Forking Sustainability Pathways?

Engaged research on local food practices in the Faroe Islands and São Tomé e Príncipe

by
Elisabeth Skarðhamar Olsen

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When we only name the problem,
when we state complaint without a constructive focus or
resolution, we take hope away. In this way critique can
become merely an expression of profound cynicism,
which then works to sustain dominator culture.

bell hooks, *Teaching Community*

Abstract

This thesis offers a unique analysis and perspective on the subsistence-oriented food economy in two small island countries – the Faroe Islands and São Tomé e Príncipe. Based upon empirical material generated through an engaged research process with small-scale food producers and activists in the two contexts, the research questions addressed in this thesis are: What characterises the subsistence-oriented food economies in the Faroe Islands and São Tomé e Príncipe? What logics, principles and values do they consist of? And how might these inform transformative sustainability pathways? With this as analytical focus, the thesis aims to contribute with empirical insights and theorisation in directions that go beyond critique of the status quo. By focusing on already existing 'sustainabilities' in the sphere of food (re)production in the two contexts (the prevalence of mutual aid, non-monetary relations of exchange, a sufficiency-mindset, etc.), the thesis aspires to ignite glimmers of hope and inspiration for policymakers, community organisers and other social actors when it comes to forging contextually meaningful and transformative sustainability pathways. The thesis body comprises four chapters (structured as stand-alone papers), which each explore dimensions of the research questions across the cases. The positionality of the researcher (being herself from the Faroe Islands) has entailed radically different approaches in terms of research design and participatory processes in the two contexts, with participatory and action dimensions more substantive in relation to the Faroese context in the final thesis. In addition to elaborating a reflexive and situated approach to participatory research with local communities in different contexts across the global North-South line, the thesis also contributes with reflections on another methodological conundrum, namely, how to support existing alternatives to growth through engagement in the field and simultaneously contribute to the advancement of knowledge that can feed into academic post-growth theorisation.

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Author's declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own work and has not been submitted for the award of a higher degree elsewhere. The thesis contains two papers that have been published and two that are in preparation for submission. They are listed below in the order they appear in the thesis with a description of the contribution that my co-authors and I have made. The word count of the thesis is approximately 60,000, which means that it does not exceed the permitted maximum.

1. **Olsen, E. S.** and Whittle, R. (2019). Transcending binaries: a participatory political ecology of the Faroese foodscape. *Nordia Geographical Publications*, *47*(5), 55–73. The article is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 4.0. Olsen conceived the ideas for this publication, collected the data, analysed the data and wrote the first draft of the manuscript. Whittle contributed critically to subsequent writing, reviewing, and editing.

2. Bogadóttir, R. and **Olsen, E. S.** (2017). Making degrowth locally meaningful: the case of the Faroese *grindadráp*. *Journal of Political Ecology*, *24,* 504-418. The article is licensed under CC BY 4.0. Both authors contributed equally to this publication – conceiving the ideas, collecting the data, analysing the data, writing the manuscript and its subsequent critical revisions.

3. **Olsen, E.S.** and Bogadóttir, R. Re-introducing fish as a locally available food source: Towards a Faroese post-growth food policy. *To be submitted*. Olsen and Bogadóttir both conceived the ideas for this publication. Olsen collected the data, analysed the data and wrote the manuscript in its current form.

4. **Olsen, E.S.** "Help me today and I will help you tomorrow": Subsistence-oriented food economies in São Tomé e Príncipe and the Faroe Islands. *To be submitted*. My Faroese and Santomean research partners and assistants will be invited to co-author the final paper.

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List of abbreviations

ADDAPA:	Associação para o Desenvolvimento Agropecuário e Proteção do Ambiente
CECAB:	Cooperativa de Produção e Exportação de Cacau Biológico
CECAFEB:	Cooperativa de Exportação de Café Biológico de São Tomé e Príncipe
CECAQ11:	Cooperativa de Exportação de Cacau de Qualidade
CEPIBA:	Cooperativa de Produção e Exportação de Pimenta e Baunilha Biológica
CSO:	Civil society organisation
EEZ:	Exclusive economic zone
FAO:	The Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations
FENAPA:	Federação Nacional dos Pequenos Agricultores
FNU:	Føroya náttúru- og umhvørvisfelag
IFAD:	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IMF:	International Monetary Fund
LCD:	Least developed countries
LVC:	La Via Campesina
MLSTP:	Movimento de Libertação de São Tomé e Príncipe
NGO:	Non-governmental organisation
ODA:	Official development assistance
PAPAFPA:	Programa de Apoio à Promoção de Agricultura Familiar e Pesca Artesanal
PAR:	Participatory Action Research
PNAPAF:	Programa Nacional de Apoio à Promoção de Agricultura Familiar
SIDS:	Small island developing state
STP:	São Tomé and Príncipe
UNEP:	United Nations Environment Programme

1. Introduction

1.1 Research area

Although there appears to be a widespread recognition that a transformation of the global food system is required to meet the socio-ecological challenges of the Anthropocene (Pereira et al., 2020; Ruben et al., 2021), and although research suggests that on the ground alternative food networks, food provision systems and diverse food economies are flourishing (Beacham, 2018a; Calvário and Kallis, 2017; Nelson and Edwards, 2022; Plank, 2022; Pungas, 2023), truly transformative pathways and systemic shifts are still to emerge.

This thesis aims to contribute to transformative food visions, initiatives and policy. Drawing from critical food scholarship and heterodox approaches to the economy, the thesis examines elements of the subsistence-oriented food economies in two small island countries in the Atlantic Ocean - The Faroe Islands and São Tomé e Príncipe. It engages with and maps out already existing contextually embedded "quiet sustainabilities" (Smith and Jehlička, 2013) in the two contexts. Building on this analysis, the thesis aims to explore how various social actors and stakeholders (food producers, activists, policymakers, etc.) can draw inspiration from these grounded experiences.

I use the concept of subsistence-oriented food economy to describe the diverse practices of food production, exchange and consumption in society that are primarily directed towards subsistence, and which do not necessarily have a profit-oriented objective, although some also have this additional dimension. My use of the concept draws significantly from the work of Mies and Bennholdt-Thomsen (1999) and is elaborated in section 1.4.3.

A key component of the process surrounding this thesis has been an ambition to engage in a participatory and/or action research process. Thus, the empirical material underpinning the thesis was generated through an engaged research process with small scale food producers and food activists in the two contexts. Parts of the thesis thus also revolves around some of the methodological themes

that characterised the research process, such as how to carry out participatory research in a reflexive, situated and meaningful way that supports local food system dynamics in the field, while simultaneously allowing for explorations of the more abstract theoretical debate on transformative sustainability pathways and post-growth. These participatory and action components of the work influenced the research and emerge in the analysis presented in many of the thesis chapters. The connections and exchanges set in motion during the project are still ongoing and have a life beyond what is captured in the thesis.

This introduction is structured into four additional sub-sections. First, I give a brief rationale for the geographical focus of the thesis. Then I spell out the thesis aim and research questions. After this, I provide an overview of the key conceptual themes which the thesis revolves around. And finally, I outline the thesis structure.

1.2 Why the Faroe Islands and São Tomé e Príncipe?

This thesis examines how subsistence-oriented food economies function in similar geographic contexts (small islands) albeit in different political economic and socio-metabolic positions (global North vs. South).

Being myself from the Faroe Islands, I knew early on that I wanted to do part of my research (t)here. However, I also wanted to be able to compare Faroese local food dynamics with another case. With an academic background in Human Ecology – a field which has a strong emphasis on global environmental inequality, doing a global North-South comparison felt meaningful, and from then on it followed naturally that the global South case was also to be a small island context.

After some desk research on small island countries in the global South, I decided upon São Tomé e Príncipe. Some of the initial reasons were that I was looking for a country with a relatively low population so that it would not be too different from the Faroe Islands in this regard. [1] Another consideration I made, was the similarity

[1] With approximately 240.000 inhabitants, São Tomé e Príncipe has a higher population than the Faroe Islands, which has approximately 55.000 inhabitants. However, this difference is relatively insignificant in the broader context.

in size in terms of land cover and territorial waters.[2] I also considered minimising language barriers.[3] Having resided in another West African country (Ghana) with historical ties to São Tomé e Príncipe also meant that the region was not completely unfamiliar.

Finally, the fact that the national export economies of both countries feed into the global food system also contributed to my decision. The main export in the Faroe Islands is fish and fish related products, while in São Tomé e Príncipe it is cocoa. In chapter two I elaborate more extensively on the rationale for the comparison and the historical human geographic contexts of the two countries.

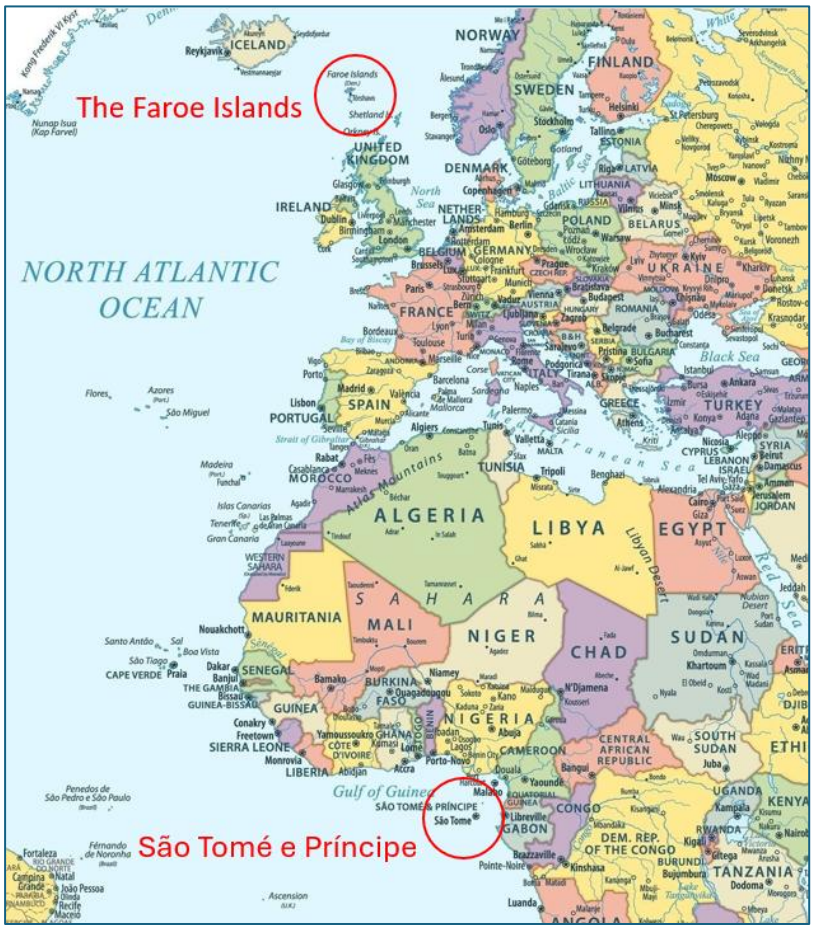


FIGURE 1: MAP ILLUSTRATING THE POSITIONS OF THE FAROE ISLANDS AND SÃO TOMÉ E PRÍNCIPE

[2] São Tomé e Príncipe covers approximately 1000 km^2 and has a 160,000 km^2 EEZ, while the Faroe Islands covers approximately 1400 km^2 and has a 274,000 km^2 EEZ.

[3] I did not speak Portuguese before starting research, but since I spoke both Italian and Spanish, I expected that I would be able to carry out basic conversations within a relatively short amount of time with support from a local translator.

1.3 Thesis aim and research questions

This thesis aims to examine how already existing alternatives to growth play out in the subsistence-oriented food economies of the Faroe Islands and São Tomé e Príncipe in the hope of stimulating our thinking and creativity when it comes to articulating contextually meaningful approaches to post-growth transitions and policymaking.

The research questions addressed in the thesis are**:**

> *What characterises the subsistence-oriented food economies in the Faroe Islands and São Tomé e Príncipe? What logics, principles and values do they consist of? And how might these inform transformative sustainability pathways?*

In addition to this, the thesis also circles around a methodological conundrum, which is:

> *How can growth-critical participatory research support existing alternatives in the field and simultaneously contribute to the advancement of academic post-growth theorisation?*

This methodological conundrum should not be understood as something that I try to solve in this thesis, but something which represents a methodological perplexity that arose during my process, and which I share some initial reflections upon in the methodology chapter and then again in the thesis conclusion.

1.4 Conceptual foundations

Conceptually, this thesis is informed by what I understand to be four different (but overlapping) clusters of theoretical debates. In this section, I map out how these have shaped my approach methodologically and also when it comes to analysing the phenomena examined in the thesis. The first cluster concerns the food security – food sovereignty debate. The second revolves around the structural dynamics related to the global environmental crisis and its inequalities, as well as its relation to the post-growth debate and agenda. The third centres on concepts

and perspectives in economic anthropology and feminist political economy. The fourth and last cluster concerns current debates on decoloniality in research and in relation to forging sustainability pathways.

1.4.1 Food (in)security and food sovereignty

Issues pertaining to environmental sustainability and social justice surrounding global food system dynamics have attracted much attention in recent years. However, in the literature there are competing non-neutral framings of these issues. In this section I introduce food security and food sovereignty as two contrasting, but also to some extent overlapping and relational frameworks for understanding some of the pressing food related challenges in the world and efforts to solve them.

Although access to food is a human right (OCHR/FAO, 2010) and despite decades of international efforts to eradicate hunger, it is estimated that approximately 28 percent of the global population lives in a state of moderate or severe food insecurity, and that around 9 percent of these live in hunger (FAO et al., 2024). Meanwhile, UNEP's estimates of global food waste suggest that 19 percent of all the food produced globally is disposed of at the retailer, food service and household level (UNEP, 2024). That the food system is "broken" (Guterres, 2023) is even more true when also considering that the global food system contributes to a third of global greenhouse gas emissions (Menegat et al., 2022) and is a key driver of global biodiversity loss (Boakes et al., 2024). These concerns were also emphasised in the latest report by the EAT-Lancet commission, which notably stressed social justice as a central goal in transforming the global food system (Rockström et al., 2025).

Policies proposed to combat hunger and food insecurity most frequently draw from the concept and framework of food security (Beddington, 2010; Godfray et al., 2010), whose most widely applied definition was first presented at the 1996 World Food Summit, in the following way: "Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and

nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life." (FAO, 2001) [4]

However, since its inception, the food security framework has faced much criticism for its "consensus framing" (Mooney and Hunt, 2009), which has led to incommensurable meanings and contradictory agendas being associated with the concept. From a political ecology perspective, one of the most significant points of critique has been the risk for it to play into a Malthusian discourse of a need to increase global food production to feed the growing population, which has facilitated a co-optation of the concept into neoliberal agendas, such as the interests of corporate agribusinesses. Moreover, by framing hunger and food insecurity as a technical problem, applications of the food security framework often dismiss questions relating to power, structural inequality and distribution. In fact, research shows that the food security framework is not only inadequate to address global hunger but is frequently also discursively mobilised to legitimise appropriations of land and other commons that rural communities rely on for food and subsistence in general (Legwegoh and Fraser, 2015; McMichael and Schneider, 2011; Moseley et al., 2015; Nally, 2016; Tomlinson, 2013).

In reaction to these tendencies, critical agrarian scholars have instead chosen to engage with the analyses and frameworks of contemporary social (food) movements, civil society organisations and initiatives, as well as exploring the perspectives and realities of contemporary small-scale food producers. From this analytical perspective, the highly unequal foodscapes around the world are understood to be embedded in historically rooted political-economic dynamics that continue to structurally (re)produce socioecological inequalities in the world (Akraham-Lodhi, 2013; McMichael, 2009; Patel, 2007). A concept connecting this body of literature is that of food sovereignty, the most applied definition of which

[4] The formal definition from 1996 was updated in 2001 to include a recognition of the significance of social factors when it comes to food access.

can be found in the 2007 Declaration of the Nyéléni Forum for Food Sovereignty[5]:

> Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts the aspirations and needs of those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations. (Nyéléni, 2007a)

While the exact origins of the food sovereignty framework are debated, a key historical event for its emergence into the scene of global food policy debates was also at the 1996 World Food Summit in Rome. This was when the international peasant movement *La Via Campesina* (in English: the Peasant Way) formally introduced the concept as an alternative to food security. Since then, it has been adopted and developed as a political program by a wider range of small-scale food producers and their allies from all over the world.

The food sovereignty framework is usually contrasted with the food security framework, proposing instead a more holistic approach which goes beyond the question of food availability to also include sustainability and support of local economies and their lifeways (Edelman et al., 2014). The framework consists of six pillars, which are: 1) A focus on food for people, 2) Valuing food providers, 3) Localising food systems, 4) Putting control locally, 5) Building knowledge and skills, and 6) Working with nature (Nyéléni, 2007b).

The food sovereignty movement – that is the large network of differently located food producers, activists, scholars and civil society organisations which identify with the food sovereignty vision – spans across highly diverse realities, from permaculture activists in the global North to land rights movement in the global

[5] The 2007 Nyéléni Forum for Food Sovereignty which took place in Sélinguè in Mali was an important international gathering for the Food Sovereignty movement. The meeting brought together over 500 participants from over 80 countries, herein small-scale food producers, indigenous people, food activists, and food scholars. A key outcome of the forum was the Nyéléni Declaration's definition of Food Sovereignty and the six-pillar framework of food sovereignty, which continue to influence food policy debates worldwide.

South and indigenous people across the global North-South line. Scholars such as Constance et al., (2014) have rightfully problematised and pointed out the limitations of conceptualising these very differently positioned initiatives into one and the same movement, questioning for instance whether alternative food networks (AFNs) and the Slow Food movement in the global North are actually engaged in the same political struggle and/or have complimentary socio-ecological objectives as peasant, indigenous and land rights movements in the global South.

A pertinent and related critique of the food sovereignty movement and its discourse, relates to what Bernstein (2016) calls the "peasant turn", referring to the renewed focus on the 'peasant' as a critical agent of change in 21st century analyses of struggles against capitalism and corporate agribusiness. Bernstein argues that the binary framing of the 'virtuous peasant' versus 'vicious agribusinesses' simplifies a complex reality, which overlooks contextual nuances, class dynamics among different agrarian subjects, and the various ways that small-scale farmers negotiate their life circumstances in the face of capitalism (Bernstein, 2016). Of relevance to islands and other coastal contexts, I would extend this perspective into fisheries and the various ways that also small-scale fishers have to negotiate their life circumstances in the context of capitalism. Chapter six in this thesis presents a case in point here.

From another complimentary perspective some scholars have also problematised the binary oppositional framing of food security and food sovereignty, which has come to dominate academic discourse in critical food and agrarian studies. In comparing the genealogy of the two concepts and while acknowledging their oppositional aspects, Jarosz (2014) emphasises the relational overlaps between them, and how the meaning attributed to the two concepts varies across scale, time and geographical context. In a similar vein Clapp (2014) argues that the concept of food security per se is an open-ended descriptive concept without any normative/prescriptive agenda. While she acknowledges that the concept has been co-opted and mainstreamed into a neoliberal agenda, she warns against the tendency of critical food scholars to abandon the descriptive concept of food

security, which she argues has much to offer when it comes to addressing the gross inequities in the food system. Thus, according to Clapp, treating food security and food sovereignty as opposing normative agendas distorts and oversimplifies their relationship. Instead, she argues in favour of moving beyond this binary framing and keeping both concepts on the policymaking table and to "not throw out the food security baby with the mainstream agenda bathwater" (Clapp, 2014).[6]

Following a similar line of thought, in chapter three of this thesis, I discuss some of the methodological benefits of moving beyond binary thinking when doing critical food research, and how in my case a reflexive participatory research process led to a richer and more nuanced understanding of the Faroese foodscape and its actors. Here I have found particular affinity with Schiavoni (2017) who has proposed a more processual application of the food sovereignty concept. Rather than seeing food sovereignty as an end point to be achieved, she draws from its pillars to identify the way that people, social groups and even countries are *doing* food sovereignty.

1.4.2 Environmental justice beyond growth

A key premise underlying the aim and research questions addressed in this thesis is the acknowledgement that the negative and unevenly distributed socio-ecological externalities of the global food system cannot be properly understood without contextualising them in relation to the paradigm of economic growth (Hornborg, 2003). For decades now, scholars in sustainability sciences and ecological economics have calculated the biophysical dimension of economic

[6] I would argue that it is exactly the descriptive nature and "consensus framing" (Mooney and Hunt, 2009) of the food security concept which facilitates its co-optation and its multifaceted usage – both into neoliberal discourse and also into other political agendas. On the one hand the concept is used by UN institutions such as the FAO, WHO and the WFP in their policies to combat hunger and malnutrition, herein also featured in their methodology for measuring and analysing the state of (mal)nutrition and food (un)availability in the world, i.e. the IPC approach (the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification) (IPC, 2025). On the other hand, it is used to frame food as a matter of national security, i.e. the trend of the so-called "securitization of food", which in recent years has become a high priority affair as a result of the increasing geopolitical tensions between Russia and Europe (Mangnus and Candel, 2025).

growth through ecological footprint analyses (Wackernagel and Rees, 1996), planetary boundaries (Rockström et al., 2009), social-metabolism analyses (Haberl, 2006; Haberl et al., 2011) and other methods of physical accounting. Many scholars have pointed out that when looking at the numbers with a political economy lens it becomes evident that at the root of the triple planetary crisis are structurally unequal political economic relations, embedded in historical colonialism.[7] These dynamics have been conceptualised as ecologically unequal exchange, denoting the process whereby time and space (e.g. embodied labour, land and resources) is appropriated from the global South to be fed into the socio-economic metabolism of the global North (Dorninger et al., 2021; Hickel et al., 2022; Hornborg, 1998, 2001).

In response to these environmental injustices and the global climate emergency, several heterodox economic approaches have gained traction. First and foremost, this thesis draws from the field which Kallis et al. (2025) have termed post-growth research, which they categorise as a sub-discipline of Sustainability Science, influenced by the field of Ecological Economics. Following their lead, in this thesis I also use the term post-growth to refer to growth-critical approaches in general. The thesis does not go into the differences and overlaps between post-growth, degrowth and other growth-critical frameworks. However, when referring to an idea or concept that pertains exclusively to degrowth scholarship, the concept of degrowth is used. This is for instance the case for the paper in chapter five, which contributed to a special issue specifically exploring degrowth in relation to culture and power (Paulson, 2017).

At its core, post-growth scholarship departs from the recognition that infinite GDP growth is not possible on a biophysically finite planet. Post-growth research therefore revolves around how and what kind of change is needed in order to transform our current economic system from growth-dependency to an economy

[7] The concept of "Triple planetary crisis" refers to the intersected crises of 1) climate change, 2) pollution and 3) biodiversity loss. The concept has been mainstreamed since the UN adopted it as a framework to for speaking about the interdependency of these three crises (see e.g. Mishra, 2025).

whose primary objective is to serve human needs and well-being within planetary boundaries. Some seminal post-growth publications that have informed my thinking on these issues include D'Alisa et al. (2014), Demaria et al. (2013), Fournier (2008), Hickel and Kallis (2020), Jackson (2011), Kallis (2011), Paulson (2017), Raworth (2017), Schneider (2010) and Schmelzer et al. (2022).

While these publications represent quite diverse positions and perspectives on the issue, a key point of consensus in the post-growth literature follows from the previously described phenomenon of ecologically unequal exchange, i.e. that the industrialisation experienced primarily in high-income countries (the global North), has consistently relied on resource extraction from low-income countries (the global South). In the literature, this relationship has also been conceptualised as an "ecological debt" which the global North owes the global South (Martínez-Alier, 2012, 2002). Following this line of reasoning, many post-growth scholars emphasise that it is first and foremost the economies in the global North whose economies must 'degrow', also to alleviate their pressure on local environments in the global South.

Although many debates and disagreements exist within the growing field of post-growth research, what unites them is a normative agenda of figuring out how to decrease global energy and resource use and simultaneously enhance human well-being (Kallis et al., 2025). Since this task requires multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary efforts, post-growth debates and research consists of a diversity of scholarly contributions spanning across the social, human and natural sciences.

The post-growth research area engaged with in this thesis revolves around identifying and theorising change from already existing economic practices that challenge the growth dogma. To this endeavour I have found much inspiration from scholarly work and perspectives in the fields of economic anthropology and feminist political economy, which thus represents the next cluster of theoretical debates that the thesis draws from.

1.4.3 A substantive feminist approach to the food economy

The overarching approach to the economy in this thesis can be conceptualised as what renowned economic anthropologist Karl Polanyi (1944/2001) would define as a substantive approach. Polanyi introduced the distinction between what he called the *formal* meaning of economics, used by economists to study the market economy, and a *substantive* meaning of economics, referring to the actual empirical reality of how people provide for their sustenance. This approach allowed him to challenge the mainstream assumption that scarcity and rational choice are universal features of human economic behaviour and decision-making. Although other scholars had already challenged the *homo economicus* dogma before him (e.g. Kropotkin, 1902/2022; Mauss, 1925/2002), he provided a more comprehensive framework for the study of how human societies and cultures organise production, distribution and consumption – beyond that which is part of the formal (market) economy.

Three other economic anthropologists which have influenced my approach include: 1) Gudeman (1986), who took things a bit further than Polanyi, by suggesting that all economies – also the formal economy - are reflections of cultural values and belief systems, and that there is no such thing as a universal model of economic behaviour; 2) Scott (1977) and his findings of a moral economy and a "subsistence ethic", which prioritises security and survival over profit maximisation, as a key characteristic of peasant societies; 3) Graeber (2012) who suggested that throughout human history three overarching forms of economic exchange have coexisted.[8] A key reason for why Graber's approach is so relevant to my approach is because he challenges the evolutionary framing of orthodox economic theory, wherein economies are understood to be evolving in a linear progression (e.g. Rostow, 1991). This non-evolutionary approach to the economy

[8] Graeber (2012) conceptualised these as 1) Communism (defined by mutual aid, family relationships, etc.), 2) Reciprocity (defined by gift exchange, market transaction, etc.) and 3) Hierarchy (defined by tribute, taxation, forced labour, and other unequal relations).

is particularly relevant for the argument made in chapter five which looks at Faroese whaling.

In addition to this influence from economic anthropology, the thesis draws considerably from perspectives in feminist political economy (FPE). Although FPE is better known as a field that studies the gendered dimensions of the political economy, such as the historical devaluation of labour carried out by women, several feminist political economists apply their frameworks to study other dimensions of the economy.

In this thesis I draw from two FPE frameworks, which both use an iceberg metaphor to emphasise the visible parts of the economy (e.g. the capitalist market economy) versus the invisible parts of the economy (e.g. economic activities not included in the GDP).

The first iceberg relates to J.K. Gibson-Graham's (1996/2006) diverse economies framework. Key here is their critique of "capitalocentrism", which they define as a discourse that has come to dominate economic theory – neoclassic, Keynesian and Marxist alike. From their perspective, the discourse of capitalocentrism constructs capitalism as an omni dominant force with the result of rendering all noncapitalist economic activities either invisible or only seen as existing in relation to (often subjugated by) the capitalist economy and never recognised as already prefiguring alternative economic practices in their own right. With the iceberg metaphor, Gibson-Graham position the capitalist economy in the visible part of the iceberg and the diversity of noncapitalist economic activities in the invisible part of the iceberg (e.g. volunteering, gift economies, sharing, solidarity economies).

Coming from a poststructuralist approach Gibson-Graham are not advancing a grand narrative of emancipation. Instead, they invite scholars, activists, practitioners and others to join in a collective effort to develop an "Economic ethics for the Anthropocene" (Graham and Roelvink, 2010) by emphasising a politics of possibility through the performativity of economic differences. By launching a research programme focused on making visible the diversity of

noncapitalist economies that already exist, Gibson-Graham have successfully established a thriving international research network dedicated to this agenda.[9]

The second FPE approach that has influenced the thinking in this thesis is Maria Mies and Veronika Bennholdt-Thomsen's (1999) subsistence perspective. Their approach can be characterised as a combined Marxist ecofeminism, somewhat similar to Federici's (2018) "politics of the commons". Here the visible part of the iceberg is conceptualised as capitalist commodity production, whereas the invisible part of the iceberg is conceptualised as subsistence-production, which is defined as all the life-sustaining activities that are devalued under capitalism. Their concept of subsistence-production is in many ways similar to the better-known Marxist concept of reproduction, i.e. care-work and other labour traditionally carried out by women without which capitalist 'production' would be possible. However, Mies and Bennholdt-Thomsen's concept of subsistence-production is broader, also encompassing other (re)productive practices that are devalued under capitalism, such as peasant work, the work of artisans, child labour, as well as the exploitation of (post)colonies and nature. While Mies and Bennholdt-Thomsen mobilise a Marxist and ecofeminist critique of capitalist exploitation of women, nature and colonised people, their work also offers hopeful visions for the future based upon the values and ethics which they note in the economic activities of the invisible part of the iceberg (e.g. relations of reciprocity, mutualism, emphasis on use-value).[10]

Finally, this thesis also draws from a variety of takes on the economy of food self-provision – both case-studies and more conceptual pieces. For instance, Smith and Jehlicka's (2013) quiet sustainability concept which emerged from their research in Czechia and Poland, where they have found that food self-provision is

[9] The network is called Community Economies Research Network (CERN), and there is also a related organisation called the Community Economies Institute (CEI). For more information see the webpage: https://www.communityeconomies.org/

[10] While the two approaches are obviously in an epistemological tension with one another (one being more poststructuralist and discursive, the other more Marxist and materialist), this thesis does not go into the meta-theoretical discussions on advantages and disadvantages of the two. For someone who does see Collard and Dempsey (2020).

a feature of daily life for a significant portion of the population in Eastern Europe without it being motivated by a sustainability agenda. Also, Dengler and Plank (2024) have offered an inspiring application of Mies and Bennholdt-Thomsen's iceberg model to enhance our understanding of the non-monetised economy when it comes to food provisioning systems, spurring a conceptual conversation on ecofeminist strategies for strengthening non-monetised provisioning systems. Last but not least, the thesis also draws from the work of other scholars that have applied Gibson-Graham's analytics specifically to food economies (Beacham, 2018b; Burke and Shear, 2014; Cameron, 2010; Johnson, 2014).

1.4.4 Finding hope from decolonial thinking

As should be clear by now, a central conceptual thematic that this thesis revolves around is a problematisation of orthodox economic theory, herein its embedded values and ideals about progress and development. Since these values and ideals are entangled in historical colonialism, the last cluster of theoretical debates which I engage with in this thesis relates to the extremely important debates and perspectives that have arisen from postcolonial theory (e.g. Mohanty, 2003; Said, 1979; Spivak, 1988) and the "decolonial turn" in academia (Maldonado-Torres, 2011; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2020). This flourishing body of literature emanating from scholars in the global South is doing the vital work of problematising the legacy of racism, colonialism and Eurocentrism embedded in hegemonic enlightenment ideals about societal progress and development (Escobar, 2011), as well as questioning the assumed superiority of Western knowledge systems over indigenous and non-Western ways of knowing (Escobar, 2007; Freire, 2017; Mignolo, 2002; Smith, 2012).

As someone who embodies privileges and biases of white Europeanness, I have to of course be mindful about how I engage with these perspectives. Writing from the settler-colonial context of North America, Tuck and Yang (2012) have rightfully criticised and warned against the academic and activist tendency to appropriate the concept of decolonisation to signify any kind of social justice work or critical practice. In their influential essay "Decolonization is not a metaphor", they argued

that decolonisation is not just about discourse and changes in the curricula, but that it is first and foremost about claiming land back and about dismantling settler colonial land relations. As will become clear in chapter two, which describes the human geographical contexts of the Faroe Islands and São Tomé e Príncipe, the unique histories of settlement and colonial dynamics in these two places differ quite significantly (each in their own unique way) to the settler colonial contexts with which Tuck and Yang engage with. I would argue that this requires taking a slightly different approach to the issues raised by Tuck and Yang.

Key to the decolonial scholarship which I draw from in this thesis is understanding the distinction between colonialism and coloniality, and the logic and process of coloniality as inseparable from the logic and process of modernity. In his seminal publication titled *The Coloniality of Being*, Maldones-Torres (2007, p. 243) writes that whereas "Colonialism denotes a political and economic relation in which the sovereignty of a nation or a people rests on the power of another nation (...) Coloniality instead, refers to long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism", which have come to define culture, relations and knowledge production "maintained alive in books, in the criteria for academic performance, in cultural patterns, in common sense, in the self-image of peoples, in aspirations of self, and so many other aspects of our modern experience" (Maldonado-Torres, 2007, p. 243).

From this perspective, modernity and coloniality are understood to be co-constitutive, and in the literature, they are frequently conceptualised jointly as "modernity/coloniality" to emphasise how they are "two sides of the same coin" (Escobar, 2007). Whereas the Eurocentric understanding of modernity is that it is a process emerging independently from European enlightenment ideas about progress, rationality and human advancement, coloniality reveals modernity's darker constituent elements, i.e. the violence, exploitation and subjugation of non-European peoples and their way of knowing and being (Maldonado-Torres, 2007).

Postcolonial and decolonial critique and thinking have been critical to my methodological approach, on the one hand helping me develop postcolonial reflexivity in the field (Radcliffe, 2017; Sultana, 2007; Vanner, 2015), and on the other as sources of intellectual inspiration for "decolonising the imaginary" (Latouche, 2014) and theorising alternative pathways (Gibson et al., 2015). To this endeavour Escobar, (2008, 2015), Kothari et al. (2014), Paulson (2017, 2019), and Dengler and Seebacher (2019) have been crucial sources of inspiration and insight in this thesis. Their work informs my thinking on the relation between post-growth and decoloniality, and I also draw inspiration from their methodologies when connecting to other literature exploring local and contextually meaningful non-dominant lifeways (Böhm et al., 2015; Gezon, 2017; Hornborg, 1996; Ingold, 2000).

Especially Escobar's (2008) ethnographic analysis of Afro-Colombian movements against neoliberalism and for alternative futures beyond the western paradigm of development was an intellectual epiphany to me. Here Escobar elaborated on Mignolo's concept of the "colonial difference" as a form of situated knowledge (Haraway, 1988), i.e. as a channel to the experiential and embodied knowledge about the world from the colonial difference.

According to Escobar (2008) it is from the colonial difference that decolonial notions and philosophies of well-being and sustainability originate, and hence also from where decolonial visions and pathways arise – not as one universally true and generalisable vision/pathway, but as a pluriverse of visions and pathways.

In his work, Escobar also connects with Gibson-Graham's (1996/2006) diverse economies approach (outlined in the previous subsection), and the parallels are notable. Both Escobar's pluriverse and Gibson-Graham's diverse economy framework reject universal models and utopian blueprints and instead advocate in favour of an anti-essentialist ontological pluralism. They are both interested in making visible already existing alternatives to capitalism and development, not only through analysis, but also through a 'performative stance', where

acknowledging already prefiguring alternatives becomes also a strategy for strengthening them.

1.5 Thesis structure

This thesis is structured so that after this introduction, I elaborate on the human geographical contexts of the two research sites. After this comes a methodology chapter, which is then followed by four chapters, which make up the thesis body. These four chapters represent four stand-alone papers that were written at different times during my research process. This means that the thesis does not read like the classic monograph thesis. However, the introductory chapters of the thesis and the conclusion should tie everything together so that it is clear to the reader how each of the four papers contributes to the main thesis argument.

In chapter two, I describe the historical and geographical background of the two island countries where I carried out my research endeavours - São Tomé e Príncipe and the Faroe Islands. This chapter ends with a brief comparative reflection on the colonialities of the two contexts.

In chapter three, which is the methodology chapter, I describe the overall research process of my doctoral project and how reflections on positionality and research ethics led me to carry out two different styles of engaged research in the two contexts. I also present the empirical material that was generated in collaboration with my partners and my engagements in the two contexts. The methodology chapter also presents the rationale of the four papers that make up the body of the thesis, and how they contribute each in their own distinct way to answering the research questions. Finally, the chapter concludes with a methodological epilogue in which I situate the thesis in relation to the overall process of my doctoral journey.

Chapter four of the thesis constitutes a paper titled “Transcending binaries: a participatory political ecology of the Faroese foodscape.”[11] Here, I reflect on some

[11] This paper was co-authored with my supervisor Rebecca Whittle and has been published in the Nordia Geographical Publications licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.

methodological challenges relating to my first phase of fieldwork in the Faroe Islands, particularly on how to balance critical analysis with affirmative engagement in the field. Drawing from Gibson-Graham's diverse economies framework and my own initial experiences with participatory research in the Faroe Islands, I problematise familiar binary categories such as "the capitalist/global food-system" versus "the alternative/local food-system".

Chapter five presents a paper, which is titled "Making degrowth locally meaningful: the case of the Faroese *grindadráp*."[12] Here my co-author and I examine the political ecology of Faroese pilot whaling through autoethnography, narrative analysis and research on degrowth. Without taking a position on whether or not to consume whales, the chapter argues that the socio-cultural system of Faroese pilot-whaling can be understood as a non-growth-oriented economic strategy, which because of its embeddedness in Faroese society represents a locally meaningful alternative economic strategy to the hegemony of growth.

Chapter six presents a paper being prepared for submission, which is titled "Re-introducing fish as a locally available food source: towards a Faroese post-growth food policy."[13] This paper addresses the apparent paradox of the tremendous growth in Faroese fish catches and simultaneous decrease in Faroese fish consumption the past century, which it also connects with recent evidence suggesting increased food insecurity in the Faroe Islands. Through a food sovereignty analysis of Faroese coastal fishery practices, locally known as *útróður*, the chapter explores how one might approach the task of designing contextually meaningful post-growth food-policies.

In chapter seven I share another paper in preparation for submission, titled "'Help me today and I will help you tomorrow': subsistence-oriented food economies in São Tomé e Príncipe and the Faroe Islands." This paper is a comparative analysis

[12] This paper was co-authored with my supervisor Ragnheiður Bogadóttir and has been published in the Journal of Political Ecology licensed under CC BY 4.0.

[13] This paper is co-authored with my supervisor Ragnheiður Bogadóttir and has not been submitted for publication yet.

of subsistence-oriented food practices in São Tomé e Príncipe and the Faroe Islands. Drawing primarily from Mies and Bennholdt-Thomsen's subsistence perspective, I illustrate how moral economic relations such as mutual aid and non-monetary relations of exchange are widespread in the subsistence-oriented sphere of food (re)production in both contexts. In the last part of this chapter, I elaborate on the Santomean concept/philosophy of *leve-leve* which I suggest has much to offer post-growth thinking.

Finally, in the thesis conclusion (chapter eight) I revisit the research questions, discuss some of the key scholarly contributions of the thesis and end with a reflection on hope in relation to my research findings.

2. Two island groups in the Atlantic Ocean

This chapter introduces the human geographical contexts of the Fareo Islands and São Tomé e Príncipe. I begin by elaborating on why I chose these as the sites of engagement for my doctoral research. Then I proceed with a historical contextualisation of the two countries, first São Tomé e Príncipe and then the Faroe Islands. These two country-specific subsections are structured so that I first provide some fundamental facts about the country in question and then proceed with an outline of some key historical events and the colonial dynamics that led to the two countries' current positions in the global political economy of resource flows. After having introduced the two cases, I end the chapter with a comparative reflection on the two countries' unequal colonialities.

2.1 Islanding the global North-South framework

> The island as a common metaphorical genre, even a master metaphor within western discourse, raises a number of issues, of which one of the most compelling is what place there is for the diversity of islands and islanders in a world where 'the island' is a standardized genre, a common figure of speech, a tool to think with, or a trampoline to jump off from, into a world of generalized abstractions. (Ronström, 2013, p. 159)

Critical discussions on the representation of islands and 'the continental gaze' in island studies are not new and are frequently traced to the influential essay "A sea of islands" by Hau'ofa (1994). This essay, which deconstructed the European perspective of Oceania as tiny islands in a far sea, impacted the field of island studies by shifting the perspective of reasoning to that of the islander, for whom the sea is an important medium of connection and relation, as opposed to that of the continental perspective, which perceives the island as a bounded locus for exploration and research, and which approaches islands as isolated entities in a vast ocean far from continental centres of power.

Similar discussions have in recent years been taken up by a new generation of island scholars, which are now calling for a decolonisation of island studies (Farbotko et al., 2023; Nadaraja et al., 2022; Nadarajah and Grydehøj, 2016).

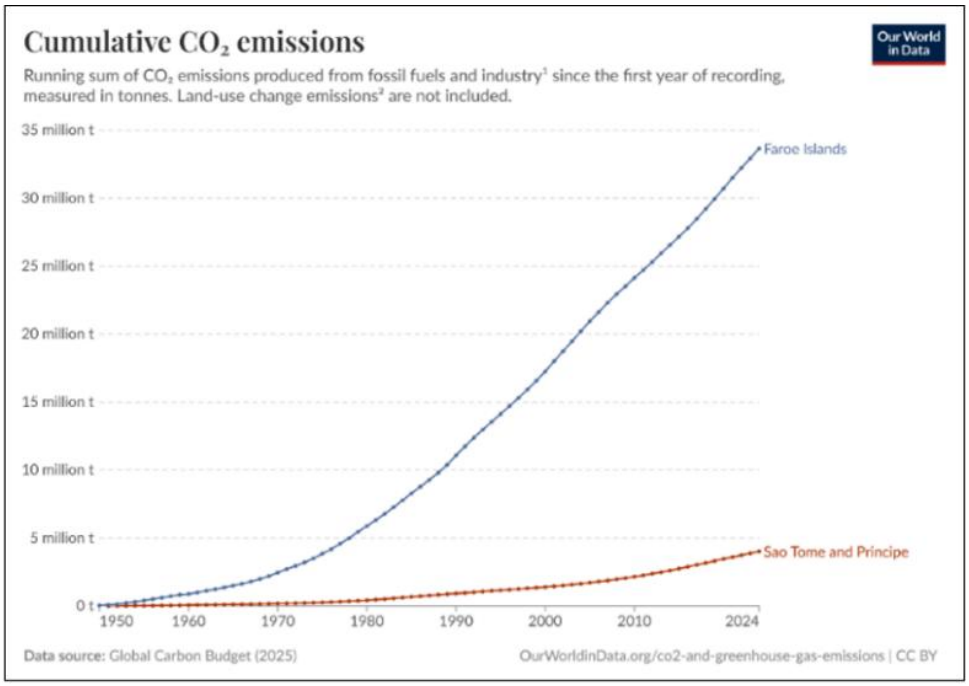
While I sympathise with this agenda, which has also been taken up by Faroese colleagues (Isfeldt and Gaini, 2025), the unresolved riddle in island studies scholarship of "how to grapple with the homogeneity of 'the island' together with the immense diversity of islands" (Ronström, 2013, p. 162) continues to loom, complicating how such a decolonisation of island studies might look like.

This tension between my own lived and embodied "island phenomenology" (Hay, 2006) which I share with other islanders, and my simultaneous scepticism and resistance to the homogenising tendency of many narratives about islands, was a key reason for why I wanted to contrast the Faroe Islands with a different small island context.

As mentioned in the introduction, I anticipated that a key parameter of difference between the two was their position in relation to global environmental inequality, frequently communicated by applying the global North-South framework. From this perspective the Faroe Islands and São Tomé e Príncipe represent highly different socio-metabolic profiles, which can be discerned by comparing their cumulative CO_2 emissions the past 75 years (see figure 2).

When then also considering the difference between the two countries' GDPs, it becomes very clear that the Faroe Islands, whose GDP per capita is $74,6 (SFI, 2025a), fits the profile of a global North context, while São Tomé e Príncipe, whose GDP per capita is $3,2 (World Bank, 2025), fits that of a global South context.[14]

[14] These figures are from 2024.



Source: The graph is from Global Carbon Budget (2025) and subject to CC BY licence.

FIGURE 2: CUMULATIVE CO2 EMISSIONS IN THE FAROE ISLANDS AND SÃO TOMÉ E PRÍNCIPE

Although these differences are key, the fact that they are both small island countries means that they also have some commonalities, for instance in relation to climate risks and vulnerabilities. According to scholars of island metabolisms, small island contexts are often characterised by fragile economies and ecosystems and thereby face similar risks and vulnerabilities when it comes to their capacity to withstand shocks caused by extreme weather events and rising sea levels (Singh et al., 2020). Moreover, the fact that both the Faroe Islands and São Tomé e Príncipe are extremely dependent on global imports, and the fact that their export economy is dependent on just one resource base – also characteristics of small island countries (Krausmann et al., 2014) - makes them vulnerable to abrupt changes (whether they be political, economic or environmental). Some of these concerns are also highlighted in ongoing research on climate change risk and vulnerabilities in both the Faroe Islands and São Tomé e Príncipe (Costa et al., 2021; Kongsager and Baron, 2024).

Having reiterated and elaborated on some of the reasons for choosing the Faroe Islands and São Tomé e Príncipe as sites of research engagement, I now proceed

to a contextual description of the histories and characteristics of the two contexts, beginning with São Tomé e Príncipe.

2.2 São Tomé e Príncipe

The Democratic Republic of São Tomé e Príncipe (or just São Tomé e Príncipe) is situated in the Gulf of Guinea in West Africa at 0°N 7°E and has a population of approximately 240,000 inhabitants. The tropical archipelago is a former Portuguese colony, which gained its independence in 1975. It consists of two main islands – the island of São Tomé and the island of Príncipe - and a few smaller islets, which together cover a landmass of approximately 1,000 km^2 and constitute one of the most biodiverse regions in the world.[15]

Politically, São Tomé e Príncipe is a semi-presidential democratic republic.[16] The main religion is Roman Catholicism, and the official language is Portuguese, while local Creole languages include *Forro* (also known as *Sãotomense*), *Angolar*, and the endangered *Príncipense*.

The national economy of São Tomé e Príncipe is heavily dependent on official development assistance (ODA) and foreign aid. The country is categorised by the UN as a small island developing state (SIDS) and recently graduated from the list of the least developed countries (LCD) to a developing country (UN, 2024). The Santomean export economy has since the late 19th century been dominated by cocoa, but it is predicted that palm oil may soon overhaul cocoa (ADB, 2024). Although São Tomé e Príncipe has a 160,000 km^2 EEZ, this resource base is primarily exploited by EU vessels which purchase access to Santomean waters from the Santomean government (Carneiro, 2012).[17]

[15] The island of Princípe was designated a UNESCO world biosphere reserve in 2012 (CBD, n.d.).

[16] The president who is the head of state is elected by popular vote to a maximum of two five-year terms. The legislature is unicameral with a National Assembly consisting of 55 members that are also democratically elected to serve four-year terms, and from which the president appoints a prime minister to serve as the head of government (Clarence-Smith and Seibert, 2025).

[17] The Santomean fleet, which consists primarily of wooden dugout canoes, is unsuited for navigation beyond a few nm from the coast (Carneiro, 2012).

2.2.1 Settlement and colonisation

Before the arrival of Portuguese explorers in the late-15th century, the islands of São Tomé and Príncipe were uninhabited. Subsequently, they were gradually colonised by the Portuguese Crown, who sent people from Portugal to settle the islands and to bring enslaved people from the African continent to cultivate sugarcane, turning São Tomé e Príncipe into one of the first tropical sugarcane plantations and a prototype for the plantation economies in the Americas that would follow (Caldeira, 2011; Mintz, 1986; Seibert, 2013). Although the conditions for sugarcane cultivation were favourable, the conditions for sugar production were less so. Because of the high levels of humidity, the Santomean sugar quality could not compare to that of Brazil and Madeira, which eventually led to the demise of the Santomean sugar industry. Seibert (2013) has explained that because of this and other factors such as life-threatening tropical diseases and frequent raids by Dutch and French pirates, the islands never became attractive to the Portuguese as a settler colony. In fact, since it was so difficult to get Portuguese to voluntarily settle the islands, the first settlers consisted primarily of deported convicts (*degredados*) and Jewish children that had been forcibly separated from their families in Portugal (Seibert, 2019). Caldeira (2011) and Temudo (2014) also emphasise the instability stemming from slave rebellions and insurrections by maroon communities (runaway slaves) as another contributing factor to why the sugar industry in the archipelago ended, referring for instance to the Amador Revolt in 1595, which destroyed more than half of the sugar mills on the islands.[18]

From the 16th until 19th century these maroon communities, which became known as the *Angolares,* led a relatively autonomous existence centred around fishing and gathering in the mountainous interior and southern parts of São Tomé island,

[18] Amador Viera or Rei Amador was a Santomean born slave of Angolan descent. He led the famous slave revolt in 1595 in which approximately 5,000 slaves raided plantations and burned settler homes for three weeks, damaging more than 70 percent of the islands' sugar producing capacity. While eventually arrested and hung by the Portuguese, the revolt that Amador led is considered one of the greatest slave insurrections in the history of the transatlantic slave trade. Amador is today regarded as a national hero in São Tomé e Príncipe; his profile is depicted on Santomean currency and Santomeans celebrate a national holiday in his honour (Seibert, 2011, 2019).

FIGURE 3: STATUE OF REI AMADOR IN SÃO TOMÉ CITY

developing their own distinct culture and language (Seibert, 2019; Temudo, 2014).[19]

The legacy was quite different for the *Forros*, i.e. the local Creole elite, which evolved from decades of miscegenation encouraged by the Portuguese Crown in order to ensure colonisation of the islands.[20] When the white Portuguese settlers largely abandoned the archipelago after the sugar industry ended in the late 17th century, they left control of the islands to the *Forros*, who initially continued to re-export slaves brought from the African continent to the Caribbean and Brazil (Caldeira, 2011; Eyzaguirre, 1989; Seibert, 2013; Temudo, 2014). However, when they lost access to the markets in Kongo and Angola, the archipelago's role became that of a transit centre for slave ships seeking provisions and food supplies before making their transatlantic crossings to the Americas (Caldeira, 2011; Seibert, 2013, 2019). This led to a gradual replacement of the sugar monocultures to diversified subsistence agriculture. Although household slavery continued, most of the slave owners were now also of African descent, which facilitated the incorporation of former slaves into the Creole category of *Forro* through intermarriage and assimilation (Seibert, 2019).

2.2.2 Re-colonisation and transforming socio-ecologies

In the beginning of the 18th century, a new colonial era began when Portuguese colonisers returned - this time to establish coffee and cocoa plantation estates,

[19] There is also a theory that the *Angolares* are the descendants of survivors of a shipwreck from Angola that reached the coast of São Tomé in 1540. However, both historical and genetic evidence strongly suggest that they are descendants of maroon communities (Seibert, 2006).

[20] In 1515 a royal decree granted manumission to the African wives of the first white settlers and their children, as well as the first male slaves brought to the islands. Subsequently the Portuguese crown employed other measures to ensure that liberated slaves were assimilated into the emerging Creole society, such as granting them suffrage and rights to hold office. These indigenous Creoles, known as the *Forros*, would also come to be referred to as the "Sons of the land" (Seibert, 2019; Temudo, 2014).

locally known as *roças*. This transformed the landscape, land relations and the social fabric of the archipelago dramatically. Approximately 90 percent of the land that had belonged to the *Forros* was now appropriated by the Portuguese through land purchases, fraud and force, resulting in the *Forros'* political and economic re-marginalisation (Seibert, 2019). Similarly, the establishment of plantations in the south forcibly displaced the maroon *Angolares* of their lands (Temudo, 2014).

The *roça* plantation system was initially based upon slave labour, but when Portugal abolished slavery in 1875, the Portuguese planters resorted to hiring migrant contract workers (mainly from Angola, Mozambique and Cape Verde) to work on the *roças* - under the infamous *serviçais* system - a system not very different to the slave labour system from before (Clarence-Smith, 1990; Temudo, 2014).[21] By the end of the 19th century cocoa production had surpassed that of coffee, and the particular technoscientific regime of Santomean cocoa production (Macedo, 2016) led São Tomé e Príncipe to become the world's leading cocoa producers at the turn of the 20th century and the main cocoa provider to the British Quaker firm Cadburry Brothers Limited.[22]

The *serviçais* system introduced to ensure labour in the plantation also changed the demography in the archipelago significantly, and in the first half of the 20th century, the migrant contract workers outnumbered the native Creole population (Seibert, 2019).

However, after World War I Santomean cocoa production drastically decreased, because of several factors combined, such as pest infestations, instability of cocoa prices on the world market, which weakened the competitiveness of the *roça* plantation system compared to that of the cocoa smallholders' practices on the African continent, and last but not least the unsustainability of the *serviçais*

[21] The *serviçais* system was a forced labour regime which replaced slavery in the Portuguese empire after its abolishment in 1875. It supplied contract labourers from other lusophone colonies to work in Santomean plantations. Labourers were often coerced into signing deceptive five-year contracts, leading to their expatriation to São Tomé e Príncipe to work under brutal and underpaid conditions (Clarence-Smith, 1990; Temudo, 2014).

[22] See also Higgs (2024) microhistory of the Cadburry Brothers' cocoa controversy in the early 20th century which resulted in a study of the labour conditions in Santomean cocoa plantations.

system. After campaigns by British anti-slavery circles on the harsh working conditions in the Santomean *roças*, the Portuguese government introduced measures to improve the situation, one of them being regular repatriation of the workers. This made the recruitment of *serviçais* more difficult and costly (Seibert, 2003, 2019; Temudo, 2014).

Both the *Forros* and *Angolares* had since the start of the Santomean cocoa adventure refused to accept agricultural wage labour on the *roças*, which they considered to be a continuation of slavery. Instead, after being displaced from their lands, the *Angolares* had started to specialise in fishing, although they occasionally agreed to take on some work in the plantations that did not involve field work, such as shipping and woodcutting. The *Forros* also accepted some wage work, e.g. in the lower functions of the colonial administration. Others made a living primarily from practicing subsistence farming on the small plots of land (*glebas*) that they had been allowed to keep, selling stolen cash crops, as well as producing and selling palm wine and *aguardente* (local gin) (Seibert, 2019; Temudo, 2014).

However, towards the mid-20th century the colonial administration under the lead of Governor Carlos Gorgulho was faced with a desperate demand for labour power and resorted to more aggressive measures to try and persuade the *Forros* to come and work in the plantations, for instance by prohibiting the production and sale of palm wine and *aguardente* and raising the poll tax two-fold, thereby undermining their economic independence. The situation was also exacerbated when Gorgulho started to use police raids to kidnap and force *Forros* to work on various construction projects that he was pursuing. As the tension grew and the *Forros* continued to resist and petition against Gorgulho's policies, the situation climaxed with the tragic *Batepá* massacre in 1953 (nationally commemorated on February 3rd). Seibert (2003) has written an extensive analysis, recounting evidence and testimonies of the event itself, as well as the events leading up to the massacre and its aftermath, herein the undeniable influence it had on Santomean nationalism and anti-colonial struggle.

The genealogy of the anti-colonial struggle from the mid-20th century until São Tomé e Príncipe gained its independence in 1975 (along with the other lusophone colonies, following the Carnation Revolution) was of course intimately entangled in growing international pressure against colonialism and the rise of African nationalism during this same period.

In an official historiography of the CLSTP (Committee for the Liberation of São Tomé and Príncipe), founded in 1960 by indignant *Forros* in exile and considered the first Santomean anti-colonial organisation, it is stated that: "For the people of São Tomé and Príncipe, the tragedy of 1953 became a great, but painful lesson and consequently an important stage in the formation of national consciousness." (Martyushin cited in Seibert, 2003, p. 75)

Eyzaguirre (1989) also recounts another event to have played a key role in the trajectory of anti-colonial resistance on the islands, namely a general strike that took place in 1963 by the *serviçais*. Although this strike was supported by the CLSTP, the fact that the mobilisation in relation to these two events was so segregated (the *Forros* in 1953 and the *serviçais* in 1963) despite being directed at the same issue (the abolition of the *roças*), testifies to the profound cleavages between these two social groups in Santomean society (Eyzaguirre, 1989).

In fact, it is relevant to note that at the core of *Forro* identity and culture had always been an emphasis on the distinction between the *Forros*, the native Creoles, and other people of African descent considered to be lower in the social hierarchy, such as the immigrant contract workers from Angola, Mozambique and Cape Verde and their descendants, known as the *Tongas*. Thus, a contributing element to the *Forros'* anti-colonial mobilisation was that they were aware of the colonial administration's agenda of trying to merge the whole Creole population into a single category of 'Africans' that was to serve as a labour resource for the whites. In other words, the *Forros'* struggle was also a struggle for keeping their

native position as the "sons of the land" and their distinction from the *serviçais* (Seibert, 2003).[23]

Nevertheless, historical evidence (Eyzaguirre, 1989) suggests that the anti-colonial movement for Santomean independence can ultimately be traced to what I think we may call the "friction" (Tsing, 2005) of on the one hand the *Forros'* resentment against the Portuguese who had appropriated their lands, and on the other hand the resistance of the *serviçais* to the harsh conditions in the *roças*. Eyzaguirre (1998) has described how this shared objective of abolishing the *roças* united the two against the colonial authorities demanding that the land was to be redistributed to the plantation workers and to the *Forros*.

2.2.3 Post-independence

Although abolition of the plantation system had been the single most important objective of the Santomean anti-colonial movement, after independence the socialist one-party regime ruled by MLSTP[24] realised how profoundly dependent the Santomean economy was on the *roças*, which at the time "occupied over 90 per cent of the land in the two islands, produced over 95 per cent of the cocoa, and accounted for nearly 99 per cent of the exports" (Eyzaguirre, 1989, p. 675). Thus, instead of abolishing the *roças*, the MLSTP government opted to nationalise them, transferring land ownership from the former Portuguese owners to the state, with the purpose of redirecting the cocoa profits to support national economic development and improve Santomean livelihoods (Keese, 2011; Seibert, 2016). However, a variety of both endogenous and exogenous factors prevented this vision from manifesting.

[23] Several scholars have attempted to describe the complex legacy of the ethnic and racialised dimensions of the Santomean plantation economy, herein how it continues to influence systems of discrimination and inequality in contemporary agricultural practices, as well as Santomean society at large (Eyzaguirre, 1989; Keese, 2011; Narciso et al., 2020; Temudo, 2008).

[24] In 1972 CLSTP changed its name to MLSTP (Movement for the Liberation of São Tomé and Príncipe). The contemporary Santomean party called MLSTP-PSD grew out of MLSTP, with the added PSD being an abbrevation for *Partido Social Democrata* (in English: Social Democratic Party).

The racialised socio-economic stratification that had been established during colonialism continued to persist into the era after independence. By default, the *Forro* elite became in charge of the state apparatus, herein the fifteen plantations enterprises which the state regrouped the *roças* into. Meanwhile the former plantation workers (the *serviçais)* and their descendants (the *Tongas*) became destined to a politically and socio-economically subordinate position in society with little to no other choice than to continue working in the plantations (Seibert, 2019; Temudo, 2014).[25]

In the first years after independence, the country experienced an extreme decline in cocoa production. Many scholars have attributed the main reason to be the failure of the state to replace the colonial labour regime.[26] After a decade of attempts, in 1985 the socialist MLSTP regime eventually signed an agreement with the IMF and the World Bank, succumbing to a path of structural adjustments that gradually would liberalise the economy and initiate a democratisation process (Seibert, 2016, 2019). [27] Despite several agricultural reforms, the state-controlled plantation economy continued to fail, with the result that the country became trapped in an unsustainable foreign debt. Eventually in 1991, the first democratically elected government took the first steps in transforming Santomean land relations. Financed by the World Bank and aimed at diversifying and increasing domestic food production and cash crop production, a land redistribution programme was initiated in 1993, which granted agricultural land on

[25] While the Angolans and Mozambicans returned to their homeland, the Cape Verdeans were denied repatriation, since the government of Cape Verde was not prepared to repatriate them because of a drought that had hit the country. This was convenient for the Santomean government which needed their labour in the plantations, since the *Forros'* disdain for plantation work continued also after independence (Seibert, 2019).

[26] Seibert (2019) notes for instance, that instead of employing qualified staff to manage the plantations, the ministry of agriculture appointed prominent *Forros* without experiences and competences to direct the large plantation enterprises. Keese (2011) has also highlighted the disillusionment of the former *serviçais* in the period after independence, when it came to the working and living conditions in the *roças* after independence, which rather than improving, worsened after independence.

[27] The first democratic elections in São Tomé e Príncipe were held in 1992. See Seibert (2016) for a thorough analysis of the first decades of Santomean multi-party politics.

a usufruct basis in part as small plots to the previous plantation workers, and in part as medium sized plantation enterprises (Seibert, 2016, 2019).

Temudo (2014) has described how this land redistribution process in the 1990s again resulted in reproducing the same racialised inequalities that had been established before independence. This time by granting members of the *Forro* elite the medium-size enterprises located in the most productive cocoa producing areas, and on the other hand granting small plots with low productive potential to the previous plantation workers, i.e. the descendants of the ex-*serviçais*. One consequence of this, which was also perpetuated by the reality of an unstable cocoa market, has been that many small family farmers resorted to diversified subsistence farming with cocoa only figuring as a wild plant that is collected when prices are favourable.

Since the mid-90s, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) has funded a series of programs to counteract food insecurity and rural poverty in the country by developing and strengthening producers' associations, professionalisation of smallholders, incentivising organic agricultural practices, improving access to new markets, as well as strengthening rural voices in governmental institutions and improving rural services (water installations, road rehabilitation, storages, etc.) (Garbero et al., 2019; IFAD, 2020).[28]

A key outcome of the first program, PNAF, which was launched in 1995, was the organisation of Santomean farmers into associations, and the establishment of the National Federation of Small Farmers - FENAPA, which still today represents small-scale farmers nationwide (Temudo, 2014). When PNAPAF ended in 2001, a subsequent IFAD funded program with the acronym PAPAFPA was launched. This was followed by PAPAC and now more recently COMPRAN.[29]

[28] A concrete outcome of these mechanisms has been the establishment of four organic and fair-trade certified export cooperatives of niche market products: CECAB (organic cacao), CECAQ11 (quality cacao), CECAFEB (coffee) and CEPIBA (pepper) (Garbero et al., 2019).

[29] Similarly to when FENAPA emerged from the first IFAD programme (PNAPAF), the second programme (PAPAFPA) led to the establishment of the local NGO known as ADAPPA, which today

While it is beyond the scope of this thesis to analyse and assess the complex ecosystem of international funding mechanisms, development initiatives, projects, NGOs and programmes related to food, fisheries and agriculture that characterise the Santomean foodscape, it is worth drawing attention to a notion repeated several times in my interviews, namely that São Tomé e Príncipe can be characterised as a "project country". A consequence of this is that most initiatives to improve the livelihoods and socio-economic situation of Santomeans are usually defined on a project-to-project basis by the international donor organisations who fund them. This has its drawbacks, and in relation to projects intended to enhance food security an issue that many of the people I spoke with raised was the disconnect between this frequently stated project aim and what was actually funded. Rather than channelling funding towards empowering and strengthening the subsistence-oriented food economy, these projects usually focus on advancing the export economy (e.g. introducing fair-trade and organic certifications and other marketing schemes). The rationale is a familiar one, as it reflects the neoliberal food security logic of striving to strengthen the country's position in the global market economy so that Santomeans can better afford to buy (imported) food.

Nevertheless, as will become evident in chapter seven, parallel to and entangled in these project-based international funding mechanisms, a subsistence-oriented food economy prevails in São Tomé and Príncipe, which arguably constitutes a more important contribution to actual Santomean food security than such market-oriented initiatives.

Having provided a historical background description of the Santomean context, I now invite the reader to transfer their attention from the equatorial line north towards the Arctic circle, where we find the Faroe Islands.

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functions as a key civil society partner in various development projects focused on food security and nutrition in the country. Another NGO of key significance when it comes to marine and coastal issues is MARAPA, which was founded in 1999 and was the outcome of the PAPAR project, created and financed by the French development agency AFD (Marapa, n.d.).

2.3 The Faroe Islands

The Faroe Islands (or just the Faroes) is a subnational jurisdiction under the Unity of the Danish Realm.[30] The subarctic archipelago is situated half-way between Iceland and Norway at 62°N 7°W and consists of eighteen islands with a total landmass of approximately 1400 km^2. It is populated by approximately 55,000 inhabitants, the main religion is Lutheran Christianity, and the official language is Faroese.

The Faroese political system is a parliamentary system.[31] The semi-autonomous status of the country was established in the Danish constitution under the so-called Home Rule Act from 1948.[32]

Similar to its neighbouring countries, the Faroe Islands has a strong economy. The national budget is relatively self-financed, although it is subsidised by 8-10 percent with an annual grant from Denmark. The country exploits its 274,000 km^2 EEZ to its full capacity, with fisheries and fish farming contributing to approximately 90 percent of Faroese exports and constituting one-third of the national GDP (Bjørndal and Mrdalo, 2023).

2.3.1 From a Viking settlement to a Danish dependency

Archaeological evidence dates human activity on the Faroe Islands to the 4th-6th century (Church et al., 2013), while recent genome research of Faroese population ancestry dates human activity to the 1st-4th century (Gislason, 2023). Most historians agree, however, that these early settlements (partly Celtic and partly Norse) have likely been temporary and that permanent settlement did not occur

[30] The "Unity of the Realm" (*Rigsfællesskabet* in Danish) comprises Denmark proper, the Faroe Islands and Greenland.

[31] The Faroese parliament is comprised of a legislative assembly (the *Løgting*) with 33 members that are democratically elected to serve four-year terms, and an administration led by the executive government of the Faroe Islands. The government is headed by a prime minister who is selected by the parliament

[32] The Home Rule Act was amended in 2005 with the supplementary Takeover Act which expanded the options for the Faroe Islands to assume further fields of responsibility. For a detailed account and analysis of the Faroese political system see West (2024).

until the arrival of Norse Vikings in the 9th century (Arge et al., 2005; Edwards, 2005).[33]

These early Viking settlers established autonomous farming communities by the coast centred around sheep which was by far the most important domesticated animal, used for meat and wool. However, archaeological evidence also suggests that they brought with them domesticated goats, cattle, pigs and horses. In addition to this, the food system consisted of cereal cultivation, as well as the hunting and gathering of wild sources of protein, such as fish, shellfish, seabirds, seabird eggs, whales, and seals (Arge et al., 2005; Lawson et al., 2005).

In the first centuries, most domestic economic activities took place in the close surroundings of the settlements with some shieling activity further inland in the summer. More systematic sheep grazing in the outfields probably developed in the 11th-12th century (Arge et al., 2005; Lawson et al., 2005). Since then and throughout Faroese history, Faroese mode of subsistence has been characterised by a division of the land into an infield *(bøur),* used for winter sheep grazing, other animal husbandry and cereal cultivation, and an outfield (*hagi)*, used for summer sheep grazing, hunting and gathering of birds, eggs, peat for fuel, etc. (Wylie, 1987).

Politically, the first settlers developed one of the world's oldest parliaments, the *Løgting*. However, in the 11th century, the original islanders lost their autonomy, as they (along with many other islands in the West Nordic region) were incorporated under the Norwegian Crown, to whom they now had to pay tribute (Sølvará, 2020).

When the Danish Crown subsequently inherited the Norwegian Kingdom in 1380 the social and political context changed significantly. The administration of the two kingdoms now became centralised in Copenhagen, and the administrative language in the Faroe Islands became Danish. Moreover, in the 17th century the centre for Faroese trade was also relocated from Bergen to Copenhagen. Danish

[33] Norse Vikings from Scotland, Ireland, etc. often had Celtic slaves and/or had intermarried Celtic population, which explains the mixed Norse/Celtic DNA of Faroese ancestry.

control of the islands thus gradually became more pertinent, ultimately leading to absolute control in the 17th century (Sølvará, 2020).

As the control of Faroese trade relations moved from Bergen to Copenhagen, the main trade commodity which between the 13th and 16th century had been dried fish, became sheep wool (or rather knitted wool stockings) (Joensen, 1996; Mortensen, 2003).

This period, which was characterised by a Danish controlled mercantilism, is frequently noted as one of the most notorious historical periods in Faroese history. Particularly the so-called Gabel Period (1655-1709), during which the Danish King granted the high-ranking official Christoffer von Gabel and subsequently his son Frederik von Gabel exclusive rights to govern the Faroe Islands, which they did harshly and oppressively (Wylie, 1987).

After the Gabel period, Denmark instituted the royal Danish trade monopoly, which maintained monopoly control of all trade activities between the Faroe Islands and the outside world until its repeal in 1856. Together with the transformation of the relations of fishing and Faroese fishing practices that happened in this same period, the mid-19th century marked a turning point in Faroese history (Joensen, 1987; Mortensen, 1993).

FIGURE 4: STATUE OF NÓLSOYAR PÁLL IN TÓRSHAVN

This period also saw a nascent Faroese nationalism and resistance against Danish control of the islands and its people. A key figure here was Nólsoyar Páll (1766-1809), who was critical about Danish dominion of the Faroes. He is particularly well remembered for breaking the royal Danish trade monopoly, and for composing the famous Faroese ballad titled “The ballad of the birds” (*Fuglakvæði*), in which he criticised Danish oppression through bird symbolism.

Faroese historian Isholm (2020) has studied in detail the period leading up to these events, including the legacy of Nólsoyar Páll, documenting how the influence of economic liberalism combined with the increased presence of foreign fishing vessels in Faroese oceanic surroundings, led to a shift in the Danish nobility's attitudes – from fearing that allowing Faroese seafarers to roam freely would lessen Danish control over Faroese trade to eventually encouraging Faroese seafarers to develop their fisheries skills so that they would be able to compete with encroaching foreign fishing vessels.

2.3.2 From a coastal peasant society to a large fishery nation

One of the most important historical events that would come to determine the present-day political position of the Faroe Islands was the Treaty of Kiel in 1814, which cemented Danish sovereignty of the Faroe Islands (and Greenland and Iceland). This led to the formalisation of Danish sovereignty of the islands *de jure* in the Danish Constitution, turning the Faroe Islands into an overseas county under the Danish Kingdom with the *Løgting* reduced to a local consultative body within the Danish unitary state (Sølvará, 2020).

With the simultaneous repeal of the royal Danish trade monopoly in the mid-19th century and the capitalist commodification of the fisheries, Faroese society also underwent a tremendous economic transformation at the turn of the 20th century. Joensen (1982) has distinguished between three types of Faroese fisheries that characterised this period: 1) the traditional rowing boat fisheries close to the coast, locally known as *útróður*. This practice was already part of the Faroese subsistence economy but now became more commodified and mechanised as fossil fuelled boat motors became more accessible; 2) the smack fisheries, i.e. seasonal offshore fishing on larger wooden sail boats termed smacks in English (*slupp* in Faroese); 3) *útróður* fishing in foreign waters. This involved bringing *útróður*-boats to other countries for longer periods of time in the summer (such as to Iceland, New Foundland and Greenland).

This "great transformation" (Polanyi, 1944/2001) of the Faroese economy led to what has been described as a double economy - characterised on the one hand by

a nascent monetary economy and on the other hand an embedded subsistence economy, which was vital to Faroese survival until at least after World War II (Joensen, 1975, 1982, 1987).

The next big leap in the history Faroese fishery economy happened during World War II. When Britain occupied the Faroe Islands to prevent German takeover (after Germany had occupied Denmark), this strengthened an already thriving nationalism and pro-independence movement on the islands, which before the war had succeeded in winning the right to speak Faroese in schools and in the church. The period surrounding World War II thus became the context for a second chapter of the Faroese independence movement (Sølvará, 2020). During this time, the British demanded that Faroese ships use the Faroese flag from 1919 (a flag which Denmark had refused to recognise). The period was also economically lucrative to Faroese, as they were able to accumulate a substantial amount of capital by selling fish to Britain. After the war, Faroese fishers invested this capital in old English coal driven steam trawlers. However, despite this giving them access to a much larger oceanic resource base, high fuel costs at the time made it an unprofitable business, and eventually led the Faroe Islands into a period of economic stagnation (Joensen, 1996).

After the war, there was strong resistance in Faroese society against returning to the pre-war arrangements with Denmark, and in 1946 a referendum was held on whether the Faroe Islands should become independent. The outcome of the referendum was extremely tight in favour (50,7 percent). However, rather than accepting the results, the Danish government chose to interpret the referendum as consultative, insisting that the final decision could only be taken by the Danish parliament (Sølvará, 2020). When then, to everyone's surprise, the unionist parties won the majority in the election to the *Løgting* two months after the referendum, they undertook new negotiations with the Danish government, which led to the so-called Home Rule Act of 1948, which granted the Faroese *Løgting* legislative authority in domestic affairs, while maintaining foreign affairs and defence under Danish control and sovereignty (Sølvará, 2020). The Home Rule system underwent a reform in 2005 with the so-called Takeover Act and a new Foreign Affairs

Authority Act, which more clearly defines Faroese options in relation to foreign affairs, and which has also strengthened the status of this policy area in the Faroe Islands (West, 2024).

2.3.3 The great acceleration of the Faroese seafood regime

In the 1950s, in response to the economic stagnation immediately after World War II, the Faroese government, now semi-autonomous but still subsidised by Denmark, invested in the most technologically advanced trawlers and longliners on the market, leading Faroese fisheries into a period of rapid industrialisation that would enable them to fish in distant waters. Poignantly, this happened just moments before the open-access regime to the world's oceans was replaced by the 200 nm EEZ, which was claimed by the Faroese in 1977 (Olsen, 2011). Many scholars have analysed the evolution of the shifting fisheries management regimes in the Faroe Islands – from the Act on Fishing in the Territorial Sea in 1978, to the Act on Commercial Fisheries to the fisheries management reform of 2018. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to go into the intricacies of these developments and debates on Faroese fisheries (mis)management (for more on these issues see Danielsen and Agnarsson, 2018b; Ellefsen and Bromley, 2021; Jacobsen, 2019). However, a brief outline of the current regime is in place as this may be useful for understanding the Faroese context, particularly in relation to chapter five.

The origins of the current fishery management system, locally known as "the fishing days system" *(fiskidagaskipanin)*, can be found in the aftermath of the remarkable collapse of the Faroese economy which happened in the early 1990s.[34] As a condition for Danish bailout in relation to this crisis, the Faroe Islands were

[34] The economic collapse happened after more than a decade of systematic government subsidisation of an over-capacious Faroese fishery sector. A key component of this was the so-called 'wet-fish fund', which functioned as a price-stabilising scheme between Faroese fishing vessels and Faroese fish-processing factories. The schemes made the fisheries appear more productive than they were, encouraging more investment, until everything crashed in 1992, resulting in the bankruptcy of two Faroese banks and a significant portion of the Faroese fleet and fish-processing factories (Hannesson, 1996). The socio-economic impact of the crisis was monumental, with hundreds of people losing their jobs and homes, being forced to migrate and seek a new beginning elsewhere. The crisis and the years following are remembered as one of the darkest periods in recent Faroese history.

obliged to introduce the Act on Commercial Fisheries in 1994, which prescribed a system for allocating individually transferrable quotas (ITQ) to the Faroese vessels with catch licenses that were still in business. In 1996 the system was changed into an effort-based management regime targeting the demersal fisheries (the pelagic fisheries continued to be managed according to ITQ). This system is based upon a division of the fleet into groups of vessels, according to types (e.g. trawl, longline) and size. Rather than distributing quotas, a number of annual fishing days are allocated to each demersal vessel group, which are then distributed between the vessels holding catch licenses (Danielsen and Agnarsson, 2018a). Both the ITQ system of the pelagic fisheries and the fishing days system of the demersal fisheries, as well as their entanglements have been heavily criticised (Ellefsen and Bromley, 2021; Jacobsen, 2019). A key point of critique and controversy has revolved around the potential resource rent, which is not collected under this current system, and which arguably represents a huge economic loss to the Faroese public. Jacobsen (2019) has estimated that the value of this potential resource rent may be around 2 percent of the national GDP. In 2018 a reform of the system was introduced, which was supposed to address this issue by incorporating a public auction of a portion of the quotas. However, in 2020 the reform was rolled back by the subsequent government, demonstrating just how much influence the Faroese fishing industry has on Faroese politics (Ellefsen and Bromley, 2023; Jacobsen, 2019).

In addition to capture fisheries, the Faroese aquaculture industry, whose first experiments can be traced to small-scale entrepreneurial trout farming in the 1960s, has grown immensely the past three decades. Mainstream narratives often frame fish-farming as a sustainable blue economic strategy for ensuring global food security at a time where fish-stock depletion and limits to growth in capture fisheries have become more apparent. Bogadóttir (2020a) has problematised these narratives in relation to Faroese fish farming, arguing that this ignores the dependency of fish-farming on capture fisheries. Through a FIFO analysis, she found that the production of 1 kg of Faroese salmon requires at least an input of

1,8 kg of wild fish (3,6 kg if trimmings and cut-offs are included) (Bogadóttir, 2020a).

Although one would think that the Faroe Islands were self-sufficient with fish, this is not the case. A recent report, published by the Nordic Cooperation, estimated Faroese fish self-sufficiency to be at 80 percent despite its coverage margin being at 5567 percent (Vestergaard et al., 2022). The same report estimated Faroese self-sufficiency of food in general to be at 22 percent.

Interestingly, to the focus of this thesis, the report also emphasised difficulties in estimating the dietary contribution of local traditional food practices that are quite prevalent in Faroese society. A reason for why such a subsistence-oriented food economy has continued up until this day (with modifications through the years) may be related to the fact that Faroese land ownership relations still pertain to customary laws, stipulated in the oldest surviving document in the Faroe Islands, known as the Sheep Letter *(Seyðabrævið).* A consequence of this decree from 1298 is that half of Faroese land is categorised as allodial land, while the other half is public land managed by the Faroese government administration in the form of copyhold tenancies (*festijørð).* A small part of this land was in the early-mid-20th century converted into allotments that can be bought and sold (*traðarjørð*). Today there are 370 copyhold tenancies (some of which are communal) and 180 allodial holdings (which are typically communal between 10-20 owners) (Djurhuus, 2017).[35]

Having described elements of the historical background of the two research contexts focused upon in this thesis, I now proceed with a concluding reflection on the colonialities of the two contexts.

[35] In Faroese terminology allodial land is termed "owned land" *(ognarjørð)*, i.e. land that descendants of and/or inhabitants of the old villages *(markatalsbygdir)* own and manage communally (as opposed to the new settlements *(niðurseturbygdir),* which do not have outfield land). The other half, which today is publicly owned copyhold land, is also known locally as "Crown land" (*Kongsjørð)* or "nobility land" (*Óðalsjørð)*, i.e. land previously owned by the Crown and leased to the Danish nobility.

2.4 Contrasting unequal colonialities

In the thesis introduction, I justified my choice to contrast the Fareo Islands with São Tomé e Príncipe saying that I wanted to incorporate a comparative global North-South dimension to my analysis of subsistence-oriented food economies in small islands. At the start of this chapter, I elaborated on this rationale with evidence on how São Tomé e Príncipe fits the profile of a global South context and the Faroe Islands a global North context. The chapter then proceeded with a more descriptive account of the historical backgrounds of the two contexts. Here I refrained from applying a conceptual North-South optic, as I felt this could easily lead to oversimplification and distortions of the particular nuances in each of the two contexts. To conclude this chapter, I now turn to a reflection on the colonial context of the Faroe Islands compared to that of São Tomé e Príncipe.

The colonial violence exerted upon the enslaved group of people from the African continent that the Portuguese brought to São Tomé e Príncipe in the 15th century, and the events that subsequently unfolded in the archipelago, should leave no doubt about the fact that Santomeans are descendants of a violent colonial past whose legacy continues to influence the cultural, economic and socio-ecological reality of the country.

When it comes to the case of the Faroe Islands, questions surrounding colonialism are not as straightforward. Although never categorised as a colony, Faroese people were subjected to colonial dynamics by Danish authorities in several ways, e.g. 1) socio-economically: through the control of trade relations in the mercantilist era, especially during the Gabel period, and 2) culturally: through policies of assimilation well into the 20th century, such as being prohibited to speak the native language and use the national flag, and 3) politically: such as being denied rights to self-determination in relation to the 1946 referendum for independence. While these are arguably valid examples of colonial dynamics that have characterised Danish presence and intervention in the Faroe Islands, it is important to stress that they do not compare to the level of violence and racism, which other colonised people in the Danish empire were subjected to

(Eydnudóttir, 2024). Nor can the Faroese experience be compared to the oppression and racism that has characterised the colonial experience of São Tomé e Príncipe, and which to some degree continue to be reproduced through neocolonial dynamics of trade agreements and neoliberal development projects.

The ambiguity of Faroese positionality in relation to historical colonialism is a well-known topic of ongoing debate among Faroese people and scholars. Reporting from a conference on kinship and coloniality that took place in the Faroe Islands in 2024, Schneidermann et al. (*forthcoming*) rightfully highlight that "the Faroe Islands do not represent any 'simple position' regarding coloniality", and that the Faroese experience complicates conversations and categorisations of "post-, de- and/or coloniality". They suggest that instead of dwelling on whether or not to categorise the Faroe Islands as a colony, it may be more insightful to ask, "what kinds of knowledge about dependencies, sovereignty and power are useful at both micro and macro levels in the Faroese context?" (Schneidermann et al., *forthcoming*, p.4)

Although this is not a thesis about colonialism and/or colonial dynamics, it is important to define how I think about these issues in relation to the two contexts explored in this thesis, as it has consequences for the way that I allow my analysis to be informed by scholarly literature on decoloniality.

Hence, based upon the Faroese life-world experience that I embody and my knowledge of Faroese history, my position on the matter is that both the Faroe Islands and São Tomé e Príncipe have been shaped by colonial dynamics and resistances to colonial oppression and structures, but that there are significant differences between the degree of violence and trauma that was inflicted on them. Juxtaposing these two contexts thus gives us an idea about what we might tentatively conceptualise as 'unequal colonialities', and the crucial historical role that racism has played for how colonial subjects have been treated by their respective colonial powers.

While this thesis does not dwell further on the colonialities of the two places, it does explore the ways that "colonial differences" (Escobar 2008) persist in these

two contexts, and the potential embedded in such differences for prompting decolonial visions and pathways. For instance, in chapter five of this thesis, I examine how the relational ethic embedded in the practice of *Grindadráp*, Faroese whaling, can be understood as a "colonial difference" to the logic of modernity. In chapter seven, I similarly approach the Santomean notion of *leve-leve*, as a "colonial difference" which defies developmentalist growth-centric thinking.

In the next chapter on methodology, I elaborate on how reflections on my positionality in relation to colonialism and colonial dynamics informed some of the methodological choices that I took in my research process.

3. Methodology

In this chapter I present my doctoral research methodology. I start by discussing how my research approach has been influenced by debates on participatory action research (PAR), scholar-activism and decoloniality in research, and the kind of reflections on power and positionality in the field that this literature stimulated in my research process. Next, I describe the research ethical procedures which were carried out to ensure informed consent and confidentiality from all the research participants, as well as some more situated ethical concerns that influenced my approach. After this I describe in detail the field research and data collection in the two case study locations. These two sections detail the empirical data that was generated and reflect on the process in each of the two contexts, herein the participatory elements that became part of the process. Then I describe how I approached the overall task of data analysis, and after that a section where I explain how the four papers that comprise the thesis body contribute to answering the research questions. Finally, this chapter concludes with a methodological epilogue where I reflect on the two spheres of dissemination that have characterised my doctoral process – on the one hand the dissemination carried out through the writing and publication of this thesis, and on the other the dissemination that occurred throughout the research process in the form of workshops, meetings, and initiatives.

3.1 Normativity, positionality and reflexivity

> While few feminist scholars today would take issue with situating one's self as an epistemological stance, in practice, it is sometimes implemented by providing a list of the researcher's identities—e.g. "as a white, middle-class, heterosexual woman, I . . .". Judith Butler has called this the "embarrassed etc. clause", that endless list of predicates that "strive to encompass a situated subject, but invariably fail to be complete" (1989, 143). Indeed, the differences are endless.
>
> However, aside from highlighting the fact of multiple identities, such a list does not do much work and may, ironically, even end up becoming

> an excuse for not doing the necessary analysis of situating one's self. A more intersectional strategy would not entail a list of identity categories, but rather involve developing a narrative about how your specific location shapes or influences you (your thinking, theoretical preferences, intellectual biography) in specific ways—ways which will be relevant with respect to the research you are doing. (Davis, 2014, p. 22)

This thesis operates within an explicitly nomative research paradigm. Throughout my academic career, I have been influenced by methodological debates on participatory research, scholar-activism, feminist research practice and decoloniality in research. In one of the four papers that makes up the thesis body (chapter four) I elaborate in depth on how these debates have contributed to developing what Alhojarvi and Sirvio (2019) conceptualise as an affirmative political ecology approach.[36]

Therefore, coming from a critical stance towards extractive research methods, I knew from the outset that I wanted to incorporate Participatory Action Research (PAR) principles into my research design, so that my research participants would also benefit from our encounter. I also resonated epistemologically with debates on scholar-activism and wanted my PhD project in some way to contribute to the advancement of the food sovereignty and food justice agenda (Anderson et al., 2017; Croog et al., 2018; Levkoe et al., 2018; Reynolds et al., 2018). Moreover, I also wanted my methodology to align as much as possible with a decolonial research practice (Radcliffe, 2017), and indeed the resonance between the ambitions of the two – PAR and decoloniality in research – are well discussed and explored in the literature (Hall and Tandon, 2017; Omodan and Dastile, 2023).

While PAR originated as a subversive and emancipatory research approach, inspired by Freire's (1968/2017) critical pedagogy, examples unfortunately also abound where its methodology has been appropriated and turned into its opposite. One such example are neoliberal development interventions that

[36] The concept is elaborated extensively in chapter four.

frequently deploy their versions of 'participatory approaches', while other more innocent forms of PAR interventions carried out by well-intentioned researchers sometimes also end up doing more harm than good (Cooke and Kothari, 2001). However, there is also an extensive body of critical literature on the importance of integrating reflexivity on power and positionality when doing participatory research to minimise harm and to be able to deliver on PAR's promise, i.e. for the research process to become a source of empowerment and benefit to the research participants' work (Cameron and Gibson, 2005; Kindon et al., 2007; People's Knowledge Editorial Collective, 2016).

In my case, I have strived to embody a situated and reflexive research practice; while aspiring to incorporate PAR principles in my research process, I have simultaneously negotiated and adapted the level and style of 'participation' and 'action' in the two contexts differently according to my positionality.

In the Faroese case, I was 'native' and had already been involved and engaged in Faroese social and environmental issues before the research project started. In this context, it felt natural and appropriate to be more pro-active and to incorporate more 'action' elements into the research process.

In the Santomean case, where I was a white Western researcher entering a context navigating the legacy of a racial colonial plantation economy, I took a more listening position, needing more reflections and time before embarking on any forms of involvement. Although also motivated by participatory principles, I found that because of my positionality, it was inappropriate to take the lead in an action-oriented research project in this context.

In the Faroe Islands I thus extended an invitation to my research partners to design a research project together with them and to be involved and contribute to the different activities taking place, e.g. give presentations, facilitate workshops and so on. Meanwhile in São Tomé e Príncipe I told my research partners that I was interested in learning about their work and the issues affecting them, and that if in any way I could support or help them with something within my capacity while I was there, I was keen to do so.

The contrast between taking a pro-active role in the Faroese context and a more cautious role in the Santomean context prompted important reflections. While preparing for fieldwork I found strong resonance with some of the sentiments that Sultana (2007) drawing from Nagar (2002) has identified as a result of over-concern about positionality and reflexivity in relation to international fieldwork. She writes:

> …there is an 'impasse' in feminist geography now, where fears of (mis)representation and (in)authenticity have led to a general withdrawal from fieldwork in the Global South, which means that fewer scholars are engaged in research that can be politically and materially useful for the poor in the Global South. However, such fears and 'impasse' can be overcome by understanding that fieldwork can be productive and liberating, as long as researchers keep in mind the critiques and undertake research that is more politically engaged, materially grounded, and institutionally sensitive. (Sultana, 2007, p. 375)

In fact, before going to São Tomé e Príncipe, I had specifically decided not to carry out research activities in the rural areas of São Tomé e Príncipe, and to limit my research engagement to less vulnerable segments of society, e.g. NGO representatives, civil officers and local intellectuals. This decision came from concerns and reflections similar to those raised by Vanner (2015) "Am I doing more harm than good?" and "Should Western feminists like myself do research in postcolonial contexts? And if so, how?"

However, the collaborative process that I established with the Santomean farmers' federation, FENAPA, led to a change of plans, so that I ended up carrying out research activities in several rural communities after all. Yet, the objective with these activities (community focus groups) was less about collecting data for my PhD thesis, it was first and foremost to strengthen FENAPA's ongoing work with their member associations (see Chapter 3.4.2 where I elaborate on this). My dedication here, to follow FENAPA's lead (e.g. on which communities to visit and

issues to explore), would probably not have been as strong, had I not already been exposed to the important and inspiring literature on decolonial research approaches by scholars such as Bhambra (2014), Mignolo (2009), Nhemachena et al. (2016), and Smith (2012).

Although the participatory process in São Tomé e Príncipe ended up being a really positive and meaningful experience (I think, to all of us), when returning to the desk, I quickly found myself overwhelmed with the amount of incredibly precious data that the process had generated, and which I now was the guardian of. Coming to terms with how (and how not) to work with and disseminate this data, has since been a theme of countless hours of reflection in my doctoral journey. In the end, I ended up being quite selective, mobilising only a fraction of the data from São Tomé e Príncipe in the actual thesis. The reason being that from a participatory and decolonial research perspective I would ideally want to consult and involve my Santomean research partners in the analysis and dissemination phase of the data that they are the co-creators of. Unfortunately, geographic distance, the Covid outbreak, financial restrictions, time constraints, as well as personal life circumstances, prevented me from traveling back to São Tomé e Príncipe before my thesis was due. However, the plan is to return after my doctoral graduation to finalise this very important last stage of the collaborative process with FENAPA that I have initiated.

In the Faroese case, this last stage of collaborative analysis and dissemination also awaits completion. While the process in the Faroe Islands has allowed for more ongoing communication with my research partners during the writing up stage of my thesis, it has not been feasible within the time constraints of the PhD to engage in a collaborative analysis and dissemination process. Thus, the analysis of the Faroese interview data presented in this thesis has not undergone scrutinization by my Faroese research partners. Instead, we have agreed to undertake a collaborative analysis and dissemination process after my doctoral graduation.

Coming to terms with this limitation in the thesis, i.e. the failure to carry out a full process of participatory analysis and dissemination before writing up the thesis, has not been easy. It has provoked feelings of guilt for having promised more than I was able to deliver. Paradoxically, this 'failure' and the reflections it induced may actually constitute some of the most important lessons learned during my doctoral training.

On reflexivity in the research process, Sultana (2007, p. 376) has suggested that it "can open up the research to more complex and nuanced understandings of issues, where boundaries between process and content can get blurred." I would argue that this blurring of content and process has to a significant degree characterised my doctoral learning and journey.

After the next section on research ethics, I describe more closely the research processes in both of my field sites, and in the methodological epilogue that comes at the end, I zoom out again – this time to reflect on the different forms of dissemination and impact that the overall research process resulted in.

3.2 Research ethics

Ensuring an ethically responsible process in research that involves direct contact with other humans is not straightforward, particularly in small closely-knit societies and in contexts of extreme power imbalance. Below I first describe issues pertaining to the research ethical procedures that I followed, after which I discuss how I prepared and tackled some situational ethical concerns that are of particular relevance to research in small island(ed) contexts like the Faroe Islands and São Tomé e Príncipe. I also touch upon some research ethical issues surrounding sensitivity and awareness of power imbalances that must not be taken lightly when it comes to research endeavours by privileged Western scholars (like me) in postcolonial contexts.

3.2.1 Ethical procedures

Before commencing any research activities, this study was reviewed and approved by the Faculty of Science and Technology Research Ethics Committee at Lancaster University (FSTREC).[37]

To ensure that the interview participants were able to give fully informed and voluntary consent to participate in the study, I had prepared a participant information sheet (see appendix A), which explained what the study was about and what participation in the study would entail. In both the Faroe Islands and São Tomé e Príncipe, many were somewhat overwhelmed by the paperwork formalities. In São Tomé e Príncipe, as many as 15 people would sometimes participate in the same focus group interview. Not all were not good readers, and so to make sure that everyone was informed about the study, someone from FENAPA (my research partner organisation) would read the participant sheet aloud, stopping along the way to allow for questions and clarifications. We would then answer any questions people had about the study and our collaboration. I also made sure that it was very clear to everyone that I did not represent a development project, an international NGO or any other actor with the capacity to offer any sort of technical or socio-economic support. It was important for me to be clear about the fact that they had nothing 'to gain' from participating in the interviews, and that it was entirely voluntary if they chose to participate. Going through the participant information sheet and clarifying who I was and what I was doing, thus often took the same amount of time as the actual interview. However, this was an important procedure to be diligent about, so to ensure that those who participated were provided with sufficient information about the study to be able to provide informed consent.

Once everyone had been given time to contemplate participation, I would ask those who chose to participate to sign a consent form (see appendix B), and when

[37] The study was approved by FSTREC on the 31st of August 2018 and before starting the second phase of my research in the Faroe Islands I submitted an additional application for ethical approval relating to some details of the collaborative research activities. This second application was approved by FSTREC on the 5th of November 2019.

the interview was over I would also hand everyone a debrief sheet (see appendix D), detailing data withdrawal procedures.[38]

When it comes to anonymisation of data and participant confidentiality, doing research in small-populated communities raises particular challenges. Island studies scholar Hayfield (2022, p. 241) writes that in addition to external confidentiality, which "ensures that identities are kept private to external others", researchers in small-populated communities must also pay attention to internal confidentiality and consider the risk "that insiders who hold sufficient knowledge can identify others through research texts" (Hayfield, 2022, p. 241).

This means that pseudonymising the data is not always enough for ensuring anonymity, which requires additional steps, such as omitting information on demographic characteristics, and even then, internal confidentiality may be broken. I have for instance heard stories from colleagues in the Faroe Islands where someone has recognised the identity of an interview participant in a quote through the participant's style of expression.

Although diligent care has been made to not reveal the identity of any informants in the dissemination of data in this thesis, I also made sure that all interview participants were aware of this risk by addressing it explicitly in the participant information sheet, where I wrote:

> You will be pseudonymised in all the material, where the data you have contributed with will be used. We will also do everything we can to minimise information, which can reveal your identity. Although we will take these measures and do our best to not disclose your identity, we are not able to promise 100% anonymity. This is because anonymisation is particularly challenging in such a small society like the Faroe Islands.

[38] A handful of interview participants in São Tomé e Príncipe gave oral consent instead of written consent, as they were unable to read and write.

> Note that if you participate as a representative of an organisation or an institution, it will be easier to recognise your identity in the material, even though you have been pseudonymised. Also, in some instances, it may be desirable *not* to conceal the identity of a participant. In such a case you will be invited to sign a form titled "Consent to disclosure of identity and full name."[39] (appendix A)

An example of when I used this "consent form to disclosure of identity and full name" (see appendix C), mentioned in the excerpt above, was for instance in relation to my research partners and representatives of organisations or institutions in Faroese and Santomean society (e.g. public servants, presidents of NGOs and interest organisations).

Finally, since I recruited someone else to transcribe the interviews in both the Faroe Islands and São Tomé e Príncipe, these transcribers were also briefed on how to securely manage the data that they were given access to and also asked to sign a confidentiality agreement (see appendix F).

3.2.2 Situational ethics

> Whether researchers arrive as strangers or already are immersed within small island/islanded communities, an ethical stance requires they pay attention to interconnectedness, interdependency, and intimacy. (Hayfield, 2022, p. 240)

In addition to challenges of ensuring anonymisation and confidentiality when doing research in small-populated contexts, the intertwined relationships that characterise such contexts also require considerations pertaining to situational ethics, i.e. "the kind [of research ethics] that deal with the unpredictable, often subtle, yet ethically important moments that come up in the field" (Ellis, 2007, p. 4). Building upon Ellis' (2007) relational ethics approach, Hayfield (2022) calls on those doing research in small island(ed) communities to be sensitive to the

multiple relational dynamics that characterise people's lives in such contexts. Drawing from her research in the Faroe Islands, she identifies three overlapping characteristics that animate Faroese social relations: 1) *interconnectedness,* which refers to the multiple relations that people have with each other, including the overlapping networks and layers of relating and knowing that characterise life in such contexts; 2) *Interdependency,* which refers to the way everyone is interdependent, which may enhance mechanisms of social control and instil significant importance on social capital and on avoiding social stigma; 3) *Intimacy,* which refers to the closeness between people, manifested very clearly in the way that the first topic of conversation in a new encounter often revolves around who you are related to and/or who your friends are (Hayfield 2022).

I would argue that being from the Faroe Islands and embodying an awareness of these dynamics, strengthened an 'island sensitive' situational ethics. Also in São Tomé e Príncipe, where I noted that similar to the Faroese context people there also have "several different hats to wear" – a phenomenon which Gaini (2013), writing from the Faroese experience, explains in the following way:

> This is a society where every citizen has many positions and functions, as well as social networks that are crossing other networks. Colleagues are neighbours, board members are relatives, sports teammates are from the same Free Church congregations, and so on (...) At one moment your cousin could be your daughter's school teacher and the next moment, he is the chair of the Board at your workplace. The same cousin could also be the treasurer of your trade union as well as the coach of the handball team in town. (Gaini, 2013, pp. 34–35)

While a sensitivity and understanding of these dynamics also played into the way I navigated social interactions in São Tomé e Príncipe, an additional layer of research ethical reflexivity linked to my privileged positionality (in terms of race, passport, education, class, etc.) and its relation to the legacy of colonialism and racial capitalism also influenced my approach there.

On this theme, Sultana writes that:

> Conducting international fieldwork involves being attentive to histories of colonialism, development, globalization and local realities, to avoid exploitative research or perpetuation of relations of domination and control. It is thus imperative that ethical concerns should permeate the entire process of the research, from conceptualization to dissemination, and that researchers are especially mindful of negotiated ethics in the field. (Sultana, 2007, p. 375)

In retrospect, I think Sultana's point here is at the core of why I decided to be quite selective about how much and in what way I ended up engaging with the Santomean data in this thesis. Instead, I have postponed doing a more comprehensive analysis, of what ended up being quite a large dataset, until I have had the chance to travel back and invite my partners at FENAPA, as well as the Santomean scholars I connected with during my stay, to be involved in the analysis and dissemination of the data.

3.3 The research process in the Faroe Islands

The research process in the Faroe Islands consisted of two main fieldwork phases (as well as additional activities that fell a bit outside the timeframe of the two phases). The first phase took place from September to December 2017, and the second from October to December 2019.

3.3.1 The first phase (Sep-Dec 2017)

The main objective of the first phase was to gather input for designing a participatory research process. At this stage in the research, my attention was primarily on terrestrial food practices, since this is where, as a Faroese myself, I had noticed a rise in grassroot food initiatives, particularly in relation to gardening and vegetable cultivation. For instance, just a couple of years earlier in 2014, the first Faroese vegetable growers' association *Veltan*[40] had been founded, and I had noticed a general interest in the Faroe Islands to become more self-sufficient with

[40] *Veltan* translates to 'the field' in English.

vegetables, and a flourishing trend of Faroese starting to experiment with small gardening projects aimed at food self-provisioning.

During this first phase, I carried out nine exploratory semi-structured interviews, two of which were with representatives from respectively the Faroese Slow Food organisation and a Faroese NGO called FNU[41], which I had previously been a part of and whose most active members at that time (2016-2017) were interested in questions and visions similar to those of the international food sovereignty movement, which I also was following quite closely at this early stage of my doctoral journey.[42]

After transcribing these initial interviews and reflecting on the Faroese context, I decided to invite activists from Slow Food and FNU to a full-day workshop to explore food sovereignty issues in the Faroese context and possible further collaboration. The analysis and reflections that came out of this workshop as well as the workshop process itself, which took place in November 2018 (i.e. in between the two research phases), ended up being a key source of inspiration for one of the published papers in this thesis (chapter four).

3.3.2 The second phase (Oct-Dec 2019)

The second phase of the research process began with a meeting with activists from Slow Food and FNU, where we made a tentative research design containing three main objectives. One activist from each of the two organisations joined me as research partners in the project and also participated in many of the research activities to the extent that time and resources allowed. Our three objectives for the collaboration were:

[41] FNU is the abbreviation for *Føroya Náttúru- og Umhvørvisfelag* (In English: the nature and environment organisation of the Faroe Islands).

[42] In the first year of my PhD, I participated in several international gatherings of the European food sovereignty movement, e.g. the 2016 European Nyéléni Forum in Cluj Napoca and FAO's Regional Symposium on Agroecology for Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems for Europe and Central Asia in Budapest in 2017.

1. To familiarise ourselves with the situation and future visions of small-scale food producers, and the informal food economy in the Faroe Islands.
2. To organise a Faroese food conference addressing key issues of importance for sustainable food systems.
3. To disseminate our findings in writing in Faroese language.

To operationalise the first objective we carried out a series of semi-structured interviews with small-scale food producers enquiring about their thoughts on Faroese food and agricultural policy, the topic of sustainability and organic production, as well as their hopes and visions for the future, and last, but not least the economic aspects of the food practices they engaged in (e.g. level of self-provision, what and how they sold their produce, to what extent they gifted and/or exchanged their produce without money).

Our sampling strategy was primarily purposive, combined with some snowballing and convenience. We wanted an as broad representation of Faroese small-scale food producers as possible – with a diversity in age and gender, part-time and full-time, 'traditional' and 'alternative', from the smaller outer islands and smaller rural areas as well as from the capital area.

With the connections that I had established during the first phase combined with my research partners' network with food producers, we managed to put down a comprehensive list of informants and by the end of the second phase, we had carried out 40 interviews with food producers from all the districts in the country.

Participants were approached by telephone, where me or one of my research partners explained the project, asking if they were interested in participating. Private phone numbers in the Faroe Islands are publicly accessible, and it is common between Faroese people to look up a person's phone number, if you for some reason are interested in speaking to that person, even if you do not know the person. Most of the interviews were carried out at the participants' homes, but in some cases, it was more practical to meet in Tórshavn (the capital), e.g. if the participant was from an outer island, which can be difficult to reach.

As for the second objective, this was originally supposed to happen on the 14th of March 2020. Everything was ready, also with invited speakers coming from abroad, but the event had to be cancelled when two-days prior to the event, the first Covid lockdown happened in the Faroe Islands. In 2021 the situation was still too uncertain with regards to Covid, but in April 2022 we managed to have a very successful two-days conference with workshops and presentations on regenerative agriculture, community supported agriculture, food sovereignty as well as a panel debate on the future of Faroese agriculture. The conference received some media attention and was well attended by food producers, policy makers and academics alike, who also gave positive feedback afterwards.

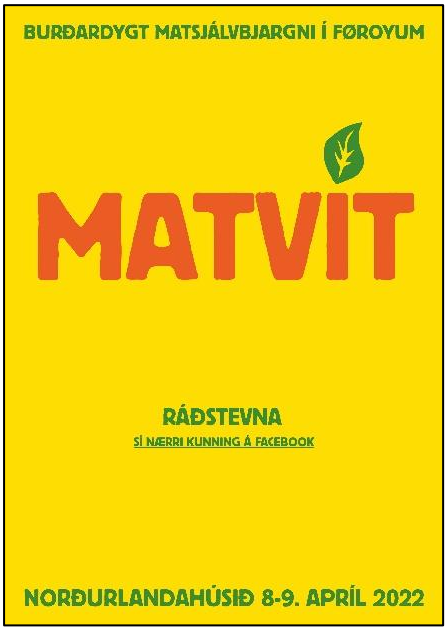

FIGURE 5: THE POSTER AND GRAPHIC IDENTITY OF THE CONFERENCE MATVIT

The third objective has not been fulfilled (yet). As mentioned earlier, I found out that it was not feasible to engage in a collaborative analysis and Faroese writing process with my research participants at the same time as I was writing up my thesis. Therefore, we have postponed this to after I have earned my PhD.

3.3.3 Empirical material

The dataset from the Faroe Islands consists of 40 semi-structured interviews with small-scale food producers, seven interviews with other relevant stakeholders in the Faroese local food scene, personal fieldnotes and material generated at workshops.

Of the interviews with food producers, 12 were with family-farms, whose income was mainly from farming, 5 were with *útróður*-fishers, whose income was also mainly from fishing and 23 were with food-producing households, whose characteristics was diverse – some had a part-time income from their produce, while for others it was mainly for food self-provision to themselves and their

closest of kin. The map below gives an overview of the representation distributed across the regions in the Faroe Islands.

Food producers interviewed in the Faroe Islands

Norðoyar **Northern Isles region**	5 agri-food producing household 2 *útróður*-fishers 1 family farm (full-time)
Eysturoy **Eysturoy region**	2 family farms (both full-time)
Sandoy **Sandoy region**	4 family farms (all full-time) 1 agri-food producing household 1 *útróður*-fisher
Streymoy **Streymoy region**	3 family farms (all full-time) 7 agri-food producing households 1 *útróður*-fisher
Suðuroy **Southern Isles region**	1 family farm (full-time) 6 agri-food producing households 1 *útróður*-fisher
Vágar **Vágar region**	4 agri-food producing household 1 family farm (full-time)

FIGURE 6: OVERVIEW OF FOOD PRODUCERS INTERVIEWED IN THE FAROE ISLANDS BY REGION

In addition to the food producers, seven other stakeholders in the Faroese subsistence-oriented foodscape were interviewed. They were:

- The Agricultural Agency (group interview with three people, all males)
- The Agricultural Trust Foundation (individual interview, male)
- *FNU*, the main environmental NGO in the Faroe Islands (group interview with two, one male and one female)
- Slow Food Faroe Islands (group interview with two, both females)
- The president of *Óðalsfelag* Føroya, freeholders' organisation (individual interview, male)
- President of *Bóndafelag Føroya*, the Faroese farmers' organisation (individual interview, male)

- The president of *Veltan*, the Faroese vegetable growers' association (individual interview, female)

Finally, I also draw from reflections, observations and insight captured in the format of fieldnotes, pictures, workshop notes and flipcharts. Whether at food producer gatherings or in conversation with Faroese policymakers or participating in traditional seasonal activities (e.g. sheep-rearing), it was sometimes through informal and unanticipated encounters that my research partners and I obtained the most authentic moments of insight. This material thus constitutes a source of (auto)ethnographic data, which has influenced elements of the analysis (see section 3.5).

3.4 The research process in São Tomé e Príncipe

The research process in São Tomé e Príncipe also consisted of two fieldwork phases. The first took place from February to March in 2018, and the second from February to June 2019.

3.4.1 The first phase (Feb-Mar 2018)

The main objective during the first phase was to carry out a pilot study - visiting the country, learn about its food-political landscape, scope for potential research partners and connect with local scholars and food actors. One of the first things that I did (after visiting the local food market of course) was to visit the local universities. This led me to a Santomean sociologist, working in the civil society sector with immense insight on critical dynamics in Santomean society. Through him, I met Antonio Lucas Aguiar, who became my local research assistant and translator throughout the entire research process in São Tomé e Príncipe.

Together with Antonio, I carried out nine interviews with key actors representing small-scale food producers. One of these interviews was with two representatives

from FENAPA, that is the Santomean federation of small-scale farmers, which I connected well with right away.[43]

3.4.2 The second phase (Feb-Jun 2019)

One year later, when I returned for the second phase of the project, I got back in touch with Antonio, who was keen to continue as my research assistant/translator on the project. I also approached the sociologist I had connected with the previous year. This time he introduced me to a female friend with whom I soon found a natural affinity. She became almost like a local supervisor to me. Throughout the duration of the second phase, I would meet with her almost consistently every second week. We would sit on her porch, sometimes for hours, and talk about Santomean politics, gender issues, colonialism, global inequality and other topical issues on the plate that day. With an interdisciplinary academic background, she had lifelong experiences working in the Santomean development sector. Our conversations were informal and unstructured, but towards the end of the second phase, I also carried out a recorded interview with her.

Something else that I did early on was to get back in touch with FENAPA to explore possibilities for collaboration, and they were immediately interested. I was from the start very conscious of my positionality and told them that I was not sure if and what I could possibly contribute with in their organisation, but that I was happy to carry out any form of casual work, such as translations of texts to English, writing funding applications, facilitating communications in English with international organisations that they would like to engage with, etc. and that to me it was a privilege to be able to learn about Santomean food issues through spending time with them and supporting them in the work that they were doing. I also told them that I had some funding that we could use for something that could benefit their advocacy work for small-scale farmers in the country.

[43] FENAPA is the abbreviation for *Federação Nacional dos Pequenos Agricultores* (In English: The national federation of small-scale farmers).

After a process of exchanging ideas and concerns, and me continuing to clarify to them that I was very flexible and open to adapt to what they foresaw as a fruitful collaboration, we ended up defining the following three objectives for our collaboration:

1. That I was to travel around the country accompanied by two representatives of FENAPA (one male and one female) facilitating out community focus group interviews that would contribute to the work of FENAPA and my research.
2. That before I left São Tomé e Príncipe, we would host a workshop-day for members of FENAPA, where they could explore issues of relevance to their reality.
3. That after earning my PhD degree, I would return to São Tomé e Príncipe and provide FENAPA with a summary of my research results in Portuguese.

At first, I hesitated when it came to the first objective. A part of me felt that traveling around the country carrying out research activities in small rural communities in a postcolonial context as a privileged white Western researcher speaking incredibly poor Portuguese, was the stereotype of everything that I wanted so desperately not to be. However, the more I reflected upon FENAPA's motivation for suggesting this in the first place, the more I also came to accept the fact that I *was* that stereotypical privileged white researcher doing research in a postcolonial context, and that spending some of my grant money on enabling two representatives from FENAPA to visit some of the most marginalised members of their organisation was a meaningful way to contribute to FENAPA's work.

Thus, we embarked on the mission of facilitating focus-groups with food-producing communities all around the country, as well as semi-structured interviews with the governors of six administrative regions in São Tomé e Príncipe. The sampling of the communities and interview participants was conducted by FENAPA and their contact person in each of the communities we visited.

As for the second objective, we organised a very successful workshop-day in June 2019 in the capital city of São Tomé, where we invited representatives from all the

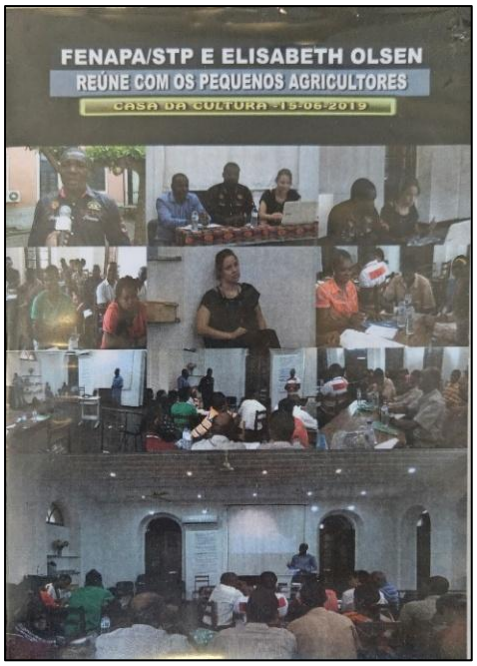

FIGURE 7: THE DVD FROM THE WORKSHOP WITH FENAPA

communities that we had visited in the preceding months. I gave a presentation about agroecology and co-facilitated the workshops, which explored various local and very context specific challenges, such as how to combat rats and other pests without the use of pesticides, and the problem of cocoa thieves. The event was held at the cultural centre called *Casa da Cultura de São Tomé*. The event received some media attention, and FENAPA also ensured video documentation of the day, which they gifted me in the form of a DVD before leaving the country.

In relation to the third objective, my plan is to return to São Tomé e Príncipe after earning my doctorate, and to then involve FENAPA in a more comprehensive data analysis and in the dissemination of results in Portuguese. In addition to this, I also aspire to involve them as co-authors in an academic research publication.

3.4.3 Empirical material

As should be clear by now, the main way that I acquired insight and learned about the Santomean food system and society was through my collaborative activities with FENAPA.

A key part of this process and the main component of my Santomean dataset are the focus groups with small-scale food producers that we carried out in 28 communities spread across all the seven administrative regions of the country. Some of the communities were predominantly fishing communities, others predominantly agricultural communities and a few were mixed. The size of the focus groups varied from place to place (ranging from 4 to 15 participants) and most of the interviews were carried out outdoors or in a community meeting hall. The map below gives an overview of the communities interviewed by region.

Communities interviewed in São Tomé e Príncipe	
Lembá	3 communities
Lobata	5 communities
Água Grande	3 communities
Mé Zóchi	2 communities
Cantagalo	4 communities
Caué	3 communities
Pagué (Príncipe)	8 communities

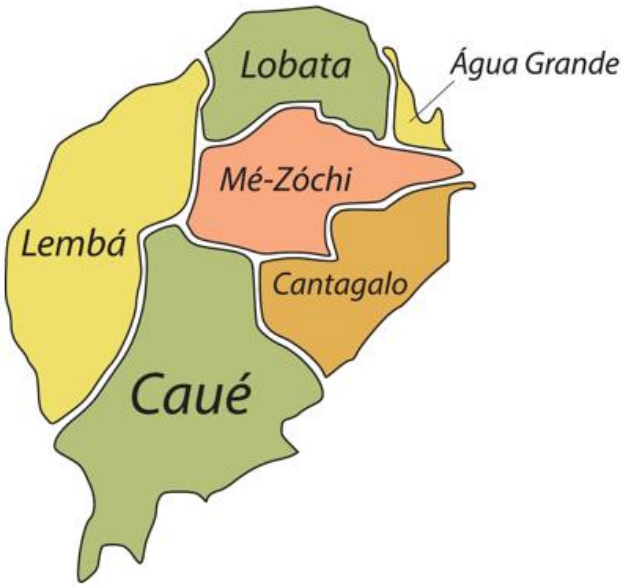

FIGURE 8: OVERVIEW OF COMMUNITIES INTERVIEWED IN SÃO TOMÉ E PRÍNCIPE BY REGION

In addition to the community focus group interviews, twenty other individual semi-structured interviews were carried out with regional governors, public servants and representatives of different CSOs in São Tomé e Príncipe. Among these were also three expert interviews through which I learned about and had the privileged to gain insight into Santomean society and explore more geopolitical issues and neocolonial dynamics affecting the country from local critical perspectives.

Overview of individual interviews carried out in São Tomé e Príncipe (February- June 2019)	
Expert interviews	Santomean intellectual and previous politician (female)
	Santomean social critic and postcolonial writer (female)
	Santomean university Professor and previous politician (female)
Representatives of local food-producer organisations and NGOs	The president of FENAPA - the national federation of small-scale farmers (male)
	The president of Amagru - a farmers women's organisation under FENAPA (female)
	The president of Qua Tela - a food co-operative focused on locally processed foods (female)
	The president of Adappa - NGO working on agriculture and environmental protection (male)
	The president of the federation of fishers and fish-sellers in São Tomé e Príncipe (male)
	The director of Marapa - an NGO working on marine conservation and education (male)
National and supranational civil officers	Civil officer at the ministry of environment and climate change (male)
	Civil officer at the ministry of blue economy (male)
	Civil officer at the ministry of agriculture (male)
	Civil officer at FAO's secretary in São Tomé e Príncipe (female)
	Civil officer at PRIASA - a food security project in São Tomé e Príncipe (female)
Regional governors	The governor of Água Grande (male)
	The governor of Cantagalo (male)
	The governor of Caué (male)
	The governor of Lembá (male)
	The governor of Lobata (male)
	The governor of Mé Zóchi (male)

Finally, similarly to the Faroe Islands a key source of empirical insight in São Tomé e Príncipe was also obtained through observations, reflections and informal conversations with my research partners and other people that I met. Thus, in addition to the interview data, which was generated in collaboration with FENAPA, my Santomean dataset also consists of fieldnotes, pictures, flipcharts and other items that evoke memories from the field.

3.5 Analytical strategy: interviews, focus groups and (auto)ethnography

With such a comprehensive dataset (comprising interviews and focus group (recordings and transcripts), field notes, pictures, etc.), figuring out how to approach the data analysis was quite challenging. Learning how to use the qualitative data analysis software Atlas.ti has been vital in this process. While still

not a ‘superuser’ of Atlas.ti, over time my proficiency in harnessing it to suit my purpose has gradually improved.

The first step was simply to get an overview of all the interview data – both audio and text (transcriptions) – and make it easier to navigate. To make the navigation as straightforward as possible, I coded each data file with key signifiers. For instance, all the data from the Faroe Islands was coded [FI 2017] or [FI 2019] and the Santomean data was coded [STP 2018] or [STP 2019], reflecting which country and which research phase the data derived from. The name of the data file was then followed with more specific information, e.g. the name of the community. I also connected each audio file with the transcription that it belonged to.

Another key function that I used was ‘document groups’, where I created one document group with all the Santomean community focus groups, one group with all the Faroese fisheries, and so on. This allowed me to compartmentalise a particular portion of the data for specific analytical enquiries. Last but not least, I used the ‘quotation comment’ function, to jot notes on sections of texts, and the coding function to thematically code the interviews with the purpose of detecting similarities and differences and enabling me to compare and contrast the ideas expressed in the data.

As for the analytical strategies employed in the four papers that constitute the body of this thesis, these are described more comprehensively in the individual chapters. However, it is worth reiterating some of the issues pertaining to reflexivity, normativity and positionality, which I touched upon at the start of this chapter and how these have influenced my analytical approach.

As already mentioned, the epistemological paradigm that has characterised my research process, including the analytical work presented in this thesis, embraces a normative stance to research and analysis. When thinking about these issues in relation to the analytical process, I have found much inspiration and resonance in the literature on autoethnography, defined as an approach that “acknowledges and accommodates subjectivity, emotionality, and the researcher's influence on

research, rather than hiding from these matters or assuming they don't exist." (Ellis et al., 2011)

Although, the papers presented in this thesis can hardly be characterised as autoethnographic texts, if we consider autoethnography to be a form of writing "that seeks to describe and systematically analyze (*graphy*) personal experience (*auto*) in order to understand cultural experience (*ethno*)" (Ellis et al., 2011, original emphasis), autoethnographic reflections have influenced the analytical process.

For instance, a level of analysis of "personal experience in order to understand cultural experiences" has informed the analytical strategy in some of the papers presented in this thesis. This was particularly the case in relation to the paper on Faroese whaling in chapter five and to some extent also the paper in chapter six about Faroese coastal fisheries (*útróður*). Here, a form of collaborative autoethnography (Winkler, 2018) was carried out by myself and my co-author, where sharing our personal reflections and discussing what these practices mean to us personally and what that says about our cultural experiences with these practices, came to inform the research questions addressed in these papers. Also in chapter seven, elements of (auto)ethnography supported the interview analysis. I put brackets around auto here, because in this paper, an analysis of personal experiences was not actively pursued. However, I want to acknowledge the influence that my 'auto' (personal experiences) had in the research process and thus also to the final analysis.

Thus, while none of the papers dwell on my personal experiences in the format of 'storytelling' that often characterises autoethnographic texts, a level of introspective analysis has been a critical component of my methodological process. Finally, working with the interview data and revisiting my fieldnotes, workshop material, pictures, etc. has also stimulated reflections and emotions that I may want to explore in the genre of autoethnographic writing in the future.

3.6 The four papers

As already clarified in the introduction, the body of this thesis comprises four chapters that are written as stand-alone papers. Therefore, each of these chapters also contains a paper-specific methods section. Below I briefly describe how these four papers/chapters contribute to answering the research questions addressed in the thesis.

The paper in chapter four (co-authored with my supervisor Rebecca Whittle) was written in the aftermath of the first workshop and discussions I had with my Faroese research partners in November 2018. This is a methodology paper, which is heavy on theory and written in the style of an explorative and reflective essay. In this paper I develop a methodological application of the concept of affirmative political ecology. I do this by applying a Gibson-Graham inspired political ecology approach to my case, i.e. the participatory analysis of the Faroese foodscape which I facilitated with my Faroese research partners in the first phase of research. A key outcome of this analysis and the theorising that evolved from writing this paper was a problematisation of binaries, such as critical research vs. affirmative research, local food systems vs. global food systems, small-scale vs. large-scale, alternative vs. conventional, etc. This also ended up informing my thesis argument quite significantly.

The paper in chapter five (co-authored with my supervisor Ragnheiður Bogadóttir) was written in the first year of my PhD. The process around this paper started around the same time that I started my PhD at Lancaster University. The idea for the paper originated from autoethnographic reflections on the practice of Faroese whaling *(grindadráp)*.This, combined with pre-existing literature on the practice, as well as statistics and a narrative analysis of official documents, social media commentaries and other public opinions pieces, led us to draw comparisons between the sustainability ethics embedded in the practice of Faroese whaling and the sustainability ethics advocated for by the degrowth movement. A key component of the paper argument is our application of Escobar's (2008) concept of "colonial difference" as an epistemological position and perspective from

where it is possible to envision alternative pathways to growth and expansion. This early attempt to articulate what "decolonising the imaginary" in the Faroese context might mean, played a crucial role for the way that I ended up connecting degrowth and other post-growth scholarship to decolonial scholarship.

The paper in chapter six (also co-authored with my supervisor Ragnheiður Bogadóttir) is a sequel to the paper in chapter five. The idea for this paper started to evolve at the final stage of writing and publishing the whaling paper, which was during the same period that I was reviewing literature in critical food studies, and attending food sovereignty workshops and conferences. In this paper, we engage with the practice of *útróður*, i.e. coastal fisheries in the Faroes. Here we mainly draw from interview material from my doctoral dataset, but also historical research and statistics. While building on some of the ideas that were developed in the previous two papers, this time food sovereignty figures as the main framework of analysis. The paper contributes to debates on how one might draw from pre-existing subsistence-oriented practices when designing post-growth food policies.

The paper in chapter seven is a comparative analysis of the subsistence-oriented food economies in the Faroe Islands and São Tomé e Príncipe. Here I draw from economic anthropology and feminist political economy in an analysis of the interview material, observations and reflections from my research in the Faroe Islands and São Tomé e Príncipe. The paper finds that economic practices imbued with 'post-growth characteristics' are widespread in both of these contexts. I also reflect upon the multiplexed meaning of the Santomean concept/philosophy of *leve-leve,* which I suggest as a source of insightful inspiration for reflecting critically about the relation between human well-being and the economy.

3.7 A methodological epilogue

This methodology chapter started with a discussion on some of the epistemological underpinnings and influences that have shaped my research approach. This was followed by a section on research ethics. After this I described the research process in both of my field-sites, including the dataset it generated.

Then I described my analytical approach, after which I outlined the four different papers that constitute the body of the thesis. Now I conclude this chapter by zooming out again – to reflect upon a methodological conundrum, which has characterised my doctoral process.

As should be clear now, two key aims have motivated the research project on the basis of which this thesis was conceived: 1) To support and contribute to ongoing work in the Faroe Islands and São Tomé e Príncipe that is concerned with empowering local, just and sustainable food systems and practices. 2) To explore and highlight economic practices in the two contexts that figure as alternatives to the capitalist export-oriented food economy.

The project was ambitious from the start, encompassing two research-sites – one in the global North (the Faroe Islands) and one in the global South (São Tomé e Príncipe). The participatory processes in both contexts have generated a range of societally impactful activities. This was especially the case in the Faroe Islands, where in addition to the conference mentioned in section 3.3.2, my research partners and I ended up organising several other events - from a political panel debate on how to enhance sustainability in Faroese agriculture, to a community educational event about soil ecology and agroecology, as well as an educational event about seed ecology, seed saving and seed swapping. These activities in turn mushroomed into new encounters, relations and other projects, which thus emerged in synergy with my doctoral project, and which have continued to evolve in Faroese society.

However, as this methodology chapter has also made clear, these research processes also generated an overwhelming amount of data in both contexts, which has presented its challenges in narrowing down a focus for the actual thesis.

As mentioned in the outline above of the four papers, shortly before starting my PhD I had started working on the paper about Faroese whaling from a degrowth perspective (chapter five). I was thus influenced by the ideas that I was developing in this paper, and the theme of non-growth-oriented economies continued to

intrigue me during my field work. However, being dedicated to a participatory research process I was also devoted to the idea of contributing with the knowledge and resources I had to the visions and wants of my research partners and participants, in whatever way I could.

As time went by, it became more and more obvious to me that in terms of dissemination of results, the format of the PhD thesis and other academic deliverables (e.g. conference presentations and paper publications) would likely be inaccessible and possibly also irrelevant to many of the research participants, and that the most societally impactful results of the project were those being disseminated through the participatory research process itself.

Thus, after much contemplation, I concluded that writing my PhD thesis on the subsistence-oriented food economies in the two contexts from a post-growth analytics, would not take anything away from the dissemination that was already happening in a more practical sense in the field, where the focus was to empower local food producers and initiatives for food sovereignty.

Moreover, while the focus on post-growth theorisation in the final thesis may be somewhat abstract and not very practice-oriented for the here and now reality and needs of the food producers who contributed to the study, it is important to reiterate that the participatory processes with my research partners in the Faroe Islands and in São Tomé e Príncipe do not end with this thesis. Rather completing this thesis can be considered a milestone that had to be accomplished before embarking on the third objective of my collaborations in both the Faroe Islands and São Tomé e Príncipe.

4. Transcending binaries

A participatory political ecology of the Faroese foodscape[44]

Abstract: This paper discusses some methodological aspects of a participatory research project on political economic dynamics of food in the Faroe Islands, in particular how to balance between the critical perspective and an affirmative practice when doing engaged research in political ecology. Drawing from Gibson-Graham's diverse economies framework combined with the concept of food sovereignty, familiar conceptual binaries (capitalism-noncapitalism, growth-degrowth, affirmation-critique) are challenged. The paper argues that instead of remaining locked in the analytical distinction between say a 'capitalist/global food-system' versus an 'alternative/local food-system', a critical-affirmative political ecology of food would ultimately have to entail a transcendence of such binary thinking. In particular, it would put more attention on the complexity and queerness of the foodscape, take more notice of the 'in-betweens' and the nuances that do not fit such categorisation. Participatory research with local activists is suggested as a fruitful and ethical methodology to facilitate such a process as it emphasises the *doing* of research and engages with the situated knowledge and experience of local activists.

Keywords: participatory research, Faroe Islands, affirmative political ecology, food sovereignty, diverse economies

[44] This chapter has already been published as an article in Nordia Geographical Publications, where it is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 4.0. The article was co-authored with my supervisor Rebecca Whittle. This version of the text has been slightly corrected since publication (formatting, typos, etc.). The reference to the original publication is: Olsen ES and Whittle, R. (2019). Transcending binaries: a participatory political ecology of the Faroese foodscape. *Nordia Geographical Publications* 47(5), 55-73.

4.1 Introduction

For decades the discourses of ecological modernisation (Hajer, 1995) and 'eco-efficiency' (Martínez-Alier, 2002) have dominated mainstream environmentalist rationality with the idea that climate change and the global environmental crisis can be fixed through institutional reform and technological advancement without changing the ways we organise the economy. Parallel to this, critical environmental social scientists (incl. many political ecologists) have deconstructed this worldview arguing that the root cause of the global environmental crisis is to be found in capitalism's dependency on continuous economic growth (e.g. Hornborg, 2001). Here studies in ecological economics that measure the energetic and material flows in the economy (e.g. Haberl et al., 2011) have been key for helping us understand and analyse the biophysical interactions and dynamics between the economy and the environment.

Although this perspective has rarely been taken seriously by those in position of political and economic power, several events this past year (2018) suggest that we are currently at a historical turning point where the hegemonic doxa of economic growth is also (finally) being challenged in mainstream policy-making circles and powerful institutions. One example of this was the Postgrowth Conference held in the EU-parliament on the 18-19th September 2018. Another example was when Diana Urge-Vorsatz, Vice Chair of working group 3 in the IPCC, on the 12th of October 2018, suggested that the issue of degrowth will be addressed in the next IPCC synthesis report[45].

[45] "...the only solution is some kind of, well, challenging the economic growth paradigm, but it is very difficult to do this in the IPCC, as many of our member countries are still with very low levels of development and certainly, they don't want to think about reducing growth and so on. But to the credit, you have certainly influenced me definitely a lot and I have followed a lot your conferences. I invited several of your keynote speakers to have a big review paper in annual review of environment and resources, which is going to come out now. And also I sneaked into the next report, degrowth. So, it was me who pushed that into the sixth assessment report. So in the outline, in the end it is not as such in the outline, because governments did not like, most many governments did not like the word, but implicitly it is there and we have a fantastic team who is going to write that chapter, and they are definitely going to address the issue of degrowth and the whole issue of consumption, so thank you for your point." (Ürge-Vorsatz (2018), *own transcription from min 60*)

How such a re-orientation of the economy is going to happen and what it might look like are therefore arguably some of the most acute issues to address for critical social science in the 21st century. We are increasingly in need of alternatives to the growth dependent economy and creative ways of thinking about the future which do not involve more 'business as usual'. For this task the concept of affirmative political ecology invites for an exciting discussion on what such a research approach might look like. While affirmation can be interpreted in different ways, this paper draws upon key dimensions of affirmative political ecology as explored in this thematic issue: an orientation to creative action that is hopeful, heterogeneous and life-affirming – seeking to transcend the limits of critique whilst also not shying away from it where necessary (Sirviö and Alhojärvi, 2018). In particular this essay explores what methodological considerations we need to make when researching non-capitalist political ecologies (Burke and Shear, 2014), doughnut economies (Raworth, 2017) and heterogenous degrowth pathways (D'Alisa et al., 2014; Paulson, 2017). For instance, how can we support alternatives to development and growth through an engaged and affirmative research practice while staying committed to the critical perspective? Or as the editors of this special issue ask, "How can critiques, negations and antagonisms feed into creative and 'care-full' modes of thought and practice – and what kind of critical practices do affirmative political ecologies need in order to avoid idealized 'affirmationism'?" (Sirviö and Alhojärvi, 2018).

In this paper we reflect on some of these questions in relation to my[46] postgraduate research on food political dynamics and visions for change in my home-country the Faroe Islands. Specifically, we consider the usefulness of moving beyond binaries and oppositions (for example, capitalism-noncapitalism, growth-degrowth, critique-affirmation). However, before doing so it is instructive to examine the ways in which recent research is trying to transgress boundaries

[46] This article takes the somewhat unconventional step of using both 'I' and 'we' pronouns. Both the original idea for the paper and the empirical material emerged from Elisabeth's PhD research in the Faroe Islands and therefore 'I' is used to signify those places in the text which relate directly to Elisabeth's voice and experience. However, both of us were involved in developing the overall shape and argument of the paper and hence 'we' is used elsewhere to indicate this collaborative dimension.

between the ‘alternative’ and the ‘conventional’. This will set us up for the second half of the paper, in which we consider my project specifically and demonstrate how a participatory research methodology can be helpful in moving beyond binaries towards a more engaged and affirmative political ecology (Batterbury, 2016; Batterbury and Horowitz, *forthcoming*).

4.2 Transcending the binary – diverse food economies

In his textbook introduction on Political Ecology, Paul Robbins characterises political ecology as “*a community of practice* united around a *certain kind of text* …that can be understood to address the condition and change of social/environmental systems, with explicit consideration of relations of power.” (Robbins, 2012, p. 20, original emphasis). Political ecology “…explores these social and environmental changes with an understanding that there are better, less coercive, less exploitative, and more sustainable ways of doing things.” (*ibid.)*

Robbins explains this normative ambition of political ecology with the metaphor of a ‘hatchet’ (political ecology as critique) and a ‘seed’ (political ecology as equity and sustainability research). In spite of this ambition, we would argue that there seems to be a tendency in most political ecology texts to have a stronger emphasis on the ‘hatchet’ than the ‘seed’. At a time where there is no lack of bad news and critique, this special issue calling for an exploration of an explicitly affirmative political ecology is thus a welcomed encouragement to attempt transcending the critical perspective (although not abandoning it).

Similarly, in food research there is a tendency to construct a binary between an affirmative practice, e.g. through participatory and other engaged research with ‘alternative local food initiatives’ (e.g. community gardens, farmers’ markets,

FIGURE 9: GIBSON-GRAHAM'S DIVERSE ECONOMIES ICEBERG

agroecology, alternative food networks) and a critique of 'the conventional global food system'. However, there is seldom acknowledgement of the fact that many food economies are somewhere in between these two extremes. In this paper we argue that while such binary categories can be useful for analysing and identifying inequalities and injustices in food systems, they fall short when it comes to explaining actual dynamics on the ground, which tend to be much more complex and contextual.

To capture this, we draw inspiration from Gibson-Graham's (1996/2006) work on diverse economies (see figure 9) and, in particular, their non-capitalocentric approach which argues that the visible, 'conventional' parts of the economy do not exist in isolation to a whole host of diverse – and potentially very transformative – economic practices (such as caring for children, voluntary work, cooperative business models etc.). In this way, their argument is that the binary of capitalism-noncapitalism is only helpful as a preliminary discursive construction

that can serve to make sense of and deconstruct the differences and similarities between the two, and that ultimately such a deconstructive process "explodes the binary, yielding a queer or radically heterogenous landscape of economy and a new ground for pluralistic economic politics" (Gibson-Graham, 2006, pp. xxi–xxii).

This is where the extensive case study research stemming from Gibson-Graham and scholars affiliated with their work is so instructive[47].

In relation to food specifically, Gibson-Graham's work has been taken up by several commentators whose research is attempting to explore the potential connections which exist between those areas of the food system which, on paper at least, appear almost irreconcilable. For example, Jonathan Beacham's UK-based work on the role of alternative food networks in times of austerity uses a diverse economies framework to consider the many ways in which apparently disparate food initiatives such as small-scale, organic agriculture and food banks, for example, may have wider lessons for us which further destabilise the idea of a binary. He writes:

> …when contrasted against the mainstream, many accounts continue to narrowly interpret AFNs, painting them simply as oppositional and reactive against hegemonic political-economic structures. A more contextually-aware interpretation (following Calvário and Kallis, 2017) helps us to understand the ways in which AFNs are not merely 'against' capitalism and/or austerity, but themselves generative of diverse economic logics and practices, altering wider relationships to food… (Beacham, 2018b, p. i)

In his wider analysis, Beacham goes on to argue that transgressing such binary thinking allows us to recognise "the powerful role that AFNs can play in articulating more positive relationships to food, and with it wider reconfigurations

[47] See e.g. the CERN network: https://www.communityeconomies.org/ce-research-network-cern

of both civil society and the foodscape beyond the austere here-and-now." (Beacham, 2018b, p. i)

Equally, Cameron's (2010) work on food economies in Newcastle, UK and Melbourne, Australia uses the diverse economies framework to underpin an analysis of insightful and in-depth case studies of varied food initiatives which goes beyond established binaries of 'alternative conventional' to explore the seeds of potentially nourishing and transformative practices in the everyday, small-scale and (often though not necessarily) local. She writes:

> What is so powerful about this diverse economies framework is that it gives us a way of talking about how people are taking back the economy through various food initiatives. So 'the economy' features not as something 'out there' that is the domain of mainstream businesses or 'the market' or 'globalisation' or 'capitalism', but as something that we all can make in ways that are people and environment centred. (Cameron, 2010, p. 8)

In this way, Cameron argues that if we stop thinking of the economy as an external, separate entity, we increase our possibilities to reshape it in more generative ways: "'the economy' features not as a bounded entity but as an open space of ethical decision making that is limited only by our imagination, our creativity and our will to 'take back'." (Cameron, 2010, p. 8)

In thinking about the transformative potential of going beyond binaries in our analysis of the food system, it is also useful to consider the impact that the concept of food sovereignty has had here. Food sovereignty, as originally coined by the international peasant organisation *La Via Campesina* in 1996, is now frequently applied in critical agrarian and food study analyses. The most applied definition of food sovereignty can be found in the 2007 Declaration of the Nyéléni Forum:

> Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable

> methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts the aspirations and needs of those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations. (Nyéléni, 2007a)

Reading this definition, and reflecting on the ways in which it has been applied by scholars, adds an interesting dimension to our discussion of binaries since, on the one hand, its origins as a "grassroots concept for sustainability" (Martinez-Alier et al., 2014) lends it an oppositional flavour, most notably in arguing for a more radical and politically transformative future than its better known cousin, food security, which has often been accused of propagating a strong 'business as usual' (often 'productivist') approach to the food system (Mooney and Hunt, 2009). However, this is not the only way in which the concept can be approached, with many activists and academics trying to employ it in less oppositional ways. For example, instead of approaching food sovereignty as an outcome, Schiavoni (2017, p. 3) conceptualises it as a "historically embedded, continually evolving set of processes that are interactively shaped by state and societal forces, reflecting competing paradigms and approaches."

This is a more dynamic approach to the concept, which focuses on the praxis of doing food sovereignty and makes 'either/ or' distinctions less important.

However, while a focus on the process of food sovereignty appears to make thinking in binaries less helpful, it would be a mistake to argue that it makes binaries irrelevant altogether. Indeed, food sovereignty is interesting because it calls for a transfer of power to the producers and consumers normally marginalised within the 'conventional large-scale capitalist' food system, explicitly stating that these actors should have the right to determine their own food systems. This requires that researchers wishing to work in this area need to listen to – and enter into dialogue with – the meanings and desires that their participants bring to the table (Guthman, 2008). This can make for a complex and interesting set of discussions, actions and negotiations between researchers and participants, since there may be situations when binary or oppositional

understandings of the food system feel both appropriate and necessary (for example, in order to defend farmer livelihoods in the face of a specific threat). However, on other occasions, a deeper understanding can be gained from all concerned coming to recognise that what seemed like a clear-cut distinction is, in fact, more nuanced and blurred. Therefore – and as we will argue in the second part of the paper – when considering food sovereignty, it may be more accurate to say that transcending binaries involves thinking both across and beyond them, rather than abandoning them altogether.

Having explored some of the literature which exists on binaries and how we understand the project of transcending them, we will now move to a consideration of how these issues are relevant for my research. This discussion will establish the groundwork necessary for considering how a PAR research methodology can be a productive way of moving beyond binaries.

We start by describing the foodscape of the Faroe Islands, drawing attention to its sometimes contradictory character and thus bringing us to consider the potential binaries that I have to navigate in my research.

4.3 Food-political dynamics in the Faroe Islands

The Faroe Islands (or the Faroes) is a semi-autonomous country within the Danish Realm. The subarctic archipelago situated between Iceland and Norway consists of 18 islands with a total landmass of approximately 1400 km^2 and is populated by approximately 51.000 inhabitants.

Besides fisheries (wild and farmed) which account for 90-98 percent of all Faroese exports (SFI, 2019), the Faroes has a rich variety of other food economic practices. In addition to traditional practices that are rooted in communitarian and 'kin-ordered' modes of production from the past, the past 3-5 years have also seen the emergence of new alternative food initiatives. Examples include initiatives to grow plant-based foods (specifically more grains and vegetables), awareness raising and innovations to reduce food waste, hydroponic systems to grow salad, wild food foraging, as well as a citizen/consumer led push for a more sustainable,

local, just and healthier food system. On the one hand this growing politicisation of food manifests itself on supermarket shelves with an increased range of e.g. organic, fairtrade, vegan produce. On the other hand, the global environmental crisis has arguably also led Faroese people to reflect upon meanings and values embedded in some of the traditional economies that are still part of the Faroese foodscape (Bogadóttir and Olsen, 2017), and encouraged Faroese people to experiment with grassroots food innovations inspired by dynamics happening elsewhere in the world (e.g. urban farming, no-packaging, no to food waste, food co-operatives).

The Faroese foodscape thus makes an excellent case for researching local community economies that potentially undermine capitalocentric understandings of the economy, i.e. "the tendency to situate capitalism at the centre of development, thus tending to devalue or marginalize possibilities of noncapitalist development" (Gibson-Graham, 2006, p. 41).

Certainly these local food economies easily fit theorisations of an emerging "economic ethics for the Anthropocene" (Graham and Roelvink, 2010), i.e. a shift to a new economic ethics where human beings are "learning to be affected" and ultimately "transformed by the world [of the Anthropocene] in which we find ourselves" (*ibid*, p. 322) which in turn generates more socially just and environmentally benign economies. However, a political ecology lens would quickly problematise such enthusiasm underlining that the Faroese foodscape remains deeply entangled in global capitalist dynamics - not only through food imports, but also through the large-scale extractive economy of wild and farmed fish for export, the profits and externalities of which are unevenly distributed.

The following section describes this potential contradiction in more detail and charts my journey into the territory of affirmative political ecology.

4.4 Beyond the binaries: An affirmative critical research practice emerges

Initially, the purpose and objective of my doctoral research was to support and engage with local food dynamics in the Faroe Islands that challenge the 'growth economy'. Thus, during my exploratory field research phase (from September 2017 to December 2017) I was exclusively focused on food practices that do not follow a capitalist logic, which meant that I ended up focusing on traditional community economies and emerging grassroots alternatives, most of which are land-based. I reflected on Faroese food habits and culture as I had experienced these throughout my lifetime and the changes that I had noticed in recent years. I had informal conversations with friends and acquaintances about the topic and more formal and focused interviews with civil society actors, such as local peasant-farmers, the Faroese peasant-farmer association, a community vegetable growers association called *Veltan*, Slow Food Faroe Islands, a local environmental NGO called *FNU* (*Føroya Náttúru og Umhvørvisfelag*), and a newly established eco-social food cooperative called *Vistgrøði*. In all cases I enquired into the hopes and visions for the future of Faroese agriculture and food system in general, and challenges to get there. I found that many of the people I spoke with expressed critical awareness of the relationship between the economic system and global environmental problems, while also finding themselves entangled in these. For instance, one farmer said that:

> ...we have caused so much damage on the earth/land *[jørðina]* for so many years with this attitude that you have to always optimise everything and rationalise everything natural away just so that you can obtain more profits. And I think that this attitude is enemy number one of the earth/land and nature. (*own translation from Faroese*)

However, while it was motivating to learn that these perspectives and attitudes figure between many Faroese people, it was equally discouraging to be reminded through media and general political discourse that what matters most to Faroese political economy and society are activities happening in the ocean: large-scale industrial fisheries and a booming fish farming industry. Hence it became clear to

me that doing research on food political dynamics in the Faroe Islands would also have to reckon with these ocean-based food economies or risk ignoring what amounted to be a huge 'elephant in the room'.

On closer inspection, engaging with this 'elephant' has stimulated a deconstructive process of not one but three conceptual binaries. These are hard to disentangle and hence they are all described here.

The first is what we might call 'a foodscape binary'. The preceding discussion of the Faroese foodscape highlighted the construction of an apparent opposition between two competing food systems. On the one hand a **land-based/local/ subsistence-oriented** food system and, on the other, the apparent polar opposite: namely a food system which is **ocean-based/global/export-oriented**.

In a similar manner we have a second 'economic ethos binary' binary around **noncapitalism/non-growth** versus **capitalism/growth**. The whole growth/non-growth debate is a clearly established 'battle line' in academia, politics and civil society which goes much broader than food (see for example Kallis et al., 2018). The reason for bringing it up here is because it has formed such a crucial subtext to the discussions that I have had with the participants.

As previously described, my research originally sought to engage fairly exclusively with the land-based/local/subsistence-oriented element of Faroese agriculture which also resonates with a noncapitalist/non-growth oriented economic ethos. However, my work with local stakeholders, much of which kept coming back to bigger questions around industrial fisheries, export and the growth economy – led me to realise that the two were entangled in more fundamental ways. For instance, in Faroese cultural memory fisheries continue to figure as an important source of survival and subsistence. Here the local concept of *útróður* (literally translated to 'rowing out') denotes the practice of rowing out for a boil of fish, and while this practice still figures in the Faroes it does so in somewhat contradictory ways. On the one hand the concept is used to denote one of the vessel groups in the Faroese fishery fleet where the catch is primarily sold to the export market. On the other hand, *útróður* is also still used in its original meaning - going out fishing

with your small boat for own subsistence or leisure, thus also here invoking contradictory relations of social and cultural class, rural-urban dynamics, etc. between those owning a boat for leisure, and those owning a boat because of their belonging and/or pursuing a more 'archaic' lifestyle (typically in more rural areas).

In 2018 *Bakkafrost*, the largest Faroese fish farming enterprise (registered at the Oslo stock exchange) officially announced plans to build a biogas plant that will produce energy and fertilisers out of the waste from their own industry and from local dairy farms. This 'environmental corporate social responsibility' move is in no way surprising as it fits perfectly with the current 'circular (blue) economy' trend. However, it also exemplifies why it makes sense to move beyond the binary distinction between land-based (local) food dynamics and ocean-based (global) food dynamics and instead pay closer attention to their interconnection and fusion. Another example is an initiative by a Faroese fish export company which has started to host a regular local food market on their factory premises – an event which is stimulating local and alternative food dynamics in the country.

I am thus finding that it is important to also engage with the 'capitalist' and export-oriented dimension to obtain a more holistic understanding of the Faroese socio-ecology. In this way, bringing the concept of food sovereignty together with the diverse economies framework allows for a non-capitalocentric analysis of the Faroese foodscape that nevertheless emphasises where resistance needs to go, what needs transformation and what needs building. In this way, I am also focusing on the doing of food sovereignty in the Faroes – and exploring the way in which this is an active process constantly in motion which involves the economy and society in the broadest sense.

Indeed, expanding on the case of the Faroes, it is possible to see that, alongside concerns for profit and growth most visible in discussions on fisheries and ocean governance, there are also many other concerns at play, e.g. sustaining (meaningful) livelihoods, which are entrenched in cultural economic practices that are not part of the official economy (Bogadóttir and Olsen, 2017). As Cameron's (2010) paper demonstrates, 'growth' in the conventional sense may be

dependent on these broader cultural economic practices, but the same does not necessarily apply vice versa. Whilst the scope of our actions, is, in many ways, constrained by the more visible parts of the capitalist economy, there are also clear examples of ways in which Faroese people are practicing economies which are about much more than just economic growth in the 'conventional'[48] sense. So again, following Cameron (2010) the question is about how to nurture the kinds of connections and practices which are supportive of these more diverse ways of being within the economy, and I see this as an important focus of my research.

However, a crucial yet much less acknowledged part of the jigsaw for my research concerns a third, much less obvious, 'methodological binary' between **affirmation** and **critique**, which relates to the ways in which we practice research and activism. In recent years the '**critique** versus **affirmation**' debate has become an important subtext to a diverse range of intellectual contributions – all of which coalesce to a certain extent on the bigger issue of hope and the question of how to live well in the Anthropocene (Gibson et al., 2015; Lear, 2008). To a greater or lesser extent, all these contributions wrestle with the challenges we face in living in a society that is very much in crisis ecologically, socially and politically. The contradictions and challenges can be expressed in many different ways but, to follow the pertinent and practical example used by Cameron (2010), we might want to ask: How can we move beyond binaries so that we can maintain faith in, **affirm** and nurture the generative potential of small-scale food system initiatives and 'alternatives' whilst also maintaining a commitment to **critique** of all too deeply entrenched neoliberal ways of being and doing?

In the following sections, we argue that participatory research methodologies offer a helpful (if underexplored) orientation to this debate, with potential to take us beyond the binaries and allowing us to resist where necessary, whilst also creatively bringing new possibilities into being.

[48] I use speech marks to indicate the fact that it remains hard to write outside of these established binaries, even while the practices 'on the ground' remain more diverse than this!

4.5 Participatory political ecology

My methodological approach is influenced by political ecology's capacity to emphasise the complex and multi-scalar webs of material as well as discursive causalities that characterise human-environmental dynamics (Paulson and Gezon, 2005), herein how natural eco-systems, local socio-ecologies as well as national processes and policy making is informed and influenced by structures of the world economy (Hornborg, 2001), as well as hegemonic discourses and narratives on for instance progress and development (Escobar, 2011). However, in addition to this, my approach is participatory as I am dedicated to doing research which aims to achieve real outcomes with and for real people by treating research participants "as competent and reflexive agents capable of participating in all aspects of the research process" (Kindon et al., 2007, p. 14).

Although there are tensions between political ecology and PAR there are also synergies. Both are politically informed and essentially about shedding light on injustices in order to influence change. Where political ecologists often emphasise complexity, employing multi-scalar analytics to deconstruct pre-conceived 'truths' and shed light on environmental problems and injustices in the world, PAR encourages a constructive and community scale analytics to practically address problems and injustices in the world.

Another reason for which I am finding it meaningful to combine political ecology and PAR is because both approaches have in recent years been increasingly informed by and in dialogue with critical scholarly debates about the historical geo-politics of science and knowledge production, herein its colonial bias (Escobar, 2007; Mignolo, 2002; Said, 1979; Spivak, 1988), gender bias (Haraway, 1988; Harding, 2004) and intersectional bias (Mohanty, 2003).

Indeed, PAR is often credited to Freire's (1968/2017) thinking in the Pedagogy of the Oppressed which inspired a research praxis where scholars relate to research participants as co-researchers rather than research subjects. Although it is also true that as participatory methodologies have been mainstreamed, they have undergone critical scrutiny for not overcoming the hierarchical relation between

‘research expert’ and ‘local participants’ with the ‘tyranny of participation’ becoming a matter of great concern, particularly in the field of development (Cooke and Kothari, 2001; Leal, 2011). To assist me in reflecting on these and other dynamics of power in my own research process, I draw from a heterogenous range of critical literature exploring issues on power, positionality and engagement (Cameron and Gibson, 2005; Cornwall, 2011; People’s Knowledge Editorial Collective, 2016; Sultana, 2007). This critical awareness thus also informs the research methodology of this project and makes reflections upon positionality a crucial component of my approach.

Doing research ‘at home’ has both advantages and challenges. In a small society like the Faroe Islands, there are dynamics at play related to the smallness and close relations between people. As a ‘native’ researcher I find myself in situations where research participants are relatives of mine, former classmates, and so on. This also means that my research participants either know ‘who I am’ before I approach them, and if not, they are likely to ask me directly ‘who my parents are?’ My research participants are thus likely to situate me somewhere on their mental map of acquaintances and relatives, possibly also with assumptions about my values and politics. Similarly, I will also have some of the participants placed somewhere on my mental map. Although it is relevant to emphasise the importance of being reflexive about such dynamics, it is beyond the scope of this paper to elaborate on these issues.

Having described my general methodological approach, we will now explore some of the specific participatory methods I am using and consider how these enable familiar binaries to be transcended.

4.6 Workshopping a participatory research agenda

There is a growing literature on scholar-activism on food justice (Croog et al., 2018; Reynolds et al., 2018) and the role of academics in the food sovereignty movement also building on participatory methodologies (Levkoe et al., 2018). In July 2018 I had the privilege to participate in a PhD summer-school on ‘research

praxis for food system transformation'.[49] The way that the participatory element of my research process is evolving is very much influenced from discussions and collective reflections with facilitators and other course participants at this school. For instance, a dedication to transformative research (Anderson and McLachlan, 2015) has meant that I have approached two Faroese activist groups as primary collaborators in the project, and that these have been involved in designing the research agenda and plan for action. The important point in the context of the present paper is that this involves a deeper level of collaboration, with the activist groups becoming partners and co-designers of the research process, rather than merely participants in a process led entirely by myself.

To initiate this collaboration in the Faroe Islands, I invited the two activist groups to participate in a full-day workshop on the global food system and efforts to change it, connecting this to what is happening in the Faroe Islands. These organisations are the Faroese chapter of Slow Food and the environmental NGO, *Føroya Náttúru og Umhvørvisfelag (FNU)*. They were chosen because they are currently the only two civil society organisations in the Faroes working on food related issues. Both organisations operate according to flat decision-making structures and are run only by voluntary activists. Another reason why working with these two organisations made sense was that their perspectives and work was well aligned with the kind of perspectives I had encountered in global civil society platforms on food sovereignty and agroecology. By way of example, Slow Food Faroe Islands works on raising awareness of the environmental degradation and social inequalities inherent in the global food system and promotes the rights of small-scale food producers and preservation of traditional food knowledge and practices. *FNU* is active lobbying for agroecological thinking in the new agricultural policy currently being drafted by the government and is also voicing critique of and advocating stricter environmental regulation of the Faroese fish farming industry.

[49] The summer-school was facilitated by Rosa Binimelis Adell and Marta Rivera Ferre from the University of Vic and Colin Anderson, Michel Pimbert, Jasber Singh and Chris Maughan from the Centre for Agroecology, Water and Resilience at Coventry University.

The initial workshop was designed so that in the morning, I facilitated a discussion on what we thought was wrong with the global food system and what international platforms and movements were working on trying to change about the food system and how they were working. Although there is a rich body of literature making sense of the socio-ecological inequalities and exploitative structures of the global food system (e.g. Akraham-Lodhi, 2013; Patel, 2007), I decided to not introduce too much theory at this stage in the workshop, as I wanted the analysis to emerge from the participants.

After a rich discussion, we watched a documentary from the British food sovereignty movement and discussed similarities and differences to the Faroe Islands. In the afternoon we looked at the Faroe Islands with similar goggles, but this time we took the concept of food sovereignty as an explicit point of departure.

FIGURE 10: THE SIX PILLARS OF FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

In the workshop, we used the six pillars of the food sovereignty concept as a framework for analysing the Faroese foodscape (see figure 10). We went through each pillar and discussed whether there were examples of where they had been realised in the Faroe Islands, as well as examples of how they might be realised, and lastly counterexamples (i.e. where the opposite was happening). This spurred a heated debate on the fish farming industry and its influence on the marine ecosystems and small-scale fisheries. At this point I also presented concepts such as a basic socio-economic metabolism, environmental justice, and degrowth to give further conceptual depth to the discussion. All these ideas resonated well with the participants and together with the concept of food sovereignty these gave a rich preliminary analysis of the Faroese foodscape – affirming positive dynamics and criticising socio-ecologically degrading dynamics.

After a fruitful workshop we agreed to continue collaboration, and a couple of weeks later we spent a week developing the next phase of the collaboration. During this week we sought to analyse the Faroese foodscape by drawing up a Cartesian coordinate system made up of the vertical axis 'small-scale - large-scale' and the horizontal axis 'global - local'. This initial attempt at an analysis revealed that even though some food economies were situated quite clearly on one side of each of these axes, there was a diverse range of food economies that were difficult to situate, as they carried elements of both 'small-scale' and 'large-scale' and/or elements of both 'global' and 'local' food system dynamics (for example the local food market mentioned earlier which was an initiative by a Faroese fish-export company). This revelation was only possible to arrive at because of our critical situated knowledge and own involvement in the Faroese foodscape. Thus, from starting the working week with a binary approach to food economies, the week ended with a much messier and more complex understanding, also in terms of which dynamics to criticise and which ones to empower and affirm. Since then, we have decided to explore the usefulness of Gibson-Graham's diverse economies table (see figure 11) in the next phase of the project, which is scheduled to take place later this year. This will allow for a more grounded analysis of the Faroese foodscape, while still keeping a structure that encourages us to think 'across and beyond' binaries such as 'noncapitalism-capitalism'.

LABOUR	TRANSACTIONS	PROPERTY	ENTERPRISE	FINANCE
Wage	Market	Private	Capitalist	Mainstream Markets
ALTERNATIVE PAID Self-employed Reciprocal labour In-kind Work for welfare	ALTERNATIVE MARKET Fair trade Alternative currencies Underground market Barter	ALTERNATIVE PRIVATE State-managed assets Customary (clan) land Community land trusts Indigenous knowledge (Intellectual Property)	ALTERNATIVE CAPITALIST State owned Environmentally responsible Socially responsible Non-profit	ALTERNATIVE MARKET Cooperative Banks Credit unions Community-based financial institutions Micro-finance
UNPAID Housework Volunteer Self-provisioning Slave labour	NON-MARKET Household sharing Gift giving Hunting, fishing, gathering Theft, piracy, poaching	OPEN ACCESS Atmosphere International Waters Open source IP Outer Space	NON-CAPITALIST Worker cooperatives Sole proprietorship Community enterprise Feudal Slave	NON-MARKET Sweat equity Family lending Donations Interest-free loans

FIGURE 11: GIBSON-GRAHAM'S DIVERSE ECONOMIES FRAMEWORK

The objective of the next phase of our research collaboration is to explore what food sovereignty and food justice means in the Faroe Islands. This will involve

interviews and workshops with food producers as well as a survey that will seek to understand how Faroese people access food and what their attitudes to food are. The project will culminate with a public forum to discuss future actions for food sovereignty and food justice in the Faroese context. My partner organisations are therefore not only involved in shaping the direction of the project but have agreed to be involved in all phases of the project (carrying out interviews, public engagement activities, analysis, etc.).

4.7 Conclusion: Towards an affirmative political ecology of Faroese food practices

In my work on the Faroe Islands, I have been struggling with how to find the right balance between the critical perspective and an affirmative practice. Recent contributions on engaged political ecology (Batterbury, 2015, 2016; Batterbury and Horowitz, *forthcoming*) and activism in research (Askins, 2009; Askins and Blazek, 2017) take us into exactly this territory and raise important questions around the how of affirmative political ecology. This is, we suggest, where participatory action research has an important role to play. Almost by definition, PAR involves working beyond apparent boundaries and binaries since it involves engaging meaningfully with the often messier reality that activists and food producers navigate in, as well as the diverse perspectives that they hold of the context they are in and their agency in the food system. In my case, adopting a participatory research process with local activists is proving to be crucial for developing an understanding of the Faroese foodscape that transcends binary thinking, as well as a research approach which is simultaneously critical and affirmative.

Again, however, it is helpful to reflect on the extent to which there may be a gulf between a recognised need and desire to do research in this way and the more practical question of the skills and approaches needed to do this. The kind of process described in this article – namely, an ambition to transcend binaries, engaging meaningfully with participants, and walking the tightrope of hope and despair alongside them necessitates a very active research process and involves skills – and, indeed, parts of yourself – which are not traditionally catered for in research training programmes. For example, in my own case, not only is the Faroe

Islands a small country, I was also a member in *FNU* and I know all the participants. This means that they also know me and my background, so there is already a high level of transparency here. Nevertheless, this often makes it tricky to work out my role and function in the project. At the moment, I am feeling more like a facilitator in the research process. Yet here again, I often find myself asking how am I participating, and what kind of power dynamics are happening? While it is tempting to say that such experiences are all about reflexivity, I would argue that a truly engaged and affirmative PAR project involves a strong relational research process that goes way beyond this and requires a different perspective on traditional categories of researcher, activist, etc. Here, it is interesting to think about how Haraway's classic contribution on situated knowledges (1988) may come together with some of the recent writing on the role of emotions within the research process (see for example Askins and Blazek (2017), Mountz et al. (2015) in a way that is thought-provoking and helpful. Indeed, it may be that these aspects – i.e. new insights on what it actually means and involves to conduct affirmative political ecology – may also prove to be an important contribution of my work. In short, there is lots to go on but, following this approach, we hope it will become more possible for researchers to be equipped with a hopeful yet also critical agenda…

5. Making degrowth locally meaningful

The case of the Faroese grindadráp[50]

Abstract: While the doxa of growth continues to dominate mainstream understandings of what constitutes a healthy economy, the concept and agenda of degrowth beg for theorisation about how culture and power render some economic strategies more viable and meaningful than others. In this article we discuss the highly contested practice of Faroese pilot whaling, *grindadráp*. Through autoethnographic methods we identify and analyse forces challenging this deep-rooted practice, both within and outside Faroese society. Faroese resistance to abandon the practice, expressed in local pro-whaling narratives suggest that, in the struggle to legitimise the *grindadráp* as a sustainable and eco-friendly practice, Faroese people are simultaneously deconstructing central tenets of the global food system, and comparing *grindadráp* favourably with the injustices and cruelties of industrial food procurement. In this sense, we argue that the *grindadráp* not only constitutes a locally meaningful alternative to growth-dominated economic practices, but may also, in this capacity, inspire Faroese people to reduce engagement with economic activities that negatively impact the environment and perpetuate social and environmental injustices in the world.

Keywords: Degrowth, whaling, Faroe Islands, relational ethic, noncapitalism

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[50] This chapter was published as an article in the Journal of Political Ecology in 2017, where it is licensed under CC BY 4.0. The article was co-authored with my supervisor Ragnheiður Bogadóttir. This version of the text has been slightly corrected since publication (formatting, typos, British spelling, etc.). The reference to the original publication is: Bogadóttir, R and Olsen, ES. (2017). Making degrowth locally meaningful: The case of the Faroese grindadráp, *Journal of Political Ecology* 24(1), 504-518.

5.1 Introduction

The Faroes, an archipelago of eighteen small islands in the North Atlantic Ocean with a population of approximately 50,000 people, has recently become centre stage of a dramatic environmental conflict.[51] It revolves around the Faroese practice of pilot whaling, locally known as *grindadráp*.[52] This deep-rooted hunting practice has been targeted by a number of environmental and conservation organisations since the mid-1980s, in later years mainly the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society (SSCS). Compelling images of *grindadráp* communicated via social media show whales being slaughtered on Faroese beaches by crowds of men with long knives, as the sea turns red from the bleeding animals. These anti-whaling campaigns portray the spectacle of *grindadráp* as an outdated tradition, barbaric, brutal, unnecessary, and sadistic. Although not yet very successful in prohibiting or preventing whale killings from taking place, the campaigns have been relatively successful in promoting a negative image of Faroese society to a global environmentally conscious audience and continue to provoke global outcry.[53] The Faroese have reacted to the anti-whaling campaigns by uniting and communally engaging in a discursive struggle to defend the right to whale, portraying the *grindadráp* as a sustainable, environmentally friendly practice. The ongoing and often raging debates among and between Faroese, and between

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[51] Faroes, *Føroyar*, or the Faroe Islands are situated roughly between Norway, Iceland and Shetland, and were settled before or around AD 600 (Church et al., 2013). Although the Faroes were incorporated into the Norwegian and later the Danish Kingdom, there has only been modest cultural assimilation, and cultural practices and traits such as the Faroese language have been retained. The Faroes gained the so-called Home Rule Act in 1948, which means in practice that most local affairs are managed and controlled by the Faroese government, while national sovereignty remains in Denmark.

[52] Etymologically *grindadráp* means pilot whale (*grind*) killing (*dráp*). The whale hunted and killed in the Faroes is the long-finned pilot whale, Globicephala melas. According to the IUCN red list website "IWC, ICES and NAMMCO have concluded, that with an estimated sub-population size of 778,000 (CV=0.295) in the eastern North Atlantic and approximately 100,000 around the Faroes (Buckland et al. 1993; NAMMCO 1997) the Faroese catch is probably sustainable" (IUCN, 2015).

[53] This outcry has manifested in different ways ranging from boycotts of Faroese products and tourism, to cancellations of sporting and cultural events. A large number of celebrities, ranging from Paul McCartney to Pamela Anderson and David Attenborough have been actively involved in anti-*grindadráp* campaigns. Faroese official and governmental agencies receive mountains of protest mail, and Faroese people, including school children receive hate mail and death threats (Ginkel, 2005, 2007).

Faroese and protesters of pilot whaling reveal how the constant (re)negotiation of identity is intimately connected to ways in which people engage with and utilise the natural environment.

Anti-whaling narratives are typically constructed around one out of three lines of argument: **First**, that whaling is unnecessary since most Faroese people can afford to buy supermarket food. **Second**, that it is cruel and uncivilised to kill whales. The **third** argument revolves around human health, in light of the fact that pilot whales are contaminated with industrial pollutants such as mercury and PCBs.

However, the practice of *grindadráp* can also be conceptualised as a successful common property regime (Kerins, 2010; Ostrom, 1990) ingrained with values that are often associated with degrowth. In a recent article Fielding et al. (2015) analyse and describe the *grindadráp* as "a unique and current example of Kropotkin's mutual aid", that is as an example of self-organisation based on cooperation rather than competition. Moreover, no monetary transactions are involved in the social organisation of labour and distribution of meat and blubber.[54] In many ways then, *grindadráp* may be seen as a continual noncapitalist practice of production/consumption (Gibson-Graham, 1996/2006).[55]

Of course, *grindadráp* represents only one reality of contemporary Faroese society. Visitors to the Faroe Islands will quickly realise that the Faroes is a so-called welfare society, which maintains high material standards of living for most inhabitants. The Faroes have one of the highest per capita GDPs in the world and one of the highest per capita emissions of greenhouse gases (Lastein, 2002). The national economy is dominated by industrial fisheries, proliferating aquaculture,

[54] Although, this is the case people are of course free to sell their share of meat and blubber, which is why it may still be bought and sold and sometimes ends up for sale in local supermarkets (for a thorough treatment of the distribution system see Joensen (2009, pp. 124–186).

[55] According to official statistics, the average annual catch of grind during the decade between 2005 and 2014 amounted to 4360 *skinn* (SFI, 2016), or approximately 166 tons of meat (using the *skinn* value of 38 kg as proposed by Bloch and Zachariassen (1989, p. 45). *Grindadráp* thus provided on average 3.5 kg of whale meat, and an almost equal amount of blubber per capita a year. *Skinn* is an old Faroese weight and value measuring unit, originally the value of a sheepskin (Thorsteinsson, 1993).

and much effort has been put into establishing a Faroese oil industry. Economic growth and mainstream development discourse thus dominates political decision-making.

The conundrum of this hybrid geography (Fielding, 2010), subsistence hunting on the one hand and industrialist on the other, is also expressed in the narrative struggle between pro- and anti-whaling positions.

Thus, as a socio-ecological phenomenon, *grindadráp* provides a unique platform to discuss many of the issues central to what we may tentatively term the political ecology of degrowth. It highlights the discrepancies of scale that such analysis must find ways to deal with, as well as the cultural complexities in which peoples' attitudes and actions towards the environment are enmeshed. Moreover, the case of the *grindadráp* is also an illuminating example of how relations of power influence culture-environment interactions, and of the importance of recognising "both the biophysical basis of reality and the historical and discursive context in which knowledge of it is gathered" (Paulson and Gezon, 2005, p. 29).

A key theoretical point of departure for this analysis is that "traditional, pre-industrial human societies have something to tell us about how to live sustainably" (Hornborg, 1996, p. 45). This position should not be confused with essentialist idealisations of the "noble savage" and "primitive ecological wisdom" (Milton, 1996/2013). Rather, a contextual or relational stance is one that "denies the capacity of abstract, totalizing systems such as science or the market to solve the basic problems of human survival, recognizing local and implicit meanings as the essential components of a sustainable livelihood" (Hornborg, 1996, p. 45). The theoretical implication of such a stance is that to recognise and advance any fair, just or even plausible transition towards degrowth, locally meaningful dimensions need to be reckoned with. By advancing a non-evolutionary approach we want to make the point that contextually meaningful contemporary practices, often rooted in pre-industrial times, and not dominated by growth imperatives, continue to co-exist with modern growth dominated lifestyles. We argue that *grindadráp* is one example of such a practice.

Although the image of the whale, or the "superwhale" (Kalland, 2009), has long been an emblem of the environmental movement, that is a metaphor in terms of which people understand the larger whole of the environmental condition (Hajer, 1995, p. 20), to the Faroese the very practice of killing whales constitutes an alternative to growth-oriented strategies. Moreover, the analysis carried out in this article reveals that in response to the powerful global forces challenging the *grindadráp*, Faroese people generally defend it as an alternative to deeper integration and dependence on the global food system, an exercise which invites them to view the economy (or rather economies) as "fundamentally ethical sphere[s] of socio-ecological relations" (Burke and Shear, 2014, p. 137), and to critically reflect upon the fetishising tendencies of global capitalist relations of production.

5.2 Contextualising degrowth

> Degrowth signifies first and foremost a critique of the **growth** economy. It calls for the decolonization of public debate from the idiom of economism and for the abolishment of economic **growth** as a social objective. Beyond that, degrowth signifies also a desired direction, one in which societies will use fewer natural resources and will organize and live differently than today. (Kallis et al., 2014, p. 3, original emphasis)

Although more than forty years have passed since the Club of Rome published *Limits to growth*, and in spite of abundant research documenting the incommensurability between the biophysical processes of ecosystem regeneration and a growth-oriented economy (e.g. Haberl et al., 2011; Wackernagel and Rees, 1996; Rockstrom and et al., 2009), the economic growth paradigm continues to thrive, albeit in greener discursive formations. Paulson (2017) points out that this paradox illustrates how systems of power and culture are embedded in socio-environmental processes, which in turn makes it crucial to emphasise relations of power and culture when theorising change. What makes the concept of degrowth so unique and powerful is that, unlike previous concepts such as "sustainable development" and "green economy," the very semantics of

the word implies less, which should make it impossible for growth-oriented discourse to co-opt it. This is also its weakness, since it expresses the antithesis of mainstream understandings of a healthy economy. "Decolonizing our imaginary" (Latouche, 2014) about what constitutes a healthy economy is therefore one of the many tasks that degrowth scholars are currently engaging in.

Based on scholarly reviews of the degrowth literature by Demaria et al. (2013), Kallis et al. (2012) and Cattaneo et al. (2012) we find it useful to distinguish between three genres of degrowth research and theorising, which to some degree overlap. The **first** concentrates on critiquing the growth paradigm and discourse of economism, and on delivering scientifically based arguments in favour of a degrowth transition or transformation. The **second** focuses on future scenario thinking about policies that one might implement in favour of a degrowth transition, and the **third** on how people and communities organise their lives according to principles associated with degrowth, such as "'sharing', 'simplicity', 'conviviality', 'care' and the 'commons'" (Kallis et al., 2014, p. 3). Most previous studies in this third genre have either focused on communities in the global south that organise their labour and lives in non-dominant ways, or on communities in affluent societies that have consciously chosen to pursue ethical and environmentally benign lifestyles that minimise engagement in capitalist relations (see e.g. D'Alisa et al., 2014). Such studies contribute to a decolonisation of the imaginary, figuring as powerful and inspiring examples of how non-dominant life practices and principles can be and are being practiced. This article contributes to this literature by exploring a non-growth-oriented practice in the affluent part of the world, in which Faroe islanders engage, not because they have taken a conscious political decision to disentangle themselves from capitalism, but because it is a deep-rooted contextually meaningful practice. We thus share with Böhm et al. (2015) the view that sustainability strategies must be planned according to cultural context, and Gezon's point that "paths to sustainability may not be limited to changing social imaginaries, but may also be advanced by valorizing and leveraging cognitive orientations and practices that exist, but that may fall below the radar of traditional economic analysis." (2017, p. 583)

The approach to degrowth advanced in this article draws significantly from the political ecology of Escobar (2008) who has made strong theoretical connection to the works of feminist economic geographers (Gibson-Graham, 1996/2006), who criticise conventional economic analyses and conventional critiques of the economy for being capitalocentric, that is that they reduce the economy to a capitalist essence. Instead, they argue that people everywhere engage in heterogeneous and diverse economic practices throughout their life. Gibson-Graham's studies of economic relationships are in many ways similar to studies that scholars of economic anthropology have been doing for some time (e.g. Gudeman, 1986; Polanyi, 1944/2001). However, rather than understanding other economic realities (e.g. subsistence economies, gift economies) as opposite, subordinate or complimentary to capitalism, they propose a non-capitalocentric approach to economic analysis.

Gibson-Graham's non-essentialist approach to the economy makes it possible for us to stress that although the neoclassic growth-oriented market-economy currently dominates the economic landscape on the Faroe Islands, people also engage in several eco-cultural practices that are examples of noncapitalist economic relationships. These manifest contextually meaningful relationships between Faroese people and their environment whose significance is undermined by capitalocentric conceptions of the economy.

Another important element of our argument rests on the way that Escobar (2008) criticises conventional theories (including critiques) of the relation between globalisation, development and modernity - the Eurocentric move of conceiving all forms of sociocultural organisation as destined towards modernity or at best towards alternative modernities.[56] Instead, Escobar emphasises the importance of approaching development from the experience and perspectives of modernity's

[56] By "alternative modernities" Escobar (2008) is referring to an understanding of modernity, which leaves "open two options for development: either its universalization as a cultural and economic logic, even if without the teleology that characterized it in the past; or development as a ceaseless negotiation of modernity in terms of the counterwork that local groups necessarily effect on the elements of development and modernity and toward more self-directed forms of modernity" (Escobar, 2008, p. 162).

"Other", conceptualised as "coloniality." He suggests that from this "pluriversal" onto-epistemological position, it becomes possible to conceptualise alternatives to modernity rather than just alternative modernities.

> Alternatives to modernity, then refers to that dimension of the relation between globalization, development, and modernity that imagines an explicit cultural-political project of transformation from the perspective of modernity/coloniality/decoloniality – more specifically, an alternative construction of the world from the perspective of the colonial difference (Escobar, 2008, p. 196).

In a similar vein (Burke and Shear, 2014, p. 129) have argued that "to advance noncapitalist socioecological relations [political ecology] must… involve more than opposition and critique; it must build on already-existing noncapitalist practices in order to foment new desires and foster new political possibilities." It is this premise that informs the ambition of this article, which is to render Faroese alternatives to modernity imaginable from the perspective of a Faroese "colonial difference," namely the *grindadráp*.

5.3 Methods

The historical and ethnographic descriptions and analysis of *grindadráp* presented in this article are based on pre-existing literature and scholarly work on the issue. Much of this work is written in Faroese or other Nordic languages and is therefore not readily accessible to a non-Nordic speaking audience. Where plausible we have tried to refer to English sources.

The analysis and classification of different narratives about Faroese pilot whaling are largely the result of autoethnographic theorising. Although both of us have lived part of our life outside the Faroes, we were raised in the Faroes, eating whale meat and blubber as a commonsensical matter. However, neither of us has ever taken active part in the slaughter itself, one reason for this being related to the gendered dimension of the practices involved, since few women are involved in the slaughter. Throughout our lives we have also experienced the strong

sentiments and aggression the issue of *grindadráp* can provoke among both Faroese and non-Faroese. In the late 1970s, the first reports on the high levels of pollution in pilot whales appeared and added yet another dimension to the contested meal. We have thus enthusiastically observed and followed the debates and activities of Faroese as well as non-Faroese stakeholders in the *grindadráp*, on social media, newspaper articles, at meetings etc., and we draw extensively on these observations in our analysis. In preparing to write this article, we have done qualitative readings of the web-page of the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, the official web-page of the Faroese government on whaling, articles about the conflict in online newspapers, tweets with the relevant hashtags, video blogs, Facebook pages, and all the heated discussions between people in the commentary sections below these online publications/pages.

Being Faroese ourselves, we are of course engaging in the discursive struggle we have identified between Faroese people and anti-whaling protagonists. Although this is the case, we see our work as being equally a part of a process of local critical self-reflection. It has been argued that such self-criticism has always been one of several pressures for the reform of *grindadráp* (e.g. Sanderson, 1990). Our goal here however is neither to legitimise the killing of whales nor to reform the *grindadráp*. By advancing an understanding of *grindadráp* which moves us beyond the evolutionary vocabulary of traditionalism versus modernism (or backwardness versus progress) with which both pro- and anti-whaling narratives currently seem to be fraught, we hope to convey the potential of eco-cultural practices such as the *grindadráp* to inspire more just and sustainable ways of being in the world.

5.4 Faroese whaling

> *"Grind,"* when used of whales, has two main meanings in modern Faroese: a school of *Globiocephala melaena*, and the meat from these whales, either alone or with their blubber (*spik*). In a sense, the whole *grindadráp* represents a progression from one meaning (a school of whales) to the other (meat) (Wylie, 1981, p. 103)

The collective driving and hunting of whales has been practiced for thousands of years in many regions of the world, but the Faroes is one of the few places where such traditional whale hunting practices have continued (Kalland et al., 2005, p. 39). It has been argued that the practice of *grindadráp* predates the initial settlement of the islands, suggesting that *grindadráp* was a common practice in the Norse region, brought to the Faroes with Norse settlers during the 8th and 9th century (Thorsteinsson, 1986). Archaeological excavations, and the mentioning of whale drives and distribution of whale meat and blubber in the first Faroese legal document, *Seyðabrævið* from AD 1298, strongly indicates that whales were always hunted for food in the Faroes (Church et al., 2005; Dahl, 1970). The historical practice of *grindadráp* involved not only the killing of pilot whales, but a number of other procedures and institutions, such as a system of signalling to neighbouring villages when a school of whales had been sighted close to shore,[57] coordination of the boats participating in the whale drive (a process which could last several days, and not infrequently ended with the escape of the whales), the successful beaching of the whales, the killing itself, the butchering and dividing of the catch between participants and others entitled to shares, the celebration after a successful catch, the transportation and conservation of the meat and blubber, and finally the preparation and consumption of the grind meal. A crucial characteristic of the *grindadráp* is that it could not be practiced by a single family or even a single community or village; it required cooperation on a larger scale than that of the local community.[58]

Arguably, the practice of *grindadráp* and the different elements composing it have not undergone dramatic change since the 16th century.[59] Still today *grindadráp* is

[57] Pilot whales are only hunted when sighted close to shore. In other words Faroese do not go out searching for whales in the open sea. In years when no pilot whales are spotted there is no *grindadráp*.

[58] Generally speaking, traditional life in the Faroes demanded high levels of co-operation and trust, but mostly at the village level.

[59] However, *grindadráp* has of course co-evolved with Faroese society. An important change in the distribution of the meat and blubber was introduced with the whaling regulations in 1832, when it was decided that a larger proportion of the catch should be given to the participants in the whale drive rather than to land owners. Distribution of whale meat and blubber still largely follows the

an example of an important subsistence practice which demands cooperation between villages and, as mentioned in the introduction, it was, and continues to be, an example of "mutual aid", i.e. survival through cooperation rather than competition (Fielding et al., 2015). By stressing these characteristics of *grindadráp* we do not mean to argue that commercial interests were never involved. Whale products, particularly whale oil, were valued on foreign markets. Historically, export volumes have varied depending on demand and the commercial strategies of colonial authorities in the Faroes. During the 1840s for instance, whale products made out almost 20 percent of total exports (West, 1972, p. 82). We argue however that the commercial aspect was never a single purpose or motivation for *grindadráp*, and that, during the twentieth century, as other spheres of life were increasingly commercialised, *grindadráp* came to represent an antithesis to commodification and commercialisation.

Historical documentation of pilot whale catches goes back to 1584 (with an interruption in data between 1642–1708), and after 1708 statistics are reliable, making Faroese pilot whaling one of the best documented hunting practices in the world. Although there is significant variation between years and periods, the average annual catch in the Faroes today of around 800 pilot whales (SFI, 2016), corresponds roughly to the annual average caught since 1709, of between 800-1000 whales (Bloch et al., 1990; Joensen and Zachariassen, 1982). The *grindadráp* is therefore a concrete example of a common property regime (Kerins, 2010) which has not ended in "tragedy" as human population has increased.[60] While the *grindadráp* has changed little, Faroese society in many other respects changed dramatically. During the span of the 19th century, the Faroes went from being a relatively self-sufficient peasant society to become a nascent fisheries nation, and during the succeeding 20th century the Faroes became increasingly integrated into

regulations set up in 1832, which means that the catch is distributed equally among the residents of a whaling district. In principle this means that "a new-born child receives the same amount of catch as the seasoned whaler who has been engaged in the hunt on land for several hours" (Joensen, 2009, p. 144). In later years, regulations to reduce the stress and suffering of the whales during the drive and killing have been introduced.

[60] While the pilot whale catches have remained relatively stable since 1709, the human population has grown more than 10-fold (Guttesen, 1996; Mortensen, 1954).

the fossil-fuelled world system of global economic trade relations, thus gaining access to non-local resources upon which Faroese society depends heavily today.[61] Parallel to the commercialisation of the fisheries and the increasing reliance on commodities from abroad, Faroese people continued to engage in noncapitalist subsistence practices such as whaling, fowling, sheep-rearing, fishing for-use, gathering of bird eggs, cow pasturing, knitting and subsistence agriculture (Olsen, 2011). This was simultaneously the period of nation-building, and together with other emblems of Faroese culture such as the Faroese language, and the traditional chain dance and ballads for instance, *grindadráp* came to play a crucial role in the construction of a Faroese national identity. Outside views such as travel writings and narrations of the *grindadráp* epitomised the bravery of Faroese men and the heroic struggle for survival which life on the islands required, portraying *grindadráp* for example as a "national sport." The *grindadráp* thus became intimately intertwined with Faroese nationhood and manhood (Nauerby, 1996; Simonsen, 2012; Wylie, 1987), and forces challenging the *grindadráp* are therefore perceived and experienced by many Faroese as an attack on Faroese culture, identity and sovereignty (Joensen, 2009).

With the rise of the environmental movement during the 1970s, and the important symbolism of the whale for the mobilisation of popular engagement in environmental issues, outside perceptions of the *grindadráp* changed dramatically. This was felt in the Faroes in the 1980s when Sea Shepherd, Greenpeace and other conservation and animal-rights organisations launched campaigns against the hunting of whales, seals and other animals deemed worthy of protection. The devastating effects of these campaigns on many indigenous hunting groups and societies are well known (Kalland et al., 2005).

[61] The process started with the introduction of free trade, the abandonment of Danish trade monopolisation and the repealing of the bonded production system called the *Bátsbandið* (boat bond) which until then had regulated fishing and catch distribution. When these changes happened in the mid-19th century, it became possible to sell fish to local merchants, who began accumulating capital through a truck-system, which made it possible for them to expand their business and invest in smacks and motorised boats (Olsen, 2011, pp. 23–24).

The anti-whaling campaigns so far have not been successful in convincing Faroese to abandon the practice of *grindadráp*. In a recent analysis of the Sea Shepherd campaign Grindstop 2014, Singleton argues that, on the contrary, the campaign strengthened pro-whaling sentiments (2016). Nevertheless, Faroese attitudes to whaling are changing and in 2011 a Faroese branch of the organisation Earthrace Conservation was established.[62] According to an opinion poll from 2014, most Faroese attitudes to end the practice of *grindadráp* are neither related to the animal-rights cause nor the negative health effects of consuming whale.[63] The poll showed that twelve percent of the Faroese populations think the practice should be abandoned, and state their main reasons to be that it is unnecessary and that it damages the image of the Faroes in the international community. Discussions around this theme in the Faroes often reveal a utilitarian perspective, for instance pointing out that whaling has a negative impact on the tourism industry, and that the Faroes would benefit economically by abandoning the practice. The ubiquity of economism is also reflected in the tactics of anti-whaling campaigns, whether it is in instigating international economic pressure on the Faroes by portraying Faroese people as bloodthirsty savages, or less aggressive methods, such as promoting the Faroes as the next potential hot-spot for economically profitable whale-watching tourism.

We argue that the forces challenging *grindadráp* today are expressions of the same decontextualising tendencies of modernity that materialise as accelerating

[62] Earthrace conservation is a non-profit organization, founded by former SSCS member Pete Bethune. According to their website (www.earthraceconservation.org) they work to end the practice of *grindadráp*, not as other organisations such as SSCS through conflict and confrontation, but through education and raising awareness.

[63] The poll was carried out by Gallup Faroe Islands for the Faroese lifestyle magazine Prei. The poll showed that the majority of Faroese are not in favor of ending the practice of *grindadráp*. Some 77 percent of the Faroese population above the age of 15, are of the opinion that the Faroese should continue whaling as they currently do. The same poll showed that 20 percent of the Faroese population has limited their consumption of pilot whale as a result of the health recommendations. Some 74 percent stated that they consume the same amount as before the recommendations, 1 percent stated they consumed more, 3 percent stated they had never eaten pilot whale, and 1 percent was not aware of the recommendations (Gallup Føroyar, 2014). A survey on consumption habits in 1981 showed that Faroese people consumed on average 4.4 kg of pilot whale meat and 2.5 kg of pilot whale blubber annually. In comparison, a survey carried out in 2000-2001 of consumption habits of pregnant Faroese women showed that they consumed on average 1.5 kg of meat and 0.2 kg of blubber (FFVA, 2011).

use of resources and a loss of local meaning, and which lie at the root of the global ecological crisis (Hornborg, 1996, 2001). These forces, which we have already identified in economism and capitalocentrism, are rendering *grindadráp* increasingly meaningless.

5.5 Toxic modernity

Another very tangible consequence of modernity is that pilot whale meat and blubber, previously an important source to nutrition and health, is now toxic. Research spurred by the increased global attention to environmental pollutants in the 1970s showed that contents of mercury and POPs[64] were alarmingly high in pilot whales, and subsequent research carried out in the Faroes has shown that Faroese people have bio-accumulated high levels of these substances (Stoltenberg et al., 2003). In a birth cohort of Faroese children, for instance, mercury dose-related deficits in attention, language, and memory have been observed (Weihe et al., 2003). This research led to recommendations to limit consumption of whale meat, and in 2008 the Faroese Chief Medical Officer issued a statement announcing that pilot whale was no longer suited for human consumption (Landslæknin, 2008; Weihe and Joensen, 2012). In 2011, the Faroese Food and Veterinary authority issued another recommendation, which stated that adults could consume one meal of whale meat and blubber a month (about 3 kg annually), while girls and women should not eat blubber until after they had had children, and that they should not eat pilot whale meat before and during pregnancy (FFVA, 2011).

The fact that pollution levels in the oceans are so high that marine mammals, which for a long time have been crucial sources of food, are now increasingly becoming unsuited for human consumption, is a situation that the Faroese share with other people in the circumpolar North. In 1998, Sheila Watt-Cloutier, then president of the Inuit Circumpolar Council of Canada expressed the emotions this

[64] Persistent Organic Pollutants are toxic chemical substances.

stirred in Inuit communities to the Inter-Government Negotiating Committee “Toward a Global Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants”.

> So imagine for a moment if you will the emotions we now feel—shock, panic, rage, grief, despair—as we discover that the food which for generations has nourished us and keeps us whole physically and spiritually is now poisoning us. You go to the supermarket for food; we go out on the land to hunt, fish, trap and gather. The environment is our supermarket. (Watt-Cloutier (1998) quoted in Johnson 2014, p. 162)

In her analysis of the negotiations in 1998, Johnson (2014, p. 162) discusses how Watt-Cloutier "invited negotiators to think differently about the relationships between production, pollution, and human and environmental well-being by evoking emotion and the affective ties that connect Inuit to one another, to the land, and to animals." The recommendation by the Faroese Chief Medical Officer uses a similar affective language, but while Watt-Cloutier uses affect to argue for a ban on the production of polluting chemicals, the Faroese recommendation, in effect, is to end the practice of *grindadráp*:

> It is with great sadness that this recommendation is provided. The pilot whale has served the Faroese well for many hundreds of years and has likely kept many Faroese alive through the centuries. But the times and the environment are changing, and we therefore believe that this recommendation is necessary from a human health point of view. We in the Faroe Islands are not responsible in regard to the marine pollution, which has been inflicted upon us from outside. That research in the Faroes has contributed to the current focus on this contamination is a bitter irony. These results have already led to reduced limit values on methylmercury in other countries. We must therefore also ourselves acknowledge the consequences and act according to the precautionary principle… (Weihe and Joensen, 2012)

The sentiment in the Faroese statement reflects an evolutionary perception of the *grindadráp* that both Faroese and non-Faroese anti-whaling positions have in common, namely that *grindadráp* now belongs in the past, not the future.

The fact that most Faroese people continue to consume whale meat and blubber despite the official recommendations does not reflect ignorance of the potential health effects, nor is it simply a matter of backward "cultural stubbornness" as is frequently argued. We believe that the insistence of so many Faroese to eat pilot whale reflects a relational ethic and the significance of this contextually meaningful subsistence practice to Faroese human/cultural ecology.

5.6 Narratives about *grindadráp*

To understand how Faroese people render the *grindadráp* meaningful, it makes sense to look at Faroese responses to global anti-whaling narratives that portray *grindadráp* as inappropriate, unnecessary, unhealthy, uncivilised, and ultimately meaningless in a modern world.

Although both Faroese and non-Faroese pro-whaling attitudes are historically rooted in the symbolic role that *grindadráp* has played in the construction of Faroese national identity, contemporary Faroese pro-whaling narratives are attributing additional meanings to the practice, subscribing to global discourses of sustainability and environmental stewardship. Kalland et al. (2005) observe that this appears to be a general tendency in all Northern cultures that hunt marine mammals. The Faroese government thus describes *grindadráp* as a sustainable, well regulated, communal, and natural way of food provisioning on the Faroe Islands (Whaling.fo, 2015). In an official memorandum by the Faroese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade from September 2015, it is for instance pointed out that:

> Catches are shared largely without the exchange of money among the participants in a whale drive and residents of the local district where they are landed.
>
> (...)

> Most meat production in industrialized countries today is hidden well away from the public view. In the Faroe Islands people are familiar with the local processes by which whales, sheep and seabirds are killed for food. Faroese children grow up with an intimate knowledge and understanding of their natural environment, and it is considered natural for them to see and understand where the meat on their dinner plates comes from. (The Government of the Faroe Islands, 2015)

Government representatives and Faroese social media commentators defend the *grindadráp* for its noncapitalist characteristics: it is a non-commercial activity, it is done for food (for use, not exchange), and it is shared equally between participants and residents, and constitutes a direct relation between Faroese people and their environments.

While there is a clear tendency to criticise larger nations for polluting the natural environment and the sea, to the extent that whale meat and blubber is now unsuited for human consumption, there has been little reflection upon the fact that Faroese are actively pursuing the same economic strategy and ever more affluent lifestyles that inevitably contribute to global environmental degradation and pollution. In fact, since the first anti-whaling campaigns began to target the Faroese *grindadráp*, there has been a prevailing insistence from the Faroese authorities that Faroese people have the right to be both 'modern' and 'traditional', implying that they have the right to retain control of locally available resources and simultaneously pursue growth oriented market strategies in order to secure an ever-increasing access to global resources.

According to founder of Sea Shepherd, Captain Paul Watson[65] the privileged lifestyle of most Faroese ought to render whaling unnecessary:

[65] Captain Paul Watson was an early member of Greenpeace in the 1970s. After his departure from Greenpeace, he founded his own group, SSCS, in 1977. Watson, who is a Canadian national, is a prominent marine conservationist with a number of prestigious awards on his CV. He is however also a controversial figure, who has received substantial criticism. The reason that we have chosen to quote Watson several times to illustrate anti-whaling narratives, instead of including statements by other anti-whaling protesters is because of Paul Watson's exceptional influence on

> The Faroese enjoy one of the highest standards of living in the world with the highest income per capita in all of Europe. Their supermarkets are well stocked with anything that can be bought in Copenhagen, London or Paris. They all drive cars, own computers and enjoy the luxuries of modern industrialized society, yet many claim that they need to kill pilot whales and dolphins for meat. The truth is that some of them simply like to kill. They enjoy it. They need to see the blood spurting into the water. They need to smell and wallow in the blood and the sh*t of the dying animals. They need to hear their pitiful screams because these are the needs of sadistic psychopaths. (Watson, 2015)

An underlying notion of most anti-whaling rhetoric is that the killing of whales is universally wrong, a realisation that should follow along with civilising progression. Watson states that he sees this evolutionary progress happening in the Faroes:

> The world is evolving and I have seen that evolution even in the Faroes from the first time I came to the Faroes in 1985, until the present. Changes have taken place and these changes have taken place because of outside pressure. No culture is an island entirely unto itself these days.
>
> (...)
>
> This atrocity will be ended, and of that I am certain because I have faith in the ability of people to evolve, and especially the young people of the Faroe Islands whose understanding of interdependence, diversity and finite resources, is on par with this same realization by young people everywhere on the planet (Watson, 2014).

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contemporary animal-rights and marine conservation environmentalism, which gives reason to assume that a very large proportion of anti-whaling protestors are influenced by his views. Captain Paul Watson has 105k followers on twitter, while his organisation's official twitter account, SSCS, has 232k followers. A quick search on Facebook in November 2015 gave us 87 Sea Shepherd fan pages, ten of which had more likes than there are inhabitants on the Faroe Islands (between 63,317 and 878,012 likes). One of these was specifically created for their Faroe Islands campaign and had 108,990 likes.

Although anti-whaling rhetoric varies, most anti-whaling narratives are framed according to the scheme of social and human evolution, and the phenomenon of the Faroese *grindadráp* - of white, modern, privileged Europeans engaging in barbaric slaughter of marine mammals - is therefore a poignant anachronism (Fielding, 2010; Ginkel, 2005; Nauerby, 1996).

5.7 The anachronism of whaling and supermarkets

When the privileged lifestyle of the Faroese is mentioned in anti-whaling rhetoric, it is to make the point that such a lifestyle, with access to global resources, should render whaling unnecessary. In Watson's words again: "The Faeroese should be made to choose between their…supermarket-available food or their barbaric slaughter" (Watson, 2012).

This argument is often received with mockery from a Faroese pro-whaling position, and anti-whaling protagonists are described as "people who do not know where the food in the supermarket comes from", as this quote below from a Facebook discussion thread in 2014 illustrates:

> Come one - no matter where you are from you have to know that supermarkets do not produce food! Where do you think the food in the supermarkets comes from? How do you think they get the meat in the freezers?

In fact, both pro- and anti-whaling/hunting arguments often centre on supermarkets. As we saw above Watt-Cloutier compares Inuit subsistence hunting and the supermarket as two sources of food and nourishment. As Johnson (2014, p. 162) notes however, Watt-Cloutier's statement "offered many more contrasts than similarities between the market-based transactions of the supermarket and the socially embedded economy of Inuit hunting", the latter being an economic practice with social and ecological ties to place. In many ways supermarkets represent the quintessential locale for the decontextualisation of human metabolism from its socio-ecological source. Faroese people seem to be aware of this when they refer to the inability of anti-whaling protagonists to grasp

this reality, as exemplified in the quote above. The conflict and controversy over whaling, and the reflection upon what *grindadráp* is, leads simultaneously to a reflection upon what a supermarket is. This can be noted in the conversations that Faroese people are having between each other, exemplified in this response to an online newspaper article in which the common anti-whaling arguments revolving around animal welfare, necessity, and health are forwarded:

> Yes, the meat is contaminated, but what food isn't? Almost everything we eat is contaminated one way or another... If you look at almost any meat we buy in supermarkets, then those animals lived under horrible conditions, whereas the grind lives free. So, we should rather buy less meat from the supermarkets, than stop killing grind, and eat more grind ;-) (Authors' translation from Faroese).[66]

5.8 *Grindadráp* as a force of Faroese decoloniality?

The point that we have been trying to make this far, is that the 'traditional' local subsistence economy, and the "modern" growth-oriented market economy, here iconified as '*grindadráp*' and 'the supermarket' respectively, co-exist on the Faroes and represent very different ways of engaging with the world in order to sustain human and social metabolism.

We have shown that *grindadráp* has characteristics that are often associated with degrowth and illustrated how the current conflict over whaling is making Faroese people reflect upon the fetishising tendencies of the global (food) market, that is the socio-ecological exploitation and injustices embodied in supermarket commodities. Faroese are aware that one of the reasons why *grindadráp* attracts so much attention is exactly because there is no secrecy to the method of slaughter or distribution, as it happens out in the open, the blood not draining down the gutter of a slaughterhouse, but colouring the whaling bay red.

[66] "Ja, kjøtið er dálkað, men hvør matur er ikki tað? Næstan alt sum vit eta er dálkað á ein ella annan hátt ... Um man hyggur eftir næstan øllum kjøti, sum vit keypa í handlum, so hava tey djórini livað í ræðuligum umstøðum, har grindin livir frítt. So vit burdu heldur keypt minnið kjøt úr handlum, enn at steðga við at drepa grind, og etið meira grind ;-)"

The spectacle of *grindadráp* has ravished foreign (and local) observers for centuries, but while outside views and perceptions during the 19th century led Faroese to construct *grindadráp* as heroic, as a national sport and so on, today, they are making Faroese people aware of other qualities of the *grindadráp*, qualities associated with more sustainable and eco-friendly ways of engaging with the human and non-human world. Such a view entails an understanding of the need for a "de-fetishization of commodities so that social and environmental injustices are no longer buried in the forgotten "secret life of things" but rather come to the fore and provide a referent for ethical consumption" (Burke and Shear, 2014, p. 137). Thus, the "colonial difference" of the *grindadráp* may potentially generate incentives for Faroese to reduce engagement with economic activities that perpetuate social and environmental injustices in the world.

5.9 Conclusion

In this article we have explored the symbolic and material dimensions of the deep-rooted non-growth-oriented practice of *grindadráp*. We suggest a conceptualisation of the *grindadráp* as a "colonial difference" (Escobar 2008) that renders alternative lifeways and degrowth imaginable and contextually meaningful. The ongoing debates among and between Faroese, and between Faroese and protesters of pilot whaling have led Faroese people (including the authors of this article) to reflect upon the relevance and meaning that *grindadráp* has in their life. Although the growth paradigm dominates Faroese understandings of a healthy economy, the struggle to articulate the *grindadráp* as meaningful, in response to the forces challenging it, is inspiring Faroese people to reflect critically upon central axioms underpinning industrial capitalist processes.

6. Re-introducing fish as a locally available food source

Towards a Faroese post-growth food policy[67]

Abstract: Fish has historically been fundamental to Faroese diet and survival, and historical evidence suggests that access to fish as a food source was ensured via a diverse set of relations embedded in the traditional moral economy in the islands. However, in tandem with the technological intensification and the enormous capacity growth of the Faroese fisheries this past century, Faroese people eat less fish than in the past. In other words, although the annual per-capita fish catch has grown significantly throughout the past century, per-capita fish consumption has decreased, suggesting that Faroese 'fish food security' has deteriorated. In this paper we approach this apparent socio-ecological paradox of the Faroese food system by exploring and developing a contextually grounded post-growth food policy approach. More specifically, drawing from the food sovereignty framework we zoom in on the Faroese practice of coastal fishing, *útróður* [in Faroese: rowing out], which we argue unsettles the binary between the Faroese subsistence-oriented economy and the Faroese export-oriented economy. We recommend that Faroese food policymakers draw inspiration from the moral economic principles embedded in the practice of *útróður,* as this may well contribute to the larger process of a sustainability transformation in the Faroese context.

Keywords: food policy, fisheries, food sovereignty, food security, Faroe Islands, post-growth

[67] This chapter constitutes the draft for a paper that is co-authored with my supervisor Ragnheiður Bogadóttir. See the author's declaration at the start of this thesis for more details.

6.1 Introduction

This paper revolves around a topical question at the intersection of research in critical food studies and sustainability sciences, namely: How might existing subsistence-oriented food practices inspire post-growth food policy?

This question is particularly relevant in contexts like the Faroe Islands – a sub-national small island jurisdiction in the North Atlantic Ocean, whose food system can be characterised as a "modern-traditional hybrid" (Bogadóttir and Olsen, 2017; Fielding, 2010). On the one hand, the Faroese foodscape is characterised by the extraction and processing of marine resources that feed into the global food system, while it on the other hand is characterised by culturally embedded food practices, which still contribute to Faroese dietary habits.

The paper aspires to shed light on how food insecurity, and more specifically unequal access to fish resources in the Faroese context, can be addressed by drawing policy inspiration from already existing food practices that are embedded in Faroese history and culture.

To do so, we examine the Faroese fishery practice of *útróður*, which we argue contains elements of both a market logic and a subsistence ethic. The paper considers the role of *útróður* in recent Faroese environmental history, as well as how contemporary *útróður*-fishers understand the practice and navigate the tension between a subsistence ethic and market rationality.

The paper is structured so that we first present our conceptual approach, which draws from critical food research and post-growth research. Next follows a methods section, and after this a brief historical background on the transformation of Faroese social metabolism and dietary habits in the 20th century. From then on, the paper highlights the voices of Faroese *útróður*-fishers in conversation with a food sovereignty and post-growth analytics.

6.2 Food sovereignty and postgrowth policymaking

In the past few decades, a lot of resources have been invested in research and international efforts supposed to bring about food security (Beddington, 2010; Godfray et al., 2010). However, governance efforts grounded in the framework of food security have been criticised for not considering the structural dimensions of power and international political economy, which are at the root of the socio-ecological inequalities and food insecurities in the world (e.g. Nally, 2016; Tomlinson, 2013). Instead, critical food scholars argue that food security policies often undermine local food systems.

At the core of mainstream food security discourse is a Malthusian logic which advocates for increasing global food production. However, the assumption that an increase in the volume of food will somehow facilitate food security has long been refuted (Sen, 1981). As critical food scholars have shown, global food insecurity does not stem from a lack of food, but from a lack of access and redistribution of food and natural resources (Patel 2007; McMichael 2009; Tomlinson 2013).

Faroese fisheries are here a case in point. The tremendous growth in the volume and efficiency of extracting fish resources in the Faroe Islands has not improved local access to fish resources – on the contrary. Although available statistics of total Faroese fish catches show very high increases in the volumes of fish biomass extracted from the ocean, national per-capita fish consumption has decreased during the same time span and continues to do so (AMAP, 2021; FBPH, 2024).

An alternative food policy framework is that of food sovereignty, which was originally introduced by the international peasant organisation *La Via Campesina* at the 1996 World Food Summit. Initially defined as the right of people to define their own food systems, it was later elaborated upon at the Nyéléni Forum for Food Sovereignty in 2007 in Mali, where over 500 people from 8O countries adopted the Declaration of Nyéléni in which one of the most cited definitions of food sovereignty can be found:

> Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations. (Nyéléni, 2007b)

Although food security and food sovereignty are often pitted against each other as opposites, many scholars have pointed out that they do not necessarily exclude one another (Clapp 2014). Looking at the two as discourses, Jarosz (2014) has noted not only oppositions between them, but also relationalities. Although the two concepts have distinct genealogies, both discourses are fluid, dynamic and deployed in different ways depending on the geographic, historical, cultural and political economic context (Jarosz 2014).

A pragmatic way to attempt a careful distinction between them which acknowledges their relationality as well as their differences might be to think of food sovereignty as an elaboration of concerns related to social and environmental justice and human rights thought to be lacking in the food security approach, or as *La Via Campesina* noted in its first Declaration on Food Sovereignty: "Food sovereignty is a precondition to genuine food security" (Via Campesina, 1996).

While most food sovereignty case studies are focused on agricultural food systems and farmer/peasant realities, studies of aquatic food systems and small-scale fisheries from a food sovereignty approach are gaining traction (see e.g. Levkoe et al., 2017; Standen, 2025). With this paper, we hope to be able to contribute to these conversations.

Although food sovereignty is often portrayed and understood as an outcome or objective towards which civil society actors and food producers (such *as Via Campesina*, Friends of the Earth, etc.) are working , from a policymaking perspective it might be more useful to approach food sovereignty as a set of historically embedded processes "that are interactively shaped by state and

societal forces, reflecting competing paradigms and approaches." (Schiavoni 2017, p. 3). Key to this framing is to see food sovereignty as a process, rather than an objective.

Moreover, shifting the attention away from a desired outcome to the praxis and process of *doing* food sovereignty also emphasises questions pertaining to economic relationships, thereby connecting with themes in post-growth research. At the core of food sovereignty is a critique of international trade relations that favour industrial export-oriented food production over small-scale food production. Here several scholars have noted a synergy between food sovereignty and the values and vision embedded in post-growth frameworks (Calvário, 2017; Daněk and Jehlička, 2020; Dengler and Plank, 2024; Nelson and Edwards, 2022; Pimbert and Claeys, 2024; Plank, 2022; Roman-Alcalá, 2017).

As with food sovereignty, in this paper we also emphasise a process-oriented approach to post-growth, where we explore already existing post-growth dynamics and processes embedded in the socio-cultural context that we are looking at (Paulson, 2017, 2019).

6.3 Methods

> Potential for transformative change is found in habitual practices through which skills, perspectives, denials and desires are viscerally embodied, and in cultural systems (economic, religious, gender and other) that govern those practices and make them meaningful.
> (Paulson 2017, p. 425)

This paper presents an affirmative political ecology analysis (Alhojarvi and Sirvio, 2019; Olsen and Whittle, 2019) of the Faroese fishery practice of *útróður*. Empirically the paper draws from the overall research process and the empirical material generated in relation to the lead author's doctoral research in the Faroe Islands between September 2017 and December 2019. The research was carried out in collaboration with activists from Slow Food Faroe Islands and the Faroese environmental NGO *Føroya Náttúru- og Umhvørvisfelag (FNU)*. The dataset

consists of field observations, informal conversations, reflections, informal conversations and semi-structured interviews with small-scale food producers in the Faroe Islands. This paper highlights five interviews with Faroese *útróður*-fishers in a broad age range (between 35-85 years old).

Doing research in small communities poses several challenges when it comes to research ethics and the anonymisation of data (Hayfield 2022). In a country with approximately 55,000 inhabitants, the number of *útróður*-fishers is limited. To protect the identity of the informants we have chosen to refer to all of them merely as '*útróður*-fisher' without disclosing demographic details such as age, home island or community. This means that the reader will not be able to distinguish between what each of the five *útróður*-fishers said. Although this compromises how much details about the interview participants, the reader has access to, we feel it does not compromise the analysis.

6.4 Transforming fisheries

According to the conventional historical narrative, during the 20th century the Faroe Islands evolved into a modern fisheries nation and welfare state. Fish was the cornerstone of this economic development, since it was the key export item throughout this period. Today fish and fish products continue to account for at least 90 percent of the total export value in the Faroe Islands (SFI, 2025a). Faroese fish export, however, is not a modern phenomenon, and dried fish has probably been a trade item since at least the 13th century (Mortensen, 2003). While fishing was therefore both a food item and a trade item throughout Faroese environmental history, the proportion going into trade and export has increased tremendously during the past century.

Overall, during the 20th century and beyond, the Faroese economy experienced remarkable increases in material and energy use (Bogadóttir, 2025). Available historical statistics on total Faroese fish catches show that the total catch in 1903 was 1200 tons and a century later, in 2003, it was approximately 700.000 tons

(Jákupsstovu 2004). The total annual catch in 2023 (the latest year available) was approximately 790.000 tons (SFI, 2025b).[68]

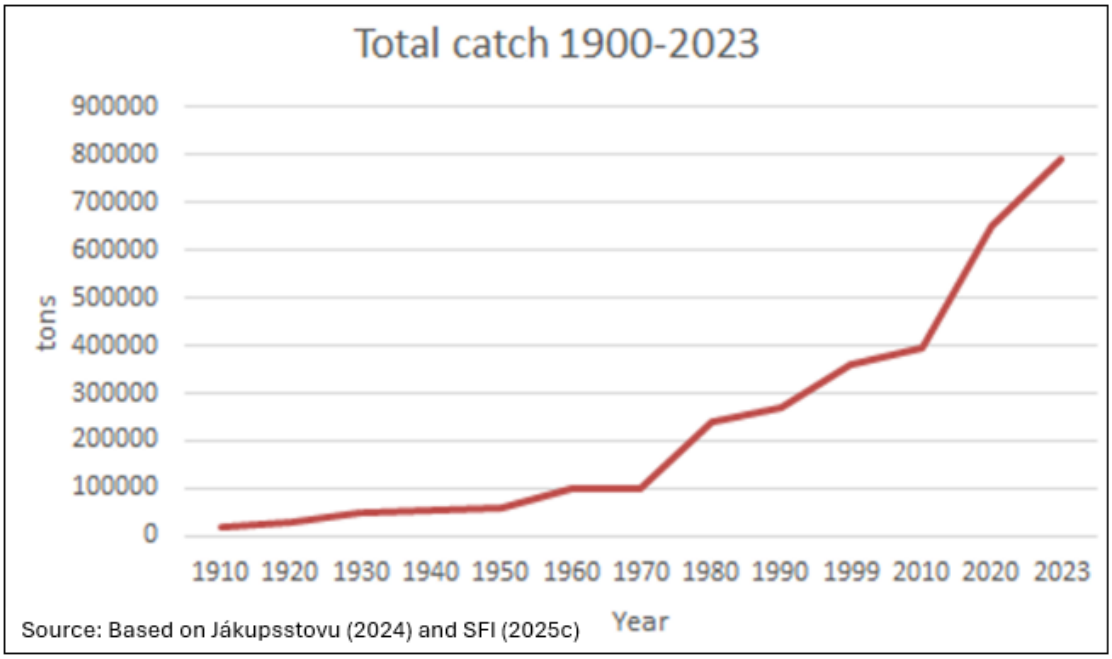

FIGURE 12: TOTAL FAROESE FISH CATCH 1900-2023

While there is significant variation between years in total catch, the general trend is one of stupendous growth, an almost 600-fold increase. If calculated per capita, the total fisheries catch grew almost 180-fold, from 79 kg per capita in 1903 to 14 tons in 2003 (Bogadóttir 2020b).

Concurrent with this growth in fish catches, surveys of food intake have shown a decline in Faroese fish consumption. An assessment by the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP) from 2021 states that there has been a steady decline in Faroese fish intake since the 1930s, from consuming fish 200 times per year on average in 1930 to consuming fish less than 100 times per year on average in the 2010s (Veyhe and Weihe, 2021). This average, however, covers a difference between age groups, the younger age groups consuming less fish than older age groups. Newer surveys indicate that the trend continues (FBPH 2024).

[68] The total annual catch, presented in figure 12, encompasses Faroese catches in the Faroese EEZ as well as in foreign waters.

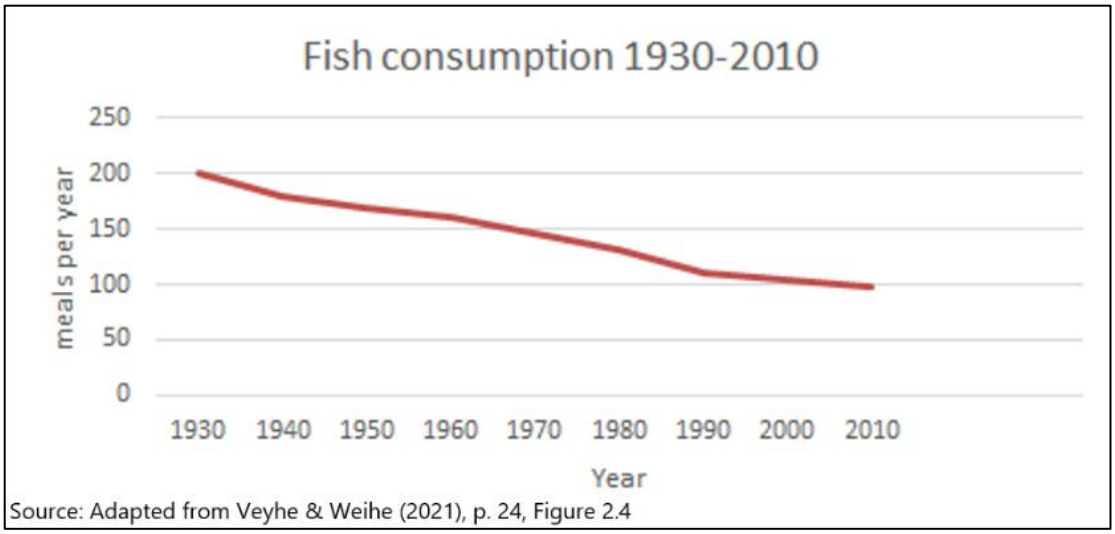

FIGURE 13: TOTAL FAROESE FISH CONSUMPTION 1930-2010

Although logics of continuous growth still dominate political debate in the Faroe Islands as they do elsewhere, we have noted a growing awareness in Faroese society that the trends of escalating biomass extraction and declining local fish consumption are unsustainable and detrimental to both human and ecosystem health. Yet addressing these issues on both global and local scales remains a notorious challenge.

6.5 *Útróður* or "rowing out for a boil of fish"

> And it [*útróður*] has always been in the Faroe Islands, I think. And it has been the traditional way of obtaining food, and those of us who do it today also get our dinner food from it. But at the same time, it is the primary industry and very commercialised, at the same time as it is the most traditional practise there is, you know? (*Útróður*-fisher, 2019)

As hinted at in the previous section, in the 20th century Faroese fisheries underwent an immense transformation. However, parallel to this trajectory the historically and culturally embedded Faroese subsistence economy has to a certain degree survived capitalist commodification, so that it today continues to play a key role to local food provision (Bogadóttir, 2020b; Joensen, 1975, 1982).

Even in the fisheries, elements from an embedded economy are still obvious, underlining the limitations of binary categories such as "export-oriented versus subsistence-oriented" and "local versus global" when it comes to the Faroese

foodscape (Olsen and Whittle, 2019). A notable example of a food practice which disrupts such binary thinking is *útróður*.

In the following section we seek to make sense of the historical roots of the concept and practice of *útróður*, as well as the concept's contemporary meaning and usage. As the quote above from an *útróður*-fisher illustrates so well, *útróður* has different and even contradictory meaning in Faroese language. We argue that the tension represented in the meaning of *útróður* might hold transformative potential when it comes to policymaking and governance interventions for food sovereignty and post-growth pathways in the Faroese context.

6.5.1 Historical roots of the term

Historically, Faroese only fished in the coastal areas and areas that could be reached in traditional rowing boats. This practice was (and is still today) locally called *útróður*, meaning "rowing out" in the sense of "rowing out for a boil of fish" as many Faroese people will say when asked to define the meaning of *útróður*.

At least during the 18th and 19th century *útróður* was regulated by what came to be referred to as *bátsbandið* (the boat bond).[69] The prevailing historical discourse posits that *bátsbandið* was an exploitative institution of bonded labour, which obliged the male gendered peasantry to serve on the farmers' boats. This narrative suggests that the advent of modernity and the principles of free trade capitalism ultimately emancipated the Faroese peasantry from this oppressive system.

However, more nuanced descriptions have shown that the system entailed both obligations and rights (Isholm 2020; Joensen 1982; Mortensen 1993). Most importantly, it facilitated access to fish for all Faroese households, since once a peasant had a seat on a boat, he did not risk losing it. Although it obliged the local peasants to crew the landowner's boats, it was the farmers' responsibility to make sure that the boat was in good condition and to ensure that representatives from all households had a seat on the boat (Joensen 1982).

[69] In written material, the term of *bátsbandið* is mentioned for the first time in a book on Faroese fisheries and the Danish royal trade monopoly from 1709-1856 (Degn 1929).

With the abandonment of *bátsbandið* in 1865, as well as the abolishment of the royal Danish trade monopoly and the introduction of free trade in 1856, Faroese began to engage in smack-fisheries, which gave access to long-distance fish-stocks that had previously been exploited by other European fleets. The first smacks were collectively purchased by fishers, but later local merchants invested the capital they had accumulated during the first years of free trade to purchase smacks and motorised *útróðrar*-boats, thereby becoming the first Faroese capitalists (Isholm, 2020; Joensen, 1975).

6.5.2 Contemporary meaning

> I think there are too few people which row out when the weather is good just to get themselves a boil of red cod or something. Nobody does it anymore. We don't have time to live. We just run and rush. (*Útróður*-fisher, 2019)

Today *útróður* holds different meanings in Faroese. On the one hand it is used as the name of the two smallest vessel groups in the Faroese Act on Commercial Fisheries - thereby referring to a commercial activity. On the other hand, the concept of *útróður* is still used in everyday speech to refer to someone who goes out fishing – either for subsistence (perhaps gifting a part of the catch to friends and family members) and/or for commercial reasons. Some do however distinguish between *at "fara á flot"* which literally translates to "to go floating" and *útróður*. According to some, they will use *at fara á flot* to denote non-commercial subsistence and leisure fishing and *útróður* as small-scale commercial fishing.

Nonetheless, drawing from Polanyian terminology on embedded and disembedded economies (Polanyi, 1944/2001), we might say that *útróður* represents a contextually embedded subsistence-oriented economy, which has been - at least partially - appropriated by the disembedded export-oriented market economy. From being a vital and indispensable food source to the inhabitants of the Faroe Islands (primarily valued for its use-value), today fish represents a vital and indispensable export commodity (primarily valued for its exchange-value).

And yet, despite this change in meaning and valuation, elements from an embedded moral *útróður* economy continue to persist.

Whereas in the past *útróður* ideally ensured that all inhabitants of the Faroe Islands had access to fish no matter their economic situation, today *útróður* is the vessel group in the Faroese fisheries management regime struggling the most to stay in business. As one *útróður*-fisher expressed:

> I think it is incredibly sad that *útróður* is about to disappear. I think it is a tragedy. One should really try to do something. Sometimes I have said jokingly that it will not be long until I will be on the finance bill classified as cultural heritage, and then I will receive some kind of support. Some sort of payment to be a klenodium of some sort. In a few years. That will be my pension. (*Útróður*-fisher, 2019)

The fact that *útróður* manifests such a clear disruption of the binary between an embedded/subsistence-oriented practice and a disembedded/export-oriented practice, makes it interesting to explore from a food sovereignty and post-growth perspective, which we do in the next section.

6.6 *Útróður* from a food sovereignty perspective

> There are many reasons why I do this, but it is very appealing to me to be able to deliver, you know, slow food or something like that. To be able to deliver good produce to people. This is something which I value highly. (*Útróður*-fisher, 2019)

When asked why they continue to engage in *útróður*, all the *útróður*-fishers that were interviewed said that a core motivation was to provide people with healthy and nutritious food, which resonates very well with the first pillar of food sovereignty, which is "Focuses on food for people" and which "rejects that food is just another commodity" (Nyéléni, 2007b).

Something else that all the *útróður*-fishers highlighted was a sense of unfair trade relations, echoing concerns relating to the second and third pillars of food

sovereignty of “Valuing food producers” and “Localising food systems”. For instance, one fisher mentioned a situation, where he had discovered his fish catch was being sold in the supermarket at a price that was eight times the price, he had received for the fish that same morning.

> What I don’t like is knowing that we have landed haddock at the fish auction for 11-13 kroner per kilo, and two hours later the same haddock will be in the counter in the supermarket at 90 kroner per kilo. In other words, the value of the fish has risen eight times in only two hours in the same country. And it is not because it has been fileted. It is in the same condition as when it was landed. Why did we not get 5 kroner more per kilo, which would have made a huge difference to us?
>
> And one more thing. Now I’m mixing everything together, but regarding the sustainability aspect. If our price had been a bit higher, then perhaps we would not be so determined to use all the allocated fishing days. If we would arrive at an annual income relatively early in the year, then we wouldn’t have to wear ourselves out in this way. Now it is a question of survival. If the price would be better, then we would adapt and bring out less fishing gear. And make our work easier. (*Útróður*-fisher, 2019)

As the quote above also illustrates, after sharing his discontentment with trade relations, this *útróður*-fisher went on to reflect on the sustainability dimension of his example, speaking to the sixth pillar of food sovereignty, which is “Working with nature”.

From a post-growth perspective, it is also interesting to note how this *útróður*-fisher reveals a sufficiency-oriented mindset. If the fish-price would be better, then his logic of reasoning is that he would not have to fish as much as he does now. It would make his work easier, and it would be more sustainable, because he would not be so determined to use all the allocated fishing days.

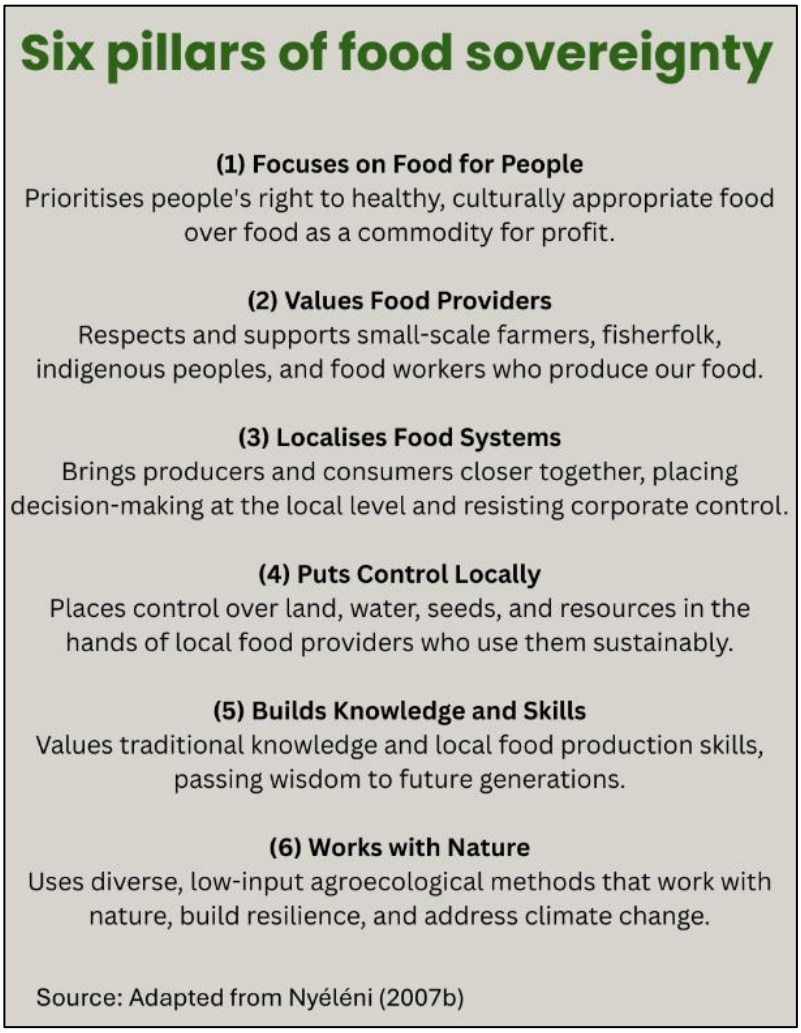

FIGURE 14: THE SIX PILLARS OF FOOD SOVEREIGNTY AS DEFINED AT NYÉLÉNI

Another topic that came up in some of the conversations was related to the fifth pillar of food sovereignty, i.e. "Building knowledge and skills". A couple of *útróður*-fishers spoke about how youngsters develop important skills about navigation, reading the weather and so forth through their experiences with *útróður*, which comes very handy when they later get the chance to work on the larger fishing vessels.

> ...the recruitment to the fisheries in general is very much through the *útróður*. People start as little boys, actually. Perhaps some girl also. They start rowing out with someone from the village or their fathers, and in that way, they get into the fishing industry. And you keep the attachment to the ocean much easier, you know? (*Útróður*-fisher, 2019)

One *útróður*-fisher also made the point that fishers that have experience with *útróður* before working on larger fishing vessels are better fishers than those without this experience, and that those who only have experience from larger fishing vessels often struggle when they try *útróður* later in life.

Also relating to skills, another issue that was raised was that fewer and fewer people know how to fillet a fish. As an *útróður*-fisher said "…nobody under 60 knows how to fillet a fish… So, it doesn't work to sell them whole fish, because they don't know what to do with it." This is also a problem for the *útróður*-fisher's business, since they are not allowed to sell fish fillets because of food safety regulations. They are only allowed to sell whole fish at the harbour. To be able to sell fillets, they need to be a certified fish fillet company.

6.7 Putting a price on it

When it comes to the question of consumer access to fish in the Faroe Islands, the *útróður*-fishers interviewed expressed different opinions, which also reflected the tension between the embedded subsistence-oriented ethos (Mies and Bennholdt-Thomsen, 1999) of *útróður*, and the disembedded market economic logic that has increasingly come to dominate *útróður*.

For instance, fish in the Faroe Islands has traditionally not been something that Faroese households buy, instead it was something they had access to via other channels of the moral economy. The concept of buying fish for dinner is therefore relatively new to Faroese people. For instance, many Faroese (aged 60+) find it almost absurd to purchase Faroese fish at the supermarket. This generation and their parents, who were still alive at the turn of the 19th century and/or the first half of the 20th century, lived at a time where fish was something you had access to either: a) by going fishing yourself (with boat or simply with a rod at the seashore), or b) if working on a smack or on one of the larger fishing vessels then you would receive a share to bring home for own use, a practice locally referred to as *grams*[70],

[70] It is common practice that fish workers on board large-scale vessels (trawlers, seine vessels, etc.) are allowed to bring home fish and fish products that they obtain for free from the vessel they

or c) through various reciprocal relations you were in, such as family members, neighbours, and/or other community members (Jóan Pauli Joensen, personal communication, October 27, 2022).

With the increased mechanisation and commodification of the Faroese fisheries throughout the 20th century, these embedded economic relations are not as widespread as they used to be. And yet, fieldwork revealed that relations of gifting, sharing and reciprocity of locally produced and caught foods, including fish, continue to prevail in the Faroe Islands – although in some areas and communities more than others.

When asked if they would sometimes gift fish or trade fish *in natura* in return for services or other foods, all the five *útróður*-fishers confirmed that this was common. Having ourselves been on the receiving end of the gifting of a *greipa*, i.e. a pair of fish (fresh or fermented), also attests to the fact that this is not a rare phenomenon in the Faroe Islands. And yet, while these informal relations of gifting persist in the Faroe Islands, they are likely more common in the smaller and more rural areas of the country than in places like Tórshavn (the capital city). Moreover, many inhabitants in the Faroe Islands have likely lost or never had access to this culturally embedded sphere of exchange. Here we are for instance thinking about migrants, young single parents/providers in urban areas, people that have been ostracised, and other marginalised groups of people.

While all the *útróður*-fishers expressed that relations of sharing and gifting was very much a part of the practice, when asked about fairness in relation to pricing, it prompted more complicated and not straightforward answers, also revealing a diversity of reflections that *útróður*-fishers make on this issue.

One *útróður*-fisher mentioned that he wished that Faroese people had better access to fish. When asked if he ever tried to sell the fish directly without going

work on (this is locally known as *grams*). This contributes substantially to the diet of the fish worker's household and is also sometimes gifted to friends, other family members and community members (Hjelm, 2013).

through the fresh fish auction (Faroe Fish Market), he said that he had tried sometimes.

> We tried a bit last year and the year before that. I am a bit idealistic… I tried to sell fish. I was so frustrated at one point. The price was at 6 kroner or something like that [at the Faroe Fish Market]. We made no money from our fishing trips. So, we took a few hundred kilos and started selling it ourselves. I think we sold it for 20 kroner per kilo, which really isn't that much, but it was enough for us. My idea was all the time that the boat crew should get a bit higher pay from the trip.… But also, that one part of the catch should go to the nursing homes, old people's homes and hospitals. It was an idealistic plan, and we did it for a period. We would sell the fish, and then I would bring as many fish to the old people's homes as they wanted. Why did I do this? Because old people love fish. It is healthy and nourishing food. And it also follows the idea about sustainability and ecology, and I think it is a good idea. (*Útróður*-fisher, 2019)

This principle of mutualism (providing the sick and elderly with free food) is also an institutionalised element of the traditional practice of whaling in the Faroe Islands, where the share is distributed for free to all members of the community and where it is still customary to allocate a share of the catch to the local elder homes and hospital (Bogadóttir and Olsen, 2017; Fielding et al., 2015).

To contrast this perspective, another *útróður*-fisher had quite a different reaction to the suggestion of gifting fish to people in need.

> I struggle to survive, and I struggle to get good quality fish, and I have a large apparatus in motion, and I pay one kroner for each hook I put down. And I put around 5-6000 hooks a day. So, this is not a social security office. And I have a quite harsh comment to that. Often, those in economic difficulties could just take a rod, walk down to the harbour and fish themselves some coalfish or something. […]

> But if I know about someone in a difficult situation, then I don't mind giving them a bag or five of fillets… but I am not going to help single mums with newly polished nails and iPhones… They can eat fishfingers from Coop…. but having said that, people are welcome to get a fillet from me… but that would be called charity. [..]
>
> And there is plenty of cheap food available…. they don't need to buy first class fish. That is something rich people who have the financial resources can do… and then everyone else can buy something else, which is cheaper. (*Útróður*-fisher, 2019)

A third *útróður*-fisher commented that: "at the same time as I am standing here saying that I think one should pay more for it, I also think it is very expensive. That is at least if you go to the grocery. And then at the same time, you can find some stuff there which I think is way too cheap… So, I don't really know. This is probably the big question, isn't it?"

Thus, what was evidently revealed throughout the interviews and which we also recognise from growing up and living in the Faroe Islands ourselves, is that the practice of *útróður* finds itself switching between an embedded subsistence-oriented ethos and a disembedded growth-oriented rationale. One *útróður*-fisher reflected on this contradiction, saying that:

> Although we are these small-scale producers we are simultaneously under the same system as the big ones. That is, we sell on the same market which provides fish to the fish factories and so on. …at the same time as we want to be these small, nice producers, we are also the opposite… *Útróður* is both … it has emerged from food self-provision and has turned into a commercial business. (*Útróður*-fisher, 2019)

This quote sums up the multiplexed nature of *útróður*. While competing on the same international market as the larger vessels, *útróður*-fishers are simultaneously trying to live up to the cultural expectations of an embedded

subsistence-oriented food economy, characterised by relations of reciprocity and mutualism.

6.8 Reintroducing fish as a staple in the Faroese diet

Returning to the issue of declining fish consumption in the Faroe Islands, we have noted an increased public concern in Faroese society that the health benefits of eating locally sourced fish have been lost. However, there is usually not much attention being paid to how certain social groups are structurally disadvantaged in this regard. Moreover, in the past couple of years, particularly since the inflation of prices on imported food commodities after Covid19 and the war in Ukraine, there are several indications that food insecurity in the Faroe Islands is not insignificant. For instance, according to the Faroese Red Cross, more people than ever are now relying on food aid from the Red Cross (Sosialurin, 2024). It is also more and more common to see anonymous people pleading for food donations on Faroese social media platforms to the degree that there is now a Facebook group, where Faroese people are donating food to other people in need.

Recognising that market mechanisms are not adequate when it comes to crucial issues such as ensuring food security and preventing overexploitation of natural resources, we suggest that policymakers look towards the embedded subsistence-oriented food practices that have sustained human metabolisms for centuries.

We argue that in the case of the Faroe Islands, it would thus make sense to revisit the non-monetary values and significance that fish has historically had to Faroese metabolism and survival, and which, as this paper has shown, can still be noted in the practice of *útróður*, as well as in other areas of the subsistence-oriented food economy in the Faroe Islands (Bogadóttir, 2020b; Bogadóttir and Olsen, 2017; Plieninger et al., 2025). We suggest that Faroese policymakers draw from these insights when drawing up a food policy that is not only culturally meaningful, but which can potentially also be part of the larger process of a socio-ecological transformation in the Faroese context.

In concrete and practical terms, such a policy could involve formalising current practices of informal distribution, so that they might again, as was previously the case, aim to include all members of society into the exchange sphere. The practice of *grams* is one example of an informal redistribution practice that could be developed with the purpose of reducing unequal access to fish. Another pathway would be to develop and expand a local economic sphere (Hornborg, 2017) rooted in local versions of 'farm to fork' principles, as they have been described in this chapter, where local fishers provide fresh fish to local public institutions such as hospitals, elderly homes, daycare institutions and schools, thereby addressing food insecurity, as well as health and sustainability related challenges facing Faroese society.

We argue that a policy based upon some form of "fish as food" approach (Levkoe et al. 2017) could have a beneficial sustainability influence on Faroese social metabolism in several ways. By giving Faroese inhabitants access to a local unprocessed protein-rich food source, such a food policy could contribute to a re-localisation of the Faroese food system, diminishing Faroese dependence on global food imports and introduce the idea of access to nutritious and culturally appropriate food as a human right, echoing principles of the food sovereignty movement.

6.9 Conclusion

The analysis in this paper was guided by a normative conceptual question, posed in the introduction, namely "How might existing subsistence-oriented food practices inspire post-growth food policy?" We have reflected on this question in relation to the practice of *útróður*, i.e. Faroese coastal fisheries, which represent a food economic phenomenon that disrupts the subsistence-oriented vs. export-oriented binary, and which was also why we found it interesting to engage with in relation to post-growth policymaking.

The reflections by *útróður*-fishers that the paper has highlighted, our own experiences as Faroese, as well as informal conversations that we have had with several politicians and policymakers in the Faroe Islands on this topic, suggest

that introducing a food/fishery policy that would have the double function of ensuring that all inhabitants have free access to fresh fish and simultaneously provide economic security for the Faroese *útróður*-fleet, is not a far-fetched idea. In the discussion we reflected upon some ways that this could be done.

The analytical findings presented in this paper thus advance the theoretical proposition that engaging with already existing contextually embedded subsistence-oriented economies from a place of 'ethnographic curiosity' may constitute a meaningful and fruitful approach to post-growth policymaking.

7. “Help me today and I will help you tomorrow”

Subsistence-oriented food economies in São Tomé e Príncipe and the Faroe Islands

Abstract: This paper explores dimensions of the subsistence-oriented food economies of two small island countries - São Tomé e Príncipe and the Faroe Islands. Based upon empirical material generated through an engaged research process in both locations, the paper contributes to ongoing scholarly discussions on what we can learn from local and culturally embedded economies when it comes to questions relating to sustainability transitions and post-development pathways. Drawing conceptually from a feminist political economy framework and perspectives in economic anthropology the paper highlights what might be characterised as post-growth characteristics of the subsistence-oriented sphere of the Santomean and Faroese foodscapes. For instance, the prevalence of moral economic relations, such as mutual aid and non-monetary relations of exchange, and in the case of São Tomé e Príncipe the potentially decolonial meaning embedded in the local concept of *leve-leve*.

Keywords: Faroe Islands, São Tomé e Príncipe, subsistence, moral economy, feminist economics, post-growth, *leve-leve*, mutual aid

7.1 Introduction

This paper examines the subsistence-oriented sphere of the Santomean and Faroese foodscapes in context of post-growth theorisation. Although the Faroe Islands and São Tomé e Príncipe differ significantly in terms of climate and geography, history and culture, as well as political economic position in the world, they also share some defining features. They both constitute small island countries and are both among the least populated countries in the world. Moreover, the export economy of both countries is primarily based upon resources that feed into the global food system. And, most importantly to the focus of this paper, subsistence-oriented food practices play an important role to the diet and culture of both contexts.

The ambition of this paper aligns with the growing body of literature preoccupied with what Alhojarvi and Sirvio (2019) have conceptualised as affirmative political ecology – that is a normative research agenda which aspires to find sources of hope and inspiration out of exploitative, expansionist and growth-centric thinking and culture. An aim of the paper is thus to ignite hope and to stimulate our thinking and creativity on how to forge sustainability transitions, post-growth and post-development pathways, by examining already existing and thriving "quiet sustainabilities" (Smith and Jehlička, 2013) in the subsistence-oriented foodscapes of these two small island countries.

The question guiding the analysis in this paper is: what characterises the subsistence-oriented food economies of São Tomé e Príncipe and the Faroe Islands? I borrow the concept of subsistence-oriented food economies from Mies and Bennholdt-Thomsen's (1999) concept of "subsistence production" – to mean and encompass not only self-provision, but everything that feeds into the subsistence of the community (including local trade, farmer markets, etc.).

Based upon empirical data generated through an engaged research process in both São Tomé e Príncipe and the Faroe Islands, the paper argues that despite the stark differences between the two contexts in terms of social metabolism and political economy – one positioned in the global North, the other in the global

South, many similarities exist when it comes to the subsistence-oriented sphere of (re)production. In both São Tomé e Príncipe and the Faroe Islands small-scale food producers engage in what may be characterised as 'post-growth compatible practices', which are embedded in the historical, cultural and socio-ecological context of these places. I suggest that since such practices represent locally meaningful alternatives to the growth dogma, they also constitute sources of inspiration for post-growth pathways that are likely to resonate culturally with the people inhabiting these places.

The paper is structured, so that after introducing my conceptual approach, I provide a brief methods section. Then I introduce the geographical contexts emphasising the subsistence-oriented foodscapes in both contexts. After this follows a comparative analysis which focuses on those features of the subsistence-oriented food economies in the two contexts, which I perceive to be particularly relevant in relation to post-growth theorisation, such as the prevalence of a moral economy, based upon solidarity and mutual aid.[71] After this the analysis zooms in on the Santomean concept of *leve-leve,* which I suggest as a source of inspiration for reflecting critically on the relation between human well-being and the economy.

7.2 Growth critique and the subsistence perspective

The idea for this paper arose from ongoing critical debates about how degrowth and other post-growth research may draw inspiration from already existing non-growth-oriented practices that characterise cultural systems and 'ordinary peoples' lives (Paulson, 2017, 2019). To this endeavour, I have found much inspiration from the conceptual vocabulary and perspectives in economic anthropology literature (e.g. Graeber, 2012; Gudeman, 1986; Polanyi, 1944/2001; Scott, 1977). Moreover, debates on the potential overlaps and relationalities between degrowth visions in the global North and decolonial visions in the global

[71] I use the concept of moral economy here to denote the phenomenon of economic relations, transactions and systems that are morally embedded in the social relationships of the community, within which they figure, emphasising fairness and reciprocity as opposed to capitalist profit maximation.

South have also influenced the perspectives developed in this paper (Dengler and Seebacher, 2019; Escobar, 2015; Kothari et al., 2014; Paulson, 2019).

The conceptual framework mobilised in the paper is furthermore inspired by the scholarly work of feminist political economists, especially Maria Mies and Veronika Bennholdt-Thomsen's seminal work on 'the Subsistence Perspective', which combines an ecofeminist critique of the capitalist exploitation of women, nature and colonised people with an alternative economic vision based upon their observation of the values embedded in what they conceptualise as the relations of subsistence production, such as mutual aid, reciprocity, solidarity, and an emphasis on use-value. Their concept of subsistence production overlaps with more familiar Marxist-feminist work around the notion of reproduction, which also centres the devaluation of women's unpaid work in capitalism (care, housework, childbearing, etc.). However, with the subsistence perspective, Mies and Bennholdt-Thomsen have developed a broader framework, which also emphasises other life-sustaining activities that are devalued under capitalism, such as the work of peasants and colonised subjects. Together with their colleague at the University of Bielefeld, Claudia von Werlhof, they developed the iceberg model of capitalist patriarchal economies (see figure 15), which has also come to be known as the 'Bielefeld – Subsistence model', to visualise the exploitative relationship between capitalist commodity production and subsistence-production (Mies, 2005).

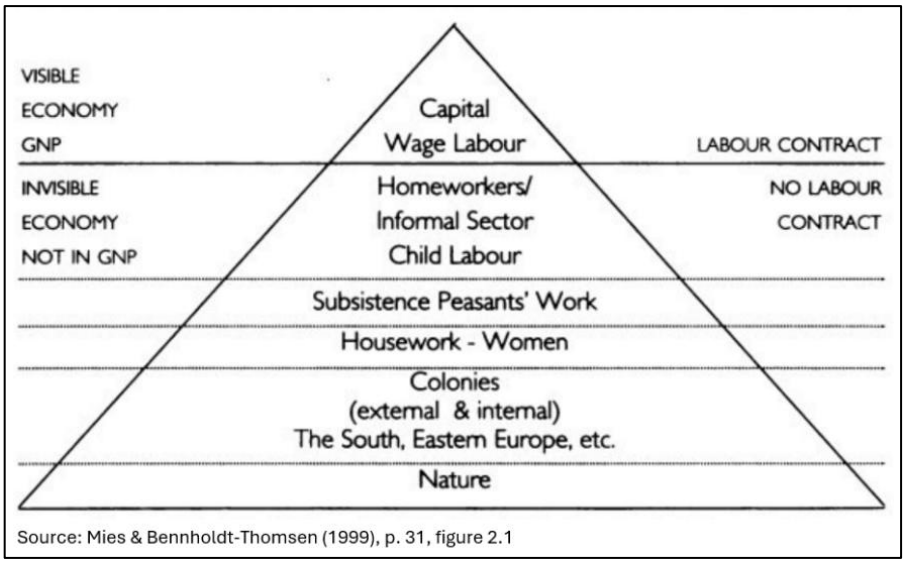

FIGURE 15: THE BIELEFELD - SUBSISTENCE MODEL

While the Bielefeld-Subsistence model bears resemblance to the better-known iceberg model by Gibson-Graham (1996/2006), there is a key epistemological difference between the two. Whereas the Marxist-ecofeminist iceberg visualises how capitalist production is dependent, entrenched in and founded upon an invisible economy of subsistence (re)production, Gibson-Graham come from a post-structuralist approach, which uses the iceberg to visualise the diversity of economic activities that exist in addition to and beyond capitalist economic relations. In the analysis carried out in this paper, I have combined and incorporated elements from both icebergs, thereby following Collard and Dempsey (2020) suggestion to hold onto both icebergs at the same time.

7.3 Methods

The analysis in this paper builds on empirical material generated between September 2017 and December 2019 during my doctoral fieldwork in the Faroe Islands and São Tomé e Príncipe.[72] The research was shaped through a dynamic and collaborative process with key actors in both locations. In the Faroe Islands: Sunniva G. Mortensen and Selma D. Erol, who are both local food and environmental activists. In São Tomé e Príncipe: FENAPA, i.e. the Santomean national federation of small-scale farmers. The part of the dataset mobilised in this paper consists of 40 individual semi-structured interviews with Faroese small-scale food producers and 28 focus group interviews with Santomean small-scale food producers.

The interview questions in both contexts revolved around what kind of food the interview participants produced, how much of it was for self-provision, how much of it was for selling, where and how they sold their produce, and how common it was to exchange food *in natura*, also asking into examples of such alternative forms of distribution and exchange. In the case of São Tomé e Príncipe, the interviews also came to revolve around the local concept of *leve-leve,* which I

[72] The fieldwork in São Tomé e Príncipe was carried out January-February 2018 and February-June 2019. The fieldwork in the Faroe Islands was carried out September-December 2017 and September-December 2019.

found particularly captivating to explore from a post-growth and post-development perspective, and which also found its way into the analysis of this paper.

In both contexts, the research process was also characterised by a small degree of (auto)ethnographic reflections. Thus, the interview analysis is also influenced by observations, reflections and other sporadic moments of insight, I had in the field. Finally, and in relation to this, a disclaimer must be made that being Faroese myself means that I have an inevitable 'knowledge bias' towards the Faroese context. While I acknowledge that this has influenced the analysis, a strategy I have taken to alleviate this issue has been to incorporate a substantive number of direct quotes from the Santomean informants and thereby allow their voice a significant amount of relatively unfiltered space in the paper.

7.4 Two small island countries across the global North-South line

In this section I first provide a brief overview of some of the human geographic characteristics of the two contexts where fieldwork was carried out. After this I proceed to a more comprehensive descriptive analysis focused on the subsistence-oriented food economies in the two countries.

The Faroe Islands and São Tomé e Príncipe are relatively similar in size, both in terms of population and geographical space, while in other ways they differ significantly. Whereas the Faroe Islands is situated in the northern part of the North Atlantic Ocean and is characterised by a sub-arctic climate, São Tomé e Príncipe is situated in the Gulf of Guinea at the equatorial line and is characterised by a tropical climate. Socio-metabolically, a stark difference between the two can also be noted when comparing their GDP per capita and CO_2 emissions per capita; the Faroe Islands clearly bears features of a global North metabolism, while São Tomé e Príncipe bears those of a global South metabolism.

	Faroe Islands	São Tomé e Príncipe
Geo coordinates	62°N 7°W	0°N 7°E
Population	55,000	240,000
Land area and EEZ	1,400 km^2 (274,000 km^2 EEZ)	1,000 km^2 (160,000 km^2 EEZ)
GDP per capita (2024)	$74,6	$3,2
$C0_2$ per capita (2024)	13,1t	0,6t

Sources: Global Carbon Budget (2025), World Bank (2025), SFI (2025a)

FIGURE 16: SOME FIGURES FOR COMPARISON BETWEEN THE FAROE ISLANDS AND SÃO TOMÉ E PRÍNCIPE

The historical human geographies of the two contexts also differ. While the native populations in both countries have historically been subjected to colonial dynamics, this has been in substantially different ways and to markedly different degrees.

While human arrival to the Faroe Islands is somewhat disputed, most historians agree that permanent settlement by Norse Vikings occurred in the 9th century. Although never classified as a colony, between the 16th and 19th century, Faroese political and economic control was gradually appropriated by Denmark, which during this historical time-period was positioning itself as an imperial power, ultimately turning the Faroe Islands into a Danish dependency in the early 19th century (Sølvará, 2020). During this time, the Danish also introduced free trade and incited the commodification of Faroese fisheries, which shifted from the realm of subsistence production to become a defining feature of an emerging capitalist society as we know the Faroe Islands today (Isholm, 2020; Joensen, 1996). While the colonial positionality of the Faroe Islands is ambiguous and the topic of many intricate debates among Faroese scholars, there is no doubt that the Faroe Islands were profoundly "entangled in the Danish colonial project and the imaginary of the Danish empire" (Eydnudóttir, 2024, p. 21).

In contrast, São Tomé e Príncipe present a much more text-book case of European racial colonialism. Although the islands were uninhabited when the Portuguese arrived in the 15th century, the Portuguese brought with them enslaved Africans from the continent to cultivate sugarcane, turning the islands into one of the

world's first plantation economies (Mintz, 1986; Seibert, 2013). After a three-hundred year long period of almost complete withdrawal and abandonment of the islands, the Portuguese returned in the 18th century to establish coffee and cocoa plantations - first based upon slave labour and subsequently an extremely exploitative system of forced labour carried out by migrants that had been relocated from other lusophone colonies (Seibert, 2019; Temudo, 2014).

As was alluded to in the first paragraphs of this section, the global political economy and the socio-ecological positionalities of the two countries are tremendously contrasful. Although São Tomé e Príncipe obtained its independence in 1975, the legacy as a colonial plantation economy means that the country is today highly dependent on official development assistance (ODA), and that the main export commodity is still cocoa (ADB, 2024). The Faroe Islands, on the other hand, has not obtained independence, but was in 1948 granted a semi-autonomous position in the so-called Danish Unity of the Realm (which comprises Denmark, Faroe Islands and Greenland). Although the Faroese economy is relatively strong, the country still receives an annual grant from Denmark, which contributes to around 8 percent of the national operating revenue (Moody's, 2024). Faroese exports are dominated by fish and fish-related products from capture fisheries and more recently also from aquaculture (Bjørndal and Mrdalo, 2023; Bogadóttir, 2020a).

Having provided a very brief contextualisation of the two countries, I now zoom in on their respective subsistence-oriented foodscapes.

7.4.1 The Faroese subsistence-oriented foodscape

The Faroese food system was historically composed of a diversity of food supplies, including the cultivation of barley, dairy from cattle, and sheep meat, as well as local wild resources, such as seabird eggs, seabirds, whales, seals, and fish (Bogadóttir, 2020b). Despite the tremendous socio-ecological transformation of Faroese metabolism in the 20th century, related to the capitalisation and modernisation of the fisheries (Bogadóttir, 2020a), when it comes to domestic food production in the Faroe Islands (fisheries and fish-farming excluded), this

remains oriented towards subsistence and continues to adhere to traditional land management systems and cultural practices formalised in medieval law decrees (Bogadóttir, 2020b). An exception is arguably Faroese dairy production, which underwent a process of industrialisation in the 1980s. Another exception to this division, are the small-scale coastal *útróður* fisheries, which are caught 'in-between' an export-oriented logic and a subsistence-oriented logic, thereby disrupting the food-system binary of "global/capitalist/disembedded" and "local/subsistence/embedded" (Olsen and Whittle, 2019).

Although many of these subsistence-oriented Faroese food practices figure outside the formal market economy and are now officially classified as 'hobbies', they still provide a portion of the caloric and nutritional needs of the Faroese population (Bogadóttir, 2020b; Vestergaard et al., 2022).

When it comes to access to local food sources in the Faroe Islands, this takes place in several different ways, depending on the food item, the social capital of the producer and the consumer, and other factors. The most common way to access sheep-meat is probably still through kin relations, i.e. family ties and relatives. However, direct purchase of sheep meat from farmers is also common. Speaking with Faroese farmers, I learned that they typically inherit the customers of the previous farmer of their land (often their parents) and likewise consumers often inherit their parents' farmer contacts. These trade relations are thus usually passed down from one generation to the next. This means that many farmers in the Faroe Islands have a fixed list of customers that they sell their meat to every year, which changes very little throughout their lifetime, suggesting that Faroese sheep-rearing operates according to a 'steady state' economic framework. Some Faroese farmers also sell a small portion of dried meat to local supermarkets, and some also have direct trade arrangements with fishing vessels and/or other companies. However most locally produced terrestrial food in the Faroe Islands is probably accessed via economic arrangements outside of the formal market economy (Vestergaard and et al., 2022).

When it comes to local trade of secondary animal produce (such as sausages, pâtes, gut tallow, lamb's head, etc.) and plant-based produce (primary and secondary), a significant portion of this happens via Facebook where food producers advertise their products in one of the many groups dedicated to the purpose. Some also have their own Facebook business page, which people can follow. Prior to the internet, similar trade arrangements were common in the local newspapers. At the start of my doctoral research, one of my research partners had started an initiative called *Matkovin* to promote local food and empower local food producers. One outcome of this has been that there are now relatively regular occurrences of local farmer markets in the Faroe Islands. Although it has been common for *útróður*-fishers, i.e. small-scale coastal fishers, to sell their catch at the harbour, local food markets with agricultural and pastoral produce have not been common. An explanation for why this has been the case, might be because agricultural and pastoral practices, along with hunting and gathering of wild food resources, have primarily been carried out for self-provision and community subsistence, not for market exchange.

Speaking with people born in the decades after World War II about access to locally produced food during their childhood and youth, many told me that in the household they grew up in, they cultivated their own potatoes, rhubarbs and other vegetables. Many also remember having poultry and some even a cow for dairy.[73] This generation grew up in a period of rapid economic globalisation, which was also reflected in the transition to more global dietary habits in the Faroe Islands.

However, in the past couple of decades a re-appreciation of locally produced food has gained foothold. This trend has been paralleled by the attempt of a handful of Faroese farmers to go into commercial vegetable production. This means that in addition to potatoes, swedes and rhubarbs (which have been cultivated traditionally), there now also exists a small commercial production of carrots, beets and other root vegetables, cabbages, kale, and leeks.

[73] Other vegetables that people mentioned were carrots, radishes, cabbage, roots and herbs such as parsley and chives.

When asked where they sell their vegetables, some farmers said that they sometimes sell to the local groceries and supermarkets, but that they prefer a more direct trade arrangement, as this way they can sell at a price that is fairer to themselves as well as their customers, avoiding the added costs of an intermediary. However, they also expressed that they would be keener to sell via intermediaries, if they received some form of subsidy, such as having the VAT on vegetables refunded. Compared to the agricultural sector in the EU, Faroese agriculture is hardly subsidised, which makes it very difficult if not impossible to compete with food imports from the continent.[74]

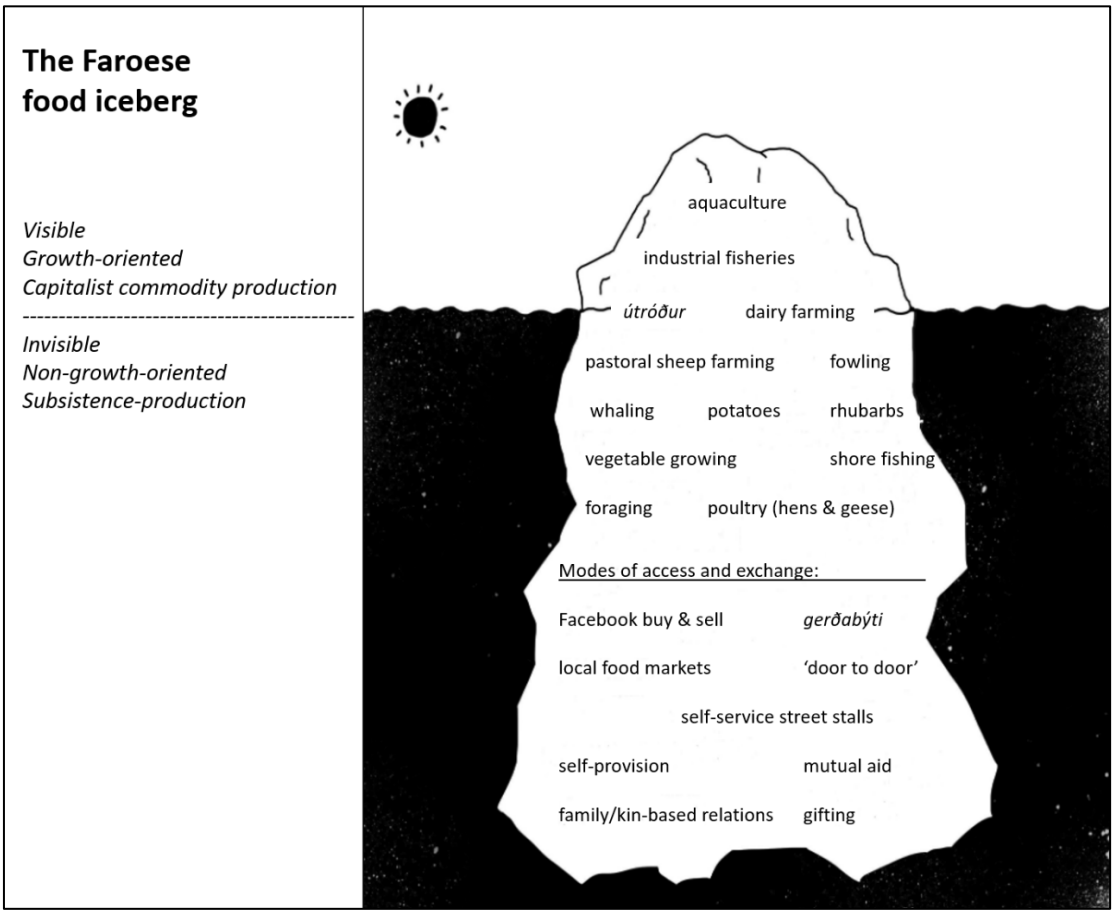

FIGURE 17: THE FAROESE FOOD ICEBERG

Another practice that has become common in recent years is for farmers to set up a self-service shop in the surroundings of their property based upon mutual trust,

[74] In 2018 Faroese agricultural subsidies amounted to what corresponds to 46 Euro per capita, while for agriculture under the European CAP it was 117 Euro per capita. Most Faroese agricultural subsidies target the Faroese dairy and sheep farming sector (Djurhuus, n.d.).

where they leave their produce unattended with price signs. This way people are free to pass by 24/7, take what they want and leave payment in a money jar or make a bank transfer.

The subsistence-oriented food economy in the Faroe Islands thus happens in quite diverse fora and according to a diversity of arrangements - from ancient culturally embedded practices to online platforms such as Facebook, and more recently also at local farmer markets. The iceberg depicted in figure 17 illuminates this diversity.

7.4.2 The Santomean subsistence-oriented foodscape

Turning our gaze south to the Santomean subsistence-oriented foodscape, historical sources suggest that at the time of settlement in São Tomé e Príncipe, food crops were limited to oil-palm, one yam species and possibly one banana species. Later domestic animals and various tropical food crops were introduced from other lusophone colonies, and these have since then been important sources of nutrition to the islanders, particularly to the rural population where money is scarce (Seibert, 2013).

From what I could see and have been told, most of the rural population in São Tomé e Príncipe is involved in some form of food self-provision. While Santomean fisheries are subsistence-oriented, Santomean agriculture is mixed. Many Santomean farmers produce cocoa for one of the four cocoa exporting co-operatives in the country and/or other cash crops, such as coffee, pepper, coconut and palm.[75] However, all the Santomean farmers, which I spoke to were also involved in subsistence-oriented food production (whether or not they produced cash-crops).

Some of the most common crops which feed into the subsistence-oriented food system in São Tomé e Príncipe are plantains, taro, palm oil tree, breadfruit,

[75]The four main cacao export cooperatives in the country are: 1) CECAB (*Cooperativa de Exportação de Cacau Biológico*), 2) Satocao (*Sociedade Santomense de Cacau*), 3) CECAQ-11 (*Cooperativa de Exportação de Cacau de Qualidade*), and 3) Diogo Vaz.

jackfruit, avocado, sugarcane, banana, Izaquiente *(treculia africana),* cajá-manga *(spondias dulcis)*, safou *(dacryodes edulis)*, cassava, maize, sweet potatoes, coconuts, mango, palm, papaya, oranges, mandarins, and other citrus fruits. Of smaller-scale horticultural production, people mentioned, and I saw tomatoes, onions, green beans, chili peppers, bell peppers, watermelon, carrots, lettuce, kale, cabbage and cucumber.

When it comes to protein, fish appears to be by far the most important source in the Santomean diet. Other local sources of protein are from animal husbandry (e.g. goats, pork, poultry), as well as the harvesting of wild fauna. Research suggests that the West African snail is important, but also feral pigs, mona monkeys, African civets, as well as fruit bats and birds are harvested for protein (Carvalho et al., 2015). Recent research also suggests that there is some consumption of cetaceans (Nuno et al., 2023). Traditionally, sea turtle (meat and eggs) was also part of the Santomean diet, but in 2014 the harvesting and trade of sea turtles was criminalised. Since then, conservation groups have made effective sea turtle conservation campaigns around the country so that the consumption of sea turtles is now more or less abandoned.

Trade in fresh local foods happens primarily at local marketplaces and street stalls - either directly from producer to consumer, or first from producer to *palaje* (the local word for a street food vendor) and then from *palaje* to consumers. It is also common for Santomean *palajes* to move around the town with a basket of food items and sell their products to passersby and/or restaurants and hotels in the town. One *palaje* that I spoke with who sold fresh fish in the capital, told me that she has a fixed list of restaurants which she visits every day with fresh produce for sale.

Although much of the urban population in São Tomé e Príncipe works either in the public sector, or in the manufacturing and service sector, I noticed that food production is also common in urban back yards (fruit trees of different sorts are for instance a common sight all over the city).

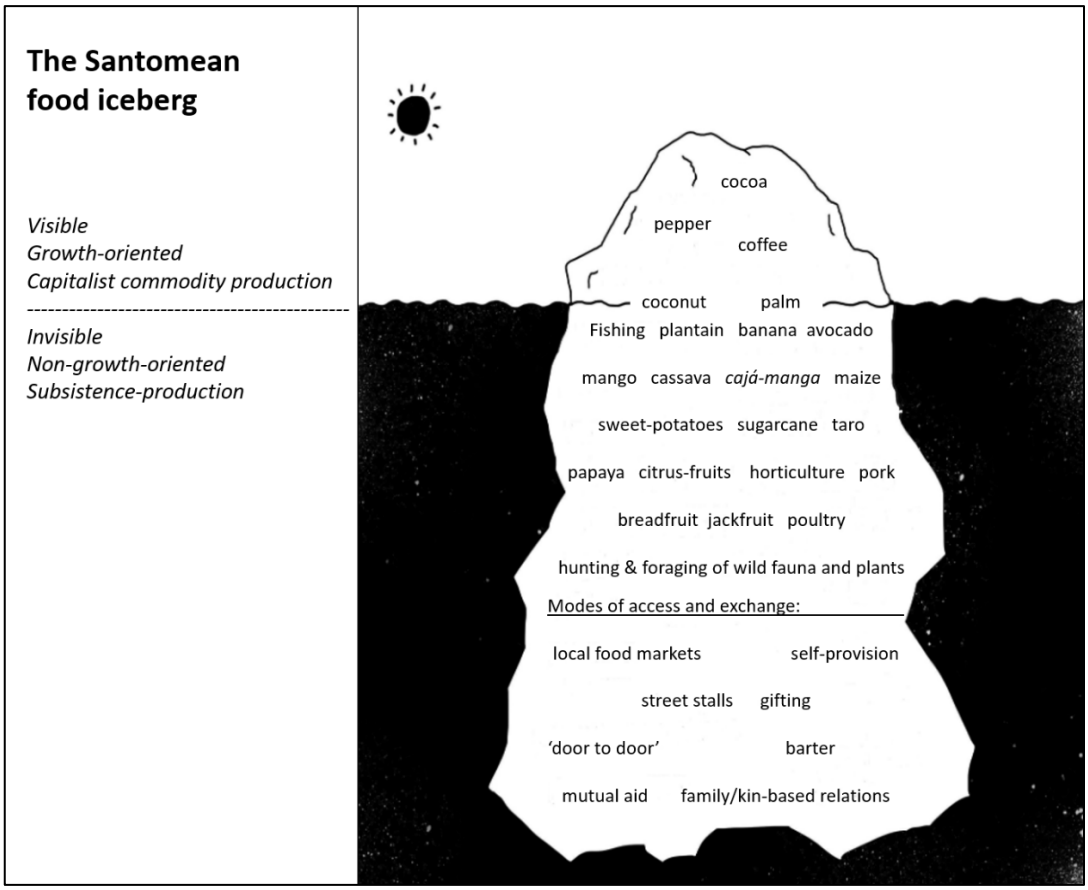

FIGURE 18: THE SANTOMEAN FOOD ICEBERG

As can be discerned in figure 18, the Santomean subsistence-oriented food economy is highly diverse – both in terms of food variety and when it comes to modes of access and exchange.

7.5 The moral food economy of São Tomé e Príncipe and the Faroe Islands

Having outlined the subsistence-oriented foodscapes in the two contexts, I now turn to a conceptual analysis of the values, meanings and principles embedded in the local food practices that characterise these places.

That there is a moral economic ethos in the subsistence-oriented sphere of (re)production in São Tomé e Príncipe and the Faroe Islands is perhaps not so surprising. Economic anthropologists have for decades reported from various contexts that this is indeed a common characteristic of most indigenous and rural communities in the world (Gudeman, 1986; Sahlins, 1972; Scott, 1977).

One way that I noticed how moral economic relations manifest in São Tomé e Príncipe and the Faroe Islands during my fieldwork was in the way that food producers spoke about trade and exchange. In the Faroe Islands for instance, some of the vegetable farmers spoke about dilemmas in relation to putting a price on their produce. On the one hand they need a fair income for the labour time and energy they put into producing high quality nutritious food. On the other hand, they also expressed a desire to be able to feed 'ordinary people' - not only those who can afford niche products and fancy gourmet restaurants.

In São Tomé e Príncipe, I learned that it was common to swap food items between food producers, e.g. fishers and farmers. One farmer said that:

> The fisherman does not work in the field. We work in the field and do not fish. There are those who fish and those who do not fish. I don't know how to fish, I bring sugarcane, and he gives me fish. That's how it is. Each person has their area. This helps with the daily bread. (Santomean farmer, 2019)

Similarly in the Faroe Islands, some of my informants spoke about swapping food items with one another, but in the Faroese context my sense is that this often happens in a less explicit and coordinated way, which can be well expressed in the Faroese concept of *gerðabýti*. According to the Faroese English dictionary *gerðabýti* can be translated into 'mutual service'. The concept is mostly used in the sense of swapping favours, or swapping a favour for food, but it can also be used to describe a food swap.

When asked if *gerðabýt*i and swapping food was common in their community, the Faroese informants had varied responses. Although not as common as it used to be according to the oldest informants, most people reported on engaging in some form of *gerðabýti* from time to time.

An example of *gerðabýti* which is institutionalised into Faroese sheep-rearing practices is the concept of *fjalløn* which literally translates to 'mountain salary'.

This is payment from a farmer *in natura* (sheep-meat) for help to drive and slaughter sheep.

It is very likely that similar more institutionalised in-kind salary arrangements exist in the Santomean subsistence-economy, but I did not encounter them during the limited time-period I spent there. However, what I can report about the Santomean context when it comes to dynamics of *gerðabýti* (or relations of 'mutual service') is that in the community group interviews which I carried out with my research partners, a theme that came up repeatedly was the importance of community solidarity. As one Santomean farmer said:

> Even with difficulties, we are a calm country. In each community there is a concentration of friendship … help me today and I will help you tomorrow. (Santomean farmer, 2019)

Which brings me to the concept of mutual-aid and the more general phenomenon of mutualism, which starkly contradicts the neoclassic dogma of the self-interested rational *homo economicus*, as it implies that humans have a natural tendency to cooperate and support each other.[76]

In the case of the Faroe Islands, a noticeable example of the mutual aid principle is the distribution system related to Faroese whaling, locally known as the *grindadráp*, in which all members of the community are entitled to a share of the catch, and where a portion is also allocated to the local elder homes and the hospital (Bogadóttir and Olsen, 2017; Fielding et al., 2015).

In the case of São Tomé e Príncipe, which unlike the Faroe Islands does not have a public welfare system, relations of mutual aid are omnipresent and crucial for survival. One of the more pronounced and institutionalised manifestation of this,

[76] The concept of mutual aid was coined by anarchist theorist Petr Kropotkin. The perspective challenged the social Darwinian paradigm of Kropotkin's time, which was that natural selection and competition between human individuals and societies was what led to progress and "the survival of the fittest". Kropotkin (1902/2022) argued on the contrary that just like in the animal world, humans have a natural tendency to make cooperative arrangements that are crucial for survival.

which I noted, pertained to the way some *palaje* associations have the function of collectively ensuring their members' access to basic social services. The following reflections by a Santomean *Palaje* (street vendor) are illustrative:

> When there was no association here, it was very difficult. Today, with the association, we take one part of the money and put the rest in the bank to help the children go to school. (Santomean *Palaje*, 2019)

The above quote exemplifies how this *palaje* association organised a collective fund to ensure that the school fees of its members' children are paid. In addition to the associations, it was very clear from the conversations I had with Santomean food producers that mutual support and solidarity generally play an important role as a safety net in rural communities.

> I prefer to live in the *roça* rather than the city... one must have a lot of resources to be able to survive in the city... No one comes to give you a box of mangoes, a piece of fruit, a banana, they don't have it... In the city, there's none, you'll go hungry. Here in the *roça,* no... life here in the *roça* is thirty-thousand times better than in the city, thirty-thousand times, even with difficulties, we know how to share, even with difficulties. (Santomean farmer, 2019)

This difference between the rural and urban contexts when it comes to issues pertaining to the moral economy, is also something that I have noticed in the Faroe Islands, where relations of gifting and mutualism are more prevalent in rural areas.

Turning to the question of "so what?", I would argue that it is possible to synthesise at least three reasons in the literature for why such culturally embedded economic arrangements and relationships are relevant to explore in relation to questions pertaining to sustainability transitions and post-growth pathways: 1) they play a key role in preventing market logics dictate all aspects of socio-ecological life (Hornborg, 1996, 2001), 2) they problematise a core assumption underlying neoclassic economic theory, that of *homo economicus*, (Gudeman, 1986; Scott, 1977) and 3) they provide evidence of the human capacity

to co-operate and prioritise community solidarity and wellbeing over profit (Paulson, 2019).

From looking at the relations of the diverse economy of the Santomean and Faroese subsistence-oriented spheres of food (re)production, I now shift the attention to a curious concept and phenomenon that I learned about while in São Tomé e Príncipe, and which I also suggest has much to contribute to post-growth theorisation.

7.6 *Leve-leve* – "Not hungry and not with a stuffed belly"

Already during the first week of fieldwork in São Tomé e Príncipe I was familiarised with the concept of *leve-leve*. I had not picked up on much Portuguese at this point and had not yet found a translator (I was trying to survive with my basic mastery of Italian and Spanish). So, at first, I did not give it much attention. It was not until my third week, when I found myself in a conversation with two expats (non-native inhabitants), who were sharing their views on Santomean work ethics, which they found to be different from what they were used to at home. The reason for this difference, according to them, had to do with the Santomean *'leve-leve* lifestyle'.

Excerpt from a conversation with a Santomean farmer

Farmer:	*Leve-leve* is our tradition here. If Elisabeth asks me how the farming is going, I answer *leve-leve*. That is, *leve-leve* - everything is normal, everything is going well... That is, it's not too bad, it's not very good, it's going *leve-leve*.
Me:	Can you also say that you do something *leve-leve*?
Farmer:	That means that you're doing the work slowly. Not doing it too quickly, not trying too hard.
Me:	Is it a good or bad thing?
Farmer:	It is good. Because you're reconciling, you're not trying too hard. Too much effort can harm your health.

After the conversation with these two foreigners my curiosity to learn more about the concept from the perspectives of Santomeans had been ignited, and a question about the meaning of *leve-leve* was added to the interview guide.

From informal conversations and observations, as well as from the interviews with Santomean food producers, I learned that the meaning of *leve-leve* varies, depending on the context, and that there are more sides to it than what is usually captured in the mainstream variety of definitions, such as the one in Donald Burness' book on Santomean literature, where he defines the concept as a "Santomean expression suggesting a free and easy relaxed attitude" (Burness, 2005, p. 148).

Very curiously I found that *leve-leve* challenges the common perception that working slowly is synonymous with being lazy. One farmer said:

> It's like I said, it's [*leve-leve* is] about doing a piece of work carefully, without rushing, without laziness. This is what I think. (Santomean farmer, 2019)

Many other interview participants made similar points, emphasising how doing a piece of work at a slow pace, meant doing things more diligently and mindfully, which in the end would lead to a better outcome.

> If you want to do a thing well, it has to be *leve-leve*. Rushing doesn't work. A job done *leve-leve* is a well-done job. (Santomean farmer, 2019)

This was evoked in various ways quite consistently in the focus groups. For instance:

> If the job is carried out *leve-leve*, up to a certain point, this is a good thing; it is a job well done. Because if everything is done very fast, for example if I put up this house in a hurry, so that I can deliver it to the owner, I could forget to put in nail. (Santomean farmer, 2019)

And:

> *Leve-leve* is to go with the right pace. When we go *leve-leve*, we go in the right pace. Many things that we do in a hurry, don't work out. (Santomean farmer, 2019)

Another informant reflected upon *leve-leve* in relation to his trip in Portugal:

> *Leve-leve* is our motto. I think the *leve-leve* motto of our country is very good because I've been to Portugal, and I can't live there. I can't run, everything there is going so fast, people are always running. Our country is so calm, it's so good. Our *leve-leve* helps us. (Santomean farmer, 2019)

The same person, however, also added that:

> Sometimes it [*leve-leve*] makes us a little lazy. When we follow this *leve-leve* way, there is slowness and things don't progress much. (Santomean farmer, 2019)

This perspective of *leve-leve* being a hindrance to 'progress' and 'development' was a theme that also came up in some of the interviews, and it was also frequently evoked in conversations on political and economic matters that I observed during my time in São Tomé e Príncipe. For instance, people would blame the culture of *leve-leve* for all things wrong with São Tomé e Príncipe – from what they perceived as the laziness of Santomean politicians to the country's poor economy. This position is also echoed in the title of a recent documentary about São Tomé e Príncipe which is "*O Peso do Leve-Leve",* i.e. "The Weight of Leve-Leve".

From a growth critical perspective, however, in which the discourse of development and progress is usually associated with an expansionist and growth-oriented mindset (Escobar, 2011, 2015; Hornborg, 2001, 2009; Paulson, 2017, 2019), I would argue that the concept of *leve-leve* is highly relevant to examine closer.

And the more one examines, the more nuances of the concept can be discerned. For instance, to some of the interview participants, the concept also implied an ethos of solidarity:

> I think that the *leve-leve* of São Tomé is very supportive, we don't leave people behind. If someone comes along who has no one, we welcome them. For me, this is solidarity, and I consider it *leve-leve*. (Santomean farmer, 2019)

Others also noted that *leve-leve* implies an acknowledgement of interdependence and the importance of conviviality:

> For me, *leve-leve* is a way of getting along with the people here, not being ignorant, not insulting people, we are always together, walking together, playing. It doesn't mean going slowly, it's a way of always being together, getting along, to not insult people, to always stay friends, playing soccer and cards. For me, this is what the word *leve-leve* means. (Santomean farmer, 2019)

When asking my follow-up question about whether *leve-leve* is a negative or positive trait of Santomean culture, some people replied that it was negative, because it made people lazy and hindered development. However, to most of the interview participants *leve-leve* was a positive trait of Santomean culture. Yet others replied that *leve-leve* is neither particularly good nor particularly bad. One interview participant explained it like this:

> At this moment, we are *leve-leve*. There is no business, the business is at a standstill, there is no money to move around, it's *leve-leve*. Not hungry and not with a stuffed belly. (Santomean *palaje*, 2019)

In this sense the concept can also be interpreted as an expression of sufficiency and thereby carrying an additional post-growth characteristic.

Determining whether *leve-leve* has a positive or negative influence on Santomean society is, however, not the objective of this paper, nor is it my place to do.

However, coming from a critical development perspective it is tempting to draw parallels between *leve-leve* and scholarly work from the global South on decolonial visions and philosophies, such as *ubuntu, buen vivir* and other "alternatives to development" (Escobar, 2008, 2015; Kothari et al., 2014).

7.7 Conclusion: towards culturally embedded post-growth alternatives

This paper has presented a comparative analysis of the subsistence-oriented food economies in the Faroe Islands and São Tomé e Príncipe focusing on what we might conceptualise as post-growth characteristics, i.e. values, principles and meanings that contradict or are in tension with a growth-oriented logic.

The paper has highlighted several ways that 'ordinary' small-scale food producers in these two contexts are already prefiguring "quiet sustainabilities" (Smith and Jehlička, 2013) through socio-culturally embedded systems of non-monetary exchange (e.g. Santomean food swapping), reciprocity (e.g. the Faroese practice of *gerðabýti*), mutual aid (e.g. Santomean food producer associations), and other forms of solidarity and sharing. Although most of these practices are not detached from the commodified sphere of the economy (the tip of the economic iceberg), I argue that they still figure as evidence of humanity's capacity to subvert neoclassic market economic logics, favouring instead a moral economy and relational ethic of mutual care and collaboration.

Finally, the paper has also put a spotlight on the captivating Santomean concept of *leve-leve*, which from the position of a growth-critical scholar in the global North, holds much inspiration when it comes to critical reflection on the relation between human well-being and the potential benefits of 'slowing down the pace' of the economy.

8. Conclusion

This thesis has examined the subsistence-oriented food economies of two small island countries across the global North-South line in the context of post-growth research. Having now arrived at the concluding chapter of the thesis, I begin by revisiting the research questions, reflecting on how the four papers, presented in the thesis, each in their own way contribute to answering them. I then revisit the conundrum spelled out in the introduction and reflected upon in the methodology, concerning the tension between the ambition to support existing alternatives to growth and simultaneously contribute to the advancement of academic post-growth theorisation. I then outline some of the scholarly contributions made in the thesis, as well as some of its limitations. Finally, I conclude with a discussion on how noticing and highlighting the everyday diverse economies of 'ordinary people' may not only stimulate hope for a future beyond growth-centrism but may also provide inspiration to policymakers on how to design and implement post-growth policies designed to address the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution, as well as its inequalities.

8.1 Revisiting the research questions

> *What characterises the subsistence-oriented food economies in the Faroe Islands and São Tomé e Príncipe? What logics, principles and values do they consist of? And how might these inform transformative sustainability pathways?*

This thesis set out to address the three overarching and interrelated research questions quoted above. In this section, I will consolidate findings from the various chapters to reflect on the (often tentative and open) answers to these questions that can be proposed building on the thesis as a whole.

1. **What characterises the subsistence-oriented food economies in the Faroe Islands and São Tomé e Príncipe?**

To begin answering this first question, it makes sense to start from the findings presented in chapter seven, which offered a comparative analysis of the

subsistence-oriented food economies in the Faroe Islands and São Tomé e Príncipe. A key common characteristic that I noted across the two case studies was a solid and thriving moral food economy, consisting of non-monetary relations of exchange, mutualistic relations, and when in contact with the commodity-oriented sphere a commitment to fairness in pricing was also noted. In relation to this, another characteristic that was particularly elaborated upon in chapter four and six was the entanglement between 'alternative' and 'neoliberal' economic formations and practices. Thus, a key point which I returned to throughout the thesis was that subsistence-oriented food economies do not exist in isolation, unaffected by the commodified sphere of the economy – on the contrary. And in chapter six, where I zoomed more extensively in on the Faroese coastal fishing practice of *útróður*, I showed how this practice exemplifies a 'commodified / subsistence-oriented hybrid'. In chapter two I hinted at the same in the Santomean context, where I noted how an assemblage of international development programs and neoliberal food security rationalities are entangled in the subsistence-oriented sphere of the Santomean food economy.

2. What logics, principles and values do they consist of?

When it comes to the second question of what logics, principles and values these economies consist of, I noted that relations of reciprocity, sharing and solidarity are not uncommon. In chapter seven, I explained how I observed a prevalence of food swapping and other relations of non-monetary exchange in both contexts. In the Faroese context, I discussed various relations of mutual aid, notably the practice of *gerðabýti* (mutual service). I also noted other relations of mutualism, for instance with the Santomean *palaje* (food vendor) associations, where members contribute their earnings to the association, which then pays for the school fee of all the members' children.

As mentioned above, a crucial point made in the thesis is that although such culturally embedded practices are not completely detached from the commodified sphere of the economy (the tip of the economic iceberg in chapter seven), they oftentimes subvert neoclassic market economic logics of

individualism and competition, favouring a relational ethic of sharing and mutualism.

The practice of *Grindadráp*, i.e. Faroese pilot whaling, examined in chapter five, stands out as a relative outlier, as it is more exclusively subsistence-oriented and characterised by non-monetary relations of access and a sufficiency-oriented mindset. Here is thus a case of a food economic practice profoundly embedded in the history and culture of the place, based upon principles of mutual aid and an ethos of solidarity and equal distribution. In fact, it is interesting to note that historical statistics (dating back to the 16th century) show that the Faroese annual catch of pilot whales has remained at a sustainable average of 850 (Bloch et al., 1990; IUCN, 2015; Joensen, 2009). This indicates that the economic trend of Faroese pilot whaling the past five-hundred years can be characterised as 'steady state'. This can be explained by the fact that pilot whaling belongs to the subsistence-oriented sphere of the Faroese foodscape, as opposed to the commodity-oriented sphere. The contrast is remarkable when comparing with the Faroese fisheries, which primarily belong to the commodity-oriented sphere, where the annual catch size grew 600-fold in the span of just one century (Bogadóttir, 2020a).

3. **And how might these inform transformative sustainability pathways?**

When it comes to the third question concerning how such subsistence-oriented food practices and 'alternative economies' might inform transformative sustainability pathways along the line of post-growth thinking, the thesis has made several reflections and suggestions. In chapter five, building on Escobar's (2008) concept of "colonial difference" and Hornborg's (1996) contextualist stance to sustainability, I emphasised how putting the spotlight on embedded subsistence-oriented food economies, in this case Faroese pilot whaling (*grindadráp*), can help demystify what post-growth economics might look like. I have argued that such practices, which can be conceptualised as examples of "quiet sustainabilities"

(Smith and Jehlička, 2013) have the capacity to render transformative sustainability pathways more imaginable and culturally meaningful.

In chapter six, this argument was developed further into a tentative post-growth policy approach. This time, building on the food sovereignty framework in combination with post-growth theory. Here I argued that revitalising the non-monetary values and significance that fish historically has had to Faroese metabolism and survival, and which can still be recognised in the practice of *útróður*, could make the Faroese social metabolism more sustainable. The argument here is that by providing the inhabitants of the Faroe Islands with access to a local protein-rich and culturally meaningful food source, this would diminish Faroese dependence on global food imports and simultaneously enhance food sovereignty.

Returning to chapter seven where I sought to show how widespread and diverse the subsistence-oriented sphere of the foodscapes in the Faroe Islands and São Tomé e Príncipe is, I also highlighted the Santomean concept and philosophy of *leve-leve*, which resonates well with the literature and debates concerning the potential complementarity between post-growth agendas in the global North and pluriversal visions and philosophies in the global South (Dengler and Seebacher, 2019; Escobar, 2015, 2018; Kothari et al., 2014; Paulson, 2019). Here, I noted how *leve-leve* provides much food for thought when it comes to critical reflections on the relation between human well-being and the neoliberal obsession with efficiency and 'saving time'. I argue that in the Faroese context and in other global North contexts, where post-growth scholars and policymakers are theorising and thinking about policies for transformative sustainability pathways, the meaning and values embedded in the Santomean concept of *leve-leve* constitute noteworthy sources of inspiration for decolonising the Western colonialist growth-centric imaginary.

8.2 Revisiting the methodological conundrum

In the introduction to this thesis, I also articulated a methodological conundrum, which has influenced some of the decisions that I took in my doctoral journey. I asked:

> *How can growth-critical participatory research support existing alternatives in the field and simultaneously contribute to the advancement of academic post-growth theorisation?*

This conundrum also deserves a conclusive reflection, as it captures the ambition of my doctoral research project, which was: 1) a dedication to a truly engaged research process which would contribute practically to ongoing initiatives and praxis of food producers and other social actors, while 2) simultaneously contributing academically to a transformative research agenda.

In practical terms, this led me to engage with ongoing local food initiatives and practices in the two contexts. In the Faroe Islands this resulted in a collaboration with two food activists, with which I conducted interviews with food producers from all over the country and organised several public events on issues of relevance to the Faroese subsistence-oriented food context. In São Tomé e Príncipe I collaborated with the Santomean federation of small-scale food producers with which I visited several food producer communities all around the country (also facilitating focus groups) and which culminated with a workshop on how to solve very hands-on challenges faced by Santomean farmers in their agricultural work.

Returning to the desk, I eventually found myself consumed by the second part of my project ambition, i.e. “to contribute to the advancement of academic post-growth theorisation”. Sitting with the data confronted and enthused me with more abstract conceptual ponderings in relation to the empirical realities I had engaged with. It now felt relevant and important to elaborate on how the food economic dynamics I had learned about in the two contexts are in effect prefiguring alternatives to the growth economy.

As described in the methodological epilogue of my methodology chapter (section 3.7), I decided to bifurcate the dissemination of my research project into: 1) on the one hand the activities being carried out in the field with my research partners and 2) on the other hand the academic dissemination in the form of the thesis. This has helped me navigate the methodological conundrum that has characterised my process – although I am not sure I have resolved it.

In the methodology chapter, I described how there was also a pragmatic dimension to this decision, as involving my research partners in the data analysis was not feasible within the time constraints of writing a PhD thesis. However, in the nearest future I plan to involve them in a second round of data analysis where the focus will be based upon what they find most important and relevant to discuss and bring to light.

8.3 Key contributions

A key contribution of this thesis is that it explores familiar conceptual themes in the food sovereignty and post-growth literature through the **examination of two unique small island contexts that diverge from more textbook cases of food sovereignty and alternative economies**. In neither of the two contexts, for instance, is there any *Via Campesina*, Friends of the Earth, Oxfam or other organisations affiliated with the platforms of the food sovereignty movement. So, while the conceptual debates explored in the thesis are familiar, this thesis has highlighted some new elements and nuances to those debates that are often overlooked in the literature.

For instance, with the practice of *útróður*, explored in chapter six, I demonstrated how a deep-rooted and embedded food practice, after coming into contact with the disembedding forces of capitalist commodification in the 20th century, today figures as a commodified/subsistence-oriented food economic hybrid. Similarly, when carrying out a collective analysis of the Faroese foodscape with my research partners, described in chapter four, we found that such hybrid food-system configurations appear to be more the norm than the exception in the Faroese context.

Another contribution, also relating to chapter six is **my (tentative) conceptualisation of a contextually grounded post-growth food-policy approach**. While this chapter focuses on the Faroese context, and how the practice of *útróður* might inspire transformative policymaking in this context, I suggest that the approach can also be applied elsewhere (that is drawing food policy inspiration from the non-monetary values in the embedded and subsistence-oriented sphere of the food economy).

An additional contribution of my work relates to the **methodology of the research project**, which in the Faroese case had a strong action component. In chapter three of the thesis, I describe a fraction of the methodological process that generated this thesis, which arguably was more complex than many other participatory projects on food sovereignty. One reason being, that in both contexts my partners were not involved in any food sovereignty platforms, nor (as I mentioned above) are there any organisations in these two contexts that are part of such international platforms or movements.[77] This required of me and my research partners to employ a situated approach, almost in the sense of a grounded theory approach. In chapter four, I describe in part how this process unfolded in the first phase of my research in the Faroe Islands, where we sought to categorise Faroese food practices according to a food sovereignty analytics, and how this resulted in a confusion on binaries and almost an abandonment of this conceptual lens. This dynamic process – where together with my research partners I examined the Faroese food context, its actors and its paradoxes – has if anything illuminated the immense value of adhering to a participatory research process for the advancement of knowledge.

Perhaps most crucially, I would argue that this thesis contributes to the debates that have evolved from Susan Paulson and Lisa Gezon's collaborative research programme of **generating empirical evidence of non-dominant lifeways and habitual practices that challenge the narrative of *homo economicus***, and

[77] Slow Food is the only international organisation which has a representation in both the Faroe Islands and in São Tomé e Príncipe. However, its influence and visibility in both contexts is marginal.

which instead show that across differences in culture, geographies and temporalities human communities are well capable and even inclined to organise themselves according to values and characteristics that are compatible with post-growth economics (Paulson, 2017, 2019). While all the four papers in the thesis body contribute to this conversation, it was especially in chapter seven that I demonstrated how, despite enormous differences between the two contexts, a relational subsistence-oriented ethic is widespread in the local food systems of both São Tomé e Príncipe and the Faroe Islands.

However, a note must be made about the warning of critical anthropologists against the tendency to essentialise and romanticise traditional/indigenous/local cultural systems and practices, as these can certainly also be imbued with power dynamics, inequalities and exploitative relationships.

While a limitation of this thesis is arguably that I do not engage much with these critical perspectives of alternatives with the consequence that my analysis and argument may to some be considered naïve or too idealistic, this was in many ways deliberate, since a core aim of this thesis was to contribute to a constructive cultivation of hope for a more just and sustainable future.

8.4 Hopeful reflections

I opened this thesis with a quote by bell hooks, which is worth restating at this point as I am about to close the thesis:

> When we only name the problem, when we state complaint without a constructive focus or resolution, we take hope away. In this way critique can become merely an expression of profound cynicism, which then works to sustain dominator culture. (hooks, 2003, p. xiv)

My decision to embark on this project for my doctoral studies was motivated by a profound desire to contribute with knowledge and perspectives that can support pathways towards a more just and sustainable future. Inspired by the work of other scholars dedicated to making visible the diversity of post-growth compatible practices, lifeways, philosophies and realities that already exist, I chose to explore

how these manifest in the local food systems of the Faroe Islands and São Tomé e Príncipe.

In the thesis I have sought to navigate the balance and tension between *critique* of 'the commodity-oriented sphere of the economy' and *affirmation* of 'the subsistence-oriented sphere of the economy', while led by a clear and conscious orientation towards affirmation. And at the same time, a key takeaway from this thesis is that such clear-cut binary distinctions between for instance a 'global/capitalist food system' and a 'local/alternative food system' (which is so pervasive in much critical food studies literature) poorly reflect the much more nuanced and hybrid food system configurations that characterise the two contexts examined in this thesis. As other scholars have proposed, acknowledging the limitation of such binary distinctions and instead paying attention to the diverse economies that dissolve the capitalist-noncapitalist binary (Gibson-Graham 1996/2006) is key for cultivating hope and for empowering pluriversal visions beyond developmentalism and growth-centrism (Escobar 2008/2015).

However, I have not shied away from an analytical usage of binary framings, since there are situations where these may be appropriate and useful. For instance, when it comes to delineating the contrasting meanings and forms of valuation in export-oriented food production versus subsistence-oriented food production. This has for instance been vital for strengthening the visibility of already existing alternatives to growth, in the form of moral economies, relations of mutualism, sharing and solidarity that persist and thrive in the Faroese and Santomean foodscapes. Far from being marginal curiosities, I argue that in their respective contexts these diverse economic practices represent widespread phenomena and constitute 'seeds' for sustainability pathways beyond the hegemony of growth and neoliberal developmentalism.

However, to mobilise these seeds for transformation, it is crucial to reemphasise that these practices do not emerge as pristine alternatives isolated from the commodity-oriented sphere and neoliberal influence but instead evolve as hybrid formations which adapt and endure within – and sometimes against – dominant

market logics. I argue that noticing and engaging with this hybridity (rather than seeking to isolate and fit certain practices into idealised models of 'alternative economies') is key for generating hope and must be part of how we look into future possibility. Reiterating the proposition made in chapter six, I argue that staying with the 'tension in meaning' that such hybridity represents may indeed constitute a constructive point from where to articulate and design locally meaningful post-growth policies.

Islands, often portrayed as vulnerable peripheries, thus emerge in this thesis as laboratories of economic experimentation where sustainability pathways are being forged in real time. Nurturing these seeds for transformation – through policy support, community empowerment, and scholarly attention – is not merely an act of cultural preservation but a pragmatic strategy for building more resilient, equitable, and ecologically grounded futures.

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Appendices

A. PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEETS
B. CONSENT FORMS
C. CONSENT TO DISCLOSURE OF FULL NAME FORMS
D. DEBRIEF SHEETS
E. CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT FOR RESEARCH PARTNERS
F. CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT FOR TRANSCRIBER

A. Participant information sheets

Folha de Informação ao Participante

Gostaria de convidá-lo a participar da primeira fase do meu projeto de doutorado, que trata das perspectivas e mudanças nas políticas alimentares das sociedades insulares. O projeto é intitulado "Caminhos em bifurcação? Pesquisa participativa (ativa) sobre perspectivas e mudanças alimentares-políticas nas Ilhas Faroé e São Tomé e Princípe".

Antes de decidir se deseja ou não participar, por favor, tome tempo para ler as informações a seguir com atenção.

Objetivo

O objetivo deste projeto de pesquisa é analisar e comparar desafios e oportunidades de soberania alimentar nas Ilhas Faroé e em São Tomé e Princípe levando em consideração desafios ambientais globais e dinâmicas político-econômicas.

O objetivo desta primeira fase do projeto é analisar:

- As condições e necessidades dos produtores de alimentos em São Tomé e Princípe (por exemplo, camponeses e pescadores).
- As visões futuras de diferentes atores em São Tomé e Princípe em relação à provisão de alimentos.

Nesta primeira fase do projeto, realizarei entrevistas com produtores de alimentos em São Tomé e Princípe, bem como com outros atores que trabalhem com questões políticas de alimentos. Além disso, também estou envolvida em trabalhos etnográficos, por exemplo, observando e participando de atividades e eventos relacionados à alimentação em São Tomé e Princípe.

A primeira fase do projeto terminará em 01 de março de 2018 e será a base para a segunda fase do projeto em São Tomé e Princípe, que começará em janeiro de 2019. Como já mencionado, um estudo semelhante também está sendo realizado nas ilhas Faroe.

Participação

A participação nesta primeira fase do projeto consiste em uma entrevista (45-90 minutos), que será gravada e depois transcrita.

Não há benefícios a serem obtidos para participar da primeira fase deste estudo. No entanto, as idéias e impressões que você compartilhar na entrevista influenciarão o tema e o projeto de pesquisa na sua segunda fase que começa em janeiro de 2019.

Se você mudar de ideia

Sua participação é voluntária e você pode retirar-se antes, durante e até duas semanas após a entrevista ter ocorrido. Você pode se retirar do projeto entrando em contato comigo em e.s.olsen@lancaster.ac.uk.

Eu destruirei todos os dados que você compartilhou comigo, ou seja, os dados brutos (gravações e transcrições), bem como qualquer informação, visão, pensamento, etc., que você compartilhou na entrevista. No entanto, se você concordar em participar de uma entrevista em grupo, não será possível retirar-se após a entrevista ter ocorrido.

Armazenamento de dados

Além de mim, as únicas outras pessoas que terão acesso aos dados brutos serão meu tradutor, um assistente de pesquisa que irá transcrever as entrevistas, e meus dois orientadores de doutoramento. Os seus dados serão armazenados em arquivos criptografados (ou seja, ninguém além de mim, a

pesquisadora, poderá acessá-los). Os dados brutos serão destruídos dez anos após o término do projeto de pesquisa.

Proteção de identidade

Vou proteger sua identidade através do uso de pseudônimos e minimizando a inclusão de informações (como idade, cidade natal, etc.) que possam revelar sua identidade. Embora eu tome essas medidas e faça o meu melhor para não divulgar sua identidade, não conseguirei prometer 100% de anonimato. Isso tem a ver com a pequena dimensão territorial de São Tomé e Princípe, o que suscita dificuldades particulares quando se trata de anonimizar.

Observe que, se você participar como representante de uma organização ou instituição, será mais fácil detectar sua identidade. Observe também que, em alguns casos, pode ser preferível não ocultar a identidade do participante da pesquisa. Neste caso, o participante será convidado a assinar um formulário de consentimento separado intitulado "Consentimento para a divulgação do nome completo".

Para que os dados e os resultados da pesquisa serão utilizados?

Os dados que você me forneceu serão usados para:

- Conceber a segunda fase do projeto de pesquisa em São Tomé e Princípe.
- Analisar e comparar as visões político-alimentares dos habitantes de São Tomé e Princípe.
- Comparar as questões políticas de alimentos em São Tomé e Princípe com as Ilhas Faroé.

Os resultados do estudo de pesquisa serão utilizados para:

- Escrever a minha dissertação de doutorado sobre visões e mudanças político-alimentares nas sociedades insulares.
- Realizar apresentações orais em conferências acadêmicas e eventos públicos.
- Informar e assessorar os formuladores de políticas nacionais e internacionais sobre assuntos políticos alimentares.
- Informar jornalistas e correspondentes de mídia sobre assuntos político-alimentares.

Quem revisou o projeto?

Este projeto de pesquisa foi revisado e aprovado pelo Comitê de Ética em Pesquisa da Faculdade de Ciências e Tecnologia da Universidade de Lancaster (FSTREC).

O projeto é financiado pelo Lancaster Environment Center e o Faroese Research Council.

Contato

Se você tiver dúvidas a respeito de sua participação neste estudo, é possível entrar em contato comigo:

Elisabeth Skarðhamar Olsen
e.s.olsen@lancaster.ac.uk
Telefone: +44 (0) 7438802657

Como alternativa, você também pode entrar em contato com um dos meus orientadores:

Dr. Giovanni Bettini
Email: g.bettini@lancaster.ac.uk
Telefone: +44 (0)1524 593974

Dr. Rebecca Whittle
Email: r.whittle@lancaster.ac.uk
Telefone: +44 (0)1524 51026

Se você tiver alguma dúvida ou reclamação que você deseja discutir com uma pessoa que não está diretamente envolvida na pesquisa, você também pode entrar em contato com o diretor do Lancaster Environment Center:

Dr. Philip Barker
Email: p.barker@lancaster.ac.uk
Telefone: +44 (0) 1524 510262

Obrigada por considerar participar deste estudo!

Heystið 2019

Kunningarskriv til luttakarar

Tygum eru boðin at luttaka í eini granskingarverkætlan um matpolitiskar hugsjónir og broytingar i oyggjasamfeløgum, sum hevur heitið "Vegamót? Luttakandi og virkin gransking av matpolitiskum hugsjónum og dynamikkum í Føroyum og í São Tomé og Príncipe".

Hetta snýr seg um ph.d. verkætlanina hjá Elisabeth Skarðhamar Olsen við Lancaster University i Stóra Bretlandi. Talan er um "participatory research" (luttakandi gransking), og tískil verður granskingin framd í samstarvi við Slow Food Føroyar og Føroya Náttúru og Umhvørvisfelag (FNU).

Áðrenn tygum gera av, um tygum vilja luttaka, verða tygum vinaliga biðin um at lesa hetta kunningarskriv.

Endamál

Endamálið við granskingarverkætlanini er at greina og samanbera avbjóðingar og møguleikar fyri burðardyggum matsjálvbjargni í ávikavist Føroyum og í São Tomé og Príncipe í kontekstinum av teimum sosialu og umhvørvisligu avbjóðingunum á altjóða matpolitiska økinum.

Arbeiðssetningurin er at kanna:

- korini hjá føroyingum, ið fáast við matrávøruframleiðslu, t.d. landbúnað, fiskiskap, urtagarðsvirksemi, fuglaveiðu.
- tær ymisku "búskaparskipanirnar", ið eyðkenna býti/handil av mati í Føroyum (t.d. innan seyðhald, grind)
- framtíðarhugsanirnar, sum ymiskir aktørar í føroyska samfelagnum hava um matpolitisk viðurskifti.

Ætlanin er at gera samrøður við føroyskar matrávøruframleiðarar og aðrar samfelagsaktørar, ið arbeiða við matpolitiskum spurningum. Harumframt verður eisini gjørt etnografiskt arbeiði, so sum eyðgleiðingar og egnar hugleiðingar av matmentanarligum og matpolitiskum virksemi í Føroyum. Ein líknandi granskingarverkætlan verður eisini gjørd í São Tomé og Príncipe.

Luttøka í granskingini

Luttøka í verkætlanini fevnir um eina samrøða ella eina bólkasamrøðu (45-90 minuttir), sum verður tikin upp á band og síðan niðurskrivað.

Eingin beinleiðis ágóði er av at luttaka í verkætlanini, men ætlanin er at nýta úrslitini, sum grundarlag fyri eini frágreiðing, sum Føroya Náttúru og Umhvørvisfelag (FNU) og Slow Food Føroyar kunnu nýta í sínum virksemi og sum kann latast politisku myndugleikunum. Eisini verður arbeitt fram ímóti at skipa fyri eini stórari verkstovu fyri matframleiðarar í Føroyum.

Um tygum broyta meining

Tygara luttøka er sjálvboðin, og tygum kunnu altíð taka tygum burturúr verkætlanini - áðrenn, undir og upp til tvær vikur eftir, at samrøðan er farin fram. Tygum kunnu taka tygum burtur úr værkætlanini við at seta tygum í samband við Elisabeth á e.s.olsen@lancaster.ac.uk ella umvegis telefon á +298 581981. So verður øll dátan, sum tygum hava latið burturbeind, tvs. rádátan (upptøkur og niðurskrivingar) og annars allar upplýsingar, sjónarmið, tankar, osfr. sum tygum hava borið fram í samrøðuni. Gevið gætur, at tá talan er um eina bólkasamrøðu, ber ikki til at taka seg burturúr verkætlanini eftir, at samrøðan er farin fram.

Dátugoymsla

Einans Elisabeth (verkætlanarleiðari), Sunniva G. Mortensen (umboð fyri Slow Food Føroyar), Selma Dahl Erol (umboð fyri FNU) og ph.d. vegleiðararnir hjá Elisabeth fara at hava atgongd til rádátuna, ið verður goymd á enkrypteraðum fílum (tvs. at eingin annar enn vit fara at hava beinleiðis atgongd til fílurnar). Tíggju ár eftir, at granskingarverkætlanin er liðug, verður rádátan burturbeind.

Verja av samleika

Tygum verða dulnevnd/ur í øllum tilfari, har dátan verður nýtt. Vit fara harumframt at gera alt fyri at tryggja, at upplýsingar, sum kunnu avdúka tygara samleika, ikki koma við. Hóast vit fara at taka hesi atlit og gera okkara ítasta fyri, at tygara samleiki ikki verður avdúkaður, so kunnu vit ikki lova anonymitet (navnloysi). Hetta kemst av, at anonymisering er serliga avbjóðandi í einum so lítlum samfelag sum í Føroyum.

Sigast skal, at um tygum luttaka sum umboð fyri eitt felag ella ein stovn, verður tað lættari at kenna tygara samleika aftur, hóast tygum eru dulnevnd/ur. Ávísar umstøður kunnu eisini gera, at tað er ynskiligt *ikki* at dylja samleikan hjá luttakaranum í verkætlanini. Í hesum føri undirskrivar luttakarin serstakt "Samtykki til avdúkan av samleika og navni".

Hvat fara dátan og granskingarúrslitini at verða nýtt til?

Dátan, ið tygum hava veitt, verður nýtt til:

- greining og samanbering av matpolitiskum hugsjónum ímillum føroyingar.
- greining og samanbering av korunum hjá føroyingum, ið fáast við matrávøruframleiðslu.
- greining og samanbering av býti/handli av matvørum í Føroyum.
- samanbering av matpolitiskum viðurskiftum í Føroyum við matpolitisk viðurskifti í Sao Tome og Principe.

Úrslitini av granskingarverkætlanini fara at verða nýtt til:

- munnligar framløgur á vísindaligum ráðstevnum og almennum tiltøkum.
- at skriva ph.d. ritgerðina (í greinaformati) hjá Elisabeth Skarðhamar Olsen.
- átøk, lobby virksemi og annað arbeiði hjá FNU og Slow Food Føroyar.

Elisabeth Skarðhamar Olsen, FNU og Slow Food Føroyar ætla harumframt at nýta úrslitini til:

- at skriva eina almenna frágreiðing á føroyskum av úrslitunum.
- at upplýsa embætisfólk og politikkarar, ið gera politiskar leiðreglur, har úrslitini kunnu verða viðkomandi.
- at upplýsa miðlafólk, ið vísa áhuga fyri granskingini.

Hvør hevur fíggjað, mett um og góðkent verkætlanina?

Hendan granskingarverkætlanin er fíggjað av Lancaster Environment Centre og Granskingarráðnum. Hon er vorðin mett og góðkend av granskingaretisku nevndini við vísindaliga og tøknifrøðiliga fakultetið á Lancaster University (t.e. Faculty of Science and Technology Research Ethics Committee (FSTREC)). Verkætlanin er eisini fráboðað dátueftirlitinum.

Samband

Um tygum hava spurningar, ivamál ella eru ónøgd við eitthvørt í sambandi við luttøku í hesi granskingarverkætlan, eru tygum vælkomin at seta tygum í samband við:

Elisabeth Skarðhamar Olsen
Telefon: +298 581981 / +44(0)7438802657
e.s.olsen@lancaster.ac.uk

Eisini er møguligt at seta tygum í samband við ein av vegleiðarunum hjá Elisabeth:

Dr. Giovanni Bettini
g.bettini@lancaster.ac.uk
Telefon: +44 (0)1524 593974

Dr. Rebecca Whittle
r.whittle@lancaster.ac.uk
Telefon: +44 (0)1524 510261

Ynskja tygum at klaga um eitthvørt og/ella práta við ein persón, sum ikki er beinleiðis heftur at verkætlanini, eru tygum vælkomin at seta tygum í samband við leiðaran á Lancaster Environment Centre:

Prof. Philip Barker
p.barker@lancaster.ac.uk
Telefon: +44 (0)1524 510262

Takk fyri at tygum umhugsa luttøku í hesi granskingarverkætlan.

B. Consent forms

Lancaster University

FORMULÁRIO DE CONSENTIMENTO

Título do Projeto: Caminhos que se bifurcam? Pesquisa Participativa (Ativa) sobre mudanças e perspectivas político-alimentares das Ilhas Faroe e São Tomé e Príncipe

Nome da Pesquisadora: Elisabeth Skarðhamar Olsen **Email:** e.s.olsen@lancaster.ac.uk

Por gentileza, marque cada caixa abaixo:

- Eu confirmo que li e entendi as informações contidas na "Folha de Informação" com esclarecimentos sobre o estudo acima.
- Eu confirmo que tive a oportunidade de avaliar as informações prestadas e fazer perguntas, que foram respondidas satisfatoriamente pela pesquisadora.
- Eu entendo que minha participação é voluntária e que eu tenho a opção de desistir a qualquer momento antes, durante e até duas semanas após a realização da entrevista, sem qualquer explicação.
- Eu entendo que em caso de desistência da entrevista, os dados fornecidos durante a entrevista deverão ser removidos do estudo, contudo, se eu vir a desistir da entrevista em grupo (grupo focal) qualquer dado com o qual eu contribuí continuará a fazer parte do presente estudo.
- Em caso de participação em grupo focal, eu entendo que qualquer informação divulgada dentro do grupo permanece confidencial ao grupo, e eu me comprometo a não discutir a entrevista em grupo com, ou em frente a, qualquer pessoa que não esteja envolvida na entrevista, a menos que eu tenha uma permissão expressa das pessoas envolvidas no grupo focal.
- Eu entendo que qualquer informação prestada por mim pode ser usada em futuras publicações pela pesquisadora, tais como relatórios, artigos acadêmicos e apresentações, assim como qualquer publicação com o objetivo de informar decisores políticos, jornalistas e a imprensa.
- Eu entendo que meu nome não vai aparecer em qualquer relatório, artigo ou apresentação, e que a pesquisadora fará o seu melhor para não divulgar minha identidade. Contudo, eu entendo que é impossível para a pesquisadora prometer anonimidade tendo em vista o pequeno tamanho de São Tomé e Príncipe.
- Eu entendo que se eu sou entrevistado como um representante de uma organização ou instituição, eu entendo que o nome da minha organização ou instituição será público, mas que meu nome não será divulgado, a menos que eu tenha dado permissão através de um formulário de consentimento próprio.
- Eu entendo que as entrevistas e os grupos focais serão gravados e transcritos e que os dados serão protegidos, criptografados e armazenados de forma segura.
- Eu entendo que os dados serão mantidos de acordo com as orientações da Universidade por no máximo 10 anos depois do fim dos estudos. Depois deste período, os dados serão destruídos.
- Eu aceito fazer parte do presente estudo. ☐

Nome do Participante:_____ Email:_____

Data:_____ Assinatura:_____

Eu confirmo que foi dada a oportunidade ao participante de tirar suas dúvidas sobre o estudo, e todas as perguntas feitas pelo participante foram respondidas corretamente e da melhor maneira possível. Eu confirmo que o participante não foi coagido a dar consentimento, e que o consentimento foi dado espontaneamente e voluntariamente.

Assinatura da pesquisadora:_____**Data:** _____

Uma cópia deste formulário será dada ao participante e a original será mantida nos arquivos da pesquisadora na Universidade de Lancaster.

SAMTYKKIVÁTTAN

Heitið á verkætlanini: Vegamót? Luttakandi og virkin gransking av matpolitiskum hugsjónum og dynamikkum í Føroyum og í São Tomé og Príncipe

Verkætlanarleiðari: Elisabeth Skarðhamar Olsen, e.s.olsen@lancaster.ac.uk

Samstarvsgranskarir: Sunniva G. Mortensen, Slow Food Føroyar, sunnivagm@gmail.com

Selma Dahl Erol, Føroya Náttúru og Umhvørvsifelag (FNU), selmadahlerol@yahoo.dk

- Eg vátti, at hava lisið kunningarskrivið fyri omanfyrinevndu verkætlan.
- Eg vátti at hava havt møguleika at hugsa meg um og seta spurningar um verkætlanina, og at spurningarnir eru svaraðir nøktandi.
- Eg skilji, at mín luttøka í verkætlanini er sjálvboðin, og at eg altíð kann taka meg burtur úr henni uttan grundgeving – áðrenn, undir og upp til tvær vikur eftir, at samrøðan er farin fram. Um eg taki meg burturúr, verður øll dátan burturbeind.
- Eg skilji, at um eg luttaki í eini bólkasamrøðu, so ber ikki til at taka meg burturúr eftir, at samrøðan er farin fram.
- Eg skilji, at alt, sum verður borið fram í eini bólkasamrøðu, er í trúnaði, og eg lovi, at eg fari ikki at práta um hetta við nakran, ið ikki luttók í bólkasamrøðuni, uttan so at hinir luttakararnir geva týðiligt og greitt loyvi til tess.
- Eg skilji, at upplýsingarnar, sum eg beri fram, kunnu verða nýttar í almennum frágreiðingum, vísindaligum greinum og framløgum, eins og tær kunnu verða nýttar til at upplýsa embætisfólk, politikkarar og miðlafólk, ið vísa áhuga fyri granskingini.
- Eg skilji, at eg verði dulnevnd/ur í øllum tilfari, sum verður framleitt burtur úr dátuni, ið eg havi veitt verkætlanini, og at verkætlanarleiðarin fer at gera sítt ítasta fyri, at mín samleiki ikki verður avdúkaður, men at tað ikki ber til at lova anonymitet (navnloysi), av tí at føroyska samfelagið er so lítið.
- Eg skilji, at umboði eg eitt felag ella ein stovn, so verður navnið á felagnum ella stovninum alment. Tó verður mítt navn ikki alment, uttan so, at eg, við at skriva undir eina serstaka samtykkiváttan fyri hetta, havi givið loyvi til tess.
- Eg skilji, at samrøðan verður tikin upp og niðurskrivað, og at rádátan verður goymd á enkrypteraðum tólum.
- Eg skilji, at rádátan verður handfarin eftir leiðreglunum hjá Lancaster University og tískil burturbeind tíggju ár eftir at granskingarverkætlanin er liðug.
- Eg játti at luttaka í hesi granskingarverkætlan undir teimum treytum, sum eru lýstar omanfyri. ☐

Navn á luttakara: _____ Aldur: _____ Teldupostur: _____

Dagfesting: _____ Undirskrift: _____

Eg vátti, at luttakarin hevur fingið høvi at seta spurningar um verkætlanina, og at allir spurningar, sum luttakarin setti, vórðu rætt svaraðir eftir besta førimuni. Eg vátti, at luttakarin ikki er vorðin tvingaður at geva samtykki, men at samtykki er sjálvboðið og givið við fríum vilja.

Undirskrift hjá verkætlanarleiðara: _____ Dagfesting: _____

C. Consent to disclosure of full name forms

Título do Projeto: Caminhos que se bifurcam? Pesquisa Participativa (Ativa) sobre mudanças e perspectivas político-alimentares nas Ilhas Faroe e São Tomé e Príncipe

Nome da Pesquisadora: Elisabeth Skarðhamar Olsen
Email: e.s.olsen@lancaster.ac.uk

Consentimento para divulgação de nome completo

Pelo presente documento, eu consinto a divulgação do meu nome em relação a qualquer publicação ou participação pública no que diz respeito a minha participação no projeto de doutorado de Elisabeth Skarðhamar Olsen.

Nome do Participante:_____ Email:_____

Data:_____ Assinatura:_____

Eu confirmo que foi dada a oportunidade ao participante de tirar suas dúvidas sobre o estudo, e todas as perguntas feitas pelo participante foram respondidas corretamente e da melhor maneira possível. Eu confirmo que o participante não foi coagido a dar consentimento, e que o consentimento foi dado espontaneamente e voluntariamente.

Assinatura da pesquisadora:_____Data: _____

Uma cópia deste formulário será dada ao participante e a original será mantida nos arquivos da pesquisadora na Universidade de Lancaster.

Heitið á verkætlanini: Vegamót? Luttakandi og virkin gransking av matpolitiskum hugsjónum og dynamikkum í Føroyum og í São Tomé og Príncipe

Verkætlanarleiðari: Elisabeth Skarðhamar Olsen, e.s.olsen@lancaster.ac.uk

Samstarvsgranskarir: Sunniva G. Mortensen, Slow Food Føroyar, sunnivagm@gmail.com
Selma Dahl Erol, Føroya Náttúru og Umhvørvsifelag (FNU), selmadahlerol@yahoo.dk

SAMTYKKI TIL AVDÚKING AV SAMLEIKA OG NAVNI

Eg gevi hervið samtykki til, at mítt fulla navn verður alment avdúkað í samband við mína luttøku í granskingarverkætlanini "Vegamót? Luttakandi og virkin gransking av matpolitiskum hugsjónum og dynamikkum í Føroyum og í São Tomé og Príncipe".

Navn á luttakara: _____ Teldupostur: _____

Dagfesting: _____ Undirskrift: _____

Eg vátti, at luttakarin hevur fingið høvi at seta spurningar um verkætlanina, og at allir spurningar, sum luttakarin setti, vórðu rætt svaraðir eftir besta førimuni. Eg vátti, at luttakarin ikki er vorðin tvingaður at geva samtykki, men at samtykki er sjálvboðið og givið við fríum vilja.

Undirskrift hjá verkætlanarleiðara:_____Dagfesting:_____

D. Debrief sheets

Lancaster University

Folha de Apresentação

Obrigado por participar desta primeira fase do meu projeto de doutorado que investiga os desafios e oportunidades de soberania alimentar em São Tomé e Princípe e nas Ilhas Faroé, levando em consideração os desafios ambientais globais e a dinâmica político-econômica do século XXI.

O objetivo desta primeira fase do projeto em que você participou foi analisar as condições e necessidades dos produtores de alimentos em São Tomé e Princípe, bem como as visões políticas alimentares que os diversos atores de São Tomé e Princípe têm para o futuro.

Gostaria de lembrá-lo de que, a menos que você participe de uma entrevista em grupo, você pode retirar-se do estudo sem fornecer nenhuma explicação, até duas semanas após a entrevista ter ocorrido. Você pode fazê-lo contatando-me em e.s.olsen@lancaster.ac.uk.

A menos que você tenha consentido em usar seu nome real, assinando um formulário de consentimento separado, eu, como prometido antes da entrevista, farei o meu melhor para não divulgar sua identidade através da criação de um pseudônimo. No entanto, como eu também expliquei antes da entrevista, por causa da pequena dimensão territorial de São Tomé e Princípe, há desafios particulares quando se trata de garantir 100% de anonimato.

Se você participou de uma entrevista em grupo, peço que você não discuta as conversas realizadas durante a sessão na frente de ou com qualquer pessoa que não faça parte da sessão, a menos que você tenha permissão expressa da pessoa envolvida.

Se futuramente você tiver alguma dúvida sobre este estudo, você pode entrar em contato comigo mesma, Elisabeth Skarðhamar Olsen, via e-mail e.s.olsen@lancaster.ac.uk, ou pelo telefone +44 (0) 7438802657.

Alternativamente, você pode entrar em contato com um dos meus orientadores Dr. Giovanni Bettini (e-mail: g.bettini@lancaster.ac.uk; Tel: +44 (0) 1524 593974), ou Dr. Rebecca Whittle (e-mail: r. whittle@lancaster.ac.uk; Tel: +44 (0) 1524 510261).

Caso você deseje discutir quaisquer preocupações decorrentes da sua participação neste estudo com uma pessoa que não está diretamente envolvida na pesquisa, você também pode entrar em contato com o Diretor do Lancaster Environment Center, Prof. Philip Barker (e-mail: p. barker@lancaster.ac.uk; Tel: +44 (0) 1524 510262).

Novamente, obrigada pela sua participação nesta pesquisa.

Elisabeth Skarðhamar Olsen, Estudante de Doutorado.

Heystið 2019

Eftirkunningarskriv

Takk fyri tygara luttøku í granskingarverkætlanin "Vegamót? Luttakandi og virkin gransking av matpolitiskum hugsjónum og dynamikkum í Føroyum og í São Tomé og Príncipe", sum kannar avbjóðingar og møguleikar fyri matsjálvbjargni í ávíkavíst Føroyum og São Tome og Principe í kontekstinum av teimum soisalu og umhvørvisligu avbjóðingunum á altjóða matpolitiska økinum.

Endamálið við verkætlanini, sum tygum hava luttikið í, er at greina korini hjá føroyingum, ið fáast við matvøruframleiðslu, ymiskar býtis- og handilsskipanir sum eyðkenna føroyska matbúskapin og framtíðarhugsanirnar um matpolitisk viðurskifti, sum ymiskir aktørar í føroyska samfelagnum hava.

Sum áður nevnt, verða tygum dulnevnd/ur í øllum tilfari, har dátan, ið tygum hava veitt, verður nýtt, uttan so, at tygum hava undirskrivað eitt serstakt samtykkiskjal, har tygum týðiliga geva samtykki til at verða nevnd/ur við tygara veruliga navni.

Hóast tygum verða dulnevnd/ur, og vit fara at gera okkara ítasta fyri, at tygara samleiki ikki verður avdúkaður, so ber ikki til at lova anonymitet (navnloysi). Hetta kemst av, at anonymisering er serliga avbjóðandi í einum so lítlum samfelag sum í Føroyum.

Eg vil minna tygum á, at tygum altíð kunnu taka tygum burturúr verkætlanini uttan grundgeving upp til tvær vikur eftir, at samrøðan er farin fram (uttan so, at talan er um eina bólkasamrøðu). Hetta kunnu tygum gera við at seta tygum í samband við Elisabeth á e.s.olsen@lancaster.ac.uk ella á telefon +298 581981. Tygum eru eisini vælkomin at skriva ella ringja, um onkur spurningur um hesa verkætlanina stingur seg upp í framtíðini.

Eisini er møguligt at seta tygum í samband við ein av vegleiðarunum hjá Elisabeth: Dr. Giovanni Bettini (teldupostur: g.bettini@lancaster.ac.uk; Tlf: +44 (0)1524 593974) ella Dr. Rebecca Whittle (teldupostur: r.whittle@lancaster.ac.uk; Tlf: +44 (0)1524 510261).

Um tygum ynskja at tosa við onkran, ið ikki er beinleiðis heftur at verkætlanini um tygara luttøku, eru tygum vælkomin at seta tygum í samband við leiðaran á Lancaster Environment Centre Prof. Philip Barker (teldupostur: p.barker@lancaster.ac.uk; Tlf: +44 (0)1524 510262).

Enn einaferð takk fyri tína luttøku.

Elisabeth Skarðhamar Olsen, PhD. Lesandi og verkætlanarleiðari, e.s.olsen@lancaster.ac.uk

Sunniva G. Mortensen, Slow Food Føroyar, sunnivagm@gmail.com

Selma Dahl Erol, Føroya Náttúru og Umhvørvsifelag (FNU), selmadahlerol@yahoo.dk

E. Confidentiality agreement for research partners

Lancaster University

Confidentiality agreement for research partners on ethical procedures and data management

Project title:	Forking paths? Participatory research on food-political visions and dynamics in the Faroe Islands and in Sao Tomé e Príncipe
Principal investigator (PI):	Elisabeth Skarðhamar Olsen, e.s.olsen@lancaster.ac.uk

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In accordance with the *Faculty of Science and Technology Research Ethics Committee (FSTREC)* terms of reference, any personal information or any data that I obtain access to relating to the above-mentioned project may not be disclosed to any third party.

By signing this document:

- I confirm that I have read and understood the FST ethics application form related to the research project above (REF: FST19015).
- I confirm that I have had the chance to ask questions and receive clarifications on any doubts relating to the ethical procedures and data management plan outlined in the FST ethics form relating to this research project.
- I understand that by working in this research project as a partner researcher I commit to the ethical procedures as these are outlined in the FST ethics form relating to this research project.
- I understand that I may not pass on, divulge or discuss the contents of the data with any third party, nor disclose the identity of any participants involved in the study.
- I understand that by obtaining access to the raw data relating to this research project, I commit to the data management plan as it is outlined in the FST ethics form relating to this research project.
- I agree only to access the raw data relating to this research project stored on Box or OneDrive via my private password encrypted device.
- I agree to ensure that the material that I am given access to is held securely and can only be accessed via password. For instance, if I download a file from Box or OneDrive on my private device, I will password encrypt the location/folder on my private device where I will save it.
- I understand that ownership of the data is with the principal investigator, Elisabeth S. Olsen.
- I understand that I have permission to use the results from this project in relation to lobby work, campaign material, texts, etc. on behalf of the organisation that I represent until 30. September 2022, and will continue to adhere to the ethical procedures and data management plan outlined in the FST ethics form relating to the project.

Name of partner organisation:_____

Name of the representative for this organisation:_____

Email/phone:_____

Date:_____ Signature:_____

F. Confidentiality agreement for transcriber

Confidentiality agreement for transcriber

Project Title: Forking Paths? Participatory (Action) Research on Island Food Futures in the Global North and the Global South

Principal investigator: Elisabeth Skarðhamar Olsen, e.s.olsen@lancaster.ac.uk

In accordance with the *Faculty of Science and Technology Research Ethics Committee (FSTREC)* terms of reference, any personal information or any data that I obtain access to relating to the above-mentioned project may not be disclosed to any third party.

By signing this document:

- I agree not to pass on, divulge or discuss the contents of the material provided to me with any third parties
- I agree to ensure that the material that I am given access to is held securely and can only be accessed via password on my private device.
- I agree to destroy any files held by me that relate to the above-mentioned project at the earliest time possible after and in any case 1 week after the files have been securely passed on to the principal investigator.

Name of transcriber:_____

Email/phone:_____

Date:_____ Signature:_____