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Visiting Group of delegates at the Staszic-Wujek Coal Mine (photo by Piotr Gerber)

MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

POLES HOST A MAGNETIC MEETING IN KATOWICE

Miles Oglethorpe, TICCIH President

In mid-November, I was enormously fortunate to be invited to attend a conference hosted by Poland's National Heritage Institute, the Polish TICCIH Committee, and the Foundation for the Preservation of Industrial Heritage of Silesia. Entitled *Industrial Heritage in the Heart of Green Europe* and led by Dr Piotr Gerber, the event took place at the Silesian Museum, a spectacular re-purposed coal mine complex and focused on current priorities for preserving industrial heritage, especially in the context of sustainable regeneration and adaptive reuse. It was a tremendous programme with formidable speakers, but it was also notable because it brought together some of TICCIH's most important partner organizations in a sequence of specialist panels.

As a result, we were able to address issues like the urgent need to secure long-term supplies of fossil fuels for working and mobile heritage. There were also sessions focusing on the heritage of port cities such as Gdansk, Gdynia, and Wroclaw and the role the media can play in promoting the preservation of industrial heritage. It was especially good to be able to meet and work with colleagues from FIVA, FedecRail, ERIH, Europa Nostra and ICOMOS, as well as Heritage Institute staff and TICCIH activists from across Poland. However, the icing on the cake was towards the end of the programme when we discussed the creation of TICCIH Europe.



Pablo Mallegni, ex-stoneworker, sharing his know-how at the stonemasons' and sculptors' workshop organized at La Calera 1888 in 2018 (photo by Cecilia Alves)

ers have stopped in time), involving neighbours of the city, promoting the recovery of practical knowledge but also memories of the industrial past in decline after the cement factory closure in 2019.

Therefore, La Calera 1888 becomes an example of industrial heritage recovery managed by the community. This means that the ac-

tivities are conceived, promoted, and financed by city residents in relation to other institutions (both private and state).

Ana Pía Recavarren is a member of the research group on anthropology and industrial archaeology (GIAAI-NuRES-FACSO-UNICEN)

CHILE

GLOCAL HISTORIOGRAPHIES AND CRITICAL INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE: STRIVING FOR A MULTIDIMENSIONAL HERITAGIZATION OF THE EL SAUCE Y LA LUZ HYDROELECTRIC COMPLEX IN VALPARAÍSO

Dr. Marion Steiner, University of Chile, ANID Fondecyt Iniciación 11230957 & Pamela Fuentes, Director of the Historical Museum of Placilla

The El Sauce y La Luz hydroelectric complex in the hinterland of Valparaíso was put into operation in 1906 to provide large-scale electrification to what was then the most important port city on the Pacific coast of South America. It was the second hydroelectric system built in Chile after the

Chivilingo plant that electrified the coalmines of Lota in the South and the first one for public use. Since Berlin firms built it in collaboration with local partners, it represents a heritage shared globally between the mythical Electropolis Berlin and the traditional port city of Chile.

While a large part of the local population and the national authorities still ignore the existence of El Sauce y La Luz, local communities on the outskirts of Valparaíso are increasingly demanding the preservation of this extraordinary industrial heritage site, which is in a deplorable condition and has no legal protection so far. One key actor in this process is the **Historical Museum of Placilla**, a local community museum founded in 2009 by enthusiastic people who started to rediscover their industrial and environmental heritage and joined forces through the Placilla Cultural Centre.

Cross-research in Valparaíso and Berlin since 2011

Around the same time, still without knowing each other, research in Berlin had started on the history and heritage of “Electropolis,” with



Field trip with students and local authorities to the El Sauce hydroelectric plant on the outskirts of Valparaíso, 27 April 2019 (photo by Francisco Rivero)

the initial goal to prepare a World Heritage nomination focused on the sites that tell the story of Berlin's rise as an industrial metropolis. The creation of the **Berlin Center for Industrial Heritage BZI** in late 2011 as a joint venture of the German Technical Museum and the University of Applied Sciences HTW Berlin allowed deepening the historical research on the global networks of power that pushed urban electrification worldwide and had a vital epicenter in Berlin.

The first key products were the Second BZI Forum on Industrial Culture and Society **"The Electropolis and its Grid"** in 2013 and the publication **"Berlin's Industrial Heritage: Substantial Past – Sustainable Future"** edited by BZI and the Berlin State Department of Monuments in three subsequent editions from 2013 onwards. Another pillar became the research conducted by Marion Steiner on the specific role of the AEG-Deutsche Bank group in the electrification process of the two most important Chilean cities before World War I, which resulted in the PhD thesis **"The Chilean plug: A small global history of German electrification in Valparaíso and Santiago de Chile, 1880-1920,"** published by Bauhaus University Weimar in 2019 (available open access in German; Vol. I includes a synopsis and a detailed index in Spanish).

In the framework of this research, the authors of the present article met for the first time on December 26, 2014, in the museum in Placilla, for a joint field trip to the La Luz water reservoir and the El Sauce plant. Impressed by the local community's work and motivated by the actual social need on the ground to identify, determine and defend the heritage values of the El Sauce y La Luz complex, Marion moved from Berlin to Valparaíso in 2018 with the aim to strengthen the collaborations between colleagues in both cities and to push the heritagization process in Chile from a critical perspective. Since then, from the **ESPI Lab Valparaíso**, the **Historical Museum of Placilla** and the **International Heritage Center** in Weimar, we have been working together on cross-cutting transdisciplinary research and applying participatory methodologies in order to develop new historiographical perspectives that reveal the interconnectivity between the two cities, the complexity of parallel processes at the global and local levels and the everyday lives and realities of electric workers in Valparaíso.

First collaborations included a series of small projects funded by the Pontifical Catholic University of Valparaíso that allowed for taking students on field trips, conducting research with them and elaborating



International cooperation visit to El Sauce for the FONDECYT project, 14 October 2023. Bottom, from left to right: Miguel Ángel Álvarez Areces, economist, President of INCUNA, Spain; Humberto Morales, historian, President of the Mexican Committee for the Conservation of Industrial Heritage CMCP; Marion Steiner; Pamela Fuentes; Moulshri Joshi, architect, TICCIH International Board Member and SpaceMatters, India. Top, from left to right: Sonsoles Aguilar, geographer; Suditya Sinha, architect, TICCIH India and SpaceMatters; Francisco Rivero, President of the Placilla Cultural Center; Camila Mera, historian (photo by Andrés Moreira)

the first maps of the hydroelectric complex, while always insisting on critically question the celebratory narratives that tend to be constructed around German electrification as a supposed contribution to local urban development and that regularly fail to mention the big business that this technology transfer meant for German imperialists.

A significant milestone was then the FONDART research project financed by the Chilean Ministry for Cultures, Arts and Heritage, whose final outcome was our book “**Light for Valparaíso,**” published in 2021 through the Placilla Cultural Centre (in Spanish). In March 2023, a new phase has started with the FONDECYT project “**Light, Progress and Power: German urban electrification of Latin America in its geopolitical and cultural context 1880-1920,**” funded by the Chilean Research and Development Agency ANID for three years, hosted by the Faculty of Philosophy and Humanities of the University of Chile and implemented in cooperation with the Bauhaus University Weimar.

Additional inputs come from the international research network coordinated by Tim Moss from the Humboldt University of Berlin which will result in the publication of a first book chapter in English language titled “**Electropolis Berlin – A New Urban Vision Fuelled by Coal and Imperial Ambitions**” (in print); the inter-institutional

research project on **Global History of Energy in Chile** between the University of Chile and the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science in Berlin, funded by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, which will culminate in an edited book, also in English language; and the preparations for the ICOHTEC World Congress 2024 in Chile, including workshops of the **HCTS Lab Chile**.

German urban electrification in Latin America before World War I

The current FONDECYT project builds on key findings from previous research on the Berlin electrification of Valparaíso and Santiago de Chile, opening up a comparative perspective to other cases in Latin America before World War I. Against the background of early globalization and the heydays of European imperialism, the project is defined from the different perspectives of technical, economic and cultural history with intakes from global urban history and geography, which enables a complex set of cases to be analyzed.

In addition to Valparaíso and Santiago de Chile, where the AEG-Deutsche Bank group took the lead thanks to an agreement signed with Siemens in 1898, Salvador de Bahía in Brazil and Mexico City were



Visit to the hydropower plant Chivilingo, 17 October 2023, during the IV International and Interdisciplinary Cultural Heritage Congress in Concepción (see the report by Esperanza Rock and Marion Steiner in Bulletin #102). Chilean entrepreneur Isidora Goyenechea commissioned the Chivilingo plant to electrify the coalmines of Lota. It was the country's first hydropower station put into service in 1897. (photo by CreaSur Cultural Center Photographic Archives)

chosen as case studies. In Salvador, on the basis of the same 1898 agreement, Siemens led the process of urban electrification by applying different business strategies than AEG, while the case of Mexico City sheds light on the competition of German actors with their North American antagonists. The comparative analysis of these four cases in three Latin American countries shows the networks and human relations that existed between the main actors, and reveals differences and similarities in the ways in which they acted locally in the German economic conquest of Latin America.

Special attention is paid to the role of waterpower in the interactions, disagreements and collaborations between German and Latin American actors. For Valparaíso and Santiago, we already have demonstrated the fundamental role that local and intermediary actors played in the implementation of hydroelectric systems instead of the continuing use of coal, which was the prevailing energy model of AEG and Deutsche Bank. The El Sauce y La Luz hydroelectric complex is, in fact, the physical result of a political and technical dispute that lasted more than a decade, and the case eventually became the great exception from the fossil-fuelled rule, which attributes a particular heritage value to it.

We are keen to know more about what happened in the same time period in Mexico and Brazil, in order to develop critical views on German technological imperialism in Latin America from a comparative North-South and South-South perspective, recognizing patterns in the electrical conquest of Latin America and critically reviewing the major modernizing discourses that have accompanied the implementation of the new large-scale technological systems in the capital region of Chile, Salvador de Bahía and Mexico City. This will also allow us to contribute to the on-going process of reconceptualizing industrial heritage from the South, which is well on its way since the TICCIH World Congress 2022 in Canada and the latest Latin American one in Mexico 2023 (see Camilo Contreras' report in Bulletin #102).

Eventually, we hope to decolonize heritage narratives around electric heritage in Valparaíso and push its legal recognition and protection. An update of the Chilean heritage legislation is needed for this, as the current one does not consider industrial heritage at all, nor does it recognize linear elements or infrastructure systems.

If you wish to share knowledge and ideas, please contact marion@patrimoniocritico.cl.