UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION AND INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE

UNESCO-va Konvencija o svjetskoj baštini i industrijska baština

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Summary

Presentation will give a brief insight of the modalities of recognition and promotion of examples of industrial heritage having characteristics of outstanding universal value. Central point of the presentation will address the provisions of the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, adopted by UNESCO in 1972 applied to industrial heritage.

In the first place, allow me to thank the organiser, Pro Torpedo of Rijeka, for the invitation extended to our UNESCO Office in Venice that has the mandate of implementation of UNESCO’s activities in cooperation with the partners in the area of Southeastern Europe. I would also like to commend the organisers for this highly important initiative in promoting the concept of industrial heritage and taking lead in this part of Europe, so rich in these specific heritage resources.

In my presentation, I will try to elaborate on these issues in three distinctive parts:
1. General notion and concept of the 1972 UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (hereinafter “The Convention”);

2. Key moments in recognition of industrial heritage;

3. Contribution of this conference to the International standard setting instruments.

The Convention, ratified by all the countries of Southeastern Europe, defines the kind of natural or cultural sites which can be considered for inscription on the World Heritage List. The Convention also sets out the duties of States Parties in identifying potential sites and their role in protecting and preserving them. By signing the Convention, each country pledges to conserve not only the World Heritage sites situated on its territory, but also to protect its national heritage. The States Parties are encouraged to integrate the protection of the cultural and natural heritage into regional planning programmes, set up staff and services at their sites, undertake scientific and technical conservation research and adopt measures which give this heritage a function in the day-to-day life of the community.

It also encourages States Parties to strengthen the appreciation of the public for World Heritage properties and to enhance their protection through educational and information programmes.

The idea of creating an international movement for protecting heritage emerged after World War I. The 1972 Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage developed from the merging of two separate movements: the first focusing on the preservation of cultural sites, and the other dealing with the conservation of nature. The event that aroused particular international concern was the decision to build the Aswan High Dam in Egypt, which would have flooded the valley containing the Abu Simbel temples (pictured here), a treasure of ancient Egyptian civilization. In 1959, after an appeal from the governments of Egypt and Sudan, UNESCO launched an international safeguarding campaign. Archaeological research in the areas to be flooded was accelerated. Above all, the Abu Simbel and Philae temples were dismantled, moved to dry ground and reassembled.

The campaign cost about US$80 million, half of which was donated by some 50 countries, showing the importance of solidarity and nations’ shared responsibility in conserving outstanding cultural sites. Its success led to other safeguarding campaigns, such as saving Venice and its Lagoon (Italy) and the Archaeological Ruins at Moenjodaro (Pakistan), and restoring the Borobodur Temple Compounds (Indonesia).

Consequently, UNESCO initiated, with the help of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), the preparation of a draft convention on the protection of cultural heritage. Linking the protection of cultural and natural
The idea of combining conservation of cultural sites with those of nature comes from the United States of America. A White House Conference in Washington, D.C., in 1965 called for a ‘World Heritage Trust’ that would stimulate international cooperation to protect ‘the world’s superb natural and scenic areas and historic sites for the present and the future of the entire world citizenry’. In 1968, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) developed similar proposals for its members. These proposals were presented to the 1972 United Nations conference on Human Environment in Stockholm.

Eventually, a single text was agreed upon by all parties concerned. The Convention concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage was adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO on 16 November 1972. By regarding heritage as both cultural and natural, the Convention reminds us of the ways in which people interact with nature, and of the fundamental need to preserve the balance between the two.

How did we arrived though to the consideration of the industrial heritage as part of our cultural heritage resources? The Industrial Revolution profoundly modified landscapes and life styles. The massive means employed to extract raw materials and exploit the minerals and agricultural products resulted in great achievements and grandiose constructions, testifying to the creative genius of humankind. Guardians of the past, they testify to the ordeals and exploits of those who worked in them. Industrial sites are important milestones in the history of humanity, marking humankind’s dual power of destruction and creation that engenders both nuisances and progress. They embody the hope of a better life, and the ever-greater power over matter.

The last 30 years have brought increased awareness of the importance of industrial history in understanding heritage. The new discipline of industrial archaeology celebrates the artefacts of the workplace that have as much meaning in our history as the religious and domestic artefacts and architecture to which more attention has been paid throughout the years. Our industrial heritage includes not only the mill and factory, but the social and engineering triumphs spawned by the new technologies: company towns, canals, railways, bridges and other forms of transportation and power engineering.

Rapid technological advances and the striping of certain deposits rendered most industrial sites obsolete. To save them from abandon or destruction, a number of mines, factories, forges and manufactures have been inscribed on the World Heritage List.

An initiative took place in UK where, established by its statutes in 4th June 1978, the International Committee for the Conservation of the Industrial Heritage (TICCIH) is created for the primary purpose of promoting preservation, conservation, investigation, documentation, research and interpretation of our industrial heritage. This wide field includes the material remains of industry –
industrial sites, buildings and architecture, plant, machinery and equipment – as well as housing, industrial settlements, industrial landscapes, products and processes, and documentation of the industrial society. It also aims at achieving cooperation at an international level in the reservation of industrial monuments and artefacts and, in fostering an understanding between nations of the historical, scientific and educational value of mankind’s industrial heritage.

“Industrial heritage consists of the remains of industrial culture which are of historical, technological, social, architectural or scientific value. These remains consist of buildings and machinery, workshops, mills and factories, mines and sites for processing and refining, warehouses and stores, places where energy is generated, transmitted and used, transport and all its infrastructure, as well as places used for social activities related to industry such as housing, religious worship or education.”

Under the Global Strategy for a credible, balanced and representative World Heritage List, adopted by the World Heritage Committee in 1994, UNESCO’s World Heritage Center takes a pro-active approach with regard to the identification and documentation of less-represented categories of heritage for inclusion on the World Heritage List. One such category is Modern Heritage, which comprises the architecture, town planning and landscape design of the 19th and 20th centuries.

On 31st of August 2000 TICCIH establishes also a collaboration agreement with ICOMOS thus bringing the issue of the Industrial Heritage closer to the World Heritage stage.

In addition to reasons of representativity, in 2001 UNESCO’s World Heritage Centre, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and the Working Party on the Documentation and Conservation of buildings, sites and neighbourhoods of the Modern Movement (DOCOMOMO) started a joint programme for the identification, documentation and promotion of the built heritage of the modern era, because properties and sites under this category were considered to be under threat. They are increasingly subject to serious alteration or destruction, without a proper discussion and assessment of the values embedded in them. Next to rapid socio-economic changes in society demanding a different functional use, a poor understanding of the significance of these properties and sites plays an equally important role. In addition to traditional heritage categories, such as archaeological sites and monuments, also modern properties and sites need to be considered that are worthy of preservation and transmission to future generations for reasons of cultural identity in relation to aspects of continuity and change.

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1 The Nizhny Tagil Charter for the Industrial Heritage; The International Committee for the Conservation of the Industrial Heritage (TICCIH) 17 July, 2003
In order to gain better understanding, raise public awareness and promote inscription of this category of heritage, study and evaluation of possibilities, establishment of criteria and selection of properties and sites is needed. To continue and complement the work done by ICOMOS in this field, two meetings were held at UNESCO Headquarters in February and October 2001 respectively to define direction and objectives for a Programme on Modern Heritage.

The papers\(^2\) of the meetings aim is to present a framework of conceptual thinking on the significance of Modern Heritage, its preservation and some of the pivotal issues concerning identification and valuation. This framework is guiding the various Regional Meetings on Modern Heritage currently under implementation by the World Heritage Centre, and should facilitate further, more concrete studies and exercises. Eventually, the combined results will be presented to the World Heritage Committee and the States Parties for recommendation, and disseminated to the general public for information and awareness building, to aim for a World Heritage List that reflects mankind’s heritage in all its diversity (see Appendix 1).

This timely initiative of the Pro Torpedo – Association for the promotion and protection of Rijeka’s industrial heritage, demonstrates the clear understanding of the importance of protection and promotion of this specific type of heritage, not always recognised as such. It is also important to observe that the conference is organized in cooperation with Ministry of Culture of Republic of Croatia, Primorsko Goranska County, University of Rijeka, Chamber of Economy Rijeka and Rijeka Tourist Board. Such a variety of stakeholders clearly indicates the cross-cutting understanding of the potential of industrial heritage as a resource for sustainable territorial development. Such an approach, if coupled with the provisions of a variety of international standard setting instruments such as The Convention but also other heritage related recommendations and charters, may greatly contribute to the process of safeguarding and revitalising of the heritage sites such as Rijeka. It also adds to the overall increasing of awareness of recognition of traditional trading routes in Southeastern Europe thus, among other dimensions, underlining the concept of cultural corridors as cultural heritage promotion and safeguarding modality.

I am profoundly convinced of the great importance of this initiative and would encourage the involved partners, but also the colleagues from other countries of Southeastern Europe, to continue this programme and strive to further promote the importance of heritage resources as elements of sustainable development and intercultural dialogue.

\(^2\) Identification and Documentation of Modern Heritage; World Heritage Papers 5; WHC 2003
APPENDIX 1

The list of industrial heritage sites updated on 1 October 2002.³

Austria
1997  Hallstatt-Dachstein Salzkammergut Cultural Landscape

1998  Semmering Railway

Belgium
1998  The Four Lifts on the Canal du Centre and their Environs, La Louvière and Le Roeulx (Hainault)

³ http://whc.unesco.org/sites/industrial.htm
III. Međunarodna konferencija o industrijskoj baštini

2000  The Neolithic Flint Mines at Spiennes (Mons)

Bolivia

1987  City of Potosi
Brazil
1980 Historic Town of Ouro Preto

China
2000 Mount Qincheng and the Dujiangyan Irrigation System

Czech Republic
1995 Kutná Hora: Historical Town Centre with the Church of St. Barbara and the Cathedral of Our Lady at Sedlec

Finland
1996 Verla Groundwood and Board Mill
France
1982  Royal Saltworks of Arc-et-Senans
1985  Pont du Gard (Roman Aqueduct)

1996  Canal du Midi

Germany
1992  Mines of Rammelsberg and Historic Town of Goslar
1994  Völklingen Ironworks

2001  Zollverein Coal Mine Industrial Complex in Essen

India
1999  Darjeeling Himalayan Railway
Italy
1995 Crespi d’Adda

Mexico
1988 Historic Town of Guanajuato and Adjacent Mines

1993 Historic Centre of Zacatecas
Netherlands
1997  Mill Network at Kinderdijk-Elshout

1998  Ir.D.F. Woudagemaal (D.F. Wouda Steam Pumping Station)

Norway
1980  Røros
Poland

1978  Wieliczka Salt Mine

Slovakia

1993  Banska Stiavnica

Spain

1985  Old Town of Segovia and its Aqueduct
1997  Las Médulas

Sweden
1993  Engelsberg Ironworks

2001  Mining Area of the Great Copper Mountain in Falun
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

1986  Ironbridge Gorge

2000  Blaenavon Industrial Landscape

2001  New Lanark
Prezentacija će dati samo kratki pregled oblika prepoznavanja i primjera industrijske baštine koji imaju osobine istaknutih univerzalnih vrijednosti. Žarište izlaganja bit će usmjereni na Konvenciju UNESCO-a o zaštiti svjetske kulturne i prirodne baštine, prihvaćene 1972. godine, te o njezinoj primjeni na industrijsku baštinu.