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MAIN SECTION

The Decaying Port City as a Tourist Destination: Valparaíso's Commodified Decline

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ABSTRACT
This article explores how neoliberal policies shaped the transformation of Valparaíso, Chile, from a deindustrialized, declining city to a site of tourist appeal that commodifies, in an ambivalent but striking way, its own decay. We describe the city's economic, social and cultural trajectory from a period of global importance as a key port city to its deindustrialization and accelerated decline, particularly in light of the imposition of violent economic policies between the 1970s and 90s. Drawing on the notion of slow violence and critical literature around heritage, postcolonial, deindustrial and 'poverty' tourism, we trace the impact and materiality of economic abandonment into the present moment, together with the city's contemporary reliance on tourism for economic survival through a form of dereliction tourism. In a port city like Valparaíso, which has suffered economic decline, widening inequality and precariousness, of which neoliberalism is one cause, the full plasticity and ambivalence of neoliberalization processes is revealed.

KEYWORDS
Valparaíso; Slow Violence; Neoliberalization; Dereliction Tourism; Heritagization

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Introduction

Port cities have been fundamental for the expansion of capitalism. They connect distant territories by channelling "flows" of "commodities, capital, migrants, and tourists".[1] Nevertheless, the relation between port cities and capitalism has been anything but stable. The history of Valparaiso, the mythical Chilean port in the South Pacific, has been marked by accelerated urban development and industrialization during the second half of the 19th and early 20th century, followed by a period of long but steady economic decay, deindustrialization, persistent casual labour, poverty and urban inequality.[2] What was the impact of neoliberal policies in Valparaíso and how did these policies respond to urban decline? This article explores how the neoliberal transformation of the port city of Valparaíso drove the deindustrialized, declining city to become a site of tourist appeal that commodifies, in an ambivalent but striking way, its own decay. Rather than providing a straightforward solution to the challenge of urban development, this strategy raises troubling new questions. How can the industrial past be remembered with integrity rather than sensationalized and romanticized, while satisfying the tourist desire for authenticity? Are the ethical tensions possible to overcome without falling into a coloniality of entertainment, poverty tourism and exotism, with a power dynamic established between rich, voyeuristic visitors and struggling locals? Is it possible to implement a culture-led and tourism-led development strategy that pays tribute to the history, culture and identity of local communities? And can local communities recover the postcolonial, post-industrial touristic city for themselves? Rather than providing clear answers to each of these questions, our aim is to interrogate and unsettle dominant discourses on development through tourism.

In the next section, we explain our selection of Valparaiso as a case study and describe the city's economic and social trajectory from a period of global importance as a key port city to deindustrialization and the acceleration of the city's decline during the dictatorship and its imposition of violent economic policies in the 1970s and 80s. Next, we set out our methodology and the value of exploring visual data when considering the tourist gaze. The following section presents our conceptual framework of neoliberalism, 'slow violence' and dereliction tourism. In the two sections that follow, we deploy these analytical tools to examine photographs that illustrate the impact and materiality of economic abandonment into the present moment. The final two sections discuss our findings and conclude

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1 Boris Vormann, *Global Port Cities in North America: Urbanization Processes and Global Production Networks* (London: Routledge, 2015), 3, https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315739557.

2 Pablo Aravena and Pablo Andueza, eds., *Valparaíso Reclamado. Demandas Ciudadanas de La Ciudad-Puerto* (Valparaíso: Perseo Ediciones, 2013); Hernán Cuevas and Jorge Budrovich, "La Neoliberalización De Los Puertos En Chile: El Caso de La Ciudad-Puerto de Valparaíso," *Revista Austral de Ciencias Sociales*, no. 38 (2020): 337–63, https://doi.org/10.4206/rev.austral.cienc.soc.2020.n38-17; Marcelo Mellado and Patricio Rozas, *Política y ciudadanía: los gritos del Puerto* (Valparaíso: La Quebrada, 2017).

that the articulation of neoliberalism and tourism favours the production and consumption of Valparaiso's degraded urban places and the appropriation of its past, current and imaginary sociocultural landscape as a tourist destination. The city's contemporary reliance on tourism for economic survival is examined as a form of dereliction tourism, drawing on critical studies on heritage, postcolonialism, deindustrialization and 'poverty' tourism.[3] We argue that the materiality of the city – written through with inequalities - has been put to work towards the city's economic survival in the context of neoliberal slow violence. That is, "a violence that occurs gradually and out of sight, a violence of delayed destruction that is dispersed across time and space, an attritional violence that is typically not viewed as violence at all."[4] The case study of Valparaíso, which has suffered economic decline, widening inequality and precariousness, reveals the full plasticity and ambivalence of neoliberalization processes. Neoliberal intervention, we argue, offered Valparaíso the tools – and created the necessity - to commodify and market its own historical decay as 'heritage' for tourists.

Valparaíso as a Paradigmatic Case

Valparaiso is a port city located in the Pacific coast of central Chile, 116km north-west from Santiago. It was established in 1544 as the Official Port of Santiago, three years after the founding of the capital city. Valparaíso was not meant to become a city in its own right, merely an operative site for the supply of Santiago. Between 1850 and 1914, Valparaíso was one of the most important ports in the Southern Pacific, as vessels moving goods between Europe and the west coast of the USA were forced by the long journey around South America to stop off in Valparaíso. During this Golden Era, Valparaíso became a thriving and progressive city, a commercial hub, a financial node, and a home to artistic movements and literature. As the Unesco World Heritage description reads: "Valparaíso is an exceptional testimony to the early phase of globalization in the 19th century, when it became the leading commercial port on the sea routes of the Pacific coast of South America." This Golden Era came to an end when the Panama Canal opened in 1914. Ships no longer needed to undertake the long odyssey, causing the slow but steady decline of Valparaíso.

The expansion of international trade, the restructuring of production and transport, and globalization have altered the world economy, transforming the world-system into a plastic and networked economy of global supply

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3 Rodney Harrison, *Heritage. Critical Approaches* (New York: Routledge, 2013); Alice Mah, "The Dereliction Tourist: Ethical Issues of Conducting Research in Areas of Industrial Ruination," *Sociological Research Online* 19, no. 4 (2014): 162–75, https://doi.org/10.5153/sro.3330; Manfred Rolfes, "Poverty Tourism: Theoretical Reflections and Empirical Findings Regarding an Extraordinary Form of Tourism," *GeoJournal* 75, no. 5 (2010): 421–42, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10708-009-9311-8.

4 Rob Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (Cambridge, MA. and London: Harvard University Press, 2011), 2, https://doi.org/10.4159/harvard.9780674061194.

chains that continually reorganize the international division of labour and the global geography of capitalism.[5] Parallel to global processes, neoliberal modernization in Chile replaced 'inefficient' traditional and industrial activities in Central Chile with efficient agribusiness and mining. Because the efficiency of port logistics was key to the global competitiveness of these extractive sectors,[6] the logistical modernization of the port followed a similar pattern of neoliberal restructuring, including the virtual privatization of the waterfront, new infrastructure, containerization and intermodal transport and, more recently, giant shipping, automation, computerization and online tracking. This economic restructuring, implemented more decisively since 1974 under the dictatorship, had ambivalent effects on Valparaíso's social and economic life.[7]

These policies caused deindustrialization and a massive loss of working-class jobs in the docks and manufacturing sectors. The docks' labour force was cut by 60% in the early 1980s and the average hourly wage of the regular dockworker dropped at a similar rate.[8] Traditional maritime industries and employment declined, destroying numerous good quality jobs, giving way to a more capital-intensive and productive logistical process. The neoliberal modernization produced a permanent reserve army of unemployed labour, social precarity, poverty and inequality.[9] Similar to other port cities, Valparaíso's urban fabric has been influenced historically by its global connectivity and lifestyle, and the presence of water as an important aspect of daily life. In recent times, Valparaiso's port cityscape has been determined by the logic of neoliberal capitalist modernization and its changes in port activity, technologies and infrastructure.[10] This involved a spatial restructuring of the littoral, which has been virtually privatized through several public bids that favoured big business: in concrete, retail (such as Plaza and CENCOSUD holdings), cruise passengers terminal (Terminal de Pasajeros Valparaíso, from the Urenda family holding) and port companies (such as Terminal Pacífico Sur from the von Appen family holding and Terminal Cerros de Valparaíso from the Spanish

5 Hernán Cuevas and Jorge Budrovich, "La Neoliberalización De Los Puertos En Chile"; Paul Ciccantell and Stephen Bunker, eds., *Space and Transport in the World-System* (London: Greenwood Press, 1998).

6 Empresa Portuaria Valparaíso, *1912 Plan de Desarrollo Portuario 2012* (Valparaíso: EPV, 2012).

7 Cuevas and Budrovich, "La Neoliberalización De Los Puertos En Chile."

8 Hernán Cuevas and Jorge Budrovich, "Contested Logistics? Neoliberal Modernization and Resistance in the Port City of Valparaíso," in *Choke Points. Logistics Workers Disrupting the Global Supply Chain*, ed. Jake Alimahomed-Wilson and Immanuel Ness (London: Pluto Press, 2018), 162–78.

9 Ibid.; Valentina Leal and Carlos Aguirre, *Estiba y desestiba. Trabajo y relatos del Valparaíso que fue* (1938–1981) (Chile: Inubicalistas, 2020).

10 Jerry H. Bentley, Renate Bridenthal, and Karen Wigen, *Seascapes: Maritime Histories, Littoral Cultures, and Transoceanic Exchanges* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007); Joan Alemany and Rinio Bruttomesso, eds., *The Port city of the XXIst century. New challenges in the relationship between port and city* (Alghero, IT: RETE, 2011); Carola Hein et al., "Introduction: Connecting Water and Heritage for the Future," in *Adaptive Strategies for Water Heritage: Past, Present and Future*, ed. Carola Hein (Cham: Springer, 2020), 1–18, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-00268-8_1.

holding OHL).[11] Although port activity is lucrative, its relative weight in the city's economic life has steadily declined. Additionally, a physical separation was installed between the modern port and the city, symbolic for critics who state that Valparaíso does not benefit from its port.[12] The city today has an ambivalent, disconnected relationship with the port, yet one which is excavated for, and prized in, the tourist imagination.

Methodology

In this article we use photography, along with our ethnographic account and reflexive interpretations, to provide a greater understanding of the commodification of urban heritage, inequality and poverty. As Douglas Harper states, "[t]he photograph can be thought of as 'data'".[13] Across sociology, urban studies, anthropology, criminology and many other disciplines, the so-called 'visual turn' has emphasized the potential of analysing images, their production and cultural interpretation.[14] We are attentive to the various problems of theory, methods, ethical engagement, and social responsibilities that come with the production, representation, and analysis of images.[15] We follow Linfield in acknowledging that photographs are open-ended and that this is part of their power:

> "by refusing to tell us what to feel, and allowing us to feel things we don't quite understand, they make us dig, and even think, a little deeper….we might see them as part of a process—the beginning of a dialogue, the start of an investigation—into which we thoughtfully, consciously enter."[16]

A particular, critical reading of photographs, which we offer here, can stand as an invitation to look more carefully and critically and to interrupt

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11 Cuevas and Budrovich, "Contested Logistics? Neoliberal Modernization and Resistance in the Port City of Valparaíso."

12 Aravena and Andueza, *Valparaíso Reclamado. Demandas Ciudadanas de La Ciudad-Puerto*; Mellado and Rozas, Política y ciudadanía: los gritos del Puerto.

13 Douglas Harper, "An Argument for Visual Sociology," in *Image-Based Research: A Sourcebook for Qualitative Researchers*, ed. Jon Prosser (London: Routledge, 1998), 29. See also Sarah Pink, *Doing Visual Ethnography: Images, Media and Representation in Research* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2001); Douglas Harper, *Visual Sociology* (New York: Routledge, 2012).

14 Fadwa El Guindi, *Visual Anthropology: Essential Theory and Method* (Lanham: Altamira Press, 2004); John Collier and Malcom Collier, *Visual Anthropology: Photography as a Research Method* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1967); Philip J. Ethington and Vanessa R. Schwartz, "Introduction: An Atlas of the Urban Icons Project," *Urban History* 33, no. 1 (2006): 5–19, https://doi.org/10.1017/S096392680600349X.

15 Michelle Brown, "Visual Criminology and Carceral Studies: Counter-Images in the Carceral Age," *Theoretical Criminology* 18, no. 2 (2014): 181, https://doi.org/10.1177/1362480613508426; Harper, Visual Sociology; Pink, *Doing Visual Ethnography: Images, Media and Representation in Research*; Gillian Rose, *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to Researching with Visual Materials* (New York: SAGE, 2011).

16 Susie Linfield, *The Cruel Radiance: Photography and Political Violence* (University of Chicago Press, 2010), 30, https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226482521.001.0001.

dominant discourses.[17] The political and emotional engagement with a particular interpretation of a photograph invites viewers to "allow the suffering of the world to enter into them instead of despising it as abjection."[18]

Collaboratively interpreting these photographs, we noted how "personality, cultural values, and ideologies of the viewer, as well as the context in which the images are presented, all shape the meaning of pictures."[19] Our different backgrounds as researchers - including nationality (one of us is Chilean, the other is Irish and visited for a short time, experiencing the city as a tourist), gender, mother tongue and disciplinary training - prompted reflexive conversations about the nature of the port city and its history, neoliberal restructuring and its legacies, and the place of the visual and the spatial in the tourist imaginary. Attentive to "a visual language that can be deciphered and the implications more fully understood",[20] photographic analysis was a revealing starting point for our joint analysis of the experience of dereliction in Valparaíso, and its commodification through tourism.

Modern tourism is a variegated field: from mainstream tourism, to alternative and niche tourism, including problematized categories such as poverty tourism and dereliction tourism.[21] Slums, ruins and abandoned infrastructure hold a strange appeal and can produce nostalgia for the past, attracting tourists by emphasising beauty in decay. But to view dereliction and ruins in this way - instead of as symbols of poverty and reminders of painful economic and social restructures - speaks to a particular, pre-existing perspective.[22] We consider here through illustrative photographic analysis what it means for a city – a port city with a rich economic, cultural and military history – to shape its identity around the presentation of aesthetics of decay for the tourist gaze. The concept of the tourist gaze "highlights that looking is a learned ability and that the pure and innocent eye is a myth".[23] To depict this gaze as unproblematic naturalizes its social and historical character, concealing the power relations involved in seeing as a tourist that often involves cultural, racial and colonial stereotypes. We note that the tourist gaze is not a one-directional process of influence and oppression. It is a dialectical process by which the expectations that tourists in search of 'authenticity' place on local populations and territories

17 Carly Guest and Rachel Seoighe, "Familiarity and Strangeness: Seeing Everyday Practices of Punishment and Resistance in Holloway Prison," *Punishment & Society* 22, no. 3 (2019): 353–75, https://doi.org/10.1177/1462474519883253.

18 Linfield, *The Cruel Radiance*, 30–31.

19 Phillippe Bourgois and Jeffrey Schonberg, *Righteous Dopefiend* (Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2009), 14.

20 Eamonn Carrabine, "Images of Torture: Culture, Politics and Power," *Crime, Media, Culture: An International Journal* 7, no. 1 (2011): 6, https://doi.org/10.1177/1741659011404418.

21 John Urry and Jonas Larsen, *The Tourist Gaze 3.0* (London and New York: SAGE, 2011), https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446251904; Rolfes, "Poverty Tourism"; Mah, "The Dereliction Tourist."

22 Mah, "The Dereliction Tourist."

23 Urry and Larsen, *The Tourist Gaze 3.0*, 1.

can potentially be mirrored and financially capitalized upon. This suggests a more active process of extracting or generating value from the remainders of historical heritage: commodifying decaying traditions, local culture, architecture and abandoned infrastructures for tourism development, heritage reappropriation and capital accumulation.

We collected different types of photographs. In some cases, we took pictures ourselves in an effort to depict and collaboratively analyse the situation under observation. In other cases, we used photographs from our own and others' collections and archives.[24] These photographs served as visual devices to reflect on the transformation of the city. Our selection was made from several hundred photographs. Both taking photographs and selecting images were part of a reflexive process integral to our research and interpretation. We favoured a selection of photographs (most of them our own) of the port city and its post-industrial materiality that we feel capture the tensions and contradictions between the economic, functional site of the port city, 'heritigized' tourism sites and the abandonment of the city's poor to slow violence. The visual is prominent in touristic place promotion: it "presents the world as image".[25] As a result, "the reveries of tourists are likely to be the reveries determined by tourism and its imagery".[26] In our photographic analysis, we draw on Cultura Puzzle's guide to Valparaíso and Lonely Planet's tourist guide to explore how Valparaíso's post-industrial character and sites of memory are 'renarrativized' and repurposed for the tourist gaze. Photographs are culturally embedded and, at the same time, they are subjective. Their meanings depend on a constructed gaze and on who is looking. As will become clear in the following sections, these photographs disrupt touristic discourses and reveal the slow violence underway in Valparaíso. In sum, our pictures of Valparaíso are visual data integral to our observations in the field, our joint and cross-disciplinary analysis, and our critical portrait of Valparaiso's decayed decadence and its commodification through tourism.

Neoliberal 'Slow Violence' and Dereliction Tourism: Critical Tourism Studies and Neoliberal Appropriation of Heritage

Valparaíso's transformation over time produced a particularly hybrid urban landscape consisting of poor slums (resulting from decades of rural immigration, impoverishment and popular land grabbing since the

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24 We are grateful to Empresa Portuaria Valparaíso, Luis Muñoz and Héctor Aguilera, local photographers, who kindly offered us their own collections and archive.

25 Nigel Morgan, "Problematizing Place Promotion," in *A Companion to Tourism*, ed. Alan A. Lew, C. Michael Hall, and Allan M. Williams (Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004), 177, https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470752272.ch14.

26 Peter Osborne, *Travelling Light: Photography, Travel and Visual Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 27.

1960s), abandoned infrastructures and industrial ruins (resulting from deindustrialization and productive restructuring in the 1980s), alongside redevelopment projects and gentrified areas with restaurants and boutique hotels (resulting from neoliberal marketization and promotion of local and global tourism since the 1990s).[27] The poverty and inequalities of the city are presented to the tourist - or at least form the background 'scenery' of the tourist experience - as 'authenticity' and 'culture' in a process of 'culturisation'.[28] The abandoned areas of Valparaíso are important to the tourist gaze only as the 'background' or 'scenery' against which the city is understood. For example, the Lonely Planet describes the "spectacular faded beauty of its chaotic cerros (hills)",[29] encouraging tourists to consider these housing constellations as a "charming jumble",[30] but, in fact, we see precarious and crude housing in informal settlements, and the abandonment of people to degrading living conditions **[Fig. 1]**. As critical tourism studies tell us, tourism is promoted today as "an industry that can turn poor countries' very poverty into a magnet for sorely needed foreign currency".[31] Studies on 'poorism' or 'poverty tourism' show that poverty itself can be semantically charged as 'culture'[32] and marketed to tourists searching for 'authenticity,' 'reality' and the complexities of place. While the tourist industry might renarrativize poverty and the experience of slow violence, destitution and poverty are part of the appeal for tourists.[33]

While Cultura Puzzle acknowledges that "the city owes greater attention to the detriment of the urban infrastructure and equipment" in the hills, it explicitly states that "those areas with World Heritage status, historical monuments and historic neighborhoods" ought especially to be prioritized.[34] When a city is reshaped for the tourist gaze, the value of heritage, and the efforts expended on its upkeep, is in relation to touristic commodification. The abandonment of local residents stands in contrast to the investment in, and 'heritagization' of, other parts of the city. In the following sections, we use the conceptual framework of slow violence to analyse Valparaíso's dependency on tourism and the ways in which that dependency transforms and commodifies the city's relationship with its past.

The many threads and complexities of Valparaíso's history and neoliberal modernization, including this phase of culture-led and tourism-led

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27 Francisco Quintana and Francisco Díaz, eds., *Proyecto Ciudad: Valparaìso* (Santiago: ARQ Editores, 2015).

28 Rolfes, "Poverty Tourism."

29 Lonely Planet, *South America*, 14th ed. (Lonely Planet, 2019), 467.

30 Ibid., 471.

31 Regina Scheyvens, "Exploring the Tourism-Poverty Nexus," *Current Issues in Tourism* 10, no. 2–3 (2007): 238, https://doi.org/10.2167/cit318.0.

32 Ramchander 2007, cited in Rolfes, "Poverty Tourism," 439.

33 Ibid., 422.

34 Cultura Puzzle, *Valparaíso capital cultural* (Valparaíso: Ediciones Universitarias de Valparaíso, PUCV, 2010), 27.

FIG. 1 Steep stairs in Valparaíso's Slums. Image by Hernán Cuevas Valenzuela.

development, are more intelligible if we interpret them as a banal, gradual but pervasive process of violence. Nixon defines slow violence as violence that is attritional, often disguised or invisible across temporal and cultural frames."[35] The unspectacular, mundane violence of neoliberalism in Valparaíso has generated widespread resistance in recent years. 2019's protests saw public outrage directed squarely at the violence of neoliberalism and the brutal inequalities it generates, resulting in a constitutional referendum. The contradictions of tourism's role in the city's economy and identity was laid bare in this context: the centrality of tourism to the neoliberal economy is undeniable, the visibility of socio-political unrest had significant economic implications, yet the city's primary tourist sites were strangely untouched by the uprisings.[36] The impact of the Covid-19 public health crisis on global tourism has also revealed the

35 Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*, 2.

36 See: https://portalportuario.cl/2017-ano-los-pasajeros-la-carga-entraron-conflicto/ and https://portalportuario.cl/primavera-portuaria-trabajadores-eventuales-cumplen-un-mes-movilizados-en-valparaiso/ [26-12-2020]

imprudence of over-reliance on tourism, and highlighted the socio-economic vulnerabilities and inequalities emerging from the neoliberal settlement.

Slow violence is at work in the city of Valparaíso. Yet for the tourist, the city's economic and material decline actually provides a certain appeal: a desired sense of authenticity, a narrative of industrial grandeur to post-industrial decay, and a romanticized colonial maritime and military history. The iconography of place associated with the city's decline is commodified and marketed in 'place promotion,' allowing for a process of 'heritigisation'[37] and gentrification that drives the tourist economy. This is a deeply violent neoliberal process and one that illustrates Nixon's warning that slow violence can become taken-for-granted, perceived as the natural order of things, even – essentially - re-written as 'recovery.'[38] In Valparaíso, the city's decayed sites of industrial and cultural memory are transformed into 'heritage' and put to work as economic resources; the 'authentic' materiality of the city becomes valuable primarily in relation to capital generation through touristic appeal. Neoliberalism provides the tools to commodify and market the city's decay and poverty to the tourist gaze. In short, the city's economic survival has become reliant on a form of dereliction tourism that markets its own deterioration. This is a violent strategy, with implications for cultural identity and dignity, economic stability and equality (particularly in times of political upheaval and global crisis), and sense of place.

Residents, visitors and the tourism industry all participate in the continuous social construction of tourism landscapes.[39] The appeal of tourism is often to encounter different cultures; culture is a mode of observation for the observance of differences as cultural differences.[40] Through observation, the tourist conceives of culture as a social construct, enveloping poverty, dereliction and decay within this framework of 'culturization.' Tourism involves a process of 'place promotion' which contributes to the cultural production and consumption of landscapes, spaces and places through "the comprehensive application of marketing techniques".[41] The stories, myths, visuals and materiality of place are commandeered by the tourist imperative to serve a clear business function, a marketing rationale. The discourses set to work also reveal taken-for-granted underlying narratives of place; the effect is to immobilize "our dynamic world, changing it to spectacle and straitjacketing it in cliché and stereotype."[42] The tourist, driven by postmodern alienation, is searching for the 'authentic'

37 Gregory J. Ashworth and John E. Tunbridge, "Whose Tourist-Historic City? Localizing the Global and Globalizing the Local," in *A Companion to Tourism Studies*, ed. Alan A. Lew, C. Michael Hall, and Allan M. Williams (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 212.

38 Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*.

39 Morgan, "Problematizing Place Promotion," 173.

40 Pott 2005: 92, cited in Rolfes, "Poverty Tourism," 439.

41 Hughes 1998: 19, cited in Morgan, "Problematizing Place Promotion," 174.

42 Ibid.

elsewhere, in otherness.[43] The authenticity desired by the tourist is staged by tourism, providing a sense of a backstage glance into 'native' lives.[44]

There is an intimate relationship between place promotion and heritage. Place and people are transformed into heritage to "produce a unique product reflecting and promoting a unique place or group identity."[45] 'Heritage tourism' means that a city – a product in an economy of 'globally competitive' cities – must have a "unique selling point," a particular, marketable local heritage.[46] Heritagization is "the process through which heritage is created from the attributes of the past – including relics, artifacts, memories, or recorded histories."[47] The histories, cultures, material remains, geographical idiosyncrasies and mythologies of Valparaíso as a post-colonial port city are marketable commodities. Industrial heritage tourism - defined as "the development of touristic activities and industries on man-made sites, buildings and landscapes that originated with industrial processes of earlier periods"[48] - is seen as a sensible means of not only preserving heritage but also reconstructing and monetizing these landscapes. This is an intensely material process - sites available for commodification include buildings and architecture, factories and machinery - but it also refers to cultural histories extant within entire communities.[49]

A series of historical and economic shifts associated with postmodernism such as deindustrialization, gentrification and commodification have led to the rise of industrial heritage tourism.[50] The slow violence of industrial decay, counterintuitively, generates a marketable city:

> "The perception of industrial heritage, which has evolved as a feeling of disorder and decay in the ruins, turns out to be an appeal. The raw character of the space has increasingly become the focus of neoliberal conceptions of urban planning."[51]

Industrial ephemera produces a landscape "more interesting than present-day modernity" in this era of postmodern collective nostalgia, which Xie understands as a third industrial revolution: urban renewal as a means of reviving decayed industries has become the norm and "brings industrial

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43 Ibid.

44 Dean MacCannell, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class*, Berkeley, CA (University of California Press, 1999), 99.

45 Ashworth and Tunbridge, "Whose Tourist-Historic City? Localizing the Global and Globalizing the Local," 211.

46 Ibid.

47 Ibid., 212.

48 J. Arwel Edwards and Joan Carles Llurdés i Coit, "Mines and Quarries: Industrial Heritage Tourism," *Annals of Tourism Research* 23, no. 2 (January 1996): 342, https://doi.org/10.1016/0160-7383(95)00067-4.

49 Philip Feifan Xie, *Industrial Heritage Tourism* (Bristol: Channel View Publications, 2015), https://doi.org/10.21832/9781845415143.

50 Ibid., 44.

51 Ibid., 14–15.

FIG. 2 Industrial ruins in Valparaíso. Image by Hernán Cuevas Valenzuela.

romance into everyday life".[52] Nowhere in Valparaíso is this more evident than in the Barón Pier area. An abandoned post-industrial site comprising the ruins of industrial capitalism (docks, warehouses, a huge railway garage and other installations) is now reappropriated by leisure capitalism as part of an ambitious waterfront redevelopment plan consisting of the reconstruction - heritagization - of old warehouses and ruins as a shopping center and a waterfront promenade [Fig. 2].

A central concern articulated in industrial heritage tourism literature relates to the tension between authenticity and commodification, that industrial landscapes are distorted into aestheticized spaces of leisure and entertainment.[53] This is a selective, reductive process that tends towards the spectacular and erases more difficult histories.[54] The heritage discourse is constructed through the selective memory and prerogatives of various stakeholders in the celebration, commemoration and commodification processes.[55] While governments want to repurpose industrial districts towards a commercial future, as in Valparaíso, local heritage preservation movements hope to conserve the particular set of values associated with old industries, and tourism businesses capitalize on their

52 Ibid., 36–37.

53 Urry and Larsen, *The Tourist Gaze 3.0*; Xie, *Industrial Heritage Tourism*.

54 Robert Summerby-Murray, "Regenerating Cultural Identity through Industrial Heritage Tourism: Visitor Attitudes, Entertainment and the Search for Authenticity at Mills, Mines and Museums of Maritime Canada," *London Journal of Canadian Studies*, no. 30 (2015): 74, https://doi.org/10.14324/111.444.ljcs.2015v30.005.

55 Summerby-Murray, "Regenerating Cultural Identity through Industrial Heritage Tourism."

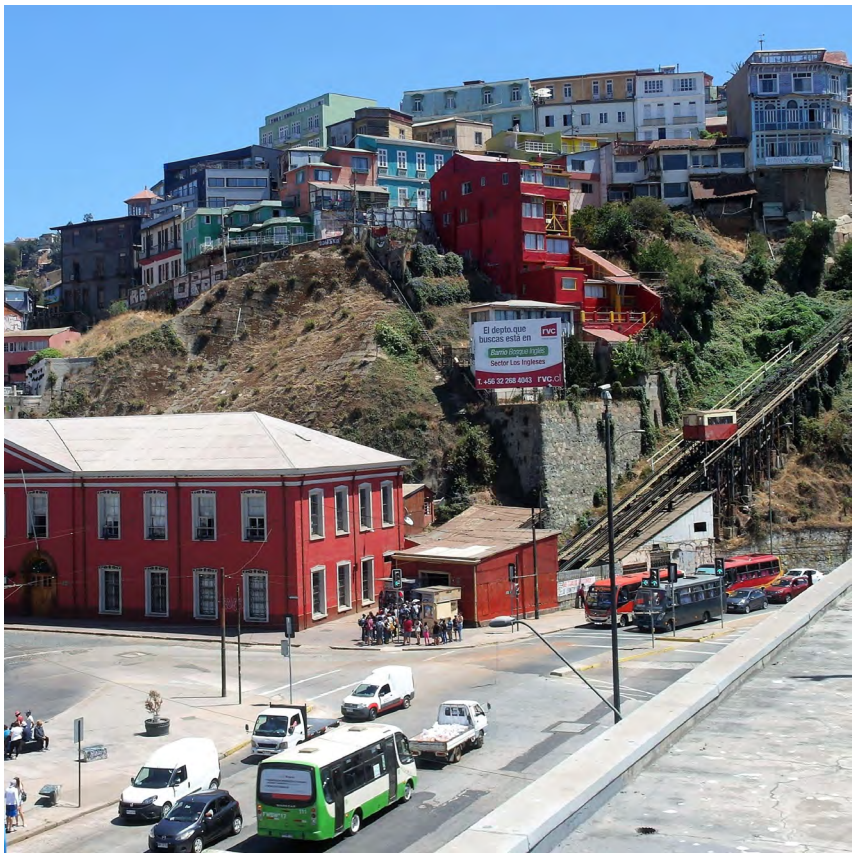

FIG. 3 Funicular at the touristic Cerro Artillería. Image by Hernán Cuevas Valenzuela.

commercial value.[56] The intertwined forms of tangible (buildings, landscapes, machinery) and intangible (values, lifestyles, traditions, mores and folklores) heritage are put to work by the tourism industry to generate capital.[57] 'Heritagization' is also highly selective locally, with implications for what heritage is preserved and receives investment. Of Valparaíso's funiculars, for example, many were granted National Historic Monument status but have ceased working in recent years "due to the financial losses involved in maintaining the elevator in operation".[58] Some funiculars in gentrified areas of the city, coinciding with UNESCO heritage site demarcation, however, are operational as "one of the best preserved manifestations of the city's industrial heritage and one of the most visited tourist attractions"[59] **[Fig. 3]**.

A significant part of Valparaíso's urban identity is the maritime awareness of its dwellers, who can see the port city from the hills **[Figs. 4-5]**. Valparaíso's unique topography also shaped its cityscape: it resembles a natural amphitheatre looking towards the bay, and many ravines cut the urban continuum.

56 Xie, *Industrial Heritage Tourism*, 7.

57 Ibid., 18–19.

58 Cultura Puzzle, *Valparaíso capital cultural*, 164.

59 Ibid., 183.

FIG. 4 Valparaíso as Amphitheatre. Image courtesy of Empresa Portuaria Valparaíso.

FIG. 5 Valparaíso Bay, view from Cerro Barón. Image by Hernán Cuevas Valenzuela.

Three urban areas are clearly identifiable: 1) the littoral or seacoast where most port activity takes place, 2) the so-called 'plan' where most public services, banks, universities and higher education institutions are located [Fig. 6], and 3) the 44 hills or boroughs where the majority of the population lives. Whereas the waterfront, the 'plan' and a few wealthy hills have been designed in line with architectural styles and urban planning criteria, the majority of the houses in the hills are the product of popular creativity and self-construction [Fig. 7].

Valparaíso embodies the idea that a city is always a collective and precarious built environment. Many houses seem to hang from the cliffs,

FIG. 6 Valparaíso's Historical Quarter. Image by Hernán Cuevas Valenzuela.

FIG. 7 Valparaíso's Slums (Cerro Cordillera). Image by Hernán Cuevas Valenzuela.

diverging from architectural principles, sound design, and canonical aesthetics. Valparaíso grew as a spontaneous network of narrow passages, long stairways, funiculars and elevators, with many established and informal city viewing-points, and a ubiquity of retaining walls that make construction possible. Central to the particular topography of Valparaíso is its steepness, providing views of the bay for the many residents of the hills. There is a cultural notion of the right to a view of the bay, which is evident in the construction of "spontaneous benches and balconies with a view of the sea."[60] It is a deeply unequal city – many of the hills' residents suffer extreme poverty, as well as fires, floods and earthquakes – yet there

60 Ibid., 26.

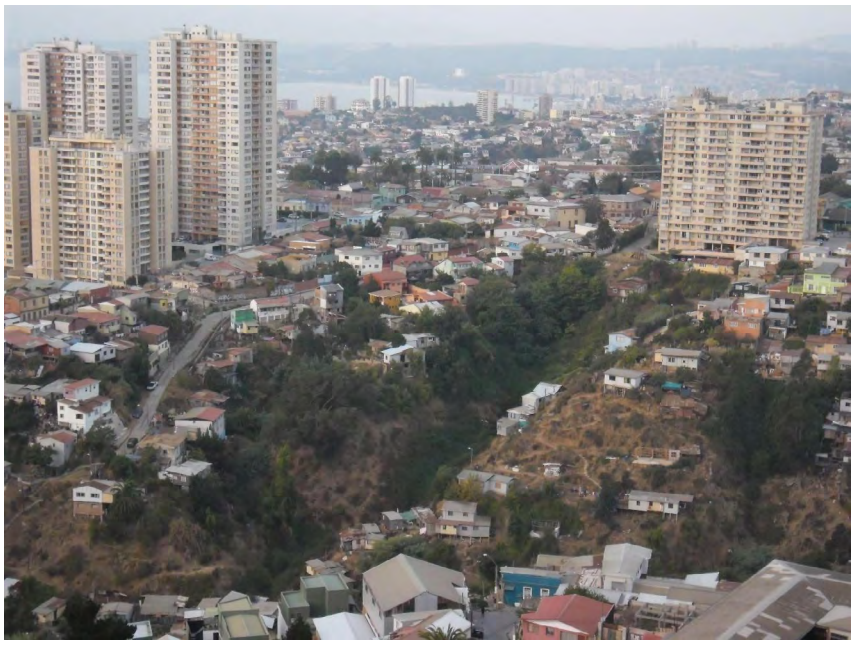

FIG. 8 Slums and Apartment Towers in Valparaíso. Image by Hernán Cuevas Valenzuela.

is an irresistibility to its topography, its view of itself. Enormous residential towers, many used during holidays by Santiaguinos and international tourists, now disrupt this local vista, depriving the hill's residents of this simple enjoyment of the city [Fig. 8]. This is indicative of the inequality of access to the city's benefits in the neoliberal, touristic settlement and the severance of these residents from the city's identity.

Neoliberalization and Heritigization

In neoliberalism's unstoppable drive for capital accumulation, the conditions of the city and its deprived residents are transformed into new, unexpected business opportunities. To resist the decay of the city and remain economically and culturally relevant, both the national government and Valparaíso's Municipality implemented an ambitious recovery programme through a public-private partnership in the early 2000s. The so-called *Plan Valparaíso* aimed at transforming the declining city into a site of global tourist appeal to supplement - and coexist with - the port city project.[61] This plan demanded a narrative of Valparaíso's identity and uniqueness, for which its port city culture was commodified for the purpose of economic development. This performative discourse re-signified the relevance of historic buildings, ruins and spaces, and popular culture.

According to the latest yearbook published by the National Tourism Service (SERNATUR), the number of foreign tourists who stayed for more than 2 nights in 2017 was 712.169.[62] During the summer of 2016-2017,

61 Quintana and Díaz, *Proyecto Ciudad: Valparaìso*.

62 Pedro Ernesto Moreira Gregori et al., "Turismo y Patrimonio. El Caso de Valparaíso (Chile) y El Perfil Del Turista Cultural," *PASOS. Revista de Turismo y Patrimonio Cultural* 17, no. 5 (2019): 1005–19, https://doi.org/10.25145/j.pasos.2019.17.071.

FIG. 9 Small touristic boats in the port of Valparaíso. Image courtesy of Héctor Aguilera.

the number of cruise passengers was close to 98.976.[63] A recent survey showed that most foreign tourists, and the numerous national visitors, are drawn to Valparaiso's port, its bay, hills, coast and especially its architecture, gastronomy and history that have made it a recognisable World Heritage Site by UNESCO.[64]

This turn to tourism has prompted debate around the city's identity in the public sphere. Critics argue that new cultural awareness has not produced better economic opportunities for its population, but benefited the tourism industry and real estate land speculation.[65] Central to this conflict are the uses of the limited seaside and areas suitable for port activities, a symptom of a much wider problematic. The competition for the coastline in Valparaíso is illustrated in **[Fig. 9]**, which shows a patient line of small boats, ready to take tourists for sightseeing tours of the bay, where they can enjoy a skyline view of the city from the water. In the background, industrial infrastructure – ships and cargo peers – frame the port entrance. Naval vessels loiter further out in the bay, connecting the tourist's imagination with the city's maritime past: Valparaíso, "the birthplace of the Chilean Navy and the city from where it powers over the sea."[66] These structures and vessels have a deep-rooted connection to the city's history and economic life, yet these smaller boats occupy valuable space in the port as the city is reconfigured for the tourist's gaze. The port is

63 Empresa Portuaria Valparaíso, *Memoria Anual 2020* (Valparaíso: EPV, 2020).

64 Moreira Gregori et al., "Turismo y Patrimonio. El Caso de Valparaíso (Chile) y El Perfil Del Turista Cultural."

65 Aravena and Andueza, *Valparaíso Reclamado. Demandas Ciudadanas de La Ciudad-Puerto*; Pablo Aravena, *La destrucción de Valparaíso* (Escritos antipatrimonialistas) (Chile: Inubicalistas, 2020); Mellado and Rozas, *Política y ciudadanía: los gritos del Puerto*.

66 Cultura Puzzle, *Valparaíso capital cultural*, 64.

FIG. 10 Ibis Hotel in Valparaíso. Image courtesy of Luis Muñoz.

offered up to tourist curiosity, an opportunity "to contemplate the shipping yards", to see the city from within and beyond the port.[67]

Just as the IBIS hotel in the next photograph **[Fig. 10]** illustrates, with its design reminiscent of colourful, piled up cargo containers, tourism finds its place in the centre of this functional port - the hotel is convenient for those disembarking cruise ships. Tourism makes another spatial intrusion into the port - the economic actors compete for space and, in a strangely parasitic relationship, the boats and the hotel enhance the 'portness' of the port for the tourist gaze, and welcome them inside its daily workings.

Yet the contemporary, functioning port and its place in the tourist imaginary is distinct from the heritage presented outside of the port walls: derelict, nostalgic industrial infrastructure and the particular hedonistic and cosmopolitan culture attributed to its past as a stopover port, "a place with abundant tavern tall tales and maritime stories".[68] The constructions and uses of the past are central to critical reflection about Valparaíso's contemporary identity.

67 Ibid., 177.

68 Ibid., 36.

Tourism's Coloniality and Failed Promise in Valparaíso

Tourism has ultimately failed in its promise to offer economic security for locals. Scholars have noted that international tourism fitted nicely into a neoliberal strategy of encouraging indebted countries to grow their economies and trade their way out of poverty.[69] Tourism can be considered a postcolonial system: it perpetuates the notion of 'periphery,' 'underdeveloped' Global South countries as both exotic and inferior.[70] Tourist economies are especially significant in economically underprivileged states; neoliberal international organizations such as the IMF and the World Bank champion tourism as a 'passport to development',[71] while the United Nations and international funders have framed it as a lever for development.[72] In the postcolonial world, the economic promise of contemporary mass tourism to newly decolonized countries saw the reproduction of colonial economic dynamics, with countries "welcoming back their old masters with open arms."[73] Local poverty also enables the growth of the industry at the expense of the locals who are compelled to offer cheap labour: "to some extent tourism always feeds off the poverty of host regions".[74] While governments will invest in infrastructure to meet the needs of tourists, local people often live without basics. Local residents are not mere victims of a destructive global industry[75] and do have opportunities for resistance and subversion. However, this agency is necessarily limited by the neoliberal socio-economic settlement, in which the poor rarely benefit from tourism.[76] 'Periphery' states such as Chile are forced to accept economic conditions set by 'core' countries. Local communities providing resources to tourists - often from the Global North – are compelled to accept economic conditions tourists view as appropriate:[77] "the power relations that condition these transactions are distinctly asymmetrical".[78] In post-industrial cities such as Valparaíso, the economic benefits

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69 Scheyvens, "Exploring the Tourism-Poverty Nexus."

70 Anne-Marie d'Hauteserre, "Postcolonialism, Colonialism and Tourism," in *A Companion to Tourism Studies*, ed. Alan A. Lew, C. Michael Hall, and Allan M. Williams (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 235–45; Jessica Bell Rizzolo, "Exploring the Sociology of Wildlife Tourism, Global Risks, and Crime," in *Conservation Criminology*, ed. Meredith L. Gore (Chichester, UK: Wiley Blackwell, 2017), 133–54, https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119376866.ch8.

71 Anthony Carrigan, *Postcolonial Tourism*, 0 ed. (Routledge, 2011), https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203832097.

72 Linda Boukhris and Emmanuelle Peyvel, "Tourism in the Context of Postcolonial and Decolonial Paradigms," *Via Tourism Review*, no. 16 (2019): 3, https://doi.org/10.4000/viatourism.4119.

73 Louis Turner and John Ash, *The Golden Hordes: International Tourism and the Pleasure Periphery* (London: Constable and Company Limited, 1975), 15.

74 Plüss & Backes, 2002, cited in Scheyvens, "Exploring the Tourism-Poverty Nexus," 238.

75 Ibid., 242.

76 Scheyvens argues that this is not inevitable, that tourism could be directed towards social and environmental goals and the needs of the poor, rather than serving neoliberal economic motives, Ibid., 249.

77 Bell Rizzolo, "Exploring the Sociology of Wildlife Tourism, Global Risks, and Crime."

78 Carrigan, *Postcolonial Tourism*.

of tourism do not necessarily help people whose livelihood and identity have been endangered or dismantled by deindustrialization.[79] The gentrification of former industrial sites and development of tourist attractions in and around these sites may create jobs but are no replacement for the former skilled industrial jobs, and often require skills that displaced workers do not have.[80] Employees in a newly generated tourist economy no longer require specialized skills and are therefore precarious and replaceable.[81] Where post-industrial economies rely primarily on tourism, the financial benefits to the local community may be insignificant and lead to increasing precarity.

Similar to other post-industrial places, Valparaíso embodies a distinctive place identity as a former centre of industry, colonial maritime and military history that constitute sources of pride for local residents. Tourism is conceived as a catalyst for meaning-making and identity (re)construction; the government may hope that actively emphasizing local heritage will encourage and strengthen people's identification with Valparaíso, as a condition for its successful external marketing. The production of tourist sites is expected to create a sense of place, to promote values such as uniqueness, imagination, authenticity and sustainability, and can generate community participation.[82] But while tourists seek out industrial landscapes out of "nostalgia for vanishing landmarks," industrial sites are increasingly romanticized and sanitized as part of a process of gentrification, commodification and post-industrialization that transforms space and culture.[83] In Valparaíso, history has been presented in a trendy, commodified version, fraught with spectacle and simulacra. Heritage and tourism development often fail to preserve intangible industrial values or create new values to unite the community.[84] Further, heritage tourism is a global phenomenon and the standardization of practice in marketing local heritage means that local places often mirror successful strategies elsewhere, at the cost of local character[85] and risking a homogenization and standardization of industrial tourism sites.[86] In places given over to tourism, such as Valparaíso, both locals and tourists are part of an "endless recycling of cultural circuits" of production and consumption, the meanings and values generated by which change over time.[87] A tourism landscape becomes "both a represented and presented space, both a

79 Xie, *Industrial Heritage Tourism*, 50–51.

80 Aravena, *La destrucción de Valparaíso* (Escritos antipatrimonialistas).

81 Ibid.

82 Gouthro and Palmer (2011), cited in Xie, *Industrial Heritage Tourism*, 2.

83 High and Lewis (2007), cited in Xie, *Industrial Heritage Tourism*.

84 Aravena, *La destrucción de Valparaíso* (Escritos antipatrimonialistas).

85 Xie, *Industrial Heritage Tourism*, 15.

86 Ibid.

87 Irena Ateljevic and Stephen Doorne, "Cultural Circuits of Tourism: Commodities, Place, and Re-Consumption," in *A Companion to Tourism Studies*, ed. Alan A. Lew, C. Michael Hall, and Allan M. Williams (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 292.

signifier and signified, both a frame and what a frame contains, both a real place and its simulacrum, both a package and the commodity inside the package".[88] In this complex production and consumption of place, tourism "voraciously appropriates surrounding economies, sociocultural landscapes, and built environments to reconstitute as 'tourist destinations'".[89] These processes are evident in Valparaíso, where the identity of the place, and ability of local residents to identify with the place, is being transformed and challenged.

Conclusion

The relationship between the marketing of the city, its heritagization and its own residents' perspectives and identity is an ambivalent and complex one. This paper has considered, through analysis of illustrative photographs and narratives within tourism guides, whether the industrial past can be remembered with integrity while satisfying the tourist desire for authenticity, cautioning that the colonial dynamics of entertainment, poverty tourism and exotism generate significant ethical tensions. We have asked whether it might be possible to implement a postcolonial ethics of culture-led and tourism-led development strategy that pays tribute to the history, culture and identity of local communities, and whether local communities might recover the postcolonial, post-industrial touristic city for themselves.[90] These questions remain largely unanswered and point to some unsolved – and maybe unsolvable - tensions and ethical challenges involved in any urban development strategy in a port city such as Valparaíso. We introduced tourism data to indicate the number of visitors and the appeal of the city as articulated by tourists, but our concern is the particularity of dereliction tourism and its implications. Dereliction tourism is never the explicit purpose of tourism policies and cannot be captured in mainstream tourism data. The troubling politics of this tourism lies in the relation between neoliberal incorporation and the commodification of poverty, spatial inequality, precarity and local culture, neoliberal 'slow violence', heritigization and dereliction tourism. We have argued that the neoliberal strategy of economic reliance on a distinct type of nostalgic 'heritage' tourism has led to the city being marketed as a site of decay, where particular sites are prized and preserved for the tourist gaze while the city's deep inequalities and poverty are reframed, in line with colonial logics, as part of the city's 'authentic' 'charm'. Further research needs to be conducted in Valparaíso to explore the changing sense of its cultural identity fraught with tensions between the authentic and the constructed, the local and the global, the public and the commodified, and the role

88 Mitchell 1994: 5, cited in *Ateljevic and Doorne*, "Cultural Circuits of Tourism," 296.

89 Ateljevic and Doorne, "Cultural Circuits of Tourism: Commodities, Place, and Re-Consumption," 296.

90 Ashworth and Tunbridge, "Whose Tourist-Historic City? Localizing the Global and Globalizing the Local."

of tourism in promoting the economy and morale in Valparaíso's local communities, so heavily impacted by the slow violence of neoliberal restructuring, industrial decline and dereliction.

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