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The Commonplace as Heritage - Younger Industrial Landscapes

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(RE-)ENCOUNTERING THE NORDIC
IN A WORLD OF TRAVELLING IDEAS

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Photo on the front cover: Scott Maco

THE COMMONPLACE AS HERITAGE – YOUNGER INDUSTRIAL LANDSCAPES

LARS ROLFSTED MORTENSEN AND ELLEN BRAAE

Abstract

The vast majority of industrial buildings in Denmark date from the post-war decades, and form an integral part of the materialisation on the threshold of potentially becoming of the Danish welfare state. They are now on the threshold of becoming subjects of heritage considerations. However, assigning heritage status to younger industrial landscapes reveals a discrepancy between the general and the specific, between the significant cultural history of the welfare state, and the particular spaces for industry and business. It is thus an open question whether these post-war industrial landscapes relate to any particular "Nordicness".

Traditional notions of the heritage object seem inadequate for the task at hand. The focus of this paper is thus to develop a qualitative way of assessing Denmark's younger industrial landscapes, and subsequently, to relate these findings both to the domain of heritage and to the question of "Nordicness". In order to make their spatial and aesthetic characteristics visible, the rigorous photographic method of Bernd and Hilla Becher forms the basis of the study. This paper argues that only by perceiving *place* as relational, and thus seeing *site-specificity* as a layered and relational construct, are we fully able to assess and appreciate younger industrial landscapes as possible places of heritage.

Introduction

Since World War II, more than 60 million m² of industrial floor space has been constructed in Denmark (Tietjen, 2010, p.40). This vast area constitutes the majority of the country's total industrial structures, and equates to roughly 10% of all built space in Denmark (ibid., p.37). The buildings themselves, however, occupy only a fraction of the surface defined by industrial use, i.e. generous infrastructures, large expanses, parking lots, plantings, and so on, all take up a much greater area. Despite their enormous footprint, these younger industrial landscapes are largely overlooked as a built testimony of the welfare state, a vital part of recent cultural history to which they are integral as primary areas for production, logistics, and supply. Today, the majority of these areas are more than 50 years old, which in a Danish legislative context puts them within the scope of heritage surveys.[1] Hence a heritage perspective will be crucial to their future, yet we know little about their characteristics apart from explorations and critiques of post-war urban development by Lynch (1960), Venturi, Scott Brown and Izenour (1972), Banham (1971), and more recently, Koolhaas (1995), none of whom focus specifically on industrial landscapes or consider a heritage perspective. As part of today's fragmented urban landscapes, younger industrial landscapes are basically considered outside the domain of heritage (Frellsen, Monfared and Mortensen, 2012). Furthermore, they tend to escape current qualitative assessment methods. This paper attempts to challenge these general

Figure 1
Lars Rolfsted Mortensen: *Ny Esbjergvej erhvervsområde (2013)*

1 See the building conservation law, §3: "The cultural minister can conserve buildings and independent works of landscape architecture of significant architectural or cultural value, which are more than 50 years old." (Bygningsfredningsloven §3: "Kulturministeren kan frede bygninger og selvstændige landskabsarkitektoniske værker af væsentlig arkitektonisk eller kulturhistorisk værdi, som er over 50 år gamle.", translated by the authors).

assumptions by assessing the particular spatial and aesthetic characteristics of younger industrial landscapes, and subsequently discussing these findings in relation to the potential for heritage status. Hence, the focus here is on a nuanced scrutiny of the eye-level appearance of younger industrial landscapes "as found". The main hypothesis is that younger industrial landscapes mediate our idea of "Nordicness" since they hold both generic and specific qualities – they are both commonplace and site specific. This thesis informs the chosen theoretical framework and the methods of analysis used. The paper thus addresses methodical and theoretical issues relating to the spatial and aesthetic assessment of younger industrial landscapes in the Danish welfare city. The wider objective of this work (which is not addressed further in this paper) is to propose transformative architectural strategies capable of enhancing and extending the particular characteristics of these areas and thus renewing the relevance of the already invested resources of the existing building stock and open spaces of younger industrial landscapes.

The main questions addressed by this paper are: (1) which spatial and aesthetic characteristics of younger industrial landscapes can be revealed by means of a systematic photographic analysis? (2) How can these characteristics inform heritage assessments for younger industrial landscapes? And finally (3) how can we understand these landscapes as part of the Nordic welfare city? The argument is structured in three parts. We begin with a brief description of the younger industrial landscapes' current challenges as an integral part of the material embodiment of the Nordic welfare state. This is followed by a spatial and aesthetic analysis of these landscapes, which uses Bernd and Hilla Becher's photographic method as a point of departure. Thirdly, we move on to a discussion of the empirical findings in relation to three different heritage concepts. Finally, the conclusion reflects on the scope of our methodological and theoretical discoveries and contributions.

1. Younger industrial landscapes in the context of the Nordic welfare state

From a societal and planning perspective, the future of younger industrial landscapes is of the utmost importance due to the vast quantities of buildings and open spaces that comprises them. In the following, we will briefly outline their current situation and their likely futures, with the aim of informing the scope of possible planning and architectural transformation, and ascertaining the frame within which heritage considerations would take place, in order to ask what kind of potential for change seems viable. Vacancies of the building stock are currently only between 4 and 11% (Lindegaard, 2014), which debunks the myth of abandonment, and several areas host a growing number of companies (Miljøministeriet, 2009). The buildings are in use, available at low rates and, upon closer inspection, offer very flexible spaces that have already proven

their adaptability to frame new uses.[2] Projected demographic growth in Denmark is very moderate, and according to current forecasts, it will primarily take place in centres of larger conurbations (Statistics Denmark, 2013). Thus, a surge in the demand for new buildings seems highly improbable, and future needs are likely to be accommodated within the existing building stock and already projected expansions (e.g., Ørestad and Nordhavnen). Looking at the economic growth potential, economic booms in Denmark have become ever smaller since the 1960s, and negative or marginal since 2008. Incredible growth rates over the post-war decades, during which younger industrial landscapes were planned and built, should probably be considered an exception rather than the norm. Consequently, Danish society's capacity to radically restructure the built environment seems highly limited. The tendencies outlined here provide a clear incentive for an investigation of younger industrial landscapes through the lens of German planner Thomas Sieverts' (b. 1934) term *Zwischenstadt* (2003), pointing at two essential characteristics:

> *This… settlement area [i.e. Zwischenstädte]… is essentially fully developed. It is a Zwischenstadt, which does not correspond to our ordinary image of the city and our yearning for an intact landscape. With the weak growth potential of the time ahead of us, this settlement structure can no longer be reconfigured. We must assume that it is a given and develop its hidden qualities…[N]ever before in history has the city as a cultural product been so malleable as it is today* (Sieverts, 2003, pp.7, 49).

Whereas the term *Zwischenstadt*, as in the quotation above, derives from analyses of vast German conurbations, the term is equally applicable to a Danish context (Tietjen, 2011, p.61). In Denmark, the *Zwischenstadt's* "city archipelago" of enclaves and open space (Sieverts, 2003, p.49) has been dubbed *The Welfare City* (Nielsen, 2008), since its emergence coincides with the built expansion of the welfare state and the implementation of major welfare reforms. From a landscape perspective, these vast industrialised areas can be labelled as "a system of man-made spaces on the surface of the earth" (Jackson, 1984, p.155). Reference to a characteristic of "Nordicness" within architecture and urban planning is often closely related to the virtues of the welfare state (Lund, 2008, pp.5, 20–21; Nielsen, 2012, p.169). Described *en masse* as the *Nordic model*, the well-known characteristics of expansive Scandinavian welfare states include an elaborate social safety net, free education and healthcare and, generally speaking, a utilitarian approach to improving the living conditions for as great a proportion of the population as possible (Albertsen and Bülent, 2004). Despite the bolstering of the "Nordic model" against market forces, these utilitarian traits are intrinsic to and fundamental for understanding The Welfare City as built testimony of the welfare state. With the current rejuvenation of heritage (Kolen, 2006, p.52), and

2   Structural change following the oil crisis of 1973 saw stagnation in production, functional rearrangements from production towards storage and logistics, and sectoral change within Denmark, where industrial production moved west (Tietjen, 2010).

the fact that these areas are now on the threshold of becoming poten-
tial heritage, we can explore how younger industrial landscapes can be
perceived within a heritage perspective. If we consider them on a par
with, for instance, social housing of the same period, it becomes obvi-
ous that the building culture of the post-war period has only recently
been considered as possibly eligible for heritage status by architects and
planners and – when attempted – this has mainly been as built *oeuvre*
or focusing on the work of specific architects (Mattson and Wallenstein,
2010; Swenarton, Avermaete and van den Heuvel, 2014). If we omit cultur-
al history and historiography, and focus solely on aesthetic appearance,
the utilitarian traits of industrial areas raise an unexpected discrepancy
when attempting to handle these enormous built landscapes as heri-
tage (Frellsen, Monfared and Mortensen, 2012). The discrepancy revolves
around the opposition between the specific and the commonplace – in
terms of place, landscape, and architecture – and it arises when exam-
ining the means employed to construct The Welfare City. Mass produc-
tion and industrialised building techniques, in addition to extended use
of standardisation, were prerequisites to realising the huge amount of
construction required to accomplish the societal visions of the time.
Younger industrial landscapes embody this functionalist approach to
maximising productivity by means of Fordist principles and advances
in technology and logistics (Braae, 2015; Pedersen, 2010). Hence, they
are constructed according to inherently non-site-specific and universal
concepts, rather than to reflect a particular Nordic locus, or something
otherwise site-specific or unique.

In this light, The Welfare City becomes an ambiguous entity when con-
sidered as a heritage object. On one hand, as built testimony of Nordic
welfare societies, it represents a particular phenomenon with an un-
questionably significant cultural history,[3] which fits within a dominant
heritage paradigm of "the monument", e.g., it is compatible with the Ven-
ice Charter.[4] On the other hand, the mundane character and widespread
monotony associated with these urban landscapes' spatial and aesthet-
ic appearance (Nielsen, 2008, pp.11, 24–26) falls short of the prevailing cri-
teria for heritage objects, i.e. where these are defined as "the grand, the
old and the beautiful" (Smith, 2006, pp.19–21, 29). Perceiving The Welfare
City as heritage thus presents us with a paradox that emerges from the
essential cultural history of the welfare state, which inheres in vast ur-
ban landscapes of subpar appearance.

In order to extend and overcome these opposing observations, this pa-
per is founded on a notion of place as a layered (Marot, 2003; Jackson,
1984) and relational construct (Burns and Kahn, 2005; Massey, 1991), an
assumption employed in the spatial and aesthetic assessment, as well as
in the subsequent heritage discussion of younger industrial landscapes.
Giving priority to relations with the outside world, the specificity of
place is traced through its connections beyond mere locality. This affects

3   Exemplified, among others, by "Heri-
    tage municipalities" (Kulturarvskom-
    munerne) and "The Board for recent
    architecture" (Udvalget for nyere tids
    arkitektur under Landsforeningen
    for Bygnings- og Landskabskultur).

4   See ICOMOS International charter
    for the conservation and restoration
    of monuments and sites (The Venice
    Charter 1964), Article 1: "The concept
    of a historic monument embraces
    not only the single architectural
    work but also the urban or rural set-
    ting in which is found the evidence
    of a particular civilization, a signifi-
    cant development or a historic event.
    This applies not only to great works
    of art but also to more modest works
    of the past which have acquired cul-
    tural significance with the passing of
    time."

the conception of identity and history associated with a specific place. Universal ideas are materialised and sedimented locally in various ways, as was demonstrated by the national pavilions at the 2014 Venice Biennale, which revised the materialisation of universalist Modernist ideas through the period 1914–2014. This approach calls for an attention to the relationships between the typical and the particular, the universal and the site-specific, the commonplace and the unique.

The field of knowledge concerning the spatial and aesthetic characteristics of younger industrial landscapes is limited. In addition to the postmodern critique of post-war urban expansions, current discourse on the *Zwischenstadt*, which forms the bulk of the present body of knowledge about younger industrial landscapes, is divided by two contrasting positions. As Vicenzotti has shown in *Der "Zwischenstadt"-Diskurs* (2011, p.16), the *Zwischenstadt*[5] is typically either perceived as anaesthetic and inadequate in every respect or conversely, accepted or even celebrated in its entirety. At the core of such opposing interpretations lies an assumed contradiction between place, identity, and historical depth on one hand, and globalisation, genericism, and contemporaneity on the other. In order to consider these opposing interpretations outside a predetermined conceptual framework, a nuanced visual account of the appearance of younger industrial landscapes is required. Such an account will establish an informed basis upon which their characteristics can be described and assessed. Using a systematic photographic method, a body of empirical material is therefore assembled in the following part of this paper. Whereas drafting and the measured survey constitute the most comprehensive classical tools for determining architectural heritage values, photography has since its inception been widely used to document changes and particular characteristics in the built environment.[6] Considering the immense geography and huge quantity of buildings that form the subject of this paper, photography has been chosen as the most suitable medium for collecting visual empirical material. Acknowledging the framed perception related to the "driving subject" that, as a consequence of speed, directs our aesthetic awareness towards scale and void-volume (Lynch, 1960; Venturi, Scott Brown and Izenour, 1972; Banham, 1971), we will explore these vast areas in close up. Further, in contrast to planimetric mappings, the eye-level photograph can be considered a "landscape" in the cultural historical sense, framing a view, and as such both constituting and reflecting an aesthetic phenomenon (Geelmuyden and Fiskevold, 2013). The construction of the following inquiry thus relies on the assumptions that (1) the heritage object must be conceived as a non-static changing entity, (2) that place must be conceived as relational and (3) that a structured and comprehensive visual account can bring forth characteristics not yet discernible.

5   Younger industrial landscapes only form a part of the Zwischenstadt's 'city archipelago, which in its entirety consists of numerous other landscape elements, infrastructures, and architectural environments.

6   As witnessed in work by Eugène Atget, Berenice Abbott, Walker Evans, and the category of so-called Record Pictures, which were widely used as documentation of 19th century civil engineering.

2. The Photomatrix Method: Spatial and aesthetic analysis of younger industrial landscapes

In the following we will present a photographic method, "the Photomatrix Method", developed to identify spatial categories and discern generic and specific aesthetic features. The methodological point of departure is the work of Bernd and Hilla Becher, as their approach forms a comprehensive tool for visualising, ordering and presenting observations as images. Not only is their work a prime example of a strict photographic methodology, their meticulous documentation of Western Europe's and North America's industrial structures also constitutes a pivotal art project in 20th century photography, and an unprecedented account of industrial archaeology. However, the subjects of Bernd and Hilla Becher's photographs are similar to ours only in their industrial nature, and thus we need to employ their method on a different scope of subjects. The process of adapting their method to meet younger industrial landscapes involves three steps. The first is the discovery and constitution of the main categories: building types, infrastructures, expanses, plantations etc.; the second is the establishment of a body of photographs for each of the categories in order to construct visual typologies; and the third entails conducting a thorough analysis of each of the typologies. Before embarking on these three steps we will briefly describe Bernd and Hilla Becher's work and method.

Bernd and Hilla Becher's approach was inspired by the 1920s *Neue Sachlichkeit*, particularly the work of Sander, Blossfeldt, and Renger-Patzsch (Lange, 2006, pp.79–83). As part of the 1975 exhibition *New Topographics: Photographs of a Man-Altered Landscape,*[7] the Bechers became exponents of one of the most important turns in contemporary landscape photography (Salvesen and Nordström, 2009). As the subtitle of the exhibition implies, the exhibited work scrutinised everyday landscapes of post-war urban expansion with an unprejudiced aesthetic gaze. The exhibition and its substantial legacy in contemporary photography[8] most likely constitute the most comprehensive visual accounts of built (and otherwise man-altered) landscapes of the post-war era. Jackson (1984) calls these types of landscapes "man-made", and thus indicates a shift of landscape perception (Braae, 2015, pp.134–141), which will not be elaborated further in this context. However, the gaze that characterises this branch of photography is closely related to both Jackson's attention towards the vernacular landscape (Salvesen and Nordström, 2009, pp.20, 36, 41) and the "para-aesthetics", which Sieverts (2003, pp.92–93, 95) calls for in order to discover and see, in a very literal sense, the forms, spaces and potentials of the *Zwischenstadt*.[9]

The Bechers' photographs span from the landscape setting of industrial plants through conglomerates, individual buildings and structures, to parts and details. They employ a strict orthogonal or diagonal positioning towards the scene, and a precise placement of the subject within the

7   Shown in January 1975, at the International Museum of Photography in Rochester, New York, the exhibition also featured prominent artists such as Lewis Baltz, Robert Adams, and Stephen Shore.

8   Visible, among numerous other places, in the recently held exhibition "Constructing Worlds" at the Barbican Gallery, London. The exhibition focused solely on "Photography and Architecture in the Modern Age" and brought together 18 artists, at least half of whom have explicit ties to New Topographics in both the form and content of their work. See Pardo, Redstone and Barbican Art Gallery (2014).

9   Sieverts qoutes Susanne Hauser's work: "A para-aesthetics position would render us sensitive to transitions of many types in spatial, temporal and material aspects between 'beautiful' and 'ugly', 'useful' and 'useless', 'moral' and 'reprehensible' and thus promote the understanding that the borders and limits of the aesthetic, understood in a broad sense as socially and culturally perceptible and invested with meaning and significance, are steadily expanding" (Sieverts, 2003, p.92).
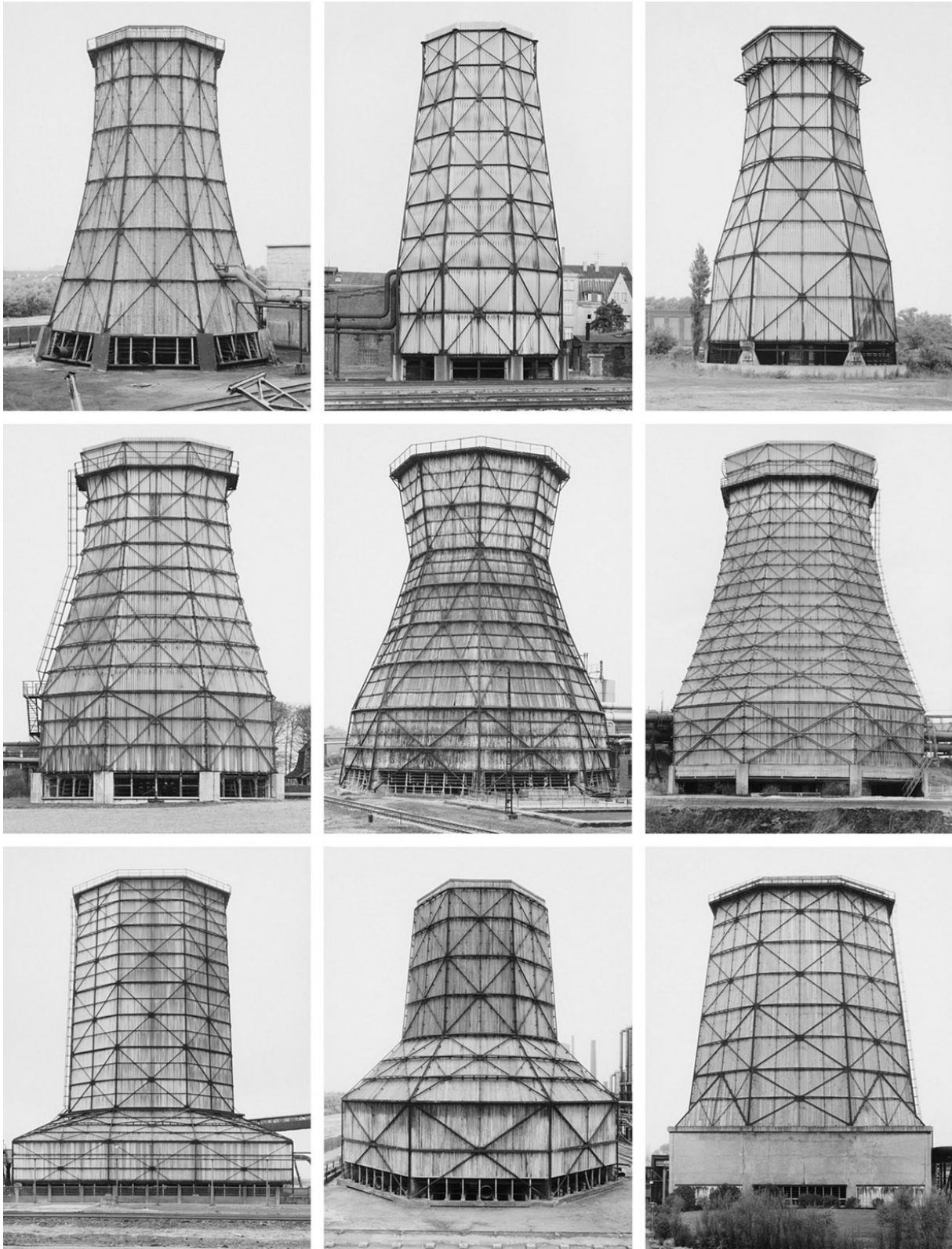
Figure 2
Bernd and Hilla Becher: Cooling towers
typology, Germany, 1964–1993.

frame. Their consistent approach over the course of almost five decades (from the late 1950s up to Bernd's death in 2007) has allowed them to assemble their signature typologies (Figure 2) depicting families of similar structures. Here, the term "typology" should be understood as both the category of the depicted structure and as a visual category of the image itself, i.e. a certain way to depict a particular subject. Looking at the grids of their typologies reveals a phenomenologically informed gaze, one that enables their subjects to appear in their completion, highly detailed, and open to inquiry and contemplation – quite different from e.g., Banham's "moving eye". The viewer is presented with an enormous richness of nuance and variation within the depicted category of structure. The relationship between the individual image and the typology as a whole involves a double movement, pointing simultaneously towards the genealogy of the type and the specificity of the singular structure. This double movement is analogous to that of Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological method, in which reflection must have its roots in the perception of the "matter itself" in order to describe an articulated, historically reflected experience of that particular perception (Thøgersen, 2004, p.30).

It is essential to consider the Bechers' photographic typologies as a constructed form of documentation,[10] since the typological grid and the consistently straight depiction are a means to create order and establish a relationship between the depicted subjects. The insistence on a straight depiction, either frontal, enhancing the elevation of a subject, or diagonal, enhancing its spatial depth, reveals an important relationship between the image and the subject. The Bechers' work can be understood as a continuous accumulation of images in the sense that industrial structures, e.g., gasholders, cooling towers etc., hold the potential to become certain images within their typologies. Thus, in order to understand the Bechers' method, priority must be given to the image rather than the subject itself; the representation takes precedence over the represented, and the formal appearance of the individual image is essential to its placement within the grid of the typology (Lange, 2006, p.52). In this delicate entwinement of aesthetics and systematic documentation, we find an interesting clue when Hilla Becher comments: "In the art-historical sense, we can hardly pinpoint clear stylistic buildings by region, but similar geographical and economic conditions lead to similar structures" (Lange, 2006, p.51).

Step one: Discovery and constitution of primary typologies

While the subject matter of the Bechers is in itself a strong incentive to pursue their work, the application of the Bechers' work in this paper is solely methodological. Thus, our aim is to apply their way of working with typologies and their idea of a "typological mode of showing", i.e. a particular way of communicating recurring phenomena through images. As a means of deepening the understanding of our subject, fieldwork

10 However, any claim of an objective photographic documentation could always be contested because of photography's inherent translation. See Dag Petersson's paper "Photographic space", p.127 in Dahlgren, Petersson and Vestberg (2013).

has been conducted in the form of long exploratory walks in Denmark's younger industrial landscapes. The slow tempo and embodied perception of walking has thus formed a mode of perception through which possible typologies have been identified. The camera has been used to document both recurring phenomena and particular appearances. We have striven to endow the photographs with a phenomenologically informed gaze in an attempt to see beyond presumptions and prejudices about the historical reception of younger industrial landscapes (Nielsen, 2008, pp.24–26) and to re-examine the "matter itself" in its spatiality, materiality, and gestalt, through epoché in Merleau-Ponty's sense (Merleau-Ponty, 2009, pp.XV, XVI, XVIII; Thøgersen, 2004, pp.24, 30, 32). The aim has thus been to deepen knowledge of the appearance of younger industrial landscapes and to examine relationships between the generic and the specific – both of which are relevant to contemporary heritage considerations – using the image as medium.

In Denmark, younger industrial landscapes usually form enclaves in the outskirts of larger towns, and the vast majority of these areas are found along the so-called "Capital H"[11] that connects all major conurbations in Denmark. The empirical basis of this study covers 22 of Denmark's younger industrial landscapes,[12] and consists of a photographic series based on 35 visits between September 2012 and May 2014. Most locations have been visited several times and in different seasons. The strict orthogonal or diagonal depiction of the Bechers has been followed, and a focus on one phenomenon in each image. The focal length ranges from moderate wide-angle to normal (28–50mm in 35mm format) and a consistent eye-level, horizon, and distance to the subjects has been maintained. Subjects have been depicted as neutrally as possible, avoiding any confusing foreground or dramatic lighting conditions. The process of this first step can be summed up in seven typologies: roads, facades, expanses, green borders, corners, plantings, and conglomerates.[13]

Step Two: Assembling the typologies

The on-going exchange between the process of collecting observations with the camera and assembling them into typologies gradually increased the focus on the spatially ordering phenomena encountered in the areas under consideration; a process that revealed trans-areal typologies. The photographs have been assembled into typologies where particular phenomena emerged and continued to reoccur during the walks. Reflecting our understanding of place as a layered and relational construct, this photographic method enables a thorough examination of the nuances within particular, geographically prevalent phenomena. The aim has been to establish a body of empirical material capable of showing the double movement between general traits and singular specificity. As a means of considering the images as a visual phenomenological inquiry into the character of younger industrial landscapes as found, each typology has been designated properties regarding their spatial, material, and aesthetic appearance.

11 This constellation of highways (in Danish: Det store H) is the main transport corridor in Denmark, drafted in the late 1930s and completed with the inauguration of the Great Belt Bridge in 1998.

12 See a full list of registered locations in the list of illustrations.

13 These typologies could of course have been constituted differently, also in number. However, they allow a systematic collection of empirical material in step two

Step Three: Characterising the typologies

The images in the typologies form an eye level account of the spatial configuration of macro planning and the passing of time now embodied within the realisation of the quite abstract, functional schemes of the 1950s and 1960s. The images represent an equal focus on architectural structures, infrastructure, and open space, an approach which is central to the attempt to encapsulate the entirety of the areas' spatial appearance. The typologies make visible a range of spatially ordering principles that appear with different levels of rigour. They form a sequence of visual categories, each of which presents a prevalent phenomenon. They enable the viewer to see, compare, and scrutinise the traits that respectively define buildings, infrastructure, plantings, expanses and so on, which in turn constitute the establishment of borders, of hierarchy and of spatial difference across a vast geographical space. The passing of time has increased the complexity of these established hierarchies. Especially in the *expanses* and *conglomerates* typologies, ordering principles originally instated by planning and architecture now show a range of new trajectories: from the retrofitting of buildings with haphazard sheds and installations, thus cumulatively adding traces of change, to the rewriting of plots, where history is being erased and new traces of development are emergent. Both ends of the scale seem related to the intentions of the original planning schemes. The cumulative layers of additions correspond to the generous plot sizes and laissez faire regulations precisely intended to allow industry to grow and transform. The clean slate redevelopment currently instating new spatial relationships is analogous to the initiation of the schemes, where farmland and plantations were given over to industry with little regard for previous uses or history. All things being equal, the spatially ordering principles, finding their origins in the post-war planning schemes, are by far the most dominant characteristic of the typologies.
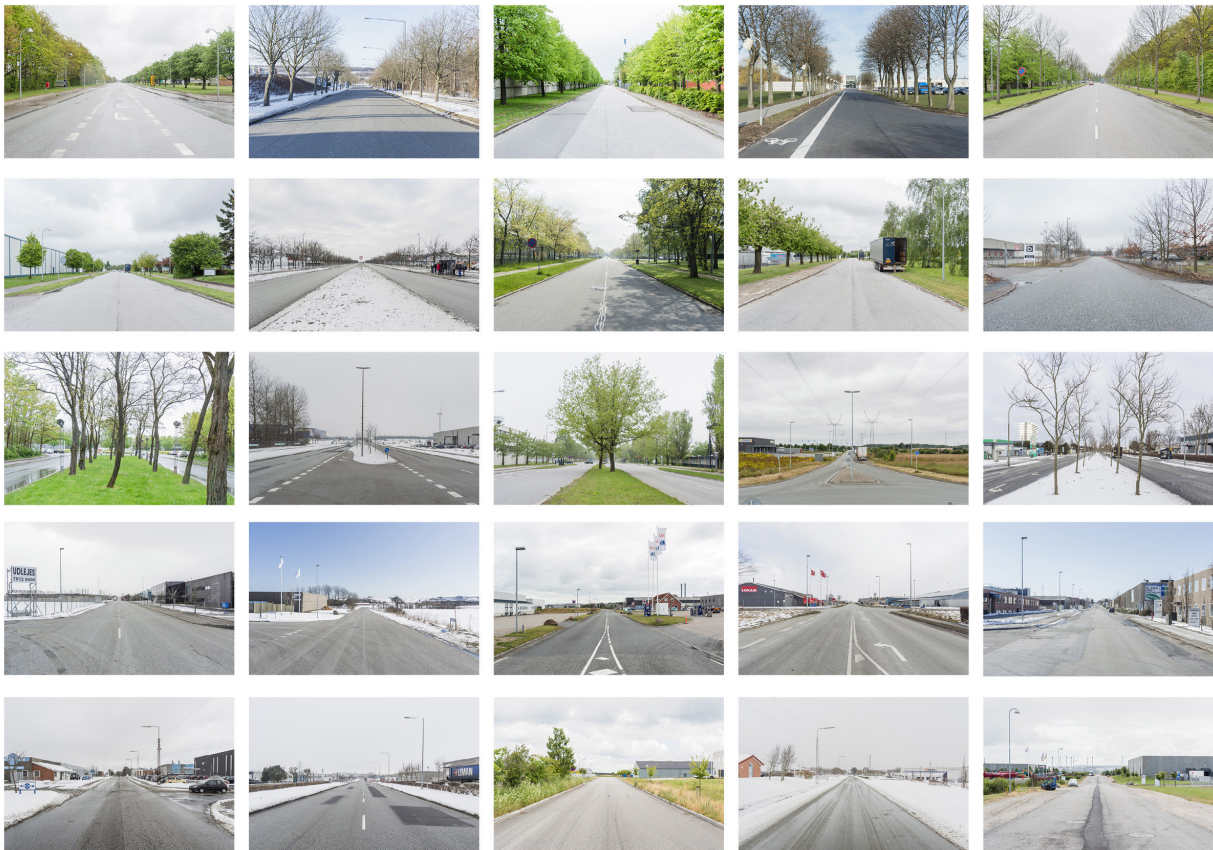
Figure 3
Lars Rolfsted Mortensen: *Roads typology (2012–2014)*
- A seemingly infinite, straight infrastructure.
- A directional axis of movement.
- Varying degrees of spatial hierarchy, established by trees, surfaces, edges and levels, ranging from the poorly differentiated, e.g. scattered trees and lighting, to the highly ordered, e.g. precise and well-maintained alley plantings.
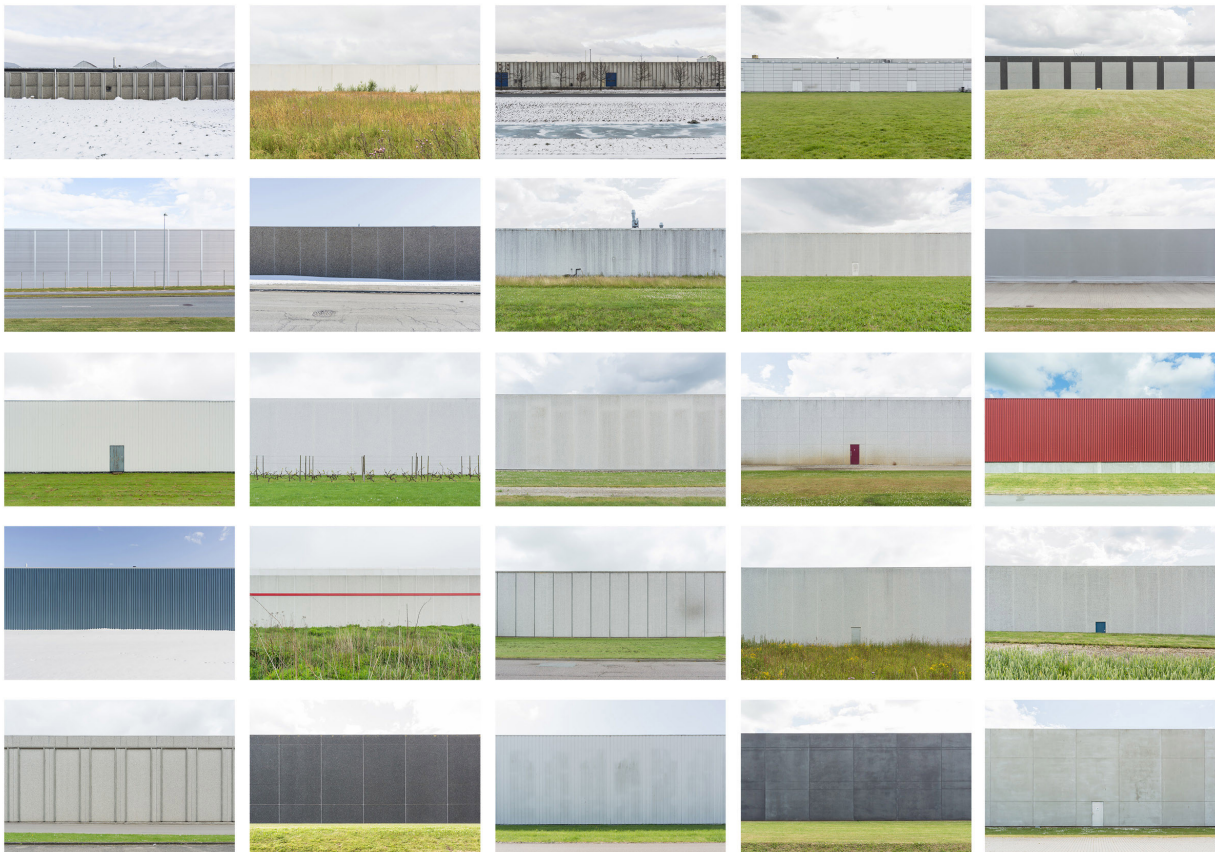
Figure 4
Lars Rolfsted Mortensen: *Facades typology (2012–2014)*
- Facades that tell us next to nothing about what goes on inside.
- A monotonous obstruction of the horizon and a seemingly endless, impenetrable spatial boundary.
- A display of concrete elements and sheet metal with tectonic properties that suggest a uniform presence.

Figure 5
Lars Rolfsted Mortensen: *Expanses typology (2012–2014)*
- Open, fluid spaces with no apparent program.
- A range of temporal conditions from decay to growth and construction.
- Varying degrees of treatment, from well-kept lawns and ponds to unregulated wildernesses and earthworks.

Figure 6
Lars Rolfsted Mortensen: *Green borders typology (2012–2014)*

- A dense, often forest-like spatial barrier.
- Differentiated plantings that add a vertical element to the otherwise predominantly horizontal landscapes.
- Precisely delineated from adjacent open spaces, typically marking a shift from functional surfaces to areas beyond.
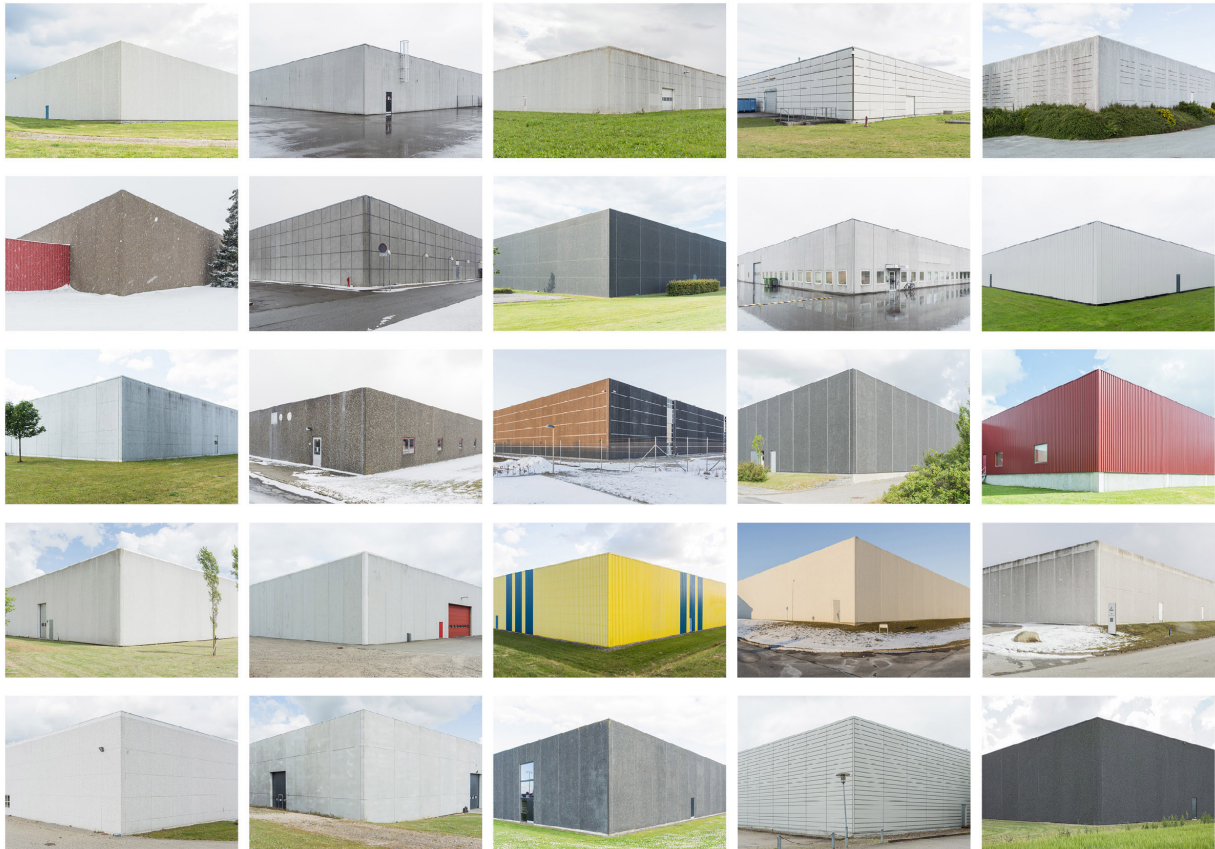
Figure 7
Lars Rolfsted Mortensen: *Corners typology (2012–2014)*
- A spatial gestalt of the building in its setting.
- An account of abstract rectangular form.
- Relation between building and surface and their often minimal material and tectonic presences.

Figure 8
Lars Rolfsted Mortensen: *Plantings typology (2012–2014)*
▪ Dense, forest-like spaces that appear unregulated.
▪ An intense, although confined, experience of dense natural elements.
▪ A stark contrast to the experience of openness found in *roads* and *expanses.*

The empirical material presented here does not in itself constitute a comprehensive heritage assessment, since it incorporates neither planimetric mapping nor a thorough analysis of cultural history,[14] nor have the areal delimitation and the entrances been taken into consideration. The systematic photographic method employed for collecting and assembling the material does however seem promising in regard to assessment, since it forces the observer to recognise and scrutinise the aesthetic features, nuances and temporal variations of landscape elements and buildings; phenomena which are often overlooked or deemed outright unaesthetic. In this respect, the Photomatrix Method may be applicable outside the realm of younger industrial landscapes, as its inherent structuring principles and visual presentation could be suited to other subjects of recent heritage, such as social housing, cultural institutions, recreational landscapes and other parts of the *Zwischenstadt*. Furthermore, the fieldwork required in order to assemble extensive photographic material entails a layered and embodied understanding of a particular place, whereas the typologies themselves visualise phenomena in a structured and comparable manner, enabling precise communication and the dissemination of findings to stakeholders.

Figure 9
Lars Rolfsted Mortensen: *Conglomerates typology (2012–2014)*
- A juxtaposition of simple figures forming more complex clusters.
- A gathering of different temporalities, from the addition of older structures to the temporary storage of containers etc.
- Compositions, spatial and material, whose appearances range from the harmoniously formed to the arbitrarily gathered.

14 This is partly due to the assumption that a broad lookout was necessary to delineate characteristics across the country.

3. Younger industrial landscapes as places of heritage – a controversial yet obvious designation

The characteristics of the typologies can serve as an intriguing point of departure for discussion when viewed from a heritage perspective. The typologies reveal characteristics of a primarily spatial and aesthetic nature that are inevitably material. The typologies embed a double movement perception; i.e. an equal focus on general, spatially transcending phenomena on one hand, and on the specificity and inherent history of the singular place on the other. If the findings are conceived as a heritage assessment, they break open several relevant problems, which will be discussed in relation to three different heritage positions.

Taking our starting point in the traditional realm of heritage, Laurajane Smith's (2006) term "Authorised Heritage Discourse" conveys the broader characteristics of the western tradition of conservation.[15] Authorised heritage discourse, in this view, has a particular focus on materiality and the object of heritage. "The grand, the old and the beautiful", seen as representative of a shared identity of the nation state, has been the recurring definition of heritage objects, representing the material embodiment of *the* past as *the* singular reading of history (Smith 2006, pp.19–21, 29). This discourse, heavily criticised by Smith, is further characterised by the divide between nature and culture originating in the Enlightenment, and a romantic desire for the ruinous (ibid., pp.31–32). Although Smith's term absorbs key opposing positions in heritage discourse into one body of theory, e.g. Viollet-le-Duc's and Ruskin's controversies, central points extracted from her thorough critique can be used as a simple checklist for younger industrial landscapes.

The monument-oriented notion of "the grand, the old and the beautiful" obviously does not fit well with the buildings and landscape elements of younger industrial landscapes. Although large and occasionally monumental in scale, they do not possess the magnificent qualities of "grandness". In general, they are simply not representative of the exceptional. Rather, they represent mediocrity at best, and often fall woefully short of what contemporary peers achieved. They belong to recent history, disqualifying them as old, and their lack of magnificence positions them far from common notions of beauty.[16] They belong entirely to the cultural, rather than natural, domain, as *systems of man-made spaces*. This disqualifies their landscape elements from any recognition within the idea of a pristine wilderness. Although these landscapes comply with a strict modernist separation between natural and built elements, a closer look at the empirical findings, especially the *expanses* typology, reveals more complex relations between the natural, the cultural, and the passing of time, which supports Sieverts' and Jackson's conception of them as "hybrids". Wildernesses, demolition grounds and earthworks emerge between the well-kept lawns, and exhibit several temporal conditions simultaneously, among which ruins occasionally appear. The multiplicity

15 Employing Smith's concept bypasses a vast body of theory and practices. However, it provides a concise umbrella term to encapsulate some of the most central characteristics of traditional heritage management.

16 The appreciation of the aesthetics of such structures primarily comes from fields of art, e.g. New Topographics and its current legacy, and progressive fields of landscape architecture that do not represent Smith's conception of Authorised Heritage Discourse.

of temporalities, and the fact that these areas are in use, not only practi-
cally inhibits a "conserve as found" ethos, but also emphasises the inces-
sant processes of change, however small these may be, that characterise
any built environment. While not all of the abovementioned criteria of
Authorised Heritage Discourse categorically exclude younger industrial
landscapes as possible places of heritage, the overarching focus of the
discourse is incompatible with the findings in the empirical material.

The disqualification of these landscapes according to the terms of tra-
ditional heritage discourse is no real surprise. The growing attention
to the heritage of recent history reveals several problems for prevalent
assessment strategies, as well as for the very conception of the heritage
object. Among the initiatives for overcoming these problems and em-
bracing rigorous critique are the *European Landscape Convention* (2000)
and the *Faro Convention* (The Council of Europe framework convention
on the value of cultural heritage for society, 2005). In *New heritage fron-
tiers* (2009), Graham Fairclough explores the potentials and implications
of the *Faro Convention* and asserts a fundamental break from a tradi-
tional concept of heritage with his first headline: "Heritage! Object and
action, product and process." This sets the stage for a more inclusive her-
itage concept that is "not restricted to 'the things that we wish to pass
on' but is, more comprehensively and straightforwardly, 'everything that
we have inherited', whether or not we then choose to pass it on to our
successors" (Fairclough, 2009, p.30).

Within this all-encompassing concept, younger industrial landscapes
can potentially be counted as heritage along with everything else. They
present highly relevant subjects both as "objects" and "processes", since
"modern things (the things we often try to prevent being built today) will
conversely come to be seen as valued heritage…The more recent past,
that of the 20th century for example…the commonplace (such as mod-
ern suburban life), may well be the spheres in which common heritage
should first be sought in the 21st century" (ibid., pp.32, 37). The both-and
approach to the objects and processes of heritage, and the strong links
to landscape and commonplace aspects of new heritage, encompass
younger industrial landscapes to a large extent. However, a number of
persistent problems call for further inquiry. Throughout Fairclough's un-
folding of New Heritage, there is an enduring focus on the local, com-
munity, and the importance of a plurality of traditions, values etc. Yet
in the embracing of multiple notions of identity, community, and land-
scape there is, paradoxically, no attention to the inevitably conflicting
understandings of these. Where do we draw the line that circumscribes
a community, especially in the case of the vast 20th century urban de-
velopment. And what if local understandings of place and identity are
not just plural, but downright conflicting. In the case of younger indus-
trial landscapes, it is quite possible to imagine that no community will
claim a particular identity or history, since these areas do not belong to a

single community, and are hardly characterised by anything 'communal' in the first place. The double movement between spatially transcending characteristics and singular specificity makes it difficult to understand these areas within the confines of locality. Ultimately, the problem with the definition of New Heritage is the conflation of concepts such as landscape, place, identity, and even heritage itself. Fairclough's implicit correspondence between landscape, community, and identity – i.e. as shared and somewhat homogeneous despite the recognition of multiple understandings of each – is ill-fated, since it relies on a common, internalised origin, instead of tracing the identity of place from relations and influences beyond mere community. Hence the New Heritage seems to have inherited a nostalgic notion of place from traditional heritage discourse, which appears to be in conflict with the ambition of embracing our entire "life world" as heritage. In its aim for comprehensive inclusion, New Heritage becomes vague, as "whatever people value in a wide range of ways" (Fairclough, 2009, p.35). One could argue that with all understandings and interpretations being equal, anything goes. While that might very well describe how our recent heritage is actually and practically being dealt with, it leaves practitioners of planning and architecture, and heritage managers in general, with quite a lot to be desired in terms of critical and operational assessment strategies. In summary, younger industrial landscapes are certainly embraced by New Heritage's declared focus on the commonplace nature of recent urban landscapes and architecture. The priority given to "live" heritage rather than "static" (i.e., used and changing, rather than preserved heritage) is also fitting for the subject at hand (ibid., pp.35, 38–39). But surprisingly, the precedence given to community and identity and their suggested coherence, seems to allow the overarching characteristics of younger industrial landscapes to slip through the net. Furthermore, this boundless concept does not provide tools for addressing and assessing the material aspects of heritage. Within new heritage, the "ordinary" is still understood as something of local distinctiveness stemming from a particular, internalised origin rather than what it typically is: something general and commonplace, whose appearance and history can be found in many similar forms across a vast geography. In the end, New Heritage does not identify this as constituent of either place or landscape. Yet, to actively and critically examine and transform younger industrial landscapes as heritage, we argue, the commonplace has to be acknowledged for what it is.

If we consider everything that is inherited as "heritage", this serves as a perfect reinforcement for OMA and Koolhaas' caution about an expanding preservation regime in their 2010 biennale project *Cronocaos*. Koolhaas has a keen eye for conflict when he points to the greatly paradoxical nature of the contemporary moment in which preservation targets ever more recent structures, whilst post-war social architecture is simultaneously exposed to large-scale demolition (Koolhaas and OMA, 2010). This interesting observation focuses heritage on the conflicting issue of

assessment and how to understand our past through the testimony of built matter. The inverse power of heritage, that is, to *not* be accepted as part of history, is greatly exemplified by looking at something loathed: "There is now a global consensus that post-war architecture...was an aesthetic and ideological debacle" (Koolhaas and OMA, 2010). It seems that Koolhaas' own *generic city* is suddenly becoming a contested historical entity, although he originally conceived it as "the city without history... It does not need maintenance...If it gets old it just self-destructs and renews" (Koolhaas, 1995, p.1250). Rather, we seem to be experiencing a simultaneous "self-destruction" *and* revival of the Generic City, the latter being something Koolhaas himself briefly anticipated: "One day it [the Generic City, eds.] will be absolutely exotic again, this discarded product of Western civilization, through the resemanticization that its very dissemination brings in its wake" (ibid., p.1250). Calling attention to the very quantity in which the Generic City exists, in this case younger industrial landscapes as part of The Welfare City, is fundamental to understanding the present and hitherto unfamiliar situation, in which the majority of the built environment enters the scope of heritage considerations. To warn us of this exotic revival of the Generic City in the guise of heritage seems to be Koolhaas' primary concern in *Cronocaos*. However, the polemical argument can be questioned, since Koolhaas neglects the transforming concept of heritage and the internally disputed and evolving discourse (only superficially presented here). His claim that heritage discourse has no concept of the passing of time, of culturally diverging perceptions of materiality and history, and of the political manifestations of its practice, is simply not true. Nevertheless, Koolhaas does make a relevant point: "There are no ideas for preserving the mediocre, the generic" (Koolhaas and OMA, 2010). To inspire such ideas, something which has not quite been achieved by Fairclough, is precisely the endeavour of this paper.

One problem persists if we are to consider younger industrial landscapes convincingly and productively as places of heritage: none of the above-mentioned concepts and discussions of heritage seem to manage the double movement embedded in the typologies. The dual relationship in the empirical findings between characteristics that transcend space, on the one hand, and contain unquestionably local and particular traits on the other, cannot fit into any of the above-mentioned notions of place. Authorised Heritage Discourse is tied to a romantic essentialism in its sense of place, and this conception is to a large extent continued in Fairclough's perspectives on *Faro*. He links landscape, place and identity with no further contemplation of the spatial boundary of the concepts. It is doubtful whether they are in fact confined to localities and communities. Koolhaas, on the contrary, is solely interested in the global implications of his proclaimed "preservation empire", and gives no attention to place.

However, if place is considered as relational, and if the specificity of place is conceptualised as continuously reproduced as an accumulated history – constituted by layer upon layer of changing relations to the wider world – then the content of the empirical findings can be fully deployed as a description of spatial and aesthetic characteristics, which can form the basis of a heritage assessment. The areas can thus be perceived as a multiplicity of specific places constituted by their layered history of relations to predominantly general characteristics such as planning regulations, industrial production and logistics, prevalent landscape features, flora, and so forth. Hence, the specificity of each place is to be found in the particular aggregate of layered relations that often derives from the commonplace. The double movement of the typologies can thereby be embedded in a sense of place that is not bound to an introverted history or essentialist idea, but defined precisely by its relations to other places and phenomena.

Conclusion

At present, and in the coming decade, we will face the unfamiliar challenge of reconsidering the majority of our built environment as something increasingly historically saturated. The "commonplace" is a recurring condition when we engage with the recent cultural history of the welfare state and attempt to consider its built testimony as heritage. Regardless of interpretation and judgement, the monotony of mass-produced architecture and centralised planning consequently formed the everyday surroundings of the majority of the Danish population. Thus, the commonplace is also something with which we are familiar – we are used to living within it, although we may overlook its defining features.

We have laid open a theoretical discussion of how to consider younger industrial landscapes as heritage, confronting three major heritage discourses with the layered and relational aspects of place. The double movement of commonplace and specific characteristics can be encapsulated as constitutive of younger industrial landscapes' identity and, in turn, deployed as essential to understanding the areas as heritage.

We have also presented The Photomatrix Method as a way of identifying and characterising aesthetic and spatial aspects of Denmark's younger industrial landscapes. The Photomatrix Method, developed in the oeuvre of Bernd and Hilla Becher, contains three steps, and shows promising potential as a tool for assessing spatial and aesthetic characteristics. The "typological mode of showing" provides an unprejudiced phenomenological gaze that allows for a nuanced scrutiny of similar subjects. The method may thus be successfully applied to other parts of the *Zwischenstadt* as a means to assess environments aesthetically.

The empirical material reveals two clearly recognisable themes. First, how the post-war planning schemes are of profound significance for the experience of younger industrial landscapes today. As presented in the typologies, the generous infrastructures, the dense plantings, the vast flat buildings and the extensive stretches of open space all describe and distinguish the perceived spatial and aesthetic appearance of younger industrial landscapes. Secondly, the passing of time increasingly permeates the areas' appearance, which is reflected in the numerous – and simultaneously present – temporal conditions in the landscape and the built adaptations. These themes transcend locality and are found in similar, but locally specific, forms across Denmark.

This new way of understanding the identity and specificity of younger industrial landscapes mediates our idea of "Nordicness" both theoretically and empirically. We have shown how the areas can neither be comprehensively described through generic and spatially transcending phenomena alone, nor through the endeavour to uncover an internalised essence of each locality. This leaves the idea of a specific "Nordicness" inherent in the Danish welfare city unfounded. However, the layered and relational conception of place reframes the idea of the site-specific and allows the concept of "Nordicness" to incorporate both the utilitarian planning and industrial production. Both central to the evolution of The Welfare City, to which "Nordicness" is inherently tied.

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