Remembering and reconfiguring industrial heritage: the case of the digester in Moss, Norway

In Moss, Norway, a former cellulose factory is currently being adapted for new uses. The onsite digester, a high-rise steel structure that was used to make cellulose before the factory closed in 2012, is a landmark on the premises. The Directorate for Cultural Heritage has not designated heritage status to the digester, although it constitutes as heritage for many who used to work at the factory. The digester now faces an uncertain material future, but that does not preclude it from being remembered in various ways. Some former factory workers suggest that its heritage can be rendered *olfactory* by reconstructing the putrid smell the digester emitted while in service. This paper argues that 'authorised' views of heritage can be challenged by the ways in which working-class heritage is performed and remembered.

Keywords: post-industrial landscapes; smellscapes; remembrance; working-class heritage

Introduction

Due to major economic restructuring since the 1960s, many industries have been turned into derelict landscapes with potential for urban regeneration (Swensen & Skrede, 2018), whereas other landscapes seem to face more uncertain futures (Galster, 2012). Some landscapes, such as rural ones, are lovingly preserved and restored; others are considered unimportant and systematically erased (Lapka & Cudlinova, 2003, p. 323). The latter is often the case for industrial landscapes, but if landscapes are 'storehouses of meaning' (High & Lewis, 2007, p. 2), deindustrialised and regenerated landscapes are also 'memorylands' (Macdonald, 2013) and 'memoryscapes' (Árvay & Foote, 2020). While certain parts of Detroit are said to be in the

process of decay, as illustrated by the derelict buildings that once acted as places of work for the working class (Galster, 2012), such landscapes may be viewed and valued differently by nearby residents. This is demonstrated by Zebracki et al. (2019); through participatory photography, they show how Detroiters reminisce about local life and the landscapes while the media and other commentators describe them as 'deteriorating'. Zebracki et al. (2019) thus remind us to highlight the different experiences of people and how social relations often prove to be power relations (Zebracki et al., 2019, p. 491) – especially in the context of urban regeneration and attempts at having something designated as heritage (Herzfeld, 2019). Corresponding to Macpherson's (2016) reading of Ingold (2000), we find it useful to consider landscapes as the world that people know, and to realise that this knowledge is generated through people's experiences of being, moving, sensing, and feeling. For example, looking at the factory through the windows of the managers' office will probably create a different experience, and thus, a different landscape, compared to viewing the worker sweating from the heat of the furnace inside the factory building. Simply put, landscapes are known or constructed through 'bodily experience[s]' (Macpherson, 2016, p. 427). However, we also follow Macpherson (2016, p. 427) in that we do not want to reduce landscapes to individuals' incorporated experiences. Landscapes are (also) physical structures that are sensed and memorized subjectively and intersubjectively, for instance through talk, written accounts and monuments. Pardue (2019) points out how spaces are made meaningful through experiences of sound, and stresses that 'music is an expression of *presence …'* (Pardue, 2019, p. 477, emphasis in original). However, sounds, people and buildings are not eternal, but as landscapes are 'dynamic' (see Pardue, 2019, p. 488) and not frozen in time, they are not clean slates without histories either, although some (potential) 'visual clues' (Sáenz de Tejada Granados & van der Horst, 2020, p. 6) may be erased. Scholars have

analysed people's responses to the altered physical landscape of Govan, a district southwest of Glasgow, after giant cranes at the Fairfield shipyard were dismantled and removed (Conlon, 2020). The cranes were iconic structures and part of Glasgow's skyline, and a local poet wrote a poem to mourn the cranes' passing:

> The last time I lay my eyes on / Our city's steel horizon / That the sun will never rise on / Til' the river drains; We'll mourn the cranes / When there's a huge hole in the sky / About a hundred meters high / We'll ask the silent river why / Glasgow maintains, only memorials to cranes. (Conlon, 2020, p. 199)

The poet laments how the cranes are no longer part of Glasgow's landscape and only memories are left of them. However, DeSilvey (2017) argues that if memory is understood not as something dependent on material containers for safekeeping, and is instead 'ignited in dialogue between mind and matter,' then memory does not rely on stable material forms for its expression (DeSilvey, 2017, p. 14). Moreover, DeSilvey argues that we 'must forget in order to remain present, forget in order not to die, forget in order to remain faithful', that it is 'possible to perform remembrance trough transience', and, finally, that it is 'possible to look beyond loss to conceive other ways of understanding and acknowledging material change' (DeSilvey, 2017, p. 5). This can be read as a 'reconciliation' by which people come to terms with a bygone past. However, despite many locals expressing sadness about 'replacing the unique with the commonplace' – to borrow a phrase from Edensor (2005, p. 3) – feelings on industrial heritage are ambivalent. In a study about industrial heritage, scholars asked if former workers would return to their old worksites to see them demolished. Some were intrigued by ruination while

others were repulsed by the very idea (High & Orange, 2020, p. 172). There is a long history of scholarly discussion about people's attachments to, or engagements with, landscapes and places (e.g. Basso, 1996; Bender, 2002; Duncan & Duncan, 2004; Gray, 2000; Jackson, 1984; Low, 2009; Okely, 2001; Toren, 1995). Many argue that the relationships between people and their surroundings not only involve *feelings* of home and belonging, but also of loss and discomfort (see also Atkinson, 2015; Berkaak, 1999; Hoekstra, 2019; Malinowski, 1984; Pleasant & Strangleman, 2020; Savage et al., 2005; Waterton, 2020). We find it useful to connect this strand of literature to a specific turn in heritage studies.

In the last ten years or so, we have witnessed an 'affective and emotional' turn in heritage studies (see e.g. Skrede, 2020; Smith & Campbell, 2016; Tolia-Kelly et al., 2017a; Waterton & Watson, 2013). Scholars have argued that we should aspire to describe human sensory life, such as 'people's actual experience of, say, eating a fruit or hearing a melody' (Macdonald, 2013, p. 82). Thus, the so-called 'other-than' or 'more-than' representational theories have gained a foothold in heritage studies, and interests in the psychological aspects of the human mind have evolved. In recent studies by Smith, it is indicated that labour and industrial history sites (as well as museums) are special, since they are often based on close personal and familial connections to the history of the site in question, thereby triggering affective and emotional responses among and *in* visitors (Smith, 2020a; 2020b, p. 135). Yet, working-class heritage has been said to be marginalised or disregarded, conceived as having little, if any, national value (Smith, 2020b, p. 128). Others have argued that working-class heritage is 'particularly in danger of being silenced and downplayed in official heritage discourses' (Berger, 2020, p. 1). Memory may also 'split open a group's fractured identity through mnemonic dissonance and dissent' (De Nardi & High, 2020, p. 117). Cowie and Heathcott argue that any discussion of deindustrialisation must respect

the ‘despair and betrayal’ felt by workers when their factories are padlocked, abandoned, turned into artsy shopping spaces or even detonated (Cowie & Heathcott, 2003, p. 1). However, as our forthcoming case study will demonstrate, ‘despair and betrayal’ – although very explicit terms – need not preclude the memorialisation of industrial heritage, which concerns both the ‘permanence and absence’ of industrial landscapes (Castañeda López & Vela Cossío, 2020). Moreover, we will also demonstrate how former employees may indeed *reminisce* about life at the former factory, recalling their past experiences with pleasure and not only despair (see also Zebracki et al., 2019).

Case presentation

Peterson & Søn was a cellulose factory in Moss, a midsize city in south-eastern Norway. It was established in 1883 and produced paper until it went bankrupt in 2012. On cold winter days, the factory filled the cityscape with white smoke/steam (Figure 1). The oldest physical remains of industry on the premises are remnants of Moss’ ironworks, which operated there prior to cellulose production. Several structures were demolished while others were adapted for new uses. Höegh Eiendom, a large property developer and owner of the premises, is also constructing several new apartment blocks with a view to building a new city district at the former industrial site. When completed, the site will contain more than two thousand new homes, as well as businesses, offices, shops, restaurants and various cultural and recreational services (Swensen & Skrede, 2018, p. 12). Several visions of the future landscape have been drafted (Figure 2).

One of the most peculiar remaining structures on the site is the digester (Figure 3), which is a primary component in the process of making cellulose. In the digester, wood chips were continuously cooked and washed prior to further refinement in the mill and other paper-making

operations (Michelsen & Foss, 1996, p. 523). Installed in 1971, the digester was manufactured by Kamyr, a Swedish-Norwegian company, and employed the latest technology in cellulose production. Due to its height – about 70 metres – it stands out in the cityscape. The digester grew famous for the smell it emitted while boiling chemical pulp; the expression 'the smell of Moss' is now known all over Norway. The Directorate for Cultural Heritage even designated this peculiar smell as intangible heritage in the Norwegian Year of Cultural Heritage 2009. However, the fate of the digester is up for debate because Höegh Eiendom is unsure of what to do with it.

Heritage scholars have employed several concepts to address disputed heritage, both tangible and intangible. Such concepts include 'dark heritage' (Gilmore & Magee, 2019), 'difficult heritage' (Macdonald, 2008; Wang, 2019), 'uncomfortable heritage' (Pendlebury et al., 2018), 'edgy heritage' (Whitehead et al., 2019), 'incidental heritage' (McCarthy, 2017) and 'dissonant heritage' (Tunbridge & Ashworth, 1996), to name a few. However, the digester's heritage is not disputed because its history is grim, but because people do not agree on whether it constitutes as heritage or not. If it does, the type of heritage it represents – and for whom – is ambiguous.

A popular term in heritage studies is the 'authorised heritage discourse', which is often abbreviated to the AHD. Smith argues that the AHD 'works to naturalize a range of assumptions about the nature and meaning of heritage' and 'promotes a certain set of Western elite cultural values as being universally applicable' (Smith, 2006, p. 11). The AHD is often concerned with 'things', which is reflected in the embedded 'assumptions about the innate and immutable cultural values of heritage that are linked to and defined by the concepts of monumentality and aesthetics' (Smith, 2006, p. 4). Such discourse becomes authorised by associations, the views of professionals, and specifically 'the authorial voices of the upper middle and ruling classes of

European educated professional and elites' (Smith, 2006, p. 28). In such an exclusive intellectual landscape, the fate of the digester sits rather uncomfortably. To collect the requisite funding to preserve and protect the digester, the cultural heritage manager in Moss turned to the Norwegian authorities on heritage, the Directorate for Cultural Heritage, in hopes they would 'authorise' and designate the digester as worthy of heritage status. The response was negative for two reasons: first, the directorate is primarily interested in industrial sites that are preserved as *complete* cultural environments. This is not the case in Moss, where many buildings have been demolished while others have been preserved. Second, since the directorate mainly deals with heritage (objects) of national interest, the directorate argued that the digester does not have 'national' value (cf. Smith, 2020b, p. 128). Thus, the authorities in effect deemed it as unworthy of heritage status. From their response, we can infer that the directorate, which in this case establishes the AHD, is more interested in preserving the status quo – that is, the whole industrial landscape as heritage rather than fragments and single objects like the digester – than in viewing heritage as a cultural and social process that involves 'negotiating and creating and recreating values, meanings, understandings and identity' (Smith, 2006, p. 307).

The heritage that the digester represents is not just 'industrial' or 'technological'. It was part of factory workers' lives for over 40 years. Displaced workers, unions and communities – the ones whose lives and industrial livelihoods have become heritage – are now facing the question of how to remember industrial heritage (Frisch, 1998). When an industrial plant closes, workers may lose a social structure in which they felt valued and validated by their fellows (High, 2013, p. 998). However, as mentioned, working-class social history is not always part of the AHD (Smith, 2006, pp. 195-236; 2018, p. 7581). At present, we do not know what the future of the digester will be – whether preserved, adaptively reused or dismantled. The outcomes of

large-scale transformations of urban landscapes, which involve planners, policymakers, private developers, heritage workers, engaged residents and the media, can likely only be ascertained in retrospect (e.g. Andersen & Røe, 2017). However, this does not mean that the digester is not remembered for various reasons, which we will return to after first outlining our research strategies.

Methods

To learn more about the meaning of the digester for previous workers at the factory, we carried out a focus group interview in September 2020. The participants included a key informant who worked around the digester from the beginning until Peterson went bankrupt, as well as two employees of the Moss Town and Industry Museum involved in documenting Peterson's history after it closed. While these interviewees do not represent the many local 'voices' or all former workers' views, learning from key informants is valuable to scholars wanting to obtain an in-depth understanding of the social, cultural and material dimensions of everyday life in a 'community' (Berkaak, 1999; McKenna & Main, 2013; Whyte, 1993a, 1993b). One of the authors has also spoken with representatives from Höegh Eiendom and the heritage management office in Moss (April 2018 and February 2019) and carried out two on-site observations of the transformation area, including 'walk-along' interviews (Kusenbach, 2003; Xiao et al., 2020) with representatives from Höegh Eiendom. The latter research proved useful in helping us obtain a sense of place. To supplement these descriptions with a 'broader picture', we analysed letters to the editors in local newspapers where the digester and its future have been debated.

We will start by outlining Moss' changing industrial landscape, a change accompanied by a transformation of the local 'smellscape' (Xiao et al., 2020). Thereafter, we will describe a

‘smelling’ art installation, followed by an interpretation of how our informants viewed and talked about the factory, its material structures ‘anchoring’ memories and how the smell stuck with the workers following their days at work.

Transformed land and ‘smellscapes’

If entering Moss by boat southbound through the *Mossesundet* inlet of the Outer Oslofjord, you could in the past see the Linox tower in the cityscape (Figure 4). The tower was erected in 1938 and was used to dry large oil canvases used in the clothing industry. It was demolished in 1997. One of our informants said that many now regret this decision, as it was an icon in the landscape, in other words, a ‘disappeared landmark’ (Sáenz de Tejada Granados & van der Horst, 2020, p. 16). Now the informant fears that the same could happen to the digester. In our conversation, the informants stated that property developers are generally more interested in looking forwards than backwards, and that newer objects are ascribed less heritage value than older ones are. The informants told us that many cannot ‘look at the whole picture’ and grasp heritage as a multifarious concept that involves taking an interest in both old and new structures.

‘Moss shall now become what Moss is not’

When asking the interviewees about their initial associations upon hearing the word ‘digester’, the first one replied ‘the smell of Moss’, the second said ‘a symbol of derelict industry’ and the third stated ‘working life and comradeship’. This illustrates how a physical object can be different ‘things’ in the social, cultural and emotional sense (Beatty, 2014; Miller, 2008). Already in the very first minutes of the focus group interview, our interlocutors’ statements put us on track towards the insight that there are ‘multiple and dynamic ways in which landscapes

come into being, are experienced, valued, imagined and reassembled by different people …' (Macpherson, 2016, p. 426). However, they all agreed that unfortunately, the memory of 'the smell of Moss' is something that many now wish to forget, eager to be rid of its 'embarrassing' symbolic value. They added that Moss is in the process of being re-branded with alternate identities – 'Bikers City', 'The City of Smiles' and 'The City of Beaches' – but in their opinion, these things are 'all that Moss is not'. The informants claim that old stone buildings are generally preserved, but that contemporary structures are 'nothing' in the minds of politicians and developers. One of them stated, 'We are now demolishing what was constructed by the welfare state after the Second World War – we should have learned better!'.

The smell of cash

The smell produced by the digester has been a defining characteristic of the city of Moss for many decades. According to a former factory worker, 'Moss will always be known as "the smell of Moss"'. Interested in learning more about the social, material and cultural implications of this particular by-product of cellulose production, we asked a former worker if he could tell us more about the smell. He explained that it particularly attached itself to leather items, such as belts, handbags and wallets. He recalled that when Peterson workers opened their wallets to pay at the local store, the smell immediately permeated the air: 'It was a saying amongst us workers; "This is the smell of cash!" Yes, the smell of Moss is the smell of money' – alluding to the factory as a site of production and money-making. The informants also said that the smell accompanied the workers' clothes, which they removed and stored on their porches to avoid bringing the smell into their homes. The smell was an important symbol for the workers and their families, but they did not want it to enter their private lives. According to van Gennep (1960) and Turner (1974),

the smell had a ‘liminal’ character. The odorants belonged to the public – that is, the factory and the urban sphere. Here, the smell was not a ‘matter out of place’ (Douglas, 2005, p. 44) but rather socially significant and of cultural value. Drawing on Pardue (2019, p. 477), the smell was an expression of the presence of the workers, their work as well as their place of work. With the factory gone, the smell also left the landscape thereby challenging the memory of the city as a working-class landscape. However, at the time of writing it is remembered by many people in Moss, either fondly or with disgust, and some even found a way to reintroduce the smell to the city (Kirsebom, 2015; Kjøniksen, 2015).

A smelling art installation

Although they received no economic support from the Directorate for Cultural Heritage, two former factory workers at Peterson – one in management and one who operated the digester – collaborated with the Moss Town and Industry Museum to remind people of the digester and the smell it produced (Kirsebom, 2015; Kjøniksen, 2015). A designer and two mechanics crafted a steel installation that could contain liquid, and one of the former workers imported ‘the smell of Moss’ from a cellulose factory in Sweden. This enabled them to re-create the same smell produced at Peterson before the factory closed. The installation (Figure 5) is funnel-shaped, allowing the concentrated smell to be ‘snuffled in through [the] nose and deep into [the] lungs’ (Kjøniksen, 2015). For visitors who might find the experience overwhelming, they installed another watered-down version of the installation inside the museum. However, some visitors indicated that the memories of the smell were enough and they had no desire experience it again (Kirsebom, 2015). Regardless, the staff refilled the installation with condensed liquid as needed. The exhibition was part of Norway’s Momentum biennale, which emphasises both the tactile and

emotional aspects of art, and allowed the audience to touch cellulose and discover how it feels to knead wet and grey paper pulp (Kirsebom, 2015). The visitors could also experience the history of Peterson through a rich visual and textual archive at the museum.

Memory in landscapes

One of our informants reported that in its initial years, the exhibition was visited by both former employees and other visitors. The installation was viewed as a humorous attempt to remember the smell of Moss as 'authentically' as possible. However, another informant told us that only one half of the workers cared about preserving the digester. The other half stated that Höegh Eiendom could 'get rid of the whole lot', implicating the digester as rubbish to be dismantled. A former Peterson worker suggested that the workers that handled the digester likely had the strongest feelings for it, while those working elsewhere in the factory did not care as much for it. However, as the digester in Moss is the only one left in Norway, the informant worried about losing his memory of the industrial landscape. When asked if he and his former colleagues regarded Peterson as 'heritage', the informant reflected briefly and replied: 'Yes, I guess we do. When we [the former workers] come together, we start reminiscing about the days at Peterson – so, yes, this is our heritage'. He also explained that if the digester disappeared, the workers 'would have nothing to "attach" [their] memories to'. To paraphrase Basso (1996), we might say that for some, memory also resides in the landscape. Radically altering a landscape by removing a conspicuous and seemingly defining cultural element – in this case, the digester – could also alter some people's memories of it. For some, the digester was a 'visual clue' (Sáenz de Tejada Granados & van der Horst, 2020, p. 6) that together with the olfactory clue (re)created memories of social significant relations and practices, thereby (re)constructing a valued world; their

landscape (Macpherson, 2016). While for others, these (potential) clues seemed to be of less value, at least not something they wanted to preserve or necessarily recall. By using the concept of 'atmosphere', one 'seeks to explore the interplay of human activity, individual emotional perception and built forms, thus giving a more nuanced − though necessarily incomplete − understanding of changing landscapes' (Sáenz de Tejada Granados & van der Horst, 2020, p. 21). Part of the defining element of different atmospheres, in our case, was the significance given to the smell of Moss.

It is worth noting that those we spoke to made no claims about preserving the digester in its present state, and it was not argued that the digester should be 'canned'. Instead, our informants argued in favour of adaptive reuse, such as by turning the digester into a coffee shop or a tourist attraction by adding new elements to its physical structure (and thus to the industrial experience). If such a change were to take place, people could feel that they are strolling 'through a public [town square]' (cf. Modan, 2019, p. 326) instead of a derelict industrial landscape.

A local attempt at cost-sharing

According to one administrative manager at Höegh Eiendom, the company wishes to dismantle the digester: 'I believe it means a lot to those who worked at Peterson, but not so much for others'. However, as one of our informants at the Moss Town and Industry Museum stated, there has been a 'lot of debate in the local media' about the digester (for a recent example, see e.g. Grønna, 2020). Perhaps in light of said interest, a representative from Höegh Eiendom told one of the authors, while walking around the former factory grounds, that the developer was willing to pay a fair share for the digester's preservation and maintenance if other actors – the

municipality, the Directorate for Cultural Heritage, NGOs, residents' associations, benefactors, sponsors or other sources – would do the same. Thus far, this strategy has not succeeded, and the digester's fate remains unclear. As mentioned, the Directorate for Cultural Heritage did not 'authorise' the digester as being worthy of heritage status because it did not represent a 'complete' cultural environment possessing national value. The directorate thus declined to provide financial support for preserving and maintaining the digester. One of our informants implied that this was a symbolic decision that made others reluctant to pay for the digester's restoration or adaptive reuse. The directorate's decision may appear paradoxical inasmuch as the same directorate designated 'the smell of Moss' as intangible heritage of national value as part of the Norwegian Year of Cultural Heritage in 2009. Since 2012, the scent that once defined Moss now exists only as an olfactory memory of the past.

Concluding discussion

Landscapes are not only 'external physical object[s]' (Macpherson, 2016, p. 427). They are bodily experienced and have cultural, social and personal significance. Moreover, memories do not only occur 'in the head' (Macdonald, 2013, p. 106); they can also be experienced materially, as in the scented installation at the Moss Town and Industry Museum. Additionally, memories and (the) landscapes (they produce) are discussed and talked about, and are thereby not only subjective but intersubjective (e.g. Sáenz de Tejada Granados & van der Horst, 2020, pp. 15-16). Whether the digester is preserved or not does not affect our ability to smell, feel and remember the past; local enthusiasts continue to remember the digester and negotiate its social significance and identity. Despite the lack of support from the Directorate for Cultural Heritage – an arbiter of the AHD in this case – locals are 'performing' remembrance rather than remaining passive about

it (Smith, 2006, pp. 195-275). This may be viewed an instance of ‘heritage from below’ that demonstrates Schofield’s claims that 1) heritage is everywhere, and 2) heritage is for everyone, and we are all heritage experts (Schofield, 2014, p. 2). The museum exhibition is an instance of heritage engagement where ‘social value’ is placed on equal footing with aesthetic value (Jones, 2017, p. 23). However, as mentioned, our key informant told us that they [the former workers] need something to ‘attach’ their memories to – a visual, and perhaps olfactory, clue (see Sáenz de Tejada Granados & van der Horst, 2020, p. 6). Thus, DeSilvey’s (2017) argument that we need not necessarily rely on material forms for remembrance may be something of a cold comfort for some former Peterson workers. The digester is not like a beautiful red brick chimney that can be understood as a ‘vessel of [...] memories of the industrial past’ (DeSilvey, 2017, p. 2), but in spite of not being designated as worthy of preservation by the Directorate for Cultural Heritage, it remains significant in the workers’ memories.

High and Lewis (2007, p. 29) have observed that ‘historic factories’ are typically picturesque stone mills located in small towns and rural areas. Unlike the digester in Moss, their aesthetic value is not in doubt. The same, however, could not be said of many industrial structures built in the twentieth century. High and Lewis (2007) have demonstrated that in terms of gaining public support and overcoming financial and other obstacles, attempts to preserve closed steel mills and grain terminal elevators have been met with difficulty (High & Lewis, 2007, p. 29). This problem also applies to the digester and thus echoes our informants’ viewpoints. Without some form of preservation or adaptive reuse, the digester will be dismantled and removed. However, this will not preclude the memorialisation of industrial heritage, as memory relates to both the ‘permanence and absence’ of industrial landscapes (Castañeda López

& Vela Cossío, 2020). Our informants have also found value in retaining symbolic material remains from the recent industrial past.

Heritage studies partly began as a critique of the essentialist understanding of heritage as object-oriented. It emphasised the cultural process by which heritage was represented, rather than consisting solely of the 'innate' qualities of objects (e.g. Smith, 2006). In the past ten to fifteen years, heritage studies have also taken an interest in how people emotionally react and respond to heritage (Skrede, 2020; Tolia-Kelly et al., 2017b). The case of the digester demonstrates that heritage is multifarious and encompasses tangible, intangible and emotional dimensions (see also Skrede & Hølleland, 2018). Locals continue to re-create the 'smell of Moss' and the embodied (olfactory) memory of the digester, as smell produces visceral reactions and affective responses in the body (Neubert, 2020). However, the case of the digester demonstrates that objects can also 'take on' memories in ways that may help people remember their industrial landscapes and the pride of having worked at industrial plants such as Peterson. As Miller (2008) might have put it, our study shows how the digester is a meaningful *thing*, an object which by *storing* memories and emotions provides former workers with a sense of *comfort*.

We have already mentioned some concepts used to signify 'disputed' heritage, such as dark heritage, difficult heritage and uncomfortable heritage. We may argue that the digester is not only working-class heritage, but 'ambiguous' and 'unauthorised' heritage, with reference to its dismissive evaluation by the Directorate for Cultural Heritage and because former workers do not unanimously agree on its cultural significance. However, for some former workers, the digester still holds value. Thus, we may say that the digester constitutes an instance of '(in)significant' heritage. Insignificance is the antonym of significance, and '(in)significance' may be used as a concept to consider the duality of value attribution practices and their impacts

(Ireland et al., 2020, p. 2). The digester was not valued by the Directorate for Cultural Heritage on account of its lack of national significance, but that judgment does not dictate whether the digester should or should not be preserved or adaptively reused. Instead, there is a need to reflect on how to confront the not-so-distant past. The directorate has initiated a preservation programme for technical and industrial heritage; the typical preserved objects are 'cosy' and 'nice' red brick structures with age and patina, which lend to a romanticised view of the industrial period that excludes what is often perceived as less 'photogenic', such as the digester (Swensen & Skrede, 2019). However, it is not an easy task to define what is or is not photogenic – one of our informants described the digester as 'tall and slender' and as one of the most beautiful digesters among others in Europe and elsewhere.

Heritage managers are struggling to approach Norway's recent industrial past. Inasmuch as working-class heritage has been described as neglected, silenced and downplayed (e.g. Berger, 2020; Smith, 2006; Smith, 2018), confronting industrial heritage seems like a golden opportunity to engage in other forms of heritage besides that which is 'canonised' and 'authorised'. Moreover, the digester can provoke thought about how material objects – such as odorants that we cannot necessarily see or touch – can still be significant social and cultural heritage. If the developers did a 'Florida thing' (McGuigan, 2009) and established a coffee shop inside the digester, the 'smellscape' would change accordingly. Then the landscape would smell like coffee – not cellulose production – and would demonstrate the dynamic and transitory character of heritage and landscapes.

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