



Masterarbeit:

Extractive capitalism in the present and future: Critical Perspectives on capitalist extraction-led development

Capitalist extraction of resources (natural and otherwise) in regions across the world, be it by large-scale capitalist corporations or individual and small-scale workings by local people, is becoming a crucial debate both within academia and in the public sphere. Natural resources extraction, especially, is presented as potentially destructive of the environment, peace and the general lives of humans and non-humans alike in regions experiencing such operation, but it is also offered as a force for economic development – for example, providing jobs and new public infrastructures in areas that could otherwise be peripheral to capitalist development. Building on critical social science perspective (primarily geographical, anthropological and sociological) that highlight the paradoxes of extractive capitalism and development, the project will scrutinize existing categories such as the distinctions between corporations and communities, between situations of domination and resistance, development and lack-of-development. The project questions the narrow frameworks of hegemonic extractive capitalism and looks to relocate extraction and development processes in all their complexity. It proposes new approaches that take into account entangled relations of power, struggles, resistance, cooperation, circulation, and transnational ties.

The master thesis can focus on the recent topics arising from the expansion of mining in post-apartheid South Africa. Here communities have been engaged in complex struggle to control and benefit from mineral resources, or completely stop the extraction, as is the case with platinum mining in the north and northwest, coal mining in the north, and proposed titanium mining in the country's south.

- The student can find out about the changing relationships and nature of engagement(s) between local communities, the state and mining companies, in face of mining related developments. For example the SOLVE - Save Our Limpopo Valley Environment movement and its struggles against coal mining in Limpopo, South Africa

Another potential focus is on artisan and small-scale mining (ASM) in Africa. Such kinds of extraction have led to the transformation of social-political struggles and contestations in place like Zimbabwe.

- The student can find out the impact of the spread of ASM on dimension of local and national political process and practices, structures and relations of power. What is the impact of widespread ASM on local forms of political mobilization, mobility and hierarchy?

The studies could be done through a discourse analysis and literature review of NGO and Activist movements' documents, media reports, documentary films, academic literature

For fieldwork abroad, students are encouraged to cultivate their own contacts with NGOs like *Brot für Alle* that have done work with activist movements in South Africa. Fieldwork can be contemplated pending clarification of security situation(s), relaxation of COVID-19 measures, and research focus.

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