

**Leonardo Alfredo
Muñoz-Morales**

Arquitecto, Estudiante de Magíster
Latinoamericano de Arquitectura
Universidad del Bío-Bío, Concepción, Chile
<https://orcid.org/0009-0005-4381-3479>
leofremm@gmail.com

**Jessica
Fuentealba-Quilodrán**

Doctora en Arquitectura, Académica,
Departamento de Diseño y Teoría de la
Arquitectura - Secretaría Académica Facultad de
Arquitectura Construcción y Diseño
Universidad del Bío-Bío
Concepción, Chile
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2267-5733>
jfuentealba@ubiobio.cl

Rubén Muñoz-Rodríguez

Doctor en Arquitectura, Académico
Departamento de Diseño y Teoría de la
Arquitectura, Universidad del Bío-Bío
Concepción, Chile
<https://orcid.org/0009-0005-4485-2234>
rmmr@ubiobio.cl

IMAGINARIES FROM THE POETRY BOOK CIPANGO BY THOMAS HARRIS. WASTELANDS, REPRESSION, AND VIOLENCE ON OROMPELLO STREET IN CONCEPCIÓN

IMAGINARIOS DEL POEMARIO CIPANGO DE
THOMAS HARRIS. ESPACIOS BALDÍOS, REPRESIÓN
Y VIOLENCIA EN LA CALLE OROMPELLO DE
CONCEPCIÓN

IMAGINÁRIOS DO LIVRO DE POEMAS CIPANGO
DE THOMAS HARRIS. ESPAÇOS BALDIOS,
REPRESSÃO E VIOLÊNCIA NA RUA OROMPELLO
EM CONCEPCIÓN.



Figure 0. Ruins of the Homecenter Sodimac store located on Orompello Street. Photo of the social uprising in Concepción, October-December 2019. Source: Courtesy of the author of the photograph, Nicolás Sáez.

RESUMEN

En este estudio se busca presentar los imaginarios de la calle Orompello de Concepción, Chile, descritos en el poemario Cipango (1992) de Thomas Harris. Para ello, se realizó un análisis cualitativo interpretativo del poemario por medio de fichas de lectura, se comparó con los hechos históricos acaecidos en el lugar y una entrevista semiestructurada con el autor para ahondar en ciertos significados presentes en el texto. Los resultados arrojaron que el espacio urbano y el habitar presentes en el relato, conforman una heterotopía transformada en distopía, situada en un contexto atemporal producto de una violencia primigenia que data de la época del descubrimiento de América y que es reproducida no solamente por la dictadura de Pinochet, sino también por el Estado en democracia. Los habitantes de este lugar se ven sumergidos en una atmósfera marginal de represión y devastación, transformando el lugar en un baldío. Estas características y sucesos hacen de calle Orompello un lugar inhabitable, pero lleno de significado.

Palabras clave: espacio urbano, hábitat, poesía, política urbana, marginalidad urbana

ABSTRACT

This study seeks to present the imaginaries of Orompello Street in Concepción, Chile, described in the poetry book Cipango (1992) by Thomas Harris. To do this, a qualitative interpretive analysis of the collection of poems was carried out through reading cards. It was compared with the historical events that occurred in the place and a semi-structured interview with the author to delve into certain meanings present in the text. The results showed that the urban space and the living present in the story make up a heterotopia transformed into dystopia, located in a timeless context, the product of primordial violence that dates back to the time of the discovery of America and that is reproduced not only by the dictatorship of Pinochet but also by the State in democracy. The inhabitants of this place are immersed in a marginal atmosphere of repression and devastation, transforming the place into a wasteland. These characteristics and events make Orompello Street an uninhabitable place but full of meaning.

Keywords: urban space, habitat, poetry, urban policy, urban marginality

RESUMO

Este estudo se propõe a apresentar os imaginários da rua Orompello, em Concepción, Chile, descritos no livro de poesias Cipango (1992), de Thomas Harris. Para tanto, foi realizada uma análise qualitativa interpretativa do livro de poemas por meio de fichas de leitura, uma comparação com fatos históricos ocorridos no local e uma entrevista semiestructurada com o autor, de forma a penetrar em determinados significados presentes no texto. Os resultados mostraram que o espaço urbano e o habitat presentes no relato compõem uma heterotopia transformada em distopia, situada em um contexto atemporal, fruto de uma violência primordial que data da época do descobrimento da América e é reproduzida não só pela ditadura de Pinochet, mas também pelo Estado na democracia. Os habitantes desse lugar estão submersos em uma atmosfera marginal de repressão e devastação, transformando o local em um terreno baldio. Essas características e eventos fazem da Rua Orompello um lugar inabitável, mas cheio de significado.

Palavras-chave: espaço urbano, habitat, poesia, política urbana, marginalidade urbana.

INTRODUCTION

Cipango (1992) is a Santiago Municipal Prize-winning work (1993) and a finalist in the Casa de las Américas prize (Cuba, 1992). It is one of the outstanding books of Thomas Harris, one of the few provincial writers to be part of the literary generation of the 1980s, comprising figures such as Enrique Lihn or Diamela Eltit. The book brings together four previous poetry collections: *La vida a veces toma la forma de los muros* (Harris, 1983), *Zonas de peligro* (Harris, 1985), *Diario de Navegación* (Harris, 1986), and *El último viaje* (Harris, 1987). Harris constructs an Imaginarium of the city of Concepción, in an era affected by the dictatorship in Chile (1973-1990), through a story crossed by references that place the city in a timeless context, nourished by historical and mythical references, along with fictions of cinema and literature.

The Concepción of *Cipango* comprises fictional spaces interspersed with places based on reality, highlighting Orompello Street, where much of the story is circumscribed. It is a vacant space, the protagonist of the *Penquista* prostitution activity and incidents such as the murder of a prostitute painted with gold, as in the scene of the movie *Goldfinger* (Hamilton, 1964), embodying the suffering of the author and society during the dictatorship.

This article analyzes the urban space and the living of the lyrical speakers and the characters on the Orompello Street of *Cipango* (1992). ■

BACKGROUND

“Orompello, Orompello.
The journey itself is absurd.
The last straw is someone who sticks to its moss,
from Concepción to the south of the stars.”
Gonzalo Rojas, Orompello, 1964.

1 This article is part of the thesis work of Leonardo Muñoz, a Latin American Master’s student in Architecture at the University of Bío-Bío (UBB), 2024.

2 Harris mentions the Revolutionary Left Movement, the poetry of Gonzalo Rojas, who cites Danger Zones as a preface, and the visit of the American poet Allen Ginsberg to the University of Concepción in 1960 (Muñoz, 2023) as triggers of this cultural revolution. The Chilean New Wave in the 1960s and the creation of the state publishing house Quimantu in 1971 can also be added to the movement.

Together with its literary environment, made up of poets such as Carlos Decap, Thomas Harris proposes to demystify Concepción of nostalgia for the cultural revolution times of the 1960s-1970s, **2** to “re-signify the city” (Harris, 2019, p. 166). It is appealing to violence as one of the Latin American topics (Dorfman, 1970), referring to historical events such as the conquest of America, with documents like the *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las indias* of Las Casas (2023) or to more recent literature, such as *Los ríos profundos* of Arguedas (1995), adding the pop culture of cinema and painting, to propose a contemporary image of Concepción, an issue that is crystallized in his second book of poems, *Zonas de Peligro* (Harris, 1985).

Continuing the country’s literary tradition, Harris aspires to construct a “*mito moderno*” (2004, p.38), or modern myth, set in the period of cultural devastation during the Pinochet dictatorship in Chile. Gonzalo Rojas, in the poem “*Orompello*” (1964), tells of his experiences on that street as an antecedent for the author, who had personally experienced the marginality of

those spaces, where “New York is not (being) talked about” (Muñoz, 2023). *“The urban space was thus opened not as a backdrop, but as the very locus where the poem should be uttered, occur, and become from a metaphorical and metonymic contextualization, which could be read in the city of real Concepción, to which another imaginary one has been superimposed, and in which substrates of the other Concepciones survive, of the other cities as a palimpsest, where all the writings or geological layers of the urban writings, converged and projected to Chile, to South America.”* (Harris, 2004, p. 40). A city in ruin; Harris describes its places, architecture, streets, bars, neighborhoods, hills, lagoons, etc.

Diverse studies have been made on the wasteland as a characterization of urban space in the *Zonas de Peligro* (1985) and *Diario Navegación* (1986) poetry books, interpreting it as the fruit of the violence of the conquest of America (Sepúlveda, 2007). Its inhabitants, imprisoned by fear, do not distinguish between reality and fiction; the imagined becomes space, the streets are bloody, and sediments of bodies cover the walls. It would be about a *“presence-absence from the world”* (Debord, 1995) inserted in a panopticon. Garrido (n.d.), in his analysis of *La vida toma a veces la forma de los muros* (1983), highlights the darkness in which the place is submerged, where the human body is part of the morphology of the empty space.

Referring to the type of analysis that interests us, Vera (2020) carries out a study of the urban imaginaries of Valparaíso through science fiction. Based on the dialog and interaction of the characters that inhabit the city, an image of a prospective city is constructed (Moreno & Palibrk, 2011). Certain utopian texts present a parallel dimension as a model of a paradisiacal city, *“a city that hung from the hills”* (Briceño, 2014, p. 20), and in others, a dystopian city, where zombies who seek to destroy the city, appear as a metaphor for the *“Other,”* an invader from Santiago who has deformed the city for his economic interests (Muñoz, 2014).

Delimiting the terms that concern us, the urban space is *“that space of public or private property, which is of free, although not necessarily, free access of the population of a city, commune, or neighborhood so that it can develop social, cultural, educational, contemplation, and recreation activities”* (León Balza, 1998, p. 31). For Delgado and Malet (2007), it is a *“space of generalized visibility, where the co-present ones form an optical society, so to speak, to the extent that each of their actions is submitted to the consideration of others, territory therefore of exposure, in a double sense of exhibition and risk”* (p. 1,2), declaring that public space transcends its distinction from private space. It forms a political instance under the power of the ruling classes, where a unity of society with the State is apparently maintained, but where it is also possible to visualize its contradictions.

On the other hand, according to the RAE, to inhabit means to live, to dwell. For Heidegger (2002), it is *“the way we humans “sind” (are/are) on earth”* (p. 17); *“it is the end that everything pursues to build”* (p. 13). It would be about the daily experience of the human being within time and space (Pallasmaa, 2017), establishing relationships between things, people, and

spaces that, in the temporal context in which they develop, constitute the identity principles of the inhabitant.

For Benjamin (1980), it is impossible to know with certainty what a city is like, as multiple interpretations are given by “*a fusion of the old and the new, the public and the private, the sacred and the profane, in a spatial anarchy where social relations are ephemeral,*” distancing itself from any hegemonic cartography or imaginary (Guerra, 2014, p. 19,25). On the other hand, Cortázar (1968) points out that the city can only be defined subjectively. It is a specific and unrepeatable personal, spatial, and temporal experience.

The “written constructs” in literature constitute a primary source for researching architecture and the city, especially when it disappeared, allowing us to approach the reading of the inhabitants of the past and the present. These would be ekphrasis exercises that could be represented graphically and even physically embodied (Muñoz, 2019, p. 32).

METHODOLOGY

The analysis of the space and living of the Orompello Street of Cipango responds to a qualitative approach, taking as an object of study the poetry book *Cipango*, published by Ediciones Documentas/Ediciones Cordillera in 1992.

An interpretative analysis of meanings present in the book of poems was carried out to identify the spatial and living characteristics of the lyrical speaker, and other characters of Orompello Street described in the book. To do this, the poems where the street is mentioned were analyzed, developing reading cards, investigating the poem’s story from the lyrical speaker and the characters that compose it, together with the references of the street and comparing it with the historical reality of its urban space. These interpretations were contrasted with a semi-structured interview with the author, Thomas Harris.

RESULTS

OROMPELLO: FROM HETEROTOPIA TO URBAN DYSTOPIA

*“They’re not going to tell me now that Orompello is a pure symbol
cast over the city
and the houses, seven houses with golden doors
and the fucking seven whores dressed in white clothes.” (Harris, 1992, p. 16)*

Orompello Street, described in *Cipango*, is a heterotopia that has resulted in a dystopia. Heterotopia is a concept coined by Foucault (1997) and defined as a materialized utopia located outside places controlled by the forces of power. They are spaces that “take place precisely at the limit that has excluded any regular system or structure” (Toro-Zambrano, 2017, p. 36). By the 1980s, Orompello Street, in the northern sector of Avenida Los

Carrera, was considered the periphery or, more specifically, the red-light district of Concepción, where men could satisfy their sexual fantasies with paid encounters. In the words of Harris, Orompello Street was “*the marginal of the marginal*,” the place “*where the party ended*.” It was the El Castillo Bar, where he used to meet with his friends at the end of the night and then visit the area’s brothels (Muñoz, 2023). The brothel as a heterotopic place (Hozven, 2004) is recognizable in other Chilean literature as *Juana Lucero* of D’Halmar (1902), or *El lugar sin límites* (Donoso 1978). It is rescued “*as a place that has the virtue of including all the other spaces recreated by culture, of confronting them, deforming them, inverting them and, finally, annulling them*” (Cánovas, 2003, p. 6). This heterotopia is threatened by the arrival of the Chilean military dictatorship between 1973 and 1990, where life is constantly monitored, and the street becomes a “*danger zone*,” a space vulnerable to police violence and susceptible to disappearing (García Alonso, 2014).

For Harris, violence is of primal origin. It is the same found in Latin America from its discovery to the present day (Harris, 2019) and even since the beginning of humanity: “*Orompello dates from the Upper Paleolithic of the city*” (Harris, 1992, p. 17). Uribe (2001) defines it as cyclical violence, inherited from generation to generation and accepted by the State as a method of governance, validating the subjugation of the lowest social strata using force to this day. Violence that is reused by the dictatorship to attack political and moral dissidents: “*The country was born and lived in ugly violence, and was learning that it was necessary; and that it should be justified in the law*” (p. 19). This violence experienced by the inhabitants of Orompello Street turns it into a timeless space where the violations of the dictatorship, such as those experienced upon the founding of Latin American cities, make their presence known in the place (Sepúlveda, 2007). This causes lyrical speakers to constantly compare the city of Concepción with other cities and historical country estates, where forces of power besieged the population: “*It was Thebes, the place of tragedy, and we were not in Thebes. It was Treblinka, the place of comedy and we were not in Treblinka*” (Harris, 1992, p. 36).

The inhabitants of Orompello live in a constant sense of vulnerability and danger. In a nocturnal environment, where the sun does not appear (Harris, 1992, p. 11, 25), becoming unable to comprehend reality and remaining in a hallucinatory state:

(...) *and a mirage, the whores dressed in white clothes,*
and a mirage, the wasteland blooming.

(...) *in Orompello, we will never know if it was true:*
to discover every night the bloodiest wound
under the sun of 40 watts wrapped in red cellophane
with the same stupefaction
of an idiot before the sea
like in front of a puddle of rain. (Harris, 1992, pp. 16-21)



Figure 1. Coral, Vivaceta, Santiago. Photograph from the series “La manzana de Adán” (1982-1988). Source: Paz Errázuriz (1987).

This hallucination, in the eyes of Christopher Columbus and his expedition, characters from the book of poems in *Diario de navegación* (Harris, 1986) and *El último viaje* (Harris, 1987), appears described as a scenography, the “theater of pain”: the dead are Chinese shadows, and “a glass door shining deep blue in the night” appears through the effect of rain. (Harris, 1992, p. 49). This condition allows them to evade reality and put themselves before the suffering experienced on the spot: “But we knew that the perverted mechanisms of sleep oppose pain.” It is possible to deduce that the physical and real urban space are fused with the imagined space, making it difficult to discern reality and, with it, the meaning of what is related (Harris, 1992, pp.49-75).

There is evidence of sexual harassment, as a form of torture, to which the female victims of the dictatorship were subjected, exemplified in the prostitutes of the Orompello Street of *Cipango*. The photo album *La manzana de Adán* (Errázuriz, 1982-1988) recounts the experiences in the brothels of Talca during the dictatorship. In one of the visits to the La Sota brothel in 1984, he states that these places are constantly besieged by law enforcement: “The presence of a police van in front of the brothel’s door belied the image we had been painted of Talca as the last area in Chile where transvestites are not harassed by the police” (Donoso, 1990, p. 19) (Figure 1).

In particular, Harris narrates the murder of Jaqueline in the middle of Orompello Street (Harris, 1992), alluding to the scene of the film *Goldfinger* (Hamilton, 1964), where the James Bond agent's companion, Jill Masterson, is murdered painted gold on a bed. Jaqueline was the name that was used, not to say pejoratively prostitute. Eltit, in her novel *Lumperica* (1983), describes a similar situation, where a woman is abused in the Plaza de Armas of Santiago, becoming a victim of the show made by the media: "*She waits anxiously for the luminous one, and that's why she moves whole when she feels touched*" (p. 7). Jaqueline is also exposed in the street to public scrutiny: "*ferocious act of sodomy - they will say in the newspapers.*" In the expedition of Columbus, similar acts are told of: "*They seemed like ghost ships gliding through those nights/women (schoolgirls, vestals, prostitutes/puberty and impuberty, the entire dreamed catalog)*" (p. 47), added to the orgy they have with the vestal **3** called O, who dies abandoned on the spot: "*after consummated, her body was left adrift in the wasteland*" (Harris, 1992, p. 52).

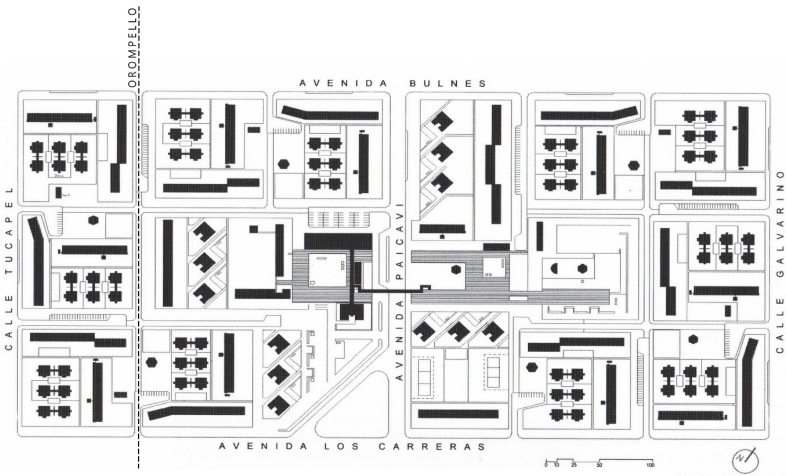
In this way, sexual activity moves to the street without differentiating between public and private space, maintaining its exposure by the forces of power that perpetrate it. Although there is no record of sexual crimes in the heart of Orompello, events involving people who saw their rights violated by the State would take place in the streets of Concepción. They would be recorded by the press, with information available at the Museum of Memory and Human Rights, naming the case of the immolation of Sebastian Acevedo (Victims, n.d. a), in front of the Cathedral of Concepción when asking for the release of his children in 1983; the murder of Luciano Aedo in the commune of Hualpencillo, present-day Hualpén, and the death of Mario Lagos (Victims, n.d. b), and Nelson Herrera (Victims, n.d. c), in front of the Vega Monumental Market, in 1984, all with the interference of the CNI. In this way, the street would be the scene of crimes perpetrated by forces of power. The affected characters in the book of poems show no resistance. Orompello's space makes visible the domination of the state over the individual and the illusion of democratic public space.

Another of the events narrated in *Cipango* is the exodus of prostitutes from Orompello to Prat "*by municipal edict,*" thus being, in addition to being raped, stripped of their home. The unfortunate event is guarded by "*armed guards and barbed wire (...) helicopters*" (Harris, 1992, p. 54), in a clear appearance of the vigilante state exercising repression in Orompello Street. With this last event, heterotopia takes its final step to dystopia.

It is important to note that this coincides with the planned dismantling of the State Railway Company by the dictatorship during the 1980s that occupied a large area of Prat, where in *Cipango*, they would remain "*rusty old locomotives fill the hall, the square/the surrounding streets*" (Harris, 1992, p. 26) that would go on to form the sediment of the walls.

3 According to the RAE, vestal means "of a Roman maiden: Consecrated to the goddess Vesta." The Vestals were virgins, and Vesta was the goddess of the protection of the home, so the violation of the vestal could suggest that the Orompello Street of Cipango reached such levels of uninhabitability that the sense of home was unable to take shape for any individual.

Figure 2. TAU. Sectional plan on 18 blocks on the perimeter of Bulnes Street, Galvarino, Los Carreras Ave., and Tucapel. The 6 blocks adjacent to Orompello Street, to the east and west, were not built. Source: Pérez, L. & Fuentes, P. (2012). Concepción. Neighborhoods that built the modern city. w/ed



THE WASTELAND AS A SYMBOL OF ABANDONMENT

*“They are always loaded with repeated images
the twilight over the wastelands. Without human form,
in pure land modeled, in pure rain crumbled,
spread out in pure mud and vegetable waste”* (Harris, 1992, p. 41)

The repression and violence of the dictatorship move cultural life to the margins of the city, allowing, in Orompello, the possibility of living in hiding, embodying the metaphor of empty space (Muñoz, 2023). Orompello Street is a space of rot and death, monotonous, a cemetery and garbage dump on the pavement, making it an uninhabitable and empty space.

Nevertheless, this wasteland is not just a metaphor but a historical spatial characteristic of the street. Its urban space marks the border where the modernizing project of the developmentalist state dies. On the one hand, the earthquake of 1939 would generate considerable damage in the sector, so a plan would be developed by the Reconstruction and Relief Corporation, which would be a restricted *“product of low investment and the decline of the construction sector”* (Fuentes, Miranda & Pérez, 2012, p. 74). With the earthquake of 1960, the construction of the Remodelación Paicaví would arrive (Figure 2), a set of residential buildings that would become an icon of the modern public architecture of the city, but of which only a section of 3 blocks would be built by the middle of that same year (Fuentes et al., 2012, p. 78). Hence, the expropriated lands on both sides of the street would remain in disuse until the 1990s, with the last sections between Las Heras and Los Carrera (Figures 3 and 4). Finally, the ruins of the Homecenter Sodimac shopping store, which occupied three-quarters of the block between Orompello, Los Carreras, Ongolmo, and Las Heras, burned down in 2019 during the Social Uprising and which remain to this day, are evidence of how



Figure 3. Empty space from the corner of Ongolmo and Los Carreras. In the background, Orompello Street. Source: UBB Architecture Archive (c. 1990)

Figura 4. View towards Orompello Street from Remodelación Eleuterio Ramírez (CORMU, f. 1970-1973). The contrast between the built and the empty space can be seen. Source: UBB Architecture Archive (c. 1990)



the wasteland still takes presence in the place for political reasons (Figure 7). In this way, "*the wasteland of Orompello invents for you a prison/hidden at the other end of Concepción*" (Harris, 1992, p. 29), an empty and peripheral space delimited by the machinery of the state.

The uninhabitability that the empty space represents constitutes the scene where the characters of the story unfold. Columbus, in *The last journey* (1987), is affected by the rot of the place to the point of losing faith in the future: "*Maybe my own transvestite body forever is already going along Prat, the last street of Concepción, towards the fetid void from which I should never have peeked.*" This rot refers to the repression and violence suffered in the city (Harris, 1992, p. 23-148). In H.P. Lovecraft's literature, Harris' influence, the image of spaces flooded by a putrid viscosity caused by a powerful force, is a recurring theme. In the story *The Horror of Dunwich* (Lovecraft, 1996), a gigantic and tentacular being, freed with the death of Wilbur Whateley leaves a trail of death with a completely stunned population: "*The Frye house had been flooded as if it were an eggshell, and no living or dead remains could be found among the ruins. Just an unbearable stench and a bituminous viscosity.*" (Lovecraft, 1996, p. 62).

The wasteland of Orompello Street becomes deadly, even for the perpetrators of violence themselves, as is narrated by the yellow horse of the Horseman of Death of the Apocalypse, "*with power over a fourth part of the Earth, to kill with the sword and with famine and with plague and by the wild animals*" (Bible The Word, 2010, Revelations 6:8), appearing in several scenes of the book, galloping down the street and subsequently passing away in one "*corner of the wasteland*" (Harris, 1992, pp. 16-86). This environment is reflected in the reiteration of the words "*Orompello*" and "*danger zone*," along with events such as those of the same galloping horse, which gives Orompello Street and the city of Concepción the idea of "*a dead-end universe, always the same; in short: unbreathable*" (Gómez, 2014, p. 75), from "*oppressive and toxic air*" (Gómez, 2014, p. 76).

In addition to the locomotives and other state debris, the bodies, living or dead, make up the sediments of the whitewashed walls comprising the materiality of the urban space of Orompello: "*These motionless bodies in the corners had already been painted on the walls, leather on stucco, bone on adobe, paint on live flesh*"; "*all the walls were whitewashed in our ghost towns*" (Harris, 1992, p. 17-36). This forms a metaphor for the concealment of the bodies of the disappeared detainees during the military dictatorship in Chile and of the mass of violated bodies of the Native Americans (Harris, 2019). These bodies are reminiscent of Bellmer's doll (1934), a plaster and wooden sculpture in a voyeuristic position (Harris, 1992) that Huenchuleo depicts in a painting inspired by *Cipango* (Figure 5). Harris finds the influence of these sedimented bodies in the paintings of El Bosco and Goya (Figure 6) (Muñoz, 2023) as referred to in the poem *Tu ojo, los muros* with his paintings presented on the walls of the King Hotel:



Figure 5. "Bellmer's Doll", (c. 2011). Source: Courtesy of the author Álvaro Huenchuleo, mixed technique on canvas.

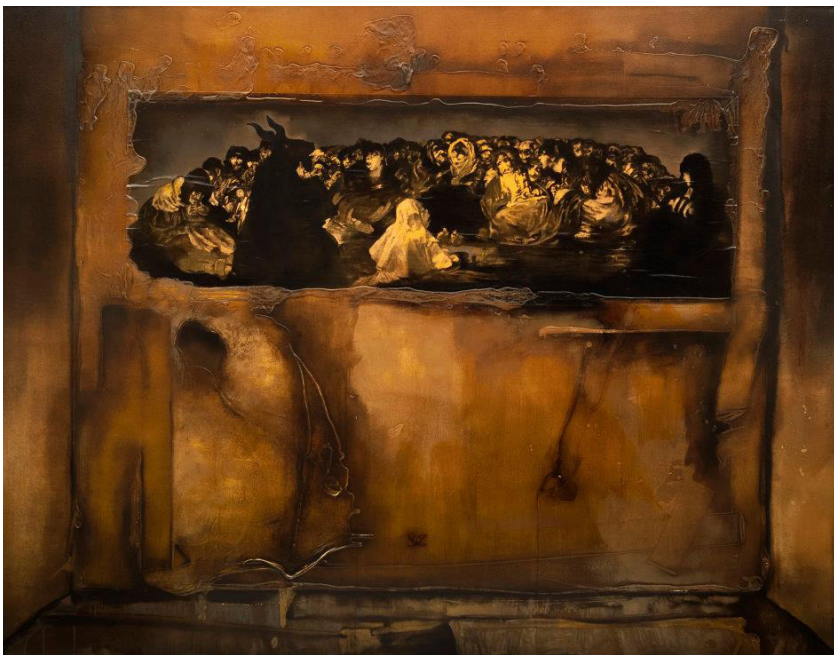


Figura 6. "Aquelarre de Goya" (c. 2011). Source: Courtesy of the author Álvaro Huenchuleo, mixed technique on canvas.



Figure 7. Ruins of the Homecenter Sodimac store located on Orompello Street. Photo of the social uprising in Concepción, October-December 2019. Source: Courtesy of the author of the photograph, Nicolás Sáez.



Figure 8. O'Higgins Street. Photo of the social uprising in Concepción, October-December 2019. Source: Courtesy of the author of the photograph, Nicolás Sáez.

“On the whitewashed wall to the lime they put us
an old magazine clipping, a reproduction
broken from the covens of Goya.” (Harris, 1992, p. 37)

Along with the colors muted by the lime, the sediments of the walls and the rot-dyed yellowish shades, red, is also present in the traffic sign “Stop” located between Bulnes and Orompello Streets, portrayed as a “moldy sun that spies on you” (Harris, 1992, p. 22), a bloody brass sun that becomes the symbol of the danger of the street (Figure 8), next to the “the red reflections of the street” (Harris, 1992, p. 93), the “long and narrow bands of blood” (Harris, 1992, p. 15) dumped on the cobblestones of Orompello Street.

Orompello Street, described in the book *Cipango* by Thomas Harris (1992), is a heterotopia in the process of eradication, immersed in the primeval violence experienced by the inhabitants of Latin America since its discovery. This street is inhabited mainly by prostitutes who live this physical violence perpetrated by forces of power, such as the dictatorship and those involved in the conquest of America. This violence, combined with the cultural censorship that the country was experiencing, gives way to the timeless and empty space, where the rot, the sediments of bodies that make up the walls, the bloody streets, and the symbols of death and oppression make it an uninhabitable place. Orompello Street becomes a dystopia where death reigns.

The empty space and the heterotopias in decay, as a consequence of the dictatorship, is an image developed by other authors of the time, such as Enrique Lihn (1979) in his poem *Nunca salí del horroroso Chile* (1979) to talk about the cultural and human devastation left by the regime: "*my trips that are not imaginary/late, yes - moments of a moment -/ they did not uproot me from the / remote and presumptuous wasteland (...) I never got out of anything*" (p. 53). It even makes an appearance in the book *Naciste Pintada* (1999) by Carmen Berenguer, in architecture as a result of the disappearance of the sanctuary character of the home for women "*to be desecrated by military violence*" (Santa Cruz, 2009, p. 92). This recurrence in the national literary scene can lead to a more finished study to understand the habitat at a time that still has significance today.

The book of poems is a valuable testimony to the urban space of Concepción, especially its peripheral and marginalized places. According to Caillóis, "*to answer this question (about imaginaries), to the point we are tempted to point to the literature*" (1998, p. 166). Thus, the literary text becomes a record capable of revealing situations forgotten by the official history. Orompello Street and its city are not only affected by natural catastrophes or the rupture that ensued with the dictatorship but also by state policies "*of progress and its consequences*" (Harris, 2004, p. 41) who have dismissed the periphery of the city while maintaining its wasteland character.

As for the interview, it provided a primary source to understand certain aspects of Harris' book of poems, giving validity to the interpretations of the story, which evokes one of the bloodiest episodes in Chilean history from the margins of the city of Concepción.

CONCLUSIONS

BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

- Arguedas, J. M. (1995). *Los ríos profundos*. Ediciones Cátedra.
- Benjamin, W. (1980). *Iluminaciones*. Taurus Ediciones.
- Biblia La Palabra (versión española) (2010). <https://www.bible.com/es-ES/bible/210/REV.6.8.BLP>
- Briceño, C. (2014). *Próximo Destino y otros relatos de Xs 200*. Puerto de Escape.
- Caillóis, R. (1998) *El mito y el hombre*. Fondo de Cultura Económica.

Cánovas, R. (2003). *Sexualidad y cultura en la novela Hispanoamericana: La alegoría del prostíbulo*. LOM Ediciones.

Cortázar, J. (1968). *Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires*. Editorial Sudamericana.

D'Halmar, A. (1902). *Juana Lucero*. Impr., Litografía y Encuadernación Turín, 1902

De Las Casas, B. (2023). *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las indias*. Ediciones Cátedra.

Debord, G. (1995). *La sociedad del espectáculo*. La Marca.

Delgado, M. y Malet, D. (2007). *Jornadas Marx siglo XXI, Universidad de la Rioja*, Logroño. <https://antropologiadeoutraforma.files.wordpress.com/2014/03/el-espacio-pc3bablico-como-ideologc3ada-manuel-delgado.pdf>

Donoso, J. (2016). *El lugar sin límites*. Alfaguara.

Donoso, P. y Errázuriz, P. (1990). *La manzana de Adán*. Zona Editorial

Dorfman, A. (1970). *Imaginación y violencia en América*. Editorial Anagrama.

Eltit, D. (1983). *Lumpérica*. Ediciones del Ornitorrinco. <http://www.bibliotecanacionaldigital.gob.cl/visor/BND:9444>

Errázuriz, P. (1987). Serie: La manzana de Adán. Coral, calle Vivaceta [fotografía]. Fundación MAPFRE. <https://www.fundacionmapfre.org/arte-y-cultura/coleccion/paz-errazuriz/la-manzana-de-adan-1982-1988/coral-calle-vivaceta/>

Foucault, M. (1997). Los espacios otros. *Revista Astrágalo: Cultura de la Arquitectura y la Ciudad*, 7, 83-91. <https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=2611573>

Fuentes, P., Miranda, P. y Pérez, L. (2012). Remodelación Paicaví. En: Pérez, L. y Fuentes, P. (2012). *Concepción. Barrios que construyeron la ciudad moderna*. s/ed.

García Alonso, M. (2014). Los territorios de los otros: memoria y heterotopía. *Revista Cuicuilco*, (21)61, 333-352. https://www.scielo.org.mx/scielo.php?pid=S0185-16592014000300015&script=sci_abstract

Garrido, M. (s.f.). *Cuerpo y Baldío en la poesía de Tomás Harris*. <http://www2.udec.cl/postliteratura/docs/artilinea/harris.pdf>

Gómez, C. (2014). Tomás Harris: ¿otro viajero inmóvil?, *Revista Áistesis* 55, 71-84. <https://doi.org/10.4067/s0718-71812014000100005>

Guerra, L. (2014). *Ciudad, género e imaginarios urbanos en la narrativa latinoamericana*. Editorial Cuarto Propio.

Hamilton, G. (1964). *Goldfinger* [Película] Danjag Eon Productions.

Harris, T. (1983). *La vida a veces toma la forma de los muros*.

Harris, T. (1985). *Zonas de peligro*. Ediciones Documentas/Ediciones Cordillera. <https://www.memoriachilena.gob.cl/archivos2/pdfs/mc0031022.pdf>

Harris, T. (1986). *Diario de Navegación*. Editorial Sur.

Harris, T. (1987). *El último viaje*. Ediciones Sur.

Harris, T. (1992). *Cipango*. <http://www.memoriachilena.cl/archivos2/pdfs/mc0031022.pdf>

Harris, T. (2004). Concepción: ciudad y ¿mito?, *Revista Mapocho*, 55, 37-43. <https://www.>

bibliotecanacionaldigital.gob.cl/visor/BND:83027

Harris, T. (2019). Poesía y ciudad: zonas de peligro. En Muñoz, R. (Ed.) *Arquitectura de palabra: Leticia y melancolía*. Ediciones Universidad del Bío-Bío.

Heidegger, M. (2002). *Construir, habitar, pensar*. Alción Editora.

Hozven, R. (2004). Relaciones equívocas: el prostíbulo y la literatura hispanoamericana actual. *Revista chilena de literatura*, 64, 103-107. <https://dx.doi.org/10.4067/S0718-22952004000100006>

León Balza, S. (1998). Conceptos sobre espacio público, gestión de proyectos y lógica social: reflexiones sobre la experiencia chilena. *Revista EURE*, 24(71), 27-36. <https://dx.doi.org/10.4067/S0250-71611998007100002>

Lihn, E. (1979). *A partir de Manhattan*. Editorial Universitaria. <http://www.memoriachilena.cl/archivos2/pdfs/mc0009641.pdf>

Lovecraft, H. (1996). *El horror de Dunwich*. Alianza Editorial.

Moreno, F., y Palibrk, I. (2011). La ciudad prospectiva. *Ángulo Recto: Revista de estudios sobre la ciudad como espacio plural*, 3(2), 119-131. https://doi.org/10.5209/rev_anre.2011.v3.n2.37584

(Muñoz, L. Comunicación personal - Thomas Harris, 30 de junio 2023)

Muñoz, M. (2014). *Evento Z. Zombies en Valparaíso*. Forja.

Muñoz, R. (Ed.) (2019). *Arquitectura de palabra: Leticia y melancolía*. Ediciones Universidad del Bío-Bío.

Pallasmaa, J. (2017). *Habitar*. Ediciones Gustavo Gili.

Pérez, L. y Fuentes, P. (2012). *Concepción. Barrios que construyeron la ciudad moderna. s/ed.*

Santa Cruz, G. (2009). *Escritoras chilenas: imaginarios en torno a los espacios*. <https://bdigital.ufp.pt/bitstream/10284/2687/3/89-99.pdf>

Sepúlveda, E. (2007). Luces en la ciudad: dictadura y simulacro en Tomás Harris. *Revista Atenea*, 496, 145-158. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4067/S0718-04622007000200009>

Toro-Zambrano, M. (2017). El concepto de heterotopía en Michel Foucault. *Revista Cuestiones de Filosofía*, (3), 21, 19-41. <https://doi.org/10.19053/01235095.v3.n21.2017.7707>

Uribe, A. (2001). *El fantasma de la sinrazón y el secreto de la poesía*. Bea-uve-dráis Editores. <http://www.memoriachilena.gob.cl/archivos2/pdfs/mc0014505.pdf>

Vera, E. (2020). Urban imaginaries of Valparaíso in recent Chilean science fiction: Traveling and inhabiting the city. *Revista Mitologías hoy*, 22, 65. <https://doi.org/10.5565/rev/mitologias.743>

Víctimas. (s.f. a). Muerte de Acevedo Becerra Sebastián. [Recopilación Histórica] Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos. <https://interactivos.museodelamemoria.cl/victimas/?p=862>

Víctimas. (s.f. b). Muerte de Lagos Rodríguez Mario. [Recopilación Histórica] Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos. <https://interactivos.museodelamemoria.cl/victimas/?p=2317>

Víctimas. (s.f. c). Muerte de Herrera Riveros Nelson Adrián. [Recopilación Histórica] Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos. <https://interactivos.museodelamemoria.cl/victimas/?p=2224>