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**Representation, process, experience:
(post)industrial landscape in
anthropological-geographical perspective**

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Prohlášení

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V Praze dne 22. března 2016

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Abstract

The main topic of the dissertation is the (post)industrial landscape of what is today the Czech Republic. In particular, the dissertation presents three case studies of three (post)industrial landscapes: that of Ostrava, Kladno and Most. The aim of the dissertation is twofold – thematic as well as theoretical. As far as the thematic focus of the dissertation goes, the author employs the concept of landscape as a prism through which it is possible to explore large societal shifts and changes as they are mirrored in landscape. The question is what has happened to industrial landscape after the fall of socialism and how industrial landscape has turned into what it is now. On the theoretical level, the (post)industrial landscape of contemporary Czechia is used as a means of exploring the complexity of the concept of landscape and developing a conceptualization of landscape that comes to terms with its complexity, ambiguity and elusiveness.

In terms of theory, the dissertation engages with three ways of conceptualising landscape prevalent in contemporary anthropology and (new cultural) geography: landscape as representation, process and experience. To explore them in depth and reveal any connection and interlinks these conceptualisations might share, the author explores the three (post)industrial landscapes of Ostrava, Kladno and Most, each from different theoretical-methodological standpoints: visual discourse analysis to analyse visual representations of Ostrava, hermeneutic content analysis to explore Kladno and finally phenomenological field research to research Most. In terms of methodology, the dissertation thus uses mixed method, bricolage inspired approach in order to surpass the epistemological challenge posed by the difficulty to conceptualise landscape as representation, process and experience at the same time. Deep situated knowledge and the commonalities among the landscapes allow the author to combine the insights in order to provide a rich account of features and elements of contemporary (post)industrial landscape as well as the forces, processes and tensions out of which it emerges. Drawing on Burawoy's extended case method, the author understands the three landscapes as particular cases from where it is possible to develop a complex understanding of contemporary (post)industrial landscape and by means of building on pre-existing theory to elaborate more nuanced conceptualization of landscape in general.

Landscape because of its complexity on both the theoretical and thematic levels allow for creative and imaginative opening of themes and topics, alleys of explorations and directions in theorizations. The proposition to combine the different approaches forms the core theoretical contribution of the dissertation to debates on what landscape is as they unfold in contemporary anthropology and geography.

Keywords

(post)industrial landscape, post-socialism, visual discourse analysis, hermeneutic content analysis, phenomenological field research

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Introduction

This dissertation is about landscape. As it becomes clear throughout the text, landscape is a highly complex and complicated concept and as such, I argue, it is suitable a tool for analytically and interpretatively approaching complex and complicated (socio-spatial) realities. The aim of this dissertation is twofold – thematic as well as theoretical. As far as the thematic focus of the dissertation goes, I employ the concept of landscape as a prism through which I want to explore large societal shifts and changes as they are mirrored in landscape. The key question for me is what has happened to industrial landscape after the fall of socialism and how industrial landscape has turned into what it is now. I thus direct my research to (post)industrial landscape of what is now the Czech Republic to analyse its key constitutive features and elements as well as the forces, processes and tensions out of which the landscape emerges. On the theoretical level, I use the (post)industrial landscape of contemporary Czechia as a means of exploring the complexity of the concept of landscape. I strive to develop a conceptualization of landscape that comes to terms with its complexity, ambiguity and elusiveness. Drawing on different strands of contemporary theorization of landscape across anthropology and geography, I exemplify the fact that while it is possible to concentrate on diverse aspects and dimensions of landscape, it might also be productive to attempt to exploit the complexity and ambiguity of the concept of landscape. This dissertation constitutes such an attempt.

The dissertation is divided into two parts that include six chapters. The first part consists of a theoretical and a methodological chapter accompanied by a short chapter outlining the socio-historical context of my research and explaining my understanding and usage of the terms post-socialist and (post)industrial. The aim of the first part is to establish a theoretical and methodological background for the second part, which is empirical. In the theoretical chapter, I discuss contemporary approaches to landscape and show that the current conceptualization of landscape can be understood as concentrating on three areas of interest – landscape as representation, landscape as process, and landscape as experience. The first acknowledges the connection of the general idea of landscape to visual culture and especially to visual representation of the world and the socio-spatial realities it consists of. This strand of theorization holds that landscape is closely linked to representation, a rendering of the world that certain social groups inhabit and understand. At the same time, this rendering provides landscape with content and inscribes meanings and emotions into it, which the landscape then radiates. Landscape is not only represented, but it also represents. The inherent link between landscape and representation in terms of

both landscape being an object of representation and a medium through which a representation takes place makes landscape experientially powerful but at the same time ideological and political, related to and mirroring the distribution of power in society. To research landscape as representation thus means to concentrate on the visual (and textual) means of production of landscape as meaningful in particular ways and by means of analysing the meanings inscribed into and communicated by the landscape to unravel the workings of power behind the meanings and their production.

The strand of theorization of landscape as process acknowledges the fact that landscape is always exposed to alterations, negotiations and changes. Landscape is thus always in process and at the same time bears traces of the processes that have taken place. Landscape is thus not only inherently linked to representation, but it is also essentially linked to time and to a process in which the material world around us is being inscribed with meanings by means of social practices. Moreover, behind this process, there are many other processes, temporalities that intersect in the landscape and influence the making of meaning behind any landscape. These temporalities are related to humans and their history, politics, social practices, but also to nonhumans, the natural world, geology and geomorphology and many others. At the intersection of these on-going temporalities, landscape – unfinished and always in process – emerges. To research landscape as process thus means to concentrate on the process in which the meanings to be inscribed into the landscape are formulated, negotiated, produced and contested and by means of that unravel the ideas, imaginaries, hopes and fears that lie behind the production of a particular landscape.

Finally, the strand of theorization of landscape as experience emphasises the fact that landscape is always a landscape for someone, that it is in some very fundamental way linked to experience (and an experiencing subject). Landscape is not simply what we look at, but it is what we see; and “we” are embodied beings immersed in the world that in some sense precedes us but in some sense also comes into full realization by means of us making sense of, negotiating and transforming it. Landscape is thus open to us. But at the same time, because we are in the landscape as bodies, it makes us also available to landscape and to the effects of the meanings, stories and temporalities out of which it emerges. To research landscape as experience thus means to concentrate on the effects landscape features have over the experiencing subject and by means of that to explore the link between spatial, social and individual dimensions of landscape.

It is evident that these three strands of theorizing landscape are closely linked to one another. On a theoretical level they may be fused to make the complexity of

landscape (as representation-process-experience) stand out. Such a complex notion of landscape would however be very difficult to research at once. This is an epistemological challenge which informs my methodological choices. In the methodological chapter I show that I resolved the problem by adopting the approach of extended case method developed by Michael Burawoy (1998) as a situated research practice, which aims at producing a context-bound situated knowledge and by means of that also at improving existing theory. This approach enables us to concentrate on a particular research theme and because of a deep understanding and situated knowledge it enables the scientist to move from the particular understanding to the general level of comparison and interpretation. With respect to the complexity of landscape, I adopt the research strategy of bricolage because, as authors like Joe L. Kincheloe (e.g. 2001) argue, it is a strategy well-suited for facing the challenge posed by the complexity of the world (and phenomena) studied. From this perspective, it seems to be a highly suitable methodological approach that allows for extending from one case to another while offering multiple perspectives on the complexity of landscape.

The three interrelated conceptualizations of landscape – landscape as representation, process, experience – are thus mirrored in three interrelated methods in my research – (visual) discourse analysis, hermeneutic (content) analysis, and phenomenological (field) research. In order to fully exploit the potential of such an approach and at the same time to cover the (post)industrial landscape as widely as possible, I concentrate my research on three landscapes of formerly and to some extent still industrial cities across what is now the Czech Republic: the city of Ostrava, Kladno, and Most. During the research, it became clear that each of the landscapes opens thematically in a different way. I soon realized that each landscape can help me to further my inquiries in thematically but also theoretically specific spheres. I decided to theoretically frame and methodologically approach each landscape in line with a particular conceptualization of landscape – I ended up focusing primarily on landscape as representation in Ostrava, on landscape as process in Kladno, and on landscape as experience in Most. At the same time, because of the commonalities they share, these three landscapes provided a potential to reach (“extend out” in Burawoy’s terms) from each one towards the other and combined they not only help me to further my understanding of contemporary (post)industrial landscape of Czechia, but also allowed for extending the theory of landscape further in an unanticipated way.

The methodological chapter provides an argumentation for the use of methods (or in Burawoy’s terms “research techniques”) I employed in my bricolage-based research. The three theoretical approaches to landscape I formulate are

interrelated, but they each concentrate on different aspects of landscape. I thus decided to employ each theoretical stance in a methodologically different way in the research fields (landscapes) that in time proved thematically rich with respect to the theoretical starting points. To research the (post)industrial landscape in line with the concept of landscape as representation, I opted for (visual) discourse analysis of mainly visual, but also other representations of the landscape and their change from socialism to post-socialism. To research (post)industrial landscape in line with the concept of landscape as process, I opted for hermeneutic (content) analysis of interviews conducted with people taking active part in negotiating the meanings of landscape in time of and after the profound change caused by post-socialist deindustrialization. Finally, to research (post)socialist landscape in line with the concept of landscape as experience, I opted for phenomenological (field) research of the effects of profound changes brought about to landscape by industry, in this case surface mining, and its recession. Each empirical chapter opens with a short narrative the aim of which is to introduce the landscape to the reader as it opened to me in the course of my research.

This dissertation is thus grounded in a triadic conception which intertwines the mentioned theoretical considerations, methodological approaches and researched landscapes. The three landscapes represent three research terrains as well as objects of study, each approached from different theoretical-methodological standpoints. Due to their commonalities and differences with respect to their histories, socialist and post-socialist renderings, the processes of establishing and negotiating their meanings, and experiential properties, they provide a rich and complex account of the constitutive features of contemporary (post)industrial landscape and tensions and processes behind it. And it is this account that constitutes the empirical part of the dissertation. In it, I explore each landscape I researched in a separate chapter. As a result the second part consists of three chapters. I start with Ostrava because the visual discourse analysis of the plentiful visual production on Ostrava from the socialist period as well as after its fall provides me with an in-depth understanding of (post)industrial landscape as representation and the continuity and change with respect to its socialist predecessor. This is a solid common ground from where I can proceed further towards the issues related to landscape as process and as experience. It is so because socialist and to a certain degree also post-socialist visual production on the three industrial landscapes is composed of similar themes and in a similar way with similar (if not identical) reasons and motives. The three landscapes share a common representational space – and thus, I argue, form a part of the same – socialist industrial and later post-socialist (post)industrial landscape. With the understanding of the continuity and change inherent to (post)industrial landscape in mind, the next chapter moves its focus to Kladno. In it, I link landscape as

representation to a complex nexus of ideas and emotions related to particular (post)industrial sites that become part of negotiations over the shape, form and content of (post)industrial landscape. Based on the interviews as well as ethnographic experience and visual materials, I explore the emotionality of such a landscape and where it stems from. The connection of meanings and ideas with aesthetics and emotionality provides me with a ground from where I can move further towards the issue of landscape as experience. In the third and final chapter of the second part of the dissertation, I explore the (post)industrial landscape of surface mining around the city of Most. I connect the understandings generated by previous chapters to a focus on experiential properties of the landscape shaped and formed, represented and negotiated with respect to intense industrial production and a change to its scope.

The dissertation ends with a conclusion, in which I trace and exemplify the links that connect all the three empirical chapters. Although they might seem disparate from each other, as they follow each other, they grow in complexity while following a common thread. The thesis offers an exploration of how continuity and change impacts and is mirrored in the landscape in particular socio-political and historical context. By employing different though interconnected theoretical concepts of landscape and by exploring three interrelated landscapes in a way of methodological bricolage, the dissertation provides a rich and deep account of contemporary (post)industrial landscape with respect to what it consists of and out of what – processes and tensions – it has emerged. At the same time, it exemplifies the potential of the complex and ambiguous concept of landscape to productively generate an understanding of socio-spatial realities that acknowledges their multiplicity. Although it is possible on a theoretical, methodological and thematic level to evade the challenges of the multiplicities of space (as represented, negotiated, experienced), the concept of landscape as I devise it in this dissertation opens up a possibility not to make such an evasion. Because of its complexity on both theoretical and thematic levels landscape allows for a creative and imaginative opening of themes and topics, alleys of explorations and directions in theorizations. This dissertation is my attempt to face the challenge posed by landscape by acknowledging the complexity of landscape on the conceptual level, putting it to use on a thematic level by means of bricolage methodology, give a detailed account of the outcomes of such an endeavour and explicitly formulating implications – in the form of theoretically grounded interpretations about the nature of landscape and its change – based on the complex theoretical approach to landscape.

PART I

Theorizing landscape

In introducing his *Landscape*, a systemic overview of the ways cultural geographers have understood landscape, John Wylie (2007) argues that landscape and the landscape concept are grounded in the interplay of various tensions – nature versus culture, eye versus land, observation versus inhabitation, or proximity versus distance, to name only those Wylie mentions. These tensions have fuelled developments in social sciences (such as anthropology) and in geography in particular allowing for a variety of approaches to and definitions of landscape. In other words, these inherent tensions of landscape lead to the fact that landscape as a concept has never fully solidified; landscape still continues to be “elusive and difficult to describe in a phrase,” as Yi-Fu Tuan (1979, 89) once put it. The ambivalent and polymorphous nature of landscape might lead to what Claudio Minca calls “conceptual confusions about landscape,” which in turn helps to that “in some academic circles the idea of simply dismissing the concept all together has gained some currency” (Minca 2013, 55).

Throughout this dissertation, I adhere to the approach that sees the ambivalence and ambiguity of landscape as a positive and productive feature of the concept for I too believe that “the tensions are creative and productive [...] rather than being indicative of some fault or lack in the concept” (Wylie 2007, 16). I hold that the elusiveness of landscape as a concept as well as a phenomenon is not a drawback to be suppressed, but an inherent feature making landscape an interesting and productive tool for analysis. For me, landscape is interesting and inspiring exactly because it is “an imprecise and ambiguous concept whose meaning has defied the many attempts to define it with the specificity generally expected of a science” (Cosgrove 1998, 13).

This chapter represents my take on the inner tensions of landscape and spells out my understanding of landscape; it explores the conceptual space surrounding landscape and formulates a theoretical background to the research of landscape that forms the core of this dissertation. Landscape in terms of a theoretically developed concept is thus my starting point. But it is also the matter to which I return with insights from the particular landscapes I analyse – industrial landscapes of post-industrial times situated in a specific socio-cultural and historical context – in order to challenge the/my established idea of landscape. In other words, this chapter is about the understanding of landscape with which I enter the field in order to emerge with a more nuanced understanding rooted in but growing beyond the initial theoretical groundings.

As it will become clear, my understanding of landscape is based on the ideas of landscape developed in sociocultural anthropology and (new) cultural geography. This means that landscape for me represents something rather different from a simple part of the outer, human independent world with a unified character based on a stabilised system of relationship of the parts it is formed of (see e.g. landscape ecology of Eduard Hadač in Hadač 1982, 16–26). I incline to a more anthropologically oriented “anthropocentric” idea of landscape. At the same time, however, I do not adhere to landscape as a passive medium that is worked upon by active agents or a mirror of active (human) culture fashioning the natural environment, as in the famous definition offered by Carl Sauer: “culture is the agent, the natural area is the medium, the cultural landscape the result” (Sauer 1963 quoted in Wylie 2007, 20). In this respect, I incline to thinking about landscape as extending beyond the human world (of ideas) and existing at least to a certain degree on its own. Landscape thus for me emerges from the tension between human and non-human (material), to add another tension to the list.

Alongside Wylie’s argument, my understanding of landscape thus acknowledges and even embraces the tensions inherent to the very idea of landscape and the fact that landscape stretches between material and immaterial (i.e. cultural, social, or experiential) and interconnects them. In what follows, I discuss three distinct and yet related ways of theorizing, which are formative for me and which come to terms with the ambivalent nature of landscape. These approach landscape as (related to) representation, either visual or textual, process – that of negotiations but also beyond human reach – and experience. My aim is to establish links between these approaches and later in the dissertation to exploit the affinities as well as tensions between them.

After elucidating my theoretical background, I discuss how landscape has been theorized in contemporary Czech social science. This helps me to further clarify my position with respect to contemporary Czech geography and anthropology. Because my research targets predominantly urban landscape, I also need to clarify how I understand the relationship between landscape and cityscape. The chapter ends with conclusive remarks on landscape expanding beyond tensions as it is understood in this text as well as on the ambition of the text with respect to contemporary theorization of landscape.

This chapter thus stands in place of a definition of landscape. Being “elusive and difficult to describe in a phrase”, landscape is challenging. The challenge is however not that of definition. Stephen Daniels warns us that “we should beware attempts to define landscape, to resolve its contradictions; rather we should abide in its duplicity” (Daniels 1989, 218). The challenge is to resist the temptation

to simplify and reduce because, it is said, it would strip landscape of its usefulness and potential. This chapter elaborates a complex idea of landscape that is then used to provide an understanding of contemporary Czech (post)industrial landscape in the Czech Republic, which in turn might enrich our understanding of landscape in general. For these reasons, this chapter does not attempt at reducing the complexity and inner richness of landscape into a definition; it strives instead for exploring the richness despite the fact that it does not help in overcoming the ambiguity of landscape. After all, it is the complex and elusive nature of landscape which makes it a “usefully ambiguous concept” (Gosden and Head 1994).

Landscape as representation

Yi-Fu Tuan argues that landscape is not a neutral sector of reality “out there”, but rather “an ordering of reality” which connects the objective and subjective (Tuan 1979, 90) and thus material and social (cultural, experiential). But is the “ordering of reality” universal or socially, culturally and historically grounded? With respect to the tensions noted in the introduction, there seems to be a specific “western” sets of ideas/tensions related to landscape. As Bender argues, “[w]estern notions of landscape are politically laden. They encapsulate ideas about perspective, about distance between observer and observed, which make the observer active, the observed passive” (Bender 2002a, S105). It is Dennis Cosgrove (1998) who explores the historicity of these ideas of landscape and situates them in “our”, “western”, “European” history. Based on the exploration, he holds landscape to be a social construct that emerged from the interplay of material environment and a historically specific visuality. The “ordering of reality” we as the inheritors of European cultural developments are embedded in is according to him closely related to vision; landscape thus comes into being at the encounter of material environment and the vision that sees it in a specific way.

In other words, “landscape [for Cosgrove] represents an historically specific way of experiencing the world developed by, and meaningful to, certain social groups” (Cosgrove 1998, 15). In his *Social formation and symbolic landscape*, Cosgrove traces a history of landscape as a European concept emerging throughout specific times of European history. He argues that landscape is very closely linked to the ways of visual representation of the world and thus to aesthetics and its developments. Not only is landscape an aesthetic concept, but as such it is also ideological. It is infused with meanings and emotions related to the aesthetics and visual symbolisms of given social groups at given historical moments. Landscape is thus “not merely the world we see, it is a construction, a composition of the world. Landscape is a way of seeing” (Cosgrove 1998, 13) the world closely related to the ways of its visual representations practiced in given socio-cultural and historical conditions.

Landscape thus has a lot in common with scenery – in terms of a view or views of natural features – though it transcends it. It stems from an aesthetical – or aestheticizing – approach to reality “based on the notion that painting has [had] a certain psychological effect on the person contemplating it, regardless of location or context” (Cosgrove 1998, 23). The personal experience between painting and spectator transformed in time into a personal experience between spectator and the landscape she sees in front of her. One objection to such a concept of landscape might be that landscape can hardly be created by the gaze of the

spectator because it precedes it in terms of its materiality. Nevertheless, as I will show later on, landscapes have been created (materially as well as otherwise), represented, approached and valued based on aesthetic criteria referencing the ways of visual representations (linear perspective) and their effects (freezing of reality, visual control of the part of the world that gives fully to the eye of the observer distanced and separated from it) and emotions related to them (such as an experience of beauty and sublime).

Due to its connection to (or origins in) visual representations, landscape separates and is at the same time a product of the process of separation – the subject is set apart from object, activity from passivity, and the spectator from the landscape. As Raymond Williams observed, “the very idea of landscape implies separation and observation” (Williams 1973 quoted in Daniels and Cosgrove 1988, 7). There is power in behind landscape, the power to separate but also the power to inscribe meanings onto the landscape, or in other words the power of seeing and the ideology (power) in behind that seeing. To research landscape understood in line with Cosgrove (and Daniels) thus as far as I am concerned requires analysing symbolic meanings hidden (and seen) in the landscape and the emotional effects of their visibility. Exploring these allows for describing afresh the socio-historical conditions under which the specific landscape as a way of seeing emerged, social formation that made a given landscape and its continuous existence possible.

The idea of landscape as a way of seeing is very much visual. On one hand, it responds to the fact that landscape as a general idea, at least in a wider European context, is related to visibility and aesthetics. On the other, it reflects the fact that particular landscapes are created, represented and experienced predominantly through visibility¹, as a visual (rather than another) phenomenon. Or, as Mitch Rose put it, “if we assume that the landscape is partially a visual experience, then how that experience is structured is most likely indicative of sociological processes” (M. Rose 2002, 456). In this respect, for example the industrial landscape of late Czechoslovak socialism, which I will discuss later on, can be understood as consisting of spaces populated by industrial materialities merging with the representation of those spaces and materialities and producing certain expectations, fuelling certain understandings and inducing certain emotions. Industrial landscape, how it looks and what it means, is in a sense mirroring the society (or social groups) for which it is meaningful and by which it is lived as such.

¹ I present approaches to landscape that oppose or challenge this assumption later in this chapter.

The landscape, being visual on general as well as particular levels, can thus also be understood in textual terms. In other words, we can attempt at reading out of it the expectations, understandings and emotions inscribed in it. Here the works of Nancy and James Duncan are of special importance. Similarly to Cosgrove, they hold that landscape is a symbolic system in and through which meanings materialize and become seemingly natural. For this reason, "it can be argued that one of the most important roles that landscape plays in the social process is ideological, supporting a set of ideas and values, unquestioned assumptions about the way society is, or should be organized." Since then, "any landscape can be analysed as a text in which social relations are inscribed," (J. Duncan and Duncan 1988, 123) irrespective of whether the text is actually in writing, like in a description, in image, like in a set of photographs, or in bricks, stones and soil.

Landscape is however not a single unproblematic text, but according to Duncan and Duncan (1988, 121), it emerges from the interplay of various social texts, which "speak of religion, politics and social class" to name just a few. Being rooted in materiality and in the visual, landscape I would argue, is thus at the same time intertextual because it brings together, references and makes visible as well as invisible various competing meanings and whole discourses. The intertextuality of landscape however stretches beyond landscape because intertextuality means "not only the interaction between different types of texts such as written or landscape texts, but also between these texts and social practices which have become textualised" (James Duncan 1990, 23).

To analyse landscape from such a viewpoint means to concentrate on the production of landscapes, on "how they are constructed on the basis of a set of texts, how they are read, and how they act as a mediating influence, shaping behaviour in the image of the text" (J. Duncan and Duncan 1988, 120). To research landscape as an intertextual phenomenon emerging from the interplay of various texts (meanings and discourses) allows for getting closer to the power relations and struggles in behind the production and negotiation of a given landscape. It helps to denaturalize landscape in which a seemingly natural and unproblematic social order is mirrored and by means of which it is sustained. It also helps to unmask landscape as being ambivalent and multi-layered, politically charged and ideological.

The ideas about landscape I have discussed in this sub-chapter open up another tension within landscape: landscape is (imagined/theorized as) visual as well as textual. Emphasising the visual or the textual of landscape or acknowledging both leads to a view of landscape as re-presentation. According to the mentioned works by Denis Cosgrove, Steven Daniels and Nancy and James Duncan, landscape

is more than morphology because it mirrors the society (social groups, discourses) that creates it and that it helps to establish and sustain. Landscape re-presents (in a sense of present as well as represent) the social context from which it emerges. However, as both Cosgrove and Duncan point out, landscape is also historically contextual. This means that landscape is not only the outcome but it also mirrors the process of its own production.

Another tension inherent to landscape emerges here. Based on the visual as well as (inter)textual conceptualizations of landscape, landscape can be seen as both the product and the process. In other words, landscape is an outcome of a process of contestation between meanings and whole discourses (on spatial as well as social order). But as its historicity reminds us – to paraphrase James Duncan (1990, 12) – landscape can also be seen as a constituent element “in socio-political processes of cultural reproduction and change”.

Landscape can thus be approached as representation; however, the “representation” here points to both the actual symbolic system as represented and the process of the development (the contestations and negotiations, inscription and remodelling) of the symbolic in the material. Landscape is representation subsuming the symbolic as well as material within the tension of the visual and the textual.

Landscape as process

Landscape might be representation, but it is also a spatial phenomenon. This means it stretches in a specific way in space (and time, as I will get to later). Thus, landscape is topographical, material, morphological. But it is also symbolic and for that reason representational. To understand landscape as representation – as stretching between and blooming out of the morphological and symbolic – enables us to defamiliarize what seems to be natural and to get closer to the power structures, social processes and contestations in behind seemingly natural ideas and realities mirrored by and expressed in landscape.

The ideas of landscape as a way of seeing or/and as (inter)textuality point to the political nature of landscape, to the fact that the morphological of landscape is used to reinforce, express or challenge particular political stances, to paraphrase Massey (2006, 5). Landscape can stand for something or somebody like the landscape of Ostrava with all the factories and smokestacks stood at one prolonged moment of history for Czechoslovak socialism and its bright future (see chapter 3). However, to say that landscape is historical and political means to admit that landscape is very deeply temporal. After all, landscape as a symbolic construction, as representation is open to contestations; and Ostrava is no longer the steel heart of the republic inhabited by imagined “us” as it was represented during socialism.

Eric Hirsch in his introduction to *The Anthropology of landscape* (Hirsch and O’Hanlon 1995) argues for an understanding of landscape as a cultural process. Similarly to John Wylie I draw on in the introduction to this chapter, Hirsch singles out tensions (“relationships”, “transitions”) the landscape is rooted in – space and place, outside and inside, representation and image, background potentiality and foreground actuality. He argues for an understanding of landscape as “the relationship seen to exist between these two poles of experience in any cultural context. Landscape [for Hirsch] thus emerges as a cultural process” (Hirsch 1995, 4).

According to Hirsch, Cosgrove acknowledges the historicity of landscape (and a specific European take on landscape) when he posits it as a historically emerged and socially conditioned way of seeing the world; but at the same time, the idea of landscape as a way of seeing underestimates the immediate processual nature of landscape. For example a socialist industrial landscape as represented through photographs, texts and other images might seem as stable and unchanging and could be experienced as such; in behind of thus emerged symbolic construction of space we can however find an ongoing process of decision-making, negotiations

and change that impacts on both the material and its representations – in socialism mines move and enlarge while cities are obliterated and built anew (like the city of Most) and after its fall smokestacks recedes from foreground to background and industry might give way to e.g. sport (like in Ostrava of the 2000s).

Defined as a process, landscape according to Hirsch “entails a relationship between the ‘foreground’ and ‘background’ of social life;” the ‘foreground’ stands for “the concrete actuality of everyday social life (‘the way we now are’)” and the ‘background’ for “the perceived potentiality thrown into relief by our foreground existence (‘the way we might be’)” (Hirsch 1995, 3). In this respect, landscape is a particular process – the one in which the material world around us is being inscribed with meanings by means of social practices.

The view of landscape as a process enriches the understanding of landscape with the emphasis on the interplay of the actual and the potential. This interplay opens landscape to change which is brought about by particular social practices of negotiation of meanings that are to be engendered by landscape which is lived in the everyday though which at the same time points at possibilities – material, social and their interconnection. Landscape is thus actively shaped and continuously recreated; it is a representation in process and the process of representation at once. Or in other words, landscape can be conceptualized as a process of a symbolic construction of space in which the background (both material and symbolic) of social existence merges with the foreground (again material as well as symbolic) of everyday life. To use Margaret Rodman’s words, “landscape is both context and content, enacted and material. It is a lived world in physical form” (Rodman 1992, 650).

Here I came to touch on the issue of landscape as a lived experience to which I return in the next sub-chapter. Suffice it here to say that landscape is not only representational but at the same time also experiential. This brings to the fore another tension of landscape to which Hirsch draws attention by noting that “social life can never achieve a timelessness of a painting” (Hirsch 1995, 3). Social life never freezes and so does landscape. In this sense, the process of symbolic construction of space through which landscape emerges can leave behind traces, an instances of the representing the world, of the landscape as a way of seeing the world in a particular historical moments. What we encounter than, for example in photographic representations of socialist industrial landscape of Ostrava, is now obsolete and to a certain degree opaque (representations of landscape that has already moved on.

It is Barbara Bender who proposes to pay close attention to the relationship of landscape and time, which will prove seminal for the analysis of post-socialist (post)industrial landscape offered in this dissertation. According to Bender, we might approach landscape as “time materialized” due to the connection of time and landscape and the traces of time passed in the landscape on both material and symbolic levels. However, while seemingly stable, “landscapes, like time, never stand still” and thus Bender proposes to consider landscape to be “time materializing” (Bender 2002a, S103).

As time materializing, landscape is closely related to memory, remembering and forgetting, because landscapes can act as repositories of the past for the present and the future. But because landscape is open to contestations, the past represented by the landscape is entangled in the politics of remembering and forgetting. With respect to industrial landscape (e.g. of contemporary Kladno), what proves to be of special importance and what I will discuss later in the dissertation is the relationship of landscape, time, absence (of material elements) and the politics of memory. Landscape like the one of Kladno can be understood as consisting of places of memory which are in turn grounded in the process of negotiation over their content. The processual nature of landscape then stems from “the socially contested, dynamic construction of places [which] represent the temporary grounding of ideas” (Rodman 1992, 652) about the past, the present and the future.

The past in the landscape does not reside only in the materiality of places but also in the imaginaries and practices related to and coming from those materialities. The perception of the places and of landscapes is socially conditioned. The perception – the imaginaries and practices – is however not necessarily united. On the contrary, the meanings and understandings are continuously negotiated; they meet, clash or pass by each other resulting in places and landscapes being multivocal and plural. Thus “this plurality of place [and landscape] is always in the making, and how it is used and perceived depends on the contours of gender, age, status, ethnicity, and so on, and upon the moment” (Bender 2002a, S107). Socially conditioned, our engagement with landscapes is thus always subjective.

This brings me back to the idea of Yi-Fu Tuan that landscape is not a neutral sector of reality “out there” (Tuan 1979, 90), with which I opened the previous sub-chapter on landscape as representation. To acknowledge along with Yi-Fu Tuan and others that landscape is subjective does not dismiss – as it might seem – the materiality of landscape. It helps to quote Barbara Bender here again: “To say that landscape and time are subjective does not require a descent into miasma of cultural relativity. It simply means that the engagement with landscape and time

is historically particular, imbricated in social relations and deeply political” (Bender 2002a, S104).

Besides bringing to the fore the connections of landscape and memory or landscape and subjectivity, landscape as time materializing also acknowledges the fact that the temporalities of landscape reach beyond human². As Doreen Massey shows, landscape as such is in constant change, even “the topographies of landscapes are constantly evolving” (Massey 2006, 34); even the material, topographical groundings of landscape are in motion from the past via the present towards the future; even the rocks – as Massey (2006) shows – are on the move in the long run. In this respect, landscape can be approached as consisting of various intertwining temporalities, human as well as nonhuman. These temporalities can – but not necessarily have to – be narrated as stories that will continue to the future. From such a perspective, both place and landscape can be understood “as events, as happenings, as moments that will be again dispersed,” or in other words, as provisionally intertwined simultaneities of on-going, unfinished stories (Massey 2006, 46).

The complex temporality of landscape – the interlinked temporalities that meet in the landscape – that is to continue to the future makes landscape open – to contestations, negotiations, re-narrations. Landscape as a process where human (social, cultural, personal) temporalities interlock with nonhuman ones is unsettling precisely because it is happening in time and opens up the future. What makes landscape so interesting is that “outrageous specialness of the current conjunction, this here and now” (Massey 2006, 42), which we see and live as the landscape of today.

Imagine standing on a narrow walkaway at the top of a church spire such as the one of the Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary that oversees what used to be Most, a city that except for the church and a couple of buildings gave way to coalmining in order to emerge anew some two kilometres away (see chapter 5). What you can see from there is a current conjunction of diverse temporalities: the time and materialities of coal and coalmining with all the absences they brought with them coalesce with temporalities of nature – water infilling the lake where the coal mine once took over the old city and is now being “redeveloped back into nature”, the birds (gulls but in spring also northern lapwings and various kinds of

² See e.g. the essay by Jiří Sádlo (1998) who from an ecological perspective argues for understanding landscape as a fluid mosaic.

ducks) flocking at the shore, as well as of culture – from the minute activities such as mowing the lawns at the shores of the lake or walking the dogs, to more far-reaching temporalities of imaginaries related to coal and coalmining, the politics of representing the city as the vanguard of socialist bright future or the city of greenery, the politics of mining and electricity production etc. The landscape seen from the top of the spire is the momentous interconnection of temporalities including temporalities of diverse representations imposed on the landscape; this interconnection which the current landscape of the very moment is provokes certain stances to the past but also provokes imaginaries of the potential future.

The coalescence of temporalities, of stories in landscape does not however mean the landscape is a coherent whole. The stories, to draw again on Massey (2011), can often be entangled with each other but can be autonomous as well, opening up diverse possibilities of continuations, even provoking us in certain ways. Landscape as a process thus can be seen as reconciling various tensions, such as the foreground and background of social life, the socially actual and potential; but it can also be seen as provocative, as having diversified effects on those looking at the landscape or being in it, as giving rise to contestations for the very reason it opens up the future by means of conjuring up some of the loose ends of the stories coming from the past, being present and apt to be moving again. Landscape as process is thus material, social as well as personal, but it is also both human and nonhuman at the same time – it is a “(temporary) product of a meeting up of trajectories out of which mobile uncertainty a future is – has to be – negotiated” (Massey 2006, 46).

Landscape as experience

“A person is *in* the landscape,” Yi-Fu Tuan once claimed, “working in the field, or [s]he is looking out of the tenement window, from a particular spot and not from an abstract point in space” (Tuan 1979, 90). While we can theorize landscape as representation or as a process, this quote represents for me a reminder that landscape is always a landscape for someone (and if we move beyond that someone does not necessarily be human but also other beings; see e.g. Von Uexküll 1992).

Imagine again standing at the top of the church spire in the city of Most. From the top, landscape gives itself to the view in terms of topography, nature, and materiality. Looking North(West), on the horizon, you can see the curvatures of the Iron Ore mountains and between them and the church a vast green and grass flatland with lake in the middle where the city once stood. Unpacking an old map from the 1930s, as I did on one of my fieldtrip, you can posit the map and try to read it with respect to current topography, to read out from what you see in front of you where the city used to be. You can link all you know with what you are looking at and the landscape – meanings, processes, stories, politics, temporalities, images – unfolds. But at the same time, to unfold the map and posit it is a complicate task due to the wind which waves with it and at one moment brings an unpleasant smell from the chemical plant in the West. The wind and the smell make the landscape more immediate and visceral as well as more problematic to get grips on.

Standing on the church spire brings about a moment of looking at landscape while at the same time being in its midst as an embodied being. The landscape, as both preceding sub-chapters wanted to argue, is not what we look at but it is what we see. But seeing is not, as Chris Tilley points out, an act of disembodied cognitive perception.³ Challenging such an idea, Tilley claims “that the manner in which we perceive, and therefore relate to visual imagery, is fundamentally related to the kinds of bodies we have. The body both limits and constrains, and enables us to perceive and react to imagery in specific embodied ways” (Tilley 2008, 18–19).

Such an approach to landscape, which Tilley terms kinaesthetic and which stresses “the role of the carnal human body” (Tilley 2008, 19), is fundamentally grounded in phenomenology. Generally speaking, phenomenology departs from the

³ See also (Feld and Basso 1996)

observation that “people do not exist apart from the world, but rather, are intimately caught up in and immersed” (Seamon 2000, 3.1; for more about phenomenological approach in geography and its developments see e.g. Gibas 2014). Moreover, people find themselves in the world in a specific way – as embodied beings. The world gives itself to us through our bodies; in turn, we as bodies are in the world and through our bodies live and experience what is in the world as well as the world as such (Altman and Low 1992; Low 2003; see also Patočka 1992).

We can thus understand people as being always already in the landscape as bodily beings. Tim Ingold conceptualises this when he argues that “body and landscape are complementary terms: each implies the other, alternately as figure and ground” (Ingold 1993, 156). In order to explore landscape he adopts a “‘dwelling perspective’, according to which the landscape is constituted as an enduring record of – and testimony to – the lives and works of past generations who have dwelt within it, and in so doing, have left there something of themselves” (Ingold 1993, 152). According to Ingold, we encounter landscape and make sense of it as embodied beings who actively and carnally engage with the world. Landscape is thus for Ingold constituted as taskscape – an “entire ensemble of tasks in their mutual interlocking”, a meaningful space of activities and (social as well as nonhuman) life (Ingold 1993, 157). In other words, landscape emerges as a meaningful space from the active carnal engagement of us, embodied human beings, with the world into which we are immersed.

We might consider climbing up the church spire and looking from there at what spreads in front of our eyes, a task which makes the “climbing up” and “looking at” meaningful and gives certain meaning also to the landscape seen from atop. It might be a part of a family trip or a fieldwork, as was my case. What unfolds in front of our eyes is by means of our bodily engagement with the world related to us, our past, present and future. The landscape we see and in the midst of which we stand at the top of the spire thus become a part of the tourist landscape of the region and linked to the places we visited (and are going to visit that day) or a part of the industrial landscape researched over the course of four years and again linked to other landscapes and places – visited, read-about, represented, experienced and more. And the socialist staircase which leads to the top of the church becomes part of the landscape as well. The particular landscape we see is a part of a process in which landscape is unfolding (to a particular embodied being). This said, it is possible to link landscape as representation to landscape as process and in turn to landscape as experience in terms of them being a (historically and socially conditioned) part of a wider whole.

However, it is John Wylie who argues that phenomenologically oriented studies of landscape have been preoccupied with presence at the expense of absence and thus also complexity. According to him, “tropes of presence are evident in much of the current literature more broadly framing landscape in terms of process, sensation, performance and experience” (Wylie 2009, 278). Presence has been a cornerstone of the phenomenologically inspired ideas about landscape. It is a bodily presence which is emphasised by phenomenologists and in the form of co-presence of embodied being and the landscape becomes a key element of the notion of landscape as experience. This co-presence, as Wylie puts it, is “not just the object and medium of analysis here – this evolving co-presence also further assumes an enlarged ontological role, as exemplary of the very process of being (or becoming) in-the-world through which existence and meaning are themselves vouchsafed” (Wylie 2009, 279).

Experiential approach thus seems to require, on an ontological level, to hold a certain fundamental resonance between being, presence, world and self. Wylie nevertheless challenges such a supposition when he calls for approach to, and offers an account of, “landscape, matter and perception couched more explicitly in terms of absence, distance, displacement and the non-coincidence of self and world” (Wylie 2009, 279). Because the church I discussed above stands at the edge of empty natural area which was mined out during the 1970s and 1980s and where the whole old city of Most used to be located, the landscape which one enters when climbing up the spire is a landscape interspersed with innumerable absences. In the chapter 5 on the (post)industrial landscape of Most, I explore these absences and show that it is not only presence, but also absence which needs to be taken into account when researching landscape as experience.

The example with the church spire leads me to another two points I want to make here with respect to landscape as experience. The first is about the difference between looking and seeing. The second directly comes out of the first and is about the effects of landscape on those being in it and perceiving it.

The wind and the smell on the top of the church are part of the landscape. Landscape we see is not an outcome of disembodied practice of looking. It is Judith Okely who in line with this example argues for a redefinition of seeing in opposition to looking: “seeing, as opposed to looking, embraces the whole body, neither vision alone nor disparate senses. The whole body is the means to understand and resonate with the world” (Okely 2001, 104). What follows is then the expanded understanding of not only seeing, but also of landscape, which emerges from our bodily and multisensory engagement with the world around us.

However, the wind and the smell thus problematizes the requirement so often associated with landscape – that of separation of the observer and observed which supposedly lies in the heart of landscape as a way of seeing developed throughout European cultural history (cf. already mentioned Williams' 1973 quote from Daniels and Cosgrove 1988, 7). The overarching gaze controlling the landscape from the top of the spire is put in question by wind and smell and by the difficulties of catching one's breath after climbing there. It is Okely, who suggests "that the overarching gaze is not inevitably one of control and chosen distance, as posited by Foucault and Fabian. To look at landscape can be to receive it, to be 'disponible' to what it offers, rather than to spy upon it" (Okely 2001, 111). Looking at landscape into which we are as bodily beings immersed is thus only a part of seeing it; being in it as bodies makes the landscape available to us but it also makes us available to landscape and the loose ends of stories unfinished which we are to wrestle with.

The smell from the chemical plant which after a while starts itching in your nose problematizes also what often comes hand in hand with phenomenologically grounded takes on landscape, namely the romanticizing perspective. The smell is not particularly a romantic feature and might be seen (and experienced) as obstructing to enjoy the view over the landscape, as obstructing to easily adopt the romanticizing perspective of landscape which is engrained in European cultural/artistic history. This romanticism of landscape resonates for example in Ingold's (1993) understanding of landscape, which for that reason was criticized by both Barbara Bender with Paul Aitken (1998) and Doreen Massey (2006). Landscape in the form of *taskscape* is for Ingold "the world as it is known to those who dwell therein, who inhabit its places and journey along the paths connecting them" (Ingold 1993, 155). Even such a short description of landscape gives rise to a feeling of a sort of coherence inherent to landscape, "an essential harmony of rhythms and resonances" as Massey (2006, 14) once characterized it. Landscape is theorized by Ingold as harmonious not only on an experiential level but it is harmonious conceptually because landscape according to him is constituted of the interlocked rhythmic patterns of activities unfolding in time. In *landscape-taskscape*, "the rhythmic pattern of human activities nests within the wider pattern of activity for all animal life, which in turn nests within the pattern of activity for all so called living things, which nests within the life-process of the world" (Ingold 1993, 162).

But are there no contradicting or clashing temporalities? What if we for example turn attention to those temporalities grounded in particular sorts of power relations and their effects – such as socialist fetishization of industrialization and coalmining leading to the destruction of the city of Most which certainly had its

own temporality of everyday city life in the streets under the Most church spire, the one that survived. Here, the industrial landscape took over the urban landscape of Most and the takeover was not very harmonious after all. As Doreen Massey argues (and as I discussed it in the previous sub-chapter) the interlocking of diverse temporalities might not on a conceptual level lead to landscape being harmonious. The loose ends of various temporalities (“trajectories”, “stories”) from which landscape continuously re-emerges at the “outrageously special” present moment is unsettling because it opens landscape to contestation and change – and even to destruction.

This all however does not necessarily discredit dwelling perspective or phenomenological approach as potent tools of theorizing or researching landscape. It only warns us of the possible pitfalls of such approaches if not carefully rethought and open to other, seemingly unrelated issues, such as power or historicity of social relations. Phenomenology in general helps in returning us into landscape and opening us to its “workings”.

Here comes my second point which brings me back to the issue of kinaesthetic approach, which emphasises the embodied experience that opens up to the world as well as opening the world for us. Contrary to dwelling perspective with an emphasis on activities, their rhythms and interlocking, kinaesthetic perspective digs deep into the actual activities of bodies which structure our experience. After all, “what body can do in the space-time of landscape and the manner in which it can act have a profound effect on the character of experience and the kinds of meanings that experience affords” (Tilley 2008, 39). In this respect, it not only conforms to the fact that “body and landscape are complementary terms” as Ingold put it, but also acknowledges landscape to be active in terms of opening up possibilities for some (carnally grounded) experiences and closing other.

Landscape as experience to use Massey’s terms can thus be seen as provocation. It is due to the temporalities that merge, coalesce and clash in the landscape in particular “special” moment, temporalities that are human but also nonhuman and that carry on from the past via present to the future. But it is also because landscape does something to and with us as embodied beings. Phenomenological approach reminds us, as Bender put it, that due to our immersion in the world, our “interventions are done not so much to the landscape as with the landscape, and what is done affects what can be done” (Bender 2002a, S104). Landscape provokes us and this provocation might lead to us climbing the stairs up to the church spire in order to look down and see the outcome of the coalescence of temporalities, our as well as of other beings and things, materializing around us

and with us. The seeing, although from the top of the tower, is embodied and the landscape is experience(d).

Landscape as representation-process-experience

The preceding three sub-chapters offered a journey through landscape as it has been theorised across anthropology and geography. Neither definitive nor concise, the aim of such a discussion of landscape and the various takes on it is to discuss the theorizations that are important for the research at hand and to distil a view of landscape that attests to its ambivalence and ambiguity as its conceptually positive features. The aim in other words is to delimit the understandings of landscape that are seminal for my own approach to landscape. For this reason I explored the ideas of landscape as (in) representation, process and experience, each of which emphasises certain features of landscape.

All these approaches are related to each other and I personally understand them as intermingling. This might be so because they all – to a varying degree – acknowledge that “the way in which people’s perceptions of their world and their material engagement with it are intimately bound together and are creative of, as well as created by, the landscape” (Bender 2002b, 487). What I hope for by starting with landscape as representation and expanding it towards process and then linking landscape as (in) representation and (in) process to experience is – similarly to David Crouch – “to render landscape’s purported fixed and steady character [familiarily associated with landscape in and as representation] as instead shuffling, unstable and lively” (Crouch 2010, 15). By this I also aim at acknowledging the dynamics of landscape, the meaning, shape and experience of which is never settled once and for all.

To become open to the “shuffling, unstable and lively” of landscape demands a conceptual openness. For now, I am leaving methodological challenges of such a theorization of landscape for the next chapter (on Researching landscape). What I have tried here is to show the interlinking of landscape as representation and process and experience on a conceptual level. This proves challenging because the only way I can do so is sequential – in writing words, sentences and sub-chapters. But to destabilize landscape as representation by introducing its processual character and by challenging the landscape as process by opening landscape for experience helps me to further my understanding of landscape as a conceptually complex idea. This idea links the material (in terms of topographical, morphological either in bricks, stones and soil or imagined)⁴ with the social,

⁴ *Landscape, I believe, is always in relation to materiality – it is always a topographical, morphological phenomenon, irrespective of whether the landscape in question is related to*

cultural, historical, and personal and with the dynamics and dynamisms of nonhuman.

What I am closing at is my understanding of landscape as a usefully ambiguous complex concept that is by its very nature hybrid and that weaves together imaginaries, practices and politics, emotions and experience, and materialities and dynamisms that are both human and nonhuman. Landscape thus for me represents a spatial conflux of the material, imaginary, social/cultural/political and experiential dimensions. This does not however mean that landscape is everything. Landscapes are very particular; they are outrageously special – even when they are mundane and ordinary – because they are born out of the subjective embodied experience of the world that transcends humans (and nonhumans) by its very materiality and temporalities, experience that is nonetheless positioned in time and thus also in particular sociocultural and historical contexts. Landscape is always “landscape in negotiation, culturally and socially moulded. Landscape [...] is material as well as imaginary, symbolical, political [...] and lived. Landscape is not simply a material contour of our lives, but rather represents an intermingling of political, symbolic, material, imaginary and personal” dimensions related to particular section of the world around us (Gibas and Pauknerová 2009, 134). This is how I understand the connections between the theoretical standpoints on landscape I have discussed so far. And this is also how I understand the already quoted assertion by Margaret Rodman that “landscape is both context and content, enacted and material”. This is also why I understand landscape as not being a representation or process or experience but all of these at once, merged and fused into a complex of representation-process-experience.

I am to develop this idea of complexity and hybridity of landscape further. But before that, I would like to step down from conceptual theorization I have been developing here to a more thematically oriented one. This should help me to illustrate the complexity of landscape more closely while moving my thinking closer to the very topic of this dissertation, i.e. industrial landscape and what has become of it in the times that moved beyond industrialization. I am first to discuss contemporary anxious landscape. Then I will posit the thereby sketched image of a particular landscape and its complexity in relation to contemporary debates on landscape in Czech social science (especially geography and anthropology) in

actually physically existing features or only those represented like in a novel or abstract painting. See the conclusion of this chapter for discussion of this.

order to position my own approach before finalizing the idea of landscape as a spatially grounded complex conflux of material, imaginary, social/cultural/political and experiential dimensions.

Journeying through contemporary anxious landscapes

In his article on what he terms *anxious landscape*, the architecture historian Antoine Picon (2000) argues that landscape has profoundly changed in the last few decades and that what we need is to attune to the newly emerged aesthetics and properties of contemporary landscape. Since the industrial revolution, it is the city that according to Picon (2000, 67) “constitutes the most primary landscape, the one we have directly before our eyes,” the one that is no more rural and pastoral but rather technological, fractal, disturbing and seemingly boundless, sprawling into its surroundings and absorbing them. Contemporary landscape is thus according to Picon very much urban (or urbanized).

Being urban, landscape of today, Picon argues, is predominantly functional, technological and lousy with an over-abundance of aesthetic stimuli. Urbanized, contemporary landscape is thus characterised by blurring of boundaries and limits where city merges with what used to be distinctly different from it, and by preponderance of artefacts over natural objects. This essential and explicit functionality of urban landscape grounded in technology goes hand in hand with “accelerated ageing,” a speedy process in which the objects quickly cease to serve the function they were designed for and become obsolete. Obsolescence is what can be found in the basis of contemporary landscape where objects are quickly “relegated to obsolescence, a bit like the living dead who endlessly haunt the landscape, preventing it from ever becoming peaceful again” (Picon 2000, 72–77).

Regarding Western landscape tradition grounded in pictorial framing, detachment of spectator and a kind of peacefulness of contemplating mind, the anti-landscape character of contemporary landscape Picon speaks about can be seen as leading to the very anxiety he identifies as one of its key characteristics. What Picon suggests, however, is that we are maybe at the eve of re-enchantment of our seemingly anaesthetic yet aesthetically over-abundant world. Such a re-enchantment however means that what we look at becomes to be seen, experienced and possibly also engaged with in a new, specific way for aesthetic or other reasons.

In what follows, I would like to use the anxious landscape Picon describes and its specific manifestation in urban decay, those obsolete, rusty and scrappy bits and pieces scattered around cities as well as beyond, as a vehicle for furthering my argument about usefulness of conceptual complexity of landscape. I would like to briefly ponder urban decay and the engagement with it on the side of scholars as well as others in order to show that in the landscape of decay representation, process, and experience merge and the attention to this can help us open new

ways of understanding contemporary – anxious – landscape. Within the dissertation however, this move to urban decay represents also a move closer to the actual theme of the dissertation, and an attempt to bring theory of landscape closer to the research topic. Urban decay here might stand for Picon’s anxious landscape and at the same time for (post)industrial landscape because it is often made up of former industrial elements, objects, buildings, tracts of land, which used to serve an industrial function until the moment where they were “relegated to obsolescence” and left to their fate.

A quick Google search shows many web pages, magazines and zines, discussion boards, hubs and rings that touch on or are devoted to urban decay and to sharing experience and photographs. Let me use an example of one particular internet zine devoted to (post)industrial explorative photography – *Explonation*⁵. As the editors state on the webpages, this zine is devoted to providing “a photographic view of the normally unseen or off-limits parts of urban areas or industrial facilities. These areas are unlikely to be seen by the everyday public and as redevelopment occurs these places will be lost forever, taking their history and secrets with them. The contributors aim to capture and record this before it’s too late”. This journal is one of many examples for the movement of urban exploration (Garrett 2010; Garrett 2011; Garrett 2013; Garrett 2014) and is interesting for me because it is an attempt to re-present urban decay visually and thus might be seen as (re)forming a specific way of seeing or looking at anxious landscape. Ninjalicious, one of the founding fathers of urban exploration, explains the activity on his *Infiltration.org* webpages: “[u]rban explorers strive to actually earn their experiences, by making discoveries that allow them to get in on the secret workings of cities and structures, and to appreciate fantastic, obscure spaces that might otherwise go completely neglected”.⁶ Indeed, urban exploration does not devote itself solely to urban decay, but a brief look at various exploration web pages as well as magazines reveals that urban decay (and the materiality of obsolescence in general) constitutes one of the main targets to be explored.

To explore and experience places with special respect to those that could be lost in the future and to capture them in a narrative or photographically are the key

⁵ I use *Explonation* here because it is a magazine that explicitly states its purpose, relates its existence to urban exploration movement, is freely accessible and at the same time offers a very concise, dense and focused set of representations, commentaries and imaginaries. Accessible at <http://www.explonation.com/> (last accessed Oct. 8, 2014).

⁶ <http://www.infiltration.org/ethicsnodisclaimer.html> (accessed Sep. 1, 2008)

issues of urban exploration as presented in the *Explonation*. As such the engagement with the spaces is wrapped up in a specific set of emotions and brings about also a specific aesthetics. Even only the names of the articles in the two only published issues of the *Explonation* tell a lot: *Myth Chateau*, *Pleasure Beach Ghost Town*, *Prison Blues*, *Frozen in Time*, or *Another World* reveal a kind of aestheticisation infused with nostalgia, melancholy, and maybe sublimity as in the account of an abandoned chateau in the first issue of the *Explonation* magazine: “the ornate ceilings were breath-taking and yet tinged with sadness”. In another account – that of a ghost town in the second issue of the *Explonation* magazine – we can see how the obsolescence of the place is closely linked to aesthetic qualities of the place that can arouse an emotional response (with more than a tint of aesthetic pleasure): “[i]t was like Magic! As we relished in this amazing photograph opportunity I couldn’t help but feel sad. Not only for the people of this once lovely town, but for the lonely town itself.”

There is a strong emphasis on photography and by means of it also on aestheticisation of decay that induces emotions. Here we can see a reference to Western landscape tradition, since the aestheticisation helps the photographer/explorer/reader to detach herself from the scene, to contemplate (more or less) peacefully what lies before the lens of her camera and to frame it in a similar way romantic painters did more than century ago, as one author in the second issue of *Explonation* describes: “[w]e spent several hours in the school, the years of neglect have done a nice job on the building and the colour scheme is beautiful with the strong light through the glass roof.” One of common descriptions of the explored spaces is that it is a kind of “another world”, which expresses the detachment of the photographer from the scene – she is an observer uninterested in much more than an experience of pictorially framing the right emotion with a camera like the photographers-explorers in the second *Explonation* magazine who recounts: “[a] beautiful orange ray of light started to illuminate the tanks. [...] First shot. “Clap”. I started to run after the light trying to get best of the place. [...] We felt like we were in a science fiction. [...] Weird and Spooky!”

Paging through *Explonation* makes one understand how much urban decay is looked at through the lens of a camera and seen (in the sense of multisensory bodily experience) in a particular way. Urban decay and the interest in it might be thus approached (researched, analysed) in terms of a particular visual, emotional, and experiential framing of the world of obsolete – as a way of seeing the world (or its particular part). For example Trigg argues that we, people of late modernity, are becoming to be attracted to such decaying spaces right because of its aesthetic qualities, because of the “embroidery of decay” (Trigg 2004 quoted in

Armstrong 2006). In this respect, Andreas Huyssen makes an important point when he argues that “we are [becoming] nostalgic for the ruins of modernity [materializing as the decaying residues of the industrial age] because they still seem to hold a promise that has vanished from our own age: the promise of an alternative future,” which however has never to become present (Huyssen 2006, 8).

But because explorers are “in it for the thrill of discovery and a few nice pictures,” to draw again on Ninjalicious, urban decay is not only about photographs and aesthetics, but also about experience, fleeting and temporary, of which photograph can be only a not particularly telling testimony (see e.g. Garrett 2010; Garrett 2013). Tim Edensor in his earlier work (e.g. Edensor 2005a) explored industrial ruins, those special representatives of contemporary urban decay with respect to their materiality and experience it offers. He argues among other things that “the excess matter in ruins and the objects chanced upon are not merely open to aesthetic and semiotic reappraisal, for the materiality of ruins also impacts upon the body.” The ruins (and urban decay in general) “feel” different from the urban space and make the body to perform space differently (Edensor 2005c, 329; Edensor 2007). So one argument Edensor puts forward is that marginal spaces of (post)industrial ruins are sensorially far richer than common and cleansed urban space due to their excessive materiality. Helen Armstrong (2006) shares this view when she argues in favour of the “landscape of contempt” as she terms contemporary urban wastelands because of the experiential and emotional possibilities it offers in contrast to cleansed and policed urban spaces. The spaces of urban decay are according to Edensor at the same time more vibrant and less regulated, open to more playful approach and thus thanks to unregulated multiple material affordances represent a spatial counterpart to the urban space. This is the case because of the obsolescence and the process in which things turn into matter: “divested of a function and no longer surrounded by spatial order, their aesthetic, shapely and textural qualities may be apprehended” (Edensor 2007, 223).

To enter the (post)industrial ruinous spaces is not only aesthetical but also embodied venture. It means according to Edensor to find oneself in disorderly space, which also refers back to the past because of the traces of the obsolete and disappearing. Such past manifested in decaying spaces of ruins cannot however be confined within a single narrative; in ruins, different kind of past materializes. The process of decay leads to the things becoming “excessive matter” and the sites of decay becoming conglomerate of “unexpected material arrangements” that exist on the threshold of the present and the absent. “Replete with excess, including numerous obscure traces, [industrial ruins] are particularly charged by

multiple yet elusive memories, as insubstantial as the ghosts who haunt them” (Edensor 2005b, 834). This according to Edensor makes the (post)industrial ruin, and I would argue urban decay in general, open to possibilities for alternative, more personal and less ordered histories.

Throughout his writing, as well as in the quote above, Edensor uses ghostly metaphors to acknowledge and re-present the effects of disordered space on the spatialization of memory and the experience of remembering. The metaphor of ghost draws on the Freudian notion of uncanny, which describes the potential to experience the familiar becoming unfamiliar (Vidler 1992:7). Ghosts at the same time lurk in the shadows between presence and absence and it is due to the workings of the juxtapositions of absence and presence from where they operate and from where the uncanny stems. For obvious reasons then, urban decay can be and often is conceived as being uncanny, since it offers to experience the familiar-unfamiliar shift due to the excess of absences one encounters when enter, look at, photograph, see and experience decaying structures of what has been “relegated to obsolescence”.

Edensor shares not only interest in the workings of absences, but also the language of so-called ‘spectral geographies’ and a growing scholarly literature on the spectral, haunting and absence. These represent a diverse set of writings that use ghostly metaphors in order to explore the relationship of space, time, memory, and remembering. Spectral metaphors of ghost and haunting have also been used on a more general level by authors like Pile (2005) or Holloway and Kneale (2008) in order to capture the geographical (urban) world in a livelier and more enchanted manner and to explore the workings of absence in constituting (urban) landscape. The absences and their workings have also been explored in order to challenge prevalent scholarly writing and reasoning styles about landscape and social reality in general because it helps to render the world more enchanted and less generalised than it appears in academic texts (see e.g. Wylie 2005; Wylie 2006; Gibas and Pauknerová 2009; Hill 2013).

Because of the tension of presence and absence in which (post)industrial ruins are rooted, Edensor’s understanding of them as haunted shares much in common to the work of other scholars who attempt at elucidating the issue of (social) memory by means of acknowledging the importance of absence in constructing the memory (see e.g. Meier, Frers, and Sigvardsdotter 2013 and monothematic

issue of cultural geographies opened by this article).⁷ Thus for example Dydia DeLyser (DeLyser 2001) analysed the role of absence for social and personal construction of the past in one US ghost town and showed that people use material absences for strengthening their pre-conception of the past (of the town) and its image. Karen Till (2005) analysed the connection between absences and the politics of remembering in order to understand the newly forming urban landscape of Berlin in the 1990s.

I have in a recent article on underground technological transport landscape (Gibas 2013) explored the tensions between absence and presence in order to understand the ambiguity of meaning (and experience) of the very mundane urban spaces of the Prague metro. At the same time however, I used the Prague metro as an example of the constitutive effect of absence on landscape and on remembering of what was forgotten or never remembered. In other words rather than memory inscribed in the materiality of landscape, absences can help to elucidate the process of remembering which is more than cognitive because it is – as Edensor in his writing on industrial ruins shows – also embodied.

Lisa Hill points out that to experience memory as embodied act of remembering is very much related to “the manner in which the past erupts into the present, and the future-present can be found in the past” (Hill 2013, 383). This in turn is closely linked to the ways in which what is absent comingles with what is present in the

⁷ *The interest in marginal spaces is much more widespread and again shares a lot in common to Edensor’s work as well as to the argument and interest developed here. Regarding social science, strange and marginal spaces have become more and more central topic since deCerteau (1984) and Lefebvre (1992). While deCerteau inspires analyses to concentrate on the everydayness and practice, tactics and strategies, Lefebvre turned the attention to the opaqueness of space, to the very fact that space (and representation of space) reveals as well as hides (Jansson and Lagerkvist 2009, 3). Since then strange spaces of any kind have been used to unravel politics as well as poetics of space, probably because their “strangeness” helps the hidden to become visible. Gandy (2005) for example shows how a strand in geography has recently turned to cyborg as a metaphor for hybridity of space and by means of it approached the city.*

Urban decay represents an example of strange as well as hybrid space and as such, although termed differently, has been analysed in various studies employing diverse approaches and accentuating different facets. Thus e.g. Gandy (2006) uses Los Angeles River, concreted river basin weaving unnoticed through the backstage of LA, in order to discuss the encounter of nature with modernist urban planning, while Williams (2004, ch. 5) on the other side of the spectrum of approaches discusses the redevelopment of the Albert Dock in Liverpool in order to analyse material changes brought to the city by de-industrialization and globalised capital.

landscape. In the spaces of urban decay, “the past erupts into present” as a result of the process of change that underlines the whole anxious landscape; the process in which at that particular places different temporalities mingle and result in the prolonged moment when “things decay and disappear, reform and regenerate, shift back and forth between different states, and always teeter on the edge of intelligibility,” as Caitlin De Silvey (2006, 336) put it.

What lies in behind the anxious landscape exemplified here – not exhaustively, indeed – by urban decay is a process, or rather a conjecture of various processes that lead to spaces of different “ecology of memory”, to draw on DeSilvey again. In these spaces, the past we encounter, either in the photographs of urban explorers of Explonation, or in embodied experience of ruins explored e.g. by Edensor, Hill, or DeSilvey, is “tactile, imaginative and involuntary;” that past is “replete with fantasies, desires and conjectures” of embodied remembering rather than “narrated and woven into orderly schemes of sequential display” (Edensor 2005c, 330). The encounter with such past, the momentous remembering of what has been half-remembered, forgotten, or never remembered unravels the more-than-representational nature of memory (see Hill 2013). The encounter with the past in a fleeting experience of remembering facilitated by urban decay, with the past embodied and open to fantasies, harboured in the “embroidery of decay” might be one of the reasons of the re-enchantment Picon speaks about in relation to anxious landscape.

When I say that anxious landscape of urban decay is a result of a conjecture of various processes, I do not refer only to (non-human) processes of decay. It is because I understand these as nested in other processes such as those through which the spaces, objects, materialities become “relegated to obsolescence” – the capitalist processes of exploitation and shifting economies, urban planning, the politics of space and related redevelopment processes, etc. Anxious landscape exists at the “outrageously special” moment that is a result of temporary intermingling of processes that make the landscape open to the future. Spaces and places of the landscape have become obsolete and haunted, filled with excess matter and new ecologies of remembering, challenging bodily movement and giving up to photographic aestheticization which in turn has become globally shared (see Gibas 2010). But this does not mean that they cannot be caught up by forces that would lead them to another life (or death), cleanse them, convert them, urbanise them, and exploit them anew (see e.g. Fagner and Zikmund 2009; Fagner and Valchářová 2014).

Let me stop here by noting that in this sub-chapter I journeyed through anxious landscape – by means of focusing on urban decay – in order to hint at its

complexities and to sketch it as emerging as a result of processes that impact with various intensities and on various levels on materialities as well as aesthetics and experiences. The (post)industrial landscape as I explore it in this dissertation shares commonalities with thus sketched anxious landscape because it is also marked by obsolescence and, as I show for example in the chapter 4 on (post)industrial landscape of Kladno, it is also entangled in a web of newly emerging aesthetics and emotionality. That is why I pondered the ways in which anxious landscape has become part of contemporary aesthetic and aestheticizing processes which makes (some of) us to see it in a very specific way. That is why I also engaged with some of the literature that attempts at grasping the experience of embodied engagement with it and with the processes from which the anxious landscape is born. I did so in order to hint at the fact that anxious landscape is a particular spatial conflux of the material, imaginary, social/cultural/political and experiential emerging at a particular historical moment of heightened emphasis on obsolescence.

To sum up the argument of this sub-chapter and link it with the overall argument I am developing here: anxious landscape as any given landscape is complex and stretches across “material as well as imaginary, symbolical, political [...] and lived,” to quote Gibas and Pauknerová (2009) again. To engage intellectually (and bodily as a part of the intellectual-research practice) with such landscape must acknowledge its complexity and confront it in order to be able to apprehend it and (despite its more-than-representational elements) re-present it.

A detour: Landscape in the context of contemporary Czech anthropology/geography

Before closing the theoretical chapter on landscape, I need to posit my own conceptualization of landscape with respect to the prevalent ideas of landscape in the Czech social sciences, anthropology and because of continuing debate there also in geography. While the notion of landscape has become increasingly popular across Czech social science and beyond (especially ecology) as well as in popular scientific works (such as those by Václav Cílek), landscape has often been treated as unproblematic (for a very thorough overview and discussion of Czech anthropological and archaeological writing on landscape see Pauknerová 2010). With respect to anthropology and geography, a growing interest in landscape has led to some attempts to face the challenges posed by landscape, acknowledge it conceptually, re-theorize it as well as exploit it in research and scholarly writing. However, in both disciplines landscape has been rather seen as passive medium worked upon and anthropologist as well as geographers has explored landscape in terms of landform and land use and their changes brought about by or alongside historical, social, cultural and political shifts. The works in (historical) anthropology by Matoušek (2006; 2010) are exemplary of this alongside the recently published edited volume by new generation of anthropologists (Křišťuf and Zíková 2015). However, the interest in landscape in anthropology also led to a short-lived discussion about the concept of landscape and its merits to which I will turn at shortly (Gibas and Pauknerová 2009; Mácha 2010).

In (social) geography, landscape has been put forward as a challenge in a discussion in *Geografie*, the most prestigious Czech geographical journal (Hynek 2008; Bičík 2008; Kolečka 2008) followed up by comments by Kučera (2009) and Mácha (2013). The discussion was opened by Hynek (2008) who argues that Czech geography has inclined to understand landscape in purely physical way and thus framed it as a topic for physical rather than human geography. With references to humanistic and British new cultural geography he calls for a shift in an approach and for openness of (Czech) human geography to landscape and the themes of power and experience – power and mental dimension of landscape and their connection, as he terms it. In his reaction to Hynek's call, Bičík (2008) claims that Czech geography (and its strongest proponent – Prague geography at the Faculty of Sciences) "in the past as well as today has taken part in basic as well as applied research that from diverse perspectives and in various depth focuses on researching human activities in space and their impact on natural environment, which is close to what Hynek calls for" (Bičík 2008, 86). In his short reply to both, Kolečka (2008) states that "landscape can be ideologized, but it cannot be

dismissed that landscape and its parts exist objectively, though we experience them subjectively. [...] However, the fact is that the 'backbone' of every landscape is its 'natural essence which is only corrected and changed by humans" (Kolejka 2008, 89). Kučera in his take on landscape on the other hand argue, that "it would be good to acknowledge that landscape is not an object, but framework [...] by means of which we discuss and organize the relationships between us and environment" (Kučera 2009, 151). I believe it evident that with the exception of Kučera, the debate has very soon shifted from conceptual to thematic and that the prevalent notion of landscape has been rather the one criticised by Hynek – the understanding of landscape as a natural medium worked upon by humans leading to a thematic concentration on the patterns and shifts in widely conceived land use and the impacts and implications (social, transportation, economic) thereof. Moreover, the debate has also been shadowed by a very critical view of Anglo-Saxon conceptualizations and the defensive stance in general.

The conceptual challenge opened up in the debate has been faced by Mácha (2013) who elaborated on his earlier article (Mácha 2010), which was in turn a reaction to an article on anthropologically oriented considerations over landscape by my colleague and I (Gibas and Pauknerová 2009). In both, Mácha argues for an understanding of landscape as a "socially relevant environment" based on a very binary idea of complementarity between physical and social body, location and place, environment and landscape, and space [vesmír] and universe [kosmos]. While the first component of his binary is understood by Mácha as "objective" and is related to objective space, the other is "(inter-)subjective" and thus related to social space (Mácha 2010, 237).

This theorization of landscape seemingly resonates with the one I am developing here. But I feel it to lack both clarity and focus on one hand and relies on the very problematic dualism of subject – object on the other with landscape being posited on the subjective side of the dyad. Binary dualisms have been often used in order to conceptually explore the notion of landscape. I have also started this chapter with references to dualisms in terms of tensions from which landscape emerges. But in cases of Tuan, Hirsch or Wylie (and many others), landscape has been understood as dialectic rather than one of the complementary pair. Thus for Hirsch landscape is a process where the (socially) imagined and (actually) lived fuses, and because both is spatial, the continuously emerging landscape is a spatial phenomenon dialectically emerging from the tensions. With respect to the above sketched understanding (s) of landscape as representation, process and experience, it is possible to note down a number of tensions (dualisms) from which landscape dialectically emerges: nature versus culture, eye versus land, observation versus inhabitation, proximity versus distance, body versus matter,

looking versus seeing, time versus space, power versus experience, and even subject versus object, etc. What Mácha strives for, it seems to me, is a definition of landscape which would go away with the tensions and problematic moments in landscape, and thus he places landscape to the (inter)subjective pole of spatiality as if the environment would be unproblematically objective and thus allowed for landscape to be unproblematically (inter)subjective. Moreover, it does not seem to me either plausible or productive to position environment in opposition to landscape as if landscape would be a mirrored image of environment. For the reasons developed throughout this chapter, I hold landscape to be something else (more) than simply an environment experienced.

What I have attempted to show in the previous subchapters is a theorization of landscape which would not rely on the problematic notions of subject and object while retaining the tension these (and other binaries) produce. Rather than a definition, I have also attempted at clarifying the conceptual space in which landscape as a concept makes sense and might be productively used to explore (research) and understand the world we (socioculturally and historically positioned embodied beings) live in. And the world, to paraphrase Seamon (1982), is geographical which means it is material and spatial, it stretches in a specific way in space (and time). This means there is a material dimension to the world. Hence the materiality of landscape. To provocatively challenge Mácha's view: landscape is always material and thus it always retains some objectivity which (for Mácha and other Czech geographers it seems) underlies materiality. At the same time however, landscape is experienced – which means it retains some subjectivity because its emergence is enabled by the self perceiving it, “seeing” it.

The materiality of landscape is however very special. Imagine again standing at the top of the church in Most, the city that was destroyed and rebuilt. Landscape which opens around you consists of slopes and hills, stretches of land and water surfaces, streets and blocks of flats, smokestacks and fenced off factories, the church spire and the staircase in side of it. Looking over it makes it seemingly dispoible but it is not, as is evidenced in the act of catching one's breath after climbing up the stairs. Landscape is material in the very sense I have just described. It is always composed of mountains and valleys, plains and paths, impenetrable forests and dangerous deserts, metaphorically speaking. In other words, landscape is always morphological irrespective whether it is physically existing in stones and soil, or imaginary. By 'morphological' I mean the simple fact that landscape has always form and structure which mould the materiality (real or imagined) in which the landscape is grounded. Landscapes are uneven, which is evidenced in the very simple act of journeying through – sometimes it is easy and smooth, sometimes dangerous and full of detours and sometimes one can lose

her way. Even the most metaphorical landscapes are morphological in this way which makes them different from networks, spaces and environments. You can re-create environment (as in the laboratory) because it is closely related to condition(s), but you can only re-present landscape⁸.

While environment denotes surroundings, landscape is very much earthy. Without attempting at linking my thinking on landscape with the issue of environment, which is out of the scope of this chapter and dissertation, I would like to note the paradoxical relationship of the two concepts. Landscape seems to be less (general term) than environment due to its concrete, earthy nature. At the same time however, in one landscape, we can find many natural (!) environments, and thus landscape is also more (embracing) than environment. I understand this to stem from the simple fact that landscape and environment should not be seen as parallel concepts, as Mácha argues, but as intersecting or cross-cutting. This is not to clarify the difference and set it once and for all, just to acknowledge the difficult relationship of landscape and environment which in turn means that to see landscape as “socially relevant environment” reduces the complexity of the former and leaves the conceptual challenge in the midst of the latter.

In response to Mácha’s conceptualization of landscape, I claim landscape (in contrast to environment) to be always morphological and thus requiring the approach which would be more focused on the morphological materiality of landscape. However, as I have discussed more in depth earlier, the earthy of landscape conjoins with the visual and political and thus also social and cultural, temporal and personal. This brings me to the conceptualization of landscape my colleague and I have envisioned as potentially productive for anthropologists and beyond in an already mentioned article (Gibas and Pauknerová 2009) that provoked Mácha’s original response (2010). There we postulated, to paraphrase, that landscape is not the material contour – either real or perceived – of our lives, but it is rather an outcome of the on-going intersection of the material dimension,

⁸ While the English etymology (and history) of the word landscape is widely known (see Hirsch 1995 for an overview), I would like to note the etymological background for the Czech word for landscape – “krajina”. According to the Czech etymological dictionary by Jiří Rejžek (published in 2001 by Leda in Voznice), “krajina” is derived from panslavic “kraj” which is in turn derived from “krojit” which means ‘to cut’. “Kraj” and thus also “krajina” is related to that what has been cut off or the border thereof “and in the end also to (distant) land or ground/area/territory”. Here, the affinity of landscape and krajina as both derived from the cut off land is notable as well as the earthy character of “krajina” which is related to the distant piece of land imagined as having different characteristics (e.g. flatland or mountainous).

personal experience, imaginary, symbolic and political spheres (cf. Gibas and Pauknerová 2009, 134). This idea, which I still understand as of interest, is what I would like to elaborate more in the conclusive section of the theoretical chapter especially with respect to the morphological of landscape.

Conclusion: Landscape beyond tensions

In this chapter, I ventured into the realms of landscape and how it has been theorized across anthropology and (new) cultural geography. The reason was not to distil a definition of landscape, but rather to explore the conceptual space in which landscape has been immersed by the scholars who think it through from various perspectives. The aim of the chapter is to illuminate how I understand landscape and how I am to use it throughout the dissertation. Moreover, it is to also unravel the complexities of landscape in contemporary theory and to embrace this complexity rooted in tensions and paradoxes as a productive feature of landscape and not its drawbacks.

I started the chapter with acknowledging the tensions out of which landscape has often been said to rise. I did so because landscape tends to be explored with respect to various tensions it houses and what landscape is has often been phrased by means of binary oppositions, relationships and the transition between them: space and place, observer and observed, separation and immersion, nature and culture, background and foreground, material and symbolic, human and nonhuman, iconographical and kinaesthetic, and many more. While landscape has often been said to come out of these tensions, instead of solely concentrating on them, I rather traced more general strands of conceptualizing landscape which react to and explore the tensions. Thus, I discussed the idea of landscape as representation, process, and experience to arrive at the point where I propose to fuse these three perspectives. This allows me for acknowledging the dynamics of landscape – to open oneself to the “shuffling, unstable and lively” nature of landscape – and at the same time embracing the complexity of landscape.

To illustrate the complexity and to move the theoretical considerations closer to the very topic of this dissertation, I discuss what Picon terms ‘anxious landscape’ and engage more closely with the studies of (post)industrial landscape in the form of urban decay. Picon’s idea of anxious landscape and his emphasis of the city as the most prevalent landscape of our times extends landscape into the city and thus erases (or profoundly rephrases) one of the dichotomies: at least in the Czech context, “landscape” has often been strongly linked to “countryside”, is a disregard for the opposition of city and landscape. This chapter made evident that this distinction is not necessarily solid and productive – at least in some contexts – as I hope to exemplify in the empirical part of the dissertation. The fact that the materiality of the city differs from the materiality of countryside is not for me a strong enough argument to maintain the division on a theoretical level. After all, landscapes are morphologically (in)formed intersections of material, imaginary,

social/cultural/political and experiential dimensions/trajectories and this is applicable irrespective of the actual material groundings of a given landscape.

To study the landscape of (post)industrial cities borders urban anthropology and urban studies in more general. I am however not that much interested in particular topics so often associated with urban anthropology⁹. My interest lies a bit aside that of urban anthropologist. I do share similar methodological and epistemological groundings, but I pay attention to landscape as emerging from the intersections rather than at any given social (cultural) group of urbanites and the ways they cope with the urban settings (both material and socio-cultural). I hold belief that to study landscape enables researchers to concentrate on the ways in which the meaning has been created in the processes of intersecting of personal (embodied) experience, social, cultural, historical and political forces and material dimensions as well as to explore the practices that are productive as well as the products of such intersections. Landscape thus according to me allows for productive disentangling the nexus of themes and topics crucial for how people live (in) the (geographical) world, how they act in that world and how the world acts back on them – in cities or elsewhere. While thematically different from urban anthropology, my approach is in essence congruent with it while opening new research interests and fostering new perspectives.

Based on the excursion into anxious landscape, I argue that to be able to engage with landscape, understand it and re-present it, one has to acknowledge and confront its complexity. This complexity stems from the fact that landscape is not a product of diverse binary tensions, but goes beyond these tensions because it emerges as an emergent spatial conflux of the material, imaginary, social/cultural/political and experiential dimensions, each of which can be singled out and approached by means of the tensions.

What is however important with respect to such claim is both the continuation of the emergence of landscape – after all landscape like time never stands still – and its peculiar materiality. In response to Mácha's theorization of landscape as

⁹ As Setha Low documented for the 1990s, „the dominant research trends in [urban] anthropology appear to be post-structural studies of race, class, and gender; political economic studies of transnational cultures; and symbolic and social production of urban space and planning“ (Low 1996, 402). To assess the similarities and differences of urban anthropology and the presented study, see e.g. Blanton (1976), Sanjek (1990) or Hannerz (Hannerz 1980) for general overviews or urban anthropology and Soukupová (2010) for a discussion of contemporary Czech anthropology of the city.

“socially relevant environment”, I argue that landscape is always morphological; in other words, in landscape there is always reference to form and structure and as such (and as representation-process-experience) landscape bridges the realms of material, imaginary, social/cultural/political and subjective.

Acknowledging the ongoing emergence of landscape, Doreen Massey argues that “both space and landscape could be imagined as provisionally intertwined simultaneities of ongoing unfinished stories. Space, as a dimension, cuts through such trajectories, but not to stabilise them into a surface; rather space is imbued with time [...] Moreover, one constantly emergent, ongoing product of trajectories is what [Massey] call[s] the landscape” (Massey 2006, 26?). Drawing on the imaginary inherent to the quote from Massey and with the line of the argument developed throughout this chapter, I would thus argue that landscape is a temporary, “shuffling, unstable and lively” result of the intersection of morphology (or space morphological) – real, imagined as real or metaphorical – and the imminent conflux of the material, imaginary, social/cultural/political and experiential dimensions, or in Massey’s words, trajectories.

Such a complex understanding of landscape, I must admit, is not what I have entered the field with. My research started by exploring various landscapes from various perspectives and it was only after some time of researching landscape by means of concentrating on (post)industrial landscape of Czechia that I started to think about complexities of landscape and the ways how to acknowledge them, explore them further and theorize them. The theorization of landscape offered in this chapter is thus not the starting point – though it precedes other chapters – but it is an outcome of the meeting of my starting points, the various unconnected theorizations of landscape, the research terrain and continuously re-thought interpretations.

In other words, I have to start writing the dissertation from a (theoretical) standpoint. This does not necessarily mean that it is the standpoint with which I entered the research, simply because I am writing the dissertation at the end of the research process. One of my aims with which I started the research was a theoretical ambition. Inspired by Michael Burawoy (1998), I understood the research as a means of elaborating the existing theory of landscape. It was the various theoretical conceptualizations of landscape that have led me with various intensity and effects through the landscapes researched. To paraphrase Burawoy, it was the diverse theories of landscape that kept me steady and guided my dialogue with landscapes (Burawoy 1998, 5), informed my methodological considerations and the choices of methods (or better techniques) of research, and analysis and in the end rephrased for myself my understanding of landscape.

In this respect, this theoretical chapter represent a middle ground – it is an outcome of a theoretical reconstruction of landscape produced throughout the research but at the same time a starting point for furthering that reconstruction in the dissertation. The following chapters are not intended to illustrate the theoretical points and namely the complex concept of landscape presented here, but they rather serve as a means of elaborating on the conception of landscape with respect to specificities of (post)industrial landscape of contemporary Czechia. But before I get to the actual landscape(s) researched, I need to turn my (and the reader's) attention to methodological considerations that are closely linked to my theoretical groundings. This is what comes in the next chapter.

Researching landscape

The previous chapter offered the theoretical groundings for this dissertation and phrased my understanding of landscape as a complex concept. Complexity of landscape, which I understand as a morphologically (in)formed intersection of material, imaginary, social/cultural/political and experiential dimensions, represents a methodological challenge. One way of dealing with such challenge is to consciously refrain from facing the complexity and concentrate only on one of the aspects, dimensions, trajectories in and of landscape. The other, which I want to cultivate and practice in this dissertation, is to face the challenge and to make respective methodological choices. This chapter is about the methodology of researching landscape as a complex, ambiguous concept.

To research landscape is to research the intersection of the personal, social/cultural, political and material while bearing in mind the morphological-spatial, the fact that landscape is not everything but that it has a spatial form and structure, which in turn is a product of the intersection; or conversely that the intersection is framed by the form and structure either real or imagined or both. As I have already noted by the end of the previous chapter, my take on the challenge posed by landscape has been inspired by Michael Burawoy's (1998) notion of the extended case method. For Burawoy, the extended case method is an approach to doing what he terms reflexive science and which he develops in contrast to positive science (and survey research as a respective methodological approach). Extended case method thus represents a situated research practice, which aims at producing a context-bound situated knowledge and by means of which also at improving existing theory.

Reflexive science, Burawoy argues, is participatory and dialogical, "it calls for the intervention of the observer in the life of the participant; it demands an analysis of interaction within social situations; it uncovers local processes in a relation of mutual determination with external social forces; and it regards theory as emerging not only in dialogue between participant and observer, but also among observers now viewed as participants in scientific community" (Burawoy 1998, 16). This allows for and at the same time required for a deep immersion in the problem studied and a deep understanding which is at the same time context-bound but allows for extending out from the particular research field (a case) to a more general understanding and knowledge. Burawoy shows that in line with reflexive science as a model, the extended case method being based on deep situational knowledge enables the scientist to "extract the general from the unique, to move from the 'micro' to the 'macro,' and to connect the present to

the past in anticipation of the future, all by building on pre-existent theory” (Burawoy 1998, 5).

Reflexive science is in essence very ethnographical – for Burawoy, it is very much grounded in the dialogue between us and them. It is thus no surprising that research techniques Burawoy prefers for practicing extended case method as a situated research practice of knowledge production based on reflexive science, is participant observation and interviews. These techniques – how Burawoy terms them – allow for deep immersion into the field and for producing deep situated understanding. However, the way how techniques are actually practiced in the field very much depend on a general framework, in Burawoy’s words on the model of science – positive or reflexive science – the researcher embraces.

Being inspired by Burawoy does not necessarily mean I have adopted his perspective fully and replicated his approach to research and science. My approach has combined Burawoy’s notion of extended case method especially with respect to the possibility of “extending out” from the particular in the field and the bricolage methodology, to which I will turn shortly in more detail. In researching landscape, I have adopted strategy similar to Burawoy in terms of using case(s), which I let to help me extending out in terms of understanding the general processes and forces at play in (trans)forming the landscape. Throughout me conducting the research, I have in compliance with Burawoy’s approach strived for extending the observer to participant, extending thus acquired observations over space and time, extending out from process – for me the observable change – to force – for me the implicit causes and dynamisms of the change, and last but not least extending theory (of landscape) in general (see Burawoy 1998, 16–22). To do so, I have concentrated on three landscapes – that of former and to some extent still industrial cities of what is now the Czech Republic: Ostrava, Kladno, and Most. In each, I have concentrated on various and diverse dimensions and trajectories intersecting to form the landscape at hand over time. Each landscape help me to extend out from it so as my understanding based on each have intertwined and extended out to form an idea of (post)industrial landscape, which in turn allows for extending the theory of landscape further.¹⁰

¹⁰ I offered the first outcome of the extending of theory in the previous chapter. I am to return to theory in empirical part of the dissertation – both in the chapters related to each cases-landscapes and in a conclusive chapter on (post)industrial landscape of contemporary Czechia.

Since landscape is complex, I did not restrict myself to participant observation and interviews in practicing the extended case method as a research practice. With respect to the theoretical groundings which is very diverse and posits landscape as representation, process and experience, I had to choose respective techniques of gaining that deep situated knowledge. In doing so, I let the research field – the three landscapes – combined with the theories to lead my methodological choices – the choices of methods (or in Burawoy's words techniques). In practicing the research, I combined a number of techniques in order to grasp the complexity of landscape(s) studied. My overall strategy of how to practice the extended case method thus embraced what has been termed the "bricolage" approach.

Bricolage as a research strategy and even onto-epistemology refers to the French word *bricoleur* describing „a handyman or handywoman who makes use of the tools available to complete a task“ (Kincheloe 2004, 1). While having been theorized especially in the area of educational research (K. Berry 2004; K. Berry 2006; K. S. Berry 2011; Kincheloe 2001; Kincheloe 2004; Kincheloe 2005), the bricolage has affinities both to Michael Burawoy's extended case method and anthropological research practice. This is because both are grounded in ethnography, which in turn has always very much relied on the abilities of the researcher in the field to gain access to data while using various strategies and techniques, as Yvonna Lincoln (2001, 693) points out.

Theorists of bricolage like Joel Kincheloe or Kathleen Barry link it to the discussion of qualitative methodology in Denzin and Lincoln (Denzin and Lincoln 2007) and in turn to bricolage as discussed by Claude Lévi-Strauss in his *The Savage Mind* with respect to meaning-making: "the 'bricoleur' is adept at performing a large number of diverse tasks [...] His universe of instruments is closed and the rules of his game are always to make do with 'whatever is at hand', that is to say with a set of tools and materials which is always finite and is also heterogeneous [...]" (Lévi-Strauss 1966, 17). Similarly to Lévi-Strauss but in an epistemological context, Norman Denzin and Yvonne Lincoln explore the potential of bricolage in qualitative research practice. According to them, "[t]he qualitative researcher as *bricoleur* or maker of quilts uses the aesthetic and material tools of his or her craft, deploying whatever strategies, methods, or empirical materials at hand [...] The choices as to which interpretive practices to employ are not necessarily set in advance" (Denzin and Lincoln 2007, 6). The choice of the practices (methods or techniques) is dependent on the questions asked which is in turn dependent on both the context of the research and on the theoretical (and thus also epistemological and ontological) grounding of the researcher.

Transposed from a structuralist context of exploring the workings of “mind in its untamed state” (Lévi-Strauss 1966, 219) into an epistemological context of how to practice a qualitative research, bricolage becomes a metaphor for a methodological strategy that is apt at facing the challenge posed by the complexity of the world (or phenomena) studied. As Kincheloe emphasises, “as researchers draw together divergent forms of research, they gain the unique insight of multiple perspectives.” Moreover, this multiplicity of perspectives helps them “to address the complexities of the social, cultural, psychological, and educational domains. Sensitive to complexity, bricoleurs use multiple methods to uncover new insights, expand and modify old principles, and re-examine accepted interpretations in unanticipated contexts” (Kincheloe 2001, 697).

Bricolage according to Denzin and Lincoln, Barry, and Kincheloe represents a reaction to the developments in social sciences in the previous turbulent decades and the recognition of the complexity of (social) reality. As Joe Kincheloe phrases it, “[t]he bricolage exists out of respect for the complexity of the lived world. Indeed, it is grounded on an epistemology of complexity” (Kincheloe 2005, 324). This acknowledgement of complexity with its consequences on the possibilities of the production of knowledge leads Kincheloe to elaborate bricolage into a specific onto-epistemological position fusing critical and constructivist epistemologies with critical hermeneutics (Kincheloe 2005). While I share some of the underlying general ideas with Kincheloe, I adhere more to the methodological take on bricolage informed (and required) by my theoretical groundings. With respect to the complexity of landscape as theorized in the previous chapter, bricolage seems to be a highly suitable methodological approach that allows for extending from one case to another while offering multiple perspective of complex landscape.

I thus see the research and dissertation as being rooted in what both Denzin and Lincoln (2007) and Kincheloe (2005) term methodological bricolage: “[t]he methodological bricoleur is adept at performing a large number of tasks, ranging from interviewing to intensive self-reflection and introspection” (Denzin and Lincoln 2007, 9). To research landscape in its complexity requires an approach allowing for multiple perspectives that might shed light on multiplicity of intersections forming and constituting landscape. Throughout the research and the dissertation, the methodological bricolage is coupled with inclinations to theoretical bricolage that works “between and within completing and overlapping perspectives and paradigms” (Denzin and Lincoln 2007, 9), in this particular case with the overlapping perspectives of what landscape is rather than competing paradigms, as the theoretical chapter evidences.

The bricolage – both theoretical and methodological – which I resorted to during the research is in line with the extended case method, by which I was very much inspired. By drawing on various research techniques and practices, it responds to and enables to grapple with the complexity of the studied problem – the landscape; it helps to acquire deep situated understanding which in turn enables me to extend the particular knowledge across the individual cases and from them to the more general; and it also allows for extending theory in terms of linking diverse theoretical perspectives. The dissertation is thus based on complex methodological consideration in which bricolage serves double purpose. It is an onto-epistemological stance based on recognition that the world in general and landscape as a research topic in particular are complex and thus are to be approached in a complex manner. On a methodological level, in order to tackle the complexity of landscape, I resort to extended case method, i.e. an in-depth exploration of particular landscapes which allows me to gain deep understanding to be turned into situated knowledge and allows for extending from the micro to macro, particular to general, and for discussing and moulding the existing theory. Nevertheless, the bricolage influenced also the choice of actual techniques employed in the extended case method to explore the actual cases. Bricolage thus stands for me as both an onto-epistemology and the way how to “do” extended case method.

The choice of techniques and practices within my research was not “set in advance” but the techniques-methods crystallized with respect to the landscapes studied, the openings they offered and themes and topics that proved important and illuminating. After some time, a complex methodological approach solidified based on a triad of key methods – or rather in line with Burawoy – techniques of data gathering and analysis. These techniques mirror the triadic concept of landscape with which I entered the field, namely landscape as representation, process, and experience. This methodological triad consists of (visual) discourse analysis that allows for unravelling the meanings and power in behind landscape as representation, interviewing and hermeneutic (content) analysis that enables me to unravel the meanings ascribed to landscape in the process of (political) negotiation, and phenomenological (field) research, which permits to dig deep into the experiential aspects of landscape. These however have not been sole techniques used but were combined with other, namely observation, which is in line with the overall bricolage approach.

I would like to devote the rest of the chapter to present the key and other techniques used within the research. In what follows, I thus describe where, how and why I employed the given techniques and discuss their role in research and its outcomes. In the dissertation, this serves a double purpose. Firstly, I need to

anchor my interpretation in sharing my methodological experience and thus to attest to my methodological expertise. Secondly, it enables me to describe in detail the materials (or data) gathered and analysed which in turn liberates the empirical part of the dissertation from the clutch of empiricism and opens the ground for interpretations referencing the already established empirical grounds. After presenting the key techniques – (visual) discourse analysis, hermeneutic (content) analysis, and phenomenological (field) research – I conclude this chapter with general remarks on the bricolage and its evaluation with respect to the topic of the research.

(Visual) discourse analysis

When I started my research, I turned my attention to key industrial cities in what is now the Czech Republic – at first Kladno, then Ostrava and finally Most. What I realised very soon, was the overabundance of visual representation of landscape of and around these three cities, both contemporary and historical. What the landscapes look like, what they consist of and what meanings they hold and how these change over time can very easily be explored by means of analysing the rich visual materials available. Throughout the introductory stages of the research, I explored the variety of visual materials available – postcard, posters, paintings, photographs and photographic books. Soon, the richness of the material available to study or even acquisition started to feel threatening. However, a very particular though ample kind of visual representations attracted my attention – that of officially published edited volumes of photographs of the cities and surrounding regions. This official visual production – most numerous, diversified and elaborate in the case of Ostrava – covers the nearly whole period of socialism in Czechoslovakia and continues to be published until the very present. The decision to follow this kind of visual material thus represented a choice I made with respect to where the research field directed me.

Throughout the research, I acquired a large number of photographic books on all the three urban landscapes with the largest number being on Ostrava. The richness and abundance of the material on Ostrava led me to start analysing Ostrava in the prism of the notion of “landscape as representation” as elaborated in the theoretical chapter. Very soon in the research, Ostrava became for me the case of landscape as representation from which I could extend to the other two cases (Kladno and Most) based on the similarities in the visual representations of all three urban landscapes. This enabled me to use the other two cases to explore other aspects of landscape while allowing me to analyse in depth the (post)industrial landscape (of Ostrava) as representation and its building blocks. The decision to primarily concentrate on Ostrava’s visual representations was enhanced by the fact that after the demise of socialism a couple of monographs on Ostrava cityscape were published by well-respected photographers. Based on their photographs from the same time period as the official publications (and sometimes even by the same photographers), these books make an interesting counterpart to the officially published visual rendering of Ostrava’s landscape.

With respect to the material analysed, I concentrated on photographic books published by official bodies such as municipal or regional administration or government as well as by local institutions and companies (namely key industrial enterprises). After intense search and review in national and other libraries and

(which proved salient) in second-hand bookshops in the cities in question, I have acquire and analysed 17 publications on Ostrava published in between 1962 and 2013 with 10 from the socialist period. I have concentrated on Ostrava because of the richness of the material, but my analysis comprised also publications on Kladno (and a key industrial company there, Poldi Steelworks) and Most.¹¹ These serve double purpose – they help me to extend the case of Ostrava to other cities based on the thematic and formal similarities (of the discourse on industrial landscape thus produced) and inform my further analyses of the landscape, which are grounded in other theoretical and methodological frameworks (of landscape as process in the case of Kladno and landscape as experience in the case of Most).

I coupled the analysis of the official production on Ostrava's landscape with similar analysis of alternative art production. In the case of Ostrava, this comprised the works of four photographers, Viktor Kolář (2010), Jindřich Štreit (2008), Miloš Polášek (2010) and Květoslav Kubala (2012), published recently but containing photographs from the times of socialism when the majority of official production was published or photographs thematically very close¹². Especially the landscape of Ostrava by Kolář and Kubala seem to condensate the antipode to the official photographic representations.¹³

I am aware of the fact that to divide the production to official and alternative is to a degree problematic as well as it is to make line between socialist and post-socialist production. The former is difficult because photographic publications about Ostrava and other cities were during socialism published by various municipal, regional but also nationwide institutions (such as ČTK - Czech Press

¹¹ *The list of all the books analysed forms a separate part of the references at the end of the dissertation.*

¹² *Jindřich Štreit's photographic exploration of Vítkovice steelworks was conducted and published at the celebration of 180 years of the steelworks, i.e. in 2008. I included it because of the thematic and stylistic closeness to the other alternative production because it helps me in a similar way to denaturalize the official production (discourse).*

¹³ *This is very interesting because Kubala and Polášek also contributed as photographers to the official socialist production. However, to concentrate on the relationship between official and alternative production with respect to the position and role of photographers would require different set of research and analytical tools than employed here – namely historical research (interviews) and discourse analysis II concentrating on the institutional aspect of the production and sustenance of given discourse. While extremely interesting, it is beyond the scope of this dissertation aiming at understanding the key aspects of (post)industrial landscape.*

Office) in which photographers have different agency. On a general level however, I understand the alternative production to emphasise the role of the actual photographer in contrast to the official publications where (especially in socialism) the actual photographer as an artist is side-lined. With respect to alternative production, the publications analysed are generally retrospective publications on artistic developments and works of the photographers and their main aim is to map the art work of the authors and (contrary to official production) not to produce visual statement on Ostrava's landscape. The division to socialist and post-socialist official as well as unofficial production is also problematic because of the rising number of publishers who publish both publications aiming at visual representing (and thus constructing) Ostrava's landscape and mapping the art works of different photographers. I draw the line in 1989 although I am aware that especially in the first years of the 1990s the style, themes, topics and even institutional background remained untouched – socialism did not disappear at once. However, the changes and shifts are for me of key importance with respect to re-constitution of industrial landscape and shifting of discourses from once dominant to residual and once residual or emergent to dominant (for this distinction see e.g. Oates-Indruchová 2012).

To analyse landscape as representation means to unravel symbolic and power structures inscribed into the landscape and with respect to the shift from socialism to post-socialism also to detect and explore the discursive re-formation. These structures (and changes) are what (in)forms the ways of understanding and experiencing the landscape and make the landscape to be what it is. To proceed with the analysis, I turned to the visual discourse analysis as exemplified by Gillian Rose(2001). My aim was to deconstruct a symbolically woven power-laden visual text (or better intertextuality) on Ostrava and in turn also on (post)industrial landscape in general.

Based on Michel Foucault's *Archaeology of Knowledge*, Rose understands discourse "to refer to groups of statements which structure the way a thing is thought, and the way we act on the basis of that thinking. In other words, discourse is a particular knowledge about the world which shapes how the world is understood and how things are done in it" (G. Rose 2001, 136). This in turn means, as Lynda Nead points out, that discourse is "a particular form of language with its own rules and conventions and the institutions within which the discourse is produced and circulated" (Nead 1988 quoted in G. Rose 2001, 136). This makes it evident that discourse is not a matter of isolated texts or images but that discourse is produced and sustained intertextually. It is because "the meanings of any one discursive image or text depend not only on that one text or image, but also on the meanings carried by other images and texts" (G. Rose 2001, 136).

Discourse analysis I as defined by Gillian Rose and employed in the dissertation pays attention to “the notion of discourse as articulated through various kinds of visual images and verbal texts” (G. Rose 2001, 140). Within such oriented analysis, the emphasis is put on how the discourse (in this case the way of seeing and representing the landscape) is structured and formed, what are the key themes and motives and how they connect into repeated (discursive) formations, how particular statements (images as visual statements) acquire their meaning, what is muted in and missing from a discourse, and how the truth in (and truthfulness of) a discourse is produced and claimed.

On a general level, “the meanings of an image or set of images are made at three sites: the sites of production, the image itself, and its audiencing” (G. Rose 2001, 32). Discourse analysis I thus focuses on the image itself and the meanings as they are produced by various textual and in this case visual means and their combination, the regime and effects of truth, the ways how meanings (and social reality) is ‘naturalized’, to draw on James and Nancy Duncan. What visual discourse enables in the end is to ‘denaturalize’ the seemingly innocent landscape as intertextually produced way of seeing (Duncan a Duncan 1988). This all applies to discourses produced textually as well as the groups of visual statements, which is the case of the material I concentrated on.

The actual practice of visual discourse analysis I is hermeneutic. Since visual discourse analysis is an interpretive process based on repeated close reading of the material, a “successful discourse analysis depends less on rigorous procedures and more on other qualities” such as craft skills or scholarship as well as the ability to suspend one’s preconceptions. This is to be achieved by starting the analysis with fresh eye – in my case I use coding to help me looking afresh at the material. In particular, I coded the individual images as much in detail as possible with respect to the contents, themes and formal aspects (composition, light, etc.). The close reading and deep understanding is according to Rose achieved by “immersing” in the material, continuous reading and rereading it, looking again and again at images (G. Rose 2001, 149–150); the analysis is thus hermeneutic.

The initial coding represented the first instance of immersion for me; after that I compared the coded information, images and its sets and immersed again and again in the material. In practicing the analysis of the photographic publications, I drew on Rose’s recommendations and focused on: how the discourse is structured and how its coherency is being accomplished; what meanings are produced by means of photographs (and accompanying texts such as captions and commentaries) and their sets, and how the photographs and meanings cluster; how the persuasiveness and truthfulness is produced; to what extent the

discourse is coherent and where there are internal contradictions; and last but not least, what is absent and made invisible (G. Rose 2001, 150–158). The interpretations I offer throughout the dissertation with respect to visual materials, and especially in the chapter on Ostrava, represent results of such a repeated close immersion and re-reading departing from the conscious bracketing of my own pre-conceptions.

Based on the visual discourse analysis, Ostrava stands in this dissertation as an exemplification of the (post)industrial landscape as representation. With the help of the visual production on the other two urban landscapes, I extend from Ostrava to a more general and interpret the industrial landscape of Czechoslovakia and the change to (post)industrial landscape of Czechia in visual terms. To extend even further, I use the cases of Kladno and Most where I employ techniques of research and analysis different from that in Ostrava. These are based on the notion of landscape as experience in the case of Most and landscape as process in the case of Kladno. And it is the latter to which I am to turn my attention to in the next section.

Hermeneutic (content) analysis

I was born and spent my childhood in Kladno, a city which used to be an industrial centre similarly important to Ostrava for the last 150 years in what is now the Czech Republic. I was to become seven years old when socialism dissipated into times which brought about profound changes to the industrial production and lives of people in Kladno (Ostrava, Most and elsewhere). De-industrialization that followed the fall of socialism led to changes not only socio-economic but also material. The landscape of Kladno and its surroundings which used to be industrial for more than a century started to change profoundly. Long before I commenced to think about my research, I was due to my personal connection to the lived Kladno well aware that there is something profound going on in terms of materiality, meanings and the connection of the two with respect to Kladno. It thus followed quite naturally that I started to do my research into (post)industrial landscape, its features and changes in Kladno where I have a strong preliminary knowledge of the topic.

What has been going on in Kladno since the fall of socialism is a process that influences the material as well as social, cultural and political dimensions of Kladno, or in other words, a process consisting of trajectories, material, cultural, social that converge and couple with (my as well as of other people) personal stories. My father for example used to work in the Poldi steelworks in Kladno at the end of 1980s and the beginning of 1990s and lost the job along with many thousand people afterwards. The process – the stories and trajectories – turned for me soon in my life into emotionally charged understandings with places and buildings being linked to emotions and experiences. I vividly remember myself at the age of eight visiting my father at the steelworks in full activity and the sight of the dilapidating factory often reminds me of these memories and evokes emotions often hard to describe.

What started to be evident soon in the research – alongside the overabundance of visual materials that made me to concentrate on visual discourses in Ostrava – was the emotionality of spaces and places of the industrial past and present of Kladno. This emotionality was not however only on my part, i.e. autobiographical, but I started to realize it all around – in the newspaper articles, on various webpages, in the events organised by different people in Kladno, in the published magazines, as well as in the photographs exhibited in galleries, etc. These emotions – nostalgia, melancholy, disgust, anger, feel of loss, and others – seemed to me closely linked to the process of material reworking of the landscape of the city of Kladno and its (post)industrial surroundings. It seemed linked to the process of change to the landscape on a material but as these emotions seemed

to prove also socio-cultural and political levels, which in turn can be linked – extended to use Burawoy's words – to various socio-economic and political forces at play after the demise of socialism.

It did not take long for me to start paying more and more attention to the meanings and underlying emotions of the landscape as expressed across diverse sources. I soon turned my attention not so much to the representations of landscape but to the contents of landscape and their developments, to the interpretations (of various people) of the process and the ways in which they represent these interpretations. Rather than to mirror my interest in visual discourse (explored in Ostrava) – the ways how particular dominant and alternative ways of seeing are constructed and conveyed as truthful and coherent and (in)form the landscape as representation – I attempted to map the diversity of meanings and related emotions that are ascribed to, inscribed in, and arise from the (post)industrial places and spaces in Kladno and around. In other words, I turned my attention to the change on material as well as the socio-cultural and political levels and the relationships of these in order to populate the landscape by meanings and emotions and interpret the change.

With respect to research data, I concentrated on the expressions of various understandings and meanings of and emotions attached to the (post)industrial materialities – spaces, places, edifices – in Kladno, expressions that reflect and react to the changes happening to but also with the landscape, to draw on Barbara Bender again. In contrast to Ostrava, I thus zoomed in from the level of visually produced and sustained discourse(s) to the actual contents of actual spaces as expressed by various people in what they write, talk and act about and with the landscape.

The case of Kladno is thus the most ethnographic; I draw on variety of diverse sources and data I encountered throughout the five years of my research in which I attempted at participating in the landscape. I browsed the webpages, newspapers and magazines, take part in excursions and walks at various occasions (such as those at Industrial trails, biennale of industrial architecture), frequented photographic exhibitions, spent time drifting through and doing observation in derelict industrial areas (especially the large brownfield of Adalbert's forge close to the city centre), take my students to Kladno's (post)industrial areas and museums (such as coalmining museum of Mayrau mine in Vinařice) and let them to draw mental maps and write their observations and responses to the spaces visited, etc.

However, the core of my interpretation of Kladno (post)industrial landscape as process in which materialities, meanings and emotions hustle on from the past via

the special moment of the present into the future is very much grounded in interviews I conducted with people who have been active in and around Kladno's post-industrial present. These I selected on the basis of my deepening knowledge of those who actively confront the landscape in Kladno and take part in the negotiations over its meanings and futures, i.e. attempt at populating it with particular meanings based on certain emotions or vice versa. I take these to be people who to a various degree actively create and negotiate the image of Kladno and its industrial past, post-industrial present and potential futures – local historian, photographers, municipal government urban planners, heritage specialist, NGOs' representatives, museum curators, artists, blogger. They form part of a local (or translocal) elite that write, talk and act about, but also with the landscape.

I conducted 9 semi-structured though openly designed interviews which I got transcribed. With respect to the open nature of interviews and diversity and thus also variability of other materials I have at my disposal, including visual materials of my own as well as from webpages and exhibitions, I decided for more open, hermeneutic approach of analysis and interpretation. Mayring argues it possible to "bring together, in individual stages of research, both more open and content analytical procedures" (Mayring 2004, 269). In response to the nature of the data, I opted for employing more open hermeneutic analysis as developed by Michael Patterson and David Williams (2002).

Hermeneutic approach – in terms of "an analytic attitude towards the field of experience" as defined by Ian Heywood and Barry Sandywell (1999) and exemplified in detail by Patterson and Williams (2002, 45–49 and further on) – seems apt at addressing diversified and highly open set of sources including visual. I entered the field with particular pre-conceptions and perspective which have helped me to make sense of the landscape as (in) process. In this instant, it seemed inappropriate (if not impossible) to bracket the pre-existing understanding and experience. This stays in contrast to visual discourse analysis, where such bracketing proved fruitful in terms of enabling me to see the material afresh and thus helped me to 'denaturalize' the visually produced discourses.

Hermeneutics, as Williams and Patterson argue, "when properly conducted, [...] is an empirical enterprise characterized by critical and 'meaningful' thought beginning with a particular perspective (the forestructure of understanding) progressing through a rigorous and systemic cyclical analysis (the hermeneutic circle) in which interpretations are evaluated and modified on the basis of the data that is then presented as evidence of the warrants for conclusions" (Patterson and Williams 2002, 36). This quote nicely captures how I proceeded

with my research by cyclically returning to my ideas stemming from the encounters with the expressions of what people interpret has happened to the industrial landscape.

In analysing the interviews as well as throughout the repeated reading of magazines (esp. *Kladno-Záporno*, a magazine published by local group) and other data including contextual sources such as historical and autobiographical literature, I seek to “identify predominant themes through which narrative accounts (interviews [but also other sources]) can be meaningfully organised, interpreted and presented” while concentrating on “the inter-relationships among these important themes” (Patterson and Williams 2002, 45). After close re-reading of the information and data at hand – accruing as the research continued – the themes started to emerge “on the basis of the ‘forestructure of understanding’ developed through the ongoing review of existing literature/research” (Patterson and Williams 2002, 48), namely the crystallizing understanding of the importance of emotionality of landscape in process.

What is however important is the fact that “hermeneutic research first seeks an understanding of the individual [...], how an individual experiences and constructs the world regardless of whether or not similar themes [...] can be found for other individuals” (Patterson and Williams 2002, 49). This means hermeneutic analysis is very much cyclical and plunge deep into the particular while at the same time allowing for the final emergence of trans-individual holistic understanding, for extension from the particular to the general. In the case of Kladno (post)industrial landscape, this is mirrored in the important themes that emerged in the process of cyclical and ongoing analysis (influencing and influenced by the ongoing research): these themes is the emotionality of landscape in process (though diversified at the individual level as for the actual emotions and their expressions) that breaks down to the melancholy and nostalgia inscribed in and arising from the landscape due to its perceived aesthetical qualities intersected by its marginal status on one hand and importance on the other when it comes to larger forces that impact upon it.

The emotionality of (post)industrial landscape of Kladno – from where due to the interconnections and intersections I extend to Ostrava and Most and then beyond – informs and is in turn informed by the process in which the (post)industrial landscape is caught up: the process which is embodied in both the material changes and socioculturally and personally influenced political negotiations over its contents, over its past, present and potential futures. The landscape as process is experienced which in turns influence the process wrapping it into certain

emotions and emotionalities. The experience and landscape is intertwined and it is the research of landscape as experience to which I turn now.

Phenomenological (field) research

From my first ever visit to Most, which took place before I started to research (post)industrial landscape, I have only vague recollection of images of places visited and emotions related to them and the visit as such. The overall and general feeling was that of sadness and at the same time fascination. My second visit, this time already as a part of the research, was in fact a day long on-foot journey through the landscape from the very flat areas of former mines to the mountains from where I for the first time of my life saw the opencast coal (or better lignite) mine. This view, I noted down, took my breath away. The experience was the closest I ever had to what is generally termed sublime. This profoundly emotional experience of landscape so closely linked to its morphology and change made me to concentrate more and more on the landscape as experience and the ways how the experience – personal and thus also embodied – relates to the materiality and material change of landscape.

The landscape of Most thus throughout my research predominantly stood for landscape as experience, although I have also collected visual representation and took part in various events and activities in the landscape. These in turn help me to extend the other landscapes – landscape as representation explored in Ostrava and landscape as process examined in Kladno – to Most and allowed me to concentrate on the landscape as experience in terms of how I developed it in the theoretical chapter.

Because landscape stands both and at the same time for what we experience and the experience as such, it is necessary to consider the ways in which this fusion can be researched most productively. Inspired by David Seamon and Chris Tilley, I opted for phenomenologically oriented research, which put emphasis on the bodily experience and connects it to the materiality of what is experienced. Since “the whole body is the means to understand and resonate with the world,” to draw on Judith Okely (2001, 104) again, the research must concentrate on the bodily engagements with the landscape and the underlying emotions (if not even affects).

In his *Geography of Lifeworld*, David Seamon researches the “everyday environmental experience – the sum total of a person’s first-hand involvements with the geographical world in which he or she typically lives” (Seamon 1979, 15–16). He conducted many focus group discussions with research participants about their embodied experience(s). In their weekly meetings, the research participants discussed their experience based on the general research task – “to make observations on any particular experience which might be relevant [and] reflect

on the past experiences” (Seamon 1979, 27). Chris Tilley in his *Body and Image* concentrates more specifically on the experience of rock art and contrary to Seamon focuses on his own bodily, kinaesthetic experience in moving, on “the study of the active effects of imagery [of rock art] in relation to human body, its balance, effort, postures and gestures” (Tilley 2008, 41).

Although both Tilley and Seamon depart from the same (or very similar) phenomenological positions, the way they actually conduct their research is very different. What follows is the fact that phenomenological research can have diverse forms and that what differentiates phenomenological research from other types of research is its ontological assumptions and ensuing interest rather than the particular research techniques. Because in my research in Most, I have been interested in the experience, which is always personal while at the same time socioculturally and historically grounded, I opted for a research technique similar to the one employed by Tilley, that is of the observation of the encounter of my body and the landscape and the enfolding experience this encounter produced.

In my more than 20 research field trips of various length (from a day to a week), which I conducted either alone or accompanied by colleagues, students or friends, I concentrated on observing and representing (writing down, photographing) such encounters of body and landscape. To paraphrase Tilley, my interests lay in exploring and answering questions: what does landscape do to an observer – visitor? What effects does it have? What bodily actions are required to encounter and see or, more widely, sensorily experience it? (see Tilley 2008, 41)

This phenomenologically grounded interest led me throughout my research; I ended up journeying (on foot) through the landscape of Most and paying close attention to the sensorily dimensions of my experience (for sensuous geographies in general see Rodaway 2011). I observed and noted down the smells and sounds, the prevailing colours, feelings and particular features such as textures of the ground, as well as the overall carnal experience of journeying, the openness of the landscape to the body, and the responses of me as embodied being to the landscape – excitement, fatigue, disinterest, etc. As is evident, I did not intend to universalize my experience. I was not aiming at the universal but rather at the very particular as it opened to me. I strived for seeing the landscape with whole my body in order to glimpse at how the material, which is morphological – and in the case of Most, the morphology has been undergoing vast changes – informs the bodily experience.

In other words, I am aware of the critiques of phenomenology for being universalistic in general or as is the case of the anthropology of the senses, culturally flattening and oversimplifying the rich though particular was of sensory

engagement with the world (for the anthropology of the senses see e.g. Classen 2005; Howes 2005; and for its critical discussion see Pink 2006). I however do not see phenomenology as per se disqualified by its (philosophically) universalistic groundings; after all my intention here are not universalistic since I am also aware that our feelings and emotion (and I would also argue that affects to at least a certain degree) are socioculturally and historically (in)formed. Karel Stibral offers a good example of this when he describes how Johann Joachim Winckelmann, a theoretician of classicism which valued certain and from today's perspective different features of landscape, vomited of revulsion and disgust when seeing the mountainous scenery of the Alps for the first time in his life (Stibral 2006, 42). This is an extremely good example of the meeting of the material – of certain morphology – and socio-cultural and political taking place on a personal level and resulting in an embodied (emotional-aesthetic) experience and reaction.

What I have attempted to do by concentrating on particular sensory and bodily experience of my encounter with a particular landscape is to unravel the morphological in the landscape, its change and effects and connect them to the bodily experience which is produced and in turn produces the landscape. The landscape of Most thus precedes my experience on a material-morphological level but at the same time emerges from that very experience; this emergent experientially (in)formed landscape is what I intended to capture by phenomenological research of my encounters with and doings in and along with the landscape.

In this respect, having been very personal and inward-looking, the research conducted in and around the city of Most bordered autoethnographic practice. Autoethnography has been defined by many in numerous and often conflicting ways (e.g. Anderson 2006a; Anderson 2006b; Denzin 2006; Ellis, Adams, and Bochner 2011; Foster, McAllister, and O'Brien 2006; Hamdan 2012; Holt 2008; Vryan 2006). What autoethnographers however tend to emphasise in doing autoethnography is that "the living body/subjective self of the researcher is recognized as a salient part of the research process, and sociohistorical implications of the researcher are reflected upon" and actively engaged with (Spry 2001, 711). As Carolin Ellis put it, autoethnography is [...] research, writing and method that connect the autobiographical and personal to the cultural and social. This form usually features concrete action, emotion, embodiment, self-consciousness, and introspection" (Ellis 2004, xix). In this respect, it is evident that my research practice with its emphasis put on my embodied experience, encounter with and responses to the particularities of the landscape, borders autoethnography. While as a research practice – the actual doing of the research – might be congruent with autoethnography in it being personal and at the same

time ethnographical, based on observations (both outward and inward with the emphasis put on the latter), the resulting understanding as well as the resulting texts and presentations including this dissertation lack the poetics that is so often seen as a hallmark of autoethnography.

Throughout the research, I have realized that my field notes tend to be intimate and poetic and thus represent an autoethnographic element in the research; after all, my aim has been to link experience to (the production or emergence of) landscape. However, because “as a method, autoethnography combines characteristics of *autobiography* and *ethnography*,” (Ellis, Adams, and Bochner 2011, pt. 2, italics in original), my approach is less autoethnographic than it might seem. In thinking about the landscape as (my) experience – in analysing and interpreting my field notes together with my own photographs coupled with other sources such as visual photographic books and representations, historical outcomes and scholarly articles – I emphasise the *auto* of the ethnographical due to my commitment to the fact that landscape is always subjective (as I have developed it in the theoretical chapter). I do not however put so much emphasis on the underlying biographical element on one hand and on the poetic element on the other. This is because unlike Denzin, “I do not seek a dramatic, performative poetic, a form of performance writing” that much; conversely, what I seek is to understand landscape and thus I practice researching, thinking and writing in a way that allows for extending the existing theory. In this respect, I go against what some authors see as the core of autoethnography – performative, pedagogical, political, and poetic practice of writing (see esp. Ellis and Bochner 2006; Denzin 2006 in their response to ; Anderson 2006a).

The research in the landscape of Most has been conducted as participatory in the sense that I have taken part in the landscape. I have walked it through and observed what the landscape did to me, made me do and the others, and what was going on in it; I have been looking at it and sensing it in order to ‘see’ it through my whole body. I have been taking notes in writing as well as in coloured and black-and-white photographs. I have been doing so in order to map the fleeting experience of and in the landscape because experience is an outcome of the ongoing encounter of personal trajectory with others (socio-cultural, political, historical, material trajectories) from which the (post)industrial landscape (of Most) emerges in the very special moment of the (experienced) present.

Conclusion: The practice of researching landscape

In the preceding subchapters, I have elaborated on the three key methods-techniques I employed in my research of contemporary (post)industrial landscape of Czechia, namely (visual) discourse analysis, hermeneutic (content) analysis and phenomenological (field) research. These three techniques – to use Burawoy's terminology – can directly be linked to the theoretical conceptualization of landscape as a complex concept in which issues of representation, process and experience intermingle. I have discussed them separately because I used them in separate research terrains – Ostrava, Kladno, Most respectively. At the same time however, the research terrains and the data gathered in each overlap – the visual materials (in the form of photographic publications) can be found in all of them, the emotions, meanings and experience ascribed to and arising from the particular materialities and spatialities can be come across in all the three, and embodied experience is inevitable in visiting and exploring the landscape in person. There is thus an overarching unity in the diversified practice of my doing the landscape research.

Moreover, the techniques employed are of analytical and interpretive nature; they are all about analysing and interpreting the gathered data with the (visual) discourse analysis the most analytical, the hermeneutic (content) analysis more driven by the process of research, and the phenomenological (field) research the most activity-in-the-field bound. Out of respect for the complexity of the lived world and of landscape, to paraphrase Kincheloe, I have opted for a bricolage approach to research with emphasis put on the three techniques with other used to enter and orient in the field, gather data and control (or as Flick (2008, 92) would put it, implicitly triangulate) my emerging understanding. In all three cities and around, though with different intensity due to the methodological choices made (see above), I observed, took notes, took part in what happened, took photographs, conducted interviews, chatted with people, browsed through second-hand bookshops, paged through newspapers, magazines, etc. This I did to immerse in the field; thus I understand my approach as bricolage of techniques framed by ethnography and driven by the aim to explore landscape by means of participating in and on it¹⁴.

¹⁴ *Denzin defines participant observation as „a field strategy that simultaneously combines document analysis, interviewing of respondents and informants, direct participation and observation, and introspection” (Denzin 1989 quoted in Flick 2006, 220). Taken as a whole, my research resonates with Denzin's view of participant observation. Usually, however, the*

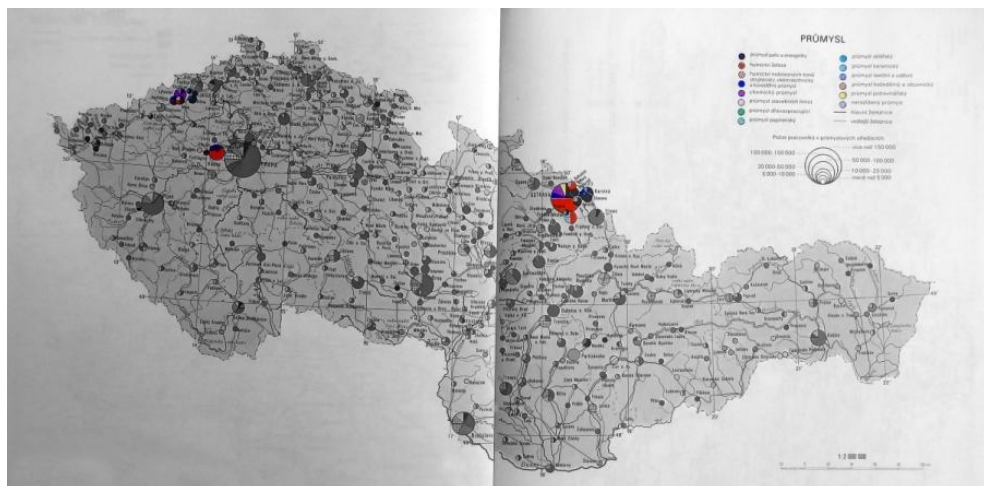
Drawing on Atkinson and Hammersley, Uwe Flick shows that ethnographic research is based on: “a strong emphasis on exploring the nature of a particular social phenomenon” rather than testing hypotheses; “a tendency to work primarily with “unstructured” data” which are interpreted inductively; “investigation of small number of cases [...] in detail”; and explicit interpretativeness directed towards meanings and their production (see Flick 2006, 227–231). In this respect, my practice of the research has been framed by ethnography which is more than congruent with bricolage approach with the difference that due to the theoretical conceptualizations of landscape, I put strong emphasis on techniques of analysis that form part of the overall ethnographic settings of the research.

Landscape might seem unproblematic but as the theoretical chapter shows, it is rather the opposite. The complexity of landscape is challenging on both theoretical and methodological level. The research design is thus inevitably complex too. However, the general ethnographic settings of the research and the explicitly bricolage approach seem to me, in the retrospect, an effective means of researching landscape as a complex and ambiguous concept and reality. The mix of approaches in and off the field with techniques being employed in different subfields (cases, particular landscapes) with differing intensity due to the data available helped me to connect these particular landscapes, to extend from one to other and from there, from the particular and micro to the general and macro. What follows in the subsequent chapters is the outcome of me immersing in the landscape(s). Though before I can turn to the actual landscapes explored, I need to posit them with respect to wider socio-political and historical context – namely, I need to elaborate more on the notions of (post)socialist and (post)industrial. It is not any landscape, I explore in this dissertation. In the next chapter, I thus concentrate on briefly contextualizing the landscape in question before turning to the particular aspects of contemporary Czech (post)industrial landscape.

participant observation targets institutions, sub-cultural groups, etc. where the researcher is to obtain a member's perspective by going (to a varying degree) native. My interest is in landscape, a phenomenon emerging at the boundary of human and non-human which of course limits the possibility of participation. Though I still hold that if not in the truest sense, it is still possible to participate on and (also at what goes on) in the landscape in order to gain complex and deep insight and generate understanding.

Contextualizing landscape

Landscape, as I have argued, is never finished but rather in a constant flux, exposed to constant changes. At any given moment, landscape exists as a conjunction of diverse temporalities – “stories”, as Doreen Massey would put it – and as such it bears evidence of the past and its multiplicity. Landscape is thus highly processual on a material as well as symbolic level. In other words, actual landscape is – together with the imaginaries of the future – conditioned by the past as well as the continuously contested understandings of the past. In this respect, to research and understand landscape it is necessary to acknowledge the particular contexts from which the landscape arises and which it references. With respect to the contemporary Czech (post)industrial landscape, two contexts seem the most important – de-industrialization and post-socialism. The aim of this short chapter is to posit the researched landscape in relation to both the terms and to open the discussion – which will inevitably weave through the rest of the dissertation – of the ways, in which de-industrialization and post-socialism have been mirrored in the landscape, influenced its current face and conditioned its future.



Img. 1 Map of the industry in Czechoslovakia from the school atlas (Atlas ČSSR 1988) with marked cities of Ostrava (in the north-east), Kladno (in the central-west), and Most and its surrounding region (in the north-west); graphical editing by the author.

The size of the cities correspond to the number of employees in industry while colours stand for the sector of production; in this case red marks metallurgy, blue marks engineering, and black marks coal mining. The intent of the map is to provide a reader with a rough geographic idea about the landscapes researched with respect to wider geographical context.

Both de-industrialization and post-socialism represent particular dimensions of the context out of which the studied landscape has emerged. At the same time, both refer to particular developments – historical, social, political – that have impacted on the landscape and continue to influence its ongoing emergence. I deliberately chose to hyphenate the two terms – de-industrialization and post-socialism – in order to emphasise the processual nature of both the developments as well as their changing role in moulding the landscape. It is industrialization as well as deindustrialization, socialism as well as what came after it that not only impacted on landscape at every given moment in the past, but that keep influencing landscape in the present. In sum, socialism and industrialization not only helped shape landscape in the past when they represented the actual socio-political, economical and historical reality, but they still haunt the landscape and influence its current form and future trajectories through their material remnants as well as ideas, images and emotions related to them.

Czechoslovak state socialism, spanning the forty years between 1948 and 1989, with roots in the situation immediately after the World War Two, was a period characterised by intense industrialization. This does not mean that there was not industrialization prior the socialist era. On the contrary, the Czech lands were one of the key industrial areas in the Austrian and later Austro-Hungarian Empire. Actually, all the three cities I explore in this dissertation – Ostrava, Kladno, and Most – had a rich industrial history reaching back into the 19th century. However, socialism intensified not only the process of industrialization, but also the rhetoric surrounding it. Industry and industrialization served economic but also political purposes. It was presented and perceived as a constitutive element of the system by means of which the system differentiates itself from its predecessors. As Klement Gottwald, the then prime minister, communist leader and the future first socialist president of Czechoslovakia, put it while setting goals for the emerging planned economy:

“It is necessary to change the structure of the Czechoslovak economy, which in its essence originated in the days of Austria-Hungary and still corresponds to the needs of that time, and we must adjust it to the new economic and political conditions of our day. This means that it is necessary to reorient Czechoslovak industry away from those branches which before the war were able to compete on the world markets as a result of starvation wages (gloves, toys, etc., partly also glass and textile) to those industries for which we have specially favourable conditions, and where products can compete on foreign markets, as for instance our metal industry, especially heavy machinery production, and our chemical industry.” (Gottwald 1948, 8)

Thus, with the ascent of socialism, the mentioned branches of industry became emphasised, promoted and supported more than before. As I show in detail later in the chapter about Ostrava, industrialization was not only an economic, material process, but it was elevated to a symbolic level during socialism. Industrialization was (re)presented as a process justifying socialist ways of governance and economic policy, as a process that went hand in hand with urbanization and as such was a sign of and symbol for progress towards a better future. As such, industrialization impacted on landscape not only on a material level as a force transforming the physical space but also on socio-political, cultural and experiential level as a force inscribing space with meanings and inducing emotions.

After the fall of state socialism with its state planned economy and a move to the market based economy, the industrial sector underwent a fundamental restructuring leading to a deindustrialization of the Czech Republic (for the developments in industry in socialism and the period right after its fall see e.g. Kopačka 1994). The post-socialist deindustrialization also had a profound impact on landscape on a material level. However, as I show later in the chapter about Kladno, deindustrialization also influenced socio-political, cultural and experiential dimensions of landscape because to the changes of the symbolic system as well as the system of values attached to industry and the sites left behind after its demise.

Industrialization during socialism and deindustrialization after its fall had a deep impact on landscape. It is this twofold process of de-industrialization that lies in behind contemporary landscape. It is an industrial landscape, albeit the industry has receded to a degree. It is also a (post)industrial landscape, connected to the industry as well as transcending it because new forces have come into play due to the socio-economic changes of the last 25 years. As I will show, industry – either real, in terms of actual production, or imaginary, in terms of ideas, symbols, and emotions – still has its say in shaping the landscape. This is why throughout the dissertation I refer to the landscape as (post)industrial. It is a landscape shaped by industry – by the double movement of de-industrialization – that is very much industrial due to the continuities with the past. At the same time, however, it is also post-industrial – and for what matters today even not industrial – due to the changes that occurred after the fall of socialism.

In order to understand contemporary (post)industrial landscape, in the following chapters, I explore among other things its socialist shape and form. This helps me to investigate the continuity between the past and the present as well as the changes that occurred. Socialism with its specific approach to landscape, its

material as well as discursive exploitation, conditioned its shape and form as well as its content and emotionality. However, socialism continues to haunt landscape until today. This is not only because of the material remnants scattered throughout landscape. It is also because, since the fall of socialism, landscape has been shaped, reworked, imagined and represented deliberately in contrast with the previous socialist landscape. Socialism thus still lurks in behind the contemporary landscape – landscape, which is not socialist any more, but which is not simply fully beyond (or devoid of) socialism.

The changes that occurred after the fall of socialism in 1989 have often been labelled “transition”. As Chris Hann (2002) argues, a view of the massive changes that took place in former socialist countries as a mere transition from socialism to capitalism is rather simplistic. Moreover, “in some cases, notably that of economics, disciplinary paradigms have been utilized not merely to explain what is unfolding but to make changes happen in a particular way” (Hann, Humphrey, and Verdery 2002, 1). And as Katherine Verdery (1996, 16) warns her readers, the idea of “transition” as employed within “so much fashionable transitology” is characterised by a certain naiveté. This is because of a stiff teleology encompassing the idea of transition from socialism as a “dead end on the far more progressive road to capitalism” (Verdery 1996, 204), which is imagined as unified and fixed while as the developments of the last quarter of a century proved it is rather the contrary. These three observations attest to the fact that rather than simple transition from one – failed – system to another – superior – one, the changes unleashed by the fall of socialism have been extremely complex and often contradictory.

Post-socialist times were /are times of complex and multi-layered changes that are characterised by a tension between continuity and discontinuity. This complexity as well as an unevenness of the changes can be exemplified by very diverse destinies of the three cities I concentrate on in this dissertation. Despite deindustrialization, Ostrava continues to be a key industrial city. At the same time however, it has gradually become also a centre of industrial heritage and tourism. Kladno, which has a similarly rich industrial history and faced similar developments during socialism, has been not only stripped of industrial production, but also of its industrial heritage thus becoming a service city for the nearby capital of Prague. The region (and landscape) of Most, the city surrounded by closed and rehabilitated as well as active surface mines, has become a periphery in which discussion about the expansion of surface mining parallel those about revitalization of the whole region into a tourist and natural area.

In all the three cities, socialism resonates in post-socialism. This resonance leads Chris Hann, for example, to express a belief that “the experience of Marxist-Leninist socialism, the reproduction of a common layer of socialist institutions, ideology and moral purpose over two generations or more, will continue to have decisive effects on this interplay everywhere in Eurasia for many years to come” (Hann, Humphrey, and Verdery 2002, 12). In this respect the (post)industrial landscape I explore is a post-socialist one, growing out of and being still influenced by socialism and its contemporary image.

At the same time, however, the changes to the landscape brought about by the fall of socialism cannot be only linked to the move away from socialism. As Maruška Svašek points out, “after the end of the Cold War, as a result of the globalising forces of capitalism, migration, forced migration, and the creation of transnational forms of political and military cooperation, the emotional experiences and discourses in and of the regions have been influenced by a variety of local and extra-local factors” (Svašek 2008, 21). The complexity of the post-socialist situation stems from the fact that only some of the “diverse histories, belief systems and practices” (Hann, Humphrey, and Verdery 2002, 11) that coalesce and out of which the new system, the new post-socialist and not-socialist future is born, have their roots in socialism or in the reaction to its fall. As I have shown in the theoretical chapter on the example of the newly emerging anxious landscape and the new sensibilities it gave birth to, some of the changes are embedded in global developments or those unrelated to socialism. The contemporary (post)industrial landscape of Czechia is thus a result of a coalescence of diverse processes. The (post)industrial landscape in question can be labelled post-socialist, but only with the awareness of the very complicated nature of what post-socialism is.

The aim of this chapter was to acknowledge the complexity of the very particular context out of which the (post)industrial landscape of Czechia arises and which it mirrors. In the following chapters, I will offer a more nuanced and detailed analysis of the particular landscapes of Ostrava, Kladno and Most. All three have been substantially shaped during socialism. Each of them has undergone profound changes in the years after socialism withered. My exploration of them can be seen also as a contribution to the growing literature exploring the particularities of post-socialism, or, to borrow a title of Katherine Verdery’s (1996) book, of what was socialism and what comes next.

PART II

“Blackened star above my head

...

Ostrava, Ostrava

Your red heart

A fate sealed from the start”¹⁵



¹⁵ Lyrics from *Ostravo!*, a song by Jaromír Nohavica

One. After more than three hours on a fast air-conditioned train from Prague, I finally arrived in Ostrava. The doors opened and I stepped onto the platform. It was early autumn and the air was much warmer than on the train. And it was full of bad smell, starting to itch in the nose after a while and tickle in the throat. It was an industrial odour, smoky and ashy. I remember the moment of getting off the train vividly because at that moment as if the air, the smoke, the ash hit me, as if I crossed a border and entered into somewhere else. Since then, I have always expected the very particular smell of one of my earliest visits to Ostrava to be present at the platform. And I am to a degree disappointed when – due to weather conditions – it is not there. After getting off, I always ponder if what I smell is the same as I remember it from that day. It is difficult to say. The recollection is more about the experience of being hit by the warm, smelly air, than about the odour as such. But for me, due to this memory, the expectation of that very air is inscribed onto the platform with a cracked tarmac surface and walls that await renovation. Despite sounding like a cliché, for me, the move from the air-conditioning into the smelly, smoky air represents literally as well as metaphorically the gateway to Ostrava.

Two. Beautiful lights come through dirty windows. From the ceiling, a forest of chains hangs down with each of them finished with a bulk of clothes and shoes wrapped up in bags, some of them plastic with imprinted fading advertisements. I am in a chain cloakroom of the coalmine Michal in Ostrava, now proclaimed a national heritage site. It is an exemplary site of the heritage management based on the experience of the last day. And I remember my astonishment when I entered the cloakroom, visually startling, emotional, beautiful, inducing the feeling that the mining of today has just finished and will be resumed tomorrow. I took a photograph on my new film camera. I struggled with it, also because the light was not strong enough and I was worried the photo would be blurred. It was not, but the final picture is compositionally weird. And thus in my memory of the cloakroom, the astonishment from the beauty of the real place fuses with the disappointment of the photograph, not good enough to capture the fleeting emotion of that moment.

Three. I climbed up one of the heaps in Ostrava. I wanted to overview the city from atop. I remember the surface of the heap as I mounted it, consisting of loose small stones resembling slate. I cannot vouch for those being there, however. I went up on too many heaps in different industrial regions which all somehow blended for me. Right below the top of the heap, my phone rang. I stood on the slope facing the city, talking on the phone with my father. At my feet, a pipe was sticking of the ground. And from it, a thin strip of smoke was rising up, right from

the inside of the heap. My recollection is about that smoke, weaving its way up through the air above the city.

I visited the city of Ostrava twice before I started my research of Czech (post)industrial landscape. All these three recollections come from these two brief trips that were separated by more than five years and which were followed by many subsequent, research-led visits. My early memories of Ostrava are sensory, but most importantly visual: three early encounters with Ostrava, three instances of me seeing the landscape

Between production and consumption: The landscape and city of Ostrava

Introduction

Ostrava, a city in the north east of the Czech Republic not far from the borders with Poland is a city with a long and rich industrial history. Due to the long and intensive industrialization, it became part of cultural and art production of the end of the 19th and throughout the whole 20th century. After socialism took over Czechoslovakia in 1948, Ostrava became one of the key socialist spaces and the landscape of Ostrava and its surroundings became inscribed with specific meanings. Because the industry of Ostrava has been coal mining and steel production, Ostrava became the “black city”, the “city of people and coal”, and above all the “steel heart of the republic”. These labels, attributed to Ostrava by the rhetoric of the socialist regime, attest to how Ostrava was thought about, dealt with and represented during socialism in Czechoslovakia – as an industrial city par excellence. Ostrava was used in the official cultural production as an example of a socialist and industrial city where the future, utopian communist harmony of people, environment, and work could be experienced in the socialist present.

In this chapter, I explore the (post)industrial landscape of Ostrava as it is (re)presented in various photographic books and other visual material about Ostrava from socialism and after. My aim is to identify the key constitutive elements of the official socialist imaginary of Ostrava, to contrast it with more ambiguous contemporary representations of alternative Ostrava cityscapes, and to question its relation to the development of a post-socialist imaginary of Ostrava. My exploration of the landscape of Ostrava as it is (re)presented photographically is directly linked to the argument developed in the theoretical chapter about landscape as representation. Representations of landscape are instances of the continuously developing way of seeing. The photographs and their sets (re)present landscape and in doing so they turn landscape into representation of the particular way of seeing developed under specific socio-historical conditions. My analysis of the landscape of Ostrava is thus an attempt to understand the underlying principles that shaped and reshaped (post)industrial landscape. I use the photographic representations of landscape as a prism through which to explore large societal shifts and changes as they are mirrored in the landscape. The representations of landscape I analyse open up landscape as representation of those large societal shifts for closer inspection. In short, they represent a case for developing an understanding, from which it is possible to

proceed to a more general question of what has happened to industrial landscape after the fall of socialism and how industrial landscape has turned into what it is now.

I start my journey through the (post)industrial landscape of Ostrava by exploring the ways in which it was produced, presented and represented in socialism, which promoted a very specific way of seeing Ostrava and thus turned Ostrava into a particular socialist landscape. During socialism, the city of Ostrava together with other institutions seated in Ostrava or related to the industrial production there published a vast number of photographic books (re)presenting the city, its life and those taking part in its construction and maintenance. I subsume these books under the umbrella term of official production due to their direct connection to official bodies and the intent to present an officially approved view of Ostrava.¹⁶ After an intense search, I was able to identify and acquire 11 photographic publications (Rýpar 1952; Krasl 1962; Gribovský 1972; Dopita 1974; Krasl 1975; *Karvinsko* 1975; Noušová 1975; Tomis 1975; *Ostrava* 1978; *Dějiny NHKG* 1981; Polášek and Sikula 1985).

These books and the series of photographs they contain can be seen as official discourse about Ostrava, its cityscape and surrounding countryside, its past, present and ambitions for the future. These sets of visual representations of Ostrava seem stylistically as well as thematically coherent and as a whole compose a visual canon of representing Ostrava, a visual discourse about urban landscape where people, coal and steel coexist in harmony. In other words, these representations turn Ostrava into a landscape consisting of elementary building blocks and their relationships. The socialist discourse on Ostrava turns it into a coherent landscape which is highly politicised and ideological.¹⁷ In this case, the means are of visual nature – photographs and their sets, the outcome is Ostrava as a visually produced urban landscape consisting of elements fused into an unambiguous, meaningful and seemingly unproblematic whole of the exemplary socialist city which heralds the way to utopian future. This chapter is mainly about

¹⁶ *In socialism, all the companies were state-controlled and linked to the system of governance by means of direct connection to the Communist party of Czechoslovakia. For this reason, the books published were under official scrutiny and underwent official approval procedure.*

¹⁷ *I understand ideology along with Seliger as “sets of ideas by which men posit, explain and justify ends and means of organized social action, and specifically political action, irrespective of whether such action aims to preserve, amend, uproot or rebuild a given social order” (Seliger 1976, cited in Eagleton 1991, 6–7).*

these building blocks and the ways in which they are forged together to create a consistent way of seeing Ostrava.

After exploring socialist Ostrava as it is (re)produced by the official photographic production, I turn my attention to more ambiguous photographic representations of Ostrava. These are again photographic books, this time by art photographers, who concentrated (part of) their photographic production on Ostrava. In the second part of this chapter, I analyse the publications by Viktor Kolář (2010), Jindřich Štreit (2008), Miloš Polášek (2010) and Květoslav Kubala (2012). Although published recently, all the books, except for Štreit's publication, contain photographs from the times of socialism. The book by Jindřich Štreit contains photographs shot in 2008 in the Vítkovice steel mill and due to the thematic closeness to both socialist official production and alternative takes on Ostrava, it represents an interesting extension to the analysed material.¹⁸ The confrontation of these (re)presentations of Ostrava with official socialist imagery helps me to denaturalize the powerful, seemingly natural, commonsensical socialist way of seeing Ostrava. The alternative takes on Ostrava by art photographers allow for disturbing the regime of truth inherent to the socialist photographic sets depicting the city. While the alternative views of Ostrava by the four photographers differ from each other in terms of styles and themes, they enable me to destabilize the officially produced image of Ostrava's landscape.

In the final part of the chapter, I explore the post-socialist production driven by the ambition to brand the city of Ostrava in particular ways. Here again, I analyse diverse photographic representations of Ostrava published in the form of books and I chart the continuities as well as discontinuities of this newly emerging way of seeing Ostrava with the older socialist landscape. Due to the complex post-socialist situation, I concentrate on official as well as other photographic publications (Sikula 2006; Sikula and Kusáková 2004; Polášek et al. 2007; *Ostrava* 2005; Špic and Noga 2010; Matěj 2007; Renner and Sklár 2007; Řezníček and Noga 2007). These recent representations of Ostrava help me to pose questions about the stability and change of landscape understood as a way of seeing.

To explore the three distinct sets of visual production about Ostrava and the possibility to compare them allows me to analyse and interpret the particularities of the (post)industrial landscape of Ostrava and the ways in which it has been

¹⁸ *The title of the book is Vítkovice and the photographs were made on the occasion of the 180 year anniversary of the factory. I included them in my analysis because of their thematic and stylistic similarity to the works of the three other photographers.*

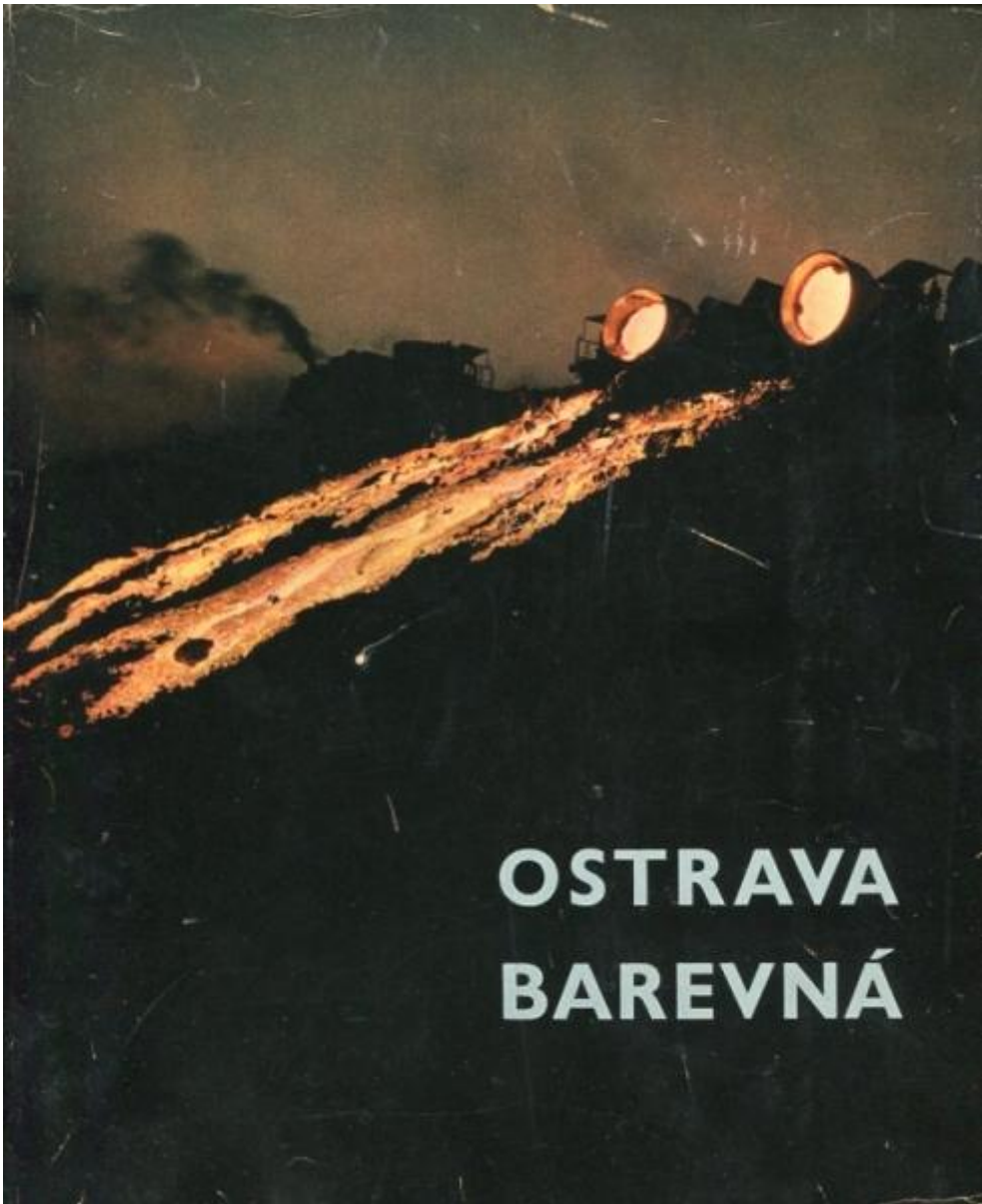
presented and represented, constructed and reconstructed since the second half of the previous century.

Ostrava in colour

Paging through the photographic representations of Ostrava, as they are condensed in the socialist official production of photographic books, the first thing that catches the attention is the prevalent use of colour photography. The landscape of Ostrava is colourful. This does not mean that all the photographs in all the books I analysed are in colour. Nevertheless, the majority of the photographs are in colour and occupy a prominent place in the books – usually on the cover and as a set in the middle of the book. Even at a time when the production of a book full of colour photographs would be innovative and thus expensive, there was a consistent emphasis on colour photography within the official socialist discourse.

This would be for example the case of the book, which stresses the colourfulness of Ostrava even in its title – *Ostrava in Colour* (Krasl 1962). The cover, just like the rest of the book, is in colour and shows slag being spilled onto the heap (img. 2). The night scene is illuminated only by the heated slag pouring from the carts pulled by a fuming locomotive, the silhouette of which stands out from the sky dim lit with reddish light of the heat. The inscription in big letters reads *Ostrava in colour*. By means of the photograph, powerful because of the use of light, the orange light of heated metal, in contrast to darkness, and the inscription, *Ostrava* is equated with heavy industry. Published in Ostrava in 1962, the booklets its readers explore the landscape of and around Ostrava. It is divided into three distinct parts that focus on the landscape of coal, steel and the cityscape of Ostrava. By means of such a thematic division and under the unifying image on the cover it presents Ostrava as based on the connection of coal, steel and the people populating the city, as an outcome of their interconnection.

On the cover, the industry is symbolised by the act of pouring slag onto the heap. The juxtaposition of the darkness of the night and the colour of the heated metal represents industry as a powerful activity based on mastering the forces of nature, of fire and heat. This is possible only by means of technological progress. Here, the powers of industry – that transcends and exploits the powers of nature – are made apparent by colour photography and its use to strengthen the emotiveness of the scene photographed. It is these forces out of which Ostrava grows.



Img. 2 The cover of the book Ostrava in colour (Krasl 1962)

I understand the prevalent use of colour photography within the socialist photographic discourse as driven by its symbolic and emotional properties. The emphasis on colour is related to the emphasis on progress. At the same time, the seemingly objective, realistic nature of colour photography is accentuated and exploited. The photographic books pretend to present Ostrava as it is, without embellishment. Only in colour can the progress made possible by coal and steel, the industrialization and ensuing urbanization, development and success be appropriately depicted. At the same time, the means of such depiction – colour photograph – becomes in itself a symbol for progress and innovation, especially in confrontation to the black-and-white past.

It is necessary here to acknowledge that industrialization of Ostrava and the surrounding region started way before socialism took power in Czechoslovakia. A large deposit of coal was found in Ostrava in 1763 and coal mining started in 1782. Coal became a prerequisite for further industrialization. In 1828 the first foundry with furnaces was founded in what is now Vítkovice, a part of Ostrava. The boom of iron industry led to a gradual increase in mining activities and attracted more and more people. Industrialization conjoined with urbanization changed the region fundamentally before the dawn of the 20th century turning it into one of the most important industrial centres in the whole Austro-Hungarian Empire. The number of inhabitants rose steadily. All the settlements which are now part of Ostrava had in total ca. 12 thousand inhabitants in 1843; in 1910 the populace mounted to 172 thousand and in 1940 to ca. 209 thousand people. During socialism, the number of people continued to rise along with the expansion of industrial production and coal mining (to e.g. 291 thousand in 1967; for the ideologically biased history of Ostrava see Noušová 1975; for general history of Ostrava see Przybylová 2013).

Despite the rich history of industrialization of Ostrava, the thematic focus of the officially published photographic sets attests to the achievements and development Ostrava underwent under socialism. This does not mean that the official way of seeing Ostrava is devoid of historical references. But the pre-socialist history is neither the main focus nor the source of contemporary achievements. It is a precursor, the times of struggles of the proletariat that enabled socialism to emerge. But the fights had been fought and the victory of the proletariat over bourgeoisie opened up the path to future. This is why during socialism, the photographic eye of the socialist way of seeing Ostrava was not turned to the past, but spotlighted the present and look out for the future.

One of the early changes to the industrial landscape of Ostrava on both material and symbolic levels was the building of a large new factory – the New Foundry of

Klement Gottwald. While envisioned early in the 1940s as an expansion to the existing ironworks in Vítkovice, it was at the dawn of socialism in 1948 that the decision to build the new factory on a much larger scale was adopted and the building works started. In 1951, the New Foundry of Klement Gottwald, named after the first Czechoslovak socialist president, was officially founded as a separate enterprise and dissociated from Vítkovice ironworks. The New Foundry was gradually built and celebratory opened in phases in the decade between 1948 and 1958. It was officially proclaimed “the Construction of young builders of socialism” by the Czechoslovakian Union of Youth.¹⁹ It attracted a lot of volunteers who took part in its building, especially students and other youth who – at least according to the official proclamations – cheerfully joined the works to help with the birth of the new regime and its economy (see *Dějiny NHKG* 1981). Dissociated from the past, built at the beginning of socialism and linked to the enthusiasm of the people who welcomed the new order with hopes of a better future, the New Foundry of Klement Gottwald became a powerful and often used symbol of socialism, its aspirations, power and abilities.

The below reproduced double page (img. 3) comes from a photographic book devoted solely to the New Foundry. Called *Great work: A photographic reportage from the first Czechoslovakian socialist construction* and published in 1952, the book represents a photographic celebration of the Foundry and its builders (Rýpar 1952). Interestingly, it is the oldest photographic book on Ostrava from socialism I have come across. Older than the other books I analyse further on, it is aesthetically rooted in the tradition of socialist realism, an officially endorsed style imported from the Soviet Union where it was favoured during Stalinism.²⁰ Socialist realism, originally a literary style that nevertheless in time engulfed all Soviet art, was first and most famously propagated at the Soviet Writers’ Congress in 1934. Here prominent writers gathered with prominent politicians such as Andrei Zhdanov, who is considered one of the key figures in moulding socialist realism and influencing the Soviet art scene. In his speech, Zhdanov eloquently described the main features of socialist realism:

¹⁹ *Czechoslovak Union of Youth (later renamed to Socialist Union of Youth) was a youth organization in Czechoslovakia managed and controlled by the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. It was established in 1948 by merging all the youth organizations in Czechoslovakia for youth between 15 and 25 years of age. Together with Pionýr (Pioneer), a united organization for children up to 15 years of age, it formed the base for organizing the children and youth in the country.*

²⁰ *i.e. from the 1930s to shortly after Stalin’s death.*



Img. 3 A double page from the book *Great work* (*Rýpar 1952, n.p.*)

“In our country the main heroes of works of literature are the active builders of a new life-working men and women, men and women collective farmers, Party members, business managers, engineers, members of the Young Communist League, Pioneers. [...] Our literature is impregnated with enthusiasm and the spirit of heroic deeds. [...] It is optimistic in essence, because it is the literature of the rising class of the proletariat, the only progressive and advanced class. Our Soviet literature is strong by virtue of the fact that it is serving a new cause - the cause of socialist construction.” In order to do so, Zhdanov believed it was necessary to concentrate on ordinary life and “to depict it truthfully in works of art, not to depict it in a dead, scholastic way, not simply as ‘objective reality,’ but to depict reality in its revolutionary development. In addition to this, the truthfulness and historical concreteness of the artistic portrayal should be combined with the ideological remoulding and education of the toiling people in the spirit of socialism.” Thus, in socialist realism, the realism is subordinate to the ideological goal of expressing certain meanings about the past and the future, meanings that represent the socialist present in a very specific, positive light. Socialist realism is thus not a means of artistic expression but of education of the masses, simplifying and employing emotions. Based on realistic grounds, socialist realism is in essence romanticizing. As Zhdanov continues, “[o]ur literature, which stands with both

feet firmly planted on a materialist basis, cannot be hostile to romanticism, but it must be a romanticism of a new type, revolutionary romanticism [...] for the whole life of our Party, the whole life of the working class and its struggle consist in a combination of the most stern and sober practical work with a supreme spirit of heroic deeds and magnificent future prospects.” Socialist realism should exemplify the “broad vision”, “the constant urge forward”; it should in other words embrace and portray “a struggle for the building of communist society”. By (re)presenting what has happened and infusing the ordinary with transcendent meanings about the regime, socialist realism “should be able to portray our [socialist, working class] heroes; it should be able to glimpse our [communist] tomorrow. This will be no utopian dream, for our tomorrow is already being prepared for today by dint of conscious planned work” (Zhdanov 1977).

The double page with volunteers on the left and steelworkers on the right is a fine example of socialist realism in photography. The facial expressions and bodily postures, the lighting of the subjects, the composition of the images and the settings in which the photographs are taken, as well as the juxtaposition of the two photographs communicate effectively a complex yet unambiguous message. On the left, young volunteers hold the pickaxes and shovels, smile and resolutely look in front of them as if ready to accept any challenge. Behind them, the steelworks grows up to the sky. On the right, steelworkers in their suits stand in front of the working steel mill. Strong and assured, they smile as well, looking up, not afraid of what awaits them. Juxtaposed as they are, the photographs reference each other. The workers are welcoming, they know what they do and they are proud. The volunteers are less confident but determined. They smile at the workers who smile back. People, work, future, this all is united in that act of smiling back and forth. Here, ordinary people are represented as heroes because they are aware of the fact that their toil transcends simple hard work. The photographs are realistic because they depict real existing objects such as shovels and pickaxes in real existing settings. Such realism is however only subordinate to ideology; realism is not detached but infused with emotions by means of the complex set of visual means – lighting, expressions, postures, composition, juxtaposition. The photographs romanticize the work by obscuring the toil and at the same time elevate it above the ordinary. The work becomes “great”, a part of building a whole new world. For these reasons these photographs stand for socialist realism in its pure form.²¹

²¹ *These two photographs, as well as other portraits in the book, are staged. There are also photographs in reportage style, i.e. not staged, showing the enthusiasm, concentration and*

In case the visual means of delivering an emotionally charged, ideologically laden message would not be enough, the photographs are labelled with an explanatory caption: “The first Czechoslovakian socialist construction in Kunčice [a part of Ostrava] calls for more volunteers as well as qualified workers to help building the 2nd and 3rd phase ... and to become honorary partners to steelworkers who already work at a blast furnace, in a steel mill, coke plant, blooming mill and other facilities of the New Foundry of Klement Gottwald.” The first part of the caption complements the photograph on the left and emphasises the overall proclamation of the New Foundry as a key socialist project. The second part then underscores the construction as a challenge which, if accepted, will reward the volunteers with honour and dignity. In the book as well as in the whole set of official photographic representations of Ostrava, captions play an important role. They help to translate the visually delivered messages, meanings, and emotions, into words and in doing so contextualize the photographs on one hand and strengthen the visually produced regime of truth on the other.²²

The New Foundry of Klement Gottwald was an early socialist intervention into the landscape of Ostrava on both material and symbolic levels. It elevated the process of the construction of the factory to a symbolic act of utmost importance. In the case of the photograph above, the factory has been framed as a site of never-ending activity, a steel city that never sleeps. The ever-present light illuminating the scene where the Foundry was being born makes the view of the plant close to sublime. In the photograph, it is the light contrasted with darkness pointing to activity and the fact that something great is being born here, by means of which the Foundry is made to transcend the ordinary – the particular lives of workers as well as those who page through the photographic book. “The construction site at night offered an enthralling view in which hundreds of lights of the new steel city glared high into the sky,” reads the caption emphasising the sublimity of the view for less perceptive readers. In this photograph, the factory as a steel city is thus visually and discursively turned into a metonymy for the city (of Ostrava). In a similar vein, the whole book serves the purpose of turning the plant into a metonymy for the newly born socialist regime. As the factory grows due to the volunteering and hard work of the politically conscious citizens, so does socialism.

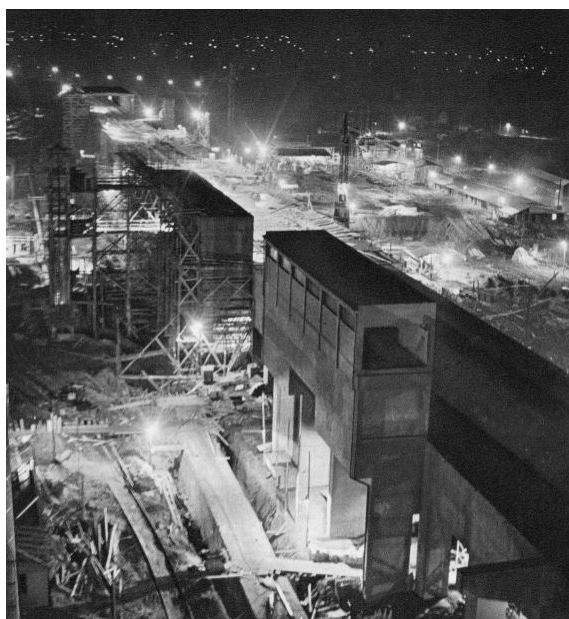
tumultuous building activity. It is also the mixture of staged socialist realist photography and reportage which makes the general impression of the publication so powerful.

²² *The fact that the two photographs share one caption not only helps in translating the meaning expressed in two photographs and their juxtaposition, it also reinforces the connection of the two photographs, their merging into one.*

As it is necessary to unite to complete the Great work of The New Foundry, so it is on a larger scale in order to create the great work of socialism. The Foundry thus became a symbol of the birth and strengthening of socialism; as an edifice, realized not only discursively but also materially, it should however serve also as a monument. As Antonín Zápotocký, the then prime minister of socialist Czechoslovakia, proclaimed: “We shall create a great work, an unforgettable monument for all the next generations, which will be an outcome and a testimony to the cooperation of thousands of workers, technicians, masters, and politicians.” Unsurprisingly, these are the closing words of the whole book, expressing the symbolic value of the Foundry as well as already turning it into what it should become in the future – a powerful symbol for and the monument to the progress brought about by socialism and the proclaimed unity of all within the regime.

Published in 1952, *The Great Work* draws on principles of socialist realism. Featuring photographs and captions of building activities, meetings of workers with politicians and views of completed work, it is celebratory and turns the New Foundry into a place of action. While later photographic books do not depend on socialist realism as their stylistic setting, they retain the emphasis on activity, especially in terms of building and construction as well as everyday work. Formally, socialist Ostrava as (re)presented by the successors of *Great work* published in between the 1960s and the end of the 1980s was less overtly ideological with respect to visual properties of the individual photographs. In a sense, it became more realist – a turn underscored by relying on colour photography and captions to frame it in a particular way. While the style became more subtle and varied, the overall emphasis, content and substance of the photographic books remained similar to the *Great work*.

One of the features of Ostrava in colour is the symbolic link between construction, development and progress. Realist, colour photographs across the photographic books attest to the success in building a city which metonymically stands for progress towards the future, which will be the fruit of present efforts. In the photograph above, Poruba, the largest housing estate for more than 100 thousand people built on the outskirts of Ostrava between the 1950s and the 1970s, is framed by blossoming trees and a blooming turf. As the caption poetically sums it up, “cherry trees, meadows as well as cities blossomed. Poruba, from the 1950s until very recently the core of the building of the city, is the new blossom of Ostrava” (img. 5).



Img. 4 A night shot of the construction works at the New Foundry of Klement Gottwald from the Great work (Rýpar 1952, n.p.)

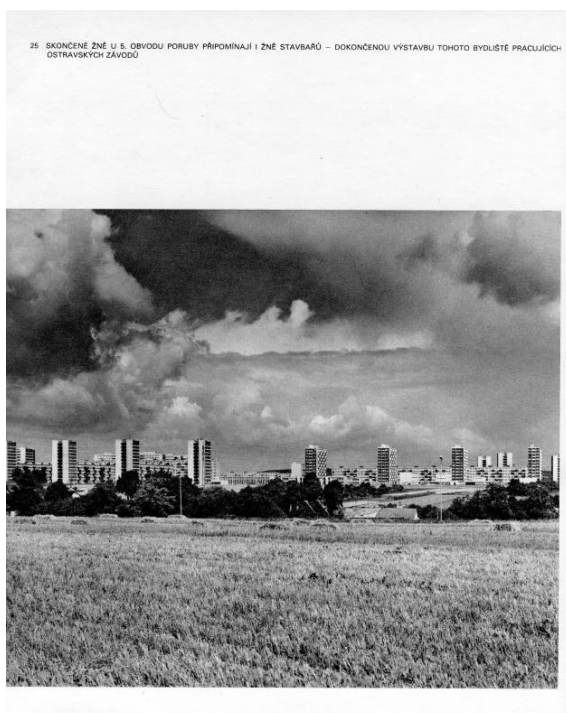
The caption reads: The construction site at night offered an amazing view of hundreds of lights of the new steel city shone high into the darkness. A view over an unfinished ore bridge during a night shift.

Úchvatný obraz skýžalo staveníště v noci, kdy vysoko nad černou tmou zářila stá světél nového železného města. — Pohled na razestavěný rudný most při noční směně.



Img. 5 A view of the Poruba housing estate from the book called Ostrava (Ostrava 1978, 74)

Similarly to the New Foundry, Poruba is also referred to as a city within the city and as such – as a complex, large, successfully finished city – it functions as a symbol of progress. While the photograph of Poruba framed by blossoming trees is to a certain degree pictorial, the following photograph is monumentalizing. In it, the newly built housing estate is seen from afar across an already harvested field. It is no coincidence because, as the caption reads, “completed harvest at the 8th Poruba district reminds us also of the harvest of builders – of the completed construction of homes of the workers of Ostrava factories” (img 6.).



Img. 6 A view over the Poruba housing estate from the book called Ostrava (Ostrava 1978, 26)

The geometrical form of the housing estate, here looming against the dark, cloudy sky, is a common motive in photographic books on Ostrava. The housing estate as a symbol of construction-development-growth-progress is within the official way of seeing Ostrava praised rhetorically as well as visually, photographed from afar or above so as its modernist, functionalist geometry can stand out. It is the distance and the bird’s eye view which turn housing estate into an abstract figure. Combined with dark photographic filter making the clouds heavy and looming, as is the case in this photograph, these are the techniques of monumentalization of housing estates and their geometrical form while dissociating them from the people inhabiting them and from the realm of the ordinary. Black and white photography allows for easier monumentalization of completed housing estates;

in black-and-white, housing estates are monumental and abstract and as such they act as self-contained, independent wholes. They are portrayed in colour when the aim is to emphasise the inherently positive features they embody – namely the development and progress. Because the housing is built and provided by the state, or state owned companies, both black and white as well as colour photographs also corroborate the scope in which the state supplies all the citizens with modern housing.

The results of a successful advancement materialized in completed housing represent one of the constitutive elements of the landscape of socialist Ostrava. The photographic books are full of similar photographs depicting the outcomes of building activity framed visually or rhetorically as blossoms or harvest. In this way, the portrayal of Ostrava engenders the progress Ostrava embodies. The housing estates serve as monuments to the successful process of building not only Ostrava, but also and more importantly socialism. However, there are also less conspicuous though no less important reminders of the development achieved in socialist Ostrava, be it transport vehicles such as buses or trams, or health, educational and recreational facilities. These are less monumental but due to their direct connection to the everyday city life they send a simple message – inhabitants of the industrial city have everything they need to lead a productive life, from efficient and modern means of transport to hospitals equipped with state of the art equipment, university campus with spacious lecture halls full of attentively listening students from around the world (symbolized by the presence of people from Africa), or the most modern control room of the power engineering system and up to date laboratories. The books conjoin all these themes and thereby create a vision of Ostrava. The books contain thematically similar photographs although of different artistic quality. They however structure the statement about Ostrava differently. In some of the books, the landscape of Ostrava is chartered by means of separate topics – coal, steel, and city in the case of the already mentioned book *Ostrava in Colour* (Krasl 1962). Other books are structurally more complex, charting the landscape almost hermeneutically – they cover a thematic arc usually starting with construction and building of the new housing estate, continuing through mining and industry, adding photographs of technical amenities, transport and services, and concluding with culture, recreation and schooling of children (*Ostrava* 1978; Polášek and Sikula 1985).



Img. 7 Four photographs from the book Ostrava (Ostrava 1978, 56, 80, 91, 100).

*All the photographs in the book are accompanied by captions. They read:
A typical night view of Ostrava (top-right); Tempting shops offer goods also during night hours (top-left); Little young citizens enter with confidence the modern, airy, sunny spaces of an elementary school in Ostrava Poruba (bottom left); The spartakiad at the Stadium of Vítkovice steelworks of Klement Gottwald – A parade of youth and joy of sporty citizens of Ostrava (bottom-right).*

The thematic arc is symbolic. Building and construction works represent the (re)birth of the city and the act of laying down the foundations for the future; the industry stands for the activity of the present; health care, education, culture and recreation symbolize the well-deserved services, care and rest for those participating in creating the “great work” of the city, socialism and potential future; and children serve as a symbol of the future, the next generations to which – to paraphrase Antonín Zápotocký – we should bequeath the monument built in the present as a testimony to the people’s commitment to assuring a better future.

This thematic scope and the way the themes are structured in individual books as well as the way they resonate across the books published in the four decades of socialism, creates a very specific way of seeing Ostrava. The books and the photographs they contain turn Ostrava into an exemplary socialist city that offers to socialist men and women all they need. At the same time, because the visual discourse accentuates the developments and emphasises their positive aspects, it makes Ostrava embody the promise of a better future – a bright, happy, advanced future which is gradually achievable provided the course of action is not disturbed. In this respect, the visual discourse justifies the socialist present by means of claiming it to be truthfully superior (over its unacknowledged competitors) based on what it has enabled.

Progress and future are the key thematic areas of the socialist visual discourse about Ostrava. The photographic eye is in essence turned towards the future. By means of depicting what is present it delivers a statement about the potential future which in turn serves as a justification of the present. This however does not mean that the socialist industrial landscape as engendered in Ostrava would be devoid of the past. On the contrary, the past is present in the form of monuments scattered throughout the landscape. The role of these is to remind of the past struggles and above all victories that enabled the present. The past, similarly to the future serves the purpose of justifying the socialist present. In the books, key themes related to the past are monuments to the fights for socialism and particularly the reminders of WWII and the victory achieved in Ostrava region by the Soviet army. This violent past is however presented as tamed, unambiguous, as a mere background to the contemporary struggles for a better future.



Img. 8 Gun as a monument form Ostrava in colour (Krasl 1962, n.p.)

The caption reads: Tamed gun at the Monument of Heroes in the Park of Comenius: Here lie 658 urns with ashes of the Red Army soldiers fallen during the liberation of Ostrava.

Ostrava in colour is in a sense ahistorical because the past (as well as the future) is stripped of inner life and ambiguity, of a potential for alternative narratives, and confined within a single narrative of a succession from capitalism and fascism of the past to socialism of the present and further on to communism in the future. Such might be for example the reading of the photograph in which children – symbolizing the future – play in front of a “tamed” gun – symbolizing the victory over Nazis (img 8).

The past is represented as where the contemporary city is rooted and from where it has sprung towards the present. Hence the reminders of the struggles for socialism, the statues of key socialist figures, the monuments to WWII in which fascism was defeated and as a consequence a new order was established. But the past is not the main focus. It is something that has already been won and that obliges the people to continue in the assumed course. Past is an inherent part of the landscape of Ostrava, one of many constitutive elements that together compose the landscape as it is seen and represented by official visual discourse.

The photographic books are about the city and feature the inner spaces of Ostrava in order to create a particular vision of the city – a cityscape with landmarks, monuments and reminders of past achievements. However, the prominent theme of the socialist way of seeing Ostrava is industry. Be it coalmining or steel production, it is an elementary aspect of the city, its *raison d'être*, its foundation; it is the true reason why the city exists and why it holds the very shape it does.

Especially in the book *Ostrava in Colour*, but in the other books as well, industry and the people taking part in industrial production are depicted in a pictorial manner. Emulating landscape painting, representations of industry aestheticize it. Outside shots capture factory halls and other industrial buildings as well as effects of industrial production such as smoke and haze as if these form an inseparable, harmonious part of the surrounding environment (img. 9). In one such photograph in *Ostrava in Colour*, children sit on a slope above the city looking into the distance where the New Foundry fumes; above the boys' heads, a funicular carries coal towards the city. Industry nurtures the city and is sustained by it as the same time. In other photographs, such as the one below, industrial objects – plants, smokestacks, and waste ponds become an inherent part of nature and the city. At the same time, industrial spaces in themselves evidence the success of the building efforts and the on-going process of development. Visual representations of such harmony serve the purpose of attesting to the success of progressive efforts of socialist Ostrava. Here comes true a modernist dream of urbanization and industrialization going hand in hand towards a better future without harmful social and environmental consequences.

Pictorialism does not stop at the door of industrial facilities and buildings. Interior shots are pictorial as well, especially the portraits influenced by socialist realism. They depict spaces and people deep underground in the dimly lit tunnels of coalmines or inside the factories full of yellow light, smoke, and fire that has been mastered and used to the benefit of the people. Coalminers are portrayed sooted, working and as if being one with the coal their dig; or they are portrayed preparing to go down the pit or showering after work, always positive, smiling, aware of the importance of their work. Steelworkers are photographed facing the fire which they handle; in front of the furnace, in between flames, concentrating on the task of creating something new out of the fire.



Img. 9 An example of pictorialist rendering of the industry of Ostrava from the book called Coal and people (Dopita 1974, n.p.)

The shots portraying industrial production use light in an interesting way. The yellow rays of low sun penetrate the vast rolling mill halls filled with fumes; yellow and red light coming from melted iron flows through the channels to illuminate the inside spaces of the ironworks; yellow heat from inside the furnace irradiates the features of a founder's face glittering with sweat. This kind of light is an oft repeated feature of the photographs from the 40 years of socialism. The light of fire is in a sense what illuminates the landscape of Ostrava. Fire and the mastery of taming and using it for the purposes of production and thus progress is a constant and at the same time the most underscored visual theme. The yellowish light and its prevalent use is a kind of fetishization. The light is a sign of forces of nature; at the same time, it stands for the fact that within the industry, these forces are controlled by people; and due to its property of illuminating, it helps the photograph to aspire at arousing emotions – the experience of beauty or awe – and thus makes the industry sublime.

Photographic effects of yellow light are very specific. Not only does the yellow deepen contrast (especially in black and white photography), but it also warms up the image and thereby makes it less detached. The connection between taming the forces of nature symbolised by means of a specific type of light and the property of this light to illuminate points to the symbolic function of industry: transcendence and future. By means of, light industry acquires transcendental properties. On one hand, it becomes sublime. On the other, it references the path towards the future enabled by taming the forces that used to be sublime and transcendental but were turned to serve the people.

One may ask who inhabits socialist Ostrava (re)presented by the official visual production. Where are the actual people populating the streets of Ostrava, inhabiting the tremendous housing estates, operating the machinery, travelling by trams and buses and enjoying the facilities the exemplary city of progress provides? Within the socialist official photographic production, the people are (re)presented as merging with the landscape, as fitting in the harmony of industry, city and natural environment. Everyday human life in Ostrava as portrayed by the photographic books is full of order; people, just like landscape, never stand still and if so, it is always for a reason. Their activities are always purposeful, and such are also their lives due to their connection to the wider whole of Ostrava. In the exemplary industrial city, there are no moments of void, moments without significance, meaning or aim.



Img. 10 An assemblage of interior shots aestheticizing industrial labour from Ostrava in colour (Krasl 1962, 11, 42 top-right and bottom-right), Ostrava region in photography (Gribovský 1972, 125 top-left) and Ostrava (Ostrava 1978, 54 bottom-left)

Apart from photographs concentrating on industry and the role of people in the mining or in the production of iron or steel, building of the city or operating the city technology, all the books contain photographs devoted to children and free time activities. Usually located at the end of the books, they portray children playing on playgrounds or attending school, students preparing for their future jobs, people exercising, swimming, taking part in the May Day celebrations or enjoying to watch a football match. Only mothers with children or elderly people can pause, sit on a bench in a park. But even these moments of rest are part of the wider harmony and order. They are the instants of well-deserved, not idle rest.



Img. 11 Children playing on a new playground at a housing estate in Ostrava (Polášek and Sikula 1985, 142)

The main reasons why socialist Ostrava of official publications is populated by people who submit to the harmony and order of the exemplary city, is the fact that the photographs do not portray living human beings with their hardships and suffering, people hesitating and making decisions. The people portrayed are idealized types – exemplary workers full of enthusiasm for their work, for their abilities to master fire or dig coal out of the depths of the Earth. There are also human moments. If the people have concerns, these are always related to the

success of their work and point at the workers' devotion to and concentration on their tasks; if the people are caught expressing emotions, these are again related to the achievements at work, being part of the larger (work) collective, or enjoying their well-deserved free time. People-idealized-types can assemble into crowds usually celebrating and thus expressing their political consciousness and loyalty to the regime. Collective enjoyment is the emotion that permeates the landscape of Ostrava.



Img. 12 May Day parade from Ostrava in colour (Krasl 1962, 84)

The landscape of Ostrava as it is (re)presented in official photographic books consists of several key constitutive elements which are composed in a specific way. The city is infused with industry. The city spaces are interspersed with coalmine shafts and the panorama is framed with industrial plants merging with

the city spaces on one hand and with nature on the other. The city is sustained by industry, which is only possible due to historical developments engendered by the monuments to fights and victories and to the liberation of the city by the Red Army. The industry and the enthusiasm in behind makes the landscape full of activity, the purpose of which is to move towards new horizons. Industry and its developments evidenced by the newly built, enlarged and modernized facilities make the landscape both stable and forever changing.

The change relates to the transformation of individual features in the landscape such as the building of new plants and vast housing estates. In other words, the change is that of the material grounding of landscape, its morphology and individual, physically existing components. These constituents of the landscape of Ostrava are portrayed in photography in a seemingly realist way to evidence the change the landscape has been undergoing. Change is an inherent feature of the landscape of Ostrava. Contrary to the change, the stability of the landscape relates to its internal meaning, to what it stands for and why it exists. The landscape of Ostrava is the landscape of progress enabled and brought about by socialism. The progress is both a prerequisite and an outcome of particular developments that impact on the landscape in the form of individual changes to its material form. The stability of the landscape does not stem from the individual features in the landscape. Rather, it arises from the themes and topics communicated by those features and their overall composition.

The landscape of Ostrava is a landscape of progress. Long before socialism, industry had become a key determinant of what was to happen to Ostrava as well as of how Ostrava would be perceived. But it was socialism, as an exemplary and final sprout of modernism, which elevated industry to a fundamental principle shaping the appearance as well as the content of the landscape (of Ostrava). Socialist Ostrava in colour is not a simple representation of Ostrava. The official photographic publications present Ostrava in a specific light. They offer a specific way of seeing Ostrava which underscores particular themes, makes certain aspects of the real existing city visible, and in doing so produce a relatively coherent general statement about the city couched as realist evidence.

Ostrava in B&W

Photographs for official socialist publications were selected and assembled in order to create a coherent whole expressing the required meanings and arousing the desired emotions. This does not mean that the books do not contain photographs that in themselves cannot be ambiguous or subversive. There are photographs that surpass the others in quality or that do not give themselves easily to the general view of Ostrava promulgated by the official publications. Especially snapshots of everyday life or some portraits do not adhere to the socialist realist or seemingly objective realist approach that informed the publications. A portrait of an older smelter by Miroslav Polášek is melancholic rather than expressing the joy of being a member of a working collective or concentration on the job. Here, as if the (black and white) photograph allows for the personality of the miner, his weariness intertwined with pride, to stand out without a ballast of ideological meanings delivered by the book, for which it is an opening image.

However, in the books that render socialist colourful Ostrava, the photographs do not speak for themselves, unless some individual images are stripped of their context. The photographs acquire their (desired) meaning from the connection to the other photographs within the actual book as well as across the publications. Moreover, the captions to individual photographs, as well as chapter headings, slogans and signs with which the books are interspersed, narrow down the possible meanings and channel the message. The arrangement of the photographs as well as the overall organization of the books represents another way how the desired meaning is produced and the correct reading is ensured. Key position is occupied by colour photographs. The structure of the books is of the same sort. The reader pages through time, either from the past to the present and ends up with children symbolizing the future, or through the cycle of the year from spring to winter and spring again. Or the books are organised thematically and one by one cover themes such as coal, industry, city, children, and free time. The structure, overall settings and captions together establish a compact, multi-layered statement about the colourful, progressive, exemplary city of Ostrava. The colourfulness of the general image of Ostrava together with its compactness and coherence results in the realist view of the city while in fact it masks the standardized, ideological and unlively nature of the landscape of socialist Ostrava.



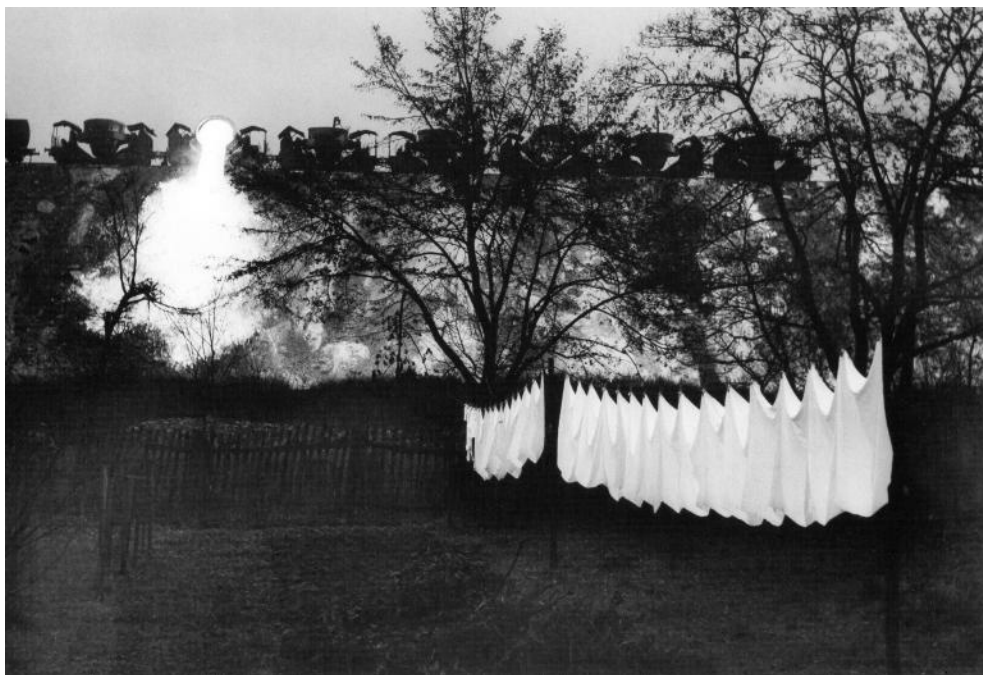
Img. 13 Portrait of a smelter by Miloš Poláček (Ostrava 1978, frontispiece; published also in Poláček 2010, 113)

The view changes fundamentally if we turn our attention from the official socialist visual production to the alternative photographic explorations of Ostrava from socialism and shortly after. The distinction between official and alternative production is artificial to a degree. During socialism, photographic publications on Ostrava were published by range of institutions, from the city hall to individual industrial companies and other publishers including those unrelated directly to Ostrava such as the Czech Press Office or Odeon, “the publishing house for belles lettres”. In this context, I understand alternative production to be publications where the position of the photographer is fundamental and emphasised as such. The socialist official publications I have analysed suppressed the position of the photographer(s) who became part of the author’s team and whose work served more as an illustration of the statements about the city on one hand or a vehicle to deliver specific messages on the other.

The books I subsume under the alternative visual production about Ostrava are *Ostrava* by Viktor Kolář (2010), *Ostrava: Tvář města mé generace (Ostrava: The face of the city of my generation)* by Miloš Polášek (2010), *Mizející Ostrava (Disappearing Ostrava)* by Květoslav Kubala (2012), and *Vítkovice* by Jindřich Štreit (2008). The first three are retrospective publications of the works of professional, art photographers. While these have been published recently, i.e. after the fall of socialism, they map the complete work of the photographers – either a lifetime work or a substantial part of it – and contain photographs from extended time periods mostly covering the socialist era. Despite the fact that they thematically focus on Ostrava, their primary aim is not to produce visual statements about the city, but to present the artistic point of view of the photographers, its scope and developments. The photographs on the factory in Vítkovice by Jindřich Štreit were taken for the jubilee of 180 years of existence of the steelworks in Vítkovice. I use them for their thematic and stylistic similarity to the other three publications. All four books allow for confronting the socialist way of seeing Ostrava and challenging the regime of truth produced by the official photographic publications.

Two main differences between official and alternative publications are readily noticeable: in the alternative artistic monographs, the photographs are unanimously black and white and usually left without any comment. In Kolář’s book, the photographs are dated; Kubala provided photographs with brief, usually topographical, information; Štreit’s photographs are left to speak for themselves; the only exception is the case of Polášek, who provided photographs with titles, sometimes ironic, sometimes descriptive.

The landscape of Ostrava as (re)presented by art monographs is not colourful but composed of shades of grey. When compared to the seemingly realist colourfulness of socialist Ostrava, the black-and-whiteness seems to renounce the urge of realism to capture the people, objects, factories, mines and the whole city in the way they look in reality. While the general themes and topics of socialist and alternative Ostrava are similar, the black and white photographs by Viktor Kolář or Květoslav Kubala are much more down-to-earth, ambiguous and open to multiple readings. In this respect, while seemingly less realist than socialist Ostrava in colour, Ostrava in black and white is paradoxically closer to the mundane reality and thus achieves more profound realism than is the typological and ideological realism of the official socialist landscape. The black-and-whiteness of the photographs makes alternative Ostrava more serious, even ontological. As if the photographs and the whole monographs focused more on capturing the inner workings of things than their (colourful) appearance. The absence of captions and explanations forces the photographs to speak for themselves and makes them open to multiple readings. The photographs cease to be treated as illustrations to a predefined reading and turn into the key medium for generating meaning.



Img. 14 Slag pouring by Viktor Kolář (2010, 45) from 1964.

The position and role of industry in the art view of Ostrava differs from the socialist publications. As the above photograph by Viktor Kolář exemplifies, industry abandons its prime position of the driving force in the landscape and becomes a background to everyday life. Here again, the slag is spilled onto a heap. In the official visuals, the same motive stands for the forces of industry lighting up the present with the glimpse of the bright future. In contrast, in the photograph here, the slag illuminates and provides contrast to the foreground, which is not about the industry, future, or a happy life in socialism. The industry engendered here by the act of spilling the slag onto a heap becomes the background for the mundane life consisting of doing the washing and in other photographs also of working, having a rest, commuting, having fun as well as being tired and worn out.

Realism, from which the black and white photographs of the alternative Ostrava resign, is an objective realism of colours meshed up with the ideologically charged (socialist) realism aspiring to give a coherent, positive meaning to the landscape it (re)produces. The realism of the socialist publications is in a sense ontological; it transcends the everyday portrayed by providing a definite framework of what the portrayed means and what its relation to larger issues is. The socialist publications produce a certain regime of truth underpinned by the realism of colour. Socialist landscape has a meaning and all that happens can be and by means of the photographs is related to that very meaning.

In contrast, the black and white photographs are much more subjective. This is because they communicate moods and experiences rather than the “truth”. In this way, they can become much more personal and can easily resonate with individual experiences and tap into one’s emotions. Because the photographs are very vaguely contextualized, only by the other photographs, they can easily transcend the particularity of what they actually portray – certain people, machinery, buildings, all forming part of bygone Ostrava. At the same time, due to the moods of the black and white photographs, the landscape portrayed becomes paradoxically much more real and nuanced than the socialist official one in colour.

While the general themes of the alternative representations of Ostrava are similar to the socialist official visuals and the individual elements such as buildings, factories, and mining towers are the same, the topics are presented in a much more civic, profane light. The commute ceases to signify the connection to the technological advancement of the transport system and becomes a mundane activity with its own emotionality – boring, tiresome. In their emphasis on the everyday, especially Viktor Kolář and Květoslav Kubala challenge the way of seeing Ostrava as a landscape formed by and attesting to (socialist, technological) progress. This is not only because in paging through the works of Kolář or Kubala,

one can come across photographs depicting the failures of technology in the form of a breakdown of the transport system due to a tramway collision (see e.g. Kolář 2010, 76) or the consequences of a gas leak. The photographs of overcrowded buses and technological failures do not challenge the existence of Ostrava as an industrial capital (img. 15). In them however, the emotionality grounded in the zeal for progress or seriousness of the work is replaced by more mundane emotionality related to the everyday life in and of the landscape of Ostrava.



Img. 15 Overcrowded transport by Viktor Kolář (2010, 101) from 1977.

This is why the industry represents more of a background than a primary focus of alternative Ostrava. In black and white Ostrava, industry also plays an important role. It structures time; it frames the landscape with plants, coal mines and waste ponds. But above all, it provides the setting for people to work and go along with their individual lives. The work of Jindřich Štreit is key for me in unravelling the mundane, (in)humane face of industry, which was buried under the positive, progressive emotionality in the socialist visual representations. In his set of photographs taken in 2008 in the old steelworks in Vítkovice, in the area where Ostrava's iron and steel industry sprouted 180 years earlier, Štreit challenges the socialist utopian view of industry as an inherently positive, liberating and

progressive activity. In his photographs from inside the active steel mill, the work is not only charged with positive emotions, but at the same time becomes also demanding, dull, repetitive, and tiresome (img. 16).



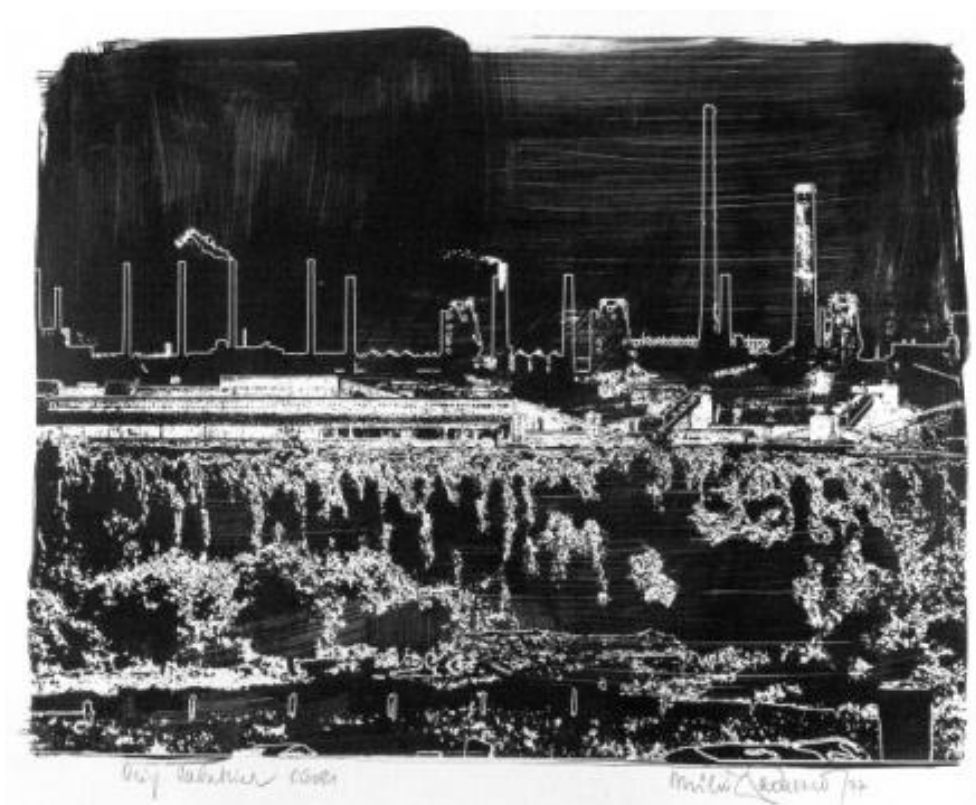
Img. 16 Portrait of a smelter from Vítkovice by Jindřich Štreit (2008, 7)

Official, colourful Ostrava is infused with the rendition of work as a joyful and fundamental activity that enables the city and society to march on the road to progress lit by the light pouring from furnaces and steel mills. Štreit's photographs return work amidst people, working, laughing, exhausted. Here, fatigue is not anything to be expelled or concealed from the industrial landscape, as is the case of colourful Ostrava. On the contrary, Štreit depicts fatigue and rest as an inherent part of human life and of work. In turn, the industrial settings, where the work and ensuing fatigue take place, become part of the everyday life as well. The photographs in his *Vítkovice* can be seen as a tacit challenge to the socialist monumentalization of industry. The halls, that are filled with transcendental light and in which Prometheus tames fire in colourful Ostrava, turn into places where people work, and more importantly, act and live. The inhabitants of these industrial spaces turned into places are not monumentalized; they are not exemplary types. What one sees in the photographs are individual people with

their worries but also pleasures. In one of the photographs, a man and a woman kiss passionately in front of the wall covered in steel cables. In another, a man feeds a cat living in the spaces of heavy industrial production.

In black and white Ostrava, industry figures in two distinct though intertwined ways. As the work of Jindřich Štreit shows, industry functions as an important background to individual lives. Often however, industry is portrayed as a topic in itself, devoid of humans and their work, yet in a very different way from socialist colourful Ostrava. For instance, in the works of Miloš Polášek, who heavily contributed to official publications on Ostrava during socialism, industry is aestheticized but not through monumentalization. Socialist colourful monumentalization of industry is clearly a means of aestheticization. Industrial spaces, shafts deep down or factory halls were rendered monumental and even sublime especially by a specific usage of light and by emphasising their connection to the progress facilitated by industrial production, hard work of men (and to a degree also women) and its outcome in the transformation of the landscape on both material as well as symbolic levels.

The aestheticization of industry engendered in the monograph by Miloš Polášek and echoed in the works of other photographers discussed here takes a different approach. The industry, especially in the figure of a factory comprising halls, furnaces and mining towers, becomes an object aesthetically valuable in itself. This means that it is stripped of its actual context, its connections to the spheres of economy, social and individual life or ideology – and thus also its meanings related to economy and society. There is a number of photographs in Polášek's monograph in which this decontextualization is not generated only by careful framing of the object and composition of the photograph, but also by acknowledging the photographic process as such. Polášek does this by using old photographic processes which can make the photographic emulsion (applied by brush) stand out and thus become a fundamental part of the image. The portrayed – the particular industrial site – and the way of portrayal both become a vehicle for aesthetic expression. The content no longer plays a pivotal role. Industry becomes an object which can be manipulated in order to achieve the desired aesthetic results. Decontextualization as a means of aestheticization of industry is most strongly evidenced when Polášek employed the Sabatier effect, such in his *Verticals* from 1977 reproduced below (img. 17). Here, the panorama of the Vítkovice industrial area is transformed by photographic means into an abstract composition only vaguely related to the real plant and its production.



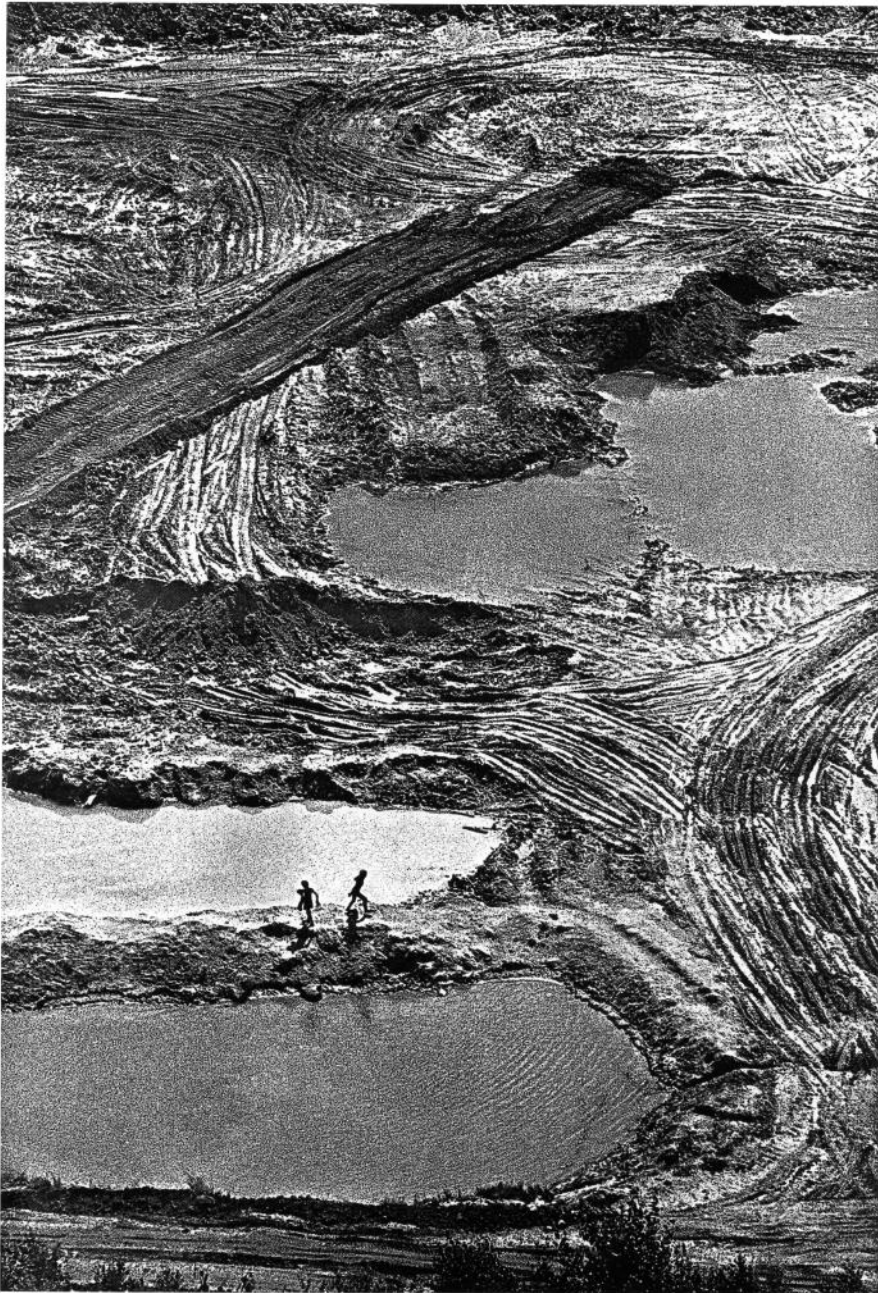
Img. 17 Verticals by Miloš Polášek (2010, 124)

Another way, in which industry figures across the books about black and white Ostrava, is through the physical transformations of landscape brought about by industry and industrialization. The consequences of mining and industrial production are explored. Again, while they might be thematically and even compositionally similar to the photographs of official colourful Ostrava, the effects of such photographs are different. While the official socialist way of seeing Ostrava contextualized the depictions of Ostrava and its physical impact on landscape as part of progress towards a better future, pictorialist rendering of industry harmoniously merging with surroundings effectively masked the potential of negative associations with industry and its impacts on the environment. The structure of how the landscape of Ostrava is produced within the individual books provides such a pictorialist view of waste ponds, heaps, and natural sceneries framed by silhouettes of mines and factories with an explanatory context. Thus, in the book *Ostrava* from 1985 with photographs by Petr Sikula and Miloš Polášek, one section is composed as follows: the double page night view of a brightly lit coal mine and its shaft is followed by two winter photographs of industrial plants taken from afar across the waste ponds and

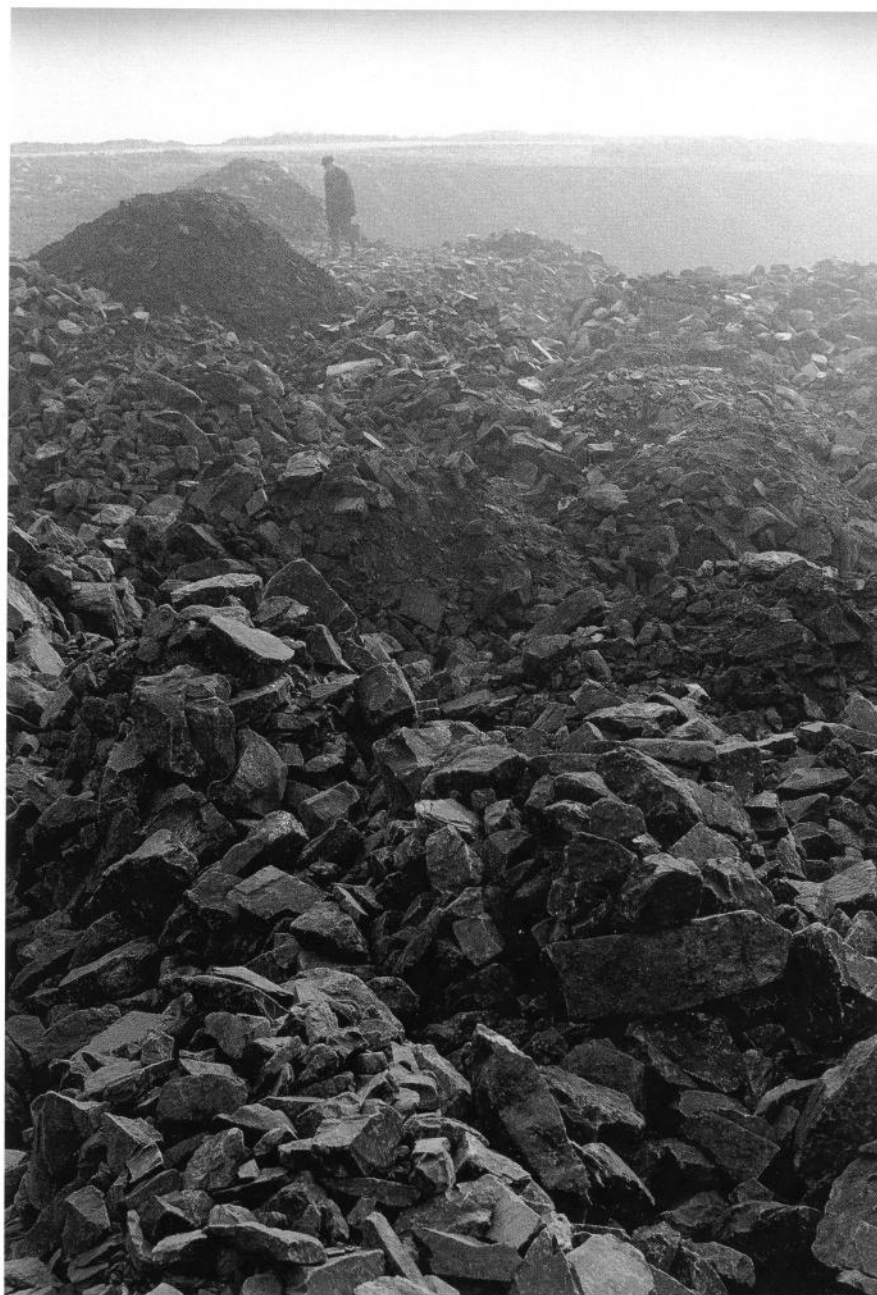
snowy landscape, four close shots of slag heaps²³, four compositions of industrial pipes and catwalks, a double page from the Ostrava Zoo with four large and four smaller photographs in which children admire well-kept and cared for wild animals, such as a polar bear and flamingos. The whole section is closed with a view of the mine shaft towering from trees and viewed across sky-blue water. In sum, again, the undesired connotations were blocked by both pictorialist rendering of the potentially ambiguous elements and by contextualizing the photographs with other photographs of different subjects, in this case a Zoo, where wild nature is exhibited and which attests to the interest of socialism in nature conservation as well as education and entertainment. The aestheticization of industry and its impacts served ideological purposes and functioned as one of the building blocks of the socialist landscape of Ostrava.

In the above mentioned examples, all the photographs are in colour. Those from the Zoo together with the close shots of the heaps and the closing image are by Miloš Polášek, the others are by Petr Sikula, to whom I will get later, in the subchapter on post-socialist Ostrava. In his own monograph, Miloš Polášek also included a number of similar images dealing with traces of industrial production. All black and white, they also include close shots of heaps as well as waste ponds and other material remains of industrial activity. They lack the descriptive feel of the colour ones; they emphasise the structure and texture of the surface by increasing contrasts (img. 18)) or underscoring grey tones (img. 19). The photographs present the remains of industrial production as more than a background to everyday life, although it is present there in the figure of a man scavenging the heap for coal or children playing in the wasteland. What is important, however, is not the role of industry as social or material settings, but the aesthetic qualities of the surfaces and textures highlighted by the photographs as an intrinsic value of the portrayed spaces.

²³ titled "Heaps - Ostrava's mountains, mounds grown thanks to the work of coalminers hands"



Img. 18 Symbiosis by Miloš Poláček (2010, 89)



Img. 19 Symbiosis by Miloš Poláček (Poláček 2010, 69)

The photographs do not aim at attesting to the harmony between industry and environment or the unity of industry (steel, coal) and people. They render the remains self-contained, valuable – aesthetically – in themselves. Two separate entities figure here: industrial landscape composed of decontextualized and thus aestheticized factories and remains of industrial production on one side and people on the other. Polášek named both the photographs *Symbiosis*, which is after all not about harmony, but about living together of different organisms. Industry ceases to express predefined meanings related to history, society and the future, and is turned into an entity in itself, an aesthetical subject, not dissimilar from people portrayed by Polášek as well as other photographers.

In black and white Ostrava, the joyful emotionality of progress is replaced by a more mundane, down-to-earth emotionality of the everyday and moods and feelings related to the medium of black and white photography and the ways in which it can aestheticize objects and turn them into subjects. In this way, the monumentalized, idealized landscape of colourful Ostrava is replaced by a black and white landscape which is on one hand less realist because of the nature of black and white photography and the aestheticization and moods that such photography enables. On the other hand, the alternative, black and white landscape of Ostrava is filled with more details, more contrasts, and more openings because it is much more focused on the everyday life of the city and the elements that compose the very mundane industrial urban spaces and their surroundings. In this respect, it can be seen as more realist than the idealized colourful Ostrava; by offering a nuanced view of Ostrava, it allows for deeper connections to the portrayed spaces, places, people, and the situations in which they (are captured to) find themselves.

Kolář, Kubala and Polášek all capture everyday moments, smiles, boredom, time spent in a pub. Black and white Ostrava is filled with people shown in concrete moments in their lives. The time in which the photographs place them is not ahistorical time spanning from past struggles to present work and future better lives. It is neither a repetitive, timeless rhythm from spring to winter repeated over and over again as the socialist official books suggest. Rather than time filled with a definitive meaning and goal, the time of black and white Ostrava is uneven similarly to how time is experienced in everyday life. It sometimes goes by hastily and sometimes nearly stops its motion – in the moments of waiting, anticipation, or simply boredom. Such moments were suppressed in the representations of colourful Ostrava and they do not belong to the official socialist landscape. But in black and white Ostrava, before the cheering crowds gather, before it is time to join the May Day parade, there are moments of waiting, boredom and even displeasure, as the photograph below by Viktor Kolář shows (img. 20).



Img. 20 Snapshot from May Day (?) in 1977 by Viktor Kolář (2010, 51)

Although it contains photographs of industrial settings, either aestheticizing or in the reportage style, Ostrava by Viktor Kolář is mainly about people. The monograph by Květoslav Kubala is thematically more diverse and structurally most resembles the official production from the times of socialism. It is divided into thematic sections, such as City and People, People and Coal, People and Steel, Industrial Ostrava, Children, etc. It is also the most nostalgic of the four books of black and white Ostrava because of the captions under the individual photographs – dating the events or view and providing topographical information leaving the impression of explaining what and how the bygone Ostrava was. However, both Kolář and Kubala concentrate on providing snapshots of the everyday life in the city. The time, they concentrate on is the time of the moment, individual, private time of when the intimate shows in public.

This is one of the main differences between black and white and official colourful Ostrava. Even when portraying work in the steelworks, the snapshots show the smelters not only concentrating or smiling, not only engulfed in smoke and flames, but also having a rest, watching somebody else doing his or her job. While the black and white photographs – as any photograph – freeze time, it is the fleeting moment unfettered by the predefined idea of the flow from the great unambiguous past to the great unambiguous future. The future of black and white Ostrava is open in the same way everyday life is open to the unexpected and

unforeseen. Especially Kubala has a number of photographs documenting the fleeting and unexpected incidents such as the fall from bicycle in a race, car accidents or the destruction after the gas leak explosion.

Socialist colourful Ostrava was infused with the notion of joyous work that enabled the progress embedded in and facilitated by the industry. Fatigue was side-lined in favour of the zeal for, devotion to and the concentration on the working tasks. Similarly, the void moments of personal life and intimacy were neglected together with the spaces where these occur. The landscape composed of the city, industry and people was devoid of privacy and intimacy unless these were related to the working collective (of miners and smelters). By contrast, black and white Ostrava emphasises the intimacy of time and spaces and thus composes the landscape of these spaces and moments rather than of monumental, timeless and teleological settings. Black and white Ostrava is a city of individual people, a composition of spaces of private relationships and personal emotions. It is a landscape where people can have a rest with a cigarette where they please to without being connected to the order and harmony of the exemplary industrial city (img. 21).



Img. 21 Three photographs from an intimate, personal city of Ostrava by (from left to right) Kolář (2010, 96) from 1983, Kubala (2012, 101) titled "Siesta", and Polášek (2010, 19) titled "Siesta at Šalamoun mine".

The photographs of overcrowded buses, exhausted miners, bored citizens, gas leak explosions, transport collapses, private spaces and moments do not only expand and enrich the imaginary landscape of Ostrava in directions unseen in the official production; they also challenge the officially produced way of seeing Ostrava by showing another landscape and thus subvert the official image by showing it to be artificial and inadequate. Black and white Ostrava is, paradoxically, much livelier than the official colourful one. While rendered in shades of grey, it is much more colourful and due to its reportage style aspects

also more realist, in the common sense of the word. At the same time, black and white Ostrava questions the harmony between people, coal, steel and the city. Instead, it lays out a representation of landscape in which it is composed of elements with much more complex, ambivalent and often unclear relationships. The way of seeing Ostrava in black and white (re)produces a different landscape than the one (re)presented in colour.

Ostrava in question

With the fall of socialism, the way of seeing Ostrava changed. Gradually, the industrial landscape of the city and its surroundings was remodelled alongside the actual socio-economic changes of the post-socialist period. Ostrava as well as the whole country deindustrialized economically (see e.g. Kopačka 1994), but it was also reimagined and represented anew. Since then, the landscape has been filled with new elements bringing about new meanings, statements and emotions. On one hand, the post-socialist rendering of the landscape of Ostrava moved away from the socialist style, and visual representations shifted in terms of themes, scope and content. On the other, however, there is a certain continuity in representing Ostrava and the way it is (to be) seen.

The photographic and visual production on Ostrava became varied with the fall of socialism. Due to the number of publishing houses and even self-publishing, the number of books dealing with Ostrava, its visual aspects and the change it has been undergoing is enormous. However, publications which would be readily comparable to the socialist production as for their origin and intended effects – publications with official, institutional producers, who strived to brand the city and present its character – are relatively scarce. They are supplemented by books, appearing since around 2007, mapping and presenting Ostrava's industrial heritage as well as other books dealing with the past of Ostrava and its image, especially with Ostrava running for the title of the European Capital of Culture of 2015. The image of Ostrava and what it entails is thus diverse, often contradictory. This variety points to the fact that unlike during socialism, the landscape of Ostrava has been put to question as a result of political, economic and societal changes after the fall of state socialism with its relatively coherent canon of picturing Ostrava.

The new landscape as it is (re)produced in photographic books on Ostrava, published by various publishing houses but supported financially as well as symbolically by the City Hall and city representatives, embodies a break-up with the past, socialist way of seeing while exhibiting features of continuation with it. The developments are easily recognizable throughout much of the official and officially sanctioned visual production on Ostrava after the fall of socialism. One of the key changes is the role of industry and the ways industry is portrayed, imagined and incorporated into the newly created landscape.



Atmosfera dávných věků dýchá z kostela sv. Václava ze 13. století i obnoveného původního dřevěného kostelka sv. Kateřiny.
The atmosphere of the ages is alive in St. Wenceslas' Church (13th century), and the rebuilt wooden Church of St. Catherine.



Img. 22 A double page reproduced from Ostrava (Řezníček and Noga 2007, n.p.)

The caption reads: “[City] centre: with the Beskyds in the background, the city is surrounded by steel and engineering works”.

Img. 23 A double page reproduced from (Ostrava 2005, n.p.)

The caption reads: “The atmosphere of old times can be felt in the churches”.

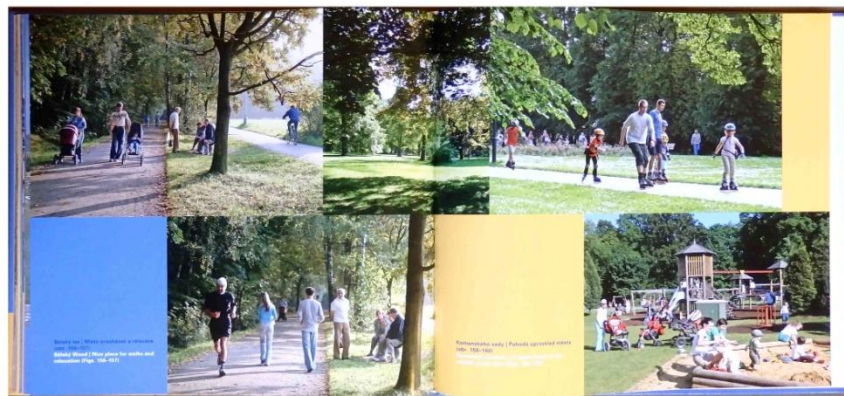
Post-socialist visual representations of the city moved away from emphasising the crucial role of industry in and for the city, a move closely linked to the desires to get rid of the labels, images and whole sets of ideas about what Ostrava is and what it is composed of. The paradoxical mixture of continuity and change of the post-socialist re-composition of landscape is evidenced by photographic book such as *Ostrava* published in 2005 or *Ostrava Non-Stop* published in 2010.

In both, industry and industrial spaces are side-lined and recede into the hardly discernible background (img. 22). This re-assessment of the role and place of industry in the newly born landscape of post-socialism is indeed related to the general downturn of the industry and continuous deindustrialization. However, the radical change cannot be simply attributed to economic developments. Rather, I suggest it is an outcome of the general re-composition of the landscape grounded in the post-socialist reaction to the socialist imaginary of Ostrava, which heavily relied on the visual underscoring of heavy industry. The two photographic books show the same city but present it in a different way, approach it from a different direction and thus re-imagine its shape and content. The books are no longer framed with images of industrial themes, but rather emphasise more neutral historical tones of architectural heritage and attempt to replace the socialist sublimity of industry with a newly established genius loci of the city.

Both the books have historical buildings on their cover and both frame the city with church spires and old red roofs, as evidenced by the opening image of the book on Ostrava from 2005. Here, the historical centre seen from above and the landscape of roofs and spires become the core of the newly emerging post-socialist Ostrava. This re-imagined city is a historical city with deep connections to the past. However, it is not industry, monuments to industrial developments and progress, or the remains of industrial production which connect the city to its past and give it meaning. Other materializations of the past, such as old facades, historical buildings and monuments and more importantly sacral monuments came to the fore as representatives of the historical nature of the city. The atmosphere of old times, as one caption reads, can be from now on felt in churches, the material elements of landscape totally overlooked in the socialist rendering of the landscape of Ostrava (img. 23).



Pohyb v různých podobách nabízí parky a mnohá vodní plochy...
 The parks and open spaces of the City are great place to relax, play and unwind ...



Img. 24 A double page reproduced from (Ostrava 2005, n.p.)

The caption reads: “The parks and open spaces of the City are a great place to relax, play and unwind ...”

Img. 25 A double page reproduced from a book called Ostrava (Řezníček and Noga 2007, n.p.)

The captions read: “Bělský wood, a nice place for a walk and relaxation” (left page); “Komenský gardens, relax in the middle of the city” (right page).

Despite the efforts to reimagine the city and to construct the landscape of Ostrava anew, there is continuity in how the landscape is composed and what elements it contains. Ostrava from 2005, for example, proceeds from spring shots of nature through the whole year into winter and closes with the shot of midnight fireworks supposedly on New Year's Eve. In this year-round exploration of Ostrava, the book covers themes well known from the socialist publications and the photographs focus on similar topics and figures – sportsmen, cheering crowds at the stadium, children playing in a park (img. 24). The photographs are also accompanied by explanatory captions, the tone of which is strikingly similar to the language of the socialist photographic publications. The whole page photograph detailing the curve of an escalator would not make much sense without the caption reading: "Well functioning intra- and inter-city transport benefits the inhabitants of the city and will not let any visitor down". Rather than the photograph – of poor quality – it is the caption that delivers the message and explains the role of the photograph.

The structural similarity of the post-socialist representations as evidenced in the books of *Ostrava* from 2005 and *Ostrava Non-Stop* from 2010 goes hand in hand with thematic continuity. While industry receded into the background, Ostrava remained imagined as a city in which locals have everything they need. Against the backdrop of housing estates built during socialism and refurbished afterwards, children continue to play their games in the park and people engage in sports (img. 24, 25). Nature is also still part of the canon and continues to be aesthetically treated in a similar vein. However, it ceased to function as a background against which the success of industrialization and modernization could be measured. It is rendered in a pictorialist manner emphasising compositions of trees and reflections on bodies of water. No longer is nature the background for industry and developments; it has become the background for recreational activities such as skating and fishing. In this way, Ostrava ceased to be a black city and on a visual level became pictured through the greenery of parks and natural surroundings.

These thematic and structural continuities of the newly emerging landscape have however been represented as a sign of a break-up with the uncomfortable, socialist past. By means of visual representations not dissimilar to the socialist ones, Ostrava has been reimaged as an enjoyable city. Photographs of sports and active lifestyle, children playing in the park and around statues, snapshots from visits to the Zoo and festivities together with photographs detailing the historical wealth of the city evidenced by old facades, churches and statues of saints present the city as peaceful, attractive, and above all unrestrained by its industrial and socialist pasts – now largely forced out of the landscape (img. 26).

The newly emerging Ostrava, the landscape of which is composed of elements detailed above, seems to be green and full of activity. “Marketing activities” as vice-mayor of the city wrote in 2007, “have recently tried to attract the attention of future visitors of Ostrava by means of the slogans: ‘the city in green’ and ‘the city in motion’”. They have been targeting particular groups of potential visitors” (Matěj 2007, 5). The driving force here is to remould Ostrava from a city of work to a city of leisure and pleasure. In this way, Ostrava has become devoid not only of any work but also of nearly any remainders of it. It has miraculously become an enjoyable and peaceful city of recreation and consumption (img. 27).



Img. 26 Page reproduced from (Ostrava 2005, n.p.)

Cropped. The caption beneath the images reads “... the newly reconstructed Ostrava castle takes visitors back in time. The Ostrava Zoo is one of the largest in the Czech Republic.”



Img. 27 A double page reproduced from a book called Ostrava (Řezníček and Noga 2007, n.p.)

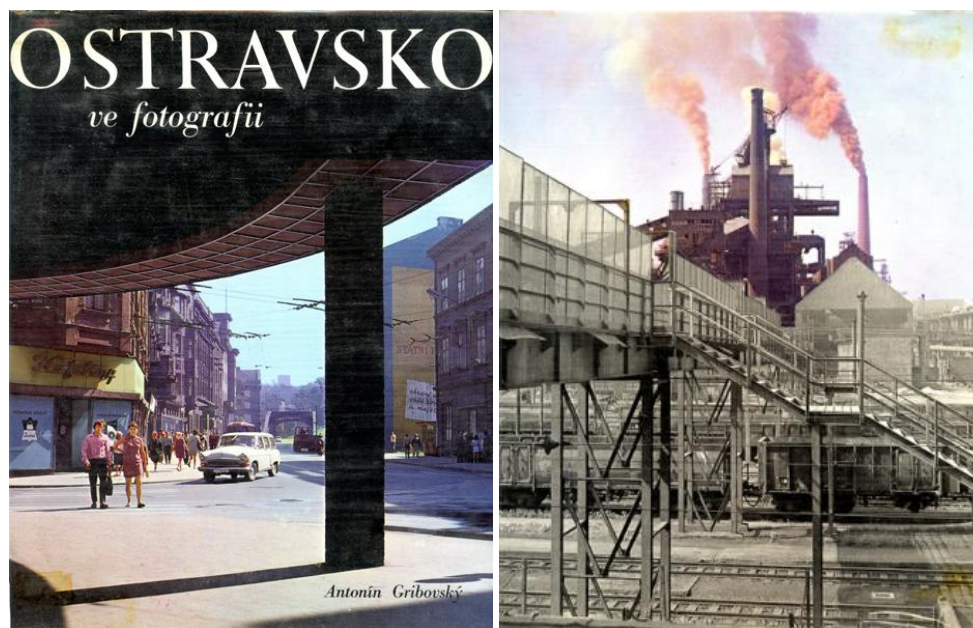
The captions read: “Moravská Ostrava, fountain in Smetana square” (left); “Moravská Ostrava, daily life in the pedestrian zone” (right)

This means that certain elements that used to be an inherent part of the landscape of Ostrava were made invisible during post-socialist times. These include industrial settings, especially those where industry still pulses, where the

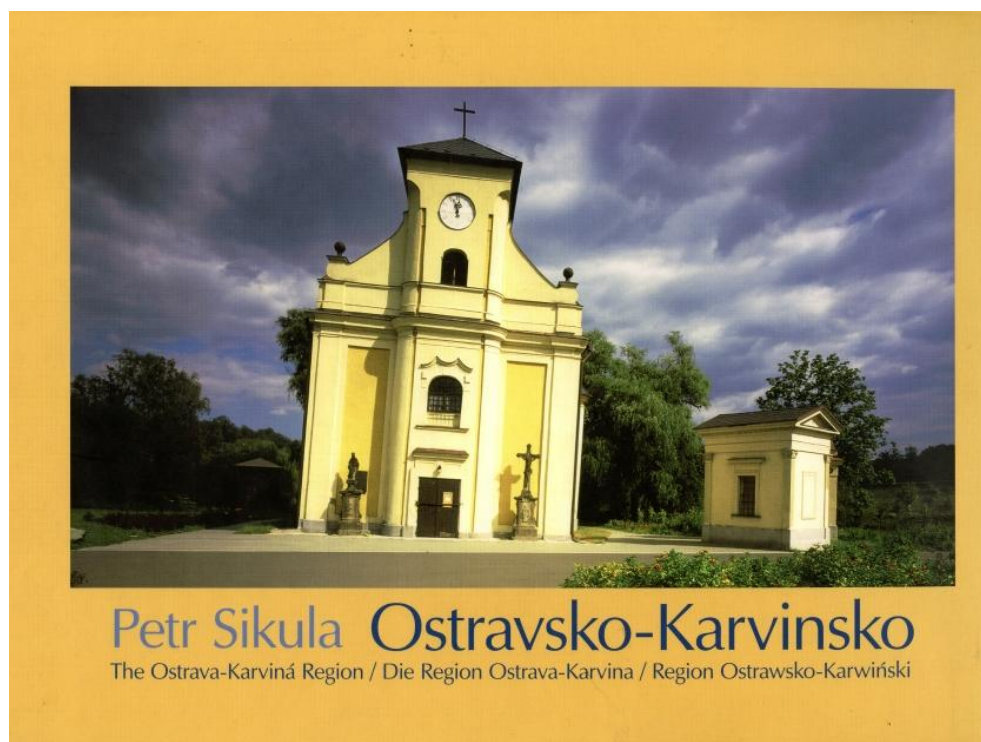
coal is mined and liquid metal illuminates the workers. Industry ceased to be the driving force shaping the landscape while being its inherent and most important part and was turned into either a tacitly present activity in the background – visually represented as the fuming smokestacks on the horizon – or as an inert historical space, as a more or less tacit witness of the past. With respect to older post-socialist books such as the two I have discussed so far, industry and the remains of it were incorporated into the landscape as one of many repositories of the past. The panorama of the Vítkovice area, which at the time mostly abandoned industrial production, or the view of a mining shaft turned into a museum, are put side by side with views of art nouveau decorations on the facades of houses in the centre of Ostrava, a wooden church or a baroque convent. People no longer work in these spaces – although they work in other industrial areas – and by means of the lens of the camera (together with the politics of heritage) these formerly industrial spaces have been both commodified and aestheticized and thus incorporated into the landscape of recreation, entertainment and in the end consumption.

The commodification of industrial buildings and spaces usually goes hand in hand with aestheticization. The three photographs focusing on industry in *Ostrava* from 2005 are all accompanied by captions opening up the aesthetics of industrial architecture and spaces for enjoyment of disinterested observers. In a landscape composed in this way, tacit furnaces bathe in artificial light emphasising the organic structures of pipes and catwalks and making “the unusually lit industrial architecture belong to summer evenings and a pleasant atmosphere of repose,” as one of the captions explains. In the post-socialist landscape of Ostrava, industry either receded into the background so as not to be seen, or was turned into industrial heritage which is beautiful on one hand and unobtrusive on the other.

The continuity and change of the landscape of Ostrava can be traced in the book of *Ostrava-Karviná Region* from 2006. Composed of photographs by Petr Sikula, a photographer who contributed to the official socialist visual production about Ostrava, the book travels through the whole region around Ostrava and represents the features forming the landscape. The photographs are in colour and accompanied by explanatory, topographical captions. Three photographs portray the actual industrial production and all the three conform to the canon established during socialism – in one, the silhouette of a fuming plant is outlined against the bright sky at sunset, in another, a river of melted metal shines inside a factory hall, and in the third, a smelter is engulfed by light and smoke.



Img. 28 Front and cover page of Antonín Gribovský's Ostrava region in photography (Gribovský 1972)



Img. 29 Front page of Petr Sikula's The Ostrava-Karviná region (Sikula 2006)

But the general focus of the book is rather on historical monuments of the region and natural wilderness and picturesque views of nature. The book also contains photographs from the Zoo, views from inside the swimming pools, but the majority of photographs focus on nature and history especially in the figure of churches of various age and style from wooden ones to historicizing ones. Symbolically, there is no industrial object on the book cover – which is the case of *Ostrava region* (1975), or a busy street of a modern city – which is the case of socialist *Ostrava region in photography* (1972). A baroque church of Saint Peter of Alcantara, which stands in the Karviná region, is on the cover, leaning to one side due to the landslide caused by mining in the area (cf. img. 28 and 29).

Industry is portrayed, but only as heritage: old brick factory buildings, the mine shaft of the National Heritage monument of the Mine Michael, and – again – the furnaces in Vítkovice turned by lighting into night scenery of colourful lights. Sikula's photographs, especially those of industrial heritage, emphasise the aesthetic qualities of the objects photographed by means of accentuating dark hues and emphasising saturation and thus producing photographs rich in colour and contrast. Such a way of turning industrial settings into aesthetic objects or compositions is similar to how – on a much deeper level – Boris Renner, another Ostrava photographer, works with industrial settings.

In his *Ostrava Guys to Everyone*, published in 2006, Renner provides a view of Ostrava and its features in which the aestheticization by means of tweaking the colour properties of the photographs is taken to the extreme. In contrast to Sikula and the official photographic books of the period, Renner repopulates the Ostrava with industry in the form of either abandoned industrial structures or functioning sites of industrial production. Post-processing consisting in tweaking the colours and playing around with hues and saturation allows for levelling differences across the themes – elements of which the landscape consists. Renner's Ostrava is a post-industrial landscape where living industry can be found scattered across the dilapidating industrial sites. The post-processing turns the landscape into a specifically coloured space where the beauty lies in the form rather than in the contents – because by means of the post-processing and colour adjustments, everything from a one-hundred-years-old brick factory hall to a pile of rubble can be made beautiful, turned into an aesthetically driven representation fitting into a unified aesthetics (img. 30).



Img. 30 A page reproduced from Boris Renner's Ostrava guys to everyone (Renner and Sklář 2007, 127)

The photograph is called Bastilla and the caption reads "Something ends so that something new could start (Chemical plant Dukla, Ostrava-Hrusov)"

Renner's way of aestheticizing the features of post-industrial landscape of Ostrava is extreme. Aestheticization arouses emotions. When combined with quasi poetic captions, the photographs focusing predominantly on the aesthetics of decay and survival of industry and urban structures in general become melancholic and nostalgic. Renner's landscape is thus artificial on the level of form but also on the level of emotionality. Aestheticization turns the observer into a distanced viewer and thus makes the landscape stiff and unnatural. However, by his focus on industrial themes, Renner returns industry to the landscape of Ostrava – industry in its immediate form, varied and stretching from the sites of continuing production to the sites of disappearance.

After the time of disappearance of industry from the core of the landscape of Ostrava, commodification of (post)industrial spaces, i.e. turning them into commodities that can be enjoyed, and their aestheticization recreated a place for industry and what has been left of it in the landscape of Ostrava. This however mainly applies to the sites of former industrial production that have been left behind due to deindustrialization. As the case of Petr Sikula shows, in case of

living industry, the ways of aestheticization remained coherent with the older, pictorial tradition of socialist visual culture. At the same time, such images became scarce with the shift from representation of the landscape of Ostrava as the one of work to the one of recreation and consumption.



Img. 31 A poster for an exhibition Ostrava in Prague

The inscription says "Ostrava in Prague, an exhibition of Ostrava's culture in Prague"; from the author's collection

Aestheticization of industry is a way of recreating a place for industrial remains – if not for industry as such – in the landscape of Ostrava. At around 2007, a shift in the interest in industrial sites can be detected due to the rising number of visual publications dealing with industrial heritage of Ostrava (Matěj 2007; Polášek et al.

2007). The rising interest goes in parallel with changes to the Vítkovice industrial area, where industrial remains of large steelworks were proclaimed cultural heritage and subsequently were redeveloped into a cultural and educational area (Pavliňák 2012; Volf, Švácha, and Souček 2013). But the interest in industrial heritage has also been sparked by the candidacy of Ostrava for the European Capital of Culture when the repressed imaginaries of Ostrava as a black city, city of coal, steel and people were brought back from the subconscious (img. 31). Images of brightly lit industrial sites, especially of the Vítkovice area, together with the image of good old black Ostrava were summoned to help. Despite losing the competition, Ostrava seems to have started officially reclaiming its industrial past and positing it as an inherent part of the landscape which encompasses the city, its surroundings and its imaginaries, and meanings.

For a long time, industry was a determinant of what Ostrava is, what it looks like, where it is heading, and it was represented accordingly. This changed after the fall of socialism and with respect to the partial deindustrialization of the city. Industry and its position in the landscape were played down and other elements were emphasised. Industry gradually returned back but as a different figure and in another role. Attempts to free Ostrava from the old industrial imaginary and liberate it from the labels of black city, the city of coal, steel and people perceived as direct heritage of socialism can be seen in the reimagining Ostrava as a city of recreation, sport, a “city in green” and “in motion”.

The return of industry in the figure of industrial heritage, aestheticized and commodified industrial objects and sites repurposed for education, entertainment, and enabling to reconnect with the industrial past challenge the industry-free image of Ostrava and landscape composed without industrial elements. However, both the moves within the visual (re)production of landscape share a common ground. The landscape of Ostrava as represented by visual production consists of elements such as old buildings, natural features, industrial heritage, and accommodates people who can enjoy the rich heritage as well as contemporary life. As such, Ostrava is devoid of spaces as well as of acts of actual work. From the landscape of production, it has been remodelled into a landscape of consumption; the industrial heritage then plays an important role because it distinguishes it from other consumption based landscapes of post-industrial times as one distinct and worth visiting. There have been deep changes in the way of seeing Ostrava, but there is also continuity – in themes, topics, forms and structures, as well as in the underlying principles of how the landscape is composed, of what and for what purposes.

Conclusion: Landscape between production, consumption and everyday life

For the books that visually depict Ostrava, photographs were carefully selected according to the purpose they should serve and the general aim of the publications. This holds true not only for socialist production connected to the official bodies – municipal or regional – or state controlled companies of the region. It also applies to post-socialist production supported by the city hall. But it is also relevant in the case of other visual production, such as alternative artistic takes on Ostrava or post-socialist explorations of the aesthetical qualities of industrial decay. The photographs in particular books can each stand on its own, especially in the case of photographs of artistic quality and value; but they also always function as a set, as a whole that presents individual features of Ostrava and its surroundings, put them into relationships and provide them with a shared context. In this way, each book produces an individual vision of Ostrava and represents a result of the encounter of material environment and social reality, which inhabits it on one hand, and the particular way of seeing them on the other.

In the theoretical chapter, I argued that one of the theoretical approaches to landscape is that of landscape as representation. Such a concept is grounded in the fact that landscape is historically linked to visual experience – to a way of seeing, “an historically specific way of experiencing the world developed by, and meaningful to, certain social groups” (Cosgrove 1998, 15). As such, landscape has a socio-political dimension, which is reflected in the way how the landscape is structured, how it is presented, represented and produced. What is made visible and what is obscured is both an aesthetical and ideological move. In behind landscape as representation, which is rooted in the way of seeing and in turn representing the world, lies power to structure the visual experience and link it to particular meanings, emotions and their interconnections. This however means, that to analyse landscape with respect to its presentation and representation allows for developing an understanding of a given spatial and social order which the landscape reflects.

In this chapter, I explored the landscape of Ostrava as it appears in photographic representations in order to explore the constitutive elements it is composed of and the emotions and meanings it harbours. In a sense, each photographic book represents a text about the actual landscape of Ostrava, a text written mainly by means of photographs and their combination. I have thus offered an interpretative reading of the photographs and their sets in order to understand how the landscape was composed. However, the individual photographic books can be seen as individual instances in the process of the production of the

landscape of Ostrava. The individual books I have discussed in this chapter provide explorations of the landscape of Ostrava. At the same time, they represent instances of particular ways of seeing Ostrava. When taken and analysed as a set, they also provide an opportunity to understand the shifts and changes of the landscape and by means of that also of the given spatial and social order in behind the landscape, its shape and its developments.

I have used the representations of the landscape in the sets of photographic books as a case to explore the continuities and discontinuities in the landscape of Ostrava as a representation of the social and spatial order at the turn of socialism to post-socialism. While official socialist production produces a coherent and relatively stable framework for seeing Ostrava, artistic renderings of Ostrava are much more ambivalent. I explored them both in order to understand the socialist landscape of Ostrava before turning to its post-socialist reimagining.

Due to its general connection to progress, socialist Ostrava is predominantly in colour. The emphasis on colourful photography not only underscores the advancement of socialism, but it also masquerades the ideological nature of socialist landscape by pretending to be objective and neutral, to depict the world as it is. When compared to the alternative takes on Ostrava by art photographers, the monumentalization and aestheticization of socialist Ostrava stands out. While the photographic monographs by Kolář, Kubala, Polášek and Štreit are all in black and white, they portray Ostrava in a much livelier way. The photographs of this black and white Ostrava are left without explanatory captions, as if left to speak for themselves. At the same time, the black and whiteness of the photographs, which impacts on their general mood, seems to help the photographic explorations of Ostrava to get beyond mere depiction. The lack of context as well as the thematic and formal focus of the photographs makes the landscape of Ostrava much more revealing not only about the city but also about the everyday life and conditions of socialism in general. In contrast, the socialist official production always contextualizes the photographs with explanations in order to guarantee the intended reading. Through the monumentalization of Ostrava represented as an exemplary socialist city, the official production also attempts at achieving a sort of generalization. However, this is not related to the actual life of and in the landscape, but rather to the role of socialism and its justification.

The attempt of the socialist official production to provide a generalized framework impacts the portrayal of people inhabiting the landscape as well as the spaces and objects which compose it on a material level. In socialist Ostrava, people are pictured as living purposeful lives focused on what is most important – the work. Socialist Ostrava is full of activity, at the workplaces, but also in free

time – be it participation in ideological parades or sports events. There are no empty moments, no occasion to linger and thus also no boredom, weariness or fatigue. Ostrava is inhabited by exemplary workers – often portrayed at work – or by crowds. Such an artificial rendering of Ostrava driven by ideological purposes stands out when compared to alternative black and white Ostrava with its snapshots of everyday intimate moments taking place in both public and private spaces. There is not only place for intimacy and everyday life in black and white Ostrava; there are also places of and for it. While socialist Ostrava is public, black and white Ostrava is more.

The socialist way of seeing Ostrava focuses on features that acknowledge its progressiveness and by means of that help to justify the socialist system which moulded a real existing city and produced a set of statements about its nature. The themes thus cover the monumental features of the city, be it large housing estates, newly built factories, fuming smokestacks, blinding interiors of steel mills; but it also gives testimony to the development of the city embodied in the figures of technical amenities and services from transport to health care and education facilities. The landscape of Ostrava conditioned by the very specific socialist way of seeing the city is a landscape heading towards the future. It acknowledges its past, but only in figures – monuments, statues – related to the fights and victories that enabled the socialist present. Both the past and the future serve the purpose of justifying the socialist present.

Industry is the most important constitutive element of socialist Ostrava. Depicted predominantly in a pictorial manner, it shows the industry, in the form of mining and especially steel production, as a fundamental feature of Ostrava. Industry is represented as a key condition for development and thus for the progress towards the desired future. It is a constitutive element of the whole landscape on material as well as symbolic levels. And it infuses the landscape with activity – with work, which helps the people, city and the whole system to proceed further. For this reason, albeit hard, work is always joyful, performed with enthusiasm and concentration. In the alternative black and white Ostrava, industry has a different role; it functions as a background for people's lives. Work in industry is rendered as important but also tiresome and hard; because of being more about the actual everyday, the alternative Ostrava lacks the zeal of socialist activity.

Post-socialist reimagining of Ostrava changed the landscape as for the elements of which it is composed, their relationship and the overall meaning the landscape embodies. But at the same time, post-socialist Ostrava and the way it has been (re)produced is in certain respects continuous with its socialist ancestor. Some of the themes and elements have been kept – such as those related to free time of

the inhabitants and the services the city provides including transportation, education etc. In some instances, especially in the official photographic publications supported by the City Hall, landscape has been represented by similar means including the structures of such presentation, selection of themes and also rendering of particular topics. What has changed profoundly however, is the position and role of industry and industrial production. After the fall of socialism, industry receded from the central position in the landscape to the very horizon. Apart from the outlines of the factories in the far background, industrial spaces disappeared from the landscape with one exception – (post)industrial spaces of discontinued production.

Industrial facilities and themes are side-lined in the post-socialist way of seeing Ostrava, except for those that can serve as a testimony to the past. Industry thus shifted from the key element actively shaping the landscape to one of many repositories of the past. Since this shift, history, the time passed, is to be encountered in dilapidating as well as renovated industrial buildings in a similar way it is in old facades, baroque statues and protected village architecture. In this way, industry has been turned into industrial heritage which has been commodified, aestheticized and represented as such. Aestheticization of industrial remains, achieved by compositional means and post-processing, tweaking the colours, emphasising certain hues (of light), makes the portrayed objects aesthetical and at the same time distant – aestheticization helps to distantiate the representation from the objects represented by widening the gap between them. In this respect, aestheticization serves the purpose of commodification because it turns the (industrial) themes and objects into something beautiful and desirable.

The change in the role of industry is indicative of more profound transformations of the landscape, its temporality and its connection to activity and work. Alternative black and white Ostrava is a landscape of the everyday life. With respect to time, the landscape is structured along the mundane and formed with respect to the temporality of everyday life. In contrast, socialist colourful Ostrava is a landscape of cyclical timelessness. In it, the time passes by in yearly cycles filled in with productive activity. Socialist industrial landscape is landscape bound up with a paradoxical tension of stability and change. It is a landscape of work, of continuous production which brings about development and change. But the progress engendered in the development and change is an inherent feature of the landscape, its key building block. The past and the future are both mythologized and distanced and the landscape is thus a landscape of the socialist present, which enfolds in cyclical time but which is in a sense ahistorical and everlasting.

Post-socialist Ostrava is also cyclical, due to the employment of the similar techniques of representation. At the same time, because of the absence of work and of the mundane everyday life, it seems timeless as well. However, the timelessness of post-socialist (post)industrial landscape is of a different nature than the socialist one. Here, the sites of production have turned into tacit remainders of the past, of the bygone industrial production and work. Industrial remains in the form of industrial heritage are made available to admiration in a similar fashion as other historical monuments. In those, the time freezes. Since the production and work have been side-lined and pushed to the hardly discernible background, what is left is a landscape in which the main underlying principle is leisure. The change and progress have disappeared and thus made the landscape to become stable and unchanging. Paradoxically, the (post)industrial landscape of leisure is in its timelessness close to the socialist industrial landscape of work.

The rendering of landscape, be it socialist industrial or post-socialist (post)industrial, which I explored in this chapter, has been produced by visual means (composition, colour, light, etc.) and governed by both aesthetical and ideological principles. These principles are products of specific socio-cultural and historical-political situations. The landscape has been produced within and across the photographic representations. The representations make the landscape to convey certain meanings and arouse particular emotions according to the way of seeing they are both the producer and the product of. These principles can be read out of the landscape by means of analysis of the individual representations and their connections. In such a view, landscape is at the same time a text in which social order has imprinted itself and intertextual process of establishing and challenging the governing social order.

All the three distinct landscapes of Ostrava I identified and analysed represent instances of specific way of seeing the world; they anchor the real existing city into the net of meanings generated visually and produce Ostrava as a specific industrial or post-industrial landscape. Each of the three landscapes as they are pictured in the books can be understood, along with Lefebvre (1992, 33) as three distinct sets of representations of space. I would however understand them rather as a loosely interconnected representational space in which all the three ways of seeing meet. The real existing Ostrava mirrors in all the three representations; they however mirror back and inform the way Ostrava is seen, understood, experienced and what is expected of it. They all interweave in the contemporary landscape of Ostrava, which is complex and multi-layered. In the theoretical chapter I advocated the view of landscape as a complex concept. By arguing that

all the three distinct landscapes as representations coalesce in the representational space, I return to such a view.

To explore such loosely interconnected representational space in the way I did in this chapter makes it possible not only to identify the individual elements of which the landscape is composed and the underlying principles of such a composition, but it also allows for understanding the changes and developments occurring in time. In this way, it is possible to glimpse at what happened to industrial landscape after the fall of socialism which endorsed industry as a key constitutive element helping to justify the regime. In Ostrava, the timeless landscape of work gave way to a timeless landscape of leisure. In the light of such a change, the contemporary (post)industrial landscape emerges as the landscape of consumption.

“Kladno, the black Kladno, the city of hundreds of smokestacks, never will I forget you ...”²⁴



²⁴ Lyrics from *Kladno, the black Kladno*, a song by Josef Šustr and Jindřich Tydrych

The bus crossed the bridge with the view over the industrial area. Here, my father never forgot to mention how many smokestacks disappeared from the panorama in the course of the last twenty years. I remembered him but by that time we already passed by an elementary school I used to frequent during my childhood. Then the bus stopped at the high school, a beautiful art nouveau building. I got off right in the very heart of Kladno, the city which used to be one of the most important industrial centres of Austria-Hungary as well as Czechoslovakia. I rushed across the small park next to the high school with the monument to the discovery of coal in the region. Since I remember, the park has been occupied by the flock of rooks, nesting in the crowns and cawing. Accompanied by the whirling of wings and muffled caws, I walked past the small prefab housing estate that replaced the picturesque streets of the old historical city centre. I passed by a prefab block of flats where one of my teenage loves lived, turned to the main street where I spared a great many hours by hanging around when I was a boy, went past a pub where a bicycle shop used to be and where I bought my first cycling helmet, and crossed the crossing to a building built in the wild post-modern style of the early 1990s.

In those five hundred meters, countless traces of the time passed could be found and countless stories could be uncovered. The past and the present of the city intertwined with the past and present of not only me, but also others, who at that autumn afternoon hastened along the streets or paced slowly home. It took me five minutes to get across the piece of the town. Houses, pavements, trees and the sky of those five minutes formed the background for my subjective, embodied, emotional experience to merge with and emerge from the wider social, historical, and political context of the city. Emotions and materiality, past, present and possible futures were intertwined in the prolonged moment in the very space. I was in a hurry and I did not pay close attention to the associations and stories. I was late.

I went for an exhibition of photographs of industrial spaces of Kladno which took place in the public spaces of a branch of an insurance company. On the first floor of the ugly building, a dozen of panels crowded in the hall connecting company offices. Two photographers exhibited their photographs glittering on the panels. Black and white ones were by an older, established photographer who used to capture the city in the times of industrial heydays. These covered industrial motives from when the city had lived and breathed in the rhythm of mines and factories. The colour ones, taken on a digital camera by a young photographer, showed the contemporary face of the spaces where the industry was long gone. I noticed a table with modest refreshment. About thirty people of various ages paced around the panels, drank juice and talked. I arrived right on time to catch

the welcoming speech. After that, accordionist pushed the bellows and the inert space filled with first bars. *“Kladno, the black Kladno, the city of hundreds of smokestacks ...”* This was a song popular in the 1920s, in the times of turbulent industrialization of Kladno. Now, it hovered above the heads of those few present, above the photographs from the past and the present. Each of the people had her own story linked to the materiality of the city, embedded in an individual mixture of emotions and memories. The complex conglomerate of meanings, emotions, and connections wrapping up contemporary city spaces multiplied with the photographs and the song. The landscape in the photographs, behind the closed windows, in thoughts and visions of those present merged one into another.

The song ended and people slowly started to leave. The city outside awaited them.

Between past and present: The landscape and the city of Kladno

Introduction

Kladno is a city in central Bohemia, not far from the capital of Prague. Like Ostrava, Kladno became an important industrial centre during the 19th and 20th century. “The city of hundreds of smokestacks”, as the song mentioned in the opening of this chapter charts it, was during socialism another exemplary industrial city, not dissimilar to Ostrava. It was also labelled as ‘black-and-red city’ and represented as the city of miners and steelworkers. And similarly to Ostrava, after the downfall of industry in the 1990s, Kladno and its image changed substantially and the wider socioeconomic changes also brought about changes to its cityscape. The coal mines were closed, factory production was heavily reduced, and smokestacks have mostly been torn down. Being located only 20 kilometres from Prague, Kladno became rather a place to sleep than a place to work.

In this chapter, I am interested in (post)industrial landscape of Kladno, and especially in spaces where the industrial past of the city materializes. I look into the ways these spaces have been not only represented, but also imagined, dealt with and their fate negotiated. Although being conspicuous parts of the Kladno landscape, spaces such as vast brownfield adjacent to the very city centre, dumps, coal mines and coal mine headstocks have until very recently been marginalised by the municipal government as remains from the inconvenient black-and-red past. At the same time however, they have been rediscovered by lay photographers aestheticizing them as an embodiment of ‘ravages of time’, as well as by activists and historians aiming at preserving the most historically valuable buildings and sites. The negotiations over these spaces have been fuelled by arguments about aesthetics and historical value and led to a partial re-evaluation of not only the spaces in question, but also of the industrial past of the former black-and-red city.

In my interpretation of what has been happening to the (post)industrial landscape of Kladno, I draw on the theoretical background I described in depth in the theoretical chapter on the landscape as process. In the previous chapter on Ostrava, I employed the concept of landscape as representation which emphasises the relationship between the landscape, its aesthetics and visual properties and meaning inscribed into and ascribed to individual landscape features and the whole landscape. I showed that with respect to industrial landscape and what has happened to it with the fall of socialism there exist a

paradoxical mixture of continuity and change. Landscape, as it is (re)presented by the photographic books on Ostrava, has been evolving as for its components, their connections and relationships, its visual aspects as well as meanings. Taken as a loosely connected representational space, the three sets of representations of landscape attest to the fact that there is a process inherent to the landscape and its formation. In this process, the morphological and material aspects of landscape are conjoined with symbolic and political aspects. To analyse the landscape as representation allows for denaturalizing meanings which are naturalized in and by the landscape; it thus allows for getting closer to understanding the power in behind the actual landscape, seemingly natural ideas and imaginaries embedded in the landscape and the way the power operates.

In sum, to approach landscape as representation as I applied it in the previous chapter underscores the political nature of landscape as well as its visual and intertextual features. It also acknowledges the fact that landscape is open to contestations. The landscape of Ostrava has been recently undergoing a profound re-negotiation with respect to its constitutive elements, their role as well as its overall meaning and shape: Ostrava ceased to be the 'steel heart of the republic' and from the landscape of production it have transformed into the landscape of consumption.

In this chapter I continue in my exploration of (post)industrial landscape furthering the insights from the previous chapter. I explore the (post)industrial landscape of Kladno with respect to meanings and emotions attached to and infused in the industrial materiality of (post)industrial spaces, their representations and imaginaries related to them. I show that the continuity and change of and in the landscape are the result of underlying processes of the re-negotiations of the emotional properties and meanings of the landscape. I pay close attention to the industrial heritage – either proclaimed or envisioned – and look into how emotions related to industrial heritage, meanings associated with it and processes impacting on it become part of the re-negotiations of the (post)industrial landscape of Kladno, its future shape and substance.

I thus explore the (post)industrial landscape of Kladno with respect to the processes that form it and acknowledge the fact that landscape as such is a process because it is in constant change. What seems important then, is the relationship of landscape and memory, the way in which they intermingle and are socially contested. The re-negotiations of (post)industrial landscape, as the example of Kladno shows, are very much conditioned by the re-imagining of industrial past. Landscape is then a representation of not only a particular way of

seeing, which is (re)produced intertextually, but also an immediate and temporary outcome of an on-going process of re-establishing the landscape.

I start my exploration of the landscape of Kladno by historically contextualizing contemporary (post)industrial landscape of the city. I trace the historical developments and the ways in which it impacted not only on the physical properties of the city, but also on its symbolical and imaginary character. Then I will turn my attention to the (post)industrial spaces in which the industrial past of the city materializes, is made visible or invisible. Based on the ethnographically oriented research, I concentrate on the diversity of understandings of (post)industrial materialities scattered around Kladno and the way how they are incorporated into the landscape which used to be industrial but is not any more. I also draw on the visual analysis of the representations of the landscape of Kladno and in such a way I connect my interpretations of the landscape of Kladno as process to my interpretations of the landscape of Ostrava as representation. But the core of my analysis lies in the 9 semi-structured interviews I conducted with the people in Kladno who represent key figures in negotiation and production of the contemporary and future landscape of Kladno, be it local historian, photographers, urban planners, heritage specialists or active and engaged members of various NGOs and civic initiatives. The interviews have been supplemented with observations, repeated personal explorations of the spaces in question and taking part in local events such is the photographic exhibition described in the opening of this chapter (for a detailed discussion of the methodology, see the chapter on Hermeneutic (content) analysis).

The research and analysis of the (post)industrial landscape of Kladno led me to unravelling three key practices-processes by means of which the landscape has been formed. In behind these lie the varied relations to and contestations of the industrial past. The following text is thus structured along the discussion of these three ways of dealing with the past and making it a constitutive element of the landscape. I discussed in detail the way in which industrial past has been repressed, acknowledged and experienced in order to show how it has become an inherent part of the (post)industrial landscape of Kladno. What my exploration unravels is the complex temporality of the landscape as process and the ways in which the temporality becomes both a constitutive element of the landscape as well as its primary content.

Exploring the past

In the region around what is now the city of Kladno, coal was being discovered continuously throughout the 18th century with important finds in 1772 and 1775. These discoveries led to relatively modest though continuously rising of coal mining (Skalníková 1959, 11–12). Important breakthrough came in 1842 when large deposits of coal were located and explored. Those finds represented an impulse for an unprecedented development in the region, “which became a sort of Czech Klondike. A lot of people headed for the city due to the vision of wealth and better life. In a short period of time, the place changed its character” from a sleepy agricultural settlement to a pulsing industrial centre circled by a ring of coal mines and with industrial plants within view from the main square (Veverková 2008, 9).

The first large coal mine was open in what is now the city in 1846. In 1849 the first foundry was founded and named Adalbert’s after its owner, Adalbert Lanna, an industrialist and entrepreneur. Forty years later, a rival foundry was founded nearby; called Poldi after the wife of its owner, Karl Wittgenstein, another important industrialist and a father of the famous philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, it became the core of the steel production of Kladno, Austria-Hungary and Czechoslovakia for the next one hundred years (see e.g. Kárný and Pěnička 1959; Kovařík 1982; for the history of mining in the region see Uváček 1995). The stormy development brought about by the rapid industrialization is evidenced in the rise of inhabitants of the villages and settlements that in time merged and formed the city of Kladno. In 1850 the conglomerate of the settlements would have approx. 2,500 inhabitants. In 50 years, the number would rise to 42 thousand and would continue rising until the fall of socialism, when the city of Kladno had 71 thousand inhabitants.²⁵

The influx of people and the overall industrial character of the newly emerging city led to the formation of a distinct area, “the folk culture of which was [is] so specific that it differed substantially from the surrounding areas. The underlying feature is the industrial character of the area. Mining together with iron and steel industry, which for more than one hundred years employed the majority of the inhabitants, brought into the Kladno area workers who under the influence of

²⁵ *The numbers are from the historical and retrospective lexicons published annually by the Czech Statistical Office. See Historical lexicon of the settlements in the Czech Republic available online at the Office’s webpages (<http://www.czso.cz>; accessed Jul. 10, 2015).*

their economic and social status developed a particular way of life, social and cultural environment, different from the way of life of peasants and which was [is] in some forms different also from the way of life of workers in other industrial areas” (Skalníková 1959, 8). This quote is from a vast ethnographic study of the workers’ life conditions at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century conducted in the 1950s by the team of researchers led by Olga Skalníková, a progressive ethnographer from the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences. Based on the ethnographic field research among the living witnesses of the rapid industrialization and urbanization of the turn of the century, it focuses on depicting of the specificities of the everyday life of the miners at the times by concentrating on the housing, interior decoration, clothing, cuisine, family life as well as on folk culture as evidenced by folk tales and humour or folk songs. In this way, the study portrays the specificities of living conditions in the emerging, hastily and heavily industrialised metropolis.

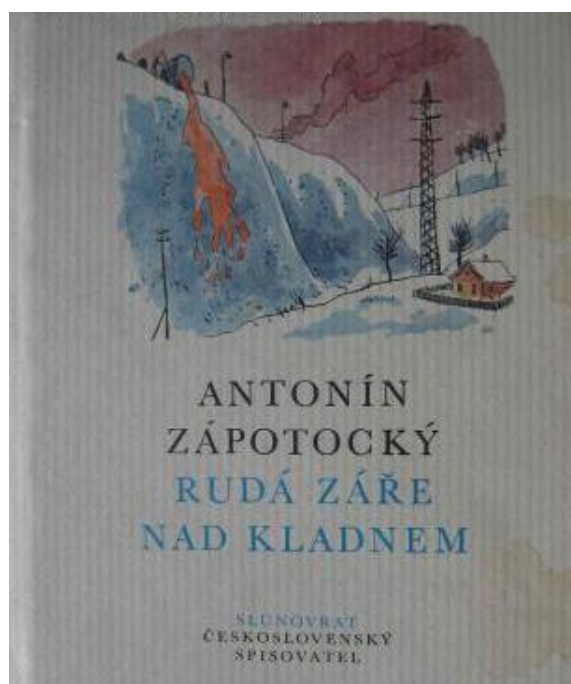


Img. 32 View over the steelworks in Kladno in a postcard from 1912 (collection of the author)

Due to the specificity of the “way of life”, as Skalníková put it, which is conditioned by and revolves around mining (and the production of iron and steel) as well as because of rapid industrialization with its environmental effects, the newly born city of Kladno passed during the second half of the 19th century into general knowledge as a black city, the city of miners, smelters, coal, smoke and

fume (img. 32). Such an image was employed in picturing the city visually but it was also exploited and furthered especially by literary depictions of Kladno, its development, changes and above all the way of life. Undoubtedly, the most famous of such representations of Kladno is the works of Marie Majerová, a communist writer who came originally from Kladno from a worker family. In its most famous novel, *Sirene*, published originally in 1935, Majerová traces the life story of four generations of a worker family, from their arrival to Kladno short after the discovery of coal in the middle of the 19th century to the First World War, and the ways the individual lives were influenced by the real events of the larger history moving forward. Unlike some of the visual renderings of Kladno in pictorialist manner (such as also the postcard reproduced here), Majerová's *Sirene* is stark in its depictions of hardships of the workers and the impacts of industrialization on the living conditions. She portrays the world as rapidly changing due to technological advancements, difficult to cope with, and above all hostile to ordinary, hardworking people. She depicts Kladno as a black city of miners and smelters who struggle, are oppressed and exploited and lean to the leftist, socialist ideas for the hope of better future. Due to the popularity after its publication and because, as a critique of industrial capitalist society of the turn of the century, it was incorporated into the canon of socialist literature after the socialist coup d'état in 1948, the book became widely known and helped to propagate the image of Kladno as a black city.

However, throughout the 20th century, Kladno was not only a black city. Due to it being a workers' city and thanks to the fact that the working class leaned, for the reasons of the living standards and working conditions, towards the left-wing political convictions, Kladno became labelled also as a red city. The shift from the black city to the black-and-red city was spurred by the publication of the *Red Glare above Kladno*, a book originally published in 1951 and written by Antonín Zápotocký, a prominent communist politician, writer and later also the second socialist president of Czechoslovakia. The book, written in the style of socialist realism, became immediately a part of the socialist literary and cultural canon, was adapted into a socialist realist movie and turned into a widely known piece of literature. In his book, Antonín Zápotocký, originally from the region, narrates a history of the workers' movement in Kladno and concentrates on the events right after the First World War. Together with its predecessor, *New Fighters Will Rise*, published in 1949 and narrating from an autobiographical point of view the events around establishing and developing the communist movement in the emerging city of Kladno in the second half of the 19th century, *Red Glare above Kladno* represented a reformulation of the Kladno's industrial past into an ideologically moulded vision of communist history.



Img. 33 A cover of Antonín Zápotocký's *Red Glare above Kladno* (Zápotocký 1986) picturing the act of pouring the slag.

The key and most important metaphor is that of spilling slag onto a heap, an image that was exploited heavily by official visual rendering of socialist industrial landscape – in Ostrava, as I showed in the previous chapter, but also elsewhere and above all in Kladno (img. 33). “They spilled slag onto a heap and the red glare glowed above Kladno,” Antonín Zápotocký opens his book in a poetically descriptive manner. More than four hundred pages later, the image returns, but the poetics intertwines with ideology in producing a statement about Kladno and the historical role of the workers’ communists’ movement of the area: “They spilled slag onto a heap and the red glare glowed above the whole region” (Zápotocký 1986). The red glare turns from a feature of the industrial landscape into a metaphor of communist ideology which seeded in the workers’ environment in Kladno and from there spread throughout the region and later on the whole country.

In socialism, Kladno was reframed into a mythical cradle of Czechoslovakian communism; it became “a centre of the revolutionary struggle and the key name in the history of the workers’ movement. In the Kladno region, the movement is related to work and important representatives of the proletariat” (*Ve Městě Ohně a Oceli* 1977, n.p.). Visual representations of Kladno from the times of socialism conform to the same sets of rules as those of Ostrava. The centre of visually (re)produced landscape of Kladno is occupied by industry and industrial facilities. Official visual publications like *Kladno* from 1974 depict the same sets of topics with the same emphasis put on the active role of industry as well as its colourful

nature bestowed on it by the light of fire of melted iron and steel enabled by coal mined out from the depths of the Earth (Bouda 1974). It is the red glare that illuminates the contours of the city with rich industrial past understood as a communist history leading to the victory of socialism, which is a guarantee of a better future. In the cover for the sets of photographs devoted to Kladno region and published by the Czech Press Office (Dusík and Krajník 1980), the similarity of the visual representations of Kladno to Ostrava is evident.



Img. 34 Kladno region, a cover for a set of representative photographs (Dusík and Krajník 1980)

The front page (img. 34) shows the statue of Antonín Zápotocký, the writer, president and communist leader who strongly influenced the perceived identity of the region he came from. The back is occupied by a natural motive, “a rare *Pulsatilla* from a protected area” in the region. The fold shows children staged as playing in the garden of the kindergarten. The symbolisation of the future by means of the children is underscored by them being (described as) “the youngest generation of Lidice”, the village near Kladno obliterated by Nazis in the 1942. The 17 photographs inside, depict the region by means of the shots of the coalmines, interiors of the steelworks lit by heated metal, monuments to the socialist past and remainders of the industrial history such as the monument to the discovery of coal, a statue in which a miner from 1848 shakes hands over a huge boulder of coal with a modern miner from 1948 carrying a jackhammer. There are also postcards showing sport and cultural amenities such as the ice hockey ring in Kladno, which was during socialism one of the centres of professional ice hockey.

While there is diversity in what the photographs portray, there is a unifying framework; the photographs on the postcards and in the books produce a certain

way of seeing Kladno as an industrial landscape not dissimilar to Ostrava (img. 35). It is a landscape, to use the ideological tone of the socialist times, in which “each image of the landscape has its own order but all have a common denominator. Fire is concealed in the blackness underground. Fire is the driving force on Earth. Fire rules the sky above Kladno. People from Kladno are marked by fire ...” (*Ve Městě Ohně a Oceli* 1977, n.p.). Portrayed as such, Kladno was, by the same visual means as Ostrava, turned into an exemplary socialist city over which “the red glare ... shines every day as a symbol of the rich history of hard work of smelters and their fight for better tomorrows” (*125 Let Kladenských Železáren* 1975, 1).

The landscape of Kladno, as it was (re)produced during socialism visually and textually, shares the underlying principles with that of Ostrava. The representations of Kladno and Ostrava, and, as I will show in the next chapter, also of Most share the same representational space. They are all instances of socialist industrial landscape which is spatially dispersed across the country but which is unified and united by means of the representation(s) and how the representing of the landscape is structured, what it entails and what it obscures. In other words, the socialist industrial landscape of Kladno (or Ostrava) is an instance of the particular socialist way of seeing which exploited the potential of the past, present and the hopes of the future in order to justify the system and its actions. Industrial past of Kladno was exploited and turned into a pre-socialist red history in the move which made Kladno to be a black but also red city.



Img. 35 Cover of the book called In the city of fire and steel (Ve Městě Ohně a Oceli 1977)

The fall of socialism in 1989 and a subsequent decline of industry, both mining and the production of iron and steel, led to a radical reframing of the city and the

industrial landscape, of which Kladno was a part for such a long time. Coalmining was in steady decline throughout the 1990s and the end of the mining came in 2002 when the whole coal district was closed to any further mining activities. The steelworks in Kladno, unified under one umbrella corporation shortly after the socialist took power in 1948 and known simply as Poldi,²⁶ was privatized in the beginning of the 1990s and as a result went bankrupt. At present, the area of former large industrial plant is occupied by a number of smaller enterprises, some of which continue in producing steel or engage in related industrial activities, while others are in their scope unrelated to previous industrial production. Apart from the enterprises and storehouses, the area was in some parts left to its fate.

As a result, the city deindustrialized in a much more profound way than Ostrava, where industrial production and mining play an important role in local economy. For developing my argument and exploring contemporary landscape of Kladno, it is not necessary to delve deep into the mechanisms – economic and political – of the post-socialist transformation (for a general overview of the state of the art in the area of urban post-socialist transformation, see e.g. Ferenčuhová 2012). During my research, an architect who moved to Kladno at the beginning of the 1980s summarized for me nicely (his view of) what happened to / in Kladno.

The city has changed beyond recognition. The rhythm of its life used to follow the “rhythmical cycle of mines”. This cycle influenced how many people visited the shops and working class pubs, which have disappeared completely. “When the siren blew, they let people leave [the factories] and it was like at a concert. What followed was a fight for a place on the bus.” With the fall of industry, the city changed substantially. But it coped relatively well with the transformation, at least with respect to the fears, “prognoses of social unrest”. Poldi, the main employer in the region together with the mines which were gradually closed down, broke up into a number of smaller companies, out of which some survived and some did not. Only small industry can be found in Kladno now. Some of the people work in the services in the city, but the majority of people work in the nearby capital city of Prague. (from the field notes, 14 October 2011).

²⁶ *The whole name was SONP Poldi. SONP stands for Spojené ocelárny, národní podnik / United steelworks, national enterprise.*

Repressing the past

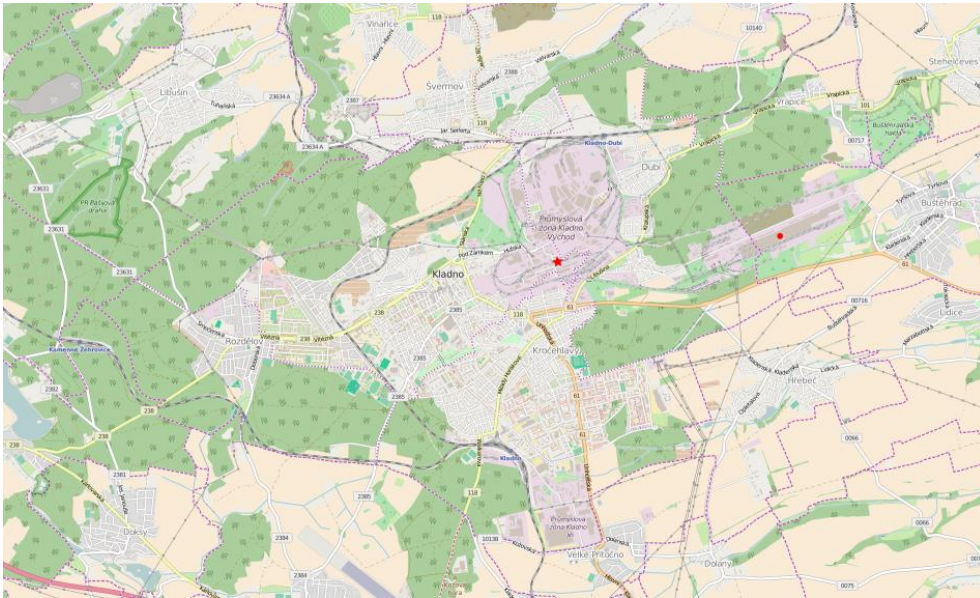
Deindustrialization changed the city profoundly. It left behind countless spaces and edifices related to industrial production. The panorama of the city continues to be interspersed and framed by industrial objects, smokestacks and factory halls. When arriving from the direction of Prague, Kladno is seen from afar as a complex of large factory halls and a group of smokestacks. This complex, right at the city limits, used to be a modern core of the socialist Poldi factory. Here, the production transferred from the Adalbert's foundry after the decision of the 1960s to start producing high quality stainless steel and the subsequent closure of the oldest foundry.



Img. 36 A view at a factory complex dominating the scenery at the arrival to Kladno from Prague, 2008, photo by author

The panorama of the city when approached from Prague is dominated by the factory complex until the present day. Now, it is for a large part inactive and serves among other things as storage house. But I remember it from my childhood, from the many evening arrivals from Prague, shining, fuming and noisy. For me, its silhouette stood as a symbol of coming home. It was like a welcoming sign, a gate to Kladno, my hometown. In its contemporary tacit presence, the

complex continues to frame the city as (post)industrial for those arriving along the busiest road from Prague.



Img. 37 A map of the city of Kladno (current state)

Pink areas represent industrial spaces. Red dot marks the industrial complex seen at the arrival from Prague. Red star marks the area of the former Adalbert's foundry. Note the extent of the industrial area with respect to the size of the city. Source of map data: [openstreetmap.org](https://www.openstreetmap.org), graphic editing by the author

However, one of the most iconic (post)industrial areas is the site of the former Adalbert's foundry. Located further in the city within the view from the main square, it is a part of a huge industrial area spanning in between the city centre and the modern complex just outside the city. Founded in 1849, it is the foundry that started the industrialization that turned Kladno into an industrial centre. In 1946, it was nationalized as all the large industrial plants in Czechoslovakia, and renamed after Ivan Stepanovich Konev, a soviet marshal who liberated Prague and also Kladno in 1945, to foundry Koněv. During socialism as well as after its fall, the area of Adalbert's foundry has been known and referred to simply as Koněv.



Img. 38 A typical first glimpse over the area looking towards the city centre, 2012, photo by author

At the beginning of my research in Kladno, in 2009, I started to venture into the area of the former Adalbert's foundry, into Koněv. This would mean to walk down from the housing estate where my parents lived through a forest into a former working class neighbourhood with houses from the turn of the 19th and 20th century. Walking through the neighbourhood, which thronged under the silhouettes of a heating plant and abandoned factories, would lead me pass the house where Marie Majerová lived and on which a bronze plaque reminded of her life and literary work. The road would end under a tangle of pipes where I would need to overcome a pile of rubble and waste. There, the huge gasholder used to

stay, a cylindrical object reaching up to the sky, visible from far away and being one of the iconic landmarks characteristic for a Kladno panorama.²⁷ Torn down in 2005, only a circle of oil soaked ground and a smell lingering in the air is what has been left of it.



Img. 39 A view over the area with a railway bridge in the centre, 2009, photo by author

Couple of steps along the rail tracks and up the mound of soil would lead me to a point from where the whole heart of former industrial Kladno gave to the view (img. 38). Buildings of diverse age, left to their fate stood solitarily in the area among fenced off lots with different purposes, small industrial production, warehouses, and even a buy up of scrap metal (img. 38, 39). The division of the area is a result of the privatization (and restitution) of the 1990s. Extremely complex situation of ownership translates into a mosaic of spaces, some

²⁷ The gasholder was 53 metres in diameter and with the height of 84 metres it was the largest gasholder in former Czechoslovakia. See the information and photographs at the Kladno of the Past webpages (<http://www.kladnominule.cz/fotografie/plynojem>, accessed Aug. 20, 2015).

accessible, some enclosed. Only the roads belong to the city and thus during the research, it was possible to wander through the area relatively freely.

On the south of the area, next to the rail tracks and above the steep fall down to the depression where the industrial production including furnaces used to be located, stood three lime kilns (img. 40). Over time, these became a symbol of the industrial heritage of Kladno, a landmark, and consequently, as a result of the activity of local initiatives, they were proclaimed cultural heritage in 2008. Being now an iconic feature of the (post)industrial landscape of Kladno, they stand the weather conditions and disrepair and slowly disintegrate.



Img. 40 The three lime kilns, now an iconic and protected monument of the industrial past, 2009, photo by author

Next to them starts a bridge which curves over the area to the other side. This used to be the rail tracks along which the hoppers full of iron ore would deliver their load to the iron ore storage (img. 41). I would pass the bridge, above the waste pond, cooling tower, factory halls and pipes to the storage building. Down deep, unused iron ore still forms large heaps.

From the bridge, the whole area gets a new perspective. Further to the north, smokestacks of the original and still active Poldi factory tower. To the left, a heap where slag used to be spilled is engulfed in the greenery of birches; in front of it,

an area of a former coking plant built in the 1950s turned into a post-apocalyptic zone (img. 42).



Img. 41 A view from the bridge towards the derelict iron ore storage, 2009, photo by author

The material settings, the way things – buildings, objects – are, how they look like, as well as the overall shape and form of the area of the former foundry is a result of diverse temporalities and the developments they brought about. The area of Koněv is in a sense an outcome of the materialization of diverse pasts and their meeting in the present. The pasts of individual objects as well as the composite past of their conglomeration, distant as well as immediate pasts in the form of events that happened in, to, and around these objects and their clusters, impacted on their material present. This is of course no ground-breaking

revelation – after all, it is possible to apply such a view to any material settings with past developments. However, in the Koněv area, the workings of time seem to me to have become an urgent feature of the area. Time and the workings of time became an immediate theme of thought when I wandered around, as if the workings of time would be acutely present there, more to be sensed here than anywhere else in the city.



Img. 42 A view of a post-apocalyptic coking plant and smokestacks of a Poldi factory from the bridge, 2009, photo by author

In one of my first research visits, I encountered what I thought an unusual activity. A group of people with a wheelbarrow, pickaxe and spade were digging in front of the lime kilns, across the rail tracks. They ostentatiously ignored me and I ignored

them. We passed each other, me taking photographs of the kilns and the area around, they digging. I soon realize that the area is full of traces of digging, ditched ground, heaps of soil, trenches. The people I saw digging were Roma people probably living nearby, in the former working class houses, now a poor neighbourhood. What they were doing was looking for and digging up metals to be sold to the buy up of scrap metal open in the area. In my many visits, I met people digging, pushing carts with metal scraps, and scavenging the disused spaces. While the former industrial area was tacit and without the noise of intense production it was not devoid of any activity.



Img. 43 A panorama of the area, 2011, photo by author

In July 2007, a group of scavengers attempted at dismantling a part of a large industrial hall at the border of the area, right next to the city centre. Ensuing collapse killed two men. As a result, the hall was demolished and attention of the media as well as political representation of the city and region turned to the area. The media, drawing on the statements of the political representatives, namely the then mayor of Kladno, depicted the area as problematic in the long run, dirty and dangerous on both material and social level. “The area is dreadful, for sure”, said the mayor after the collapse, “but it is also an opportunity. After the years [of neglect], the ideas push through about why not to use the area for housing, services or storage.”²⁸

²⁸ *The Mayor of Kladno, quoted in the article of the newspaper Mladá Fronta Dnes, internet edition, published Sep. 14, 2007 (http://zpravy.idnes.cz/poldovka-je-hruza-ale-i-prilezitost-rika-primator-fvb-/domaci.asp?c=A070913_121031_domaci_itu, accessed Aug. 20, 2015).*



Img. 44 Dereliction in the marginal spaces, uncontrolled and ungoverned, 2009, photo by author

The collapse of the hall served for many as a confirmation that Koněv represented a scar on the face of the city. The connection of the space which is formerly industrial, and thus contaminated, to the illicit activities conducted, at least in the eyes of the public, by socially marginalised individuals, such as Roma or homeless people, led to the cementing the image of the area as materially and socially disturbed and dangerous. The opportunities such an area offered, was seen in its gradual demolition and replacement with something materially and socially more desirable, clean, predictable, and controllable.

With respect to the historical development of the city and its historical dependence on industry, the marginalization of industrial remnants and the sidelining of their potential for the future development of (post)industrial city with a

rich industrial history might seem surprising. Radoslava Schmelzová, an art historian, aptly summarized the paradoxical nature of the situation in which the Koněv area has been for more than two decades. “The area of the former ironworks could have a positive potential for the further development of the city. So far, it has been perceived by thy City Hall as an unwanted rift in the meticulously created image of Kladno as a calm, suburban area of Prague (Schmelzová 2007, 48). The potential Schmelzová hinted at did not lie in erasing the space and filling it anew, but in acknowledging the past of the city which materialized in the buildings, objects and the overall setting of the area as formerly industrial, as a reminder of the past on which it is possible to build the future.

As the Mayor wrote on the official city webpages in 2008:

“People, especially in the Czech Republic, still associate Kladno with the adjective ‘black’. The reason for this idea is an image of Kladno as a city of heavy industry with the characteristic negative impacts on the appearance of the city and its surroundings, environment and social structure of its inhabitants. However, the opposite is true. Kladno is undoubtedly a city meeting the standards of developed Europe. Visitors are welcomed by the surprisingly high quality of the environment [...]. It is necessary to point out the perfect accessibility of Prague and other beautiful natural and historical places of our country; the newly refurbished city centre with valuable baroque monuments, the pedestrian area following in the traditions of the first republic and the reconstructed main square; good conditions for investors evidenced by fully operational industrial area Kladno-South²⁹ occupied by prestigious foreign investors; very good transport connection to the international airport in Prague – Ruzyně; wide offer of education provided by high schools, colleges and universities, with the new Faculty of biomedical engineering of the Czech Technical University, the most prestigious technical university in the country; the quality of services in the area of retail and accommodation; abundance of flats; great quality and wide variety of sporting grounds and places for cultural events; forests encircling Kladno; new modern park redevelopment of the city; cultivation of relations with partner cities in France and the United States, and so on. I am positive that Kladno of the beginning of the 21st century can be labelled as a dynamic city, city of new possibilities and modern lifestyle.”

²⁹ *built on the fields on the other side of the city than the Adalbert’s foundry.*

Kladno wants to officially (re)present itself as an ideal city. In the quote above, the history of the city is emphasised by the figure of baroque monuments and reference to the first republic.³⁰ This view of Kladno was published in 2008, when I first encountered it. What is however interesting, is the fact that the text is still online as a part of an official presentation of the city, updated in 2012, and up to date also in 2015. Kladno is pictured as a city which offers to its inhabitants all they need, from housing to sport and culture, from education to entertainment. The image did not change in the last couple of years. In this respect, the image of Kladno is that of an ideal city; as such it is not dissimilar to the socialist images of industrial cities such as Ostrava and Kladno in which the cities were also portrayed as ideal, exemplary, as cities offering everything needed to their citizens (for the analysis of the continuity and change in the image-making of Czech cities in socialism and after see Ferencuhová 2010). However, in a contemporary image of Kladno, there is no place for its industrial past. Given the fact that it is the industrial past which made Kladno what it is, the move to obscure it and erase it seems paradoxical.

The erasure of the industrial past is evidenced in the continuous disappearance of the remains of industrial production, such as the gasholder or the collapsed hall. Even the heap onto which slag used to be spilled has since 1998 been slowly levelled down by Destro, a private company specializing in reuse of industrial waste. For the future, the heap is conceived in the newly prepared Master plan of the city as a reserve for mixed urban development including housing.³¹ While in socialism, the glow of the red glare of slag spilled onto the heap became a token for industrial Kladno, nowadays, the slag is being removed from the material as well as symbolic realm of Kladno.

Kladno continues to be officially represented as an ideal city; the ideal is however to be as furthest away from the label of the “black”, not to mention the “red”, city as possible. As one of my informants summarized the situation:

“... if I had to characterize the city, then it is a city which is dissatisfied with itself. It is struggling, it does not have any clear identity, I think, although it has tried to

³⁰ *The period between the foundation of the independent republic of Czechoslovakia in 1918 and the Munich agreement in 1938, as a result of which Czechoslovakia lost part of its territory to Nazi Germany.*

³¹ *The Master Plan is available at the Official webpages of the city (<http://www.mestokladno.cz/uzemni-plany-a-mapy/ms-2100039992/p1=2100039992>, accessed Aug. 21, 2015).*

get it somehow in an artificial way in the last years. [...] One identity is that of Kladno as a city of sport. [...] There was, four or five years ago, there was a slogan 'the city of culture, greenery [nature], and sport'. But I think what was left was the sport [laughter]. And maybe also greenery, a bit."³²

The area of Koněv has been marginalized despite its connection to the rich industrial past of the city and the proximity to the city centre. Complicated ownership structure of the area is not the primary reason for the marginalization, although it adds to the position the area occupies in the city and its image. The marginalization is very much grounded in the fact that, as the director of the local museum pointed out, "the city representatives decided to cut off from the pre-1989 past, which framed Kladno as 'black' and 'red', and present it as a city of sport, nature, and free time activities" (Kuchyňka 2010, 1).

"The city does not know what to do with it," a local historian told me when we talked about the area of Koněv. But the same applies to industrial remnants in general. The refusal to acknowledge the industrial past is in behind the marginalization of former industrial spaces of (post)industrial Kladno. It relates to the marginalization of the whole section of the history of the city rooted in the inability or unwillingness to cope with the labels that were stack to the city in a different socio-historical situation, during socialism, in other way than to simply refuse them altogether and by means of that make the certain aspects of the past invisible in the present and for the future.

For these reasons, I see the area of Koněv not only as a part of the (post)industrial landscape of Kladno and the situation in which it is found today, but also as a metonymy. In it, the (post)industrial landscape of Kladno concentrates in all its complexity. Koněv also mirrors the changes and developments of the landscape; it is exposed to the processes that (in)forms the landscape, its negotiation and content, both material and symbolical. The image of Koněv I sketched in the beginning of this subchapter seems stable and unchanging, similarly to the image the city produces about itself. What I have however encountered during my ventures into the area of the oldest foundry in Kladno is the unending process of change. During a later one of my many excursions to the area with students and friends, I noted down:

The piles of rubbish at the entrance to the area disappeared. When arriving to the gasholder, we can already hear the hustle and boom from the area – noise of

³² *From an interview with an 'Activist', a locally active member of civic society (June 28, 2012).*

production. So different from the calm and quiet I remember. Intense building activity [the view opens to us].

“It is really beautiful” [one of the students].

“It is so big it hardly can squeeze in the picture” [another one].

In ‘Stalingrad’ [as I dubbed the coking plant area], the wilderness disappeared from in front of the building with [...] wooden roof and the smell of developer. New fence, huge pipes, lorries. Somebody is building a storehouse. A lot of changes since the last time. But surprisingly, I do not feel disconcerted or sad [as before]; strange joy – from the discovering of the new? Although the new means that the Koněv I remember from the beginning is disappearing (field notes, 5 April 2012).

The (post)industrial area of Koněv has been continuously changing in between my visits. Here and there, new piles of rubbish appeared, some buildings were torn down, fenced off, rubbish – under the iron ore storage – were cleansed. Irrespective of how small the changes were, they felt important and often even painful for me. Especially the cleansing and disappearance made me think about the workings of time in terms of the tension of presence and absence. And it became the change manifested in unforeseen sudden absences of elements I expected to be present that flooded the piece of (post)industrial landscape near the main square of the city of Kladno with emotions.

There used to be lots fenced off from each other under the bridge that curves from the lime kilns to the iron ore storage building. High metal plate fences and dogs shielded the insides, be it storage yards or small production facilities, from the outside, from scavengers of metal and wanderers through the (post)industrial landscape like me or others, like photographers. In time, these separated islands melted together as one of the entrepreneurs started to buy out the lots and unite the area. At one point, the area under the bridge became sealed off. From then on, it would not be possible to descent next to the bridge and walk to the other side, to the iron ore storage through down there. The old factory hall left to the bridge was newly insulated and the dirty brick walls were covered in shiny blue metal shell. A process of continuous change has been shaping the materiality of the landscape. And it was the process and the fact that I was powerless in face of the change that made me feel melancholic, nostalgic even, every time I was (about to go) there. I did not want to face the unalterable transformation. The nostalgia, which is deeply linked to the (post)industrial spaces, especially those abandoned or derelict, and which I will discuss later, became amplified by the alterations which I could not foresee, influence, but only encounter.

The landscape is in essence emotional. On one hand, the emotionality is rooted in the very way of seeing that underscores western notion of landscape as visual experience related to beauty or sublime. However, the emotionality of landscape, as I want to further discuss in the rest of the chapter, is also rooted in the fact that, as Barbara Bender noted and as I have already mentioned earlier, “landscapes, like time, never stand still” (Bender 2002a, S103). This movement of landscape forward, which happens on a material, but also on political, social and personal levels, with various degree of agency over the course of the change, can be a powerful source of emotions. These levels and the processes they initiate and endure do not necessary have to resonate one with the others. On the contrary, as I am to show further on in this chapter, they can be contradictory, parallel, unrelated. But in the end, it is the meeting of them the meeting of the pasts each of those movements carry on in to the present, what composes the landscape at any given moment. The emotionality of such landscape, as I have shown here, is sustained by the interplay between the present and the absent because the presence and the absence are the outcomes of and signs for the meeting of the processes at work in sustaining the landscape.

Embracing the past

On the side of the City Hall, after the fall of state socialism and the ensuing deindustrialization, industry and industrial past were side-lined and the city was reimagined. Deindustrialization together with the marginalization of the reminders of the industrial past impacted on the landscape and its physical features. The shift from industrial metropolis to de-industrialized city of greenery and sport happened quickly. Benjamin Fragner, the head of the Research Centre for Industrial Heritage at the Faculty of Architecture, Czech Technical University,³³ summarized the outcomes of the abrupt and quick change while referring to his personal involvement in the mapping of the remnants of industrial production in and around Kladno:

“When we started to walk around here with colleagues in the 1990s, what we soon realised was the danger that what was in front of us would disappear sooner than we would be able to record it, realise its value, and before we could see something reasonable happen to the [deindustrialized] area[s] ... so we were concerned that one could not even [manage to] detect what was disappearing” (*field notes, Conference on Kladno vs. Ostrava, 23 September 2011*).

Three points can be raised with respect to the quote and the context it refers to. First, the change brought about by deindustrialization is very quick on one hand and abrupt on the other. What happened in and to Kladno was very sudden and unexpected as for the pace of the change, but also its profoundness. The gradual though quick disappearance of mining and industrial production materialized not only in the changes on a socio-economic level, but also in the form of similarly quick disappearance of objects and spaces linked to dying industry.

Second, part of the change lied also in the shift in the status of the spaces and places of former industrial production. They suddenly ceased to be commonplace and linked to everyday life and became a focus of the interest of historians; they were turned into objects to be mapped, assessed, evaluated and possibly also protected. Suddenly, with industry becoming a matter of the past, the areas and buildings associated with it became, as if by magic, infused with value that was

³³ *The research centre “systematically documents the industrial heritage and technical and industrial monuments located on the territory of the Czech Republic and it studies them in reference to the history and theory of architecture, urban studies, and heritage conservation”. For more information see the official webpages: <http://vcpd.cvut.cz/profile/> (accessed Sep. 9, 2015)*

waiting to be recognised and exploited so as something “reasonable could happen” based on the acknowledgement and appreciation of the value.

And third, specific emotionality emerged related not only to the change as such but more importantly also to its swiftness and rapidity. The emotionality of formerly industrial spaces in (post)industrial landscape does not, as I argue further on, stem only from the perceived connection of the industrial remains to the past, which in a deindustrialised world engulfed industrial production; the emotionality is also sustained by the acknowledged susceptibility of the abandoned industrial remains to disappearance. Here, in the threat of perishing, lie the roots of emotionally tinged interest, both personal and institutional, in industrial remains. To paraphrase the quote above, it is the perceived danger that what is in front of us would disappear and that we would not be able to notice it, record it, and appreciate it, which makes the objects and sites interesting, emotionally charged and above all attracting attention.

This perceived danger of perishing for good, disappearing without a trace, irreversibly succumbing to oblivion, gives birth to the interest in the formerly industrial sites as well as to underlying concerns. A museum curator, who is in his thirties and specializes in industrial heritage as he is in charge of it in one of the museums of Central Bohemia located in the Kladno region, told me about how he became interested and involved in industrial heritage conservation:

“Well, these were the times, at around 1998 or so, when the majority of coal mines were closing down in Kladno. So it [coal mining] was an area that was disappearing. And that triggered my interest, so I started to take pictures of them [the mines], and later on I began to search more deeply for [information] about them, and started to document the mines. And because I am a blacksmith by training, I was also interested in ironworks and such. So I always was close to industry and the stuff seemed interesting to me.”

Since the turn of the century, industrial sites have attracted attention due to the change brought about by deindustrialization, attention not so much of the city or regional representatives, but of historians, conservationists, local enthusiasts and photographers. And this attention is very much linked to the concerns that one cannot even manage to detect what is disappearing because of the scope but also pace of the changes. In Kladno, the rise of interest in what was to become industrial heritage followed and resonated with the upturn of interest throughout the country and the gradual change in the perception of the remains of industrial

production. While the idea of technological objects and industrial sites as heritage was part of a specialised heritage discourse since at least the second half of the 1980s³⁴, in general, it became more readily accepted at the turn of the century due to the activities of the people around the newly forming Research Centre for Industrial Heritage, founded in 2002. My aim here is neither to chart the history of the conservation of industrial heritage, nor to trace the developments of the discourse on industrial heritage. To illustrate the connection of the situation in Kladno to the wider context, it suffices to quote how the museum Curator narrated the story of the rise in interest in industrial remains in Kladno. I asked him about the view that industrial remains can be seen as monuments and he replied lengthily:

“Well, that is the question of, I don’t know, the last ten years or so. Mainly thanks to the Research Centre for Industrial Heritage, it becomes ... they are the people who started to change the views. They started to organize the Industrial biennale and tried to point out [the importance of industrial heritage]. Because, as the situation changed and all the [industrial] companies were vanishing, here in Kladno, it was a matter of a couple of years, not of a decade, but it took two years when the monuments, or the industrial sites went out of business and suddenly either disappeared or lost their purpose. So they [people around the Research Centre] began to draw attention to the fact that the buildings have value, even though there are environmental contaminants and harmful substances. And on the other hand, in Kladno, the mining and metallurgy, the mining itself is 220 years old, if you count the beginnings of the intense mining. And metallurgy followed soon afterwards. After all, ironworks and mines, that is what Kladno rose out of, isn’t it. Without these two, Kladno would be still a little town like Unhošť.”

Here again, the Curator mentions the swiftness and abruptness of the change that happened not only in Kladno, but elsewhere in the country. In this view, Kladno represents an example of a wider development and thus can function as a case

³⁴ A conservationist from the National Heritage Institute responsible for industrial heritage narrated to me the history of interest in industrial heritage from her perspective as one of the witnesses to the changes in focus and scope of heritage practice in socialism and after: “This is where the core of the group fighting the tearing down of the Těšnov train station was formed in 1986; it focused on industrial heritage protection. At the same time, a law came into effect in 1987 [which enabled even individuals to make a motion proposing a building is listed as national cultural heritage so that even buildings that used to be disapproved of were listed – these would include neo-styles built in the 19th century despised by art historians and later also technical and industrial buildings] and that was when the listing started. And many members of the group proposed [industrial buildings].”

from which it is possible to explore more general processes. At the same time, the Curator's account gives credit to a group of people who perceive the change and its outcomes in a specific light on one hand, and attempt at promoting their view and change the general perception on the other. To "change the view" of formerly industrial sites entails a shift in what they are associated with – from harmful and contagious sites to objects with inherent value. It is the value that is unravelled by deindustrialization and supposedly needs to be acknowledged. As the end of the quote suggests, the value is related to the connection of the materiality of the formerly industrial objects and sites to the past.

Because the value, which turns the objects and buildings into (potential) heritage, is rooted in the connection to the past, it is both very general and particular at the same time. Because of that connection, the formerly industrial sites, buildings and edifices are valuable per se. As a conservationist specialising in industrial heritage told me rather sharply: "technical and industrial heritage is an inseparable part of cultural treasure". She then continues eloquently: "for long, [it was] overlooked, because [...] heritage conservation developed based on art history and archaeology. This resulted in an interest in castles, chateaux, church monuments, etc." And after a historical overview³⁵ she exclaims: "The value, value of industrial heritage. [Me: Yes?] An inseparable part of our national treasure ..."

While the value can go unquestioned on a general level, it is at the same time very concrete. As the quote from the Curator suggests, the value of the formerly industrial sites is rooted in the very particular history – that of Kladno, its rise in prominence due to intense and continuous industrialization without which the city would not come into existence. In this respect, the buildings and areas are valuable because of the connection to the past in general; they do have a value due to the connection to the time passed, which is however a very particular part of a concrete historical course. As the Conservationist indicates, industrial heritage, or the sites that can become heritage, are of the same value as other monuments such as castles or churches, exactly because they all can stand for the past in the present. However, to acknowledge the value of industrial monuments(-to-be), one has to start seeing value in something that until short before used to be commonplace. In the times of abrupt change brought about by deindustrialization, the danger of disappearance grounded in the fact that industry ceases to be part of the present and becomes part of the past results in a

³⁵ See footnote no. 32.

heightened sensitivity towards the value in something that used not to be (seen as) valuable.

This heightened sensitivity, appears at a specific time and in specific places, such as in deindustrialized Kladno. The newly emerging sensitivity becomes a part of a paradoxical situation. In Kladno, but – as I showed in the previous chapter based on visual representations – in Ostrava as well as elsewhere around the country, the city represented by the City Hall refuses to acknowledge and embrace its industrial past due to historical connotations. Deindustrialization allows for this past to be repressed because the material traces of industry, which is becoming a matter of the past rather than the present, are continually erased. This refusal of the past however happens in the times of emerging heightened sensitivity to industrial remains which become the signs for the past and thus valuable. The industrial past is on one hand repressed and suppressed. On the other, it is embraced and revalued. In Kladno, this paradoxical situation leads to emergence of local activism. As one of the member of locally active initiatives with activities revolving among other things around industrial past of Kladno summarized:

“For me, Kladno, well the reason why we organize activities here, somehow and of different quality, is that Kladno is a city that painfully searches for itself. And so we have had a feeling for some time now that in a way we have to help it. And that searching for itself is not only [a result of] a contradictory attitude towards the present, but I think, it is a matter of not coming to terms with the past.”

As in the quote from the Curator, here again the matter of the past and especially acknowledging the industrial history of Kladno represents a key issue. While the concerns are about the past and its survival into the present in the form of monuments, material objects in which the traces of the past activities and events can be made evident, the concerns are about the future of the city and in turn about its identity. As a city that rose out of coal mines and ironworks, to borrow the words of the Curator, Kladno is seen by my informants as losing its groundings with deindustrialization. These concerns, which are in fact about the city becoming severed from its roots and thus also from the source of its identity, are in fact about the present and future of the city. As a young photographer from Kladno communicated to me:

Since the privatization of the Poldi factory and deindustrialization, “Kladno has no history as a city. Here used to be mining and smelting and that is what ma[de] Kladno famous. [...] If you ask somebody eighteen years old [...what Poldi is], then plenty would say ‘I don’t know what Poldi is’. If I ask ... or if I tell somebody that I am from Kladno, they can’t associate anything with Kladno.”

The heightened sensitivity for the past in the form of the remnants left after deindustrialization is not nostalgic for the return of industry. In other words, the concerns that represent a result of a specific situation in which Kladno is to be found after the demise of industry are not directly related to socio-economic issues, to worries about prosperity and future economic developments. Although economy and prosperity might play their roles, the concerns and the underlying sensitivity is related to a perceived discontinuity with the past, which makes the city and urban spaces emptied of contents and meanings and thus impacts on the identity of the city as well as its inhabitants; identity, which if not connected to the past would be difficult to envisage and cultivate. After all, as the Activist told me, when living somewhere and becoming interested in the place(s) you live, “you cannot ask about the future. Seeking the present and the past is probably the only thing you can do when you explore the surroundings.”

And when I ask about the role the past should play in the present of the city and its life, he continues thoughtfully:

“Well, it [the past] should be in harmony, so as it would not be ... well, I have a feeling that Kladno tries to write a new era in terms of ‘there used to be industry, industry is over and we go on, continue to exist and will exist in a different and novel way’. And in a way, ‘what used to be is of no interest to us’. But for me, organic work with history is substantial. And it happens at Mayrau³⁶, but still in a kind of an institutionalized way, you see. For me, there is simply plenty of interesting things, such as here in the city centre [...] there is quite a lot of remnants of coalmining. And I think, if there was will, one could come up with plenty of interesting things also from the point of view of tourism. [...] These are of course fanciful ideas [because of the inactive or resentful approach of the City Hall], but I still think that the city cannot fully get rid of the past. It cannot be without it.”

The value of industrial remains is closely linked to the perception of the past as an important resource for establishing and maintaining what the Activist refers to as the identity of the city. In the case of Kladno, the material remnants of former industrial production stand for industry of the past and in turn for the past that made the city what it used to be and impacted profoundly on what it is now. The acknowledgement of this metonymy, the fact that the given materiality stands for

³⁶ *Open-air mining museum at the former coal mine Mayrau near Kladno, now a part of the Regional museum – Sládečkovo vlastivědné muzeum v Kladně.*

the past of the city, is an act of embracing the past due to the emergent heightened sensitivity towards the value in the particular materiality. Because industry in Kladno became – for the large part – the matter of the past, the remains, if seen as historical monuments, function as anchors to the past and allow for the past to be embraced and worked upon as a source of local identity. What is however important, is the emphasis put on the materiality of the industrial monuments. During my research, I interviewed an architect, who is active in campaigning for protection of the area of the former foundry of Koněv so as something reasonable would happen there, to borrow the words from Benjamin Frágner from the very beginning of this subchapter. When I asked him what role the remains of industrial production should play in the future, he hesitated at first, “I guess ...”, but then continued:

“It is not a small part, they should be something like a reminder of the time passed. That, on the very spot, 150 years ago, there used to be a foundry producing iron and that, I don’t know, ten generations of people worked hard there and ... and something like that. So leave a trace there. And the question is, if to leave the trace is to name the road ‘Furnaces’ or something like that. But that is not enough for me. It could be for someone ... But I say, I am rather ... well materialist. So I wouldn’t be satisfied with just a street name, I need to see the matter, there.”

Here, the Urbanist puts emphasis on both the materiality of the remains and their function as an anchor to the past. At least for him, these two cannot be so easily separated. While he relativizes the need for the reminders to be material by suggesting that immaterial reminders can be enough “for someone”, when I noted that the materiality seems important, he nodded, “well, it is more” when in bricks and mortar. Again, the value of the industrial remains is readily acknowledged and presupposed. The connection to the past makes the material objects valuable. The connection is perceived as harboured by the matter of the objects. I believe it is the matter from the past that makes the objects metonymically stand for the past and turns them into (potential) monuments.

I assert that the perception of the industrial remains as valuable and the heightened sensitivity towards them and their connection to the past permeate the (post)industrial landscape of Kladno. This sensibility lies in behind the interviews I conducted with people active in Kladno. It is because this sensitivity is shared across the group of those active and involved in re-negotiation of what Kladno could be and hence it permeates much of what has been going on in Kladno with respect to the industrial heritage, history and industrial past in general.

The activities are diverse and not necessarily directly focused on industry and industrial past. They however often revolve around them, also because of the personal alliances and multiple involvements of the people in behind. Here I refer to the activities and intentions of the associations of Kladno-Záporno (Positive-Negative), Arteum, Kladno minulé (Kladno of the past), and Huť Koněv (Foundry Koněv) in particular as well as to events and co-operation under the umbrella of the Industrial biennale.³⁷

Huť Koněv (Foundry Koněv), founded in 2007, is an association devoted to the issue of industrial areas, their potential revitalization and their potential for future development of Kladno with particular attention paid to the area of the former Adalbert's foundry/foundry Koněv. The members gather information about the history of the area, actively engage in the negotiations of the future developmental plans, organize architectural competitions for gathering uncommon ideas, and attempt at helping to "something reasonable to happen" to the area, which "has an image of an unsafe, dirty, polluted and revolting part of the city. Despite/or because of this fact, the area has (created) its own genius loci – rough romance and certain appeal. Due to the buildings still in existence in the area which remembers the glory of the steel working in Kladno or even helped it to happen. Their state is usually bleak. They tacitly await the appreciation of their significance and uniqueness – their second life". To stimulate the second life which would be based on the appreciation of the value of the area due to the fact that the materiality "remembers" the glorious past, the association also created an educational trail through the area with concrete panels with information about the past and present scattered around (img. 45).

³⁷ *There are of course other initiatives and clubs active in the city of Kladno, such as various musical bodies (an orchestra, bands), amateur theatre companies, and many more. But for the negotiations over the present with respect to the past and the industrial history of the city, the associations mentioned here are crucial because they explicitly open the questions related to industry and its role in the shaping of the city.*



Img. 45 One of the panels of the educational trail with the coking plant in behind, 2011, photo by author

Kladno minulé (Kladno of the past) is a project mapping the past of the city mainly through the old photographs and related narratives gathered at the webpages titled “Reading not only about coal and steel”. As the authors publicly proclaim, the aim of the project is “to enliven the history of the city, to contribute to the

creation of common cultural values and bring impulses for discussion into the life of the city. The past of the city of Kladno is particular in many aspects. By Czech standards, it is relatively short and formed for the large part by the industrial era. For many people, Kladno is historically uninteresting. The project Kladno of the past should prove the contrary.”³⁸ Founded originally by the association Kladno-Záporo (Positive-Negative) in 2008, it is now operated by the association Halda (Heap)³⁹ and maintained in close connection to other similar projects such as Kladenský uhelný revír (Coal district of Kladno)⁴⁰ specializing on coal mining history of the region, or Kladno literární (Literary Kladno)⁴¹ focusing on the past and present of literature (literary culture and its production) in Kladno.

Arteum is another association focusing on the cultural sphere. It strives “to remind people of the industrial past of the city and to help enliven the industrial monuments in the Kladno region.”⁴² Since its foundation in 2002, it has been organizing art and musical events, conferences on industrial heritage, guided tours, and published a number of monographs and catalogues devoted predominantly to industrial past. In time, it shifted towards organizing exhibitions in unusual, often industrial spaces, but also co-organizing jazz evenings.

Kladno-Záporo (Positive-Negative) is an association devoted to publishing a cultural revue of the same name about Kladno and often plays thematically with its industrial past, ambiguous present and uncertain future. The name of the association and of the journal, published approximately twice a year, is a pun on the name of the city. While etymologically, the origins of the name “Kladno” are unclear, it sounds as an artificially constructed noun derived from an adjective “positive” (“kladný”). “Záporo”, then, is similarly constructed from an adjective “negative” (“záporný”). The pun thus plays on the contemporary ambiguity of the

³⁸ See the webpages <http://www.kladnominule.cz/o-projektu> (accessed 18 Sep, 2015).

³⁹ See the webpages <http://www.haldaknih.cz/> (accessed 18 Sep, 2015).

⁴⁰ See the webpages <http://hornictvi.kladnominule.cz/> (accessed 18 Sep, 2015).

⁴¹ See the webpages <http://www.literarnikladno.cz/> (accessed 18 Sep, 2015)

⁴² See the webpages <http://arteum.org/> (accessed 18 Sep, 2015).

city, which seeks its future shape.⁴³ The association was established in 2006 as a direct outcome of the experience of the Industrial biennale in 2005 and continued to be active until 2012, when the publishing of the journal was discontinued: “We are taking a break. When will the next Kladno-Záporno be published? We do not know. We missed the autumn 2012 issue – there was no money, ideas, energy. It might be that these components will come together once again in the future.”

These and other associations form a part of a cultural scene in Kladno. Although differing in scope and focus, they are personally interconnected and share a common emphasis. They all more or less emphasise the past and work with the specificities of the history of Kladno. In general, what these activities share, is a heightened sensitivity towards the (industrial) past and consequent belief in its potential to form the present and the future of the city, on material but also social and cultural levels, and its cultural, social life.

They all were founded in 2000s, in the times of the abrupt disappearance of industry, and they all are somehow related to the Industrial biennale in 2005, either personally or as a source of inspiration. I personally missed the Industrial biennale in 2005, which turned in the interviews into a nearly mythical event, a key impulse for further activities and involvement of my informants, a climax of the interest in and concerns about industrial remains boiling under the surface for some time then. The already quoted Conservationist, who took part in the preparations of the Industrial biennale from the very beginning, recalled in length the events:

“The point was the biennale was not meant as a conference but as taking advantage of the potential that lies in the industrial heritage, in the old factories. So, we managed to get the sort of alternative theatres there and the effects were unbelievable. That was special at one of the biennales. Also, when we organised the biennale, the first one was here in Prague. We were really happy to have 80 people. ... [In the following years] we connected the biennale with cities. [...] This is in fact how we got to the theatre-makers, I mean those that were interested. [...] so should I get back to Kladno, there was at the biennale..., what was it called...there was a play set at the iron and steel works. [...] You drove in through gatehouse no. 1 and in the first hall on the left, there was a regular buffet, just a normal kiosk of [the sort of workers’ kiosks] ... There was an exhibition by high

⁴³ *The motto of the journal reads “a revue, not only positive [“kladná”] and not only for Kladno”. For more information about the activities and for the contents of the journals, see the webpages at <http://www.kladno-zaporno.cz/> (accessed 18 Sep., 2015).*

school students and it finished with scans of originals from Larks on a String and other stuff written by Hrabal when he ..., you know, those poems of his. And from there a bus left, which took on the audience and drove through the dark ... it was at night and we floodlit various industrial recesses and there was some programme. So, for instance, when you got out, there was an announcement ... and we were shown around by a tea lady and a maintenance guy, they were students, and as you got off they would say "please, do not step to your right, there is a hole, you know we pulled Franta out of there, he fell in yesterday". The comments were great and the second part was that we got on a train, they borrowed the Posázavský Pacifik [historic] train, and off we went. The tracks were still in place back then. There was the circle line, the inner line was OK. There was a theatre performance going on, there was an accordionist and then, all of a sudden, a girl ran by, she was the engine driver, and she said "and now please everyone goes to the right, a meter of tracks is missing here, so we need to balance out the train" and they made the people go crazy. Then we got off at Maďarka [rolling mill hall]⁴⁴ and there was a Hungarian Gipsy woman playing the violin. She was dressed up as a Gipsy woman but she was a conservatoire student. So that was amazing. I don't know what music she played. And it all finished at the symbol, today it is the last symbol, except for the iron ore storage, at the three lime kilns. There was a guitar player and people got off and he played a concert guitar in that atmosphere. Those were some incredible experiences. It was sold out that week. There were two shows. People from Prague came as they learned about it from others and it was the first time attention was drawn to the potential of the industrial [heritage in Kladno]."

The industrial biennale of 2005 in Kladno is remembered as a colourful, vivid experience, an extraordinary event which in the narratives takes on a nearly mythical form. The lengthy quote above communicates the delight of taking part in or being witness to the event, fascinating because of the connection of literary and cultural references, theatrical performances and visual experience framed by industrial remains. In recollections, the 2005 biennale becomes an ideal of enlivening the industrial spaces and producing unforgettable memories and experiences, an ideal that is rather difficult to repeat.

Being an extraordinary, fascinating experience for the participants, it served as a source of inspiration for engagement in reframing and renegotiating industrial

⁴⁴ *Maďarka means "Hungarian" and the hall was called so because the rolling mill should originally been located in Hungary; it is the hall that collapsed in 2007*

heritage in Kladno, an energising impulse for many of those who took part in future activities of diverse civic associations that deal with the industrial past. As the Urbanist explained to me, one of the impulses for him was the destruction of Maďarka factory hall, the one that collapsed in 2007 on the scrap metal scavengers killing two. But the other, initial impulse to take part in activities around industrial remains, it was the 2005 biennale. It forms an inseparable part of his journey towards the active interest in the industrial heritage. As he explains, “it was the same year I came to Koněv [foundry area] for the first time. And I was doing a project [an architectural study] about the lime kilns and in the autumn, there was the biennale.” And then he asks me, “I don’t know if you were there,” and I have to admit, that “I wasn’t there. I was at the next one.” And so he exclaims, “it was like spectacular.”

When I was doing interviews with my informants, active in public involvement in Kladno, the question about the 2005 biennale surfaced very often. To admit that I could not take part in it felt as if I did not belong to a privileged group of people who were there, at a mythical moment of rebirth of something important – of an interest in industrial history and in the industrial past of the city as well as of a heterogeneous and fluid group of active people. The 2005 biennale thus figures in the narratives as a colourful memory, a source of inspiration, an impulse for active involvement as well as a climax of publicly expressed interest in industrial remains in Kladno and a surrounding region. The Activist summarizes the latter by claiming:

“But that is a pity, or I see as a bit of a loss, that no one ever succeeded in repeating the event. I mean, what happened at the biennale in 2005 and the scope at which it happened, it did not happen again at the next biennale. There were attempts, there were mine tours, it was amazing, but actually the atmosphere that was there in 2005, it somehow ... somehow faded away.”

In our interview, he repeatedly returned to the 2005 biennale so as to compare the situation then and today or ponder the developments that were ignited by the biennale. The biennale thus can stand as a sign for a shift of the general attitude towards industrial remains (in Kladno) in a sense that it was an event in which the heightened sensitivity towards the industrial past got its first expression, successful and memorable one. As the activist muses:

“I think that the wave of disinterest [in industrial heritage] ended in 2005 and in the Industrial biennale then, at least in the minds of some people. And now, a wave of gradual interest slowly starts which will take 20 – 30 years, and after that it is possible to start working with it further.”

It is a certain paradox that the 2005 biennale functioned both as a starting point for a lot of what happened in the following years with respect to industrial heritage and a climax of interest from which onwards the enthusiasm and concerns slowly fade away. Even the city was moved in favour of its industrial past and its material remains:

“And with respect to the approach of the city, I don’t know, I have this feeling that in 2005, there was a sort of a wave of enthusiasm and the wave continued on. There was a guide book about industrial monuments published, Central-west it was called or something like that.⁴⁵ Some maps were published. Here and there the city supported something. Well, and then, it faded away, this wave of interest. And I have this feeling that the city just ticked off that ‘we did something and now let’s leave it to the institutions that are meant to deal with it, and leave it to the Mayrau [coal mining museum], so that they there take care of it. And that was the end of it. Which is a pity.”

This fading away of a public interest in the sense of the support from the side of the city and especially the City Hall, is a sign of and at the same time a reason for a further decline of the original enthusiasm. As an artist, who took part in the 2005 biennale, cooperated with the Mayrau museum since 2002, co-founded the Arteum association and initiated a number of events in and around industrial spaces, explained to me when we met at a restaurant after the Industrial biennale in 2011:

“I believe that the attitude of the city has changed. I don’t know, the mayor [of the city of Kladno] did not appear at any event [of the 2011 biennale]. In the past, he used to open the biennale, he was interested. Now, he has other priorities.” I ask whether it is still the same person throughout the years and she nods, “Yes. ... I understand that when something is not moving anywhere and one cannot get money out of it that he loses interest. So ... there is no one in the city [hall] who would personally [push it through] ...”

And thus the activities shift, the old associations dissolve or “take a break” and new ones emerge, the enthusiasm dissipates and the interests refocus on other issues. Partly, it is “because some things will not budge,” as the Artist says, and describes her reasons for dissatisfaction and turning away from industrial issues:

⁴⁵ *He means the book titled Industrial trails through the Bohemian Mid-west (Dvořáková and Šenberger 2005)*

“I concentrate now on my own things. After this biennale [in 2011], I have this feeling that it is not possible to do it like this anymore, that we meet all the time only the same people and I don't know ... it does not satisfy me anymore. [...] Take the conference [which was part of the 2011 biennale]. I was telling myself, it was nothing new. I did a conference before, I don't know, in 2005 and there were over 100 people and one could see that there was something at stake there. And now, I have this feeling that it is about nothing [...] that what I want from the people, what I want to tell them, I am only telling the people who have already heard it.”

These last quotes attest to the fact that there has been a development on the level of activities and involvement of the people attempting at actively shaping a post-industrial landscape of the deindustrialised city of Kladno. The changes to the materiality of the landscape brought about by deindustrialization sparked interest in the material and spatial remains of former industrial production. The sudden and unanticipated possibility and threat of disappearance of the objects, edifices and spaces that are due to their materiality connected to the not so distant industrial past of the city tapped into an emerging sensitivity to the past. As a result, there is a specific emotionality engulfing the post-industrial landscape of Kladno, emotionality which is grounded in fascination on one hand and concerns on the other.

The sensitivity towards a particular industrial portion of the past imbues the material remains of the past with specific value, which is rooted in the idea of the remnants becoming a metonymy for the past and which is at the same time accentuated by the threat of the destruction of the remnants understood as a loss of the connection to the past. The concerns over the industrial remnants-turned-monuments growing out of the heightened sensitivity to the past are however closely linked to the concerns about the present and the future of the city and its shape and form, not only material but also substantial. In other words, the interest in and engagement over the material elements in the city are in fact an expression of involvement in the shaping of the meaning related to the city and its perceived identity.

The interest in the industrial remains and more importantly the extent of involvement and engagement of people and associations fluctuates; there are shifts and developments directly unrelated to the materiality but rather linked to the social, cultural and personal possibilities of involvement and the actual political openness to change. What happens to Kladno, and especially to the formerly industrial spaces and places, on a material level is very much related to what happens on a political, social and cultural as well as personal level; this is of course nothing surprising. It however underscores the fact that in behind the

post-industrial landscape of Kladno at a given (present) moment, there is a multiplicity of stories, temporalities of not only material but also personal, social and political nature. These can be only vaguely related and unparalleled but their interconnection makes the landscape what it is.

At present, the post-industrial landscape of Kladno is very emotional. As the example of the 2005 Industrial biennale and the narratives about it show, the fascination with and the concern for formerly industrial spaces stems from personal encounters with them. The accounts of the biennale as well as of the reasons why those actively involved took part in the negotiation of the meaning and future of the post-industrial landscape show the emotionality of the landscape and its connection to personal experience which is, at least in part, of aesthetical nature. And it is the aesthetics of the encounter with the past concealed in industrial remains to which I am to turn next.

Experiencing the past

In spring 2008, when I went to explore again the area of the foundry Koněv, I noticed I was not alone. Usually, once in a while, somebody would walk through the area, a worker heading to work or a scavenger pushing his trolley with scrap metals. This time, it was different. I could see people here and there strolling through the dilapidating structures, positioning their tripods or looking through their cameras. A group of photographers came from a 120 km distant town (of Lanškroun), as they said, “to document the state of it all because in a couple of years it won’t be here” (img. 46). They crowd the usually sleepy area with activity. In retrospect, they also pointed me to a very important area of inquiry. From our chat, it stood out that what they became focused on after their arrival, and what they in a sense attempted to capture, was the “ravages of time”. And it is a particular connection of formerly industrial spaces and time that underlies much of the interest in industrial remains and to which I would like to devote this subchapter.



Img. 46 One of the photographers from Lanškroun measuring the light conditions in the derelict iron ore storage, 2008, photo by author

I have shown that past, and the perceived connection of industrial remains to past, plays an important role in the emotionality that infuses contemporary post-industrial landscape of Kladno. However, an important aspect of this connection

to the past, and thus also of the re-evaluation of industrial remains as something valuable and interesting, is the way in which this connection is materialised in the formerly industrial spaces and objects. What I want to argue in the rest of this chapter is that the emotionality of contemporary post-industrial landscape, which is fed by the heightened sensitivity towards the past, is an aesthetically grounded phenomenon. In other words, the emotions related to industrial remains are closely linked to aesthetic experience – embodied and thus multisensory with visual aspects playing an important role.

The above quoted accounts of the 2005 biennale attest to the interconnection of emotions and aesthetics when it comes to industrial monuments. The biennale was “like splendid” among other things because it was an aesthetically unique experience with the industrial buildings and objects lit up by colourful lights and the “incredible atmosphere” of the night performances. The experience of the 2005 biennale is that of surprise, fascination and awe. I believe it is remembered as unique because it resonated with a more general experience of industrial remains and underscored a common feature of encounters with industrial remnants - its aesthetical nature. One young photographer from Kladno told me how the experience of the Industrial biennale, the one in 2007, attracted him to industrial remains as a topic of photographic exploration:

“Because of the biennale two years ago, there I actually ... I actually really fell for industrial themes, because I could see that ‘oh God, somebody is interested in it’ [...] the two months were full, one had to choose from three events a day where to go. And they were more varied, they had a much better drive, were much more innovative [than in 2011]. For example, you could organize a concert in the chain cloakroom in Mayrau [the mining museum]. That was an absolutely wonderful thing, you could climb up the mining tower and look around and all those [buildings] were lit up from the outside. And it was great.”

The lighting of the industrial buildings underscores their visual properties. Here, in the visual character of formerly industrial spaces and objects, lies the source of emotions that imbue industrial remains. The encounter with them is emotional. The events such as Biennale play on the emotional nature of the encounter by emphasising the features and characters and preparing the settings for moods and emotions to get hold of the visitors. This is however made possible only because in a certain socio-historical situation, when industry suddenly receded from the present to the past, a specific sensibility occurred which framed the remains of industry aesthetically and emotionally.

The industrial remains are seen and experienced as fascinating. The Young Photographer explains:

“What fascinates me about the industrial [remains] is the architecture as such, it is possible to say that one feels so tiny with respect to the buildings. And this arouses interest, it aroused my interest, because I am talking about myself. This aroused my interest, the fact that I stand in front of something that I cannot figure out how it works. I had to get to it in time, but ... that is where the interest about industrial architecture comes from.”

The buildings and spaces are not beautiful in a traditional sense. The encounter with them is rather a sublime experience, an encounter with something that transcends the particular moment in the present, because of its immediate connection to the past, as well as the very observer, because of its greatness rooted in its form but also in its mysteriousness.⁴⁶ The large dilapidating structures in the area of the former Koněv foundry in Kladno became sublime in the times when industry for the large part left the city. The sublimity stems from the material properties, which however are found in a specific socio-historical context when industry is being forgotten and moves away from the everyday experience. The Urbanist expressed this when he mused about the nature of industrial remains and what makes them valuable and interesting:

“I would divide it, I’d say ... the physical parameters, these are the heights and lengths, which you normally don’t see in the city, and depths. It is, mostly, the depth that fascinates [you]. ... And then, the mysteriousness, because who comes there for the first time, doesn’t know how it functioned, what it was built for. So, the mysteriousness of this. The situation [the current state]. And all these are physical properties of the objects [buildings]. And then, there is something inner, I say psychological, that we somehow feel that an epoch is drawing to a close or has already ended. And this is harder for me to dissect, I am not a philosopher ... But I feel it like this, inside, though I cannot express it [better].”

Contrary to the Urbanist himself, I think he expressed the complexity of the emotionality of the industrial remains in post-industrial times (of Kladno) very aptly. The buildings and spaces are felt sublime because of their material properties, their enormous and surprising heights, lengths and depths as well as

⁴⁶ Here I draw on Burke’s idea of beauty as something that inspires feelings of tenderness and affection and of sublime, which grows out of an ecstasy or terror that fills the mind completely and is induced by certain characteristics, attributes of an object or scenery such as obscurity, power, darkness, vacinity, silence, vastness, magnitude, infinity, difficulty and magnificence (Nye 1994, 6).

because of their current state of dilapidation and decay. The sole material character would however not be enough to entice so strong and profound emotions of fascination and awe. I want to argue that industrial remains are sublime not because of their materiality per se, but because the materiality in its current state stands metonymically for something more profound. In his attempt to grasp this deeper, semiotic role of industrial remains, the Urbanist, without knowing so, paraphrases Andreas Huyssen, who argues that industrial ruins are infused with emotions, nostalgia in particular, because of their connection to the past and its promises and dreams of a better future which however never came true and are now present as ruins and decaying materiality (Huyssen 2006).

The sublimity of (post)industrial spaces is related to their mysteriousness which in turn stems from the fact that these spaces are wrenched from the present and while existing here and now they are engulfed in the past about which we know only a little. Moreover, what is part of the present bears traces of the past and of plunging into it. Dereliction and decay are processes of transition from the present into the past, but also of transformation of what has been of human origin into natural realm. These add to the emotional and aesthetical dimension of industrial remains. As the Activist expressed it, the attractiveness of such (post)industrial spaces might grow out of “our unconscious human fascination with how something we created is disappearing suddenly. And, that natural forces take it back. Which might be one of the things that tempt me to go there regularly. You cannot get to new places, but every time they look different because here and there something becomes overgrown, something falls down, and some places you cannot walk through anymore.”

I completely understand what he said. After all, the dynamics of the area, the inner life and the processes at play, especially those of dereliction and decay, fascinated me throughout the whole research. At the same time, however, I felt sad about the changes. The emotionality of the place in my case became for some time embedded in a feeling of being powerless face to face the unstoppable change. It inhibited me and my research for some time before I overcame it and became more indifferent. I asked the Activist also about that:

“Well, for me it is sometimes rather painful, the fact that I come there and find there something different, find that somebody dismantled a hall for example and built there some,” and here he interrupted me:

“But that is a human force, that is a harmful force. But then, there is also the thing that you always go to the coking plant, which is the same all the time, only the climbing plants spread over the whole wall and do not cover anymore only half of it, and the stairs, that you could climb, you cannot climb anymore because they

are overgrown with something. And, maybe, I don't know, maybe there is a strange fascination with apocalypse of a sort or apocalyptic vision of the world. Because you can watch there what happens when people have completely disappeared. And it doesn't take long, does it? It has been 20 – 30 years since nobody has been in Koněv [the foundry area] and nature is taking it back. And after all, the things that emerge there through the kind of harmonious coexistence of the matter brought there by humans and nature, which takes it back, are simply fascinating.”

The (post)industrial spaces (of Kladno) left to their fate are embedded in processes that go beyond the reach and influence of humans. This makes them part of a new urban wilderness; they are uncontrollable, or at least hardly manageable, and the interconnection of various processes that take place there is conspicuous, much more than in other urban settings (Gibas 2008). However, to appreciate them aesthetically and experience the aesthetics and materiality as emotionally positive, to perceive them as beautiful or sublime, requires adopting a detached and distanced perspective. Such a move is facilitated by the perception of industrial remains as signs for the past and as material objects in which the transition of something of the present into something of the past can be readily evidenced. The perceived direct material link of these spaces to the past together with the acuteness of the transition materialized as decay and dereliction lie in behind the strong emotionality of formerly industrial areas such as the foundry Koněv.

“But [the foundry] Koněv impresses everyone. It is a kind of a satisfying locality ... It can simply impress anyone,” says the Urbanist. And so I ask, “What makes it so fascinating?” And he replies:

“I think the primary impression is that of an unbelievable devastation of the place. That is what you, even though you know you are going to an industrial area, you don't expect it to look as horrible as it looks. So that is I believe the first impression you get. And only after that you might, or you might not, start catching the surviving industrial objects and admiring, enjoying them. But for somebody, it might be just the impression of devastation that suppresses everything else.”

“But if it impresses you, then it is a positive emotion, isn't it,” I remark.

“Well, it is the devastation alone that can impress you,” he laughs and after some time continues:

“And so, that is the first thing. But there is another thing related to that. And that is that you feel a kind of freedom there. That you can piss into a gutter and you

can smoke weed and toss the fag end. You don't dare to now in the city. And then you understand that you go to a plot that you know belongs to the city or state and that you go there and it is like private but you dare because you know nobody is there to kick you out and there is no reason why anyone would. And you see the characters there, the gipsy with a trolley passes by, and that makes it for me [interesting]. It is connected to the devastation because although the state of it is terrible at first sight, you can feel freedom there. A bit of free anarchy, maybe."

The encounter with (post)industrial spaces, the visit to and exploration of them is an emotional endeavour. To go to the Koněv foundry and see all the dereliction and decay is overwhelming. But after some time, the viewer can overcome this overwhelming impression and start to admire the view in more detail. The enjoyment comes from both the fact of being overwhelmed as well as the ability to overcome this. It is a sublime experience.⁴⁷ However, to enjoy it, to feel the sublime emotions of fascination and awe, requires a certain level of detachment going hand in hand with a specific sensitivity. To admire a gipsy pushing a trolley full of scrap metal, to enjoy the view of him on the backdrop of dilapidating industrial structures calls for a detachment from his or her immediate socioeconomic situation. Similarly, to marvel at the dereliction of buildings formerly full of productive activity demands to ignore the socioeconomic realities masked by the appealing materiality – the loss of work for many, the struggles of the families suddenly without income, the profound change in the socioeconomic groundings of the city, or the nostalgic and proud sadness of those who spent lives in producing coal and steel and who suddenly found themselves wrenched out of their productive lives. The emotionality of post-industrial landscape of Kladno is in this sense romantic – emotionally exalted, primarily aesthetical, focused on the past and the remnants and signs of it in the present, politically and personally detached from the actual reality of those in and behind the admired landscape views, and re-produced in the acts of adventurous venturing into seemingly ungoverned spaces. As the Young photographer noted hinting at the underlying romantic background to the (post)industrial landscape and interest in it:

⁴⁷ *The experience of facing something vastly superior lies at the core of the idea of sublime as developed both by Burke and Kant. Burke emphasized the transcendental properties of natural objects while Kant accentuated the ability of the subject to overcome the initial overwhelming emotion so that the subject starts to feel superior, which is the source of the sublime experience. For a detailed discussion see (Nye 1994, chap. 1).*

“If people go to see ruins of castles nowadays, why couldn’t they go to see the ruins of coking plants?”

However, going to see the coking plants (in Kladno as well as elsewhere) resembles an adventurous expedition to experience a specific encounter with the past in the present. As the Young Photographer explained to me:

“I simply love it the most when the buildings live their own lives and you can admire them largely as they were built and they don’t change any more. Or if there are changes ... changes in the way the workers who worked there made it beautiful for themselves. [...] Like the inscriptions on the wall, ‘Charlie, throw it here!’ and things like that. So I like to look for such details. And it is as if I return back in time and that affects me the most, a kind of nostalgia and the genius loci of the place, I see it in these.”

I side-lined the topic a bit when I asked: “And do you think this would disappear if the buildings were renovated and modernized?”

“For sure,” he replied and moved to the issue of the conversion of industrial buildings. But after a couple of sentences, he returned to the experience in the current, not renovated post-industrial spaces:

“Because to discover the places there, not only here [in Kladno], but anywhere in the country, is the best there can be. But on the other hand, you are often even afraid to enter because the buildings dilapidate in a way that if the stairs give in under you[r weight], nobody will ever find you there.”

To go to post-industrial spaces and buildings is in a sense an act of adventurous exploration in which, due to the materiality of the buildings which is rooted in the past and exposed to the forces of nature, one can hope to encounter the time passed as well as the time passing by. It is adventurous because the spaces do not follow the rules of ordinary urban spaces, as Tim Edensor has suggested in his explorations of the sensory and material propensities of derelict industrial areas of Manchester (e.g. Edensor 2005a). What I would like to argue here is that the emotionality of the spaces stems from not only their connection to the past, from the embracing of the past these spaces stand for in the present, but also from them as readily experienced materiality, ever-changing, even dangerous materiality exposed to and worked upon by the ravages of time. To plunge into such emotionality, to discover such emotional overtones in the post-industrial landscape requires certain distance from the spaces explored and from the particular past they engender. It is, to certain degree, an aesthetical endeavour. To illustrate my point, I have to turn back to an interview with the local Historian

who talks about the way her parents have experienced the de-industrialization of Kladno:

“I can tell you for example that my father, he is 86, so he has ... he is a kind of mournful. Because I was the only one in the family who didn't work at the Poldi [factory], and they all had a very emotional attitude to it. And it made the old people really ... you know, [they have a] mournful relationship. [...] He worked as an economist, he is not any dimwit, but he has this mournful relationship. [...] [For me] it is him, an image of how bad the old people have been getting along with it [the deindustrialization/breakdown of the factory]. Because they saw that all their work, activity, efforts [...] It must be always terrible, such a blow given by the era when it all turns the other way round.”

By ‘the blow of the era’, the Historian refers to a sudden and abrupt change brought about by deindustrialization. What this remark unravels in an interesting way is the emotional charge of the deindustrialized landscape felt by the people who have been directly connected to it. My aim here is not to plunge into the issue deeper because the nostalgic, mournful emotionality would deserve much more of direct research. What I want to point out here is the difference in emotionality which I attribute to the different relationship to the (post)industrial spaces in question, relationship which is underscored by the closeness or distance between them and the people. As the Historian continues, a couple of minutes later when talking about one particular building in the deindustrialized and abandoned area of the former factory:

“Well, the people have psychological those [resentments?], which I understand. For example, my mother could not enter the house because she spent nearly her entire [working] life there and she has in mind an image of it, when it was full of people, equipment, when it functioned.”

In a sense, she is also (said by the Historian to be) mournful. While the closeness might make her feel nostalgic, it would not help to make her admire the mysteriousness of the now abandoned site or to enjoy the workings of time and nature on the building and find it sublime and positively emotional. The closeness prevents the aesthetical stance to be adopted. I understand the overall emotionality of (post)industrial landscape as it is expressed, experienced, employed and represented by my informants, heritage specialists, young civic activist, artists, photographers, to be rooted in a specific aesthetically informed understanding of the connection between the materiality and the past, or more generally between the materiality and time.

By embracing the past by means of acknowledging the connection between the materiality of formerly industrial buildings and spaces, these are transformed into the signs of the past and thus become the past materialized in the present. This does not mean that the (post)industrial areas and objects cannot – due to their connection to the glorious industrial past – stand as reminders of political and economic decisions (leading to deindustrialization) that have affected profoundly the socioeconomic reality of the city. However, the emphasis has been primarily put on the past and time, not on other issues that might find their expression and embodiment in the figure of decaying industrial areas. In such a move, although materially present and exposed to the happenings in the present, the (post)industrial areas become literary as well as metaphorically matter of the past. One older photographer I interviewed hinted at this when he explained why he used to be interested in exploring and photographing the industrial sites during the 1970s and 1980s and why he is not any more:

“You know, when I used to photograph the heaps and [around] the mines in the past, it was exciting because I was not really allowed to be there, I was not an employee you see, and they didn’t guard it that closely there at the Poldi [factory]. So I used to be happy about capturing some pictures without being seen, you see. I don’t know if anyone can understand, but it was a bit of an adventure for me, that I ventured into a kind of a forbidden world of sorts. And nowadays, for me, it just doesn’t have the [thrill] ... and it all, Poldi, Mayrau, as if it all fell asleep.”

It might seem surprising that while the Young photographer finds exploring the industrial areas that “fell asleep” adventurous due to their material condition, the Old photographer sees them as devoid of the adventure they used to hold. But it got clearer during the interview, when after an instant the Old photographer turned the subject to the contemporary photographers and others active around industrial heritage, ‘the young’, as he referred to them:

“... and we asked the professor, ‘what is antiquity’ and he said, ‘you know, antiquity is something you didn’t experience in your lifetime’. [...] So I think the young, they experience here a sort of seeking something which is very distant [in time]. And they look for clues of the past and have a chance and get happy when they find some traces there. I understand them. I know they want to find it and are glad they have it here and they want to save it. Because it is interesting that it is the young people who take care of saving it. The old don’t have that kind of relationship to it.”

While cryptic, the quote points out to a very important difference in the approach to and emotionality of the (post)industrial landscape. On one hand, there is

mourning about something that was present, has passed, is gone, cannot be revived and more importantly cannot be encountered any more in the present. What can be encountered, however, are the remains that painfully remind those who remember about what is gone. On the other hand, there is newly emerged sensitivity towards the past in the present which is not remembered in detail, and which is not to be revived but acknowledged and more importantly experienced in its present form. This sensitivity, I argue, has shaped the contemporary (post)industrial landscape (of Kladno), the activities that re-construct and re-negotiate it as well as its (photographic) representations.

There is plentiful of photographic representations of the (post)industrial areas of Kladno, namely of the Koněv foundry. As the Old photographer told me:

“When I looked at the webpages of some of the photographers from Kladno, or also from Prague, nearly everyone has a section on industrial remnants and Kladno’s foundries, the lime kilns especially and so on. Well, I find it good, you know, like good, but we won’t all be taking pictures of the same theme, shall we? [...] So I got detached a bit and I intentionally didn’t want to photograph the industry now, because I told myself ‘I won’t seek something I have already mapped when it was breathing, and won’t be doing the same theme as everybody.’”

Here, he again returns back to the difference between the times “when it was breathing” and when “it all fell asleep”. What he however point out, is the issue of “seeking” which I understand as an expression to account for the attractiveness of the places for photographers and explorers. What the photographs, exhibited at various photographer’s webpages, at exhibitions, and throughout the Internet, attempt at in general, I believe, is to capture the emotionality of the experience of the sublime felt when physically, bodily present at (post)industrial spaces where past and nature have been absorbing the still present remains of bygone industry. I too, being an enthusiast photographer, fell for the charms of (post)industrial areas in Kladno and especially the Koněv foundry with the lime kilns, iron ore storage and coking plant. When going there, I always took camera, different cameras at different times, small format or medium format black and white film as well as digital cameras, to document but also to capture the experience of the encounter with the place and its emotional charge.



Img. 47 "Only darkness in the furnaces" by Milan Sýkora

Source: <http://www.milansykora.net/>, accessed Sep. 30, 2015

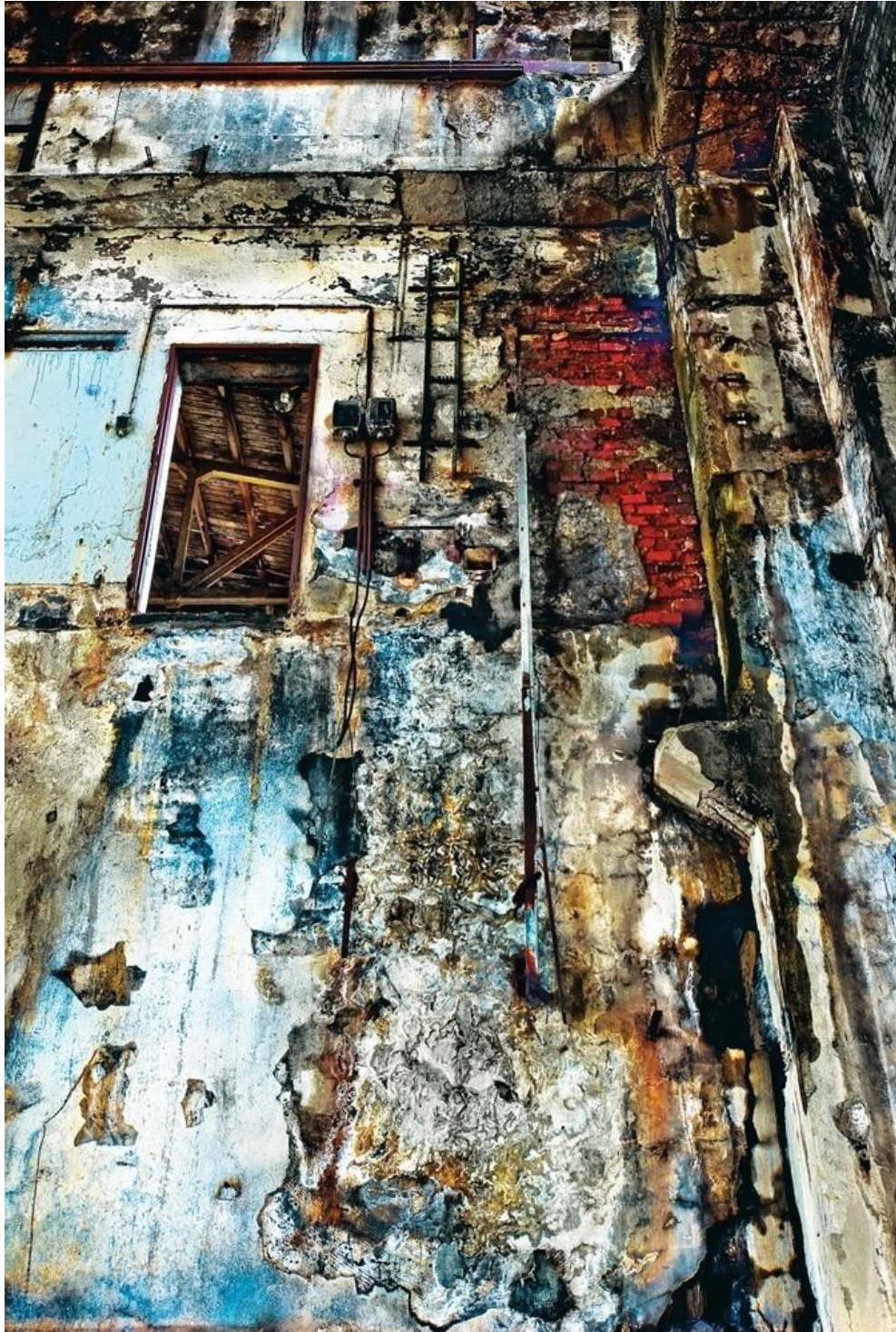
The photographs serve the purpose of capturing what is left of the past. Those, such as this one by Milan Sýkora, a lay photographer who explored the (post)industrial area of the Koněv foundry repeatedly around the year of 2006, can be understood as an expression of "seeking" the "antiquity", of seeking the traces of the bygone past in the present. By photographing it, the remnants of the past can be salvaged even in cases the materiality, such as the hall in the photograph, is dismantled and disappears for good. At the same time, however, the photographs are infused with and encircled by an emotionality that conforms to the one I have explored in this subchapter – the emotionality of sublime that springs out from the specific material attributes and conditions of the (post)industrial spaces. As Sýkora explained in one of the accompanying texts, the former factory "slowly but undoubtedly perishes – and so I ventured there again, so as to see something of it and preserve it ... It was adventurous: unexpected

holes in the ground, even less expectable people with pickaxes and hammers (and always numerous), places where height or depth takes one's breath away ...".⁴⁸

The attraction of the (post)industrial spaces comes not only from their connection to the once glorious past, but from the aesthetic properties of the past that has been in the making in the spaces at present and resulted in the unexpected, ungoverned and thus in adventurous, in aesthetically unusual juxtapositions of matter and more importantly of presences and absences. The order of things has been disappearing from (post)industrial spaces due to them being exposed to weather and nature, to "ravages of time" which makes the once solid and ordered materiality to dissipate and become porous (img. 47). The photograph below by Šimon Vejvančický, a photographer in behind the project called IndustryArt,⁴⁹ which concentrates on photographic exploration of (post)industrial sites in and around Kladno, more directly focuses on the ravages of time and the ensuing aesthetics. Here, the topic is not a matter of picturing a specific object surrounded by decay and thus standing for the slowly disappearing past which should be preserved at least by picturing it, but rather a matter of capturing the process of dissolving into the past as such (img. 48).

⁴⁸ See the photographer's webpages at <http://www.milansykora.net/2006/poldi2006.html> (accessed Sep. 30, 2015).

⁴⁹ See the webpages at <http://www.industryart.cz> (accessed Sep. 30, 2015) for examples of photographic exploration of (post)industrial landscape using various photographic means such as digital, large format photography, as well as instant Polaroid cameras. The diversity of the approaches can be seen as an attempt to come to terms photographically with the complex emotional and experiential nature of (post)industrial landscape.



Img. 48 An example of the aesthetisation of decay brought about by the ravages of time

Source: Photograph by Šimon Vejvančický, <http://www.industryart.cz>, accessed Sep. 30, 2015

Both the photographs represent examples of an attempt to photographically, visually represent the (post)industrial landscape with respect to its materiality but also to its experiential and emotional dimensions. And both the photographs, as well as the experiences I have explored in this subchapter, revolve around the connection of the materiality of the landscape – comprised of various spaces and places – and the past. What I attempted at showing is however the fact that the past plays a twofold role with respect to the re-evaluation of and interest in formerly industrial spaces like the foundry Koněv. Firstly, it is a time-space from where, how and why the present landscape emerged in the shape it has. Secondly, it is a process in which what is present has been continuously turned into something else – decayed, decomposed, absent. Both these aspects of how past is present in the (post)industrial landscape and their interconnection in the (post)industrial spaces form a source of the specific emotionality of the (post)industrial landscape.

The heightened sensitivity towards the past and the ensuing emotionality is grounded in the acknowledgment of this particular connection of formerly industrial spaces and places to the past and thus in turning them into a source of identity and a potential for future developments. This is a static idea of the past being present in the industrial areas and buildings. Such an idea is grounded in embracing the past and acknowledging the importance of the great time of industrialization to Kladno. The emotionality of the (post)industrial landscape springs partly from such acknowledgment.

However, the past is not static, it is not something that is formed and finished for good. On the contrary, it is very dynamic; it is a movement in which what is now is turned into what has been, to paraphrase Jane Rendell (Rendell 2007, 97–98). With respect to the emotionality of the (post)industrial landscape, this dynamic feature of the past as a process impacts profoundly on the materiality of the spaces in question and together with the architectural, spatial attributes, fundamentally contributes to their sublimity. While the industrial remains in Kladno can be rationally linked to the past, to embrace the past in them intertwines with the specific experience which is not only related to space, their material, spatial features, but also to time that has been impacting on those features constantly. In sum, (post)industrial landscape is not only a landscape of the time passed, a landscape of monuments that point to some bygone era. It is also landscape of the time passing by. While this might be said about any landscape, it is the (post)industrial spaces, buildings and objects that due to the very specific sociohistorical context of the present make this feature of landscape to stand out. The specific emotionality of formerly industrial spaces, buildings and objects reside in the fact that an encounter with industrial remains is a twofold

encounter with time: with the time passed materialized in the presence of (post)industrial monuments and with the process of dereliction, disappearance and above all unmediated workings of “the ravages of time”, as the group of photographers I met in the Koněv foundry back in 2007 suggested.

Conclusion: Landscape between past and present

After the fall of socialism, industry in Kladno struggled and then abruptly and relatively suddenly for a large part disappeared. The city deindustrialized which impacted on socioeconomic situation of its inhabitants, the majority of who used to be tied to industrial production, material composition of the city and its surroundings, as well as symbolic and thus in turn also political imaginaries of the city, its character, potential and future. The buildings and sites related to industrial production of the recent past have been since then left to their fate, and after some time become key element in re-imagining the potential future of the city. They testify the change of the form, shape and content of the landscape of Kladno which used to be industrial and is no longer such.

On the side of the city representatives, industrial past of the city has been seen as something not fully wanted due to its supposed and unambiguous interconnection to Czechoslovakian socialism. Moreover, as the sites were abandoned and left on its own, they become dilapidated, ungoverned and although often located in the very city perceived as a foreign, uncontrollable and dangerous element preventing the development of the city into an agreeable, clean and safe quasi-suburbia of Prague, the nearby capital of the Czech Republic. Such an official approach to formerly industrial areas combined with complicated ownership of the sites in question led to further neglect on both material and symbolic level.

Decayed and dilapidating, soon after the demise of traditional, coal and steel industry in Kladno, the areas and sites have started to attract attention due to their aesthetical qualities and historical values. Heritage conservationists, photographers, local activists and after some time a wider general public started to re-appraise the value of the (post)industrial sites and the material elements, buildings, edifices, objects, etc., these consist of. By means of diverse activities, they push for a change in perception of (post)industrial landscape and its constitutive elements and with them also of the past, which is seen as harboured there.

Throughout this chapter, I explored the complex nexus of ideas and emotions related to the (post)industrial sites in Kladno. I argued that they are perceived by locally active citizens and specialists as valuable due to their imagined direct connection to the past. Areas such as the foundry Koněv, a large brownfield at the very heart of the city which contains the most iconic edifices such as the three lime kilns now protected as cultural heritage are conceived of and represented as a past materialized. Mining towers, smokestacks, factory halls, foundries, they all

reference back to the time passed. It is thus necessary to find them, explore them, document them, and also in the most important cases to protect them. Due to their direct connection to the past, the loss of such objects, buildings and sites does not only represent a loss of historically valuable object, but also of a material anchor to the past, of a possibility to directly relate to the past.

Because the (post)industrial sites are thanks to their materiality perceived as directly referencing the past, they become places of social contestation and dynamic, on-going construction and negotiation of ideas about the past and in connection to that also about the present and future of the city. To draw on Margaret Rodman, they become “the temporary grounding of ideas” (Rodman 1992, 652) and, as I showed based on the interviews, personal experience and visual representations, also of particular emotions related to those ideas.

A particular emotionality pervades the (post)industrial landscape of Kladno. This emotionality is related to the fact that the landscape emerged as a result of abrupt and to an extent unforeseen change leading to a danger of disappearance of the formerly commonly present material elements – industrial sites – that turn into anchors to the past. But it is also related to peculiar material features of those sites, architectural and material character, heights, widths, depths, inherited from the past as well as acquired due to the ongoing changes brought about by neglect and decay. What I argue is that while the emotionality of (post) industrial landscape stems from its perceived connection to the past, it is conditioned and strengthened by the process of change in which the present turns into the past. In other words, I believe that the emotionality of (post)industrial landscape is grounded in the encounter with the past in the present both materialized and materializing.

Emotions and feelings attached to and experienced in an encounter with (post)industrial sites – attraction, concern and care, fascination, sublime – all relate to the situation in which these sites find themselves – often neglected, dilapidating, left to the mercy of weather and time and their resulting character of romantic ruins in which the presence and absence intermingle. Both presence and absence reference the past. The presence is a material reminder of the past in the present. The absence is a reminder of the disappearance of the materiality in time, a reminder of the process in which what is now turns into what has been (Rendell 2007, 97–98), the present turns into the past. The emotionality of (post)industrial landscape is thus an emotionality of an encounter with time materialized and materializing in the ruinous and decaying (post)industrial sites.

Double fetishization lies in behind the re-evaluation and re-appreciation of formerly industrial sites, buildings and objects, as well as behind their

emotionality and perceived value. (Post)industrial sites are fascinating, valued and admired because of their perceived connection to the past, because they are a materialization of the time passed. Simultaneously, however, they are also sublime, breath-taking and marvelled at because of their exposure to the 'ravages of time', because they represent a materialization of time passing by. It is this double fetishization of time that gives the (post)industrial landscape (of Kladno) its aesthetical appeal and emotional charge.

The (post)industrial landscape emerged due to fundamental changes brought about by the fall of socialism. As such, it is a result of an ongoing process of change, social, political, material but also cultural. At the same time, it engenders the process of change on both symbolic and material level. By their very presence, the material constitutive elements of the landscape, the (post)industrial sites, refer to the processes of which they are the immediate and temporary result. On one hand, they reference back to the long process of industrialization and the particular industrial history of the city. On the other, they also reference back to more recent past of deindustrialization and the ensuing particular developments which have made the city what it is in present.

The emotions linked to the (post)industrial landscape of Kladno and especially to its relatively emergence after the fall of socialism and to the ongoing changes attest to the observation made by Barbara Bender that "landscapes, like time, never stand still" (Bender 2002a, S103). What seems important is however not only that (post)industrial landscape makes the processual nature of landscape evident, but more importantly that the process of change is fundamental to its aesthetic appeal, emotional charge and thus also to its perceived value. It is the process of dissipation which makes the landscape aesthetically and emotionally appealing. In this respect, (post)industrial landscape is not only the landscape of time passed, but also the landscape of time passing by; it is not only time materialized as a result of past changes, but also time materializing throughout the continuous process of gradual dematerialization of (post)industrial spaces, their decay and disappearance.

In such an interpretation of contemporary (post)industrial landscape, I return back to the notion of landscape as process developed in the theoretical chapter. While any landscape can be interpreted in terms of the idea of landscape as process, it is (post)industrial landscape with its derelict and decaying as well as conversed and refurbished sites and objects which makes the time materializing evident, in which it is the core of its aesthetical, emotional and symbolical appeal as well as cultural, social and political representations and arguments. In every landscape, human and nonhuman temporalities and agencies meet and

intertwine, but it is (post)industrial landscape, in a sense in which I explored it in this chapter, in which the tensions and juxtapositions of the temporalities and agencies are so closely and fundamentally related to the experience and meaning, to the aesthetics and emotions that further help to sustain it.

(Post)industrial landscape is a landscape growing out of a very particular awareness of the processes out of which it emerged, past as well as recent, concluded as well as still in progress, human as well as nonhuman. The emotionality of (post)industrial landscape which might be understood as based on the experience of the sublime is in essence an emotionality of time. The aesthetics of (post)industrial landscape which might be seen as a specific, romantic way of looking at the dereliction and decay is in essence an aesthetics of time. In this respect, I argue that the key constitutive element of contemporary (post)industrial landscape, anxious landscape to use Andreas Picon's (2000) term, its emotionality and ideas related to it, is the process of change as such materializing in the ruinous and decaying materiality of the sites.

As I showed in this chapter, the emotionality and aesthetics of the (post)industrial landscape of Kladno is based on an encounter with time passed and passing by facilitated by the materiality of the (post)industrial monuments – time materialized in the buildings still standing and decaying and time materializing as it passes by captured in the decomposition, ruins and absences with which these are peppered. Thus, much of the appeal of (post)industrial landscape lies in the acute tension between the past and the present with which the landscape is pervaded. This is played out not only by means of the material presence of something belonging to the past, something gone but still present, but also by means of the dynamic process of something present becoming absent and thus shifting from the present into the past. The explicitness of the process, the fact that it fundamentally contributes to the material shape and form of the sites, buildings and objects in question, makes it very acute and thus emotionally intense.

Time concentrates in (post)industrial landscape in twofold manner; this conditions the twofold fetishization of industrial remains that contributed to the current state of (post)industrial landscape. One is the level of the reference to the past which the materiality "remembers" and which it thus can mediate. The other is the exposure to the "ravages of time" which has been eroding the material substance of (post)industrial sites. Contemporary (post)industrial landscape, as exemplified by the one of Kladno, is a landscape based on the fetishization of time as it passes by from the present to the past. On a material (and symbolic) level, it is absences and their juxtaposition to presences that captures this process and

makes it evident. And it is the issue of the role of the presence and absence in (post)industrial landscape to which I turn in the next and final chapter.

“Can you feel the circle of deep flooded mines enclosing the city?”⁵⁰



⁵⁰ *A memory of Most at night in 1953, poem by Emil Juliš.*

After a day of walking in the countryside, we passed a sign forbidding us to entry. It felt as if the whole day headed towards this very moment. Since morning, we hiked through land which had been rehabilitated after the mining. We crossed spoil dams covered in grass and overtaken by birches, hornbeams or poplars. We marched along the roads with rectangular turns, which is why it took us so long to get through to the mine. We walked through young forests with smokestack protruding in the background, along the road leading through a chemical plant, we passed heaps of rubbish thrown away in the bushes by the road, we visited a village threatened by demolition because of the mine advancing towards it, and toured a castle slowly disintegrating because of the mine touched on the hill upon which it stood. We watched birds and observe land rehabilitation of new spoil dams in the distance. We also got a glimpse of the mine through the forest near the castle. But it was not until this moment when the mine gave to us in its entirety. A couple of steps along a dirty road and there it was. A vast plane coloured in shades of grey and brown stretching from beneath our feet to a power plant at the horizon. We stood in silence. The mine seemed calm, devoid of any movement. Just space on its own surrounded by strips of land in which green and brown mixed and struggled. The strips looked like large steps leading from the surface, green with vegetation, to the depths of the earth. Further down, brown gained the upper hand and blended with dark grey. There, the space was folded, nearly monochromatic, consisting of waves of different shades cut across by dark, long straight lines of conveyor belts and interspersed with yellow of bucket-wheel excavators and spreaders, machines that brought the mine into existence.

The view was breath-taking. The mine was so vast it could not be seen at once. It required our eyes to travel it through, to focus our view here and there, from excavators to power plant to green edges and back to the dark hollow, follow the lines of conveyors. The feeling of awe gradually built up with the realization of true proportions. Excavators and spreaders are massive, but they were dwarfed by the mine's vastness. Coloured dots scattered around turned into cars, barely recognizable, tiny in comparison to the heavy machinery. Then, at the moment I realized the mine was not motionless, I came closest to the feeling of sublime in my whole life. The large wheels of the excavators were turning, conveyors moved coal through the mine, cars were running around. The mine was alive. But its movement was steady and slow, accompanied with low humming noise, which I realized was in the background for the most of our journey; a ponderous movement with an air of unavoidability. Fatigue and anticipation mixed with fascination and awe in the very moment when the mine gave itself to us as a whole. However, the intense emotion – was it really sublime? – slowly dissipated

as we comprehended what opened in front of us. I took out my binoculars in order to take a closer look.

Between presence and absence: The landscape and the city of Most

Introduction

The city of Most lies in the north-east of the Czech Republic at the border with Germany. Surrounded by lignite surface mines and mined-out and rehabilitated areas, it is different from both Kladno and Ostrava with respect to its history and socialist as well as post-socialist developments. However, its socialist past and its post-socialist present share some important features with the two cities and landscapes discussed so far.

In this chapter, I am to further my inquiries into what happened to industrial landscape after the fall of socialism and a resulting demise of industry. In the two previous chapters I explored the changes and developments in the ways of seeing (post)industrial landscape and the imaginaries, emotions and negotiations that energise the processes out of which the landscape emerges. In this final empirical chapter, I combine these approaches with an emphasis put on experience of the landscape which has been profoundly transformed by industry, in this case by extensive surface mining. This helps me to further my inquiries along the lines of aesthetics, processes in behind landscape, and its temporality. The aim is to further explore the connection of materiality (and aesthetics) of landscape, its temporality and change to the notion of landscape as experience which I introduced in the theoretical chapter.

When I explored the landscape of Ostrava, I concentrated on the visual representations in order to understand the way of seeing and the changes it underwent. I analysed the official socialist rendering of Ostrava as an exemplary socialist industrial city in which the bright future could be glimpsed in the present by means of the testimonies of achievements such as technology and most importantly harmony of people, coal and steel. By juxtaposing it to alternative as well as official post-socialist sets of representation, I unravelled the political nature of socialist industrial landscape and the ways in which it was constructed – as a landscape of production of socialist present justified by specific, power-laden visual imageries of the past and the future. As I showed in the chapter on Kladno, both Ostrava and Kladno occupied a similar symbolic space in socialist industrial landscape; they were represented in similar veins, as key socialist cities in which the future is forged by hard work in the present. In this chapter, I show that official socialist as well as post-socialist visual representations of Most followed the same pattern. Although the cities of Ostrava, Kladno, and Most are spatially

distant, they occupied and formed part of the same socialist landscape; they were to be seen in the same light and were subjugated to the same way of seeing.

In the chapter on Kladno, I tried to unravel the connection between the political nature of landscape and the ways in which it is embroiled in on-going processes of change. This expanded the scope of my exploration of (post)industrial landscape because it allowed for a more nuanced account of the underlying principles, experiences and emotions in behind a particular way of seeing. I argued that the fascination and awe, the aesthetic and historical reappraisal of the (post)industrial sites is fundamentally related to the fetishization of the past in both the sense of the time passed and the time passing by. In this chapter, I further explore the temporalities and processes in behind (post)industrial landscape. My primary aim, however, is not to link them to political negotiations over the meaning and future of the landscape, as I did in the chapter on Kladno, but to focus more on the interplay of presence and absence, which I showed to be important with respect to the aesthetics, emotionality, experience and politics of (post)industrial landscape of both Kladno and Ostrava.

Any landscape is in the state of constant change. The (post)industrial landscape of Most with its surface mines, land rehabilitation, artificial lakes and a destroyed and newly built city is a landscape in which this processual nature of landscape can be productively explored. Moreover, on a material level, the landscape around the city of Most has been transformed fundamentally by means of massive reallocation of matter; surface mines were mined out and filled in again. As I showed in the previous chapter, the past holds grip over the present; it is in around Most where the past is present in powerful ways. In the theoretical chapter I discussed, among other things, an onto-epistemological problem of landscape studies lying in the fact that landscapes are much often theorized and explored in terms of presence (see Wylie 2009) than absence. In the previous chapter on Kladno, I pointed out that it is not only presence, but also absence which makes landscape aesthetically powerful and emotionally charged. Although absence represents a fundamental constitutive element of any landscape, its role becomes apparent in (post)industrial landscape which grows out not only of the past, but also in direct reference to the past and to the process in which the present is becoming the past.

The material I draw on in this chapter comprises visual representations and field notes from my repeated phenomenologically oriented field trips to the city of Most and its surroundings. I analyse the visual representations, both official from the times of socialism and after as well as alternative, in order to illustrate how the landscape emerges out of the meeting of diverse temporalities and how these

are turned into stories and meanings inscribed into the landscape. I combine the visual (discourse) analysis with reflections on my own experience with and of the landscape in order to understand the mutual relationship of bodily experience and landscape.

The landscape of Most has been profoundly transformed by mining activity. I explore the outcome of the transformation, which is in turn a result of the meeting of various temporalities-trajectories. I focus on the processes of disappearance and reappearance which fundamentally (in)form the landscape materially as well as symbolically. The intermingling of these two basic processes results in the landscape which is full of voids where the tensions between presence and absence stand out peculiarly. These three, partial perspectives on disappearance, reappearance and voids allow me to more fully understand the role of absence in constituting the landscape on material, symbolical (visual), but also experiential (embodied) levels.

Disappearance

The city of Most occupies an important place in the North Bohemian Basin, a geomorphological (meso)region delimited by the Ore Mountains in the north-west and the Central Bohemian Uplands in the south-east. The Basin formed during Lower Oligocene, i.e. between 34 and 28 million years ago, and later, especially during Lower Miocene between 22 and 17 million years ago, it was filled with sediments of clay, sand and organic matter forming a layer up to 500 metres thick. The organic matter formed a large swamp and over time changed into a peat land which then turned into lignite. The outcome of this trajectory, a natural story spanning millennia, was a lignite seam thick around 30 and somewhere even up to 60 metres awaiting its discovery (for a detailed geomorphological description see Pešek 2010, 40–137; for a detailed geological treatise see Malkovský 1985).

The first mention of the “inflammable stone” in the region dates back to the very beginning of the 15th century, but it was not until the second half of the 19th century and particularly until the expansion of the railway into the region in 1870 that coal mining activities gained momentum and started to profoundly transform the region. The city of Most became the centre of the newly forming landscape. The history of the city dates back at least to the first mentions from the 11th century, although its core, which survived to the 20th century, was built after a disastrous fire of 1515 which destroyed the whole old gothic city. At the onset of industrialization, which fully erupted in the 1870s, the city represented an architecturally rich mixture of late gothic, renaissance and baroque styles with the dominant gothic Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary in its centre. Since then, the city grew in size and in the 1930s, the old city was surrounded by working class neighbourhoods and both underground and surface lignite mines (for a detailed history of the city and the region see Pokorná 2000).

At first, lignite used to be mined out in underground mines, apart from haphazard surface mining. In the first half of the 20th century, modest surface mining occurred where the deposits were close enough to the surface, such as on the east outskirts of the old city of Most. This process of industrialization revolving around more and more intense lignite mining of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century changed the region into an industrial, coal mining district. However, the most profound transformation of the landscape occurred only after WWII when the majority of the original German population was expelled and socialism took over. After 1948, economic priorities shifted towards heavy industry. The demand for coal soared and as a result, mining in the Most Basin changed. Since the 1950s, the large scale surface mining took over as the primary style of mining.

As a result, vast strips of land disappeared and were transformed fundamentally.⁵¹ Václav Krejčí, an architect and urban planner who significantly influenced the urban development of the region described the change in his memoir: right after WWII,

“Most becomes one of the main sources of economic potential for post-war industrial development in the republic. The technology of mining fundamentally changes to strip mining. Large scale surface mines open in combination with spoil piles and significantly impact on the appearance of the whole basin area. A number of villages have to give way to the technology as they are demolished before the advancing mines. The landscape of Most completely changes its face” (Krejčí 2008, 37).

Probably the most famous representation of the landscape of Most comes from the turn of the 1950s and 1960s when the landscape started to change fundamentally, both materially and symbolically. It consists of a collection of photographs by Josef Sudek, the famous Czechoslovakian photographer, who influenced both the interwar avant-garde and post-war photography in the Czech as well as European context. In 1957, Sudek started to explore and photograph the landscape around the city of Most.⁵² In his panoramic photographs, he presents the landscape succumbing to profound transformation as a sad landscape:

“...and really, the landscape, that’s it. It is not big and it has romance and civility. It is a kind of a saddened landscape. I don’t like doing cheerful landscape. Because cheerful is always cheerful and always the same. But sad has a lot of variations. More sad and less sad and even more sad, and that is possible to work with” (undated quotation of Sudek from Mrázková and Remeš 1996, 35 quoted in Sudek 2004, 94).

⁵¹ Deep mining mostly impacted the areas with the deepest coal seams (up to 450 m deep), i.e. the central basins around Most and Bílina but also around Teplice and Ústí nad Labem.

⁵² As a result, Sudek prepared 128 photographs for publication in the 1960s. The book, with the working title *Northern landscape* was never published and only 11 of the panoramic photographs Sudek took of a decommissioned mine called Humboldtka near the city of Most were published during his life under the title *Mostecko – Humboldtka* in 1969. A selection of 89 original photographs was published as a photographic book titled *Sad landscape* in 1999 and reprinted in 2004. The second edition (Sudek 2004) is the one I draw on in my analysis.

Thematically, Sudek's rendering of the landscape ranges from shots overseeing the landscape from distance (img. 49) to semi-detailed views of particular elements in the landscape. Their presence in the photographs turns them into constitutive elements of the landscape as Sudek presents it by re-creating it using light-sensitive material on glass plates. All the photographs are panoramic and thus in a sense pretend to be objective. As Antonín Dufek noted in his postscript to Sudek's *Sad landscape*:

"A panorama-format plate camera from the previous century became the instrument of record for the extent of the environmental devastation in the Most region. Had Sudek employed crops of details, some possibility might always have remained that the countryside outside the pictures still flourished. In these terms, the panoramic photographs represent a return to the original essence of photography, embodying the ethos that dominated the medium in the works of the 19th century. It is the ethos of truthfulness that holds nothing back, that does not select or omit; the ethos of exact description, exploration of the world. At the same time, it is the ethos of service to reality, towards which the artist bows in humility. The photographer and his instrument are here to allow reality to make its imprint on the sensitive emulsion of the film as carefully as possible" (Sudek 2004, 95).

But this, I would argue, is a masquerade. When taking pictures, the process of selection, framing, composing is always present. The fact that the panoramic photographs seem to convey the outside world realistically helps mask the creation of the landscape by means of producing a set of photographs, a set of representations based on and at the same time helping to establish a certain way of seeing, which induces the landscape of the Most region with particular emotionality and turns the landscape of profound transformation into a sad though aesthetically pleasing visual experience. It thus masks the representation as presentation, creation as truthful recreation.

Sudek's photographs overseeing the landscape are characterised by middle to higher horizon, grey and sometimes even heavy sky and a scenery framed with the shadowed Iron Ore Mountains in the background and cone-shaped tops of the Central Bohemian Uplands in the middle ground. The clouds, hillsides, houses, factories and smokestacks as well as fields in the foreground are detailed in rich shades of grey. Usually without people, the landscape portrayed in dark tones feels transcendental, majestic and at the same time ominous, as if imbued with its own particular sublimity.



Img. 49 A view overseeing the sad landscape, (Sudek 2004, 2)

In his rendering of the landscape, Sudek focuses on elements present in the landscape which reference the transformation it is undergoing. The absence of people in the photographs, with the exception of those portraying the spaces of the old city of Most or where the new city was being born at the time, and the simultaneous emphasis on the transformation makes the changes to the landscape seem to happen without the people. As if the landscape was imbued with its own agency, as if it transcends the people who stand aside only to witness the profound alterations being brought about by giant excavators (img. 50).



Img. 50 Sad landscape of surface mining (Sudek 2004, 32)

Except for its tonal properties, what makes Sudek's landscape sad is its thematic focus on the signs of change. The elements that are portrayed as being part of the landscape and that by means of that become constitutive elements of Sudek's way of seeing the Most region, are always in close relationship to disappearance. The change portrayed entails something disappearing and leaving only traces of its previous presence. In one of the photographs, the village is encircled by mining activity. In the background, we can feel the presence of a large surface mine pit,

giving away its presence in the clouds of dust. In the foreground, deserted land and heaps of dirt close on to the village which is about to disappear (img. 51).



Img. 51 Village to be devoured by a surface mine (Sudek 2004, 43)

Other photographs depict the material traces of the disappeared, the prolonged moment of disappearance. Be it a chaise rusting and overgrown by bushes in the area of a former, long closed mine to be torn down (img. 52), an old wooden fence collapsed into the water engulfing former gardens, or just a plain with an old tree avenue flooded with water (img. 53). Water features prominently in Sad landscape. As a result of mining activity, it engulfs trees and meadows and forms new plunges and pools. As such it can be seen as a powerful symbol of disappearance; it erases minute features and levels the landscape visually fusing the sky and the water surface. Only in the background the smokestacks protrude and fume.



Img. 52 An old chaise overgrown by bushes (Sudek 2004, 23)

Water fills in but at the same time makes the places empty. It fills the land where villages used to be with absence and erasure. By means of water surfaces, absence materializes in around Most and makes itself imprint onto the photographic emulsion. Disappearance and the moment that precedes it is a key motive in the *Sad landscape*. It underscores the monumentality of the landscape as well as its ominousness. From hints to traces, from signs of disappearance to actual emptiness, the photographs show a whole variety of disappearance, which is visually represented and expresses itself by means of the tension of presence and absence.



Img. 53 Water fills in the sad landscape (Sudek 2004, 46, 77)

The shots of trees engulfed by water as well as detailed shots of the structure of spoil piles and dumps share a common denominator. They are different visual expressions of emptiness filling in the landscape. And it is the threat of being emptied which infuses the landscape with sadness. What I argue here is that Sudek's landscape is a landscape of transformation of which disappearance is a key expression. Being visually represented through the tension between presence and absence, disappearance is emotionally powerful because it engenders a threat of emptiness – material as well as of meaning. While visually appealing due to the properties of Sudek's black and white panoramic photographs – diffuse

lighting, careful framing and composing, and perfect tonal expression, its (ontological) ominousness emphasised with the dark tones of the photographs – it is disappearance in all its forms from mere indications to emptiness represented for example by amorphous textures of spoil piles (img. 54) which makes the landscape infused with sadness.



Img. Amorphous textures of spoil piles (Sudek 2004, 51)

Vast surface mines represent an extreme materialization of emptiness in landscape. In them, presence (of coal but of other matter including material features of landscape) succumbs to absence, disappears from the present into the past and is substituted with emptiness. In his series of photographs, Sudek emphasises this feature of the landscape of Most, the fact that the transformation brought about by surface mining leads to relocation, replacement and displacement of matter as well as people, and uses visual properties of (panoramic) black and white photographs to explore it. Later, I show that the transformation which heavily relies on disappearance and its visual representation does not necessarily have to be grounded in such an approach; there are other visual representations of the same features and elements of the city of Most and its surroundings infused with different emotionality and expressing different way of seeing.

In the times when Josef Sudek was photographically exploring it, the region was undergoing vast changes evidenced in Sudek's photographs. Surface mining was accelerating in pace and scope and as a result, the whole region was materially transforming. New landscape was forming in which, as Sudek shows and I argue further on, the juxtaposition and tension between presence and absence would play fundamental role on material but also symbolic (interpretive) and emotional (experiential) level. More than 30 villages from the close vicinity of the city of

Most gave way to mining. Because the old city of Most itself was located above a rich deposit of coal, it eventually disappeared as well.

Socialist official discourse narrated the disappearance of the old Most as a necessity. As one official publication of the time put it:

“The fate of the city was decided by coal. In the protective zone of the old city of Most 100 millions of tons of high quality lignite are located. And the coal is placed so favourably – in a coal seam more than 30 metres thick just 27 metres under the surface – that to open the mine to mine the coal out would be the most profitable mine opening in the north Bohemian mining region since 1945” (Most ve Fotografii 1974 n.p. (16)).

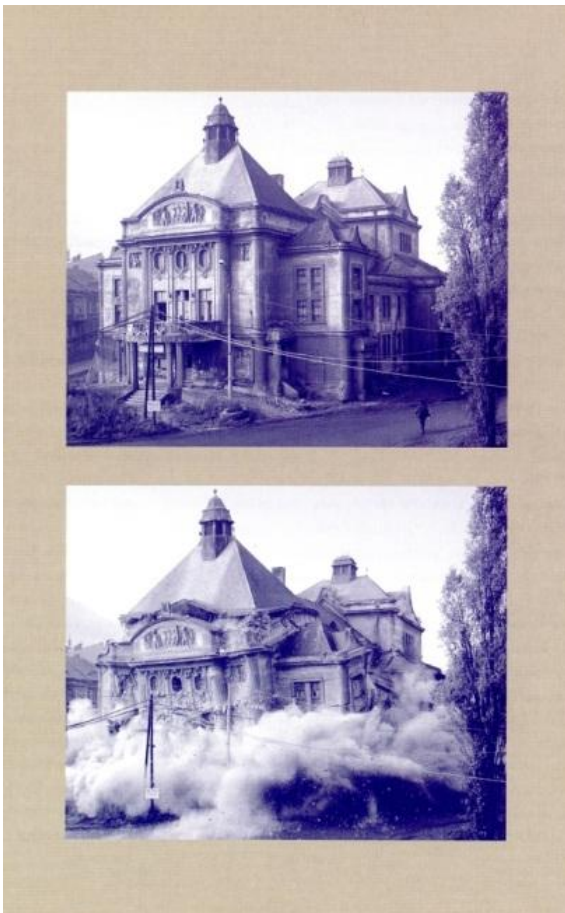
In fact, it was of course not coal, but political apparatus that sealed the fate of the historical city. The final decision to mine out the lignite under the city was approved by the Czechoslovakian government on 25 March 1964 in its decision no. 180.⁵³ This decision was however a long prepared one. The official General development plan⁵⁴ of Most prepared in between 1955 and 1956 already presupposed the old city to be demolished “in due time”. Along with the disappearance of the old city, a new one should emerge to house 100 thousand people. In time, the requirement for the new city as well as the ideas about the demolition of the old city got more detailed contours as the plans, studies and documents underwent a complex and complicated process of consultation, correction and approval across municipal, regional and state governmental and communist party bodies. Already in 1962, the demolition of the old city was decided for sure and the organizational and processual details were negotiated. When the government officially decided in 1964, everything was prepared. The historical city that like phoenix rose from ashes of the devastating fire of 1515 was to disappear forever (for the detailed discussion of the negotiation and approval procedure see Krejčí 2008).

The demolition of the city started in 1967 and lasted for 20 years. One of the last buildings to vanish was the municipal theatre built in 1911 which was demolished on 22 October 1982 (for a history of the theatre see e. g. Novák, Prošek, and Votroubek 2005). And so in 1984, the historical overview of Most in one official

⁵³ Titled “Detailed subject and time schedule of investments and design related to the completion of the new and destruction of the old Most and the construction of the technological corridor”.

⁵⁴ A zoning plan

photographic book could be concluded by a laconic statement: *“Mining affects deeply human settlements. Today, it is only possible to read in historical treaties about a number of villages, while this fate awaits other places. Their inhabitants move to new housing estates. With a bit of nostalgia – but also knowing that it was not possible otherwise – we have to say that old Most disappeared, too”* (Severočeský Kraj: Okres Most 1984 n.p. (10)).



Img. 54 Demolition of the old Most theatre in 1982, reproduced from (Novák, Prošek, and Votroubek 2005, 166)

The caption, couched in a typically nostalgic tone, reads: “Only the second blast meant the definite demolition of the historical building of the theatre in Most. It resisted the first one ...”

For me, the disappearance of the whole historical city represents a symbolical culmination of the transformation of the landscape of Most. But it was not only the city that vanished. With it, an up to 50 metres thick layer of coal weighing nearly 100 million tons disappeared and 25 metres of soil from above the coal was moved elsewhere. Materially, the landscape was formed, reformed and transformed on the basis of innumerable disappearances brought about by mining. These disappearances however impacted on landscape in terms of its visual character and representations as well as emotionality and experience. As I

showed on the example of Sudek's series portraying his vision of the Most region as a Sad landscape, disappearances entered also the realm of representation and artistic expression. In following subchapters, I show how disappearances taking on a form of the tension between presence and absence have been dealt with in the process of re-constructing this landscape of massive transformation. I also show how this tension and the disappearances and reappearances it gives rise to influence the landscape on a level of experience. After all, from the already said, it becomes clear that the landscape of Most is a landscape exposed to profound transformation. The encounter with such a dynamic, substantially changing landscape is a powerful experience. Sudek's photographic series on the landscape of Most can be seen as an artistic expression of coming to terms with such an experience. From the times when Sudek travelled around Most with his panoramic camera comes also the following account by Václav Krejčí, an architect and urban planner who in the years to come from the position of the lead city architect influenced Most probably more than anyone else. In his account of his first encounter of Most and its surroundings, the landscape emerges in contours similar to Sudek's visual representation. At the same time, for Krejčí however, the sublimity of the landscape stems also from its technological grounding, from the fact that it is primarily a technological landscape in which the forces of nature merge with and at the same time are exploited by the forces governed by humans:

"Open quarries interchanged with the moonscape of outer mine waste dumps, occasional remains of disturbed villages, roads suddenly interrupted by a quarry or a mine waste dump, poppet heads of underground mining and huge overburden excavators, green vegetation fighting for survival, steam and electric coal trains, and a range of intersecting aboveground pipes and cables hanging on poles. Chemical Works of J. V. Stalin in Záluží looked like a cobweb of steel constructions with poles, round and cylindrical storage tanks, extensive marshalling yard and tanks. A huge pipe leading from Litvínov to Chemical Works of J.V. Stalin served to bring fresh air into some technological plants. In case of emergency, there were always several coaches on alert at the chemical works that would take employees away to get some fresh air in Meziboří. Two tramlines from Most to Litvínov via Růžodol and around Ruská Kaple forced their way on the remains of stable ground; now they are but a memory.

However, I could not say that it was all just a gloomy sight of a devastated landscape. It was something new: an image of an afflicted natural and living environment under the fellow-sufferers - the woods of the Ore Mountains. At the bottom of my heart I could sense the unkindness of the environment with heavy grey-yellow fogs full of exhalations from open quarries, mine waste dumps

frequently on fire and chemical waste of industrial production that would limit visibility especially in autumn to several metres only. An environment where man lives and holds out.

Nevertheless, there were also days when I could see thousands of stars in the evening sky from high grounds above Litvínov as they merged with thousands of lights in the basin forming a spectacular, romantic and fascinating image of an endless star scape.” (Krejčí 2008, 16–17)

Reappearance

Both Sudek's photographic series and Krejčí's short recollection of their encounter with the landscape of Most represent it as emotionally powerful, as melancholic and sad, but also (romantically) fascinating and in a sense transcendental. Although one might think melancholy and sadness are induced by the representation being simply that of devastation and destruction, I believe the emotionality of the landscape as it is represented by Sudek and remembered by Krejčí stems from the fact that something new was being born out of the mass disappearance brought about by surface mining and related industrialization of the region. The landscape transformed under the pressure of technology. The groundings of the landscape, the soil, was turned over, and with it the content of the landscape, material, symbolic, but also experiential, transmuted. The outcome was the landscape in which the natural groundings and technological overlays fused, like in the image of stars and lights creating an endless landscape drawn by Krejčí in the quote from the end of the last subchapter.

I had a similar experience of the technologically transformed landscape. In summer 2011, I hiked with friends around the southern edge of the Most basin. We were sleeping rough at a hilltop, a natural reserve from where a view opened to a vast strip of land with fields and forests, a power plant and an open surface mine, all framed by the Iron Ore Mountains on the horizon. It was a fascinating view during the day (img. 56), when we climbed up the hill, but it turned breathtaking at night. We were attracted by a continuous low pitched humming sound and went to the edge where we stood silent, amazed by the night scenery in which the lights beneath the darkened mountain ridge reached up to the stars. The mine was only a shade darker than the rest with lights shining out from the depths of its darkness. The mining was humming through the night and the lights from the mine joined those from the plant. The natural and the technological elements fused in a night landscape, "romantically fascinating". This image, a memory of a long time ago came to my mind when reading Krejčí's description of how he remembered the landscape of Most. Although the two experiences are separated by decades, they share a common fascination with the encounter with the technologically (trans)formed landscape of mining.



Img. 55 The view over the technologically (trans)formed land(scape), 2011

The power plant is Kadaň –Prunéřov, the brown area to the is the surface mine Nástup – Tušimice; photo by author

As I argued earlier, the landscape of Most was formed based on a long term mass scale process consisting of innumerable acts of disappearance, of relocation of matter resulting in absences becoming materially present, discernible, exposed to a view, readily available for to be encountered and photographed. The newly created landscape was and still is materially neither natural, nor human. But that is exactly what makes it fascinating, sublime even – the impossibility to separate one from the other in the image which is clearly a result of a profound transformation transcending the imaginable. Disappearance is a formative element of the landscape of Most. This in turn means that it is disappearance which makes something new to appear; on the borders of disappearance, there lurks reappearance, a return of the displaced, material or immaterial, in bricks and stone or in flashes of remembrance. Grounded in disappearance, a new landscape emerged in which presence and absence in their many forms play a fundamental role material as well as experiential.

Some of the representations of the landscape, the one by Sudek, but also other photographers such as Josef Koudelka⁵⁵, emphasise the tension between presence and absence and frame the landscape in melancholy that goes hand in hand with fascination. However, the disappearance was during socialism framed differently by official socialist discourse. It was not disappearance, but reappearance which occupied the spotlight. The tension between presence and absence was exploited by the narrative(s) stressing technological character of the landscape as well as the potential opened up by disappearance(s) of and in the landscape. One example of the ways in which the disappearance and reappearance were brought together in order to produce an official representation of the landscape, to form and sustain a particular way of seeing the region of Most while capitalizing on its emotional, experiential properties, is the re-narration of the demolition of the old city of Most in an official documentary from 1988. Called *Most of yesterday and tomorrow*, it is now renowned especially because it contains invaluable shots of the old city before it was destroyed. For me, however, it is important because in it, an official socialist discourse about the Most region condenses.

The movie consists of a succession of shots depicting the old city, its demolition and the building of a new city instead, accompanied with a narrative. Read by a narrator, a famous Czech actor, the narrative together with musical accompaniments functions as an explanatory line which provides the visuals with the right mood, context and content. Here I offer a brief excerpt from between the fourth and eleventh minute of the movie in the form of stills and a transcript of an accompanying narrative:



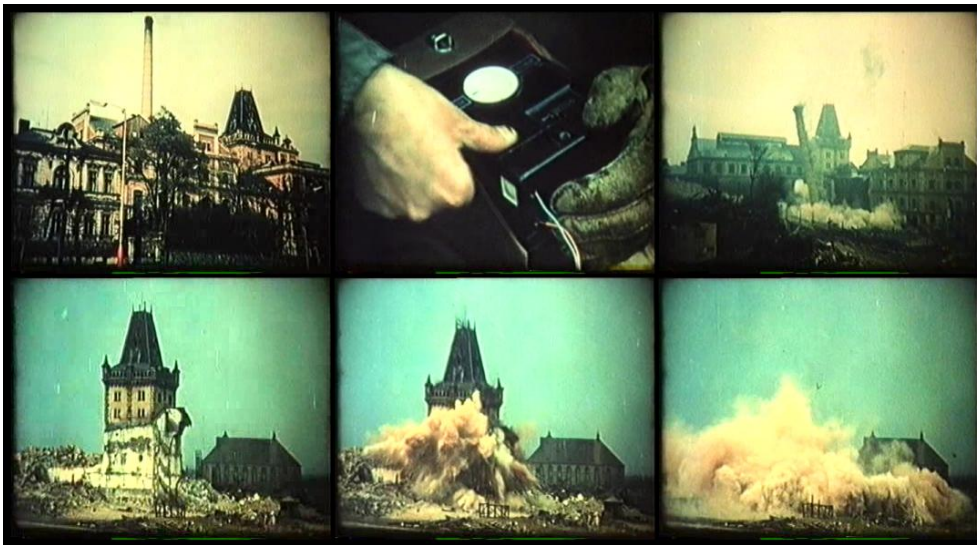
1964 was the key year for Most and its surroundings. The Czechoslovak government decided to remove the old city beneath which lay 100 million tons of quality brown coal and to build a new, modern, airy city for 65,000 people: new

⁵⁵ In his collection called *The Black Triangle: The Foothills of the Ore Mountain from 1994*

Most. There were many obstacles. The Bílina river ran through the centre. Its stream bed will have to be transferred. The Chomutov-Ústí nad Labem railway also ran through the old town. It was the artery of the north Bohemian coal district connected to the national railway. [...] Rapid transit system and the 1/15 highway crossed the centre from Prague to Litvínov and there was a coach station on the 3rd Square. The river, roads and railways could not stop. The only solution was to move the facilities to a corridor to the south-west of the city called the Technological Corridor. We can see its model.



One of the first buildings to give way to the coal mining was the Most brewery.



The old city demolition started in 1965. As it proceeded it gave way to coal mining and the construction of the Technological Corridor.



It was linked to the new city construction. The works were planned so as to secure water, gas and electricity supplies to the dying old city. A protection zone was to protect the new city from the negative effects of demolition, construction and mining.

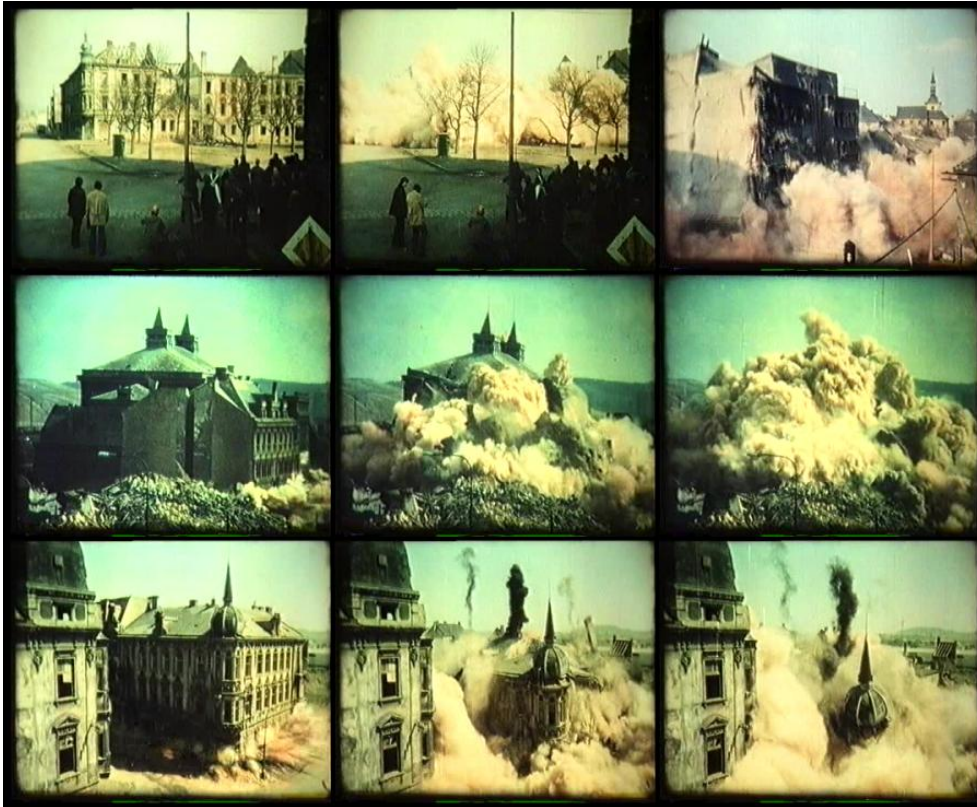


New housing estates with facilities were built under the pressure of the demolition. The training school dorm. Important HQs of Mining Construction Works dominate Gottwaldova Třída (Gottwald Street). Many housing estates with shops and services are built.

The future city centre is planned. A big shopping mall Rozkvět (Bloom) is open. The 7th district emerges on former Vrch nad Červenou Jámou. Urban facilities and a technical school are planned as well as a cultural centre Máj (May). [...]



The demolition of the old city was part of preparatory works to vacate the coal mine face. A 700-year-old city vanishes in these archival shots.



The construction of the future city centre was launched. The building of the municipal authority, the Prior shopping mall, a modern hospital with a secondary nursing school. This was the beginning of the 1970s.

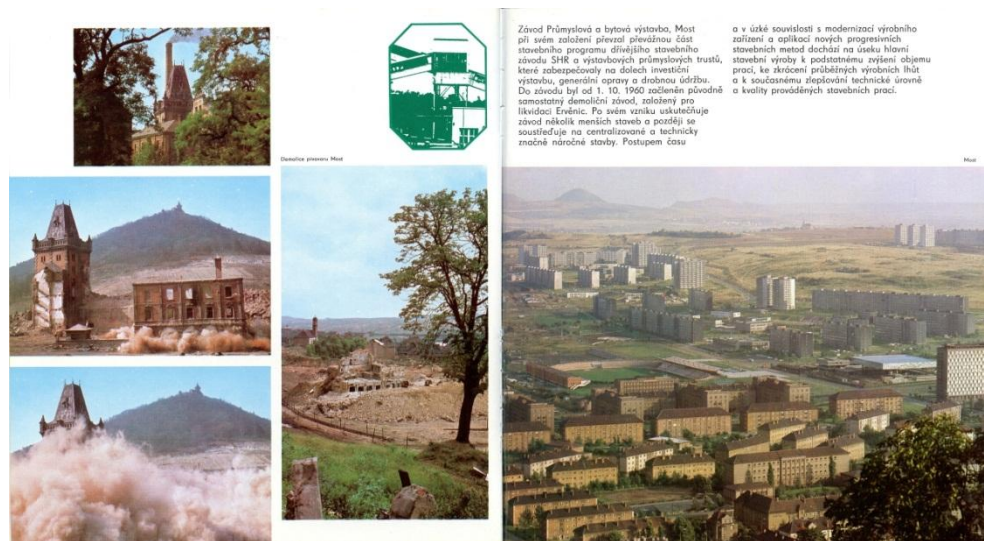


Img. 56 Stills from the movie Most of yesterday and tomorrow (1988)

The stills with the narrative that accompanies them come from the 3' to 11' minutes of the movie. Narrative linked to the stills unedited, stills by the author.

The documentary contains extensive material on the demolition of the city, as also the stills evidence. It might seem paradoxical and absurd. At least, that is what I felt when I was watching the documentary for the first time. The demolition is however closely interwoven into the narrative of necessity. The city

is presented as standing in the way of economic development which would be brought about by the coal. By means of juxtaposing the old city with the new one, the narrative is developed so as the new city visually embodies the development and thus becomes also an embodiment of progress. The movie with the interconnection of the succession of images and explanatory narrative (as well as with music which changes from ominous to cheerful when the new construction is shown) presents a justification of the demolition of Most and as such also of the transformation of the region with many disappearances that it entailed.

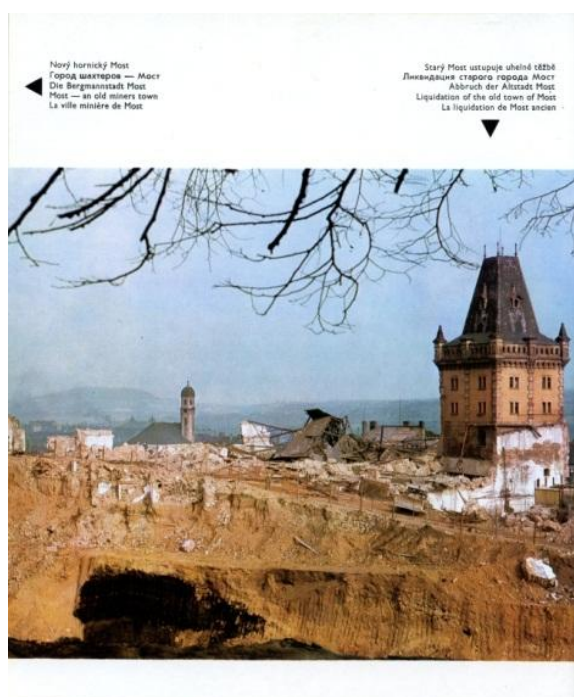


Img. 57 A double page from the promotional book of the company Mining constructions Most (Báňské Stavby Most 1977, n.p.)

The double page visually and discursively link the demolition of the old city, represented here by the demolition of the brewery (left), to the construction of the new city (right).

But I believe there is also other emotional grounding to why the demolition of the old city and many buildings in it is shown in such a voyeuristic manner. There is certain definitiveness to the demolition, to the explosions and the transformation of historical buildings into piles of rubble and clouds of dust. It is an ultimate step and as such it arouses powerful emotions. Although today the images of destruction of old Most, of the buildings such as the old theatre I reprinted above, are used to entice nostalgia mixed with contempt, in the documentary as well as in many photographic books and representations of Most from socialist times, they served other ambiguous and multileveled purpose. Firstly, they formed part of a complex discourse about socialist progress. Secondly, they testified the power

of the regime. And thirdly, I believe they played on the fascination with not only the unimaginable scope of destruction but also the definitiveness of the process of disappearing. The image of such destruction is in a sense sublime; by its scope as well as because of the feeling of powerlessness when faced with it. It seems transcendental because of the impossibility to turn it back, because of the power needed to demolish the whole city, but also because it can be observed from afar, from the secure spot in front of the screen. I believe this in turn helped sustain the political aim of the message, of the justification of the event and thus also the power of the regime.



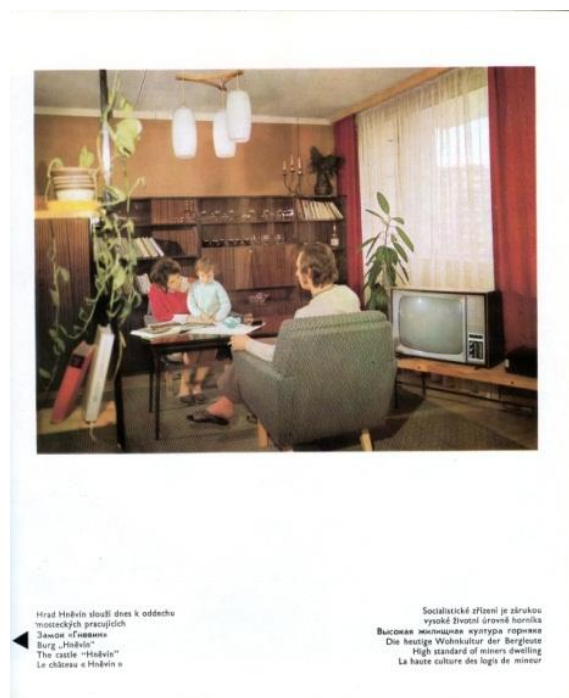
Img. 58 "Old city of Most gives way to coalmining", a page from (Severočeský Hnědouhelný Revír 1973, n.p.)

The images of the demolition of old Most and construction of new one documented the profound change that the region underwent. They also interconnected discursively the old city with the new one, which in turn helped with the justification of the decision to mine the old city out (img. 58). After all, as one of the official publication about Most from 1983 stated:

“Even though the last remains of the old city disappear, the city of Most would not perish. It continues and it will continue in a new socialist city which bears only the name of the old one but which continues and will always draw on hundreds of years of history and glorious tradition” (Most: Zpravodaj Městského Národního Výboru v Mostě 1983 n.p. (3)).

In connecting the old and the new city, the authors of the quote relate the disappearing and the disappeared to the appearing and reappeared. Most in these representations becomes a phoenix which is born anew, in a new form in which it can march towards better future. The change of the region is necessary because of the needs which would help to create the future. The change is a necessary transformation, a sacrifice which however opens door to technological advancement and thus to progress. In comparison with the new, airy city, old Most seems outdated and unsatisfactory.

“Coal under the city is tempting. It is deposited in such a favourable manner that it would be hard to find any more convenient mining field. Old houses, roads, water pipelines, in short all the facilities in the old town are such that the costs of adaptation would be higher than of the new ones. There is no point in calculation how much it will cost, how many houses will be demolished and built, how many kilometres of road, pipes, cables, gas lines, and water pipelines will be placed. In short, it is great accomplishments. Never before anything like this was conceived, initiated and carried out. And not only here. But in whole Europe” (Dobřemysl and Dojáček 1967, 12).

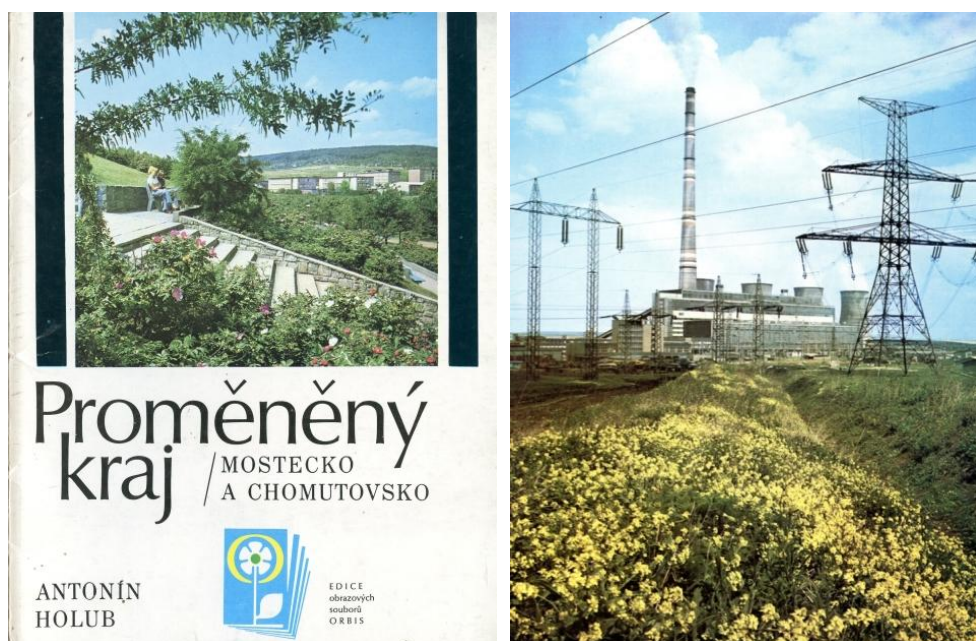


Img. 59 Socialist system guarantees high living standards for miners”, a page from (Severočeský Hnědouhelný Revír 1973, n.p.)

In such a manner, the transformation is embedded in the narrative of continuous building of better society which is materially evidenced in the newly appearing

elements in the landscape. Old Most gave way to mining and disappeared so as something new and better, materially but also socially, could emerge (cf. img. 59 and 60).

The change which the region faced and whose most extreme instance was the demolition of a whole, 700 years old city, is thus in the official socialist discourse justified by means of intertwining it into the narrative of progress. This is done in line with the principles I analysed in the chapter on Ostrava. The parallels between the socialist way of seeing and rendering Most and Ostrava (as well as Kladno) are evident in the documentary and the stills and narrative thereof. The change of the landscape on the level of its materiality as well as meaning, its social and political relevance as well as experiential properties is a result of massive material transformation in which disappearance play a fundamental role. This transformation is exploited in the official socialist discourse by means of making it an inseparable part of an on-going general transition from the pre-socialist past to socialist present and better future. The region which was undergoing such profound changes was in this way turned discursively into a deliberately transformed region.



Img. 60 Cover and the view over Tušimice power plant from the Transformed region representative set (Holub, Košek, and Veselý 1975, cover, 12)

The captions on the back read: Spoil dump of the Bohumír Šmeral mine; near the city the rehabilitation changes into an aesthetical landscape, which gives a new purpose to the areas disrupted by surface mining of lignite in the north Bohemian coal district (left); The Tušimice II power plant, the first international construction of the Union of Socialist Youth with an output of 800 MW was constructed between 1969 and 1975. It uses coal from the north Bohemian coal district (right).

Transformed region (Holub, Košek, and Veselý 1975), a set of representative photographs published as a photographic series, consisting of 15 photographs wrapped in a jacket and each accompanied with a commentary, exemplifies this discursive move. The photographs depict diverse sites across the region including historical towns, surface mines as well as new constructions across the region. Similarly to the depictions of industry in Ostrava and Kladno, industry in around Most is portrayed in harmony with nature. Sure, the region is transformed but the outcome of such transformation is a harmonious landscape where nature, people and technology coexist and thrive. Power plants are surrounded with blossoms and the land afflicted by mining, such as spoil dumps, is rehabilitated and transformed so as it could be given “new utility”, new purpose and meaning.



Img. 61 A couple of photographs from (Holub, Košek, and Veselý 1975, 1, 4)

The captions on the back read: 1: New Most is turning into a city of greenery, big trees are gradually growing just like decorative shrubs and perennial plants. The city centre with communal services centres are decorated by many roses (left). The huge excavator, an indispensable helper of north Bohemian coal district miners, in a cut through a coal seam in a spot where houses of the old Most stood only recently (right).

A picture of mining represented by a bucket-wheel excavator in the mine on the site of the disappearing old city is put side by side with the photographs of newly built Most. In them, the city is full of life sustained by rich network of public amenities from shopping to recreation. The new city is portrayed as a good place to live, a blossoming city of greenery, full of roses and children and joy. A motive of children is again exploited with children being pictured as enjoying a newly built open-air swimming pool in one of the new housing estates in Most or playing in blossoming meadows outside modern working class housing estates built for growing numbers of miners across the region.



Img. 62 A couple of photographs from (Holub, Košek, and Veselý 1975, 3, 5)

The captions on the back read: The district city of 60 000 inhabitants, built to the south of the old Most and the castle of Hněvín, provides its citizens with modern housing as well as nice relaxation at the cascade pool (left). Obrnice, a village of miners situated to the south/east of the new Most by the Bílina river and under the scenic Zlatník hill (522 m) has completely changed the way it looks due to new construction (right)

By embedding the transformation of the region in the narrative of progress, of a transition from pre-socialist times to bright future, the change itself is rendered to be a result of continuous and systematic hard work for better future which pays off because of the progress it brings into the present. In the official socialist imaginary of Most, the transformation is a key constitutive feature of the landscape of around Most. But it is (conceived of and employed as) a positive feature. Disappearance opens up possibilities for new contents to emerge; it vacates space for progress to materialize as amenities, better urban space, but also as narratives of the march to future which leaves material traces both in the form of presences of what has (re)appeared as well as absences of what disappeared. Mining thus not only brings about disappearance which alters the face of the region, but it also – and more importantly – initiates a complementary process of reappearance. New constructions necessary for and at the same time enabled by the developments of mining industry infill the landscape with new elements and meanings.

With the fall of socialism, the way of seeing Most and its surrounding region shifted radically. The link between mining and progress was severed. As a result, mining in the region was spatially limited by the governmental resolution in 1991. Grounded in ecological concerns, the government delimited the maximum extent

of future mining.⁵⁶ The mining limits are still in place although mining companies struggle for them being lifted, which would lead to a demolition of settlements (depending on the variant of newly opened mining fields).⁵⁷ The limits thus represent an inhibiting factor in the on-going process of material change rooted in disappearances brought about by mining. This however does not mean that material transformation would cease with the fall of socialism. The extent of mining was diminished, but the landscape has continued to change profoundly.

What is interesting with respect to the fall of socialism is the mixture of continuity and change in representing the landscape of Most. While popular and media images tend to represent the area as a structurally impaired region struggling with severe socioeconomic and environmental issues or as a sad, wrenched out and uprooted landscape, official local representations of the city of Most and its surroundings have inherited or echoed several tropes from socialist times. The city continues to be imagined as a phoenix which rose from ashes not once, but twice, after the disastrous fire of 1515 as well as after the demolition of the old city. The imaginary was for example summoned in promotional publications about Most from 1997 as well as 2010:

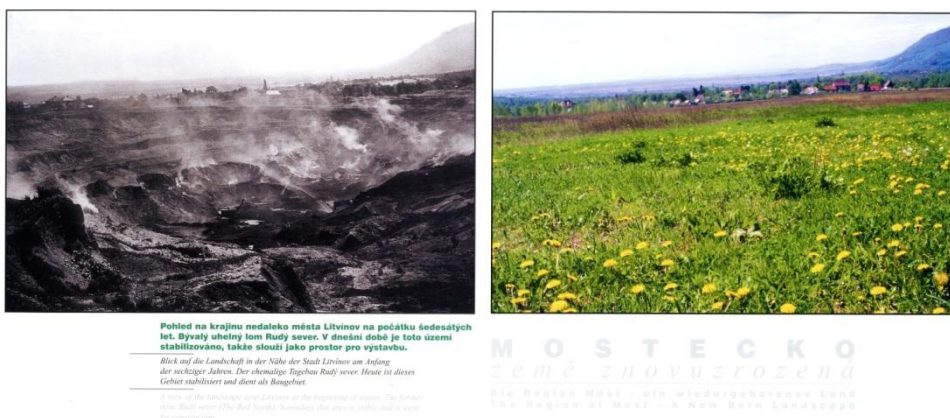
“There is a legend about Phoenix, a bird which rises from ashes back to life, and the city of Most is a sort of a parallel to the story. A formerly grey city covered in dust becomes an agreeable place to live,” declares for example the publication from 2010 called *Most: between past and future (Most: Mezi Minulostí a Budoucností / Most: Zwischen Vergangenheit Und Zukunft / Most: Between Past and Future 2010)*. Efficient public transport, spacious urban plan, accessible amenities and recreational facilities including a horse racing venue (Hippodrom), airfield, car race track, golf course as well as lakes, all built at rehabilitated spoil dumps of former mines, are also constantly praised. But it is land rehabilitation and an emphasis on greenery and nature, which is the most prevalent trope in recent representations and re-imaginings of the landscape of Most (see e.g. Štýs

⁵⁶ Resolution of the government of the Czech Republic of 30 October 1991 no. 444 on the report on local ecological limits on lignite mining and the energy sector of the north Bohemian coal district.

⁵⁷ Part of the limits was breached by the Government at its meeting on 19 October 2015 (as part of the Solution to future steps on territorial ecological limits on lignite mining in north Bohemia). At one of the surface mines, the limits were repositioned so as to prolong the mining.

and Větvička 2008). In them, echoes of socialist narratives about progress and about filling in the voids produced by mining can be heard:

“[T]he mines and large dump areas are associated not only with the devastation of the countryside, but also with thousands of hectares of new forests, fields, orchards, man-made lakes and even fertile vineyards, which have replaced the large areas of wasteland once occupied by mines, thanks to an activity known as reclamation [sic!], involving predominantly farmers and forest workers. The result of their activities, spanning decades, has been an entirely new countryside, miraculously able in terms of charm to compete with that which ones gave way to the mines, or even eclipse it. The most persuasive evidence of this is the town of Most itself, until recently surrounded by several open-cast coal mines and large waste heaps. Naturally, this barren land, the result of technological activities of man, was not the most enticing area for walks. Compare that with the Most of today, submerged in several hundreds of hectares of newly planted forests and beautiful parks containing a variety of playgrounds, and even two man-made lakes” (The Most Area: An Unknown Land 1997, 19).

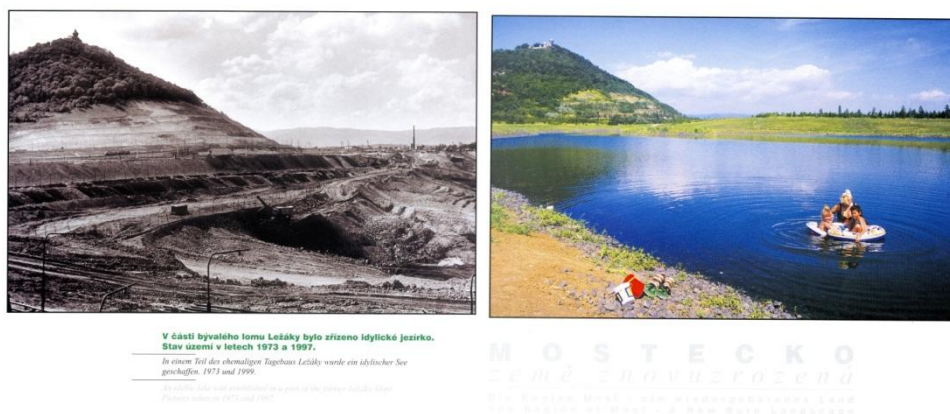


Img. 63 A double page from (Štýs 2000, n.p.)

The caption reads: A view of the landscape near Litvínov in the sixties. Former mine Rudý sever (Red North). Nowadays, this area is stable and is used for construction.

These lines were written by Stanislav Štýs, one of the most important specialists in land rehabilitation – considered a founding father of the discipline – who has been working in the Most region since 1956. In his narrative, he draws on a common imaginary of the Most region, that of a moon landscape. Due to intense surface

mining and in connection to mass disappearance of landscape features in terms of both topography and monuments, the region was dubbed a moon landscape and as such it entered common imagination. The metaphor of the moon landscape is in effect a metaphor for landscape formed through disappearance, a landscape of emptiness visually expressed by means of images of vast and deep mines in which one can discern only mining technology, and of spoil dumps, vast heaps of raw material without vegetation cover. In time, however, the landscape changed profoundly and while today it also contains vast mines and dumps in operation, for a relatively large part, it is covered in vegetation. A key monograph by Štýs, in which he describes the change caused by land rehabilitation, is called *Changes of moon landscape* (Štýs and Helešicová 1992), indeed, a title chosen on purpose.



Img. 64 A double page from (Štýs 2000, n.p.)

The caption reads: An idyllic lake was established in a part of the former Ležáky mine. Pictures taken in 1973 and 1997.

In Štýs' view, land rehabilitation is a process in which the land uprooted and wrinkled by mining is reclaimed and reformed so as it becomes fertile again (img. 64). Open mining "was the cause for considerable devastation of landscape, the face of which was marked by surface mines, by wrinkles very deep," Štýs writes (Štýs and Helešicová 1992, 34). Land rehabilitation is then like "plastic surgery" in which the land is given back its face, even more beautiful than was the original

one.⁵⁸ The act of land rehabilitation is a godly act in which the land is not only reclaimed, but more importantly re-cultivated and miraculously transformed into new and better land, a land reborn.

The rehabilitation of land afflicted by mining is a long-term process, a scientific endeavour by means of which the disappeared is returned back into the world and the ugly (moon landscape) is made beautiful (img. 65). In his *The region of Most: A new born landscape*, Štýs (2000) reproduces photographs of 'before' and 'after' in order to present, using visual means only, the miracles of land rehabilitation. The moon landscape of Most of the 1960s and 1970s is represented as not only becoming again a functional environment, ecologically stable and economically profitable, but also as beautiful, as a land to where beauty returned:

"Landscape must be ecologically in equilibrium, which requires a stability of ecosystems. [...] Furthermore, it is necessary that landscape is economically effective, which means it has to contain high productive forms of agricultural rehabilitation so that it can sustain people to a degree. [...] And lastly – although this is almost the most important issue for people – we need to mention a requirement of an aesthetic impression. Imagine it is beautiful weather. One goes on a trip to the nature, walks up a hill, and looks into distance – and starts to have an unpleasant feeling that something unnatural annoys her. Anyone could tell her at that moment anything about how much corn grows on the rehabilitated fields, how tasty the apples from spoil dump slopes are ... Feelings are much more important than we think. Will the landscape be able to "look" into a mirror?" (Štýs and Helešicová 1992, 78)

Aesthetics is an important part of the narrative of land rehabilitation as well as an argument in its favour. Štýs somehow understands that landscape does not entail only topography and material features, but that landscape is closely linked to aesthetical experience (of seeing). However, beauty serves a particular purpose in his narrative about land rehabilitation as a successful project of filling in the emptiness brought about to landscape by mining. Paradoxical as it may sound, beauty of rehabilitated land attests to the superiority of man's action over nature and thus in turn feeds the narrative of the landscape of Most being a part and result of technology-led progress. After all, Štýs argues (see img. 65), as "the pair of the photographs of the same area (...), from 1952 and 1992, makes clear,

⁵⁸ Štýs even compares the specialists in land rehabilitation to a team of surgeons.

nature would in time take care of making the moon landscape green, but only in her own image, and not according to our ideas and needs” (Štýs and Helešicová 1992, 173)



Img. 65 A pair of the photographs discussed in (Štýs and Helešicová 1992, 173)

After they have been rehabilitated, the areas of former mines and spoil dumps exceed their former selves, surpass ordinary land in beauty which stems not only from the fact they were returned back into life, but that they were given a new purpose which makes them part of human world, spaces of servitude, spaces to consume – by means of spare time activities, but also materially in the form of crops turned bread or grapes turned red wine. In this respect, the narrative of land rehabilitation, as exemplified in the works by Stanislav Štýs (see also e.g. Štýs 2012), represents a continuation of socialist narrative which turned landscape of disappearance into landscape of reappearance full of potential for future development under the leadership of progress led by technology.

In such narratives, nature in the form of vegetation cover, parks, but also lakes, fields, vineyards represents an element of refilling. The image of Most as a Phoenix merges with an image of Most as a blossoming garden, both made possible due to scientific planning and intense, progressive work which helped Phoenix to rise from ashes and evolve into a “green lungs of the North [of Bohemia]” (Štýs and Větvicka 2008, 7). Discursively, rehabilitated land plays the role of a symbol of progress from the past to the present and future. But on a deeper level of meaning, it also underscores a particular dynamics out of which the landscape of Most emerges both materially and symbolically. This dynamics is a result of the relationship between disappearance and reappearance as it materializes in the landscape, as it is exploited discursively and artistically and

experienced personally, carnally. Although disappearance and reappearance, or on a more general level absence and presence, form and inform any landscape, it is the (post)industrial landscape of Most with its surface mines, vanished villages, rehabilitated spoil dumps and complex imaginaries of those where the workings of the dynamics of disappearance and reappearance, of absence and presence, is easily recognised, made visible and explored.

In place but out of place

Land rehabilitation is one example of a process by means of which voids left behind by the disappeared are filled in. Landscape of Most, moulded by mining, is a landscape of both disappearance and reappearance. It is a landscape in which emptiness is produced on a massive scale by massive relocation of matter, demolition of monuments as well as ordinary spaces related to the past, obliteration and forgetting. It is also landscape in which a reverse process takes place, a continuous infilling of the emptiness by (re)created elements, material objects such as a whole new city, as well as by contents, meanings and emotions. But in the process of filling in of the voids cleared because of and alongside mining, other voids emerge. In what follow, I show that these grow out of a tension between presence and absence and impact on the material, symbolic as well as experiential properties of landscape. But before I turn my attention to them and to related experience in which the landscape of Most acquires its final form, I would like to explore in more detail the dynamics of disappearance and reappearance which lies in behind the landscape of Most as both representation and experience.

I have two examples of a process of filling in the voids in the landscape and its outcomes. Both are related to land rehabilitation, but both point out beyond the ideas and imaginaries related to engineered nature of the landscape reborn so extensively embraced by Štýs. At the same time, both highlight the ambiguity and tensions existing between the disappeared and the reappeared because they represent elements of the landscape which are in place and out of place at once. And both serves here also as a link between the previous discussion of the landscape of Most as representation and the analysis of the landscape as experience, to which I turn right after this subchapter.

The first example is a story of a baroque fresco. It begins in 1728 when Wenzel Lorenz Reiner, one of the most renowned Bohemian baroque master painters agreed on decorating a hospital church in Duchcov, a town with a splendid baroque chateau complex with a large garden and a hospital belonging to the house of Waldstein and being located around 10 kilometres north-east of the city of Most. Opposite the chateau, across the French formal garden, later turned into an English landscape garden, laid a baroque hospital complex with an octagonal chapel of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, the dome of which was decorated with Reiner's fresco (img. 67).



Img. 66 A baroque octagonal chapel of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, the dome of which used to be decorated with Reiner's fresco on a photograph from 1952 (author's collection)

The baroque complex of the hospital and the garden survived until 1958 when around a third of the garden was cleared of vegetation and the hospital was demolished on the pretext of future mining. However, because of the historical significance of the complex evidencing the transition from baroque to rococo, and of the fresco, which represents one of the milestones in the work of Wenzel Lorenz Reiner, it was decided, on a governmental level, to save both sculptural and painterly decoration of the chapel, including statues by famous baroque sculptures Matthias Braun and Ferdinand Brokoff and most importantly the fresco by Reiner. And thus, prior the demolition in 1958, *“from the attic of the hospital's chapel, valuable sculptures of Braun's Virtues were brought down as well as some other elements of stone masonry decoration such as coats of arms, vases, etc. Rescued were also sculptures of Brokoff's Calvary and a number of smaller wooden busts of saints as well as two altar paintings, one of them by Reiner”* (*Pavilón pro Reinerovu Fresku v Duchcově: 1982, n.p.*).

On the 12 March 1956, a team of specialists was assembled with the task to remove the fresco by the end of the year so as it could be stored and later on mounted onto a new surface in an appropriate settings. Thus, during that year, the fresco, covering over 200 m², was examined and documented, impregnated and then cut into 549 pieces, which were carefully removed from the plastering at the dome of the chapel as a part of an experimental and untested process with

unpredictable results. Four large crates filled with the painting created nearly 230 years before were stored in the regional museum in Most. After that, a couple of the pieces were from time to time exhibited (in Milan and Montreal), but it was not until 1982 when the fresco left the depository and returned to Duchcov.

There, a new dome-like pavilion was built for the fresco in between 1973 and 1976 as a part of a rehabilitation of the garden. As the official publication from 1982 noted, *“the architect who was to design a new edifice for the reinstallation of the removed fresco, faced a difficult task. Reiner’s artwork used to be a part of another artwork – an architectural space with which it created an integral stylistic unity, co-created the space and was inspired by it. Once demolished, historical building is irreplaceable.”* Thus, the pavilion by architect Jan Sokol does not emulate the torn down building, rather its exterior is supposed to be a “modern expression of an old architectural motive of the cupola above the dome” (*Pavilón pro Reinerovu Fresku v Duchcově*: 1982, n.p.).



Img. 67 A book cover with a view of the new pavilion for the Reiner’s fresco (Pavilón pro Reinerovu Fresku v Duchcově: 1982, cover)

Technologically, the construction of the pavilion was extremely demanding and was during socialism represented as such – and thus also as a great technological success. The inside curvature of the dome had to conform to the one inside the demolished chapel so as the fresco could be mounted on it. Moreover, the inside space had to comply with requirements for a long term installation of the fresco – humidity, air permeability, sturdiness and stability had to emulate those in the old church. After three years, “the demanding, atypical building, unique of its kind in

the world,” as the official discourse would put it, “was at the beginning of August 1976 finalized and ready for the team of renovators to step in and complete the commenced work with their specialized skills” (*Pavilón pro Reinerovu Fresku v Duchcově*: 1982, n.p.).

After some experimentation with reinforcement of the pieces of the fresco and testing of the plaster on the inside of the dome, the fresco was piece by piece fixed onto the ceiling. The gaps between individual pieces were puttied and the painting was renovated and, in the gaps between individual pieces, reconstructed. In July 1982, the works were concluded. The fresco returned back to the garden and the chapel, although it was a different garden as well as a different chapel. Since then, the fresco is back in place. However, it seems out of place at the same time. After all, as Jan Sokol, an architect of the pavilion noted, “it is not a church, but an exhibitory pavilion on the dome of which lies the fresco, in the four corners stand Braun’s allegories of main virtues and by side Brokoff’s Descent from the cross and a Pietà by an unknown author.”⁵⁹



Img. 68 Exhibition depicting restoration works; photographs by author

I visited the chapel in summer 2014. After an about three previous visits to Duchcov, I finally found out what the purpose of the odd building resembling a water tower standing in the middle of the park was. There is a small exhibition inside about the construction of the pavilion including plans and photographs

⁵⁹ The quote comes from Jan Sokol’s memoirs (called *My plans. Memoirs of an architect*, published in Prague by Triáda publishers in 2004) and is quoted at the exhibition about the fresco inside the pavilion, where I have the quote from.

from the times when the fresco was being put back in (img. 69). Despite the dark, I took some photographs, but I spent much of my time slowly walking around looking up at the fresco pondering the ways in which its presence is marked with absence and how the disappeared, the church, the (original, uncut) fresco itself, becomes felt present despite their absence. In spite of the restoration efforts, the interstices between individual pieces into which the fresco was cut, stand out clearly and the fresco thus resembles a puzzle. Because of different climate inside the pavilion, the surface of the fresco darkens with time and defects become more visible. The interstices, the concrete walls of the pavilion, the juxtaposition of baroque statues and modernist (brutalist) aesthetics, they all draw attention to a paradoxical situation of the fresco being back in place and out of place at the same time (img. 70).



Img. 69 Brokoff's statue and Reiner's fresco in its present state, photographs by author

The fresco is present in the pavilion, but its presence is tinged with absence. The absence is in a sense present in the fresco, it is imprinted onto it. The interstices are actual spaces of absence within the fresco and make direct, visual reference to the disappearance which was part of the process leading to the fresco to reappear here again. But the presence of the fresco as a whole makes also reference to what is absent. In the form of the pavilion, in the shape of its dome

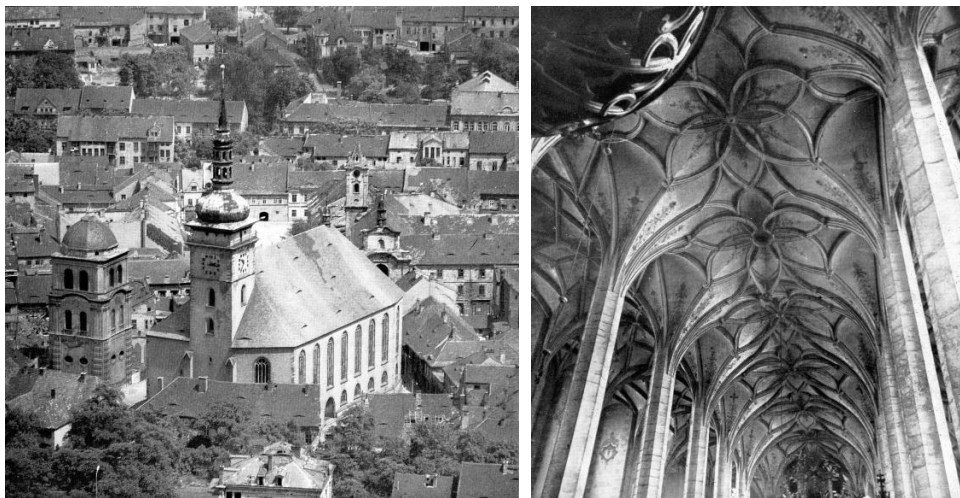
onto which the fresco is mounted, there lies a direct reference to the disappeared chapel, the absence of which is made evident and present by the pavilion and its interconnection with the fresco. This does not mean that the pavilion has to become a place of nostalgia, of longing for what disappeared. I merely want to point out the fact that the pavilion and the fresco are material outcomes of a process in which disappearance and absence play as crucial role as reappearance and presence. In other words, the presence of the fresco and the pavilion is in direct relationship to absence; the material presence of them in their present form is conditioned and shaped by absence. The fresco and the pavilion thus exemplify the ways in which presence and absence intertwine and co-create one another in the (post)industrial landscape of Most.

The second example for this subchapter's topic is a story of a church, which is from its very beginning marked by tensions between disappearance and reappearance. The story begins even earlier than the one of the fresco, right after the disastrous fire of the town of Most in 1515. A legend has it that after the fire, only two houses survived; the rest of the city vanished. Already in 1517, however, a construction of a new church started after a considerable sum was amassed through donations. After 77 years, the church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary designed by Jakob Heilmann from Schweinfurt, a stonemason and builder from the borderland of Bohemia and Saxony and a pupil of Benedikt Ried, a leading bohemian late gothic architect, was consecrated.

The church is now considered one of key late gothic architectural masterpieces drawing on the influence of both late gothic architecture of central Bohemia, as exemplified in the St. Barbara's Church in Kutná Hora, and of Saxony such as the Albrechtsburg in Meissen. The inner space of the church consists of a large hall divided into three naves by octahedral columns standing relatively far from each other so as the inner space would be visually unified. This unity is reflected in an original and innovative ribbed vault of the side naves which changes in the middle nave into a beautiful stellar vault (img. 71, for a detailed history of the church construction and description see Mannlová 1969; for a general history of the church in dates see Novák, Prošek, and Votroubek 2005).

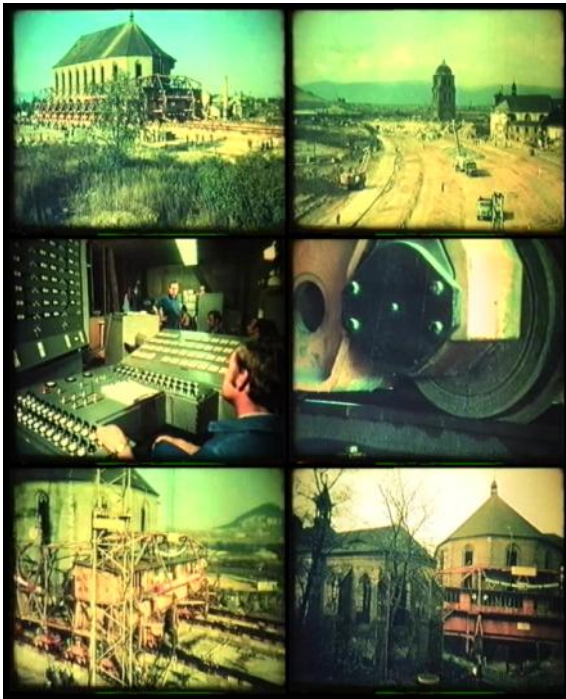
After it was decided, formally in 1964, that the old city of Most would be demolished, the question of what should happen to the church, an invaluable architectural monument from the turn of late Gothic and Renaissance located in the middle of the city, arose. The fate of the church was officially sealed in 1971 when the Czechoslovakian government decided that the church should be saved. Prior the decision, a number of variants of how to approach the matter of the church was devised, discussed and negotiated on state and communist party

levels. One option was to leave the church at its place on a pillar of untouched coal and overlays. Technically demanding because of the danger of landslides as well as self-ignition of the coal beneath the church, stabilization and securing the church, this option was in the end abandoned in favour of relocation or demolition with preservation of only the most valuable fragments. A specialized committee recommended relocation. The church was to be documented, stripped of decorations, reinforced and moved about 850 metres in the direction to the newly built city of Most (for a detailed discussion of existing variants and the process of planning and decision-making see Krejčí 2008, chap. 11).



Img. 70 The church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary in the old city of Most (left) and the valuable stellar vault in the middle nave inside (right); reproduced from (Mannlová 1969, 35, 41)

In 1971, the church bell was taken down and the spire was dismantled piece by piece so as it could be rebuilt afterward. Until 1975, the vault, columns, walls and the entire interior were reinforced. The column plinths were replaced with reinforced concrete blocks under which transport carriages were placed. The path for the church was cleared off and rail tracks were prepared. In 1975, the church was lifted up, placed on the tracks and began its journey, discursively praised during socialism as well as today as a proof of utmost technological skills. In the already mentioned documentary, *Most yesterday and tomorrow*, the move was described as a „technologically demanding step“ which „manifested the advances of Czechoslovak workers and technicians. Experts from around the world came to Most (img 72).

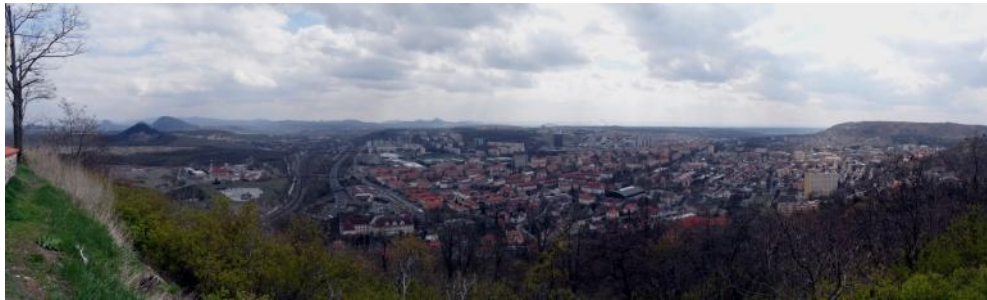


Img. 71 Moving the church, stills from the movie Most yesterday and tomorrow, 8:40 – 9:30; stills by the author

“At eleven hours and fifty minutes in the morning on 30 September 1975, hydraulic cylinders gave a push to the torso of the church bound in a steel cage. The hydraulic cylinders had compressive strength of 150 MP and upstroke of 3500 mm. 12 160 tons of stone, steel and concrete were set in motion. Partly pushed and slowed down, at speed of 1 to 3 cm per hour, the church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary started to move away from the site designated by its founders at the end of the Middle Ages. The baroque bell tower was left standing alone,” (Novák, Prošek, and Votroubek 2005, 112) and later perished together with the old city. After a month, on 27 October 1975, the church stopped at a place where it stands since then. However, it was not until 1988 when the spire was pieced together and the church was opened to serve as an exhibition space. The church was consecrated again after further reconstructions in 1993.

The new location for the church was chosen so as the church was close to the city but at the same time the transport and the final position would not disturb mining or the construction works on the new city and the corridor containing the main road, train tracks and the relocated river. As a result, the church is on the other side of the corridor than the new city of Most. A former spiritual centre which used to be the gravitational point of the old city is now cut off from its reincarnation by road, railroad and riverbed. Next to the church stands a smaller

gothic church of The Holy Spirit interconnected with a former baroque town hospital. Except for the district of Zahražany with buildings from the turn of the 19th and 20th century, which is located at the northern outskirts of the new city of Most, the area around the relocated church is everything that was left of old Most.



Img. 72 Panorama showing the present location of the relocated church, photo by author

Paradoxically, the only connection between the city and its historically most significant space is a narrow bridge above the corridor (img. 73). As a result, the church and its surroundings are lifeless, calm and quiet. In the direction to the disappeared centre of the old city, a green space stretches to the horizon with a vast lake covering the area where the old city and the church used to stand. The lake was filled in with water between 2008 and 2012 and is now up to 75 metres deep covering more than 300 hectares. Due to structural problems with its banks, it represents a no-go zone patrolled by private security and inhabited by flocks of birds. In the future, the lake and its surroundings should become a recreational area full of activity, a place of relaxation and consumption. Until then, the disappeared city transformed into a hybrid space, devised and governed by people but invaded and inhabited by nature (img. 74).

Being in a (new) place, the church is clearly out of place. It lost its architectural and urban context. But it is also out of place within the new city, located outside its structure and everyday life. In the church, the disappearance of the whole city is reflected; its material existence is in close relation to the material absence of not only the city, but also of the elements that used to be part of the church, such as the foundations that provided a direct material connection to the church which disappeared in the fire of the 1515 and which were demolished after the church moved to its new location. In a sense, the church disappeared so as it could reappear in a new context, both preserved and transformed. Disappearance and

reappearance, presence and absence intersect in a particular way in the church and its surroundings which directly and indirectly relates to the city which has disappeared so as to reappear in a new form.



Img. 73 View over the rehabilitated land from the top of the church; photo by author

New and old, disappeared and reappeared, presence and absence, they all underlie the actual, immediate shape and form of the landscape of Most. As I showed on the two examples of the fresco and the church, the reappeared is always in relation to the disappeared. The processes of disappearance and reappearance are closely intertwined. Presences and absences result from this paradoxical, bi-directional process which has been forming the landscape of Most and represent constitutive elements of the landscape. Material presence of the new city, the relocated church, the restored fresco, they all engender the absences of the old city or baroque complex of Duchcov garden and hospital. In them, presence and absence intertwine.

I use these two examples because in them this interconnection of presence and absence and the tensions of the processes of disappearance and reappearance materialize and thus are made visible much more easily. They can serve the purpose of drawing attention to what I understand to be the underlying principles out of which the landscape of Most emerges. The two examples should show how I think about the role of absence in the emergence and existence of landscape. The question remains of whether and how the interconnection of presence and absence and the intersecting processes of disappearance and reappearance impact on experience. This, the issue of experiential properties of the landscape of disappearance and reappearance, is what I turn to in the final subchapter.

Voids

It is April. Clouds hurry across the sky. Sunny changes now and then to cloudy and cold. Birds are singing and from the road and railroad down there rises incessant hum and noise which creates a humming background to bird songs and the silence of the forest. I am coming down the Hněvín hill across the road from the place where the relocated church stands. Through the branches of leafless trees I can see the lake. It looks full, not like a couple of years ago, and it filled up a lot of space of the rehabilitation [area]. That is the space which interests me. The water surface is dark and the flatland around is green and yellowish-brown, according to the type of vegetation and also where sunrays pass to through the clouds. On the horizon, the lake and the flatland is encircled with a dark strip of forests. To the left, a chemical plant fumes. I shall go there, to the church and the lake. While descending, I am thinking about the flatness of the land as an expression of absence. Erased but still there, remembered through images and maps. I am thinking about the flatness of the land – it is flat because full of absence which will in time disappear when sports and recreation become present as a new function of the space around the lake – when the lake is finished (from the field notes, 13 April 2012).

The landscape around Most is fascinating. Its material properties, the fact that it has emerged as completely remodelled, makes it intriguing: vast surface mines, rehabilitated spoil dumps and spaces interspersed with technological infrastructure, pipelines crossing through emerging forests and meadows, belt conveyors, silent, immobile and suddenly thrusting on, huge excavators on the horizon, clouds of dust rising from the mines, ever-present humming sound, bows of odd smells from a chemical plant, but also vast grasslands, young forests emerging through succession, birds and mushrooms, green and grey mountain ridge on the horizon. One of the spaces where this oddity of the landscape concentrates is the surroundings of the relocated church, especially the rehabilitation area which replaced the old city and the mine that led to its destruction.

It is an odd space, intriguing because difficult to come to terms with. The church big enough to make the city's most monumental cathedral stands at the very border of an empty space. Of course the space is not devoid of materiality; it is not empty in the strict sense. But it feels to be so. A couple of old buildings and a factory on one side, closer to the new city of Most, and a small park with old, baroque statues confined in walls surrounding the church together with a new city cemetery fenced off from a vast, green, grassy flatland on the other. This is where the old city used to stand before its foundations together with a thick coal

seam was mined out leaving after only a space to be filled with soil and water (img. 75).



Img. 74 The relocated church at the edge of the rehabilitated area, 2014, photo by author

This grassy area intrigued me when I first saw it, even before I got to know that it used to be a mine and before that a city. Although green, covered in vegetation, it felt artificial, unreal. Natural because of the vegetation, but unnatural at the same time. The best view over the area is from the church spire. Dismantled, it was built again after the church was moved and settled here. From the outside, it looks as it used to look, at least according to old photographs, but inside, it is constructed from the same building material used in the construction of prefab panel houses on socialist housing estates. On the walls along the staircase hang photographs showing views of the Most region and especially the disappeared old city. From the gallery at the top of the spire opens a view over the surroundings, the cemetery and the area towards the lake or the new city with silhouettes of the prefab houses and the city centre. Once, I tried to ascertain where the old city and the church in particular used to be. It proves hard without any reference points. All the clues to the presence of the old city perished and the topography changed completely. This is a space of erasure, just a grass flatland and a water surface, new groups of fast growing trees, birches, alders and aspens, new cemetery. In the end, I guessed the church stood in what is now the lake, near its closer left

corner. It is just a guess because the city is completely materially absent (img. 76).⁶⁰



Img. 75 A view of the church over the rehabilitated land from the direction of its original location, 2012, photo by author

To the halfway between the church and the lake, the grass is mown regularly. The area thus resembles a large lawn (img 77). People come here to walk their dogs or just stroll around. Here and there, one can come across paths trodden by dog owners and joggers who, when observed from the church spire, seem nothing more like small black dots on a lightly undulated green background. Then there is a dirt road encircling the lake which represents a border between the lawn-like area and a wilder space more towards the lake. Here, entry is forbidden due to the “danger of injury”. No-entry signs are scattered along the road and put at road turns alongside information panels telling the story of the land rehabilitation pursued here. From time to time, a lonely walker like me or an older couple curious about what has changed in there since their last stroll walk along and stop at the panels. Despite the trodden paths, the mown area feels emptier than the one nearer the lake because of its uniformity and seamlessness. Behind the border, around the lake, the grass is not mown and the meadow like area is here and there invaded by bushes and trees, inhabited by skylarks and interspersed with muddy pools and wetlands overgrown with reeds (img. 78). This is a

⁶⁰ According to the field notes from 1 July 2012.

wilderness where one would not expect to find it, timid wilderness growing out of a space the fate of which as well as the processes of its emergence have been thoroughly planned. Paradoxical space of solitude for a walker trespassing in entering a paradise of water birds (for an assessment of the area from an ornithological perspective see Bejček and Šťastný 2000). Until he or she is spotted by security.



Img. 76 Rehabilitated area at the site of the demolished city, 2012, photo by author



Img. 77 Wetlands in the rehabilitated area with a chemical plant in Litvínov in the background, 2012, photo by author

This is the space of absence overcome by an intense emergence.

The area is a space which used to be filled in with matter and content, then it was gradually emptied both materially as well as for its content and afterwards it was remodelled so as it could be filled in with matter (or water) and a new purpose. At the time of my research, it was a transitory space overtaken by a process of filling in the void, a process deliberate and conscious on one side – land rehabilitation, filling in the lake, mowing the lawn – and spontaneous and to a degree autonomous on the other – the succession of plants and animals, the resistance of the matter to be subdued to human plans which lead to instability of the lake shores and the ban on entry. This is, I believe, what makes it feel odd, the fact that it is a space of intense emergence.



Img. 78 Filling in the void, 2012, photo by author

For me, this photograph comes closest from all my photographs to convey the elusiveness of the space as a void, the fact that it is filling it with presence and yet still tinged with absence.

In other words, I understand the space around the newly forming lake as a void – a space where emptiness is felt and experience. This does not mean that the space is empty, only that the absence of presence or presence of absence can be intensely experienced there (img 79). The feeling of emptiness does not emerge only because of the knowledge of what used to be present and is now absent. I believe, its material features, the particular way in which what is there is present, makes the juxtaposition of presence and absence and in turn the emptiness to be possible to experience and conceive of more fully than elsewhere. The area where the old city used to be is a place which has not yet settled down and thus harbours absences alongside presences. It is a place in formation, but this process of formation is more noticeable because of the disappearance leading to fundamental absence, which preceded it.

The green grassy area where the old city used to stand might be seen as an example of the particularities of the (post)industrial landscape of Most. An artificial, pretending to be natural, hybrid landscape reappearing from the verge of disappearance, full of absences and tensions between presence and absence which imprint on its material features and character. In the land of rehabilitation, roads are straight and the turns often to the right angle. Once, my friends and I were looking for a mine. We just wanted to see it, take a couple of photographs. However, it is rather difficult to orient oneself in the rehabilitated land. It is changing, expanding, the vegetation is growing. Because of young oaks and hornbeams, it was not possible to see anywhere from the roads. For some time, we just went on lost. Then we arrived at a crossroads, the view opened at a power plant from which a belt conveyer run all the way to us and further on along the road (img. 80). And then, security turned out, one security man on foot from one side and two in a car from the other. Looking rough at first, they turned friendly after a while:

“There is no mine here, anywhere. Here you are at a fly ash landfill.”

“You would have to go from the other side, but you wouldn’t see anything there either, because there is just a forest. You can’t see the mine from anywhere because there is no hill anywhere here.”

“Do you see the excavator there? Here’s half a metre of soil and under that 40 metres of fly ash. Here everything grows on fly ash” (field notes from 5 July 2011).

The coal mined out from the open cast mine was transported by conveyors to a power plant, burned and transformed into electrical energy. Fly ash, the residue, was transported by other conveyors back to mined-out areas where it was dumped. A new landscape emerged, grew out of the ash, landscape of rectangular roads, young forests, no views and difficult orientation, landscape of vast distances, seamless, monotonous landscape of emergence in which disappearance turned into reappearance. Walking in the landscape of land rehabilitation is tedious. Distances are longer than they seem. Vegetation is still young and does not provide shade. Extensive views change with longer passages where the view is blocked by bushes or trees, where the flatness of the land allows only for glimpses of higher structures of excavators and smokestacks protruding up.



Img. 79 Belt conveyor in the rehabilitated land, 2011, photo by author

Closer to the mines, belt conveyors or pipelines cut through the land. At waste ponds, *“black water jets down from pipes and finds its way through dark sediments. Solid and liquid blackness, white pipes, smell of ash and something more, black soot on the banks. [...] From the pond, we descend towards the city [of Litvínov] and then go up to the field above the chemical plant. Before that, we pass a fountain of rust-coloured water falling down into a rusty pond from which three withered trees protrude like in one of those Sudek’s photographs”* (field notes, 16 June 2012).

The processes of disappearance and reappearance coexist and merge in the landscape of Most with varying intensity. This makes the landscape experientially unified and seamless and at the same time full of diversity entailing the ways in which nature invades and inhabit the artificial space created by mining industry. Here is a description of one of my walks through the landscape which should convey the ambiguous experience of its hybrid materiality:

We leave the town of Duchcov and find ourselves “in landscape where our steps resonate on the road paved by concrete panels as we pass by a waste pond with a view over a power plant, on a dirt road where the view is blocked by self-seeded but already grown trees under which wild strawberries turn red, or on a long, straight, smooth road lined with poplar trees and a meadow on the left through

which a straight line of two pipes shoot, each a metre in diameter. [...] We walk along a spoil dump towards a large spreader which throws out soil. At first, we doubt that it is in operation, but a closer look reveals a stream of soil tumbling down. But, it makes noise, the noise which is omnipresent on the background for nearly our whole journey. On one side, there is an earth bank with the spreader and a bulldozer, on the other spreads a waste pond, dry white plane onto which at one place falls water from a pipe and creates a puddle, tiny when compared to the plane of white. [...] Up the hill, for the first time today. The sky is blue, dotted with clouds, and all around us are green fields of oilseed rape. Cooling towers and a silhouette of the spreader is what is left of industrial landscape. And the noise, ever-present hum, which is typical of the (post)industrial landscape here, one of its constitutive elements. [...] Then we walk straight towards the mine and along its right bank, separated from it only by a meadow or a wall from a young forest of spruce. In behind the forest, there is the mine; we can even see a tiny part of it. But it makes itself present by the hum (which mixes with birdsongs). It is also dust, a brownish fog curling upwards, which reminds us of the mine's existence. Noise and dust are indexes of the mine and as such also symbols of this landscape" (field notes, 14 June 2014).



Img. 80 Material features contributing to the hybridity of the landscape: poplar trees alongside pipelines (2014) and disused belt conveyor (2010); photographs author

I perceive the mines around Most as vast spaces of emptiness which advances through space and impacts on the landscape. The mines are stripped of topography and emptied of their content. Ever-present noise and clouds of dust point to the continuous activity which makes the mines what they are – the activity of disappearance which makes the absence to become materially present as vast and deep pits moving slowly through landscape and devouring its material properties, emptying the space so as in time something else could reappear. When looking at the mines, what comes to my mind is their unavoidability. They move slowly though continually. There is certain fatefulness to the vast, humming, dusty areas in which emptiness has taken on an array of shades of brown and is punctuated only by slow moving machines. It is sometimes difficult to ascertain whether the machinery in the mine is in motion. This is a result of vast distances and the lack of reference points which would help to estimate how far or how big the things are. This lack of reference points, the inability to ascertain or come to terms with the dimensions of the mines, the ominous slowness of the movement, the blurriness of strips of brown in the mine, they all contribute to a sublimity of the mine when finally the view of it opens up (img. 82):

“We pass through three lines of trees and the mine [of Bílina] shows up, a brown to grey-brown plane stretching from beneath us to the grey-green mountains at the horizon. The shades of brown are complemented with a seamless, low humming noise, which I feel an inherent part of the mine. I already know the view. When I saw a surface mine for the first time, after having descended from the castle of Jezeří, it was pure fascination. A friend of mine and I stood for a long time in front of the view and looked through binoculars at machines down there. It took quite a while before we understood that the mine was in operation, that it was not halted, as we thought. It took time to discern the slow motion of excavators and conveyors and match it with an incessant hum. The size of the mine and the machines, against which ordinary cars were so tiny, fascinated us. This was the closest I have ever been to the feeling of sublime. We looked and looked and slowly started to understand; it slowly pieced together into a complex image. Now [three years later], it is curiosity rather than fascination, mixed with a feel of familiarity. I already know what to expect. But despite that, it is an amazing view – cascades of green turning into brown, the size of the brownish area, dust and noise” (field notes, 1 July 2012).



Img. 81 View over the mine of the Czechoslovakian Army, to the north-west of Most, 2010, photo by author

In the beginning of my research, I explored the landscape both topographically, to get to know what it consists of materially, and emotionally. I paid attention to textures of the surfaces, to continuity of certain presences – reminders of the industrial character of the area – as well as discontinuities, the areas that were unlike others. Further on, when I got acquainted with the features and distilled out the elements that are characteristic or constitutive of the landscape on both material and experiential level, I started to think about its spatial properties and in turn also about scale. This relates to my ongoing photographic attempts to capture something of the landscape in terms of the experience and thus also to depict the combination of diversity and uniformity of the landscape as I explored and experienced it by means of walking.

When walked, the landscape unfolds slowly and gradually. In the case of this particular landscape, distances seem smaller but take more time. This is because the basin in between the Iron Ore Mountains and the Central Bohemia Uplands is flat both topographically and visually. At the same time, it houses elements which are bigger than they seem due to the lack of reference points which would be readily available. The chemical plant in between the cities of Most and Litvínov, power plant in Ledvice, surface mines, they are all gigantic and thus seen from afar, they seem closer than they are because they are actually bigger than they

seem. This is an issue of scale and it impacts on how the landscape of vast distances and gigantic mines can be experienced, seen and represented:

“Photographing landscape requires objects which would make up a composition and at the same time help to convey a concise character of the landscape. On the way, I try to take photographs especially of the views, because view is associated most closely with “landscape”. The problem is that the mine in Bílina is gigantic and at the same time visually flat. It is empty materially, but also as for its [visual, aesthetical or symbolic] content. It is just a vast brownish plane which fills up the photograph, in case it squeezes in, but this means the photograph loses its composition and focus because there are no objects which would made the mine to be seen. Thus the mine is just one large featureless plane. To squeeze it in the picture, one has to be far away. This leads to not only the mine but also details in the background as well as foreground to be indistinct” (field notes, 5 September 2015).



Img. 82 A view towards the mine Bílina clouded in dust, 2012, photo by author

The landscape of Most is thus, I argue, characteristic by emptiness being simultaneously created and overcome. Scattered around the landscape are places where emptiness or the process of filling in the emptiness surface and let themselves to be faced, felt, experienced and even represented. The emptiness gives itself in the form of a continuing absence of presence, which would be the case of the mine emptied of its content, or presence of absence, which would be the case of the area surrounding the relocated church, where the absence of the

old city and the original immediate context is felt present as well as made present by the practices of remembering such as the exhibited photographs inside the church spire.

The continuing process of disappearance – as embodied in mining – combines in the landscape with a reverse process of reappearance. As a result, the landscape is interspersed with voids, places where the absence of the disappeared is still felt in a (fresh) presence of the reappeared. These are the places of the emergence of new presence where the voids fill in and where the tension between presence and absence stand out.

Conclusion: Landscape between presence and absence

The landscape of Most is a landscape of constant change. Since the beginning of the 20th century at the latest, the landscape has been substantially remodelled by surface mining of lignite. With the mining, not only the physical properties of landscape changed. The mining and the material changes it brought about impacted on meanings inscribed into the landscape, ideas associated with individual places as well as with the landscape as a whole and emotions expected to be enticed by it. The process of mining was accompanied with a continuous process of renegotiating the meaning of the landscape and its future in terms of material, physical properties but also images, ideas and aspirations.

In this chapter, I explore the changes brought about mining with particular attention paid to the level of representation. I analyse visual representations of the region and show that they thematically revolve around the changes to the region. My aim is not only to explore these representations, but also to explore how these representations change in time, especially with the fall of socialism. Similarly to the chapter on Ostrava, I understand these representations as particular ways of seeing the region, as a means of establishing, supporting or challenging certain ideas about (post)industrial landscape of North-West Bohemia.

Josef Sudek for example (re)presented the region as a sad landscape. In his photographic endeavour, he captures, frames and composes a very particular vision in which the landscape is infused with and entices particular emotions – that of melancholy and sadness. I argue that thematically as well as formally and stylistically, these emotions as well as the general way of seeing put forth by Sudek is rooted in the focus on the tensions between presence and absence which are in turn a result of the intermingling of the processes of disappearance and (re)appearance. Throughout the chapter I hold that it is these processes and their outcomes that are constructive of the landscape – not only on a material level, but also on the level of representations, negotiations of its meanings and aspirations and also on the level of experience.

While Sudek frames the changes in a particular way so as to compose and produce the landscape as infused with sadness, socialist official imaginary of the landscape framed the many disappearances and (re)appearances in generally positive way. The city of Most, which was destroyed to give way to surface mining and built anew on a new location, was represented as a phoenix, which after its destruction rose again in a new and better form. The disappearance and (re)appearance of the city as well as of other monuments, spaces and places

throughout the region was narrated as a necessary move towards better, socialist future. In this way, the landscape was thematically as well as metaphorically linked to the process of disappearance and (re)appearance and shown as an outcome of the meeting of the two. The official socialist landscape of Most and the sad landscape by Josef Sudek share the same general principle, which governs the way of seeing the region. In both cases the landscape emerges out of the meeting of the two complementary processes of disappearance and (re)appearance as a landscape full of not only presence, but also of absence. It is the particular framing of the tensions between presence and absence and of the clash between the processes of disappearance and (re)appearance which makes the socialist official vision of the landscape radically different from the one produced by Sudek.

It is thus not only disappearance which lies in behind the changes of constantly emerging landscape of Most. The many disappearances did not consist of only physical destruction; alongside the demolitions, hollowing of the land and relocation of matter there went also disappearances of meanings and contents – people were forced to move, places of the past, of remembering, disappeared. At the same time, however, new elements emerged bringing new contents and meanings in the landscape. Where villages and mines used to be, new rehabilitated land and nature (re)appeared. Socialist official representations tended to link mining and progress which allowed them to frame the processes of disappearance and (re)appearance and their outcomes in a positive light. Post-socialist official representations tend to focus on reappearance and thus continue to promote the city of Most as well as its surroundings as a phoenix. Thematically however, the way of seeing the area shifted towards focusing on land rehabilitation and its potential. The city of Most has become to be (re)presented as a city of greenery and nature and the region has been framed as a future recreational region. Such local official representations promote the view that the landscape of the past, the landscape of disappearance, turned into a landscape of reappearance which opens new ways and new potentials for the future of a highly industrialized region.

The post-socialist official representations of the landscape share some thematic commonalities with their socialist predecessors. There is continuity in how the theme of progress and technological advancement is interwoven into the landscape. However, the progress is no longer associated with mining industry and the complex of the processes of disappearance and (re)appearance and their outcomes, but rather with the management of land rehabilitation and the potentials unlocked by the reappearance of natural environment. At the same time, on a general level, the landscape of post-socialist representations is

grounded in the same tensions of presence and absence. The governing principle in behind the way of seeing the landscape in post-socialist representations is to focus on the (re)appearances and their power to fill in the absences that are so intensely present in the landscape.

In this chapter, I do not stop at exploring the landscape of Most as representation. My aim is to further the visual analysis and enrich it with experiential perspective. With respect to the notion of landscape as experience developed in the theoretical chapter and in reference to the works of Judith Okely (2001) and Chris Tilley (2008) I strive for connecting the visual aspect of landscape with multisensory direct perception. Landscape as representation, the analysis of diverse visual representations of landscape of Most, thus represent a starting point in exploring the experiential properties of landscape that has been represented as grounded in and stemming from the tension between presence and absence, the outcomes of the fundamental constitutive processes of disappearance and (re)appearance.

As the analysed representations of the landscape show, the landscape of Most is an exemplary landscape for exploring the effects and outcomes of the interwoven process of disappearance and reappearance. Based on my phenomenologically grounded long term research, I show how absences form an important part of the landscape not only in terms of representation but more importantly in terms of experience. What I encountered when walking through the places and spaces in and around the city of Most was a landscape full of absences which were the results of the concrete processes of disappearance. But in many instances, these absences became to be felt present (much more immediately) due to the concrete processes of (re)appearances. During my phenomenological explorations, I discover places where the presence of absence represents a key constitutive feature of the place and its experience. I call these places voids because they are the places where emptiness, which is an outcome of the process of disappearance or (re)appearance or both, can be readily encountered and experienced in the features, character or settings. The voids are outcomes of an interweaving of multiple temporalities that formed and inform material as well as social and personal dimension of the encounter between embodied, socioculturally positioned human being, and the world (s)he finds her/himself in. In the case of my research, it was me entering, exploring, walking through places that were changed and/or created because of lignite mining. These temporalities can be narrated as stories of coal, coal mining, but also political negotiations and resulting aspirations, ideas, images, ideologies, representations, etc.

I recounted two such complex multi-layered stories that lie in behind two voids – places or spaces where the absence brought about by mining stands out and impacts on an immediate embodied experience. The outcomes of these stories – of the fresco by Reiner in Duchcov and of the church in Most – are places one can enter as a bodily being, move through and explore. Such an encounter with the places is carnal and multisensory meeting with an immediate and temporary outcome of a meeting of diverse temporalities, stories that materialize on site. What is characteristic of such outcomes, of the places I explored, is them being in place and out of place at once. The fresco and the church are both materially present, but their presence is tinged with absence. In both cases, the absence is a fundamental part of their presence and refers back to the interconnected processes of disappearance and (re)appearance out of which these places have emerged. Disappearance and (re)appearance were processes productive of these two places I explored. These two processes made presence and absence to become part of the places in a particular way and as a result, the places are marked by an intense tension between presence and absence.

I chose to concentrate on these two places because they encapsulate for me how presence and absence intertwine and co-create one another in the (post)industrial landscape of Most. They are just examples of buildings, sites, monuments but also general features such as nature, water, agriculture that disappeared so as they could (re)appear later on in new contexts, preserved and transformed at the same time. Exploration of these places and the ways in which absence becomes a fundamental part in/of their presence is my way of trying to get grips on the (post)industrial landscape of Most, which I understand to be a temporary conflux of diverse temporalities, stories I became part of when I entered it.

The landscape forms as an outcome of a continuous process of change. It emerges for us “here and now” as a conjunction of diverse temporalities (Massey 2006, 42) when we as embodied beings enter it so as we could become part of the diverse human as well as nonhuman trajectories that form it. However, because the process of change was put in motion by surface mining, it encompasses a vast relocation of matter and as such consists of complementary processes of disappearance and (re)appearance. Because of that, the landscape we encounter is a landscape emerging out of the tension between presence and absence. This could be said about any landscape. Due to the fact that the conjunction of the processes of disappearance and (re)appearance was intensified by surface mining and the way it was approached, employed and represented during socialism, the effects of the meeting of disappearances and (re)appearances are amplified. What makes the (post)industrial landscape of Most special is the fact that the tensions

between presence and absence that (in)form any landscape can be faced, felt, experienced and thus also explored much more easily. The (post)industrial landscape of Most is interspersed with places and spaces where the absence of the disappeared is still felt in a (fresh) presence of the reappeared. It is a landscape which, as any other landscape but in a more intense manner, emerges on material, symbolic but also experiential level out of the tension between presence and absence.

CONCLUSION

Tensions behind a contemporary (post)industrial landscape

As a theoretical concept, landscape is complex, ambiguous and elusive. I belong to those who perceive the complexity of landscape as its conceptual strength. Being elusive and ambivalent, landscape can help us to explore and analyse spatial themes in their complexity. This is what this dissertation strives to do. I employ the concept of landscape as a tool which can help me to describe, explore and understand what happened after state socialism to the places and spaces which used to be industrial during socialism. In other words, this dissertation represents a journey through (post)industrial landscape charting the developments and changes brought about to it by the turn from socialism to what came after, whether we call it post-socialism or otherwise.

Throughout the dissertation I refer to the landscape in question as (post)industrial. It is because it is a landscape that was profoundly shaped by industrialization, which predated socialism but continued on and was discursively emphasised until the fall of state socialism in Czechoslovakia. Since then, the opposing process of deindustrialization took over, although not with the same force and outcomes everywhere. Since I am interested in spaces and places (and their context) that used to be industrial and since the end of socialism have been becoming something else, the developments in the landscape I explore are closely linked to what happened to industry. In other words, industry – real, in terms of actual production, as well as imaginary, in terms of ideas, symbols, and emotions – and its rise and decline represent a key force behind the landscape which is thus (post)industrial.

It is both industrialization and deindustrialization in a particular geographical, socio-historical and political context, out of which the landscape I explore emerged (and continues to emerge). In the process of emergence of the landscape, socialism historically played and in its echoes continues to play an extremely important role. Socialism shaped landscape in the past on a material level but also with respect to ideas, images and emotions inscribed into, associated with and naturalized by means of industry and the landscape it occupied and formed. But socialism continues to haunt the landscape I explore. This is because the developments in and alterations to the landscape and the

ways in which it was imagined, represented, taken care of and exploited represent a reaction to socialist past. The (post)industrial landscape is thus not socialist any more, but it cannot be said to be simply devoid of or beyond socialism. This is why I consider the landscape to be post-socialist, which I deliberately spell in this way – so that the spelling acknowledges the fact that it is a contemporary landscape which was substantially formed by socialism, which continues to be reformed with reference to socialism, but where other forces unrelated to socialism also play important roles. In other words, the (post)industrial landscape is a post-socialist one, growing out of and being still influenced by socialism and its contemporary image. Yet we have to keep in mind that only parts of the new post-socialist and not-socialist present and future have their roots in socialism or in the reaction to its form.

In the dissertation, I explore this post-socialist (post)industrial landscape using three research terrains in three cities with rich industrial history and a turbulent (post)industrial present, which has affected each city in a different way. The city of Ostrava, called the steel heart of the republic under socialism, continues to be an important centre of heavy industry despite the deindustrialization of the period after the fall of socialism. At the same time, it is a vanguard in industrial tourism and industrial heritage preservation. Over the last 25 years, the city of Kladno, which has a similarly rich industrial history to Ostrava, turned into a residential area from where industrial heritage continues to disappear. The city of Most is surrounded by closed as well as operating surface mines and as such has become the centre of a region the future of which is negotiated through the future of the industry that profoundly altered its basic morphology.

The choice of the three particular landscapes which form part of the large post-socialist (post)industrial landscape of contemporary Czechia was not haphazard. It was informed by the complexity of the concept of landscape as it is theorised across socio-cultural anthropology and (new) cultural geography. As I argue in the theoretical chapter, three strands of conceptualizing landscape can be discerned: across the literature, landscape has been approached as representation, as process and as experience. I chose the three particular landscapes of Ostrava, Kladno and Most as terrains where each of the three conceptualizations of landscape can be employed to explore diverse aspects of (post)industrial landscape.

The idea and concept of landscape appeared in (Western) thought and practice in close connection to visual arts, namely painting. Landscape is a way of rendering the world in visual terms, or, as Denis Cosgrove (1998; see also Daniels and Cosgrove 1988) argues, it is a way of seeing the world grounded in particular

approaches to composition, to the means of visual representation, to positioning subjects and objects and enticing emotions. Landscape (as a concept) thus entails rendering of the world that certain social groups inhabit and understand. This rendering, the way of seeing the world, in turn impacts on the world as such, provides it with content and inscribes meanings and emotions into it. Landscape is thus not only represented but at the same time it also represents. In this way, it can be understood as a symbolic system in and through which socially produced meanings materialize and become seemingly natural (see J. Duncan and Duncan 1988; James Duncan 1990). The meanings of landscape emerge as an outcome of the interplay of various (visual but also other) texts and practices; in other words, landscape is inherently intertextual. In this strand of thinking about landscape, it comes into being at the intersection of material environment and the vision that sees it in a specific way, provides it with meanings and infuses it with emotions. The concept of landscape as representation drives my explorations of the (post)industrial landscape of Ostrava. I employ visual discourse analysis to analyse official as well as alternative photographic production on the city, its form and content and the role of industry from the socialist period and after its fall.

Landscape, however, is not static. As Barbara Bender points out, it is never finished and it never stands still (Bender 2002a). Even as a representation, it is actively shaped and continuously recreated. As such, landscape is not only intertextual, but it is also temporal, consisting of and emerging out of diverse temporalities that meet and coalesce in the landscape. These are social: temporalities of representations, of the way of seeing and its change. But they are also personal on one hand and nonhuman on the other. It is Doreen Massey who emphasises the fact that at any time, landscape emerges as an event, as provisionally intertwined simultaneities of on-going, unfinished stories, which unfold in time (Massey 2006). We tend to understand and approach landscape as coherent – partly because the way of seeing is a means of making disparate features of the world around us fit into a unified whole, an image or representation. But the coalescence of temporalities – of stories in landscape – does not necessarily result in a coherent outcome. In this way, landscape is open to contestations and negotiations for the very reason it contains (and is made of) incoherence. Landscape reaches beyond human because it consists of temporalities that outreach us; at the same time landscape is socially conditioned because it emerges out of a particular way of seeing. However, the imaginaries and practices related to landscape as representation are not necessarily united. On the contrary, the meanings and understandings are continuously negotiated; they meet, clash or pass each other resulting in places and landscapes that are multivocal and plural, always in the making. In this respect, landscape is a particular process in which the material world around us is being inscribed with

meanings by means of social practices. I explore the (post)industrial landscape of Kladno stressing the idea of landscape as process. I do so by means of ethnography with a particular emphasis on interviews analysed in line with hermeneutic (content) analysis of statements about the city, its relationship to industry and the ways in which it figures in the ideas about its past, present and future.

Landscape is not simply what we look at, but it is what we as socially and historically conditioned beings see: make sense of, negotiate and transform. Landscape thus emerges as a meaningful space from our engagement with the world into which we are immersed. As phenomenologists and phenomenologically oriented scholars (such as Ingold 1993; Rodman 1992; Tilley 2008) argue, we engage with the world in a particular way, as embodied human beings. Landscape thus always bears testimony to the fact that seeing by means of which the particular landscape emerges is subjective (and related to a particular individual) and multisensory (related to our bodily being). This leads for example Judith Okely (2001) to an assertion that looking at a landscape into which we are immersed as bodily beings forms only a part of seeing it (because we receive it as carnal beings) and that being in the landscape as bodies makes not only the landscape available to us but also us available to the landscape and the stories it houses and trajectories out of which it is conjoined. Landscape thus needs to be theorized not simply as a passive medium, but as active in terms of opening up possibilities for some (carnally grounded) experiences and closing others. This is what, I believe, Doreen Massey (2006) have in mind when asserting that landscape is among other things also a provocation. I draw on these phenomenologically inspired conceptualizations of landscape in my exploration of the (post)industrial landscape of Most where I conducted a phenomenological (field) research.

These three strands of theorization of landscape might be conceived of as separate approaches to landscape. I found them not only formative for my understanding of landscape, but I personally understand them also as deeply interconnected. Thus, for me landscape represents a spatial conflux of the material, imaginary, social/cultural/political and experiential dimensions related to a particular section of the world around us. In the dissertation, I attempt at linking landscape as representation to landscape as process and in turn to landscape as experience in order to come to terms with the (post)industrial landscape of contemporary Czechia while acknowledging its complex nature on the thematic and ambiguous nature on the theoretical level. By means of that, I strive to unravel the potential of landscape as a theoretical concept for exploring the richness and complexity of particular landscapes rather than reducing these

for the sake of developing an unambiguously (and thus reductively) devised concept.

In my research, I am inspired by Michael Burawoy and his concept of extended case method (Burawoy 1998). I thus understand my research as a means of elaborating on existing theories of landscape with particular emphasis put on linking the diverse theories so as to develop an understanding of landscape which would acknowledge the complexity of the landscape(s) in question: the (post)industrial landscape of Czechia as it is exemplified by the landscapes of Ostrava, Kladno and Most. In the theoretical chapter, I discuss the three strands of current theorization of landscape (across anthropology and geography), which allows me to formulate their interconnectedness. In the methodological chapter, I then show that in my research of landscape I prefer a bricolage approach (Kincheloe 2001) which enables me to combine a number of research techniques (methods) with the intent to grasp the complexity of the studied landscape(s). The three interrelated conceptualizations of landscape – landscape as representation, process, experience – are thus mirrored in three interrelated methods (or methodologies) that I apply to the landscapes in question – visual discourse analysis to research the landscape as representation, hermeneutic (content) analysis to understand the landscape as process, and phenomenological field research to explore the landscape as representation. The first part of the dissertation consists of chapters outlining its theoretical and methodological groundings. I put these three related perspectives in use in the three landscapes which represent three research terrains as well as objects of study. This is what constitutes the second, empirical part of the dissertation.

Because I am driven by the idea of extended case method and the underlying ambition to extend the existing theory of landscape, the three empirical chapters are not intended to just illustrate the theoretical points. They serve to elaborate on the complex conceptualization of landscape by means of exploring the specificities of (post)industrial landscape of contemporary Czechia from the perspective of landscape as representation, process and experience. Therefore, in the chapter on Ostrava, I discuss at length the notion of landscape as a way of seeing. By means of an analysis of photographic books containing particular sets of visual representations of Ostrava, I explore the shifts in seeing (composing, producing) the landscape. I understand these sets of photographs – official visual socialist production, alternative artistic production and post-socialist official representations – as instances of particular ways of seeing Ostrava, of framing and constructing the landscape. I show that while official socialist as well as post-socialist representations produce a coherent and relatively stable framework for seeing Ostrava, artistic renderings of Ostrava are much more ambivalent. Each of

the three landscapes as they are pictured in the books can be understood as three distinct sets of representations with their own constitutive features and elements. Due to the connections and references among them, they also form a loosely interconnected representational space in which the real existing city of Ostrava is mirrored and which informs how Ostrava is seen, understood, experienced and what is expected of it.

The case of Ostrava shows that socialist industrial landscape emerges from a paradoxical tension of stability and change. Industry is the most important constitutive element of socialist Ostrava and it is represented as such on both the material and symbolic level. It is industry that lies behind both the stability and change of the landscape; it infuses the landscape with work, an activity which helps the people, city and the whole system to proceed further. The socialist landscape of Ostrava is a landscape of work thematized as a continuous production which brings about development and change. The progress engendered in the development and change brought about into the landscape by industry is an inherent feature of the landscape. The past and the future are both mythologized and distanced. This makes the landscape a landscape of the (socialist) present, which seems to be ahistorical and everlasting. Both the past and the future serve the purpose of justifying the socialist present, which is to be forever heading towards a better future.

Throughout the analysis of the post-socialist official visual rendering of Ostrava, I show that there is a complex mixture of continuity and change in (re)presenting the (post)industrial landscape. Due to the employment of similar visual strategies, the (post)industrial landscape of post-socialist Ostrava is also infused with timelessness similarly to its predecessor. However, industry and production shifted into the background and the sites of production, once the key constitutive elements of the landscape of production, have been turned into remainders, repositories of the past. This change in (re)presentation of industry and its role in the landscape led to a profound change: progress has disappeared from the landscape which thus becomes stable and essentially unchanging. The (post)industrial landscape resulted from the change of the landscape of production to the landscape of consumption, which is however close to the socialist industrial landscape of work as it shares its timelessness. The contemporary (post)industrial landscape emerges as the landscape of consumption.

In the chapter on Ostrava, I use photographic books as a case to explore the continuities and discontinuities in the landscape of Ostrava understood as a representation of the social and spatial order at the turn of socialism and post-

socialism. In the following two chapters, I expanded on this by means of linking the visual representations of the cities of Kladno and Most to those of Ostrava on one hand and connecting the landscape as representation to other dimensions of landscape on the other. Throughout all the three empirical chapters, I show that in all the three cities, socialist visual representations showed landscape as a coherent whole and followed similar patterns. Post-socialist representations have been caught up in a similar mixture of continuity and change with respect to the previous, official way of seeing. In socialism and to some extent after its fall, the three cities thus shared a representational space, in which industrial and later (post)industrial landscape was presented and represented.

In the second empirical chapter on the (post)industrial landscape of Kladno, I explore in greater depth the issue of continuity and change brought about by the fall of state socialism. I do not concentrate so much on the landscape as a way of seeing; rather, I link landscape as representation to a complex nexus of ideas and emotions related to particular (post)industrial sites in Kladno. I show that these spaces have (also through their representations) become places of social contestation and continuous negotiation about the past and in this connection also about the present and future of the city. Based on interviews, personal experience and visual representations, I show that these (post)industrial sites have become “the temporary grounding of ideas” (Rodman 1992, 652) and emotions related to those ideas. From there I turn my attention to a specific emotionality that pervades the (post)industrial landscape of Kladno. This emotionality is related to the fact that the landscape emerged as a result of an abrupt change related to industry and its role in everyday life and the landscape. In the chapter, I argue that emotionality of (post)industrial landscape stems from its perceived connection to the past and that it is at the same time conditioned and strengthened by the process of change in which the present turns into the past.

The (post)industrial landscape engenders the process of change; it is both its immediate outcome and manifestation on both the symbolic and material level. And it is the process of change that is fundamental to the aesthetic appeal, emotional charge and perceived value of the spaces and places that constitute the landscape both in material terms and on the level of imaginary. I show that it is the process of dissipation that makes the landscape aesthetically and emotionally appealing and turns it into a landscape of contestations. What makes it an important area of negotiations because of ideas and emotions related to its value and appeal is both the time materialized in the form of industrial heritage, but also time materializing in the form of decay and disappearance. I argue that the appeal of (post)industrial landscape is to be attributed to the tension between the

past and the present that pervades the landscape. This tension stands out not only in the material presence of something belonging to the past, such as the sites of former industrial production, but also in the dynamic process of something present becoming absent and thus moving from the present into the past.

The continuity and change of the (post)industrial landscape thus takes form through the tension between the past and the present as it materializes, but also as it is reflected upon, represented and made sense of. In the (post)industrial landscape with its derelict and decaying sites and objects, the process of time materializing and its aesthetical, emotional and symbolical appeal as well as cultural, social and political representations and arguments becomes clearly evident. The negotiations over the shape, form, content and meaning of the (post)industrial landscape are conditioned by the approach to the materialization of time in the spaces and places that form the landscape. An important element of the (post)industrial landscape is the current approach to (the materialization of) time which fetishizes it. Thus in the chapter, I argue that the contemporary (post)industrial landscape, as exemplified by the landscape of Kladno, is a landscape based on the fetishization of time as it passes by from the present to the past.

In the chapter on Kladno, I use the (post)industrial landscape of Kladno as a means to explore landscape as always in process – both material as well as symbolic. I show that the contemporary landscape of Kladno comes out of a tension between the past and the present (and in turn also of the present and the absent) and that the future of the landscape depends on how the tension and the meanings attached to the past are negotiated in the present. Drawing on Massey [2000], I argue that at any given moment landscape emerges as an interconnection of diverse temporalities (“trajectories”, “stories”) of both material and immaterial nature. The temporalities and their immediate manifestations are where the past meets the present; they are the outcome of the tension between the two.

In the case of Most and the surrounding region, I furthered my analysis by showing that the processes behind the (post)industrial landscape of Most are those of disappearance and reappearance. In this respect, I expanded on the thinking about the (post)industrial landscape of Kladno where I unravelled the fundamental role of time in the landscape as process which encompasses nonhuman, material continuities and changes and human negotiations and contestations over these. In the chapter on the (post)industrial landscape of Most, I argue that it is disappearance and (re)appearance that form and inform the temporalities (“trajectories”, “stories”) at the intersection of which the landscape

emerges. Disappearance, reappearance and the intersection of the two shape spaces and places, ideas and images, material forms and representations the landscape consists of. Generally speaking, it is the interweaving of disappearance and reappearance out of which the (post)industrial landscape emerges.

The (post)industrial landscape of Most has been transformed by intensive surface mining which impacted not only the material composition of the land, but also the meanings inscribed into the landscape, ideas associated with individual places as well as with the landscape as a whole. On the level of representation, the landscape emerges out of a particular framing of the tensions between presence and absence and of the clash between the processes of disappearance and (re)appearance, which makes the diverse visions of the landscape radically different from one another. Despite the differences – between socialist, post-socialist official visual production and other visual production such as that by Josef Sudek – the forces behind the framing and composing as well as contesting and negotiating the landscape remain similar. However, based on my phenomenological field research, I also show that these forces (creative tensions) fundamentally inform the experiential properties of landscape. I thus move from the emphasis put on landscape as process in the chapter on the (post)industrial landscape of Kladno to the issue of landscape as experience.

Throughout the chapter, I show that (similarly to Kladno), absences form an important part of the landscape not only in terms of representation or process (of change and negotiation) but also in terms of experience. The (post)industrial landscape of Most is full of absences which are the outcomes of the processes of disappearance. However, these absences are present in the landscape due to the processes of (re)appearance. The (post)industrial landscape of Most thus helps me to proceed with my exploration of how presence and absence intertwine and co-create one another in landscape in general. I base my understanding of what is and what happened in the (post)industrial landscape of Most on the fact that I consider it a temporary conflux of diverse temporalities, stories, of which I become part when I venture into the landscape. I explore places such as the current site where the baroque fresco by Wenzel Lorenz Reiner from 1728 was moved in the 1980s and the area around the relocated late gothic Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, in order to understand the ways in which absence becomes a fundamental part of the presence. As a result, I argue that landscape, exemplified here by the (post)industrial landscape of Most, comes into being due to the tension between presence and absence on a material, symbolic but also experiential level.

There is a number of links and connections between the three empirical chapters. There is also a progression and an increase in complexity of the analysis and its outcomes. The visual discourse analysis applied predominantly (but not solely) to Ostrava established a common ground for a more complex analysis – for proceeding to more elusive theoretical and thematic issues related to the concepts of landscape as process and as experience. It also pointed out the importance of continuity and change and the particular ways in which the post-socialist (post)industrial landscape is continuous and at the same time discontinuous with the socialist industrial landscape. In turning from Ostrava to Kladno, I progress from exploring continuity and change in the landscape as representation to its role in the landscape as process. I do not only show that there is continuity and change in how the past, present and future are represented to form part of the landscape. I also demonstrate that the continuity and change as such and the effects of being continuous and/or discontinuous become an important part of negotiations, contestations and in turn of composing, forming and transforming the landscape, its content, meaning and effects (e.g. aesthetical and emotional). The issue of continuity and change is closely related to the issue of the relationship of the past, present and future in landscape because continuity and change manifest themselves in the present as a relationship, material but also symbolic, social, political, to the past (and future). Moving from Ostrava and landscape as representation to Kladno and landscape as process thus means an extension from the tension between continuity and change to the tension between past and present.

The tension between the past and the present and the particular outcomes of how this tension and the meanings attached to the past are being negotiated in the present manifests itself in the landscape in the form of presences and absences. In turning from Kladno to Most I progress from exploring the tension between past and present and its formative effects on landscape to the relationship between the presence and absence and how this relationship (in)forms landscape. But the tension between presence and absence is an outcome of the formative processes in behind, namely disappearance and (re)appearance. As outcomes of the on-going processes and as fundamental constitutive elements of landscape, they are important for understanding the landscape as process – on a material but also symbolic, social, and political level. As such we can relate them back to the issue of continuity and change and thus also to landscape as representation. But because disappearance and (re)appearance are formative of landscape features, they impact our experience of what we come across and might or might not encounter in landscape. As such, the move from Kladno and the tension between the past and the present to Most and the tension between presence and absence as outcomes of disappearance

and (re)appearance also means an extension from landscape as process to landscape as experience.

Change is inherent to landscape. The fall of state socialism and the ensuing developments and their particular impact on industry amplified the links between the past and the present as well as presence and absence and their relationship to landscape. In turn, post-socialist (post)industrial landscape makes these links, relationships and formative tensions (forces) clearly visible, and readily available for an in-depth analysis. It is such an in-depth analysis that this dissertation offers. On a thematic level, it explores the particular ways in which continuity and change, the past and the present, presence and absence, disappearance and (re)appearance intermingle in the contemporary post-socialist (post)industrial landscape of Czechia. By means of that the dissertation elucidates how these tensions become involved in forming the landscape as representation, process and experience on a general level making a contribution to theoretical thinking about landscape.

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