The Amadiba Crisis Committee: Sustaining mobilisation in Xolobeni, South Africa

By

Lucas Joel Nowicki

Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in

Political and International Studies

at Rhodes University

January 2024

Supervisor: Professor Sally Matthews

Abstract

This thesis seeks to understand how the Amadiba Crisis Committee (ACC), a rural movement from Xolobeni, has sustained mobilisation and worked with allies in civil society. The ACC was formed in 2007 in response to attempts by a mining company, Transworld Energy and Mineral Resources (TEM), to establish a sand mine off the coast of the Eastern Cape of South Africa. Since 2007, the ACC has achieved significant victories in their fight against imposed development projects they argue threaten existing livelihoods that rely on the land. This thesis theorises the ACC's mobilisation by drawing on concepts such as political opportunity, resource mobilisation, repertoires of action, framing and resource frontiers'. The thesis responds to the research question(s) by undertaking a thematic analysis of textual data drawn from semi-structured in-depth interviews conducted with ACC members and their allies in civil society, most of which were collected during fieldwork in Xolobeni. The study finds that the ACC has sustained mobilisation through the combination of more public and institutional repertoires of action with more subtle everyday forms of resistance. These repertoires include dynamic uses of the law and rights discourses to further the movement's goals. The ACC also used more confrontational tactics whereby activists use their bodies to physically disrupt extractive projects' operations, actions which are coordinated through communication networks and local leadership structures. Furthermore, the ACC promotes alternative development strategies in a way which can be conceived as a type of prefigurative politics whereby activists actualise and embody the types of relations and development they want to see in the world. Many of these tactics were supported and made possible due to the presence of allies in civil society such as Sustaining the Wild Coast (SWC). Although there is a risk that such allies may end up co-opting and undermining mobilisation, this risk has been averted because both the SWC and the ACC are committed to maintaining separation between the movement and NGO in mobilisation. The SWC's support has included facilitating access to media and civil society networks located in urban areas and using these networks and social capital to access information and other necessary resources. Overall, the movement has sustained resistance to imposed development projects by drawing on strong existing historical community ties, using diverse repertoires to achieve goals and build the movement's base, and by consistently outlining alternative development strategies as a positive vision to their mobilisation. This has consolidated the ACC as a movement and established them as a powerful force with the ability to shape local development, policy and public discourse.

Acknowledgments

Firstly, I would like to thank my supervisor, Professor Sally Matthews, who has been extremely patient, helpful and encouraging throughout the process of writing this thesis.

I would also like to thank Sinegugu Zukulu for helping me with the logistics of travelling to Xolobeni, which is not the easiest of tasks without a 4x4. Thanks to Siyabonga Novela and his wife Luleka, for showing such hospitality while hosting me at their home in Nyaveni during the fieldwork. Thanks to Landiso Magqaza for helping with translation and transcription.

I would also like to express a deep appreciation to all the research participants who gave me their time and welcomed me into their homes.

Lastly, I would like to thank my family, especially my mother, Dorothy Dyer, who has supported me through my studies.

Abbreviations

AA	Amadiba Adventures
ACC	The Amadiba Crisis Committee
ANC	African National Congress
AMLA	Agroecological Movement of Latin America
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
DMR	Department of Mineral Resources
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EWT	Endangered Wildlife Trust
EE	Equal Education
FOA	The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FPIC	Free Prior and Informed Consent
IPILRA	Interim Protection of Informal Land Rights Act
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
LRC	Legal Resource Centre
MST	Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra
MRC	Mineral Commodities Limited
NEMA	National Environmental Management Act
NMT	New social movement theory
NBA	Narmada Bachao Andola
NP	National Party
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPA	National Prosecuting Authority
PAIA	Promotion of Access to Information
SACP	South African Communist Party
SAHRC	South African Human Rights Commission
SANRAL	South African National Roads Agency SOC Ltd
SAPPI	South African Pulp and Paper Industries Ltd
SAPS	South African Police Service
SWC	Sustaining the Wild Coast
TEM	Transworld Energy and Mineral Resources
UN	United Nations

WESSA	Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa
XOLCO	Xolobeni Empowerment Company

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction 8

1.2 Research question(s) 9

1.3 Research rationale 9

1.4 Research methods 11

1.5 Positionality and limitations 14

1.6 Structure of the thesis 15

Chapter 2: Theorising conflict and mobilisation in Xolobeni 16

2.1 Introduction 16

2.2 Defining mobilisation and grassroots movements 16

2.3 Political opportunity 18

2.4 Repertoires of action 19

2.5 Resource mobilisation 21

2.6 Framing 23

2. 7 Towards a common framework 24

2.8 Resource frontiers 25

2.9 Conclusion 28

Chapter 3: The making of the uMgungundlovu resource frontier 30

3.1 Introduction 30

3.2 Place history in Xolobeni and rural South Africa 30

3.3 “Our fathers were fighting this before we were born”: The Mpondo revolts 32

3.4 Land use in Xolobeni 34

3.5 Imposed development: The making of the uMgungundlovu resource frontier 36

3.6 Clashing claims of territorialisation 40

3.8 Conclusion 43

Chapter 4: The Amadiba Crisis Committee’s Repertoires of Action 44

4.1 Introduction 44

4.2 Legal mobilisation in post-apartheid South Africa 45

4.2.1 Using the law to counter-repression 46

4.2.2 Movement building: the ACC’s legal mobilisation and rights framing around the “right to say no” 48

4.2.3 Baleni judgement: claiming rights from below 50

4.3 Blockadia: protest and disruption 52

4.4 Education and communication networks ... 55

4.5 Prefiguring: providing a positive vision for mobilisation ... 58

4.5.1 Countering pressures of territorialisation: community-driven tourism and agroecology ... 59

4.6 Conclusion ... 62

Chapter 5: SWC, solidarity networks and mobilising structures ... 63

5.1 Introduction ... 63

5.2 NGOs and movements ... 63

5.3 From Save the Wild Coast to Sustaining the Wild Coast ... 64

5.4 Accessing information ... 69

5.5 The media and civil society networks ... 70

5.6 Oppositional research and knowledge production: supporting local claims of territorialisation ... 73

5.7 Maintaining separation and taking mandates ... 74

5.8 Simbhademe: supporting prefigurative politics and alternative development ... 75

5.9 Conclusion ... 78

Chapter 6: Conclusion ... 80

Chapter 1: Introduction

In 2007 Transworld Energy and Mineral Resources (TEM), a subsidiary of an Australian mining company, submitted a mining rights application to South Africa's Department of Minerals and Energy (DME) to prospect for Titanium in Xolobeni,[1] located on a coastal section of the Amadiba Traditional Authority[2] on the Wild Coast of the Eastern Cape province. The prospective Xolobeni Mineral Sands Project was set to be a 22 km long open-cast Titanium sand mine across a coastal stretch of uMgungundlovu (Washinyira, 2016). In June 2007, a meeting was called at the uMgungundlovu Komkhulu*,* or the traditional court, to discuss the threat of mining. Following that meeting, the Amadiba Crisis Committee (ACC) was formed, representing a collection of villagers who opposed the mine (Washinyira, 2016). By November that year, the ACC had over 900 active members from villages surrounding the affected areas (Bennie, 2010).

In the 15 years since this initial mobilisation, the ACC has successfully sustained multi-pronged activism and advocacy through various channels, both institutional and extra-institutional. Although the mobilisation has predominantly focussed on the Xolobeni Mineral Sands Project, the coastal communities have also been involved in resisting attempts by the South African National Road Agency (SANRAL) to construct a national highway through uMgungundlovu and more recently, Shell's attempts to conduct seismic surveys for gas off the Wild Coast (Healy, 2022). This activism has been sustained despite significant repression – including the assassination of an ACC leader – and constant condemnation and attempts at co-option from local state structures, national politicians and pro-mining community members (Washinyira, 2016). Despite these challenges, the ACC has emerged as one of the most formidable and well-known grassroots community movements in South Africa. Despite its relative geographic isolation and remoteness, the ACC has been supported by various actors across civil society, including Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) such as Sustaining the Wild Coast (SWC) and law firms such as the Legal Resource Centre (LRC) and Richard Spoor Attorneys Incorporated. In the public eye, the ACC is known for the historic 2018 Baleni

[1] Over the years, the name Xolobeni has been used to refer to the entire coastal region that is affected by the mine, when it is only one of six affected villages. These are: Sigidi, Mtentu (or Nyavini), Mtolani (or Xolobeni), Mdatya, Bekela and Mpindweni. The official name for the coastal part of Amadiba, and where these villages are located, is uMgungundlovu. Xolobeni is now used interchangeably with Mgungundlovu in academic and media documents. This thesis uses the name similarly.

[2] Due to its size, the Amadiba Traditional Authority is divided into two zones; the coastal zone (section 24) referred to as uMgungundlovu and the inland zone (section 21). Each zone has its own traditional court, or Komkhulu, which meets weekly.

judgement, where Pretoria High Court ordered that mining cannot take place in Xolobeni without free prior and informed consent (FPIC) from the affected community after a nearly two-decade battle. But the movement has been and continues to mobilise against other imposed development projects.

Analytically and empirically, the ACC's mobilisation in Xolobeni raises questions about how such remote rural communities have managed to organise and mobilise against powerful state and corporate actors for more than 15 years.

1.2 Research question(s)

This thesis aims to explore how the ACC, a relatively isolated rural local movement resisting imposed developments in Xolobeni on the Wild Coast of South Africa, has managed to successfully mobilise for over 15 years in the face of a powerful alliance between the state and corporations. Specifically, it seeks to answer the question:

How has the Amadiba Crisis Committee sustained mobilisation in Xolobeni, Wild Coast, since its formation in 2007?

The above research question was broken down into smaller questions to address the question of how the ACC sustained including;

1. What role does the history of the area and previous mobilisations play in the contemporary struggle?
2. How have the ACC's use of the law and other repertoires of action impacted their mobilisation and broader struggle?
3. How have the ACC's civil society alliances and networks impacted on their mobilisation?

1.3 Research rationale

According to public intellectual Steven Friedman (2018), South Africa's democracy, and democracy more broadly, is in a state of turmoil. The solution, or part of it, according to Friedman (2018), lies in everyday collective action from marginalised citizens, claiming power to influence decisions that impact their daily lives. Friedman (2018) highlights that we must look beyond only public forms of protest and popular mobilisation, to more subtle but equally important actions and routines of collective action, such as forming alliances, setting media

agendas and providing alternative approaches to local development and governance. Social and community movements, according to Friedman (2018), are thus central to democracy. However, Thompson and Tapscott (2010:1) highlight how social movements in the global south, like the ACC, are often "reduced to caricature" due to long range analysis that lacks historical or empirical grounding in academic literature. Recent studies on post-apartheid social movements have avoided this tendency to reduce movements to caricatures (Chiumbu, 2012; Runciman 2012; Tselapedi and Dugard, 2013). However, these studies predominantly focus on urban movements and protest. According to Ncapayi (2023) and Koch (2010) contemporary rural protest action and collective action in South Africa remains relatively understudied and theorised. This is especially in comparison to studies on rural movements across South America, such as the landless movement Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra (MST), which has been engaged extensively in various fields (Robles, 2019; Caldeira, 2008).

In the 21st century, the collective power of labour and trade unions has been eroded due to neoliberalism's shift away from industrial capitalism towards the financialisation of the global economy and the rise of outsourcing (Ashman, 2015). In South Africa, the power and legitimacy of labour is undermined further by the decision by the Congress of South Africa's Trade Union (COSATU) - the biggest trade union federation in the country - to join the Tripartite Alliance in the 1990s, together with the governing African National Congress (ANC), and the South African Communist Party (SACP) (Ballard et al. 2005). The decline of the power of unions has been coupled with the rise of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), who have increasingly come to play a prominent, often contested, role in civil society (Matthews and Nqaba, 2017). The relationship between NGOs and grassroots movements is significant, because, as Pithouse (2006:255) highlights, movements "require resources, information and experience" for sustained mobilisation. However, this relationship is often characterised by unequal power relations that can result in the demobilisation of movements' activism towards more technocratic approaches of participation and development due to the increasingly professionalised nature of NGOs (Choudry and Kapoor, 2013). For this reason, the ACC case study of sustained mobilisation and interaction with various NGOs and civil society networks, is an important one. This study can contribute to better understanding the effects of such interaction on social movements. There has already been important research on varied aspects of the Xolobeni case study; such as the early social dynamics (Bennie, 2010), the relationship between land, labour and livelihoods (Bennie, 2011), the role of state (Mahlatsi, 2016), legal pluralism (Huizenga, 2019), the public participation process for the

Xolobeni Mineral Sands project (Maphanga et al. 2023), gender justice in the Xolobeni struggle (Goldblatt and Shireen, 2023; Womin collective 2017), the tensions between conflicting forms of devlopment and conceptualisations of land use (Xaba, 2023) and narrative accounts of the conflict (Healy, 2022). These studies provide invaluable contributions to the Xolobeni case study in varied fields and disciplines; however, they have not explicitly addressed the focus of this study which is on how the ACC has sustained mobilisation for so long, and what the role of different alliances in civil society has been.

Lastly, Oliver et al. (2003:234) highlight the need for the mainstream mobilisation theories drawn on in this study - such as resource mobilisation, political opportunity and repertoires of action - to "address geographically and substantively broader empirical base, breaking out of a preoccupation with Anglo-American and Europe and become truly global in its orientation." The theorists themselves call on a wider application of these theories across diverse contexts (McAdam and Tarrow, 2011). As Runciman (2012:18) highlights, by applying these theories to a South African context, the explanatory potential of the theories can be expanded on.

1.4 Research methods

This study takes a qualitative approach in responding to the proposed research questions. Qualitative research allows for an exploration of the "human side of an issue" that often revolves around "contradictory behaviours, beliefs and opinions and relationships of individuals" (Mack et al. 2005:1). A researcher plays an active role in interpreting data in qualitative analysis, with the assumption that humans play an active role in the construction of their reality (Braun and Clarke, 2006:84). Within qualitative analysis, this study employs thematic analysis to textual data in responding to the research questions and goals (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis focuses on identifying, analysing and interpreting meaning within qualitative data, usually into different themes. These themes are generated from codes, which are the "smallest units of analysis that capture interesting features of the data (potentially) relevant to the research question" (Braun and Clarke, 2017:298). Codes are the building blocks of themes. Importantly, thematic analysis is not meant to summarise qualitative data, but used to "identify, and interpret, key features of the data" guided by the research question or approach (Braum and Clarke, 2017:298).

This study utilised a range of different data collection tools and approaches including document analysis, semi-structured in-depth interviews and forms of observation. To begin with, I analysed documents such as newspaper articles, reports, and legal documents related to the ACC's mobilisation that helped inform the fieldwork and interviews. The bulk of the data was collected during a two-week period of fieldwork near the coastal village of Nyaveni (also known as Umtentu) in Ugungundlovu in April 2023. Eighteen semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with grassroots ACC supporters from surrounding areas during this period. These interviews were translated from isiPondo by a young guide and translator from the area. The interviews conducted in isiPondo varied greatly in length, ranging from 10 minutes to 50 minutes each. The interviews were guided by relatively open-ended questions about their activism and the influence of different actors in the area. All but one of these interviews took place inside the individuals *umzi* or homestead. Interviewing participants in their home environment allows for participants to be more at ease and provides the researcher with an idea of their surroundings, both in terms of their home environment, but also the surrounding infrastructure (Dempsey et al., 2016). Another reason why interviews with grassroots ACC supporters were conducted in individuals' homes was to ensure anonymity, as non-executive members of the ACC who participated in this project were guaranteed anonymity. This was done due to the history of violence and intimidation towards ACC activists by state actors and mining supporters (Washinyira, 2016). Taking this into account, pseudonyms are employed when referring to ACC activists who are not in leadership positions. Leaders are named because they are already well-known in the general public and media. In additional to the eighteen interviews conducted in isiPondo, five further interviews were conducted in English during the fieldwork period. These were with employees from Sustaining the Wild Coast (SWC), executive members of the ACC, and grassroots members who preferred to speak English.

I also conducted semi-structured in-depth interviews with different actors from civil society who have been involved in Xolobeni and the ACC's struggle in various capacities. This included employees at or associated with the SWC, Richard Spoor Attorneys, the Legal Resource Centre (LRC) and the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC). In total eight interviews were conducted with actors associated with these organisations who had experience working in Xolobeni, with three follow-up interviews. All but two of these were conducted on Zoom. Lastly, two Zoom interviews were conducted with senior members of the ACC who I did not manage to speak to during fieldwork. Semi-structured in-depth interviews

provide a nuanced understanding of the movement from the participants, offering a more complex understanding of movements as dynamic, often heterogeneous networks of actors (Klandermans and Staggenborg, 2002). A combination of purpose and snowball sampling was used for interviews. Initially, certain individuals from civil society and ACC leaders were identified as key actors to interview given their experience and knowledge of the ACC's mobilisation. During fieldwork and interviews with grassroots ACC members around Umtentu, snowball sampling was employed to interview different activists in the surrounding area (Parker et al., 2019).

Observation and participant observation, where the researcher observes everyday life and social interactions in the area and community of interest, was also employed (Robson, 2002). This included informal discussions with community members and hiking around the surrounding coastal areas to get an idea of where the proposed mining area is located, and where the coastal route for the Wild Coast Toll Road would run. According to Lichterman (1998:401), participant observation "can teach us much about the everyday meanings of doing social activism." It also helps generate deeper insights into the relationship between and amongst people, communities, the environment, and the "internal bonds of solidarity which movements forge that are necessary for social movement activism" (Runciman, 2012:130). It helped widen my understanding of the communities' relationship with the land and ecology, which underpins their mobilisation and rejection of imposed development projects.

All the interviews were recorded and transcribed, with someone being hired to transcribe the interviews conducted in IsiPondo, while I transcribed the English interviews. I started with inductive coding of the textual data, which is when you only work with the textual data when coding without taking into account the focus of your research study (Saldana, 2009:6) From this, codes are generated and grouped from the textual data. As mentioned, codes are phrases, sayings or words short that capture the essence or key properties in the primary data (Saldana, 2009). This process of inductive coding is helpful in providing an outline of what the data is speaking to outside of your research focus. After the initial phase of inductive coding, I undertook theoretical coding, a form of deductive coding, to examine my data in relation to classical mobilisation theories – namely repertoires of action and resource mobilisation. Theoretical coding uses existing theories or concepts as organising themes in the coding and analysis of textual data (Bingham, 2022). These were related to and compared to the inductive codes generated to ensure consistency. I also undertook theoretical coding in relation to the

theory and related concepts of the resource frontier (Lund and Peluso, 2012). These findings and concepts were used as broad themes for different chapters.

1.5 Positionality and limitations

Social science has seen widespread shift away from positivist research methodologies, which assume the researcher to be a disembodied rational actor "objectively" engaging with data and analysis (Bourke, 2014). Instead of trying to position researchers as a neutral observer or arbiter of information, authors are calling for researchers to recognise and engage with their own positionality and bias. Being a young white male South African journalism student who had covered – and admired – grassroots movements, protest and collective action in South Africa throughout my early studies, I became interested in how and why movements organise, and what makes some more successful and impactful than others. This interest came from the belief that socio-political change should and does come from the organisation, agency and mobilisation of everyday citizens. The ACC is one of the few well-known movements that are still mobilising, and have been since 2007, which informed my decision to focus on them.

As a white English-speaking South African who cannot speak isiPondo – or any related Nguni language – my position as an outsider in uMgungundlovu was stark. These markers no doubt influenced how I was perceived by participants I interviewed and could have affected their responses. Due to South Africa's history of apartheid, white people still hold a disproportionate percentage of jobs in well-resourced sectors of civil society, such as NGOs and research institutions (Madlingozi, 2017). Thus, my position as a white male researcher asking questions about NGOs and lawyers, could have resulted in me being associated with these actors, which could have impacted the responses themselves. Related to this limitation is the use of a guide that is a supporter of the ACC as a translator. This could have impacted the responses provided by the respondents when asked questions related to the role of ACC's leadership among other issues. It is also important to note that this study focuses on the perspective of the ACC and allies, which is one perspective of conflict and mobilisation around the different devlopment projects. I initially intended on speaking to pro-mining community members during the fieldwork, but the fieldwork took place soon after two ACC leaders had received death threats, and there was significant tension in the area. This made it difficult to move between pro- and anti-mining groups.

Another limitation of the study was the lack of in depth-observation of the ACC's mobilisation activities, such as their community meetings, protests, or community gatherings at the local Komkhulu. Many studies of South African movements employ ethnographic methodology because it allows for the researcher to experience varied spaces that movements inhibit (Runciman, 2012; Sinwell, 2009; Findeley, 2022), deepening analysis of mobilisation beyond more public or reported displays of contention. Ethnographic approaches to studying grassroots movements help researchers move beyond descriptive accounts of movements and allow for an assessment of internal dynamics, meaning and power relations (Runciman, 2012). This approach helps avoid romanticising movements and their internal politics, a trend that Dawson and Sinwell (2012:21) view as a significant shortfall of scholarship on post-apartheid social and protest movements. However, due to time and resource constraints, with this study being a half-thesis master's research project, a detailed ethnographic approach was not feasible for this study. Given the complexities, time frame and range of actors involved in the Xolobeni conflict and struggle since 2007, many of the findings and issues explored in this report could be expanded on greatly using an ethnographic approach that allows for longer time in the field, as well as being able to speak isiPondo. This could also lead to better internal analysis of the politics of the ACC, and the ebbs and flow of mobilisation.

1.6 Structure of the thesis

Following this introductory chapter, **Chapter 2** provides an overview of some of the different ways social movements have been theorised in literature, focussing on repertoires of action, resource mobilisation, framing and political opportunity. It also introduces the concept of resource frontiers. **Chapter 3** provides the historical and political context to the making of the uMgungundlovu resource frontier. It provides the background to the ACC's formation, and the different conceptualisations of land use and development. In **Chapter 4**, I examine the different repertoires of action employed by the ACC in their mobilisation in relation to existing debates on mobilisation. The chapter focuses on the ACC's use of the law, protest and obstruction, communication networks and the use of prefigurative politics to create an oppositional culture rooted in alternative development strategies. **Chapter 5** explores the role of allies across civil society in the ACC's struggle, focussing mostly on Sustaining the Wild Coast (SWC) and the early role that allies and their networks played in helping consolidate and support the ACC's struggle. **Chapter 6** concludes the thesis.

Chapter 2: Theorising conflict and mobilisation in Xolobeni

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an outline of the debates and theoretical approaches to studying collective action, highlighting concepts that are helpful in understanding the Amadiba Crisis Committee's (ACC's) mobilisation efforts. A defining feature about scholarship on collective action is the tendency of different scholars to work exclusively within one school of thought, while ignoring insights from other theoretical approaches (Buecheler, 1994, McAdam et al., 2001, Runciman, 2012). This chapter argues that McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly's (2001) attempt to create a more dynamic approach to studying collective action by synthesising previously separate tools for uncovering mobilisation into a relational framework provides a helpful starting point in unpacking the ACC's mobilisation in Xolobeni.

However, the limitation of McAdam et al.'s (2001) theoretical framework, I argue, is its statist orientation. It does not consider global economic power relations that shape relations between and within states (Thompson and Tapscott, 2010, Habib et al., 2006). These processes are important in understanding the political, economic and social context of the emergence and evolution of grassroots movements such as the ACC. The second section of the chapter introduces the concept of a resource frontier, which highlights how capitalism and the global economy's constant need for growth results in the shift of social and political orders in rural areas with exploitable resource deposits (Tsing, 2003; Korf and Raymakers, 2013). In resource frontiers, the dominant logic of economic growth and resource extraction as development strategies clash with contrasting conceptions of development rooted in local practices of land and resource use (Lund and Peluso, 2012).

2.2 Defining mobilisation and grassroots movements

Mobilisation is defined as the "process of increasing the readiness to act collectively" by Gamson (1975) while Tilly (1978:10) defines it as a "process by which groups acquire collective control over resources needed for action." At the core of these definitions is the

emphasis on a collective, rather than an individual, and an emphasis on participatory action, rather than passive observation or acceptance. Importantly, mobilisation is not static or uni-directional, but a continuous process that ebbs and flows. There are several approaches to understanding and defining grassroots movements. Some scholars such as Medearis (2005:54) argue that movements are "collective challenges mounted by relatively marginal groups against powerful elites and dominant ideologies." Tilly's (1985:735-736) starting point for defining grassroots mobilisation is by looking at what it is not, arguing it is "neither a party nor a union but a political campaign .... [Movements] actually consists in a series of demands or challenges to power-holders in the name of a social category that lacks an established political position". Other scholars have tried to broaden the definition to encapsulate a wide range of contentious politics. Snow et al. (2004:6) note that although definitions of movements often tend to emphasise or focus on different aspects, commonalities can be drawn. These include certain axes revolving around "collective or joint action; change-oriented goals or claims; some extra- or non-institutional collective action; some degree of organisation; and some degree of temporal continuity" (Snow et al. 2004:6). Tarrow (1998:86), one of the leading scholars in the theorisation and study of movements, defines movements as "collective challenges mounted by people with common purposes and solidarity in sustained interaction with elites, opponents and authorities." Tarrow breaks this definition down further into four basic properties of movements: collective challenge, common purpose, solidarity and sustained interaction.

In 2001, Tarrow, McAdam, and Tilly published *Dynamics of Contention*, where the authors attempt to synthesise diverse approaches to examining movements that were previously isolated, into a dynamic and coherent framework. Instead of trying to define a specific form of a movement, they tried to broaden the definition beyond a single form of mobilisation, or "contention" as they define it. This was partly because their initial definitions had been largely based of Western experiences and forms of mobilisation, and because they wanted to try draw linkages between a wider array of what they refer to as "contentious politics" which would include strikes, revolutions, liberation struggles, issue-based campaigns and local movements like the ACC (McAdam et al., 2001:8). They define movements, or what they refer to as contentious politics as

> Episodic, public, collective interaction among makers of claims and their objects when (a) at least one government is a claimant, an object of claims, or a party to the claims, (b) the claims would, if realised,

> affect the interests of at least one of the claimants, (c) at least some parties to the conflict are newly self-identified political actors, and/or (d) at least some parties employ innovative collective action.

This definition draws on four contrasting but related conceptual tools that have been built on since the 1970s, namely political opportunity structures, resource mobilisation, repertoires of contention and framing.

2.3 Political opportunity

The term political opportunity was coined by Eisenger (1973) in his study examining why riots emerged in some US cities but not in others. He argued that a local government's degree of "openness" and "closedness" in terms of citizen participation and integration determined the likelihood of mobilisation. If there were open institutional channels where individuals could easily channel their grievances, Eisenger (1973) found that individuals were far less likely to protest and riot, while if the channels for grievances were closed, citizens were more likely to take to the streets. Eisenger's (1973) theory was hugely influential at the time, largely because previous theories of mobilisation theories regarded participation in protest events and social movements to be the result of disturbed or irrational states of mind (McAdam, 1982). These were referred to as "classical theories" which included mass society theory, collective behaviour, relative deprivation, and rising expectation theory (Van Stekelenburg and Klandermans 2008). For example, Olson (1965), a neoclassical economist and foundational theorist to these schools, viewed resistance as an exception, while inaction was viewed as a norm. This was derived from the logic that all individuals are self-interested and that participation in collective action is not worth the risks if one weighs them up with benefits, and thus participation is not rational (Olson, 1965).

Tarrow (1998) expanded on existing notions of political opportunity in his seminal book, *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics.* Tarrow (1998) highlights that only when there are shifts in political opportunities and, importantly, constraints, are marginalised actors able to embark on contentious campaigns, sustaining contention and potentially forming a more organised movement. Tarrow (1998:19) defines political opportunities as "consistent – but not necessarily formal, permanent, or national – dimensions of the political struggle that encourage people to engage in contentious politics." Constraints

include factors such as repression, but also the capacity of states to present a "united front" in the face of antagonist claim-making (Tarrow, 1998). It was McAdam's (1999) study which traced the devlopment of the American Civil Rights to organisational, political and consciousness change in the United States of America (USA) that helped synthesise political opportunity process into a more coherent model. He broke down opportunities into threats and opportunities, recognising that threats can trigger mobilisation and collective action. Tarrow (2011:160) defines opportunities as "the [perceived] probability that social protest actions will lead to success in achieving a desired outcome." He provides an example of Mikhail Gorbachev's reforms in the USSR as an example of how opportunities can arise for mobilisation within political institutions. Threats are related to the costs of action, but importantly, also inaction, rather than prospects of success (Tarrow, 2011:161). At times the costs of inaction can be greater than action, especially for more marginalised activists or movements. For example, if you are a movement occupying land, and there is the risk that the state will evict you or demolish your housing, inaction can cost more than action. Related to opportunity is also the presence and availability of allies and coalitions in civil society, which is argued to increase the likelihood of mobilisation (Tarrow, 2011:163). Although use of the theory grew greatly in the 1990s, ambiguities began to appear in literature, such as whether repression of movements has a positive or negative affect on mobilisation (Tarrow, 2011:28). Authors also had differing interpretations of opportunities and threats, which risked reducing the explanatory and comparative value of the studies. This led scholars such as McAdam et al. (2001) and Tarrow (2011) to employ political opportunity in relation to a broader theoretical framework of related tools for uncovering different dynamics of mobilisation. This was largely because they overlapped. For example, political opportunity structures also directly influence the forms and strategies that activists and movements employ to legitimise their claims and realise their goals in the face of powerful opponents. These strategies are known as repertoires of action.

2.4 Repertoires of action

Charles Tilly (1978; 2008) expanded on understandings of political opportunity structures in his historical analyses of different case studies of collective action. He argued that the likelihood of mobilisation revolved around the openness and receptiveness of the system of governance. Significantly, he argued that the political opportunities available to a movement directly influenced the different mechanisms or strategies used by activists within what Tilly

(1978) referred to as “repertoires of contention”, which are also referred to by others as “repertoires of action” (Madlingozi 2013; Gillan and Lambert, 2016). Repertoires are the historically and culturally embedded means that activists employ to oppose a public decision, institutional process, or action they consider unjust or threatening (Della Porta, 2013). Tilly (1986:2) defines repertoires of contention as the “whole set of means [a group] has for making claims of different types of individuals.” Repertoires, as highlighted, are directly related to the political opportunities and threats facing a movement. For example, activists in a totalitarian state would not use public marches as a means of engaging in collective action, while an unemployed people’s movement would not engage in a strike or other repertoires associated with organised labour (Tilly, 2008) According to Madlingozi (2013:96), in order for activists to respond to the shifting political opportunities and threats, activists “resort to learned action repertoires to mobilise and (re)activate excluded people.” This highlights the importance of repertoires not only to gain attention of legitimacy to their claims, but to mobilise potential movement adherents to join and support the movement. For example, conservatives would not be enticed to join a movement that used radical repertoires, such as occupation. In terms of the ACC’s mobilisation, their repertoires of action, as we will see in Chapter 5, are responding directly to the threat of dispossession posed by the toll road and mine, as well as the powerful alliance of traditional, state and corporate elites who support and promote these pathways of development.

Initial conceptions of repertoires were criticised for only focusing on more public forms of action, such as marches, boycotts, or riots (Della Porta, 2013). This was largely due to early studies on collective action which relied on historical accounts and media articles in their attempt to theorise movements and their processes of mobilisation. In these earlier analyses, there are few attempts to uncover the more subtle, day to day practices that activists use to sustain their mobilisation and claim making. Disruption is a powerful tool for mobilisation, providing leverage to weak and excluded actors (Madlingozi, 2013). However, there are times when disruptions stop being regarded as newsworthy or the authorities become adept at controlling them, forcing movements to either escalate their approaches and risk alienating certain members or supporters, temper strategies and goals, or try move between institutional and extra-institutional tactics while maintaining a transgressive movement identity (Madlingozi, 2013:96). This is where innovation and the use of symbols can become important resources in sustaining mobilisation.

Tilly's (2008) later work expanded on repertoires to include more subtle broader forms of action and claim-making that undergo constant innovation based on past experiences. Given that movements are often made up of individuals without political and economic clout, resistance can take the form of contesting dominant narratives and powerful institutions through small acts of resistance, often symbolic (Della Porta, 2013:2). More recently, scholars have called for a focus on micro-mobilisation contexts and forms of contention outside of the Global North (McAdam et al, 2001, Runciman 2012). As we will see in a later chapter on the ACC's repertoires of contention, the ACC's practice of promoting alternative development strategies that rely and revolve on the local ecology acts as a powerful, but subtle, tool for subverting the dominant logic of the alliance of state and corporate elites who promote toll roads and titanium mines as ideal forms of development. However, these types of repertoires require resources to sustain them in the face of elite alliances.

2.5 Resource mobilisation

Resource mobilisation emerged partly out of scholars calling for a focus on internal aspects of mobilisation and movements, rather than the external political environment. McCarthy and Zald's (1977) seminal study of American social movements emphasises the importance of organisational bases, networks, resource accumulation and collective coordination for actors engaging in political claim-making. Foweraker (1995:15) highlights that resource mobilisation starts with "the premise that social discontent is universal but collective action is not." The main challenge of sustaining mobilisation is thus mobilising enough resources to maintain and expand the movement, according to Foweraker (1995:15). Incipient movements need resources to sustain collective organisation, organise protests and sustain their campaigns and activism (Madlingozi, 2013:97). Later work by Edwards and McCarthy (2004) expands on their definition of resources, outlining five different types of resources relevant to mobilisation: socio-organisational, moral, cultural, human and material. Socio-organisational resources are the formal and informal vehicles and networks connected to a movement, such as supporting NGOs, or local neighbourhood committees, that can be drawn on by movements (McAdam, 2004:128). Moral resources revolve around legitimacy, solidarity, support and celebrity. According to Madlingozi. (2013:97) moral resources often "originate from outside protesting groups and include legitimacy, respectability and solidarity support from the general public, mainstream media, and state and non-state elites." Chapter 6 explores the importance of moral resources and media attention in terms of helping sustain the ACC's mobilisation through

support from wider environmental civil society networks. In order to realise moral resources and legitimacy, human and cultural resources are also required, as activists need to have the know-how to stage a protest, engage the media, and perform other tasks central to the movement's mobilisation efforts (Edwards and McCarthy, 2004:125). Writing on resource mobilisation in the South African context, Runciman (2012:48) highlights that the availability of critical resources such as mainstream media and access to institutional actors is influenced by geography, as these well-resourced actors are mostly concentrated within urban areas. In South Africa especially, it is important to consider the "geographical and social availability of resources" within the country's legacy of spatial apartheid, or apartheid's racialised geography (Runciman, 2012:48)

This focus on geography and access to critical resources in civil society, is pertinent to the Xolobeni case study, as the ACC emerged and is based within an isolated rural area with little influence from the more formalised civil society and even state structures. Despite this, they still managed to sustain and expand mobilisation for over 15 years in the face of an alliance of state and corporate elites. This raises the question of how they have employed, innovated and drawn on varied resources to sustain contention. Networks, both formal and informal, play a significant role in likelihood for mobilisation to succeed, as these form the basis of organisation and the ties that connect individuals into a collective, and facilitate the movement of resources (Diani and McAdam, 2003). Similarly, social capital is emphasised as significant in accessing networks. Diani (1997:130) defines social capital as "ties that are based on mutual trust and mutual recognition among the actors involved in the relationship". The impact of varied resources on the mobilisation strategies of movements raises questions about the role and nature of how NGOs and allies influence the trajectory and form of mobilisation and collective action (Edwards and McCarthy, 2004).

Resources are also needed to sustain repertoires of contention. However, focusing on resources alone falls short in providing a nuanced understanding of mobilisation, largely because they exaggerate the deliberate and strategic nature of movements actions, downplaying the contingent and interactive nature of contentious politics (McAdam et al., 2001:15). Another limitation is the dominance of quantitative approaches to resource mobilisation, where scholars focus on quantifying and mapping the networks within movements and their supporters. This undermines an approach to mobilisation which tries to complicate and explore the interactive nature between different types of resources and how activists innovate within socio-political

environments. In response to many of these criticisms, authors started adopting the concept of "framing" to explore how meaning is created and interpreted by movements in grassroots struggles.

2.6 Framing

The late 1980s and 1990s saw a theoretical shift in social sciences, often referred to as the "cultural turn" where scholars moved away from positivist theoretical assumptions towards meaning, identity construction and the possibilities and limitations of agency (McAdam, 1999). In Europe, scholars such as Melucci (1989), theorised what is often referred to as "new social movement theory" (NMT), which highlights how collective action has moved from revolving around class distinctions in industrialised societies, to new non-class-based identities in post-industrial societies. Similar to proponents of NMT, Bedford and Snow (2000) developed tools to understand how meaning, identity and interpretations affect mobilisation. These tools revolved around what refer to as "frame analysis" or "framing" in grassroots mobilisation. They conceive collective action as a constant struggle over mobilising and counter-mobilising ideas and identities (Benford and Snow, 2000:613). Benford and Snow (2000:613) argue that social movements are not just "carriers of extant ideas and meanings" that arise automatically from existing ideologies or structural arrangements. Rather, movement actors are themselves "signifying agents" who actively produce meaning in a way that "implies agency and contention at the level of reality construction" (Benford and Snow, 2000:613). The authors divide framing into three core roles. Firstly, diagnostic framing, which revolves around identifying the problem, or grievance and attributing responsibility. Secondly, prognostic framing which is the conceptualisation of the solution and desired path in relation to the grievances within the diagnostic frame. Finally, motivational framing is the "call to arms" or rationale for activists to engage in collective action (Benford and Snow, 2000:617).

A further important element of frame analysis is the notion of frame alignment, bridging and amplifications. These are mechanisms in which the movements employ to bolster their cause and strategically link their concerns and cause to potential audiences and movement adherents (Runciman, 2012:52). As we shall see in Chapter 6 the application of frame bridges is useful in understanding the success of the ACC, as the movement has created and maintained key alliances across different segments of civil society; from conservation organisations such as Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA) to more openly progressive civil

society actors such as the Alternative Information and Development Centre (AIDC). The media plays an important role in framing, or frame "amplification" of movements and their agendas (Snow, 1998). However, the media is also considered an important "moral resource" within resource mobilisation (Edwards and McCarthy, 2004). Recognising that many of these concepts overlap, scholars of collective action started to conceptualise them in relation to each other.

2. 7 Towards a common framework

In 2001, McAdam, Tilly and Tarrow published *Dynamics of Contention* which integrates political opportunity, repertoires of contention, resource mobilisation and framing into a related framework. Central to the *Dynamics of Contention* was the attempt to move beyond analysing the static conditions and factors that lead to the emergence and success of movements so as to look at movements and as continuous and interactive process of generation (mobilisation) and decline (demobilisation) (McAdam et al 2001; McAdam, 1999). As highlighted, the authors recognised the tools had more explanatory value when analysed in relation to each other, rather than in isolation. This revised approach revolves around looking at political opportunities and threats, not as objective static factors but as subject to attribution and or perception (McAdam et al., 2001:43). In other words, there is nothing automatic about a political event or shift that will invite mobilisation, as it first needs to be considered an opportunity before being acted upon by challenges. It is then important to consider how activists interpret certain events that they act on, rather than assuming their response. Instead of focussing on pre-existing resources, the authors pay attention to the active construction and appropriation of sites for mobilisation, which are keyways in which more marginalised groups overcome resource deficits (McAdam et al. 2001:44). Rather than looking at resources alone, they suggest looking at how activists innovate and appropriate resources and expand networks. Moving away from looking at framing as solely a strategic tool for movement leaders, framing is understood as a "the interactive construction of disputes among challengers, their opponents, elements of the state, third parties, and the media" (McAdam et al. 2001:44). Madlingozi (2013:98), looking at action repertoires in relation to political opportunities and threats, resources, and framing processes, highlights the (ideal) relationship between these different tools:

> Actual and perceived shifts in political opportunities and threats offer an incentive to aggrieved marginalised actors to embark on protest. Using well-known action repertoires, appealing to culturally

> resonant and electrifying collective action frames, and creatively mobilising resources, marginalised groups can embark on sustained interaction with powerful adversaries and extract some concessions.

This thesis seeks to draw on this framework which brings into focus the interactive and dynamic relationship between repertoires of contention, political opportunities/threats, mobilising structures and framing processes. Specifically, it will explore how the ACC's repertoires of contention enable mobilisation in face of significant political threats, and how it has drawn on civil society networks and resources. These I argue are important factors in grappling with how the ACC has managed to sustain mobilisation in Xolobeni for over 15 years.

Despite the usefulness of the McAdam et al.'s (2001) dynamic framework for excavating grassroots struggles, it has been criticised for failing to consider the role of broader economic processes and systems, such as capitalism and globalisation in mediating collective action (Hetland and Goodwin, 2013; Thompson and Tapscott, 2010; Ballard et al., 2006). In more recent scholarship on grassroots resistance from the Global South, Paret (2017:15) highlights the need to bring "Marxism and capitalism back into the study of social movements and contentious politics." Central to this commitment is the situation of movements and protests within socio-political and historical contexts (Paret, 2017:15). According to Hetland and Goodwin (2013:86), research into collective action within this dominant paradigm has largely ignored the enabling and constraining effects of capitalism and global power relations on movements' struggles. In light of these criticisms, this thesis locates the ACC's mobilisation within the spatially grounded concept of resource frontiers.

2.8 Resource frontiers

A resource frontier refers to a geographical space that is subjected to contrasting and conflicting authorities which claim legitimacy in their attempts to impose new forms of territorial governance because of these external pressures and demands of capitalism (Lund and Peluso, 2011). Frontiers demarcate the edges of something and have historically been associated with unsettled, mapped or regulated land (Tsing, 2003). In South Africa, and many other colonised nations, a notion of a frontier conjures up images of colonial incursion into local people's lands, leading to large scale dispossession. Recently, the concept of a frontier, more specifically a resource frontier, has been revived in political ecology orientated studies that explore the social,

cultural and political effects of the expansion of resource extractive industries in rural areas that have historically been marginalised, or neglected, by the global economy (Sarma et al., 2023; Woodworth, 2017; Di Muzio, 2015, Mkutu, 2023). An example of an area that has been conceptualised as a resource frontier recently is Northern Kenya, where there is ongoing conflict between local pastoralists, conservation NGOs, extractive industries and the state over how land and resources are used and organised, (Enns, 2016; Mkutu, 2023; Greiner et al., 2022). Pastoralists have used land for livestock-keeping and seasonal movement for centuries and became increasingly painted as "savages" by the Kenyan state, who argue that pastoralists are disturbing the extraction of oil and other resources in the area and overgrazing the land. The Kenyan state have allied with western conservationist NGOs who established several conservancies which are guarded by armed rangers hired by these NGOs, who are often in violent conflict with pastoralists (Schetter et al., 2022:5).

Writing on frontiers underlines how capitalism and the free market presuppose continuous accumulation and growth strategies that rely on the extraction of natural resources for maintenance (Di Muzio, 2015). This means, as Heins (1996:987) states, "the system's ongoing growth depends on incessantly redrawing its boundaries." Although business and states often present this expansion as a natural process of development that allows for growth and opportunity, there is almost always some form of conflict and reorganisation of territory when there are already existing forms of land use, political or cultural authority and livelihood practices. Huizenga (2022:3) defines resource frontiers as "sites where peoples and ecologies are subjected to the accelerated speculative and material work of actors who seek to impose new forms of territorial governance for the purpose of extracting profits." Korf and Raeymaekers (2013:10) conceive frontiers as "the space where territorial and institutional penetration of the modern state has (not yet) been completed." Central to the resource frontiers are the creation of disparate alliances in periods of uncertainty. According to Mkutu et al. (2022:4) frontiers arise when "capitalist and state actors penetrate rural hinterlands, with the aim of transforming these regions according to competing visions of the future that operate at different scales." These sites are shifting liminal spaces at the edge of a political "core" (Woodworth, 2017:135), as well as sites of emerging subjectivities, governance, authority, and citizenship (Huizenga, 2022:3; Lund, 2011). Central to the creation of a resource frontier is the rise of violence as a means of control and access, by those who Schetter et al. (2022:3) refer to as "frontier entrepreneurs" which are usually state or corporate actors committed to resource extraction at the expense of local livelihoods and socio-ecological relations. According to

Högselius (2020), integral to the notion of a resource frontier is the introduction of ancillary infrastructure, most often roads and other infrastructure that facilitate the extraction and transportation of resources. The link between resource extraction and transport infrastructure is something that has been highlighted by the ACC when they argue that the mine and toll road are related projects, despite the state's assurance that they are not.

Underpinning the creation of resource frontiers is the logic of extractivism and processes of territorialisation. Extractivism is a term born out of anti-colonial and indigenous rural movements across Latin America resisting the exploitation of natural resources and dispossession of land throughout the 1990s. It describes the underlying logic of the capital accumulation through large-scale exploitation of natural resources, mostly for export, found in existing capitalist systems of development, but not exclusively tied to them (Acosta, 2013). Chaves (as cited by Riofranco, 2020) defines it as "the intensive and extensive exploitation of natural resources; little or no industrialisation; export as the principal destination; exploitation that impedes natural renovation ... the economic form of the 'enclave'." The focus on export references the asymmetrical power relations in the global economy which created a system where raw materials are extracted from developing countries but exported to developed countries where most of the profits accrue (Chagnon et al. 2022). According to Chagnon et al. (2022:762), extractivism is based on "socio-ecologically destructive processes of subjugation, depletion, and non-reciprocal relations." This process of large-scale resource extraction entails a shift in the nature of social, political, and cultural relations in the region of exploitation, resulting in a process of deterritorialisation.

Development, as a practice, can be conceived as reorganising space (Vandegeest, 2003; Huizenga, 2022). Central to dynamics of development are processes of territorialisation, which relate to how power relations and institutions determine access and use of land. Territorialisation is the means actors – often but not exclusively state actors – gain authority and legitimacy over resources and land use (Lund and Peluso, 2011). Frontier dynamics and pressures of extractivism dissolve (or attempt to dissolve) existing social orders, property systems and political jurisdictions, with territorialisation being "shorthand for all the dynamics that establish and re-order a space anew" (Rasmussen and Lund, 2018:388). Territorialisation ultimately results in de-territorialisation, which is the process of shifting away from previous ways of organising and utilising a space and its resources. In other words, territorialisation determines what type of development occurs, because at its core "development is the practice

of reorganising space" (Huizenga, 2022:4). This also means that struggle and mobilisation are a central part of development, and processes of territorialisation. Although the state is often the main actor in this de-territorialisation process, multinational companies, especially in the extractive industry and NGOs are increasingly playing a role in reshaping the governance, politics and land use in these semi-isolated rural "peripheries" (see Woodworth, 2017; Finkedey, 2023; Mkutu et al., 2023). In Xolobeni, the clash of different forms of land use and conceptualisations of development between the ACC and their allies on the one hand, and the state-mining alliance on the other, represent competing claims of territorialisation in the area (Huizenga, 2022). Claims of development by the state and mining company follow the logic of large-scale industrial development and extraction of natural resources. In contrast, claims of development from the ACC and its allies in civil society broadly follow the logic of conservation and environmental justice (Huizenga, 2022:7). These contrasting claims of territorialisation are explored further in Chapter 3.

The usefulness of the notion of the resource frontier, and related concepts of extractivism and territorialisation to the aims of this study, is three-fold. First, these concepts link the ACC's mobilisation to broader systems of capitalism and globalisation, and show how these interact and inform local struggles such as the ACC's. Second, given that the ACC has until now successfully prevented attempts to initiate large-scale development and extractivist projects in uMgungundlovu, the ACC's struggle represents one of the few success stories in terms of local communities resisting attempts by state and corporate elites to re-territorialise the area towards large-scale industrial and extractive development in existing resource frontiers. Lastly, using the concept of the resource frontier expands notions of "mobilisation" in the research question, as mobilisation in a resource frontier is closely related to mechanisms of territorialisation, or resource control, access and development (Rasmussen and Lund, 2018).

2.9 Conclusion

The theorisation of mobilisation and collective action has evolved significantly since its inception in the 1970s. This chapter has outlined the development of the four key tools in the study of collective action: political opportunities, repertoires of action, resource mobilisation and framing. It argued that these (updated/expanded) conceptual tools, used together, provide a helpful framework to explore how the ACC has sustained mobilisation in the face of significant constraints and state repression. However, the framework is limited in its statist

orientation and failure to relate localised forms of collective action to global processes and systems of capitalist and globalisation. In light of these gaps, I discussed how the concept of resource frontiers helps deepen understandings of the ACC's mobilisation. Taking this into account, I argued that the concept of resource frontier helps ground this study of the ACC's mobilisation within broader economic systems, discussions and case studies while expanding conceptualisations of what mobilisation entails.

Chapter 3: The making of the uMgungundlovu resource frontier

> If the Mpondo revolts did not take place, if our forefathers and mothers were not brave… I can say history helps the next generation, it sharpens your struggle, it is a way to take you to the place you want to go. Our history gives us a direction; the importance of land is not something we learn from land, but because of the history they [Mpondo revolt veterans] teach us why the land is so important to us. That is why today we are still standing and still fighting, as we know the importance of land.[3]

3.1 Introduction

Anti-extractivist struggles are inherently place-based. Any attempt to understand the role, possibilities and limitations of movements in creating and sustaining spaces of resistance requires an historical and socio-political grounding (Finkeldey, 2022). By providing a historically grounded, empirically detailed discussion of the context, we can avoid reducing movements' and communities' struggles to caricatures (Thompson and Tappscott, 2010; Finkeldey, 2022). This is because movements usually do not emerge out of an isolated rupture of the status quo but rather "grow from roots in less visible episodes of institutional contention" (McAdam et al., 2001:7). This chapter outlines the different processes, opportunities, threats and claims that have informed the creation of the contested Xolobeni resource frontier within which the Amadiba Crisis Committee (ACC) and their network of civil society allies have mobilised.

3.2 Place history in Xolobeni and rural South Africa

Historically, Xolobeni has been a contested space with various conflicts over land use taking place before the formation of the ACC in 2007. Xolobeni is located in the Pondoland region of the Eastern Cape, which is mostly inhabited by the Mpondo people, who have occupied the region for over six centuries. The Mpondo kingdom was one of the four pre-colonial kingdoms in the Eastern Cape (Hendricks and Peires, 2011:116). By the late 1870s, Mpondoland was the

[3] Interview with Nonhle Mbuthuma, ACC chairperson, May 2023. Online.

last remaining independent kingdom beyond the Kei River. However, with the threat of military intervention, the amaMpondo political structures gave up independence to the British under Cecil John Rhodes in 1894, who annexed the territory as part of the Cape (Bramwell, 2015:114). After the discovery of gold at Witwatersrand in 1886 and establishment of the Union of South Africa in 1910, the government needed to ensure a cheap supply of African labour, while making sure that they could not compete with white workers or be independent of the colonial economy (Ntsebeza 2009:8; Bundy, 1989:389).

Colin Bundy's (1989) seminal work on the rise and fall of African peasantry highlights that throughout the 1800s African farmers were adapting to the changing environments and competing with white farmers in terms of production. The 1893-94 Cape Labour Commission noted that labour was in short supply because "Africans could meet the necessities of life with little effort and because many of them were leaseholders or landowners, could not be attracted to white employment" (Bundy, 1989:381). Mpondo peasants reportedly told the commission "Why should we work? Is not the country ours, and have we not lots of land and many women and children to cultivate it? We prefer to remain as we are" (cited in Bundy, 1989:381). This independence threatened the economic framework of settler colonialism that was underpinned by a landless proletariat class that relied on their labour, rather than their land, for survival (Brass and Bernstein, 1992). In response to this threat, the Native Land Act was passed in 1913. The act designated "scheduled areas" to serve as "native" reserves for Africans, taking up about seven percent of the country's land mass. No Africans could legally own or lease land outside of these small reserves. Thousands of African workers who were living on white-owned farms were given notice to leave to the reserves, threatened with imprisonment or fines if they did not (Hall, 2014). In the demarcation, Mpondoland was part of the "native reserve" referred to as the "Transkei". The British colonial administration – of which Mpondoland was a part – co-opted and manipulated structures of traditional systems of governance to work as extensions of the British colonial bureaucracy (Ngcukaitobi, 2021:111). A system of migrant labour was crystallised, where men from these reserves would be forced to travel to industrial mining and manufacturing areas for work, sending home remittances that supported the majority of the local population in the reserves (Hall, 2014:2).

In 1948, the Afrikaner National Party (NP) won the elections and started entrenching the white supremacist system of apartheid. The NP passed the Bantu Authorities Act in 1951, which legislated certain ethnic groups to specific reserves. Similar to how the British incorporated

chiefs into the colonial bureaucracy, the 1951 Act set up chiefs to be responsible for the distribution of land, welfare and development within their areas (Ngcukaitobi, 2021). However, the NP took this policy of 'stabilisation' further, incorporating headmen, who were previously independent of the chiefs, to be subordinated under them (Southall, 1977). Women's access to secure tenure and land rights rights were also "severely circumscribed" despite most households in former homelands being headed by women due to the system of migrant labour. Southall (1977) argues by emphasising the importance of tradition, the NP sought to limit popular decision making to a conservative elite. These imposed policies – Betterment and Bantu Authorities Act – were deeply unpopular and throughout the 1950s resistance grew in some rural areas. In this same period, the traditional leadership of Eastern Mpondoland, Chief Botha Sigcau, working under Verwoerd, lost all legitimacy in the eyes of the people in the face of corruption allegations, over-taxing the local population, and granting mineral and railway rights to the colonial government (Pieterse, 2011:38). The distortion of the community's traditional governance system, combined with the local population's diminished access to natural resources, land and coastal grazing lands, triggered a revolt in Eastern Mpondoland.

3.3 "Our fathers were fighting this before we were born": The Mpondo revolts

In the 1960s thousands of people from Mpondoland initiated a revolt against the discredited traditional authority and threat of resettlement, cattle culling and fencing off land. The revolt had been simmering since the 1950s but escalated in 1960. The group, who became known as Ikongo*,* or the mountain committee, started boycotting paying taxes to the chief or supporting local trading stores (Drew, 2011:88). Ikongo also targeted collaborators, warning them that if they did not cooperate and engage with the committee – who effectively took over governance in the area – their dwellings or kraals would be burnt. Many kraals were burnt, with about 22 people killed in this manner, mostly chiefs, headman, police or bodyguards. The most famous account of the revolt came from Govan Mbeki's (1964) *South Africa: The Peasants Revolt.* In November 1960, the apartheid government initiated a state of emergency for the entirety of the Transkei and brutally cracked down on the revolts, launching a mass incarceration campaign that arrested over 5000 people, 30 of whom were sentenced to death (Drew, 2011:85). In the biography of ANC veteran Oliver Tambo, Callinicos (2004:242) notes the Mpondo uprising of 1960 was a hugely significant event that influenced the ANC's decision to take up an armed

struggle in 1961, forming uMkhonto we Sizwe (MK). De Wet's study (2011) looking at the legacy of the revolts highlights how many of the events in Mpondo revolts took place in and surrounding uMgungundlovu. Significantly, veterans of the revolt were involved in the early formation of the Amadiba Crisis Committee (ACC), such as the late Samson Gampe, a Mpondo revolt and early member of the ACC.[4]

A few years after the revolt, the British converted what was previously a leper colony on the Western side of the Umentu river bordering Xolobeni into a nature reserve. The establishment of the Mkambati nature reserve resulted in the dispossession of hundreds of homesteads, most of which were located on the coast (Kobobana, 2007). Since the Mpondo revolts of 1960, there have been multiple instances of more localised resistance to imposed development projects in uMgungundlovu. One of these was in response to a government-sponsored program that tried to initiate small-scale sugar plantations in the area in the 1980s. The community was antagonistic to the development projects, which they perceived as benefiting a small elite (De Wet, 2011:260). The dispossession associated with the plantations were argued to undermine the livelihood strategies of community members. A similar pattern occurred in 1999, when a local company, the South African Pulp and Paper Industries (SAPPI) and the South African government tried to initiate a project where community members were paid to plant trees under a rental system. De Wet (2011:261) highlights how the intervention divided the community; with some community members conceiving the system as an ideal form of development, while others questioned the use of land and how it would affect local livelihood strategies. This resulted in two weeks of violence, known as the Gum Tree Rebellion, where 14 homesteads who planted the trees were burnt to the ground (De Wet, 2011). Both McAdam et al (2001) and Tarrow (2011) highlight that contemporary analysis and understanding of social or political movements should be rooted in historical relationships, identities and "episodes of contention." This section has highlighted how the region in which the ACC formed has a history of militant resistance to the imposed devlopment projects and apartheid policies. As Mahlatsi (2018:616) argues, the legacy of the Mpondoland revolts have shaped sociopolitical discourse and individual attitudes towards land and environmental justice in the area. This legacy, along with subsequent mobilisations against imposed development projects, I argue, is important to the formation and maintenance of the ACC's mobilisation.

---

[4] Interview with John Clarke, social worker and former SWC director, October 2023, Port Alfred.

The place history of Xolobeni illustrates how the area has been constructed as a resource frontier at various times, with outsiders from the state and corporations attempting to reconfigure how the territory is organised and developed throughout the 20th century in hope of extracting profits from the environment. The local inhabitants' reliance on the land and local ecology for their livelihoods, has resulted in multiple clashes over processes of territorialisation and deterritorialisation (De Wet, 2011). Many of these narratives and historical memories relate to and inform the ACC's contemporary struggle against the imposed developments of the toll road and titanium mine. For example, ACC member Khulekani Khiwa compares the mine to

> the creation of Mkhambati Nature Reserve where our fathers were oblivious to its [the land's] worth and were tricked into leaving the land. Now people live further up the land and we cannot allow that today because we have to work this soil.[5]

As Khiwa's quote references, many people from the uMgungundlovu have relied on the land and local ecology to support their livelihoods and continue to do so post 1994.

3.4 Land use in Xolobeni

South Africa transitioned to democracy in 1994, which saw the ostensibly independent Transkei re-integrated back into the Republic of South Africa. Land in the former homeland areas – about 12% of the country's landmass – was designated as "communal" post 1994 and became nominally owned by the state and held in a trust for the local traditional authority, usually a Chief (Ngcukaitobi 2021). Occupants do not own individual title deeds, but instead receive certificates from the local traditional authority that guarantees tenure (Ntsebeza, 2005). The region of Xolobeni was made part of the Winnie Mandikizela-Mandela Local Municipality (formerly Bizana) in 1996, which itself is part of the Alfred Nzo District Municipality in the Eastern Cape. The Municipality is made up of one major town – Bizana – and surrounding rural villages that occupy the coastal stretch from the Umzimvubu river past Port St Johns, to the border of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) which is marked by the Umzamba river. The coastal area of Xolobeni, or uMgungundlovu, is a biodiversity hotspot, with it being home to 200 endemic species, referred to as the Pondoland Centre of Endemism. Its environment is characterised by rolling hills of grass, large-rivers flowing into the ocean, waterfalls and ancient indigenous forests (Steyn and Damba-Hendrik, 2021). It is one of 34 biodiversity hotspots in the world

[5] Interview with Khulekani Kiwa, ACC member, April 2023, Umtentu.

(Steyn and Damba-Hendrik, 2021). However, many the households within the municipality are characterised by significant lack of access to basic services and infrastructure in terms of access to water, sanitation, electricity refuse collection and public amenities like schools and hospitals. (Winnie-Mandela Municipality, 2021). Similarly, the roads to access the coastal areas of Xolobeni are very eroded, and costly to travel on no matter the vehicle you are driving.[6]

Xaba (2023:7) argues that because of the history of resistance to the apartheid regime, communities in uMgungundlovu have largely managed to "retain their land-based livelihood systems" which revolve around farming, livestock, ocean harvesting, medicinal plants, agriculture and access to building materials, more so than other rural communities. Although there are very few formal jobs available in the area, Zamchiya's (2019) livelihood study of 80 homesteads in Xolobeni found low levels of food insecurity compared to most rural black communities in South Africa, who typically suffer from some of the worst levels of poverty and food insecurity in the country. The study found that 95% of households grew key staple crops such as maize, while 93% of those surveyed harvested some resources from the ocean (Zamchiya, 2019). Bennie's (2019) research in Sigidi, one of the villages in uMgungundlovu, found that agricultural production has been expanding, with about R90 000 a week coming into the village from the sale of sweet potatoes and *amadumbes* (a potato-like tuber) to informal traders in Durban. This is despite no support from the government, illustrated by the extremely degraded state of the roads, which local ACC activists view as punishment for not supporting the mine.[7] This reliance on the land was reflected in fieldwork in the area. Only one out of the 19 ACC activists interviewed for the research project had a formal job. The land is also used in local practices of traditional medicine, with an array of indigenous herbs being relied on by local sangomas, or traditional healers.[8] For example, when asked what she does for a living, ACC activist Lithembi Dlamini, an elderly woman born in Xolobeni, replied:

> I plant sweet potatoes, beans, potatoes, as you can see the leaves there. I am growing spinach, bananas, and sugar cane. I have cows who graze in this yard and then they will be driven to the veld. I also have goats, sheep, horses etc.[9]

[6] Fieldnotes, April 2023, Umtentu.
[7] Fieldnotes, April 2023. Nyaveni.
[8] Interview with Sanjani Dlamini, ACC member and local traditional healer, April 2023, Nyaveni.
[9] Interview with Lithembi Dlanjwa, ACC member, April 2023 (Umtentu)

As Xaba (2023:3) highlights in his study on the different conceptualisations of development in the Xolobeni case study, land is more than only a source of livelihood or income for many rural African communities but also central to "their being and identity." Speaking on the importance of land in the area, Nonhle Mbuthuma, ACC's chairperson stated that "the land is us, the land is our identity. Once we lose land, we lose everything." This central role that land plays in uMgungundlovu's social and cultural fabric is important to understand how the ACC has managed to mobilise community members to sustain resistance to different imposed development projects.

3.5 Imposed development: The making of the uMgungundlovu resource frontier

In 2002, Mineral Commodities Limited (MRC), an Australian mining company under the directorship of businessman Mark Caruso, was granted prospective mining rights for minerals off the Xolobeni coastline by South Africa's Department of Minerals and Resources (DME). Caruso had visited the area as a tourist in the late 1990s. By 2003 MRC had confirmed the presence of valuable metals on the Xolobeni coastline. That same year, the Xolobeni Empowerment Company (Xolco) was formed by Zamily Qunya and Patrick Caruso, Mark Caruso's brother. Xolco was provided a 26% share in the Xolobeni Mineral Sands Project, which was set to be a 22km stretch of Titanuim sand mining off the coast's beaches (Bennie, 2010). Qunya is a member of the local African National Congress (ANC) elite, having previously served as a councillor and mayor at the local Winnie Madikizela-Mandela Municipality (Sole, 2019). After his time in government, Qunya became a businessman receiving tenders from different government departments in the Eastern Cape (Bennie, 2010). He was also the director of a trust that managed a popular local tourism initiative in uMgungundlovu, called Amadiba Adventures that was started in 1997. Employees at Amadiba Adventures accused Qunya of deliberately sabotaging the operations of the company in order to eliminate any alternatives to mining after joining Xolco in 2003. MRC and Xolco also were accused of spreading misinformation about the impacts of the mine, although one interviewee reported that at the time, Qunya and Xolco did not even refer specifically to a mine, but rather talked about a "project that will bring jobs."[10] Later investigations by journalists alleged that Xolco was guilty of fraud and misrepresentation of affected community members attitude

[10] Interview with Mzamo Dlamini, guide at AA and early ACC leader, October 2023 (Online)

towards the mine, including the faking of lists of signatures to try to show support for the mine (Healy, 2022).

In March 2007, MRC's South Africa subsidiary, Transworld Energy and Mineral Resources (TEM), submitted a mining rights application for the right to mine a 22km long and 2km wide stretch of the uMgungundlovu coastline. A few months later, in June 2007, a meeting was called at the traditional court near Xolobeni – which represents the coastal villages of uMgungundlovu – to discuss the threat of mining. Those present at the meeting report that it was tense and volatile, with pro and anti-mining supporters arguing over the impact and benefits of mining.[11] At the meeting, community members decided to formalise opposition to the mining, establishing the Amadiba Crisis Committee (ACC). The ACC argues that the affected communities had not been consulted, and that a mine would undermine existing livelihood practices in the area (De Wet, 2011). It represents community members opposed to mining and other imposed development projects across six different coastal villages in uMgungundlovu; Sigidi, Mtentu (or Nyavini), Mtolani (or Xolobeni), Mdatya, Bekela and Mpindweni. More recently community members from another village, called Moscow, have joined the ACC.[12] In terms of political opportunity structures (McAdam et al. 2001) the ACC formed in response to the threat of mining represented by the mining rights application, the lack of consultation in affected areas and the threat to local livelihoods. Two important actors in the formation of the ACC were young activists from the area, Mzamo Dlamini and Nonhle Mbuthuma, who previously worked as hiking guides on the coast. Although its formation was largely reactive to the mine, since 2007 the movement has grown significantly, and expanded its mobilisation and networks. Significantly, it received early support from civil society organisations such as Sustaining the Wild Coast (SWC), and the Legal Resource Centre (LRC), which is discussed further in Chapter 5.

In 2011, the initial mining right was revoked by the Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy on a technicality, rather than due to the lack of consultation (Healy, 2022). However, in 2014, the push to initiate the mine was restarted after the traditional leader for the entire Amadiba administrative area, Chief Lunga Baleni – who had previously been outspoken against the mining – was appointed as a director of Xolco (Healy, 2022). Many viewed the fact that he

[11] Interview with Sinegugu Zukulu, supporter of the ACC and current director of SWC, April 2023, Umtentu.
[12] Interview with Mzamo Dlamini, guide at AA and early ACC leader, October 2023, Online.

was given shares in the mine to be evidence of bribery and corruption, given his previous position towards the project. In March 2015, TEM submitted a new mining rights application, which was signed off by Chief Lunga Baleni. This renewed push for mining was followed by a significant escalation in violence and intimidation by pro-mining supporters, including Chief Lunga Baleni, Zamile Qunya and Qunya's younger brothers. The period of violence culminated in the assassination of the ACC's chairperson, Sikhosiphi "Bazooka" Rhadebe in March 2016. Rhadebe was shot eight times outside his home by men reportedly dressed in police uniforms (Sole, 2022). Eight years later, there has been no arrests made, with investigative journalists alleging that at least one senior police officer has been actively involved in blocking the case (Sole, 2022). The contested and unstable nature of resource frontiers means that they are often characterised by increased violence and repression as a means of control (Huizenga 2022; Finkeldey, 2022; Korf and Raeymaeker, 2013). Schetter and Müller-Koné (2021:2) describe patterns of violence that emerge from resource frontiers, arguing that attempts to turn nature into economic resources able to be exploited triggers conflicts around both who gets to access these resources, but also over the "definition of what constitutes a resource in the first place, and over the way in which resources are to be exploited." Violence, or at least the threat of violence, serve as a mechanism of land control, consolidating access to resources and land for some while excluding others (Peluso and Lund, 2018:668). The introduction of the mine divided villagers within communities, but also affected inter-community relations in the area. The division in the area is largely between coastal communities – who are those directly affected by the projects – and inland communities in the Amadiba Traditional Authority. The coastal communities are commonly associated with anti-mining, and make up the support bases of the ACC, while inland areas such as Baleni are associated with pro-mining positions. These divisions are also found in the traditional authorities in the area, with the coastal traditional court, under headwomen Cynthia Baleni, being a vocal opponent of the mine and supporter of the ACC. While her relative, Chief Lunga Baleni, who is Chief for the entire Amadiba Traditional Authority, became a supporter – and beneficiary – of the mining project (Healy, 2022).

In 2016, the ACC, represented by Richard Spoor Attorneys Incorporated and the LRC, launched a case to prevent the Minister of Mineral Resources from granting the mining right. In 2017, the then Minister for Mineral Resources, Mosebenzi Zwane, announced a moratorium on mining for 18 months, starting from June 2017, due to the violence (Healy, 2022:134). In 2018, Judge Basson of the Pretoria High Court ruled in favour of the community's right to say

no to mining, based on the principle of free prior and informed consent (FPIC) in the Interim Protection of Informal Land Rights Act (IPILRA) of 1996. The judgement was historic in that it enshrined FPIC into South Africa's land use and mining framework in communal areas through IPILRA (Mwana, 2018). 68 out of the 72 homesteads to be dispossessed by the mine joined the case as respondents (*Baleni and Others v Minister of Mineral Resources and Others*). The celebration was short-lived as Healy (2022:134) highlights:

> In December 2018, Mantashe announced he would appeal the November ruling, warning that the situation threatened the government's authority, and would have "chaotic" consequences (Magubane, 2019). [Despite being declared unwelcome to Xolobeni by the ACC] Mantashe was undeterred, issuing a press statement on January 14, 2019 claiming that the community had "requested the Minister to come back and meet with the broader community", a claim that activists refuted (Bloom, 2019). Two days later Mantashe arrived with a coachload of mining supporters wearing ACC shirts.

As highlighted by Healy (2022), Mantashe has visited multiple times since the judgement to try to persuade the community and the ACC to rethink their stance, but is accused by ACC supporters of actively trying to make the situation more volatile by arriving with significant numbers of police officers and community members from outside the area to de-legitimise the ACC's position.[13] These meeting often end in violence by police, with tear gas and rubber bullets being used. Although the 2018 judgement was a significant victory in preventing the mine, many ACC members do not think the struggle against mining is over.[14]

More recently, the South African government has doubled down on its attempt to reterritorialise the Wild Coast, where Xolobeni is located, as a "development corridor". Development corridors are a framework for large-scale development planning and consist of "infrastructural" nodes such as roads, pipelines, ports, cities and railways that connect different economic hubs (Huizenga, 2022:7). The central project of the corridor is the construction of the N2 Toll Road that runs through the Wild Coast, with infrastructural hubs being placed alongside the road. The construction of the road, a multi-billion-rand project, is run by South African National Roads Agency (SANRAL), the parastatal within the Department of Transport tasked with building and maintaining national road systems. Initially the road was planned to be 20 km inland, but the more recent route runs alongside the coast and cuts through different

[13] Interview with Vuyani Nxolo, ACC member, April 2023 (Umtentu)
[14] Fieldnotes, April 2023. Umtentu.

villages represented by the ACC (Steyn, 2021). The ACC views the fact that the route was changed from inland to the coast to be evidence that the mine and the road are two related projects.[15] The N2 is coupled with plans to develop a "smart city" on the Wild Coast, part of the country's commitment to keeping up with the "fourth industrial revolution", which has been promoted by the country's president, Cyril Ramaphosa (Huizenga, 2022:7). The ACC sustained and expanded their mobilisation and resistance to these developments which they view as imposed and destructive to the social and ecological fabric of the area.

Map of mining area and Wild Coast Toll Road route. (Source, GroundUp News)

3.6 Clashing claims of territorialisation

The ACC are consistently labelled as being "anti-development" by actors from the mine and state – both local and national. The mayor of the Municipality, Zoleka Capa of the ANC, openly supported mining during her tenure, arguing it will bring jobs and "development" to the area. Capa, actors from MRC and other political elites would frequently characterise the community as "poor" and living in extreme poverty, in their attempt to justify the need for mining (Clarke, 2014). In 2016, former ANC councillor and director of Xolco, Zamily Qunya told the media, "There is no running water, no transport, schools or clinics [in uMgungundlovu]. People there are not yet civilised. They still follow old traditions like polygamy. People are dying from HIV/AIDS, they have no information. If our people are not educated there will be no change" (cited in Washinyria, 2016). State and other-promising actors also frequently characterise anti-mining sentiment in the area to be due the influence of white outsiders – such as the ACC's

[15] Interview with Nonthle Mbuthuma, ACC chairperson, June 2023. (Online).

allies in civil society – who want to keep the area pristine for their holidays, or foreign-funded environmental NGOs who are intent of obstructing South Africa's access to its own resources. The latter being a narrative promoted by Gwede Mantashe, a veteran ANC politician and former unionist who is the current Minster of Resources. As Bennie (2010:132) highlights, environmental concerns and the lack of consultation were largely dismissed by the local government. Officials reported that the community just needs to be "educated" about the benefits around mining, rather than consulted, while environmental concerns were framed as elitist and an obstacle to progress and modernisation (Bennie, 2010).

The attitude of these state and corporate actors in the Xolobeni resource frontier reflect what is referred to as "frontier habitus" which is underpinned by the "an inherent ignorance of the pre-existing social order … existing social orders are not recognised as constituting a form of governance, the space thus seen as 'terra nullius'" (Schetter and Muller-Kone, 2021:4-5). *Terra nullius* is a Latin term that refers to land that is not owned or claimed by a state with the term being used to justify subsequent occupation in international law. This logic is reflective of discourses justifying colonisation on the basis of exploring and taming "empty lands" which were either not recognised as having existing governance practises and resource use by local peoples, or which regard these practises as inefficient or destructive to the environment (Rasmussen and Lund, 2018:391). These discourses underpin the government and mining company's attempt at territorialisation in Xolobeni, which revolve around large-scale and extractivist conceptualisations of development, which look to short-term profit creation and industrialisation as measures of development. This label of anti-development is rejected by ACC members. Cromwell Sonjica, ACC executive member for Mtentu, says,

> We are not blocking the development, what we are saying is that the development for the people, must start from the people, and go up. Development should not start from the top and go down to the people. The development of the people is the things that the community wants… When the government is responding their priorities; to the community's priorities, that is when the development of the people is happening, not the government enforcing development. That is the line we are on, we are just on the edge when people are coming with their own projects, we say no, this is not the proper way to channel things, you have to follow these procedures here, and they don't like it, because it will take the money away from their pockets. They just want to make sure that they benefit from whatever is happening.[16]

[16] Interview with Cromwell Sonjica, ACC executive member for Nyaveni, April 2023 (Umtentu).

This speaks to wider discussions of contrasting values associated with land and conceptualisations of what development is and should entail. The ACC promotes alternative forms of development that do not impact the local ecology and land uses that are compatible with their livelihoods and customary practices (Zachiriya, 2019). Chapter 5 and 6 explore these alternatives, community-driven tourism and agriculture, in more detail.

The ACC also rejects the coastal communities being labelled "poor". In response to a programme manager of SANRAL criticising the ACC for rejecting development when the communities are living in poverty, the ACC released a statement asking:

> how can we be poor when we have land? We grow maize, sweet potatoes, taro, potatoes, onions, spinach, carrots, lemons, guava and we sell some of it to the market. We eat fish, eggs and chicken. This agriculture is what should be developed here. It is not falling apart like in many other places in the Eastern Cape. We have cattle for weddings and traditional rituals. We have goats for ceremonies. We are NOT a part of the "one out of four South Africans who go hungry to bed". We have a life. Poor infrastructure is not poverty (cited in Washinyira, 2016).

During my fieldwork, many ACC members and allies from the area expressed pride in the communal life and relationship with the local environment in Amadiba. Sinegugu Zukulu, the current director of the SWC, says that there was a rich social structure that supported communal life while he was growing up in Amadiba. Zukulu, reflecting on his upbringing, criticises monetary conceptualisations of poverty and development that many state actors support:

> If we were to look in terms of World Bank ways to measure poverty it would say I grew up under poverty. I know I did not grow up under poverty. But if they added the amount of money, I must have grown up in a family that was living on less than a dollar and thus I am poor. That is rubbish, that is nonsense. I grew up in that very rich social structure. We work jointly, we support one another. [17]

The ACC and its allies' conceptualisation of land and resource use is in opposition to the views promoted by the state and mining company, which reflect extractivist processes of territorialisation, modernity and development underpinned by large-scale industrialisation and the extraction of raw natural resources from the land (Acosta, 2013). Importantly, the ACC's emphasis on the protection of the natural environment and local ecosystem on which the community's livelihoods depend, is reflective of territorial claims made by environmental civil

[17] Interview with Singegugu Zukulu, SWC director and ACC ally, January 2024, online

society actors active in the area, which emphasises maintaining the natural environment, biodiversity and local livelihood practices (Bennie, 2010). This resulted in sustained support for the ACC from across local and international networks of environmental civil society, which is examined in Chapter 6.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a place history of Xolobeni, which highlights that the formation of the ACC in 2007 was not an "isolated rupture of the status quo" but a reflection of multiple "episodes of contention" (McAdam, 2001). These episodes saw the villagers from uMgungundlovu coastal resist attempts by state and private actors to impose various forms of development and claims of territorialisation that were perceived as threatening existing agricultural and livelihood practices in the area. Narratives of the Mpondo Revolts of 1960, the Gum Tree Rebellion of 1999, and the memories of dispossession caused by the Mkbhabati nature reserve have informed a collective identity and sense of agency in uMgungundlovu. This collective identity and sense of solidarity has supported and informed the ACC's ongoing resistance and mobilisation against the mine and other forms of imposed developments. This resistance is rooted in the defence of dynamic agricultural practices, cultural institutions and livelihoods that revolve around the land.

The state and mining companies, I argue, largely conceive the coastal area of Xolobeni as *terra nullius*, or empty, unproductive land that requires development and modernisation. In line with this logic, the state has promoted a development corridor, underpinned by the N2, a smart city, and different infrastructural nodes as the desired development pathways for the area. They also label the ACC as anti-development and characterise the people in the area as living in dire poverty in their justification of these projects. The ACC has rejected the characterisation of the coastal communities as poor, questioning how one defines "poor" or "poverty" by citing their relationship to and reliance on the land, food security in the area and active local institutions such as the coastal Komkhulu, or traditional court. Their claims of territorialisation are rooted in assertions that the area is culturally significant and ecologically sensitive, and supportive of communities' livelihoods. These dynamics have created a volatile resource frontier that has been characterised by an increase in violence and conflict.

Chapter 4: The Amadiba Crisis Committee’s Repertoires of Action

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapters have provided theoretical and historical background to the concepts and discussions drawn on in this study's analysis of the Amadiba Crisis Committee’s mobilisation. This chapter explores how the ACC has sustained mobilisation in uMgungundlovu through their use of different repertoires of action (Tilly, 2006; Della Porta, 2013). Movements’ repertoires of action are the means by which activists engage in contentious collective action and political claim-making. They range from institutional tactics such as lobbying and use of the law to extra-institutional tactics such as occupations and protests (Madlingozi, 2013). These repertoires are located within the spatially focussed concept of a “resource frontier” outlined in Chapter 2.

Four of the ACC’s repertoires of action are explored: legal and rights-based mobilisation, disruption, education networks and prefigurative politics. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of the ways in which the ACC engages in and sustains collective action and political-claim making, but were identified as key ways in which the ACC mobilises. Lastly, given that repertoires of contention are embedded in social, historical and political contexts (Engels, 2016), this chapter also draws on local debates and studies around mobilisation repertoires and protest movements in post-apartheid South Africa and the Global South.

Repertoires are a whole set of means that movements have for making claims and engaging in contentious collective action. As highlighted in Chapter 2, they are directly related to the political opportunities and constraints facing activists, the resources at its disposal, as well as the focus and goals of the movement. Repertoires are similarly related to the focus and orientation of the movement itself. According to the typology of movements in South Africa provided by Habib et al. (2006), the ACC would be defined as primarily a locally-based movement, as its primary goal is to protect and defend the land and way of life in uMgungundlovu from unwanted and imposed large-scale development projects – namely a

titanium sand mine and national highway (ACC, 2020). Although it has supporters from across the country, its grassroots constituency base is spread between several coastal villages in uMgungundlovu, with many of them being close to or within the prospective mining area. In order for the ACC to effectively respond to the shifting political opportunities, constraints and threats to sustain mobilisation in the Xolobeni resource frontier, ACC activists turn to "learned action repertoires to mobilise and re(activate) excluded people" (Madlingozi, 2013). As highlighted in Chapter 2, these different repertoires can also be seen as attempts to defend the land from extractivist pressure of territorialisation, where the state and mining companies attempt to reconfigure the organisation, access and relationship between the local population and ecology (Lund, 2018). This chapter focuses on two public forms of repertoires of the ACC's repertoires of contention – the use of the law and protest, and two less visible but equally important, repertoires – education and prefiguring the type of development and politics they want.

4.2 Legal mobilisation in post-apartheid South Africa

The role and use of the law in grassroots movements struggles is contested, both globally (McCann, 2006; Gabel, 2013; Scheingold, 1973), and locally (Sinwell, 2010; Cousins et al 2013; Neocosmos, 2009). In South Africa, Duguard et al. (2015:24) argue that post-apartheid social movements have increasingly started drawing on legal tactics and rights-based discourses to further their struggles because previous repertoires of action, rooted in the anti-apartheid struggle, were failing to attract sympathy from political elites and instead faced significant state repression. However, some scholars have critiqued movements for using legal strategies and framing to further their struggles (Bond, 2014; Sinwell, 2010; Pieterse, 2007). Mngxitama (2006), a former activist and member of the Landless Peoples Movement (LPM), argues that legal tactics create dependency on elites from NGOs and lawyers, most of whom are white given South Africa's history of racial domination. Others argue that the law is inherently demobilising in that it operates and accommodates existing political institutions, thereby perpetuating the status quo and limiting the ability to effect change (Pieterse, 2007). Others argue movements' tactical use of the law can further their struggles in a number of ways, including building and framing movements, alleviating repression, attracting sympathy of media and allies, and contributing to improvements and realisation of movements' goals and

material positions (Dugard et al., 2015; Runciman, 2012; McCann, 1994; Levitsky, 2006). Many of these uses can be seen in the ACC's use of legal and rights-based mobilisation.

4.2.1 Using the law to counter-repression

> We see it very much as our job to represent our clients even in the gruelling, messy world of [the] Magistrates' [Courts]…. It does become difficult to draw lines, and I think it is an art and not a science… But we see it as fundamental to providing the overall service, but also to a mobilisation strategy where the collective in part use lawyers and the law to mobilise and organise around.[18]

In post-apartheid South Africa, grassroots movements that have openly challenged and criticised the state and its development framework – such as Abahlali baseMjondolo (Pithouse, 2008) and the Anti-Eviction Campaign (Oldfield and Stokke, 2006) – have been criminalised and faced significant repression from the state institutions, police and groups aligned or connected to the state's agenda (Madlingozi, 2013). It is in this context, as the above quote from Johan Lorenzen (one of ACC's lawyers) highlights, that representing activists facing criminal charges becomes important to the mobilisation strategies of movements. Chapter 3 outlined how the ACC has encountered significant repression and violence from the state and political elites throughout its existence as a movement between 2007-2023. This included arresting and charging ACC members under various charges. Lorenzen, a lawyer from Richard Spoor Attorneys Incorporated who has worked with the ACC since 2014, considers these arrests as means to intimidate ACC members because of their position against the mining.[19] In the early days of the ACC's mobilisation, this was largely done through arresting ACC members for marijuana cultivation, before the 2018 Constitutional court judgement that legalised cultivation (Minister of Justice vs Prince*).* While ACC members were criminally prosecuted for cultivation, the marijuana fields of the pro-mining supporters, were reportedly left to grow freely, while criminal cases against pro-mining supporters for vandalism of solar panels and intimidation were never pursued by the South African Police Service (SAPS) or National Prosecuting Authority (NPA).[20]

Similarly, acts of intimidation and violence towards ACC members by police and pro-mining supporters escalated as the ACC's support base grew (Healy, 2022). In one case of violence towards ACC members, the local headman and member of the ACC from Umtentu, Luxolo Dlamini was shot at by pro-mining supporters:

---

[18] Interview with Johan Lorenzen, lawyer at Richard Spoor Attorneys Incorporated, June 2023, online.
[19] Interview with Johan Lorenzen, lawyer at Richard Spoor Attorneys Incorporated, June 2023, online.
[20] Interview with Johan Lorenzen, lawyer at Richard Spoor Attorneys Incorporated, June 2023, online.

> This guy used to be part of the [ACC]. All of a sudden, he left the [ACC] because they bribed him. Now they gave him a gun to shoot me down. Gunshots fired after he arrived here telling me "I will kill this dog". We left to the police station and explained the incident. To my surprise they asked me to bring the bullet casing. I told them it's not my job to bring evidence. I still left and fetched the bullet casing. I made sure not to hold it with my fingers as he instructed. When I brought evidence he refused to carry the case forward. He said the trial docket is impossible to find. I said how is there a docket when there is no case to begin with. You have not opened the case yet. He told me to return on another date to go to town and take the case further. That never happened because my case just collapsed into oblivion. They refuse to arrest this man when I point to him directly. The station commander ignored me when I returned. I rushed to inform the ACC lawyers who were shocked. When we called him to the Komkhulu he refused to come.[21]

Dlamini's story of violence and inaction by the local police is one of dozens of similar experiences by ACC activists heard during field work and documented in articles (Healy, 2022; Washinyira, 2016). The police are what Tilly (2003:168) refers to as government agents. He states that:

> Every regime empowers agents – police, troops, headmen, posses, sheriffs, and others – to monitor, contain, and on occasion repress collective claim making. Some of the agents are violent specialists, and most others have violent specialists under their command. These agents always have some means of collective coercion at their disposal and always enjoy some discretion in the use of those means.

Violence is used as a tool of control and collective coercion in uMgungundlovu. In some ways, attracting repression can be considered a measure of success of movements as it indicates the state considers the movement to be a legitimate threat to interests, power or support bases. However, repression can lead to significant demobilisation, as activists can become fearful or participate in public displays of collective action and contentious politics (Madlingozi, 2013). Given the lack of material resources of the ACC members, and the relative geographic isolation and inaccessibility of the areas, the legal representation of ACC activists defended the ACC's spaces of mobilisation and contention in the face of sustained repression from state actors and the mining lobby. As Dugard et al. (2015:23) highlight in a study on the use of law by shack dwellers movement Abahlali baseMjondolo, defensive uses of the law can contribute to "direct improvements in material conditions that enable increased activism and mobilisation." Representation of grassroot ACC activists in the Magistrates' Courts helped defend and legitimise the ACC's spaces of mobilisation, and their more confrontational mobilisation strategies discussed in the next section. That is because, as mentioned, repression of

[21] Interview with Luxolo Dlamini, ACC member and local headman, April 2023, Umtentu.

marginalised movements has “the direct effect of depleting the already meagre socio-organisational, moral, human, and material resources of locally focused movements” (Madlingozi, 2013:110) such as the ACC, whose activists have little access to institutional and material resources. By helping ACC activists like Dlamini engage partisan state institutions, the ACC’s lawyers create vital breathing room for ACC’s mobilisation. Importantly, as we will see in Chapter 5, the use of lawyers also creates a sense of solidarity that bolsters the ACC’s confidence and the perceived legitimacy of their cause.

However, the representation of ACC activists against this targeted repression did not result in a de-escalation of violence. As highlighted in Chapter 3, ACC chairman Sikhosiphi “Bazooka” Rhadebe was shot eight times outside his home by killers dressed in police uniform in 2016 (Healy, 2022). Although the assassination of Rhadebe resulted in widespread public outrage and support for the ACC from across civil society in South Africa, according to Mzamo Dlamini, a former ACC leader, it negatively affected the ACC’s internal mobilisation as Rhadebe was a widely respected elderly figure who helped bring local legitimacy to the ACC’s cause.[22] It also resulted in a period of extreme fear and tension among ACC members, leaders and the broader community.

4.2.2 Movement building: the ACC’s legal mobilisation and rights framing around the “right to say no”

> We are the owners of the land, not anyone else. Now we need to give consent [before mining can take place], but consent is becoming a problem to our own state. Our state … is part of the UN treaties, which enshrined consent. But they can avoid it because they just see the money, the money is god, but they cannot break the laws. These laws are for all of us. Even the TNCs [transnational corporations] must respect these laws.[23]

An awareness of the law and legal norms, as the quote from Mbuthuma references, can be used to strengthen the position and identity of movements in the face of more powerful and resourced actors. According to McCann (1994), the law can be used to build and consolidate grassroots movements through a number of different means. Related to the use of the law are discourses around rights. The ACC has appropriated rights discourses to legitimise extra-institutional mobilisation activities; an approach drawn on by many post-apartheid social movements such as housing movement Reclaim the City, which mobilises around “the right to

[22] Interview with Mzamo Dlmaini, September 2023, former ACC leader, online.
[23]Interview with Nonhle Mbuthuma, ACC chairperson, June 2023, online.

city" (Madlingozi, 2017). As Osaghae (2010:37) highlights, the coherence, mobilisation and success of movements is often dependent on the ability of movements to forge common interests and goals. Rights are increasingly playing a role in the identities and strategies of movements, as the denial of rights can frame grievances, while the demand for rights can frame motivations for mobilisation (Osaghae, 2010:37). In this sense, rights can be conceived as the currency of claims enacted by actors of contentious politics.

The ACC has mobilised around and framed their mobilisation within the right to say no in their ongoing mobilisation. The right to say no in the Xolobeni case is linked to the international right of Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), which is recognised by the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (United Nations). It was first formally outlined by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in its 1989 Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples. According to the UN (2019), the Convention enshrined the right of indigenous peoples to right "engage in negotiations to shape the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of projects." The right, according to Mukwevho (2023), "presupposes that communities have the right to give or withhold consent to proposed development projects on the lands that they own, occupy or otherwise use." It is a global right that is linked to anti-extractivist discourses and movements across the world, who challenge the imposition of large-scale extractive-projects and the destructive socio-ecological impacts. South Africa has not formally developed FPIC in its development systems, but elements of the principle are found in pieces of certain legislation and development practices (Mukwevho, 2023). Grounding FPIC in the South African context and debates, it is important to highlight the contested role of traditional authorities in land allocation and consultation in communal areas such as Xolobeni. In communal areas, post-apartheid policies and political discourse, according to Ntsebeza (2005) and Mamdani (1996), have undermined the ability of rural citizens to participate in decisions around land allocation and use in former homelands due to the centralisation of decision-making power in the hands of traditional leaders recognised by the state. This centralisation of power has resulted in chiefs becoming central actors in local extractivist alliances and conflicts with state and corporate elites in communal areas in Limpopo, Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal (Leonard, 2019; Finkeldy, 2022).

ACC activists frame their resistance through the right to say no in interviews and media statements. It is a phrase that I heard throughout interviews and informal discussions with ACC members. Framing mobilisation within the discourses around rights can be a powerful resource in relating mobilisation to "global trends conducive to 'struggles from below'" (Osaghae,

2010:36) within the global human rights framework. This helps connect localised struggles to global discussions and actors. Internally, the framing reflected the community members' contention that they should be the ones to decide whether and how their land is developed, not the state, chief or corporate elites.[24] It also resonated with the community's historical rejection of imposed developments (De Wet, 2011). Externally, the framing of their movement through the right to say no has helped link the ACC struggle to other indigenous or rural communities' resistance against imposed development projects[25] as well as global civil society actors increasingly concerned with environmental justice, anti-extractivism and climate change (Bernauer and Betzold, 2012). For example, the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation – a progressive internationalist NGO affiliated to the democratic socialist Left party in Germany – became a vocal supporter and amplifier of the ACC's struggle around the right to say no, creating a documentary on ACC's struggle titled *Xolobeni – the right to say no* as well as hosting workshops with ACC leaders and other activists in civil society around mechanisms to protect rural communities' rights (Rosa Luxemburg Foundation).

Legal mobilisation and rights discourses, such as the ACC's mobilisation around the right to say no, helped create a "frame bridge" (Madlingozi, 2013) between grassroots ACC activists and well-resourced allies in civil society as well as with other movements facing similar pressures of dispossession from extractivist projects across the world. It is also important to highlight the political opportunity structures offered to the ACC by the global environmental movement and the significant attention climate change and indigenous movements have received in the public consciousness, international civil society and media in the 21st century (Alonso et al., 2011) By drawing on the right to say no, the ACC links its localised mobilisation to broader environmental discourses and civil society networks which have proliferated over the last two decades. However, the ACC and their lawyers have not only used this right as a political resource for framing and legitimating their struggles but also to realise the material goals of the movement.

4.2.3 Baleni judgement: claiming rights from below

> Now, who makes the Chief a chief? Us. Although we respect the chief, we have authority over him. We possess the right to say "You're not our chief, you're a phony who can't lead" ... In South Africa there's no land more precious yet people died because of mining.[26]

[24] Fieldnotes, April 2023. Umtentu.
[25] Interview with Nonhle Mbuthuma, ACC chairperson, June 2023 (Online)
[26] Interview with Luxolo Dlamini, ACC member and Umtentu headman, April 2023, Umtentu.

The above quote was made by Luxolo Dlamini, an elderly headman from the Umtentu village in uMgungundlovu, and member of the ACC. It captures the ACC's rejection of Chief Lunga Baleni's decision to sign off on the second mining rights application in 2015 as the traditional leader for the area, after he became a director of Xolco, the local company with a 26% stake in mine (Healy, 2022). As he was a vocal opponent of the mine before this, the ACC viewed this as bribery by the mining company. In 2016, the ACC launched a case to prevent the Minister of Energy from granting the mining rights. In 2018, Judge Basson handed down a judgement in favour of the ACC, which argued that the Minister could not grant mining rights without proper consultation with the coastal community under the Interim Protection of Informal Land Rights (I of 1996 (*Baleni vs Minister of Mineral Resources, 2018)*. The 2018 legal victory was central in the ACC's political struggle to assert their land rights in the face of repression. The judgement was viewed as historic because it recognised customary land rights and the uMgungundlovu communities living customary law.[27] In the historical and political context of what Mamdani (1996) famously referred to as a "bifurcated state" with "subjects" in former homelands and "citizens" in urban areas, the Baleni judgement was seen as creating important jurisprudence towards realising rural communities' right to democracy (Mwana, 2018). The case and judgement resulted in significant media coverage of the ACC's struggle for the right to say no. Importantly, it provided the ACC's struggle against imposed development with moral legitimacy both for grassroots activists and in the eyes of broader civil society. Grassroots ACC supporters like Xolani Novela, link their continued support of the ACC's struggle, to their successful defence of the land, stating "they [the ACC] have worked tremendously. If not, then we would not have this land. They have listened to our voice and defended the land from being sold."[28]

Although the law can be a powerful defensive tool for movements, an over reliance on legal mobilisation in a movement's repertoire of contention can result in demobilisation (McCann, 1994; Madlingozi, 2013; Bond, 2007). The ACC and their lawyers have used the law and rights discourses innovatively to achieve different goals. Representation of ACC activists targeted by the local police provides essential breathing room for activists who have little material and institutional resources to challenge the action alone (McCann,1994). While court victories such as the Baleni judgement provide both direct support to the ACC's goal of defending the land from imposed development projects, such victories are also a valuable political resource that

[27] For more in-depth legal analysis of the 2018 judgement see Thambi (2022) and Tshitanda (2019)
[28] Interview with Xolani Novela, ACC member, April 2023, Umtentu.

the ACC can mobilise around, providing confidence and legitimacy to the struggle externally and internally. The ACC have used the Baleni judgement, which was widely reported in the media, as what Madlingozi (2017:169) refers to as a "rallying point" and as a way to "publicly display counter-power" in the face of antagonistic state actors. An institutional victory such as the 2018 judgement "re-energises the target community" seeing that the state and mining company can be defeated (Madlingozi, 2017). The judgement also mobilises external support from civil society due to the wide media coverage. Lastly, the use of the right to say no as a framing tool, helps provide the "necessary justificatory and organising principles that give coherence to movements" (Osaghae, 2010:37) helping consolidate the ACC's identity and standing of the movement in civil society, and make links across civil society. However, recognising the limits of the law, the ACC have combined these institutional tactics with extra-institutional tactics.

4.3 Blockadia: protest and disruption

In South Africa, public protest demonstrations are deeply embedded repertoires of action, playing a significant role in various strands of the anti-apartheid and anti-colonial movements (Du Pisani et al., 1990). As Tilly (2008:5) highlights, repertoires are determined by time and space. They are historically and culturally embedded practices of contention or claim-making. Chapter 3 highlighted how the Xolobeni community has a long history of mobilising against and disrupting development projects that they view as imposed on them. This includes the infamous Pondo revolts of 1960, but also the 1985 sugar saga and 1999 gum tree rebellion, all of which included local residents physically disrupting development projects and policies that were viewed as imposed on the community (De Wet, 2011). Unlike the projects imposed during apartheid, large-scale developments such as the Xolobeni Mineral Sands Project and Wild Coast Toll Road are required to follow legal procedures around consultation and participation, most significantly in relation to the Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) under the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) of 1996 and the Mineral and Petroleum Development Resources Act 28 of 2002. EIAs are needed for any large-scale development projects, and they are meant to identify the environmental, economic, and social effects of these projects before decisions are made (Sandham et al., 2013). Mobilisation to prevent EIAs is an important example of the use of public protest and disruption by the ACC. The strategy of blocking EIAs has roots in a visit to a Titanium mine in Richards Bay Kwazulu-Natal, which

TEM used to try to illustrate how it can bring about development in the area. TEM transported Ugungundlovu community members to Richards Bay in an attempt to sway local attitudes to the mine. This backfired, as ACC chairperson Nonhle Mbuthuma recounts:

> People [in Richards Bay] told us that once the mining company gets the license, or you give a permit to start, you will never defeat [it]. That was the first thing we learnt from other communities like Richards Bay. Now, when we came back, we realised that no matter if you give the mining company a small piece, as long as the minerals are there, they will keep pushing you and pushing you until you have left the whole area.[29]

This realisation informed a pattern of disruption by the ACC when different actors came into the community to conduct public participation processes or lobby for the development projects. For example, in 2015, a group of TEM consultants arrived at the uMgungundlovu Komkhulu to conduct a public participation process. Local ACC members threw guavas at them, asserted that no EIA would be conducted and forced them to leave (Healy, 2022). Although ACC members are spread out between seven different villages, each village has representatives – sometimes referred to as executive members – who coordinate mobilisation efforts within their village. They also have Whatsapp groups, through which local ACC members can be mobilised quickly if they are needed to form a blockade or disrupt a meeting.[30] In April 2015, consultants tried again to conduct the EIA process in uMgungundlovu, this time bringing Zamile Qunya and Chief Lunga. However, the consultants were "confronted by a barricade of logs and brushwood on the road, manned by an ever-growing group of angry residents," (Clarke, 2015). A similar pattern emerged in 2021, when the South African National Roads Agency (SANRAL) consultants arrived to conduct a public participation process on the coast.[31] With the rise of similar strategies used by anti- extractivist movements across the world, Klein (2014) coined the term "blockadia" to refer to the repertoire. Blockadia refers to "roving transnational conflict zone … where regular people … are trying to stop this era of extreme extraction with their bodies or in the court" (Klein, 2014:37). The ACC has used these tactics effectively to prevent the projects from ever getting momentum on the ground. Blockadia's effectiveness in challenging extractivist pathways combined with the lack of material resources needed to employ, has seen this type of protest proliferate across environmental and indigenous movements across the world (Klein, 2014). But these repertoires are not new: in India,

[29] Interview with Nonhle Mbuthuma, ACC chairperson, June 2023, online.
[30] Interview with Sanjani Dlamini, ACC member and local traditional healer, April 2023, Umtentu.
[31] Interview with Nonhle Mbuthuma, ACC chairperson, June 2023, online.

Narmada Bachao Andola (NBA), formed in the 1980s, would strategically employ what was referred to as *rasta roko* (road blockages) and *gaonbandi* (restraining state officials from entering villages) to prevent the building of dams and the subsequent dispossession of land (Chowdhury, 2014).

The ACC have also disrupted meetings that they perceive as co-opted or manipulated. Many state-created spaces of political participation in South Africa are regarded as co-opted towards the dominant political and economic agenda aligned with the state and governing party, the ANC (Piper and Nadvi, 2010, Sinwell, 2009; Le Roux, 2015). In terms of Xolobeni, a pattern emerged when political actors from local and national government would reportedly bus in large numbers of people from the inland regions of amaDiba to meetings on the coast (Kockott, 2008). These community members were supportive of the mine and were used to create the perception that the ACC's rejection of the mine and toll road represented the minority of affected community members in uMgungundlovu. This strategy was amplified following the intervention of Gwede Mantashe in 2018, who is Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy. Mantashe is outspoken against ACC's position and called the 2018 precedent setting judgement 'disastrous' and committed to appealing it (Healy, 2022). Unlike other ministers who visited the area, Mantashe would arrive in Xolobeni with a large convoy of police.[32] At one meeting in 2019, when ACC activists arrived, the entire meeting place was already full of residents from the inland amaDiba region, many of them wearing ACC shirts in an alleged attempt to be perceived as coastal residents and members of the ACC. According to Chris Harrison:

> By the time we got there, the whole tent was full. Three buses had arrived with people from outside of the area and they had basically filled the tent to capacity, so there was literally no space in the community meeting for the ACC, which is the affected community. So we, the crisis committee, basically forced our way into the corridors and all the spaces we could, sang and danced, and just wouldn't let the meeting proceed.[33]

The police responded with tear gas and stun grenades, as well as by arresting Richard Spoor, one of the ACC's legal representatives, under an old Transkei law, for pointing a finger at the local police captain. ACC activists marched to and surrounded the local police station, demanding his release. He was released that night.[34] These extra-institutional tactics of protest, blockades and disruption did not halt the operations of the mining and road projects but rather prevented them from ever starting. It also continued to draw attention and legitimacy to their

[32] Interview with Lithembi Tabani, ACC member, September 2023, Umtentu.
[33] Interview with Chris Harrison, ACC member, April 2023, Umtentu.
[34] Interview with Chris Harrison, ACC member, April 2023, Umtentu.

cause through media coverage. However, this was primarily a reactive and public repertoire of action (Della Porta, 2013). The following two repertoires are less visible but as important in terms of sustaining mobilisation.

4.4 Education and communication networks

> The reason why ACC managed to hold up until today, is because we go to our communities, we inform them, we conscientise them. Because what they [the state and mining company] are doing is hiding information. The state is always making sure that the communities are not being informed. But once the communities are informed, there is no way you can mislead, there is no way you can take advantage of the community. That is what we have done as ACC, to make sure that we have informed them.[35]

As the above quote from ACC chairperson Nonhle Mbuthuma indicates, education and cross-community dialogues are seen as fundamental to sustaining the ACC's mobilisation. This is partly because, as alluded to in the quote, the introduction of mining debates was coupled with a rise of misinformation, deceit and public shaming towards the coastal residents who were not supportive of the mine.[36] The first two repertoires of action focussed on actions that are more visible to the public, which historically have been the focus of most studies analysing movements' contentious politics and how they enact and realise their claims (Della Porta, 2013). The next two focus on more subtle, interactive and mundane forms of mobilisation and claim-making in the ACC (Tilly, 2008). In post-Apartheid South Africa, Madlingozi (2013:109) highlights that locally focused grassroots movements, such as the ACC, who challenge the state in some form are met with a mixture of "vilification, countermovements, co-optation, criminalisation and repression" by state elites. In Xolobeni, local elites spread narratives trying to paint the mine in a positive light, while also trying to delegitimise the agenda of those who were not supportive of it. Those who resisted the mine were labelled as being under the control of "white environmentalists" who want to keep the land pristine for their holidays.[37] Community members were also initially told that the mine would not take away land. These patterns of misinformation and a lack of information about details such as the mining right application and the environmental impact, are widespread across rural mining affected communities, especially in former homelands, according to 2018 report by the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC, 2018) As highlighted in Chapter 3, ACC supporters were attacked as being "anti-development" and "backwards" by the mining lobby

[35] Interview with Nonhle Mbuthuma, ACC chairperson, June 2023, Online.
[36] Interview with Mzamo Dlamini, former ACC leader, September, Online.
[37] Interview with Mzamo Dlmaini, former ACC leader, September, Online.

and local political elite. This representation made some community members who were initially against the mine feel ashamed about their position.[38] It is in this context that early ACC leaders mobilised information and created different networks and spaces for information sharing and discussion. Younger leaders from the area who had more of a formal education were central in setting up these early networks, according to Mzamo Dlamini:

> We would get information – there was a lot of lying and making sure people do not ask questions – because people were not educated. Many were not literate and not knowing what to ask, when to ask. It was on us, not being so educated, but educated more than most people in the area. We were able to make sure we were bridging that gap, coming with all the information, making the links with the outsiders like your Sandy [Heather], your John Clarke, and later with SWC, and Richard Spoor.[39]

Early leaders of the ACC helped mobilising information as well as helping connect the ACC's struggle to well-resourced allies and networks in civil society. Mzamo Dlamini and Nonhle Mbuthuma both play the role of "organic intellectuals" (Gramci, 1993) or "bridge leaders" (Runciman, 2011:608) in the sense that their formal education and ability to speak English enabled them to connect and translate the community's struggle to resourced actors in civil society. Bridge leaders play a major role in mobilisation through the translation of community needs and values into "concrete political claims" which politicises community members into joining movements (Runciman, 2011:608). An intimate awareness of local politics, language, power relations and culture are needed for this translation. This is similar to Gramsci's organic intellectuals who are leaders that provide an "alternative value system on which to base the future development of society" by articulating alternatives to dominant, or hegemonic, beliefs, systems and ideologies (Sinwell, 2011:66). In this case, these dominant beliefs relate to the extractivist logic of the state and mining company.

Another important reason why spaces of learning, discussion and reflection are important in sustaining the ACC's mobilisation lies in the geography of the area where its grassroots members are located. As highlighted in the previous chapter, the ACC's membership base is made up of several different villages, many of which are bordered by rivers, while the dirt roads in the area are extremely degraded and costly to use (Bennie, 2019). This makes sustaining mobilisation difficult in several ways. One of these being that it is challenging to keep

[38] Interview with Nokwanda Langazana, former SWC facilitator and ally of ACC, September 2023, Online.
[39] Interview with Mzamo Dlamaini, early ACC leader, September, Online. Sandy Heather and John Clarke, mentioned in this quote, are two key early allies of the ACC who would become central in SWCs work with the ACC. Their role in the struggle is focussed on in the next chapter.

maintaining unity, coherence and resonance of the movement's identities and goals with its grassroots consistencies. It also makes it easier for members to be co-opted or demobilised by local elites' counter-movements (Tilly, 2008). According to Nonhle Mbuthuma, the ACC's current chairperson:

> Our villages are far apart from each other, it is not walkable. Transport is always an issue ... But we need to be together, we need to strategise, we need to update people, we need to inform communities … [To] inform them, we need to take a decision where we are going to agree on the direction we are going, otherwise it is very difficult to divide it up, and different decisions are taken at different villages … When we take a decision, we take a decision as a collective.[40]

In response to these challenges, the ACC set up different structures to create a network of information and communication between the varied structures of the ACC. Each village has one to three executives – depending on the number of ACC members in the area – who meet with each other when it is not possible to organise a meeting including all members. After these meetings, each representative would then report back to their own community members and take mandates back to the executive.[41] There is a WhatsApp group for the entire ACC, but also village-based WhatsApp groups coordinated by the executive members, which enable the facilitation of these meetings. If there is something urgent that needs discussing regarding land, the local Komkhulu, or traditional court, is used as a meeting place.[42] The ACC also hosts large gatherings, or *imbizos,* at different villages, where they will transport members from across the different villages to one large gathering. The local taxi association is supportive of the ACC cause, meaning that they only charge for petrol when transporting members to meetings if they do not have the funds to pay.[43] Supporting actors, like the SWC have also provided and held funds for the ACC for mobilisation and legal fees, as the ACC is not a registered organisation.[44] These spaces of education are used to discuss the ecological effects of mining, but also to provide the ACC and their allies with strategic direction and mandates from grassroots members.[45] Some grassroots ACC members praised the ACC and its leaders for creating spaces of dialogue to helping inform and engage communities. Lithembi Sojela, an elderly woman from Umtentu said the ACC are "able to educate us about this project [mining]. After all, we are not schooled on these issues. They play a major role in raising awareness to all members of the ACC and even young people who are uninformed about the reasons why we oppose

[40]Interview with Nonhle Mbuthuma, ACC chairperson. May 2023, online.
[41] Interview with Cromwell Sonjica, ACC executive member, April 2023, Umtentu.
[42] Interview with Cromwell Sonjica, ACC executive member, April 2023, Umtentu.
[43] Interview with Nonhle Mbuthuma, ACC chairperson. May 2023, Online.
[44] Interview with Singegugu Zukulu, SWC director and ACC alley, April 2023, Nyaveni.
[45] Interview with Nonhle Mbuthuma, ACC chairperson. May 2023, Online.

these projects."[46] These spaces are fundamental for keeping community members politicised and engaged in the struggle and maintaining networks of trust that are needed for long-term collective action (Garza, 2020).

Education, and the spaces that the ACC creates for dialogues and reflection, contribute to maintaining a collective identity necessary for sustaining mobilisation (Osaghae, 2010:34). They also provide members with a sense of pride and confidence to be a part of the struggle, when they are attacked by the state and mining company for being "backwards" and "anti-development". Lastly, these networks and spaces of education are used to educate and promote alternative developmental pathways outside of extractivist logic, namely agro-ecology and eco-tourism. This, I argue, can be viewed as a form of prefigurative politics.

4.5 Prefiguring: providing a positive vision for mobilisation

Prefigurative politics refers to the "future-oriented construction of political alternatives, or of attempts to reflect political goals or values in social movement processes" (Yates, 2021). Instead of attempting to overthrow or replace existing political structures, a prefigurative approach seeks to embody, create and actualise the types of relations and forms of development that activists want to see in the world (Finkeldey, 2022). It is similar to Escobar's (2008) "politics of place" where movements consciously construct territories around local identities and practices, in opposition to what they view as the destructive effects of modernity and capitalism. A critique of post-apartheid social movements, and more generally movements on the left, is that they are largely reactionary and often fail to provide a positive vision for their mobilisation (Sinwell, 2011). In terms of repertoires of action, a prefigurative approach to claim-making involves more than just making the claims – it also involves practising them. It is often linked to discussions of praxis and ideology in movements every day (Leach, 2013). In Xolobeni, the ACC has consistently promoted alternatives to mining and large-scale development in their advocacy and mobilisation. Sinegugu Zukulu, director of the SWC, highlights how opponents of the mining started focussing on alternative devlopment pathways:

> If we are saying mining is not the future that people want [then we have to ask] what do the people that want? They said eco-tourism and agriculture are the investments of choice. Then we started working with those – what should tourism look like here? So, hence the establishment of home stays, the training of guides and people to do hosting. [47]

[46] Interview with Lithembi Sojela, ACC memeber, April 2023, Umtentu..
[47] Interview with Singegugu Zukulu, SWC director and ACC alley, April 2023, Nyaveni.

In environmental movements across the world, activists' attempts at prefiguring "fossil free spaces" have been seen as a type of prefigurative politics (Yates, 2021; Finkdeldy, 2022). While blocking and disruption is a reactive and defensive tactic to external threats, prefiguring aims at deepening communal practices that emphasises and supports sustainable livelihood practices and their territorial claims (Finkeldy, 2022:107).

4.6. Countering pressures of territorialisation: community-driven tourism and agroecology

Lithembi Dlamini, an elderly woman from Umtentu who relies on cultivating the land for subsistence, said that she is committed to "work with tourism for sustainable development but not mining because it will ruin nature, such as the water sources our cattle drink from."[48] Both tourism and agriculture are practices of development that ACC activists argue will provide income and jobs to the area without destroying the local ecology that they rely on. Many activists referenced the fact that mines have a limited timespan in terms of job creation and local development, while "tourism can last longer, so even our grandchildren see tourism" as Nonhla Balete, an elderly woman from Untentu put it.[49] Development, as a practice, can be conceived as reorganising space (Vandegeest, 2003). Central to dynamics of development are processes of territorialisation, which relates to how power relations and institutions determine access and use of land. Territorialisation is the means by which state and non-state actors gain authority and legitimacy over resources and land use (Lund and Peluso, 2011). Chapter 3 outlined the clashing conceptualisations of how the land should be developed, between the ACC (supported by their allies in civil society) and the mining alliance in the uMgungundlovu resource frontier, representing competing claims of territorialisation in the area (Huizenga, 2022). The ACC's territorial claims are bolstered significantly by a prefigurative approach to their claims, i.e. by practising the types of development and land use that underpin their position. These claims of territorialisation are reflected in the ACC's promotion of eco-tourism and agroecology as alternative land uses to mining and other forms of large-scale developments outlined in Chapter 3 (Huizenga, 2022). The ACC, supported by allies like the SWC, promote locally driven small-scale tourism initiatives that focus on creating experiences for tourists that are not environmentally, socially or economically destructive to the local ecology and

[48] Interview with Lithembi Dlamini, ACC activist, April 2023, Umtentu.
[49] Interview with Nonhla Balete, ACC activist, April 2023, Nyaveni.

community. Given Xolobeni's rich biodiversity and natural beauty, tourism is promoted as a way to maintain this environment and its socio-ecological relations without destroying or replacing it. Instead of creating tourism enclaves where the profits are centralised, locally-run initiatives allow for wider distribution of benefits and creates a sense of ownership (Hamilton, and Alexander, 2013:13). Mining director and political elite Zamily Qunya was accused of sabotaging a popular ecotourism initiative, Amadiba Adventures (AA) to eliminate any alternatives to mining (Bennie, 2010). Amadiba Adventures was closed in 2007, but local guides and homestays that hosted tourists continued to operate independently and are supported by local NGOs such as the SWC. These are mostly operated relatively informally and through word of mouth.[50]

Agroecology is a scientific discipline, agricultural practice and movement (Wezel et al., 2009:504). The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FOA) defines agroecology as:

> An integrated approach that simultaneously applies ecological and social concepts and principles to the design and management of food and agricultural systems. It seeks to optimize the interactions between plants, animals, humans and the environment while taking into consideration the social aspects that need to be addressed for a sustainable and fair food system.

There is a vibrant culture of agroecological movements and networks of movements in Latin America, such as the Agroecological Movement of Latin America (AMLA). AMLA declared its opposition to the "degradation of nature and society" and promoted its assistance "to promote, exchange and extend local experiences of civil resistance and to foster the generation of alternatives to use and maintain local varieties" in the late 1990s (Wenzel et al., 2009:506). The fundamental basis of agroecology conflicts with hegemonic logic of extractivism and neoliberalism in that it values environmental and social protection over profit maximisation and industrial development (Wenzel et al., 2009:506). Agro-ecological movements have formed across Africa, often in response to capitalist agriculture markets that promote monocultures, pay little and are hyper focused on exports, all factors which contribute to African farmers living in poverty (Conz, 2019). Many of these movements draw on local food systems and agricultural practices in their rejection of capitalist agricultural markets. In Xolobeni, there is already a rich history of dynamic agricultural systems and practices and

[50] Interview with Singegugu Zukulu, SWC director and ACC ally, April 2023, Nyaveni.

ecological relations that sustain these communities and contribute to local food security present (Zachiyira, 2019; Bennie, 2019). These practices are supported and celebrated by the ACC as alternatives to mining and other large-scale development in the area. Importantly, practices of alternative development are also supported by allies in civil society, most notably, Sustaining the Wild Coast (SWC). This is explored in detail in the following chapter but will also be addressed briefly here in terms of how it relates to the ACC's prefigurative practices. In 2019, the SWC ran a program in uMgungundlovu called "Yes4Youth". It was a part of a national program involving the state, business and civil society where youth were getting varied work experience in different sectors (Yes4Youth, 2024). Cromwell Sonjica, ACC executive member, says that the SWC and the community "changed the program to suit our lifestyle." Instead of travelling to urban areas for work experience, about 100 youth from uMgungundlovu were provided with one hectare of land and everything needed to plant and cultivate food. According to Sonjica, it helped "boost the youth in the community, and also produced a lot of crops for the community as well. By doing so we are protecting the land and chasing poverty away."[51]

The ACC's emphasis and mobilisation around alternatives to large-scale development represented by the mine provides a positive vision to their mobilisation. As Yates (2021:1046) highlights, "prefigurative mobilisation might include setting up the new alternative practical projects that may build oppositional culture." The ACC has created an oppositional culture rooted in alternative anti-extractivist development strategies and visions for uMgungundlovu's development. This oppositional culture underpins the ACC's mobilisation and claim-making in the uMgungundlovu resource frontier. In a political environment where many movements are only defensive or reactive, the ability to both vocalise and actualise alternative pathways to those promoted and enforced by the state is helpful in providing legitimacy to the movement's claim-making both internally and externally. That is because the ACC are seen as not fighting to say no to be able to say no, rather they are fighting to give consent to visions of the future and development that they want to see. In terms of how movements engage in contentious politics and claim-making around territorialisation, prefigurative politics is a dynamic way for movements to bolster and legitimise their claims against better-resourced opponents.

[51] Interview with Cromwell Sonjica, ACC executive member, April 2023, Umtentu.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter has drawn on Tilly's (2008) "repertoires of action" to explore how the ACC has enacted and legitimated claims through different means in the face of varied political opportunities and constraints. These repertoires were discussed in relation to debates about the role of different actions employed by grassroots movements in South Africa, but also similar environmental movements in resource frontiers across the globe. Although scholars have questioned the use of the law and rights in grassroots movements struggles, I argue above that the ACC and their lawyers have strategically used the law and rights discourses as a defensive, framing and targeted tool in their mobilisation. This includes countering repression and violence from state elites towards ACC supporters, but also using rights - specifically the right to say no as a framing tool for their grassroots and legal mobilisation and political claim-making. The 2018 Baleni judgement was a significant victory in the ACC's mission to prevent mining and other forms of large-scale development in Xolobeni, but it was also used as a political resource to mobilise support. However, the ACC did not rely solely on the courts to realise their claims, but also used extra-institutional tactics of "blockadia" and disruption to physically obstruct the initiation of these projects.

In terms of less visible repertoires of action, the ACC have used education and communication networks as a tool for politicising and mobilising community members to join the ACC's struggle. These networks helped counter the rise of misinformation, co-option and manipulation that arose from various state and corporate actors. These spaces are used to highlight the destructive effects of extractivism, but also outline alternative claims of territorialisation and development. These claims are underpinned by a prefigurative approach to mobilisation and advocacy in the ACC's promotion and practice of alternative development pathways to the mine and other large-scale development projects. I argued that this prefigurative approach has helped build an oppositional culture rooted in practices of agroecology and locally driven tourism in Xolobeni. These alternative practices of development are supported by the ACC's networks of allies in civil society, which is explored in the next chapter.

Chapter 5: SWC, solidarity networks and mobilising structures

5.1 Introduction

This thesis explores the different ways that the Amadiba Crisis Committee (ACC), a local movement formed in a relatively infrastructurally and economically isolated geographic area, has managed to sustain mobilisation for over 15 years in the face of a powerful alliance of state, corporate and traditional elites. The previous chapter explored the different repertoires of action employed by the ACC to defend uMgungundlovu from imposed developments of the titanium mine and toll road. It argued that a large part of the ACC's success has been its combination of more visible and confrontational tactics of resistance, such as the use of the law and physical disruption, with less visible but equally important tactics of building mobilisation and communication networks across consistencies and promoting alternative development strategies to those they are resisting. Many of these repertoires were supported, enhanced and enabled by the presence, networks and resources of allies across civil society. This chapter explores the role of allies and civil society solidarity networks in the ACC's mobilisation, focussing chiefly on a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) called Sustaining the Wild Coast (SWC), but also on broader networks and actors.

5.2 NGOs and movements

The globalisation of neoliberal development and governance paradigms since the 1980s and the subsequent reduction of state intervention and provision of social services has meant that NGOs and other private actors have increasingly filled these gaps (Matthews and Nqaba, 2017). A significant criticism of NGOs is their tendency to favour a technocratic and professionalised approach to dealing with issues of poverty and development. The emphasis on experts with tertiary qualifications as best suited to respond to issues facing the poor results in those who are most affected by these social issues being sidelined from discussion and interventions attempted to address poverty (Choudry and Kapoor, 2013). Similarly, the reliance and

influence of external donor funding, often through mainstream development actors, is argued to have a depoliticising and pacifying effect on NGOs' advocacy and relationships with more marginalised actors in civil society. This process of movements who work with NGOs de-radicalising their activism towards accommodating existing social and economic relations and systems, is referred to as NGOisation (Choudry and Kapoor, 2013). However, in terms of discussion of movements in the Global South, any "notions of the transformative power of social activism and movements are balanced by the acknowledgement of the limited resources and political power of the very marginalised", according to Thompson and Tapscott (2010:20). More recently proponents of resource mobilisation have called for an exploration of the extent in which external support can constrain or enable movements goals or activities (Edwards and McCarthy, 2004:135). The following sections explore the role of different allies and actors in the ACC's struggle.

5.3 From Save the Wild Coast to Sustaining the Wild Coast

Sustaining the Wild Coast (SWC) is one of the few NGOs that was present in Xolobeni during the early phases of the conflict around mining. It was formed around 2002 under the name Save the Wild Coast and has undergone a significant shift in politics and focus since. It was initially formed in response to South African National Roads Agency (SANRAL) decision to move a section of the Wild Coast Toll Road alongside the coast, cutting across the Pondoland centre of endemism (Save the Wild Coast, 2006). The campaign was linked to a number of environmental civil society organisations and actors, such as Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT), the Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA), Earthlife Africa, the Environmental Justice Networking Forum (EJNF) and the Southern African Faith Communities' Environment Institute (SAFCEI) (Bennie, 2010). Save the Wild Coast was formed to be able to take SANRAL to court and not have individuals have to pay the costs if they lost the case.[52] According to Cock (2006:204), organisations such as WESSA and EWT make up South Africa's mainstream environmental movement which are characterised by being largely "socially shallow with a mainly white, middle-class support base and are predominantly concerned with preserving biodiversity." None of the actors who made up Save the Wild Coast were from the area, with most of them being exposed to the natural beauty of

[52] Interview with John Clarke, activist social worker and former director of SWC, October 2023 (Port Alfred)

the area as tourists. The SWC, at this time, had very little presence on the ground area, as they mostly communicated and strategised from their home bases in urban areas such as Johannesburg and Durban. However, a few years after its formation Save the Wild Coast underwent a shift in its politics, position and approach to development and mobilisation. This shift was partly because the campaign was initially focussed on the toll road, and the introduction of mining debates saw more dialogue and engagement with local community members. The shift was also linked to the introduction of new actors in the SWC who became involved in the organisation and debates around the mine after being asked by local community members to help provide information regarding the impact of the mine and toll road. These new actors also had different conceptualisations of development and more of a focus on issues of social justice. One of these actors was Sandy Heather, who became involved in the campaign after travelling to the coast to help with a study on the funding of the Wild Coast Toll Road. Heather says at when she first joined the SWC she was unhappy with the focus and politics of the SWC, as it was mostly made up of

> A group of environmentalists … I am not an environmentalist, I am a socio-eco ... I don't know what ... Environmentalism has a lot to do with conservation and a lot to do with colonial thinking, so I have always been anti-that. It is old fashioned, but it was long ago, so it was right for the time – the conservation approach. It was all about saving the species, and very little about people. I came in then, and yeah, I was the newcomer but was never satisfied with that so I nudged, and I think I can take credit for moving it away. I don't know if other people will agree with me, but I was very uncomfortable with the role that it was in. I actually invited [activist social worker John Clarke] in … John came in a little bit after me, it was still all about Save the Wild Coast … [We changed the name] because we were not saving anything, it's there already, it needs sustaining.

This quote reflects this directed attempt to move away from politics and discourses of conservation, which as Heather points out in the quote, has long been criticised as reflecting colonial understanding of land use and development (Dominguez and Luoma, 2020). Heather perceived the environmental politics associated the conservation actors, such as WESSA, as largely outdated and colonial as they often sidelined local knowledge systems and socio-ecological relations in environmental campaigns. As colonialism was fundamentally about the exploitation of new lands and the "productive" use of resources, conservation areas were used to separate indigenous peoples from their natural environments (Dominguez and Luoma, 2020). This is especially the case for older models of conservation which are referred to as "fortress conservation" (Dominguez and Luoma, 2020). This approach to conservation is

similar to technocratic approaches to development in which the agency, knowledge and experiences of local peoples are sidelined in favour of "experts" who are promoted as having the know-how to provide the necessary interventions for development, which results in the stabilisation of existing power relations and social inequalities (Ramsutsindela et al., 2022). Ramutsindela et al.'s (2022) book, *The Violence of Conservation in Africa* highlights how Western conservation organisations – with the support of local states – are increasingly gaining control over large swathes of land through violence and dehumanisation of local peoples across Africa. These land grabs are justified by ideologies that objectify local peoples and their way of life as "inimical to the health of the planet and the future of humanity on the planet" (Ramutsindela et al., 2022:4). More recently, organisations such as Survival have attempted to decolonise conservation, arguing that indigenous peoples understand and manage their environment better than anyone else, and support their efforts to resist dispossession and deterritorialisation (McVeigh, 2022).

The SWC's attempt to move away from discourses and practises of conservation was reflected in the name being changed from Save the Wild Coast to Sustaining the Wild Coast. Another person who contributed to this shift was John Clarke, an activist social worker who was introduced to the Amadiba struggle after visiting the area with his family on a holiday from Johannesburg. Clarke does not define himself as an anti-capitalist, but was strongly influenced by Chilean economist Manfred Max-Neef's Fundamental Human Needs and Human Scale Development. Central to Max-Neef's philosophy was a critique of monetary and productivist conceptions of development, arguing development should not come from the top-down and be measured by gross domestic product (GDP) (Max-Neef, 1991:6). Clarke is also a strong believer in South Africa's Constitution and Bill of Rights as tools for mobilisation, the realisation of social justice and "keeping power in check."[53] Being a social worker, he availed himself to the community in the early stages of the mining debates to support them in any way possible. Sinegugu Zukulu, an environmental activist and former Geography teacher was another important actor in the SWC's transition. Zukulu grew up in Baleni, a slightly inland village in Amadiba, where he was raised in a big family. He studied at the University of the Transkei in the 1990s, after which he worked as a Geography teacher at private school in KwaZulu Natal (KZN). In 2005, he left the school and travelled back home to Baleni. When

[53] Interview with John Clarke, activist social worker and former director of SWC, October 2023 (Port Alfred)

he moved back home, there were rumours about a mine. In 2006, Zukulu was asked by an archaeologist professor, whom he had met while a teacher, to speak to the local traditional court, or Komkhulu, to get permission for a team from the University of the Witwatersrand to excavate red coastal dunes in Xolobeni, in search of stone age artefacts, but was blocked by the pro-mining lobby, who viewed it as a threat to the mine. Zukulu, angry that this happened when he had followed all protocols, realised then that the threat of mining was real. Soon after this he connected with the SWC and actors like John Clarke. [54] Later, in 2010, Sinegugu would go on to graduate with a Master's Degree in environmental management from Stellenbosch University, where part of his studies looked at environmental law. Zukulu states about his decision to resist the mine:

> [I] made a choice, because I am educated and come from a community and families where there are very low education levels. It is my responsibility that I use the knowledge I have to be able to help my community because I can speak to the media, I can read, I can talk to lawyers, I can speak English, I understand environmental law. What I am doing is not very special other than using the skills that life has presented to me to help my community.[55]

Given his extensive knowledge of the area, ability to speak isiPondo and English and connection with the local traditional authority, or Komkhulu and other local institutions, Zukulu helped facilitate connections between the Amadiba community and actors from the SWC. In many ways, Sinegugu, like the younger ACC activists who could speak English, played the role of a bridge leader (Runciman, 2011:608) – discussed in the previous chapter – in his ability to articulate local issues and positions into broader political claims, environmental discourses and criticisms of power structures and injustices. Cock (2012:201) highlights that historically, environmental resistance has been fragmented in South Africa. She highlights the importance of framing to build a more united resistance by drawing in previously disparate actors within environmental sectors of civil society. In Xolobeni, actors like Sinegugu and Clarke have played a significant role in merging environmental, social and political "frames of interpretation" (Cock, 2012:201) within the struggle to mobilise divergent actors in civil society. Without this coalescence of frustrations and framing of injustices, mobilisation would have been very difficult to sustain.

---

[54] Interview with Sinegugu Zukulu, local activist and current director of the SWC, January 2024, online

[55] Interview with Sinegugu Zukulu, local activist and current director of the SWC, January 2024, online.

The SWC's move away from a more conservationist approach with dominant conceptions of development was reflected in the initiation of a project called Simbhademe. Simbhademe, outlined in more detail in later sections, was focussed on allowing the local communities to articulate what their needs and priorities are, and to indicate how the SWC can support existing livelihood strategies, amplify their activism and strengthen social ties and networks. According to Heather, Simbhademe was initiated because amaDiba community members asked if the only way to develop Xolobeni was through the Titanium sand mine and Wild Coast Toll Road, which was the narrative being disseminated by the state.

> [Mzamo, a young ACC leader] asked if the road being built was the only way to development. I said well, I know very little about development, but I doubt it. I said there is absolutely no single path to anything, and certainly can't be to development, so we said let's see, let's explore. I am an educator, I am not a development practitioner, but there were ways to find the path and we did that together. That's the exciting root of this story, and I think why the story is still successful today: because it was a joint effort, it wasn't me or an NGO, like a water-tanker NGO, coming to the people and saying "okay we do water tanks, who needs a water tank?" and of course everyone says we all need a water tank, and then they are not maintained and whatever. That wasn't the approach, it was from the people for starters, and then understanding that none of us had the right understanding yet, so we explored together, and it was emphatically a team and collaborative approach. I had the network, the external understanding, the educational training I suppose, to be able to go and do what the people were asking me to do, or to find out more information about whatever they were needing to know, so yeah it had a core difference to the way other things start, and that is how Simbhademe started.

This highlights two important ways that the SWC would come to differ from standard practise of more professionalised NGOs concerned with development. The first is an aversion to what Ferguson (1994:56) defines as an "anti-politics" approach to development, which constructs development as a natural process orchestrated by "experts". This depoliticised approach to issues of development, such as poverty and inequality, is criticised as legitimating existing unequal power relations, and perpetuating the status quo that excludes the majority from playing a role in their own development (Shivji, 2006; Ferguson, 1994). This rejection of typical processes of development speaks to post-development scholars' argument that development should support and arise from local communities' own conceptualisations of development rather than trying to impose or universalise one approach to development (Matthews, 2006:54). This aversion to imposing or assuming needs and wants is echoed by Zukulu, the current director of the SWC, who says they emphasise "talking to the people to identify their needs and aspirations and work on those; getting the voices of the people out and

working with them to envision what the people want, and then doing proactive work [based on these wants]” [56].

This section has highlighted the evolution of the SWC, which was initially formed as a conservation campaign that would allow environmentalists to take SANRAL to court without paying costs but evolved into an organisation committed to supporting the coastal communities of Amadiba in their struggle against imposed developments. The following sections outline the different ways that the SWC and supporting networks evolved to support the ACC’s struggle.

5.4 Accessing information

> Information is also not consistently made available in languages and formats which render them accessible. A large percentage of mining- related information, including SLPs [Social and Labour Plans], are not currently available to the public where such information should in fact be automatically publicly available… The absence of proper industry guidelines and standard reporting templates means that interested parties must continue to follow lengthy legal processes in terms of the (PAIA) or pursue court action to gain access to crucial documents (SAHRC, 2018:70)

A 2018 South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) report into mining affected communities in rural South Africa found that there was a significant lack of information, consultation and transparency (SAHRC, 2018:7). The report found that the state and mining companies often deem information “classified” and do not make the information “available in languages and formats which render them accessible” to affected communities (SAHRC, 2018:70). This was the case in Xolobeni, where the SAHRC, in an earlier report on the conflict regarding the Xolobeni Mineral Sands Project, characterised the consultation and participation period as being undermined by a “chronic lack of information,” (SAHRC, 2008).

The networks of the SWC and Richard Spoor Incorporated Attorneys played an important role in countering this lack of information – as well as misinformation – by accessing information around the mining operations and status of applications through contacts in civil society and the media. This was done through the different communication networks and structures created between the six different villages that make up the ACC’s support base examined in the Chapter 4. For example, in 2008, the ACC requested that John Clarke submit a promotion of access to

[56] Interview with Sineugu Zukulu, local activist and current director of the SWC, January 2024, online.

information request (PAIA) for the mining right application, which had never been shared with the community. Mining right applications contain important information such as "the particulars of the applicant, the mining works programme and the social and labour plan for socio-economic development of mine-affected areas" (Field, 2020). Following the PAIA request, Clarke travelled to the Department of Mineral and Energy offices in Port Elizabeth to access a hardcopy of the mining rights application, which revealed the shady nature of the mining deal and its benefactors.[57] Clarke was also asked by the ACC to lodge a complaint with the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC), which resulted in a large fact-finding mission. The SAHRC subpoenaed local actors such as politicians involved in Xolco, the local subsidiary for the mining project, to testify at hearings hosted in the affected communities.[58] The SAHRC's report concluded that "despite a chronic lack of information, the majority of the communities [affected by the mining] are not in favour of mining, while the mining company consistently claims otherwise, saying support is unanimous" (SAHRC, 2008). The CEO of SAHRC at the time, Tseliso Thipanyane, was called in and reprimanded by a senior government minister in Pretoria following the report, which illustrates how invested the state has been in seeing the project through.[59] The SAHRC report and mining rights application are valuable moral resources for the ACC in that they legitimised the position of early ACC activists such as Mzamo Dlamini and Nonhle Mbuthuma. Moral resources include "legitimacy, solidarity support, sympathetic support, and celebrity" both in terms of external supporters of the movement, but also internally (Edwards and McCarthy, 2004:125). Information is also fundamental to political education and creating shared positions among diverse groups of activists. As Alicia Garza (2020:74), who was one of the founders of the Black Lives Matter movement, highlights, creating networks of information helps keep activists politicised and engaged on issues of injustice, especially when mobilising over a prolonged period. These resources and information helped provide the ACC with confidence and legitimacy in the movement's early mobilisation. It also led to wider exposure of the ACC's struggle in the media.

5.5 The media and civil society networks

[57] Interview with John Clarke, activist social worker and a former director of the SWC, October 2023, Makhanda.
[58] Interview with Tseliso Thipanyane, former CEO of SAHRC, October 2023, online.
[59] Interview with Tseliso Thipanyane, former CEO of SAHRC, October 2023, online.

> SWC came here back in 2006, that is when we started. We did the first media expose – in October 2006, that was the very first media coverage. From then we were therefore able to bring in the lawyers and more media. What happened is many organisations later noticed what was happening and then came on board.[60]

Zukulu's quote highlights the importance of media for the ACC's struggle, especially in the early stages of the conflict and mobilisation. Garza (2020:143) argues that successful movements should "know how to use the tools of media and culture to communicate what they are for, and to help paint a picture of what an alternative world can look like." A central way in which the SWC and early allies such as John Clarke supported the ACC struggle against imposed development was by assisting the ACC to access media and well-resourced civil society networks. The media is a powerful tool for mobilisation (Vliegenthart and Walgrave, 2012). It can amplify a movement or community's claims to a national, and even international audience. It allows for framing of grievances and struggles in ways that can mobilise both external support from allies and internal support from potential movement adherents (Snow, 1998). The media can also delegitimise movements by focusing on particular actions while ignoring others. Vliegenthart and Walgrave (2012:395) highlight how the media can "nurture the feeling of injustice and fuel the preparedness of taking action" by framing or dramatising grievances and spur agency by framing events in ways in which citizens feel they can intervene. It can also contribute to consolidating collective identities and solidarity by describing aggrieved groups as unitary, and also identifying enemies or adversaries often in a one-dimensional manner (Vliegenthart and Walgrave, 2012). Sinegugu Zukulu, who would become director of the SWC, recognised the important role of the media in amplifying the ACC's struggle and exposing the ongoing injustices early on – especially given the remoteness of area. He requested that John Clarke use his connections in Johannesburg to bring journalists to Amadiba in 2006.[61] According to Clarke, the

> advantage of living in Johannesburg and travelling down to the Wild Coast meant that I had connections with the media, connections with other civil society people. It was two extremes: an isolated rural area and then a massive urban conglomerate of a city, with all the resources there, and then I just became a vector for the cross-pollination of learning through these two sectors; taking journalists, taking other civil society folk down there who would come and give advice, and we would learn our way into it.

[60] Interview with Sineugu Zukulu, local activist and current director of the SWC, April 2023, Umtentu.
[61] Interview with Sineugu Zukulu, local activist and current director of the SWC, April 2023, Umtentu.

Clarke also directly contacted lawyers to provide legal support to the ACC, calling Richard Spoor, an attorney who represents mining affected communities, after hearing him speak on the radio. Spoor and a lawyer working for his organisation, Johan Lorenzen, would come to play a significant role representing and supporting the ACC in various capacities and court cases, including representing the ACC in the 2018 Baleni judgement. Clarke also brought *50/50*, an environmental news programme on a national television channel, to Xolobeni for the first major media coverage of the community's conflict around mining and the lack of proper consultation around the project. From this first media coverage of the community's struggle, the Legal Resource Centre (LRC), a public interest human rights legal organisation, offered their support to the ACC.[62] Since then, the ACC has received significant amounts of favourable media coverage from national and international media outlets. ACC leaders were also supported by the SWC to craft their own press statements and engage with the media independently.[63]

This illustrates the importance of social capital and networks in the early mobilisation in Xolobeni, a key concept in resource mobilisation. Putnam (1993:35) defines social capital as "features of social organisations, such as networks, norms and trust that facilitate action and cooperation for mutual benefit" while Diani (1997) refers to it as "ties that are based on mutual trust and mutual recognition among the actors involved in the relationship." Social capital is related to class, race, education and geography, all factors that determine access and institutionalisation within social networks as well as access to political power (Siisiäinen, 2003). Clarke's position as a white activist social worker from Johannesburg – the biggest city in South Africa – means that he has access to extensive networks across civil society, some more formal than others. Diani (1997:133), writing on the importance of networks in social movements, highlights how they play a significant role in circulating resources, generating trust and norms which are then reproduced. This role can be seen in the ACC's support from networks across a range of different actors in civil society. These networks facilitate coordination and communication, amplify grievances and provide resources that allow for the realisation of movements' struggles (Diani, 1997:133). An important way that these networks and media exposure facilitated support for the ACC was through the production of oppositional resources and research that support the ACC's claims of territorialisation.

[62] Interview with Sineugu Zukulu, local activist and current director of the SWC, April 2023, Umtentu.
[63] Interview with Sineugu Zukulu, local activist and current director of the SWC, April 2023, Umtentu.
,

5.6 Oppositional research and knowledge production: supporting local claims of territorialisation

A significant political resource to the ACC's claims of territorialisation has been the production of oppositional research that challenges narratives and development discourses of the state and mining company. These have often been facilitated by their allies in civil society such as the SWC, LRC or Richard Spoor Incorporated Attorneys. For example, there have been two livelihood surveys done on the coastal amaDiba community that illustrate the community's dependence on the local ecology for substance but also their relative food security compared to many rural areas in South Africa (Zamchiya, 2019). One of them was submitted as part of the supporting legal documents for the 2018 historic "Right to say no" case where the High Court ordered the mining right be revoked until the community was consulted. Andrew Bennie, a researcher who has written several studies on the Xolobeni mining conflict (Bennie, 2010; 2011; 2019), joined the board of the SWC and continued to be involved in the community's struggle. In 2019, he published research that highlights how agricultural production in Xolobeni has been expanding following the establishment of markets and informal traders in Durban, an industrial hub that is about 200 kilometres north of the area (Bennie, 2019). Bennie (2019) calculated that R90 000 rand was flowing back into Sigidi – one of the villages in uMgungundlovu – each week, with no state support. Bennie knew that this research would be a valuable political resource to the ACC.[64] Another use of research to bolster the mobilisation strategies of the ACC is related to the ongoing court case by the ACC to have SANRAL's Wild Coast Toll Road route moved inland. In 2021, the ACC presented their political strategy of pushing for the Wild Coast Toll Road to be routed further inland to their lawyers, Richard Spoor Attorneys Incorporated.[65] The lawyers then facilitated an introduction to engineers who were supportive of the ACC's cause. Malcolm Cambell, the principal of ACG Architects & Development Planners, started conducting research into the feasibility of the alternative route promoted by the ACC. The ACC's lawyer, Johan Lorenzen of Richard Spoor Attorneys, highlights that,

> establishing the feasibility of an alternative [Wild Coast Toll Road] route is much more important on the mobilising side than on the legal side. You are not going to get a court order compelling the state to build on a certain route. We use the feasibility [study] only to establish that the current route is not the only

[64] Interview with Andrew Bennie, researcher and SWC board member, November 2023. Online

[65] Interview with Johan Lorenzen, lawyer at Richard Spoor Attorneys, June 2023. (Online)

> route. The engineers introduced to us, we have worked with through a legal perspective but also facilitated to make sure they understand that their work speaks to the broader social and political strategy.

This counter-framing amplifies the ACC's depiction of their struggle – processes Snow and Bedford (2000:627) refer to as "frame amplification" and "frame diffusion", where the ACC's narratives of mobilisation are simultaneously supported, legitimated and amplified by empirical research. These studies serve both as a legal resource to legitimate claims in ongoing litigation, but also as a political resource for the movement – and public – to mobilise around. This is a similar tactic used by Equal Education, a South African youth-led education movement who use "mobilisation, and public action supported by careful research, to empower young activists and ensure equality in South African education." (EE, 2020). Such research acts as an important legal and political resource in advocacy and mobilisation, especially when engaging with the general public or media. The research done focussing on land use and development in Xolobeni – similar to the practice of prefigurative politics (Yates, 2021) – augment the ACC's claims of territorialisation and jurisdiction in Xolobeni, related to the defence of local ways of life and agricultural systems that support the community's livelihoods. Despite lawyers and NGOs like SWC working closely with ACC in these projects, there have been clear attempts to create a clear separation between the two throughout the relationship.

5.7 Maintaining separation and taking mandates

Although the SWC provided extensive support for the ACC, both the movement and the NGO tried to make sure there was a clear separation between the two. Sinegugu Zukulu, the current director of the SWC, emphasises:

> The ACC are independent of us, they are separate from us but we are partners. We do not lead the ACC, we support the ACC. We support and lead from the back, because their struggle is the struggle of the coastal people. We cannot speak on their behalf, we can speak on our behalf as SWC.

Initially, the SWC provided direct training and capacity building to the ACC's younger activists including media training and networking with other mining affected communities across the country. However, despite these close connections, ACC leaders turned down multiple requests to sit on the SWCs board.[66] This separation is important when engaging in

[66] Interview with Sandy Heather, May 2023. (Online).

discussions of demobilisation and NGOisation of movements which is more likely to occur when there are not clear lines drawn between the two (Choudry and Kapoor, 2013:12). By 2012, the ACC's network expanded, and it had established itself as a dynamic movement with strong local structures and support from across civil society. It was at this time that ACC requested that the SWC focus on the stream of work that supported alternative development and leave the activism and mobilisation to the ACC.[67] This is significant, given that in most NGO-movement relationships, the NGO's access to political and material resources often results in movements "abandoning their oppositional politics" in favour of institutional and financial survival (Choudry and Kapoor, 2013:7). In this case, it was the SWC taking mandates from the ACC in their support of the coastal communities' struggle against imposed devlopment.

5.8 Simbhademe: supporting prefigurative politics and alternative development

The alternative development stream of the SWC's work was led by Heather, who describes herself as an "educator, not a development practitioner" influenced by Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy at the time (Freire, 2005). Freire's critical pedagogy emphasises education as a collaborative, anti-hierarchical process that should draw from individuals' lived experiences (Freire, 2005). Earlier sections in this chapter outlined how Simbhademe and the SWC's approach differed from standard development practices of NGOs. The name Simbhademe was chosen by participants (the programme was initially referred to as the Innovations Programme) and means "we discover" in isiPondo. It worked with six coastal villages in uMgungundlovu; Sigidi, Mabaleni, Mdatya, Mpinweni, Mtolani (Xolobeni) and Mtentu. Heather describes how Simbhademe, or the SWCs "alternative development" program, materialised from

> everyone asking questions and me going back and saying okay, I'll find out some answers. It was categorically from the beginning, not pro or anti the road or the mining… I didn't want to influence, because I don't live their life, my skin is not black. I don't have the same experiences, so I don't have a right to influence, but I can take information in.

[67] Interview with Andrew Bennie, researcher and the SWC board member, November 2023. (Online)

This suggests that the the program did not arise from a particular political or developmental goal – at least not directly. The initial pilot programme of Simbhademe started in 2008 and was funded by Christian Aid, with later iterations of the programme funded by the UNDP's Global Environment Facility's Small Grants Fund (GEF/SGF).[68] Phase 1 of the project involved workshops across the different coastal villages, where the local communities would raise issues and ideas around the types of development and change community members want to see in their own community. This stage of Simbhademe drew on "community mapping" (Parker, 2006). Community mapping is a process whereby community members collaboratively produce a map of their locale featuring local knowledge and resources (Parker, 2006). These maps "intimate the potential for radical social change" and the reallocation of local resources in line with local perspectives of development (Parker, 2006:470). This is also referred to as "counter-mapping" by Peluso (1995:387) who looks at how indigenous communities represent themselves and stake claim to local resources and ecology. Participants in Simbhademe mapped their own communities and their relationship to the local ecology; this included markers such as where their families' ancestral graves are located, where their cattle drink water and the different fishing spots.[69] They would also map what they would want to see in their community and how it should be developed, often using pictures and illustrations. Phase 2 included networking with other communities who have organised themselves innovatively and responded to locally driven and environmentally sustainable approaches of development, such as the Bulungula Community Incubator, also on the Wild Coast in the Eastern Cape.[70] Phase 3 involved planning and implementation to assist community members with their own livelihood projects related to food security and locally driven tourism initiatives. These included the establishment of a local grinding mill for maize (villagers previously had to travel long distances), and the establishment of locally owned "homestays" for tourists visiting the area.[71]

Importantly, all of the Simbhademe workshops were conducted entirely in isiPondo, with the SWC employing young people from the area, including two of the younger ACC leaders Mzamo Dlamini and Nonhle Mbuthuma, as well as Nokwanda Langazana to facilitate the sessions. Simbhademe was open to the entire amaDiba community, but because of its

[68] Simbhademe 2014 programme report, SWC.
[69] Interview with John Clarke, activist social worker and former director of SWC, November 2023. (Makhanda)
[70] Simbhademe 2014 programme report, SWC.
[71] Interview with Sinegugu Zukulu, local activist and current director of SWC, April 2023 (Umtentu).

association with anti-mining activists and its eventual focus on alternative development strategies, it became associated with anti-mining.[72] Nokwanda Langazana, one of the facilitators of Simbhademe, said that the programme played a major role in raising the confidence of community members who rejected the mine in the six different coastal villages the program worked in. As many of them were being blackmailed and criticised by government and pro-mining community members for being "anti-developmental", she said Simbhademe helped community members from the six villages articulate what type of devlopment they wanted. They were able to put their statements on the table, saying "we don't want mining, we want tourism and other projects that will support our livelihoods." This was especially the case for the women who participated in Simbhademe, as they were often sidelined from discussions of land use and governance due to the often-patriarchal nature of traditional systems of land use and governance communal areas (Claassens, 2011). Although Chief Lunga Baleni, who joined Xolco and became a vocal supporter of the mine, is the chief of the entire Amadiba traditional authority, his relative Cynthia Baleni, is the headwomen for the Komkhulu, or traditional court, located closer to the coast. Cynthia Baleni is a supporter of the ACC's rejection of imposed developments, deposing the founding affidavit for the 2018 court judgement. As Simbhademe evolved from its start in 2009, women became more active, confident and engaged in discussions on land and development, according to the facilitators.[73] Women currently make up more than half the ACC's leadership.[74] Although Simbhademe only ran from around 2009-2015, it seemed to have a significant impact on the coastal communities' social solidarity and connections between the villages and individual homesteads. It stopped due to a lack of funding, despite other surrounding communities inviting the SWC to run something similar in their area.

Resource mobilisation theorists often regard the ability of movements to sustain mobilisation as related to the strength of the social ties and networks that link different activists, organisations, and institutions together (Diani, 2004:339). As Klandermans and Oegema (1987:520) argue, "however successfully a movement mobilises consensus… if it does not have access to recruitment networks, its mobilisation potential cannot be realised." In terms of the ACC, these networks include local institutions such as the coastal Komkhulu, or traditional court as well as kinship ties between homesteads. In Cynthia Baleni's founding affidavit in the

[72] Interview with Nokwanda Langazana, amaDiba resident and facilitator of Sinhdame, October 2023 (Online)
[73] Interview with Nokwanda Langazana and Mzamo, facilitators of Sibhadame.
[74] Interview with Nonhle Mbuthuma, ACC chairperson. June 2023. (Online)

right to say no court case, the local headwomen and supporter of the ACC emphasises the communitarian nature of land and daily life in uMgungundlovu and how this contributes to social and economic interdependence between the communities.[75] Baleni highlights that years of living in relative isolation has created "networks of support and mutual dependency" in relation to sharing food, labour and other resources.[76] These ties and networks of mutual support, underpinned by communal land governance and customary law, are central to the ACC's mobilisation.

Simbhademe added to this network and connection between the communities through the promotion and actualisation of alternative development projects which, as Yates (2021) highlights, builds an oppositional culture rooted in alternatives that sustain people's willingness and commitment to the collective struggle and resistance to the state. This programme and the projects significantly enhanced the prefigurative politics outlined in Chapter 4.

5.9 Conclusion

In Tarrow's (2011:33) latest addition of *Power in Movement*, he argues that mobilisation is most likely to be sustained if the existence of availability of allies and their networks are (consistently) demonstrated. This position was supported throughout this chapter, which looked at the role of civil society actors and networks in the ACC's struggle and resistance to imposed development projects such as the Xolobeni Mineral Sands Mining project and the N2 Wild Coast Toll Road. It focused mostly on the SWC, which was an NGO that evolved from a conservation framed campaign to an organisation concerned with supporting the ACC to mobilise against the mine while supporting alternative forms of development. The SWC and associated actors such as social worker John Clarke provided invaluable resources and networks through their social capital, including helping the ACC to access the media, lawyers and researchers. Despite close connections, the SWC and the ACC maintained a clear separation between the movement and the NGO, reducing risks of demobilisation and NGOisation. As the ACC consolidated its movement and network, the SWC moved to play

[75] Duduzile Baleni, 'Founding Affidavit, In the High Court of South Africa (Gauteng Division, Pretoria)' (2016) Case No: 73768/2016. Pg 115.
[76] Duduzile Baleni, 'Founding Affidavit, In the High Court of South Africa (Gauteng Division, Pretoria)' (2016) Case No: 73768/2016. Pg 57.

more of a supportive role, focussing on actualising alternative development strategies that are promoted by the community, providing a positive vision to the ACC's mobilisation.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This aim of this thesis was to provide insights relating to how the Amadiba Crisis Committee (ACC), a local rural community-based movement from the Wild Coast of South Africa, has sustained mobilisation in the uMgungundlovu resource frontier since its formation in 2007. It was guided by McAdam et al.'s (2001) theoretical framework that combines different theories of mobilisation, as well as the political-ecology grounded concept of resource frontiers (Tsing, 2003; Korf and Raymakers, 2013). These theories and concepts help illuminate critical interpretations of ever-changing geographies of development agenda in the Wild Coast and show how clashing conceptualisations of land use in these areas have led to conflict, disparate alliances and violence.

The philosophic roots of the ACC and its mobilisation can be traced to a history of militant resistance and suspicion towards external political actors and their attempts at imposing various socio-economic development pathways within Mpondoland. The backbone of this militant resistance and its maintenance, revolve around the collective identities, links and solidarity between different communities in Amadiba, and especially in uMgungundlovu. These links – which help cement what Oommen (2004:2016) refers to as the "crystallisation of a collective consciousness" needed for mobilisation – are rooted in this historical of rejection of imposed development projects and apartheid policies, as well as the communal practices of daily life that support the land-based livelihoods of most community members in uMgungundlovu. Tactically, The ACC has combined institutional and extra-institutional strategies in its mobilisation efforts to prevent imposed development projects, but also to build and consolidate the internal structures of the movement and its networks. This has included varied uses of the law and rights discourses, such as using it defensively to counter targeted repression by the state but also using it to successfully claim land rights through litigation against the state's decision to grant mining rights to TEM. These were combined with more confrontational tactics of "blockadia" (Klein, 2014), where activists use their bodies to physically and effectively obstruct the initiation of any unwanted projects or meetings that were perceived as co-opted. The ACC, by combining divergent strategies – many in the public eye – have managed to leverage significant support and attention to their movement, resulting in important interventions and support from well-resourced allies across civil society.

More importantly in terms of sustaining mobilisation, the ACC have created information and education networks across the villages in uMgungundlovu, where each village has representatives coordinate meetings and share information as they get it. This keeps individuals engaged and mobilised within the struggle. Another central part of the ACC's ability to sustain mobilisation is a positive vision for what development should look like in Xolobeni. The promotion of agriculture and locally driven tourism, which I argued to be a kind of prefigurative politics (Yates, 2021), mobilising against large-scale industrial projects, creates an oppositional culture rooted in alternative devlopment practises, rather than only a rejection of mining. These alternative narratives offer a positive vision for community members to mobilise around, which are vital for maintaining mobilisation, or the willingness to act as a collective- over a longer-period of time, because of the increasing risk of co-option and demobilisation from local and national elites. These approaches, along with the legal action, was made possible partly due to the presence and support of allies across civil society, who played a central role in providing the ACC with various resources, social capital and networks. The ACC built networks with NGOs such as the SWC and public interest lawyers such as Richard Spoor Attorneys Incorporated for different mobilisation strategies, while, importantly, maintaining a degree of separation from these organisations. These organisations and actors supported the movements mobilisation through varied means, supporting local claims of territorialisation.

There are a number of different areas and questions that arise from this study on the ACC's mobilisation and that require further research. As highlighted in the limitations section, many of these findings and chapters, such as the discussion of the different repertoires of action employed by the ACC, could be deepened and expanded upon through longer-term studies employing ethnographic research methods. For example, although the role of media is discussed in this study, there needs to be deeper engagement with the role of the media as a facilitator of links between well-resourced spheres of civil society and more marginalised actors.

There were also questions that arose through the research that were not in the field of this study, such as: How has the ACC interacted with different political parties and the electoral system more broadly? How do we understand the divisions within the Amadiba traditional authority, represented by Chief Lunga Baleni on the one hand and head woman Cynthia Baleni on the other hand? What are the prospects of local environmental based movements like the ACC forming part of the broader environmental justice movement in South Africa?

I also struggled to interview allies of the ACC across civil society, such as actors from the Alternative Information and Devlopment Centre (AIDC), which has been supporting the ACC's mobilisation and advocacy since around 2014. These other allies would be important actors to talk to following on from this study.

Lastly, through the fieldwork it became apparent that the mining issue has created divisions in the Amadiba traditional area, largely between coastal communities, who have had historically been neglected by the state and formal economy, and inland communities who are more integrated into the formal economy. As highlighted throughout the study, much of the ACC's support base comes from the coastal communities of Umgungunlodvu, while inland community members are associated with being pro-mining. These divisions, and the reasons why some communities are pro-mining and while others are anti-mining, were not explored in this research paper and would be an interesting topic for further research.

Conflict in Xolobeni is far from over. While I was conducting research for this report, the ACC filed new papers to take SANRAL to court to stop the construction of the Wild Coast Toll Road alongside the coast. There was also a flareup of violence in Sigidi, as local elites attempt to consolidate access to land that would run alongside the toll road (Broughton, 2023). Gwede Mantashe, South Africa's Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy, has doubled down on his position towards the environmental segment of civil society in South Africa, which is likely to only increase conflict and litigation between the state and civil society. While this is happening, the ACC's network continues to expand, cementing the movement as an ongoing example of what collective mobilisation and organisation at a community level can achieve. Building on the previous mobilisation, it can be hoped that the ACC will be able to continue to resist attempts to imposed unwanted imposed developments projects in Xolobeni.

Reference List

Acosta, A. (2013). Extractivism and neoextractivism: two sides of the same curse. Lang M, and Mokrani D (eds). *Beyond development: alternative visions from Latin America*, *1*, pp. 61-86.

Ashman, S. (2015). The social crisis of labour and the crisis of labour politics in South Africa. *Tiers Monde*, (224), pp. 47-66.

Ballard, R, Habib, A., Valodia, I. & Zuern, E. (2006). Introduction: From Anti-Apartheid to Post-Apartheid Social Movements. In: Ballard, R., Habib, A. & Valodia, I. (eds). *Voices of Protest.* Scottsville: University of KwaZulu Natal Press.

Ballard, R., Habib, A., Valodia, I. and Zuern, E. (2005). Globalization, marginalization and contemporary social movements in South Africa. *African Affairs*, *104*(417), pp.615-634.

Bennie, A. (2010). *The relation between environmental protection and development: a case study of the social dynamics involved in the proposed mining at Xolobeni, Wild Coast*. MA dissertation. Johannesburg, University of the Witwatersrand.

Bennie, A. (2011). Questions for labour on land, livelihoods and jobs: A case study of the proposed mining at Xolobeni, Wild Coast. *South African Review of Sociology*, *42*(3), pp.41-59.

Bennie, A. (2019). Mining will not bring jobs to Xolobeni. *The Daily Maverick.* 15 January. Available at: https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2019-01-15-mining-will-not-bring-jobs-to-xolobeni/

Bond, P. (2014). Constitutionalism as a barrier to the resolution of widespread community rebellions in South Africa. *Politikon*, 41(3), pp. 461-482.

Bourke, B. (2014). Positionality: Reflecting on the research process. *The Qualitative Report*, 19(33), pp. 1-9.

Benford, R.D. & Snow, D.A. (2000). Framing Processes and Social Movements: An Overview and Assessment. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 26, pp. 611-639.

Bernauer, T. and Betzold, C. (2012). Civil society in global environmental governance. *The Journal of Environment & Development*, 21(1), pp. 62-66.

Bingham, A.J. (2023). From data management to actionable findings: a five-phase process of qualitative data analysis. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 22, pp. 1-11.

Buechler, S.M. (1993). Beyond Resource Mobilisation? Emerging Trends in Social Movement Theory. *The Sociological Quarterly*. 34(2), pp. 217-235.

Bramwell, W.J. (2015). *Loyalties and the politics of incorporation in South Africa: the case of Pondoland, c. 1870-1913* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Warwick).

Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), pp. 77-101.

Broughton, T. (2023). Women beaten with knobkieries in battle over Wild Coast land, court hears. *GroundUp.* 15 May, 2023. Available at: https://www.groundup.org.za/article/women-beaten-with-knobkieries-in-battle-over-wild-coast-land-court-hears/

Bundy, C. (1989). *The Rise and Fall of South Africa's Peasantry.* 2nd edition. Cape Town: David Phillip.

Chagnon, C.W., Durante, F., Gills, B.K., Hagolani-Albov, S.E., Hokkanen, S., Kangasluoma, S.M., Konttinen, H., Kröger, M., LaFleur, W., Ollinaho, O. and Vuola, M.P. (2022). From extractivism to global extractivism: The evolution of an organizing concept. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 49(4), pp. 760-792.

Chowdhury, A.R. (2014). Repertoires of contention in movements against hydropower projects in India. *Social Movement Studies*, 13(3), pp. 399-405.

Choudry, A. and Kapoor, D. (2013) *NGOisation: Complicity, contradictions and prospects*. London: Zed Books.

Clarke, V. and Braun, V. (2017). Thematic analysis. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 12(3), pp. 297-298.

Clarke, J. (2015). Wild Coast mining conflict: Xolobeni escalates. *Daily Maverick.* May 4th. Available at : https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2015-05-04-wild-coast-mining-conflict-xolobeni-escalates/

Claassens, A. (2013). Recent Changes in Women's Land Rights and Contested Customary Law in South Africa. *Journal of Agrarian Change*, *13*(1), pp.71-92.

Cock, J. (2006). Connecting the Red, Brown and Green: the Environmental Justice Movement in South Africa." In Ballard R. Habib, A. and Valodia, I. (eds) *Voices of Protest: Social Movements in Post-Apartheid South Africa,* pp 203-224. Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press.

Cock, J. (2012). The challenges of ecological transformation in Post-Apartheid South Africa South Africa: The reemergence of an Environmental Justice Movement. In Dawson, M and Sinwell, L. (eds). *Contesting transformation: Popular resistance in the 21st century South Africa.* London: Pluto Press.

Conz, C. (2019). One way to resist capitalist food production. *Africa is a country.* 31 July. Available at: https://africasacountry.com/2019/07/there-is-a-way-to-resist-capitalist-food-production .

Dawson, M. and Sinwell, L. (2012) Transforming scholarship: Soberly reflecting on the politics of resistance. In Dawson, M and Sinwell, L. (eds). *Contesting transformation: Popular resistance in the 21st century South Africa.* London: Pluto Press.

De Wet, J. (2011). Chapter 13: "We Don't Want Your Developments!": Resistance to Imposed Developments in North Eastern Pondoland. In Kepe, T., and Ntsebeza, L. eds. *Rural resistance in South Africa: The Mpondo revolts after fifty years,* pp 203-224. Cape Town: UCT Press.

Della Porta, D. (2013). Repertoires of contention. In Snow, D. A., della Porta, D., Klandermans, B., & McAdam, D. (eds.) *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social and Political Movements*. New York: Wiley-Blackwell.

Dempsey, L., Dowling, M., Larkin, P. and Murphy, K. (2016). Sensitive interviewing in qualitative research. *Research in Nursing & Health*, 39(6), pp. 480-490.

Diani, M. (1992). The Concept of Social Movement. *The Sociological Review*, 40(1), pp. 1-25.

Diani, M. (1997). Social movements and social capital: a network perspective on movement outcomes. *Mobilisation: An International Quarterly*, 2(2), pp. 129-147.

Diani, M., and McAdam D. (2003). *Social Movements and Networks: Relational Approaches to Collective Action*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Diani, M. (2004). Networks and participation. *The Blackwell companion to social movements*, pp.339-359.

Di Muzio, T. (2015). *Carbon capitalism: power, social reproduction and world order*. London: Rowman & Littlefield.

Domínguez, L. and Luoma, C. (2020). Decolonising conservation policy: How colonial land and conservation ideologies persist and perpetuate indigenous injustices at the expense of the environment. *Land*, *9*(3), p.1-22.

Drew., A. (2011). Govan Mbeki's The Peasants Revolt: a Critical Examination. In Kepe, T., and Ntsebeza, L. (eds.) *Rural resistance in South Africa: The Mpondo revolts after fifty years*, pp 67-91. Cape Town: UCT Press.

Dugard, J., Madlingozi, T. and Tissington, K. (2015). Rights-compromised or rights-savvy? The use of rights-based strategies to advance socio-economic struggles by Abahlali baseMjondolo, the South African shack-dwellers' movement. In Garcia, H., Klare, K. and

Williams, L. (eds.) *Social and economic rights in theory and practice: Critical inquiries*, pp 23-42. New York: Routledge.

Du Pisani, J.A., Broodryk, M. and Coetzer, P.W. (1990). Protest Marches in South Africa. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 28(4), pp. 573-602.

Edwards, B. & McCarthy, J.D. (2004). Resources and Social Movement Mobilisation. In: Snow, D.A. Soule, S. & Kriesi, H. (eds.). *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements,* pp 116-152. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Eisinger, P. (1973). The Conditions of Protest Behaviour in American Cities. American Political Science Review. 81(11), pp. 11-28.

Enns, C. 2016. *Experiments in Governance and Citizenship in Kenya's Resource Frontier.* (Doctoral dissertation, Waterloo: University of Waterloo)

Escobar, A. (2008). *Territories of Difference: Place, Movements, Life, Redes*. Durham**:** Duke University Press.

Equal Education. (2024). Our Movement. Available at: https://equaleducation.org.za/our-movement/

Foweraker, J. (1995). *Theorizing Social Movement*s. London: Pluto Press.

Finkeldey, J. (2022). *Fighting Global Neo-Extractivism: Fossil-Free Social Movements in South Africa*. London: Taylor & Francis.

Field, T. (2020). South African community wins right to access mining rights application. *The Conversation.* October 13. Available at: https://theconversation.com/south-african-community-wins-right-to-access-mining-application-but-who-will-win-the-war-147522

Friere, P. (2005). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed.* New York: Continuum.

Friedman, S. (2018). *Power in Action: Democracy, Citizenship and Social Justice*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.

Ferguson, J. (1994). *The Anti-Politics Machine: "Development", Depoliticisation and Bueacratic Power in Lesotho*. Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press.

Garza, A. (2020). *The Purpose of Power: How to Build Movements for the 21st Century*. New York: One World.

Gabel, P. (2013). *Another way of seeing: Essays on transforming law, politics and culture*. Louisiana: Quid Pro Books.

Gamson, W. (1975). *The Strategy of Social Protest.* Homewood, IL: Dorsey.

Gibson, N. (2006). Calling everything into question: Broken Promises, Social Movements and the Emergent Intellectual Currents in Post-Apartheid South Africa. In Gibson (ed) *Challenging Hegemony: Social Movements and the Quest for a New Humanism in Post-Apartheid South Afric*a, pp 1-43. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press.

Gillan, M. and Lambert, R. (2016). Labour movements and the age of crisis: Scale, form and repertoires of action in India and beyond. In Gillian, M and Lambert R (eds) *India and the Age of Crisis*, pp. 22-40. London: Routledge.

Goldblatt, B. & Hassim S. (2023). "Grass in the cracks": Gender, social reproduction and climate justice in the Xolobeni struggle. In Albertyn, C. García, H.A., Campbell M.S., Freeman, S. & Machado, M. (eds.). *Feminist Frontiers in Climate Justice: Gender Equality, Climate Change and Rights*, pp 246-267. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Gramsci, A. (1999). *Selections from Prison Notebooks.* London: Electric Book Company.

Hall, R. (2014). The legacies of the Natives Land Act of 1913. *Scriptura: Journal for Contextual Hermeneutics in Southern Africa*, 113(1), pp. 1-13.

Hamilton, K. and Alexander, M. (2013). Organic community tourism: A co-created approach. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 42: 169-190.

Healy, H. (2022). Struggle for the sands of Xolobeni–From post-colonial environmental injustice to crisis of democracy. *Geoforum*, 133, pp. 128-139.

Hetland, G. and Goodwin, J. (2013). The strange disappearance of capitalism from social movement studies. In *Marxism and Social Movements* (pp. 82-102). Leiden: Brill.

Heim, C.E. (1996). Accumulation in advanced economies: spatial, technological, and social frontiers. *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, 20 (6), pp. 687-714.

Huizenga, D. (2022). Rival jurisdictions on a resource frontier: Law, territorialisation, and inscription in the Eastern Cape, South Africa. *Geoforum*, 133, pp. 1-10.

Hendricks, F. and Peires, J. (2011). All Quiet on the Western Front: Nyandeni Acquiescence in the Mpondoland Revolt. In Kepe, T., and Ntsebeza, L. eds. *Rural Resistance in South Africa: The Mpondo revolts after fifty years,* pp 115-143. Cape Town: UCT Press.

Högselius, P. (2020). The Historical Dynamics of Resource Frontiers. *NTM Zeitschrift für Geschichte der Wissenschaften, Technik und Medizin*, 28(2), pp. 253-266.

Klandermans, B. and Oegema, D. (1987). Potentials, networks, motivations and barriers: steps towards participation in social movements. American Sociological Review, 52(4), pp 519-531.

Koch, R.E. (2010). *Mobilisation and the power of rural movements: A comparison of the South African National Land Committee with the Brazilian Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem-Terra* (Doctoral dissertation, Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch).

Kepe, T., and Ntsebeza, L. eds. (2012). *Rural resistance in South Africa: The Mpondo revolts after fifty years*. Cape Town: UCT Press.

Klein, N. (2014). *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs the Climate.* New York: Simon & Schuster.

Korf, B. and Raeymaekers, T. (2013). Introduction: Border, Frontier and the Geography of Rule at the Margins of the State. In *Violence on the Margins: States, Conflict, and Borderlands*, pp. 3-27. New York: Palgrave Macmillan US.

Leach, D.K. (2013). Prefigurative politics. In *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social and Political Movements*, pp. 1004-1006.

Leonard, L. (2019) Traditional leadership, community participation and mining development in South Africa: The case of Fuleni, Saint Lucia, KwaZulu-Natal. *Land Use Policy*, 86, pp. 290-298.

Levitsky, S.R. (2006) Reassessing the Influence of Legal Advocacy Organisations in Social Movements. *Cause lawyers and social movements*, *145*(146), pp.157-158.

Le Roux, A. (2015) Contesting "Invited spaces": where a ward committee and a social movement meet. *Transformation: critical perspectives on Southern Africa*, 89(1), pp. 87-111.

Lichterman, P. (1998) What do movements mean? The value of participant-observation. *Qualitative Sociology*, 21, pp. 401-418.

Lund, C. (2011) Property and citizenship: conceptually connecting land rights and belonging in Africa. *Africa Spectrum*, 46(3), pp.71-75.

Mack, N. Woodsong, C., MacQueen, K.M., Guest, G., Namey, E. (2005). *Qualitative Research Methods: A Data Collector's Field Guide*. North Carolina: Family Health International.

Maphanga, T., Shale, K., Gqomfa, B. and Zungu, V.M. (2023). The state of public participation in the EIA process and its role in South Africa: a case of Xolobeni. *South African Geographical Journal*, *105*(3), pp.277-305.

Madlingozi, T. (2007). Post-Apartheid Social Movements and the Quest for the Elusive "New" South Africa. *Journal of Law and Society*, 34(1), pp. 77-98.

Madlingozi, T. (2013). Post-Apartheid Social Movements and Legal Mobilisation. Langford, M, Cousins, B, Madlingozi, T, and Dugard, J (eds). *Socio-economic rights in South Africa: Symbols or substance*? pp- 92-130. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Madlingozi, T. (2017). There Is No "Outside the Law": Social Movements, the Law and Social Justice. In Matthews, S. (ed.) *NGOs and Social Justice in South Africa and Beyond.* Pietermaritzburg: University Of KwaZulu Natal Press.

Mahlatsi, M.L. (2018). The peasants' revolt: Analysing the role of the democratic state in the struggle for land and environmental justice in Xolobeni, Eastern Cape, South Africa. *Journal of Public Administration*, 53(2-1), pp. 615-631.

Mamdani, M. (1996). Citizen *and Subject*: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Matthews, S. (2006). Responding to poverty in the light of the post-development debate: Some insights from the NGO Enda Graf Sahel. *Africa Development*, 31(4), pp.52-72.

Matthews, S. and Nqaba, P. (2017). Introduction: Rethinking the Role of NGOs in Struggles for Social Justice. In Matthews, S. (ed.) *NGOs and Social Justice in South Africa and Beyond.* Pietermaritzburg: University Of KwaZulu Natal Press.

Max-Neef, M. (1991). *Human Scale Devlopment: Conception, Application and Further Devlopment.* New York: The Apex Press.

McAdam, D. (1999). *Political process and the development of black insurgency, 1930-1970*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

McAdam, D., Tarrow, S., and Tilly, C. (2001). *Dynamics of Contention.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

McAdam, D. & Tarrow, S. (2011). Dynamics of Contention Ten Years On. *Mobilization: An International Journal*. 16(1), pp. 1-10.

McVeigh, K. (2022). Racism and colonialism embedded in language of conservation, says NGO. *The Guardian.* 12 October. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2022/oct/12/racism-colonialism-nature-conservation-language-survival-international-guide

McCann, M. (1994). *Rights at Work: Pay Equity Reform and the Politics of Legal Mobilisation* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

McCarthy, J.D. and Zald, M.Z. (1977) Resource Mobilisation and Social Movement: A Partial Theory. *American Journal of Sociology*, 82(6): 1212-1241.

Medearis, J. (2005) Social movements and deliberative democratic theory. *British Journal of Political Science*, 35(1), pp. 53-75.

Melucci, A. (1989). *Nomads of the Present: Social Movements and Individual Needs in Contemporary Society*. London: Hutchinson Radius.

Mkutu, K., Greiner, C., Klagge, B. and Grawert, E. (2022) *Future-making and scalar politics in a resource frontier: Energy projects in northern Kenya*. Working Paper No. 63. Bellville: Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies, University of the Western Cape, Cape Town, South Africa.

Mnwana, S. (2018). Why South African Community's win against a mining company matters. *The Conversation.* December 13. Available at: https://theconversation.com/why-south-african-communitys-win-against-mining-company-matters-107746

Mngxitama, A. (2006). National Land Committee, 1994-2006: A Critical Insiders Perspective. In In Gibson, N. (ed.) *Challenging Hegemony: Social Movements and the Quest for a New Humanism in Post-Apartheid South Afric*a, pp 157-193. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press.

Mukwevho, N. (2022). The evolution and development of the principle of free, prior and informed consent in South Africa. *South African Journal on Human Rights*, 38(1-2), pp.144-162.

Ncapayi, F. (2023). Chapter 6: Rural protest against imposed development processes and environmental damage: Fishing communities in the Eastern Cape's Wild Coast. in Brooks, H. Chikane, R. and Mottiar, S. (eds.) *Protest in South Africa: Rejection, reassertion, reclamation.* Johannesburg: MISTRA.

Nombulelo, D.H. & Steyn, D. (2021). N2 toll road on Wild Coast divides community. *GroundUp*. 2 August. Available at: https://www.groundup.org.za/article/xolobeni-n2-toll-road-may-be-bridge-too-far/

Ntsebeza, L. (2005) *Democracy Compromised: Chiefs and the Politics of the Land in South Africa*. Leiden: Brill.

Ngcukaitobi, T. (2021) *Land Matters: South Africa's Failed Land Reforms and the Road Ahead.* Cape Town: Penguin Random House South Africa.

Olson, M. (1965). *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*. NewYork: Schocken.

Oldfield, S. and Stokke, K. (2006). Building Unity in Diversity: Social Movement Activism in the Western Cape Anti-Eviction Campaign, pp 25-49, In Habib, A. Valodia, I and Ballard, R. (eds.) *Globalisation, Marginalisation and New Social Movements.* Durban: University of KwaZulu Natal Press.

Oliver, P.E. Cadena-Roa, J. and Strawn, K.D. (2003). Emerging trends in the study of protest and social movements. *Research in Political Sociology*, 12(1), pp. 213-244.

Oommen, T.K. (2004). *Nation, Civil Society and Social Movements: Essays in Political Sociology*. New Delhi: Sage Publications.

Osaghae, E.E. (2010). Social movements and rights claims: the case of action groups in the Niger Delta, pp 35-59. In Thompson, L., and Tapscott, C. (eds.) *Citizenship and social movements: perspectives from the Global South,* pp 25-59. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Parker, B. (2006). Constructing community through maps? Power and praxis in community mapping. *The Professional Geographer*, 58(4), pp. 470-484.

Paret, M. (2017). Southern resistance in critical perspective. In Paret, M., Runciman, C and Sinwell, L. (eds.) *Southern resistance in critical perspectives: The politics of protest in South Africa's contentious democracy,* pp 1-22. New York: Routledge.

Peluso, N.L. (1995). Whose woods are these? Counter-mapping forest territories in Kalimantan, Indonesia. *Antipode*, 27(4), pp. 383-406.

Peluso, N.L. and Lund, C. (2011). New frontiers of land control: Introduction. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 38(4), pp. 667-681.

Pieterse, M. (2007). Eating socioeconomic rights: the usefulness of rights talk in alleviating social hardship revisited. *Human Rights Quarterly*, 29 (2), pp.796-822.

Pieterse, J. (2011). Reading and Writing the Mpondo Revolts. In Kepe, T., and Ntsebeza, L. eds. *Rural resistance in South Africa: The Mpondo revolts after fifty years*, pp 43-67. Cape Town: UCT Press.

Piper, L and Nadvi, L. (2010). Popular mobilization, party dominance and participatory governance in South Africa. In Thompson, L., and Tapscott, C. (eds.) *Citizenship and social movements: perspectives from the Global South*, pp 212-238. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Pithouse, R. (2008). A politics of the poor: shack dwellers' struggles in Durban. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 43(1), pp. 63-94.

Pithouse, R. (2006). Solidarity, Co-option and Assimilation: The Necessity, Promises and Pitfalls of Global Linkages for South African Movements. In Gibson, N. (ed.) *Challenging Hegemony: Social Movements and the Quest for a New Humanism in Post-Apartheid South Afric*a, pp 247-270. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press.

Putnam, R. D. (1993). *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Van Stekelenburg, J. and Klandermans, B. (2008). Chapter 2: Social Movement Theory: past, present and prospects. In Ellis, S. and Van Kessel, I. (eds). *Movers and Shakers: Social Movements in Africa*, pp17-43. Leiden: Brill.

Ramutsindela, M., Matose, F. and Mushonga, T. (2022). *The violence of conservation in Africa: state, militarization and alternatives*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Rasmussen, M.B. and Lund, C. (2018). Reconfiguring frontier spaces: The territorialisation of resource control. *World Development*, 101, pp. 388-399.

Runciman, C. (2011). Questioning resistance in post-apartheid South Africa: a response to Luke Sinwell. *Review of African Political Economy*, *38*(130), pp.607-614.

Runciman, C.F. (2012). *Mobilisation and insurgent citizenship of the anti-privatisation forum, South Africa: An ethnographic study* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Glasgow).

Saldana, J. (2009). *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*. London: Sage Publications.

Sarma, J. Faxon, H.O. and Roberts, K.B. (2023). Remaking and living with resource frontiers: Insights from Myanmar and beyond. *Geopolitics*, 28(1), pp.1-22.

Sandham, L.A., Van Heerden, A.J., Jones, C.E., Retief, F.P. and Morrison-Saunders, A.N. (2013). 'Does enhanced regulation improve EIA report quality? Lessons from South Africa. *Environmental Impact Assessment Review*, 38, pp.155-162.

Siisiainen, M. (2003). Two concepts of social capital: Bourdieu vs. Putnam. *International Journal of Contemporary Sociology*, 40(2), pp.183-204.

Schetter, C. and Müller-Koné, M. (2021). Frontiers' violence: The interplay of state of exception, frontier habitus, and organized violence. *Political Geography*, 87, pp1-10.

Scheingold, S. (1973). *The myth of rights*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Shivji, I.G. (2006). The Silences in the NGO Discourse: The role and future of NGOs in Africa. *Africa Development*, 31(4), pp. 22-51.

Sinwell, L. (2010). The Wynberg concerned residents' disempowering court victory. *Urban Forum.* 21, pp. 153-169.

Sinwell, L. (2011). Is "another world" really possible? Re-examining counter-hegemonic forces in post-apartheid South Africa. *Review of African Political Economy*, 38(127), pp. 61-76.

Sole, S. (2019). Xolobeni - the mine, the murder and DG. *amaBhungane.* 30 June. Available at: https://amabhungane.org/stories/xolobeni-the-mine-the-murder-and-the-dg/

Sole, S. (2022). Xolobeni murder: Hawks General Fingered for shutting down investigation. *amaBhungane.* 10 May. Available at: https://amabhungane.org/stories/230510-xolobeni-murder-hawks-general-fingered-for-shutting-down-investigation/

SAHRC (South African Human Rights Commission). (2018). *National Hearing on the Underlying Socio-economic Challenges of Mining-affected Communities in South Africa*. Pretoria: Government Printer.

SAHRC (South African Human Rights Commission.). (2007). *Human rights commission visit to Xolobeni, Wild Coast.* Johannesburg: SAHRC.

Snow, D.A., Soule, S.A. and Kriesi, H. (2004). Mapping the terrain. *The Blackwell companion to social movements*. New York: Wiley-Blackwell

Southall, R.J. (1977). The beneficiaries of Transkeian 'independence'. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, *15*(1), pp.1-23.

Steyn, D. (2021). Should the proposed N2 road through the coast be moved? *GroundUp.* 3 November. Available at: https://www.groundup.org.za/article/n2-toll-road-controversy-sanral-versus-amadiba-crisis-committee/

Tarrow, S. (1998). *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics,* 1st edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tarrow, S (2011). *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*, 2nd edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tilly, C. (1978). *From Mobilisation to Revolution*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley

Tilly, C. (2008). *Contentious Performances*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tilly, C. (2003). *The politics of collective violence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tilly, C. (1985) Models and realities of popular collective action. *Social Research*, 52(5), pp. 717-747.

Thompson, L., Tapscott, C. (2010). Introduction: mobilisation and social movements in the South - struggles for inclusive governance. In Thompson, L., and Tapscott, C. (eds.) *Citizenship and Social Movements: Perspectives from the Global South,* pp 1-32. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Tsing, A.L. (2003). Natural resources and capitalist frontiers. *Economic and Political Weekly*, pp. 5100-5106.

Riofrancos, T. (2020). Extractivism and Extractivismo. Global South Studies: Collective Publication with The Global South. 11 November. Available at: https://globalsouthstudies.as.virginia.edu/articles/pdf/726

Rosa Luxemberg Foundation. (2020). Xolobeni – the Right to Say No. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q8p1VXDgLkY

Vandergeest, P. (2003). Land to some tillers: development-induced displacement in Laos. *International Social Science* Journal 55(175), pp. 47-56.

Vliegenthart, R. and Walgrave, S. (2012). The interdependency of mass media and social movements. *The Sage Handbook of Political Communication*, pp.387-398.

Van Stekelenburg, J. and Klandermans, B. (2008). Social movement theory: past, present and prospects by. In Ellies and Kessel (eds) *Movers and shakers: Social movements in Africa*, pp. 17-43. Leiden: Brill.

Wezel, A., Bellon, S., Doré, T., Francis, C., Vallod, D. and David, C. (2009). Agroecology as a science, a movement and a practice. A review. *Agronomy for Sustainable Development*, 29, pp. 503-515.

Washinyira, T. (2016). "We will die for our land", say angry Xolobeni villagers as dune mining looms *The Mail and Guardian.* 12 February, URL: https://mg.co.za/article/2016-02-12-we-will-die-for-our-land-say-angry-xolobeni-villagers-as-dune-mining-looms/.

Woodworth, M.D. (2017). Disposable Ordos: The making of an energy resource frontier in western China. *Geoforum*, 78, pp. 133-140.

WoMin Collective, T. (2017). Extractives vs development sovereignty: building living consent rights for African women. *Gender & Development*, 25(3), pp. 421-437.

Xaba, M.B., 2023. Resisting development or imposition? Examining the many dynamics around the resistance of externally initiated, state-assisted, and industry-driven "development" projects in the Wild Coast, Eastern Cape, South Africa. *Cogent Social Sciences*, *9*(2), pp.1-15.

Yates, L. (2021). Prefigurative politics and social movement strategy: The roles of prefiguration in the reproduction, mobilisation and coordination of movements. *Political Studies*, 69(4), pp.1033-1052.

Yes4Youth. (2024). What is Yes4Youth? Available at: https://www.yes4youth.co.za/

Zamchiya, P. (2019). *Differentiation and development: The case of the Xolobeni community in the Eastern Cape, South Africa*. PLAAS: Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies Working Paper 61.

Court documents

Baleni and Others v Minister of Mineral Resources and Others (73768/2016) [2018] ZAGPPHC 829; [2019] 1 All SA 358 (GP); 2019 (2) SA 453 (GP) (22 November 2018) (n.d.).

Duduzile Baleni. Founding Affidavit, In the High Court of South Africa (Gauteng Division, Pretoria) (2016) Case No: 73768/2016.

Interviews

Andrew Bennie, researcher and board member at Sustaining the Wild Coast (SWC), November 2023, online.

Sandy Heather, former employee and project manager at Sustaining the Wild Coast (SWC). May 2023, online. Follow up interview in August 2023, online.

Johan Lorenzen, Lawyer at Richard Spoor Attorneys Incorporated, June 2023, online.

Sinegugu Zukulu, director of Sustaining the Wild coast (SWC), April 2023, Umtentu. Follow up interview, January 2024, online.

John Clarke, activist social worker and former director of Sustaining the Wild Coast (SWC), Port Alfred, August 2023. Follow up interview, Makhanda, November 2023.

Wilmien Wicomb, lawyer at Legal Resource Centre (LRC), August 2023, online.

Sarah Sephton, former director of Legal Resource Centre (LRC), Makhanda office, online.

Tseliso Thipanyane, former CEO of South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC), October 2023, online.

Nokwanda Langazana, amaDiba resident, former employee at Sustaining the Wild Coas (SWC) and facilitator of Simbhademe, October 2023, online.

Nonhle Mbuthuma, ACC chairperson, May 2023. Online.

Mzamo Dlmaini, former ACC leader, September, Online.

Cromwell Sonjica, ACC executive member for Umtentu, April 2023 Umtentu.

Sanjani Dlamini [77], ACC member and local traditional healer, April 2023, Umtentu.

Vuyani Nxolo, ACC member, April 2023 Umtentu.

Luxolo Dlamini, ACC member and Umtentu headman, April 2023, Umtentu.

Khulekani Kiwa, ACC member, April 2023 Umtentu.

Sitolo Danca, ACC member, April 2023, Umtentu.

Lithembi Dlamini, ACC activist, April 2023, Umtentu.

Nonhla Balete, ACC activist, April 2023, Umtentu.

Xolani Novela, ACC member, April 2023, Umtentu.

Lithembi Tabani, ACC member, September 2023, Umtentu.

Chris Harrison, ACC member, April 2023, Umtentu.

Mazwi Gampe, ACC member, April 2023, Umtentu.

Nokuzolo Denge, ACC member, April 2023, Umtentu.

[77] Pseudonyms were used for non-executive ACC members.