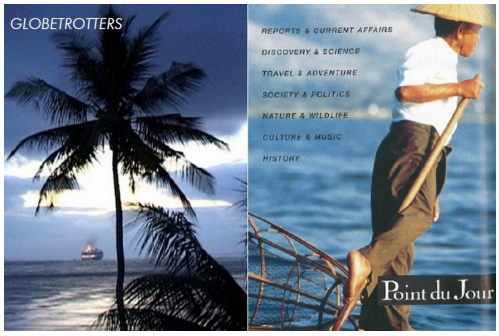

CHILE: GHOSTS OF CHACABUCO

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With temperatures of 45 degrees in the shade, the Atacacam desert, in northern Chile, is said to be the most arid in the world. Nevertheless, until the 1940s, there used to be a town here, Chacabuco, with a population varying between 20,000 and 30,000 inhabitants, mostly engineers and miners. There were shops, cafés, brothels. Two men remained, José and Roberto, the town's last watchmen. Cut off from the rest of the world, José and Roberto have formed the "free town of Chacabuco", a place of memories. Those of the miners of old and of the political prisoners that General Pinochet sent into desert exile during the years of repression.

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