New Stories of Resistance:
The Right to Say NO, Extractivism and Development Alternatives in South Africa

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Abstract

Despite growing interest in movements, mobilisations and communities rising up against extractivism, little research has focused on the radical political potential these mobilisations bear for envisioning just and sustainable futures. Taking the *Right to Say NO* in South Africa as a case study and point of departure, this thesis examines development alternatives envisioned within anti-extractivist resistance. Through interviews and participatory mapping in Amadiba and Mpumalanga, it explores research questions concerning (1) activists' understandings of development and extractivism as systems of exploitation, (2) imagined and lived development alternatives, and (3) the value in imagining alternatives within resistance. Postcolonial theory and environmental justice form the theoretical base for this qualitative analysis. Findings suggest that activists understand extractivism and development as closely related and intertwined with colonial, racist, patriarchal and capitalist oppression, rendering self-determination contingent on access to capital and power. Ranging from agroecology to eco-tourism, worker's-cooperatives and businesses, prefigurative alternatives exhibit commitments to social justice, self-determination and the protection of (access to) natural environments, suggesting nothing less than a radical re-imagination of development. Imagining alternatives and post-extractivist futures holds strategic value for transformative change. This project stands in solidarity with struggles in South Africa and seeds optimism for just and sustainable futures.

Key words: extractivism, development, resistance, re-imagination, decoloniality, alternatives, self-determination

Acknowledgements

List of Abbreviations

R2SN	Right to Say NO
EJ	Environmental Justice
AMD	Acid Mine Drainage
FPIC	Free Prior and Informed Consent
AIDC	Alternative Information and Development Centre
ACC	Amadiba Crisis Committee
SAGRC	South African Green Revolutionary Council
MRC	Mineral Commodities Ltd.
TEM	Transworld Energy and Minerals
DMRE	Department for Mineral Resources and Energy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
GMO	Genetically Modified Organisms
UN	United Nations

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1. **<u>Introduction: Mining, Resistance and the Quest for Alternatives</u>**

Corresponding to ever-more expanding resource frontiers and metabolisms of societies' consumption of energy and commodities, the extractive sector continues to be situated at the core of the neoliberal capitalist model that is driving the world into ecological collapse and socio-economic despair. Extractivism, referring to the exploitation of natural resources in the financial interest of few and at the ecological, social and political expense of many, intersects with and benefits from oppressive structures of corporate power, class under capitalism, patriarchy and racism in ways that are complex and inextricably intertwined. Simultaneously to the great acceleration of mineral extraction, resistance, referring to the mobilisation of social protest action in the event of clashing (political) interests (Dietz & Engels 2021), is growing in the face of intensified capital penetration particularly in the Global South (Conde & Le Billon, 2017, Özkaynak et. al 2015, Conde 2017, Hamouchene 2019, Ballard & Banks 2003, Bebbington et. al 2008).

This is not a coincidence. The relationship between natural resources and development constitutes one of the 'most contentious issues' in questions around development (Arsel et. al 2016: 880). These conflicts do not only concern local economies, livelihoods and politics, but rather beg the question of the legitimacy and future of the neoliberal extractive development model occupying ideological hegemony. In the search for alternatives to coal, a switch to renewable energies without systematic change in the way we produce, consume and form relations to nature and each other will lead to a dramatic increase in mining globally, at the expense of marginalised groups and the environment (Cirefice & Sullivan 2019). Thus, resisting extractivism means resisting an imperative that is by definition hostile towards nature, women, People of Colour and the working class. Against this background, struggles against extractivism ought to be understood as '*making those inroads*' towards just and sustainable alternatives for the ways we live, consume, produce and trade[1]. Changing conceptions of what it means to live a good life is essential in the age of climate change and growing inequality. Anti-extractivist resistances can contribute to transformative systemic change as they display grounded, nuanced and painfully informed understandings of the costs of the extractive model. In its rejection of extractivist processes and ideologies, resistance can significantly shape and influence patterns of development, disrupting routine development thinking and spark re-imagination (Conde 2017, Radcliffe 2015, Escobar 2012).

In South Africa, mining and the extractive sector are, and have historically been, situated at the centre of the national economy, most (in)famously with the mining of coal, gold and diamonds (Fine & Rustomjee 2018, Sharife & Bond 2013). At the same time, the country is home to the highest rates of wealth inequality in the world (World Bank 2022) and the continued marginalisation and exploitation of People of Colour and women. Taking the *Right to Say No* (R2SN) anti-extractivist campaign and network in South Africa as a case study and point of departure, this thesis aims to add to the literature on postcolonial, post-extractivist futures and

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[1] 12/04/2022 Cape Town

environmental justice, and stimulate new ways of thinking about resistance and its constructive contributions. Since the R2SN is situated at the nexus of critiques of the global political economy of extractivism, it poses a radical review of and systematic challenge to the development paradigm as we know it. Resistances tell stories of community vs. capital that constitute an important illustration of the power of civil society, asserting autonomy through alternative community projects that challenge dominant narratives. This thesis is informed by postcolonial and environmental justice critiques (EJ) of the neoliberal extractivist development regime and the quest for alternatives that are socially and environmentally sustainable, accessible and allow good lives for all. Thereby, both postcolonial and EJ scholars promote a de-globalisation, de-capitalisation and re-politicisation of development where 'working seriously, bottom-up, with the existing anti-poverty, global justice movements would constitute a much wiser use of resources, energy and political commitment' (Bond 2006: 352).

1.1 Aim, Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this dissertation is to document, understand and discuss development alternatives put forward by members of the R2SN in South Africa, and contribute to the conceptualisation of the development model that activists resist, thereby following a twofold agenda. Drawing together the richness of alternatives in theory and practice, contributing to a grounded transformative approach delinked from profit is the key purpose of this dissertation. Focusing on discussions surrounding sovereignty, self-determination and the meanings of living a good life, I aim to bring to the fore the strength of employing postcolonial, decolonial and environmental justice approaches in imagining post-extractivist futures in Africa, which have not figured centrally in post-extractivist and alternative development theorising (Matthews 2004).

While one activist described '*moving beyond the "No"*'[2] as one of the major challenges for the R2SN, opening up conversations around alternatives is not only a practical exercise surrounding desired futures. Amplifying these debates can serve as a crucially strategic tool to strengthen the R2SN as not only an oppositional but constructive movement and campaign, where members exert a say about future development trajectories. In that sense, this thesis asks questions about who gets to decide about matters of development, or critique them. Thereby, I put activist opinions and perspectives at the centre and discuss them with a commitment to nuance and context-specificity. Similar to political ecologist Paul Robbin's "hatchet and seeds" approach, I understand the R2SN to embark on the dual task of 'deconstructing and discarding dominant narratives' while simultaneously 'identifying alternative practices and knowledges', shedding light on innovations developed by activists (Temper et. al 2018: 573) and acknowledging the radical political potential of anti-extractivist movements.

As Dinerstein writes, prefiguring 'alternatives with political imagination' (2015: 2) involves creating hope and motivating the 'search for a new way of life in dignity [..] incompatible with conditions of exploitation and oppression' (Dinerstein & Deneulin 2012: 589–590). According to Williams and Satgar, 'utopian imaginations are vital to begin to build the future we want'

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[2] 22/04/2022 Cape Town

(2019: 276), where cultivating prefigurative pathways as 'radical practices that build components of a desired future in the present (Tornaghi & Dehaene 2019: 595) are the first steps forward. Prefigurative alternatives thereby embody visions of future societies through social practice relations, decision-making and philosophy, forming a pluriverse of alternatives in the present (Monticelli 2018, 2021, Clarence-Smith & Monticelli 2022, Kothari et. al 2019). As phrased by a key activist in Amadiba, this research comes '*at a crucial time*'[3], as the world and community stand at a crossroads where alternative projects bear revolutionary potential to slow down climate change and create just and sustainable futures.

Drawing on participatory mapping and decolonial approaches to methodology, I have taken inspiration from questions asked by St. Martin and Hall-Arber:

> *'How might participatory projects create new community-based claims to space and environment even in the midst of a hegemonic economic ideology of private property and individual interests? How might sites "within" capitalism, sites where community and commons have been assumed to be long one, also be sites of alternative economic and environmental possibilities?*'
> (2008: 54),

hinting both at the transformative potential of participatory methodology, and that of reigniting processes of re-imagination in communities opposing or disadvantaged by what is labelled development for the powerful. Next to exploring development alternatives, this paper also sheds light on activists' understandings of the development-extraction nexus to acknowledge what activists resist and better situate envisioned alternatives. Although the analysis of resistance is secondary, it is nevertheless crucial to acknowledge the injustice, destruction and pain caused by extractive projects, setting the scene for the discussion and presentation of envisioned alternatives. Moreover, this thesis offers a glimpse on the R2SN as history from below, countering and contesting dominant representations of the role of the extractive sector in South Africa and aims to add to structures of meaningful collaboration between academia and social movements or civil society more broadly.

The following research questions are explored in this thesis:

1) What are critiques of extractivism and development articulated as part of the R2SN?
   a) How does extractivism impair peoples' abilities to live a good life?

2) What are development alternatives and post-extractivist futures that activists envision as part of their resistance and how do they strive to achieve them?
   a) What values, ideologies and principles underpin these alternatives?

3) What is the value of development alternatives in resistance to extractivism?

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[3] 13/03/2022a Amadiba focus group

As far as the structure of this thesis is concerned, chapter two will lay out the background to anti-extractivist activism in South Africa, and communities and groups that collaborated on this research. Chapter three explains the theoretical framework, while chapter four notes methodology, positionality and ethical considerations. Chapter five constitutes the first chapter of combined findings and analysis focussing on resistance to extractivism and the hegemonic development model. Chapter six describes proposed alternatives, split into paradigmatic suggestions and alternatives practiced on the ground. In chapter seven, I introduce nuanced perspectives on alternatives discussing some of their challenges and limitations. Countering notions of academia being more critical than collaborative (Routledge & Derickson 2015), this research stands in solidarity with the struggles in South Africa and hopes to seed optimism for developing alternatives.

2. <u>Background: Mining and Resistance in South Africa</u>

The following chapter will provide an introduction to the case study. I will briefly discuss the history and scope of mining and extractive activities in South Africa and introduce the Right to Say No and the two case study sites of Amadiba and Mpumalanga.

2.1 Mining in South Africa

The mining sector is largely understood as at the heart of South African economy and society, having structured and dominated the country's history and politics since the 1880s through the minerals-energy complex, weak regulations and cheap migrant labour systems (Sharife & Bond 2012, Munnick et. al 2010, Mkhize 2018). With the earth being rich in resources, colonial, apartheid and today's administrations have violently sought to extract these at the expense of the environment, communities and labour, the violence infamously surfacing with the Marikana massacre in 2012 (Munnick 2010, Twala 2012, Satgar 2018, 2012). The extractive sector today is dominated by transnational corporations such as Anglo American, Glencore and BHP Billiton deriving large profits while little beneficiation takes place for South African society, suggesting a resource curse (Elbra 2013). Yet, the limits to South African resource abundance, especially with regards to gold and coal, are increasingly apparent, extending resource frontiers with capital penetrating more remote and inaccessible sites (Hargreaves 2016).

The destructive social and environmental impacts of mining in South Africa are largely externalised to marginalised communities, nature, women and following generations, contributing to an 'acute, multifaceted social, economic and environmental crisis' (Hargreaves 2016: 145). Negative environmental effects of mining activities in South Africa include acid mine drainage (AMD), dust and soil dumps that increase concentrations of heavy metals and radiation (Heiberg 2016), coal fires, fly ash and smoke loaded with toxic chemicals resulting in increased respiratory and other diseases, and delayed neuronal development in children[4]

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[4] 26/03/2022 focus group Phola

(Anyanwu et. al 2018, Munnick 2017, Cock 2019, Nkosi 2018). The mining and processing of coal are considered among the major drivers of environmental degradation and injustice in South Africa, and climate change (Cock 2019). Mining projects by nature require the dislocation of large amounts of earth, which is dumped in tailings, resulting in the loss of fertile land, increased food insecurity and violations of ancestral graves (Nkosi 2018, Cock 2019, Hallowes & Munnick 2016, Skosana 2022). Further, women are at higher risk to experience sexual harassment, gender-based violence and wage discrimination in or around extractive activities, contributing to the crisis of social reproduction and oppression of women (Lahiri-Dutt 2022, WoMin 2022, WoMin 2022a, WoMin 2022c).

2.2 What is the Right to Say No? An Introduction

The R2SN is a campaign and network that connects different struggles against extractivism across Africa, aiming to put a full stop to 'a destructive economic system which harms people, land and nature so that powerful companies can profit' (WoMin 2022c: 1). Born out of the Southern African Permanent Peoples Tribunal on transnational corporations and closely linked to the Southern African Campaign to Dismantle Corporate Power, the R2SN aims to amplify resistance against corporate power and extractivism by providing tools and fostering alliances between communities and organisations nationally and regionally. The campaign is part of the Thematic Forum on Mining and Extractivism, exchanging knowledge with anti-extractivists worldwide. Thereby, a central pillar is the concept of Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), derived from the ILO169 on indigenous rights, functions as a 'protection of communities' substantive rights', recognising community participation in decision-making about land and resources (ibid, WoMin 2022a). The R2SN understands itself an extension to FPIC, stressing and promoting communities' rights to oppose extractive projects all together. According to the AIDC, 'this essential notion does not only amplify communities' voices', putting them in a more equitable position, but also puts pressure on corporations to respect indigenous knowledge and customary law' (AIDC 2018). Overall, despite it being far from constituting a large popular political movement, the R2SN provides a space for anti-extractivist struggles to come together and organise strategically. Members include established civil society organisations such as the AIDC, Amadiba Crisis Committee (ACC), WoMin and the Southern African Green Revolutionary Council (SAGRC), and smaller organisations and community mobilisations. Activities are centred around information campaigns, political liaising, research, and the organisation of local, provincial and national workshops and events.

2.3 Introduction of Case Study Sites

This study examines two sites of R2SN mobilisation that differ significantly from one another. The two case study sites Mpumalanga and Amadiba were selected for two reasons: (1) the R2SN is particularly well-connected and present in both of them and (2) they offer an interesting contrast between one area where there is resistance to proposed mining and in defence of non-extractive economies and another, which is at the heart of South Africa's coal and mineral belt that has been affected by mining for more than 100 years, exhibiting resistance

informed by the *impacts* of mining (Hallowes & Munnick 2016). The map below shows all fieldwork sites in South Africa. Orange pins refer to locations in Mpumalanga, green pins in Eastern Cape and red pins in Cape Town. In Mpumalanga I visited multiple settlement areas.

Figure 1: Map of fieldwork locations across South Africa.

2.3.1 Amadiba

Amadiba, or Umgungundlovu, is a rural area on the north-eastern coast of Pondoland in the province of Eastern Cape, indicated by the green pin. It contains the five villages of Sigidi, Xolobeni Mdatdya, Dumasi and Impinto, stretching over 22km between the Mzamba and Mtentu rivers. The dominant mode of livelihood generation is traditional small-scale farming for subsistence and sale on informal markets. Most land is communally-owned and -governed and decisions are made at the traditional democratic forum *Komkhulu*. Since the first proposal by the Australian mining firm Transworld Energy and Minerals (TEM), a subsidiary of Mineral Commodities Ltd. (MRC), in 1996 to build an open-cast titanium mine on community-owned land, resistance has sparked and achieved landmark victories in South African courts (AIDC 2018, 2018a). The proposed US$200 million investment

Figure 2: Landscape in Amadiba.

mine is estimated to contain 139 million tonnes of titanium-bearing minerals and cover 2,867

hectares of land, resulting in the eviction of 200 households (AIDC 2022a). The Xolobeni Mineral Sands Project is supported by the Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy Gwede Mantashe and the DMRE (Wilson 2011).

In 2007, the Amadiba Crisis Committee (ACC) was founded by community activists and has since fought successfully against the community's dispossession of land through lawyers and protests. Land and attached livelihoods are a central part of the mobilisation due to widespread dependence on small-scale farming and fishing. Besides the farming of grains, vegetables, some fruits and cattle, a common crop is dagga (marihuana). Amadiba is repeatedly labelled one of South Africa's poorest regions in need of development by state officials and mining proponents (Peacock & Essa 2021, Bennie 2019): a narrative that many residents oppose through definitions of wealth as the ownership of land and independence. Today, the Amadiba community is not only threatened by the titanium mine, but also the construction of the national N2 highway along the coastline, explorations of gas reserves by Shell in adjacent ocean waters, a large-scale commercial cannabis farm upon legalisation of marihuana[5], and a 'Smart City' proposed by the World Bank.

In the literature, the case of the Amadiba resistance is often portrayed as a 'David against Goliath' story, celebrating the success of community resistance in the face of capital. Mahlatsi (2018) traces down the evolution of resistance struggles in Xolobeni, placing the conflict in the context of colonial expropriation of Black people of their land, including debates surrounding the South African land question, and the (predatory) role of the state. Further, Madiya (2021) explores linkages between neoliberalism and rural exclusion from the postcolonial South African state, focusing on how paradigms of economic development are often at the expense of the rural poor. Huizenga (2019, 2020) elaborates on this by illustrating how communities and their customary land rights are marginalised in current mining governance legislation in South Africa.

2.3.2 Mpumalanga

Mpumalanga is a province in the North East of South Africa, bordering Mozambique and Eswatini. Extractivism in Mpumalanga has a long history culminating in the province hosting South Africa's 'coal belt' with the Mpumalanga Highveld as one of the largest national coalfields. According to Cock, by 2014, more than 60% of all surface area in Mpumalanga was subject to prospecting and mining rights applications (2019). Most mining and extractivist activities in Mpumalanga's Highveld revolve around coal, the burning of coal for electricity generation, and the production of steel. There are indications of acid depositions through acidic rain, and multiple events of AMD affecting surface and groundwater (Munnick 2017, Hallowes & Munnick 2016). Migrant labour is dominant, adding to harsh social and gender relations, and local unemployment (ibid.). In Mpumalanga, I worked with activists from four settlements in three municipalities: eMalahleni, Coronation, Phola and Nkomazi.

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[5] The cannabis farm requires expensive and complicated licensing coordinated by the state, effectively excluding local farmers.

Emalahleni

Extractive activities are defining of the combined cities of Witbank and eMalahleni with dozens of mining sites, numerous power stations and steel factories. The area shows one of the world's poorest air quality rankings due to the mining and processing of coal and other resources (Kekana 2018). Coronation township, located in eMalahleni and built on previously mined territory, shows high rates of unemployment, drug use and poverty. Surrounded by and built on poorly discarded coal ashes that occasionally light up in fires, residents are confronted with sinkholes and a coal mine that opened in 2020. eMalahleni is home to the Southern African Green Revolutionary Council (SAGRC) which was founded in 1983 and is a member-based organisation mobilising, uniting and supporting communities around the R2SN (AIDC 2022b).

Figure 4: Street in eMalahleni, MSN township (March 2022).

Figure 3: Sinkhole in Coronation.

Phola

Phola is located about 34km from eMalahleni and surrounded by 19 mining sites and hosts a group of anti-extractivist activists[6]. When the Beryl Coal Mine was built right next to the township, replacing a large farm which provided some employment and food, it employed only a small minority of local labour[7]. Community members are severely impacted by dust, high noise and vibration levels from blasting that crack walls and windows. In 2022, activists achieved a landmark victory as the Beryl Coal Mine stopped operating after a confrontation with protestors in March.

Figure 5: Dust from Beryl coal mine. Picture shared by activist.

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[6] 26/03/2022 Focus group Phola

[7] Ibid.

Nkomazi

Nkomazi municipality is located in a rural or peri-urban area with agriculture as one of the main sources of income and occupation. Sugarcane is a common crop, as well as vegetables and fruits (James & Woodhouse 2016). In 2020, the Mangweni coal mine started operations in Nkomazi and has since expanded dramatically. The mine is poorly fenced, and wastewater is leaking uncontrolled into surrounding lands and the river that feeds communities. In the word of mouth, Nkomazi is handled as the 'new eMalahleni'.

Figure 6: Church and livestock next to Mangweni mine (March 2022).

Figure 7: Wastewater leaking from Mangweni mine (March 2022)

3. **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework at the core of this project is centred around postcolonial development theory, and concepts of environmental justice, extractivism and post-extractivism to be able to situate the R2SN struggle within academic traditions and analyses of global patterns of exploitation, domination and power. Moreover, one section will be centred around post-extractivism and development alternatives.

3.1 Postcolonial Theory and Decoloniality

Postcolonial theory, and postcolonial development theory more specifically, have significantly informed both the conceptualisation of this research in its framing, as well as its translation into practice. According to Mkandawire, the objective of postcolonial and decolonial theory is to point out and critique oppressive systems of continued colonial domination both at the levels of macro- and micro-politics and support efforts towards liberation and equality (2011: 7). Nair further understands postcolonialism as looking at politics 'from the margins', offering alternative and counter-hegemonic insights into the global political and economic system, and local processes of inclusion and exclusion (2018:50). Thereby, postcolonial theory provides a powerful critique of the power inequalities within the international political economy

of development and resource ownership and control. By deconstructing narratives, politics and relationships, postcolonial approaches seek to recover the agency of those subjugated by colonialism and neo-colonial forms of domination, recovering the 'lost historical voices of the marginalized, the oppressed and the dominated through a radical reconstruction of history and knowledge production' (McEwan 2014. 137,138). As people from the Global South are seen to have little or no autonomy over their representation or in constructing models and policies (Escobar 2012: 7), Said identifies colonialism not only as a project of military and material interventions, but equally as an epistemic form of imperialist domination (Zeus 2018: 7) viewing nature and people as separate and promoting the growing commodification of environments and social relations (Gudynas 2017).

Pointing more directly at the economic and material domains of contemporary inequality and exploitation, Nkrumah finds that despite colonialism having officially ended, the exploitative inequalities between rich and poor countries, the former colonisers and the colonised, persist and were further manifested through trade agreements and aid programs (1965: 1). Neo-colonialism describes the interest of international investors and financial institutions to lie in the mere extraction of profit, rather than a genuine interest in improving living conditions or state income in low- and middle-income countries, continuing the colonial fashion of profit and resource extraction without adequate compensation and opportunity for participation (Ferguson 2006). With this research, I aim to contribute to the postcolonial project by offering a comprehensive overview of the power that lies in employing decolonial narratives in the fight against development paradigms that are based on extractivism. It constitutes a postcolonial project in itself by shifting the focus towards local activist agendas and perspectives on development from the margins.

3.2 Environmental Justice

Environmental justice (EJ) is a concept straddling academia and activism, mostly classified as a branch of ecological distribution conflicts arising from the unequal distribution of environmental benefits and burdens that overlaps with agrarian struggles over land resources and labour struggles over working conditions (Mohai et. al 2009, Akbulut et. al 2019). It is concerned with the unequal exposure to pollution and environmental harm due to unequal power, class, race and gender relations, and their intersectionality (Walter et. al 2020). As Schlosberg notes, there is a distinction within EJ concerned with the distribution of environmental risks among human communities, and ecological justice referring to relationships between humans and the 'rest of the natural world' (2007: 1), a distinction that is relevant in the context of extractivism where both concepts of justice become violated. He further describes that conceptually, claims to EJ globally include elements of equity and distribution, but also cultural recognition, political participation, and community functioning (2007), adding to the definition of EJ beyond that of organisations alone. EJ has manifested itself as a pioneer in new solutions and environmental agendas from a radically democratic and egalitarian stance which displays high degrees of diversity and to some degree fragmentation, where the movement is characterised by an 'ecology of diverse knowledges' (ibid., Sousa Santos 2014). The concept and radical vocabulary are understood to inspire processes of litigation and general mobilization, as well as make it less susceptible to co-optation and

appropriation by opposing actors since narratives and movements have been revolving around North-South justice and explicit demands in the interest of the 99%. Therefore, EJ sits at the core of this research and enriches it with tools for successful conceptualisation of resistance against extractivism in South Africa.

EJ has contributed to the understanding of procedural and recognitional justice, as well as exposes both consequentialist and deontological qualities and perspectives on questions of environmental pollution and justice, trying to actively reconcile claims to justice and sustainability. The most important concepts forged by EJ scholars and activists are environmentalism of the poor, as well as environmental racism, given the highly divided realities and politics in South Africa that segregate along the lines of class and race. With regards to the environmentalism of the poor, or environmentalism of the dispossessed (Temper 2014), EJ puts forward a kind of environmentalism that is cautious of the environmental dispossession of livelihood opportunities and resources through capitalist accumulation. Yet, this environmentalism is not only motivated by local material concerns but also 'broader scales of opposition to dispossession of sovereignty and self-governing authority' (Martinez-Alier et. al 2016: 732) and the politics of place and belonging.

3.3 Extractivism and Extractive Hegemony

Extractivism refers 'to those activities which remove large quantities of natural resources that are not processed (or processed only to a limited degree), especially for export' (Acosta 2013: 62). Thereby, processes of value creation are simultaneously exported and the generation of larger profits takes place removed from the places of extraction, rendering extractivism a 'longstanding colonial and imperialist' Pereira & Tsikata 2021) mode of accumulation representing the 'ongoing force of the colonial encounter' (Gómez-Barris 2017: 2, Ye et. al 2020). Dunlap and Jakobsen situate extractivism at the centre of today's socio-ecological crisis, driven by techno-capitalist development imperatives. Developing their idea of *total extractivism*, they attest the 'spirit and amalgamation of violent technologies' that comprise the 'totalising imperative and tension at the heart of the present catastrophic trajectory' (2020: 1). Yet, total extractivism is not only concerned with the practicalities of resource extraction and profit creation for the few, but also encompasses the normalisation of 'its logics, apparatuses and subjectivities, as it violently colonizes and pacifies various natures' (ibid. 6). According to Ye and colleagues, extractivist logics have succeeded in moulding many previously dispersed extractive activities into the all-encompassing imperative of extractivism, entailing an organised and internally coherent system of ongoing value extraction as a development model (2020). Thereby, production occurs without efforts of reproduction resulting in 'socio-ecological "bareness": degraded societies and ravaged landscapes' (Ye et. al 2019 paraphrased in Dunlap & Jakobsen 2020: 6).

Further, one of the central features of extractivism is its inherent tendency to maintain and deepen networks of (colonial) international and domestic exploitation and oppression, and create new ones (e.g., the rise of China, Brazil and India as extractive forces) where the entanglements of extractivism and colonialism are symbolic of the 'ongoing force of the

colonial encounter' (Gómez-Barris 2017: 2). With resource extraction being the motor of capitalist growth, extractivism produces 'hyper-destructive ramifications that continue[s] to position the Global South as the provider of raw materials in the international division of labour' (ibid. 5). At the same time, negative externalities such as pollution of soil, air and water are disproportionately borne by the poor and most vulnerable, remaining mostly unaccounted for. Hargreaves adds that costs of extractivism are largely externalised not only to nature and communities, but also to women and future generations, contributing to an acute, multifaceted socio-economic crisis (2016).

3.4 Post-Extractivism and Alternatives

Post-extractivism is a body of literature and activism, strongly associated with anti-extractivist thinking in Latin America, holding great potential for the conceptualisation of development alternatives. Referring to the radical re-conceptualisation of non-extractive and non-capitalist futures, post-extractivism seeks to 'move beyond a dominant Western economic model' and imagine alternative visions of societies (Gudynas in Hargreaves 2016: 153). Nature, under extractivism, is nothing more than a resource to be exploited, takes centre stage in post-extractivist imaginations, probing a reorientation in human understanding of nature and the ways in which human and non-human existence are connected. Drawing on local and/or indigenous alternatives to development such as Buen Vivir or Sumak Kawsay, Ecological Swaraj, the African philosophy of Ubuntu or ideas of degrowth, post-extractivism aims to uncover imaginations of alternative models (Brand et. al 2017, Cuestas-Caza 2018, Demaria & Kothari 2017, Kothari 2014).

Advocating emancipatory formulations of local alternatives and concepts for systemic change, post-extractivism helps to draw together the different strings and agendas of this research in working towards alternatives that are decolonial, just and environmentally sustainable. Ultimately, post-extractivism calls for changing patterns of accumulation and wealth concentration (Acosta 2013), and involves a reassessment of what is valued for development and futures decided upon in deeply democratic ways (Hargreaves 2016). In that sense, post-extractivism closely relates to development alternatives originating from decolonial and postcolonial, or political economy critiques (Escobar 2012, Radcliffe 2015, Death & Gabay 2015, Ferguson 1994). In context of South Africa, activists and intellectuals have put forward calls for eco-socialist feminist alternatives, a just transition that is socially owned and democratically led, and ideas about food sovereignty and solidarity economies (Bennie & Satgoor 2018, Ashley 2018, Cock 2019, Hargreaves 2016). What these critiques share in common is the recognition of a need for structural, fundamental transformation that goes beyond narratives of participatory or sustainable development (Acuna 2014).

4. <u>Methodology: Methods and Ethical Considerations</u>

Given the research questions and postcolonial theoretical framework, I consider a qualitative approach to the project most appropriate, allowing for the flexibility and spontaneity required to understand collected data in its complexity and diversity. I use a multi-method

approach understood to better capture the complexities of real-life struggles (Huot & Laliberte Rudman, 2015), practised during two months of fieldwork in South Africa in the spring of 2022. I gathered data in Amadiba, Mpumalanga and Cape Town. The former two are employed as instrumental case studies, allowing for the in-depth understanding and analysis of these two communities and struggles (Yin 2009, Cousin 2005). In using the term communities, I am referring to groups of lay people and activists residing in defined settlement areas, connected through social ties and the sharing of resources and interests (MacQueen et. al, 2001, Conde 2017). I am aware of the challenges this carries in terms of assuming homogeneity and ignoring complexities of actors and interests. Yet, as the term is employed among R2SN activists, I will adopt this terminology.

4.1 Interviews

The primary method for data collection is semi-structured interviews. Interviews took place in Amadiba, eMalahleni, Phola, Nkomazi and Cape Town and were semi-structured, meaning they are based on a set of baseline questions where interviewees, however, have the opportunity to set thematic emphases individually (Brinkmann, 2014). This medium flexibility is understood to guide the conversation constructively without imposing an inflexible set of questions unrelated to participants' perceptions and concerns. To add to the appropriateness of interview questions and focus, the interview guide has been designed by using a soft participatory approach by inviting one key informant to give input and co-design research questions in advance. I carried out 13 interviews with 16 participants, as three couples decided to carry out their interviews together. Interviewees' contexts, occupations and educational and class backgrounds varied significantly.

	Number of interviews in location	Age range of participants (years)	Gender distribution	Language of interview
Amadiba, Sigidi village	7 (3 interviews with couples)	30-70	5 women, 5 men	Pondo/Xhosa, English
Mpumalanga, Emalahleni	3	28-55	2 men, 1 woman	English
Cape Town	3	26-60	2 women, 1 man	English

Table 1: Distribution of interviewees.

4.2 Interviews in Motion

Seated interviews were complemented by interviews in motion, while walking or driving. I invited participants to show me around their community and lands affected by extractivism or to showcase of alternatives. Routes were determined by the research participants. Mobile interviews are useful in this research as they specifically relate what is being said to the immediate surroundings and thus can help to better understand peoples' relationship with the land and environment around them (Evans & Jones, 2011). Generated data is informed by the

landscapes with which they form relationships, likely to affect the development envisioned. I was able to do narrative walks/drives in Coronation and Nkomazi.

4.3 Participatory Mapping in Focus Groups

Another methodology employed involved group discussions, and exercises of visualization through participatory mapping of envisioned future land use. These exercises were carried out in groups of four to seven people and relied on the concept of conventional focus groups. My role as the facilitator was to ensure lively and coherent discussions in a non-threatening environment, referring back to a focus group guide (Litosseliti 2003). Focus groups are praised for their synergistic approach producing a range of ideas through interactions and discussions between participants, enabling nuanced and complex data (ibid., Clark 2021). Maps are seen to provide a different access to participants' knowledge and help to redress power imbalances as participants choose what elements to include in their mapping and where (Huot & Laliberte Rudman, 2015). They pose an epistemological challenge to traditional methods, transform research into a more socially owned project and practice the politically radical within research (Kindon et. al 2007, St. Martin & Hall-Arber 2008).

Groups were sampled as natural focus groups, as all participants were part of the R2SN. I organised two focus groups. In Phola the idea of drawing maps was not picked up upon. In Amadiba, 17 participants were divided into three smaller groups, labelled one

Figure 8: Mapping exercise Amadiba (March 2022).

to three, which each created one map. I did not identify problems of compromised anonymity and confidentiality, or the preposition of certain assumptions and knowledges since all participants are part of a common struggle and did not express concerns and the purpose was to learn about alternatives expressed overtly, collectively and strategically. Remaining within locally specific activist groups further helped to retain the potential for radical rethinking (Johansson 2021).

4.4 Sampling

Sampling relied on purposive sampling carried out in a sequential manner relying on snowball sampling, based on defined criteria for inclusion (association with or membership of R2SN) (Clark, 2021). The sample includes different genders, ages, educational backgrounds, positions, classes and locations, including 37 participants, out of whom 20 are women. All participants pass as Black, except for two who pass as white, which is important to note in the racialised South African context. I label participants as 'key' or 'community' activists, where the former refers to activists that hold central positions in national or regional coordination of

the R2SN. Given the scope of this dissertation, data saturation has been achieved, although unequally distributed across research sites.

4.5 Data Analysis

Methods used to analyse transcribed data and maps include manual and digital coding through NVivo12. This helped me to structure and understand the data in relation to specific themes. In coding, I used a blended approach of deductive and inductive coding and both high-level and lower-level codes, referring to different dimensions of the collected data: high-level codes equal theory and paradigms, whereas low-level codes equal practical issues (Huot & Laliberte Rudman, 2015).

4.6 Ethical Considerations

Ethical standards in research imply a commitment to accountability and responsibility of the researcher, and basic human rights of autonomy and dignity (Miller et. al 2012, Jazeel & McFarlane 2009). Being aware of discussions around the exploitative structures of much of qualitative, development and case study research (Kvale & Brinkmann 2005, Yin 2009), I aim to mitigate exploitative and extractive properties by paying special attention to two particular dimensions:

1) Negotiating respectful collaboration with research participants and local organizations and relying on methods participants were most prepared for (interviews) or contributed to the struggle in meaningful ways (mapping exercises). Although genuine equality in research is difficult to achieve because of the position of power researchers occupy acting in control of scope, participation and interpretation (Turnhout et. al 2020), by opening spaces for continuous input and amendment, I tried to turn the project into a collaborative effort. This required me to acknowledge activists' time and resources limitations and enact gratitude and humbleness. My agenda was flexible and adaptive to what participants were willing to engage in. This was mentioned as a strongside of my research[8].

1) The formulation of my thesis topic was developed as an idea to, on the one hand, make the time to start re-imagining post-extractivist futures, and on the other hand, create something valuable for local struggles, global discourse and literature through documenting, understanding and sharing visions for post-extractivist futures. To include wider audiences, my findings will be disseminated through non-academic channels.

All participants gave their free prior and informed consent, either through a consent form in English or, when deemed more appropriate due to language or literacy barriers, orally after explaining the specifics of this research. Participants received full information about processes of data collection and use, including the opportunity to amend or decline participation at any time. Before publishing thesis and drafts, I ensured that activists' safety is given through

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[8] 12/04/2022 Cape Town

anonymisation and not disclosing any data that could lead to identification. Methods were previously approved by a contact person and national campaigner of the R2SN, and enacted thoughtfully and carefully. Thereby, I aim to produce knowledges that '"abide by" (Ismail 2005) the struggles of marginalised communities in ways that reject, but not ignore, the violent and imperialist histories of the academy' (Routledge & Derickson 2015: 391). I conducted regular self-tests for Covid-19 and complied with regulations and guidelines.

4.7 Reflexivity and Positionality

This section serves as a summary of reflections on my positionality as a white, German, female and middle-class student researcher among anti-extractivist activists in South Africa. Reflections on my positionality in 'the geopolitics of knowledge production' (Abu Moghli & Kadiwal 2021: 4) were key during this research, but particularly central during fieldwork, acknowledging situational power dynamics and exploitation in research and theorising on Africa in particular (Sultana 2007, Nagar and Geiger 2007, Berger 2015, Zimbalist 2020). My reflections revolved around questions about entitlement to carry out this research, approaching participants requesting to share time and knowledge, and representing data appropriately. I navigated this through engaging with literature on exploitation and racism in research, and consulting participants and gatekeepers. I mitigate the 'power to interpret' by staying close to collected data, fieldnotes and campaign material and using approaches that are socio-politically conscious, engaging, respectful and inclusive (Bilgen et. al, 2021, Mama 2007). My involvement with the R2SN since August 2021 through the solidarity organisation Global Aktion enabled meaningful interactions complying with an ethics of mutuality, reciprocity and equality. Being introduced to participants by Black key activists allowed me to enter spaces that would otherwise remain hidden to me, and clarified my status as an ally. Being a young woman required constant negotiation in interactions given the role of women in extractivism (where being a woman helped to foster trust and conversation), but also difficult gender relations where being a woman demanded to obey certain rules. All but one activist responded positively to my presence and the project, stressing that solidarity matters over questions of positionality.

Navigating the always-shifting insider/outsider dichotomy was central when affirming my positionality as a scholar activist producing 'academic research, explicitly and unapologetically connected to political projects or movements[..], produced in a way that is emotionally sensitive, socially comradely and politically committed to the working people' (Monjane 2021: 2,Adu-Ampong & Adams, 2019). Attempts to invite participants into co-designing research focus and questions aimed to disperse power and break down boundaries, even though with limited success. However, participants exercised power by selecting participants, determining schedules and sharing certain stories over others. During interactions, I left space to question my presence, method and research. I am committed to enact accountability and prolonged engagement through formulating articles or social media contributions, and the co-facilitation of a workshop at the Global Aktion Partnership Seminar in October 2022. Moving towards structural critiques of the global politics of knowledge production helped to avoid feeling demobilised by the ambiguity of fieldwork positionalities and not dismissing it as a source of knowledge co-production (Routledge & Derickson 2015).

4.8 Limitations and Omissions

This research is subject to multiple limitations. Firstly, relying on two specific community case studies poses difficulties in terms of generalising findings and speaking for the whole of the R2SN. Findings thus need to be understood under the banner of the R2SN, but not defining of it. Secondly, relying on gatekeeper activists to select participants can lead to selective perspectives, and risked to miss the most vulnerable and less visible in communities. Thirdly, language barriers and translations pose a significant limitation as a minority of participants speak English as their first language, and in Amadiba I relied on a translator. Using English, I speak one of the eleven official languages of South Africa, yet it is also a colonial language. Relying on a translator imposed significant barriers to direct conversation with residents in Amadiba. Hence, I risked reinforcing structures of exclusion, and loss of material, although informants seemed used to the translation process (Erhard et. al, 2021). It is undeniable that some of the details and complexities of interviews diminished, but main points and central opinions were conveyed nonetheless. Lastly, I omit some of the specifics regarding mining legislation, FPIC and the ties between mining, global markets, states and political economy.

5. <u>Findings and Analysis: Resisting What? Understanding Extractivism and Development</u>

This chapter lays the foundations for the presentation of development alternatives by providing understandings of extractivism and development articulated by activists. Thereby, I refer to the first research question on critiques of the hegemonic extractivist development model and present how extractive activities impair peoples' abilities to live dignified lives. I find that activists formulate powerful critiques of both extractivism and development while paying particular attention to the exploitation of communities and nature in the name of profit, and the continuation of colonial structures of oppression and looting of resources. What figures prominently is the force with which extractive activities in the name of development impair peoples' abilities to live safe and fulfilled lives through the pervasiveness of pollution, exploitation and material and epistemological violence, lies and '*empty promises*'[9]. Separate sections examine understandings of development and extractivism respectively.

5.1 On Mainstream 'Toxic' Development

In this section I explore in detail the definitions and understandings of contemporary development paradigms that inform activists' resistance. In that, I understand development as an overarching concept loaded with power inequalities and dynamics, underlying and sustaining the extractive imperative, making it an excellent topic for examination before diving into the specifics of extractivism and mining. Answering the first research question posed for this study, activists critique development as a concept that disguises the establishment of extractive activities or other projects in the interest of elites and profit, rendering self-

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[9] 15/03/2022 Amadiba

determination contingent on access to capital and power. Knowledge and opinions about development differed between communities and/or interviewees, mostly along the lines of previous exposure to it.

Situating this section within postcolonial theory, reiterating postcolonial critiques of development will prove useful. Broadly, postcolonial studies aim to probe development's relative amnesia about its colonial roots and coloniality (Kapoor 2008: xv), and serve as a critical politics suspicious of Western concepts of political, economic and social life and their presumed universality (ibid.). In this vein, Arturo Escobar criticises development as a hegemonic worldview penetrating the economic, social and cultural fabric of lower-income countries and the poor (2012) and which 'constitutes the present asymmetrical global power structure that prevents the possibilities of meaningful development in the Global South in general and Africa in particular' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2012: 2).

That being said, research participants from all communities offered contributions and drew detailed pictures of the kind of development they resist. Two themes surfaced strongly in participants' responses: 1) development as a logic that inscribes the quest for profit at the expense of nature and traditional ways of living and 2) development as a practice that '*happens to people*' rather, than with people[10]. Starting this discussion with the former, the following quote illustrates this starkly:

> *'In our experience, where communities have been living in peace and have been eating healthy food, even though they had to walk a little distance to fetch water, but that water was clean. Now, communities find themselves trapped in that logic that says development. So, when they were still collecting water, when there was nothing that surrounds them, they were able to produce food, feed to their families. They were independent. Then came in this logic development. When it comes in, it takes over. Now communities will have a tarred road, but the water that they will be drinking will be contaminated. [..]. Development comes in to make people sick and people must die. That's why immediately with development comes in a clinic, and therefore there's supposed to be a funeral parlour. So, in an actual fact, people are not being told the truth. [..] But on another note, development has actually tempered with our cultures, our way of life. Where people have been living in harmony, where people are living in solidarity with one another, where there was no greediness. People could still share. People could still take care of each other. Development brings in that culture of individualism'[11].*

Development is portrayed as a paradigm motivated by profit and the will to power, spanning social, economic, cultural, political dimensions and personal sensibilities or aesthetics. The participant talked about the rejection of African identities and beauty, creating and maintaining a sense of inferiority for Black people as one of the features for development to be able to

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[10] 12/04/2022 Cape Town
[11] 24/03/2022 eMalahleni

function seamlessly and sustain itself. Quijano identifies the control of subjectivity and knowledge as an epistemological colonisation that includes the articulation of African subjectivity as inferior, constituted by a 'series of "deficits" and a catalogue of "lacks"' (2007: 168-187), addressed through capacity building workshops.

The perception of development as inappropriate locally and globally, given the environmental crisis, came through during another interview:

> *'Think of the destruction of nature: it is because people have moved to the cities and we have development like in the big, wealthy countries. That's exactly what we always say to our government. The Mother Earth, it is becoming exhausted, it is becoming tired, because of the way we are going in order to make profit'*[12]

Activists contest and reject the apolitical consensus on growth and development promoted by mainstream development agencies, actors and ideologies (Busck &Schmidt 2020):

> *'Some of them keep saying that these villages, they do not want development. But we want development, just not this development you have with the mining company that is said to create a lot of jobs, build schools. All of this is mentioned in their promises, but they are empty promises. When they start mining titanium here, no one can work those machines. No one can work in the office of the DMRE. It is not development. Development can come here and the community can benefit. Because it can take only 10 years to dig that Titanium and then they will leave. All that dust will come straight to us. No grass. No water. Imagine!'*[13]

By questioning the linear trajectory prescribed by mainstream developmentalists, activists assert claims to self-determination and re-politicise development ideology, which, following James Ferguson, has successfully established itself as an 'anti-politics machine' co-opting political struggle, debate and contestation of the hegemonic model of (neoliberal) capitalism and state control (Ferguson 1990). Further, it illustrates the clashes between desirable goals, lifestyles and ambitions, exhibiting the high valuation of nature and peasantry over formal employment.

One activist in Cape Town drew on, and repeatedly referred to, the distinction between '*development for the people*' and '*development to make money*'[14]. Mainstream development is understood as a project for the private sector and the rich, manifesting itself in unequal access to basic services[15], conducted in a quest for profit, weakening local governance structures[16], and creating dependency on the food industry through the displacement of people[17]. This

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[12] 11/03/2022 Amadiba
[13] 15/03/2022 Amadiba
[14] 12/04/2022 Cape Town
[15] 21/04/2022 Cape Town
[16] 24/03/2022 Cape Town
[17] 11/03/2022 Amadiba, 25/04/2022 eMalahleni

resonates with analyses of the colonial model as opening up the African continent for economic exploitation, defeating African resistance, designating land to private property of white settlers and rearranging African agrarian systems to produce cash crops (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2012). Thereby, development has historically pushed Africans out of traditional ways of life into emergent capitalist ones, and continues to do so through extractivism (ibid.). Reiterating these imperatives seems offensively exposing of the parallels between imperial and colonial imperatives, and the extractive industry in relation to communities and anti-extractivist struggles in South Africa today.

Another problem voiced concerns the role of NGOs marketing themselves as apolitical, eradicating poverty through technocratic programme-based interventions without addressing structural reasons for poverty, rising inequality and environmental destruction (Hickel 2017, Holmén 2010, Mohanty 2010). Three activists described the NGO sector as exploitative of community knowledge, and dysfunctional in terms of complementing community struggles, the allocation of funds, internal structures, achievements and interaction with communities[18], reminding of the workings of corporate power and extractivism itself[19]. Two participants in Mpumalanga discussed the culture of workshops where learning skills seldomly result in employment or other tangible benefits[20], leading one key activist to conclude that NGOs excel at keeping communities '*going around in circles*'[21]. This relates to problems of racist discrimination in terms of employment and distribution of funding where white candidates are often perceived as more trustworthy or capable, despite Black candidates being qualified[22]. Pailey describes problematic relationships between race and development where development terminology is used to disguise the continued implementation and maintenance of racist and racially segregated (global) divisions of labour and privilege (Pailey, 2021). NGOs are seen as continuing to preach about alternatives but failing at putting them into practice, enacting non-racist philosophies and returning trust, thereby turning communities into '*a conveyor belt for the money to go to the capitalist*'[23]. Thereby, NGOs mystify the reality of capitalist production and power under the guise of development, contributing to its legitimisation (Shivji 2006).

5.2 Confrontations With Extractivism

In this section, I reiterate definitions and critiques of extractivism as one facet of the mainstream development paradigm. I argue that concerns over local environments and demands for self-determined control over resources and livelihoods are key drivers of mobilisation, linking place-based demands surrounding land, water and territorial rights to discourses surrounding the unjust enclosure and privatisation of resources by mining projects (Conde 2017). These demands result from the impediments extractivism poses for communities' visions of living a good life, including pollution, seeding division among communities and reinforcing racist and patriarchal structures of oppression. Thereby, extractivist mining

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[18] 24/03/2022 and 25/03/2022 eMalahleni, 12/04/2022 Cape Town
[19] 24/03/2022 eMalahleni
[20] 26/03/2022 Phola
[21] 25/04/2022 eMalahleni
[22] 26/04/2020 Phola
[23] 25/04/2022 eMalahleni

concerns resources at the heart of capitalist development, including the marginalisation and exploitation of often formerly colonised countries (Pereira 2021).

5.2.1 Extractivism, Exploitation and Land

Definitions of extractivism as the extraction of minerals, resources and other goods such as plants, timber and indigenous knowledge without FPIC or fair distributions of benefits and at the expense of marginalised communities and nature were commonly reiterated by activists and will serve as a baseline definition throughout this chapter. In South Africa, the unequal distribution of benefits and burdens through extractivism is particularly visible:

> *'South Africa is known as a hub of minerals. But look at the inequality, those are poor and those are getting richer. That's South Africa now. [..] We have the whole country with diamonds, with platinum, with gold, with titanium. We have all sorts of minerals. But look at South Africa, we are the beggars. [..] Now what difference are oil and gas going to make?'*[24]

This quote is rich in three ways: it names extractivisms' dimension of unequal distribution, referring to South Africa as losing out in the global imperialist capitalist system where value from extractive industries is obtained elsewhere. Secondly, it exhibits a sense of pride and ownership over national resources, yielding at resource sovereignty. And thirdly, it emerged as a response to questions about new natural gas sources explored by Shell just off the coast of Amadiba, and whether the R2SN hinders national development plans where, for instance, LNG can function as a bridge technology for renewables. Yet, this activist no longer trusts in state or corporate narratives.

This resonates with a response from an activist in Phola: '*We won't let them just work freely here. [..] They will not get these minerals freely*'[25]. Activists do not only oppose the externalisation of environmental costs and the centralised control over resources (Ye et. al 2020), but also the '*abuse*'[26] of communities by mining firms and the extractive system. Often, electrified mines with roads, access to water and infrastructure stand in stark contrast to neighbouring communities that attempt to farm vegetables on coal dust and have no access to basic services or employment, as one activist from Coronation explains: '*It is painful that we have this coal here for all the power stations, they sell it abroad but we still live without electricity. They produce it here; it affects us directly.*'[27]

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[24] 11/03/2022 Amadiba
[25] 26/03/2022 focus group Phola
[26] 15/03/2022 Amadiba
[27] 24/03/2022 eMalahleni

Figure 10: Maize in Coronation (March 2022).

Figure 9: Coal ashes in Coronation (March 2022).

He illustrates further:

> *'They bribe the community by dumping coal there to make fire. But what are we going to cook on the fire? [..] Anglo [American] made the deal with the municipality years ago, but we are the ones that are suffering now. And the municipality is suffering too because they have no way to hold Anglo responsible for the damage they have done. Their bosses are sitting very nicely in America[28] and their pockets are full.'[29]*

Activists resist and contest the disrespect of communities' demands and boundaries in the quest for profit without conscience, corporate capture of public goods and resources, and therefore corporate power. In this context the ways in which extractivism affect daily lives and living conditions emerge starkly, directly answering my first research question (a) with particular attention given to the inequalities in access and power involved.

With regards to the land question in South Africa, extractivism adds tremendously to existing injustices and tensions, especially since almost 90% of new mining applications are located in rural areas, posing an intensification of post-apartheid dispossessions (Bennie 2019). This stands behind histories of continued dispossession of Black-owned land, inhibiting a highly political space in discussions around extractivism and land use (Alden & Anseeuw 2009). As the proposed titanium mine in Amadiba threatens communally-owned land, one central

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[28] Anglo American's headquarters are in London. I understand 'America' symbolising the Global North.
[29] 24/03/2022 eMalahleni

dimension of the struggle concerns the defence of land as a source of wealth and belonging, and traditional livelihoods that are irreplaceable: participants expressed that [30] *'land is life'* and that farming is not only essential for survival, but also in terms of entire ways of being in this world, being independent[31] and self-sustaining[32]. The fear over loss of land comes with fears of losing cultural and social heritage, affecting community lives for the worse. Displacement and dispossession by extractive activities often evoke frustrations over the loss of livelihoods, well-being, and belonging (Pereira & Tsikata 2021, Ebhuoma et. al 2021) - as one participant describes: Since their umbilical cord is buried on the land, she holds a strong connection to it: '*When you disconnect me, you disconnect me with my spirituality. You disconnect me with my identity*'[33]. These attachments contest corporate narratives of rural landscapes as unused and 'empty' spaces available for capital accumulation (Dietz & Engels 2018).

Figure 12: Strelizia collected in local forest, Amadiba (March 2022).

Figure 11: Cattle grazing, Amadiba (March 2022).

Extractivism sees people and nature as separate and promotes the growing commodification of environments and social relations without regards to current relations of ownership, use and trade (Gudynas 2017). In response, there is a strong sense among anti-extractivist activists of wanting to determine what happens on their lands, including the recognition of (customary) land rights (Ali & Grewal 2006, Urkidi 2010). In the South African context, questions surrounding land stand behind the history and present of continued dispossession of Black-

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[30] 15/03/2022b Amadib

[31] Ibid.

[32] 15/03/2022a Amadiba

[33] 11/03/2022 Amadiba

owned land in favour of white minorities, hence, inhibiting a highly political space in discussions around extractivism and land use. Parallels to colonial and apartheid land governance, structures and local chiefs exist in the ways land for extractivist projects is acquired[34] (Leonard, 2019). In Nkomazi, Mangweni coal mine is perceived as exercising authority over land use without consent or consultation of neighbouring communities by building access roads for the mine, destroying fields of sugarcane without compensation. '*It is as if they own the country*'[35], as a local activist expressed the feeling of powerlessness and external control[36]. Yet, engaging in radical resistance and re-imagination, 'peasants and rural populations are not gullible and passive victims, but fight back, overtly and covertly, as they seek to retain what they consider their birth right: land' (Monjane: 2021: 5). Although this certainly applies in Amadiba and Nkomazi where agriculture provides livelihoods for many, the question of land is different in eMalahleni, where most people and especially township residents do not own or have access to arable land within 'local geographies that have been traversed by colonialism and extractive capitalism' (Gómez-Barris 2017: 2). In both contexts, however, mining and extractivism directly affects people's abilities to live deemed dignified, safe, healthy and happy, thereby crucially informing and defining activists' understandings of extractivism as a system of continued colonial oppression, dispossession and injustice.

Figure 13: Mine access road Mangweni mine (March 2022).

5.2.2 Extractivist Hegemony

Next to the concerns raised around material consequences of extractivist agendas, members of the R2SN articulate an epistemological critique of extractivism as a concept based on lies and deception. Related to the first research question, critiques of extractivism articulated by activists stress and actively counter impressions of extractivism as a win-win situation, and instead document and share the dangers and injustices involved. In the contestation of corporate power and hegemonic imperatives of assumed benefits, the R2SN is committed to '*exposing the lies involved in the logic of extractivism*'[37]:

> '*One of the major problems that we're coming across is that it takes time for people to actually understand the struggle that is involved, especially with regards to the extractive sector. Why? Because for years, people have been told that the extractive sector is bringing about development and therefore it will better their lives. So, the first step is to actually show them the negative*

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[34] 11/03/2022 Amadiba
[35] 29/03/2022 Narrative drive Nkomazi
[36] Ibid.
[37] 25/03/2022 eMalahleni

> *impacts and expose the lies that are involved in that logic, which says development and better life.'[38]*

This quote exposes the gravity with which extractivism has been engrained in South African development discourse and the difficulties in dismantling the hegemonic imperative created around assumed benefits. Here, the concept of extractive hegemony, where progress and development are rendered contingent on the constant extension of the extractivist sector, including the search for new frontiers, technologies and locations, is useful (Bernauer & Roth 2021). The hegemonizing dimensions of the extractivist model further remind of Membe's thoughts on the legitimising violence employed by past colonial institutions in order to naturalise and colonise colonial realities and rationality (2001, Bhambra 2014), which I think prominently figures within South African extractivist imperatives. Two activists, from Amadiba and Mpumalanga respectively, emphasised feelings of pain and betrayal caused by the state and corporations. The continued non-compliance to agreements or promises was understood to influence peoples' lives negatively through increased stress, fear and disillusion, adding to answers to the first research question (a).

In fact, the sharing and creation of knowledge about the negative effects of extractivism constitutes a key strategy of the R2SN, next to blockades and protests, the employment of lawyers, democratic decision-making, multi-scalar alliances, and the organisation of healing circles for women. Building counter-hegemonic knowledge and, therefore, power, happens for instance through information campaigns, workshops and the testing of water for AMD:

> *'Part of the work is also to raise awareness, where there is none, about the impacts of mining. Because some communities are rural. Some communities are far and isolated. So, these communities are struggling, but struggling without information'[39],*

echoed by members of the struggle in Amadiba stating that '*the most powerful strategy is to keep our people informed*'[40], and that activists tell '*the truth*'[41]. Something that all of these strategies share is the promotion of collective, rather than individual struggles, a firm belief in their claims to justice as being rightful, shared access to information among activists, and building alliances. These strategies embody critiques of and reject the lack of transparency in the mining sector, and resist corporate power through working towards power owned by the people, relying on values of equality, transparency and democracy. The creation of this antagonism between corporate and government 'lies' versus 'truth' generated and shared by activists exposes both the deep mistrust between communities and corporations, but also the ways in which activists exert autonomy and agency by taking ownership of knowledge.

Hence, in their contestation of extractive hegemony, activists contest the idea of arguments as universal and hence expose strong decolonial imperatives. Anti-extractivist movements are not

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[38] Ibid.
[39] 25/03/2022 eMalahleni
[40] 11/03/2022 Amadiba
[41] 15/03/2022 Amadiba

only or predominantly environmental movements, but 'better understood as the latest development in the historical trajectory of class struggle against capitalist exploitation and imperialist domination (Hamouchene 2019: 17). Overall, I find that the articulated critiques of extractivism expose a strong commitment to ethics of equality, fair distribution and bottom-up decision-making, negatively informed by activists' experiences with the extractive sector. Beyond impacting community lives materially through pollution, dispossession and unemployment, extractivism is understood to disrespect and violate community rights through the creation of hegemonic narratives, lacks of information and corporate lies, referred to as extractive hegemony. Having laid out the critiques of development and extractivism and how they impair activists' abilities to live a good life, this leads to finding solutions: reimagining concepts and creating alternatives.

6. <u>Findings and Analysis: Re-imagining New Paradigms and Practical Alternatives</u>

Examining proposed alternatives, this chapter is designed to explore activists' visions for post-extractivist futures and what it means to live a 'good life' beyond the extractivism-development imperative. I answer the second research question on development alternatives envisioned and enacted as part of the resistance, and the values underpinning them. Activists call for a shift in paradigm towards bottom-up development, informed and directed by the needs, demands and possibilities of communities; based on values of democracy, equality, respect and self-determination. Practical alternatives range from agroecological farming to eco-tourism, worker's cooperatives and small businesses exhibiting a high commitment to principles of justice, and the protection of (access to) natural environments. Being able to state 'this is the development we want' equips activists and communities with more negotiating power, and re-politicises the development debate[42] (Williams & Satgar 2019, Mohanty 2010, Dietz & Engels 2021), thereby answering the third research question posed for this project and stressing the strategic value in thinking about alternatives within resistance. As decoloniality entails to 'transform our sense of what it means to live' (Bhabha in Bhambra 2014: 116), this project disrupts discourses of Western modernity by stressing a diversity of narratives and desirable futures outside the interests of the privileged.

Presenting hopeful alternatives in South Africa, this chapter is divided into two sections, examining visions for transformative change regarding meanings of development and practical alternatives respectively. I understand resistance not only as a defensive, but also as constructive process of re-imagination and politicisation of possibilities for future trajectories (Sørensen 2016, Conde 2017, Monticelli 2018). Acknowledging that there are no grand alternatives applicable to all contexts, I aim to balance being tangled up in 'the micropolitics of dispersed resistances and individualised alternative practices' (Swyngedouw 2014: 92) where resistances enter the neoliberal game, and discussions on structural change ('the politics').

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[42] 11/03/2022 Amadiba

Drawing on the work of Monticelli, I understand development alternatives simultaneously as prefigurative 'interstitial' initiatives working in the 'here' and 'now', and as part of a shift towards fundamental and transformative change (2018). I will present ideas and alternatives in their diversity and 'messiness', representing the heterogeneity of demands by activists facing different challenges. Through using participatory methods, participants engaged in active visioning exercises helpful for understanding future imaginations and opening up conversations.

6.1 Envisioning New Post-Extractivist Development Paradigms

Ideas for alternative paradigms, or what Satgar refers to as systemic alternatives (2018), share a common desire for self-determination and the urgency for transformative change. Put powerfully, *'we are being told that a life beyond capitalism, a life beyond patriarchy, and a life beyond these systems of oppression is impossible, when it is not'*[43]. Activists thus oppose not only the institutionalised material and economic hegemony and exploitation, but also its epistemological hegemony (Escobar 2012). In conceptualising this section, I have taken inspiration from post-development scholars in their critiques of development and the articulation of alternatives (Escobar 2012, Ziai 2007, Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2012, 2015, 2020), stating that 'the binary, the mechanistic, the reductionist, the inhumane and the ultimately self-destructive approach to change is over.' (Rahnema 1997: 391). Instead, alternative pathways are informed by the subordination of growth and development to the rights of nature and local, indigenous and grassroots understandings of prosperity and well-being composing a pluriverse of alternatives (Escobar 2015, Demaria & Kothari 2017).

Answering questions about participants' visions and the meaning of development, a common response was that '*development must start from the communities and it must meet the needs of the communities*'[44], understanding that communities often have answers to development issues specific to their location and situation. Here, self-determination can be defined as communities, groups or individuals asserting autonomy in a struggle towards self-management and independent social and economic practices in relation to the state and capital (Böhm et. al 2010) constituting alternatives to hegemonic development or the practical negotiation of power. The strong commitment to pose a counterweight to corporate and state modes of top-down decision-making is reflected in the following quote: '*If you have access [to money, resources or education], you have more choices. If you don't, you have less choices. But the Right to Say No is a choice regardless of whether you have anything or not*'[45], detaching self-determination from access to capital and privilege.

Democratic decision-making and dialogue were seen as virtues and desirable policy, if not already enacted as for instance at *Komkhulu* in Amadiba. In Phola, activists sought dialogue with management and CEOs of the neighbouring mine, suggesting plans for noise minimisation and compensation for cracked houses. Active and collective involvement in decision-making

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[43] 21/04/2022 Cape Town
[44] 12/04/2022 Cape Town, 25/03/2022eMalahleni
[45] 12/04/2022 Cape Town

about the distribution of rents, local infrastructure, transport and employment is understood as central, and consent is to be obtained from collective meetings and meaningful dialogue[46]. This resonates with what Dietz and Engels see as central for the feasibility of radical (rural) utopias: the maintenance or establishment of equal access to democratic decision-making processes that are collectively defined (2021). With regards to mining, trade and the just transition, activists demand a shift towards the localisation of rents from extractive industries and manufacturing to end South Africa's position as a consumer, but to enter as producers. This was brought up for instance in relation to solar panels that are exclusively produced abroad, such as in France, Germany and China[47].

Voices calling for new paradigms also concern the role of women in the design of post-extractivist futures. The R2SN is proud to have women among its leaders, yet activists find that this should translate into more women being in charge of policy development and central institutions[48]. (African) ecofeminism as a guiding principle thereby poses systemic critiques based on empathy, care and ethics of reciprocity, emphasising connections and dependency between all forms of life and ending the crisis of social reproduction (Andrews 2021, Randriamaro 2021, Aguinaga et. al 2013). Extractivism and patriarchy are thereby closely intertwined, subjecting women to 'extreme exploitation of their labour and bodies, and often sexualised violence' (WoMin 2022a). The liberation of women is impossible without the liberation of nature, as African peasant women are understood to have a strong material and spiritual connection to the land as they are often responsible for the management of natural resources, an aspect that was expressed by two women in Amadiba[49] (Randriamaro 2021). Although these visions provide for a significant shift towards the valuation of nature and well-being, the conversation around practical alternatives often takes the backseat in the R2SN as challenges of funding, health and land dominate.

6.1.1 Development with, not for People

Another recurring theme was the problematisation of NGOs as actors within the political economy of extractivism and development by communities, criticising that NGOs reduce local agency. According to one activist in Mpumalanga, alternative development must involve NGOs to warrant that funding circulates within communities ensuring financial sustainability, '*because tomorrow there will be no donor*'[50]. Activists wish for long-lasting engagement where NGOs do not to undermine community struggles, but complement them in advancing initiatives and ideas that already exist[51]. Moreover, NGOs, and scholars, claiming to pursue bottom-up approaches, there is room for improvement in terms of having these debates directly with community members, rather than in spaces that are removed from lived realities.[52] Although not by definition, the R2SN provides for and invites the discussion of alternatives. Yet, to some

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[46] 11/03/2022 and 12/03/2022 Amadiba, 25/03/2022 eMalahleni
[47] 25/03/2022 eMalahleni
[48] 21/04/2022 Cape Town, 20/04/2022 Cape Town, 12/04/2022 Cape Town, 27/03/2022 eMalahleni
[49] 15/03/2022 Amadiba
[50] 25/03/2022 eMalahleni
[51] Ibid.
[52] 24/03/2022 eMalahleni

activists, this is not enough and conversations should revolve more around finding solutions as

> *'while we are sitting [at a workshop], the capitalists are sitting planning how to oppress us. For us no to be oppressed, we need some source of income or money. Now I am expecting us to be discussing how to empower each other. This does not have to be money. But giving me an idea of how do I draft and put together a business plan that can be funded. [..]. That is want I want to hear at the next workshop.'[53]*

Activists demand *'solidarity in action, not in words'*[54] through for instance, more targeted knowledge exchanges between activists, or programmes that are directed at sharing practically oriented knowledge. Activists in Mpumalanga had a very clear understanding of the role of NGOs in the creation of alternatives where '*people who preach must put that into practice*'[55]. Nonetheless, alternatives exist and the following section is centred around mapping them out.

6.2 Lived and Practical Alternatives

This section notes and examines different practical alternatives, whether they have been in existence for centuries, realised recently, or are nothing less than a revolutionary idea or proposal for implementation. The purpose of this section is to showcase projects that community members or groups have put forward as examples for just and sustainable futures and that have not received sufficient attention. These alternatives are specific to local environments and socio-political and economic contexts, yet signify the emancipation from externally prescribed development projects towards self-determined alternatives. Thereby, this section answers the second research question on alternatives, presenting in detail those of agroecological farming, eco-tourism and to a lesser degree worker cooperatives, small businesses, 'climate jobs', and socially-owned renewable energies. I find that all of these are closely intertwined with questions of land, employment, environmental justice and protection and, ultimately, self-determination.

6.2.1 Agroecological Farming and Land Use

One alternative most prominently put forward by the R2SN revolves around agroecological farming, regenerative farming or small-scale agriculture more generally. It is promoted as a development alternative in the campaign (WoMin 2022), as well as a localised practice grounded in traditional livelihoods such as in Amadiba, or the quest for independence and innovation in Mpumalanga. Agroecology refers to a stream of agricultural practice and theory bringing radical change and 'sustainability to all parts' of a resilient, localised, re-commoned and democratic food system while strongly connected to indigenous and peasant knowledges, fostering collective self-determination and food-sovereignty (Gliessmann 2018: 599, Pimbert, 2015, Kroll, 2021). It thereby relies on low external input and draws on local ecosystem solutions (McCune & Rosset 2021). While the term agroecology was seldomly used

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[53] 24/03/2022 eMalahleni
[54] Ibid.
[55] 25/03/2022 eMalahleni

in Amadiba to describe agricultural production (many referred to it as traditional farming), the SAGRC farm is an explicitly agroecological project.

Strongly dominated by small-scale agriculture focussed around the farming of cattle, vegetables and marihuana, promoting agroecological farming as a development alternative in Amadiba appears intuitive. As one of the local leaders of the struggle described it, '*my dream for this community is to see our agriculture, which is part of our blood, being protected. And when I talk about agriculture, I'm not talking about monoculture. I'm talking about a permanent agriculture that we have right now*[56]', referring to crop variations, low use of fossil-fuelled machinery, and the maintenance of a local seedbank[57]. Food security in the area is high and residents understand their wealth to lie in their land and produce, rather than in formal employment[58]: '*This land is very rich. It is more wealth than to take your bag and go look for a job outside*'[59], as a young activist notes. In fact, differing understandings of poverty have been a topic of dispute between Amadiba residents and the state trying to justify the mining project on the basis of limited formal employment in Amadiba (Bennie 2011).

As a longstanding ally to the ACC, Bennie writes that 'resistance is fertile' in Amadiba, with the active pursuit and extension of traditional agricultural practice as a powerful form of resistance from below (2017). Amadiba residents stressed that they wish to hold onto traditional livelihood practices and strategies of land governance because '*this is right for us. We do not want mining because they will not let us do the things we want to do*'[60], yielding at maintaining independence, a strong attachment to local livelihoods intertwined with identity and cultural heritage, and reiterating the value of agriculture beyond nutrition and income (Urkidi 2010). Another suggestion for the future is the establishment of a local market and the elimination of middlemen claiming large shares of farmers' incomes, relating to the Direct Trade movement[61]. These ideas are reflected in the created maps: All include the persistence of small-scale agriculture. While map one (M1) shows 'green squares' that symbolise fields, map two (M2) shows fields growing maize and sweet potato. Map three (M3) includes gardens (symbolised by parallel lines) next to individual houses, as well as a corridor (symbolised by dotted line) close to the beach designated for cattle grazing. Moreover, two maps include a packhouse (M3) and a market (M1).

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[56] 11/03/2022 Amadiba
[57] 15/03/2022 Amadiba
[58] 11/03/2022 and 19/03/2022 Amadiba
[59] 19/03/2022 Amadiba
[60] 15/03/2022b Amadiba
[61] 12/03/2022a Amadiba
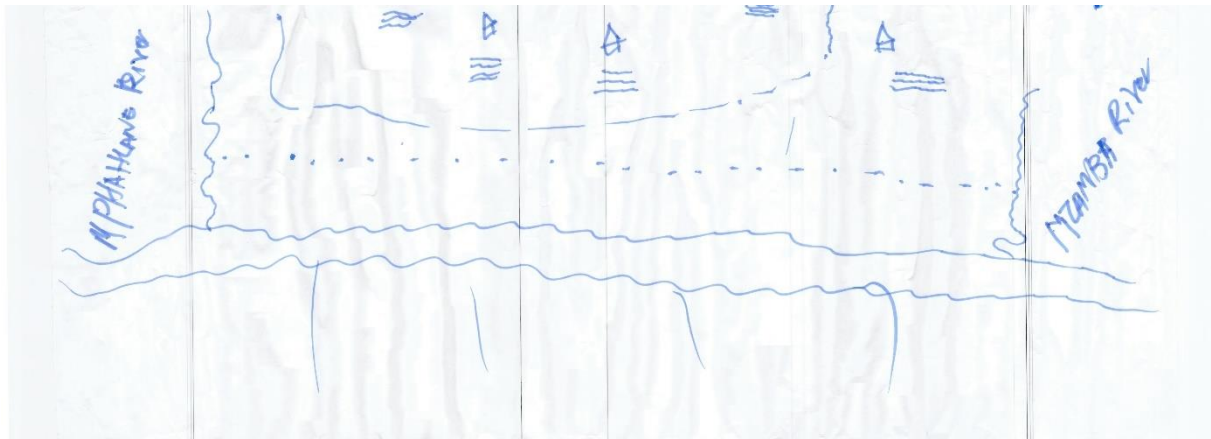
Figure 14: Map 3 - dotted line symbolising grazing line along coast.

Figure 15: Map 3 - Sigidi packhouse, school, clinic and community hall.

Figure 16: Map 1 - Fields and eco-villages.

While the maps also include other elements such as shops (supermarkets), access roads, clinics, hospitals and day cares for children, the strong presence of agriculture indicates that young activists in Amadiba value agriculture as a source of income, an occupation and a way of living, engrained in culture and livelihoods. What is interesting here is the completely opposite understanding of land by mining companies and people who farm, exhibiting the uniqueness of land as an awkward commodity that is both a source of life and profit (Li 2014). The deployment of narratives of peasants as not properly employed and therefore somehow redundant to society thereby adds to the justification of development initiatives that undermine peasant's subsistence.
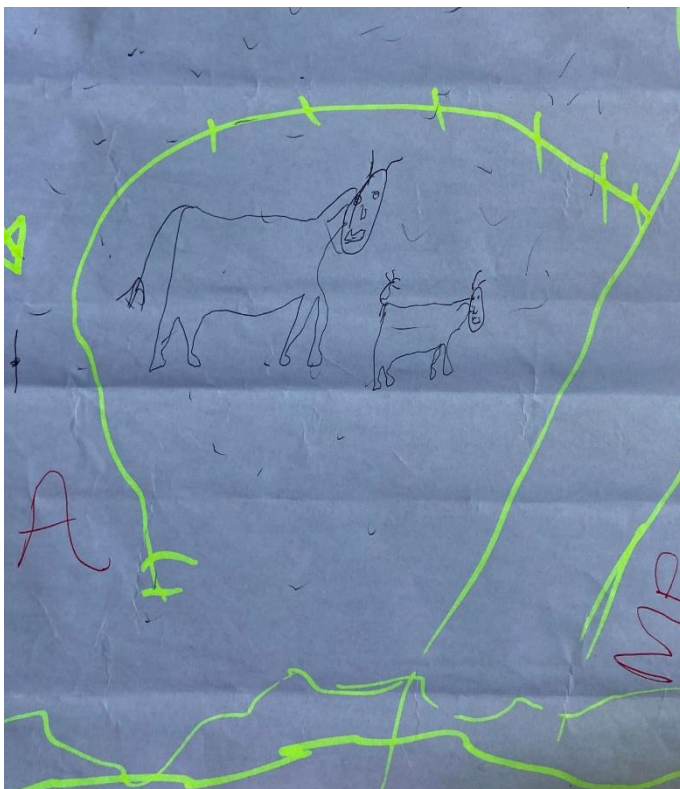
Figure 17: Map 2 - Cattle.

Further, agroecological farming is actively promoted within R2SN in eMalahleni. Here, the SAGRC has started a large agroecological farm aiming to go off the grid in the near future. The farm is built on land won through a land claim in 2020 and has since been fostered by key activists of the SAGRC. Water is obtained from three boreholes that are powered by two small windmills on the farm and distributed through systems of drip irrigation. The farm produces mostly vegetables such as tomatoes, peppers, cabbage, spinach and carrots, but also hosts chickens and two pigs. It is a committed and innovative project, especially given the difficult conditions in eMalahleni as a city rich in pollution and poor in nutritious soil. Produce is sold on local markets, and the farm hopes to employ about 20 SAGRC and community members in the future and replicate the model in other areas.

Figure 19: Windmill on SAGRC farm.

Figure 18: Tomatoes on SAGRC farm.

An activist from Coronation is currently collecting funding to start a poultry farm, planning to farm 50 to 100 chickens on a plot of land (4-6sqm) to sell to community members informally.[62] This element of locally produced fresh foods, and the direct link between farmers and buyers can foster a sense of community, working against tendencies of fragmentation of the social fabric, rendering cohesion visible (Wells et. al 1999). Inspired by motives such as access to healthy food, being independent and pursuing culturally desired lifestyles, these agricultural initiatives involve non-monetary motives. Existing on the fringes of the global industrial food system, community-led agriculture therefore poses a contestation of the ways modern capitalist society is organised and, in Amadiba, the transformation of social relations towards increases in inequality, anti-democratic rule and non-recognition of rights through increased capital

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[62] 24/03/2022 eMalahleni

penetration in rural areas (Dietz & Engels 2021). By taking pride in independence, self-determination and food sovereignty, activists stress the political potential of access to healthy food as a political question (Monjane & Tramel 2018).

The topic of smaller-scale agriculture was picked up by all participating communities. Activists in Phola advanced the idea of if they were able to reclaim and rehabilitate the land of the coal mine, community members would use it for collective small-scale farming for the community. In their view, this would provide more meaningful jobs for a higher number of people, and ensure food security[63]. Generally, claims to relocation were coupled with desires for land that can be used for agricultural purposes, collectively or individually. Hence, the land question with regards to livelihood creation and self-determination famously comes into play when looking at environmentalisms of the poor and dispossessed. These positions resonate with broader movements and struggles demanding a shift towards agroecological or environmentally sustainable food systems, food justice and food sovereignty for marginalised communities in South Africa (Satgar & Cherry 2019, SAFSC 2022, SPP 2022, Greenberg & Drimie 2021, Kroll 2021, Zazu & Manderson 2020), and serve as practical examples to lead the way forward.

6.2.2 Eco-Tourism in Amadiba

Another alternative advanced by activists in Amadiba is eco-tourism and all three maps included at least one eco-lodge envisioned for the future. As the term suggests, eco-tourism is commonly understood as tourism that minimises environmental impacts ensuring sustainability and including educational elements surrounding ecosystems and local cultures (Diamantis 1999). In this, ecotourists are understood to be more reflective and acknowledging of local contexts and environments, creating more respectful and meaningful and non-extractivist interactions (ibid.). While this might be the most intuitive definition, the definition of ecotourism is fluid and differs between actors. In this section I will introduce some of the ecotourist activities that are already in place in Amadiba and also focus on demands and visions formulated for the future.

In fact, ecotourism is often understood as an alternative to extraction (Davidov & Büscher 2015). While they argue that ecotourism maintains Eurocentric perceptions of development regardless of traditional forms of rural subsistence (2013), ecotourism seems to be perceived as a development compromise or hybrid between maintaining traditional livelihoods (and ownership over land), while entering the formal market. What is noteworthy when considering the critique put forward by the authors is that they include conservation parks and efforts in their analysis, while this research focusses on ecotourism that allows for shared use of the land, including agriculture. As Walter and Urkidi note, ecotourism often is a locally preferred alternative to large open pit mines (2015), as it is far from the levels of ecological and social exploitation expected from mining. This perception relates closely to the struggle in Amadiba, where ecotourism is not only seen as a source of income, but also as a counter-strategy to the community's labelling as 'anti-development' by pro-mining actors, sharing and preserving the

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[63] 26/03/2022 focus group Phola

unique natural environment[64].

There are around seven female-led homestays in Amadiba that are very successful[65]. The community in the past received funding which helped to fund the construction of two lodges and a campsite, out of which one lodge closed. Tourists can book guided hikes and tours, with local tourist guides, introducing them to the natural environment or local customs[66]. Yet, the definition of ecotourism seemed to diverge between local leaders, who formulated ideas close to those in the literature above, and community activists involved in tourism. According to a host of village-based accommodation and a local tourist guide, ecotourism is about the ability to offer and do many different activities in one place and the close interconnection between all actors involved such as guides, hosts and drivers[67]. I found the development of ecotourism in Amadiba to be generally welcomed by most activists, yet concrete meanings of the term differed. Most people agreed that ecotourism should be compliant with local lifestyles and leave grazing land and waterflow in the rivers intact, and one activist suggested building ecolodges with 250+ beds in one, or all, of the five villages in Amadiba. In that activist's vision, the lodges would fetch water from the rivers and offer activities such as 4x4 tours and a motocross parkour, next to guided hikes and tours. This idea was brought forward as part of one of the focus groups, where group three presented the idea of an eco-lodge in Sigidi close to the natural pools:

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[64] 11/03/2022 Amadiba
[65] 11/03/2022 Amadiba, 15/03/2022 Amadiba
[66] 15/03/2022 Amadiba
[67] Ibid.

Figure 20: Lodge, motorbikes, natural pools and shop.

Profits from the lodges would be used for new investments and distributed in the communities through salaries for community members. New ecotourism projects are dependent on funding to afford facilities such as houses and canoes to cross rivers. All maps included lodges, and group one stressed the need for ecological sustainability of the lodge. Another participant added on the question of tourism that '*tourism can be discussed when there is a meeting [at Komkhulu]*' [68], reinstating the sense of collective autonomy and self-determined decision-making by all community members.

6.2.3 Cooperatives, Businesses and Community Projects

Although alternatives proposed mostly revolve around agroecology and ecotourism, interviews and focus groups in fact offered a wide array of ideas and pilot projects. Ranging from soup kitchens led by women[69] to the establishment of a cooperative bank for NGOs and activists that is detached from mining magnates and the extractive sector[70], the ideas and visions shared encompassed wide sectors of society. This section serves as an outlook and portrait of

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[68] 12/03/2022 Amadiba
[69] 21/03/2022 Cape Town
[70] 25/03/2022 eMalahleni

the directions that alternatives of the R2SN take on, and what can be derived from them in relation to postcolonial development perspectives.

A key activist in eMalahleni explained that once the SAGRC farm will be running smoothly and self-sufficiently, they would like to start other projects such as a community bakery using some of the produce from the farm[71]. What is seen as a driving factor behind these initiatives is the integration of the working class and the creation of perspectives that go beyond workshops directed at 'capacity building'. In a similar vein, activists in Phola had started a community recycling station, involving multiple community members and two vehicles collecting waste from households and streets to sort and recycle. The project was funded by Anglo American and, according to activists, was a great success due to the double benefit of creating jobs and clean streets. However, when the funding ended after two years, the municipality took over the project which has since been abandoned.[72] While this reflects the ongoing conflict between communities and municipalities, it also shows that community-led projects can indeed work more efficiently. In Amadiba, a group of 34 community members in Sigidi (Amadiba) have applied for municipality funding for a fishing cooperative, aiming to start operating in March 2023. The fishermen would hold equal shares, and profits will be used for repairs and salaries would be equal, but dependent on the hour worked in the cooperative. The group aims to catch fish using rods to not deplete stocks, and sell fish to local markets and restaurants[73]. This resonates with a statement made by an activist in eMalahleni saying that '*we as South Africans, or as the working class, we need to start producing instead of depending on what comes from the outside, because we can*'[74]. It stresses the strength, creativity and (political) commitment shown towards contesting the system maintaining their continued exploitation, and creating alternatives putting their needs and well-being first.

Activists further enact autonomy by entering negotiations with mining firms: in Phola, residents have consulted mine management in their demand for jobs, the planting of a tree line to prevent dust from entering houses, the protection and repair of houses damaged by blasting vibrations, times for night rest and stopping heavy machinery from entering the township[75]. The provision of benefits to the community surrounding basic needs such as water and electricity, that are abundant for the mine, are key demands by activists[76]. Moreover, another activist talked about the utilisation of mine-rehabilitation processes for growing algae in mining holes for the creation of biomass and biofuel as creative ways of mitigation[77]. Another narrative employed by activists especially in Mpumalanga and Cape Town, where debates surrounding the just transition are pervasive, is that of community- or socially-owned renewable energies. For that, communities and the working class must be '*in control of the process*'[78], referring both to

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[71] Ibid.
[72] 26/03/2022 focus group Phola
[73] 15/03/2022 Amadiba
[74] 24/03/2022 eMalahleni
[75] 26/03/2022 focus group Phola
[76] 26/03/2022 focus group Phola
[77] 21/04/2022 Cape Town
[78] 25/03/2022 eMalahleni

decision-making about future development or energy trajectories, and the production and installation of needed technology. A truly just transition requires communities and the working class to play a significant role in the production of solar panels and wind turbines as otherwise '*we are marketing for the capitalist* '[79]. These demands stress activists' holistic understanding of the challenges regarding North-South divisions and the risk of co-optation.

With regards to the question of employment, some activists referred to the 'One Million Climate Jobs' campaign, promoted by the SAGRC, AIDC and some South African trade unions. The campaign claims that a just transition could create 'at least one million jobs' and aims to mobilise 'thousands of South Africans around real solutions to slow down climate change and promote the enhancement of human life and the natural environment' (Ashley & Rudin 2016: 411). Areas of action include the production of green energy, public transportation, retrofitted buildings, sustainable food production, the protection of natural resources and the satisfaction of basic needs (ibid.). Thereby, the campaign aims to offer a feasible, practical and just alternative to hegemonic discourses of extractivist development as the only possibility to create jobs and maintain economic growth (ibid., One Million Climate Jobs & AIDC 2017). Hence, answering my second research question, I can conclude that in their diversity, all suggested alternatives stress the importance of creating post-extractivist alternatives that can be put into practice immediately and locally, complying with communities' needs, demands and possibilities. Moreover, this chapter has contributed to answering my third question on the value of alternatives in resistance in the sense that presented alternatives and narratives display and foster a sense of pride, ownership and confidence in post-extractivist futures that are worth working towards. Discussing some of the challenges and possibilities of post-extractivist futures and the value of this contribution will be subject of the following chapter.

7. <u>Discussion: Challenges and Possibilities of Creating a New Story</u>

Exploring and discussing alternatives, however, must not fall short of acknowledging the nuances and complexities they involve. This chapter serves as a basis for reflection not only on the feasibility of alternatives and possible conflicts of interests, but also with regards to the contribution of this research project. Re-emphasising some of the most important points, this chapter aims to draw together different themes and put them into perspective without generalisation. This is meant to constructively point out some of the more controversial issues with the R2SN and alternatives, providing input for continued sophistication and improvement. Discussions particularly touch upon research questions two and three, leading to conclude that prefigurative alternatives embody some of the complexities of the world within which they exist, however, are of tremendous value in terms of providing and constantly refining a roadmap towards just and sustainable futures.

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[79] 25/03/2022 eMalahleni

7.1 Challenges, Possibilities and Movement Politics

Having laid out the specifics of development alternatives proposed as part of this research, here I take a slightly more critical stance, discussing the obstacles, limitations and ethical problems for some of them, and internal movement politics. The challenges to R2SN activism are as diverse as the contexts that participants operate in. Safety threats and security fears are omnipresent, activists stand in constant conflict with municipalities, mining firms and the police (SAPS). Moreover, corruption and co-optations pose a central challenge, continue colonial divide-and-rule tactics and seed divisions between male and female activists[80] (Schilling-Vacaflor & Eichler 2017, Michalopoulos & Papaioannou 2011). Moving away from resistance towards alternatives, it is important to assess how and if structures of exclusion, marginalisation and injustice may weave themselves into proposed alternatives.

In the context of Amadiba, some of the complexities of thinking about alternatives surfaced strongly, especially with regards to partial yet significant dissonances in definitions and knowledge between leaders of the struggle and community activists. While leaders and official channels provide sophisticated and detailed articulations of alternatives, these definitions were not always coherent with community formulations. For instance, one local farmer, an active promotor of the seedbank and local democracy, expressed interest in GMO maize seeds hoping for more secure harvests[81], unaware about the effects these can have for surrounding ecosystems. Moreover, almost all farming participants in Amadiba expressed the wish to own a tractor to ease the workload and farm more efficiently. Concerns about potential effects on agricultural practice and soil, air and water quality, or social, economic and political consequences were not raised. In that regard, tensions may be surfacing between the kinds of language and concepts used trying to reach and keep allies and supporters, and the needs and visions articulated by community farmers. In some way this relates to tensions surrounding the placement of agroecology within alternative discourses: While agroecology is welcomed by institutions such as the UN or World Bank, their discourses of sustainable farming go alongside extractivism and agri-business, diverging from formulations of the agroecological shift put forward by activists. Agroecology is at risk of co-optation which many activists are wary about, yet might deserve closer attention in terms of how to maintain independent and radical interpretations.

With regards to the practicality of alternatives, questions of unequal exposure and suitability in different contexts can lead to the re-inscription of inequalities. In Amadiba, households closest to the coast are expected to benefit most from expansions in eco-tourism. On the flipside, eco-tourism currently is unthinkable of in places like Coronation where the environment is hostile towards nature and relaxation, meaning residents do not have the same chances to propose 'sexy' proposals for alternatives that comply to funders' ideas about sustainable futures (e.g., individually-owned conventional poultry farm in Coronation). In this context, quests for relocation deserve closer attention, especially with regards to the right to a clean and safe environment. Further, questions around the what it means to say 'no' to mining, and the just

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[80] 24/03/2022a eMalahleni
[81] 15/03/2022a Amadiba

transition were common, especially in Mpumalanga where it is inevitable to realise the difficulty of replacing coal while maintaining or increasing national levels of electricity. Related to this, discussions emerged about what it means to 'say no' to mining overall, or whether there can be fair and more sustainable possibilities for mineral extraction. Moreover, questions surrounding labour next to the need for mining for renewable energies and the transition-extraction nexus pose challenges to an outright 'no' to all mining in South Africa.

These discussions beg two questions: a) Who decides and speaks in these struggles and b) are there differences between what is sustainable and what it is that the people want? And if there are, how can we reconcile them? Looking at these two questions confronts critical scholarship and thought on alternatives with tendencies to romanticise community alternatives, ignorant of the realities of continued poverty and inequality where being able to formally enter the capitalist market or relying on state services is not a sign of weak activist spirit, but a valid choice. R2SN activists understand that in a world ruled by capital, not all alternatives can work independently of that. The privilege imbricated in being able to realise alternatives not reliant on generating income reiterates the need for developing a new paradigm that is socially just and delinked from profit. Yet, although not all proposed alternatives are anti-capitalist, they are anti-extractivist. These lived alternatives can be labelled 'interstitial' alternatives that develop within capitalism, 'anti, despite and post-capitalism' (Chatterton & Pickerill 2010: 1, Monticelli 2018). By taking on their future within capitalism, these alternatives and utopias help to re-think and re-politicise 'conventional modes of production, consumption and living by *defending*, *restoring* and *creating* spaces of resistance and experimentation' (Monticelli 2018: 514, original emphasis), helping to erode and 'crack' the system from within (ibid., Holloway & Sergi 2010, Clarence-Smith & Monticelli, 2022). These conversations invite reflections on the role of the state, which has been absent throughout this thesis. Activists' visions did not involve and active role for the state despite explicit follow-up questions, exhibiting a lack of trust and faith in the state understood to act in the interests of capital.

Nonetheless, the quest for bottom-up development raises questions about who can and should put alternative paradigms into practice, hinting at discussions surrounding race, class and nationality, North-South exploitation and meaningful solidarity. Initiating these discussions, not at last to learn more about expectations for my own future support of the struggle, I was surprised that only for activists in Cape Town these debates seemed important. Community activists and leaders stressed that to them, questions of identity are secondary as long as deep solidarity is enacted according to the community's needs and ethics. In that sense, activists ranked tangible outcomes and new skills over politics of who should be doing the sharing, teaching and financing. This is why I am intrigued to learn more about meaningful bottom-up development, and how dialogue between those on the ground and those with access to funding can be better maintained especially in the face of limitations to resources:

> *'I myself want to stand in front of the community and say before we did not have electricity, now we have solar panels that is going to provide you with*

> *electricity. This coal business is not good for you, here is the alternative. But I cannot because of the lack of resources* [82].

Relying on one particularly strong interview in this discussion, the lack of resources was mentioned by all research participants. In Amadiba, many residents asked me if I could help with funding for tractors and manure, while in Mpumalanga resources are needed to finance individual or collective initiatives:

> *'We know what we want or what we want to say "yes" to. But mostly it is difficult because for you to achieve what you are saying yes to, it needs funding, money'* [83]

The above quote points towards debates surrounding funding and self-determination. It me reflect on debates surrounding bottom-up and postcolonial development, where funding is often seen to reinforce structures of dependency and oppression, ignorant of local agency and self-determination. These debates seem to be in need of a 'reality check' to find ways for meaningful solidarity with those who have been fenced off from generating income or means of livelihood in order to move from the 'here' to achieving visions. Funding is about control and power and it is often the conditionalities and sources of funding that are problematic. While a key activist in Mpumalanga voiced concerns and anger about donor-dependency and NGO codes of conduct, most participants expressed limited or no concern about the origins of funding, if distributed on good conditionalities. Similarly, the large majority of activists was neutral on the question of who should be conveying knowledge in manners that are conducive to the struggle and needs on the ground. Hence, there is a need for more nuanced and tailored approaches to postcolonial bottom-up development that does not lose sight of the agents of change and effective ways to support them.

With regards to the social dynamics at play in the development of alternatives and this research, I also want to reflect on divisions along the lines of age and gender. As a colleague in Cape Town noted, it might become more difficult to convince youths to devote their life to agriculture, when portrayals of glamorous urban lives are only one swipe away on everyone's smartphones. Although younger participants in Amadiba did not directly convey this impression as they stressed the importance of local agriculture, some who can afford it go to college and study non-agricultural occupations. Similarly, women understood as having a closer relationship to the land they work, have a stronger interest in keeping that land. Yet, as map 3, created only by women, in Amadiba shows, there is also an interest in having a clubhouse accessible to women, day care and a shop for quick food supply. Moreover, despite some women being in leading positions for the R2SN, it seems that often patriarchal structures of the everyday remain unchanged. Despite the diversity of challenges to and within the alternatives discussed in this research, they all have something in common: Developing alternatives is not the core purpose of the R2SN and hence, alternatives need to be put into perspective.

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[82] Interview eMalahleni 24/03/2022
[83] 24/03/2022 eMalahleni

Nonetheless, the suggested alternatives provide a yet powerful departure from the neo-colonial extractivist model, although not yet developed to their full potential.

7.2 On the Value of This Contribution

I believe that this research has made an important contribution in working towards envisioning sophisticated alternatives and uplifting what Gómez-Barris calls 'submerged perspectives' under extractivism. I draw this confidence from feedback by activists, especially with regards to the mapping exercises and focus group, but also interviewees and other comrades who expressed this notion. Understanding this project as creating the spaces and devoting time to talk about visions for alternatives in greater depth has added to the groundwork that is already being done in terms of creating alternatives and thinking about development differently. Thinking about the effects of conversations on communities, there are two thoughts I am grappling with: Firstly, activists saw value in developing alternatives and creating spaces for doing so. This might have stimulated activists to continue these conversations, thought experiments and making space for shared discussions. In saying this, my intention is not to add pressure to activists' work combining resistance and alternatives, but to acknowledge the strategic value and hope that participants expressed to permeate from working on alternatives, relating strongly to my third research question. Some participants struggled to envision futures that go beyond service provision and basic needs, because imagining structural change had been absorbed by feelings of resignation and disappointment. In that sense, it is even more important to emphasise possibilities for alternative futures to fight for, creating a sense of unity, emancipation and empowerment. In that context tapping into the wealth of knowledge that exists within the R2SN about systems activists say 'no' to invites for opposite imaginations. Therefore, I argue there is exceptional value in thinking about alternatives as part of (anti-extractivist) resistance.

Secondly, precisely because alternatives often have not taken centre stage in the R2SN in the past, and also the concept of development as such carries neo-colonial and exploitative connotations in this context, I was cautious about imposing the topic, influenced by my European upbringing focussed on progress, development and definitions. This brings us back to the topic of decoloniality and this research where I find the contribution to lie not only in the articulation of counter-hegemonic designs, but also the shape this project took through its emphasis on forging more participatory inroads to formulating alternative paradigms across different levels of activism and knowledge production. Yet, generating interest not only in locally practiced alternatives, but also the articulation of alternative paradigms and what it means to live a good life contributes to putting into practice some of decolonial narratives and imperatives. Sharing the wisdom that already exist among communities and contributing to the global discourse by using the privilege I have access to within European academia, to amplify community and activist voices.

Focussing on alternatives and the role of alternatives in resistance, looking at the micropolitics and microprojects is an important addition to current debates, often centred around grand narratives. Understanding the diversity and complexity of and difficulties for local alternatives to develop new paradigms constitutes a healthy reminder in terms of their non-universality

(Bebbington & Bebbington, 2001). What this project has also shown, however, is that development is a concept loaded politically and emotionally that feels important for activists and communities to reclaim in their own interest and ethos. Basing discussion on discourses of extractivism and development enabled activists to state clearly what they are saying 'no' to, but also what they are saying 'yes' to, entering a hopefully long-lasting debate around re-imagining in response to horrors of the past and present. In that sense, thinking about alternatives is an important step in reclaiming and taking ownership of development and sustainable and just futures. In contrasting transnational extractivist and South African (community) activist perspectives on land, justice, culture and sustainability, this project contributes to the field of human ecology and diversities in understanding human-nature relations.

8. Conclusions and Ways Forward

This dissertation has demonstrated that next to formulating grounded critiques of extractivism and mainstream development, members of the R2SN in South Africa create and conceptualise powerful development alternatives as part of their resistance, situated at the core of the extractivism-development nexus. This thesis offered a documentation of the R2SN as history from below, countering and contesting dominant representations of the extractive sector in South Africa. Among R2SN activists, the critique of the extractive model is rooted deeply in lived and historical experiences of exploitation and marginalisation in the name of development. Mining impairs people's abilities to live in dignity through the extreme pollution of natural resources such as water, air and soil, the appropriation of land and resources, and the exploitation and marginalisation of labour, women and People of Colour. Extractivism is understood as a system in the interest of elites, disrespectful of community rights and continuing structures of colonial and apartheid exploitation and dispossession. In that, development takes on an overarching role, sustaining extractive hegemony and reinscribing inferior roles for Africans and African economies. Ignorant of non-Western ways of being in this world, development is understood as a disguise for the continuation of top-down exploitative structures in the name of profit, contributing meaningfully to existing postcolonial and EJ critiques of extractive development.

Answering the second research question posed in this paper, activists formulate visions for futures that are socially and environmentally just, embody alternatives in the present that hold great emancipatory potential. Ranging from agroecological and traditional farming to eco-tourism, workers' cooperatives and small businesses, proposed alternatives share the quest for self-determination and environmental justice as fundamental driving forces, and enact values commitments to diversity, openness, democracy and knowledge exchange. In developing alternatives, activists question the interests of whom development should be targeted at and insist on extending mechanisms of bottom-up development and decision-making. In response to the third research question, I find that articulated alternatives inhibit radical political potential and contribute to the globally proliferating pluriverse of alternatives and counter-hegemonic imaginations. Imagining alternatives equips activists and struggles with a constructive agenda,

and can add to feelings of unity, emancipation and empowerment, and is therefore of tremendous value. Questions around internal politics around power, class, gender, race and age within the R2SN and proposed alternatives provide interesting topics for further research, as well as inquiries about the role of the state and differentiations between communities. I end with a quote from Illich,

> *'Neither revolution nor reformation can ultimately change a society, rather you must tell a new powerful tale, one so persuasive that it sweeps away the old myths and becomes the preferred story, one so inclusive that it gathers all the bits of our past and our present into a coherent whole, one that even shines some light into the future so that we can take the next step… If you want to change a society, then you have to tell an alternative story'* (in De Souza 2019: 228),

reiterating the importance, urgency and potential in imagining alternatives in the face of looming environmental collapse and ever-increasing inequality.

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Appendices

1. **Primary Data– Overview**

Date	Form of participation	Location	Affiliated organisation	Occupation*
11/03/2022	Interview	Amadiba, Sigidi	Amadiba Crisis Committee	Activist
12/03/2022	"	"	"	Activist, farmer
12/03/2022a	"	"	"	"
13/03/2022	Focus Group	"	-	-
13/03/2022	Interview	"	"	"
15/03/2022	Interview	"	"	"
15/03/2022a	Interview	"	"	"
15/03/2022b	Interview	"	"	"
24/03/2022	Interview	Coronation	SAGRC	-
24/03/2022a	Interview in motion	"	"	-
25/03/2022	Interview	eMalahleni	"	R2SN coordinator
26/03/2022	Focus group	Phola	"	-
27/03/2022	Interview	eMalahleni	-	-
12/04/2022	Interview	Cape Town	AIDC	R2SN coordinator
21/04/2022	Interview	"	WoMin	R2SN coordinator
22/04/2022	Interview	"	AIDC	-

*When no occupation is indicted this either means unemployed, or I will not disclose the occupation as that could lead to identification.

2. **Interview Guide**

This interview guide is a preliminary draft and is open to adaptation both by research participants as well as co-designers to this research.

Background
1. What is your name, gender and where do you live?
2. What does this area mean to you and your family?
   a. How long have you lived here?
   b. Does your family live here? Do you have children?
   c. What is your relationship with the land?
   d. Are you a farmer? What does this land provide for you?
3. How long have you been fighting against mining?
   a. When did you join the Right to Say NO movement?
4. What is your relationship with the R2SN as a regional movement?

Anti-mining activism

5. What is your role within your community council/committee/group?
6. Why did you decide to fight against mining in your region?
    a. How has/would the mining affect your livelihood and land?
    b. How are you connected to the mines? Do family members work there?
    c. Has your health been affected? Are you worried about that?
7. How have you resisted mining activities in your region? Which strategies of resistance did you participate in?
8. Which one of these activities did you find most useful and powerful?
   Which activities would you recommend to other communities in South Africa or globally?
9. What do you find to be the biggest challenge for the R2SN movement?
    a. What are your concerns about safety? Have you experienced threats? How has the resistance affected your life negatively?
10. Who has the movement connected with and how has that been useful in the past? Do other struggles inspire you (in South Africa and beyond)?

Visions for the future and strengths of the R2SN

11. What is your biggest concern for the future? What is worrying you?
12. On the contrary, what are your dreams and visions for the future? For you personally, for your family, community, region and country?
    a. How would you like to use the land to live on?
    b. How do you imagine your surroundings?
    c. What is the role of mining in this future?
13. What is the kind of development you would like to see and support?
    a. What, in your eyes, is a sustainable future for South Africa?
    b. What does development mean to you? How should it be done?
    c. What is bottom-up development?
14. How will you achieve this? Where to start? How to grow?
15. What role do the state and markets play in this kind of development?
16. Can the R2SN interfere with national development plans?
17. What is the role of civil society organisations, NGOs or other institutions?
18. What role do other actors have? Who is important in creating this future?
19. What does self-determination, freedom, independence mean for you?
    How important are these values? When do you know you have achieved them?
    What is the role of democracy, hierarchies, gender politics?
20. What does solidarity mean for you? How can others play a role in this?
21. How are you going to continue fighting? What are the strengths of the R2SN movement?

Expectations for this research

22. Is there anything else you would like to share? Do you think I overlooked something?
23. What are your expectations for this research?

24. How do you perceive my presence as a white, German researcher in this context? What do you think solidarity in research should look like? What can I do better? Do you have any feedback?
25. Would you like to be anonymised? To what extent?
26. Do you have any questions?

3. Focus Group Guide

Introducing myself and the research project
- Thank people for coming and taking the time
- Outline main goals of the project
- Outline of ethical issues: informed consent and right to withdraw
- Format of the discussion:
  - drawing maps of what the area is imagined to look like in 20 years
  - everyone can draw at the same time if they wish to
  - everyone is entitled to express their views and contribute to the map
  - Openness of the session and stress that everyone's views are important
- Provide materials: pens, paper, sticky labels
- Amount of time it will take: approximately one hour, but according to participants' input
- Treatment of data (+recordings?)
- Introduce snacks

Round of introductions
- Names, roles within the movement, occupation
- Tell the first thing that comes to your mind when you think about the R2SN
- Does everyone feel comfortable with the exercise as I have presented it?
- Does everyone feel comfortable and confident in the group setting? Reiterate that everyone can leave at any time

Prompt discussions
- What are 3 factors that you find most important for healthy and sustainable communities in the future?
- What is the future of the land we are standing on?
- How will infrastructure look like? Will there be new roads? Buildings? Schools?
- Who will be here? In terms of age, status, gender.
- Will there be state presence in any form?

Maps
- Give time to conceptualise and start drawing maps
- I will be around to answer questions, maybe overheard conversations
- When finished, ask participants to present the map and what it means, + meaning of parts to it.

Finish
- Brief summary / description of the maps - is my understanding correct?
- Thank the group for their time and participation
- Is there anything that you forgot in the maps or discussion/that you would like to add?

- How do you perceive my presence as a white, German researcher in this context? What do you think solidarity in research should look like? What can I do better? Do you have any feedback?
- Explain what will happen to the data
- Ask for thoughts and feedback

4. Consent Form

Participant Consent Form

The Right to Say NO: Resistance to Mining and Development Alternatives in South Africa

Consent to take part in research project

- I……………………………………… voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

- I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.

- I understand that I can withdraw permission to use data from my participation in the dialogue workshop within two weeks after the workshop, in which case the material will be deleted.

- I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing or speaking and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.

- I understand that participation involves contributing to the development and conceptualization of alternatives to mainstream development narratives.

- I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.

- I agree to some parts of the interview or focus group being documented through taking pictures.

- I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.

- I understand that in any report on the results of this research my identity will remain anonymous, if I wish them to be. This will be done by changing my name and disguising any details of my participation which may reveal my identity or the identity of people I speak about.

- I understand that disguised extracts from my contributions may be quoted in the Masters thesis, journal articles, newspaper articles, social media posts and podcasts.

- I understand that if I inform the researcher that myself or someone else is at risk of harm, they may have to report this to the relevant authorities - they will discuss this with me first but may be required to report with or without my permission.

- I understand that a recording of the interview will be retained for a period of two years after the project ends in August 2022.

- I understand that under freedom of information legislation I am entitled to access the information I have provided at any time while it is in storage as specified above.

- I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information.

Researcher:
Lisa Pier
0049-15788969553
Lisamaya.pier@gmail.com
Södervärnsgatan 4B
Malmö, Sweden

Signature of research participant

Signature of participant

Date

Signature of researcher

I believe the participant is giving informed consent to participate in this study.

Signature of researcher

Date

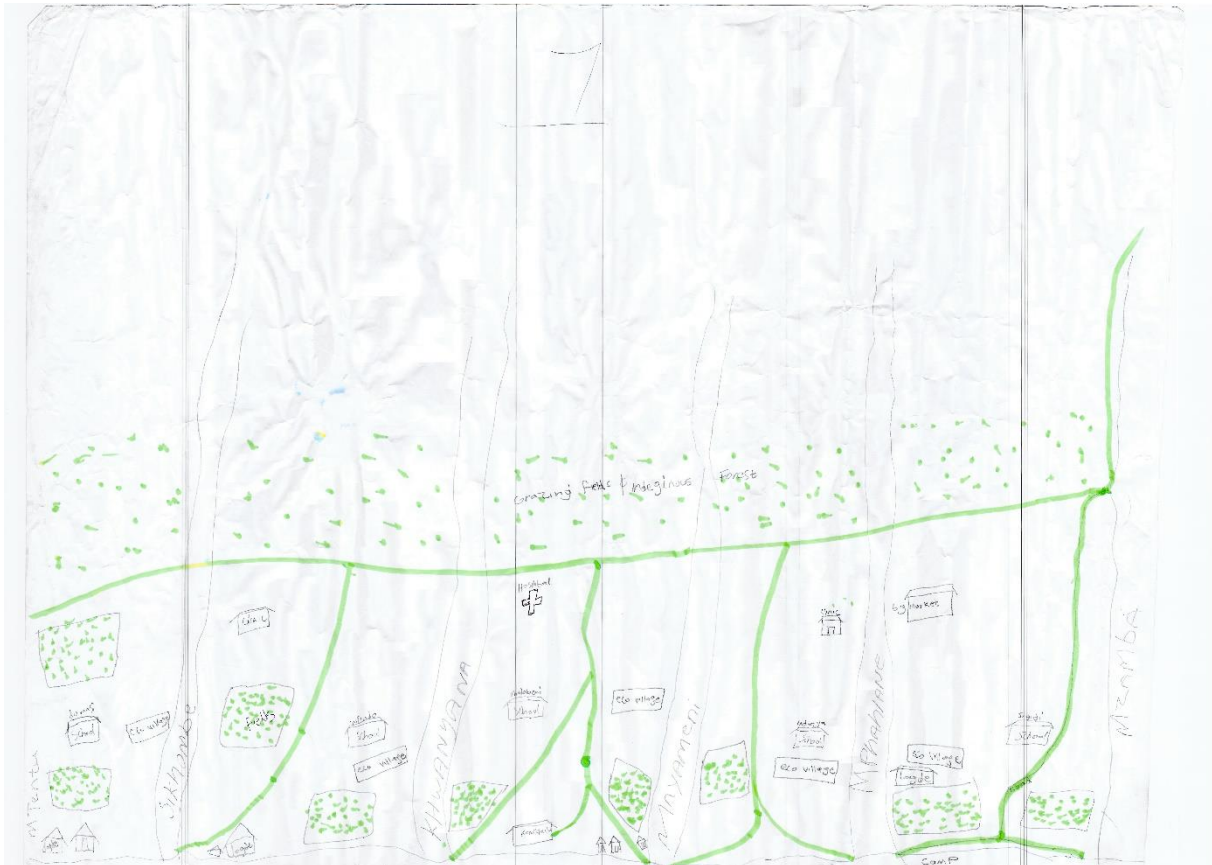## 5. Maps Created in Focus Groups in Amadiba
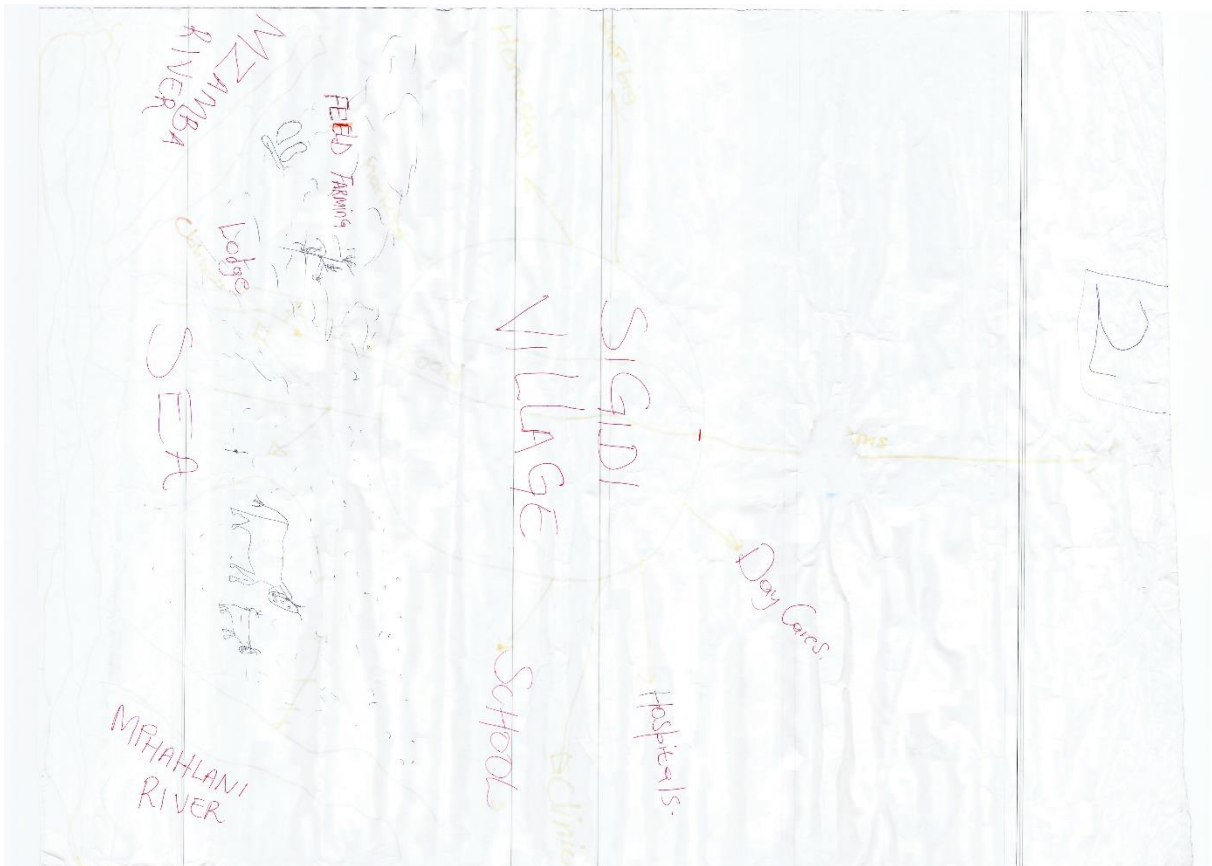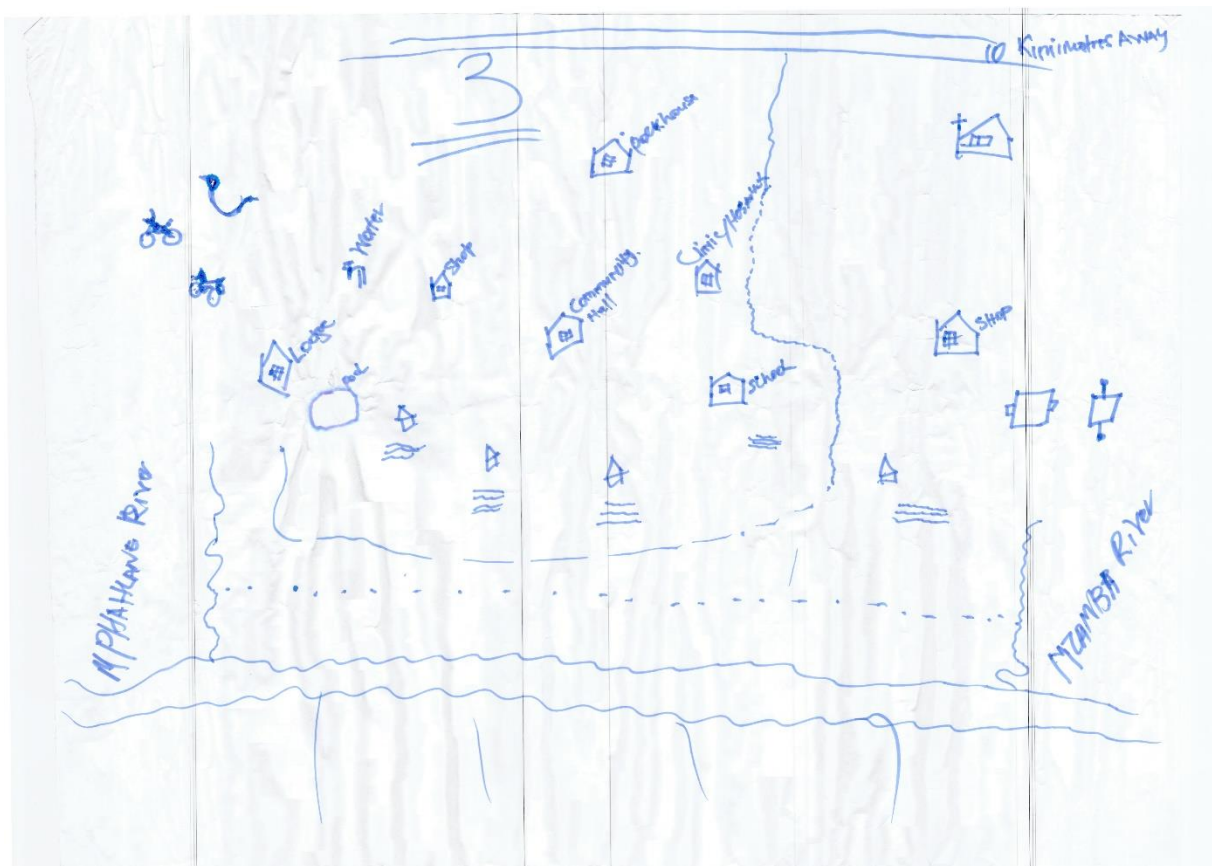

Figure 21: Map created by group one.

Figure 22: Map created by group two.

Figure 23: Map created by group three.