1937* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).
22. Murakushi, *The Transfer of Coal-Mining Technology*, 33–4. Using the coal-pillar method, miners excavate the coal seam but leave behind huge pillars of coal that support the roof.
23. The problem with the coal-pillar method is that large amounts of coal are left behind. According to Murakushi, the fine-sand-filling method allowed the pillars to be safely extracted without compromising the roof because the excavated areas are filled in with fine sand. Murakushi, *The Transfer of Coal-Mining Technology*, 34–5.
24. Murakushi, *The Transfer of Coal-Mining Technology*, 33–47.
25. *Ibid.*, 24–47.
26. Tai-Wei Lim, *China's Quest for Self-Reliance in Oil: The Story of Fushun, Yumen, and Daqing* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2008), 24–8.
27. Lim, *China's Quest for Self-Reliance in Oil*, 26–7.
28. *Ibid.*, 32–5.
29. *Ibid.*, 35.
30. “Fushun shi yu fushun meikuang [Fushun City and Fushun Colliery],” trans. Zhang Gexun, *Fushun wenshi ziliao xuanji disiji* [Volume 4 of the Collected Materials on Fushun History] (Fushun: Zhengxie fushun shi weiyuanhui wenshiweiyuanhui chuban, 1984), 304–6.
31. Murakushi, *The Transfer of Coal-Mining Technology*, 39–40.
32. The South Manchuria Railway Company, “Di bashisi hui diguo yihui shuoming ziliao [Explanatory Materials on the Eighty-Fourth Imperialism Conference]” (1943), reprinted in *Mantie shi ziliao*, 376.
33. The South Manchuria Railway Company, *Report on Progress in Manchuria, 1907–1928* (Dairen: South Manchurian Railway, 1929), 6–7.
34. Guangqing Zhao, *Fushun tongshi*, 343.
35. Gail Hershatter, *The Workers of Tianjin, 1900–1949* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986), 48.

36. There were Koreans and even Russians who worked in Fushun colliery. Their numbers were much smaller in comparison to the Japanese and Chinese. In SMR documents, they were seldom visible, and this could be because the colonial relationship between Japanese and Chinese was the central axis of the Fushun colliery.
37. Mariko Asano Tamanoi, "Knowledge, Power, and Racial Classification: The 'Japanese' in 'Manchuria,'" *Journal of Asian Studies* 59, 2 (May 2000): 252–9.
38. Nakagawa Jū, *Tankō dokuhon: bujun tankō Mantetsu shiryō sōsho* (Bujun tankō, Minami Manshū tetsudō kabushiki kaisha, 1940; repr., Tōkyō: Ryūkei shosha, 1986), 34.
39. Jū, *Tankō dokuhon*, 31–2.
40. Murakushi, *The Transfer of Coal-Mining Technology*, 51–4.
41. Jū, *Tankō dokuhon*, 51–70.
42. Murakushi, *The Transfer of Coal-Mining Technology*, 51–4.
43. W. Donald Smith, "Gender and Ethnicity in Japan's Chikuho Coalfield," in *Towards a Comparative History of Coalfield Societies*, ed. Stefan Berger, Andy Croll, and Norman LaPorte (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2005), 204–18.
44. Soon-Won Park, *Colonial Industrialization and Labor in Korea: The Onoda Cement Factory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999); Elyssa Faison, *Managing Women: Disciplining Labor in Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).
45. Park, *Colonial Industrialization and Labor in Korea*, 111–21.
46. See the South Manchuria Railway's *Report on Progress*, especially the section on Chinese migrant laborers.
47. Yao Yunpeng and Wei Dan, "Huanleyuan de youlai [Origins of the Entertainment Center]," in *Qianjinzhai, huanleyuan* [Qianjinzhai, the entertainment complex] (Fushun: Zhongguo ren min zheng zhi xie shang hui yi Liaoning Sheng FushunXian wei yuan hu wen shi zi liao wei yuan hui, 1991), 5–6.
48. Yao Yunpeng, "Yonganli—jinuyuan [Brothels in Yonganli]" in *Qianjinzhai, huanleyuan* [Qianjinzhai, the entertainment complex] (Fushun: Zhongguo ren min zheng zhi xie shang hui yi Liaoning Sheng FushunXian wei yuan hu wen shi zi liao wei yuan hui, 1991), 17–27.
49. Zhao Guangqing, *Fushun chengshi jianzhu shi* [History of Buildings in the City of Fushun] (Tianjin: Tianjin daxue chubanshe, 1988), 27.
50. See Bryna Goodman, *Native Place, City, and Nation: Regional Networks and Identities in Shanghai, 1853–1937* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); Emily Honig, *Sisters and Strangers: Women in the Shanghai Cotton Mills, 1919–1949* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992).
51. Wright, *Coal Mining in China's Economy and Society*, 166–8.
52. Murakushi, *The Transfer of Coal-Mining Technology*, 55–63.
53. Guangqing, *Fushun chengshi jianzhu shi*, 27–32; Zhao Guangqing and Cao Dequan, *Fushun tongshi*, 346–52.
54. Edwin Pauley, *Report on Japanese Assets in Manchuria to the President of the United States* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, July 1947), 37.

55. Ibid., 77–8, appendices 4 and 9.
56. Ibid., appendices 1 and 8.
57. Lim, *China's Quest for Self-Reliance in Oil*, 84.
58. Ibid., 85.
59. Liaoning sheng tongji ju, *Liaoning tongji nianjian* [Liaoning Statistical Yearbook] (Beijing: Zhongguo tongji chubanshe, 2009), 42.
60. Ibid., 54–60, 72–80.
61. Ibid., 327–9.

## CHAPTER 4

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# “Little Storybook Town”: Space and Labor in a Company Town in Colonial Angola

*Jeremy Ball*

Urban colonization in Angola grew out of the Berlin Conference (1884–5) and the expectation that colonizing powers demonstrate effective occupation in order to receive international—European—recognition for their territorial claims. In response, Portuguese elites rediscovered their long-neglected coastal settlements along the Angolan and Mozambican littorals and began to make substantial investments in infrastructure, including railways, ports, and administrative and military buildings. On Angola’s south-central coast, the frontier town of Catumbela, long known as an embarkation point for slaves headed to the New World, developed as a result of a boom in rubber exports. Portuguese and Luso-African traders established trading houses and rebuilt the small town to reflect a Portuguese aesthetic. With the decline in world rubber prices by 1910 and the exhaustion of elephant herds in the Angolan interior, the local trading economy declined while a new sugar industry developed on the plains surrounding Catumbela, based on irrigation from the Catumbela River and favorable tariff access to the Portuguese market.

The Portuguese owners of the Cassequel Sugar Company (Cassequel) created a model town in Catumbela. Company officials painted all buildings *cor-de-rosa* (pink), including workers’ huts, to reinforce the appearance of a benevolent and united colonial order. As Anthony King has argued, “the built environment is more than a mere representation of social order (i.e. a reflector), or simply a mere environment in which social action takes place,” and in fact the “physical and spatial urban form actually constitute

as well as represent much of social and cultural existence: society is to a very large extent constituted through the buildings and spaces that it creates.”<sup>1</sup> As in other cities in Africa, the built environment in Catumbela and its surrounding workers’ villages reflected colonial power relations and ensured domination over the African majority through security, order, and control.<sup>2</sup> Aesthetically, Catumbela grew to look much like a Portuguese town. The historian James Duffy could have been describing Catumbela when, in 1959, he wrote: “In perhaps no other region of Africa has the presence of a colonial power been so clearly impressed as on the cities and towns of Portuguese Africa. In a sense they are Portugal . . . the architecture, the streets, the city squares, the gardens and parks, the color, the spirit, the whole way of life is fundamentally Portuguese.”<sup>3</sup> This chapter seeks to explain how the Cassequel Sugar Company developed Catumbela’s built environment between 1913 and 1961 to become a Portuguese town in Africa. The well-ordered grid, the uniform housing, the ubiquitous pink color scheme all contributed to a sense of a benevolent colonial order. Far beyond the company town, dotting the contiguous plantation, existed villages for forced laborers (all single men) with rudimentary mud and grass huts lacking such infrastructure as potable water and sewage, much less amenities such as a cinema or company



**Figure 4.1** *Bairro indígena* (Native Workers’ Village).  
Centro de História do Banco Espírito Santo, Lisbon.

store. From the 1940s, Cassequel’s owners began to make substantive investments in the workers’ villages and sought to attract an increasingly voluntary labor force. More permanent housing with whitewashed walls, even windows, replaced the old mud and grass huts, and new potable water stations, kitchens, and toilets reflected the government’s growing interest in improving the working conditions of its African subjects. By the 1950s, the government instructed major employers such as Cassequel to improve working conditions as a means of preparing for the eventual abolition of forced labor, which came in 1961 following the outbreak of the guerrilla war for independence. This shift explains why a foreign visitor to Cassequel in 1969 described a newly built *bairro indígena* (workers’ village) as “clumps of huts on rises behind the plantation . . . they are painted pink with brown thatch roofs. They really look like little storybook towns.”<sup>4</sup> (See figure 4.1)

### A Company Town and a Company Estate

Since the 1970s, scholarship on colonial cities has grown tremendously across a range of academic fields, from history and sociology to urban planning. A defining feature of this literature has been, as William Cunningham Bissell notes, a focus on “dualism (in both social and spatial senses) . . . as a defining feature of colonial cities: analysts discussed various modalities of segregation and separation as quintessential hallmarks of these sites. But as the range of colonial urban studies has grown in both scope and detail of late, a more ambiguous picture has emerged.”<sup>5</sup> Catumbela presents a dual nature that includes aspects of a model company town with characteristics of a company estate. In a model company town, as John Garner explains, the “paternalism of the owner extended beyond the bare-bones architectural requirements of factories or mines. Well-designed houses, parks, schools, libraries, and meeting halls, all set within an attractive landscape, represented an unusual degree of interest by the developer. But equally exceptional were the social programs that extended to the families of employees.”<sup>6</sup> Catumbela’s colonial condition added yet another important dimension. Limin Teh’s chapter on the South Manchurian Railway company town in Fushun, China, in this volume, proposes a third category of company town—the colonial company town. In this type, the state propels the development of the town, which reflects a particular political agenda. This characterization captures the essence of Catumbela and the workers’ villages of the adjacent Cassequel sugar plantation, because to a large extent the social and built environments reflected colonial priorities—the production of sugar for the national (Portuguese) economy, a race- and culture-based social and political hierarchy, and economic profitability for Cassequel’s well-connected Portuguese owners. This

chapter argues for the dual nature of colonial Catumbela, especially before 1961, in part because of the town's close relationship with the adjacent company estate where sugar was cultivated. Like earlier studies of colonial estates, such as Philip Bonner and Karin Shapiro's study of Pilgrim's Rest, in South Africa, and Robert Home's study of workers' towns in colonial Natal and Northern Rhodesia,<sup>7</sup> this study emphasizes hierarchies and divisions as means of controlling workers and extracting profit. Social and economic ambiguities may have been more common in larger, colonial urban centers such as Zanzibar,<sup>8</sup> or under less autocratic regimes than the Portuguese, but in the years 1913–1961 in colonial Angola, little ambiguity existed about social and economic hierarchies.

For Portuguese employees in particular, Catumbela offered many of the amenities characteristic of model company towns, but for the vast majority of Cassequel's *indígena* [native] workforce, the benefits of Catumbela were off limits because *indígenas* lived in "native villages" dotting the plantation lands near to where they labored to plant and process sugarcane, removed both physically and socially from Catumbela. Under Portuguese rule, *indígenas* were subject to native law, including contract (forced) labor, and afforded none of the rights of Portuguese citizens. Most *indígena* workers migrated on one-year contracts to fulfill a colonial labor requirement. Their living conditions in huts with four men to a room and few amenities, not even potable water, were characteristic of other company estates in the colonized world.<sup>9</sup>

Living in between Portuguese and *indígena* employees—both spatially and socially—were a small number of Angolans who received *assimilado* status (literally "assimilated," which referred to those who passed a government test and were deemed to be sufficiently civilized, that is, to read and write Portuguese and to live in a European manner), which gave them the rights of Portuguese citizens and exempted them from contract labor. These *assimilado* employees often lived in a section of Catumbela called Caputo.

For Portuguese employees, the Cassequel Sugar Company provided a paternalistic and comfortable lifestyle. Portuguese employees benefitted from the privileges of whiteness in colonial Angola and therefore felt part of a larger colonial project. They enjoyed the lion's share of corporate benefits, including company-provided health care, education for their children, housing, sports and recreation facilities such as a zoo, and in some cases an annual trip to Portugal. Supplying physical and social infrastructure was an essential component of the company's ability to attract skilled workers from Portugal and mirrored to an extent the paternalistic and authoritarian ethos of the *Estado Novo* (New State), which held power in Portugal between 1933 and 1974.<sup>10</sup> The New State, like earlier Portuguese governments, viewed the administration of the African colonies as central to the historical mission of the



Portuguese people and a guarantor of Portugal’s place among colonizing powers.<sup>11</sup> *Assimilado* employees enjoyed some of these same benefits, though they faced a glass ceiling in employment opportunities, especially prior to late colonial reforms enacted between the late 1950s and Angolan independence in 1975. As in other company towns, Cassequel’s owners sought to maximize profitability by restricting the mobility and collective organization of labor.<sup>12</sup> In fact, Portuguese colonial law prohibited collective organization for *any* workers. As has been mentioned above, *indígena* employees received few services prior to the 1960s. Health care consisted primarily of screening out weak contract workers, providing vaccinations, and from World War II, spraying the plantation with DDT to prevent the spread of malarial-bearing mosquitoes.

Over the course of the twentieth century, Portuguese residents slowly made Catumbela into a “European” town with a spatial geography that reflected the class and racial hierarchy among citizens and physically reinforced a clear distinction among various levels of citizens. Among citizen employees, spatial divisions reflected company hierarchy. Atop the highest hill lived the president of the company in a large villa with panoramic views and a verdant garden set among otherwise dry hills. Further downhill were the residences of nearly two dozen company executives, engineers, and doctors, in somewhat smaller, but still gracious, villas with vistas of the river, verdant plantation lands, and the Atlantic Ocean. The roughly 200 middle managers, mechanics, foreman, nurses, and their families lived in neatly appointed houses along Catumbela’s tree-lined streets. *Indígena* workers, who remained subjects of the colonial state, lived primarily outside the town of Catumbela both in spatial and social terms. The vast majority of the Company’s roughly 5,000 *indígena* employees lived in windowless huts with no modern infrastructure. These huts were clustered in worker villages dotting the plantation. (See figure 4.1).

Cassequel made so little effort for its *indígena* employees because colonial law contained the requirement that all *indígenas* had the legal, and after 1928, the moral, duty to be fully employed. Colonial administrators forced local men to work for nine to twelve months, and sometimes longer, on distant coffee and sugar plantations. Forced labor also included work on public works at the local level. The government’s mechanisms for control also included the *caderneta indígena*, a “passbook” required by all African natives from the mid-1920s that listed a person’s name and whether he had paid his tax.<sup>13</sup> The system of control, therefore, rested on a foundation of structural violence enforced by both Portuguese and African members of the community in an effort to retain their position within the power structure. The colonial state required *sobas* (chiefs) to deliver a requested number of contract laborers to

their local administrative office. If the chief failed to meet his quota, he faced corporal punishment, and if he repeatedly failed to meet the quota, he would lose his position.<sup>14</sup>

African resentment of the force labor system is borne out in statistics detailing numbers of runaways and out-migration from Angola to neighboring colonies. Most accepted the status quo for a range of reasons, including the seeming invincibility of colonial power and a lack of alternatives. Most interviewees use the word *okukwatu* (to abduct) to explain how they were selected for forced labor. There was no choice in whether or not to accept, or even where one would be sent for the next year. João K., a former forced laborer, explains:

In 1940 when I was abducted, I had no notion of where I would be sent, and I received no explanation, nobody would take the time to explain to you that you will be sent here . . . what options does a prisoner have?<sup>15</sup>

In response to whether *contratados* exercised any choice in employer, Félix S. responded: “Not at all because the term *contratado* signified slave . . . nobody had the right to stand next to a white to say his name, much less to voice a preference [for employer].”<sup>16</sup>

This situation began to change in the 1950s as the political climate turned against colonialism. Article 73 of the United Nations Charter of 1945 stipulated that member states had the duty to move their colonies toward independence. In 1951 the *Estado Novo* adopted a new Colonial Act, which promoted national unity and dropped the terms “Portuguese Colonial Empire” and “colonies” in favor of “overseas provinces.” Assimilation became the official response to calls for African independence. During this period the government promoted the idea of *Lusotropicalismo*, a theory advocated by the Brazilian sociologist Gilberto Freyre, who argued that Portugal alone among colonizing powers promoted a unique form of racial mixing.<sup>17</sup> As the historian Cláudia Castelo notes, “It was this doctrine that was of enormous utility for the strengthening of the idea of a united, trans-continental Portuguese Nation.”<sup>18</sup> The government informed Cassequel’s executives to adopt a policy of attracting more voluntary *indígena* workers on annual contract. In 1961, following the outbreak of the nationalist war for independence, the government abolished forced labor. The policy of attraction necessitated that the Company build potable water stations, chapels, health dispensaries, schools, and amenities such as sports fields and a movie theater for those who never before had access to such sites. Thus, company paternalism changed from the late 1950s to reflect the government’s attempt to broaden the appeal of and support for the colonial state to include all Angolans. The reforms

indicated a new business strategy for Cassequel to attract voluntary workers through better amenities. Though the reforms certainly improved the day-to-day experiences of most Angolans, they did not achieve their political objective of winning hearts and minds. In fact, the anticolonial war continued until the Portuguese military overthrew the *Estado Novo* in April 1974.

### **From Catumbela to Cassequel: Developing the Company Town**

The Catumbela River mouth had long been an entrepôt for trade, in particular the export of slaves to the New World, which had dominated the local export trade from the seventeenth century. Then in 1836, when the Portuguese government officially abolished the trans-Atlantic slave trade and built a fort overlooking the Catumbela River to enforce Portuguese power over the region, Portuguese traders established the town of Asseiceira near the mouth of the river.<sup>19</sup> By the end of the nineteenth century, locals called the growing town Catumbela, after the adjacent river.<sup>20</sup> In the 1840s, the autonomous African peoples living in the Catumbela area staged an unsuccessful revolt against the expropriation of their lands to recently arrived colonists.<sup>21</sup> What had been community land, controlled by lineage heads, became privately owned land belonging to colonists. The Land Law of 1856 operated according to Portuguese land laws and did not recognize community land controlled by lineage heads. These laws clearly benefited colonists, who claimed land concessions up to 1,000 hectares.<sup>22</sup> Settlers wanted this land because of its location along the river, along which traders from the interior traveled to bring trade goods to market. The site also provided easy access to ocean trade and the fresh water of the river provided the needs of the inhabitants and made possible extensive agriculture in an otherwise dry coastal plain, including the tapping of groves of palm trees for palm oil.<sup>23</sup>

From the 1860s through the 1890s, Catumbela developed its market and was frequented by caravans of Ovimbundu traders, who transported wax, ivory, slaves, and rubber down the escarpment, following footpaths that ended in Catumbela. Catumbela housed several trading firms and grew to look like a provincial Portuguese town with tree-lined streets, a square for negotiation between caravans and Portuguese and Luso-African traders, a town hall, a Catholic church, and the presidio atop a small hill overlooking the river and town.

The establishment of a town government in Catumbela was central to solidifying colonial hegemony in the region. During the first decade of the twentieth century, the Portuguese were busy consolidating their authority in the surrounding district of Benguela, in part because many people continued to live outside of Portuguese authority.<sup>24</sup> To the southeast, the

Portuguese faced fierce resistance from the Kwanyamas, who opposed colonial encroachment until a decisive military defeat in 1915.<sup>25</sup> In the interior districts of Huambo and Bié, Portuguese authority was more or less assured after Portuguese forces defeated the 1902 Ovimbundu rebellion.<sup>26</sup> Thus, by the first decade of the twentieth century, Catumbela reflected the effects of growing Portuguese hegemony in Angola.

Catumbela grew in importance after the government decided to build a port at the nearby Lobito Bay, which had a deep-water natural harbor, rather than off the coast of Benguela.<sup>27</sup> The new port was to service the Benguela Railway, one of the most significant development projects undertaken in early-twentieth-century Angola. Construction of the Benguela Railway began in 1904, and by 1909 it extended over 200 kilometers and connected the port of Lobito to the interior regions of Angola, which were undergoing the slow process of incorporation into the governmental structure of the expanding colonial nucleus. The railway contributed to Catumbela's economic development by allowing for easier and more efficient access to both the nearby port at Lobito and the interior markets. In 1905, the railway company dedicated an iron bridge at Catumbela over the river. The bridge was known as "Africa's third bridge."<sup>28</sup> In that same year, Catumbela received new postal and telegraph offices, and its own town government. The easy access to the port at Lobito contributed to the profitability of the export of semiprocessed sugar to the Portuguese market.

In 1909 Augusto Bastos, a resident merchant and local historian, estimated Catumbela's population at about 2,100, of which nearly 80 percent were Africans living in *cubatas* (huts) outside the town center.<sup>29</sup> Bastos estimated that *serviçais* (a colonial euphemism for people in a kind of servitude akin to slavery, although each *serviçal* received a nominal salary) made up a fourth of the total population.<sup>30</sup> Bastos describes merchants and farmers among the town's approximately 1,200 free blacks.<sup>31</sup> Catumbela also had two agencies that "contracted" *serviçais* for shipment to the islands of São Tomé and Príncipe.<sup>32</sup>

The trade in *serviçais* in Catumbela reflected how urban centers acted as loci of colonial hegemony.<sup>33</sup> The social hierarchy in Catumbela reflected that of other colonial urban centers in Angola. Government and military officials, priests, and leading businessmen made up the small colonial elite. After the founding of Cassequel, in 1913, company managers would join the town's elite. Before the mid-twentieth century this number would have included a significant percentage of mixed-race Angolans who generally operated within the Portuguese cultural milieu.<sup>34</sup> As Portuguese immigration to Angola increased during the twentieth century, especially from World War II, mixed-race Angolans faced increasing discrimination.

The founding of Cassequel transformed the local economy and society. In 1913 a group of Portuguese investors bought two sugar plantations along the banks of the Catumbela River and began a new refinery to turn sugar cane into semi-refined sugar. They named the enterprise Cassequel after the long-established African village of Kasekele, located on the southern bank of the Catumbela River.<sup>35</sup> In December 1914, Cassequel processed its first sugar harvest; the following year, it processed an impressive 1,800 tons of sugar.<sup>36</sup> The government provided financial incentives to investors, including exempting colonial-grown sugar from importation tariffs. The land itself came relatively cheaply because of the 1911 government decree by Portugal’s new Republican government to prohibit all liquor production in Angola, including the distillation of rum, which had been the primary industry around Catumbela. Over the course of the next sixty years Cassequel grew to become the most important sugar producer and refiner in colonial Angola, with over 5,000 African and about 200 Portuguese employees. Its stockholders, led by the Lisbon-based Espírito Santo banking family, as well as officials in successive Portuguese governments, cited it as an example of Portugal’s colonizing ethos, as embodied in the company town’s pink buildings and palm-lined avenues.

Successive colonial governments, the Cassequel Sugar Company, and Portuguese settlers living in Catumbela worked to create a recognizably Portuguese space.<sup>37</sup> In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when white settlers made up no more than 200 people living in the town’s central district, Africans lived in and around the center as well as on the outskirts. As the white population slowly grew from the 1920s, and especially after World War II, African settlements were forcibly removed from the town center in order to build new administrative, commercial, and residential buildings. As growing numbers of Portuguese managers and technicians arrived to work at Cassequel, a demand grew for improved sanitation and improvements in health care for European employees and their families. The Company underwrote the extension of the electric grid and piped water to the town center and the homes of individual white employees during the 1920–40s. The company considered these ameliorations key to attracting skilled Portuguese workers.

As in other colonies, the “sanitation syndrome” was used to justify intensified increasing racial segregation.<sup>38</sup> The “sanitation syndrome” referred to colonial policies of segregating Europeans from Africans as a means of protecting Europeans from the spread of endemic diseases among Africans. Strict segregation had never been practiced in colonial Angola before the 1910s but was advocated by such notable governors as Norton de Matos, who argued that white settlement would simultaneously civilize Angola and make

it more Portuguese.<sup>39</sup> Norton de Matos admired the modern and well-ordered appearance of British colonial administration, and he advocated for increased segregation between white and African communities in Angola. Pamphlets compiled by the Geographical Society in Lisbon in the 1940s instructed prospective colonists to construct barriers between themselves and Africans in order to guarantee continued Portuguese rule.<sup>40</sup> Another pamphlet admonished settlers to take daily showers, to always wear a hat, and to situate their homes far from forests, wetlands, and native villages.<sup>41</sup> By the 1940s, Africans had largely been removed from the town center to an area on the outskirts known as Caputo. Spatial segregation continued as the dominant idea during the following decades. From 1944 the Gabinete de Urbanização Colonial (Town Planning Committee for the Colonies) directed officials to designate separate neighborhoods for *indigenas* (natives) and *colonos* (settlers).<sup>42</sup> As officials moved to remake Angola towns into African and European sections, the construction of public works, such as a hydroelectric plant up the Catumbela River, health dispensaries, and public works, involved the entire colonial population.<sup>43</sup> The 1930s and 1940s also witnessed the construction of commemorative monuments, post offices, schools, and hospitals to better integrate Angola into the Empire, and to connect Angola to the world economy.

The 1930s and 1940s witnessed an intensive effort to define a Lusophone space in the colonies and thus to define the Empire. This effort was marked by what the architectural historian José Manuel Fernandes calls an intensive commemorativism.<sup>44</sup> Officials in the *Estado Novo* lionized explorers and early businessmen as nationalist heroes. Luiz de Sousa Lara, son of one of the early pioneer businessmen in Angola, told a conference at Lisbon's Geographical Society in 1936:

We remember and revere those few and unknown heroes who went out to Africa to colonize, created wealth day by day, giving up pleasure and comfort, conquered the land, and sacrificed their health living among savages in an inhospitable climate.<sup>45</sup>

Sousa Lara proceeded to pay homage to the settlers' courage and work "for progress, civilization and the fatherland."<sup>46</sup> In Angola, settlers and government officials erected monuments to commemorate early pioneers and settlers, and African place-names were replaced by Portuguese names, which often commemorated these same pioneers and settlers.<sup>47</sup> The walls of Cassequel's main administration building reflected the oil portraits of Portuguese political and business leaders, including Ricardo Espírito Santo, director of Cassequel's board of directors in the 1930s and 1940s, as well as

head of the Espírito Santo Bank and an advisor to the *Estado Novo* dictator António Salazar.

### The Impact of Labor Reforms

The post-World War II era ushered in a period of dramatic change for European colonial powers and their empires, though in Angola reforms of forced labor would not happen until the 1950s and especially after the outbreak of the nationalist war for independence in 1961. In Article 73 of the United Nation’s Charter of 1945, member states committed to moving their colonies toward independence. In 1948, member states of the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which recognized the right to self-determination. The two emerging superpowers—the United States and the Soviet Union—committed themselves to anticolonial platforms, and the emerging Cold War led both nations to look to African nationalist movements as potential allies. Portuguese leaders responded to these changing circumstances in 1951 by reiterating the integral relationship between the metropole and colonies and by dropping the terms “Portuguese Colonial Empire”<sup>48</sup> and “colonies” in favor of “overseas provinces” of a pluricontinental Portugal.

The year 1961 marked a sea change in Angolan life because of the abolition of forced labor in the wake of the outbreak of a nationalist war for independence. The piecemeal reforms of the 1950s intensified as the Portuguese fought to maintain control and to convince Angolans of the benefits of colonialism. At Cassequel, reforms in the provision of housing, health care, and social services aimed to attract a wholly voluntary workforce for the first time in the plantation’s history. Prior to 1960, Cassequel made no provision for housing its African workforce, whether voluntary or contract workers. African workers built their own housing and provided for their own sanitation in villages on the edge of Catumbela and in small clusters dotting the plantation. The only service the company provided was food and occasional health care in the form of yellow fever vaccinations. Cassequel’s case was far from unique. The existence of limited infrastructure for African employees was common across colonial Africa.<sup>49</sup> Colonizers often justified publicly this lack of infrastructure as resulting from Africans’ “low stage of evolution,”<sup>50</sup> while benefitting from the significant cost savings. Planners conceptualized a dual space. The modern parts of Catumbela, with its hospital, cinema, and parks, served European and *assimilado* employees and their families, whereas African workers would be accommodated in worker villages scattered across the plantation and out of sight of Catumbela town center.<sup>51</sup>

The outbreak of the nationalist war for independence and increasing international criticism of Portuguese colonialism in the context of widespread African independence in 1960 led to a change in policies. Cassequel's administrators decided to build housing and provide services such as health care and potable water to African employees in an effort to attract a wholly voluntary labor force. Cassequel extended a range of social services to African employees (in 1961 the government abolished the legal designation *indigena* and made all Angolans citizens), including schools, chapels, sanitary posts, and sports facilities.

### *Housing*

Plans to build worker villages at Cassequel dated to 1948, when Cassequel's director, Vasco Monteiro, recommended that the board of directors invest in permanent villages for voluntary and contract workers. The proposed investment aimed to make Cassequel a more attractive and salubrious place to work in order to recruit more workers. Monteiro feared that Cassequel's labor needs would not be met as the government supplied fewer forced laborers because of a boom in coffee production in north-central Angola and indications that it would phase out forced labor. The plan called for new houses, workshops, a school, and a chapel in every large village, and a job creation program for women to produce clothes.<sup>52</sup> The emphasis on attracting voluntary workers meant that women began settling with their husbands at Cassequel. Though Cassequel employed women, some African women found work in the homes and offices of Catumbela. The reforms did not envision any appreciable effort to train Africans for administrative or managerial positions. Because of costs, Cassequel put off the investments until the late 1950s and 1960s.

In 1953, villages consisted of stone, mud, and thatch *cubatas* (huts). There were no toilets, showers, or kitchen facilities beyond rudimentary fire pits. In 1953, cognizant of government impatience with the lack of improvements and increasingly committed to attracting more voluntary laborers to meet its growing labor needs, Cassequel's administration commissioned an extensive report to assess the water supply and sanitary installations in each of the plantation's twenty-three *bairros indígenas* (native villages) for contracted workers.<sup>53</sup> The report recommended the installation of water filtration systems in all twenty-three *bairros indígenas*. These investments were made over the course of the next decade and were largely in place by 1963. These reforms contributed to Cassequel's declining mortality rate and an improved quality of life for African workers. Strict architecture plans mandated the construction of square huts with thatched roofs, some with a single window, with access to a potable water station, an open-air kitchen and eating area, and



in the larger villages a small medical clinic. (See figure 4.1) Showers and toilets were not part of the plan. By 1963 Cassequel contained thirty-eight worker villages housing 5,820 workers and their families.<sup>54</sup> The dramatically improved living conditions contributed to Cassequel’s ability to attract and retain voluntary workers and their families.

### *Health Care*

Colonial officials began to pay more attention to health care after World War II for the economic reason that a healthy worker is more productive. Increasing international attention on delivering the development promises of colonialism and talk of self-determination animated colonial officials to talk up the benefits of colonial hegemony. Vicente Ferreira, a writer on colonial affairs with years of experience working in Angola, explained Portugal’s growing interest in providing services to its African subjects:

Assistance to the natives has as its objective to conserve and develop this precious and indispensable auxiliary in the economic exploitation of African lands. The true interest of the Colony, not to mention the simple duty of humanity, requires more attention for the well-being of the Negro populations and for their progressive adoption of the work methods and habits of white men.<sup>55</sup>

Portuguese officials used the provision of health care in the colonies as propaganda to win support for Portuguese colonialism among the increasingly critical international community and Angolans.<sup>56</sup>

All of these reasons motivated Cassequel’s administration and board of directors to improve the health and vitality of its workers. Dr. Carlos Verdete, who headed Cassequel’s medical services between 1952 and 1974, identified 1945 as the year Cassequel achieved a significant breakthrough in worker mortality. In that year mortality at Cassequel more than halved, from 430 in 1944 to 200 in 1945, and continued to decline yearly until the end of the colonial period. There were multiple reasons for the decline, including (1) improvement in living conditions, specifically housing and sanitation; (2) better nutrition; (3) the availability of antibiotics; (4) augmentation in the number of medical staff; (5) the distribution of prophylactics for malaria and vaccinations against smallpox; and (6) the use of disinfectants. Dr. Verdete promoted a plan of action referred to as “Factor K,” which recognized that the implementation of all the above health reforms would result in a healthier environment and lower mortality among workers.<sup>57</sup> As evidence he noted that the K Factor explained why Cassequel’s white employees experienced a low mortality—less than 1 percent in most recorded years.<sup>58</sup>

Provision of health care to African workers at Cassequel resulted from a combination of government pressure and economic self-interest. In March 1950, the governor general of Angola “insisted that we recommence with the construction of the new hospital, under threat of sanctions.”<sup>59</sup> By June the board of directors approved the construction of a new hospital with European and African wards.<sup>60</sup> The new St. Peter Hospital included 400 beds, operation rooms, x-ray equipment, laboratories, a pharmacy, a maternity wing, and a children’s wing and was one of the best-equipped hospitals in Angola.<sup>61</sup> In addition, Cassequel constructed eight sanitary posts in strategic locations on the plantation staffed by nurses; each day two ambulances visited worker villages to dispense drugs and visit patients.<sup>62</sup> Cassequel increased the number of doctors from one to three. To fight malaria, an endemic killer in Angola as in most of tropical Africa, Cassequel sprayed villages and strategic points of the plantation with DDT and distributed every worker with the malaria prophylaxis Daraprim.<sup>63</sup> Cassequel focused medical resources on preventing smallpox, typhoid fever, and parasitical infections among workers and their families.

The provision of health care won allegiance from workers and made Cassequel a more attractive employer to voluntary workers. A number of new initiatives were undertaken by the Portuguese to legitimize their regime through its health service during these years.<sup>64</sup> Martin Shapiro argues convincingly that Portugal used medical treatment as a weapon in its war to win the hearts and minds of Angolans and convince the international community that Portuguese rule benefited Angolans.<sup>65</sup> Between 1954 and 1957, for example, the Angolan public health care system was seeing no fewer than 600,000 patients in consultation annually, apart from the work of vaccination and sleeping sickness brigades, and by 1958 these numbers had nearly doubled to over 1,000,000 patients.<sup>66</sup> The government vaccinated between 963,000 and 1,600,000 people against smallpox each year between 1955 and 1959. This escalation occurred concurrently with efforts to eradicate smallpox worldwide, but was particularly impressive in relation to the amount of morbidity the disease was causing in Angola at the time: there were only three cases of smallpox in all of Angola in 1966. Cassequel’s investment in health care for workers made the plantation a healthier place to work, and African workers benefited from the improved conditions.

### *Social Services*

In addition to housing and health care, Cassequel initiated social services for its African employees, including a recreation club called Grupo Desportivo e Recreativo do Cassequel (Sport and Recreation Club of Cassequel). The club

organized sports tournaments and sponsored films on Saturday nights. A few of the villages had a sports field, and more than half a dozen had basketball courts. The main administration building contained a recreation room with a radio, a film projector, a ping-pong table, and an assortment of games. These social services, in addition to vastly improved housing and sanitation, improved the quality of life for Cassequel’s workers and their families and contributed to attracting greater numbers of voluntary workers.

With increasing numbers of voluntary workers and their families living on the plantation, the administration constructed five primary schools for the children of workers and one primary school focused on teaching adults.<sup>67</sup> Children attending primary school in workers’ villages received religious instruction from the Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny, who visited each school three times a week to teach religion. To encourage the spread of Catholicism among its workers, Cassequel built two chapels. In 1960 Company officials began an annual “Christmas party for native children.” The idea was to distribute toys and food to all of the children ten years of age and younger, approximately 1,500 in 1960. Each child received a gift and attended a party in front of the refinery. Children and their parents living in the villages farthest from the factory were transported on the plantation’s train, decorated to look like a sleigh and staffed by “six native *Pais Natal* (Santa Clauses).”<sup>68</sup> Former workers remembered fondly the *Festa de Natal* (Christmas Party).<sup>69</sup>

By the early 1960s, Cassequel’s administration responded to the end of forced labor with investments in housing, health care, and social services, in order to attract voluntary workers and engender goodwill in a domestic and international climate increasingly hostile to colonialism. In spite of these improvements in African living conditions, at Cassequel there existed a major chasm between white settlers who supported continued Portuguese rule and a large percentage of Africans who supported, at least tacitly, Angolan independence. Urban areas, where most settlers lived, reflected increasing white paranoia about perceived African nationalists, which explains why in 1961, in response to the outbreak of nationalist violence against the colonial state, Cassequel’s administration distributed 102 pistols and 84 rifles to white employees, who made nightly patrols of the plantation’s perimeter.<sup>70</sup> Cassequel’s administration worked closely with the PIDE (the New State’s secret police) to identify and arrest politically active workers.<sup>71</sup>

## Conclusion

The physical and spatial urban form of Catumbela changed dramatically between 1913 and 1961. The only diachronic elements included the pre-eminence of colonial administrative and military power atop the hill in the

fort overlooking the river, to the town hall (*câmara municipal*) in the center of town. In most other aspects, Catumbela increasingly resembled a provincial Portuguese town, from the architecture styles, to the *praças* (squares) and distinctive *calçadas portuguesas* (Portuguese sidewalks). The construction of gracious villas for Cassequel's top administrators overlooking town, housing in the center for Portuguese employees, and the construction of monuments commemorating Portuguese history framed people's interactions and gave Catumbela a distinctly Portuguese colonial identity.<sup>72</sup> From the 1920s, Africans were moved to settlements outside of the town center, where white settlers and *assimilados* lived. Angola's urban spaces evolved increasingly throughout the 1920s through 1950s to look increasingly more like the segregated towns and cities of neighboring British and Belgian colonies. These changes resulted from ideas about the "sanitation syndrome" and efforts by Cassequel to create a model company town in order to attract skilled administrators and technical staff from Portugal.

Changing geopolitical conditions led the colonial government to abolish forced labor in 1961, which caused Cassequel's administrators to hasten a policy of attracting a wholly voluntary workforce. To achieve this goal, Cassequel built worker villages in the 1950s and 1960s. These villages provided dramatically better conditions for employees and their families, and as a result workers' mortality declined. At the same time as living and working conditions for African employees improved, the Company's model town simmered with tensions as the nationalist war for independence raged and an infusion of tens of thousands of Portuguese troops across Angola heightened white settler loyalty to Portugal and suspicion of Africans. From settler neighborhoods came declarations of support for the troops and fatherland, and from the *bairros indígenas* on the outskirts came the beats and lyrics of Angolan musicians singing about nationalist themes and clandestine broadcasts from abroad.<sup>73</sup> With independence in 1975, the vast majority of Catumbela's white residents left the country, the new government nationalized Cassequel, and distinctions blurred between white and African areas. The government renamed Cassequel "Primeiro de Maio" in recognition of International Workers' Day. The plantation operated until 1990, when the government closed it because of declining production resulting from a shortage in machinery, increasing pressure to grow food for consumption on plantation lands, and the decision to carve an air force base and runaway out of the plantation for the Angolan armed forces.

## Notes

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2. Garth Andrew Myers, *Verandahs of Power: Colonialism and Space in Urban Africa* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2003), 9–10.
3. James Duffy, *Portuguese Africa* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1959), 2.
4. Hudson Institute, *Angola: Some Views of Development Prospects*, vol. 1 (New York: Hudson Institute, 1969), 133.
5. William Cunningham Bissell, "Between Fixity and Fantasy: Assessing the Spatial Impact of Colonial Urban Dualism," *Journal of Urban History* 37, 2 (2011): 208–29.
6. John Garner, ed., *The Company Town: Architecture and Society in the Early Industrial Age* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 4.
7. Philip Bonner and Karin Shapiro, "Company Town, Company Estate: Pilgrim's Rest, 1910–1932," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 19, 2 (June 1993): 171–200; Robert Home, "From Barrack Compounds to the Single-Family House: Planning Worker Housing in Colonial Natal and Northern Rhodesia," *Planning Perspectives* 15 (2000): 327–47.
8. Myers, *Verandahs of Power*.
9. J. Douglas Porteous, "The Nature of the Company Town," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 51 (November 1970): 127–42.
10. On May 28, 1928, a military coup overthrew Portugal's First Republic. In 1933 the finance minister António de Oliveira Salazar instituted the *Estado Novo* (New State), which became known for its authoritarian, pro-Catholic, and pro-colonial policies. New State leaders such as Salazar and Armindo Monteiro, Minister of the Colonies (1931–35), theorized an imperial mythology that aimed to raise support in Portugal for the imperial mission.
11. Cláudia Castelo, *O Modo Português de Estar no Mundo: O Luso-Tropicalismo e a Ideologia Colonial Portuguesa* (Porto: Edições Afrontamento, 1999), 61.
12. For a South African case study see Bonner and Shapiro, "Company Town, Company Estate."
13. Castelo, *O Modo Português*, 286.
14. Jeremy Ball, "'I Escaped in a Coffin': Remembering Angolan Forced Labor from the 1940s," *Cadernos de Estudos Africanos*, no. 9/10 (July 2005/June 2006): 61–75.
15. Interview with João K., February 21, 2006, Balombo (Benguela).
16. Interview with Félix S., April 18, 2006, Chinguar (Bié).
17. The best historical analysis of *Lusotropicalismo* is Castelo, *O Modo Português*.
18. Cláudia Castelo, *Passagens para África: O Povoamento de Angola e Moçambique com Naturais da Metrópole, 1920–1974* (Porto: Edições Afrontamento, 2007), 108.
19. Aida Freudenthal, José Manuel Fernandes, Maria de Lurdes Janeiro, eds., *Angola no século XIX: Cidades, Território e Arquitecturas* (Lisbon: authors' edition, 2006), 46.
20. Fernando Batalha, *A Urbanização de Angola* (Luanda: Museu de Angola, 1950), 16.

21. Aida Freudenthal, *Arimos e Fazendas: A Transição Agrária em Angola* (Luanda: Edições Chá de Caxinde, 2005), 134.
22. *Ibid.*, 144.
23. *Ibid.*, 106.
24. Henrique de Paiva Couceiro, *Angola (Dois annos de Governo Junho 1907-Junho 1909): História e Commentarios* (Lisbon: A Nacional, 1910), 72.
25. René Pélissier, *Les Guerres grises: Résistance et révoltes en Angola, 1845–1941* (Orgeval: Pélissier, 1977).
26. For an overview of the 1902 Ovimbundu rebellion, see Douglas Wheeler and C. Diane Christensen, “To Rise with One Mind: The Bailundo War of 1902,” in *Social Change in Angola*, ed. Franz-Wilhelm Heimer (Munich: Weltforum Verlag, 1973), 53–92.
27. *Ibid.*, 169. In fact, as early as 1843, the colonial government made plans and passed legislation to move the entire city of Benguela to the site of Lobito because of the site’s better harbor for large ships. However, the move never happened as a result of lack of funds. See Batalha, *A Urbanização de Angola*, 18. See also João Bernardina B. de Sá, “O Porto do Lobito e o Caminho de Ferro de Benguela como Factores de Desenvolvimento,” *Fontes e Estudos Revista do Arquivo Histórico Nacional*, no. 1 (November 1994): 79–100.
28. Augusto Bastos, *Monographia de Catumbella* (Lisbon: Tipografia Universal, 1912), 44.
29. *Ibid.*, 67.
30. *Ibid.*, 20–1.
31. *Ibid.*, 67–9. The Portuguese abolished slavery in the coastal towns under their control in 1869. Slaves became *libertos* (freedmen) subject to certain restrictions until 1878, when they were completely freed and called *pretos livres* (free blacks). In spite of these reforms, the slave trade from the interior continued and purchases of slaves in the coastal regions were commonly referred to as *serviçais*. See Linda M. Heywood, “Slavery and Forced Labor in the Changing Political Economy of Central Angola, 1850–1949,” in *The End of Slavery in Africa*, ed. Suzanne Miers and Richard Roberts (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988), 415–36.
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33. Freudenthal, Fernandes, and Janeiro, *Angola no século XIX*, 54.
34. *Ibid.*, 56.
35. José Redinha, *Distribuição Étnica da Província de Angola* (Luanda: Centro de Informação e Turismo de Angola, 1965), 20.

36. José do Sacramento e Sousa, *Relatório da Alfândega de Benguela Relativo ao ano de 1915* (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional, 1918), 70.
37. For a comparative process in French African colonies, see Gwendolyn Wright, “Tradition in the Service of Modernity: Architecture and Urbanism in French Colonial Policy, 1900–1930,” in *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, ed. Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 322–45.
38. For more about the “sanitation syndrome,” see Bill Freund, *The African City: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 79.
39. Norton de Matos served two influential terms as governor between 1912–15 and 1920–24. For a detailed analysis of white settlement in Angola, see Castelo, *Passagens para África*.
40. Castelo, *Passagens para África*, 248.
41. *Ibid.*, 257.
42. In 1952 the Gabinete de Urbanização Colonial became the Gabinete de Urbanização do Ultramar (Town Planning Committee for the Overseas Territories). J. M. Fernandes, “Arquitectura e Urbanismo no Espaço Ultramarino Português,” in *História da Expansão Portuguesa*, vol. 5, 1930–1998, ed. F. Bettencourt and K. Chaudhuri (Lisbon: Círculo de Leitores, 1999), 334–83.
43. Wright, “Tradition in the Service of Modernity,” 323.
44. José Manuel Fernandes, *Geração Africana Arquitectura e Cidades em Angola e Moçambique, 1925–1975* (Lisbon: Livros Horizonte, 2002), 9.
45. Luiz de Sousa Lara, *A Indústria do Açúcar na Economia do Império Conferência Realizada na Sociedade de Geografia em 6 de Março de 1936* (Lisbon: Sociedade Industrial de Tipografia, 1936), 16.
46. *Ibid.*
47. For example, the town of Bocoio became Villa de Sousa Lara, Balombo became Villa de Norton de Matos, and Lubango became Sá de Bandeira, all names of colonial settlers and officials. For an interesting perspective on colonial memory, see the special edition of *Cadernos de Estudos Africanos*, “Memórias Coloniais,” no. 9/10 (July 2005/June 2006).
48. Castelo, *Passagens para África*, 107–8.
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51. Abdou Maliq Simone, *For the City Yet to Come: Changing African Life in Four Cities* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004), 142.
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65. Ibid., 370.
66. Ibid., 165–6.
67. Ibid.
68. Letter to Board of Directors, December 15, 1960, Cartas Expedidas 1959 a 1960, Cassequel Archive.
69. Interview with Mário S. and João A., Catumbela, July 13, 2002.
70. For the revolt in the north, see Douglas Wheeler and Rene Pelissier, *Angola* (London: Pall Mall, 1971). For the revolt in Baixa de Caassanje, see Aida Freudenthal, “A Baixa de Cassanje: Algodão e Revolta,” *Revista Internacional de Estudos Africanos*, no. 18–22 (1995–1999): 245–83.
71. Acontecimentos em Angola, April 22, 1961, Cartas Expedidas 1961, 1962 e 1963, Cassequel Archive.
72. For an overview of ideas about colonial spaces, culture, and identity, see Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson, “Beyond ‘Culture’: Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference,” *Cultural Anthropology* 7, 1 (February 1992): 6–23.
73. Marissa Moorman, *Intonations: A Social History of Music and Nation in Luanda, Angola, from 1945 to Recent Times* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2008).



## CHAPTER 5

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# Labor Resistance and Accommodation among Immigrant Workers in the Oil Company Towns of Patagonia, Argentina

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Days were getting brighter in late September 1917, announcing the much-awaited warm weather that would put an end to Comodoro Rivadavia's cold and windy winter. Located in the San Jorge Gulf, in central Patagonia, the port town was the commercial and transportation hub that linked the ranches of the western Chubut territory with the rest of the country. It was also a bustling service and commercial center that benefited from its proximity to the ring of company towns that had sprung since the discovery of rich oil deposits just a few kilometers to the north in 1907. The largest of these company towns was built by the Argentine state and, ten years later, was home to close to half the area's population.<sup>1</sup> As the main commercial, service, and transportation center, Comodoro Rivadavia was full of activity, and its streets were busy with locals and out-of-towners from distant rural settlements and nearby oil towns. The early spring of 1917, however, witnessed a movement of a different kind, signaling the beginning of important social transformations. A diverse, multiethnic group of oil workers from the state-owned company town took to the streets of Comodoro Rivadavia asking for improvements in working conditions and denouncing the company in harsh terms. The visible head of the company, Leopoldo Sol, a mining engineer who then served as the local administrator, was the center of incensed chants:

We demand eight hours  
 And our daily wage increased  
 Hey, hey, hey  
 And our daily wage increased  
 The town's priest  
 Has understood the reason  
 But who has not understood?  
 It is the great oaf of Sol  
 Hey, hey, hey  
 It is the great oaf of Sol<sup>2</sup>

This unprecedented street rally marked the start of a series of protests and strikes that mobilized large numbers of workers and resulted in the creation of unions in the oil company towns during the first three decades of the twentieth century. These rallies and strikes were part of larger negotiations between oil workers and companies that included both tactics of resistance and accommodation. Oil workers had to confront the companies' and the Argentine state actions, which varied from swift repression of any sign of dissidence to nurturing a sense of shared goals and patriotic values. In the process, oil workers reevaluated their roles and objectives as workers, immigrants, and residents of the oil company towns.

Class solidarity played a central role in the redefinition of labor-capital relations that took place in the oil towns, but so did workers' ethnicity and national origins. Oil workers comprised a heterogeneous, multiethnic group of immigrants. Located on the arid terrain of coastal Patagonia, the oil area was only sparsely populated, and the town of Comodoro Rivadavia, which had been founded in 1901, could not provide the necessary labor force. At the beginning of oil production, the majority of workers were European migrants who were hired directly in Europe for their technical skills (such as Germans, Austrians, Poles, and Russians), or else contracted in Buenos Aires, the country's capital; soon, workers from southern and eastern Europe followed, attracted by the news of job opportunities in the oil fields. Spaniards, Portuguese, Russians, Italians, and Bulgarians constituted the largest groups. Later, internal migrants from northern Argentina and migrants from neighboring Chile joined the labor force of the oil companies.<sup>3</sup> Migrant workers had to negotiate their multiple roles as oil workers of particular company towns, as workers with links to a larger working class, and as immigrants who belonged to different national and ethnic groups. During some labor disputes, oil workers were able to overcome differences and maintain class solidarity. Sometimes their ethnic origin helped them achieve their interests as workers; others, workers' ethnicity weakened their class interests. Company town dynamics added to this process of labor-capital

relations. As in the case of Britannia Beach, Canada, analyzed by Katharine Rollwagen in this book, oil companies played an important role in creating a sense of community through both paternalistic welfare and repressive actions. As Rollwagen discusses, often management's and labor's ideas of community were at odds. Similarly, in the oil fields of Patagonia, management's actions contributed to the tension between class and ethnic solidarities. The presence of the Argentine state in its double role of company manager and enforcer of national authority added a crucial dimension to labor-capital relations in the state-run company town—in particular, through an active policy of Argentinization that included the enforcement of patriotic ideals and the recruitment of Argentine workers to diminish the strength of organized labor, which was largely in the hands of immigrant workers. Ideas of loyalty among the workers in the oil fields became highly contested terrain.

Concepts such as class and ethnicity have received wide attention from scholars. While earlier interpretation of class solidarity considered it a direct result of worker's struggle, subsequent analyses have placed it within the totality of workers' lived experiences (both in and out of the workplace).<sup>4</sup> Ethnicity has also been the object of reinterpretation, particularly as a concept to analyze the immigrant experience. Reacting to earlier considerations of ethnicity as a primordial characteristic that remains unchanged, later interpretations have emphasized its instrumental capacity, presenting it as the result of particular historical contexts. Ethnicity is a dynamic construction only possible in relationship with others. In the words of Werner Sollors, "It is not a thing but a process."<sup>5</sup> Migrant workers made use of both sources of identity and relationships according to changing local and historical circumstances. Ethnicity sometimes hindered class solidarity, but other times it served as a bonding factor among immigrant workers.<sup>6</sup> Gary Mormino and George Pozzetta's observation can be aptly applied to the oil company towns of Patagonia: "Class and ethnicity... emerge more as a reflection of the accommodation people fashioned to cope with the insecurities that came with the social changes rather than ends in themselves."<sup>7</sup>

By looking at labor conflict and the actions of trade unions, this chapter explores the tension between class and ethnic ties among immigrant oil workers and the way they played out within the space of the company town created and administered by the Argentine state. In particular, it focuses on the combination of factors that contributed to labor mobilization and to the success or failure of strikes, and the change from confrontation to accommodation. It examines three distinct periods: from 1917 to 1922, when oil workers created unions and participated in five strikes; from 1922 to 1930, when labor conflict decreased, trade union activities ended, and the

state-run oil company implemented measures of labor control that included the policy of Argentinization; and from 1930 to 1945, when there was a transition from workers' resistance to accommodation in the context of a stronger interference of the state in labor-capital relations.

### **The Oil Workers of Kilometer 3: Immigration and Labor in a State-Owned Company Town**

Soon after oil began gushing from the ground in 1907, the Argentine state moved in and established an area of exclusive production. The state-owned company was first known as Explotación Nacional de Petróleo de Comodoro Rivadavia and, since 1922, as Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales, or YPF, the name that remained in use until its partial privatization in the 1980s. YPF's original camp, built near the first oil well, gave way to a complex of oil fields, drilling camps, workshops, administrative buildings, and workers' accommodations centered around a fully developed company town located 3 km north of Comodoro Rivadavia. Popularly known as Kilometer 3 or simply "El 3" (The 3), the initial settlement became a residential and production compound that rivaled in population the nearby town of Comodoro Rivadavia.<sup>8</sup> Securing concessions for oil exploration from the Argentine state, private companies also set up work camps and company towns in the area during the first two decades of the twentieth century. The three main private company towns were created by the Compañía Ferrocarrilera de Petróleo, Astra, and Diadema Argentina; they were located 8 km, 20 km, and 27 km north and northwest of Comodoro Rivadavia, respectively.<sup>9</sup> Such a concentration of company towns was unprecedented in Argentina, and it was not replicated. Company towns were not unknown in the country, but they were not numerous. At the turn of the twentieth century, this type of residential settlement of laborers associated with a particular extractive or processing site was common in the sugar-producing plantations and processing centers of the Northwest and in the *quabricho* lumbering settlements of the Chaco region.<sup>10</sup> In both cases, company towns were associated with large company estates.<sup>11</sup> In the Province of Entre Ríos, north of Buenos Aires, European entrepreneurs also built a company town for Liebig's meat extract and corned beef plant, which became one of the most modern meat-processing plants in South America.<sup>12</sup> A few other company towns emerged during the following decades. These towns were associated with particular extractive or industrial activities like cement and textile production.<sup>13</sup> More common was the development of single-industry towns like Berisso, in the Province of Buenos Aires (meatpacking), or Firmat, in the Province of Santa Fe (agricultural machinery).<sup>14</sup> As YPF expanded production to other parts of Argentina—namely the provinces of

Salta and Neuquén—the company used the pioneering experience of Km 3 to build new oil towns.<sup>15</sup>

Oil production in coastal Patagonia required an abundant and reliable source of labor that the region could not supply, thus making company towns a necessity. YPF's Km 3 was the largest and the most populated of the oil company towns. Demographic growth followed increase in production. From an initial team of 11 men in 1907, it grew to close to 6,000 inhabitants by the late 1920s and to more than 10,000 inhabitants in the early 1940s.<sup>16</sup> Male workers constituted the majority of this population, especially in the early years. Most workers were single or married men who had left their families in Europe or in other Argentine cities. Their intention was to work in the oil fields temporarily, taking advantage of higher wages and savings opportunities. Consequently, the rate of turnover was very high.<sup>17</sup> The working population grew considerably during the 1930s and early 1940s, reaching over 5,000 workers in 1943. As the company built more housing and provided more services for workers, more migrant workers settled. The presence of women and children increased with family migration and family formation in Argentina. In 1917, women and children constituted only 17 percent of the population of the YPF company town; by 1926, they were 43 percent; and by 1940, they represented approximately 56 percent.

Foreign migrants constituted a clear majority of the labor force well into the 1930s, and they remained a significant group into the middle of the century. All but one of the members of the original drilling team were foreigners.<sup>18</sup> Once production took off and labor opportunities expanded, direct recruitment and the subsequent development of networks of migration resulted in a steady flow of immigrant labor. Southern and eastern European immigrants constituted the overwhelming majority of the working population, especially among blue-collar workers. Ethnic composition changed over time with an increase in the presence of Argentine workers (see table 5.1). In 1917, for example, only 4 percent of the blue-collar workers were Argentine. Among the immigrant workers, Spaniards (28.5 percent), Portuguese (16.4 percent), Russians (16.4 percent), Greeks (8.8 percent), and other Eastern Europeans (7.0 percent) constituted the largest groups. By 1929, Spaniards and Portuguese continued as the largest immigrant groups, but their relative importance diminished (from 44.9 in 1917 to 22.6 percent in 1929), while the relative presence of Italians (7.7 percent) and Eastern Europeans, in particular Bulgarians (6.5 percent), grew. The biggest change, however, was the noticeable growth in the number of Argentine workers, which reached 43.4 percent.<sup>19</sup>

In part, the overall decline in the number of European workers was the result of an active policy of Argentinization of the labor force implemented

**Table 5.1** YPF Workers by Nationality

Nationality	1917	1926	1929
Argentines	4.0	21.4	43.4
Spaniards	28.5	25.0	14.2
Portuguese	16.4	17.0	8.4
Russians	16.4	3.0	<i>No info.</i>
Austrians	9.5	2.3	<i>No info.</i>
Greeks	8.0	2.6	<i>No info.</i>
Rumanians	4.5	1.7	<i>No info.</i>
Italians	3.3	5.7	7.7
Bulgarians	2.5	4.3	6.5
Germans	2.5	4.0	<i>No info.</i>
Others	4.4	13.0	19.8
Numbers	1,137	3,384	2,732

*Source:* *La Protesta*, October 5, 1917, 3; AYPF, Copiador (December 1925–December 1930), 33–4; *Memoria YPF año 1919*, 48.

by Colonel Enrique Mosconi (General after 1926), the director-general of YPF from 1922 to 1930. The company enacted a series of initiatives to instill a sense of Argentine patriotism among the multiethnic population of the company town and to increase the presence of Argentine workers. Labor replacement was a response to the growing unrest among immigrant workers in the oil fields and to the activity of European immigrants as labor leaders. It rested on the assumption that Argentines of non-European descent were less prone to labor unrest, which YPF management like the Argentine authorities in general considered an alien phenomenon introduced by undesirable foreign activists.<sup>20</sup> YPF began a practice of direct recruitment of Argentine workers in the northwestern provinces of Catamarca and La Rioja—tellingly, regions that had not been affected by the wave of overseas immigration to Argentina.<sup>21</sup> This labor strategy was implemented without regard to the high costs involved and often without taking into account the valuable experience of immigrant workers in the fields. Recruitment was successful, but turnover was very high. Between 1925 and 1930, 2,613 Argentine workers from the Northwest arrived in the area, but only a little over a third of them remained.<sup>22</sup> After a few years, the company abandoned direct recruitment in favor of social networks created by immigrants themselves that facilitated the arrival of family members, friends, and acquaintances to the oil fields. Migrant workers built social and labor networks that facilitated the arrival of newcomers.<sup>23</sup>

The spatial characteristics of the company town and the discretionary power of the company in its space created special circumstances for the

development of class and ethnic solidarities.<sup>24</sup> As other company towns, YPF's Km 3 combined work and residence, production and community life.<sup>25</sup> An unincorporated community, Km 3 was an autonomous space beyond the reach of the local government of Comodoro Rivadavia. The same was true for the other oil company towns in the area. Within the confines of the company town, the oil company administered not only production and labor but also social life. In its role as an employer, the company hired and distributed workers in different work sections, and it terminated contracts when it saw fit. In its role as an administrator, it controlled a myriad services and activities, including housing allocation, provision of medical services, and authorization for the creation of social organizations and the establishment of individually owned stores.

Km 3 was not a planned community, but by the late 1920s, it had grown into a large company town with areas dedicated to administrative, service, and residential uses. Spatial divisions were tied not only to function but also to the hierarchical structure of the company town. The central neighborhood housed the administration, post office, some workshops, the consumer cooperative, the social club, the Catholic church, and the technical school for workers' sons; other service and commercial activities took place in the nearby commercial neighborhood. The hospital and the elementary school were located on the outskirts of the central neighborhoods, as were most of the workshops and warehouses. Residential areas were distributed around the company town following clear hierarchical principles. Housing assignments reinforced the company town's social structure, as workers' dwellings varied according to occupation and marital status. The houses of the company administrator and high-ranking personnel were located at the town's entrance, on the road leading to the central neighborhood from Comodoro Rivadavia; white-collar families had houses near the administration building; and blue-collar family housing and blue-collar single housing were located further away. Occupational status also determined the quality, services, and overall comfort of company housing—at the upper end of the housing spectrum were the chalet-style houses of the administrator and the high-ranking personnel; at the opposite end, the barracks for single workers. Unlike company towns with ethnically or racially diverse labor in other societies, in the oil fields there were no spatial divisions by ethnicity or national origin.<sup>26</sup> Thus, residential spaces facilitated class solidarity outside the workplace. Subsidized housing was a necessity to attract and maintain the labor force, but it also became an important strategy for social control, for it was contingent upon employment. In addition to housing, workers had access to company-sponsored social and recreational services that also reflected social hierarchy and occupational status. For example, the activities of the social club were

restricted to white-collar workers and high-ranking personnel; sports were also divided by occupational category. The exception to this hierarchical division was the participation in company-sponsored public gatherings to commemorate national holidays or company anniversaries. Over the years, these celebrations developed into important community rituals in which the company downplayed class and ethnic differences and emphasized a sense of belonging to a larger “petroleum family.”<sup>27</sup>

Migrant workers and oil companies in the oil fields of Comodoro Rivadavia built socially and ethnically diverse communities in which labor relations went through moments of accommodation and resistance. YPF intervened actively in the redefinition of class and ethnic ties among its workers. Management used different devices to facilitate production and avoid conflict, including mechanisms of social and labor control. Workers had their own objectives and devised different ways to achieve them and to alter power dynamics to their benefit whenever possible. The formation of unions and the participation in labor stoppages were among the repertoire of strategies used by oil workers during the first four decades of the twentieth century.

### **Early Oil Workers’ Organization in Times of Labor Unrest**

Between 1917 and 1922, the state-owned oil company had to confront unprecedented labor unrest. Oil workers created their first organizations and were involved in a series of strikes. Labor unrest disrupted production, which forced the oil company to accept several demands. At the same time, the company took measures to impose a stricter control and avoid further disturbances. Three strikes marked the highest points of confrontation between the workers and the oil company. The heterogeneity of the working population of the oil fields and its impact on workers’ participation became apparent in these strikes. Ethnic ties facilitated labor mobilization among the most occupationally homogeneous ethnic groups.

The first strike began on September 29, 1917, in the state-owned company town, as a result of the administration’s rejection of workers’ demands for higher wages and better working conditions. In particular, striking workers asked for an increase of regular wages, higher hourly payment for overtime and Sunday work, and a reduction in their work day to eight hours. In addition, strikers presented a series of grievances that included rudimentary working conditions, the “military” discipline to which they were subjected, and the lack of respect they received from company management.<sup>28</sup> When the company administrator Leopoldo Sol rejected the workers’ demands, the majority of the skilled and unskilled workers, including forty-five drilling foremen, went on strike.<sup>29</sup> The conflict extended to nearby



private oil company towns, administered by Astra (Km 20) and the *Compañía Argentina de Comodoro Rivadavia* (the precursor of the *Compañía Ferrocarrilera de Petróleo* in Km 8), and it lasted forty days. Informal social networks served as important channels of communication and support for labor solidarity. As the administrator of Astra explained, “There is no formal worker organization in the district. Nevertheless, personal relations exist that make it possible for workers from one mine to support workers from the others.”<sup>30</sup>

Oil companies met to discuss a common action and decided to leave the resolution of the conflict to their local administrators who showed no sign of flexibility during negotiations. Administrators continued firing workers and expelling them from the company towns—for housing was tied to employment.<sup>31</sup> Companies blamed the conflict on “the presence of outside agitators” and appealed to the national government for protection, which dispatched navy troops to the oil fields. Both the militarization of law enforcement during times of unrest and the expulsion of foreign workers deemed agitators would increase during the next decades as mechanisms of social control.<sup>32</sup> The expulsion of immigrant workers was facilitated by national legislation passed during the previous decade. In particular, by the Residency Law of 1902 and the Law of Social Defense of 1910, which authorized the deportation of immigrants whose behavior was considered a threat to national security or public order.<sup>33</sup> As weeks passed, an increasing number of workers found themselves without work, housing, or food. Several local unions declared their solidarity with workers in strike.<sup>34</sup> Support also extended to the larger community of Comodoro Rivadavia, whose leading members sent a letter to the national authorities demanding a resolution to the conflict. Local merchants offered bread and meat to the strikers and gave workers the possibility of buying products on credit to be paid after the strike, and a local strike commission organized a soup kitchen.<sup>35</sup>

With negotiations in a deadlock, a month after the beginning of the conflict, oil workers on strike decided to deal directly with national authorities. Evading police controls, a delegation of seven workers traveled to Buenos Aires. Its occupational profile reveals interesting aspects of labor leadership. All delegates were skilled workers (drilling bosses, boilermakers, and founders), showing that they were the most active organizers. Their skills suggest that they had a long period of service in the oil companies or that they had worked before in the railroad or in foundries. They also had some leverage in the negotiations, as skilled workers were harder to replace. In terms of national origin, the delegation was composed of four Argentines and three Spaniards. The presence of Spanish leaders reflected the composition of the working population of the state-owned oil company as a whole, but that of

Argentine leaders was overrepresented (in 1917, Spaniards and Argentines were close to 30 percent and 4 percent of the oil workers, respectively). It is possible these labor leaders had previous militant experiences, but other factors may also explain the delegation's composition. Language was important for negotiations, and all of them spoke Spanish. In addition, Argentines were safe from laws that punished immigrant labor and political activism with deportation.

Direct negotiations with the ministries of Agriculture and the Navy, and the administrators of the state company and the private company Astra stalled until the president of Argentina, Hipólito Yrigoyen, decided to intervene and ordered the end to the conflict.<sup>36</sup> Workers' demands were largely met. Companies accepted the eight-hour working day and granted substantial wage increases, only slightly inferior to the workers' original demands. In addition, in order to improve working and living conditions, the government promised to create a consumer cooperative and a cooperative for disabled workers for the state-owned company town, to enforce the work accident law fully, to improve workers' housing, and to establish a lower fee for the transportation of fruits and vegetables from Buenos Aires to Patagonia in the oil ships.<sup>37</sup>

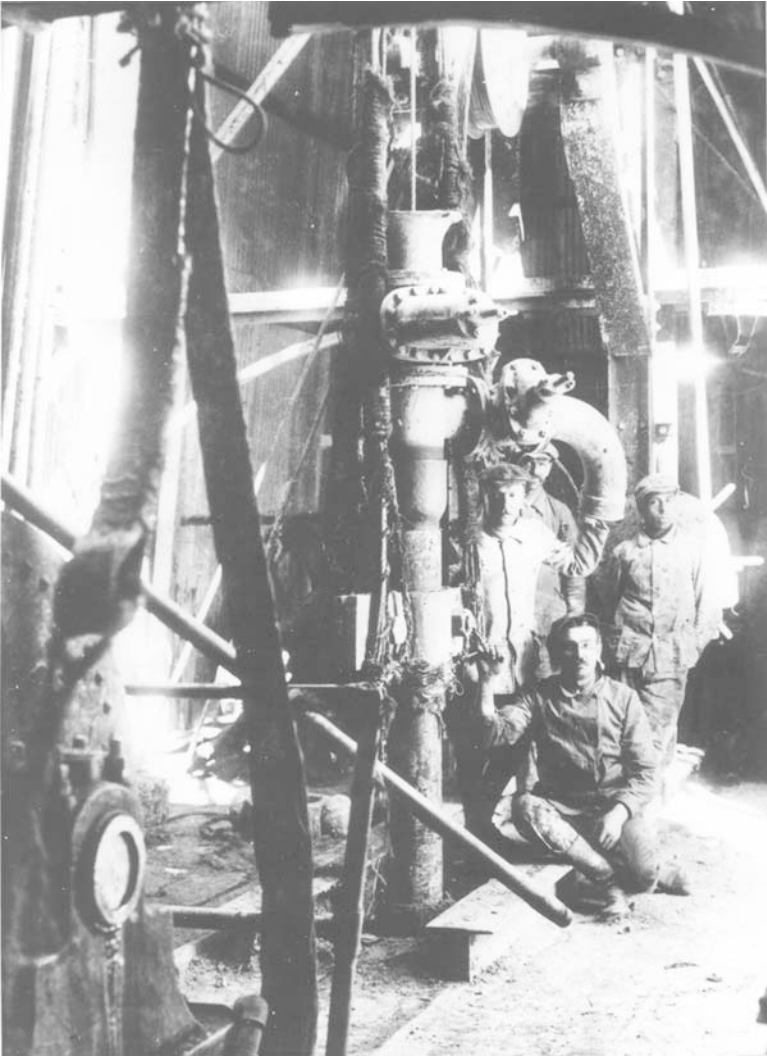
After the first strike, oil companies had to confront a different reality. Oil workers' participation in a successful work stoppage had bolstered their bargaining position. Equally important, participation in the strike led to the creation of the first labor organizations. Before the strike had ended, skilled drilling workers organized the Drilling Boss and Aspirant Society—most of the early members were Austrian and German immigrants.<sup>38</sup> A few days after the strike was settled, a larger, more inclusive organization was born. Known as the Oil Workers Federation, it included representatives from all the oil company towns as well as from oil workers living in the town of Comodoro Rivadavia. According to the authorities of the state-run company, the Federation was anarchist. Its members, however, defined their organization as an autonomous entity linked to larger labor organizations, namely the Labor Federation of the Argentine Republic (FORA) of the Fifth and the Ninth Congresses. These two divisions of the FORA represented an anarco-communist and a syndicalist position, respectively, which confirms the autonomy of the new organization of oil workers.<sup>39</sup> The Oil Workers Federation's inclination to negotiate suggests a reformist syndicalist position.

The Oil Workers Federation was very active during 1918, using multiple approaches. It staged a long boycott to a local merchant who had not supported the strikers in 1917, engaged in negotiations to obtain wage increases and improvements in workers' conditions, and organized two strikes. One strike was in solidarity with local railroad workers, and the other demanded the readmission of workers who had been fired under accusations of labor

agitation. The second strike ended in failure, which weakened the union's position. Workers from the state-owned company went on strike, but their call to action was not followed by workers of the nearby oil towns. The recently appointed YPF chief administrator, Captain Felipe Fliess, held a firm uncompromising position, ordering the workers back to work or threatening them with eviction from the company town and expulsion. The confrontation turned violent, with clashes between strikers and strikebreakers. Captain Fliess's appointment inaugurated a long period in which the state company town was under the authority of an administrator with a military background, and in which military discipline played a central role in the company town's management.<sup>40</sup> Navy soldiers were called once more to the oil fields for protection and to help drilling and shift bosses to continue with production.<sup>41</sup> Faced with the intransigency of the local administration, strikers appealed for the mediation of the president of Argentina, hoping to repeat the success of 1917. Realizing that they could not keep the conflict for too long, strike leaders shifted their position: they abandoned their demand for the readmission of laid-off workers—the original cause of the strike—but pressed for the liberation of the workers imprisoned during the current strike in the local police station. President Yrigoyen responded favorably to the revised demands, and the labor leaders put an end to the strike. Workers had lost the strike, and the company proceeded to expel more workers from the company town under the accusation of spreading anarchist ideas. There were no formal reactions to these expulsions by the Oil Workers Federation.<sup>42</sup>

The failed stoppage of 1918 was a turning point for organized labor in the oil fields. Both the state company's administration and the national government acted with more resolve and employed harsher measures. From the point of view of oil production, imported oil from Mexico lessened the possibility of an energy crisis, and the authorities were less willing to compromise.<sup>43</sup> But equally important were fears of radicalization of the labor movement triggered by the Bolshevik revolution in Europe and the economic crisis that followed World War I. These fears provoked a conservative reaction among Argentine leaders. The immigrant origin of most oil workers only increased official mistrust about labor mobilization. As labor stoppages grew in other parts of the country, the Argentine government turned often to military force to repress them and to enforce order. Oil workers' response also contributed to the 1918 failure, as they showed a less unified front than in 1917. Participation in the strike varied according to occupational status, work organization, and workplace practices.<sup>44</sup> Most workers—whether unskilled, skilled, or foremen—went on strike, but the majority of the drilling and shift bosses did not. Workers in oil production, general services, and construction services had participation rates that ranged from 77 percent to

94 percent. Working experiences in these divisions fostered solidarity. In oil production, workers were organized in small teams dedicated to each oil well; most of them were unskilled workers under the supervision of foremen (see figure 5.1). In general or construction services, most workers were



**Figure 5.1** Oil Workers, Undated.

Patagonia Mosaic Digital Collection, Archives and Special Collections, Dickinson College.

skilled and were organized in larger groups under the supervision of foremen. Skilled workers were more likely to become strikers and active militants. The closer the relation was among skilled and unskilled workers in the workplace, the easier it was to build stronger bonds of solidarity.

Ethnicity also influenced participation. Overall, European workers had higher levels of participation in the strike than their Argentine counterparts whose rate of participation was only 40 percent. But there were significant variations among European workers as well. The more socially homogeneous the ethnic group, the greater its participation. Among Spaniards, the largest ethnic group, the rate of participation reached 90 percent. Most of them were skilled or unskilled workers, and very few were foremen. Portuguese workers, who constituted the second-largest ethnic group and most of whom were unskilled laborers, showed a complete adherence to the strike. Spaniards and Portuguese were homogenous in another way, namely regional origin. A significant number of Spanish workers originated in a handful of nearby villages in the Province of Almeria, and most of the Portuguese were from a cluster of villages in the southern region of the Algarve.<sup>45</sup> In contrast, ethnic groups who were occupationally more diverse did not exhibit the same level of participation. For example, the majority of Austrians worked in production and close to a third were foremen or drilling bosses. Their participation in the strike was 30 percent lower than the Portuguese and 20 percent lower than the Spaniards. Clearly, by sharing the same working and living conditions, most workers built strong bonds of class solidarity. Among the largest and more homogenous groups, this solidarity was reinforced by ethnic ties. The largest immigrant groups also had labor militants who contributed to the mobilization of their fellow workers using the channels of ethnic solidarity. For example, a Portuguese mason was secretary of the Oil Workers Federation in 1917, and Spanish, Portuguese, and Russian workers were among those expelled and sent to Buenos Aires because they were accused of spreading anarchist ideas in 1918.<sup>46</sup>

The failure of the second 1918 strike and the dismissal of labor leaders demoralized oil workers. A letter sent by a former Italian worker to a friend in May 1919 presents a clear picture of the climate in the oil fields. There was still support for the “workers’ cause,” he explained, but “due to the latest events, when our deportation occurred, all of them have withdrawn and nobody wants to act.”<sup>47</sup> During most of 1919, the Oil Workers Federation went through a period of internal reorganization. This period of soul searching was perceived as weakness by the authorities of the state-owned company, which took this opportunity to exert a stricter control over the labor force, including arbitrary firing of workers. In the words of the company administrator, Captain Felipe Fliess, the message to the workers had

to be clear: “before, workers ruled, but now [managers] rule.”<sup>48</sup> For organized labor, action was the best remedy to show strength and unite workers. During late 1919 and early 1920, oil workers participated in two labor conflicts. The first one began in solidarity with a conflict among port workers, and it involved oil workers from the state-owned company and the private company Astra.<sup>49</sup> The second conflict started in December 1919 as a reaction to the state-owned company’s refusal to attend to a series of oil workers’ demands for wage increases and improvements in living conditions and health services.<sup>50</sup> As the state oil company maintained an intransigent position, the strike expanded to the private companies Astra and *Compañía Argentina de Petróleo*. Lack of negotiations and the expansion of the conflict led to a prolonged standoff that ended in March 1920. Despite workers’ perseverance, the strike was defeated. Many labor leaders were expelled, and fear of radicalization at the national and local level deprived workers of broader support beyond the oil fields.

Oil companies held a firm position during the 1919–20 strike. Negotiations were accompanied by clear demonstrations of companies’ resolve to enforce order and to challenge the position of organized labor. Dismissals, evictions from company housing, arrests, and expulsions to Buenos Aires were common—the last, a likely prelude to deportation for many immigrant workers. At the height of the conflict, the state-owned company offered free transportation to discontented workers who wanted to leave the oil fields and return to Buenos Aires. By the end of the strike, about half the workers had left the company town. Oil companies began hiring personnel at the end of March 1920, but only after careful selection. Those labeled as “agitators” were not readmitted—among them many drilling bosses, shift bosses, and stokers from the state-owned company who had been accused of destroying oil equipment with the intent of sabotaging production.<sup>51</sup>

The general context was also hostile to workers’ activism, which explains the lack of support beyond the limits of the company towns. Unlike in 1917, during the 1919–20 strike, the local community did not support oil workers’ actions. Even more indicative of a growing climate of fear and distrust, groups of concerned residents were willing to support a policy of repression. During those years, immigrant worker and labor activist became synonymous in the eyes of the authorities, and trade unionism was considered unpatriotic. After the arrest of an oil worker for distributing pamphlets in support of the strike revealed that he was an Argentine and not an immigrant, the police chief of Comodoro Rivadavia exclaimed, “But my friend, an Argentine [like you] cannot be such a scoundrel!”<sup>52</sup> Alarm about a possible Marxist or anarchist revolution had spread in urban centers in Argentina that experienced increased labor activism and strikes, particularly during what became known as the Tragic Week, in early 1919. Labor disturbances also began to

spread closer to home, to the ranches of southern Patagonia that witnessed violent confrontations between striking workers and the army in the following years.<sup>53</sup> Fears of social unrest took hold in Comodoro Rivadavia where a branch of the Argentine Patriotic League was founded by the local manager of the Bank of the Argentine Nation.<sup>54</sup> At the national level, the government used the army to enforce order during strikes. President Yrigoyen did not intervene as a mediator, as he did in 1917.

Occupational and ethnic diversity influenced workers' participation in the 1919–20 strike, showing a trend that was already visible in the previous year, namely the higher rate of support among the most occupationally homogeneous ethnic groups. The overall rate of participation remained high, but lower than in 1918 (82 percent versus 86 percent). There were significant variations according to sections, workplace, and ethnic groups. Among Spanish workers, the overall participation in the strike was 87 percent. Half of the Spanish workers were concentrated in general service, and 60 percent of them were unskilled workers. Among those who did not join the strike, the majority worked in warehousing, accounting, and housing services. Among Portuguese workers, the participation was complete. The overwhelming majority of Portuguese workers were unskilled, and the largest concentration was in the drilling and pulling service. Finally, almost all Russian workers—the majority of whom were unskilled—joined the strike (95 percent). Spaniards, Russians, Portuguese, and Bulgarians were also among the most regular speakers in workers' meetings, and they had a strong presence in the majority of the committees in the Oil Workers Federation.<sup>55</sup> Levels of participation decreased among those groups that were occupationally more diversified and had more skilled workers or production overseers. For example, the overall participation among Austrian workers was fairly high overall (80 percent), but it was nil among drilling bosses, who constituted the bulk of Austrians who did not join the strike.

From 1917 to 1920, oil workers used strikes to improve their working and living conditions (see figure 5.2). In the process, they showed their resolve to confront the oil companies and built their first labor organization. Labor and ethnic solidarity were important factors in building support for the strikes. In those cases in which the workplace experience was reinforced by ethnic ties, solidarity was stronger. Labor leaders used both their appeal as fellow workers and as members of immigrant communities to garner support. Oil workers' success was not only related to the evolution of capital-labor relations within the company towns, but it was also influenced by events beyond their limits. In 1917, a successful outcome was possible because of the strength of workers' militancy, the ability of labor leaders to bargain with companies and the national government, the support of the local community, and the intervention of President Yrigoyen. In 1918 and 1919–20, the diminished







state company was reorganized in 1922 under the leadership of Colonel (later General) Enrique Mosconi, who oversaw the creation of Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales (YPF). A supporter of a policy of economic nationalism, Mosconi proposed a strong role of the state in the development of energy resources that would liberate Argentina of the economic dependency that had become evident during World War I and facilitate industrialization. Mosconi's main goal was the creation of a vertically integrated company that included every stage—exploration, drilling, refining, transportation, and commercialization. As a result of Mosconi's plan, YPF became the world's first vertically integrated, state-owned oil enterprise.<sup>56</sup>

With increased production came an expansion of the labor force. During the 1920s, immigration to the oil fields of Patagonia not only grew but became more diverse.<sup>57</sup> Southern and eastern European immigrants continued arriving using the networks of assistance already in place, and new networks emerged channeling more recent arrivals from Eastern Europe. The ethnic profile of the working population further diversified with the arrival of growing numbers of Argentine workers, following an active policy of company recruitment. Convinced that the high proportion of foreign workers in the oil fields was the cause of labor unrest, Mosconi was determined to Argentinize the labor force. The policy of Argentinization included the implementation of activities and civic rituals to create a sense of patriotism and loyalty to the adopted country among immigrant workers. In his words, these efforts sought “to implant the principles of Christian morality and the cult of heroes” among the workers in the oil fields.<sup>58</sup> This approach also had a repressive side, as nothing could be considered more unpatriotic than active labor militancy and disruption of production. In addition to measures to maintain order and keep social control, Mosconi implemented a strong anti-labor policy. In Comodoro Rivadavia, General Engineer Alonso Baldrich, the local YPF administrator from 1922 to 1924, carried out Mosconi's policies with military style—including hiring military personnel as assistants and working in military uniform—which exacerbated tensions in the company town and in the oil fields.<sup>59</sup>

Latent tensions between management and labor became manifest in 1924, when oil workers from YPF and from private oil companies went on strike in protest for a new national pension law. This occasion also contributed to galvanizing the Oil Workers Federation, which had been inactive since 1922, mostly as a result of the effective policy of intimidation and expulsions implemented by YPF's administration.<sup>60</sup> This strike was part of a national labor stoppage against the law that found widespread support in the oil company towns, where adherence to the strike was almost complete.<sup>61</sup> More than 1,500 workers attended daily meetings led by a labor delegate from Buenos Aires,

and the Oil Workers Federation was reactivated.<sup>62</sup> Oil workers needed little incentive to support the protest, particularly the large numbers of European workers who opposed the law vehemently. As YPF authorities observed, immigrant workers did not see any benefits in a law that reduced their pay for a future pension that they would not enjoy: “having come to the country for two or three years to save money and go back to their homeland, [workers] cannot accept a discount on their wages, which they consider exiguous.”<sup>63</sup> Oil activities were totally paralyzed, and some workers committed acts of sabotage such as filling extractive wells and boilers with water. Equally strong was the government’s and the oil companies’ reaction. YPF authorities organized armed volunteers and marines to patrol the oil fields, controlled all movements in and out of the company town, prohibited gatherings of more than three people, and targeted workers who were considered agitators.<sup>64</sup> Workers’ actions were ultimately successful, and an executive order from President Marcelo T. de Alvear annulled the pension law.

A few months later, when oil production in YPF had recuperated and reached its highest level, another strike took place in the oil fields. Labor leaders called for a stoppage in protest for YPF’s retaliation against workers who had been identified as agitators during the last strike. Despite having the support of the local railroad workers and the oil workers from the private companies, who announced solidarity strikes, YPF’s administration did not cede to workers’ demands and dismissed all workers who refused to return to work. This second strike lasted only a few days and ended in failure; defeated, some 1,500 workers returned to work.<sup>65</sup>

The policy of dismissals, eviction from the company town, and expulsion from the oil zone (and from Comodoro Rivadavia) was particularly detrimental for the labor leadership. Enforcement of this policy was not limited to cases of active hostility toward the company. Any manifestation of labor activism, such as the possession of anarchist literature or the public expression of critical views, was reason for dismissal. For example, in 1926 a group of Bulgarian workers accused of having anarchist books and pamphlets and links with the Balkan Anarchist Association in Buenos Aires was expelled; the same year, a Spanish worker who belonged to the Oil Workers Federation was fired after he was reported for saying “soon oppression will end and liberty will come.”<sup>66</sup> Managers, drilling bosses, and timekeepers who oversaw workers in the field were vigilant, and oil workers had to be careful of voicing any opinion that could be considered nonconformist or dangerous. The local newspaper, *El Chubut*, expressed concern about the arbitrariness of some of these actions. “In the national company,” wrote *El Chubut*, “contempt of the law, abuses, arbitrariness, the abandon of justice, the disdain for workers, and the lack of stimulus, come from the top . . . Any poor fellow who makes a

gesture, or who attempts to defend a right such as a right to health care, will be classified as anarchist and 'deported' in the first oil ship."<sup>67</sup>

YPF's strong stance at the local level and the support of the national government in the containment of activities that could subvert social order sealed the fate of organized labor in the oil fields during the remainder of the 1920s. After the failed 1924 strike, the Oil Workers Federation languished and all attempts to revive it proved unsuccessful. In 1925, YPF authorities dismissed any danger of a resurgence of organized militant activities and credited the company's alertness about and firm response to potential sources of disturbance to public order and disruption of production:

The elimination of workers in a successive and gradual way, together with measures of precaution and vigilance adopted in the oil field (personnel selection, dislodgment of intruders, creation of two sites of vigilance), and completed with the instructions given to the port police chief of paying especial attention to the vigilance of restless elements, this administration hopes that the FOP [the Oil Workers Federation] . . . is not going to organize itself in a form which poses a threat to the calm of those workers who want to work.<sup>68</sup>

The test came in 1927, when labor federations at the national level declared their participation in an international work stoppage in solidarity with the trial and later execution of Italian anarchists Bartolomeo Vanzetti and Nicola Sacco, in the United States. Perceived by organized labor as an unjust action and a legal travesty, the events in the small Massachusetts town of South Braintree attracted unprecedented attention around the world.<sup>69</sup> In the oil fields, reactions were mixed. Port town workers and oil workers from most of the private companies went on strike, but most YPF workers abstained from participating. Only a handful of YPF workers were expelled from refusing to work.<sup>70</sup> In an internal memo, YPF authorities expressed satisfaction with the restraint showed by the majority of the workers and praised the "spirit of order and discipline with which [personnel] had maintained the normalcy of work during the strike."<sup>71</sup> But more than to workers' restraint, the lack of participation was due to strong preemptive measures. Company authorities had not taken any chances. General Mosconi arranged the dispatch of the two largest navy battleships to Comodoro Rivadavia and the landing of marines to help break the strike. In addition, 200 workers were imprisoned and 100 were expelled on accusations of being anarcho-syndicalist sympathizers.<sup>72</sup> This firm show of force was an effective deterrent. An oil worker recounted the general feeling in the oil fields in a letter to the national workers' newspaper *La Protesta*, in September 1927, in the following terms: "we could not go on strike again because the reaction left us totally drowned. Some [workers] were

**Table 5.2** Workers Dismissed in YPF by Nationality, 1924

<i>Nationality</i>	<i>Percentage Workers Dismissed*</i>	<i>Percentage Workers Population (1917)</i>	<i>Percentage Workers Population (1926)</i>
Argentines	5.0	4.0	21.4
Spaniards	38.0	28.5	25.0
Portuguese	25.0	16.4	17.0
Bulgarians	7.1	2.5	4.3
Greeks	4.3	8.0	2.6
Russians	4.1	16.4	3.0
Austrians	3.4	9.5	2.3
Other Europeans	13.2	14.4	23.0
Chileans	0.9	0.3	1.4
Numbers	463		

\* See note 74

Source: AYPF, Personnel Records; idem, *Circulares internas* año 1924, circular 121.

not in Comodoro already, and others were wherever the oil ships had taken them. The deployment of forces was what threatened us the most.<sup>73</sup>

Immigrant workers from the most established ethnic groups and who were most occupationally homogenous had the most active militant leadership and were able to mobilize more workers during the 1920s strikes. Available information about the dismissed workers from YPF in the 1924 strike sheds some light on the relative importance of class and ethnic ties in workers' participation (see table 5.2). Two groups stand out with percentages of participation higher than their proportion of the total working population: Spaniards and Portuguese, who together accounted for two-thirds of the dismissed workers (compared with approximately 42 percent of the total number of workers).<sup>74</sup> Other immigrant groups with high percentages of participation included Bulgarians, Greeks, Russians, and Rumanians. Eastern European immigrants from other countries, who constituted the most recent arrivals, such as Czechs, Poles, and Yugoslavs, had lower rates of participation but later became active members in organized labor. In terms of occupation, the vast majority of dismissed workers were unskilled laborers (66.5 percent), followed by half-craftsmen or craftsmen (14 percent), stokers or stokers' helpers (12 percent), and only three foremen (two Greeks and a Portuguese). After the strike, YPF expelled 57 workers from the oil fields, over 80 percent of whom were Spaniards and Portuguese, followed by Bulgarians and Greeks (7 percent each). Regarding their occupations, half of the Spaniards, Greeks, and Bulgarians were stokers, and a third of the Portuguese were half-craftsmen; the rest were unskilled workers.<sup>75</sup> The immigrants who participated actively

in this strike represented not only the most established and occupationally homogenous groups, but also the ones with the strongest militant practices. Many of the workers who participated in the 1924 strike and were punished with dismissal had also participated in the 1918 and 1919 strikes. As newcomers continued to arrive, established ethnic and occupational ties facilitated the mobilization of fellow countrymen and their participation in organized labor.

On the other side of the spectrum stood the Argentine workers, whose presence had increased considerably during the 1920s, but who were newcomers with weak links to the larger community in the company town and the town of Comodoro Rivadavia. Their participation in labor stoppages remained low. The proportion of Argentine workers in YPF grew from 4 percent in 1917 to 21 percent in 1926, yet only 5 percent appear among the dismissed workers in 1924. Approximately two-thirds of those dismissed were skilled workers (stokers, stokers' helpers, and half-craftsmen). This occupational profile suggests that these workers were not recent arrivals from the countryside of northwest Argentina. They most likely had a longer presence in the oil fields, previous exposure to labor mobilization, or even militant experience. It is also possible that they were encouraged by their fellow immigrant boilermakers, most of whom went on strike.

Among the mostly European labor activists, the lack of participation of Argentine oil workers was interpreted as submissiveness, becoming the object of contempt and resentment. During the 1919 strike, when the mass arrivals of Argentine workers to the oil fields had not started, a Spaniard worker voiced a common opinion among immigrant labor when he was reported saying "if the strike is lost, it is because Argentines are a bunch of scabs."<sup>76</sup> Aware of this ethnic tension, the company used it as an effective mechanism to debilitate labor solidarity. In the midst of the 1919 strike, the oil company authorities suggested to the Minister of Interior that the most effective way to end the stoppage would be to send "200 or 300 Argentine workers" to the oil fields, if possible—the administrator added—from the interior provinces such as Salta, Catamarca, La Rioja, or others that are not yet contaminated by ideas about strikes.<sup>77</sup> The company administrator recognized the obstacles that a growing presence of Argentine workers posed to labor leaders as they tried unsuccessfully to revive the Oil Workers Federation in the early 1920s. These efforts, he observed, "encounter the distrust of many of our workers, among whom we have many Creole [native Argentine] elements who are not going to lend themselves to the leaders' idealism."<sup>78</sup> The participation of a few Argentine workers in the anti-immigrant Argentine Patriotic League only contributed to fuel labor leaders' resentment and ethnic tension. The national labor newspaper *La Protesta* denounced the harsh tactics followed

by the local YPF administrator, Captain Francisco Borges, to block workers' efforts to reorganize—including a system of informants to identify and prosecute labor leaders. Growing tensions between immigrant and Argentine labor are clear in *La Protesta's* evaluation of the obstacles faced by oil workers in their efforts to reorganize their union:

All workers who speak about a new association are registered in Captain Borges' black book, and he orders their immediate prosecution. Organized workers have to behave with great secrecy to avoid being denounced by tyrant Borges' secret guard. The majority of its members are people recruited from the most backward provinces by the slave traders of the [Patriotic] League, who work for the national government. This people resist organization and, although they do not adapt to the system of exploitation and feel as everyone the pressure of that tyranny, they do not dare to raise their foreheads and to look face to face at their executioner.<sup>79</sup>

Resolute tactics to control labor mobilization championed by General Mosconi at the national level and firmly executed by local administrators paid off, as the outcome of the 1920s strikes confirm. Vigilance and repression, however, were only one side of a larger policy of pacification of labor unrest in the oil fields that had the policy of Argentinization at its center. This strategy included not only the recruitment of large numbers of Argentine workers from the northwestern provinces, but also an active agenda of civic education whose objective was to instill patriotic values in the heterogeneous population of mostly foreign oil workers; in other words, it sought to make immigrants into Argentines. Outside of police tactics to contain labor conflicts, few actions had a punitive character. A 1924 YPF memo, for example, prohibited the use of foreign languages in the workplace and stated that not following the Spanish-only rule “must be considered as a lack of respect for the soil which hosts them [the immigrants].”<sup>80</sup> Most initiatives, however, were uplifting and celebratory of Argentine patriotism and loyalty to the company. If the demographic side of the Argentinization policy (i.e., the replacement of European workers with laborers from the Northwest) resulted in increased ethnic tensions, the patriotic agenda put in place in the 1920s sought to deflect those tensions and build a sense of common belonging to company and country.

Working-class solidarity developed in the common spaces of the company towns and was reinforced by participation in myriad social activities that extended beyond their borders. YPF authorities were aware of the power of shared spaces in fostering workers' solidarity. As the national administrator clearly pointed out in 1924, “large workers neighborhoods such as Villa Rosada or Villa Obrera were harmful, because [militants] proselytize among

them [workers] and exert pressure on the timid ones, which is inevitable."<sup>81</sup> In part to counteract this situation, beginning in the 1920s, YPF promoted social and recreational activities that fostered workers' belonging to the company town. In the beginning, company-sponsored recreation was mostly geared to white-collar workers and high-ranking personnel, such as that organized by the Social Club. YPF also sponsored the creation of two separate soccer teams for white- and blue-collar workers; other white-collar-only clubs for the practice of boxing, tennis, basketball, and golf followed.<sup>82</sup> There were also many informal activities in which workers and their families participated, such as picnics or hunting in the nearby countryside. Informal ethnic gatherings were also common among oil workers. But most of the ethnic life occurred in the town of Comodoro Rivadavia, where immigrant groups organized active ethnic associations that recruited from the company towns and the port town. Dances, theater productions, and festivals organized by these associations marked the social calendar of the town and the surrounding company towns.<sup>83</sup> This dynamic interaction of working-class and ethnic ties fostered strong bonds of camaraderie among European oil workers. (The port town of Comodoro Rivadavia also provided an outlet for workers' participation in forms of recreation that were not allowed in the company towns such as bars and brothels.)

The 1920s witnessed an expansion of services and benefits for the working population of YPF that contributed to ease pressures that could lead to direct confrontation and had the added advantage of increasing a sentiment of belonging to the company town. YPF put in motion an ambitious plan that included sanitary infrastructure, water and energy networks, new housing complexes, a consumer cooperative, educational services, and recreational facilities.<sup>84</sup> The other pillar of YPF's strategy to strengthen workers' allegiance to the company was patriotism. As a state-owned company, for YPF loyalty to the country and loyalty to the company became one and the same. Until 1920, no public gatherings had been organized in the YPF company town to commemorate Argentine national dates. On May 25, 1920, the YPF administrator invited company town families to the first open-air mass to celebrate the anniversary of the beginning of Argentina's independence process in 1810.<sup>85</sup> From then on, patriotic commemorations became important public ceremonies in which Argentine and foreign workers were reminded of their participation in a common enterprise for the growth of the company and the nation. The climax of this commemorative effort occurred in July 1930, with the inauguration of a monument to General José de San Martín, the leader of Argentine wars of independence, at the center of YPF's company town in Km 3.<sup>86</sup> The connection between patriotism and social order was clear in this policy, as expressed by General Mosconi in a 1923 public ceremony to dedicate

the beginning of the company hospital. Mosconi praised both Argentine and immigrant workers as builders of the company's and the country's future:

[We relied] on Creoles [Argentines] who carry out their patriotic duties with perseverance . . . to increase national richness; and on foreigners, whom we receive as brothers when they come to collaborate in our future development, and whom we treat with fraternal feeling when they work with honesty under the redeeming shadow of our flag, but whom we repudiate when they come to empty out the slime of their rancor and ancestral hatred. I have faith that Creoles and foreigners, united by discipline, justice, and work, which purifies and uplifts, will be worthy workers for our progress.<sup>87</sup>

Commemorations and public celebrations were intended to advance the general policy of Argentinization and to foster the idea of a community without ethnic and class distinctions.

Aware of the power of ethnic ties among immigrant workers, YPF's administration implemented a strategy of assimilation that would make Argentines out of immigrant workers, thus weakening labor solidarity. The other side of this policy took the form of persecution, firing, and expulsion of workers. Both approaches continued into the next decade. These policies resulted in a period of relative calm in the national oil company's fields during the late 1920s. They also created latent ethnic tensions. More than nationality specific, however, the dividing line was between European and non-European workers. The promotion of patriotic values and company loyalty also served to ease those divisions.

### **From Confrontation to Accommodation**

The period 1930–45 was marked by international events that affected the life in the oil fields politically and economically, such as the Great Depression, the Spanish Civil War, and World War II. At the national level, a military coup ousted President Yrigoyen from power in 1930 and put in place a military regime followed by a weak period of civilian rule and another coup in 1943 that paved the way for the rise of General Juan Perón in 1945. International events brought unemployment and increased political tension; the 1930 military coup led to General Mosconi's resignation as director-general of YPF.<sup>88</sup> On the labor front, the arrival of communist leaders to the oil zone posed a new problem for local authorities. The national government and the YPF administration continued with already-established, firm policies of social control and expulsions. Communist labor leaders were instrumental in organizing strikes in 1932, but the response in the oil fields was uneven. While oil workers from private company towns such as *Compañía Ferrocarrilera*,



in Km 8, or Diadema Argentina, in Km 27, participated in large numbers, YPF workers remained on the side. The vigilant attitude of YPF authorities may have dissuaded some oil workers, but more importantly, the reaction of YPF workers marked the beginning of a process of accommodation and acceptance of new rules in labor-capital relations that resulted from previous experiences and negotiations. YPF's implementation of social policies in the previous decade also contributed to the new strategy of accommodation among its oil workers, as did a new attitude among long-established immigrant workers who settled with their families in the company towns and for whom job security in their adopted country became an important objective.

Communist activities began in 1930 with the organizing efforts of an Argentine leader, Rufino Gómez, and a few European immigrants, mainly Bulgarians. They created cells in each company town, organized by shift, workplace, and residence. Recruitment was done clandestinely. Fully aware of the importance of both ethnic ties and the bonds forged in the workplace in getting workers' support, Communist leaders recruited workers who were respected by and could influence other immigrant workers. After a year, there were some 75 cells that included 300 workers.<sup>89</sup> In 1931 a branch of the International Red Aid was created in Comodoro Rivadavia, and in 1932 the General Union of Oil Workers was organized that associated itself with other Communist organizations such as the Latin American Syndical Federation, which belonged to Red Trade Union International (also known as Profintern).<sup>90</sup> According to Rufino Gómez, who was an active organizer in the oil fields, by March 1932, the new oil union had 3,200 members, the Communist Party had recruited 400 people, and the International Red Aid had 500 local supporters.<sup>91</sup>

Strength in numbers, however, did not translate into unified action among oil workers. There were two strikes in 1932, but YPF workers chose not to participate. The first strike began in February, when workers from Compañía Ferrocarrilera demanded the readmission of discharged workers and wage increases. Soon the conflict spread to the company towns of other private companies and to the town of Comodoro Rivadavia. Tensions run high and mobilization included women and children from Km 8, who defied the oil company's authorities and the local police in public protests.<sup>92</sup> After less than a month, a second strike began in Diadema Argentina, in Km 27, when three workers accused of being labor militants were expelled; as the strike progressed, wage increases, improvements of working and living conditions, and company recognition of the new oil union were also included in the strikers' demands. In solidarity, workers from Km 8 and from the town of Comodoro Rivadavia joined the stoppage.<sup>93</sup> The first strike ended in complete failure, and the second obtained only minimal wage concessions. In both cases, YPF

workers remained passive and did not join their fellow oil workers from the private companies, a factor that weakened the power of the strike. These unsuccessful strikes had profound consequences for organized labor among oil workers. The last action of the General Union of Oil Workers was a call for a general strike in September 1932 that did not prosper; after that failed attempt, it ceased to exist. Communist activities continued with the party's participation in local politics in Comodoro Rivadavia.<sup>94</sup>

Despite the lack of participation of YPF workers in the Communist-inspired labor stoppages of 1932, the company did not let its guard down and collaborated decisively with local authorities in policing the space of the company town and identifying any dissidence among its workers. During the strikes, the police stationed in Km 3 company town interrogated, arrested, and deported workers suspected of Communist activities.<sup>95</sup> Vigilance of possible Communist presence in the labor force continued after the strikes, in collaboration with the local police and the provincial government. In the words of YPF authorities, strict alertness was necessary to identify "menacing elements" and avoid "the infiltration of their ideas among the workers of the company town." YPF workers accused of belonging to Communist cells were expelled, and the administration monitored the activities of Communists in the town of Comodoro Rivadavia. In 1934, YPF included 252 members of the local Communist Party in a list of undesirable workers.<sup>96</sup>

In the second half of the 1930s, there was a countrywide increase in the activity of organized labor in Argentina. Communist leaders were at the forefront of this reactivation, especially in the expanding industrial unions.<sup>97</sup> In the case of Comodoro Rivadavia, the resurgence of organized labor among oil workers occurred in 1938 with the creation of a local branch of the Association of Government Workers (known by the Spanish acronym ATE); nine out of the eleven members of its board were oil workers. YPF refused to accept the new organization on legal grounds (national authorities had not yet recognized its legal status), but ATE acted as the *de facto* representative of the oil workers.<sup>98</sup> The new organization supported oil workers in the only conflict that occurred during these years in the oil fields when, in August 1941, a group of task laborers involved mostly in oil tower mounting and digging protested changes in working conditions. Preoccupied with the revival of labor activism, YPF took a firm stance and fired several workers. The administrator refused to meet with union representatives, who staged a public campaign of protest that included the distribution of pamphlets censuring YPF authorities.<sup>99</sup>

Changing international and national conditions, however, put a sudden end to this revival of labor activism. Citing national security concerns created by World War II, at the end of 1941, the local police received orders to close

all unions and political organizations. Two years later, a military coup put in power a new government that proceeded to prohibit all union activities. In addition, the new government militarized the area of Comodoro Rivadavia and its oil fields, a prelude to the creation of a military zone under the authority of a military governor a year later. With the militarization of the oil fields, the national authorities sought to facilitate the protection of a resource considered vital for the country's interests in times of international turmoil as well as the implementation of strong measures to control labor activism.<sup>100</sup> The significant presence of Communist labor leaders added urgency to the decision to protect both production and social peace.<sup>101</sup> National and local authorities also watched very closely the activities of ethnic organizations, especially those that emerged to aid the population of the countries of origin of European immigrants during the war or to support participants of the conflict. Of particular concern were the activities of immigrants from Eastern Europe, as becomes apparent by the disproportionate number of their associations that were banned in the mid-1940s.<sup>102</sup>

During the decade following the end of World War II, the activities of the military authority at the local level and the national policies implemented by General Domingo Perón, president of Argentina from 1946 to 1955, created a different reality for organized labor. Oil workers organized a new union that supported the general policies of economic nationalism and workers' welfare that YPF had adopted and that the new government championed at the national level.<sup>103</sup>

## Conclusion

By the late 1930s and early 1940s, YPF workers had chosen accommodation over confrontation. The effectiveness of policing measures and the alertness of the company to any sign of unrest were decisive. But equally significant were the implementation of services and benefits to YPF workers that had ameliorated their working and living conditions considerably during the previous decade. Most private companies lagged behind in introducing similar policies, which accounts in part for the greater willingness of their workers to manifest their grievances through labor unrest. The YPF administrator identified this connection as the key for understanding labor accommodation in his assessment of the failed attempts to organize the workers of the state-owned company in the late 1930s: "the great majority repudiates acts of resistance," he said, "[because] of the measures taken by the General Direction for the social wellbeing of YPF personnel."<sup>104</sup> These policies would be complemented by the strengthening of the ideas of community belonging and patriotism that began in the previous decade and achieved new highs during the 1940s.

Commemorations and civic rituals abounded and increased even more during the second half of the decade with the beginning of the National Petroleum Festival, celebrated each December since 1947. With festivities, sports, beauty pageants, and floats designed by each company town, it served to reinforce the bonds of the “great petroleum family.”<sup>105</sup>

The company town of Km 3 witnessed intense interaction between oil workers and the company during the first four decades of the twentieth century. As the other oil towns of central Patagonia, Km 3 was autonomous but not isolated. Life in the company towns was influenced by local, national, and international forces. Workers’ organizations were not an exception. Labor mobilization in the company towns had local causes but were linked to broader ideologies and practices, and influenced by events beyond their limits. As most workers were of immigrant origin, they had to reconcile multiple allegiances. Class and ethnic solidarities were fashioned and refashioned according to changing economic, political, and demographic forces—sometimes reinforcing each other, sometimes acting as divisive forces in oil workers’ actions.

Because of its origins and characteristics, as a state-owned and state-run company town, the presence of the state was stronger in YPF’s Km 3. The oil company and the Argentine state used both hard and soft strategies to ensure social peace—from swift repression of labor unrest to the manipulation of the ethnic makeup of the labor force. The most ambitious strategy was the recruitment of Argentine workers to debilitate the labor movement that had organized several successful strikes in the late 1910s. Immigrant workers also made use of their ethnic and class solidarities in strategic ways that took into account changing local and national circumstances. Ethnic ties among European workers proved central to the recruitment of supporters for workers’ organizations and strikes. Ethnicity, however, played a different role in the 1930s and 1940s; ties of ethnic and class solidarity not always reinforced each other for labor mobilization. The arrival of Argentine workers continued while European immigrants turned their attention to their countries of origin during the war. Ethnic activities revived during these years, as the conflicts in Europe generated a new crop of immigrant associations in support of their homelands (in some cases, taking a partisan position in the conflicts). Immigrant workers developed two parallel identities—as workers and residents of a company town, and as members of immigrant groups whose main manifestations were the social gatherings of the immigrant associations in Comodoro Rivadavia. Ethnic associations were the places for a symbolic recreation of ethnic belonging that did not challenge the predominant spirit of patriotism put in place by the oil company and the state.<sup>106</sup> In the workplace, the policy of Argentinization had contributed to ethnic tensions between old-timers of

European origin and newcomers from the northwest of Argentina that the uplifting spirit of community and patriotic commemorations also sought to deflate.<sup>107</sup>

The relative social peace of the late 1930s and early 1940s was the result of the effectiveness of the multifaceted strategy of YPF authorities. The 1940s also witnessed the consolidation of significant social services and benefits for workers that further contributed to fostering a sense of loyalty to the company. Change in workers' outlook also helped solidify a strategy of accommodation, especially the transition from an earlier period of high labor turnover to one of long-term or permanent settlement among European immigrant workers. A new phase of family formation and family reunification in the company towns was already place, prompted in the case of some immigrant groups by the conflicts in Europe that had created obvious obstacles to the original idea of return. In addition, a new generation of Argentine children of immigrant origin also came of age in the 1940s. Fully socialized in company town life and Argentine culture and values, they contributed decisively to a stronger sense of belonging.

### Notes

1. *La Protesta* (Buenos Aires), October 5, 1917, 3.
2. *Medio siglo de petróleo argentino, 1907–1957* (Comodoro Rivadavia: El Rivadavia, 1957), 41.
3. For information about the demographic characteristics of Comodoro Rivadavia and the oil company towns, and immigration to the area, see Daniel Márquez and Mario Palma Godoy, *Comodoro Rivadavia en tiempos de cambio: Una propuesta para la revalorización de nuestras identidades culturales* (Comodoro Rivadavia: Ediciones Proyección Patagónica, 1993); Susana Torres, "Two Oil Company Towns in Patagonia: European Immigrants, Class, and Ethnicity, 1907–1933" (Ph.D. diss., Rutgers University, 1995), chap. 1; idem, "La inmigración chilena a Comodoro Rivadavia," *Revista de Estudios Trasandinos* 5 (First Semester 2001): 39–69; idem, "Pautas matrimoniales e identidades de los españoles y europeos del Este en la zona de Comodoro Rivadavia, 1901–1947," paper presented at the 5th International Congress of Americanists, Warsaw, Poland, July 10–14, 2000; Graciela Ciselli, *Los italianos en el sureste de Chubut: Su inserción socioeconómica, 1901–1944* (Comodoro Rivadavia: Dirección de Imprenta y Comunicaciones, Universidad Nacional de la Patagonia San Juan Bosco, 1995); Víctor Manuel Castiñeira Castro and Alfredo Martín García, "Aproximación a la emigración española a la provincia del Chubut: Los Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales, 1915–1933," *Anuario de Estudios Americanos* 56, 2 (1999): 581–604; Marcelo Borges, *Chains of Gold: Portuguese Migration to Argentina in Transatlantic Perspective* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2009), chap. 4.

4. For a historical introduction of the concept of class, see Patrick Joyce, ed., *Class* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1993). Analytical frameworks have shifted from traditional labor studies to new fields such as subaltern studies and global labor history. See the recent theoretical and historiographical analyses of working class and labor history in Jan Lucassen, ed., *Global Labour History: A State of the Art* (Bern, Berlin, etc.: Peter Lang, 2006), and Marcel van der Linden, *Workers of the World: Essays Toward a Global Labor History* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2008). For Latin America, see Charles Bergquist, *Labor in Latin America: Comparative Essays on Chile, Argentina, Venezuela, and Colombia* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986), and John D. French, "The Laboring and Middle-Class Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean: Historical Trajectories and New Research Directions," in Lucassen, *Global Labour History*, 289–333.
5. Werner Sollors, "Introduction: The Invention of Ethnicity," in *The Invention of Ethnicity*, ed. Werner Sollors (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), xv. See also Kathleen Conzen et al., "The Invention of Ethnicity: A Perspective from the U.S.A.," *Altreitalia* 3 (April 1990): 37–63; Ewa Morowska, "Ethnicity," in *Encyclopedia of Social History*, ed. Peter Stearns (New York: Garland Publishing, 1994), 240–3; Gerd Baumann, *The Multicultural Riddle: Rethinking National, Ethnic, and Religious Identities* (New York: Routledge, 1999).
6. Carl Strikwerda and Camille Guerin-Gonzales, "Labor, Migration, and Politics," in *The Politics of Immigrant Workers: Labor Activism and Migration in the World Economy since 1830*, ed. Camille Guerin-Gonzales and Carl Strikwerda (New York and London: Holmes & Meier, 1993), 24–7. See also Dirk Hoerder, ed., *Struggle a Hard Battle: Essays on Working-Class Immigrants* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1986).
7. Gary Mormino and George Pozzetta, *The Immigrant World of Ybor City: Italians and Their Latin Neighbors in Tampa, 1890–1940* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 370.
8. Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales, *Desarrollo de la industria petrolífera fiscal, 1907–1932* (Buenos Aires: Peuser, 1932); *Medio siglo de petróleo*, 43–100; *Cincuentenario de Comodoro Rivadavia, 1901–23 de febrero—1951* (Comodoro Rivadavia: El Rivadavia, 1951), chap. 7; Márquez and Palma Godoy, *Comodoro Rivadavia en tiempos de cambio*, passim; Torres, "Two Oil Company Towns," chap. 1.
9. The Compañía Ferrocarrilera de Petróleo began operations in 1921, after obtaining the concession for oil exploration granted by the state to the Compañía Argentina de Comodoro Rivadavia, which had been present in the Km 8 area since 1915. The Compañía Ferrocarrilera was initially owned by British capitals linked to railroad investments and later nationalized and re-privatized under the name Petroquímica. Astra was financed by a conglomerate of German and Argentine capital. Finally, Diadema Argentina was a subsidiary of Royal Dutch Shell. There were other private oil companies in the area. For an overview of state and private investment in the oil fields, see George Brady,

- “The Comodoro Rivadavia Petroleum Fields,” United States, Department of Commerce, Commerce Reports, *Daily Consular and Trade Reports Issued Daily by the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce*, No. 177, August 1, 1921, 602–08. See also *Medio siglo de petróleo*, 123–33; Torres, “Two Oil Company Towns,” 33–6.
10. Olga Paterlini de Koch, “Company Towns of Chile and Argentina,” in *The Company Town: Architecture and Society in the Early Industrial Age*, ed. John Garner (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 208, 211–14, 216–29.
  11. See Chapter 1 in this book for a discussion on company estates and plantations.
  12. *Ibid.*, 215–6.
  13. See, for example, Federico Neiburg, *Fábrica y villa obrera: Historia social y antropología de los obreros del cemento* (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1988); Alicia Villafañe, “Procesos de transformación del espacio social rural-urbano pampeano: El caso de de la conformación de localidades minero-agrarias en el Partido de Olavarría, Pcia. de Buenos Aires,” *Revista Theomai* no. 1 (First Semester 2000), <http://revista-theomai.unq.edu.ar/numero1/artvillafane1.htm>; Guillermina Fernández and Aldo Guzmán Ramos, “El patrimonio industrial-minero como recurso turístico cultural: El caso de un pueblo-fábrica en Argentina,” *Pasos: Revista de Turismo y Patrimonio Cultural* 2, 1 (2004): 101–9; María Inés Barbero and Mariela Ceva, “La vida obrera en una empresa paternalista,” in *Historia de la vida privada en la Argentina*, 3, ed. Fernando Devoto and Marta Madero (Buenos Aires: Taurus, 1999), 141–67.
  14. Mirta Lobato, *La vida en las fábricas: Trabajo, protesta y política en una comunidad obrera: Berisso, 1900–1970* (Buenos Aires: Prometeo Libros-Entrepasados, 2001); Silvia Simonassi, “Labor and Community in Postwar Argentina: The Industry of Agricultural Machinery in Firmat, Santa Fe,” in *Company Towns in the Americas: Landscape, Power, and Working-Class Communities*, ed. Oliver Dinius and Angela Vergara (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011), 198–220.
  15. For Neuquén see Elana Shever, “Powerful Motors: Kinship, Citizenship, and the Transformation of the Argentine Oil Industry” (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2008), chap. 3.
  16. *La Protesta*, October 5, 1917, 3; Archivo de YPF (YPF Company Archive, hereafter AYPF), Copiador (December 1925–December 1930), 23–4; República Argentina, Ministerio del Interior, *Censo general de los Territorios Nacionales* (Buenos Aires: Establecimiento Gráfico A. de Martino, 1923), 2:185. Dirección General de Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales, *Memoria correspondiente al año 1929* (Buenos Aires: La Dirección, 1930); Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales, *Memoria correspondiente al año 1943* (Buenos Aires: Talleres Gráficos R. Canals, 1944).
  17. Torres, “Two Oil Company Towns,” 51–3.
  18. Yacimiento Petrolíferos Fiscales, *Desarrollo de la industria*, 18.
  19. *La Protesta*, October 5, 1917, 3; Dirección General de Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales, *Memoria correspondiente al año 1929*, 48.



20. Carl Solberg, *Oil and Nationalism in Argentina: A History* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1979), 98; Márquez and Palma Godoy, *Comodoro Rivadavia en tiempos de cambio*, 71–5; Daniel Márquez, “Conflicto e intervención estatal en los orígenes de la actividad petrolera: Comodoro Rivadavia, 1915–1930,” in *Distinguir y comprender: Aportes para pensar la sociedad y cultura en Patagonia*, ed. Daniel Márquez and Mario Palma Godoy (Comodoro Rivadavia: Ediciones Proyección Patagónica, 1995), 102, 107, 114–9; Torres, “Two Oil Company Towns,” *passim*. Colonel Mosconi was not alone in his assessment of social unrest. The interwar years witnessed the growth of nativist sectors that advocated Argentinization as a way to put an end to labor unrest, even through violent means, as illustrated by the anti-foreigner activities of the Argentine Patriotic League. See Sandra McGee Deutsch, *Counterrevolution in Argentina: The Argentine Patriotic League, 1900–1932* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986); Luis María Caterina, *La Liga Patriótica Argentina: Un grupo de presión frente a las convulsiones sociales de la década del veinte* (Buenos Aires: Corregidor, 1995).
21. Alfredo Lattes, “Las migraciones en la Argentina entre mediados del siglo XIX y 1960,” *Desarrollo Económico* 12, 48 (January–March 1973): 849–65; Fernando Devoto, *Historia de la inmigración en la Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 2003), 294–302.
22. AYPF, Copiador (December 1929–December 1933), 156; *idem*, Copiador (December 1925–December 1930), 380.
23. For an analysis of the interplay between social and occupational networks among oil workers, focusing on Portuguese migrants, see Borges, *Chains of Gold*, 169–83, 259–65.
24. The characterization of the YPF company town that follows is based on *Medio siglo de petróleo*; Márquez and Palma Godoy, *Comodoro Rivadavia en tiempos de cambio*; Torres, “Two Oil Company Towns”; and Márquez, “Hacia la definición de un modelo de bienestar: Estado, trabajadores y políticas socio-laborales en los Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales de Comodoro Rivadavia, 1915–1930,” in Márquez and Palma Godoy, *Distinguir y comprender*, 127–66.
25. See the definitions and analyses of company towns discussed in Chapter 1 of this volume.
26. The lack of ethnic or national segregation was common to all the company towns in oil zone of Comodoro Rivadavia, even in the private company town in which there was a large presence of administrators or high-ranking personnel from a particular national group (i.e., Germans in Km 20, British in Km 8, or Dutch in Km 27). In contrast, ethnic or racial spatial segregation was a common practice in extractive industries’ company towns in other countries. See, for example, Crandall Shifflett, *Coal Towns: Life, Work, and Culture in Company Towns of Southern Appalachia, 1880–1960* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991); Eileen Goltz, “The Image and the Reality of Life in a Northern Ontario Company-Owned Town,” in *Mines and Single-Industry Towns in Northern Ontario*, ed. Matt Bray and Ashley Thomson (Toronto:



- Dundurn Press, 1992), 62–91; Jonathan Brown, *Oil and Revolution in Mexico* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); Thomas Miller Klubock, *Contested Communities: Class, Gender, and Politics in Chile's El Teniente Copper Mine, 1904–1951* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998); Miguel Tinker Salas, "Races and Cultures in the Venezuelan Oil Fields," in *Work, Protest, and Identity in Twentieth-Century Latin America*, ed. Vicent Peloso (Wilmington, DE: SR Books, 2003), 143–64. See also the analyses of ethnic and racial spatial divisions in company towns of China, Angola, and Indonesia in this volume.
27. Mariel Pacheco, "Las prácticas materiales e imaginarias del estado y la nación en un yacimiento petrolero de la Patagonia argentina: La puesta en escena de la Fiesta Nacional del Petróleo como mitografía atávica, 1907–1960," *Voces Recobradas, Revista de Historia Oral* 6, 17 (April 2004): 14–26.
  28. Standard work times until the strike were 10 hours for workshops and construction, and 12 hours for oil drilling and pulling. Wages had been recently increased, but they lagged behind cost of living increases. *La Protesta*, October 5, 1917, 3; idem, November 2, 1917, 1; *La Prensa* (Buenos Aires), November 1, 1917, 8.
  29. *La Prensa*, November 1, 1917, 8; *La Protesta*, October 5, 1917, 3; *La Vanguardia* (Buenos Aires), November 2, 1917, 1; Carl Solberg, *Petróleo y nacionalismo*, 72.
  30. Archivo de Astra (Astra Company Archive, hereafter AA), *Copiador (1916–18)*, 36.
  31. *La Prensa*, November 23, 1917, 5.
  32. Daniel Marques Cabral, "Del pozo al socavón: Trabajadores petroleros y mineros estatales en la Patagonia Austral: Un estudio comparativo," in *Historia de los trabajadores en la Patagonia*, ed. Enrique Mases and Lisandro Gallucci (Neuquen: Educo-Universidad Nacional del Comahue, 2007), 1:70–1, 74, 76, 79.
  33. See Carl Solberg, *Immigration and Nationalism in Argentina, 1890–1914* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1970); Iacov Oved, "El trasfondo histórico de la ley 4144 de residencia," *Desarrollo Económico* 6, 61 (April–June 1976): 123–50; Juan Suriano, ed., *La cuestión social en la Argentina, 1870–1943* (Buenos Aires: La Colmena, 2000); Gabriela Costanzo, *Los indeseables: Las leyes de residencia y defensa social* (Buenos Aires: Madreselva, 2009).
  34. Railroad, building, and dock workers unions declared solidarity strikes. *Medio siglo de petróleo*, 33; *La Protesta*, November 2, 1917, 1.
  35. *Medio siglo de petróleo*, 33, 41; *La Protesta*, November 2, 1917, 1; *La Prensa*, November 1, 1917, 8; *Comodoro 70* (Comodoro Rivadavia: El Rivadavia, 1971), 257.
  36. *La Prensa*: November 1, 1917, 8; November 3, 1917, 5; November 6, 1917, 9; November 9, 1917, 9. *La Vanguardia*, November 8, 1917. 1. AA, *Copiador (1916–18)*, Note September 30, 1917, and Entradas oficiales, 1917, Note July 11, 1917.
  37. *La Prensa*: November 10, 1917, 10, and November 15, 1917, 8; *La Vanguardia*, November 13, 1917, 3.

38. AYPF, Copiador (March 1918–March 1923), 117–8, 158, Legajo (worker's file) 158; AA, Entradas oficiales 1918, 13.
39. For an overview of Argentine labor history, see José Panettieri, *Los trabajadores* (Buenos Aires: Jorge Álvarez, 1967); Samuel Baily, *Labor, Nationalism, and Politics in Argentina* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1967); Bergquist, *Labor in Latin America*, chap. 3; Héctor Palacios, *Historia del movimiento obrero argentino* (Buenos Aires: Mundo Color), 1992; Julio Godio, *Historia del movimiento obrero argentino, 1870–2000*, 2 (Buenos Aires: Corregidor, 2000); Robert Alexander, *A History of Organized Labor in Argentina* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003).
40. Marques Cabral, “Del pozo al socavón,” 70.
41. *La Prensa*, December 17, 1918, 2, 11; December 18, 1918, 7; December 24, 1918, 10. AA, Copiador (October 19, 1918–August 15, 1921), 38, 39, 41, and Note December 22, 1918.
42. AYPF, Copiador (March 1918–March 1923, 205–6); Legajos (workers' files) 26 and 938.
43. Solberg, *Oil and Nationalism*, 45.
44. All information about participation rates in oil strikes by occupation, working place, and ethnicity is based on the analysis of YPF's personnel files.
45. Castiñeira Castro and Martín García, “Aproximación a la emigración española”; Torres, “Pautas matrimoniales e identidades”; Borges, *Chains of Gold*, 157–65. Information about regional origins is scarce for Spanish workers in the early decades. Based on the available information from personnel records until 1933, Castiñeira Castro and Martín García show that Andalusians constituted close to half of all Spanish workers in YPF (p. 602).
46. AYPF, Legajos 395, 839, 26, and 785.
47. *Ibid.*, 306.
48. Explotación Nacional del Petróleo de Comodoro Rivadavia, *Memoria . . . correspondiente al año 1919* (Buenos Aires: Talleres Gráficos del Ministerio de Agricultura de la Nación, 1920), 36, 41–2.
49. *La Vanguardia*, August 17, 1919, 3; *idem.*, August 27, 1919, 6. AA, Copiador (October 19, 1918–August 15, 1921), 182–4.
50. *La Vanguardia*, October 17, 1919, 3; February 22, 1920, 9. *La Prensa*, December 15, 1919, 8, and January 6, 1920, 7. AYPF, Copiador (March 1918–March 1923), 301. AA, Copiador (October 19, 1918–August 15, 1921), 218–24.
51. *The Review of the River Plate* (Buenos Aires), March 5, 1920, 631; Explotación Nacional del Petróleo de Comodoro Rivadavia, *Memoria . . . correspondiente al año 1920* (Buenos Aires: Talleres Gráficos del Ministerio de Agricultura de la Nación, 1921), 63; AYPF, Copiador (December 1918–March 1921), 280–2, and Legajos 297 and 2198.
52. This anecdote is reported in Asencio Abeijón, *El vasco de la carretilla y otros relatos* (Comodoro Rivadavia: author's edition, 1986), 160.
53. Susana Fiorito, *Las huelgas de Santa Cruz, 1921–1922* (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1985); Osvaldo Bayer, “El Far South: Latifundistas y

- anarquistas,” in *Patagonia, una tormenta de imaginario*, ed. Graciela Madanes (Buenos Aires: Edicial, 1998), 149–57; idem, *La Patagonia rebelde* (Buenos Aires: Planeta, 2002); Ernesto Bohoslavsky and Alberto Harambour, “El miedo rojo más austral del mundo: Clase dominante local y Estado nacional frente a los trabajadores en la Patagonia argentino-chilena, 1917–1922,” in Mases and Gallucci, *Historia de los trabajadores en la Patagonia*, 201–20.
54. *La Vanguardia*, February 25, 1920, 9. For a general overview of the Tragic Week and the rise of the Argentine Patriotic League, see Edgardo Bilsky, *La Semana Trágica* (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1984); and Sandra McGee Deutsch, “The Right under Radicalism, 1910–1930,” in *The Argentine Right: Its History and Intellectual Origins, 1910 to the Present*, ed. Sandra McGee Deutsch and Ronald Dolkart (Lanham, MD: SR Books, 1993), 37–47.
55. AYPF, Legajo 1660.
56. Enrique Mosconi, *El petróleo argentino, 1922–1930* (Buenos Aires: Círculo Militar, 1983 [1936]); *Desarrollo de la industria*, passim; *Medio siglo de petróleo*, chap. 7; Solberg, *Oil and Nationalism*, chap. 3; Carl Solberg, “YPF: The Formative Years of Latin America’s Pioneer State Oil Company, 1922–1939,” in *Latin American Oil Companies and the Politics of Energy*, ed. John Wirth (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1980), 51–102; Carl Solberg, “Entrepreneurship in Public Enterprise: General Enrique Mosconi and the Argentine Petroleum Industry,” *Business History Review* 56 (Autumn 1982): 380–99; María Inés Barbero and Fernando Devoto, *Los nacionalistas* (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1984); Raúl Larra, *Mosconi, General del Petróleo* (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1992).
57. For more information, see sources cited in note 3.
58. Cited in Solberg, *Oil and Nationalism*, 98.
59. Ibid.
60. AYPF, Copiador (December 1918–December 1925), 300; Legajo 1804. *La Protesta*: July 4, 1922, 2; July 9, 1922, 1; July 20, 1922, 2; December 15, 1922, 1.
61. Ruben Iscaro, *Origen y desarrollo del movimiento sindical argentino* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Ateneo, 1958), 135; Julio Godio, *El movimiento obrero argentino, 1910–1930* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Legasa, 1988), 166; *El Chubut* (Comodoro Rivadavia), February 2, 1924, 1.
62. *El Chubut*, May 14, 1924, 1–2; *La Vanguardia*, August 1, 1924, 3; AYPF, Copiador (December 1918–December 1925), 393–4.
63. AYPF, Copiador (December 1918–December 1925), 395–6.
64. Ibid., 394–9; AYPF, Circulares internas, año 1924, circular 68 and circular 138; *La Prensa*, May 12, 1924, 2; *La Vanguardia*, September 1, 1927, 2.
65. *The Review of the River Plate*, August 1, 1924, 279; August 15, 1924, 454. *La Prensa*: July 29, 1924, 16–7; July 30, 1924, 9; August 2, 1924, 12; August 3, 1924, 12. *El Chubut*, July 26, 1924, 5; July 30, 1924, 5. AYPF, Circulares internas, año 1924, circular 108, circular 109, circular 11, and circular 115; Copiador (December 1918–December 1925), 404–6.

66. AYPF, Legajos 8316, 7855, 7882, 8316, 9097, 9705, 10662, and 5585; *La Protesta*, August 19, 1927, 1; *El Chubut*, September 9, 1926, 4.
67. *El Chubut*, March 3, 1926, 2, 4.
68. AYPF, Copiador (March 1918–March 1925), 481.
69. Recent overviews about this case can be found in Bruce Watson, *Sacco and Vanzetti: The Men, The Murders, and the Judgment of Mankind* (New York: Viking, 2007), and Moshik Temkin, *The Sacco-Vanzetti Affair: America on Trial* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009). On international repercussion, including Argentina, see Lisa McGirr, “The Passion of Sacco and Vanzetti: A Global History,” *Journal of American History* 93, 4 (March 2007): 1085–105.
70. *El Chubut*: August 10, 1927, 10; August 22, 1927, 1. *La Vanguardia*, April 10, 1927, 1, 3. *La Protesta*, September 24, 1927, 2. AYPF, Legajos 11482, 11572, 11101, 11098, 9360. Archivo de la Policía, Provincia de Chubut (Police Archive, Province of Chubut, hereafter APC), Policía de YPF, Copiador (June 1926–September 1928), 224–6.
71. AYPF, Circulares internas, año 1927, circular 116.
72. Solberg, *Oil and Nationalism*, 99.
73. *La Protesta*, September 27, 1927, 2.
74. The proportion of immigrants groups as a total of the working population is an approximation based on the information from 1917 and 1926, which allows us to consider the composition of YPF workers by nationality before and after the 1920s strike.
75. AYPF, Cicales internas año 1924, circular 121. Data come from 47 percent of the cases.
76. AYPF, Legajo 280. The original slang expression for strikebreaker used by this worker, and common in Argentina, was ram (*carnero*).
77. Letter dated August 27, 1919, cited in Márquez, “Conflicto e intervención estatal,” 107. A few months later, the administration expressed the convenience of placing Argentine workers in key positions of production to guarantee order because “foreigners make up the majority of personnel . . . and they are the first ones to join any strike.” Letter dated October 6, 1919, cited in Márquez, “Hacia la definición de un modelo de bienestar,” 140.
78. AYPF, Copiador (December 1918–December 1925), 300.
79. *La Protesta*, July 9, 1922, 2.
80. AYPF, Circulares internas año 1924, circular 43.
81. AYPF, Copiador (December 1918–December 1925), 396–9; Circulares internas año 1924, circular 68 and circular 138.
82. *Medio siglo de petróleo*, 225–6, 241, 248, 259, 262; *Memoria de YPF año 1928*, 74; *Comodoro 70*, 182, 184, 211. *El Chubut*: June 10, 1923, 3; April 28, 1932, 2; May 8, 1932, 8. Salvador Paz Núñez, *Album histórico de los deportes de Comodoro Rivadavia, 1909–1948* (Comodoro Rivadavia: n.p., 1948).
83. *Cincuentenario de Comodoro Rivadavia*, chap. 27; *Medio siglo de petróleo*, chap. 21; Ciselli, *Los italianos*, passim; Torres, “Two Oil Company Towns,” 204–17,

- 228, 232–6, 239–42; Márquez and Palma Godoy, *Comodoro Rivadavia en tiempos de cambio*, 30–5; Borges, *Chains of Gold*, 283–94.
84. Torres, “Two Oil Company Towns,” chap. 5; Márquez, “Hacia la definición de un modelo de bienestar”; Daniel Cabral Marques and Edda Lía Crespo, “Entre el petróleo y el carbón: Empresas estatales, trabajadores e identidades sociolaborales en la Patagonia austral, 1907–1976,” in *Hecho en Patagonia: La historia en perspectiva regional*, ed. Susana Bandieri et al. (Neuquen: CEHIR-Universidad Nacional del Comahue, 2006); Cabral Marques, “Del pozo al socavón,” 70–1.
  85. AYPF, Circulares internas año 1920, circular 167.
  86. Mosconi, *El petróleo argentino*, 192; AYPF, Circulares internas año 1930, circular 79.
  87. *El Chubut*, February 4, 1923, 5.
  88. For an overview of these changes in YPF and the national oil policy, see Solberg, *Oil and Nationalism*, 156–62; and Nicolás Gadano, *Historia del petróleo en Argentina, 1907–1955: Desde los inicios hasta la caída de Perón* (Buenos Aires: Edhasa, 2006), 291–493.
  89. Rufino Gómez, *La gran huelga obrera de Comodoro Rivadavia, 1931–1932* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Centro de Estudios, 1973), 13, 27.
  90. Gómez, *La gran huelga*, 14, 27. For an overview of Communist organizations in Argentina, see Iscaro, *Origen y desarrollo*; Mario Rapoport, *Los partidos de izquierda, el movimiento obrero y la política internacional, 1930–1946* (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1988); Hernán Camarero, *A la conquista de la clase obrera: Los comunistas y el mundo del trabajo en la Argentina, 1920–1935* (Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI, 2007); and Robert Alexander, *International Labor Organizations and Organized Labor in Latin America and the Caribbean: A History* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger/ABC-CLIO, 2009). For the global outreach of the International Red Aid, see J. Martin Ryle, “International Red Aid and Comintern Strategy, 1922–1926,” *International Review of Social History* 15, 1 (April 1970): 43–68.
  91. Gómez, *La gran huelga*, 13.
  92. *El Chubut*: February 26, 1932, 8; February 28, 1932, 3; March 2, 1932, 3; March 3, 1932, 3; March 12, 1932, 5.
  93. *El Chubut*: April 12, 1932, 5; April 13, 1932, 4; April 14, 1932, 5; April 17, 1932, 7; April 19, 1932, 4; April 20, 1932, 5; May 1, 1932, 5; May 3, 1932, 4; May 14, 1932, 5; May 15, 1932, 4; May 19, 1932, 5; May 23, 1932, 9.
  94. AYPF Copiador (December 1929–September 1933), September 24, 1932, 354.
  95. *El Chubut*: February 24, 1932, 8; February 25, 1932, 4; February 27, 1932, 8; March 2, 1932, 4; March 3, 1932, 3; March 15, 1932, 3; March 19, 1932, 5; March 23, 1932, 5. There are several cases of interrogation and expulsion in the police archives. APC, División de Identificaciones, Legajos Orden Social, prontuario (police file) 190, prontuario 195, prontuario 196.
  96. AYPF Copiador (December 1929–September 1933), October 22, 1932, 364; February 1, 1933, 401. Idem, Copiador (September 1933–February 1936), October 10, 1934, 194; September 25, 1934, 178.

97. Godio, *Historia del movimiento obrero*, 1:700–5; Roberto Korzeniewicz, “Las vísperas del peronismo: Los conflictos laborales entre 1930 y 1943,” *Desarrollo Económico* 33, 131 (October–December 1993): 323–54.
98. AYPF, Copiador (April 1936–October 1938), July 14, 1938, 388.
99. AYPF, Copiador (October 1938–May 1943), June 26, 1943, 285; August 28, 1941, 287; February 3, 1942, 374. In the early 1940s, task laborers represented 18 percent of YPF labor force. The majority of them were immigrant workers. Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales, *Memoria correspondiente al año 1940* (Buenos Aires: Guillermo Kraft, 1941), 145; idem, *Memoria correspondiente al año 1941*, 164; idem, *Memoria correspondiente al año 1942*, 133; idem, *Memoria correspondiente al año 1943*, 121.
100. Susana Torres and Graciela Ciselli, “La Gobernación Militar de Comodoro Rivadavia (1944–1945): Un análisis exploratorio,” in *Las formas de la política en la Patagonia: El primer peronismo en los Territorios Nacionales*, ed. Aixa Bona and Juan Vilaboa (Buenos Aires: Editorial Biblos, 2007), 63–76; Gabriel Carrizo, Trabajo, petróleo y ruptura populista: Los trabajadores del petróleo en la Gobernación Militar de Comodoro Rivadavia,” *Revista Estudios Digital* 2 (Winter 2009), available online at <http://www.revistaestudios.unc.edu.ar/articulos02/articulos/carrizo.php>. See also Márquez and Palma Godoy, *Comodoro Rivadavia en tiempos de cambio*, 111–25.
101. See, for example, the note sent by the military authorities in Comodoro Rivadavia to the Minister of Interior, in August 1943, urging for the establishment of the projected military zone to protect the oil fields as the most effective solution to end with Communist activism, cited in Carrizo, “Trabajo, petróleo y ruptura populista.”
102. Banned ethnic organizations included the White Russia Ukrainian Association, the Dom Polski Polish Association, and associations created by Croatian, Slovak, and Bulgarian immigrants. Other banned associations supported the war effort in Europe or had clear political profile, such as the Democratic Confederation of Aid to Free Countries, the Italian Democratic Mutual Aid Association, and the Spanish Democratic Center. *El Chubut*, August 7, 1943; *El Rivadavia* (Comodoro Rivadavia), August 27, 1943. See also Stella Armesto et al., *Crónicas del centenario, 1901–2001* (Comodoro Rivadavia: Diario Crónica, 2001), 239, 252, 263–5, 273–4.
103. Cabral Marques, “Del pozo al socavón,” 80–7; Carrizo, “Trabajo, petróleo y ruptura populista”; Torres and Ciselli, “La gobernación militar.”
104. Letter dated September 4, 1941, cited in Cabral Marques, “Del pozo al socavón,” 78–9.
105. Pacheco, “Las prácticas materiales e imaginarias del estado y la nación”; Edda Crespo, “Madres, esposas y reinas: Petróleo, mujeres y nacionalismo en Comodoro Rivadavia durante el primer Peronismo,” in *Cuando las mujeres reinaban: Belleza, virtud y poder en la Argentina del siglo XX*, ed. Mirta Lobato (Buenos Aires: Editorial Biblos, 2005), 143–90.

106. Borges, *Chains of Gold*, 288–95.
107. A sense of European identity among old-timers and differentiations vis-à-vis Argentine migrants from the Northwest continued into the following decades. These differences were reinforced with the arrival of immigrants from neighboring Chile. See the findings of a sociological study conducted in the 1960s in Lelio Mármora, *Migración al sur: Argentinos y chilenos en Comodoro Rivadavia* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Libera, 1968).

## CHAPTER 6

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# When Ghosts Hovered: Community and Crisis in the Company Town of Britannia Beach, British Columbia, Canada

*Katharine Rollwagen*

Britannia Beach is not a ghost town today, but between 1957 and 1965 residents and employees of the former company-owned copper mining town, located 48 km north of Vancouver, British Columbia, had good reasons to believe it would become one. The town faced two major crises in less than a decade, triggering mine shutdowns that threw the future of the town into question. Plummeting copper prices led to a ten-month closure in 1958 that divided the town and left many employees and residents feeling helpless. Ultimately, workers were unable to resist the shutdown, and many left to find work elsewhere. The second shutdown, triggered by a labor dispute in 1964, escalated when the company threatened to close the mine. This time, workers came together to fight for their jobs.

How did two shutdowns within a decade and affecting the same company town prompt such different reactions? This chapter explores the extent to which employees' notions of community were, in the historian Steven High's words, a "sufficiently empowering myth," capable of mobilizing Britannia's workforce to resist the mine closures when ghosts hovered over the town.<sup>1</sup> While economic conditions were certainly a factor, dampening already low spirits in 1958 and encouraging optimism in 1964, employees' sense of community contributed significantly to these events. In 1958, employee loyalty to the company and divisive notions of community based primarily on marital status helped prevent opposition to the closure. In 1964, social interaction



and rhetorical appeals to local and national communities fostered solidarity and garnered support to sustain the workers' campaign against the company.

### **Britannia in Context: Company Towns in Canada**

The 1958 shutdown ended a period of relative stability at the formerly prosperous mine, altering the company-owned town irrevocably. The Britannia Mining & Smelting Company Limited (hereafter BM&S) began mining on the property in 1904. Initially it was a small operation, made up of several isolated mining camps scattered high in the mountains. Britannia was a low-grade copper mine, meaning that large amounts of ore had to be taken from the ground, and the copper carefully extracted from the rock using mechanical and chemical processes. By 1905 the company had built a mill on the shores of Howe Sound, which crushed mined rock into powder and then separated copper ore from the powder using a froth floatation process.<sup>2</sup> The separated copper ore was then shipped to smelters around the world. As production increased, the company's workforce grew. Between 1910 and 1920 the company built two town sites for its several hundred employees.<sup>3</sup> Britannia Beach itself, in the shadow of the mill, housed primarily company officials and mill workers. Many of the underground workers lived near the mine in the mountains above, in an area known both as the Townsite and Mount Sheer.

These were quintessential company towns, completely owned and operated by one employer, and—until the late 1950s—accessible from Vancouver only by boat. For more than thirty years, Britannia's employees and their families lived in company housing, shopped at the company stores, and participated in recreation programs organized with the company's blessing. Despite the efforts of several unions, the workforce remained unorganized until 1943. Even after BM&S closed the Townsite and declared bankruptcy in 1958, and the mine was sold to the Anaconda Company in 1962, Britannia Beach remained an unincorporated entity under corporate control. Although critics, particularly in the labor movement, protested the company's continuous and extensive control of daily life in its town sites, journalists and industry supporters often portrayed Britannia as a picturesque, close-knit, and well-serviced community.<sup>4</sup> Similar to other communities examined in this volume, such as Catumbela, Angola, company town planning created the appearance of order and unity. Many observers admired the uniformity of Britannia's white clapboard houses against the dramatic mountain backdrop of Howe Sound. Some reacted to news of the possible closures in 1958 and 1964 with shock and concern, fearing that this "ideal community . . . far from the rush and congestion of the big city" would become another ghost town in British

Columbia, a province vulnerable to the boom-and-bust nature of the resource industries that dominated—and continue to shape—its economy.<sup>5</sup>

Britannia's development mirrored that of scores of other mining towns in Canada between World Wars I and II. In the early decades of the twentieth century, many mining companies were realizing that it was in their interest to build communities for their workforces. The Klondike Gold Rush in 1898, in which thousands of prospectors and their followers—including “the promoters, drifters, lawyers, gamblers, and prostitutes”—rushed to the Yukon Territory of northern Canada and erected Dawson City practically overnight, demonstrated how unmanageable resource development could be. The Klondike was not an isolated case. Sandon, British Columbia, and Cobalt, Ontario, were only two of many other examples of instant, unplanned, and unruly mining camps characterized by hard-drinking miners, prostitution, and ramshackle accommodation.<sup>6</sup> Communities built by employees were open to anyone, democratically operated, and subject to Canadian laws. However, communities built on land owned by a private company were not subject to the same regulations. Mining companies saw the benefits of being able to control who lived close to their operations. For example, visitors to Britannia had to request permission before their arrival. In the 1920s and 1930s the property's general manager promptly fired anyone caught violating the company's alcohol prohibition, or showing pro-union sentiments. In Canada's undeveloped hinterland, company towns were usually isolated and closed communities, where mining companies exerted a great degree of control over their employees.

However, even if mining companies built stable communities for their employees, they had little control over the resource they mined; once a mineral was depleted, or prices dropped below the price of extraction, many mines closed and company towns were left deserted. Mine closures happened regularly throughout the twentieth century. When Britannia was shut down in 1958, some residents could likely recall the experiences of Phoenix and Anyox, British Columbia. These copper mining towns had been bustling one week and abandoned the next—Phoenix stopped mining in 1919; Anyox closed in 1935. The sorry fate of these and other mining towns in British Columbia made it seem likely that Britannia was destined to disappear.

Canadian scholars have defined failed company towns as the inevitable victims of a boom-and-bust economy.<sup>7</sup> While many have commented on these communities' economic dependence on a single resource, fewer have examined the process of de-industrialization in these places.<sup>8</sup> As John Bradbury and Isabelle St-Martin argue, the existing literature on single-industry towns focuses on the birth, youth, and maturity, as opposed to the death, of such communities.<sup>9</sup> In his comprehensive study of Canadian resource towns, Rex

Lucas suggests resource town development occurred in stages, from construction to maturity.<sup>10</sup> Bradbury and St-Martin have extended Lucas's typology to include the "winding down" and "closure" stages of resource town experience. This life cycle metaphor is both helpful and dangerous. While it has facilitated the study and comparison of varied resource communities, it is less useful for historical analysis for two reasons. First, it removes resource towns from their varied contexts, suggesting towns followed a typical development pattern regardless of time or place. Furthermore, although Lucas, Bradbury, and St-Martin insist that community development is a nonlinear process, the life-cycle framework implies that de-industrialization—like death—is an inevitable part of resource community existence.<sup>11</sup> This approach also ignores the role of community in the de-industrialization process.

### Defining Community

While historians have often assumed that readers know what community means, or limited its scope to "the ideas of a shared place and a static, self-contained entity,"<sup>12</sup> this study defines community in two, interconnecting ways. Community is seen as both a continuous process of constructing and sustaining social bonds and a rhetorical tool that joins people imaginatively. Britannia's workers and residents developed their sense of community working and playing together, and also by emphasizing the common identities—such as miner, or housewife—that they believed they shared. As the historian Thomas Bender argues, "community can be defined better as an experience than as a place"; it is something understood through relationships with others.<sup>13</sup> As relationships and power relations shift, so do a community's boundaries. This results in the inclusion of some people while necessarily excluding others. In Britannia's case, employees in 1958 were more likely to include the company in their definition of community than those in 1964, when most viewed the company as an outsider. During the earlier shutdown, workers' notions of community impeded worker solidarity, while in the latter, they facilitated it. This approach recognizes that community is never solely a positive force; it simultaneously divides and unites.

Community is also a cultural construct. Benedict Anderson's notion of "imagined communities" has demonstrated that language can create feelings of commonality among people who will never meet, cultivating regional and national identities.<sup>14</sup> Britannia's managers often tried to conjure this type of community in their publicity, and the union similarly appealed to imagined local and national solidarities. In this study, community is examined as both a discursive construct and a social process, which was continuously formed and imagined in Britannia's mines, homes, and social clubs. Britannia's workers

and residents challenged and appealed to these varied notions of community during times of crisis.

This chapter builds on the work of recent de-industrialization scholars, many of whom no longer assume that plant closures are inevitable or uniformly destructive occurrences. As Jefferson Cowie and Joseph Heathcott have argued, de-industrialization is better conceived of as a nonlinear process that changes—for good or ill—the social fabric of the affected community.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, when ghosts hovered over Britannia, the copper mine's fate was anything but sealed. The shutdowns did not destroy an ideal community, but refashioned it (traumatically, for many) in the eyes of its workers and residents. While the 1958 shutdown divided the workforce and scattered a Britannia community that had catered to married workers and encouraged loyalty to the company, it did not prevent new expressions of community from emerging later on. By 1964, Britannia's physical and social geographies had changed; many workers commuted, and the 1958 shutdown had curtailed many of the social and institutional structures that had previously fostered interaction and common identity. Nevertheless, a strike against their new employer brought workers together in solidarity and spawned rhetorical appeals to local and national community that bolstered their campaign.

The case of Britannia also challenges current hypotheses about when and how de-industrialization began in Canada. The historian Steven High pinpoints the 1970s as the beginning of de-industrialization in the North American manufacturing sector, when corporations began closing obsolete factories and relocating to areas with cheaper labor. However, evidence from Britannia suggests that the process may have been quite different in Canada's primary resource sectors, where mine and mill closures did not begin and end in a specific era but happened frequently and continuously throughout the twentieth century as resources were depleted and new sources found. Canada's overall copper production increased steadily between 1880 and 1975, despite individual company failures. Nevertheless, the relative success of an industry does not change the effects of a mine closure on those who experience it.

The case of Britannia also demonstrates that appeals to economic nationalism were heard in Canada's mines and mills before they were voiced (perhaps more loudly) in its factories. In 1958 and, more successfully in 1964, the union representing Britannia workers cautioned against American control of Canadian mining resources, concerned that the mobile capital of mining companies paid little heed to the needs of local workers. Britannia's workers were witnessing and resisting a shift in business practices and labor relations, as increasingly global companies adopted more flexible profit-making strategies and invested less in local infrastructure.<sup>16</sup> These employers were less

willing to compromise with unions. The crises in Britannia counter a popular belief that the postwar era was one of uniform working-class prosperity and stable labor relations.<sup>17</sup> Faced with job loss and dislocation, Britannia's employees evoked varied, often conflicting notions of community in order to make sense of and resist change.

### One Town, Two Crises

Rumblings of the first shutdown began in early 1957, when declining world copper prices created a "serious economic situation" for the mine's owner, BM&S.<sup>18</sup> In 1958, the North American economy was in recession. The London price of copper had fallen more than 50 percent since 1956, from £435 to £160.<sup>19</sup> In July, the general manager George Lipsey announced that the mine would close unless employees were willing to accept a 15 percent pay cut.<sup>20</sup> The company told newspapers that it was losing \$65,000 per month.<sup>21</sup> The workers, represented by local 663 of the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers (hereafter Mine Mill), refused to take a reduction in wages, but offered to work longer hours and sacrifice other benefits to keep the mine operating. The company accepted, and operations continued on a regular basis for several months.

In October, the situation became "more precarious" and the company president E. C. Roper told Lipsey that "efforts to maintain some semblance of an operation are in jeopardy."<sup>22</sup> In early December, the federal and provincial governments agreed to provide a subsidy to help keep the mine open. Despite the financial assistance, on December 17 the company announced that it would limit operations and reduce staff to remain afloat. By the end of the month, 40 percent of underground workers, 59 percent of mill workers, and 12 percent of salaried employees had lost their jobs.<sup>23</sup> There were more layoffs in subsequent months, as mining continued on a more limited basis. Now-vacant houses at the Townsite were boarded up, and the local branch of the only national bank in town closed its doors.<sup>24</sup>

On February 27, the company announced that economic conditions had made it "impractical to prolong operations even with the assistance which has been received."<sup>25</sup> The mine was shut down completely. Six months later, BM&S was placed in "voluntary liquidation," and its parent, Howe Sound Company, took charge of the Britannia property.<sup>26</sup> By December 1958 copper prices had risen, and the new managers resumed limited operations in the mine and mill in 1959. To save money, the company moved all operations to the Beach and closed the Townsite, burning many of its buildings.<sup>27</sup> The shutdown, which many had believed permanent, lasted ten months.<sup>28</sup>

While world commodity prices were the main cause of the 1958 shutdown, employer-employee relations played a prominent role in the 1964 crisis. It began as a dispute between the Mine Mill union and the mine's new owner, the Anaconda Company, over annual contract negotiations. The union's demands included a 40-hour workweek with no loss in take-home pay, extra pay for weekend work, a 20-cent per hour raise, and more control of job classification.<sup>29</sup> Talks were lengthy, and the company called on a conciliation board to help the two sides reach an agreement. However, in July, Britannia's 350 workers rejected the conciliation board's report and voted 97.3 percent in favor of a strike. The strike began on August 11, 1964.

The company hinted almost immediately that it would close the mine if the strike persisted. Negotiations continued sporadically through August and September. The company tabled an offer on September 21, but three days later, before union members had voted on the proposal, the company announced it was closing the mine. Union president Ken Smith believed the announcement was intended to frighten workers into accepting the company's offer, but Anaconda manager Barney Greenlee claimed the expense of the strike had precipitated the closure announcement. Strikers at Britannia immediately mounted a picket line to prevent the company from removing mine equipment and, over the following months, held rallies and petitioned government officials to oppose Anaconda's closure efforts. When Anaconda claimed ownership of the union hall, located on company property, union members staged a sit-in and took the company to court to regain their right to use the hall. After a court injunction prevented strikers from blocking entrances or picketing in the industrial areas of the property, company managers began dismantling and removing equipment themselves, and the *Province* newspaper reported that Britannia "would be a ghost mine in every sense of the word by mid-February."<sup>30</sup>

Despite these predictions, British Columbia's Minister of Mines Donald Brothers was able to coax both parties back to the bargaining table in early March 1965. The company and the union reached an agreement, accepted by 92 percent of the striking workers, and the strike ended on March 5. Four days later, twenty-five employees were restoring equipment to the mine, while others anticipated their return to work. It took several months for the mine to resume full operations.<sup>31</sup>

Given the different economic and labor relations climate during the two shutdowns, the differing responses of workers may at first seem unsurprising. It makes sense that employees would be resigned to losing their jobs during an economic recession such as in 1958 and angry with a company that would rather close the mine than bargain with them in 1964. However, when we consider workers' differing notions of community, their responses

to the shutdowns appear contradictory. In 1958, one might expect employees who had lived in Britannia for many years, raised their families, and formed social bonds in the community to fiercely resist the closure of their workplace and town. Yet, during the 1958 shutdown there was little collective action to protest the company's decision. Social divisions between married and single employees, coupled with feelings of loyalty toward the company, meant that no coherent opposition to the shutdown emerged. Community hindered militancy. Ironically, in 1964, workers mounted an effective campaign against their employer despite the fact that many of the social structures that had promoted cohesion had disappeared and many employees now commuted to the mine from nearby towns. The strike fostered an animosity toward Anaconda that helped workers present a more united front to preserve their jobs. Community became both a rallying cry for strikers and a rhetorical strategy to garner wider support for Britannia based on economic nationalism. In both cases, workers' reactions to the mine closures do not immediately square with their shifting notions of community.

### 1958—A Workforce Divided

In 1958, social divisions among workers help explain residents' failure to resist the shutdown. These divisions, based primarily on marital status, played a central role in defining community membership in Britannia in the years following World War II. While married employees considered themselves respectable, stable community members, they characterized many of the single workers as rough transients, and often treated them as outsiders. Single employees came to Britannia from across the province and country looking for work. At the mine, they lived in bunkhouses, separated by a creek at both the Beach and Townsite from the houses inhabited by married residents. The creeks served as physical barriers between rough and respectable activity.<sup>32</sup> Socially, single men were largely excluded from local organizations. BM&S sought to attract stable family men to its mine and made families and children a priority when planning recreational events, creating playgrounds, and sponsoring picnics and sporting events. These events held little appeal for most bunkhouse dwellers.<sup>33</sup> Evidence also shows that single men were more likely than their married counterparts to be employed intermittently or seasonally and were thus less able to commit to local organizations. A study of Britannia workers and residents mentioned in the town newspaper, the *Townsite Reporter*, between 1949 and 1955, reveals that married employees and their families were much more involved in local activities; bunkhouse dwellers were rarely mentioned in the newspaper because few attended social club meetings or held leadership positions in local organizations.<sup>34</sup>

Since single workers were less likely to participate in events or volunteer for committees, few married residents considered them equal community members. Although married workers constituted a minority of Britannia employees, they enforced a code of respectability that largely excluded the more numerous and transient bunkhouse inhabitants.<sup>35</sup>

The social divisions between workers helped prevent the emergence of a collective opposition to the 1958 mine closure. Because of their exclusion, few single employees developed the same kind of devotion to Britannia as their married coworkers, many of whom had made the Beach or Townsite their permanent homes. When the mine closed, they had few reasons to stay in Britannia and saw little point in opposing the shutdown. While they may have felt sadness at the closing or frustration at losing their jobs, they would likely not have considered allying in opposition to the shutdown with the married residents who had persistently, if subtly, excluded them. As the *Province* reported, "Single miners had no illusions. They began packing at once and headed for the PGE trains."<sup>36</sup> The day after the company announced the shutdown, recalled the miner Al McNair, bunkhouse occupants began "leaving like a bunch of flies."<sup>37</sup> With a large portion of workers gone, it would have been difficult for the remaining employees and their families to muster the critical mass needed to mount an effective opposition campaign. Ultimately, married residents' close-knit sense of community speeded the town sites' dissolution.

However, even married residents failed to maintain a sense of unity or cohesion during the long shutdown process. The many months of uncertainty that preceded the mine closure did not bring residents closer together. Indeed, as the *Province* columnist Jean Howarth observed two months before the shutdown, Britannia was "a town torn by internal strife, totally without security, disturbed by a steady stream of rumors."<sup>38</sup> The December layoffs created further instability for residents. No one knew whose job would be cut, or when. National unemployment figures were approaching those last seen during the 1930s, and few Britannia residents could have been enthusiastic about the idea of finding a new job during a recession.<sup>39</sup> Furthermore, because the town sites were small and many married residents formed a close-knit community, friendships were unavoidably severed when supervisors and managers had to fire their neighbors.<sup>40</sup> Some families moved away, and the busy routine of meetings and events was disrupted. Resentment grew when the company transferred employees from the Townsite to replace terminated workers at the Beach, and vice versa. A miner's son, Jim Walton claimed "the uncertainty of the mine closing caused a lot of heartache, a lot of tragedy in terms of personal suffering." His parents relied on their creditors' kindness to stretch their limited income, and several other families were in similarly stressful financial



situations.<sup>41</sup> The columnist Jean Howarth wrote that shortly after the layoffs, people were “withdrawing into themselves, avoiding even their friends.” Residents were “caught in the frightening wave of fear and insecurity” that made them less likely to trust their coworkers.<sup>42</sup> This attitude made any cohesive reaction to the mine’s closure difficult.

Furthermore, some residents were so weary from constant uncertainty that when the mine closed they reacted with relief as well as sadness. For example, Mrs. Simpson, a foundry worker’s wife, told reporters that her family was “in a rut, and maybe it would be good for us to move.” Others hastened to pull up roots as tension between residents mounted. Howarth found that, after several months of uncertainty, “the most prevalent attitude is one of ‘I-don’t-give-a-damn.’”<sup>43</sup> Employee and long-time resident George Hurley demonstrated this attitude when he demanded to withdraw “every cent” of his money from the now struggling Britannia Credit Union three weeks after the shutdown began. The credit union was a cooperative bank owned and operated by Britannia’s residents, who pooled their savings and lent money to each other. Requests from now unemployed credit union members to withdraw their savings threatened to overextend the bank’s limited funds. Like Hurley, many other credit union members feared that their savings would be lost if they did not withdraw their deposits immediately.<sup>44</sup> In a letter to the provincial credit union inspector, Hurley threatened to create “adverse publicity” if his demand was not met.<sup>45</sup> This was a pivotal moment for British Columbia’s growing credit union movement. The crisis in Britannia resulted in the creation of the Credit Union Reserve Board, charged with providing financial assistance to credit unions “unavoidably in difficulty.” By securing funds from other credit unions, the Britannia organization was soon able to allow residents to withdraw money.<sup>46</sup>

While credit unions were rallying to support an organization in trouble, there was little equivalent sense of solidarity among Britannia’s married residents, who had previously considered themselves dedicated, respectable community members. Gone were the group activities and meetings they had claimed made them a unified group. Many seemed eager to move on. Only a handful of families remained during the shutdown, either because they were hopeful that the mine would eventually reopen, or because they saw few job prospects elsewhere.<sup>47</sup> The apparent “death” of the town evoked mostly sadness, blunting any attempts at organized opposition to the mine’s closure.

### 1964—Crisis as Catalyst

Between 1958 and 1964 the town’s physical and social shape altered considerably. Physically, the community was smaller; with the Townsite in the

mountains closed, all residents lived at the Beach. Anaconda also employed fewer workers than BM&S.<sup>48</sup> Thanks to the recently completed highway linking Britannia Beach to the growing city of Vancouver, workers did not need to live at the mine site. Several employees now commuted to work from nearby communities such as Squamish, Horseshoe Bay, and North Vancouver.<sup>49</sup> While Britannia Beach was still a company-owned property, it was no longer a closed community. These changes affected the way remaining residents and new employees defined themselves as a community. Britannia was no longer a remote town where residents believed people had to “make their own entertainment and fun.” While organizations such as the church and Ladies’ Auxiliary remained active, and the Britannia Beach Community Club continued to hold dances and baseball games, residents could now easily drive to Squamish or Vancouver for an evening’s entertainment. After the road went through, “the people went their own way,” remembered miner’s wife Betty Manson: “the closeness wasn’t there.”<sup>50</sup> Cohesiveness, stability, and active local participation—characteristics that had shaped married residents’ understanding of community before the 1958 shutdown—were less evident in the early 1960s. Residents who had previously relied on these characteristics to identify themselves as community members were left feeling that Britannia Beach was no longer a community.

Even though some residents believed that Britannia’s community spirit had waned after the 1958 shutdown, the 1964 strike and shutdown fostered a renewed sense of unity in the face of instability. The strike acted as a catalyst, exposing employees’ shared vulnerability at the hands of a large company, and providing some of Britannia’s workers with a renewed sense of community that motivated them to act collectively. “The solidarity of the working people is tremendous,” miner’s wife and *Squamish Times* correspondent Betty McNair reported in the second month of the strike.<sup>51</sup> While the strike’s duration caused financial hardship and uncertainty about the future, the sense of fear and weariness that plagued residents during 1957 and 1958 was not as evident in 1964. Some worried, as did the resident Freda Arsenault, that “it will take us years to catch up with everything we’ve lost” during the strike. However, the fact that help was being given to those struggling to make ends meet heartened others. The *Vancouver Times* reported that two supermarkets in Squamish and North Vancouver were offering free groceries to striking families, while union officials promised to contact workers’ creditors in an attempt to have monthly bills suspended for the duration of the strike.<sup>52</sup> Workers also received strike pay from the union.<sup>53</sup> Mine Mill leaders held frequent meetings with strikers and formed committees to organize social events and fundraisers and to publish strike bulletins.<sup>54</sup> This kind of assistance brought employees, some of whom lived in different towns, in close

and regular contact with each other. It also helped striking workers focus on walking picket lines and opposing the company's threatened closure, keeping feelings of uncertainty partially at bay.

The union also provided a common program around which employees could rally. Workers and residents were working toward a common goal and assisting each other. The result was a noted "return of community interest which had not been in evidence for some years," as one woman told a *Squamish Times* reporter: "It's almost as if the strike has brought us all closer together."<sup>55</sup> Betty McNair believed that the picket lines and the efforts of the strike committees had prompted "more visiting and togetherness" than "since before the road opened."<sup>56</sup> The strike provided a rallying point for many employees, creating a level of social interaction not seen since before 1958. While exclusive notions of community divided residents in 1958, the sense of community precipitated by the 1964 strike helped to unite and sustain workers during the period of uncertainty.

### **Loyalty and Hostility: Including and Excluding the Company from the Community**

The union's ability to foster a renewed sense of community at Britannia was particularly significant given the circumstances the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers faced as a known "Red" union during the Cold War. Since the late 1940s, the union had been subjected to continuous red baiting, and it resisted attempts—both from inside and outside the labor movement—to purge its leadership of Communist Party members and sympathizers.<sup>57</sup> As a "centre of communist strength," Mine Mill was particularly susceptible; its members were harassed and its delegates prevented from attending union conventions in the United States.<sup>58</sup> Between 1949 and 1965 the union also faced a series of certification challenges from the competing Steelworkers' Union. The tense atmosphere may account for the union's seemingly quiescent reaction to the 1958 shutdown. In 1955, Mine Mill's international leadership granted autonomy to its Canadian locals, but the red baiting continued.<sup>59</sup> During the 1964 strike, several journalists accused Mine Mill of making Britannia "an issue they can sink their pink teeth into." Britannia was a "fertile field for reds," according to the *Province's* editor, who claimed that the workers' protest was a futile "red-led furor."<sup>60</sup> Despite the attacks, union leadership was able to rally Britannia's workers and residents against their employer.

The union solidarity that fed opposition to the company in 1964 contrasted sharply with the company loyalty prevalent six years earlier. How residents viewed the company within or without the community influenced

their divergent reactions to the shutdown and strike. Loyalty to the company among married employees, especially, helped to inhibit collective opposition to the mine's closure in 1958. To many the company was a valued member of their community. After all, BM&S had built the town sites and operated the mine for five decades. More so than single employees, married residents approved of the company's efforts to build infrastructure, such as the community church, and to provide benefits for stable workers. Married workers were more likely to benefit from employee incentives—such as life insurance and company store dividends—because they stayed at the mine longer on average than their unmarried coworkers, and because the company favored benefit schemes tied to employee loyalty and stability.<sup>61</sup> They also benefited from the company's low-rent housing, recreation facilities, hospitals, and schools. They were encouraged to raise their children at Britannia and make it their home. Several long-time residents remembered how the company tried to help employees during the lean 1930s, extending store credit, stockpiling copper, and retaining as many married workers as possible on a reduced work schedule.<sup>62</sup> The goodwill generated by the company's acts made it more difficult for residents to blame BM&S for the shutdown. Since the 1920s, BM&S had engaged in a form of civic capitalism that, while it did not avert employer-employee conflict, in Philip Scranton's words, "bounded and channeled it, humanized it, and obstructed that abstraction and generalization from experience that could constitute class consciousness."<sup>63</sup> Thus, although residents remembered the shutdown as "devastating," and "quite a shock," they believed that the company had always been, in the words of one resident, "on guard for the welfare of the community," and hesitated to blame BM&S for the mine's closure.<sup>64</sup> Some residents appeared unable to imagine Britannia without the company.

Conversely, in 1964 many employees believed the company was treating them unfairly. This belief was due in part to the high price of copper at the time the company was pleading poverty. During the strike the price per ton continued to rise, from £209 in March 1964 to £245 six months later.<sup>65</sup> In this favorable economic climate, strike supporters saw the company's threat to close the mine as a mere "bargaining weapon," a way to force the workers to accept the company's contract offer. The union president and former Britannia employee Ken Smith called it an empty threat: "All along they have said they'd close if we didn't accept their proposals," he told reporters. "I won't believe it till they move out the track and hoisting equipment."<sup>66</sup> In 1958 many residents believed that the company had tried to avoid the shutdown until it had no other choice, but during the 1964 strike few believed the company was considering workers' interests. Some claimed that the mine closure was "a deliberate attempt to jack-up [*sic*] the market price of copper" by

limiting supply.<sup>67</sup> Many remembered the sacrifices the union had made to help the mine reopen. In 1959, the union had agreed to a 44-hour workweek and surrendered some of its benefits, and Ken Smith argued that, despite the mine's changed ownership, workers rightfully "expect some reciprocation now copper prices are up."<sup>68</sup> Strikers found the company's threats more reprehensible because they believed their demands were reasonable. "We believe the men are entitled to a 40-hour week," miner's wife Sylvia Hoeflitch told the *Squamish Times*: "Practically everyone else has it." Smith claimed that even if the company agreed to all the union's demands, conditions in Britannia would still not achieve parity with those at other British Columbia mines.<sup>69</sup> With copper prices high, many in Britannia believed that the company was able to meet union demands and felt mistreated when the company refused to compromise and threatened to close the mine permanently.

Employees also did not have the same sense of loyalty to the Anaconda Company that previous employees had shown BM&S. While BM&S had tried to foster loyalty and unity through welfare schemes, the Anaconda Company did little to establish such a social contract with its employees.<sup>70</sup> By the 1960s, the tenets of civic capitalism that BM&S had sustained since the 1920s were being replaced by ideas of global capitalism, in which shareholders' interests were paramount.<sup>71</sup> Although BM&S was owned by an American parent company that operated three other mines, Britannia was always managed locally. The managers' longevity, autonomy, and paternalistic approach gave the mine a family-owned feel.<sup>72</sup> Anaconda, on the other hand, was an American corporate "empire" of mining, transportation, lumber, and real estate companies. It owned subsidiaries in four countries and had a reputation for using "coercion and persuasion to maintain control" over its employees.<sup>73</sup> Anaconda showed less consideration for Britannia's workers and residents than did BM&S. Miner's wife and long-time resident Olive Baxter noticed the difference between the companies' approaches. Under BM&S management, she remembered, "it was more like a big family. But when the Anaconda come [*sic*], they were more into industry . . . and it was more business."<sup>74</sup> Her feelings for BM&S were fond enough that she considered the company akin to a relative or friend, not a corporate entity. Baxter and her fellow residents felt less connected to the new mine owners, who had only been operating the mine for two years. They did not believe they owed Anaconda anything, and consequently it was easier to label the company an "outsider" and portray it as the enemy. The strike helped workers to redefine community in opposition to the company.

In 1958, the sustained cooperation between BM&S and the union during the months of uncertainty preceding the shutdown gave residents further proof that the company was concerned about their welfare. Initially, BM&S

and Mine Mill disagreed over the best way to respond to falling copper prices. Each group used its own rhetoric to promote its preferred solution to the crisis. The company asked its employees to take a pay cut, calling for local unity and sacrifice to help keep the mine open. Management expected workers to share “the company’s hardship through an emergency.” On the other hand, the union refused to take a pay cut, believing that to do so would be to “break faith” with the broader community of base-metal workers across Canada.<sup>75</sup> Though there was sympathy for the company, worker solidarity was paramount. Despite their diverging notions of community, company officials and union leaders did not disagree for long. Together, they reached several agreements that allowed the mine to continue operating. In late August, they rearranged work schedules to reduce labor costs. In October, workers gave up a 5 cent per hour wage increase promised in their two-year contract and agreed to work four additional hours per week.<sup>76</sup> The company’s willingness to negotiate and compromise with the union further convinced some residents that BM&S was trying to act in their interest and keep the mine open.

### **Death and Murder: Rhetoric of Local and National Community**

Residents’ loyalty, coupled with the sustained cooperation of union and company officials to prevent the closure, helps explain why there was little public opposition when BM&S announced in February 1958 that it would have to close Britannia until base-metal prices improved.<sup>77</sup> Because of the union’s and company’s extended efforts to keep the mine open, many residents believed that “everything possible had been done,” and the closure was unavoidable.<sup>78</sup> “You can’t do anything once the copper prices are down,” the former resident Will Trythall claimed.<sup>79</sup> Miner John Dickinson did not blame the company either; business was bad, and BM&S “just couldn’t make a go of it, that’s all.”<sup>80</sup> Rex Lucas argues this attitude is common among employees of Canada’s post-WWII single-industry communities. These workers recognize the many uncontrollable factors affecting resource industries and consequently believe that power and authority are diffuse. They have little focus for their hostility, believing, especially in a time of recession, that company officials cannot control the laws of supply and demand or shareholders’ whims. This belief, Lucas notes, inhibits action because “it is difficult to direct intense conflict against an enemy you cannot find.”<sup>81</sup> Lucas’s theory applies to Britannia’s workers in 1958, many of whom believed that their town was the victim of economic laws, laws that, according to a *Victoria Times* editorial, “no Canadian government, no government in the world” could circumvent.<sup>82</sup> While some grumbled that the company surely owed them something for all

the concessions they had made, ultimately no collective opposition to the shutdown emerged because many believed there was nothing they could do. Anger did not translate into action.

This sense of helplessness and pessimism is evident in the language residents and observers used to describe the mine's closure. Their words often evoked images of death. The resident Elsie Hamelin called the drop in copper prices Britannia's "death knell," while Mrs. Robinson, the postmaster's wife, claimed that watching the mine close was like "sitting by the deathbed of an old friend." Vancouver's newspapers announced the town's unfortunate fate; "Britannia Dies," one headline read, while another article claimed that "the life-blood is draining from Britannia." Reporters alleged that there was an "eerie silence" in the quickly emptying town and described the shutdown as a "tragedy."<sup>83</sup> These images reinforced the presumed finality of the closure and underlined the futility of disputing the company's actions. Death, it seemed, was inevitable. Britannia's ghost town status was all but assured.

While the 1958 shutdown was portrayed as the slow death of a town, Anaconda's actions in 1964 were seen as the unprovoked "murder of a community." Union leaders, strikers, and supporters were not despondent, but positive, insisting after several weeks on the picket line that the strike "remains solid" and "morale is high."<sup>84</sup> Their rhetoric, instead of embracing death, evoked images of local and national community to garner wider support for their cause.

On the one hand, strikers and supporters described Britannia as a close-knit community threatened by a heartless corporation. Union bulletins and newspaper reports employed what the anthropologist Elizabeth Furniss has called the "politics of victimization." This does not imply that the union's claims about the company were unfounded or fabricated, but they were worded to emphasize Britannia's small size and the hardworking nature of its residents in order to highlight the "discrepancies of power" between the company and the community. The technique transformed Britannia's seeming powerlessness into a moral authority that could be used to justify the union's actions.<sup>85</sup> This was a David versus Goliath struggle. Union bulletins often described the strikers as "little local 663," while the company was termed "the Anaconda giant" or the "giant metal monopoly." Union leaders reminded strikers and supporters that the company was a "billion dollar" enterprise, the "world's largest copper producer." By reinforcing the disparities of resources and power between Anaconda and its employees, the strikers were trying to demonstrate the integrity of their cause. The company was a bully, they claimed, whose "every Scrooge tactic . . . only serves to stiffen the resistance of the workers." The workers were the "good and faithful long-service employees," the "miners and their families who over the years have

produced [the mine's] wealth."<sup>86</sup> The union's rhetoric described Britannia's workers as united small-town folks, an image that excluded the approximately 20 percent of employees who did not participate in the strike.<sup>87</sup> Britannia's embodiment of small-town values made it worth saving, supporters argued, even if, in reality, many of the mine's employees now lived in other towns and commuted to work. Those opposed to the mine's closure appealed to the image of a close-knit community standing up to a corporate giant to help convince the general public that theirs was a just cause.

On the other hand, the strike's rhetoric also situated Britannia within a national community in order to solicit support from across the country. The union especially appealed to a growing sense of economic nationalism, claiming that all Canadian workers and citizens should be concerned about an American corporation's efforts to close the Britannia mine. Union leaders had tried this tactic in 1958 without much success. Two weeks after BM&S closed the mine on February 27, 1958, the union submitted a paper to the provincial government's Select Standing Committee on Labour, accusing the company of "callous and precipitate action" and asking the government to take the mine away from "foreign interests" and operate it itself. The report asserted that the unused mine would deteriorate, making it nearly impossible to reopen should copper prices rise. It argued that the decision to close Britannia was made "4,000 miles away, by citizens of another country, and evidently without concern for the people of British Columbia."<sup>88</sup> The union tried to solicit government intervention by insisting that the mine's closure affected not only Britannia's citizens but also the inhabitants of the entire province. A *Vancouver Sun* editorial agreed that the company "surely owes this province something more than a series of vague disaster warnings, followed by an abrupt shutdown with no explanation at all."<sup>89</sup> However, the provincial and federal governments did not act. The appeals came too late in 1958; the mine was closed, and many employees had already left.

However, by 1964 feelings of economic nationalism had become more prevalent in Canada. The historian Steven High argues that "by the mid-1960s, a growing number of English-speaking Canadians believed that their country was in imminent danger of becoming an American colony."<sup>90</sup> While some lamented the invasion of American culture in magazines and television programs, others pointed to high levels of foreign investment as proof of the United States' imperialist intentions. Indeed, by 1960, 47.4 percent of capital invested in Canada came from the United States.<sup>91</sup> Canada faced a choice, according to former federal Minister of Finance Walter L. Gordon, between independence and colonial status. This new nationalism became, in Steven High's words, "a powerful rhetorical weapon in the hands of working people to be used against companies that closed plants." High insists



that this nationalist feeling was strongest in Ontario's manufacturing sector in the early 1970s.<sup>92</sup> However, Britannia's employees were using the rhetoric of economic nationalism years earlier. After all, foreign investment was not limited to the manufacturing sector of Canada's economy. Between 1926 and 1963, foreign investment in Canada's mining and smelting sector rose from 38 to 59 percent.<sup>93</sup> In 1964, the union was able to play more successfully on nationalist fears, placing Anaconda's threat to close the mine within an emerging discourse criticizing American influence in the Canadian economy. In an effort to save their jobs and town, residents and employees began imagining community on a larger scale than they had in 1958.

Strikers used nationalist rhetoric in two ways. First, they described themselves as part of a national community of workers that needed to defend itself against American corporations. Union leaders argued that all Canadian workers should be concerned about the attempt to close the Britannia mine, because a victory against Anaconda would "benefit workers everywhere." The union president Ken Smith offered the attempted closure as evidence that "absentee landlords (particularly U.S.) have nothing but disdain for the Canadian worker."<sup>94</sup> Workers across Canada were encouraged to support the Britannia strikers because, with increased American ownership in Canada, they could soon be facing a similar situation. Strong opposition and legislation would ensure, as union representatives told federal Minister of Labor Leslie Peterson, that foreign companies could not "enter our country for the purpose of exploitation without regard to the welfare of the workers and the community as a whole."<sup>95</sup>

Union leaders and strike supporters also claimed that all Canadians had an interest in keeping the mine in operation and implored their fellow citizens not to "let the Yanks rule Britannia." In a letter to the *Northern Miner*, the Mine Mill president Ken Smith argued that Canadian taxpayers, who had been willing to provide a subsidy to keep the mine operating in 1958, should expect the company to "reciprocate when times are good for them." A petition circulated at a union rally in October 1964 asserted that the decision to close the mine was made "without regard for the welfare of the Canadian people" and accused Anaconda of trying to destroy "millions of tons of valuable ore" that could have been contributing to the Canadian economy.<sup>96</sup> This ore, union leaders insisted, was "an asset belonging to the people and should not be abandoned." In this context, the strike became more than a struggle to keep the mine open and secure improved working conditions for employees. It was, according to the union, a struggle to "re-establish the rights of the people of this Province and our sovereign government" against foreign resource extraction companies. To this end, Mine Mill asked the provincial government to enact legislation to ensure that mining properties, claims, grants, and

leases abandoned by corporate interests became the property of the Crown.<sup>97</sup> The union wanted the mine “put to use for the benefit of Canadians,” not, as one Mine Mill bulletin put it, left in the hands of an “arrogant American monopoly.”<sup>98</sup>

Unlike in 1958, many people responded favorably to the strikers’ nationalist appeals. They agreed that, as Canadians, they were part of a community that needed to rally to help their fellow citizens. In a display of worker solidarity, locals from 42 unions across Canada pledged money and support for Britannia’s strikers, many requesting copies of strike bulletins so they could “follow the developments of your fight.” Several politicians reacted with concern. In a letter to the *Vancouver Times*, Arthur Turner, an elected member of British Columbia’s legislative assembly and a member of the left-leaning New Democratic Party, said that Anaconda’s attempt to close the mine should “shock and startle Canadians into action.” Turner claimed that he was not as concerned about the dispute between the company and the union as he was about “the fact that Canadian wealth—known and potential—can be willfully destroyed” by “a large corporation with headquarters in the United States.” Charles Caron, chairman of the North Vancouver Committee of the Communist Party of Canada, wrote to Jack Davis, the Member of Parliament for the Coast-Capilano riding (and a Liberal Party member), asking the federal government to “nationalize this enterprise so that it may be operated in the interests of Canadians.” Similarly, the leader of British Columbia’s New Democratic Party, R. M. Strachan, told the Mine Mill representative Harvey Murphy that he was concerned about Anaconda’s actions and intended “to pursue this matter further.”<sup>99</sup> Private citizens also used nationalist sentiments to voice their dismay at the mine closure. “The obvious solution,” one writer to the *Province* suggested, “is expropriation and operation of the mine by the B.C. government.”<sup>100</sup> The union’s nationalist rhetoric clearly struck a chord, emphasizing all Canadians’ vulnerability at the hands of American corporations.

As these examples illustrate, other unions, politicians, and private citizens shared the union’s fears about increasing American control of Canadian industries. Many believed the union’s assertions that, as members of the same country, they belonged to the same community of interest as the Britannia strikers and therefore should send the miners assistance and support. Although neither the federal nor the provincial government introduced legislation or took steps to nationalize the mine, many people saw the strike in Britannia as an attempt to stand up to foreign companies. This was a community, whether imagined locally or nationally, defending its interests. The financial and moral support strikers received as a result of their nationalist appeals sustained their campaign for eight months—long enough to convince

both union and company officials to return to the bargaining table. Whereas in 1958 many observers had only pity for Britannia's "tragic" and scattered residents, in 1964 observers were invited to become part of the strikers' community. This ensured that at least some opposition to the shutdown came from across the country, not only from local residents.

### **Company Town: Shack Town, New Town, Hometown**

During both crises, workers' diverse notions of community played an influential role in their response. The rapid changes affecting Britannia during these years did not destroy the community, but forced employees to reexamine their understandings of what connected them to each other. In 1958, notions of community obstructed collective action, dividing workers and diffusing blame. Residents who had used marital status to define community membership were unwilling or unable to express any effective or united opposition when the mine suddenly closed. However, in 1964 understandings of community motivated many workers to act collectively. Striking employees believed the shutdown gave them a common purpose and a common opponent in the company. They were able to embrace notions of local and national community that broadened their struggle and garnered support from outside Britannia's boundaries.

Employees' experiences during these crises underline the often sporadic and inconsistent nature of de-industrialization. They remind us that resource town closures cannot be characterized as inevitable or tragic; these are dynamic periods of intense change, shaped by both material realities, such as income and commodity prices, and discursive factors, such as loyalty and community, that deserve more focused historical attention. Other town sites and abandoned industrial relics likely hold similarly complex stories, most still awaiting scholarly exploration. Not only do Britannia's shutdowns reveal how community identity shaped workers' responses to de-industrialization in unexpected ways, they also help debunk the notion that the postwar era in Canada was a time of labor stability and worker prosperity. Shutdowns that occurred in this period reinforce the idea that, historically, de-industrialization has been a process, in Cowie and Heathcott's words, "pockmarked with explosions, relocations, desertions, and competitive struggles."<sup>101</sup> People in Britannia characterized de-industrialization both as a drawn-out, traumatic, and dislocating experience and as a renewing, unifying, and strengthening one for their community. No one metaphor suffices to explain the diverse reactions of residents when ghosts hovered over the future of the town.

Once resolved, the 1964 strike faded quickly from the media spotlight. British Columbia's provincial government was busy implementing its newly amended Municipal Act, designed to give government officials a role in resource town development and allow new towns to be immediately incorporated, ostensibly giving residents more control over local affairs through taxation and municipal councils.<sup>102</sup> The government intended to prevent company towns like Britannia from being built in the future by legislating a new model for resource town development.

In September 1965, seven short months after Britannia's employees returned to work, government ministers, professional planners, labor leaders, and resource company officials attended a conference to discuss the Act's implications. Conference delegates imagined a bright future, in which resource towns would guarantee a stable labor supply for companies and a secure, enjoyable lifestyle for employees. They contrasted this future with the stereotypical "shack towns of the past" and offered the newly completed town of Kitimat as an example of what was possible. G. W. Whitehead was the manager of the property department for the Aluminum Company of Canada, which owned the Kitimat smelter and the hydroelectric project in neighboring Kemano, located on British Columbia northern coast, approximately 1,000 km north of Vancouver. At the conference he claimed that the "unprecedented low rate of one percent labor turnover per year for the past six years proves beyond a doubt that long-range planning of an industrial town complete with all amenities pays." W. B. Scott, the engineer hired to develop the pulp-and-paper town of Gold River on Vancouver Island, believed that people would no longer "tolerate company towns where their lives are dominated by the employer." He insisted that "good schools, homes, shopping centres, recreational and cultural facilities" were needed to make these new towns "hometowns." Delegates stressed the need to reduce "unnecessary antagonisms" between labor and management. They believed that resource extraction should benefit resource communities and argued that "where the use of a natural resource does not lead to a good community life, perhaps the resource should not be developed at all."<sup>103</sup>

These were admirable statements. Certainly, British Columbia's working people deserved to live in stable, well-appointed, incorporated communities. However, these were not revolutionary ideas; Britannia's residents would certainly have found several of the delegates' announcements familiar, and perhaps ironic. Their own experiences suggested that the delegates' plans and recommendations would do little to change company town life. For one thing, the Beach and Townsite had always had many of the amenities that professional planners were now advocating. Those amenities had

not significantly lowered labor turnover rates, nor had they prevented the company from shutting down the mine in 1958 and closing the Townsite permanently.

Moreover, far from being an “unnecessary antagonism,” conflict between employer and employees had recently brought Britannia residents closer together, creating a sense of community and purpose that helped them fight for their jobs and homes. It is clear that the experts’ advice did not apply to Britannia, which was, for many, already a hometown. Had the conference delegates asked, Britannia’s residents would have told them that people, not plans, create communities; social interaction cannot easily be laid out in blueprints and policies. But they did not ask. Britannia residents were not invited to give their opinions. Instead, the delegates painted the same bleak and simplistic image of company town life, one that did not reflect the varied experiences of the many people that had passed through Britannia over the years.

Today, Britannia Beach lives off the memory of its mining days. When Anaconda ceased operations for good in 1974, residents were ready with a museum plan that saw the copper concentrator and other historic buildings preserved as part of the British Columbia Mining Museum. In the face of mounting pressure from developers to take advantage of the site’s breathtaking mountain views and convenient proximity to Vancouver, residents and former employees again united to assert their town’s mining identity. Today, as commuters and tourists drive by on the Sea-to-Sky Highway, the giant copper mill stands in quiet testament, one of the few remaining material reminders that this was a place where people worked hard, raised families, and endured repeated crises that threatened their livelihood and refashioned their community—while always keeping the ghosts at bay.

## Notes

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1. Steven High, *Industrial Sunset: The Making of North America’s Rust Belt, 1969–1984* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 9.

2. For further details about the mill (also known as the concentrator), see the online exhibit at the British Columbia Museum of Mining, which is located in Britannia Beach. <http://www.theconcentrator.ca>.
3. The exact number employed at Britannia varied continuously, but averaged 600 to 800 workers during the 1950s. In the 1960s, the workforce was much reduced, averaging closer to 350 employees at the mine.
4. Politicians sympathetic to labor repeatedly called for company towns to be “opened up” and claimed that company authority violated workers’ rights. For examples, see *Victoria Daily Times*, March 11, 1919, 4; *Vancouver Sun*, February 13, 1934, 16; *Victoria Daily Times*, February 13, 1943, 2; *Victoria Daily Times*, February 29, 1944, 8; *Victoria Daily Times*, February 26, 1944, 5.
5. “Shutdown Threatens Britannia,” *Vancouver Sun*, July 11, 1957, 1; “\$15,000 Homes to Make B.C.’s New Ghost Town,” *Vancouver Sun*, July 22, 1957, 3.
6. Gilbert Stelter and Alan Artibise, “Canadian Resource Towns in Historical Perspective,” in *Little Communities and Big Industries: Studies in the Social Impact of Canadian Resource Extraction*, ed. Roy Bowles (Toronto: Butterworths, 1982), 50.
7. Doug Ward, “Ghost Towns Dot the B.C. Landscape,” *Vancouver Sun*, October 18, 1997, C4.
8. See, for example, Patricia Marchak, *Green Gold: The Forest Industry in British Columbia* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1983).
9. John Bradbury and Isabelle St-Martin, “Winding Down in a Québec Mining Town: A Case Study of Shefferville,” *Canadian Geographer* 27, 2 (1983): 133.
10. Rex Lucas, *Minetown, Milltown, Railtown: Life in Canadian Communities of Single Industry* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971).
11. Many local histories of company towns adopt a similar approach. See, for example, Bruce Ramsey’s history of Britannia, *Britannia: The Story of a Mine* (Britannia Beach: Britannia Beach Community Club, 1967), and Charlie Angus’ “King of the Shield,” *Beaver* (April/May 1999), 30–6.
12. John Walsh and Steven High, “Rethinking the Concept of Community,” *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 32, 64 (1999): 255. Thomas Bender similarly criticized American historians for their stilted approach to community in his monograph, *Community and Social Change in America* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1978).
13. Bender, *Community and Social Change in America*, 6.
14. “Imagined communities” does not imply that community does not exist; the interesting question asks not about a community’s authenticity, but inquires as to how and why it was imagined in a certain way. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso Editions, 1983), 15.
15. Jefferson Cowie and Joseph Heathcott, “The Meanings of De-industrialization,” in *Beyond the Ruins: The Meanings of De-industrialization*, ed. Jefferson Cowie and Joseph Heathcott (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003), 5–6.

16. David Harvey describes this as the change from a Fordist regime of accumulation to a post-Fordist regime of flexible accumulation, characterized by high levels of structural unemployment, rapid destruction and reconstruction of skills, and modest gains in real wages. Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Causes of Cultural Change* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989), 147.
17. According to Bryan Palmer, the 1950s and 1960s are often erroneously portrayed as an “end of ideology,” a time of unprecedented cooperation between Canadian unions and employers. Bryan Palmer, *Working-Class Experience: The Rise and Reconstitution of Canadian Labour, 1800–1980* (Toronto: Butterworth & Co., 1983), 252.
18. “Progress Report—November 1st to 15th, Inclusive.” Howe Sound Company (Britannia Division) Records, Box 83b, File 24, UBC Special Collections (hereafter UBC SpColl), Vancouver, B.C.
19. Bryan Palmer, *Working Class Experience: Rethinking the History of Canadian Labour, 1800–1991* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1992), 338; Ferdinand E Banks, *The World Copper Market: An Economic Analysis* (Cambridge, MA: Ballinger Publishing Company, 1974), 10.
20. “Shutdown Threatens Britannia,” *Vancouver Sun*, July 11, 1957, 1. Given that the average weekly metal mining wage in 1957 was \$81.68, this amounted to a net loss of approximately \$12.25 per week. “Averages of weekly wages of hourly rated wage earners, select industry groups, Canada, 1945–1970,” E78–85, F.H. Leacy, ed., *Historical Statistics of Canada, Electronic edition* (2003), <http://www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/11–516-XIE/sectiona/toc.htm>, April 21, 2006.
21. This is approximately \$485,000 in 2006 dollars. By November 1957, the price of copper had dropped further, and the company stated that it was losing \$80,000 per month (\$623,500 in 2010 dollars). “Inflation Calculator,” [http://banqueducanada.ca/en/rates/inflation\\_calc.html](http://banqueducanada.ca/en/rates/inflation_calc.html) (accessed November 1, 2010). International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers (Western District), “Submission to Select Standing Committee on Labour of the B.C. Government, Re: Closing of Britannia Mine,” March 11, 1958, 4–5, IUMMSW Fonds, Box 115, File 11, UBC SpColl, Vancouver B.C.
22. E. C. Roper, Letter to G.C. Lipsey, October 16, 1957, Howe Sounds Company (Britannia Division) Records, Box 54, File 34, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, B.C.
23. The total workforce was reduced by 32 percent. “Analysis of Labor at November 20, 1957,” and “Summary of Labor at December 31, 1957,” Howe Sound Company (Britannia Division) Records, Box 63, File 14, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, B.C.
24. Royal Bank of Canada, Letter to J.E. Nelson, January 31, 1958, Britannia Mining and Smelting Company, Limited, MS1221, Box 57, File 55, British Columbia Archives (hereafter BCARS), Victoria, B.C.
25. E. C. Roper, Telegram to J.S. Roper, February 27, 1958, MS1221, Box 74, File 1, BCARS, Victoria, B.C.

26. Minister of Mines, Province of British Columbia, *Annual Report 1958* (Victoria: Don McDiarmid, Printer to the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, 1959), 56.
27. Interview with Al McNair, September 22, 2004.
28. Interview with Kay Pickard, September 24, 2004.
29. "Bargaining Demands," *Mine-Mill Herald*, February/March 1964, Greenlee Papers (hereafter GP), UBC SpColl, Vancouver, B.C.
30. "Britannia Miners Spurn Wage Report," *Vancouver Sun*, July 24, 1964; "Britannia Faces 'Indefinite Shutdown,'" *Squamish Times*, August 13, 1964, GP, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, B.C.; "Britannia Wage Talks to Start Again Today," *Province*, September 11, 1964, GP, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, B.C.; "Britannia Strikers Lose Jobs as Mine Company Pulls Out," *Sunday Sun*, September 26, 1964, GP, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, B.C.; "Women Join Line at Britannia Gate," *Vancouver Sun*, September 29, 1964, 1; "200 Autos Join Miners' Motorcade," *Vancouver Sun*, October 31, 1964, 29; "Union Men Stay in 'Padlocked' Hall," *Vancouver Sun*, November 3, 1964, 23. " 'Border' Maps Ready for Britannia Pickets," *Province*, October 3, 1964, 29; "Ghost Mine Spectre Looms at Britannia," *Province*, November 26, 1964, 20.
31. "Talks Bring New Hope in Britannia Mine Strike," *Province*, March 2, 1965, 9; "Long Strike Ends," *Vancouver Sun*, March 5, 1965, 1; "Britannia Bustles Again," *Vancouver Sun*, March 9, 1965, 13.
32. Katharine Rollwagen, "Bunkhouse and Home: Company, Community, and Crisis in Britannia Beach, British Columbia" (master's thesis, University of Victoria, 2005), 58–60.
33. These men were not necessarily all unmarried; a housing shortage in the 1950s made it necessary for some married men to live in the bunkhouses and house their families in Vancouver. *Ibid.*, 39–42.
34. Approximately 75 percent of those named in the *Reporter* were married employees or family members. *Townsite Reporter* 1:1–9:8, LS856–536 and LS856–474, BCARS, Victoria, B.C. After one social club meeting in 1951, the Beach newspaper, *Beachcomber*, mentioned that even though the bunkhouse dwellers comprised 65 percent of the club membership, only 25 single men had attended the meeting, and only one had run for an executive position. *Beachcomber* 1:9 (October 1951), n.p., Archie Smith Papers (hereafter ASP), 2687, British Columbia Mining Museum (hereafter BCMM), Britannia Beach, B.C.
35. The company did not keep exact population statistics; however, in 1957 Coast-Capilano MP James Sinclair told the House of Commons that the mine employed approximately 800 people, and the town housed 312 families. Since all families contained at least one employee (only employees could live in Britannia), we can estimate there were no more than 325 married employees, and the remainder were bunkhouse inhabitants. Debates, House of Commons, Canada. Session 1957–1958, 2, 1114.
36. "For Mr. Gaglardi—A Message: You Still Can Save Britannia's Life," *Province*, March 3, 1958, 17; "Britannia Folk Wait and Wonder," *Vancouver Sun*, March 3, 1958, 2.



37. Interview with Al McNair, Britannia Mines Oral History Project (hereafter BMOHP), 1878–29, University of British Columbia Archives (hereafter UBCAR), Vancouver, B.C.
38. Jean Howarth, “Britannia Very Unhappy Town,” *Province*, January 7, 1958.
39. Unemployment levels varied between 2.5 and 5 percent in the early 1950s, but rose as high as 10 percent between 1956 and 1959. Between 500,000 and 750,000 people were unemployed across Canada at this time. Palmer, *Working-Class Experience*, 271.
40. Jean Howarth, “Britannia Very Unhappy Town,” *Province*, January 7, 1958.
41. Interview with Jim Walton, BMOHP, 1878–43, UBCAR, Vancouver, B.C.
42. Jean Howarth, “Britannia a Divided Town,” *Province*, January 9, 1958, 20.
43. “For Mr. Gaglardi—A Message: You still Can Save Britannia’s Life,” *Province*, March 3, 1958, 17; Jean Howarth, “It Is Hard—Pulling Up Roots,” *Province*, January 8, 1958.
44. Ian MacPherson, *Co-operation, Conflict and Consensus* (Vancouver: B.C. Central Credit Union, 1995), 121.
45. BCARS, B262, Credit Union Inspector’s Records, File 34, Letter from George Hurley, March 24, 1958.
46. MacPherson, *Co-operation, Conflict and Consensus*, 121–2.
47. The exact number is unknown; however, in 1964, only 5 percent of the then striking employees had been working at Britannia prior to the 1958 shutdown, suggesting that few remained or returned when the mine reopened.
48. BM&S employed approximately 800 people before the layoffs of December 1957 and the 1958 shutdown. Anaconda employed 350 people at the time of the 1964 strike. See House of Commons Debates, November 14, 1957, 1117; “Miners Strike At Britannia,” *Vancouver Sun*, August 11, 1964, 7.
49. Employee addresses noted on strike registration forms. See Strike registration forms, IUMMSW Fonds, Box 120, File 14, UBC SpColl, Vancouver B.C.
50. Interview with Kay Pickard, September 24, 2004; interviews with Mary Smith and Muriel Green, BMOHP, 1878–40 and 1878–20 (respectively), UBCAR, Vancouver, B.C.; transcript from interview with Betty Manson, BMOHP, Box 3, File 11, UBCAR, Vancouver, B.C.
51. Betty McNair, “Britannia a Troubled Town,” *Squamish Times*, October 8, 1964.
52. UBC SpColl, GP, “Many Britannia Miners Dig In—Ready to Live in Jobless Town,” *Vancouver Times*, October 7, 1964; “Britannia Faces ‘Indefinite Shutdown,’” *Squamish Times*, August 13, 1964.
53. In 1958, the shutdown was seen as permanent; workers were laid off according to union seniority, but did not receive any ongoing financial aid or compensation during the shutdown.
54. “Local 663—Strike Bulletin,” 1:5 (September 2, 1964), GP, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, B.C.
55. “Britannia People Hope Mine Will Re-open Soon,” *Squamish Times*, November 26, 1964, GP, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, B.C.
56. Betty McNair, “Strikes and Pickets,” *Squamish Times*, October 8, 1964.

57. The American Taft-Hartley Act of 1947 limited unions' right to strike and required union officials to sign anti-Communist affidavits. Although it was American law, it was also applied to the leadership of international unions active in Canada. For more on Taft-Hartley, see Robert H. Z. Zieger and Gilbert Gall, *American Workers, American Unions* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 152–3.
58. Ken Smith, Britannia employee and union delegate, was turned back at the border in 1948 and arrested in Seattle during a later attempt. See Mike Solski and John Smaller, *Mine Mill: The History of the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers in Canada Since 1895* (Ottawa: Steel Rail Publishing, 1984), 52–3. Quote is from Palmer, *Working-Class Experience*, 248.
59. Solski and Smaller, *Mine Mill*, 130.
60. Ormond Turner, "Around Town," *Province*, November 2, 1964, 25.; "Britannia: Fertile Field for Reds," *Province*, November 4, 1964, 4.
61. Residents' varied reactions to company paternalism are detailed in Rollwagen, "Bunkhouse and Home," 49–53.
62. Interview with Lucille Gillingham, BMOHP, 1878–18, UBCAR, Vancouver, B.C.
63. Philip Scranton, *Proprietary Capitalism: The Textile Manufacturer at Philadelphia, 1800–1885* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 418, quoted in High, *Industrial Sunset*, 89.
64. Interview with Elsie Anderson, September 23, 2004; report on interview with Reg Eades, Jr., BMOHP, Box 2, File 15 and report on interview with Mrs. Betty Manson, BMOHP, Box 3 File 11, UBCAR, Vancouver, B.C.
65. The company's actual financial situation is of little relevance here; the residents' belief that they were being cheated affected their actions regardless of whether these beliefs can be substantiated. In dollars, the price of copper increased from \$580 to \$680 per ton. "The Truth About Britannia Mine," *Vancouver Sun*, September 9, 1964, 9.
66. Doug Collins, "Bob's Ghost," *Vancouver Times*, October 3, 1964; "Mine Will Close," *Province*, September 26, 1964; "Britannia to Shut but Vote Goes On," *Province*, September 28, 1964, GP, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, B.C.
67. Labor unrest in Rhodesia and the Congo during the same period was contributing to a worldwide drop in the copper supply and raising the metal's price, fuelling the miners' suspicions about the company's intentions. "Uneasy Calm at Britannia," *Province*, September 29, 1964, GP, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, B.C.; "Many Britannia Miners Dig In—Ready to Live in Jobless Town," *Vancouver Times*, October 7, 1964.
68. Doug Collins, "Bob's Ghost," *Vancouver Times*, October 3, 1964, GP, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, B.C.; "Mine Will Close," *Province*, September 26, 1964.
69. "Britannia Faces 'Indefinite Shutdown,'" *Squamish Times*, August 13, 1964; Doug Collins, "Bob's Ghost," *Vancouver Times*, October 3, 1964, GP, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, B.C.

70. The term social contract is used to describe a relationship between employees and employers in which employers recognize the way their business affects individual workers, their families, and communities. See Steve May and Laura Morrison, "Making Sense of Restructuring," in Cowie and Heathcott, *Beyond the Ruins*, 260.
71. High, *Industrial Sunset*, 89.
72. From 1922 until its bankruptcy, BM&S employed three general managers. One, C. P. Browning, held the position for 25 years. Each had worked for the company in various capacities before becoming general manager.
73. Norman Girvan, *Copper in Chile: A Study in Conflict Between Corporate and National Economy* (Mona: Institute of Social and Economic Research, University of the West Indies, 1972), 37; Laurie Mercier, *Anaconda: Labor, Community, and Culture in Montana's Smelter City* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 20.
74. Interview with Olive Baxter, BMOHP, 1878–3, UBCAR, Vancouver, B.C.
75. "\$15,000 Homes to Make B.C.'s New Ghost Town," *Vancouver Sun*, July 22, 1957, 3.
76. For the details of these arrangements, "Britannia Mine, Union Plan Economies to Keep Running," *Vancouver Sun*, August 23, 1957, 16 and also House of Commons Debates, Tuesday November 14, 1957, 1115.
77. "For Mr. Gaglardi—A Message: You Still Can Save Britannia's Life," *Province*, March 3, 1958, 17.
78. Doug Collins, "My MP," *Vancouver Times*, November 7, 1964, GP, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, B.C.
79. Interview with Will Trythall, September 23, 2004.
80. Interview with Elsie Hamelin, BMOHP, 1878–14, UBCAR, Vancouver, B.C.
81. Lucas, *Minetown, Milltown, Railtown*, 334–9.
82. "Who Pays the Shot?" *Victoria Times*, September 4, 1957.
83. Report from interview with Elsie Hamelin, BMOHP, Box 3, File 4, UBCAR, Vancouver, B.C.; "\$15,000 Homes to Make B.C.'s New Ghost Town," *Vancouver Sun*, July 22, 1957, 3; "Death of a Whole Town at Least Deserves an Inquest," *Vancouver Sun*, March 11, 1958, 4; "For Mr. Gaglardi—A Message: You Still Can Save Britannia's Life," *Province*, March 3, 1958, 17; Jack Scott, "Our Town: Man With Ghost," *Vancouver Sun*, May 26, 1958, 21.
84. "We Can't Allow Town's Murder," *Victoria Colonist*, November 18, 1964, 27; "Local 663 Strike Bulletin" 1, no. 5, September 2, 1964, GP, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, B.C.
85. The term is often used to explore how rural settler communities oppose intrusion by urban governments and/or expanding resource industries. Elizabeth Furniss, *The Burden of History: Colonialism and the Frontier Myth in a Rural Canadian Community* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1999), 88–9.
86. "Local 663—Strike Bulletin," 2, no. 1, February 12, 1965, IUMMSW Fonds, Box 120, File 12, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, B.C.; "Historic Victory of Mine

- Miller's at Britannia"—bulletin dated March 11, 1965, GP, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, B.C.; Ken Smith, Letter to "All Trade Unionists," September 17, 1964, GP, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, B.C. "Britannia," *Western Miner* (October 1964), "Save Britannia: Cavalcade Sunday," *Pacific Tribune*, October 30, 1964, GP, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, B.C.
87. Although 97.3 percent of the unionized employees voted in favor of the strike, only 268 out of the approximately 350 workers (77 percent) completed Strike Registration Forms, which allowed them to volunteer for picket duty and receive strike pay. Of the remaining employees, it is possible that they did not want to participate in the strike, or left Britannia for jobs elsewhere. See Strike registration forms, IUMMSW Fonds, Box 120, File 14, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, B.C.
  88. International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers (Western District), "Submission to Select Standing Committee on Labour of the B.C. Government, Re: Closing of Britannia Mine," March 11, 1958, 1–2, IUMMSW Fonds, Box 115, File 11, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, B.C.
  89. "Death of a Whole Town at Least Deserves an Inquest," *Vancouver Sun*, March 11, 1958, 4.
  90. High, *Industrial Sunset*, 168.
  91. Herb Gray, *Foreign Direct Investment in Canada* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1972), 15.
  92. High, *Industrial Sunset*, 168–9, 250, n.7.
  93. Jennifer Ann Howard, "The Impact of Foreign Investment on the Canadian Economy" (master's thesis, University of Victoria, 1979), 21.
  94. K. A. Smith, Letter to "All Trade Unionists," September 17, 1964, GP, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, B.C.; W.A. Booth, president of Local 651 (Kimberley), Letter, August 11, 1964, IUMMSW Fonds, Box 118, File 3, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, B.C.
  95. "Local 663 Strike Bulletin," 1, no. 4, n.d., GP, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, B.C.
  96. "Britannia Miners Stage Big Rally on Sunday," *Squamish Times*, November 5, 1964, GP, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, B.C.; "Union Takes Exception to Britannia Editorial," *Northern Miner*, November 5, 1964, GP, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, B.C.; Petition from rally, IUMMSW Fonds, Box 118, File 3, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, B.C.
  97. Paper presented to the members of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia, January 26, 1965, 3–4, IUMMSW Fonds, Box 118, File 3, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, B.C.
  98. "Save Britannia: Cavalcade Sunday," *Pacific Tribune*, October 30, 1964, GP, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, B.C.; "Historic Victory of Mine Miller's at Britannia," March 11, 1965, IUMMSW Fonds, Box 120, File 11, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, B.C.
  99. Leslie Farkas, Letter to local union staff, November 12, 1964, IUMMSW Fonds, Box 120, File 12, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, B.C.; "Don't Let Foreigners Destroy B.C. Mine," *Vancouver Times*, October 17, 1964, GP, UBC SpColl,

- Vancouver, B.C.; Charles Caron, Letter to J. Davis, M.P (Coast-Capilano), September 30, 1964, GP, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, B.C.; R. M. Strachan, Letter to Harvey Murphy, December 10, 1964, IUMMSW Fonds, Box 62, File 19, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, B.C.
100. "Take Over Mine," *Province*, November 17, 1964, GP, UBC SpColl, Vancouver, B.C. Premier W. A. C. Bennett's 1961 "provincialization" of the B.C. Electric Company set a precedent for government expropriation of private companies that had not existed in 1958, perhaps making it a more "obvious solution" for Britannia in some British Columbians' minds. Jean Barman, *The West Beyond the West: A History of British Columbia*, rev. ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 285.
  101. Cowie and Heathcott, "The Meanings of De-industrialization," 14.
  102. Bradbury, "Class Structure and Class Conflicts," 3–18.
  103. "Making New Towns Hometowns," *Vancouver Sun*, September 11, 1965, 23.

## CHAPTER 7

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# Company Towns in a Transnational Commodity Chain: Social and Environmental Dimensions of Aluminum Production in Porto Trombetás, Brazil, and Årdal, Norway

*Frank Meyer*

Thousands of miles and contrasting geographic settings separate Porto Trombetás and Årdal. Yet, since the mid-1970s both towns have been connected by a transnational commodity chain. For over thirty-five years, mine workers in the Brazilian Amazon have dug bauxite from the Trombetás deposits and loaded the ore on bulk carriers to be transported to various smelters and transformed into aluminum oxide. One such site was the Norwegian town of Årdal, located deep in the interior of the Sognefjord, which grew during the twentieth century into a major industrial center and by mid-century boasted the largest aluminum plant in Western Europe. First introduced by Terence Hopkins and Immanuel Wallerstein, the term *commodity chain* describes “a network of labor and production processes whose end result is a finished commodity.”<sup>1</sup> For its part, a global commodity chain “consists of sets of interorganizational networks clustered around one commodity within the world economy” that are “situationally specific, socially constructed, and locally integrated, underscoring the social embeddedness of economic organization.”<sup>2</sup> At opposite ends of the global aluminum commodity chain, the company towns of Porto Trombetás and Årdal exemplify these local adaptations. This chapter examines the living and working conditions in both towns and the social and environmental impacts of their incorporation

into the commodity chain.<sup>3</sup> The nature of production, the characteristics of local communities, and the sociopolitical context in both countries created both similarities and differences in the development of these company towns. In both locations, the process of incorporation involved the state, national and international corporations, local populations, and migrant workers. This chapter also explores the interplay of these actors and the impact of changing sociopolitical conditions on the development of both communities.

Porto Trombetás and Årdal evolved in different ways. Following the typology presented in the introduction of this volume, Porto Trombetás can be characterized as a mining enclave that evolved from an earlier work camp, while Årdal was a single enterprise community that grew out of a preexisting agricultural and fishing settlement. The area where the company town of Porto Trombetás was established was far less populated and far more isolated from the outside world than Årdal. Communities on the banks of the Trombetás River were based on fishing, gathering, and hunting for consumption, and they were only loosely connected to people outside the area. Similar to company towns in other resource peripheries, in Porto Trombetás the mining company built the company town and provided housing and services for its workers that were recruited outside the area.<sup>4</sup> The area of Årdal had well-established communities before industrialization that provided a ready available source of workers. Additional labor was recruited mostly regionally. This situation was common to most company towns in Norway.<sup>5</sup> In contrast with Porto Trombetás, in Årdal the company's role as a provider of housing for its workers—one of the defining characteristics of company towns—was limited to periods of increased economic activity that spurred the arrival of new workers to the area. The presence of the aluminum industry became dominant, but never exclusive. More isolated and dependent on a single company, Porto Trombetás was less autonomous vis-à-vis the company's interests than Årdal. Finally, the regulatory presence of the state developed differently in Brazil than in Norway, affecting labor relations and the impact of mining and industrial activities on the environment. Porto Trombetás was established in the 1970s, when Brazil was ruled by a military dictatorship. For its part the development of Årdal began much earlier, but the aluminum plant was built during the five years of German military rule in Norway that began in 1940. At both locations the pace and intensity of industrial development were extraordinarily high at these times. With democratic governments (in Norway since 1945 and in Brazil since 1985) there was a more active role of the state regarding both labor relations and the environment.

These case studies illustrate the consequences of uneven development in an age of global connectivity—one characterized by global chains through which commodities are manufactured using elements produced in

different continents.<sup>6</sup> The transnational commodity chain connecting Porto Trombetás and Årdal was created and administered by a handful of companies. The composition of the shareholder conglomerate of the mine and the aluminum plant changed over time, but there were three different business ties connecting Porto Trombetás and Årdal. From 1974 to 1979, the Årdal aluminum plant (ÅSV) held 5 percent of the shares of the mine. Overlapping in part with ÅSV's presence in Brazil, from 1966 to 1986 the Canadian multinational Alcan held shares in both the mine (12 to 19 percent) and the aluminum plant (50 percent until 1969 and 25 percent in 1969–86). Finally, Norsk Hydro ASA held 5 percent of the shares of the mine since 1974—either directly or indirectly, through a Brazilian daughter company—and bought the Årdal aluminum plant in 1986.<sup>7</sup> In the early years of mining, bauxite output was entirely absorbed by foreign shareholders.<sup>8</sup> As a result of the Brazilian government's import substitution industrialization policies of the 1970s and 1980s, a growing share of the bauxite began to be refined in Brazil and used by Brazilian industries.<sup>9</sup> By 2008, 60 percent of the bauxite extracted in Porto Trombetás was processed in refineries and smelters in northeastern Brazil.<sup>10</sup>

### **Porto Trombetás: A Company Town in the Amazon**

#### *Before Bauxite*

Located in the northeastern state of Pará, 880 km west of Belém and 400 km east of Manaus at the Trombetás River, the area that later became the site of the company town of Porto Trombetás was known as Sítio Conceição. The Trombetás River has its source in the Guyana Mountains and flows into the Amazon River just north of the city of Óbidos, in the State of Pará. It has very strong currents, turbulent rapids, and waterfalls in its upper course, but approximately 200 km from its mouth and northwards, the river is navigable. Through this part of the river and further on in the Amazon River, the banks of the Trombetás River became connected to the global economy through mining for export.<sup>11</sup> The official company history claims that before *Mineração Rio do Norte* built its mining site, “nothing ever existed but the jungle,” where “an urban and operating infrastructure [was] implemented to permit bauxite production.”<sup>12</sup> Before the establishment of the Porto Trombetás company town, however, a mixed population inhabited the area that consisted of native communities and the descendents of runaway or liberated African slaves from Guyana, Surinam, and Venezuela known as Quilombo communities.

Archeological evidence indicates that there were settlements of the Conduri indigenous communities from 205 A.C. to the post-Columbian



period in the region between the Low Trombetás and Faro Lake. After the Portuguese settlement, these communities were driven deeper into the heartland and lived on the banks of the Trombetás River. Between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the river area was called Cahu and inhabited by the Kaxuyana (or Purehno) indigenous people. These groups, like many South American native populations, were nearly wiped out by the spread of diseases that arrived with the newcomers to the area. In addition, violent conflicts between different indigenous groups led to a decrease in the population. At the end of the nineteenth century, the survivors banded together in an attempt to survive.<sup>13</sup> By 1960, only one of the various groups of the Kaxuyana community lived within a 100 km radius of the area where the mine was established. The population had declined from approximately 500 to 300 individuals in the 1920s to around 60 in the 1960s. In order to prevent complete extinction, the Brazilian government relocated the survivors 500 km to the north, close to the border with Surinam, where they joined another indigenous community, the Tirios.<sup>14</sup>

The second ethnic group that lived on the banks of the Trombetás River area consisted of a few hundred families living in Quilombo communities. The origin of these communities in the Trombetás area is unclear. These families claim descendancy from runaway or freed slaves, thus representing an earlier connection to the international world.<sup>15</sup> The Quilombo families began to settle alongside the riverbanks in the 1820s, and since punitive expeditions were sent out in order to capture runaway slaves, they avoided outsiders. Contacts with nearby indigenous peoples, however, were common, and it is likely that the runaway slaves spread contagious diseases that contributed to the demographic decline of the Kaxuyana. In the course of time, the Quilombo communities engaged in a barter economy with the outside world, exchanging tobacco and forest fruits for coffee, sugar, tools, and cloth.<sup>16</sup> Similarly to neighboring Indian communities, the Quilombos' economy was primarily based on fishing, hunting, and gathering of Brazilian nuts and bananas. They also cultivated some sugarcane, coffee beans, manioc, and vegetables. Local communities produced solely for their own consumption, and families moved regularly when lack of nourishment made it necessary.<sup>17</sup>

### *Mining and the Construction of the Company Town*

Porto Trombetás developed in several stages, from early prospection to full-scale production. The growth of the company town accompanied these successive phases. In the first phase (1961–67) the Canadian aluminum multinational Alcan equipped a small group of geologists, mining engineers, and a few local workers in order to explore the jungle in the Trombetás region

for bauxite deposits. At that time, Alcan was interested in finding a replacement for the raw material that was obtained from mines in Jamaica and Guinea. Also, the newly independent ex-British colony of Guyana threatened Alcan's longstanding control of Guyanese bauxite mines, providing further stimulus to expand bauxite production in the Amazon.<sup>18</sup> The group established their headquarters on the riverboat "Gaivota" anchored at the small river community of Terra Santa, in the Amazon River. Exploring the area by boat and on foot, they established several camps until 1965, when a camp on the Saracá plateau became the site of early mining activities. The men worked in the field for ninety days at a time, enduring humid climate, insects, wild animals, and loneliness.<sup>19</sup> In 1967, laboratory analyses confirmed the existence of large deposits of bauxite in the area.

At that time, foreign mining companies were not allowed to have tracts that were larger than 500 hectares. Because of the pressure applied to several multinational companies, including U.S. Steel, this limitation was removed by changes in Brazilian law in 1968 and 1969. Thereafter, dispensation was granted for companies operating in so-called difficult territories, such as the Amazon region. By the end of 1969, Alcan purchased or received priority prospecting licenses for 63,000 hectares.<sup>20</sup> In 1970, the Terra Santa headquarters were moved to Sítio Conceição, and the construction of a port and a small airport began. A workforce of 550 men and machines were flown in to clear forests and start the construction of the camp, railway, port, and site installations, which were completed by May 1972.<sup>21</sup>

A third phase began in May 1972, when Alcan temporarily discontinued the project because of falling aluminum prices. Negotiations to resume the project under a new structure began, and on June 11, 1974, two Brazilian and seven foreign companies agreed on developing the Trombetás bauxite deposit as a joint venture, with 51 percent participation of domestic shareholders. Named *Mineração Rio do Norte* (MRN), the Trombetás mine became part of the governmental program *Polamazonia*, aimed at developing the Amazon by strengthening urban centers, improving river navigation, and supporting bauxite exploration and other activities. In October 1974, the governmental authority to develop the Amazon, SUDAM, approved ten years of income tax exemption for the mining project. In addition, the Brazilian government guaranteed its financing.<sup>22</sup>

The fourth and last phase began in 1977, and it was characterized by project implementation. It ended in 1979, when the first load of bauxite was shipped from the port of Trombetás. In this period, even larger areas of forest were cleared and the construction of infrastructure begun—industrial facilities for crushing, beneficiating, and loading; water and oil reservoirs; a 30 km railroad line between the mine and the port; a 1,250 m runway for small

airplanes; a bauxite terminal; a power station; and a deepwater harbor with a wharf and loading cranes.<sup>23</sup> By 1979, the mine was producing 3.35 million tons of bauxite. In 2001, Brazil was the third-largest producer of bauxite in the world with 13.2 million tons per year. The Porto Trombetás mine contributed approximately 81 percent of this total (about 10.7 million tons a year).<sup>24</sup>

Porto Trombetás grew from a mining camp into a company town over several years. Infrastructure and residential facilities developed slowly, following the expansion of production. During the initial years, the development of technical installations was prioritized and only the geologists' camp existed. Hundreds of workers had to commute two hours daily by boat to the construction site from Cachoeira Porteira, a small town that had developed while building the Northern Amazonian Highway. In addition, there was regular ferry communication with Santarém (a 15- to 20-hour boat trip). During the construction peak, the number of boats and barges carrying both passengers and load reached 14 and even 21 daily.<sup>25</sup> Commuting diminished at the same pace as barracks were constructed. During the early years houses were a scarce item and became a source of dispute. Originally, 24 PVC and wood pavilions were erected close to the industrial area in order to house more than 6,000 workers. Eventually, six standardized types of houses became available, which reflected in their size and comfort the social stratification of the company town. For the top segment of senior engineers, 11 houses of 278 m<sup>2</sup> were available; for junior engineers and personnel with university degrees or equivalent education, 196 houses of 197 m<sup>2</sup> were provided; technicians were lodged in 80 houses of 82 m<sup>2</sup>; and skilled workers lived in 120 houses of 70 m<sup>2</sup>. In addition, there were 400 prefabricated houses and pavilions for unskilled workers. (As illustrated in the analyses of company towns in Germany, Angola, Argentina, and Canada in this volume, this hierarchical distribution of company housing followed well-established practices.) The company only charged symbolic rent.<sup>26</sup> However, a group of seventy workers who were homeless in Porto Trombetás lived in the satellite town of Caraná, described by researchers in the 1970s as a site of "formless crates" made out of "planks, tin and cardboard," where unemployed people settled hoping for a better life close to the emerging industrial center.<sup>27</sup> When construction work ended at the end of the 1970s, most of the original workers were dismissed and the demand for housing fell accordingly.<sup>28</sup> A core group of qualified staff remained in place, and new employees were recruited from other areas of Brazil.<sup>29</sup>

During the time of project implementation, working and living conditions were harsh for most laborers, who worked for 10 to 15 hours a day, seven days a week. Spare time was limited, and the budding company town

provided no leisure activities. Many employees looked for recreation in the nearby satellite town, which, despite its limitations, provided some activities and a respite from company supervision.<sup>30</sup> Life in the company residential village was highly controlled not only for leisure but for workers' organizations. No trade unions were tolerated (apart from organizations of the technicians and engineers), and workers were deprived of contracts. Thus, they often were paid less than agreed upon in advance, and they were forced to work below their level of qualification. The barracks where 4,000 to 5,000 workers slept in rooms of six to eight workers in average were fenced off by barbed wire. Food quality was poor, and queues long. Not surprisingly, spirits ran low and turnover was high. In the autumn of 1978, a riot broke out when a crowd of 2,000 workers started throwing stones at guards who had denied a sick worker to jump the food queue, and barracks were set on fire. The private company guard intervened, and the riot was put down with thirty rioters imprisoned in the camp jail.<sup>31</sup> Since then, conditions for the organization of workers changed radically as a result of a countrywide trend of workers' mobilization that accompanied the transition to democratic rule in the 1980s. Initially, the workers of Porto Trombetás joined the umbrella organization of the Labor Union of Extractive Industries of Pará and Amapá. The distance from union headquarters in Amapá contributed to a sense of marginalization that was solved by the creation of a local, autonomous union, the Labor Union of Extractive Industries of Non-Ferrous Metals of Oriximiná (known by the Portuguese acronym STIEMNFO), in 1989.<sup>32</sup>

Some 6,200 people lived in Porto Trombetás at the turn of the twenty-first century.<sup>33</sup> The company town included the residential village for the company employees, the bauxite terminal, and the deepwater harbor with wharves and loading cranes. Since the 1980s, when all technical installations were in place, the mine developed the social and cultural infrastructure of Porto Trombetás considerably. This was necessary in order to avoid high turnover among skilled workers.<sup>34</sup> The community's infrastructure was supplemented by a school that provided education up to secondary level and had capacity for 1,000 students;<sup>35</sup> a hospital with full laboratory services; clubs; a cinema and theater; a commercial center; and an airport.<sup>36</sup>

### *Social and Environmental Consequences*

The beginning of mining activities and the construction of the company town created a new social reality in Porto Trombetás. Workers' experiences varied widely according to occupational category but also to ethnicity. Similarly to company towns in enclave or colonial situations, in Porto Trombetás there was a clear division between the newcomers (a largely white population of

skilled permanent and contract workers) and the unskilled workers from the Quilombo communities.<sup>37</sup> According to Candance Slater, this ethnic division was reinforced by racist attitudes.<sup>38</sup> In addition, the Quilombo communities themselves were divided into two different groups, depending on whether their members were employed at the mine. Thus, for local communities, mining activity increased economic disparity and contributed to growing social imbalance.

Regular, skilled, and mostly white mine workers and their families benefited from what the company called the welfare community. Travelers' photographs from the residential center show well-dressed people in front of small bungalows, in small gardens with garden furniture and garden elves, modern cars, pickups, and children's bicycles. Other photographic material shows the village's public open-air swimming pool and a port for small boats.<sup>39</sup> In newspaper accounts, company town workers emphasized the absence of common problems in Brazilian major cities, such as high criminality and drugs.<sup>40</sup> But on the down side, isolation could be difficult to bear and a plane ticket to Belém, the capital of the State of Pará, was equivalent to a month's earning. As part of their benefits, the company provided these workers with a six-week vacation once a year. On the opposite end of the labor spectrum were the members of the Quilombo communities, who represented the lowest class of workers. For local workers, only unskilled and badly paid work was available at the mine. Those who worked full-time at the mine received less than 60 percent of a white, skilled worker's wage. Opportunities for local women were limited to part-time work and housekeeping.<sup>41</sup>

Mining and the creation of the company town also had other socioeconomic consequences for the Quilombo communities. Because of the introduction of a cash market for local products, the traditional subsistence economy declined while economic relations became increasingly commercialized. Nonetheless, it was difficult for the members of the local Quilombo communities to access the market at the mine. They were prohibited from selling to the company town population because, according to mine officials, they could not guarantee production. Thus, most merchants at the local market were not members of the local Quilombo community, but came from Oriximiná or even from remote places such as Santarém. In addition, traditional areas for economic activity were greatly restricted after national authorities declared large extensions close to the mine as Biological Reserve (1979) and National Forest (1989). Both were established as a compensation for the mining activities in the area. Worthy environmental initiatives, these changes in land use negatively impacted the local community. For Quilombo communities, these changes meant that raw materials previously available in the forest such as wood for building, heating, and cooking had to be bought.

In addition, they were prohibited from using these two protected areas for harvesting Brazil nuts and for commercial fishing.<sup>42</sup>

The environmental costs of industrial production were considerable at Porto Trombetás.<sup>43</sup> There were three main types of environmental consequences resulting from mining activity. First, large areas of former rainforests were cleared, which resulted, as some observers wrote, in “red soil as far as the eye can see” in the middle of the Amazon.<sup>44</sup> As Glenn Switkes explains, “even if topsoil is restored after mining, the soil loses its ability to retain water making it unfit for annual crops.”<sup>45</sup> Second, the ore was washed with freshwater, and the waste materials from this process were then pumped into a local freshwater reservoir, Lake Batata. Since ore washing did not use toxic substances, the main problem was a considerable sedimentation and extreme degradation of the lake. During the first five years of production, 10 million tons of mud was pumped into the lake, reducing its surface by 15 percent and leading to the disappearance and death of local vegetation and animals.<sup>46</sup> Bauxite waste (residues from washing and bauxite powder in the air) also polluted other freshwater reservoirs such as the Agua Fria area as well as creeks and even the Trombetás River. In addition, freshwater wells built by the mine failed to provide adequate water supplies, thereby leaving the Quilombo communities with the task of collecting water for drinking and washing from remote sources. Third, ships came in carrying salt water for ballast, which was then discharged into the river prior to loading bauxite. This practice heavily impacted the local freshwater ecology and fishing activities in the form of invasive plant and animal species. There were also some additional consequences of the mining activity, such as a poor sewer treatment system with discharge going directly into the river; noise pollution that drove away animals and disrupted community life; other forms of air and water pollution that led to a scarcity of wild animals and fish; and, particularly in the summertime, indiscriminate fishing by mine employees often using pressure guns.

Mining also had health consequences for the Quilombo communities, particularly as a consequence of its polluting effect on water supplies that caused worms and diarrhea. Purification systems provided by the mine malfunctioned and were removed, but never replaced. These problems were compounded by the lack of medical assistance for those who were not part of the mining community, who were outside of the company town’s health assistance. Quilombo women were particularly disadvantaged, in particular unmarried women who experienced difficulties registering their children at the health care center.<sup>47</sup> Demographic changes also had consequences for local health, in particular as a result of the increased population of unattached men—namely, the increase in alcohol consumption and

prostitution. Quilombo communities complained about the effects of these problems on their youth, including reports of the practice of prostitution among girls as young as thirteen.<sup>48</sup>

However, not all consequences from the contact with the outside world brought by mining and the building of MNR's company town were negative for local Quilombo communities.<sup>49</sup> With the end of the military dictatorship in 1985 and the adoption of a new constitution in 1988, local populations in Brazil gained access to strategies to respond to violations of their traditional rights and to challenges to their economic and value systems. The Black Movement, which helped organize Afro-Brazilians and was supported by numerous academics, succeeded in including provisions in the new federal constitution for cultural and territorial rights.<sup>50</sup> The new political climate that accompanied a return to democratic rule in the 1980s led to the creation of grassroots organizations. In 1989, the inhabitants of twenty-one Quilombo communities in the greater Trombetás area founded the Association of Descendants of Former Quilombos of the Municipality of Oriximiná (ARQMO). This organization managed to go beyond local issues and collaborated with larger regional, national, and international associations in environmental and indigenous issues. As a result of national and international networking, the Quilombo communities were able to launch legal action setting limits to multinational corporations' land acquisition.<sup>51</sup> The Quilombo community of Boa Vista, close to Porto Trombetás, was the first to be entitled land rights under the 1988 Constitution; sixteen other Quilombo communities in the area later experienced similar success.<sup>52</sup>

In addition to political changes and social movements at the national level, increased international monitoring of environmental and minority rights also had positive impacts on the lives of Quilombo communities and the local environment.<sup>53</sup> MRN introduced new practices to offset environmental damages. To compensate for the clearing of large areas of rainforests, MRN employed an ecologist to work with reforestation and started nurseries with native trees for replanting.<sup>54</sup> The process of rehabilitation implied that the thin layer of topsoil was removed carefully from the mining site, preserved while mining proceeded, and returned after the extraction of the ore. MRN also started an environmental monitoring program.<sup>55</sup> The Quilombo settlements were provided with small purification machines to clean the water, and the company started a partial cleanup of Lake Batata. This trend of environmentally conscious practices had started even before Brazil's return to democracy, when in December 1982 the company installed filters for dust removal at a cost of US\$15 million.<sup>56</sup> But the political changes of the mid-1980s paved the way for more decisive changes. Overall, after Brazil's return to democracy in 1985, local and international developments caused a considerable improvement of working and living conditions in

Porto Trombetás—namely, increased collaboration of the Quilombo communities with national and international environmental and minority rights organizations; the implementation of international monitoring of corporate environmental and social responsibility practices; and the pressure of organized labor.<sup>57</sup>

## Årdal: The Making of a Single-Industry Town

### *Before Aluminum*

Årdal is located on the west coast of southern Norway, about 300 km northwest of Oslo and 250 km northeast of Bergen, at the innermost part of Sognefjord, Norway's largest fjord. Traditionally, the municipality of Årdal consisted of two centers—Årdalstangen, situated on the shore of the fjord and the location of the harbor, and Upper Årdal (Øvre Årdal), where the smelting plant was built in the 1940s. Throughout most of its history, locals lived as gatherers, shepherds, farmers, and fishermen. In contrast to the communities on the banks of the Trombetás River, the Årdal community was not isolated but connected to a broader regional economy based on trade with fish and agricultural products. Since 1814, governmental officials, townspeople, and farmers of the community had the right to vote for national elections, and since 1838 the community enjoyed self-government. This democratic framework was extended and modified but, except for the years of the German occupation (1940–45), never abandoned. Årdal also developed early connections to the international economy when the *Gottes Gabe* (God's Gift) copper mine was established in the early eighteenth century. The mine was not a success and was closed down soon after it was founded, and was again closed down after it was reestablished in the middle of the eighteenth century. Even so, Årdal had an early experience as a part of a transnational economic network, with financial and labor connections with Copenhagen, where the king ran his businesses; with Amsterdam, which was at that time the center for the copper trade in Europe; and with Germany, where skilled workers for the mine were recruited.<sup>58</sup> During the next 150 years Årdal became disconnected from international networks and its economy relied largely on traditional activities such as farming and fishing. The only significant urban center was Tangen, at the fjord, where a few timber houses, shops, the post office, and the sheriff's office were lined up along a single street.<sup>59</sup>

### *Industrial Development and the Transformation of Årdal*

The process of incorporation into the global commodity chain began earlier and advanced at a slower pace in Årdal than in Porto Trombetás. At times,



the process halted and even stopped; at others—particularly during the years of German occupation—the pace of industrial development accelerated and became comparable to the rapid development in Porto Trombetás. After the short-lived industrialization attempt of the eighteenth century, the process of industrial transformation of Årdal occurred mostly during the first half of the twentieth century. Aluminum production was preceded by an early phase of development of hydroelectric power.

Årdal's full transformation into a site for hydroelectric power took forty years, from 1907 to 1947. It began when Christiania lawyers Jens P. Heyerdahl and Ch. C. Platou applied on behalf of a German-Norwegian joint venture for a license to build a watercourse arguing that the project would provide “the tiny and poor municipality of Årdal” with benefits in the form of tax income, better communication lines, and markets for farm products.<sup>60</sup> The local county council supported the application, as did the 323 residents who attached their names to a “Statement from the Inhabitants of Årdal.”<sup>61</sup> A crucial factor in obtaining community support was safeguarding the ownership of the vast water resources needed to produce hydroelectric energy. In contrast to Porto Trombetás, local residents retained final control of natural resources. The law governing the distribution of concessions in Norway guaranteed from the very beginning of the industrial development that the natural resources at Årdal were only on loan to international companies. There is a general consensus among Norwegian historians that the laws regulating the ownership of hydropower (*Konsesjonslovene*) assured Norway's control over production, thus playing a vital role in protecting the Norwegian economy from dependency on foreign interests.<sup>62</sup> The Norwegian Parliament approved the conditions for building the hydroelectric plant in August 1908 and awarded the license by royal decree to the stock company *Tyinfald* a month later.

Work to build the plant began in February 1910 with the construction of the necessary roads and harbor infrastructure. The work stopped temporarily in the autumn of 1911, when the German owners abandoned the project because of conflicts regarding the production technology to be utilized at the plant. The German shareholders sold their shares to the Norwegian-owned fertilizer company *Hydro*.<sup>63</sup> *Hydro* did not want to complete the plant as it had been planned, and time after time found reasons for delaying its completion. Before World War II, plans about what was to be produced at Årdal changed frequently. The number of employees also varied greatly. The initial work force consisted of some 200 workers. During the summer of 1914, the entire workforce was fired without notice because of the difficulties in financing the plant. However, *Hydro* had to keep a minimum number employed because of the conditions set by the license. During the period 1921–32,

between 80 and 145 men worked at the construction site.<sup>64</sup> In contrast to Porto Trombetás, most of the early workers were recruited locally from nearby farms, cottages, and neighboring villages. A few Swedish workers were also present at the plant during the initial years and provided training for local workers. However, foreign workers were the first to be fired when Hydro had to cut back.<sup>65</sup>

Årdal's gradual transformation into an industrial community changed radically with World War II, when German occupation led to a period of industrialization resembling the rapid pace of development of Porto Trombetás. Germany was in a desperate need of aluminum, particularly for the production of airplanes. According to German plans, bauxite was to be provided by Ukraine and production was to increase sixfold until 1944. In spring 1941, occupation conditions forced Hydro to sell the enterprise to a German owned-company called Nordag. From 1940 to 1945, building accelerated under the command of the German occupational forces, resulting in the completion of the road connecting the two community centers and the construction of the power station as well as parts of the oxide hall (never fully completed) and the smelting hall. According to Erling Læg Reid, who witnessed these changes as a child, the meadows of the narrow valley where Årdal sits were dotted with unfinished factory buildings, piles of debris, iron structures, railway tracks and sleepers, stacks of sheathing boards for frame construction, and large iron balls. There was dirt, dust, and the humming of machinery. The quay was extended with docks along the shoreline, where barges, tugs, freighters, and passenger ferryboats lay closely moored.<sup>66</sup>

Increased activity attracted more workers to Årdal, and soon the area became overpopulated. In 1942, at the peak of activity, almost 6,000 workers lived in Årdal, which twenty years earlier had only 1,600 inhabitants. Most of these were Norwegians, followed by a few Germans and Danes. Most migrant workers were housed in hastily erected barracks with poor sanitation. Living and working conditions caused high turnover. At any given time, 20 percent of the workers were sick, on holiday, or on leave for other reasons. In 1942, as the Germans needed all available resources at the Eastern front, the workforce was demobilized and the construction of the technical installations in Årdal was discontinued. In June 1943, work started again, this time with substantial use of forced labor. Between March 1943 and September 1944, at least 1,200 Soviet workers (both civilians and prisoners of war) were taken to Årdal, in addition to about 650 Frenchmen, and 1,200 Norwegian volunteers. Originally, German authorities intended to rank forced workers according to ethnic hierarchy, which limited Soviet workers to subordinate work. However, shortage of skilled workers undermined these plans, and civilian Soviet workers were promoted to skilled positions and some even

became foremen. In September 1944, when the Germans discontinued work in Årdal, the Soviet workers were sent to minor work camps in eastern and southern Norway, while most of the civilian French workers were transported back home. Working and living conditions for forced workers were harsh. A force of German guards called *Werkschutz* (work protection) kept prisoners from committing acts of sabotage and resistance.<sup>67</sup> When the Germans capitulated, forced and voluntary workers had virtually completed the hydroelectric power station and assembled three out of the five aggregates. At the smelting plant, all of the ovens in one hall had been completed and the second hall was fully constructed.<sup>68</sup>

After World War II, the production of hydroelectric energy became the basis of industrialization in Årdal with the full development of aluminum production. However, the decision to establish an industry requiring enormous quantities of electrical energy was not uncontested by local residents. A national policy was needed to subsidize the price of electricity, so that it would be profitable to run a smelting plant. The project had the full political backing of the Norwegian Labor Party, whose leaders were committed to major industrial development projects, especially those producing for international markets.<sup>69</sup> Aluminum became Årdal's dominant activity. Despite municipal and national efforts to diversify the local economy, few significant alternatives for employment developed in the shadow of aluminum production.

### *Social and Environmental Consequences*

Full transition to aluminum production after World War II resulted in important demographic changes. Regional migration of male workers from neighboring villages increased Årdal's population considerably. Unlike the artificial growth of population during the period of German occupation, this growth followed new labor opportunities and was free of any coercion. In 1946, 500 workers were employed at the plant. Four years later, the number of workers rose to 1,400, which was more than the entire population of Årdal in the mid-1930s. Only 300 of these workers had been born in Årdal. Local population grew 72 percent between 1946 and 1950, and 63 percent in the following decade. Population continued to grow at a slower pace until the 1970s and began to decline in the 1980s.<sup>70</sup>

The massive influx of people challenged housing facilities. In the immediate post-World War II years, the barracks built by German forces were used to capacity to house new workers. Barrack workers (all male and unskilled) lived in isolation from the rest of the Årdal community. Small living areas were shared by four or five workers. Substandard living conditions contributed to

an already high turnover. The majority of workers left the plant after less than six months of employment.<sup>71</sup> As in other company towns analyzed in this volume, one of the strategies developed by the company to reduce turnover was to improve workers' housing and the town's infrastructure. By 1959, the company had constructed more than 300 houses or flats, which accounted for 30 percent of all accommodations in Årdal. The plant covered two-thirds of the costs of construction.<sup>72</sup> Married workers could reunite with their families. In the early 1960s, the company created two modern residential communities on the narrow strip of land between the Sognefjord and Jotunheimen, equipped with recreational facilities and services.<sup>73</sup> There was, however, no grand plan of urban development typical of model company towns such as Hellerau, in Germany, analyzed in Chapter 2. In the words of Erling Læg Reid, the town resembled a "deformed jaw."<sup>74</sup> In contrast to other Norwegian single-enterprise communities such as Sauda or Rjukan, and other company towns analyzed in this volume, in Årdal there was no rigid spatial division of classes. Except for the company's top management, all aluminum workers lived in the same areas, participated in the same neighborhood associations and clubs, and socialized in the same locales.<sup>75</sup> In addition, there were no significant differences for workers in the plant and in the community at large. The legal and socioeconomic framework of the Norwegian welfare state precluded significant income disparities and guaranteed a relatively high level of public health. During the second half of the twentieth century, Norwegian workers in Årdal enjoyed a high standard of living and were protected by generous unemployment benefits, old age insurance, and health care.<sup>76</sup>

Smelting created new challenges for the environment and workers' health that mobilized local residents and received national attention. The Årdal plant released sulfur dioxide and other hothouse gases, but the greatest problem was the pollution resulting from the release of great amounts of fluorides. These chemicals were contained in the smoke released from the smelting baths in the plants' furnaces. Since ovens were not covered, the smoke spread throughout the narrow valley flanked by mountains more than 2,400 meters high, which, along with prevailing weather conditions, did not allow ventilation of the air masses. In 1949, after the plant had been running for eighteen months, local residents began to register the effects of pollution. This was first evidenced in the area's cattle, which registered levels of fluorine in their bones and urine fifty times the usual amount. As a result of legal actions initiated by local farmers, in 1952 the courts required the Årdal plant to pay compensations amounting to 500,000 Norwegian crowns, plus court costs.<sup>77</sup> Not only farmers but also plant laborers and their families—and particularly housewives—experienced the consequences of the polluting smoke. Factory-induced asthma is a well-known phenomenon and a widespread

illness affecting workers in the aluminum industry in general. The Norwegian Institute to Promote Health in Industry declared in 1960 that the pollution in the factories was the cause of the asthma afflicting workers. In addition, the Institute claimed that the workers in those factories had a greater risk of developing cancer.<sup>78</sup> Despite such evidence, pollution increased as the plant expanded. In the beginning of the 1960s, the factories Årdal II and Årdal III went into production. In the winter of 1962/63, the soot emitted from the ovens began causing problems. Weather conditions caused the soot to settle in the residential areas located near the plant. "A cloud of soot has settled upon everything like a veil," the local newspaper wrote, and it continued: "A few days after a snowfall, all the snow turned black. The children who play outdoors are as dirty as the workers who return home after their shifts at the factory."<sup>79</sup> The dusty soot also dirtied all clothes that hung outside to dry, in addition to the windows and floors of the worker's houses. Local businesses increased their sales of soap and detergents that winter. Given the effects of soot on clothing and houses, it is not surprising that the Labor Party Women's Club of Upper Årdal was the first to address the problem of pollution. "The general opinion amongst housewives is that the menacing smoke and soot is getting worse and worse" read a letter sent to the Årdal branch of the Labor Party. But the position of the local community was not homogenous. Farmers and industrial workers did not always share the same ideas about appropriate actions. On several occasions the Labor Party complained about the problems of pollution, but it encountered some local resistance because the smoke and soot were generated by the industrial activity that put food on the table for most families in the community.<sup>80</sup>

By the end of the 1960s, environmental movements and institutions at the local and national level began to confront industrial pollution more decisively. An ancient fir tree forest close to Årdal, located in an area that was to be included in Jotunheimen National Park, was badly damaged by pollution, an event that called the public's attention. Agricultural authorities were the driving force behind the development of institutions to protect the environment—for example, Årdal's Local Committee to Investigate Smoke Damage, established in 1956, and the Central Council against Smoke Damage, created in 1962.<sup>81</sup> The Council monitored the licensing requirements for all new companies that polluted the environment. In addition, it established strict requirements for rebuilding existing factories so that pollution would be reduced. The Council's requirements forced the Årdal plant to reduce its pollution in the course of a ten-year period from 80 to 40 kg of fluorides per hour. In 1976, The Norwegian State Authority for the Control of Pollution (SFT) was established, replacing the Council and assuming its functions. The Norwegian Law to Combat Pollution provided SFT with the power to

fine polluting factories. In the mid-1980s, when the Årdal plant exceeded by 25 percent the amount of pollutants it was licensed to release, SFT threatened to fine the factory 8 million Norwegian crowns for every kilo of fluorides that exceeded the limits of their license.<sup>82</sup> Reacting to these measures, the plant's board of directors decided to close the factory ovens. In 1970, the oldest ovens were closed down, which led to a dramatic reduction in the emission of fluorides. Furthermore, a cleansing facility and process steering resulted in even lower emissions.<sup>83</sup> This was the only operable procedure because it was impossible to water down the poisonous materials.

As was true for mining in Porto Trombetás, the production of aluminum also entailed substantial negative impacts on the natural environment in Årdal. However, the quantity of pollution in the Årdal region was eventually reduced as a result of the actions of the local population who protested against the undesired consequences of industrial production and the action of national agencies. The existence of clear legal avenues and the relative autonomy of the town inhabitants enabled the local population to appeal to—and be heard by—national authorities. Despite these actions, effective measures against environmental degradation took a long time to be implemented. As discussed above, in Porto Trombetás, environmental protection policies were enacted when sociopolitical conditions changed after the end of the military dictatorship. When compared with the Brazilian case, it is striking how limited effect the community of Årdal had on environmental policies before the 1970s, despite the existence of the channels of participation. It took time before politicians became committed to environmental issues, which involved confronting industrial interests and balancing the economic viability of local communities with the common good. Pollution in Årdal became a political issue that revealed the conflict of interests between agriculture and industry, and also the conflict between state and business interests.

## Conclusion

Participation in the bauxite-aluminum commodity chain transformed Porto Trombetás and Årdal. Companies created residential communities for their workers and largely or completely dominated the local economies. Both communities shared general characteristics of company towns, but also important variations, resulting from their relative isolation, their degree of autonomy of the town vis-à-vis the main employer, as well as the influence of local conditions and larger historical, economic, and political developments at the national level.

An isolated mining enclave, Porto Trombetás resembled more a classic company town than Årdal, which can be classified more accurately as a

single-enterprise community. While the destinies of both communities were tied to their participation in the global aluminum commodity chain, Porto Trombetás was much more dependent on the multinationals that created the town. For its part, Årdal enjoyed a higher degree of relative autonomy from the company.

The role of the state differed considerably in both cases, which had considerable impact on the pace and degree of industrial development and its social and environmental consequences. In the course of a few years in the 1970s, Porto Trombetás was established as a mining community from bare beginnings in a heavily forested region. In Årdal, hydroelectric power and the aluminum plant were the result of a process that lasted for decades, from the beginning of the twentieth century until the end of World War II. In both cases, however, during periods of authoritarian rule (the German occupation of Norway, from 1940 to 1945, and the Brazilian dictatorship, which ended in 1985), the pace of industrialization was much higher than in times of democracy.

Environmental consequences were significant in both cases. Even though the population of Årdal had the possibility to demand a reduction of polluting emissions from the aluminum plant, through the political channels of representative democracy, the struggle for environmental corporate responsibility lasted several decades. The mining company in Porto Trombetás introduced measures to reduce environmental damages almost immediately after the end of the construction period (but especially after the end of the military rule). In this respect, Porto Trombetás might have had a certain advantage from being a latecomer. The construction of the company town and the consequences of mining in the area of Porto Trombetás, however, had lasting negative consequences for the local Quilombo communities. Only with the return of democracy in Brazil did these communities begin to pressure the company and the national government to improve conditions. Collaboration with national and international NGOs on issues of environmental protection and minority rights also contributed to these improvements.

With their fate tied to the developments of a single commodity, what would be the effects of changing global conditions at the turn of the twenty-first century? Would these company towns be able to adapt and transform if mining and industrial production follows capital to other parts of the globalized world? Projections about future expenses and profits often lead to the relocation of capital to alternative production sites. As capital moves across the globe, industrialization and de-industrialization become two sides of the same coin.<sup>84</sup>

The community of Årdal had to confront this predicament when the aluminum multinational Hydro decided to close down the Söderberg potroom in June 2007 and proceeded to lay off over 100 workers, claiming insecurity about the future costs of electric power in Norway.<sup>85</sup> Because aluminum production is highly dependent on cheap energy, Hydro reduced production capacity and began looking for alternatives.<sup>86</sup> De-industrialization in Årdal has led to at least two different types of re-industrialization. First, the plant closing led to unrest and uncertainty among local residents about the future of the community. At the same time, the newly elected national government made up of a coalition of the Norwegian Labor Party, the Socialist Left, and the Center Party began a discussion about state industrial policy and industrial development in the Norwegian districts and rural areas. Most important for the local workforce was the move by the government to make available resources from a readjustment fund (*Innovasjon Norge*), which led to the establishment of new industries for door production and solar cell panels in Årdal.<sup>87</sup> In addition, the municipality of Årdal worked to convince Hydro to invest locally in the development of new technologies.<sup>88</sup> Furthermore, there was industrialization in other parts of the world. Already in advance of the closing of the oldest parts of the aluminum plant in Årdal, the multinational Hydro had developed plans to establish aluminum production in other countries in order to compensate for the production facilities in Årdal. At the end of 2006, a site team of Hydro arrived in Qatar to explore the possibilities of aluminum production with Qatari authorities (the very same year, Hydro decided to close down parts of the plant in Årdal).<sup>89</sup> Construction work began in 2008 and directly involved more than 56,000 workers from more than 200 companies, spending 90 million working hours at the construction site.<sup>90</sup> On April 12, 2010, the Qatari Emir, accompanied by Norway's Crown Prince Haakon, inaugurated the completion of the largest aluminum plant ever launched.<sup>91</sup>

De-industrialization also seems destined to play a role in the future of Porto Trombetás. New mines are planned at Paragominas (by Companhia Vale do Rio Doce) and Juriti Velho (by Alcoa), also in the Amazon.<sup>92</sup> When the Trombetás mine was established, it was estimated that mining activities would last for 150 years. These optimistic estimations have been revised recently, and it seems likely that the multinational aluminum conglomerate currently running the mine will close down all activities within the next twenty years. Since there are no other apparent commercial activities in the area, the residential village created by the company town runs the risk of turning into a ghost town. The planned mine at Juriti Velho is estimated to have bauxite reserves of 350 million tons. Local communities around



the mining site have traditionally survived through sustainable extraction of forest resources and by fishing. They filed complaints regarding Alcoa's clearing of the rainforest and threats from armed guards who have restricted the access of community members to an area of 65,000 hectares that Alcoa claims to own. In the plans for the new Alcoa mine, 8,000 hectares of forest are to be cleared. Juriti Velho community leaders have expressed concern for the 1,800 families living near the Great Lake (site of Alcoa's proposed mine and alumina plant), where extensive areas of virgin forests and various endangered animal species can be found. Once deforestation spreads, the area is in danger of becoming a desert.<sup>93</sup> However, history does not necessarily need to repeat itself in this case. The national political context at the turn of twenty-first century is very different in Brazil than it was when Porto Trombetás was created and so are the proven possibilities of mobilization of local and international environmentalist networks. In 2010, Hydro bought 30 percent of the Brazilian company Vale do Rio Doce, the majority shareholder of Paragominas, thus setting the bases for future links between Brazil and Norway in the transnational aluminum commodity chains.

### Acknowledgment

The author is indebted to Professor Michael Seltzer and Ms. Thais de Araujo Ferraz, whose suggestions helped enhance the quality of this chapter.

### Notes

1. Terence Hopkins and Immanuel Wallerstein, "Commodity Chains in the World Economy Prior to 1800," *Review, Fernand Braudel Center* 10, 1 (Summer 1986): 159. Marcel van der Linden has made us aware of the French *filière* concept, introduced in the 1960s, thus anticipating key elements of the commodity chain approach. See Marcel van der Linden, "Globalizing Labour Historiography: The IISH Approach," International Institute of Social History, 2002, available at <http://www.iisg.nl/publications/globlab/pdf>
2. Gary Gareffi, Miguel Korzeniewicz, and Roberto Korzeniewicz, "Introduction: Global Commodity Chains," in *Commodity Chains and Global Capitalism*, ed. Gareffi, Korzeniewicz, and Korzeniewicz (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1994), 2. See also Stephen Bunker and Paul Ciccantell, *Globalization and the Race for Resources* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005).
3. Thomas Hall, "Incorporation in the World-System: Toward a Critique," *American Sociological Review* 51, 3 (June 1986): 390–402.
4. For other examples, see the analyses of company towns in Argentina, Canada, and Indonesia in this volume. For a Brazilian counterpart, see the example of Henry Ford's Fordlandia in Greg Grandin, *Fordlandia: The Rise and Fall of Henry Ford's Forgotten Jungle City* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2009).

5. Knut Kjeldstadli, "Lokal internasjonalism," in *Årdal: Verket og bygda 1947–1997*, ed. Rolv Petter Amdam, Dag Gjestland, and Andreas Hompland (Oslo: Det norske samlaget 1997), 38–55; idem, "Å komme, å bli, å bygge," in *Ferrolfolket ved fjorden*, ed. Erik Fossåskåret and Frode Storås (Bergen: Ålvik Nord 4, 1999), 48–80.
6. Marcel van der Linden, "Sattelzeit: Strategien von oben, Lernprozesse von unten," in *Kontroversen über den Zustand der Welt: Weltmarkt: Arbeitsform: Hegemoniezyklen*, ed. Marcel van der Linden and Christoph Lieber (Hamburg: VSA, 2007), 25; Bert Altena and Marcel van der Linden, "Preface," in "De-industrialization: Social, Cultural, and Political Aspects," ed. Altena and van der Linden, *International Review of Social History, Supplement 10*, 47 (November 2002): 1–2.
7. Ozair Pereira de Siqueira, *Mineração Rio do Norte Tells its Story from the Beginning* (Porto Trombetás: MRN, 2002), 38–9, 181; <http://www.hydro.com/nol/Pressesenter/Nyheter/Arkiv/2002/Mai/15888>.
8. Siqueira, *Mineração Rio do Norte*, 143–4.
9. Lars Hildebrand, *Die globale Güterkette der Aluminiumindustrie: Weltmarktintegration als Entwicklungsstrategie? Erfahrungen aus Brasilien* (Hamburg: Universität Hamburg-Institut für Geographie, 2007), 73–126.
10. Instituto Observatório Social and Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund Bildungswerk, eds., *Study of Aluminium Production Chain in Northern Brazil* (São Paulo: Instituto Observatório Social, 2008).
11. Siqueira, *Mineração Rio do Norte*, 29–31; [http://www.mrn.com.br/english/quem\\_somos/portotrombetas.html](http://www.mrn.com.br/english/quem_somos/portotrombetas.html).
12. Siqueira, *Mineração Rio do Norte*, 29, 19.
13. *Ibid.*, 32.
14. Dan Børge Åkerø, Per Erik Borge, Helge Hveem, and Dag Poleszynski, *Norge i Brasil: Militærdiktatur, folkemord og norsk aluminium* (Oslo: Aschehoug, 1979), 21–2; <http://www.pib.socioambiental.org/en/povo/kaxuyana>.
15. Richard Price, "Scrapping Maroon History: Brazil's Promise, Suriname's Shame," *New West Indian Guide/Nieuwe West-Indische Gids* 72, 3/4 (1998): 233–55; Flávio dos Santos Gomes and Sabrina Gledhill, "A 'Safe Haven': Runaway Slaves, Mocambos, and Borders in Colonial Amazon, Brazil," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 82, 3 (August 2002): 469–98.
16. Candace Slater, *Entangled Edens: Visions of the Amazon* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002), 161.
17. Lucia M. M. Andrade, *The Quilombos of the Trombetás River Basin: Brief History* (São Paulo: Comissão Pro-Índio, 1993); Slater, *Entangled Edens*, 161; Stephen Bunker, *Underdeveloping the Amazon: Extraction, Unequal Exchange, and the Failure of the Modern State* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1985). At times, some of the riverine indigenous people worked at a local Brazilian nut farm near Oriximiná and Óbidos, at the mouth of the Trombetás River.
18. Siqueira, *Mineração Rio do Norte*, 19; Åkerø et al., *Norge i Brasil*, 158. See also B. Boulangé and A. Carvalho, "The Bauxite of Porto Trombetás," in *Brazilian*

- Bauxites*, ed. A Carvalho et al. (São Paulo and Paris: USP/FAPESP/ORSTOM, 1997).
19. Siqueira, *Mineração Rio do Norte*, 18–25.
  20. Siqueira, *Mineração Rio do Norte*, 29. See also Åkerø et al., *Norge i Brasil*, 28; and Shelton Davis, *Victims of the Miracle: Development and the Indians of Brazil* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 33–6.
  21. Siqueira, *Mineração Rio do Norte*, 35; Lúcio Flávio Pinto, *Amazônia: O século perdido: A batalha do alumínio e outras derrotas da globalização* (Belém: Edição Jornal Pessoal, 1997), 89.
  22. Alexander López, *Environmental Change, Social Conflicts and Security in the Brazilian Amazon: Exploring the Links* (Oslo: Department of Political Science, University of Oslo, 2000); Bunker, *Underdeveloping the Amazon*; Bunker and Ciccantell, *Globalization and the Race for Resources*, 33–77; Åkerø et al., *Norge i Brasil*, 160; Siqueira, *Mineração Rio do Norte*, 25, 40; Slater, *Entangled Edens*, 162.
  23. Siqueira, *Mineração Rio do Norte*, 69.
  24. Cornelia Girndt, “Bergbau in Brasilien: Die Bauxitmine von Porto Trombetas,” *Quetzal, Politik und Kultur in Lateinamerika* (Leipzig), June 2008, 1.
  25. *Ibid.*, 72; Pinto, *Amazônia*.
  26. Siqueira, *Mineração Rio do Norte*, 96.
  27. Åkerø et al., *Norge i Brasil*, 42. Migrants have also settled in the satellite town, mostly coming from the Northeast. See, William Flanagan and Gail Whiteman, “Ethics Codes and MNCs as Minority Shareholders: The Case of a Bauxite Mine in Brazil,” in *Ethics Codes, Corporations, and the Challenges of Globalization*, ed. Wesley Cragg (Cheltenham, England: Edward Elgar Publishers, 2005), 218; Pinto, *Amazônia*.
  28. Siqueira, *Mineração Rio do Norte*, 72.
  29. Girndt, “Bergbau in Brasilien.”
  30. Pinto, *Amazônia*.
  31. Åkerø et al., *Norge i Brasil*, 38–50; Girndt, “Bergbau in Brasilien.”
  32. For background information, see the union’s website <http://www.stiennfo.org.br>.
  33. [http://www.mrn.com.br/english/quem\\_somos/portotrombetas.html](http://www.mrn.com.br/english/quem_somos/portotrombetas.html).
  34. Siqueira, *Mineração Rio do Norte*.
  35. For the children of Quilombo communities, attendance at the village school is free. However, school materials are very expensive and consequently many students from poor families have to drop out of school.
  36. [http://www.mrn.com.br/english/quem\\_somos/portotrombetas.html](http://www.mrn.com.br/english/quem_somos/portotrombetas.html); Siqueira, *Mineração Rio do Norte*, 69.
  37. For a comparison, see the analyses of Fushun, Catumbela, and East Kalimantan in this volume.
  38. Slater, *Entangled Edens*, 164. In Årdal, on the other hand, there has been only a slight ethnic division of labor, limited to the case of Swedish migrant workers in the initial phase of construction work. Consequently, the work force there has been ethnically more homogeneous.

39. This material is available on Google's pictures search and on [www.flickr.com](http://www.flickr.com). <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FU4v9aB1ofE>. See also Girndt, "Bergbau in Brasilien."
40. "Não temos aqui os problemas existentes na maioria das cidades," *Gazeta Mercantil* (São Paulo), March 28, 2002 ([www.amazonia.org.br/noticias/print.cfm?id=8879](http://www.amazonia.org.br/noticias/print.cfm?id=8879)); Girndt, "Bergbau in Brasilien," 2.
41. Flanagan and Whiteman, "Ethics Codes and MNCs," 228–30.
42. Antônio Carlos Diegues, "Social Movements and the Remaking of the Commons in the Brazilian Amazon," in *Privatizing Nature: Political Struggles for the Global Commons*, ed. Michael Goldman (London: Pluto Press, 1998), 70–1; Rosa Acevedo and Edna Castro, *Negros do Trombetás: Guardiães de matas e rios* (Belém: UFPA/NAEA, 1993), 207; Luiz J. Wanderley, "O grande projeto minerador e seus impactos territoriais de localização: O caso da MRN em Oriximiná-PA," Grupo de Pesquisa Mineração e Desenvolvimento Sustentável, 2004, [http://www3.ufpa.br/projetomineracao/docs/estrut/artigo\\_Luiz\\_\(CNPq\).pdf](http://www3.ufpa.br/projetomineracao/docs/estrut/artigo_Luiz_(CNPq).pdf); Luiz J. Wanderley, Conflitos e impactos ambientais na exploração dos recursos minerais na Amazônia 2008, [http://publique.rdc.puc-rio.br/geopuc/media/Wanderley\\_geopuc03.pdf](http://publique.rdc.puc-rio.br/geopuc/media/Wanderley_geopuc03.pdf).
43. Flanagan and Whiteman, "Ethics Codes and MNCs"; Pinto, *Amazônia*, 89; Slater, *Entangled Edens*, 162–3, 270; Cornelia Girndt, "Bei uns bleibt der Dreck: Aluminium von Amazonas," in *Amazonien: Stadt, Land, Fluss: Das größte Zusammendhängende Regenwaldgebiet der Erde zwischen Schutz und Nutzung* (Berlin: FDCL-Verlag, 2009), 86–9. See also the Norwegian journalist Roar Nerdal's articles on Hydro's investments into Alunorte and the environmental problems for local fisheries in Barcarena, in *Dagens Næringsliv*, April 24, 2008, April 25, 2008, and April 30, 2008.
44. <http://www.hydro.com/no/Pressesenter/Nyheter/Arkiv/2002/Mai/15888>. See also Siqueira, *Mineração Rio do Norte*, 153–5; Leslie Sponsel, "The Environmental History of the Amazon: Natural and Human Disturbances, and the Ecological Transition," in *Changing Tropical Forests: Historical Perspectives on Today's Challenges in Central and South America*, ed. Harold Steen and Richard Tucker (Durham, NC: The Forest History Society Group, 1992), 233–51.
45. Glenn Switkes, *Foiling the Aluminium Industry: A Toolkit for Communities, Activists, Consumers and Workers* (Berkeley, CA: International Rivers Network, 2005), 5.
46. Pinto, *Amazônia*, 89, 96–7; Switkes, *Foiling the Aluminium Industry*, 5. See also Siqueira, *Mineração Rio do Norte*, 155–9.
47. Flanagan and Whiteman, "Ethics Codes and MNCs," 228–30.
48. *Ibid.*
49. See Davis, *Victims of the Miracle*.
50. Price, "Scrapping Maroon History," 237f.
51. Slater, *Entangled Edens*, 163.
52. Siqueira, *Mineração Rio do Norte*, 33.
53. Diegues, "Social Movements," 56.

54. Ghillean Prance, "The Amazon: Paradise Lost?" in *The Last Extinction*, ed. Les Kaufmann and Kenneth Mallory (Boston: MIT Press, 1993), 69–114 (97); John Parrotta and Oliver Knowles, "Restoring Tropical Forests on Lands Mined for Bauxite: Examples from the Brazilian Amazon," *Ecological Engineering* 17, 2–3 (July 2001): 219–39.
55. Flanagan and Whiteman, "Ethics Codes and MNCs," 228–30.
56. Pinto, *Amazônia*, 99.
57. Francisco Vidal Luna and Herbert Klein, *Brazil since 1980* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Robert Gwynne and Cristóbal Kay, eds., *Latin America Transformed: Globalization and Modernity*, 2nd ed. (London: Edward Arnold; New York: Oxford University Press, 2004); Steen and Tucker, *Changing Tropical Forests*.
58. Finn Erhard Johannessen, "Mykje skrik og lite gull," in Amdam et al., *Årdal: Verket og bygda*, 24–37.
59. Erling Læg Reid, "Eg burde ha hata Verket," in Amdam et al., *Årdal: Verket og bygda*, 274; Eli Janette Fosso, "Industriens barn," in Amdam et al., *Årdal: Verket og bygda*, 205.
60. Harald Rinde, "Den lange ventetida," in Amdam et al., *Årdal: Verket og bygda*, 63. Christiania was the name of the Norwegian capital until 1923, when it changed its name to Oslo.
61. Ibid.
62. St. meld, no. 67 (1974–75), Norsk industris utvikling i fremtid. Industridepartementet, Oslo, April 4, 1975, 106.
63. Rinde, "Den lange ventetida," 64.
64. Ibid., 67ff.
65. Ibid., 68ff.
66. Læg Reid, "Eg burde ha hata Verket," 274.
67. Marianne Neerland Soleim, *Sovjetiske krigsfanger i Norge 1941–194: Antall, organisering og repatriering* (Oslo: Scandinavian Academic Press-Spartacus Forlag, 2009), 156; Einar Kr. Steffenak, *Russerfangene: Sovjetiske krigsfanger i Norge og deres skjebne* (Oslo: Humanist Forlag, 2008), 93–4; Michael Stokke, *Sovjetiske og franske sivile tvangsarbeidere i Norge 1943–1945: En sammenligning av arbeids- og leveforhold* (Bergen: Universitetet i Bergen, Institutt for arkeologi, historie, kultur- og religionsvitenskap, 2008), 32; Rinde, "Den lange ventetida," 72–7.
68. Rinde, "Den lange ventetida," 77ff.
69. Lange, *Samling om felles mål*, 156–8, 169–70; Trond Bergh, *Storhetstid, 1945–1965* (Oslo: Tiden, 1987), 165–6, 197.
70. Oddbjørn Bukve, "I skuggen av Verket," in Amdam et al., *Årdal: Verket og bygda*, 166–70.
71. Fosso, "Industriens barn," 206–11.
72. Bukve, "I skuggen av Verket," 166–70.
73. Dag Gjestland, "Gjensyn med Årdal," in Amdam et al., *Årdal: Verket og bygda*, 186, 197.
74. Læg Reid, "Eg burde ha hata Verket," 275–80.

75. Kjeldstadli, "Å komme, å bli, å bygge," 62, 66.
76. Bergh, *Storhetstid*; Lange, *Samling om felles mål*; Knut Halvorsen and Steinar Stjernø, *Work, Oil, and Welfare: The Welfare State in Norway* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget 2008).
77. Martin Byrkjeland, "Kampen mot fluoren," in Amdam et al., *Årdal: Verket og bygd*, 110–32; Lange, *Samling om felles mål*, 201.
78. Byrkjeland, "Kampen mot fluoren," 114–8.
79. *Sogn Folkeblad*, March 26, 1963, quoted in Byrkjeland, "Kampen mot fluoren," 118.
80. Byrkjeland, "Kampen mot fluoren," 118–20.
81. The executive committee was comprised of representatives from the plant, local farms, the district veterinarian, and an agricultural consultant. Byrkjeland, "Kampen mot fluoren," 116.
82. Byrkjeland, "Kampen mot fluoren," 126.
83. When the plant was bought by Hydro in 1986, the management agreed to reduce pollution. Moreover, Hydro wanted to exceed the minimum requirements of the SFT and directed attention to other forms of pollution, in addition to fluorides.
84. Altena and van der Linden, "Preface," 2; Christopher Johnson, "Introduction: De-industrialization and Globalization," in Altena and van der Linden, "De-industrialization," 25; Jefferson Cowie, *Capital Moves: RCA's Seventy-Year Quest for Cheap Labor* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999).
85. <http://hydro.no/no/Pressesenter/Nyheter/Arkiv/2006/Mars/15461>.
86. Hans Otto Frøland and Asbjørn Karlsen, "Innledning: Globalisering gjennom et århundre: langsiktige trekk ved norsk aluminiumindustri," in *Globalisering gjennom et århundre: Norsk aluminiumindustri 1908–2008*, ed. Johan Henden, Hans Otto Frøland, and Asbjørn Karlsen (Bergen: Fagbokforlaget, 2008), 7–32 (22).
87. <http://no.wikipedia.org/wiki/Årdal>. As Johnson states, "Competition is always modifie
88. Roald Johansen, *Omstillingen i Årdal. Sluttrapport* (Lysaker: Ifo-Institutt for Organisasjonsutvikling, 2008); Oddbjørn Bukve, Øyvind Glosvik, Harald Mundal, Jon Gunnar Nesse, Veronika Trengereid, and Åge Vebostad, *Omstillingsprogrammet i Sogn og Fjordane: Resultat og erfaringar* (Sogndal: Høgskolen i Sogn og Fjordane, 2009).
89. <http://www.qatalum.com/en/About-Qatalum/>. Meanwhile, aluminium production in Michigan and Sunndal, Norway, also has been reduced or concluded. See <http://www.hydro.com/no/Pressesenter/Nyheter/Arkiv/2009>.
90. <http://www.qatalum.com/en/Media-room/News/2010/Royal-inauguration-of-Qatalum-a-world-class-smelter>.
91. <http://www.qatalum.com/en/About-Qatalum>.
92. Switkes, *Foiling the Aluminium Industry*, 6.
93. *Ibid.*

## CHAPTER 8

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# Race and Gender in Peripheral Resource Towns: Boundaries and Boundary-Crossings in Tanjung Bara Mining Camp in Kalimantan, Indonesia

*Kuntala Lahiri-Dutt*

### **Mining Towns in Resource Peripheries**

Large-scale, capital-intensive and globalized mining project sites represent an international order—little enclaves of the global located in the midst, but not really an intrinsic part, of the local context within which the mining operations take place.<sup>1</sup> They represent the global and developmental aspirations of the national governments, who often earn huge amounts of revenues from these mining operations, but have significant impacts on the social and cultural fabric of the local communities that host such projects. As shown by Limin Teh in this volume, the upheavals that take place fundamentally change the preexisting social order, giving rise to urban settlements or company towns where the company is present in every aspect of life and where the community life mirrors the company hierarchies. However, it is not only class boundaries that are manifested on the space in such towns. Race and gender complicate the picture and create new spatial boundaries. This chapter locates itself at the intersection of larger theoretical and disciplinary fields from which it borrows for explanation of social and gender phenomena: the geographical insights on gated communities and their elaborations on the social class and race within company towns, and the anthropological analyses of boundary maintenance.<sup>2</sup> Within the company town, it focuses on the

mining camp, a gated residential community meant for upper-class managers from overseas and from other parts of the country that bars the entry of the general population of the company town. Humanist geographers prefer to call such local sites “places,” human attachment to and perceptions of which create a personalized space and often unique sense of place. Focusing on this micro site illuminates the complex interactions of class, race, and gender in the company town.

The mining camp under the microscope is Tanjung Bara (literally, “cape” or “peninsula of coal”). Tanjung Bara is the residential area of PT Kaltim Prima Coal (hereafter KPC or “the Company”) in Sangatta town, East Kalimantan, Indonesia, located on the coast about 60 km north of the Equator. The sites described in this chapter are located within this residential camp that was originally meant for the foreign experts or the expatriate staff, locally known as the “expats”—generally white-skinned males from Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States, and even Canada—who work for or advise the mining company. These high-salaried expats live in an exceedingly secluded manner, recreating a westernized and masculinized way of life that is completely out of place with the rest of Sangatta. Waking up at daybreak, they eat their hearty Western breakfast and with packed sandwiches in boxes leave for the mine pits wearing helmets and orange jackets in their four-wheel drives waving warning orange flags at the end of poles. Getting back to the camp after a hard day’s work, they gather around the Aquatic Bar near the coast or the poolside bar to discuss the latest in Australian rugby with mates over a few drinks. On weekends, they play tennis or golf or cricket, go for a jog, or dive in the sea. If the work they do is characterized by masculinity, the life they lead is characterized by a playful and sporty nature. If the work is rough and difficult, and takes place in the mine pits, the living environment in the camp is beautifully comfortable and world-class. Within the community of the mining camp, the boundaries are maintained along class, sex, and racial lines, and enacted in certain places of the site. As “difference” is performed, people construct themselves as similar to and different from other racial groups or classes.<sup>3</sup>

Access to the field site is critical for the ethnographer. The mode of accessing the site also influences the way research subjects see the places within the camp. Ballard and Banks have observed how access is difficult for researchers to remotely located and heavily guarded mining projects.<sup>4</sup> Although Sangatta is located in the general area that is now experiencing economic boom due to its extractive industries, it started as a rather remote and isolated place, growing to its present size from the tiny village of Teluk Lingga. Close to the mining area is Kutai National Park, which still contains relics of the dense equatorial forest that once covered the area. The road leading to Sangatta



from the port of Samarinda meanders through the Kutai National Forest and used to practically end in Sangatta until 1999. The original inhabitants of East Kalimantan were the various Dayak groups, particularly the Dayak Basaf, although the Kutai people also consider themselves *orang asli* (original people). These communities traditionally accessed the interior parts of Kalimantan through rivers, but in spite of its coastal location, higher-level Company staff today access Sangatta primarily by air from Balikpapan, the nearest airport, although most locals tend to use the road. Other industrial towns include Bontang, which houses a number of multinational gas and fertilizer companies, and the port of Samarinda, located at the mouth of the Mahakam River Delta. The flight to Sangatta is in a light aircraft for about an hour over the equatorial jungle to reach the air base at Tanjung Bara, constructed and maintained by the Company. Upper-level employees arrive in the camp via air, and although they go out to restaurants and so on, they never seem to interact much with the locals. The local environment, the villages, and the communities are therefore treated somewhat like wallpapers creating the passive backgrounds for the mine, which is central to the town's identity. During each visit and throughout the lengths of my stay there, I felt that the mode of accessing Tanjung Bara had a bearing on the way people came to see the place. Almost all the company staff are from outside—that is, they are nonlocal and from other parts of Indonesia.<sup>5</sup> However, they live outside Tanjung Bara and are closer to the heartbeats of the rest of Sangatta. By contrast, the higher-level managerial and professional staff—including those of Indonesian origin—arriving directly into Tanjung Bara by air, have little contact with the rest of the community. The physical distance between Tanjung Bara and Sangatta may add to the psychological distance. The result is that only a few of them become aware of the exclusiveness of their way of life or the ways in which the world outside Tanjung Bara—Sangatta town and its surrounding villages—has transformed since the founding of KPC. The executives seem to take the exclusive and comfortable life for granted, almost as normal, and appear unaware of the unreality of the secluded, blue-green utopian world they live in. To fall with its rhythm, they perform what they think they are expected to. A common greeting at the airport, particularly to the first-time visitor, is “Welcome to the jungle,” although for all practical purposes life in the camp is almost as removed from the jungle as in the bustling metropolitan city of Jakarta. The car temperatures are usually kept extremely low, and as one leaves the vehicle, the glasses immediately fog up in the equatorial heat and humidity. Not only the safety guards and the security measures at work but also sports and leisure activities, such as the golf games, diving and canoeing, cricket, and swimming sessions, keep residents busily aloof from the flows of community life around Tanjung Bara.

### Under the Shadow of the Company

Race-gender-class identities and interactions in Tanjung Bara imply an understanding of Sangatta and even East Kalimantan resource development politics within which it is placed, and that of KPC, which created and controls both places. KPC is one of the largest coal mining operations in the world, and it is the dominating influence over the town of Sangatta. Although incorporated in Indonesia in 1982, PT KPC was originally a multinational owned jointly by BP and CRA Ltd., which used to be the overseas entity of Rio Tinto of Australia. KPC was a long way away from the administrative arms of the government in Jakarta and enjoyed relative autonomy in the region. It is one of the earliest “large” resource companies that gave rise to a town—although it arrived a couple of decades after the logging company PT Porodisa, which started operating in 1960s in the area. Consequently, the settlement it gave rise to lived completely under the “shadow of the company” and became both “a settlement in the interior and at a frontier” as it derived its social, demographic, and economic characteristics from KPC.<sup>6</sup> Ramanie Kunanayagam describes the relationship of dependency that emerged between the Company and the community of the town as one that exists between a patron and a client.<sup>7</sup>

The placeness of Sangatta derives entirely from its coal. If one speaks to the many visitors who come and go to the town, they all agree that the reason for its significance lay in the coal that is extracted from its gently undulating hillsides. These hillslopes must at one time have been thickly covered with equatorial rainforests; generations of slash-and-burn and the logging by Porodisa had already reduced this habitat of orangutans into small sections of green separated by much larger bald patches. Still, life grows excessively rapidly in such heat and humidity; creepers crawl over anything that has been left untouched even for a few weeks. The region is rich in natural resources, its oil, timber, and gas leading to the growth of a number of processing industries, construction activities, and trade. The boom in resources that began with wood, oil, and natural gas in nearby towns and ports has now made coal central to the identity of Sangatta.

Like any other mining town experiencing a boom, Sangatta has grown phenomenally in response to the huge growth of KPC. During the course of my research, KPC coal operations have undergone tremendous growth—from 19 million tons in 2003 to 48 million tons in 2010—which in turn is closely connected to the buoyant coal prices in the global market. When KPC reaches its target production of 70 million tons in 2015, it will be by far the largest coal-producing mine in the world. Until about 1990, Sangatta had only 5,000 or so residents; the town’s multiethnic population is now

well over 80,000. People from almost all ethnic groups of Indonesia live in Sangatta today. Although the older parts of the town are still congested and unimpressive in appearance, new hotels, karaoke bars, restaurants, and shiny buildings are coming up every day. KPC owns a series of twelve open cut pits (only seven are currently under operation), two coal preparation facilities, a 13 km overland conveyor to the coast, and two marine terminals capable of handling bulk ocean carriers in the town. It also owns the supporting infrastructure such as an airport for light aircrafts, a coal-fired power station, three major housing areas, schools, a hospital, water supply and sanitation, a mini shopping market, and recreation amenities such as golf and cricket grounds, swimming pools, and the Aquatic Bar and diving area.

Coal not only integrated Sangatta into the world capitalist system, it also brought the world to Sangatta. James Garza, writing on Sangatta town, notes:

Sangatta is itself the attractor, pulling in friends or relatives of those already settled there to work either for the mining company or one of its many contractors. Furthermore, Sangatta has drawn in an international element required for support of the mining company operations at KPC. Although residents may lack international travel experience, they can generally identify the headquarter countries of the various big name corporations providing local support to the mining company. . . . These new connections bring an ironic international element to a formerly unknown, and only relatively recently named, locality in an inconspicuous corner of East Kalimantan.<sup>8</sup>

This statement remains true even today. Sangatta is where the world is present and cradled in the laps of Indonesia; this is where the locals can access the outer world even through informal interactions with the Company. As people from all over the world came to Sangatta in search of its valuable coal resource, the value of Sangatta as a place to Indonesians themselves changed. Indonesians arrived here from Java, Sulawesi, and other islands of the country to work for the Company; each family invited their relatives, friends, and other contacts to join KPC. There are economic opportunities aplenty for the migrant Indonesians who are keen on taking the initiative, have a spirit of entrepreneurship, and are ready to put in their labor. Those who can get a job as an operator see themselves as lucky; those who cannot, look for work in other companies that do business with KPC or try to start a business. As the local government was established in 1999 they built a secretariat at Bukit Pelangi (Rainbow Hill); the impressive and palatial buildings are spread over a few acres and can be spotted even from the sky as the light aircraft swoops downward to Tanjung Bara's airstrip. The local government is one of the richest in the country, and it flaunts the riches as well.<sup>9</sup> This prosperity, the crowds, and the hustle-bustle are all from coal. Although many people

living in Sangatta today earn from other sources, the placeness of Sangatta still largely derives from coal.

Although KPC has three other “housing quarters”—Swarga Bara, Panorama, and Munthe—Tanjung Bara, located by the coast and away from the pits, is the only closely guarded residential area to which the characteristics of a “gated community” are most applicable.<sup>10</sup> There are about fifty households in Tanjung Bara (usually managerial-level staff and their families), a singles’ mess-cum-dining hall, and a guesthouse for high-level visitors. Housing, even the facilities in the barracks, are invariably graded according to the rank of the employee in Tanjung Bara. The people who live in Tanjung Bara—both expats and Indonesian staff—have to define their residential area in distinct ways, depending on their class and status within the Company or race/nationality and the length of stay. This makes Tanjung Bara a small replica of a company town, yet a unique and global place. To the residents, Tanjung Bara has the fond name “the Camp.” The name denotes not only a simple romanticization of an imagined hard life in this blue-green and isolated utopia, but also a sense of temporariness as though people are on the way to somewhere else via Tanjung Bara, where they have stopped because they have to.

Tanjung Bara was originally meant as a residential area solely for the expats—the company staff, their families, the visitors, and the staff of the contractor companies. It was built by Australian planners, who designed the entire residential area at par with global standards. The houses are made of local wood and raised on stilts to protect the residents from the teeming insects; the verandas are regularly visited by monkeys and, although rarely, by orangutans. Inside the singles’ barrack, the visitor can find air-conditioned rooms with soft beds and a Western-style toilet in the attached bathroom. Such comfort is not common even for the hotels in the area. That it is a tradition carried over from its “foreign past” is evident from older records. Visiting the place in early 1990s after the mine started, Kunanayagam noted that the facilities and the infrastructure were conventionally “far superior and advanced” than what is found in the rest of Sangatta.<sup>11</sup>

As a company settlement, an important characteristic of Tanjung Bara is its careful physical layout along class lines. Such structuring of space is not uncommon in company towns around the world, whether in the past (as shown by the case studies of Angola, Argentina, and Canada in this volume) or at present. In Tanjung Bara, the central part is occupied by the recreational hub: the swimming pool and the poolside bar, the tennis court, the golf course, the gym, as well as the classy restaurant. Opposite this complex is the accommodation office and the dining hall, next to which are the medical center and the mosque. The best residences with the most

spectacular views of the sea and the surrounding forests belong to the highest level of managers. Kunanayagam notes that “the hierarchical structure that prevails within the camp is evident in the physical layout.”<sup>12</sup> Everything is graded according to one’s position in the Company; even the singles barracks are meant for certain classes of visitors. However, race also determines one’s place within the Camp. The physical separation between the expats and the Indonesians is most visible in the dining hall where the foreigners sit on the tables on one side and the Indonesians sit on the other side. To deal with the silent tussle over the television channel, a new television set has been installed on the expat side recently.

Within the same boom gate but on the slightly higher ground overlooking the sea is Batu Putih, literally meaning “the white rock,” the much-coveted area for the top-level managers. This site has acquired a special position because of its association with status. This is strictly a family area with no single residents. Women who live in this part of the camp are called the “wives of the hill.” Wives of lower-level staff see the wives of the hill—married either to Indonesian or expat managers—as occupying a desirable position and space by virtue of the work status of their husbands. The Company also sees the wives as precious enough to deserve special protection, as shown by a gate recently set up to ensure security during the day when their husbands are away at work. The managing director’s house commands the highest point of Batu Putih, offering an excellent view of the airstrip, the coastline, and ship movement. However, even within Batu Putih, fine differences exist according to the gender-race-class status of the husband *and* the wife; the status is a product of not only class but also race. Consequently, depending on the intersection of one’s identity, individuals rank their status differently. Indonesian managers with Indonesian wives rank themselves as the highest and expat managers with expat wives as the lowest. Not only was it the other way around formerly, but even now expats define the social ranking differently. However, as such categorizations are largely perceptual, they are expressed very subtly through complex social interactions. (The picture is also a lot more complex; for example, expat managers with Indonesian wives add complexities in social interaction and may confuse the rankings.)

### Getting to the Camp

Tanjung Bara is a quintessential, albeit microscopic, gated community.<sup>13</sup> Such walling or fencing off of residential areas is a common response to the fear of the unknown and the other. In many poorer countries, for example in Saudi Arabian cities, the compounds of Western expatriate residences are highly gated in order to enable people with profoundly differing cultural

backgrounds to live side by side.<sup>14</sup> Tanjung Bara, although gated from the extopia, where the rest of the company town lies, is continually being influenced by this wider context. These influences may also have import on the gendered social interactions between the expats and local women and men. The economic crisis in Indonesia led to riots in 1997–98 in Jakarta, encouraging not only the Chinese but all middle- and upper-class residences to gate themselves for protection.<sup>15</sup> Tanjung Bara was established before most of the urban gated communities and, being part of a company town, fully reflects class structure in its physical layout. Gating has satisfied a twofold purpose in Tanjung Bara: to order and control the occupants and discipline their interactions, and to keep them away from the harsher realities of community life outside the boom gates in Sangatta and other villages nearby. From the Company's perspective, gating is justified by safety and security needs. The foreign owners of KPC put the boom gates in place in late 1980s when safety and liability requirement necessitated the identification of a clear-cut boundary where the Company's responsibility stopped. In those early days, Tanjung Bara mainly housed expats who enjoyed a sanitized, Club Med lifestyle as a compensation for living away from home. Since the late 1990s, although Indonesian managers have moved in, more fences have been imposed to prevent land claims by surrounding villagers.

Like other communities dominated by a company, the standards of behavior within the compound of Tanjung Bara are also preestablished and complied with by residents who live there.<sup>16</sup> With the changing ownership of the Company, the gender-, race-, and class-based interactions have also changed over time. In the process, many individuals crossed over the symbolic and social boundaries that were created by the Company. Consequently, this chapter examines the processes by which people create, maintain, and change their social positions rather than focusing explicitly on such aspects of identity as class or race or ethnicity. The context of place allows the exploration of these transnational interactions, which in turn illuminate much about race, ethnicity, and class. Places such as Tanjung Bara are made of and by people. Tanjung Bara as a place becomes a space that has a meaning, or multiple meanings, and is not at all an empty area, a geographic field, a geometric condition. Places and sites within Tanjung Bara represent particular locations defined socially. Ethnographic methods of research such as those used in this study illuminate the empirical meanings of what counts as "place" within Tanjung Bara. Geographers have demonstrated the ways in which places are also spatial conceptions of history. As such, a sense of place is deeply associated with both perceptions of the past and a sense of self or of individual identity. Places show not only how gender-class-race boundaries are maintained in a local context, but also how these boundaries

are fluid and nonpermanent. Together, the located and fragmented performances of gender-class-race reflect a complex history and politics and present a compelling social topography.

### Indonesianization of KPC

KPC is notable among the various large companies in Indonesia and takes pride in its diverse range of activities toward meeting the goals of corporate social responsibility (CSR). It reflects the importance of KPC for the national government; KPC is among six mining companies of Indonesia that have been designated as “Obvitnas”—Indonesia’s National Vital Object (Objek Vital Nasional)—or a company with strategic importance that is granted special protection from the police (and the army in case of escalated conflict). The status as Obvitnas is proudly displayed at the gates by KPC and justifies gating and the maintenance of high security. Toward the north of Sangatta, in Bangalon, where KPC pits have been expanding lately, a permanent war exercise area has been established and used for war exercises a number of times. KPC is indeed located in a sensitive area—on the Sulawesi Strait, which is part of an international maritime route that is often poached by pirates.

Although established with foreign investment as a global standard company, KPC has changed hands in recent years after the democratization and decentralization of governance in Indonesia.<sup>17</sup> Two main reasons rooted in the politics of the country were behind the transfer of ownership, described as Indonesianization: first, Article 26 of the original Coal Contract obligates KPC to divest its equity to “Indonesian participants”<sup>18</sup>; second, the divestment of KPC has been a major plank in local and regional political elections, with the current governor of East Kalimantan, Awang Faroek Ishak, being the most vociferous supporter of divestment of the company for the benefit of local and regional governments. Indeed, the time since the establishment of the local government has been marked by a “long and deep conflict” between the central government, the provincial government, and KPC.<sup>19</sup> The initial sale of the Company occurred in 2003, when Bumi Resources Limited, an Indonesian-owned company, acquired it for only US\$500 million.<sup>20</sup> At the same time, 5 percent ownership was given to the district government, which sold back the share in 2006 to Bumi in return for cash.

These complexities associated with Indonesianization of KPC have important bearing on the gender and social performances that take place on the social sites in Tanjung Bara. Gating, ostensibly for security measures, has increased manifold, and what is more interesting is that such means of control are now often imposed through indirect means on the personal behavior and mores of the individuals, particularly that of the expats. For example,

excessive drinking at the pubs after a hard day's work and the loud exhibition of cheerful behavior has become much more subdued.

### Social Interactions in the Town

The process of Indonesianization has meant a gradual change in the racial identity of the residents who live in Tanjung Bara. This reflects the steady decline in the number of expatriates working in KPC since the hand-over. Kunanayagam noted that during the time of her research, "most of the camp's inhabitants were expatriates," "the camp guards stand at the boom gates to control entry to the camp," and "the type of recreational facilities provided were more suited to expatriate tastes."<sup>21</sup> In 1992, expats comprised 78 percent and 19 percent of the workforce in management/professional and technical/supervisory positions, respectively.<sup>22</sup> In July 2010, only nine expats worked for KPC and almost all of them lived within the Camp.<sup>23</sup>

Tanjung Bara's changing racial composition was reflected in the use of the camp's social spaces. The recreational hall was turned in 2004 into a permanent mosque, and the original hall was moved to the back of the dining hall. Kabo Sports Club, which was outside of Tanjung Bara but was meant mainly for drinking and dancing by the expats, was closed in 2005. The poolside bar and the aquatic clubs are no longer well maintained. Places such as "Susie's Monkey Bar," which is located outside the camp, had also played an important part in the past, since exploration was being undertaken by the Company. Until recently, the Monkey Bar played an important role not only as a watering hole for expat men after their days in the mine pits "under the equatorial sun," or after their monthly hash-run, but also as a meeting place with their contract wives and girlfriends. Indonesianization, on the heels of urban growth and changing sensibilities, meant that a pushing away of such sites outside the periphery of vision became necessary. The Monkey Bar was closed in 2009, and there have been some attempts to shift Kampung Kanjang (or the sex workers' village) out of the town. Within the sites and places in Tanjung Bara, such moralistic effects of Indonesianization have imposed stricter restrictions on social behavior, such as open living with unrelated Indonesian women or bringing women into Tanjung Bara from outside. Such relations were common but open secrets; it was usual before for an expat to house an Indonesian girl in the singles' mess. Until early 2002 or even in 2003, one could spot a man carrying away plates loaded with food for two out of the dining hall. The first restriction imposed after Indonesianization was on bringing in unrelated young women. Security personnel were instructed to look carefully inside the cars for such girls, and the Food and Beverage Unit (PBU) restricted from taking food out of the



dining hall into the rooms. The policing inside the camp was matched by informal attempts to shift the location of brothels and karaoke bars away from Sangatta. Some of my respondents were satisfied that these measures had yielded results in “taming the unruly and immoral behavior” of the expats.<sup>24</sup>

However, most importantly, the most discernible change has occurred in the nature and mode of social and informal interactions taking place within Tanjung Bara. Although many of the “work cultures” have remained the same, particularly those around safety and office discipline, the nature and modes of social interactions between individuals have changed. If the boundaries, at first glance, appear to be stronger now and reinforced by a mutual distrust, there is also a greater amount of interaction between the Indonesians and the expats. A sense of moral decency, pre-determination of right and wrong modes of behavior, and the impropriety of the expats seem to be the subject matter of many jokes cracked in the camp. In addition, as gating has increased, a postcolonial sense of “Our KPC” seems to have pervaded the psyche of the Indonesian managers. They often have difficulty reconciling with the foreign past of the Company, when physical segregation in terms of use of specific amenities and access to certain spaces in the camp was far more acute. Expats, on the other hand, take pride in the international standards put in place by the foreign owners of the Company and regret that some of these standards are going down. Those who are still left find it difficult to cope with this rising nationalism and sense of ownership of self. This unease is expressed in a careful avoidance of topics relating to the Indonesianization of the Company in informal conversations.

In summary, one observes that with Indonesianization, the social nature of some of the sites has changed, reflecting the changing interactions on these sites between the locals and the expats. Individuals have become more equal and more restricted at the same time. More local (or Indonesian) rules of engagement now dictate these interactions. Indonesian greetings such as “Selamat Pagi” are more common than “Good morning.” So too are body languages, which are more Indonesian than “Western.” It is not uncommon to encounter women wearing headscarves playing badminton or tennis games within the Camp, and many traditional Indonesian activities, such as *arisan*, have been introduced and popularized even among the expat wives.<sup>25</sup>

### Desire for Female Company

Expats living in Tanjung Bara are usually single men, although some are accompanied by families and live in Batu Putih. This is usually in contrast to Indonesian men who generally have their wives with them. There are a handful of educated single and young Indonesian women (and men) who

work in various superior administrative positions within the Company. Generally speaking, the sex ratio of the residents would be around 85 men to 15 women. But while the number of expat men has gone down recently, there have never been a large number of “Western women” present in Tanjung Bara. Only rarely are the expats accompanied by wives from home. Thus, isolation operates at many levels—if Tanjung Bara is isolated from Sangatta, the residential houses within the Camp are segregated on class lines, and interaction is restricted along racial lines. In addition, the repetitive nature of the mining tasks and the monotonous “day in and day out” rhythm of the mine, in which people are forced to “live with work,” lead to further isolation. When the sheer boredom meets the enhanced masculinity of the work environment in mines, they together accentuate the intense desire for female company. In KPC, in fact one of the pits opened in early days of the mine’s operation was named “Hatari,” which translates in Bahasa Indonesia for “days and nights without wives.”

Western women do not accompany their expat husbands for a number of reasons: they too get bored, feel isolated and “stuck in the middle of no where,” and are obliged to perform their husbands’ class or managerial status on their behalf in public.<sup>26</sup> Under the conditions of extreme boredom and isolation, the wives must recreate pseudo-familial and social networks among themselves. Interracial friendships among wives are neither common nor easily acceptable to either group. Some wives in Tanjung Bara spend time with the Indonesian wives who are at similar status levels, some make weekly or monthly trips to Balikpapan or Samarinda for shopping, and some just leave citing the children’s education or family needs as reason. A number of marriages have broken up because of the sheer monotony that the resort life of Tanjung Bara offers to expat wives. Expat wives also feel that there is a wide social and cultural gap between themselves and the Indonesian women. Many of them comment on how the “small-boned” Indonesian women enact a well-rehearsed “petite prettiness.”<sup>27</sup> There is always a subtle sense of competition between the expat wives and Indonesian wives that stems from perceived qualities as housewives. Other Indonesian women who are around in the camp usually belong to lower economic classes, such as those working in the Food and Beverages Unit or “the PBU girls.” These young women are dressed neatly, and although they do not live in Tanjung Bara, those who work in the bars and serve alcohol to the expats are generally seen as “easily available.” This feeling can sometimes verge on suppressed rivalry; one British manager’s wife referred to her husband’s colleague who spoke better Indonesian because “he went and acquired a blackhead dictionary”—that is, he married a local girl. Asked about some of these cross-cultural marriages that have survived the test of time, one expat woman resorted to gender

stereotypes: “Western women argue too much,” whereas Indonesian women are “more submissive and obedient.” I was informed that there have been only two single expat women in the history of KPC who came to Tanjung Bara on their own, as teachers in the International School. As I spoke with one of them, she expressed the view that there is very little social interaction between the expats and the Indonesians. Yet, while commenting on the “rampant sex industry” and the fact that she had “no problem with it, because it fulfils a need,” she thought that many Indonesian women in this industry are not necessarily “dirt poor” but see it as a “ticket out.” When asked to comment on why she thought that female-expat and female Indonesian interaction is slightly more extensive, she mentioned the joint sports activities but also social visits to each other’s houses. However, she said, “as soon as the male figure appears on the scene the Indonesian female in general retreats into her own safe female world in order not to offend her Indonesian husband.” Another expat wife commented that male-expat and male Indonesian interaction has always been extremely thin within Tanjung Bara, although the expats and Indonesians regularly meet at work or occasionally in work-related social or recreational events. She thought that “religion and culture has a lot to do with it. If each avoids the other socially, there would also be no opportunity for conflict to arise.”<sup>28</sup>

Alliances with women—who are not necessarily “local” in the pure sense of the term and who often come for brief periods from other parts of the country in search of additional cash incomes or to “try out their luck”—are common. In KPC, it has been a customary practice for expat men, suffering from an acute sense of isolation, to take up one or more local girlfriends. Cannon’s work on expatriation in the mining industry in a similar location in Indonesia (Batu Hijau mine) discusses in detail the sense of alienation that many expats feel in similar circumstances. One of my female respondents said, “You probably start to go a bit crazy after living here for some time.”<sup>29</sup> Cannon observes, “All expats experience a separation from their society of origin, even when they are accompanied by their family, and in LDCs [less developed countries] they find a position of increased status and privilege to that which they experienced at home.”<sup>30</sup>

Interactions of a sexual nature generally do not occur between expat women and local men who tend to stay within their “own” social circles. Some of the liaisons between the expat men and Indonesian women turn into more permanent relationships. Anecdotally, at least fifty-five expats working for KPC eventually took home an Indonesian bride to whom they were legally married.<sup>31</sup> However, there are also many more examples of “boyfriends” leaving the girls after their contracts with the Company were over. There are at least a few cases in which the departed boyfriend continued to pay for

the upkeep and education of the offspring from the union, but more often these children are just left with their mothers. Most interracial relationships are established on unequal terms; for example, contract marriages were not unheard of in Sangatta. When I interviewed expat men about such relationships, quite a few described them as a “win-win” situation for both.<sup>32</sup> These relations are unequal in terms of not only age but also power—that is, they determine who sets the rules and how. For example, Anna, a young Indonesian girl, proudly showed me the gold chain that her “boyfriend” had gifted to her, but when I asked her if she knows his full address back in Australia, she was visibly uneasy. The easy disposability of Indonesian women appears as one of the reasons why they seem more attractive to expats.

### **Redefining an “Expat”: Indians in Tanjung Bara**

An unexpected event took place in 2007, when the fully Indian-owned Tata Power Company purchased 33 percent equity of Bumi Resources Limited to import coal to its coastal power stations in the power-hungry India. The Tatas are now represented in the board of directors of Bumi and have managers in key positions in the major mines owned by Bumi. This has added a complexity in the previous dichotomous social situation. In KPC, the general manager of finance now is an Indian who lives in Tanjung Bara with his wife. The part-purchase by the Tatas has also introduced Indian mining engineers into the mines in places conventionally occupied by people with white skin. These Indian engineers are young, often married males, and usually Hindus with vegetarian food preferences.

The entry of Indian men in Tanjung Bara has changed the conventional definition of an “expat” and has created new modes of introduction on the social sites. In the dining hall, Indian engineers sit huddled together—separate from the beef- and pork-eating expats and the beef-eating Indonesians. The buffet now serves a medley of choices, including vegetarian curries with shepherd’s pies and nasi goreng. Neither do these men fit the conventional description of an expat, nor are they “local” as claimed by the Indonesian staff. Although they share an “Asian” culture, there are some essential differences in food preferences, in drinking habits, and even in the exhibiting of emotions in public. So far, the men have revealed physical shyness and avoided breaking into song and dance, which is one of the favorite entertainments among company staff of Indonesian origin. Language of communication plays a key role in self-definition; the Indian mining engineers are yet to learn Bahasa Indonesia and hence feel a strong need to stick to the expats. In a celebration of KPC’s silver jubilee in 2010, amid the dancing and singing the general manager’s wife moved around with expat wives for the ease of communication. Generally, the Indian men are yet to pick up upper-class

sports such as golf and diving, but they participate in cricket and visit the gym. They make it a point to stay away from the karaoke bars and the drinking sites, and so far have interacted very little with local women. Not only are the sites now marked by a binary physical separatedness between two groups, but in more personal interactions such as eating in the dining hall, one sees the Indians keeping to themselves and eating their own food. Similarly, some of the recreational activities remain separate, although such separation does not exist in formal interactions at work.

The entry of Indians has more than complicated the social and cultural meanings of place in Tanjung Bara. No place can now have a simplified binary meaning; no one has the full claim of being an “insider” anymore. Indeed, everyone in Tanjung Bara is more or less an outsider; everyone there is living between two worlds and yet making a home in one way or the other. The presence of Indians not only challenges the politics of Indonesianization, it also mutes the national pride in KPC by showing that the company too is not a homogeneous and undifferentiated entity.<sup>33</sup>

## Conclusion

To conclude this chapter, I would draw upon the rich reservoir of geographical literature on mining communities. Although such towns have existed since the early urban planners “created” model communities in nineteenth-century Britain to solve the problem of housing industrial workers,<sup>34</sup> geographers looking for symmetry and reason in settlement growth always found mining towns an obnoxious aberration.<sup>35</sup> Resource-based communities and the visibility of class (and ethnic) segregation posed a problem to geographers of the time who were looking for patterns in urban development. Some geographers even thought that except in remote resource areas, such mining towns would cease to exist because of reduced isolation, greater state involvement, and the drive for town incorporation. Jonathan Crush sharply criticized such work by earlier geographers for their ahistorical structuralism, which located mining towns within an overall system, such as “the frontier,” “the world economy,” or the capitalist “mode of production,” and decontextualized and loosened them from their social moorings.<sup>36</sup> Crush presented the mining camp in South African mining industry as the site where power and authority are manifested through race. However, although Crush contested the two popular narratives of the mining camp—of paternalism and of labor coercion and regulation—and showed how the mining camp acts as an instrument of industrial discipline and control, he ignored gender because the migrant black working-class population was mostly male. True to geographical scholarship of the time, most such research remained silent about gender relations, particularly in the context of mines. The analysis of

gender relations within mining communities was introduced by early Marxist feminist scholars Doreen Massey and Linda McDowell, who brought gender into focus within the class structures of industrial production.<sup>37</sup> Since then, the poststructuralist feminists Katherine Gibson and Julie Graham have revised class and argued, in the context of an Australian mining town located in Queensland, that class is a process and that it exists in a number of sites in a state of continual change.<sup>38</sup> They have shown that class processes are constituted by every other aspect of social life through which class may take multiple and diverse forms. Each individual, then, can have a variety of class positions—producer, appropriator, distributor, or receiver of surplus labor in a variety of forms. Under such an analytical framework, class processes are no longer restricted to the industrial, capitalist mining economy but can spread over multiple sites wherever surplus labor is produced, appropriated, or distributed. However, Gibson and Graham’s work—carried out in a predominantly white community—did not explore how race and ethnicity might have added interesting angles to class processes.

In this context, the study in Tanjung Bara has shown that neither race nor gender can be omitted from the analyses of mining communities. Racial differences give rise to social boundaries that are manifested through unequal access to and unequal distribution of resources on different places and sites within a mining camp. Within the patriarchal and overtly masculine context of mining, both women and men fall back on cultural norms and accepted modes of behavior. As the story of KPC illustrates, these norms are neither unchangeable nor rigidly single-dimensional. Tanjung Bara shows that the racial stereotypical roles established by convention are not dichotomous at all.

### Acknowledgment

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### Notes

1. Such remote locations have been described as “resource peripheries” that are “remote, elsewhere, foreign, uncomfortable, expensive to reach and sometimes dangerous.” Roger Hayter, Trevor Barnes, and Michael Bradshaw, “Relocating

- Resource Peripheries to the Core of Economic Geography's Theorizing: Rationale and Agenda," *Area* 35, 1 (2003): 17.
2. The first geographical works were Evan McKenzie, *Privatopia: Homeowner Associations and the Rise of Residential Private Government* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994), and Edward Blakely and Mary Gail Snyder, *Fortress America: Gated Communities in the United States* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1997). The interest spread to the urban centers of less developed countries where gating is a practical solution to consumer need for "defended collective housing." The gated communities are rooted in the idea of a "fragmented city"—the private and guarded housing being a consequence not only of a deregulated and flexible economy but also of a growing pluralization of lifestyles and "cultural" orientations at large.
  3. Transnational research on gender in such a context has raised important questions related not only to ethics but also to my own identity as a "footloose researcher." Throughout the research and during each of the field visits, I was most acutely aware of myself, of my own multiple identities and my subjective position—as a woman, an Indian woman, and a researcher with a certain standpoint on the social impacts of mining. I was an outsider, a woman from Australia, yet I was an Asian, not the usual and accustomed "white" foreigner. Although being an Asian woman often made me more acceptable in certain circumstances, at other levels I remained an outsider as I could only speak basic Bahasa Indonesia. My own identity as a researcher is also located within the transnational flow of labor and capital, and the "betweenness" of myself often caught me in the double bind of being both a local and an ethnographer. The series of research projects in collaboration with KPC since 2004 threw up a number of methodological questions for me. The research represented a crossing of the border for me not only in the absolute physical sense of looking for and locating the Equator, which is only some kilometers away yet which almost never seems to arouse any interest among either the expats or the local Indonesian immigrants. But this was also my first research outside of my "home region," South Asia, and my first "commercial" research (initially in 2004, I undertook a research-based consultancy project for KPC to make a gender audit of the Company's human resources). For me, such research entailed critical ethical questions that tormented my activist self. The ethical complexities of action-research in collaboration with a mining company was new not only for me, it was new also for the university that had been aggressively pursuing such industry linkages in order to generate research grants. Lastly, the fantasy and desire for Asian women, of warm and humid nights, and the palpable yearning for the Asian femininity by Western men were brought home to me as real experiences right from airport bookstores as I traveled to Southeast Asia. Researching in KPC, therefore, was both a "first contact" and a "boundary crossing" at the same time. See the commentary about transnational feminist researchers in Richa Nagar, "Footloose Researcher, 'Traveling' Theories, and the Politics of Transnational Feminist Praxis," *Gender, Place and Culture* 9, 2 (2002): 179–86; and Miraftab Faranak, "Can You Belly Dance?: Methodological

- Questions in the Era of Transnational Feminism,” *Gender, Place, and Culture* 11, 4 (December 2004): 595–604.
4. Chris Ballard and Glenn Banks, “Resource Wars: Mining and Anthropology,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 32 (October 2003): 287–313.
  5. Lesley Potter has described how such far away locations such as those in Kalimantan continue to be seen as distant and different resource peripheries from the heartland in Indonesia. Lesley Potter, “Resource Periphery, Corridor, Heartland: Contesting Land Use in the Kalimantan/Malaysia Borderlands,” *Asia Pacific Viewpoint* 50, 1 (April 2009): 88–106.
  6. Ramanie Kunanayagam, “Under the Shadow of the Company: Patronage and Status in a Mining Center” (masters’ thesis, Monash University, Melbourne, 1994), 51.
  7. *Ibid.* This anthropological concept denotes a person of power, status, and authority (the patron) who protects (or manipulates) a weaker or lower-status individual (the client). Such relations are clearly based on unequal authority and power, although symbiotic exchanges, dependency, and exploitation may exist between the two.
  8. James Garza, “Yearning for the Community: Ethnography of a Settlement Adjacent to a Multinational Mining Company in East Borneo” (Ph.D. diss., Monash University, Melbourne, 2006), 5.
  9. Its revenue earnings are not only from decentralization but also from the allocation of a share of locally produced resource profits.
  10. The housing areas of Swarga Bara, Panorama, and Munthe offer accommodation that can eventually be owned by the staff, but that is not allowed for Tanjung Bara.
  11. Kunanayagam, “Under the Shadow,” 22.
  12. *Ibid.*, 24.
  13. For a review, see Stanley D. Brunn, “Gated Minds and Gated Lives as Worlds of Exclusion and Fear,” *GeoJournal* 66, 1–2 (November 2006): 5–13.
  14. Georg Glasze, “Segregation and Seclusion: The Case of Compounds for Western Expatriates in Saudi Arabia,” *GeoJournal* 66, 1–2 (November 2006): 83–8.
  15. Indonesian gated communities depart from the private sector-driven “globalized” form of spatial segregation found elsewhere. They were a response to the demonstrations, riots, and chaotic collective violence directed at wealthy ethnic Chinese Indonesian minorities during the crisis of 1997–98. See Kim Jee Hun, “Research Notes on the Making of a ‘Gated Community’: A Study of an Inner City Neighbourhood, Jakarta, Indonesia,” *Asian Journal of Social Science* 30, 1 (2002): 97–108.
  16. See examples in Judy Bates, “Gendered Spaces of Industrial Restructuring in Resource Peripheries: The Case of the Corner Brook Region, Newfoundland,” *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geographie, Royal Dutch Geographical Society KNAG* 97, 2 (2005): 126–37; and Anne Goldberg, “Company Town, Border Town, Small Town: Transforming Place and Identities on the US-Mexico Border,” *Journal of the Southwest* 48, 3 (Autumn 2006): 275–306.



17. KPC received ISO 14,001 recognition in 2004.
18. According to Prasetyawan, this regulation was formulated with the intention of offering the Indonesian businesspeople a chance to operate a large coal mining project through a partnership with large multinationals as a means of gaining access to the international market, capital, and technology. Wahyu Prasetyawan, "Government and Multinationals: Conflict over Economic Resources in East Kalimantan, 1998–2003," *Southeast Asian Studies* 43, 2 (September 2005): 173–4.
19. Prasetyawan, "Government and Multinationals," 161.
20. For details, see <http://www.bumiresources.com>.
21. Kunanayagam, "Under the Shadow," 23–4.
22. G. D. Klinger, "Labour in Mining: The Kaltim Prima Coal Experience," in *Indonesia Assessment 1993: Labour: Sharing in the Benefits of Growth?* ed. Chris Manning and Joan Hardjono (Canberra: Department of Political and Social Change, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, The Australian National University, 1993), 173–85.
23. In addition, there are a few more expats living in Sangatta who work in the general area for the various "contractors" of KPC and access the facilities in Tanjung Bara.
24. Interview with L, April 2010.
25. *Arisan* is a kind of lottery, "ladies kitty game," played usually by the "wives of the hill," but sometimes also by the wives of managers who stay in Tanjung Bara proper.
26. Interview with P, a manager's wife.
27. Interview with N., Australian woman of around 45 years.
28. Personal communication with R., European woman of around 38, wife to a manager.
29. Interview with K., July 2007.
30. Justine Cannon, "Men at Work: Expatriation in the International Mining Industry" (Ph.D. diss., Monash University, Melbourne, 2002), 239.
31. Personal interview with J.M., July 2007.
32. Personal interview in July 2004, with E., Australian male, manager, who was at that time in a de facto relationship with an Indonesian girl, about 30 years younger than him.
33. Banks' work has previously touched on this by showing how a binary is generally created between the company and the community. If the community is seen as a homogeneous mass, the locals also see "the Company" as a homogeneous entity. See Glenn Banks, "Mountain of Desire: Mining Company and Indigenous Community at the Porgera Gold Mine, Papua New Guinea" (Ph.D. diss., Australian National University, Canberra, 1997).
34. From this perspective, Owen's New Lanark (1816) or Lever's Port Sunlight (1886) were the first company towns. However, as Porteous has noted, they also furthered social, political, or religious aims, whereas the latter-day mining or extractive industry-based company towns characteristically exhibit ethnic and

- socioeconomic segregation in housing location in which house-quality styles are allocated to employees not according to need (such as family size) but according to class, leading to the creation of separate institutions for each class. See J. Douglas Porteous, "Social Class in Atacama Company Towns," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 64, 3 (September 1974): 409–17. See also the discussion of company towns concepts in Chapter 1 of this volume.
35. For example of such work, see James Allen, *The Company Town in the American West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1966), and J. Douglas Porteous, "The Nature of the Company Town," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 51 (November 1970): 127–42.
  36. Jonathan Crush, "Scripting the Compound: Power and Space in the South African Mining Industry," *Environment and Planning, D, Society and Space* 12, 3 (1994): 301–2.
  37. Doreen Massey, *Spatial Divisions of Labour: Social Structures and the Geography of Production* (London: Macmillan, 1983); Linda McDowell, "Life Without Father and Ford: The New Gender Order of Post-Fordism," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, New Series, 16 (1991): 400–19.
  38. Katherine Gibson and Julie Graham, "Rethinking Class in Industrial Geography: Creating a Space for an Alternative Politics of Class," *Economic Geography* 68, 2 (April 1992): 113.

## CHAPTER 9

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# Reflections on an Appalachian Camelot: Place, Memory, and Identity in the Former Company Town of Wheelwright, Kentucky, USA

*Lisa Perry*

Wheelwright originated in the mid-nineteenth century as a small family settlement named Otter Creek, in southeastern Kentucky. In 1916, Elk Horn Coal Company finalized leases for land and mineral rights in the area and the first coal was mined in the town. Over the next thirteen years, the camp grew as Elk Horn brought in more men, including African Americans and European immigrants, to work in the mine. With the coming of the Great Depression, the town was sold to Inland Steel Company of Chicago, Illinois. In the thirty-five years that Inland Steel owned Wheelwright, the town underwent significant change because of massive investments by the company. These years of change represent the peak in the quality of life and the availability of opportunity for Wheelwright, a time many former residents reflect upon as idyllic, nearly mythic. The 1966 sale of the town to Island Creek Coal Company signaled the beginning of a period of marked decline for the town, an almost inevitable bust of the “boom and bust cycle” so common in towns dependent on extractive industries for their survival. The town still exists, but the communities that were and are Wheelwright could not be more different. The remembered community lives on in the memories of those former residents who gather in Lexington, Kentucky, each year to share their stories. However, their memories have little

bearing on the physical community as it exists today. Little remains of the remembered model company town that thrived in the mid-twentieth century. At the turn of the twenty-first century, Wheelwright struggles to find a way to survive economic challenges more than four decades after mining ended.

Benita Riley, a Prestonsburg, Kentucky, attorney, was born in Wheelwright in the 1950s. In recalling her childhood, she says, “The first ten years of my life in Wheelwright, it was like living in Camelot . . . everything that we could imagine was there. And it was a very unique way to grow up and I really didn’t realize that until after I left and I met other people who grew up in eastern Kentucky.”<sup>1</sup> Riley’s remembrance of Wheelwright and her comparison of the town with Camelot are common among those who lived in the company town during the Inland Steel era, particularly among those who moved away before the decline. What was so special about the town, or about the company? How did Inland Steel’s paternalistic practices help to form this identity? Are these feelings shared by everyone, or are they further defined by age, gender, or race? This chapter examines these questions and explores how the town fits within the broader scope of coal company towns in Appalachia and company towns in general. It also looks at the industrial development and decline of the town and the resulting impact on its physical structures and social development, ultimately creating two communities: one that survives in memory and one that plods slowly forward in the aftermath of the mining industry.

### **Wheelwright in Context: Coal Mining in Appalachia**

For people outside the region, the name Appalachia conjures visions of otherworldliness, of poverty, of clannish people of Scots-Irish descent determined to follow old ways of life. It is, perhaps, the least understood and most maligned region in the United States. The images of the region held by outsiders were largely formed in the decades following the American Civil War, when it was undergoing a wrenching transition to industrialization. It was during this era that outsiders engaged in rampant speculative investment in railroads, timber operations, and coal mines. Investors brought in native-born whites from outside the mountains, newly arrived immigrants from Europe, and African Americans from the South to clear the forests, build the railroads, and work in the mines. Mineral prospectors from outside the region became interested in these vast deposits of Appalachian bituminous coal during the Civil War.<sup>2</sup> Following the war, they rapidly converged on the region, buying mineral rights from local land owners. By obtaining the mineral rights, generally for about 50 cents per acre, these prospectors secured all rights to the

riches to be found. Although they were unable to capitalize on these investments immediately, the promise of future riches was enough to encourage these ventures.

Coal companies, often linked either directly or indirectly to the rail companies or their investors, generally developed operations in parallel with railroads. In some instances, coal operations would begin before the railroad extended into the camp. In those cases, the extracted mineral was stockpiled until lines could be constructed close enough to the mines to transport the coal to market. Initially these mine communities truly were camps. Early mining settlements were camps more than towns, with accommodations consisting primarily of tents, and later followed by frame rooming houses and roughly constructed dining areas. Soon more permanent dwellings, company stores, and other businesses replaced these temporary quarters.<sup>3</sup> Construction was necessary because, for the most part, the central Appalachian bituminous coal mines were opening at remote, sparsely populated sites. There were no towns nearby with readily available labor or lodging for laborers.<sup>4</sup>

Crandall Shifflett has identified three stages in the life of the company towns. The first stage, lasting from the late 1890s until about World War I, was a pioneer or frontier phase. During this phase, coal and steel companies began construction of rough towns with the barest of housing and service infrastructure.<sup>5</sup> A second, paternalistic phase lasted from World War I until the Great Depression. Companies with the wherewithal invested in quality-of-life improvements such as paved streets, sanitary sewer systems, municipal water systems, health care and recreational facilities, company stores, telephone systems, indoor plumbing, and schools. David Corbin argues that these investments were made to stave off the perceived threat of unionization and, perhaps worse, federal intervention through mandated welfare programs. If coal companies could get ahead of demands and choose what they believed would serve their needs and provide a measure of satisfaction for employees, they could mitigate demands from the unions and limit intervention by the government.<sup>6</sup> According to Corbin, in fewer than 2 percent of all coal towns, extensive investment by coal companies led to the development of “model coal towns.” As Jeremy Ball discusses in his study of a model company town in colonial Angola in this book, these communities had more in common with cosmopolitan urban centers than with rural coal camps. Although the amenities varied from town to town, they typically were planned communities that featured modern amenities and services. In providing for residents, these model towns had many types of entertainment and social venues, including swimming pools, theaters, hospitals, and many social organizations such as Masonic lodges, ladies’ auxiliaries, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, dance halls, and parks.<sup>7</sup>

The period from the mid-1930s until the closing of many coal towns in the mid-1950s was characterized by decline and urban decay. Large-scale investment in improvements in most coal towns ended as coal companies invested in machinery that could mine the coal faster and with fewer miners. Other reductions in demand for bituminous coal came as a result of changes in energy production and technology and because strikes by union miners made coal an unreliable resource. Hydroelectric dams increased their generating capacity between 1917 and 1927, further reducing the demand for coal. Trains began making the shift from coal-burning boilers to diesel fuel around this same time. As these improvements were made, there was no longer a compelling need for steel companies to continue in the coal business.<sup>8</sup> Because Inland Steel began their multi-million dollar investment in the town beginning in 1930, Wheelwright, Kentucky, was an anomaly in the midst of declining investment in the creation of model coal towns. When other coal companies were closing their towns, selling off workers' homes, and giving up paternalism in the form of infrastructure and services for workers as a management practice, Inland Steel was creating a model company town in Wheelwright. Contemporary observers recognized the exceptionality of this development in the context of Appalachia coal country. In the first of a series of articles on Appalachia, the noted *Chicago Daily Tribune* journalist Norma Lee Browning contrasted Wheelwright uniqueness in what the title characterized as a region living in the Middle Ages as follows:

The Kentucky Appalachian area cannot be considered pleasing to the eye. It is a region of shabby "coal camps" as the mining settlements are still called [with rare exceptions such as Chicago's Inland Steel mining village at Wheelwright], a hilly land of coal darkened creeks, sooty coal tipples, mud and clay deep rutted "roads" that can be traveled along by jeep or horseback.<sup>9</sup>

In a 2007 interview, E. Minor Pace, the last general manager for coal properties in Wheelwright and later executive vice president at Inland Steel Company, indicated that the company made the investment to secure a needed supply of metallurgical coal for their steel production facility. In the early twentieth century, the company engaged in vertical integration, gaining control over sources of raw materials; the acquisition of Wheelwright was just another step along the path to self-sufficiency.<sup>10</sup> The generous investment in quality-of-life improvements was also a continuation of long-standing company management philosophy. According to Pace, the company viewed the investment as a way of maximizing profitability. The expectation was that happy employees were more productive on the job and less likely to leave, thus reducing the attendant cost of turnover.

### Mining Comes to Wheelwright—Then Leaves

Stimulated by World War I, the need for coal for steel and energy production made it possible to extract coal in more remote areas. Access and transportation, however, had to be resolved before full mining operations could start. The Long Fork Railway Company, in a cooperative agreement with the Baltimore and Ohio Railway and the Elk Horn Coal Company, began construction of a 26-mile rail line extending from Martin, Kentucky, 23 miles north of Otter Creek, the area that would become Wheelwright, into Weeksbury, about 3 miles to the south. That same year, an agent for Elk Horn Coal Company approached the families living on Otter Creek with an offer of 20 dollars an acre for their land, in an effort to combine surface holdings with the mineral rights they already held. The families living in the area accepted the offer, selling some 350 acres of land to the coal company.<sup>11</sup> Elk Horn Coal Company began building a rough camp on Otter Creek and started to work the mine. Lee Hall, Sr., and Will Branham both owned small stores in the Otter Creek settlement. After the sale, they moved their stores to the fringes of town (to Hall Hollow and Branham Hollow, respectively). These stores filled the early shopping needs of the community and continued in business even after the company store opened in town.

Most of the men in the original families who settled on Otter Creek were able to secure work in the mine if they wanted. However, the company still had to recruit more men to have an adequate labor force.<sup>12</sup> The company erected tents to house these early workers. By the end of 1916 the first portal into the hillside that would become known as 79 Hill was opened. Within a year, the company was actively recruiting many laborers to work in the mine and had begun constructing permanent facilities. The transformation of this farming area into a mining camp and later a company town changed Otter Creek into Wheelwright, named for Jere Hungerford Wheelwright, an executive at Consolidation Coal Company.<sup>13</sup> Tents gave way to simple, floorless frame shacks with building paper lining the inside of the walls. Houses and commercial structures were built using native timber harvested from the surrounding hillsides and processed in the camp. Other construction materials were hauled by ox-drawn carts across the mountains from the nearest rail station, approximately 18 miles away. The company continued investing in the community, building more houses and improving the original shacks to add floors and finished walls of plaster or lath and plaster. Limited electric service was available at the houses. Water was drawn from wells with hand pumps. Lacking a sanitary sewer system, each home also had a privy for the family to use. Elk Horn Coal also constructed commercial facilities to provide goods

and services that would be needed by the miners arriving to work in the town, including a company store, offices, and boarding houses.<sup>14</sup>

Coal miners constituted a diverse labor force. African Americans were present since the early years of mining. Unlike industrial communities in the rest of the country and unlike company towns in other segregated societies, in Wheelwright black and white laborers worked alongside each other. Required by state law, separation outside the workplace was enforced in Wheelwright. There were separate church and school facilities, as well as separate soda fountains and pool rooms. Entertainment facilities—the theater, and later, the swimming pool, and the bowling alley—either provided separate service areas or white-only services through the early decades of operation. Integration in public facilities and schools had to wait until the 1950s. Interviews with African American workers, however, indicate the existence of similar opportunities and equal pay in the workplace. The United Mine Workers of America began representing workers in the Wheelwright mines about the time the company was sold by Elk Horn Coal Company. Inland Steel Company, with its base in Chicago, also did not have entrenched policies affecting African Americans in the workplace. Although the town was held accountable for upholding state law, opportunities were provided where possible. Henry Armour, an African American miner who came to Wheelwright in 1923 and retired in 1962, spoke of being one of the first men trained on new equipment that was brought into the mine. According to a government report, he was the highest paid miner in the Wheelwright mine in 1945.<sup>15</sup> Richard Watts, another African American miner who worked in the Wheelwright mine, became the first mine superintendant of color in town and, later, the first African American mine inspector for the State of Kentucky.

By 1920, Wheelwright was beginning to look more like a town than a camp. A post office, company store, office building, hotel, boarding houses, churches, an elementary school, and other trappings of a thriving community were operating in town. The community continued with few additional improvements through much of the 1920s. For reasons not in the record, Elk Horn Coal began looking for a buyer for their Wheelwright operations in 1929. Perhaps the company experienced economic problems related to the stock market crash in October of that year, or maybe the onset of the Great Depression led them to sell. Looking to secure a stable supply of coal for their steel-making operations, Chicago-based Inland Steel purchased Wheelwright from Elk Horn Coal in April 1930. While our knowledge of Elk Horn-era Wheelwright is sparse, one thread of consistency in the transition from Elk Horn to Inland Steel was the presence of E. R. “Jack” Price. Elk Horn hired Price in 1926, fresh from being fired from the Consolidation Coal mine in Van Lear, Kentucky, to manage their Wheelwright operation.<sup>16</sup> His employment in the town continued for nearly three decades. Under the ownership of



Inland Steel, and more particularly under Price's watchful supervision, conditions changed dramatically for the mine and the company town residents.

Inland Steel faced many challenges in renovating Wheelwright. The town it purchased from Elk Horn Coal Company was typical of the Central Appalachian coal camps at that time.<sup>17</sup> Amenities such as running water, flush toilets, tubs or showers for bathing, sanitary sewer systems, paved streets, and streetlights did not exist.<sup>18</sup> Paul Osborne, a former resident, put it best when he said: "It was just another grimy, dirty coal town. You can travel all over Kentucky and West Virginia and if you've seen one you've seen them all . . . . But when Inland got it they turned it all around."<sup>19</sup> When Inland Steel purchased the coal camp, they closed the mine to modernize operations, demolished the original wood tipple and constructed a new one of steel, and initiated renovations in the shop. Investments in the community extended well beyond safety and mine modernization.

Led by Jack Price, Inland Steel management also demonstrated a keen interest in the appearance of Wheelwright and the provision of amenities for its employees. Shortly after taking possession of the community, the company put men to work cleaning the town—clearing brush, removing debris from the streams, cleaning around the houses. Miners who lived in company houses were told to clean their yards, cut the grass, and make the properties look presentable. For those who chose not to do so, the company sent crews to do the work and then billed the miners.<sup>20</sup> Subsequently, the company installed streetlights, paved the streets, and constructed sidewalks where needed. Improvements in housing and commercial facilities necessitated the expansion of the utility infrastructure, including work on gas and water lines, and solid waste disposal.<sup>21</sup>

Following the community modernization and improvement efforts initiated in the 1930s, Inland Steel began addressing shortcomings in employee lodging. In 1940 and 1941, the company renovated all the houses. These changes included installation of kitchen sinks, flush toilets, water heaters, and natural gas for heating and cooking. Along with improving the living conditions for its employees, the company initiatives had clear aesthetic benefits. Replacing the wood- and coal-burning stoves with gas appliances eliminated the coal and ash piles found in the residents' yards. Similarly, the installation of indoor plumbing led to the demolition of hundreds of privies, eliminating the unsightly, foul-smelling structures from the yards. Later, houses were underpinned with brick to close up the crawl spaces underneath. Because radio ownership in the community was widespread, the company also installed radio antennas under the eaves of the company houses to improve reception. In the early 1950s, as local interest in television programming became apparent, the company also installed a central antenna and ran television lines to the homes in town.<sup>22</sup>

In addition to improving workers' families' living conditions, Inland Steel was also active in expansion of education for their children. Work began in the early 1930s with a substantial expansion at the high school and the elementary school for white students. In 1937, a school was constructed in Hall Hollow to accommodate the public education of African American children. Prior to completion of this facility, these students attended classes held in a neighborhood church.<sup>23</sup> Palmer Dunbar School also provided, for the first time, high school classes for African American students. Classes at the church, where black children had previously attended school, ended after eighth grade.<sup>24</sup> Students who wanted to attend high school had to stay with relatives or friends in communities that provided high schools for African American children, such as Williamson, West Virginia, approximately 50 miles away.

Along with remodeling the employees' housing and educational facilities, Inland Steel launched a major renovation of the city's commercial district and social spaces (see figure 9.1). Throughout the area, the company erected brick



**Figure 9.1** Elevated View of Wheelwright's Commercial District, 1946.

Photograph by Russell Lee, Records of the Solid Fuels Administration for War, 1937–1948. National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

facades around many building exteriors to create a Colonial Williamsburg theme. The aesthetic choice of an idealized community in the preindustrial past is very telling of management's desire to create a model town that would reinforce communal values. Such efforts were common in other American company towns, factory towns, and planned communities—from Indian Hill, in Massachusetts, to Tyrone, in New Mexico.<sup>25</sup> As Marynel Ryan Van Zee's study of the German town of Hellerau in this book shows, preindustrial aesthetics were also common in European company towns at the turn of the twentieth century. In Wheelwright, the community building also underwent a complete interior redesign, adding a soda fountain, restaurant, barbershop, and post office. It also added an upper floor with a fully equipped kitchen to accommodate company and civic club meetings and frequent community and school dances, thereby making it a center for social gathering for residents of all ages. While there is no record of what the building contained prior to the renovation, interviews with early residents of the town are clear that the upper banquet/dance/meeting room was new to the town. In the first few years after construction, the facilities added served a predominantly white clientele. The "colored" fountain and pool room were located across the street, just north of this building. Barber facilities for African American men were located in the boarding house in Hall Hollow; this boarding house also sold drinks and sandwiches to area residents.<sup>26</sup> Rather than renovate the clubhouse, located across the street from the community building, the company built a new one that opened in 1941 that included boarding and hotel facilities, bowling alley, dry goods store, restaurant, beauty shop, and library.<sup>27</sup> Finally, Inland Steel also subsidized improvements in the community's church, a focal point in the town's religious and social life. Constructed early in Elk Horn Coal Company's tenure in Wheelwright, the original church was shared by members of different religious denominations, including Methodists, Baptists, and Pentecostals. It later became a Methodist church after other congregations constructed their own churches in the area. Several people interviewed about the town remembered that Alice Jean Gibson, wife of the company engineer Raymond Gibson, played the organ every evening at six o'clock. Speakers in the church broadcast the music loudly enough to be heard throughout the town.<sup>28</sup>

The company town also provided extensive opportunities for employees to engage in recreational opportunities in town. Between 1940 and 1943, the company built an Olympic-size swimming pool with an adjacent playground and lighted tennis courts at the north end of town. Just east of the swimming pool, the company constructed a nine-hole golf course in what was then known as Garbage Hollow, so named because it was where trash

and refuse from the privies had been dumped from the town's earliest days under Elk Horn Coal Company.

Improvements and modernization were also pursued for the general health of the town's residents. Under Elk Horn, and in the early days under Inland Steel, illnesses common in the coal camps plagued Wheelwright. Dysentery, typhoid, and tuberculosis were common where communities lacked sanitation systems. These conditions also contributed to a high infant mortality rate in Wheelwright and throughout the region. Many of the company's early changes and improvements to the infrastructure had the added benefit of improving sanitary conditions and overall health in the community. In 1930, the existing clinic provided basic services for illness and injury. However, it was not equipped to handle diagnostics, preventive medicine, or major illness or injury. Inland Steel expanded the old clinic, adding a laboratory and x-ray services, and developed it into a small hospital. Rather than existing solely to treat mining-related injuries, the hospital provided a broad range of medical services and support to the families of the miners. Among its areas of emphasis were preventative health care and nutrition. Indeed, the company's commitment to these endeavors even extended to hiring a nutrition consultant who offered information about healthier eating, food preparation, and kitchen sanitation to the company town women.<sup>29</sup>

When all the efforts that Inland Steel made toward urban and housing improvements in the company town are considered, it seems almost incomprehensible that such investments were made during the era from the early days of the Great Depression through World War II. There was no legal necessity for the expenditures, and during the early 1930s, they were not necessary in order to attract workers. While some former residents have expressed the belief that the company did this because it cared about the people, others are more pragmatic and acknowledge that it was simply good for business at the time. Many of the town's residents came to believe that the company wanted to make Wheelwright into a special place. Perhaps one reason so many of those interviewed over the years believed so strongly both in the company's concern for them and in the altruism behind the actions was the concerted efforts that the company management made toward creating a community. In a May 1946 *Chicago Daily Tribune* article that praised Inland Steel's achievement in creating a model corporate town that contrasted with most mining towns in Appalachia, Jack Price made it clear that workers' welfare was directly connected with productivity:

“Does it pay the company to build a model community like this?” Price was asked. . . .

“The benefits are intangible, but nevertheless real,” Price said. “We expect to be here producing coal for 50 or 60 years more.

“We want our people to be happy. That’s why we keep improving the houses. Those homes are better now than 16 years ago, when many of them were first built.”<sup>30</sup>

When Inland Steel sold the company town to Island Creek Coal Company in 1966, many people who lived there said they had no advance notice of the pending departure or inkling that major changes were afoot. Years later, the former manager E. Minor Pace explained the sale as a purely business decision made to ensure the company’s fiscal health. Technological changes in steel production, coupled with changes in mining technology, transportation costs, and economic necessity, made the cost of maintaining entire towns uneconomical. Inland Steel Company owned rights to coal lands near Mount Vernon, Illinois. While the quality of the coal was not as high as found in Wheelwright, it was adequate for the company, for it used modern technology. Changes in mining methods, eliminating much of the labor-intensive manual work, reduced the number of men needed to mine coal to the point that companies no longer needed to attract large numbers of workers to nice towns. Wheelwright no longer served a purpose for the company. The sale, which became official at the beginning of 1966, signaled the end of life in Wheelwright for many. Some moved to Illinois to work in Inland Steel Company’s mining operations near Mount Vernon. Others remained behind in the hope of continuing the lives they had come to know in the community they helped to build. Few of those who remained, however, had any idea of what was to come in the following months and years. Paternalism, and the dependence it bred, left a community ill-prepared to fend for itself.

Island Creek Coal Company became owner of all the Inland Steel real estate, mineral rights, and processing facilities in Floyd, Pike, and Knott counties.<sup>31</sup> In the hope of allaying residents’ fears, Island Creek sent letters assuring the workers of their continued employment in the mine. Also, as a term of the contract, Inland Steel agreed to purchase a substantial portion of the coal mined in Wheelwright for several years after the sale, giving the company a certain market for their coal. Island Creek also assured residents of their intent to maintain the company store, hospital, and office facilities in the town. Despite these assurances, however, Island Creek was not in business to run a town. In November 1966, the company sold everything except the coal mining operation and the golf course to Mountain Investment.<sup>32</sup> The *New York Times* reported the end of an era “of benevolent—and sometimes not so benevolent paternalism that [had] been dying in the Kentucky coal fields for two decades.” “In one stroke,” the article continued, “a model of

the corporate welfare state was thrust into the competitive world.”<sup>33</sup> The end of the corporate town filled residents with anxiety. Vern Bailey, a miner and the chairman of the local council, expressed it clearly: “We have always in the past had a strong feeling of certainty about the company and about this town. Now, we just don’t know.”<sup>34</sup>

From 1966 through the 1970s, the properties deteriorated because of neglect and vandalism. It was common for Mountain Investments’ workers to strip water heaters, appliances, windows, even electrical wiring to repair other homes in town. As the properties deteriorated, many residents moved out, either to find work or to find housing that was more suitable. New people, seeking cheap housing, moved in. Rents, which had steadily increased since Mountain Investment purchased the town in 1966, declined in the 1970s. Advancing deterioration of the homes decreased their appeal and value to potential renters and forced the company to reduce rents to prevent higher vacancy rates.<sup>35</sup> Conditions were no better for the commercial properties than they were for the residences. Despite having an inventory of well-constructed and attractive commercial properties in Wheelwright, Mountain Investment was unsuccessful at either attracting or retaining business. It is unclear whether the company was seeking to recoup losses it was incurring in other areas of the town, overestimated the value or attraction of the locale for these potential investors, or was intent on further devaluing its investment for some reason. What is clear is that in the thirteen years it owned the community, the company was unsuccessful in attracting commercial investors. Of the few buildings sold by Mountain Investment, none were commercial structures. As the city and services crumbled around them, residents were hard-pressed to find any advantages in remaining. Cheap housing aside, there was little left to encourage residents’ belief that the new owners cared for them or their well-being. The one constant for the town since it became a coal camp was work—regardless of whether they were working for Elk Horn Coal Company or Inland Steel Company, the miners had jobs. Even this certainty was lost in the transition to Island Creek. For the miners, the employment situation was no better than the town’s living conditions. Island Creek did not maintain regular operating schedules in town during its time there, and despite broadly announced intentions of investing nearly 1 million dollars in mine improvements in 1969, by May 1970, mining operations had ceased.<sup>36</sup>

Mountain Investment retained ownership of the town for fourteen years, keeping it an “owned” town much longer than was usually seen in the Appalachian coal fields. Because of this outside ownership, the town had little control over utilities maintenance, law enforcement, tax collection, or any other aspect of management of the town. The city commission was powerless

in the face of the company's refusal to improve conditions for residents. It would be a dozen years after mining ended before the state and federal government came to the aid of the town and helped them to wrest ownership from the hands of Mountain Investment and begin the slow process of achieving autonomy.

Today, the elected officials struggle with the same challenges that face so many other former coal camps—lack of jobs, lack of opportunities, and lack of resources to attract either jobs or opportunities for the residents. Most of the town's residents live in poverty, and nearly all the children are eligible for free meals at the local schools. Some efforts toward preservation and development of a heritage tourism industry have been made over the years, but little progress resulted. With so many critical needs in the community, efforts that seem to focus backward are deemed irrelevant. For local residents, there is little time or, for most, patience with efforts to raise money to fund projects that commemorate the town's history. Wheelwright's commercial district was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1982, but most of the buildings that comprised the district have been torn down or burned. A historical society has formed on at least two occasions, but the only tangible results of those efforts are a few collected stories and a volunteer-run public library. Few current residents are members, and fewer still hold out any hope of meaningful preservation or restoration efforts. This situation contrasts with the interest in the town's past among the former company town residents. Membership in the organization formed in 2007 is almost entirely drawn from those who left when the town was still intact. Former residents have contributed to keeping the memory of the long-gone company town in other ways too, namely through yearly reunions that celebrate in almost idyllic terms a place and time that is no more.

### **Remembrance and Reunion**

A group of former Wheelwright residents initiated what became an annual reunion in 1989. Although none of them discuss timing as related to any key events, it is significant that the first reunion was held nearly twenty-five years after Inland Steel sold its company town. Whether conscious or not, the approach of a major anniversary of the company's departure must be considered as a factor in the creation of this event. The Wheelwright reunion draws many people to Lexington, Kentucky, some 150 miles from Wheelwright. There are many reasons why the reunion is not held in Wheelwright; perhaps the most important of these is that Wheelwright cannot accommodate the large numbers of people who attend the reunion. In contrast to the heyday of the company town, today there is no hotel, no conference center, and

no meeting facility in the town. Lexington has the nearest major airport, and that is where most of the attendees who fly in arrive. They travel from across the nation—from Maine, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Texas, Kentucky, and elsewhere. More than 500 people attended the first reunion. Over the years, attendance grew, exceeding 1,000 at its height. It is their shared identity, one reinforced through the retelling of the old stories, sharing of old photographs, and choice—their choice to continue to work to preserve their idealized memories of the community—that continues to draw them, year after year, to the gathering. Storytelling occurs across generations, as parents share stories with children and grandchildren. In her study of Britannia Beach, British Columbia, in this volume, Katharine Rollwagen refers to the importance of “constructing and sustaining social bonds” as an important factor in developing a sense of community identity. In replaying this annual rite of reenactment, the members of this community of remembrance nurture the bonds that hold them together. Their shared experience in the former company town and their ongoing shared experiences at the reunions have cemented this community as surely as a geographical co-location did for the workers Rollwagen writes about.

The people who attend this reunion represent a broad socioeconomic spectrum within today’s society—retirees, nurses, teachers, doctors, lawyers, housewives, engineers, laborers, secretaries, executives—but a much narrower group when defined within their role or status in the Wheelwright of the mining years. For the most part, they are the children, wives, or widows of miners; they are engineers or other above-ground laborers and their wives and children; and, with very few exceptions, they are white. They are also predominantly people who moved from Wheelwright before conditions deteriorated in the late 1960s and 1970s. Their children and grandchildren accompany many of the attendees, ranging in age from sixties to eighties. Few coal miners attend the reunion. Available information does not indicate if they were more involved in early reunions or if they have always been under-represented. Underground coal mining was and is a dangerous profession, and dying young is an all too frequent occurrence. Mine accidents resulting from roof falls, equipment failures, lack of appropriate safety measures, and fire and explosions were, and are, daily risks faced by those who work underground. Silicosis and black lung, health conditions afflicting those who work underground for many years, lead to disability, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and death. Several of the reunion attendees tell the stories of their fathers’ dying in the mines or from mining-related diseases or accidents. Mary Lamm’s family left Wheelwright at the end of the school year after her father was killed in a rock fall. Jean Terry Honeycutt had to leave town as a young girl after her father died of a heart attack. Other attendees have similar



stories and have experienced similar losses. The company policy toward these families was simple: someone in the household had to be on the company payroll in order for the family to live in town. When the fathers died, the families had to move out of town if no others worked for the company. With just over 400 residences in town, there were not enough homes for all the miners and their families. Although employment numbers fluctuated, at its height Inland Steel had over 2,400 employees in the town. Without an employee-tenant, there was no economic justification to allow the family to continue living there. Despite having to move, however, these former residents do not hold any animosity toward either the coal company or its managers. They gather, along with those who left for work, school, military service, or other reasons, to celebrate their shared history in Wheelwright. Although most of the management representing Inland Steel in Wheelwright had died by the time the reunions began, it is noteworthy that the last remaining member of that group, E. Minor Pace, did not attend the reunion. Although aware of the reunion and known by at least some of those who attend, it was but one step in a long career with Inland Steel. When he spoke of living in the town, his fondness for the place was evident. Pace, who died in January 2011, recalled:

It was just like a tourism town. Had everything, you know. That's one thing that Inland tried to do. They tried to provide anything that you could find in any other town. We had some of the first facilities of any towns in that area. We had the first automatic telephone put in. We had TV first.<sup>37</sup>

Few current Wheelwright residents attend the reunion. As discussed earlier, many of the town's current residents did not live there when it was owned by Inland Steel and, therefore, do not share in the culture celebrated by attendees. Their experience, like my own as a participant observer, is what they live vicariously through the stories shared by those who did live in the town during its heyday.

Attendees participate in familiar activities that in part recreate social life in the old Wheelwright—they dance, swim, golf, and congregate; a ladies' luncheon is often held on Thursday, a picnic on Saturday; they spend days and evenings lounging on the hotel patio and recalling evenings spent with neighbors, retelling old stories, and sharing new ones; many bring photographs and other memorabilia. Reunions are informal, without an established beginning or end. Those who attend come to Lexington as soon as they can and remain until they must leave. Planned events do not begin until Thursday, but that does not deter early arrivals from making use of the hotel patio as a gathering spot. For those who live in and around Lexington, the hotel patio becomes a home away from home for the week; while they usually return home to sleep,

morning finds them irresistibly drawn back again. New arrivals are greeted like family, with each new arrival bringing fresh news of others. Sometimes that news is of illnesses or death, sometimes of new grandchildren or great-grandchildren. Always, it is a time to catch up on news from the past year. Many of the former residents share stories of the town being like family. They tell stories of visiting each other's homes and of having backyard gatherings, cookouts, and just simple time together. At the reunion, there is always a crowd on the hotel patio. Coolers of chilled drinks, homemade wine, and snacks are freely shared as attendees look at old photographs, mementos, or simply swap familiar stories with others. In this retelling, in the "Do you remember . . .?" or "What was the name of . . .?" they both relate stories and recall them to mind, keeping them alive and growing through the act of sharing.

They talk about the dances in the community hall, where many of their parents met and many more found romantic interests. Beecher and Anne Scutchfield met at a dance; Grace Porter, who began working at the company store at age sixteen and retired after thirty-four years with the company, met her husband there as well. In casual conversations, Douglas Scutchfield and Grace Porter reminisced about live bands and of standing outside on the balcony overlooking the street and listening to music and chatting up members of the opposite sex.<sup>38</sup> At the reunion, two nights are dedicated to dancing—or at least sitting in the lounge, where either a disk jockey or a band provides music. The music is different, hailing to their adult years outside Wheelwright rather than tunes they would have heard at the dances in town—1970s and 1980s rock, R&B, even some hip-hop music make their way into the celebration; there is little hint of music that would have been popular in the 1940s, 1950s, or 1960s. There is a core group who always dance, and as an observer it is easy to imagine them fifty years younger. There is little hint of aching joints or aging bodies; time has, for a while, rolled back to their younger days, and aging has no place in the moment. Women outnumber men on the dance floor, but this does not inhibit their sheer joy in being together. For the few men who dance, there is never any lack of partners.

A few of the men talk about the golf course, but most of those who attend do not seem to have the close association with that as they do with other amenities in town. The Elder brothers, whose father was a professional golf player in Wheelwright, spoke at length of the golf tournaments in town. Perhaps because of their father's involvement with the golf course, their recollections of this activity in town is most vivid; for the children of the coal miners, few talk about their own direct participation in the sport as a major component of their early lives. Most men do speak of having a golf course as

being a monumental achievement for a coal camp in the 1940s and 1950s, but not of using the facility. Contemporary observers agreed. A 1946 *Chicago Daily Tribune* article highlights the existence of the golf course and the fact that “every family in town is a member of the company golf club” as an illustration of the success of Wheelwright as a model community.<sup>39</sup> Two days of the week, a group of attendees, almost exclusively men, trek to a local golf course to play together.

The camaraderie extends into Saturday, through the reunion picnic. Many people are unable to spend several days in Lexington, so the largest crowd at the reunion gathers for a few hours to participate in a potluck feast. The picnic is a time for family, unlike many of the other activities, which are geared more toward adults. The picnic draws in families—attendees bring children and grandchildren to show off, to share a day in the sun, and to share in the sense of community. They gather mid-morning and are gone by early afternoon, but the intervening hours are filled with the sounds of laughter and of stories, always stories. Over platters of fried chicken, macaroni salad, baked beans, chicken and dumplings, and endless desserts, attendees continue with the hotel patio discussions and catch up with those who have driven in for the day. The feel is that of a multigenerational family reunion of far-flung relatives. In the end, locals drive home and some of those from out of town start planning their trek home the next day. It is the culmination of the reunion—the beginning for some, the end for others. Others plan visits with each other or with family members still in the area. Many take time to visit cemeteries to decorate graves of family members. The reunion is waning, but not done yet. As at the beginning, when people drift into town a few at a time, they will flow out at the same pace. There is no declared end, simply a time when no one is left to gather on the patio in remembrance of their common home.

Because the reunion has been running continuously for more than twenty years, it has developed a pattern of events that, taken together, form the basis of new tradition. Among these are the hotel where they meet, logistical coordination with the hotel and park, and the picnic pavilion at Jacobson Park. These new traditions have accomplished a level of success that would not have been possible in their absence. There is no coordinated effort to send out invitations, to ensure everyone knows the details of the reunion. Rather, in more than twenty years of annual gathering, word of mouth brings in newcomers and ritual brings those who may have missed a year or more. They can show up and be assured that others will join them because this is where attendees gather.

Mary Lamm has been at all but one of the reunions. She and I discussed past attendance at the reunion picnic in 2010. She revealed that the event

was at its height when families used it for family gatherings; members who had scattered across the country for work and family would reconnect at this reunion in Lexington. It is the one time of year when they can all be together. Other attendees at the 2010 reunion spoke of the same phenomenon—of only having the whole family together at the reunion. They also spoke of the reunion as a gathering of extended family—sharing that common home of Wheelwright made them family. One man at the 2010 reunion bemoaned the loss of connection and sense of family that came about after the company left. Like others, he recalled living in Wheelwright as living with a big family. Several people use the same analogy of an extended family encompassing the community when they speak of living in Wheelwright, as well as of the reunion group.

Many attendees have expressed concern about the future and about whether their traditions and memories will live on in the next generation. There is almost a sense of mourning the loss, as if some recognize that their memories are what keep the idealized Wheelwright alive. Attendance has dwindled in recent years; several attendees mentioned failing health and financial setbacks due to the recent economic crises; others noted the number of attendees who have passed away. They are well aware of the concepts discussed by Agnes Heller when she wrote, “Cultural memory constructs and maintains identity. As long as a group of people maintains and cultivates a common cultural memory, the group continues to exist . . . . Whenever cultural memory is lost, a group of people disappears, irrespective of their recorded history or lack thereof.”<sup>40</sup> When they are all gone, when the last of the people who experienced Wheelwright under Inland Steel have passed away, will it be the end of the legend? The story of Camelot is the story of the rise and collapse of a civilization. So too is the story of Wheelwright. It came to being, became an idealized society where the quality of life and standards for living exceeded those of most other Appalachian coal towns of the day, and, in the absence of a benevolent ruler, came to an end. Yet, like Camelot, the stories will keep the legend alive. So long as there are those who remember and continue to share the wonder of their time in this place, it will live on. When they are gone, when the stories have been forgotten, then their legendary community will cease to exist.

## Conclusion

In his study of memory, history, and the uses of the past, David Lowenthal wrote: “Memory and history are processes of insight; each involves components of the other, and their boundaries are shadowy. Yet memory and history are normally and justifiably distinguished: memory is an inescapable

and prima-facie indubitable; history is contingent and empirically testable.”<sup>41</sup> In the process of constructing the story of Wheelwright, I have used archival records and personal narratives. The records provided clues to how and when events occurred, who was involved, and, to a limited extent, why management of the companies involved in running the town made the decisions they did. Personal stories brought the town as it existed mid-century to life. Even when stories contradicted documented facts, as often was the case, they provided a look inside the lives of those affected by company policies and actions. The accuracy or inaccuracy of those memories is less important than the association that these former residents hold between Inland Steel and the idealized lives they remember because of perceived company concern for their well-being and quality of life. While memories are fallible, they are reliable markers of the human experience. As Alessandro Portelli states:

The discrepancy between fact and memory ultimately enhances the value of the oral sources as historical documents. It is not caused by faulty recollections (some of the motifs and symbols found in oral narratives were already present in embryo in coeval written sources), but actively and creatively generated by memory and imagination in an effort to make sense of crucial events and of history in general. . . . Beyond the event as such, the real and significant historical fact which these narratives highlight is the memory itself.<sup>42</sup>

Wheelwright, Kentucky, experienced what former residents perceive of as a “golden age,” resulting from massive investments by Inland Steel Company, an age that holds a significant role in the lives of hundreds of people who experienced it firsthand. More than fifty-five years after they sold the town, the company and its first town manager, Edwin R. “Jack” Price, are still recalled as heroes for creating—even if only briefly—a community that continues to live on in the hearts and lives of those who called Wheelwright home.

For its former residents, Wheelwright, as run by Inland Steel Company, was an almost magical place. Crossing boundaries of race, age, and gender, the idea of Wheelwright became the measure by which all that came after was judged. Although Raymond Gibson, an engineer for Inland Steel, is credited with making the first comparison of Wheelwright with the legendary Camelot, the comparison has since found its way into the lexicon of Wheelwright narratives.<sup>43</sup> For the people who experienced the changes wrought by Inland Steel, particularly those who were younger—children, teenagers, or young adults—the town is spoken of as an almost magical place. Christopher Post indicates that these associations by the young are to be expected. Because children are most involved in their current experiences rather than with what has been or is to come, they most quickly attach

to place.<sup>44</sup> And, whether intentional or not, Inland Steel was creating the foundation of placemaking for their employees and families. That the company went so far in investing in quality-of-life improvements indicates there were more important factors to the company than the shortsighted pursuit of maximum profits with minimum investment. The level of investment, and interaction of residents with these many amenities, created an overwhelming experience that continues to influence their lives decades later. Post writes of a similar experience in the town of Sunflower, Kansas, which “coalesced to overwhelm residents and made Sunflower a special place to them.”<sup>45</sup>

In collecting the varied stories of Wheelwright, both historical documents and personal narratives became parts of the whole patchwork story of the town, each providing substance, texture, and the threads to bind the whole together. Memory, even flawed or inaccurate memory, helps to explain the attitudes toward the community and the shared sense of identity held by those who were fortunate enough to live there during the Inland Steel years. Personal accounts of experienced events are vital to reconstructing a history of the near past, but those accounts are colored by experiences and distance. Each reflects one side of a story that has many—one perspective over another. In the retelling, and in the creation of written narratives, these stories become a fundamental component of the identity of the people telling them.<sup>46</sup> The present never seems as meaningful or important when lived as it will in retrospect. With looking back comes an almost inevitable wistfulness for times unspoiled by modernity and adult responsibilities. It is a sense of nostalgia for a time that was, perhaps, never as wonderful as remembered; yet it remains a sentimental and cherished place to which one may wish to return—perhaps not a return to the exact place in time as it existed, but how it exists in memory, cleansed of imperfections and failures.

In his 1953 novel, *The Go-Between*, L. P. Hartley opens with perhaps the most worn phrase used by historians. He writes, “The past is a foreign country: they do things differently there.”<sup>47</sup> Remarking on this phenomenon, Robert Archibald writes, “The experiences of past and future are so vastly different as to make consensus impossible . . . . To be from a different time is to be from a different place.”<sup>48</sup> On the same topic, Peter Howard claims, “Cultural heritage is inevitably concerned with age, and people of different ages inevitably portray different attitudes.”<sup>49</sup> The Wheelwright of the 1940s into the mid-1960s was a different place from the town today—it was a place where men worked hard and their families enjoyed the enchantment of their utopian community as envisioned by Jack Price. Stories of the town’s golden age serve as a constant reminder of what was, and what can never be again. For those who remain in the town, particularly those who came after 1966, the community celebrated in stories is as much fairy tale as the literary Camelot.

## Notes

1. Benita Riley, interview with Lisa Perry, Prestonsburg, Kentucky, July 14, 2007.
2. David Corbin, *Life, Work, and Rebellion in the Coal Fields: The Southern West Virginia Miners, 1880–1922* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981), xi.
3. *Ibid.*, 35.
4. *Ibid.*, 1, 8, 62–3; Crandall Shifflett, *Coal Towns: Life, Work, and Culture in Company Towns of Southern Appalachia, 1880–1960* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1991), 34–5; Stephen Clark King, *Wheelwright, Kentucky: Community in Transition* (Lexington, KY: Appalachian Center of University of Kentucky, 1982), 21.
5. Shifflett, *Coal Towns*, 47–8.
6. *Ibid.*, 117–18; Corbin, *Life, Work, and Rebellion*, xii, xiv.
7. George Torok, *A Guide to Historic Coal Towns of the Big Sandy River Valley* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2004), 70–7.
8. Shifflett, *Coal Towns*, 199–212.
9. Norma Lee Browning, “A Trip to Appalachia: Visit to Middle Ages,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, May 5, 1979, 4.
10. Vertical integration is the business practice used to gain control over the supply chain necessary for the manufacture of a product or provision of a service. It limits company dependence on outside vendors for supplies and gives it more control over the cost of goods manufactured.
11. Robert Weise, *Grasping at Independence: Debt, Male Authority, and Mineral Rights in Appalachian Kentucky 1850–1915* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2001), 281.
12. Baltimore and Ohio Railway Company, *A Corporate History of Long Fork Railway Company as of June 30, 1918* (Baltimore: Baltimore and Ohio Railway Company, 1918); Chesapeake and Ohio Railway Company, *A Corporate History of Long Fork Railway Company for Period July 1, 1918 to December 31, 1927* (Richmond, VA: Chesapeake and Ohio Railway Company, 1927).
13. Years later, Jere Hungerford Wheelwright, Jr., son of the man whose name the town bears, published several novels. One of those novels, *Kentucky Stand*, published in 1951, focused on the Kentucky frontier.
14. Stephen Clark King, *Wheelwright, Kentucky: Community in Transition* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Appalachian Center, 1982), 20–2; Lewis Williams, *Transformation of a Coal Mining Town* (Chicago: Inland Steel Company, ca 1945), 10.
15. *A Medical Survey of the Bituminous-Coal Industry: Report of the Coal Mines Administration* (Washington, DC: Department of the Interior, Coal Mines Administration, 1947).
16. Burt Crisp, interview by Patti Rose, June 22, 1971, transcript, Appalachian Oral History Program, Alice Lloyd College, Pippa Passes, Kentucky.

17. Descriptions of the coal camps in the region, along with photographs, can be found in Lisa Perry, *Images of America: Floyd County* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2010). See also Torok, *A Guide to Historic Coal Towns*.
18. In the date for the 1940 Census of Population and Housing, for example, Table 5 for Kentucky shows the availability of private baths in the homes; as of that year, most of the homes in Wheelwright still did not have private baths. The same is true in the enumerated coal camps in Floyd County, as well as in nearby Perry, Knott, Pike, Letcher, and Johnson counties, all of which were home to many coal camps at that time. Information available at <http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/decennial/1940.html>.
19. Paul Osborne, interview with Stephen Clark King, November 6, 1980. Quoted in Stephen Clark King, *Wheelwright, Kentucky: Community in Transition* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Appalachian Center, 1982), 22.
20. King, *Wheelwright, Kentucky*, 26–39; Williams, *Transformation of a Coal Mining Town*, 17–21; “Wheelwright Coal Mine: The Making of a Community,” *Inland News*, May 1947, 1–4.
21. King, *Wheelwright, Kentucky*, 26–8; “Wheelwright Coal Mine: The Making of a Community,” *Inland News*, May 1947, 1–4.
22. King, *Wheelwright, Kentucky*, 26–39; Williams, *Transformation of a Coal Mining Town*, 17–21; “Wheelwright Coal Mine: The Making of a Community,” *Inland News*, May 1947, 1–4.
23. The practice of using community churches for educational purposes was a common arrangement, particularly in the South.
24. King, *Wheelwright, Kentucky*, 26–39; Williams, *Transformation of a Coal Mining Town*, 17–21; “Wheelwright Coal Mine: The Making of a Community,” *Inland News*, May 1947, 1–4; Box 20 Folder 1, Bath House Assessment, Wheelwright Collection, 1916–1979, 88M6, Special Collections, University of Kentucky Libraries, Lexington, Kentucky; Gwendolyn Brooks, interview by Lisa Perry, October 23, 2007.
25. Margaret Crawford, *Building the Workingman's Paradise: The Design of American Company Towns* (London: Verso, 1995), 78–80, 110–3, 126–35, 138–9. According to E. Minor Pace, the last general manager of the town for Inland Steel, the wife of Inland Steel Vice President Clarence Randall loved Williamsburg and influenced the redesign of the town to emulate that community.
26. King, *Wheelwright, Kentucky*, 29.
27. Huntington, West Virginia architect, Albert Tucker, designed most of the buildings and renovations in the commercial district of Wheelwright. His designs include the city hall, clubhouse, office, company store, engineering annex/doctor's offices, and warehouse, as well as the miner's bathhouse. The final cost for this construction was \$115,959.83; an additional \$14,967.50 was allocated for furniture and furnishings; linens, silverware, china, and glassware; carpets; and kitchen fixtures and equipment. Special Appropriations, Box 95, Folder 2, Wheelwright Collection, 1916–1979, 88M6, Special Collections, University of Kentucky Libraries, Lexington, Kentucky.



28. Raymond and Alice Jean Gibson interview by Lisa Perry and Mary Alice Lamm, Lexington, Kentucky, July 11, 2007; casual conversations with other former members of the community.
29. King, *Wheelwright, Kentucky*, 28; Williams, *Transformation of a Coal Mining Town*, 17–21.
30. Wayne Thomis, “Inland Provides a Model Town for its Miners,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, May 20, 1946, 5.
31. King, *Wheelwright, Kentucky*, 43. King provides the best information regarding the changes that took place in Wheelwright, particularly during the transition to Kentucky Housing and to self-governance and operation. Rather than offering a secondary interpretation of these events, he spent a substantial amount of time in the town, attending community and board meetings, and observing much of the transition firsthand. Although much is known about Island Creek Coal Company’s subsequent sale of the town’s real estate and infrastructure, due in large part to King’s documentation of later events, little is in the available records to indicate the purchase price or terms in the transaction between Island Creek and Inland Steel.
32. King, *Wheelwright, Kentucky*, 47.
33. Ben A. Franklin, “The Last Coal Town in Kentucky is Sold” *New York Times*, November 18, 1966, 45.
34. *Ibid.*
35. King, *Wheelwright, Kentucky*, 47–51; Box 363, folder 1, *Pike County News*, March 7, 1974, Wheelwright Collection, 1916–1979, 88M6, Special Collections, University of Kentucky Libraries, Lexington, Kentucky.
36. Box 363, File 1; *The Lexington Herald and The Lexington Leader*, March 15, 1969, Wheelwright Collection, 1916–1979, 88M6, Special Collections, University of Kentucky Libraries, Lexington, Kentucky; *Floyd County Times*, March 20, 1969; *Williamson Daily News*, March 13, 1969, 2; *The Herald-Dispatch and Advertiser* (Huntington), March 15, 1969; David Hawpe, “Agony at Wheelwright Kentucky: Noble Experiment is Dying with Town,” *Louisville Courier Journal*, May 31, 1970. Intermittent mining did take place briefly following the 1970 closure. According to an article in the February 24, 1972 *Wheelwright Statesman*, in 1972 there were 313 miners working for Island Creek in Wheelwright.
37. E. Minor Pace and Helen Pace, interview by Lisa Perry, Mount Vernon, Illinois, July 16, 2007.
38. F. Douglas Scutchfield, interview by Lisa Perry, Lexington, Kentucky, June 2007.; Grace Porter, interview by Lisa Perry, Mount Vernon, Illinois, July 16, 2007.
39. Thomis, “Island Provides a Model Town for Its Miners.”
40. Agnes Heller, “A Tentative Answer to the Question: Has Civil Society Cultural Memory?” *Social Research* 68, 4 (Winter 2001): 1031.
41. David Lowenthal, *The Past Is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 187.

42. Alessandro Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and other Tales* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), 26.
43. See Valerie Honeycutt-Spears, "Wonderful Wheelwright," *Lexington Herald-Leader*, April 24, 2006, A8.
44. Christopher Post, "The Making of a Federal Company Town: Sunflower Village, Kansas," in *Company Towns in the Americas: Landscape, Power, and Working-Class Communities*, ed. Oliver Dinius and Angela Vergara (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011), 127.
45. *Ibid.*, 128.
46. Peter Howard, *Heritage: Management, Interpretation, Identity* (London: Continuum, 2003), 147; Lowenthal, *The Past Is a Foreign Country*, 8, 187, 372; Dennis Walder, *Postcolonial Nostalgias: Writing, Representation, and Memory* (New York: Routledge, 2010) 7; James Wertsch, *Voices of Collective Remembering* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 8–9.
47. L. P. Hartley, *The Go-Between* (New York: Knopf, 1954 [1953]), 3.
48. Robert Archibald, *A Place to Remember: Using History to Build Community* (Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press, 1999). David Lowenthal also borrowed the phrase for his book *The Past is a Foreign Country*.
49. Howard, *Heritage*, 219.

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