



ZRC SAZU

Leveraging the past for the future: industrial culture and its impact on development

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Motivation, research questions



Idrija: (neo)industrial town



Trbovlje: post-industrial town



Kočevje: (re)industrialised town

- Why do similar towns have such divergent development paths?
- What is the role of (industrial) history and specific geography? How did they underpin human agents?
 - How can the (industrial) past impact future development?

Theoretical framework

Evolutionary thinking:

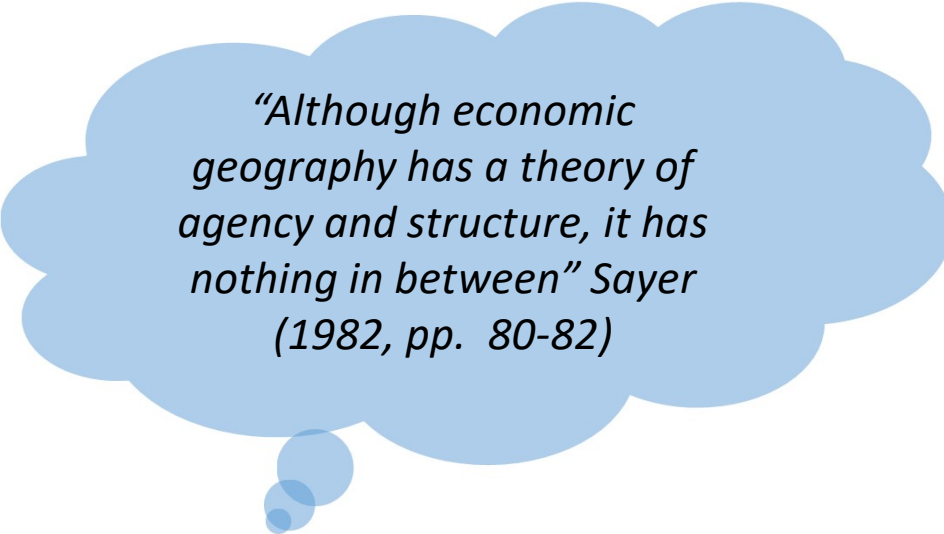
historical change and transformation can explain current development paths

Relational thinking:

finding social and cultural foundations of economic processes

Human agency-based thinking:

actions that have (intended and unintended) consequences on regional development

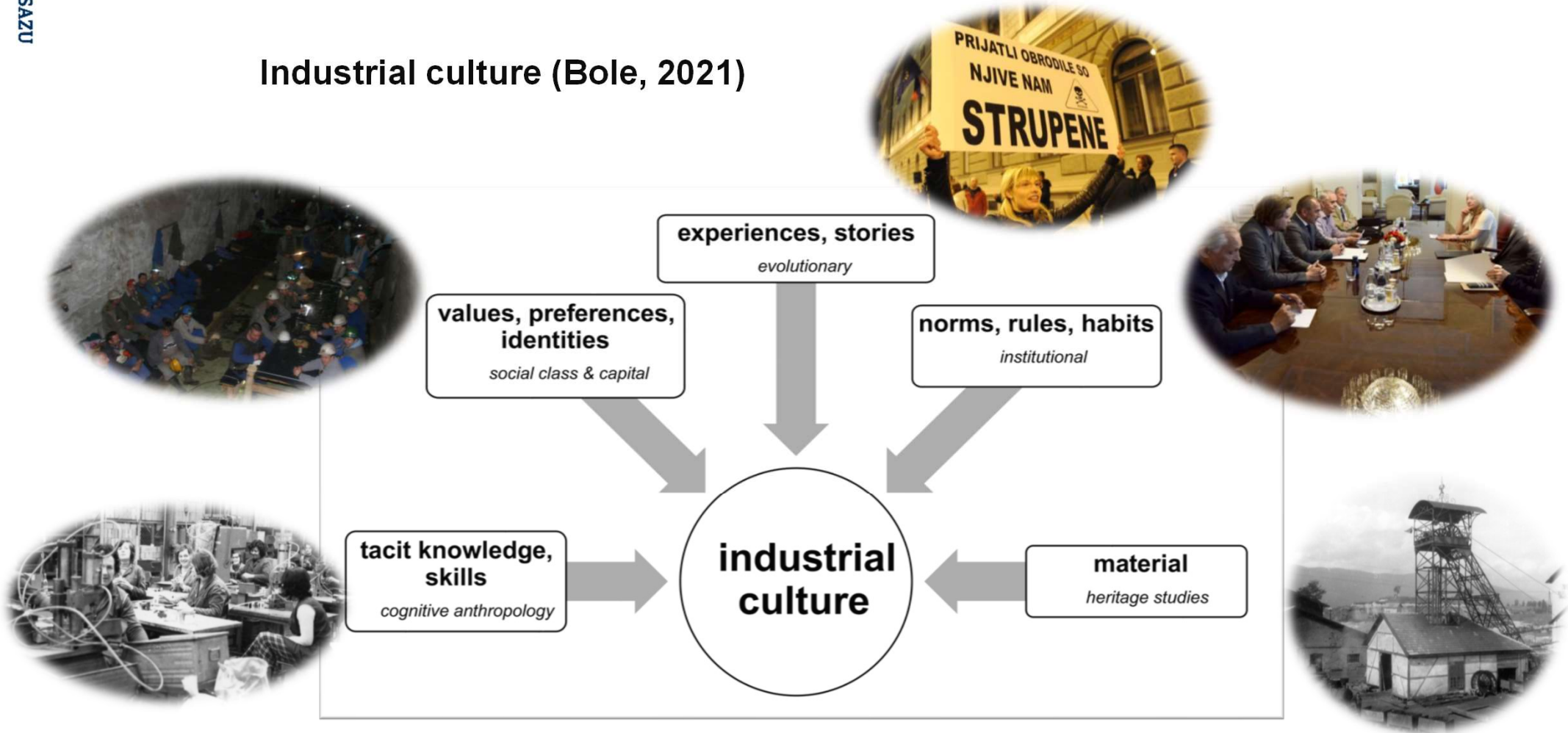


“Although economic geography has a theory of agency and structure, it has nothing in between” Sayer (1982, pp. 80-82)



Theoretical framework

Industrial culture (Bole, 2021)



Idrija: the successful (neo)industrial town



*Path creation
(1970ies, 1980ies)*

- Lace-making/engineering
- Company loyalty, identity
- Trust (personal, institutional)

Asset transfer/modification



- Place-based leader?

*Path upgrading
(1990ies)*

- Narrative of pragmatic elites, “phoenix rising”
- External market orientation

Legitimation, motivation



- Incumbent firms



Kočevje: the reindustrialised town



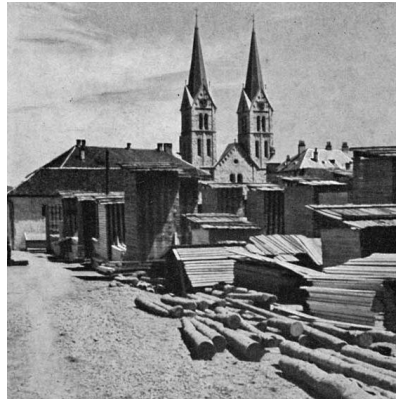
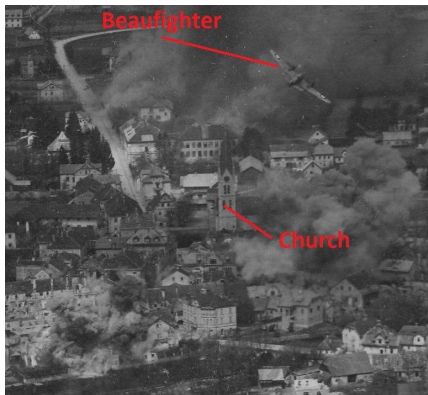
*Path importation
(2010 on)*

- “learned helplessness”
- Dependency, passivity
- Narrative of industrial failure

Asset destruction



- Policy actors /
place-based
leadership



Trbovlje: post-industrial town



Path creation (2000 on)

- Narrative of past pollution
- Rigidity of incumbent firms

Motivation, legitimation



- NGO's
- innovators

Path creation (2000 on)

- Technological mind-set, creativity
- Diligence

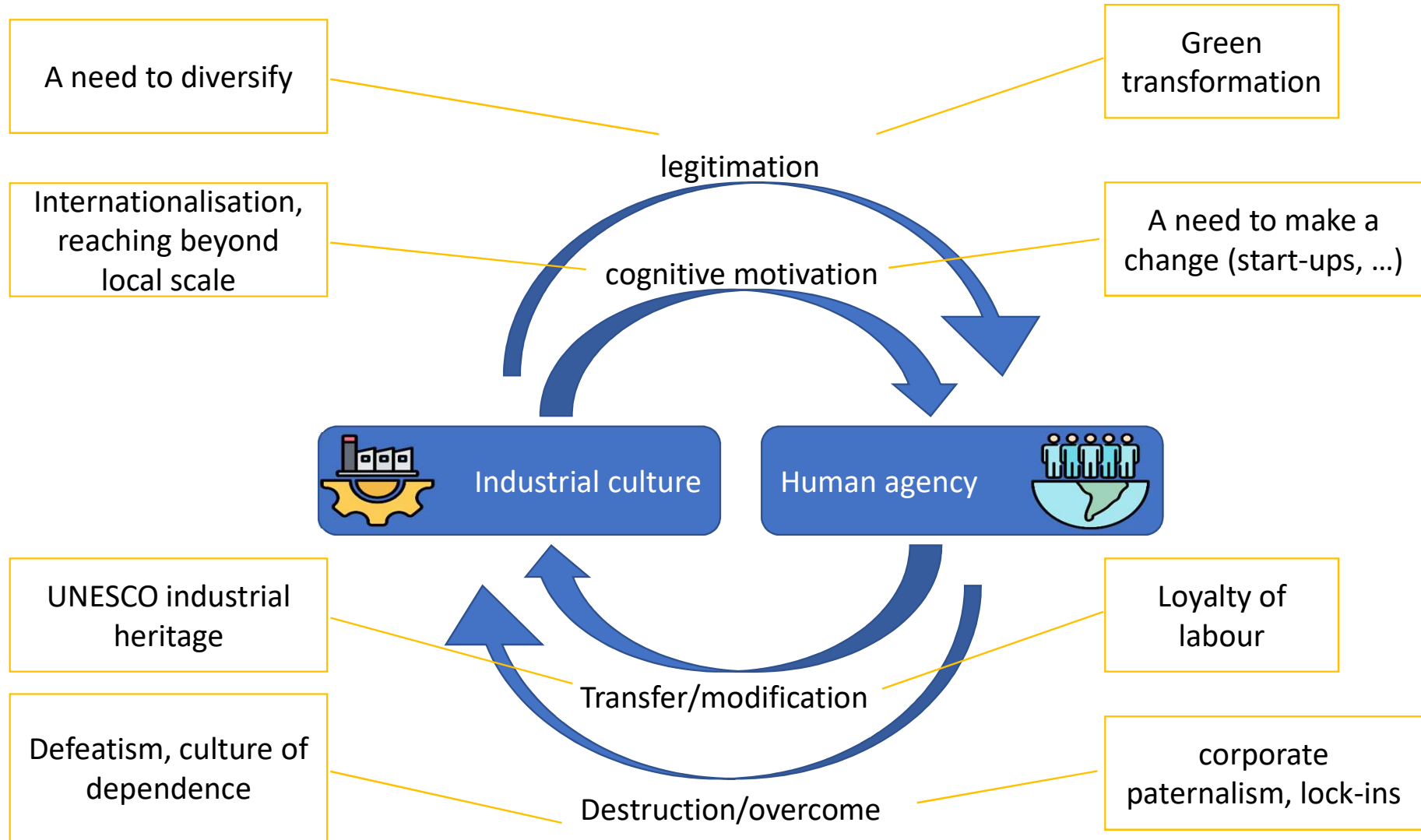
Asset modification / transfer



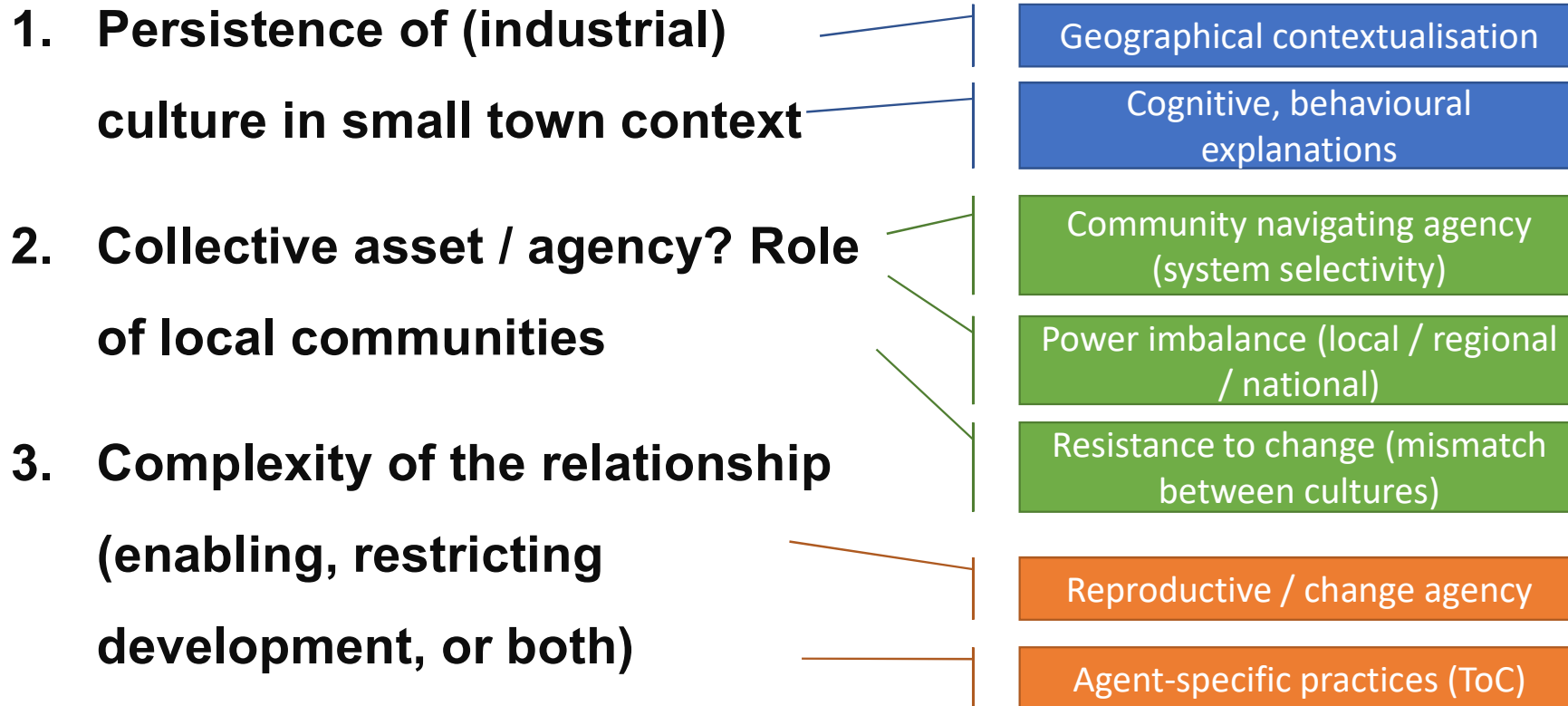
- artists, creatives
- innovators



Bidirectionality: industrial culture ↔ human agency



Implications: industrial culture ↔ human agency



Future research, discussion

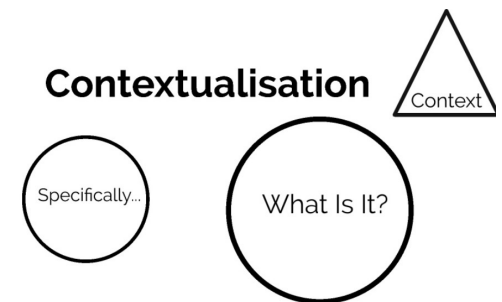
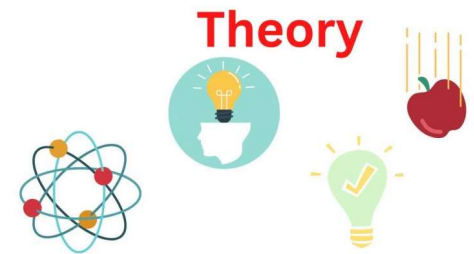
Cultural codes from the past can influence the future

1. Upgrading the theory and methodology

- Individual motivation
- Collective imaginaries

2. Contextualised research

- Policy
- Specificity





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Thank you for your attention!

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