GERMANY

INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE AND CLIMATE CHANGE. INVITATION TO A ROUNDTABLE ON TICCIH 2022 CONFERENCE

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The optimistic or pessimistic view on progress has a lot to do with recent events in climate change and extinction of species: Did we force the world to serve human comfort so long, now life will get worse? In 1983 the Brundland Report Our Common Future of the United Nations talked of Successes and Failures of mankind and said about the latter: there are 'also environmental trends that threaten to radically alter the planet, that threaten the lives of many species upon it, including the human species'. But while few read the report, we heard it all in public culture, like in 1976 from the rock group Black Sabbath:

Rocket engines burning fuel so fast

Up into the night sky they blast

Through the universe engines whine

Could it be the end of man and time?

The coking plant at the Zollverein World Heritage Site is today looked upon as a quantity of ovens that produced too much carbon dioxide.

For many, including myself, it took Covid to fully understand the situation. But most of us heard an intelligent child, Greta Thunberg, who made the situation and its consequences quite clear. But though we know now, we are not sure what to do. Is there any chance whatever? Will there be an effect like in the 1990s, the worldwide action against a growing ozone-hole over the arctic? There a world community was actually successful. And it was on the basis of industrial invention and innovation, that the problem was solved. Is there a technical solution for today's problems?

Industrial heritage has become an important field of thinking about the effects of climate change. Narratives of industry´s constant success and industrial heritage as testimonial of its history have come to an end. Now, we tend to see the contrary: Industrial history telling the beginning of a new world and the end of our world at the same time. Machines, collieries and factories may be seen as memorials instead of monuments. They may be reminders of a complex story of 'successes and failures'. I believe that a brainstorming-like inventory could be the basis to find out what to do. This is why I want to invite to the roundtable 'Industrial Heritage Conservation and Climate Change' at the TICCIH-Conference 2022 in Montréal. It will try to collect thoughts to start providing a better basis in knowledge about what to do in this time of catastrophe.

If I start the brainstorming, I find myself dealing with our relationship towards heritages of machines, factories, mines, collieries, oil fields, power plants, airports. The question seems to be `burning´ in our minds, since a Scottish association, STICK, recently asked: may we still burn fossil energy for the demonstration of historic engines in museums?[1] While thousands drive to their work with an SUV, our community of practice in industrial heritage seems to get quite serious about the question of an end to the world where men, animals and plants can live. Why? To what extend can we contribute?

One view might be to go back to Lewis Mumford, who started writing his book 'Technics and Civilization' in 1930. His goal was to understand the interaction between human societies' development and technical development by taking machines into consideration quite seriously. Many have followed him: Thomas P. Hughes influenced a generation of technical historians and spread his ideas of the socio-technical systems we built to foster technical development.[2] Mumford and Hughes where fascinated by phenomena they were describing while at the same time worried about the amount of harm they were doing. Today we are even afraid an end to progress may be possible. Books are being published that consider the history of the steam engine to be the history of climate destruction.[3]

For industrial heritage conservation, this poses a specific problem: We preserve historic objects of industry and machinery, that, while in use, were polluting the world. When they became useless, we tried to see a meaning instead of a use. Since they were once both useful and polluting, the meaning of these machines today may be that they are signs of human ingenuity and incompetence at the same time. Successes and failures, beauties and horrors are open to the eyes in industrial heritage. Probably Industrial Heritage is the last testimonial of rewarding futures in a proto-apocalyptic situation.

The problem today is much huger than ever before. Technical innovation for climate neutrality is an important field of research, but there is also the need to reduce our way of industrial production and even reduce endless search for innovation. Here the existence of Industrial Heritage may help: It may lead to a declining need of constantly proving ourselves. The reason for the overall attractivity of more and more new innovations lies in the fascination for the new and more ingenious. But the fascination of ingenuity can easily be shown in every machine ever invented. Industrial Heritage is already a diorama of what man can do. We see our successes of ingenuity in every industrial artefact. C'mon, just look at it!

Contact the author

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1. Scottish Transport & Industry Collections and Knowledge: "Burning Issues. The Future of Fossil Fuels in Heritage", April 2021.

2. Thomas P. Hughes, *The Evolution of Large Technological Systems*, 1989.

3. Andreas Malm, *Fossil Capital,* Verso 2016.

AUSTRALIA

CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT OF RYDE WATER PUMPING STATION

Philip Bennett, Lead Heritage Adviser, Sydney Water

One of Australia's largest and most interesting pumping stations pumps water in the suburb of West Ryde in Sydney. The station belongs to Sydney Water, the corporation that provides water and sewage services to all Greater Sydney, the Blue Mountains, and the Illawarra regions in New South Wales. This encompasses a population of over five million people. Ryde water pumping station was built to supply the rapidly developing suburbs north of Sydney harbour. Today, about 700,000 households receive their water from the Ryde pumping station.

The first coal-fuelled and steam-driven pumping station was constructed 1893. The site is adjacent to the city's northern

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