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### **The quarries of the Ourthe-Amblève region in the XIXth century : a historical survey**

During XIXth century, the Ourthe-Amblève region, until then essentially agricultural, became the most important quarry center in the Province of Liège. This industrial shift led to numerous transformations in the landscape: establishment of quarries, extension of communications routes, construction of specific infrastructures and buildings, multiplication of workers' houses, early development of the electric power network, etc. Mechanization, the two World wars and the preference for architectural materials such as concrete, glass, or even asphalt are at the origin of the sector's decline during the XXth century. Today, activities are concentrated around a few sites still in operation and involve a few dozen workers. The numerous remains preserved contribute to the identity of the region as well as its tourist development. They also serve as a support for a collective memory which tends to fade over the years.

Despite its importance, the quarry center of Ourthe-Amblève has never been the subject of an in-depth study, so much so that its history remains very superficial. We do not know, or very poorly, or anecdotally, what dynamics were at work in this territory, the sites that are operated there, or the firms and entrepreneurs who manage them before the beginning of the XXth century. Our communication aims to present the historical approach which is at the heart of our research, in particular by trying to create a dialogue between, on one side, past and bygone history as revealed by the archives, and on the other side, a very tangible heritage, that is sites, buildings, landscapes, toponymy, etc. Methodologically, its focus is on the sources and documents currently available that make the understanding of similar aspects elsewhere in Belgium possible.