

International Conference
Industrial Heritage Reloaded

The International Committee for the Conservation of Industrial Heritage (TICCIH)

18th Congress, Montreal, August 28th – September 3rd 2022

**Urbex, parkour and the neglected industrial heritage:
spatial attributes, practices and alternative forms of tourism**

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Introduction

URBEX AND PARKOUR TO THINK ABOUT HERITAGE AND TOURISM

Introduction

Urban tourism transformations



The GR2013, a hiking track to discover the metropolitan area of Marseille (Henry, 2013), including natural, urban, industrial and suburbs landscapes (photos: <https://www.gr2013.fr/trek/>)

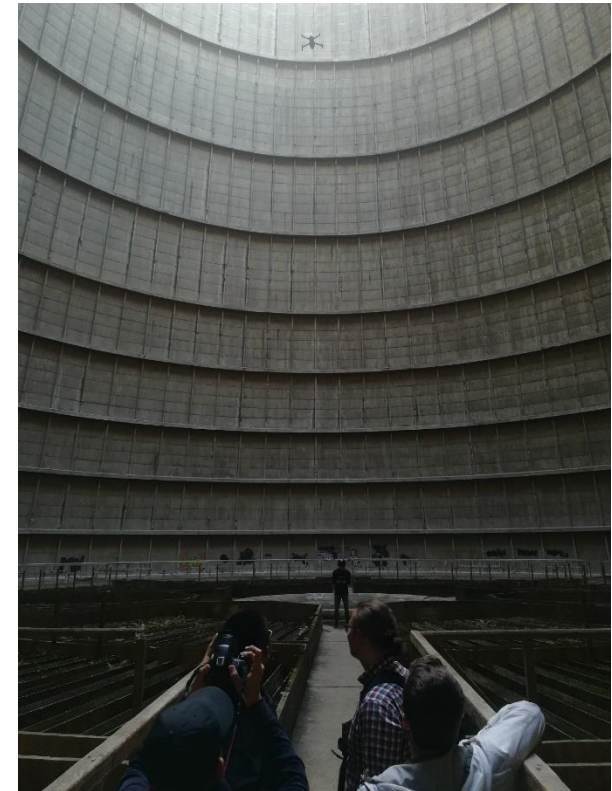
Introduction

Parkour and Urban Exploration (Urbex)



A traceur performing a succession of vaults in the old-town of Lille (France)

A group of explorers visiting the cooling tower of an abandoned power plant (Belgium)



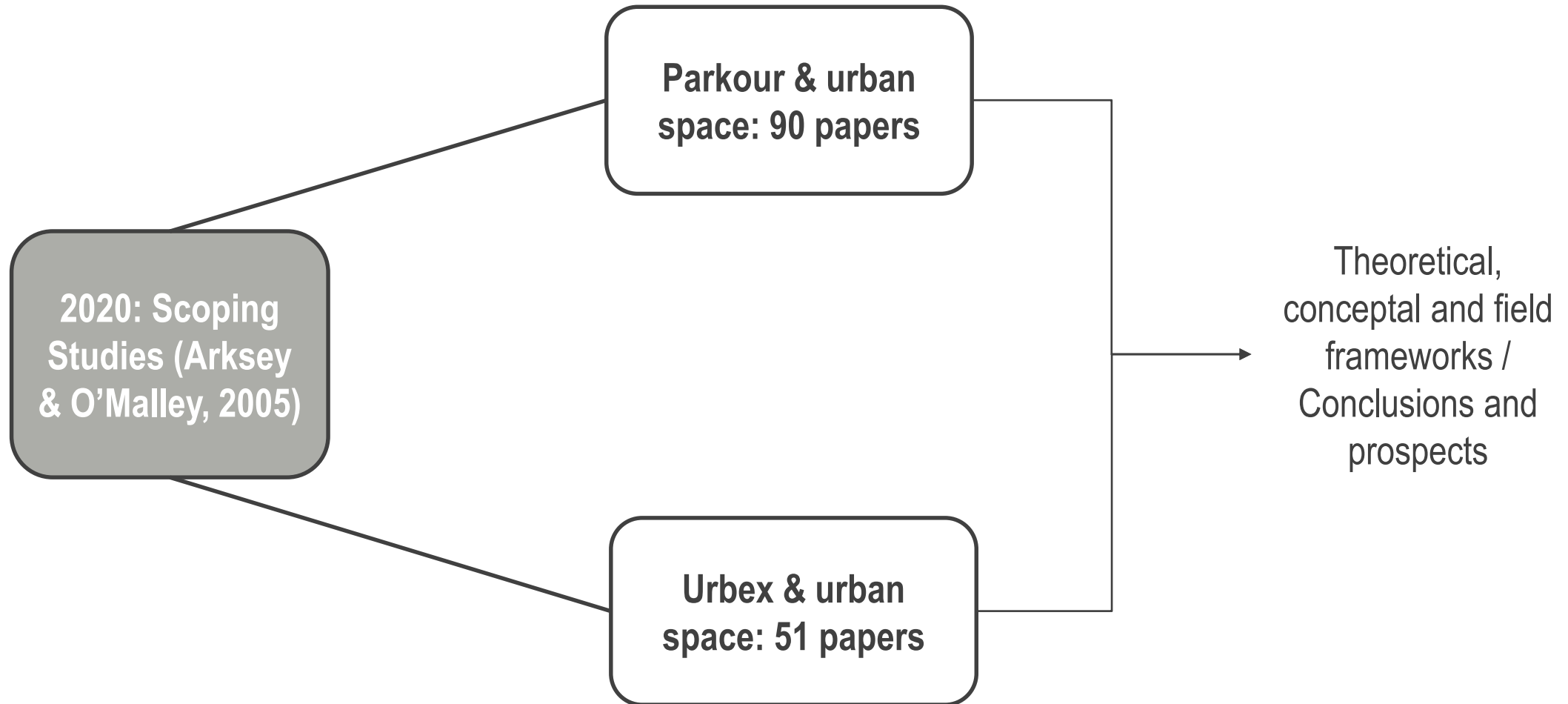


Theoretical framework

A LITERATURE FOCUSED ON THE QUESTION OF SPATIAL EXPERIENCE

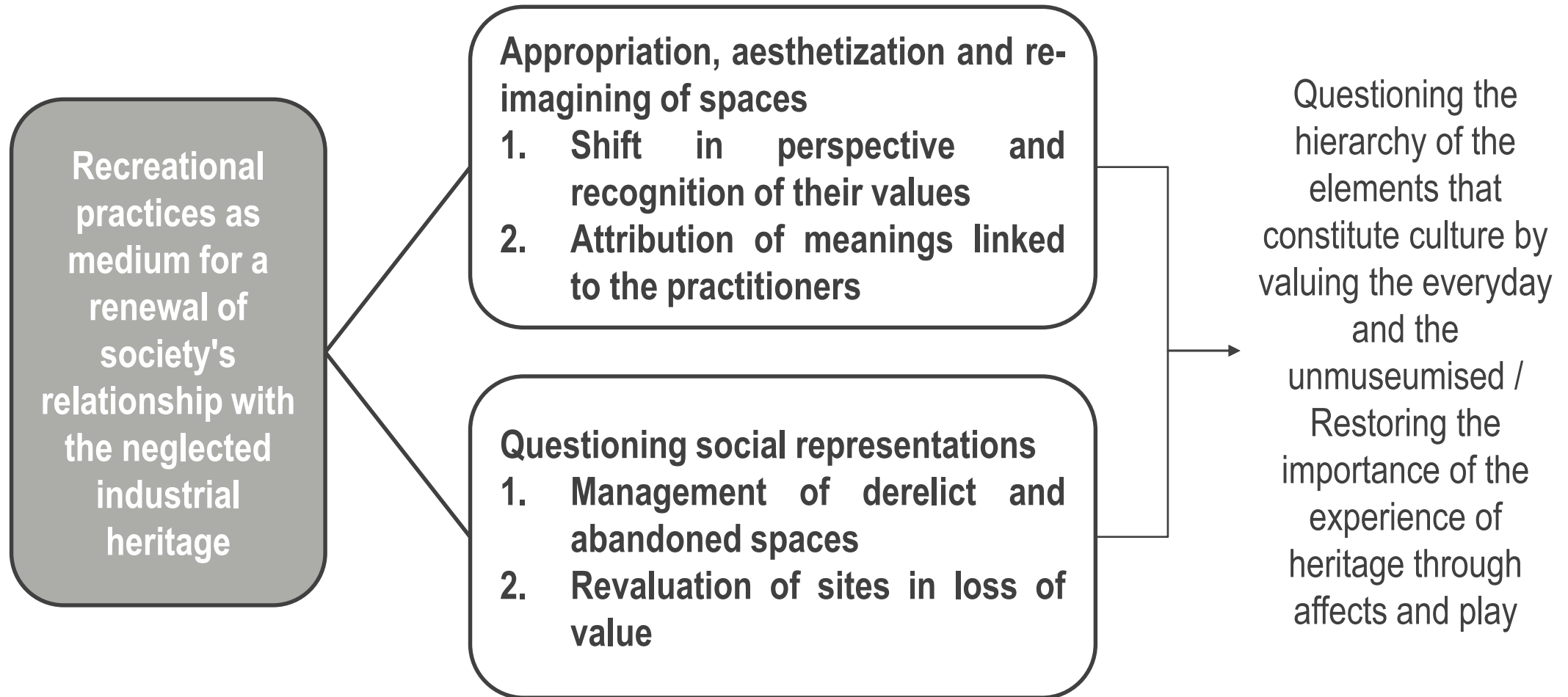
Theoretical framework

The systematization of the state of the art



Theoretical framework

Rethinking the value of heritage through spatial experience





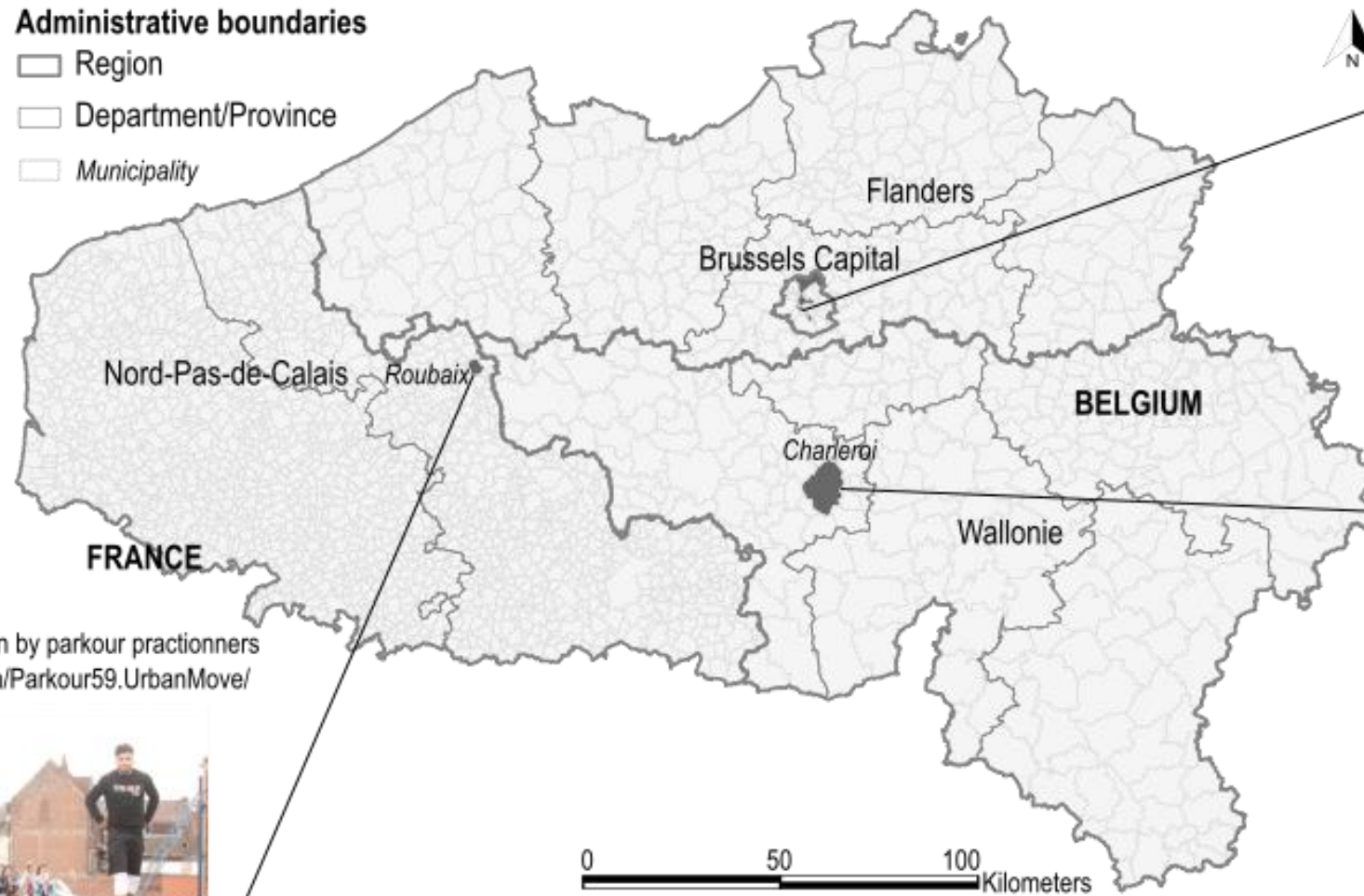
Material and Methods

INDUCTIVE INVESTIGATION WITH THE ACTORS OF URBAN NEGLECTED
SPACES VISITS

Industrial neglected spaces visits field works in the former Nord-Pas-de-Calais Region and french speaking Belgium

Administrative boundaries

- Region
- Department/Province
- Municipality



The Aegidium, a former cinema and reception hall
<https://www.facebook.com/VisitesdemonV>



AEGIDIUM

The Urban Safary of Charleroi, a visit of industrial spaces
<https://www.glennvanderbeke.com/>



The visits of Roubaix driven by parkour practionners
<https://www.facebook.com/Parkour59.UrbanMove/>



Sources:

AdminVector_L08 (Belgium), ngi.be (produced by Belgian IGN) ; ADMIN-EXPRESS_2-4 (France, 2021), data.gouv.fr (produced by French IGN)

ArcMap, Lambert 2008 Projection, Datum ETRS 1989


Material and Methods

Interviews with actors of the visits

	Guides	Officials	Visitors	Total
Roubaix's parkour visits	2	1	1	4
Charleroi's urban safaris	1	0	0	1
Brussels' Aegidium visits	1	1	1	3
Total	4	2	2	8

Content of the interviews:

1. introducing the actor and the visit,
2. discussing about the ecological and recreational aspects of the visit,
3. and establishing a critical assessment of the tourism offer.



Results

THE HUMAN, THE AUTHENTIC AND THE SOCIAL CRITIQUE, OR THE ANCHORING OF THE EXPERIENCE OF NEGLECTED INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE IN CONTEMPORANEITY

Results

The context of the renewing of the heritage tourism sector

Willingness to offer alternative heritage tours

Breaking the rules of the sightseeing industry: an experience more

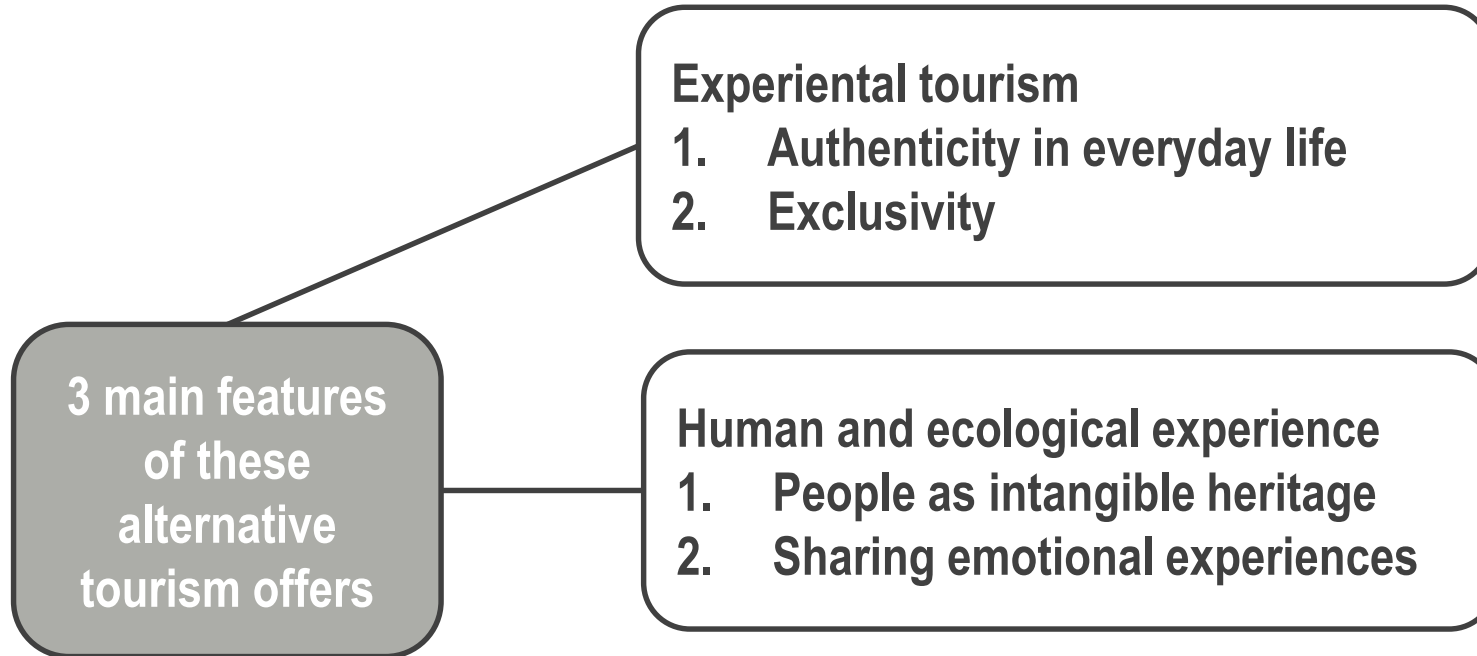
1. Intense, against the weariness of tourist visits
2. Physical and authentic, to strengthen transmission

Formalization complexity

1. Recognition of the heritage character of industrial sites
2. Recognition of these visits as tourism offers
3. A critical political dimension that can disturb the institution

Results

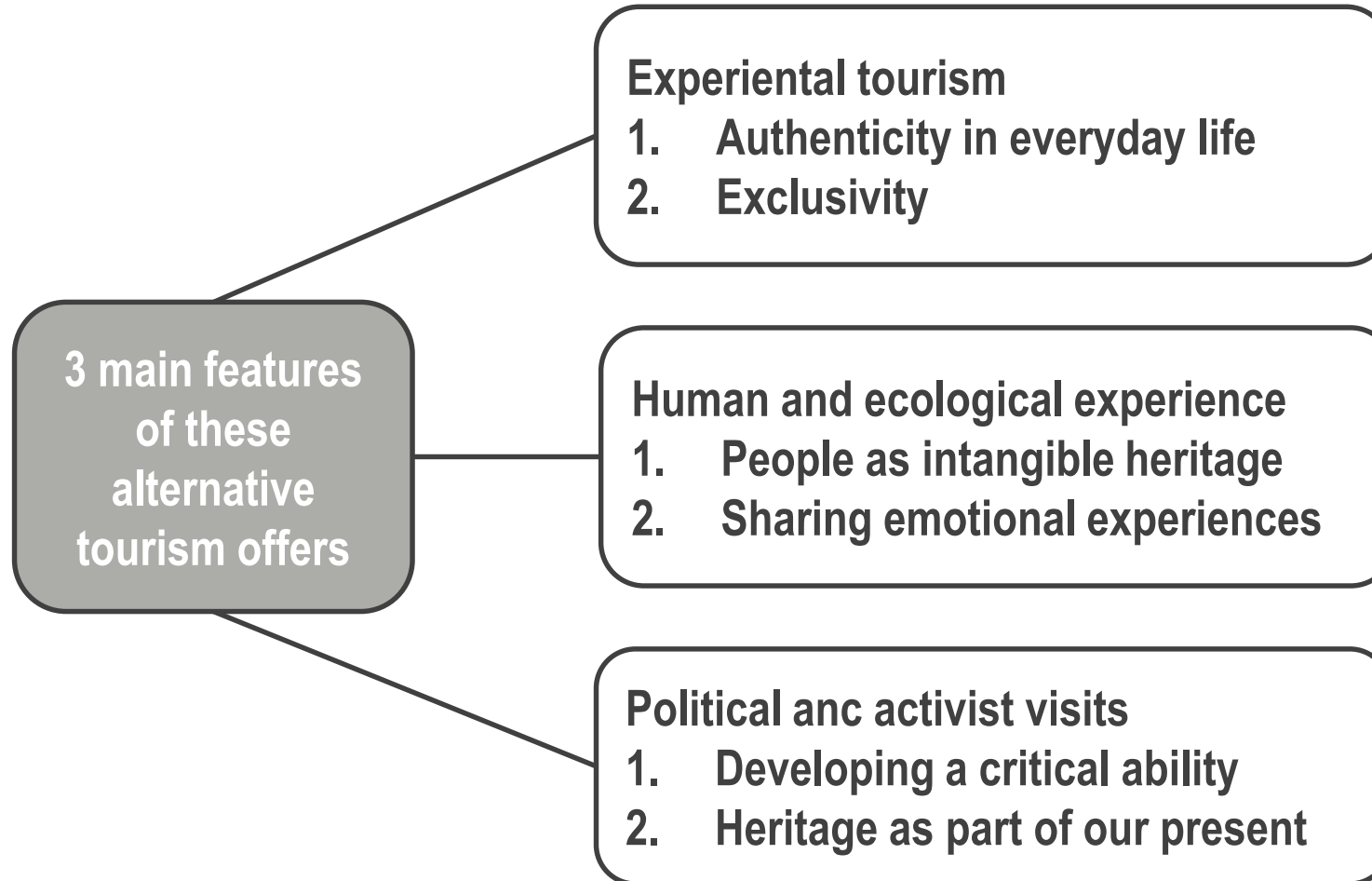
Renewing heritage tourist visits in concrete terms






Results

Renewing heritage tourist visits in concrete terms



The visits enable us to “teach people to read the city. Because the city is a hyper-political object. It is the political space par excellence!” (Visit guide, 2020)



Discussion

HERITAGE AND SETTING IN TOURISM OF INDUSTRIAL REMAINS

Discussion

Urbex and parkour questioning tourism and heritage

Evolution of society's relationship to urban industrial spaces:

Strengthening the recreational aspect
+
Bringing together past and present memories

Context of changing tourism practices

1. Disinterest in tourist areas (Derek, 2015)
2. Astonishment to discover new places (Gal, 2015)
3. Off the beaten track tourism (Gravari-Barbas & Delaplace, 2015)

Redefining heritage

1. Rewriting memory considering also the not “best” of heritage
2. Heritage activism and democratization (Le Gallou, 2018)
3. Place as memory and identity producer (Morisset, 2009)



Discussion

Recreational practices for the benefit of industrial heritage

Everyday recreational practices to:

Reveal the tourist potential of neglected industrial areas

+

Lead to the enhancement of neglected industrial spaces

Everyday heritage

1. Rewrite industrial history (Robinson, 2015)
2. Enhancing the ordinary memory of places (Le Gallou, 2018)

Rediscovery of derelict industrial areas in the vicinity

1. Attribution of a “distant” otherness value (Bourdeau, 2012)
2. Construction of an exotic “elsewhere” in the everyday “here”

Strengthening sensibility in heritage construction

1. Constructing memory places through physical experience
2. « Revive » places as heritage integrated in the present



Conclusion

RECREATIONAL PRACTICES TO “RELOAD” INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE

Conclusion

Recreational practices to « reload » industrial heritage

Visits of
industrial
neglected
spaces

Tourist niche, such as the (re)discovery of the city through its unusual spaces (Bonard & Capt, 2009)

“alternative local lifestyle tourism” (Lesné, 2021): exploitation of the social and material otherness of the local environment to enhance it as a "tourist" resource

Urbex, parkour and the neglected industrial heritage: spatial attributes, practices and alternative forms of tourism

Thanks for your attention

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