

**Refractory Ceramics Division
St. Louis Section of The American Ceramic Society
Refractories Institute
ASTM International Committee C08 on Refractories**

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My name is Walter Andrés Calvo and I am a PhD student in Materials Science at the National University of Mar del Plata, Argentina. In particular, my thesis concerns the corrosion of carbon containing refractories. This year I attended to UNITECR 2017 congress; as I expected, it was a rewarding experience for my career to be part of a congress in which a lot of professionals working in the field of refractories were present. The organization was great and I could attend to a lot of presentations about different refractory materials, including those I am studying in my research work. In addition, I met experts from several countries, having the opportunity to interchange useful information with them.

The main lectures made me understand important issues concerning the production of refractories in the world. In particular, they were about the world economy, the shortage in raw materials and the change in the environmental politics. I could get information about the more current needs of the refractory industry and this will help me to plan my future research work in a strategy way.

The presentations were given in different rooms during the congress according to the topic and with a strict schedule which allows selecting which ones I want to attend, and in this way, I was able to make the most. In my case, I focused on works that concerned corrosion refractories because this is my research topic. However, I also attended to presentations of works about mechanical properties and refractory binder technology, among others, and I could learn about the latest in technology applied to the testing and manufacture of refractory materials.

I also presented a work ("Chemical attack evaluation of alumina-magnesia-graphite bricks by dynamic tests and thermodynamic simulation") concerning part of the results obtained in my doctoral thesis. It was a challenge for me to make an oral presentation for a specialist audience, and it was very useful because this people gave me some suggestions that will help to improve my research work.

Finally, I would like to thank to The Refractory Ceramics Division (RCD), St. Louis Section (STLSEC) of The American Ceramic Society (ACerS), The Refractories Institute (TRI) and ASTM International Committee C08 on Refractories for allocating money to make possible for students like me to attend to these international meetings, considering the benefits for our professional careers.

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