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## Communalization of the territory versus citizens as consumers-clients: Management and production of a “real urban commons” in Talca

### Comunalización del territorio versus ciudadanxs como consumidorxs-clientes: gestión y producción de un “común urbano real” en Talca.

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#### Abstract

This article is based on an assessment of Territorio 5. This project was a collective management of a group of intertwined neighbourhoods across an urban territory in Talca. The experience involved joining civil society and academia together with neighbours’ formal organisations. They were able to produce a first assessment and later a management system proposal which allowed a new way of dealing with State and the markets. The data used comes from archive data—from the actual project and its ex-post assessments—and in-depth interviews with key actors of the project. Departing from their opinions and observations

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we consider Territorio 5 as a territory-based common, and through the analysis we address its organisation issues, its material and symbolic landmarks and how it makes a contribution to social cohesion, and by doing this, how it produces common goods.

Additionally, we underline how this project made a contribution in changing ways of the understanding of citizenship, and the shifting practice of political participation, from a clientelist-consumerist to a more collective one. Addressing this experience makes room to think in territorial innovations aimed at overtaking current neighbourhood institutional frames, considering the construction of the territory and the management of commons as a way of strengthening social cohesion and producing counter-agency against structures that atomise and disperse subjectivities.

## Resumen

En este artículo presentamos una evaluación de la experiencia del Territorio 5, una instancia de gestión colectiva del territorio urbano interbarrios, de la ciudad de Talca. Esta experiencia implicó la unión de diversas unidades vecinales, quienes, en conjunto con la academia y la sociedad civil, produjeron un diagnóstico, un modelo de gestión y una gobernanza que permitió una nueva forma de relacionarse con la institucionalidad del Estado y de los mercados. Se abordó a través de la recolección de información documental, producida durante y después de la implementación de la iniciativa, así como a través de la realización de entrevistas con informantes claves que participaron y participan de la experiencia. Por medio de sus observaciones y narrativas podemos reconocer la constitución de Territorio 5 como un común territorial; en el análisis recorreremos su organización, sus hitos materiales y simbólicos, su aporte a la cohesión, y cómo a través de ello se genera la capacidad de producir otros bienes comunes.

Destacamos el proceso de transformación de formas de entender la ciudadanía y la participación desde racionalidades consumidoras, clientelares y clientelistas hacia lógicas más colectivas. El repaso de esta experiencia invita a pensar las innovaciones territoriales desde la superación de la institucionalidad vecinal-territorial vigente, desde la perspectiva de producción del territorio y desde la gestión de los comunes como una forma de potenciar la cohesión social y contra-agenciar las estructuras que tienden a producir subjetividades atomizadas y dispersas.

**Palabras Clave:**  
Comunes; innovaciones territoriales; clientelismo; gobernanza territorial; ciudadano-consumidor



## Introduction

Can an urban territory be collectively managed by its inhabitants? While there are neighborhood institutions that have allowed for the management of certain aspects of territorial units, such as neighborhood associations, the idea is raised that the production of territorial innovations, under the principles of communalism, can contribute to new ways of managing a “communalized” urban territory, far from clientelist logics. This, in turn, could contribute to greater social cohesion. To evaluate this possibility and present evidence and arguments in favor of it, we analyze the case of Territory 5 (T5) in Talca. The article is based on an ex-post evaluation of the intervention “Innovative Neighborhood Territories,” carried out by the Center for Urban Territorial Studies of the Universidad Católica del Maule and the Corporation of Social Studies and Education SUR. The intervention aimed to rethink, through praxis, the work and relationship between neighborhood groups in a sector of the city of Talca and their own community development. The project was executed from 2014 to 2016 and led to the establishment of Territory 5 (T5), although this entity had self-identified since at least 2005. The intervention model and participation were validated by institutional and community actors (UCM et al., 2014).

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The experience of T5 can be seen as an instance of action-learning aimed at strengthening the capacity of local actors to plan and influence the development of their territories. The baseline diagnosis that was constructed initially focuses on the territorial, based on the notion that there are shared problems due to poor urban planning that causes a poor quality of life and reinforces structural inequalities. Subsequently, the contents discussed by the inhabitants themselves circulate, observing how this urban planning is almost exclusively accommodated in the market, translated into real estate expansion without improving urban infrastructure—green areas, services, transport—that threaten the very essence of the intermediate city and its perceived benefits (Micheletti et al., 2018). In other cases, it produces a sense of deterioration and postponement. This physical abandonment is a representation of the social neglect that raises questions about social cohesion and socio-territorial identity.

New forms of collective management based on innovative principles emerge in the rethinking of communities and their relationship with the territory. These innovations are based on: 1) seeking the empowerment of instances of collective participation beyond the existing neighborhood-territorial institutional framework; 2) understanding and producing the territory in a common way—through collective agency, demands



are internalized and socially managed in “really existing commons” (Eizenberg, 2012: 765); and 3) understanding the management of commons as a way to enhance social cohesion and counteract structures that tend to produce atomized and dispersed subjectivities, moving away from individual and clientelist logics.

This governance is based, on the one hand, on the recognition of the existence of political, social, and economic relationships that shape territorial and urban ecosystems. These relationships operate in parallel to the dominant logics of markets and the State, and yet “enter and exit” them. Likewise, governance is based on modes of communalization that act with certain levels of reflexivity, reciprocity, and cohesion, allowing for action with autonomy from these state and market spheres.

One of the fundamental points of the intervention, reflected in T5, was the collectivization of neighborhood action. The central nucleus of the experience was the collective construction of a socio-urban diagnosis that included both problem identification and their prioritization, as well as proposals for solutions, aiming at a common vision of the territory. Its origins date back to 2014, with previous leadership training. Specifically, a path was promoted from the micro-neighborhood to the inter-neighborhood, along with the construction of a network of actors and spaces much larger than the atomized action field of neighborhood associations (Letelier et al., 2019). This also meant moving from a neighborhood logic to a more community-oriented logic, in the sense of a network of relationships that do not depend exclusively on geographical proximity (Gutiérrez, 2020). The specific objectives of this action-learning were the intergroup generation of knowledge about the environment and the organization that would allow for agency with sufficient capacity to negotiate and influence the opportunities and initiatives of urban and community development that occur within and around the territory. The text is structured as follows: this section presents the case study along with a summary of the argumentation; the following section synthesizes the ideas that make up the conceptual framework; next, the methodology used to collect and analyze the data is explained. Subsequently, selected results are presented around three axes: the production of the territory through the communalization of governance; the tension between collective counter-agency and the sedimentation of atomized and clientelist subjectivities on which the initiative was based; and the possibilities of permanence and scaling. Finally, the results are discussed in light of the transitions from the neighborhood to the community and from the individual to the collective.



## Comunalization as a Critical Approach to Territorial Action

To theoretically shape the case, we propose working with a set of concepts that will allow us to establish this relationship between the neighborhood-community and the commons as a model of innovative territorial management. To achieve this, we will review the idea of commons with an emphasis on the territorial aspect. Additionally, to strengthen our proposition of territorial governance that challenges markets and the state, we will briefly explore the idea of citizens turned into clients, which will later reveal its more critical nature.

Commons have initially been defined as goods or resources whose management occurs through collective arrangements and with a long-term perspective (Ostrom, 1990; Laval and Dardot, 2014). In a broader sense, commons also include processes, intangible knowledge along with the territory, involving collective and community practices, drawing from an ecosystemic vision (Mies, 2014; Gibson-Graham et al., 2013).

Ostrom's (2010) seminal contributions focused on highlighting the power of social capital to generate self-management and self-regulation in organizations oriented towards the common, which simultaneously moved towards autonomy. Therefore, for Ostrom (2008), such common experiences are constituted collectively but also by placing themselves outside of markets and the state, aiming to solve social problems through the self-management capacity of organizations. Thus, the emphasis is primarily on the collective governance of commons. From this perspective, the emphasis is on the capacity for self-management and self-regulation generated by and for social capital, strengthening common organizations and their efficiency. On the other hand, the emergence of common forms also leads to management forms (Laval and Dardot, 2014) that, in turn, lead to the construction of governance.

From a more politicized perspective, there is a debate about the ability of commons to counteract capitalist rationalities and whether, by developing a certain efficiency in this regard, the common as a project has the capacity to "scale," with its respective transformative potential. For example, it helps understand the organization of a neighborhood as a dynamic that is not closed or fragmented but tends towards plurality (Castro-Coma and Martí-Costa, 2016). This perspective aims to understand commons as an instance of alternative politics (Caffentzis and Federici, 2014; De Angelis, 2017; Bianchi, 2018). The proposition in this article is an understanding that complements organizational and social cohesion aspects with more politicized aspects, based on the collectivization and public agency of commons in their role of negotiation and, in some cases, subversion of conventional institutional logics.



In essence, the urban focus on commons ends up being applied more broadly due to its specific characteristics—territory, materiality, political nature (Colding and Barthel, 2013). In the case of territorial commons, experiences are oriented towards the production of organizational goods designed to protect, preserve, and sometimes collectively increase what could be integrated into the realm of commons. Many goods can be considered commons, whether material (land, soil, equipment) or intangible (such as cooperation and cohesion) (Castro-Coma and Martí-Costa, 2016). The hybridization of knowledge, skills, and technologies that enable autonomous territorial designs is appreciated (Escobar, 2019). The production of the common is crowned in the process rather than the creation of a good, whether tangible or not.

The processes of commoning can be translated into housing cooperatives that aim to de-marketize housing or consumer cooperatives that aim to build exchange relationships parallel to the state and markets. However, the understanding of commons and their practical expressions has expanded from tangible—production and consumer cooperatives, water committees, localized natural resources—to intangible goods—immaterial and cultural heritage, territorial management, etc. (Fonseca et al., 2021; Cid et al., 2021).

This perspective also allows us to focus on processes intentionally developed to produce collectivization around community management, using criteria for territorial innovation in commoning itself (Baldauf et al., 2018; Bresnihan, 2015; Lineabuagh, 2010). The innovative component is based on a broad and dynamic vision of the territory (Brenner, 2013) that allows a redefinition from its own actors and for themselves, and ultimately, a redefinition of the territory and its relationship with its inhabitants. This conception allows us to understand that in the operation of producing a common, an understanding, or rather, a production of the territory emerges, based on a way of creating community that is not based on a traditionalist or essentialist view of the community but rather on its associative and productive capacity (Gutiérrez, 2020).

In contrast to common perspectives—social/organizational and politicized—we introduce the concept of citizen-clients, for which we work with a dual meaning: one related to the mode of individual consumers, and the other related to the effectiveness of clientelist leaderships. In the first, there is the perspective of a state that begins to relate to citizens as clients (Streeck, 2012) to try to deal with socio-economic inequalities as a form of consumer dissatisfaction. This mechanism reinforces individual ways of interacting with states, typical of socialization as consumers, and particularly as clients.

To this, the withdrawal of the state as a provider of welfare (Crouch, 2009) is added, implying the privatization and commodification of the provision of public services, transforming the real expectations of citizens into those of clients. Also, certain management models, such as new public management (Schedler and Proeller, 2000), and technocratic reforms at the end of the 20th century led public bureaucracies to try to mimic the supposed efficiency of private management, primarily its focus on customer service and satisfaction.

In the second meaning, the starting point is a politics that abandons the “political” to focus on the spectacular and the aesthetic. Large sectors of society lose interest in the collective aspect of politics, and only a vanguard or elite remains interested in the public in an instrumental way, i.e., the resolution of collective problems through the individual or clientelist, understood as a capture of state action (Edwards, 2009). This can be seen, for example, where there is limited and instrumental collectivization: collective demands aimed at protecting consumer rights with weak legislation or relationships with consumer organizations that depend on direct or indirect state funding for their mere existence (Clarke, 2007). In concrete terms, in territories, the state has replicated this model with neighborhood associations, which, in turn, constitute the state’s way of understanding territorial community management.

## Methodology

This article is based on a qualitative research approach, utilizing a case study design, as the main objective was to conduct an ex-post evaluation of the experience in question from the perspective of various stakeholders in the process and monitor its outcomes over a few years. The case’s rationale was to project, in light of new frameworks of understanding—using interpretations and concepts tailored for this evaluation exercise, different but not opposed to those that underpinned the initial intervention—its replicability in other territories and under what conditions. However, this doesn’t imply a claim of generalization given the situated characteristics of the case.

The researcher conducting this evaluation did not directly or indirectly participate in the Territorio 5 initiative, ensuring that biases present are inherent to any scientific work. The proposed analysis, discussion, and conclusions presented here do not correspond directly to those outlined by those involved in the intervention or the documents produced during it. The work was approached through the collection of documentary information produced during and after the implementation of the initiative. This included conducting interviews with key informants, including four social leaders, three



community intervention professionals, and eight residents of Territorio 5. The sampling of interviewees was initially convenience-based, contacting key informants from the professional and academic world who participated in the initiative, as well as social leaders. Subsequently, the group of interviewees among the residents of Territorio 5 was selected, including four individuals aged 45 to 65 and four individuals aged 22 to 36, aiming for generational contrast.

In detail, semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants (academics, managers, interveners, leaders), covering topics such as neighborhood trajectories, organization and management, political engagement, escalations, territorial issues, territorial definition, connections and networks, and moral and social evaluations. With residents, the same topics were addressed, excluding those related to leadership trajectories and management.

The data analysis was approached from a deductive and interpretative perspective, given the exploratory and evaluative nature of the case and the supporting categories used. However, it was possible to identify emerging themes, such as one of the axes addressed in this article, more focused on identity. The analysis framework was also influenced by the emerging relationship of these initiatives with the dynamics of the social outbreak at the end of 2019.

The data collection for this article adheres to the parameters and formalizations of the ethics boards of the institutions supporting this review, as part of a larger project. Precautions included providing detailed information about the project's objectives to participants, obtaining informed consent, ensuring voluntary participation, and guaranteeing anonymity. No incentives were offered to participate, and it was made clear that their involvement in the research was voluntary.

### **From Clientelization of the Local to the Communal Production of Territory and its Governance**

A first axis of analysis aims at seeking the empowerment of collective participation instances beyond the current neighborhood-territorial institutional framework, and the possibilities of permanence and scaling of this empowerment. The starting point is the initial observation—established during the implementation of the Territorios Vecinales Innovadores project—of the tension between the concept of neighborhoods (neo-ecological) that cooperate internally and compete with each other and the environment, and the idea of neighborhood geographies, which constitute multiple scales, spaces, and organizations (Letelier et al., 2019).



Before the production of T5, there was a trace of capacities installed in some social leaders, facilitated by NGOs and academia, through the format of “leadership school,” with a critical emphasis on urban processes. This led to the creation of a network of leaders who already glimpsed that their close problems had much to do with larger geographical spaces—and even with the socio-political structures that surrounded them—rather than with the closest neighborhood instances. Later, the T5 initiative implied—with advances and difficulties—the creation, promotion, and strengthening of technical capacities for organization and management of the territory. It allowed the consolidation of leaderships that had been forming from the experience and also generated social and economic activities that managed to articulate old and new generations, a key point in territorial participation.

*That complexity, those relationships they established, changed their way of looking at things, observing problems, and also interacting with authority. It changed the scale of thought fundamentally, and also changed the power scale of these neighborhood actors to sit down and talk to the authorities. (Community intervention professional I)*

The common revolves around concrete issues, such as defining spaces and territories of influence. First, through rules of operation, and later through “products,” like the construction of a park, which became a milestone for this innovative management form. The “Parque de la 17 Norte” allowed the use of a rectangular piece of land that had little use, turning it into bike paths, trails, games, exercises, fields, and trees. The pre-design of which was handed over by the residents to the authorities, and whose construction took much longer than initially planned. This meant moving from a “theoretical common” to a “real common,” that is, a material resource, but of common ownership and that has its survival based on the self-management of a community that must have sufficient agency to do without, but at the same time dialogue with the State (which can offer disdain) and with markets (which can offer threats).

All these elements would help understand what is common and what needs to be organized and managed. In that context, the first things that needed to be communalized were precisely the pre-existing areas of influence. The production of T5 brought together 17 neighborhood units or neighborhood associations and another dozen organizations with some territorial roots but more segmented: sports clubs, cultural committees, among others. This was achieved through a “focus and invitation” strategy, consisting of calling leaders who had some familiarity with intervention or training programs in social technologies to make initial contacts and thus strengthen the call to the rest of the community.

*However, the neighborhood association, at a minimum, has about two hundred registered members, and from one household, I can get four or five, as long as they are over fourteen years old. So, we can form a neighborhood association with just two blocks. However, the neighborhood association here (of which I am the president) is made up of three communities: Villa Parque Industrial, Villa Comercio, and Villa España. This amounts to approximately five hundred houses, but that's because people have been joining; the membership book does not have the minimum two hundred people required by the neighborhood association but has many more. (Social leader 3)*

*It's that before, the neighborhood unit was the same as the territory because they covered the same space; we are Neighborhood Unit No. 22, and Territory 5 is, as I told you, this project application where neighborhood units were not respected but rather territories. (Social leader 1)*

Evidently, these new forms of organizing the territory—theoretically more horizontal, reflective, and co-participatory—grappled with the challenges and opportunities of the old forms—the experience and knowledge of neighborhood leaders. The difference lay in certain more integrative ways that sought cohesion from a somewhat more collective perspective during the process, aiming for intergenerational and inter-neighborhood integration.

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*And why can it be done? Because there is a whole territory participating, I mean, older adults participate, young people participate, surveys are conducted on how they want it, so it is much more participatory. There is no one in the territory who does not know when that park started and when the first two sections of the ribbon were cut. (Social leader 4)*

*We have people in their thirties; the last time we had two who were eighteen. Yes, it varies. Because every time we leave the meeting, it's like the last sentence is 'Remember that we are committed every time we come to a meeting, to invite one or two more people each of us. (Social leader 2)*

The milestone of the park, mentioned earlier, arose from a diagnosis and planning that materialized, after dozens of workdays, into a master plan for urban improvement. This was not the first time that most of these social actors were involved in this topic, but the new approach meant raising the way of “demanding” from the authorities.



*The park was ‘obtained’ through a territory, where the government or municipal entities are exposed to the needs of an entire territory; how it would be beneficial to have this in such a place, which is a vacant lot causing these and other disturbances, and on top of that, we support them with the design, with the type of materials. (Social leader 1)*

*So that was one of the [participatory] techniques applied for the construction of the park. The sector where the park was going to be built was especially involved. (Community intervention professional 2)*

In summary, the forms of organization stemming from new territorial configurations would pave the way for the production of the common: communalization. This notion of the common, managed with inclusive and participatory elements, builds the necessary cohesion to challenge power and institutionalization, transforming such commonality, which constitutes a process, into concrete products.

### **Beyond the “neighborhood”: the production of territory from the collective to the common**

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The production of the common in the territory operates under the assumption of recognizing its value and relationships, functioning through the production of collective agency, as argued in the previous section. It is an understanding that the territory generates well-being and cohesion. As announced in the previous section, communalization is the process that impacts infrastructure or spaces. This is mainly supported by processes led by more or less active communities that tend to politicize the communal and transform it into the common. From collective agency, demands are internalized that not only involve the material aspect, i.e., solving a neighborhood problem but also demand a comprehensive vision that involves the common. For example, the continuity of collective instances that generate neighborhood demands and then manage the material (e.g., park) and immaterial (e.g., park governance) goods produced in the territory. The challenge is to verify if these processes consolidate such politicization and how they expand their relationships with the market and the State.

As outlined in the previous point, the production of the territory implied, first, a decision regarding the formation of the group, including defining rules and planning actions: starting from the limits of the organization, its possibilities for expansion, its settlement and territorial integration, and the conditions for producing a diagnosis that assesses the state of affairs but also delimits the territory and generates a minimum of identification.



*So, I believe that basically, the pros of interesting things, perhaps from the [common] perspective, are that before this process, there was almost no perspective of thinking about the territory... that this territory had a meaning or that the territory had significance for people. It was more like a part of the city 'where my population was' or 'where I happened to live,' but the territory did not have meaning. (Community intervention professional 2)*

This required breaking the political-administrative inertia of neighborhood associations and moving towards collectivization within each of these units and between the units, paving the way for the communalization of territorial governance. This communality begins to be built from the relationship itself with those who facilitate this process—academia and civil society—so that clientelist or atomizing logics are not replicated in the subsequent relationship with the State and markets. This implies not “turning away” from both, which seems impossible and improbable, but resisting the pressures of co-optation, positioning with a certain level of collective agency that can be visible and acting more or less permanently.

*And the authorities, especially the municipality, did not see it either; for the municipality of Talca, this territory did not exist in 2014, what existed were the specific populations and their neighborhood associations. (Inhabitant 3)*

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*Local politics took a turn, a change of conception, to assume this effort by the neighbors to collectivize work on the territory, and they assumed it. (Community intervention professional 1)*

When there is collectivity from the organized community, this sort of common power is constituted, which ultimately translates into a capacity for diagnosis, knowledge, and organization in strategic demands to the corresponding actors, based on their own agendas.

*You achieve fewer things as a neighborhood association; you get smaller projects because you have less weight. In other words, they, with the neighborhood association, could apply for a government project. (Social leader 3)*

*Look, for example, when we are raising a battery of projects, there is a lot of movement because first, we make a map, we dialogue, on the map, we present the needs of all the organizations that are there; for example, there is a wooden bridge here, but it is about to collapse, the person draws it, and we put our problems from all the organizations, from all the populations of the representatives who are there. (Social leader 4)*



The park, as a “common really existing” (Eisenberg, 2012: 765), has implied the continuity of planning, design, and implementation of related activities. In other words, after the construction of the park, there was the equally important stage of maintaining the park. In more concrete terms, the park and its current management end up embodying the common. Human, sociotechnical, and economic investment culminate in the survival of this common. This continuous process means managing short and medium-term micro-processes and achieving an effective mechanism of control and monitoring, translating into meetings, coordination, and measures aimed at complementary demands, in this new scenario where there is already a “product” that must be managed, and where negotiation instances with the authorities have been configured in a different way.

This production of the territory opened discussions about scaling among its participants, as it is thought that the same rationale of greater agency and interterritorial cooperation makes more sense than competition, which obviously requires the installation of certain capacities for internal discussion and cohesion to overcome the more competitive, clientelist, and atomized paradigms with which the institutions are usually designed.

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*This territory, more than competing, is admired, and they have asked it to help other territories (we have done it), we do not compete with anyone. (Social leader 1)*

*We help Las Américas by raising new territorial tables; so that Talca has more territorial tables. We went to raise territorial tables in Las Américas, here next to El Centro Newspaper as well, now they were requesting it in Abate Molina; so more than competition, they have asked us for help. Because as this has been maintained for a long time, they want to see the techniques that are applied. (Social leader 2)*

*So, it's different here; we did a survey of how these people are living; we visited each one of them, there is a report for each one, we know where they live, how much they are earning, what diseases they suffer from, who will visit them, how often, that is known; and everything is recorded in a formal document. (Social leader 1)*

The development of a product like the park, which constitutes a “real common,” and the way to generate communalized instances of participation, as well as the design and its subsequent maintenance, allowed the development of a collective agency with the capacity for expansion that, in turn, impacts the cohesion of geographically larger territories, instead of promoting the usual competition for scarce resources.



## From Clientelist Citizenship to Communalization

The establishment of T5 involved addressing the social erosion of decades of demobilization and the primacy of individual identities over class-based or more collective dynamics. This tension, observed not only in this territory, arises from the contrast between the emergence of this counter-collective agency and the sedimentation of atomized and clientelist subjectivities on which the initiative was built. It reflects a view of politics and participation from the perspective of consumers, with atomized individual arrangements (García Canclini, 2009; Sennet, 2008). In essence, there was a contrast between two generations. The first, the generation of “social leaders” with a stronger territorial identification but also with high institutional involvement and cooptation possibilities; then, the younger generation, consisting of two profiles: those less identified with the territory, less inclined to “solve” problems collectively because they usually leave the neighborhood as soon as their economic and/or cultural capital increases and do not stay to take on leadership roles, and those who, due to a lack of social and community integration, do not participate.

*See, [people] leave for two reasons: because they have a bit more money, because they got the money to dye their hair, so they can move to another neighborhood. Also, they get tired of the crime, the gunshots, like it can tire anyone; those are the only two reasons I see. (Social leader 3)*

*So, you see them and pass by, see young guys still drinking, so sure, it might be a social issue, but it might also be an age issue. Well, in fact, they also say that there is like a focus of crime there (and I don't have firsthand knowledge, I repeat their discourse). (Inhabitant 1)*

*The thing here, from what I've seen, the feeling I have is that there are two types of people: there are people who, with the little they have, feel they are of another class and move to another world to feel more and forget all these brothers around here. (Inhabitant 2)*

Understanding the management of the commons can also be thought of as a way to enhance social cohesion and counter-agency structures that tend to produce atomized and dispersed subjectivities. From a clientelist perspective, social leaders linked to T5 have had relationships with political authorities in an institutional manner, either through participation in formal instances, such as municipal council meetings, or more clientelist, such as campaigns of elected authorities. This is developed through personal relationships. Obviously, this clientelism impacts the possibilities of both identification and communalization, at the community and leadership levels.

*Sure, they chose a few, and he hung out with these people here, but he didn't include those from there... I don't know if I explain myself. [XXX XXX] was his name. But maybe those from here are not interested in participating either; that could be a point. (Inhabitant 6)*

*Although the leaders (all of them) say they are "apolitical," and I think that is also important because there was also a break in Las Américas because other leaders participated in campaigns, for example, Sepúlveda's campaign later, and it didn't work out (CORE campaign). (Social leader 2)*

*But the territorial table has all colors; we have had to get used to working with all colors. (Inhabitant 1)*

The rotation of authorities produces interruptions in joint work processes when they end up being too personalized, where the logic of individual clients is replicated in political negotiation. The leaders themselves recognize that changes in political authorities "are a threat to the advancement plans of the neighbors." The concept of citizen participation that each authority has, according to its political-ideological framework, will also influence the notion of citizens as clients (Streeck, 2012), if applicable.

*Sure, I mean, we are at risk when the government changes because we have to instruct them again about what happens within the territory, inform them again about the problems we have. But if the government comes to work with the people, we resume work quickly, but if they bring... as it was difficult with this government, for them to understand that working with the people is more comfortable and means less work for them, but they brought imposition; they brought the formula. (Social leader 2)*

*He is opposed to all initiatives because he is a right-wing guy who has a very mercantilist view, as if he does not believe in the collective; so, it is also complicated when you have an authority that does not engage and sponsor you, so to speak. (Community intervention professional 1)*

The vision of the communal and participatory is also expressed in the "resolution of problems on a microscopic scale," as one of the community intervention professionals refers to the way of relating to units on as small a scale as possible. The smaller the size, the greater the probability of a user/consumer logic.

The Social Leaders with more experience have used their knowledge of maintaining institutional relationships, not for the consolidation of the relationship itself, but now for the production of bureaucratic knowledge, which is added to territorial knowledge, for the preparation of documents that can be instrumentalized in this new type of relationship, more collective, but more efficient.

*Now, if you didn't win their favor, you had zero possibilities. I experienced that as a neighborhood association leader some periods ago. So, the authority would punish us, and as a territory, since we are many more people, the authority here now sees an interest as voters. Because if they invest a lot here, we have already presented how many people we are because you also need tactics and technique. We said in a document how many voters we are, and that this territory could only decide the path of a mayor. So, you present a whole document, with numbers, and the authority either believes in you or not; and this one believed in us. (Social leader 1)*

The process of communalization also had an impact on neighborhood subjectivities and their individualization. In the case of social leaders, there is tension between clientelist inertia and overcoming the atomization of citizenship. However, it remains to be seen how this “communalizing moment” can project itself towards less involved neighbors, upon whose involvement the scaling of these projects and their transformative capacity depend.

## Discussion

Beyond viewing T5 simply as a group of neighborhood associations collaborating with local NGOs and academia to overcome barriers in political-administrative institutionalism to achieve “things,” this initiative is highlighted as a collective endeavor based on and managing a “commonality.” In the long run, it embodies a sense of communal politics. Despite its connection to political institutions, it aligns with unconventional forms of political engagement and potential transformative aspirations. At the very least, it involves creating spaces or forms of sociability that offer a means of reproduction (away from the logic of commodity production) and pose a challenge to capitalist social relations within a territorially conceived common space.

Projects grounded in the communal management of the communal provide a vision of breaking away from individualism and modern enclosures “à la Polanyi” (Hodkinson, 2012). They dismantle barriers that seek to hinder non-commodified relationships and ways of socializing that exist outside prevailing production relationships.

In rethinking communities and their relationship to the territory, new forms of collective management emerge, grounded in innovative principles, with active participation in the planning, operation, and implementation of territorial initiatives. This perspective recognizes the existence of political, social, and economic relationships shaping territorial and urban ecosystems, operating parallel to dominant market and state logics. However, these relationships “enter and exit” markets and the state. Ultimately, modes of communalization, operating with certain levels of reflexivity, reciprocity, and cohesion, allow for action with autonomy from these state and market spheres.



Is this form of territorial management an innovative common? The management of the territory itself aligns with the management of the common. It is no longer about operating as a client or clientelist facing markets or the state to obtain isolated resources for the improvement of the quality of life of a delimited group—the size of a neighborhood association. Instead, the communalization that the creation and operation of Territorio 5 entailed has resulted in the valorization of the neighborhood ecosystem, its ways of life, and the work of “community managers.”

By concretizing this experience under this communalizing model, territorial landscapes are recovered and revalued. An ecosystem is not only material but also experiential in its communalizing nature. It is within this understanding that the commons exist, facing threats but also having the potential to scale, depending on communities and their cohesion.

It achieves a management that goes beyond privatized solutions but also beyond state-local dependence. The strength lies in the communalization that integrates these and takes care of the communalization itself. It involves the creation and strengthening of a common good—in this case, the incipient territorial governance achieved by Territorio 5 and its power of reflexivity and agency. This intangible common subordinates itself to the material commons, mainly installations and capacities for management and interaction with authorities. All these commons are recognized and empowered by the communities. Whether from the fragmentary logics of markets or from the administrative atrophies of the state and local governments, the territory can be considered de-collectivized and foreign to a common vision, particularly concerning the capacity for management by its inhabitants. Experiences like these contribute to re-politicizing and rethinking territories.

Collective and common governance of the territory attempts to escape the view of consumers as citizens or fragmented inhabitants. The latter is a dynamic of enclosure, privatization, clientelization, userization—a citizenship as a customer dynamic—that shares some elements with the discussion of family versus society. The former dynamic produces social cohesion by grounding itself in the logics of articulation and social production of the territory.

Collectivization enables the communalization of the territory. This aims at a politicization of the communal and the social production of territorial governance. Specifically, it implies counter-agency against the state’s inertia and market logics, as well as communalized visions of the territory through strategies of working with public opinion and local powers, promoting participation and the production of social cohesion.

The operationalization of politicization here is complex, assimilating that the problems of everyday life have structural reasons and that the solutions are part of processes involving understanding the territory as something social, not just geographic. It requires collective organization to generate knowledge, competencies, and discourses. The collective aspect is the realization that the client logic does not allow an understanding of the complex logics in relation to the state, nor does it allow a symmetrical relationship in markets.

T5 has allowed the recovery of certain levels of local autonomy. It has not only involved the management of material resources but has also facilitated cooperation within the territory, contributing to intergenerational social cohesion among different zones of the territory. The managers of the initiative noted that a significant challenge was to involve younger individuals, culturally more permeated by disenchantment with the public and, ultimately, with the communal. The knowledge, appreciation of the environment, and identification with the territory contributed to involving younger groups, who usually orient themselves toward individual and external resolution of their “quality of life” requirements. The aim is to increase their capacities and competencies to migrate from the neighborhood.

An unexplored challenge lies in breaking the inertia of intergenerational distancing, implying the basis for a class re-enchantment. This would involve understanding whether, given the segregative model and lack of design in Chilean cities in general, initiatives like these, transcending the neighborhood, have the capacity to enchant generations that rely on residential mobility as the main strategy for improving quality of life and achieving symbolic social ascensions. The communalizing factor, the collective production of the territory, can go against, for example, more meritocratic discourses, as they propose and promote a path that is not only more individual but crucially more competitive.

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