Critical Geopolitics of Foreign Involvement in Namibia: A Mixed Methods Approach

Meredith J. Deboom

University of Colorado at Boulder, meredith.deboom@gmail.com

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CRITICAL GEOPOLITICS OF FOREIGN INVOLVEMENT IN NAMIBIA: A MIXED METHODS APPROACH

by

MEREDITH JOY DEBOOM

B.A., University of Iowa, 2009

A thesis submitted to the
Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Colorado in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of
Masters of Arts
Department of Geography
2013
This thesis entitled:
Critical Geopolitics of Foreign Involvement in Namibia: A Mixed Methods Approach
written by Meredith Joy DeBoom
has been approved for the Department of Geography

_____________________________________

John O’Loughlin, Chair

_____________________________________

Joe Bryan, Committee Member

Date____________

The final copy of this thesis has been examined by the signatories, and we find that both the content and the form meet acceptable presentation standards of scholarly work in the above mentioned discipline.
Abstract

DeBoom, Meredith Joy (M.A., Geography)
Critical Geopolitics of Foreign Involvement in Namibia: A Mixed Methods Approach
Thesis directed by Professor John O’Loughlin

In May 2011, Namibia’s Minister of Mines and Energy issued a controversial new policy requiring that all future extraction licenses for “strategic” minerals be issued only to state-owned companies. The public debate over this policy reflects rising concerns in southern Africa over who should benefit from globally-significant resources. The goal of this thesis is to apply a critical geopolitics approach to create space for the consideration of Namibian perspectives on this topic, rather than relying on Western geopolitical and political discourses. Using a mixed methods approach, I analyze Namibians’ opinions on foreign involvement, particularly involvement in natural resource extraction, from three sources: China, South Africa, and the United States. First, through textual analysis of media sources, including editorials, letters to the editor, and SMSes, I examine the divergent portrayals of specific foreign investment actors. Second, through an analysis of Afrobarometer survey data, I identify the socioeconomic, demographic, and political factors that best predict Namibians’ perceptions of Chinese, South African, and American involvement. The findings of these two approaches provide details on two key aspects of foreign investment in Namibia: first, the ways in which the oft-cited discursive battle of “resource-grabbing” versus “investment opportunity” obscures the diversity of ways in which foreign investment is framed by Namibians, and second, the critical geopolitics, based on public opinion, that have singled out China in discussions of foreign investment in Africa, even in places like Namibia where it is far from the largest actor.
Acknowledgements

This thesis would not have been possible without the inspiration, challenge, and encouragement of countless Namibian colleagues and friends. While I cannot name most of them here, I do want to give special thanks to Buti, who first encouraged my interest in the politics of foreign investment in Namibia.

I have also benefitted significantly from the encouragement of a collection of truly outstanding academic mentors. At the University of Colorado-Boulder, I cannot thank John O’Loughlin, my advisor, enough for his thoughtful comments on countless drafts and his unflagging support throughout the writing process. Throughout my graduate education, Dr. O’Loughlin has always challenged me to do my best work. My committee members, Joe Bryan and Mara Goldman, offered invaluable feedback, support, and insight throughout the writing process, for which I am most grateful. At the University of Iowa, I must thank John Conybeare and Andy Willard, who gave me my first taste of independent research by supervising my undergraduate honors theses in Political Science and International Studies, respectively. I would also like to thank Tom Rice and Bob Kirby, my mentors at the University of Iowa who demonstrated the value of academic work in creating social change through their own outstanding scholarship.

Finally, I would like to thank my family and friends for their encouragement, support, and patience during this process. I would especially like to thank my parents, Kermit and Pam De Boom. As the first person in my family to graduate from college, I had some doubts on my way to earning an M.A. They never did. Mom and Dad, this one’s for you.
# Table of Contents

List of Tables.......................................................................................................................vii
List of Figures.........................................................................................................................viii
List of Abbreviations................................................................................................................ix

Chapter 1: Situating the Research Project: Resources, Development, and China.............1
   1.1. Introduction
   1.2. Foreign Investment in Africa: Africa(ns) Rising?
   1.3. Foreign Investment in Namibia
   1.4. Approaches and Methods
   1.5. Limitations of the Research Project
   1.6. Chapter Layout

Chapter 2: Resource Politics and Geopolitics in Sub-Saharan Africa: Boom or Curse, and for Whom?.................................................................18
   2.1. Examining the Resource “Curse”: Economics, Politics, and Development
   2.2. Environmental Determinism? Geographic Critiques of the Resource “Curse” and its Connection with Broader Socio-Politico-Economic Processes
   2.3. Foreign Involvement in Resource Extraction
   2.4. Final Thoughts: Substantial Gaps in the Literature

Chapter 3: The Historical Political Economy of Resource Extraction and Foreign Involvement in Namibia.............................................................................40
   3.1. Introduction
   3.2. Early History: Pre-Colonization to German and South African Colonialism
   3.3. The Political Economy of Independent Namibia
   3.4. Extraction in the Post-Independence Namibian Political Economy
   3.5. Extraction Projects, Actors, and Affiliations
   3.6. Contemporary Debates over Resource Law
   3.7. Conclusions

Chapter 4: Resource-Based Development? Media Portrayals of Foreign Involvement and the Namibian State.................................................................................75
   4.1. Framework and Methods
   4.2. The Namibian Media and Data Sources
   4.3. Portrayals of Foreign Investment in Resource Extraction
   4.4. Criticism of the GRN’s Management of Namibian Natural Resources
   4.5. Conclusions

Chapter 5: Namibian Resources for Namibians? A Critical Geopolitics Analysis of Portrayals of Foreign Involvement in the Namibian Media............................................104
   5.1. Portrayals of China
   5.2. Portrayals of South Africa
   5.3. Portrayals of the United States
   5.4. Conclusions
Chapter 6: A Quantitative Analysis of Namibians’ Opinions on Foreign Investment……142
6.1.Importance of a Country-Wide Approach
6.2.Data Source
6.3.Demographic Summary Statistics
6.4.Overall Opinions of Foreign Involvement
6.5.Summary Statistics for Non-Demographic Independent and Control Variables
6.6.Cross Tabulations
6.7.Logistic Regression Analysis
6.8.Conclusions

Chapter 7: The View From Namibia: Conclusions and Future Directions………………166
7.1. Significance of a Critical Geopolitics of Foreign Involvement from the Global South
7.2. What Do Namibians Really Think? Media Portrayals versus Public Opinion on China
7.3. The Resource Extraction-Foreign Involvement Connection
7.4. The State, Development, and Foreign Involvement
7.5. Future Research Directions

Works Cited………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………176

Appendices………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………190
Appendix 1: Minster of Mines and Energy Katali’s Announcement of the 2011 Strategic Minerals Policy
Appendix 2: Demographic and Political Data (Namibia Afrobarometer 2008)
Appendix 3: Afrobarometer Independent and Control Variable Questions
LIST OF TABLES

Table

1.3.1 Data on Interviewees in Namibia ................................................................. 16
3.3.1 Namibia’s Population by Ethnic Group (1989) ............................................ 47
3.3.2 2009 Legislative Election Results ................................................................. 53
3.4.1 Namibian Employment by Sector (2012) .................................................... 62
3.5.1 Partial List of Mining and Drilling Companies Active in Namibia (2012) .... 65
4.3.1 Examples of Negative Portrayals of Foreign Involvement ......................... 97
4.3.2 Examples of Positive Portrayals of Foreign Involvement .......................... 99
4.4.1 Portrayals of the GRN’s Management of Namibian Resources ................. 101
5.1.1 Percentage Breakdown of Portrayals by Country ..................................... 105
5.2.1 Percentage Breakdown of Negative Portrayals of China by Theme ............. 108
5.2.2 Examples: Portrayals of China as Low Quality, Exploitative, and/or Unwelcome .... 110
5.2.3 Examples: Portrayals of China as Corrupt, Undemocratic, or Immoral ......... 113
5.2.4 Examples: Portrayals of China as Resource-Hungry ................................ 116
5.2.5 Examples: Portrayals of China as Colonial/Imperial .................................. 118
5.2.6 Examples: Portrayals of China as Invasion .................................................... 120
5.2.7 Examples: Portrayals of China as Partnership and/or South-South Solidarity .... 124
5.2.8 Examples: Support for China in the Media by Political Officials ............... 126
5.2.9 Examples: Portrayals of Chinese Involvement as Strengthening the Namibian Economy/Namibia’s Position in the Global Economic System ........................................ 128
5.3.1 Percentage Breakdown of Negative Portrayals of South Africa by Theme .... 131
5.3.2 Examples: Negative Portrayals of South Africa .......................................... 132
5.3.3 Examples: Positive Portrayals of South Africa .......................................... 134
5.4.1 Examples: Negative Portrayals of the U.S. .................................................. 137
5.4.2 Examples: Positive Portrayals of the U.S. .................................................. 139
6.4.1 Namibian Opinions of Foreign Involvement .............................................. 147
6.5.1 Non-Demographic Control and Independent Variables ............................. 149
6.6.1 Cross Tabulation of Namibians’ Opinions of Foreign Involvement and News Readership ......................................................................................... 152
6.6.2 Cross Tabulation of Namibians’ Opinions of Foreign Involvement and Perception of National Assembly Corruption .................................................. 153
6.6.3 Cross Tabulation of Namibians’ Opinions of Foreign Involvement and Support for Democracy .................................................................................................. 155
6.6.4 Cross Tabulation of Namibians’ Opinions of Foreign Involvement and Opinions on Foreign Investment Broadly .................................................................. 156
6.6.5 Cross Tabulation of Namibians’ Opinions of Foreign Involvement and Perceptions of the Influence of Foreign Investment on the GRN ........................................... 158
6.7.1 Logistic Regression Models of Namibians’ Opinions of Chinese, South African, and American Involvement ......................................................................................... 160
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure
1.2.1 Portrayals of Africa in Western Media, 1978-2013 ......................................................... 4
1.2.2 Chinese Trade with Africa and Chinese Investment Destinations ................................. 7
1.3.1 Namibia’s GDP Growth vs. Sub-Saharan Africa, 2003-2011 ........................................ 10
1.3.2 Aerial Views of the Chinese Embassy in Windhoek, Namibia ................................... 13
3.3.1 Population Density of Namibia, 2013 ........................................................................... 46
3.3.2 Map of Namibia’s Primary Linguistic Groups (2013) .................................................. 48
3.3.3 Namibia’s Administrative Regions ................................................................................. 49
3.4.1 Mining Employment in Namibia, 1990-2010 ................................................................. 61
7.4.1 Former Namibian President Sam Nujoma with Brazilian Samba Dancers at HRT
Launch Party ........................................................................................................ 173
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>Anti-Corruption Commission (Namibia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AEO</td>
<td>African Economic Outlook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANC</td>
<td>African National Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APP</td>
<td>All People’s Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARMZ</td>
<td>Atomredmetzoloto (Russia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEE</td>
<td>Black Economic Empowerment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRICS</td>
<td>Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGNPC</td>
<td>China Guangdong Nuclear Power Corp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNPC</td>
<td>China National Petroleum Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CoD</td>
<td>Congress of Democrats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CP</td>
<td>Communist Party (of Namibia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPN</td>
<td>Democratic Party of Namibia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DTA</td>
<td>Democratic Turnhalle Alliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EITI</td>
<td>Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPL</td>
<td>Exclusive Prospecting License</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FDI</td>
<td>Foreign direct investment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross domestic product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIS</td>
<td>Geographic Information Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRN</td>
<td>Government of the Republic of Namibia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDI</td>
<td>Human Development Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IHDI</td>
<td>Inequality-Adjusted Human Development Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPPR</td>
<td>Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) (Namibia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAC</td>
<td>Legal Assistance Center of Namibia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAG</td>
<td>Monitor Action Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDRL</td>
<td>Mineral Deposit Retention License</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ML</td>
<td>Mining License</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MME</td>
<td>Ministry of Mines and Energy (Namibia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>Member of (Namibian) Parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPLA</td>
<td>Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NS</td>
<td>Namibian Dollar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBC</td>
<td>Namibian Broadcasting Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDF</td>
<td>Namibian Defense Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDMC</td>
<td>Namibia Democratic Movement for Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDP</td>
<td>National Democratic party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEPL</td>
<td>Non-Exclusive Prospecting License</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NLF</td>
<td>Namibia Liquid Fuel</td>
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<tr>
<td>NUDO</td>
<td>National Unity Democratic Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>OSISA</td>
<td>Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLAN</td>
<td>People’s Liberation Army of Namibia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RDP</td>
<td>Rally for Democracy and Progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RL</td>
<td>Reconnaissance License (mining)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP</td>
<td>Republican Party (of Namibia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSA</td>
<td>Republic of South Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SADC</td>
<td>Southern African Development Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SADF</td>
<td>South African Defense Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMP</td>
<td>Strategic Minerals Policy of 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMS</td>
<td>Short message service (text message)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPEC</td>
<td>SWAPO Party Elders’ Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPYL</td>
<td>SWAPO Party Youth League</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWAC</td>
<td>South West Africa Company, Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWANU</td>
<td>South West Africa National Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWAPO</td>
<td>South West Africa People’s Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UDF</td>
<td>United Democratic Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNEP</td>
<td>United Nations Environment Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNITA</td>
<td>National Union for the Total Independence of Angola</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VTB</td>
<td>Vneshtorgbank (Russia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WNA</td>
<td>World Nuclear Association</td>
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</table>
Chapter 1: Situating the Research Project: Resources, Development, and China

1.1. Introduction

In May 2011, Namibia’s Minister of Mines and Energy issued a new policy requiring that all future extraction licenses for “strategic” minerals be issued only to state-owned companies. The resulting debate reflects rising concerns in Namibia over who should benefit from globally-significant resources. These concerns have escalated in a time of rising global commodity prices and increasing levels of foreign investment, particularly from China. Yet, processes such as foreign investment are intensely localized and play out differently in different locations and for different people. After reviewing the role of foreign involvement in Africa and Namibia and analyzing the relevant literatures on resource extraction and foreign involvement in Africa, this thesis applies a mixed-methods approach to address the following research questions regarding foreign involvement in Namibia (listed by chapter):

- **Chapter 3:** How has the Namibian state negotiated the tensions between encouraging economic growth through foreign investment in mineral extraction and addressing the social problems (such as inequality) inherent in that extraction? How do the actions of the Namibian state (and the reactions of Namibians) reflect Namibia’s historical political economic context?

- **Chapter 4:** How are Namibians interpreting foreign involvement and the actions of the state in the Namibian media?

- **Chapter 5:** How are Namibians interpreting the involvement of China, the United States, and South Africa in Namibia in the Namibian media?

- **Chapter 6:** Which factors best predict Namibians’ opinions on the foreign involvement of China, the United States, and South Africa? Do Namibians’ opinions as collected in public opinion data differ from Namibians opinions as evidenced in the Namibian media?

With its debate over resource ownership, reliance on mineral extraction and high rates of foreign investment, unemployment, and inequality, Namibia is an important case study to better understand the critical geopolitics and politics of foreign investment, particularly in resource
extraction. While this thesis is not a traditional discourse analysis or genealogy, nor does it seek to place Namibians’ experiences within a societal conception of “Africa” (see Ferguson 2006) or within an overarching theoretical framework (e.g. political economy or governmentality), it follows the efforts of scholars such as Sharp (2011) and Power and Mohan (2010) to create space for the consideration of Namibian perspectives on foreign involvement.

There are four primary findings of this analysis. First, based upon a review of the literature, I expected that resource extraction would be Namibians’ primary concern with foreign involvement. Instead, while resource extraction was often the focus of concerns regarding foreign involvement broadly, it was rarely mentioned in discussions of American or South African involvement. Discussions of Chinese involvement mentioned resource extraction more regularly but still far less often than concerns regarding low quality products and Chinese competition with Namibian businesses. Second, many Namibians appeared to distinguish Chinese involvement from American and South African involvement. In addition, portrayals of Chinese involvement in the Namibian media were more diverse in terms of their focus and were more likely to be negative than portrayals of the U.S. or South Africa. For example, Chinese involvement was more likely than South African or American involvement to be described as corrupt, and concern regarding corruption was a statistically significant predictor of Namibians’ opinions of Chinese involvement. Finally, while the Namibian state has been largely successful in framing the debate over resource ownership as a binary issue of state versus corporate ownership (with the state assumed to represent Namibians), this framing has been challenged both by the close relationship between Namibian and Chinese elites and by many Namibians who see the China-Namibia relationship as benefitting only a small political-economic elite.
In the duration of this introduction, I briefly describe the broader context that impelled me to pursue this research: the dramatic increase in foreign investment in sub-Saharan Africa, particularly from China and particularly concentrated in resource extraction. This is followed by an overview of foreign involvement in Namibia, again with a focus on Chinese involvement. I conclude with a brief overview of the methods employed in this thesis and its limitations.

1.2 Foreign Investment in Africa: Africa(ns) Rising?

In the past five years, a variety of scholars and media sources have remarked on the high growth rates of many African states. *The Economist*, for example, has shifted from calling Africa a “hopeless continent” to “aspiring.” The International Monetary Fund (IMF) projects that sub-Saharan Africa’s growth rate will be 6.1% in 2014, well above the 4% global average (*The Economist* 2013). For the first time since the immediate post-colonial period, sub-Saharan Africa’s poverty rate declined, falling from 45.9% to 41.1% from 1999 to 2007 (United Nations 2007). In contrast to 1983-2003, when real income per person in sub-Saharan Africa decreased by 10%, real income per person has increased by over 30% since 2003 (*The Economist* 2013). This growth is frequently attributed to foreign investment, which has more than tripled since 2002 from $15 billion to more than $46 billion (*The Economist* 2013) and is projected to reach $54 billion by 2015 (as reported by Smith 2013 in *The Guardian*).

While some scholars have justly noted the ways in which continent-wide statistics hide as much as they reveal (see Kiely 2007), the statistics above have led the media to spill a great deal of ink exclaiming that “Africa is rising!” in publications such as *The Economist* and *Time*. Such portrayals of Africa as an essentialized space that can be categorized as “rising” or “falling” are of course nothing new; as shown in Figure 1.1 on the next page, these portrayals have been cycling through the media for several decades (although the proportion of “hopeful Africa”
stories to “hopeless Africa” stories appears to have been higher over the past three years than it has been at least since the 1980s). Yet, with the exception of the February 2013 special report in *The Economist*, these “rising”/“falling” pieces largely focus on the question of “Are things getting better in Africa” without considering the far more interesting and important follow-up question of “for whom?” This thesis revolves around just such a question: foreign investment is up in Namibia, and the economy is booming, but how are these changes, particularly the increase in foreign investment in Namibia’s mineral resources, being interpreted by Namibians? Do Namibians think foreign investment is improving their lives or do they see such investment as continued exploitation? As I demonstrate in this thesis, the picture is far more complicated than this binary of investment as exploitation/investment as empowerment might lead us to assume.

**Figure 1.2.1. Portrayals of Africa in Western Media, 1978-2013**

Source: Compiled by author using the digital media archives of each source above

Furthermore, despite (or interconnected with, as scholars such as Ferguson (2006) and Grant and Nijman (2004) would note) these high growth rates, much of Africa’s incorporation into the global economy to date has been through “adverse differential incorporation,” an incorporation dominated by neoliberalism that has improved the lives of a small elite while
leaving the vast majority of the population the same or worse off (Bush 2007, 3). While publications such as *The Economist* have argued that economic gains are beginning to improve the lives of ordinary Africans, the picture is complicated. As Carmody argues, “increasing interconnectedness between places (globalization) is a contradictory process, generating inclusion and exclusion simultaneously, rather than being a fixed end state (2010, 33).” Thus, globalization presents both opportunities and pitfalls for African states and Africans. While improved access to markets may improve the livelihood stability of some Africans (see Stiglitz 2006), it may worsen the situations of others (see Watts 1987, Ferguson 2006, and Carmody 2010). Likewise, while increasing foreign investment may leave some states awash in revenues, resources have proven in several cases to be more of curse than a blessing (see Chapter 2).

Continent-wide statistics, alongside discursive portrayals of “Africa” as a category, have been thoroughly critiqued by scholars such as Schroeder (2012) and Mudimbe (1988). Yet, as Ferguson (2006) argues, the notion of “Africa” is too important, particularly in terms of policy implications, to not engage with and, furthermore, some individuals do in fact understand themselves as “African.” I found many example of this in my textual analysis of the Namibian media; Namibians often framed foreign involvement, particularly from China, as an “African” rather than a “Namibian” issue. While the goal of this thesis is not to place Namibia within discursive constructions of “Africa,” and I certainly make no claims that this analysis is representative of “African” experiences, this work does engage with the ways in which Namibians’ opinions of foreign involvement are similar and different from broader discursive portrayals of that involvement (e.g. as neo-colonialism or as a development opportunity). The following sections provide necessary context regarding the ways in which Chinese involvement in Africa and Namibia, particularly as it relates to resource extraction, have been discussed.
Africa in the Commodity Boom

While the reasons behind globalization’s unevenness are beyond the scope of this thesis, two interconnected dynamics of the increasing integration of sub-Saharan Africa into the global economy are of importance: resource extraction and Chinese involvement. In 1998, Castells argued that Africa was at risk of becoming a “fourth world,” a region not even valued as a potential location for exploitation by international corporations. Today, however, African growth rates are rising, largely due to resource extraction. Sub-Saharan Africa has over 10% of the total global oil reserves, as well as at least 33% of the global reserves of cobalt and other base metals (Mbaye 2010). South Africa alone has 40% of the world’s total gold reserves. Rising commodity prices have both increased incentives for foreign companies to invest in resource extraction and increased revenues from extraction. While Angola and Nigeria are generally put forward as quintessential resource economies, the dependence of African economies on resource extraction is pervasive and growing; the World Bank (2013) estimates that only four or five African countries will not be involved in mineral extraction by 2020. Chapter 2 reviews the literature on resource dependency in sub-Saharan Africa (particularly the so-called “resource curse”).

Chinese Investment in Africa

The commodity boom described above is intertwined with the growth of the Chinese economy and the concomitant increasing Chinese demand for commodities. A significant proportion of research on foreign investment in Africa over the past decade, and particularly over the past five years, has focused on China (see Carmody and Owusu 2007; Keet 2008; Alden, Large, and Soares De Oliveira 2008; Brautigam 2009; Taylor 2009; Power and Mohan 2010; Power 2012). Although Chinese involvement in Africa is often portrayed as a “new” phenomenon (and it certainly has dramatically increased in the past 15 years, as demonstrated in
Figure 1.2.2 below), relationships between China and African states began over 50 years ago with the 1955 Bandung Conference (Larkin 1971).

**Figure 1.2.2 Chinese Trade with Africa and Chinese Investment Destinations**

Chinese investment has been cited as a key reason for Africa’s growth over the past five years, despite the global downturn (*The Economist* 2011b). Although Chinese investment in Africa still represents a smaller proportion of overall Chinese investment than the Americas, Asia, or the Middle East/North Africa (see Figure 1.2.2 above), Chinese trade with Africa increased five-fold between 2003 and 2010 (Mbaye 2010). Much of this investment has been in natural resources, particularly in countries such as Zambia, Angola, Sudan, and South Sudan.

Many scholars and activists have interpreted growing Chinese investment as an alternative to African reliance on Western aid and/or exploitation through Western neocolonialism. Bloom (forthcoming), for example, argues that China investment is the biggest
opportunity for Africa development since the last big push for Western aid and assistance, prior
to its decline in the 1980s. Brautigam (2009) makes a similar argument. Yet, Bloom also notes
that increasing Chinese influence must be considered as part of China’s push for “raw materials
and markets.” Other scholars, however, have portrayed Chinese involvement in Africa as simply
the new face of neo-colonialism (Sasman 2011c). In Chapter 2, I explore the diversity of
scholarly opinions on Chinese involvement in more detail.

African Perspectives

Despite the high level of attention paid to Chinese involvement in Africa in the media
and by Western governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), there has been
inadequate attention to African perspectives on Chinese involvement. This lack of African
perspectives is of course nothing new, as Africans have often been represented, rather than
engaged with, through Western eyes in the media as well as in scholarship. Approaches that
focus on the geopolitics of Chinese involvement from Western perspectives only, however, pay
inadequate attention to Africans’ interpretation of, negotiation of, resistance to, and collaboration
with such investment. As detailed further in both Chapter 2 and Chapter 4, social science
approaches, and critical geopolitics in particular, have to date paid inadequate attention to views
of geopolitics from the Global South, often treating Africans as mere victims of foreign
involvement who are *effected by* foreign involvement without likewise *affecting* that
involvement. At the same time, descriptions by Western states of Chinese involvement as
“exploiting poor Africans” demonstrate a convenient forgetting of the West’s own exploitation
of Africans. Kenyan scholar Binyavanga Wainaina keenly critiqued this tendency in a recent
biting satire piece in *The Guardian* titled “An Open Letter to Madonna.” An excerpt that is particularly relevant to my research interest is included below (italics added for emphasis).¹

“It's been well over a century since we met your people, and since then Africa's relationship with the western world has gone from strength to strength. Today, bad people, like those from China, Brazil and India are coming to Africa to bring colonialism back by buying our minerals and crops at good market prices and giving us cheapish loans for infrastructure…

Those countries, Brics as they are called, who think development is about bridges, roads, rail and electricity are not investing in democracy. Europe and the west, they have a simple way of developing Africa. They give money to do something called Institution-Building. They find activists who can start pro-democracy organisations with massive budgets. These civil society activists like to make social-change soap operas about a thing called Governance, which is very important for Africa because Africans are corrupt and illiterate and need a lot of gentle lectures from western institutions about how to unthreateningly and firmly and nicely talk to the grassroots and show them the best way to choose their leaders. African people, of course, cannot make good decisions.” (Wainaina 2013)

Although Wainaina’s piece is satire, his point, and its importance for scholarship on foreign involvement in Africa, is far from a joke. This thesis uses the tools of critical geopolitics to explicitly consider Namibian voices in discussions of foreign involvement, *without* trying to fit those voices into a particular theoretical framework such as political economy or governmentality. My goal is to *engage with* Namibian voices rather than to represent them, including Namibian voices without essentializing them. Incorporating Namibians’ writing into my thesis does not eliminate the power dynamics inherent in my writing about Namibian opinions. Still, this thesis is an important first step toward engaging with the diversity of ways in which Namibians are negotiating with foreign involvement and resource extraction.

### 1.3. Foreign Investment in Namibia

Upon independence, the Government of the Republic of Namibian (GRN) embarked upon a period of economic liberalization in which, as described more broadly by Emel, Huber,

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¹ Thank you to Joe Bryan for calling my attention to this piece.
and Makene, it “actively constructed a set of legal, fiscal, and political incentives to attract foreign direct investment (2011, 71, emphasis in original).” As discussed in Chapter 3, the GRN has pursued foreign investment as the best possible route to spur economic growth. Furthermore, state officials have argued that increasing economic growth is the best way to mitigate Namibia’s high levels of inequality and poverty. It would be difficult to argue that these policies have not resulted in economic growth; Namibia’s gross domestic product (GDP) per capita is among the ten highest in sub-Saharan Africa at $4,700, and its growth rate was 4.8% in 2011 (World Bank 2013). Namibia’s annual GDP growth rates, relative to the average growth rates for sub-Saharan Africa outside of South Africa, are presented in Figure 1.3.1 below.

Figure 1.3.1 Namibia’s GDP Growth vs. Sub-Saharan Africa, 2003-2011

![GDP growth chart]


As described in Chapter 3, however, Namibia’s economic growth has not significantly reduced its income inequality, which is among the world’s highest (World Bank 2013). Yet, despite the lack of improvement in inequality from high rates of economic growth, the GRN continues to prioritize economic growth, particularly through mineral extraction, as the best path
for development and the reduction of inequality in Namibia. Namibia’s strategic plan for
development, titled Vision 2030, states that “[w]ithout doubt, we [Namibians] need economic
growth…to achieve full industrialization and sustainable development (Namibian Planning
Commission 2004, 14).” The document goes on to argue that increasing foreign investment,
particularly in mineral resources, which it states will lead to “sustained high economic growth,
that places Namibia in the ‘high income’ category of nations, eliminates duality in the economy
and ensures equity in the pattern of economic growth (NPC 2004, 16).” The implications of this
framing of foreign involvement and resource-based development are discussed in Chapter 3.

Partially as a result of this failure to reduce inequality, Namibians are questioning the
Government of the Republic of Namibia (GRN)’s openness toward foreign investment. In an
October 2 editorial in The Namibian, T. Itembu and K. Basson, who identified themselves as
residents of Katutura (a largely impoverished community in Windhoek), argued that Namibia is
now “an investor over-friendly country” in which “mining monopolies…have been looting the
country” while its citizens continue to live in poverty (Itembu and Basson 2012). Much of this
debate has played out in the Namibian media, the focus of Chapters 4 and 5 of this thesis.

**Chinese Involvement in Namibia**

Relative to countries such as Angola and Zambia, Chinese involvement in Namibia has
largely flown under the international community’s radar, perhaps due to Namibia’s small size.
Yet, while the largest source of foreign investment in Namibia remains South Africa, Chinese
involvement, in terms of foreign investment, aid, and diplomatic relationships, is growing
rapidly. Bilateral trade between Namibia and China reached $713 million in 2011, more than 60
times the level in 2003. Most of this investment is concentrated in resource extraction,
particularly uranium and copper. China currently has 12% ownership of the Rio Tinto Group,
which owns 69% of shares in Rössing Uranium, the world’s largest uranium mine (Sasman 2011b). Chinese influence is increasing in other sectors as well. In 2008, Chinese companies, both state-owned and private, were estimated to control 70% of the Namibian construction market (Sasman 2011a). According to University of Namibia economists, China had given 30-50 million Yuan ($5-8 million) in aid to Namibia and provided Namibia with interest-free loans totaling an additional 30 million Yuan by 2008 (Odada and Kakujaha-Matundu 2008). Although more recent public figures are not available, this number is estimated to have risen significantly.

While Chinese involvement in Namibia is increasing rapidly, the China-Namibia relationship itself is nothing new. China first established ties with Namibia in the early 1960s through relationships with SWAPO (Odada and Kakujaha-Matundu 2008). China supported SWAPO forces during Namibia’s struggle for independence, although not nearly as extensively as did the USSR. China was also one of the first countries to recognize Namibia diplomatically (Odada and Kakujaha-Matundu 2008). This involvement with SWAPO has continued since independence, often spurring concerns (detailed in Chapter 5) about excessive Chinese influence in the party. In the 2004 campaign cycle, the Chinese government donated $30,000 to SWAPO presidential and National Assembly campaigns (Sasman 2011a).

The GRN has implemented a substantial number of initiatives and policies to encourage the development of relationships between Namibia and China. Namibian political leaders, including current President Pohamba, have frequently spoken highly of Chinese involvement (detailed in Chapters 3-5; see also The Namibian 2011d). In July 2011, during my fieldwork in Namibia, the GRN hosted a Namibia-China Business Forum sponsored by the Namibian Ministry of Trade and Industry. The forum attracted nearly 50 Chinese companies. There are currently more than 30 Chinese state-owned companies active in Namibia in the construction,
engineering, technology, financial, and mining sectors (Daly 2012). China also provides support for the Namibian Defense Force (NDF), including training NDF troops in China, providing aid in the form of Chinese military equipment, and training NDF pilots in Namibia (Sasman 2011a).

Perhaps the best indication of China’s long-term interests in Namibia is the new Chinese embassy compound in Windhoek, shown in figure 1.3.2 below. During my fieldwork in Namibia in the summer of 2011, which began shortly before the Embassy opened on May 21, 2011, I lived approximately one mile from the Chinese embassy compound and often passed it. The embassy is surrounded by a tall fence and, as shown in the photos in figure 1.3.2, is large.\textsuperscript{2}

**Figure 1.3.2. Aerial Views of the Chinese Embassy in Windhoek, Namibia**

Source: The photo on the left comes from Google Earth. The photo on the right was taken by a Namibian contact of mine shortly after the opening of the embassy and is included with his permission.

It is located in Ludwidsdorf, one of the wealthiest Windhoek neighborhoods and (along with Klein Windhoek), the area with the largest number of expatriate residences. The left photo is from Google Earth, while the right photo is an aerial shot provided by a Namibian contact. In both photos, a number of housing structures are visible in the bottom right corner. The size of the primary embassy structure in the center is noteworthy relative to the other buildings, which

\textsuperscript{2} I could not find details regarding the Embassy’s exact size, although it appears to take up at least four city blocks in the photos above.
include some of the larger houses in Windhoek as well as several commercial buildings. In my estimation, the Chinese Embassy is roughly five times the size of the American Embassy, which is located in multiple small buildings in downtown Windhoek. The Chinese government also operates a separate commercial and economic office closer to downtown Windhoek.

1.4. Approaches and Methods

In evaluating Namibian’s perspectives on foreign involvement in light of pervasive discourses on foreign investment in sub-Saharan Africa (i.e. ‘neo-colonialism’ and ‘development opportunity’), this thesis takes inspiration from Ferguson’s (2006) demonstrations of the ways in which African discourses of modernity differ from scholarly conceptions of “modernity” and “alternative modernity.” In Chapters 4 and 5 in particular, I identify the ways in which academic discourses on foreign involvement compare with Namibians’ opinions as gleaned from media sources and public opinion polling. Thus, I aim to get beyond essentialized discussions of “African views” of foreign investment to demonstrate the generalization inherent in discussing even “Namibian views” on foreign involvement. Like Ferguson, my analysis is limited; this thesis does not describe the views of all Namibians, and the lack of extensive interviews makes it impossible to identify factors that have shaped individual Namibians’ opinions. Yet, the scope of my analysis is such that I can demonstrate the diversity of opinions on involvement that exist even within a state of only approximately 2 million people.

Methodological Overview

This thesis employs both qualitative and quantitative methods. Each method is detailed in the particular chapter in which it is applied. In my qualitative analysis (Chapters 4 and 5), which consists of a textual analysis of official texts (e.g. government publications, speeches, etc.) and media reporting (e.g. articles, letters to the editor, text message submissions to newspapers, etc.),
I employ a framework of critical geopolitics. In my quantitative analysis (Chapter 6), I use Afrobarometer survey data to interrogate the themes that emerged in the qualitative analysis. I also use binary logistic regression to identify the factors that best predict Namibians’ opinions of Chinese, South African, and American foreign involvement.

Fieldwork

In addition to textual and statistical analysis, this thesis draws upon four months of fieldwork in Namibia from May 2011 to August 2011. My fieldwork was based in Windhoek, Namibia’s capital (population 325,000), but I also completed fieldwork in four additional communities: Okahandja (population 25,000), Swakopmund (population 45,000), Walvis Bay (population 85,000), and Oshakati (population 30,000), although I only completed interviews in Swakopmund and Walvis Bay. My non-Windhoek fieldwork totaled approximately 2.5 weeks and provided me with an opportunity to get a sense of the debates over foreign involvement outside of the capital. Within Windhoek, I conducted preliminary fieldwork in the following neighborhoods, in addition to the city center: Katatura (former settlement for black Namibians under apartheid; remains majority black and the poorest part of Windhoek), Khomasdal (former settlement for Coloured Namibians under apartheid; mixed coloured and black population), Ludwigsdorf (upper-class, historically white neighborhood), and Pioneers Park (middle-class, racially-mixed neighborhood). The chart below provides details on the individuals I interviewed. These data are not presented to make a claim that the individuals interviewed are representative of any particular Namibian group but rather to provide broad information on the individuals I

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3 My fieldwork was funded through a U.S. Department of State Cox Graduate Fellowship, which provided funding, transportation, and housing in exchange for working 35 hours per week at the U.S. Embassy, where my work consisted of research on gender-based violence/human rights and coordinating a small grants program. The informal interviews described above were conducted on weekends, during scheduled breaks, and after hours. While the U.S. Department of State supported my research financially through the provision of a stipend, housing, and airfare, I was never asked to provide information regarding my to any U.S. officials.
informally interviewed. While I do not include direct quotes from interviews in this thesis due to the exploratory nature of the fieldwork, the perspectives of these individuals shaped my research methods, analytical framework, and research questions.

### Table 1.3.1 Data on Interviewees in Namibia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Interviewee Location</th>
<th>Month</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>60s</td>
<td>Namibian</td>
<td>Ovambo</td>
<td>Namibian Government (SWAPO)</td>
<td>Windhoek (Ludwigsdorf)</td>
<td>June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>40s</td>
<td>Namibian</td>
<td>British</td>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>Windhoek (Ludwigsdorf)</td>
<td>June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30s</td>
<td>Namibian</td>
<td>Ovambo</td>
<td>Namibian Government (SWAPO)</td>
<td>Windhoek (Pioneers Park)</td>
<td>June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>20s</td>
<td>Namibian</td>
<td>Ovambo</td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>Katatura</td>
<td>June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>American</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>U.S. Government</td>
<td>Windhoek (Ludwigsdorf)</td>
<td>June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>20s</td>
<td>Namibian</td>
<td>Afrikaaner</td>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>Swakopmund</td>
<td>June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>20s</td>
<td>Namibian</td>
<td>Ovambo</td>
<td>Tourism</td>
<td>Walvis Bay</td>
<td>June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30s</td>
<td>Namibian</td>
<td>Herero</td>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Windhoek (Katatura)</td>
<td>July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>30s</td>
<td>Namibian</td>
<td>Herero</td>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>Windhoek (Katatura)</td>
<td>July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30s</td>
<td>Namibian</td>
<td>Colored</td>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Windhoek (Khomasdal)</td>
<td>July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>40s</td>
<td>British</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Windhoek (Pioneers Park)</td>
<td>July</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 1.5. Limitations

Both Chapters 4 (textual analysis of Namibian media) and 6 (quantitative analysis of opinion data) conclude with a discussion of the limitations of their respective methods. It is important to note at the outset, however, that the results of this thesis are not generalizable to non-Namibian contexts, nor are they generalizable to the entire Namibian population. My textual analysis
sample is not random, and in the cases of the text messages (SMSes) analyzed in Chapters 4 and 5, it is not even possible to identify the authors of analyzed portrayals. There are also limitations regarding what can be inferred from the quantitative analysis of Chapter 6, in part because my analysis is limited by the particular questions asked by the Afrobarometer survey. These limitations are described in more detail in the chapters that follow.

1.6. Chapter Layout

In Chapter 2, I review two key literatures for my project: scholarship on the resource curse and research on foreign investment, in both cases focusing on the literature relevant to sub-Saharan Africa. Chapter 3 provides the historical political economic context of resource extraction and foreign involvement in Namibia from pre-colonialism to the present. In Chapter 4, I provide an overview of the state of the Namibian media before analyzing Namibians’ opinions on foreign involvement generally and the role of the Namibian state in managing that involvement, as portrayed in the Namibian media. This analysis is complemented by Chapter 5, which provides a critical analysis of Namibians’ opinions on particular foreign involvement actors, highlighting the themes that arise in the Namibian media. Chapter 6 draws on the qualitative analyses of Chapters 4 and 5 to determine whether relationships exist between Namibians’ opinions on particular foreign involvement actors and a host of socio-economic and political factors. In Chapter 7, I conclude with a review of the key findings and an overview of future directions.
Control of natural resources, particularly oil, has been a key component of geopolitics and politics from European colonization (Agnew 2003) to Hitler’s Party Programme (cited in Le Billon 2006) to the two Gulf Wars (Le Billon and El Khatib 2004). In *The Prize*, Yergin (1991, 401) quotes President Franklin D. Roosevelt as declaring to the British Ambassador, “Persian oil…is yours. We share the oil of Iraq and Kuwait. As for Saudi Arabian oil, it’s ours.” Although the resource geopolitics of the Middle East remain important, scholars and policymakers alike have increased their attention to foreign involvement in resource extraction in sub-Saharan Africa (henceforth referred to simply as “Africa”) over the past decade. This chapter reviews recent scholarship on the politics and geopolitics of resource extraction in Africa through two lenses of study: the ‘resource curse’ and the critical geopolitics of foreign investment in Africa. It would be possible to examine these topics through broader lenses, particularly those of political ecology (and its intersecting analysis of ecological economics; see Conde and Kallis 2012; Moore 2000; Martinez-Alier et al. 2010), development studies (see Ferguson 2006 on enclave development), and political theory (see Mitchell 2011 on oil politics), but the two fields identified above are the most useful for my focus on Namibians’ perceptions of resource extraction and foreign involvement. This review connects these two fields through consideration of the broader economic and geopolitical context of the resource “curse,” concluding by identifying three key gaps in the literature with which this thesis engages.

### 2.1 Examining the Resource “Curse”: Economics, Politics, and Development

The term “resource curse,” as coined by Richard Auty (1993), describes countries which, despite abundant natural resources, have failed to experience gains in economic, political, or development terms. For the purposes of this review, I have divided my discussion of the
literature along economic (e.g. Dutch disease), political/geopolitical (e.g. conflict), and development lines, although there is significant overlap among these three areas.

**Economic Elements: Dutch Disease**

‘Dutch disease,’ one of the most-researched elements of the resource curse (see Humphreys, et. al 2007, Collier and Goderis 2007, and Auty 2001), refers to an economic trajectory in which a country’s currency appreciates due to increasing resource revenues, reducing the competitiveness of export industries such as agriculture and manufacturing. As non-resource sectors deteriorate, the economy becomes overly reliant on resource exports, such as natural gas in the case of the Netherlands (for which Dutch disease, as coined by *The Economist* (1977), is named). When commodity prices decline, as occurred following the 1970s oil booms, decimated non-resource sectors cannot make up for the loss of revenue (McSherry 2006).

Most studies of Dutch disease have been undertaken by political scientists and economists. In their still-influential 1995 study, Sachs and Warner analyzed 97 countries, finding that those with relatively high ratios of natural resource exports to total GDP in 1971 experienced exceptionally slow GDP growth from 1971 to 1989 versus non-resource dependent economies. This large-scale analysis provided cross-country quantitative evidence for the previous work of Gelb (1988), who used a case study approach to analyze Dutch disease in Algeria, Ecuador, Indonesia, Nigeria, Trinidad and Tobago, and Venezuela during the 1970s oil booms. Case study approaches have once again become popular as critiques from geographers such as Watts (2004) have mounted regarding the difficulty of capturing the politico-economic complexities of Dutch disease though large-scale modeling. Recent case study approaches to Dutch disease include McSherry’s (2006) work on oil in Equatorial Guinea and Wunder’s (2003) analysis of oil and timber exports in Gabon.
One of the complexities of Dutch disease is its influence on state budgets. Governments with significant resource revenues often become overly reliant on those revenues. When commodity prices decline, the reduction in revenues can lead to increases in inequality (e.g. through a lack of funds for redistributive social services) (Auty 2001). Revenue uncertainty also makes for poor planning; flush with revenues, resource-dependent countries may build new schools, only to be unable to pay for teachers when commodity prices crash (Ross 2012). This can lead to a cycle in which governments become increasingly dependent on resources, as two of the best predictors of whether a country will be able to diversify its economy away from resources are income level and policies designed to promote non-resource economic sectors (Collier and Hoeffler 2002c). As Ross (2012) describes, revenue shortages associated with an over-dependence on commodity exports have led to political crises in countries as diverse as Gabon, Mexico, and Venezuela. It is to these political crises that I now turn.

Political Elements: Legitimacy, the Rentier State, and Conflict

Social scientists have argued that resource abundance reduces government legitimacy, promotes patronage, and spurs rebel movements, among other outcomes, creating what Lam and Wantchekon (2002) have termed the “political Dutch disease.” The following paragraphs explore some of the key scholarship in these three interconnected areas.

Legitimacy

Ross (2001, 327) argues that governments with abundant natural resources can use resource revenues to “relieve social pressures that might otherwise lead to demands for greater accountability.” At this time, this argument appears to be based primarily on theory and case studies rather than in large-scale statistical analysis. Ross (1999) did find a statistically significant relationship between declines in democratization and increasing oil wealth in a study
of 113 states from 1971-1997, but his focus was on democratization rather than legitimacy per se. Karl (2008) and Le Billon (2001a) both support Ross’ argument about legitimacy using a case study approach. Karl (2008), for example, argues that resource-based cash influxes have led Angola’s government to tax its population significantly less than do non-resource-funded states. As a result, citizen cooperation is not necessary to finance government projects or leaders’ salaries, creating distance between leaders and citizens that discourages responsible governance. Le Billon (2001a) echoes this argument, noting that resource-funded governments do not need to collect taxes across their populations and thus have few incentives to be responsive to the wishes of their citizens (besides the threat of a coup d’état, presumably). While the legitimacy argument is theoretically appealing, more evidence from more states is needed to support its claims.

The Rentier State: Patronage and Oppression

Some political scientists have framed the effects of resources on governance in terms of the ‘rentier state’ problem (Karl 2008, Jensen and Wantchekon 2004, Ross 1999). ‘Rentier states’ derive a significant portion of their revenues from external rents such as resources. Scholars have identified two primary ways in which rents can negatively affect governance: by supporting a patronage system and by enabling the suppression of opposition groups.

Resource wealth enables states to distribute resource rents as patronage, a system of wealth distribution that has the potential to turn governments into little more than distributers of rents (Karl 2008). Karl (2008) and Ross (1999) argue that political elites can thus use revenues to provide incentives for individuals to support the state, including corruption and the co-option of opposition groups. In Angola, for example, the IMF estimates that more than $1 billion worth of oil revenues have been inappropriately transferred to the private banking accounts of political elites (Global Witness 2008). Such patronage systems also influence who seeks office and why.
The promise of resource wealth for prospective politicians can turn elections into “spoil politics,” in which self-enrichment is the primary goal in seeking office (Allen 1999). Such a system further undermines the state’s need for legitimacy (Le Billon 2001a).

Resource rents also provide governments with funding to politically or militarily oppress opposition groups. In contrast to the literature on legitimacy, scholars have provided substantial statistical evidence of the relationship between political freedom and resource revenues (although such evidence is not without criticism). Lam and Wantchekon (2003), for example, found a robust positive relationship between resource dependence (measured as the ratio of resource exports to total exports) and authoritarianism (measured using the Polity IV index) after controlling for variables such as GDP, human capital, and income inequality. Furthermore, in a follow-up study with Jensen, Wantchekon (2004) noted that the level of control that a state’s leaders have over resources is significantly and negatively associated with a country’s level of political freedom. This indicates that leaders’ control over resources is perhaps more a more important influence on political freedom than the mere presence of resources. Scholars such as Humphreys, Sachs, and Stiglitz (2007) have cited this evidence to argue for the implementation of resource governance policies enforced by international institutions (e.g. the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative) that would prevent the consolidation of resource control in the hands of a small leadership, but it is unclear whether such policies have had any effect.

Conflict

Resource conflict has historically been the focus of political scientists, but scholars such as Le Billon (2001a) have brought resource conflicts onto the agenda of geographers. There has been much more work on this topic (see Korf 2011) than it is appropriate to review here, but this section provides a brief review of the study of resource conflicts in the African context.
Le Billon (2001a) identifies two schools of thought on resource conflicts - that scarce resources cause conflict (see Homer-Dixon 1991 and 1999 and, for critiques, several chapters in Peluso and Watts 2001) and that abundant resources cause conflict (see Fairhead 2000 and Collier 2003). The resource abundance argument is most relevant to this thesis, as it has focused to a greater extent on non-renewable resources such as diamonds and oil. According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) (2009), natural resources were involved in at least 40% of intrastate conflicts over the past sixty years. Furthermore, resource-related conflicts are twice as likely to relapse within five years versus non-resource-related conflicts. Resource abundance has been theorized to lead to conflict both directly and indirectly. Le Billon’s (2001a, 2012) analysis of the use of ‘lootable’ resources to fund rebel movements is an example of a direct effect, while evidence that resource wealth leads to poor governance and/or low economic growth which then increases conflict risk is an example of an indirect effect. Collier and Hoeffler (2002b) have found a primary commodity-dependent country is 4.2 times more likely to experience armed conflict than a country not dependent on primary commodities, even after controlling for other factors relevant to conflict. Scholars have also connected resource abundance with conflict through indirect effects that can be evaluated in light of Collier’s conflict trap (2000) by focusing on how resources affect economic growth and governance.

The reality of resource conflict, however, is case-dependent. As even Collier (2003, 54) argues, “[e]ach war is distinctive, with its own particular personalities, events, and antecedents. Any all-embracing, general theory of civil war would therefore be patently ridiculous.” In addition to promoting the use of geo-coded resource data, as opposed to national-level data (see Gilmore, et al. 2005 and Buhaug, et al. 2009), geographers have emphasized the diverse ways in which resources influence conflict at different scales. Perhaps most influentially, Le Billon
(2001a, 568) has argued that two characteristics of a resource – conflictuality and lootability – affect conflict risk. ‘Conflictuality’ describes “the failure and denigration of political systems – most generally patrimonialism or clientelism (Le Billon 2001a, 568)” and is closely linked to the literature on political Dutch disease. ‘Lootability’ reflects the spatially fixed nature of resource extraction (as also described by Emel, Huber, and Makene 2011) and refers to the extent to which resources are readily accessible to governments or rebel groups. Le Billon (2001a) identifies likely conflict scenarios by classifying lootability in a typology based on geographic location (proximate or distant) and concentration (point or diffuse), both of which affect the ability of governments and rebel groups to control resources. This typology thus accounts not only for national factors but also for localized geographic factors.

**Human Development: Reverse Modernization and Uneven Development**

Resource abundance has also been theorized to lead to declines in human development, including education and health care. Political ecologists in particular have conducted substantial research on how resource extraction is interwoven with uneven development. Even within geography, approaches to this topic have varied significantly. While Watts (2004) has analyzed conflict over oil in the Niger Delta through the lens of Marxism, Le Billon (2001b and 2006) has applied conflict theory to his studies of diamond conflict in Angola. Some of this research explicitly engages with the evaluation of the ‘resource curse’ (see several chapters in Peluso and Watts 2001, Watts 2004), including the implications of resource extraction for citizens’ quality of life in environmental, social, and economic terms (DeLoughrey and Handley 2011). Ross (2001) characterizes these impacts as the “modernization” effect; as governments become less accountable to their citizens and citizens seek income through rents distributed by the state, Ross (2001) theorizes that social pressures for state services such as higher education decline. As a
result, economic development is concentrated in extraction rather than supporting the development of the broader economy. Thus, the rentier state effect affects not only governance but also societal characteristics. According to Ross (2001), the modernization effect partially explains why resource-poor countries grew more rapidly than resource-rich countries from 1975 to 2000, even after controlling for structural attributes such as type of government and debt load.

Scholars have paid critical attention to the ways in which resource extraction encourages uneven development within and between states, as well as to how resource control is intertwined with geopolitical power struggles. The geopolitics of resource extraction and the linking of resource access to national security have been debated in both academic (Le Billon 2004, Bradshaw 2009) and more publically-oriented literature (see Klare 2002 and Yergin 2012). In his analysis of the role of resource revenues in Angola’s civil war, Le Billon (2001b) traces how the role of resources in conflict has shifted since the end of the Cold War with the rising power of transnational corporations. His most recent publication, Wars of Plunder (2012), provides further evidence that non-state actors, including transnational corporations and NGOs, must be considered in the analysis of relationships between resources and development. Capital from transnational corporations, Le Billon (2001b) argues, has become more important to conflict actors than foreign aid, and it requires far less accountability from the donor or the recipient. Furthermore, Le Billon argues, it is necessary to look beyond “need” (scarcity) and “greed” (abundance) to view resource conflicts as

“a historical product inseparable from the social construction and political economy of resources. The unfolding of conflict as a process entails the restructuring of polities and commercial networks become (selectively) incorporated into the global economy, often in the form of resource enclaves, in a mutually dependent relationship which encourages and sustains armed conflicts, as the source of power becomes not political legitimacy but violent control over key nodes of the commodity chain.” (Le Billon 2001a, 575-576)
Thus, the challenges of resource-based development must be considered in light of the global factors that have led resources to be such a critical element of the global political economy.

Le Billon’s attention to resource enclaves echoes Ferguson’s work on Africa’s role in the global economy (2006) and the politics of development (1994). Ferguson (2006) argues that resource enclaves such as Cabinda in Angola are, contrary to popular belief, highly efficient in capitalist extraction. It is often assumed that operations in autocratic and corrupt countries are inefficient places to do business, but Ferguson (2006) argues that corrupt and autocratic states provide corporations with freedom to extract resources without the need to contribute broad-based benefits. Such enclaves are the epitome of uneven development. Ghazvinian (2007) echoes Ferguson’s concerns, noting that oil production in Africa has produced far more job growth in Europe and the U.S. than in Africa. Based on oil industry annual reports, he estimates that only 5% of foreign investment in Africa oil production has been spent in Africa. Extraction enclaves enable corporations to extract resources without having to deal with conflict, poverty, or a lack of infrastructure. Enclaves are made even more efficient by the off-shore nature of oil in much of West and Central Africa, which makes it possible to transport oil to the global market without touching the host country’s soil (Ferguson 2006).

2.2 Environmental Determinism? Geographic Critiques of the Resource “Curse” and its Connection with Broader Socio-Politico-Economic Processes

As noted above, the role of resources in the international political economy is not based on their physical existence alone. Oil would perhaps be rather useless if not for a fortuitous experiment in Pennsylvania (Yergin 1991). Resources have gained importance through their roles in processes such as industry, transportation, and war. Thus, the danger in the portrayal of resource abundance as a “curse” is that it can border on environmental determinism. Le Billon
critiques the “quasi-environmental determinism” that has characterized some work on the role of resources in conflict in particular (Homer-Dixon, 1999, is one oft-cited example), noting that,

“[t]he availability in nature of any resource is thus not in itself a predictive indicator of conflict. Rather, the desires sparked by this availability as well as people’s needs (or greed), and the practices shaping the political economy of any resource can prove conflictual, with violence becoming the decisive means of arbitration.” (Le Billon 2001a, 563, emphasis in original)

Stating that resources do not themselves cause conflict is perhaps trite, but the broader historical, economic, and political context of extraction is sometimes lost in continent-wide analyses. On the other end of the spectrum, insinuating that Norway and Canada have avoided the pitfalls of resource abundance and thus so can states like Angola, as Collier and Goderis (2007) seem to claim, is also unhelpful, as the divergent experiences of Norway and Angola render them incomparable in any meaningful sense. Thankfully, this is a topic in which a geographic perspective, with its attention to both the uniqueness of individual situations and the broader connections of such situations to global processes, can be particularly useful.

One way that geographers have challenged the commodity determinism of some of the resource curse literature is by analyzing resource extraction from a political economy perspective (see Bridge 2000, Peluso and Watts 2001, and Le Billon 2006). While scholars such as Watts and Ferguson have largely focused on the implications of commodity chains for African communities, Huber (2009, 2011a) has recently analyzed the political economy of commodity chains from the perspective of the American economy. This research has confirmed the argument made by Zimmerman and re-affirmed by scholars such as Robbins (2012) that “resources are not, they become (Zimmerman 1951, XX);” resources gain importance through their incorporation into social, economic, and political processes and practices. Meanwhile, geographers and other social scientists have evaluated the effects of globalization in Africa,
including the effects of the foreign investment model of development (Ferguson 2006; Peet and Hartwick 1999; Mercer, et al. 2003). The work of scholars such as Ferguson (1998) in evaluating the on-the-ground effects of foreign involvement in resource extraction has been an especially valuable complement to the work of more global system-level thinkers such as Carmody (2011).

Words of caution about attributing too much causality to the mere presence of resources have also come from quantitative geographers, who have demonstrated that the presence of resources is most likely to become a “curse” when it occurs in conjunction with other risk factors for economic stagnation, conflict, and political instability. Geographers have also used GIS to improve upon the country-year studies of political scientists and economists by evaluating the influence of resources below the scale of the state. Hegre, Raleigh, and Ostby (2009), for example, used ACLED conflict data to analyze conflict in Liberia. While their focus was on the relationship between conflict and poverty, they included diamond deposits in their model. Using a zero-inflated negative binomial model, they found that conflict was more likely to occur in areas near significant diamond deposits. Yet, once proximity to international borders and highly-populated areas (which Raleigh and Hegre (2009) had found to be associated with conflict) were controlled for, proximity to diamond deposits was no longer a statistically significant conflict predictor (Hegre, et al. 2009). Further integration of geo-located natural resource data into statistical modeling is needed to understand how resources may divergently affect economic conditions, politics, and development at scales below that of the state.

2.3. Foreign Involvement in Resource Extraction

As Lawson (2007) argues, global geopolitical and economic processes have profound impacts on local material circumstances. In the past ten years, and particularly in the past five, social scientists have expanded their analysis of how global processes are implicated in local
conditions to study foreign investment in Africa’s resources (see Southall and Melber 2009 for a diverse sample of this research). Much of this research has astutely applied a place-dependent analytic (Massey 1994) to consider how foreign investment reflects the uneven distribution of global power (Lawson 2007). Scholars have considered foreign involvement in resource extraction ranging from fishing (Standing 2009) and mining (Kabemba and Nhancale 2012) to genetic patenting (Thompson 2009) and extractive security (Rupiya and Southall 2009). One of the key questions of this focus on the so-called ‘new scramble’ for Africa is whether foreign investment represents a development opportunity for African states and citizens or neo-colonialism/imperialism (see Carmody 2011, Cheru and Obi 2008, Brautigam 2009, and Guerrero and Manji 2008). Beyond this question, scholars have paid particular attention to questions of resource sovereignty and to the growing role of Chinese investment in resource extraction. This research is interconnected with broader considerations of how global processes are re-scaled over time (see Grant and Nijman 2004). Lawson (2007, 21) argues that such rescaling analyses focus on two research trajectories: “First, they critique the limits of mainstream development and its inability to address the processes producing economic growth, inequality and poverty. Second, they are posing new questions about the way resources, political influence and people are circulating in our contemporary world.” As the literature described below illustrates, these two trajectories are both represented in research on foreign capital flows.

**Neo-Colonialism or Development Opportunity?**

Geographers have paid significant attention to the ways in which capital flows shape uneven development between and within countries (see Grant and Nijman 2004 and Watts 2001). Analysis of foreign investment flows in resource extraction fit with what Lawson, citing Gaile and Ferguson (1997), Bebbington (2000), and Hart (2002), describes as the analysis of
“historical, social and political processes as they come together in particular configurations in places to explain the spatially uneven character of development processes across the globe (2007, 48).” In countries such as Tanzania (Emel, Huber, & Makene 2011) and Namibia (Links 2012, Kempton and Preez 1997), researchers have reported citizen disappointment with the lack of tangible benefits from resource extraction. Political elites have expressed similar concerns, citing the low contributions of large-scale extraction by corporations to state revenues (Carmody 2011). In countries such as Zambia and Namibia, political leaders have pushed for shifts in the balance of power (or, more accurately, revenue) between the state and private corporations. In a recent media statement, Namibian Minister of Mines and Energy Katali argued that:

“[m]oreover, the export of Namibian minerals in raw-form denies the citizens of the country the full benefit of the value chain. Namibia has, therefore, become an Eldorado of speculators and other quick-fix would be mineral explorers and mining developers. It is for this reason among many others, that Namibia’s Gini-Coefficient remains skewed.” (Katali 2011, 3)

The rise in foreign investment from countries such as India, China, and Brazil (so-called ‘south-south investment’) means that the focus of geographers on uneven development associated solely with Western domination is in need of an update. Theoretical perspectives on the growing influence of foreign companies in sub-Saharan Africa range from Marxist theories of dispossession (Thompson 2009) to rational choice theory (Shane 2006). As would be expected, theoretical frameworks influence authors’ conclusions. Thompson’s (2009) Marxist perspective leads her to view involvement by transnational corporations in African agriculture as exploitative neo-colonialism, while Shane’s (2006) rational choice perspective leads him to conclude that African political elites seek investment that they deem to promise the largest and most stable revenue stream and thus increases in investment from countries such as China demonstrate the appeal of such investment relative to other sources. Brautigam (2009), for
example, argues that south-south investment represents an alternative to the long-dominant trade and aid policies of Western states, particularly the U.S. Yet, even after former colonies gained legal sovereignty, the relative economic positions of many such countries have remained disadvantaged (Robbins 2012). Carmody (2011, 3) defines neo-colonialism as occurring “where formal political independence is achieved, but economic control – and hence indirect political power – continues to lie with overseas powers and companies.” Based on this definition, he argues that an element of neo-colonialism is at play in the resource scramble, but, like Emel, Huber, and Makene (2011), he is careful to note that extraction can benefit political elites in resource-rich countries. Further geographic investigation is needed regarding the implications of south-south investment, particularly from BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) economies, for the relative power of African elites and African citizens.

**Sovereignty and the State**

Political geographers have begun to attend to issues of resource sovereignty and the ways in which resource control interacts with the motivations of the state (see Carmody 2009; Emel, Huber, and Makene 201; Kohl and Farthing 2012). This scholarship is intertwined with debates over whether foreign investment in sectors such as resource extraction represents an opportunity for states to increase their ability to govern a territory (through revenues that can be directed toward social services, for example) or merely a continuation of neo-colonial relationships. While political scientists such as Brautigam (2009) have lobbyed for the former, geographers such as Peet (1999) have argued the latter. Peet (1999, 107), for example, argues that resource exploitation and foreign investment lead to perpetual economic underdevelopment, in which

> “real power [is] exercised from external centers of command in dominant ('metropolitan') countries. Dependence continues...through international ownership of the region's most dynamic sectors, multinational corporate control over technology and payments of royalties, interests, and profit.”
This scholarship has been influenced by recent movements toward resource nationalism in countries ranging from Bolivia to Zambia. While such movements might be seen as impairing foreign investment, Emel, Huber, and Makene (2011) argue that resource nationalism can actually promote capitalist interests. Emel, Huber, and Makene (2011) are not the first to consider how capital-state relationships can enhance the power of both. In their article on relations between the Namibian government and De Beers, for example, Kempton and Preez (1997) note that the policies of the Southwest Africa Peoples’ Organization (SWAPO) changed dramatically as the party transitioned from a rebel group to a party of governance. While the SWAPO of rebellion saw diamond mining by De Beers as “an unmitigated form of exploitation,” the SWAPO of governance found De Beers to be a useful partner capable of providing access to international markets and mining technology (Kempton and Preez 1997, 585).

Yet, Emel, Huber, and Makene (2011, 73) may overstretch the evidence when they argue that “it may be that private mining capital prefers the simplicity of public systems over the chaos of private property.” While this is perhaps the case situations such as their dated example of the influence of U.S. oil companies in the re-writing of Venezuela’s oil law in 1922, the widespread resistance by private corporations to resource nationalism movements in states such as Zambia and Namibia demonstrates that nationalism is not always preferred by capitalist entities. More empirical work is needed to understand how resource sovereignty is changing in light of increasing foreign investment and how those changes are affecting the power of the state itself.

*Chinese Involvement in Africa*

Recent scholarship on foreign involvement in Africa, particularly in resource extraction, has paid greater attention to the role of China. This scholarship has developed into a substantial body of work in geography and in other social science disciplines (Carmody and Owusu 2007;
Keet 2008; Alden, Large, and Soares De Oliveira 2008; Brautigam 2009; Taylor 2009; Power and Mohan 2010; Power 2012). Although Chinese involvement in Africa is nothing new, as is perhaps over-emphasized by both Brautigam (2009) and Carmody (2011), it has received relatively little attention compared to Western influences until the past decade.

There are tensions in the literature between those who characterize Chinese involvement as neo-imperialism and those who portray it as a development opportunity. Authors such as Brautigam (2009) argue that China’s emphasis on sovereignty and mutual benefit increases Africans’ power in shaping development. She quotes Senegalese President Wade as noting that “China’s approach to our needs is simply better adapted than the slow and sometimes patronizing approach of Europe (135)” and an unnamed Nigerian diplomat as observing that “[t]he Chinese are trying to get involved in every sector of our economy. If you look at the West, it’s oil, oil, oil, and nothing else (279).” This view contrasts with U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton’s June 2011 speech warning of the dangers of a “new colonialism” in Africa while on a trip to Zambia, which was widely interpreted to be directed at China (while conveniently ignoring the history U.S. companies’ involvement in Africa) (Kelemen 2011). Scholars such as Carmody (2011) strike out a position between these two extremes, befittingly arguing that Chinese investment is neither “good” nor “bad” for Africans as a coherent group. Instead, it is beneficial for some (e.g. political elites) but harmful to others (e.g. individuals employed by Chinese companies in violation of labor laws). The World Bank has expressed similar sentiments, albeit focused on the transparency of Chinese involvement. In discussing China’s African investments, World Bank Managing Director Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala noted that “China’s investment is welcome – African has an investment deficit and there is room for everyone, but investment needs to have sound principles whether it is from China, Europe, or the United States (Stanway and Hornby 2010).”
Western portrayals of Chinese involvement in Africa have tended toward over-simplification, often playing into dominant discourses surrounding both Africa and China (although thankfully this is less true of academic work). Large (2008, 45) argues that Western actors have tended to portray China as a “monolithic Chinese dragon in an unvariegated African bush stripped of historical and political context.” In analyzing European reactions to Chinese involvement in Africa, Tull (2008) found that negativity toward Chinese involvement seemed to be the standard among media figures, politicians, and civil society. This negativity was premised upon both economic and political rationales. Politically, China was portrayed as undermining human rights and democracy (Anshan 2007; Tull 2008). In a 2008 Heritage Foundation ‘backgrounder,’ for example, Brookes and Shin (2006) cited China’s involvement in Zimbabwe and Sudan as legitimizing authoritarian regimes and enabling them to secure aid without having to comply with human rights principles. U.S. Colonel Philippe Rogers echoed Brookes and Shin’s concern with Chinese influence in a 2007 Joint Force Quarterly article, arguing that China’s opposition to UN actions against Sudan and Zimbabwe made it impossible for UN interventions to be effective. In academia, Robert Rotberg (2008), one of the creators of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation-supported Index of African Governance, has made similar arguments, positing that China’s refusal to support sanctions against Zimbabwe led to the 2008 corrupt elections. According to Kurlantzick (2007), China’s increasing power in Sudan and Zimbabwe makes the U.S. appear geopolitically weaker.

Economically, China is often portrayed as exploiting Africa, particularly its natural resources (Tull 2008). The involvement of the Chinese government and Chinese businesses in oil extraction has come under particularly heavy scrutiny (Taylor 2006). Yet, while there is substantial engagement with the assumption that Chinese interests in Africa are rooted in natural
resources, this view is not universal. Brautigam (2009, 17), for example, argues that the idea that China’s policies toward Africa are overwhelmingly focused on resource extraction “is at best a partial and misleading answer” (emphasis in original). To better understand Chinese involvement in Africa, she argues, we need to look at its non-resource interests on the continent, including Africa’s potential as an export market, a source of contracts (e.g. in infrastructure and communications), and a source of employment for Chinese citizens (Brautigam 2009). The migration of Chinese citizens to cities such as Lusaka and Luanda will likely take a significantly different form from migrations among African states (e.g. Zimbabweans to South Africa) and from Western expatriate communities alike (Brautigam 2003). These changes should be of keen interest to geographers focused on development, urban settings, and migration.

Finally, scholars have linked China’s growing influence in Africa to its rising influence in geopolitics. While some scholars have focused on China’s geopolitical motivations for involvement in Africa, others have concentrated on the geopolitical rationales for Western interpretations of China’s influence. Carmody and Owusu (2007, 505), for example, characterize China’s economic rise as a driving force in the geopolitical competition for African resources since 2000. They argue that China’s increasing trade with Africa, as well as its efforts to ensure access to the continent’s resources, is indicative of its desire to counter U.S. hegemony, thus framing Africa as a geopolitical battleground. Noting that China’s ten largest trading partners in Africa, with the exception of South Africa, are oil producers, Taylor (2006) argues that Chinese involvement in resource extraction may reflect more than just the short-term goal of securing oil for domestic consumption. Instead, Taylor (2007, 14) argues that China’s oil diplomacy “may be linked to Chinese strategists at the national level who may well first and foremost be paying attention to the long-term goal of being in charge of oil resources at their source in a strategy to
manipulate future price.” In light of these impressions, Anshan (2007) argues that Western powers such as the U.S. and European states view Africa as lying in their sphere of influence, and that this worldview explains their reactions to the Chinese presence as invasive.

Yet, while geopolitical analyses of both Chinese motivations for involvement in Africa and Western reactions to that involvement are useful, they provide little insight into how such ‘turf battles’ are affecting and being effected by Africans. Indeed, compared to the literature on Western perceptions of China in Africa, the literature on African perceptions of Chinese involvement is sparse. While scholars such as Brautigam (2009) and Carmody (2011) have included insights from interviews with Africans in their work, much of the academic literature has described Chinese involvement in Africa from a non-African perspective or has analyzed “African perceptions” at a continental scale of generalization. In this thesis, I intervene in these discussions by analyzing the diversity of opinions regarding Chinese involvement in Namibia.

2.4. Final Thoughts: Substantial Gaps in the Literature

This literature review has identified several gaps in both the resource curse and foreign investment literature on Africa. I conclude this chapter by discussing three of these gaps with which this thesis engages.

Resource Ethics and Ownership: Connections between the Local and the Global

Social scientists have thoroughly analyzed the effects of globalization in sub-Saharan Africa, including the implications of globalization for resource extraction (Ferguson 1994 and 2006; Peet and Hartwick 1999; Mercer, et al. 2003). The work of Ferguson (1998) and Watts (2004) in evaluating the on-the-ground effects of extraction in Zambia and Nigeria, respectively, has been particularly valuable. Yet, despite these advances, scholars have only tangentially
addressed how geopolitics and geo-economics, including increasing South-South investment, affect perceptions of who should benefit from globally significant resources.

In studying how the global and the local intertwine in debates over resource ownership, geographers should engage with the literature on the ethics of just resource-based development and revenue distribution (such as Sen 1984 and the edited collection by Agyeman, et al. 2003). Of course, many geographers consider issues of distributive justice in extraction (Michael Watts in particular comes to mind), and even more geographic work is likely inspired by conceptions of distributive justice. Yet, there has been little discussion of how divergent conceptions of distributive justice are evident in the resource extraction policies of African states. My review of several government documents on resource-based development indicated that resource policies in South Africa (ANC 2012, Government of the Republic of South Africa 2002), Uganda (Government of Uganda 2012), and Namibia (GRN 2003) are awash with conceptions of distributive justice (e.g. statements that ‘our people should benefit from our resources’).

Investigating how these policies fit into broader debates over resource ownership and access seems like fertile intellectual ground for geographic research. Emel, Makene, and Huber’s (2011) recent work on resource sovereignty is one potential way forward on this topic. In this thesis, I engage with questions of resource ownership in the case of Namibia, focusing on the ways in which the state has constructed the debate over resource ownership as a binary struggle between ‘the state’ (assumed to represent ‘the people’) and ‘the corporation.’

**Perspectives from the Global South**

The literature on foreign investment in resources in Africa is overwhelmingly a view from the West. While there are some notable exceptions (see the 2007 edited collection by Manji and Marks), scholarly (see Carmody 2011) and government (see CSIS 2004) literature largely
focuses on why African resources matter for those outside of the continent. Carmody and Owusu (2007), for example, focus on the hegemonic policies pursued by the U.S. and China without devoting any text to the strategies of African states in negotiating these relationships. There is danger in the dominance of Western-focused discussions about the implications of involvement by China and other BRICS economies in Africa. As Mawdsley (2007, 406) argues, such discussions can deteriorate into “a strong tendency to simplify and even demonise China.” There is a related tendency for academics and policymakers alike to refer to “China” as a coherent entity in its actions abroad. Carmody and Owusu’s (2007) analysis, for example, fails to fully consider the diverse forms of Chinese involvement (e.g. public, private, or in-between).

Perhaps even more importantly, discussions about an “aggressive China” risk perpetuating the discursive framing of Africa as “helpless.” In her analysis of British newspapers, Mawdsley (2008) illustrates the pervasiveness of portrayals of ‘poor Africans, being exploited by the aggressive Chinese.’ To be fair, much of the literature befittingly emphasizes that “new scramble” discussions must respect the agency of Africans in co-opting, contesting, and sponsoring foreign investment (Mawdsley 2008; Carmody 2011). It is through such an approach that the analysis of Africans’ perceptions of foreign investment and the framing of such investment by African elites is particularly valuable. Still, research examining how foreign investment in extraction may actually strengthen African states’ positions in the global economy remains rare. Gonzalez-Vicente (2011) makes such a case, noting that increased competition for resources may increase the power of countries with abundant resources by increasing state revenues and potentially (although this seems too optimistic) improving the terms of trade faced by resource-dependent economies. It may be time to update the work of scholars such as Ferguson (2006), whose portrayal of Africa is of a globalized continent (particularly in terms of
resource extraction) whose residents have uneven access to the benefits of that globalization, to reflect the ways in which increasing foreign investment in Africa may augment the power of political elites. This thesis focuses on Namibians’ diverse opinions of foreign involvement, seeking to engage with that diversity rather than to create a generalized category of “Namibian opinions on Chinese involvement.”

**Looking Beyond the West and China**

Although some recent scholarship has considered the roles of India (several chapters in Southall and Melber 2009, Cheru and Obi 2008, Taylor 2010, Mawdsley and McCann 2011, and Carmody 2011), South Africa (Schroeder 2008 and 2012 and Carmody 2011), Russia (Shubin 2004), and Brazil (World Bank 2011; Dauvergne and Farias 2012), the vast majority of scholarship on foreign investment in Africa has focused on Western or, more recently, Chinese involvement. My inclusion of a section in this literature review on the role of China, rather than Brazil or India, in Africa reflects the attention paid to China in the academic literature. While attention to Chinese involvement by Western media and governments is predictable in light of broader geopolitical concerns regarding the rise of China – and China is currently more involved overall in Africa than either Brazil or India - this does not justify scholars’ inattention to other rising powers. Geographers must not be so caught up in Chinese investment as a ‘hot’ topic that they fail to attend to the growing influence of actors such as Russia, India, Brazil, South Africa, Indonesia, Malaysia, and South Korea. To begin addressing this gap, I engage with Namibian opinions of South African involvement in Chapters 5 and 6 of this thesis.
Chapter 3: The Historical Political Economy of Resource Extraction and Foreign Involvement in Namibia

3.1 Introduction

Few studies in critical geopolitics or foreign investment have focused on Namibia, although several critical development studies have considered the experiences of its neighbors in southern Africa (see Ferguson 1994 on Lesotho or Fraser and Larmer 2010 on Zambia). Instead, social science research on Namibia has primarily focused on its independence struggle (Simon 1996; Forrest 1998), its role in regional conflicts (Minter 2008), its practices of statehood (Friedman 2011), and its conservation practices (Scanlon and Kull 2009). Despite the lack of academic attention, a great deal of debate is taking place within Namibia regarding resource extraction and development and the role of foreign involvement and the state in both.

Although debates over resource extraction in Namibia echo similar debates in countries such as Zambia, they also reflect a place-specific political economy. In describing development planning in India, Gidwani (2002) argues that development is not a static project. Instead, it is shaped by local actors, who, while they may be constrained by the project’s nature (e.g. which international actors set the agenda, which aspects of development are emphasized, etc.), can still negotiate development’s forms and local effects. Similarly, foreign investment (and foreign involvement more broadly) is not a static, technical project but rather a project that is constituted in part through the ways in which communities interpret, negotiate, challenge, and co-opt it. Furthermore, these processes of interpretation, negotiation, challenge, and co-option are situated within the power dynamics of the Namibian state, both internally and as they relate to Namibia’s role in the global political economy.  

4 I find distinctions between internal and external dynamics unhelpful, as such distinctions have a tendency to reduce our attention to how the “internal” and “external” are interlinked.
Debates about foreign involvement and resource extraction in Namibia are also situated within debates over inequality and uneven development. As Nadasdy (2011) argues, political actors (including the state) not only express power over how forms of knowledge, such what constitutes ‘development’ or ‘distributive justice,’ are circulated and applied. They are also entangled in the political production of knowledge. Thus, “ideas about proper resource use (or, indeed, about what constitutes a resource in the first place) are themselves the products of particular sociocultural histories (Nadasdy 2011, 130).” To understand how foreign involvement in Namibia is interpreted, addressed, and understood by Namibians, such discussions must be placed in the context of broader political debates over development, distribution, power, and justice. Namibia’s diplomatic relationship with South Africa, for example, has been strained by the continued dominance of white South African businesses, including in mining, in Namibia.⁵ This dominance, as well as the presence of a significant South African-born population in Namibia, is an artifact of Namibia’s occupation by South Africa (1915-1990). While a truly comprehensive study of Namibia’s political economic history is outside the scope of this thesis, this chapter provides a necessary introduction to the historical and contemporary political economy of resource extraction in Namibia, from its time as a German colony through its illegal occupation by South Africa to current debates over resource policies.

3.2 Namibia’s Colonial History

Even before colonization, ‘Namibia’ as a political entity emerged through global political economic processes. The Portuguese first explored the ports of Walvis Bay and Lüderitz in the 1400s before losing control to the Dutch, the British, and the South Africans. Namibia’s earliest

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⁵ Outside of concerns with South Africa’s economic dominance, relationships between the Namibian state and the South African state are largely positive, as South Africa’s ANC leadership and Namibia’s SWAPO leadership were partners during both countries’ anti-apartheid and independence struggles (Thornberry 2004).
residents, the Ovambo, Kavango, Himba, and Herero peoples of the Khoisan language family, were pushed northward by Bantu groups in the 15th and 16th centuries and by Dutch settlers fleeing British settlement in the 18th and 19th centuries. The subsequent violence between these groups, particularly by the Dutch against the Herero, previewed German colonialism, including a 1904-1908 genocide during which 25,000-100,000 Herero (50-70% of the population) and over 10,000 Nama (~50% of the population) were killed (Zimmerer and Zeller 2003).

According to Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson (2001), Namibia’s designation as a German settler colony should have imbued it with institutions designed for long-term growth rather than mere resource exploitation. In their comparative analysis of African colonial legacies, Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson (2001) found low mortality rates in settler colonies, used as a proxy for institutional quality, to be a highly significant predictor of post-independence economic growth. Namibia had relatively low rates of disease (Malaria was confined to the north), a high and dry climate, and exceptional access to sea trade routes. Indeed, Germans settled in larger numbers in Namibia than in other German colonies, a legacy that is obvious in cities like Swakopmund (Gann and Duignan 1977). Yet, German institutions in Namibia were premised upon exploitation, particularly in mining. Germany’s goal for Namibia was “the establishment of a settlement outpost, drawing on and extracting its natural resources, while keeping its investment, human and financial, to the bare minimum (Jauch and Muchena 2011, 183).” In 1892, the German, British, and Cape Colony governments jointly established the South West Africa Company, Ltd. (SWAC) to support mineral extraction. Initially involved in copper extraction, SWAC grew with the discovery of alluvial diamonds near Lüderitz in 1908, which were mined through the forced labor of Nama and Herero peoples (Conrad 2012). By 1913, Namibian diamonds accounted for nearly 20% of global production. In 1920, several mining
companies in Namibia were amalgamated into South Africa’s DeBeers mining corporation, which continues to control Namibian diamond mining. While this resource-based strategy contributed to economic growth in post-colonial Namibia, as predicted by Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson (2001), that growth is concentrated in the mining sector.

Namibia’s history also reflects geopolitics. Germany claimed Namibia as its first colony in 1884 to stave off expanding British influence. German South-West Africa’s transfer to South African trusteeship after the German defeat in World War I reflected the changing geopolitics of Europe and the rising military strength of South Africa. Later, Namibia’s independence struggle, like the civil wars in Mozambique and Angola, was embedded in Cold War geopolitics. Cuba, the USSR, and China’s support for Namibian independence continues to influence the political economy of foreign involvement in Namibia through the political identification of “friends” (e.g. China and Cuba) and “exploiters” (e.g. countries that supported South Africa). Namibian politicians, for example, often frame their support for Chinese involvement as part of a China-Namibia friendship solidified by Chinese support for Namibian independence. Thus, while the original scramble for Africa may be historically distant, its geopolitics continue to influence Namibia’s contemporary political economy. In the following sections, I briefly review Namibia’s history from World War II to independence before turning to contemporary politics.

**World War II to Independence: South African Occupation**

South Africa’s domination of Namibia began in a conception of ‘trusteeship,’ as described by Cowen and Shenton (1996), which advocated for intervention by strong states to “assist” “politically weak” and “underdeveloped” territories. After occupying South-West Africa from 1915 until the end of World War I, South Africa was granted a “Class C” mandate (reserved for the least developed territories) over South-West Africa (Neather 2003). Under the
mandate, South-West Africa was run as a “de facto” South African province subject to apartheid laws, including pass laws, contract labor, and the homeland system (Leys and Saul 1995; Thornberry 2004). These effects of these laws remain visible in Namibia’s high inequality and mining laws (Mbuende 1986; Becker 1995).

Namibia’s 23-year liberation war against South Africa began in 1966 when the UN revoked South Africa’s mandate after repeated South African refusals to replace the mandate with an alternative system (Leys and Saul 1995). The UN decision was followed by a strike against the South African contract labor system, in which 25% of South-West Africa’s workers, including mining laborers, ceased work to protest the occupation. International pressure increased in 1977, when the Western Contact Group (Canada, the U.S., the UK, West Germany, and France) undertook a diplomatic effort to create a process for Namibian independence (Leys and Saul 1995). South Africa broke with this in December 1978 by unilaterally holding elections in which only whites could vote. The elections were boycotted by SWAPO, which the UN had recognized as the “sole legitimate representative” of Namibians in 1972 (Thornberry 2004). Meanwhile, SWAPO’s military branch, the People’s Liberation Army of Namibian (PLAN), became increasingly active during the late 1960s-70s with support from Cuba and the USSR. PLAN’s attack on the South African air force in 1966 marked the beginning of guerrilla war against South Africa. With Angola’s independence in 1975, PLAN used Angola as a base from which to attack the South Africa military (Minter 2008). In 1975, South Africa launched its own military partnership with the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) after its split with the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), marking the beginning of the Angolan civil war (Leys and Saul 1995). Cold War proxy conflict in Angola
stalled attempts to secure Namibian independence, as the so-called “border war” between SWAPO and South Africa was absorbed into the Angolan civil war (Minter 2008).⁶

Namibia’s independence war spilled into the 1980s, as South Africa repeatedly refused to recognize U.N. processes. In 1987 Bernt Carlsson was appointed as the UN Commissioner for Namibia with the expectation that he would oversee the transition to an independent Namibia. In May 1988, Carlsson successfully brought together parties from Angola, Cuba, and South Africa and USSR observers in negotiations that culminated in the 1988 Moscow Summit, where Reagan and Gorbachev agreed to end Soviet aid to the MPLA and SWAPO upon the withdrawal of South African troops from Namibia. The agreement was formalized in the Brazzaville Protocol and the Tripartite Accord of December 22, 1988 (Thornberry 2004). Despite several returns to violence, the Tripartite Accord facilitated the withdrawal of South African troops by 1989. In November 1989, free and fair elections for the Namibian Constituent Assembly were held with a 98% voter turnout. Despite over $40 million in South African, SWAPO won 57% of the vote, followed by the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA) with 29% (African Election Database 2012). After adopting a constitution on February 9, 1990, Namibia became officially independent on March 21, 1990, with SWAPO liberation leader Sam Nujoma sworn in as President.⁷ The Tripartite Accord’s success was intertwined with the fall of apartheid and South Africa’s subsequent democratization (Wasserman 2010). Despite the history of South African occupation of Namibia, SWAPO and South Africa’s ruling African National Congress (ANC) party are largely supportive of one another, reflecting the fact that both were fighting the white South African apartheid system.

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⁶ The overlap between the Angolan civil war and the Namibian independence war is evident in the demographics of both states. Namibia hosts thousands of Angolan refugees (whose number peaked at 35,000 in 2001), 5,000+ Namibians live in Angola, and connections between northern Namibia and southern Angola are strong.

⁷ Despite this, Namibia did not achieve full territorial integrity until March 1, 1994, when Walvis Bay, a South African enclave on Namibia’s coast, was transferred to Namibia (Simon 1996).
3.3 The Political Economy of Independent Namibia

Social Context

Namibia is the second least densely populated country in the world, with approximately 2.2 million residents in an area of 824,292 square kilometers. Windhoek is Namibia’s capital, largest city, and economic and political center with a population of approximately 350,000. Only 38% of Namibia’s total population lives in cities, and its rate of urbanization is low for sub-Saharan Africa at 3.3% per year (World Bank 2012). As shown in Figure 3.3.1 below, Namibia’s population is concentrated in the four north-central, OvaMbo-dominated regions, as well as a few urban areas. Namibia’s low population density has presented challenges to the GRN, which has struggled to provide basic services to its diffuse population (Rothe 2011).

Figure 3.3.1 Population Density of Namibia (2013)

There are 32 distinct ethnic groups in Namibia. Namibia’s ethnic composition and distribution has not been reported by the GRN since independence, when the population was
800,000 lower than today. Although GRN data is not available, independent surveyors such as Michigan State’s Afrobarometer provide estimates. Table 3.3.1 below presents Namibia’s 1989 ethnic composition, while Appendix 2 provides data from the 2008 Afrobarometer survey. Ovambo peoples comprise over half of Namibia’s population (Rothe 2011). The Chinese population is the fastest growing ethnic group, estimated at 2% of the total population in 2008 (Alden, Large, and Oliveira 2008). With the exception of whites, the number of which has decreased significantly since independence, other ethnic groups are expected to have remained at roughly equal proportions to the 1989 numbers (Jauch and Muchena 2011).

**Table 3.3.1. Namibia’s Population by Ethnic Group (1989)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>Population Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ovambo</td>
<td>49.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kavango</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damara</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herero</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nama</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coloured</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caprivian</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baster</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Population categories are presented as they were measured in the 1989 census. Source: Malan (1998)*
Ethnologue provides the most accurate mapping of Namibia’s ethnic group distribution, as language is a trustworthy predictor of ethnicity. Figure 3.3.2 below presents a map of Namibia’s linguistic groups, distinguishing between Bantu (e.g. Owambo and Herero) and Khoisan (e.g. Nama and San) language groups. While the spatial diversification of Namibia’s ethnic groups has increased since independence due to the removal of South African homeland policies, northern Namibia remains dominated by Owambo peoples. Owambo support is the backbone of Namibia’s dominant SWAPO political party. Note that Owambo peoples are split by dialect in the map below; Owambo peoples form the overwhelming majority of residents in the sections surrounding the Etosha Pan in the north central portion of the map (areas 19, 11, and 13). San peoples are primarily encompassed within the !Xóõ (21) and Naro (18) sections.

**Figure 3.3.2. Map of Namibia’s Primary Linguistic Groups (2013)**

**Political System**

Namibia is a unitary republic with a bicameral legislature split between the National Council, for which two members are indirectly elected for each of Namibia’s 13 regions by directly-elected regional councilors, and the National Assembly, which consists of 72 members elected by popular vote in a party-list proportional system and six non-voting members appointed by Namibia’s President. Although the system was designed to ensure regional representation, the National Council has been consistently dominated by SWAPO, which has maintained large enough proportions of regional councilors in each of Namibia’s regions to ensure its National Council leadership. Namibia’s President is elected by direct popular vote for five-year terms, with a two-term limit. While most political power is centralized at the national level, social services are distributed through regional governments (shown in Fig. 3.3.3 below).

**Figure 3.3.3 Namibia’s Administrative Regions**

Namibia’s regions are closely allied with its ethnic groups, particularly in the north-central provinces (often referred to as the “Four O’s”), but the ethnic heterogeneity of all regions has increased since independence (Wasserman 2010). Thus, while there is significant overlap between Namibia’s regional and linguistic maps, they are far from identical.

Like neighboring Botswana, Namibia’s democracy is often praised as a ‘success story.’ Namibia is second only to Botswana in southern Africa in its record of multi-party elections (Lemon 2007). There is no minimum party threshold for representation in the Namibian National Assembly, a key factor in the formation of a multi-party state (Lemon 2007). Despite SWAPO’s dominance, registration and turnout are high and increased from 58.1% to 84.4% from 1999 to 2004 (Lemon 2007). Namibia is also one of only nine African countries classified as free by Freedom House (2012), and it was ranked sixth out of 53 African countries in the most recent iteration of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation’s good governance index (2012). Elections are widely regarded as free and fair, and political violence is negligible. Yet, despite this high praise, Namibians face political economic challenges in the one-party nature of the Namibian democracy (SWAPO has held the Presidency and a National Assembly majority since independence) and inequality. These issues are discussed in the following paragraphs.

**SWAPO Dominance**

Despite its high rankings by Freedom House and the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, there is little inter- or intra-party political competition in Namibia. Namibia is not alone in this regard; Botswana and South Africa are both labeled as democratic and yet are characterized by one-party dominance. SWAPO, the political descendent of the liberation movement, has won each of the three most recent Namibian presidential elections with at least 75% of the vote. Lemon (2007,

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8 Namibia’s ranking of 6th consisted of sub-rankings of 4th in safety and rule of law, 5th in participation and human rights, 9th in sustainable economic opportunity, and 10th in human development (Mo Ibrahim Foundation 2012).
846) has argued that “Namibia clearly exemplif[ies a] dominant party system in which existing opposition parties pose no serious challenge to the ruling parties.” In contrast to many African states, SWAPO’s dominance is not limited to a specific region; it won majorities in 11 of Namibia’s 13 regions in 2004 and received a plurality of the vote in the remaining two (Lemon 2007). It is also one of only three political parties, along with the Congress of Democrats (CoD) and the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA), that can claim to have multi-racial and multi-ethnic support (Chirawu 2003). Even within SWAPO, there is little contestation. Sam Nujoma, Namibia’s first President, is considered to be the ‘king-maker’ behind the election of current President Hifikepunye Pohamba and the SWAPO party (The Economist 2009).

SWAPO’s dominance comes at the cost of not only democracy but also progress on development and human rights issues. It also has implications for resource politics, as the questioning of the GRN’s policies is equated to the questioning of SWAPO’s leadership (and occasionally the liberation struggle itself; see Ramutsindela 2013). Unlike liberation struggles in Zimbabwe and South Africa, Namibia’s liberation struggle was not marked by internal division⁹, meaning that there is little precedent for political competition. Henning Melber, a Namibian scholar and long-time SWAPO member, argued in a 2011 interview that “Swapo has forfeited the moral high ground” and created a situation that “is toxic for democracy and is another step towards a kind of ‘democratic centralism’ that has as much to do with democracy as torture does with human rights.” Melber has been a prominent critic of the vertical and horizontal consolidation of power under Presidents Nujoma and Pohamba, including the recent Regional Councils Act which empowers Namibia’s President to appoint regional governors. Melber argues that SWAPO has used its liberation legacy both to do away with the equality that was at the

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⁹ Zimbabwe’s liberation movement was split between the ZANU and ZAPU factions, while South Africa’s liberation movement was split between the ANC and PAC factions (Schroeder 2011).
forefront of the struggle and to justify its continued self-enrichment (particularly through mineral extraction) at the expense of Namibians. “The only thing genuine about Swapo,” Melber argued, “is the arrogance of power, claiming that a liberation struggle requires [continual] sacrifices…If we are willing to close our eyes when it comes to human rights violations in our own ranks, we are no better than those we accuse of human rights violations…In contrast to South Africa, SWAPO has been seen even more so as the only recognized and legitimate ‘liberator,’ now ‘cashing in’ in both sense of the term…” (Melber 2011)

Similarly to South Africa’s ruling ANC (see Southall 2003), SWAPO’s liberation legacy has seemingly provided it with immunity from competition. As Wasserman (2010) noted in his study of Namibian media freedom, SWAPO opponents have been characterized as “unpatriotic” or even “anti-independence,” “apartheid apologists,” or “apartheid sympathizers,” regardless of racial identity. As a result, as has been argued by Ramutsindela (2013, A2) in the case of the ANC, SWAPO “is increasingly becoming an intolerant party partly as a result of its dominance – in terms of electoral victories and the monopoly of power over state resources – and the party’s belief that it has the inherent right to govern on the grounds of its struggle credentials.” As detailed in Chapter 5, Namibians have frequently characterized economic benefits from resource extraction as one example of SWAPO’s monopoly over state resources.

Beyond SWAPO, Namibia has thirteen political parties, which are presented along with their vote percentage in the most recent national election (2009) in Table 3.3.2 on the next page. The closest thing to an opposition party is the Rally for Democracy and Progress (RDP), which split off from SWAPO in 2007 and won approximately 11% of the vote in the 2009 legislative and presidential elections (African Elections Database 2011). As Namibia uses a proportional representation system for the National Assembly’s 72 seats, non-SWAPO parties are represented legislatively (although their actual power is minimal given SWPAO’s super-majority). The
highest proportion an opposition party has ever received was the 29% received by the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA) in the 1989 pre-independence elections.

Table 3.3.2. 2009 Legislative Election Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party Name</th>
<th>Votes</th>
<th>Vote Percentage</th>
<th>Seats Awarded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO)</td>
<td>602,580</td>
<td>75.27%</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rally for Democracy and Progress (RDP)</td>
<td>90,556</td>
<td>11.31%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA)</td>
<td>25,393</td>
<td>3.17%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Unity Democratic Organisation (NUDO)</td>
<td>24,422</td>
<td>3.05%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Democratic Front (UDF)</td>
<td>19,489</td>
<td>2.43%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All People's Party (APP)</td>
<td>10,795</td>
<td>1.35%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican Party (RP)</td>
<td>6,541</td>
<td>0.82%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congress of Democrats (COD)</td>
<td>5,375</td>
<td>0.67%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West Africa National Union (SWANU)</td>
<td>4,989</td>
<td>0.62%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitor Action Group (MAG)</td>
<td>4,718</td>
<td>0.59%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Party of Namibia (DPN)</td>
<td>1,942</td>
<td>0.24%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Namibia Democratic Movement for Change (NDMC)</td>
<td>1,770</td>
<td>0.22%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Democratic Party (NDP)</td>
<td>1,187</td>
<td>0.15%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communist Party (CP)</td>
<td>810</td>
<td>0.10%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: African Elections Database (2011)

Namibia’s next elections, both presidential and legislative, will be held in 2014. As President Pohamba has reached the presidential term-limit, a new president will be elected. Given SWAPO’s dominance, the presidential candidate selection at the SWAPO Annual Congress is almost covered more extensively in the press than the election itself, the outcome of which is essentially pre-determined. The 2014 candidate selection, held in late 2012, was more contentious than usual due to disputes within the SWAPO leadership. Hage Geingob, the former
SWAPO Vice President and Prime Minister\(^\text{10}\) as of November 2012, was ultimately selected by the SWAPO central committee. Geingob’s nomination was controversial due to his past challenge to former President Nujoma’s (Namibia’s “founding father”) support of then-candidate Pohamba in 2002, which resulted in Geingob being voted out of the SWAPO Politburo (its executive) (Shipanga 2012). The controversy over Geingob’s nomination is illustrative of the value placed on loyalty within SWAPO, a value that is similarly demonstrated by SWAPO supporters, who have often equated criticism of SWAPO to criticism of the liberation struggle. Despite the contentious nature of the 2014 selection process, it is likely that SWAPO will maintain its hold over both the Namibian Presidency and the National Assembly in 2014. Perhaps reflecting the SWAPO leadership’s desire to reach beyond its historical base in the Owambo ethnic group, Geingob is the first non-Owambo to be nominated by SWAPO for President. His victory would make him the first non-Owambo Namibian President.

**Inequality and Unemployment**

Inequality has been cited by organizations such as the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA) as the greatest challenge facing not only Namibia but the entire southern African region. At $4,700, Namibia’s gross domestic product (GDP) per capita is among the 10 highest in sub-Saharan Africa. Yet, while the World Bank has recently reclassified Namibia as a middle-income country, in large part due to mineral extraction, this classification belies one of the most unequal distributions of income in the world (Lemon 2007). The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) lists Namibia’s income inequality as the highest in the world, and it has the third highest Gini coefficient in the world at 63.9 (following the Seychelles and Comoros) according to the World Bank (2013). As Melber (2007, 112) argues, “the concept

\(^{10}\) Namibia’s Vice President and Prime Minister also serve in the Cabinet. Cabinet members, including the heads of various government ministries, are appointed by the President from among National Assembly members.
of the average Namibian clearly does not exist. The notion of an average income becomes rather meaningless when half the population survives on approximately 10 percent of such fictive average income.” For example, the UNDP ranks Namibia at 128 out of 186 countries in its Human Development Index (HDI), slightly behind South Africa and Botswana and the tenth highest among African countries. Literacy in Namibia is among the highest in Africa at 89% (UNDP 2012). Yet, this picture changes after accounting for inequality. In the UNDP’s inequality-adjusted human development index (IHDI), which measures losses in human development resulting from inequalities in health, education, and income, Namibia’s HDI decreases by 43.5%. This is the world’s largest inequality-based decline between HDI and IHDI.

While inequality and absolute poverty have decreased since Namibia’s independence, both remain persistently high. Namibia’s 2008 Labor Force Survey indicated that one in four Namibian households live at or below the poverty level, versus two-thirds at independence (World Bank 1991). Yet, approximately 34.9% of Namibians live on less than $1 per day, and 55.8% live on less than $2 per day. Inequality is persistent at multiple scales, not only between urban and rural areas but also within the same neighborhoods in Windhoek, reflecting the hyper-differentiation associated with the combination of globalization and economic liberalization (Grant and Nijman 2003). As The Economist (2011a) describes it, “[i]t is much the same elsewhere in Africa, but in Namibia the difference [between the rich and the poor] is more extreme.” High unemployment, estimated at 51.2% by the GRN, aggravates this situation. Unemployment is particularly high among young Namibians: the 2008 Labor Force Survey found that 83.6% of Namibians between ages 15 and 19 are unemployed. A full 66% of those under 25 indicated that they had never had a paid job, and 72% of all unemployed individuals had been jobless for more than two years.
Namibia’s inequality can be linked to the legacies of colonialism and apartheid, particularly in land and business ownership. Namibia’s white minority (approximately 6% of its population) owns half of its arable land. While agriculture accounts for only 9% of Namibia’s GDP, it is the primary income source for 41% of households (Namibia Labor Force Survey 2008). Land reform has been debated over the past five years as a potential solution to inequality, but the ownership picture has changed little since independence (Friedman 2011). While political power rests with the Ovambo-dominated SWAPO, Namibia’s economy is still dominated by white Namibians, particularly in agriculture, tourism, and manufacturing (Rothe 2011). The GRN has sought to address racial inequalities through Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) policies, which have been mildly successful in addressing racial inequalities, including increasing the number of black Namibian millionaires. It has also spurred the growth of a strong black middle class (Jauch and Muchena 2011). Yet, while BEE has increased the number of black Namibians employed in skilled jobs, particularly in the civil service, and the number of black-owned businesses, there is also evidence that it has primarily benefitted Namibia’s political-economic elite, especially those associated with SWAPO (Gaomab II 2005). Namibia’s Employment Equity Commission, while supportive of the policy overall, has noted that BEE has essentially only benefitted the aspiring black middle and upper classes and has benefitted men far more than women (EEC 2009 and 2010). In a 2011 interview, Melber argued that,

“In Namibia, BEE is almost exclusively a system of rent-seeking through the proclaimed ‘Namibianisation’ of resources. This translates into privatization with some local beneficiaries sharing crumbs of the cake with the same or similar external actors than before.”

Thus, while BEE has strengthened Namibia’s black middle and upper classes, it does not appear to have improved the lives of the majority of poor Namibians.

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11 This was announced as one of BEE’s key goals by the Namibia Chamber of Commerce and Industry in 2003.
Finally, inequality is aggravated by the ineffectiveness of the GRN’s social service provision. For example, while the GRN has publicly blamed the education system for high unemployment, using such arguments to increase education funding, education remains highly unequal, with private schools dramatically out-performing public schools (Jauch and Muchena 2011). Beyond education, the GRN provides a monthly pension of approximately $55 to Namibians over age 60, but the average life expectancy of 52 means that many citizens do not live long enough receive this benefit (The Economist 2011a). Namibian AIDS orphans are eligible to receive approximately $22 in aid each month, but there is no state support for the 15% of adult Namibians with HIV/AIDS (the fifth highest rate in the world). HIV/AIDS’ deadliness in Namibia, particularly among low-income individuals, is aggravated by the prevalence of tuberculosis, of which Namibia has the second highest rate in the world (WHO 2011).

**Dependence on South Africa**

Finally, before moving on to extraction, it is important to emphasize the extent of Namibia’s continued economic dependency on South Africa nearly 15 years after independence. A full 75% of Namibia’s imports come from South Africa, and 32% of Namibia’s exports are to South Africa. South Africa’s dominance cuts across every sector, from agriculture and industry to tourism and retail (AEO 2012). As Jauch and Muchena (2011) argue, South Africa’s dominance of Namibia has “severely limited the development of an indigenous capitalist class…the bulk of the black working class was situated around the mining and fishing towns, employed by South African businesses at the semi-skilled or unskilled levels (190).” Even monetary policy is dominated by South Africa, as the Namibian dollar (N$) has been tied to the South African Rand since independence. While the duration of this chapter discusses the

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12 This is despite the fact that education funding is the largest sector in the GRN budget, and education is free and compulsory for Namibians under age 16.
importance of South African businesses in Namibia’s mining sector, the influences of South African businesses and the South African government upon Namibia are not limited to mining.

3.4 Extraction in the Post-Independence Namibian Political Economy

Pred and Watts argue that “…how things develop depends on where they develop, on what has been historically sedimented there, on the social and spatial structures that are already in place (1992, 11).” Debates over resource ownership and foreign investment in Namibia cannot be fully appreciated without considering resource extraction’s historical role in the Namibian political economy. Following on the historical context of the previous sections, this section details the role of resource extraction in Namibia’s political economy at and after independence.

Prior to independence, SWAPO called mining giant De Beers “an unmitigated form of exploitation” (Kempton and Du Preez, 1997, 585). The 1976 SWAPO Constitution promised to work for the “oppressed and exploited people of Namibia,” including Namibians employed in South African mines. “In fulfilling its vanguard role,” it proclaimed, “SWAPO organizes, unites, inspires, orientates and leads the broad masses of the working Namibian people in the struggle for national and social liberation (quoted in SWAPO 1981, 257).” As negotiations progressed however, and particularly as the USSR, a key supporter of SWAPO, weakened, SWAPO’s political goals turned from a proletarian revolution to simply independence. Anti-mining sentiments largely faded from influence after independence, as mining accounted for 60% of Namibia’s exports and 40% of state revenue and was thus critical to state revenues (Tapscott 1995). Needing to support the nascent new government and under pressure from the World Bank the SWAPO-led government re-affirmed mining as an important source of state revenue. Instead of ending the “unmitigated…exploitation” of mining, SWAPO switched its focus to using

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13 Today mining accounts for 50% of export earnings but only 7% of GRN revenues.
“mining [revenue] to diversify production in other sectors, to decrease the economic imbalance, break dependence on South Africa and give Namibia a better chance for development…A greater part of the mining sector’s profits should be reinvested here, for diversification and economic growth.” (Ben Amathila, SWAPO Economics Secretary, 1989; quoted in Jauch 2011)

Thus, Namibia came to reflect the “typical neoliberal state” described by Harvey (2005, 70), which “tend(s) to side with a good business climate as opposed to the collective rights…of labour.” The GRN passed a foreign investment act protecting foreign investments from expropriation and implemented relatively low tax rates on mining. These policies led to Namibia’s classification as the 42nd best country in the world and the 5th best in Africa in which to do business in the World Bank’s 2007 Doing Business report. The Nielson Company, which conducts market research, praised Namibia in its 2012 Emerging Markets Insight Survey Report, noting that its “economy, political stability and per capita income have consistently ranked among the best in Africa” and calling it the “seventh most business friendly country in Africa.”

Upon independence, as well as today, the vast majority of mining operations in Namibia were foreign owned (Tapscott 1995). These corporations included Consolidated Diamond Mines (South Africa), Tsumeb Corporation Ltd. (a now-defunct syndicate of British, South African, and American companies), DeBeers (South Africa), and Rio Tinto (UK). As is the case today, Namibia’s minerals were almost universally exported in raw form, with little value-added production (through diamond cutting, etc.) (Mbuende 1986). In terms of employment, despite its contributions to GDP and government revenue, mining accounted for only 5% of total employment at independence (Jauch and Muchena 2011). Further liberalization of the Namibian economy thus merely hastened the transfer of mineral profits from Namibia to the states hosting international mining companies, as was the case in countless other examples of the opening of economies to foreign investment in the 1990s (see Mitchell 2001 for one example).
The political economy of extraction has had consequences not only for Namibians but also for the GRN. As the following section details, the GRN has found itself increasingly subject to critique for its failure to use mineral revenues to reduce inequality and improve Namibians’ living conditions outside of a small, well-connected elite. As a result, extraction in Namibia is about far more than mere minerals; it is intertwined with debates regarding in whose service the state should work. As is detailed in the rest of this chapter, the GRN finds itself toeing a difficult line between needing to alleviate rising public discontent about inequality through policies such as the 2011 Strategic Minerals Policy and needing to maintain partnerships with international capital that ensure continued GDP growth and the enrichment its political-economic elite.

**Economic Dependency and Implications for Government Revenues**

Namibia’s economy has grown by a yearly average of 4.2% since independence, largely due to its status as the fourth largest exporter of non-fuel minerals in Africa (The Economist 2011a). Minerals total approximately 50% of all Namibian export earnings (Odada and Kakujaha-Matundu 2008) and 50% of Namibia’s foreign exchange earnings (LAC 2009). Namibia’s mining sector grew by 18.8% in 2012, in large part due to increased commodity prices and increased uranium production. Its mineral resources include diamonds, uranium, zinc, gold, copper, pyrite, base metals, and semi-precious stones. Namibia’s diamonds are alluvial, making them of gem quality. Namibia also sits upon an extensive uranium deposit and is the world’s fourth largest uranium producer (Weidlich 2011). Uranium is expected to account for 15% of Namibia’s GDP by 2015, replacing diamonds as Namibia’s largest export commodity due to rising demand from China and India (AEO 2012). Two of Namibia’s uranium mines – Rossing (the world’s largest) and Langer Heinrich – alone account for approximately 10% of global uranium mining (Chamber of Mines 2007).
Resource extraction in Namibia fits Ferguson’s (2006) definition of an enclave. There are few linkages between the mineral sector and the rest of the economy; the vast majority of profits are returned to the home countries of mining companies (Conde and Kallis 2012). While employment in mining increased in the early-to-mid 2000s (see Figure 3.4.1 below), it has never returned to the employment levels at independence, when mining was more labor intensive than it is today. Only 1.8% of Namibians were employed in mining sector in 2012, down from 4% at independence. Table 3.4.1 on the next page presents Namibian employment by sector in 2012.

Despite the fact that mining accounts for nearly 50% of export earnings, it represents only 7% of GRN revenues (AEO 2012). This is largely due to the lack of value-added production and Namibia’s comparatively low tax rates. Furthermore, the Namibian economy’s dependence on mining for export revenue makes it vulnerable to commodity price swings. In 2011, for example, Namibia’s mining sector contracted by 7.9%, due to a 22.1% reduction in uranium, copper, and zinc mining and stone quarrying (Namibia Labor Force Survey 2012). The following year, mining grew 11.2% on the basis of an 18.8 % increase in uranium, copper, and zinc revenues. Such dramatic commodity swings make economic planning incredibly difficult.
The gap between mining export earnings and government revenues has made resource ownership and revenue distribution a prominent topic of debate. In a media statement last year, Minister of Mines and Energy Katali called this situation “disturbing” and further argued that “the export of Namibian minerals in raw-form denies the citizens of the country the full benefit of the value chain. Namibia has, therefore, become an Eldorado of speculators and other quick-fix would be mineral explorers and mining developers. It is for this reason among many others, that Namibia’s Gini-Coefficient remains skewed.” (Katali 2011, 3, italics added for emphasis)

As the above quote indicates, debates over extraction in Namibia are made even more politically salient by its inequality. Civil society leaders and citizens alike have echoed Furnivall’s (1948) concerns about the disconnect between growth and quality of life improvements. While Namibia

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**Table 3.4.1. Namibian Employment by Sector (2012)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>% of Employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, forestry and fishing</td>
<td>27.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale and retail trade</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private households</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation and food service</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public administration, defense, and compulsory social security</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative and support services</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport and storage</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human health and social work</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial and insurance activities</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mining and Quarrying</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.8</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other service activities</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, scientific and technical activities</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information and communication</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity and water industries</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts, entertainment, and recreation</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real estate</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other/don't know</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

has become highly integrated into the world economy and has posted impressive growth rates in
the eyes of international institutions, this growth has not improved most Namibians’ quality of
life. As a result, some Namibians view the GRN as not doing enough to address inequality. An
October 2010 SMS to *The Namibian* exemplified such sentiments, arguing that “[t]he biggest
challenge for the Namibian government is the equal distribution of resources. For years now,
government has failed to implement this exercise and this is the sole mandate for anyone in
power (*The Namibian* 2010).” Facing pressures from citizens to ensure that mineral revenues
benefit citizens and pressures from international institutions and corporations to continue
Namibia’s favorable investment environment, the GRN is walking a narrow line of negotiation.
The state’s inability to implement the 2011 Strategic Minerals Policy, as discussed later in this
chapter, is one example of this tenuous position between labor and capital.

*Context of Resource Policy in Sub-Saharan Africa*

The GRN is not alone in the dilemmas it faces over resource extraction and foreign
investment. Ernst and Young reported that 25 countries, many of which were in Africa,
announced plans to increase the government share of resource revenues in 2011 (as reported in
*The Economist* 2012). There have been substantial movements among sub-Saharan African
governments, and southern African governments in particular, to impose tighter restrictions (both
financially and in terms of regulation) on mineral extraction in recent years. South Africa, for
example, is considering implementing a 50% windfall tax on mining profits and a 50% capital
gains tax on the sale of prospecting rights (*The Economist* 2012). Zambia raised its royalty rate
on copper profits from 3% to 6% in 2012. Ghana plans to raise its current tax rate of 25% on
mining companies to 35% and implement a windfall tax of an additional 10%, which the new
policy argues is “[for] the good of the country” (*The Economist* 2012). Zimbabwe’s
indigenization policy, which is scheduled to be imposed retroactively, requires that 51% of any mining company must be owned by Zimbabweans (The Economist 2012).

Namibia is also not alone in southern Africa in its combination of mineral wealth and inequality. South Africa’s Gini coefficient is the fourth highest in the world at 63.1 (versus Namibia at 63.9), followed by Botswana at fifth and Angola at seventh. Zambia and Lesotho round out the top twenty. Both the South African and Zambian policies mentioned above have been promoted as ways to address inequality. Debswana, the 50-50 joint venture between De Beers and Botswana, is often cited as an example of successful state-corporation profit-sharing. Through this partnership, diamond production accounts for approximately 33% of Botswana’s GDP, half of government revenues, and approximately 75% of Botswana’s export earnings (Falk et al. 2008). Similar partnerships have been discussed in South Africa and Zambia. Yet, while the Debswana partnership has increased the government’s share of mining revenues, it has not significantly lowered Botswana’s income inequality.

3.5 Extraction Projects, Actors, and Affiliations

The vast majority of the 66 companies who hold exclusive prospecting licenses (EPLs) in Namibia are foreign-owned, with most of those companies headquartered in Australia, Canada, China, South Africa, and the UK (Weidlich 2011). Historically, South Africa has been the dominant investor in Namibia’s mining sector, particularly in diamonds (Links 2012). Germany, Canada, the UK, the U.S., and Australia have also been historically active, the later particularly in uranium extraction. In recent years, however, China, Brazil, and Russia have all become more involved in Namibian mining. While companies from these countries have multiple interests, patterns have emerged: Brazilian investment has been concentrated in oil exploration, Russian companies are predominantly involved in natural gas, and Chinese entities are most heavily
involved in copper and uranium. China’s China Guangdong Nuclear Power Corp (CGNPC), for example, recently announced that it will begin mining operations by 2015 at Husab, one of the largest uranium mines in the world. Table 3.5.1 below provides a partial list of mining and drilling companies active in Namibia and their countries of ownership.

**Table 3.5.1. Partial List of Mining and Drilling Companies Active in Namibia (2012)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country of Ownership</th>
<th>Company</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Bannerman Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BHP Billiton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Metals Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paladin Resources Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>Petrobras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CP Cimento</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HRT Participacoes em Petroleo SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Forsys Metals Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Helio Resource Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teal Exploration and Mining</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Xemplar Energy Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yale Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>China Guangdong Nuclear Power Corp (CGNPC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chinashine H.F. Economic and Trade Co Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jiangsu Eastern China Non-ferrous Metal Investment Holding Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taurus Minerals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>Areva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Itochu Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>Atomredmetzoloto (ARMZ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gazprom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Renova Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Technabexport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vneshtorgbank (VTB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>Aveng Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>De Beers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kumba Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Petroleum, Oil and Gas Corporation of South Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>Holcim S.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>Chariot Oil and Gas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rio Tinto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tullow Oil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weatherly International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>Hunt Oil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author
Namibia has become a significant player in the global ‘uranium rush’ over the past ten years due to its relatively lax regulations and low mining taxes. As of 2012, the GRN had granted 66 uranium prospecting licenses (Conde and Kallis 2012). Namibia is currently the fourth largest uranium producer in the world, with 5% of global reserves (WNA 2011) and three to four new mines slated to open in the next five years (MME 2010). Increasing investment in Namibia’s uranium industry is intertwined with the global political economy of resources as well as discourses of national security that have influenced Western (particularly American) policies toward uranium over the past 15 years. Increases in uranium mining over the past decade in countries such as Niger and Namibia, for example, have occurred simultaneously with increasing security concerns regarding the uranium commodity chain. As a result, foreign governments have increasingly challenged the GRN’s sovereignty in managing extraction (see Hecht 2009).

3.6 Contemporary Debates over Resource Law

As briefly described above, the post-independence GRN has taken a largely pro-foreign investment position. In a speech at the 2011 Namibian Investment Forum, Namibian Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry Tjekero Tweya argued that foreign investment “will assist Namibian companies in becoming more competitive, as well as for Namibia to take its place among the industrialised nations as per Vision 2030 objectives.” This section details Namibia’s current resource policies before turning to the proposed 2011 Strategic Minerals Policy.

Minerals (Prospecting and Mining) Act of 1992

Mining in Namibia is governed according to the Minerals (Prospecting and Mining) Act of 1992. Under this law, the GRN holds initial rights to all prospecting in Namibia. The Minister of Mines and Energy, as the representative of the GRN, has the power to grant mineral licenses. These licenses can take the following four forms:
• **Exclusive Prospecting License (EPL):** entitles a company to exclusive land rights for up to 1000km² for an initial period of two years, with the possibility to extend the license up to two times for periods of two years each. EPLs are granted only for the license-specified minerals; multiple companies may be granted licenses to mine different minerals on the same land simultaneously.

• **Mineral Deposit Retention License (MDRL):** entitles an exploration company to hold the rights to significant deposits that are discovered under an EPL but that cannot be developed at the time of the initial discovery. MDRLs are initially granted for 5 years but can be renewed for unlimited 2 year periods.

• **Mining License (ML):** entitles a company to exclusive rights to mine an area for up to 25 years, with possible renewal for an additional 15 years. Holders of MLs have the exclusive right to approve of any mines to be developed in the same area as their license.

• **Reconnaissance License (RL):** entitles companies to conduct exploration for minerals for six months, with the possibility of a six-month extension.

Small-scale mining can also occur through Mining Claims (granted only to Namibians) or Non-Exclusive Prospecting Licenses (NEPLs), which allow individuals to conduct prospecting activities on any land (including privately-owned land) except for closed areas such as game reserves. The four corporate license types above, however, are the most applicable to foreign involvement. Along with Namibia’s political stability and its low mining taxes, the Minerals Act of 1992 is one of the key reasons for Namibia’s appeal to foreign investors. It is supported by the Namibian Chamber of Mines, for example, which argues that the law

> “contribute[s] to the creation of an environment that attracts both foreign and local investment in mining...[and] to the development of opportunities for the Namibian people to benefit from their country’s mineral resources in line with the Government’s policy on socio-economic upliftment.” (2013).

**Strategic Minerals Policy of 2011**

On April 20, 2011, Namibia’s Minister of Mines and Energy announced that the Namibian Cabinet had “declared certain minerals as controlled and high value minerals or strategic minerals.” This policy, named the 2011 Strategic Minerals Policy (henceforth referred
to as the “SMP;” see Appendix 1 for the full statement), would ensure that future licenses for “strategic” minerals (including uranium, diamonds, coal, gold, copper, and rare earth metals) would only be issued to state-owned companies, which could then pursue partnerships with private entities. It would not affect existing licenses. Oil and natural gas are not currently included in the SMP, but the GRN has included an option to add additional resources. While multiple state entities could be created to own mineral licenses, only one state-owned enterprise, Epangelo (created on July 8, 2008), would likely be involved in the immediate future. The SMP has not yet been implemented by the GRN, but it has catalyzed substantial debate.

In his announcement of the SMP, Minister of Mines and Energy Katali declared it to be a necessary step “towards the realization of Vision 2030,” Namibia’s strategic plan. Katali is not alone in this argument; the Namibian Cabinet cited mining speculation as the primary reason why exclusive mining rights should be granted to state-owned enterprises (Duddy 2011). The GRN has thus framed the SMP as key to promoting development (the primary goal of Vision 2030). More specifically, the GRN’s rationale has been described in three primary ways, as illustrated in Katali’s statement: mining does not contribute its “fair share” to the GRN, the lack of value-added mining exports and the speculative nature of mining hurts Namibians, and increased government involvement in mining is an opportunity for Namibians and private corporations alike. Each of these framings is detailed in the following paragraphs.

In describing mining’s (lack of) contributions to GRN revenues, Minister Katali echoed many of the concerns described in the previous section, arguing that,

“[t]he [mining] sector accounts for 25 percent of national income and 15 percent of gross domestic product. However, the mining sector’s contribution to government revenue is not commensurate with its share to the gross domestic

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14 For the policy to be legally enforceable, the Minerals Act of 1992 needs to be amended. At the moment, it appears that there is a lack of political will to proceed with such an amendment. Thus, while the 2011 Strategic Minerals Policy is being applied as a “guideline” for minerals development, it is not legally enforceable.
product…This means that Namibia benefits from its natural endowment mainly through rent-seeking. This situation is untenable.”

While Namibia’s mineral wealth is contributing significantly to GDP, Katali argues that its contribution is “not commensurate with its share to the gross domestic product.” His description of the situation as “untenable” “rent-seeking” justifies the GRN’s efforts to pursue a new policy.

Second, Katali argues that Namibia’s mining industry is overrun with foreign investors who have bought up mining rights for exploitation rather than for development. According to Katali, the GRN’s failure to regulate foreign investment has made Namibia a victim of short-sighted investment that increases inequality. The result is “a disturbing phenomenon” that finances speculation “on the back of the Namibian government…without government deriving any benefits through sales taxes, values added taxes, or stamp duties (Katali 2011).” In this way, the SMP can be seen as a political maneuver to address pressure on the GRN about inequality without admitting to the state’s complicity in that inequality. As framed by the SMP, the root cause of Namibia’s inequality is not GRN’s policies or the composition of Namibia’s economy; it’s the “Eldorado” effect.” The GRN is thus framed as the solution rather than the problem.

Finally, Katali describes the SMP as a “win-win partnership” for both private companies and Namibians. According to Katali (2011), the goals of such partnerships are

“a shared growth in the mining sector; a shared risk in exploration, mine development and mining business; making the government and the people of Namibian [sic] meaningful participants in the mining business rather than rent-seekers; ensuring a sense of ownership of natural endowment by the people of Namibia; creating conditions for individual Namibians to participate when at the appropriate time the State-owned company shall sell some of its shares to private investors; and ensuring that when private investors sell their shares government shall at all times be in the picture.”

As the final element of Minister Katali’s statement suggests, one of the key goals of the SMP is to increase Namibians’ involvement (through ownership and potentially direct participation) in
mining. Yet, Katali argues that the policy will be beneficial because the GRN will share the risk of mining exploration, perhaps seeking to pre-empt accusations of resource nationalism. Katali does not elaborate on other potential benefits for private corporations in his statement, but phrases such as “win-win,” “mutually beneficial,” and “partnership” are prevalent throughout.

The GRN’s movement toward increasing the state’s role in extraction could be interpreted as a re-visiting of pre-independence political positions. Yet, through his emphasis a “win-win” partnership for Namibians and corporations alike, Minister Katali makes it clear that the SMP should not be interpreted as anti-foreign investment. Instead, Katali appears to be toeing the fine line between the demands of labor and capital upon the GRN, or at least providing the appearance of doing so (a situation which is certainly not unique to Namibia). Katali’s call to hold mining corporations accountable without discouraging foreign investment has been echoed in subsequent speeches by GRN officials. In a 2012 speech celebrating the opening of the Namibian Phosphate Head Office, for example, Deputy Minister of Mines and Energy Willem Isaacks argued that the GRN is actively seeking foreign investment in mining but will not tolerate “irresponsible mining operations” that threaten Namibians or the environment. Thus, GRN officials have made it clear that foreign investment is still desired as a means for pursuing growth. Due to the weakness of Namibia’s political opposition parties, it is unlikely that SWAPO will face a successful challenge on this issue at the ballot box in the near future.

**Reactions to the Strategic Minerals Policy**

The SMP was met with both vehement support and opposition in the media and in business and diplomatic circles. While its supporters approved of adjusting the distribution of resource revenues in the GRN’s favor, its opponents described it as likely to scare away foreign investment and/or a step toward resource nationalization. In my analysis of over 300 articles and
250 SMSes (text messages) in the Namibian media, I found that supporters of the policy frequently expressed their support not only for increasing the GRN’s role in extraction but also for the underlying goal of reducing inequality. One SMS commentator, for example, argued that the policy corrected a situation where “[f]or too long the benefit belonged to foreigners while Namibians go hungry (The Namibian 2011c).” The Namibian Council of Churches, an influential interfaith NGO, expressed its support for the “stricter conditions attached to licenses for exploration of natural resources” under the policy, which it deemed necessary “to ensure Namibians draw more direct benefits from the extractive sectors (The Namibian 2011b).”

Like supporters, opponents of the SMP rarely questioned the state versus private dichotomy set up by Katali’s announcement. Instead, they largely focused criticism on the SMP’s implications for foreign investment. One SMS commentator, who self-identified as having an economics background, argued that “Namibia…shot itself in the foot” (The Namibian 2011d), while the Namibian Chamber of Mines put out a detailed press statement noting that “[t]he Chamber of Mines is acutely aware of the impact that such uncertainty [regarding the role of the state in extraction] has on the global investment community’s excellent regard for Namibia as an investment destination…Government needs to be cautioned against policy measures which will deny explorers and developers the ability to raise funding on capital markets…Given how speculative early exploration activities prove to be, the further danger is that new deposits will not be found in the absence of foreign risk capital, hindering the development of Namibia’s natural resources for decades.” (as reported by Duddy 2011)

Others went farther, equating the SMP with outright nationalization or the first step on the road to nationalization. Opposition Rally for Democracy and Progress (RDP) Secretary of Energy and Mineral Resources Martin Heit, for example, argued that the policy represented the “first step to nationalization of minerals, similar to steps taken by the Zanu-PF government in Zimbabwe (The Namibian 2011e).” Western media sources also joined in on the debate, overwhelmingly in
opposition to the policy. A 2011 editorial in *The Australian*, for example, noted that Namibia would have been placed “well down the list of probable/possibles [for] an upset in Africa” but now appeared vulnerable to nationalization pressures and concomitant instability.

These negative reactions have pushed the GRN to defend the SMP against accusations of resource nationalism, but such reactions were far from unanticipated by GRN officials. In his statement announcing the SMP, Minister Katali (2011) explicitly addressed resource nationalization, arguing that such claims are based upon racial stereotypes. “The alarmist reports of ‘nationalization,’” he proclaimed, “are red herring! In fact they are based on African stereotypes as neither the Cabinet decision nor my budget statement in Parliament mentioned nationalization.” Katali went on to question what he expected would be divergent portrayals of a Namibian state-owned company versus a Chinese state-owned company. “What is the difference,” he argued, “between a Chinese state-owned company and a Namibia [sic] state-owned company. International investment perception is still crowded by racial stereotypes!”

Indeed, articles expressing concerns with resource nationalization in African states have frequently appeared in business-oriented news sources such as *The Economist* and the *Financial Times* over the past several years, including a piece cleverly titled “Wish you were mine” in the February 2012 issue of *The Economist* that cited the SMP as an example of resource nationalism.

Regardless of whether concerns about resource nationalization are the racialized “red herring” that Katali described, such rhetoric has proven powerful in shaping reactions to the SMP. Opposition to the policy in the business and diplomatic communities led the GRN to rhetorically backtrack, re-affirming its commitment to the capitalist model of resource-based development and promising that the GRN will continue to cooperate with mining corporations. This backtracking has been portrayed by mining stakeholders, as well as some government officials.

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15 It is not clear whether Katali was referring to a specific event or speaking in the abstract.
officials, as a necessity due to the costs of mineral extraction. As a result, the National Assembly has not hosted a vote on the SMP, and SWAPO leadership appears to have put it near the bottom of its priorities in the lead-up to the 2014 elections (although, as considered in the conclusion, perhaps it was never truly a priority). Thus, a policy seemingly designed to mitigate public dissatisfaction with inequality and resource management appears to have been abandoned in favor of preserving the delicate relationships between the GRN and mining interests.

3.7. Conclusions

Mineral extraction politics in Namibia are situated within the country’s history of colonialism, racism, occupation, and proxy wars, as well as in the neoliberal economic context of its transition to independence. These legacies continue to underscore the political economy of extraction, particularly the GRN’s positions on inequality and ownership. Politics of extraction are also intertwined with both localized power inequalities, as in the case of politically-marginalized groups within Namibia (i.e. non-Owambo groups), and global power inequalities, such as those dictated by terms of trade and colonialism. Through policies such as the SMP, the GRN has attempted to shift the private-public balance of power in favor of the state, applying the rhetoric of “Namibian resources for Namibians.” The state’s attempt to increase its power through the SMP has not come to fruition, but the underlying questions of resource ownership and revenue distribution remain unresolved.

It is noteworthy that while the SMP emphasizes strengthening Namibians’ ownership of their own resources, there is little discussion of how this shift will benefit communities that are most effected by mineral extraction (beyond Katali’s mention of “creating conditions for individual Namibians to participate when at the appropriate time”). Instead, agency is placed with the state; Katali’s argument centers on how the SMP will shift the balance of power, and
access to revenues, between the “Namibian people” and private corporations, with the state acting as the mechanism through which this shift will be accomplished. Although the Namibian situation is distinct from the relationships between aid and the state described by Ferguson (1994) in Lesotho, the SMP can similarly be interpreted as a mechanism that strengthens the state’s authority and makes its use of resource extraction as a tool for the benefit of Namibians appear beyond question. Katali’s statement centers the debate on who should control resources and their concomitant revenues in order to achieve a goal of more equitable economic development. The politics of resource extraction are limited to state versus corporate ownership and control (e.g. should the state or a corporation own resources?); the GRN’s framing of the policy has limited openings for questions regarding why resource extraction is an appropriate tool to improve Namibians’ lives and why state ownership is the best way to maximize the benefits of resource extraction for Namibians.

Despite the GRN’s backpedaling and the lack of legislative action on the SMP since 2011, it continues to be a topic of debate among officials, media outlets, and companies with mining interests (see Chamber of Mines 2011 and Deloitte 2011 and 2012). This debate has been fueled in part by more specific concerns regarding foreign investment, particularly from China, in extraction as well as other industries. As evidenced in the analysis that follows, this debate illustrates that, while the SMP may not be a political priority, Namibians are noting and responding to the ways in which foreign investment is affecting their lives. In the following chapters, I analyze Namibians’ opinions of foreign involvement using public opinion data and media reports to evaluate how Namibians’ opinions of foreign involvement differ depending on the particular foreign actor in question and how Namibians are discursively responding to increasing foreign involvement.
Chapter 4: Resource-Based Development? Media Portrayals of Foreign Involvement and the Namibian State

Building upon the previous chapter’s analysis of the political economy of resource extraction and foreign involvement in Namibia, in this chapter I analyze portrayals of foreign involvement in the Namibian media. I begin with an argument for the usefulness of a critical geopolitics framework for such an analysis, focusing on the need for critical geopolitics to incorporate non-Global North perspectives. This is followed by a critical analysis of the state of the Namibian media and an overview of methods before moving on to an analysis of portrayals of foreign involvement in the Namibian media.

4.1 Approach and Methods

This chapter and the subsequent chapter apply the method of textual analysis and the approach of critical geopolitics. My decision to apply textual analysis is based upon my desire to understand how language is used by Namibians (elites and non-elites alike) as a tool to shape the debate over foreign involvement in resource extraction. Understandings of foreign involvement are produced not only through material experiences but also through the discourses and scalar politics surrounding it. The ways in which language is used as a tool to promote conceptions of identity and to empower individuals is encompassed by two of Gee’s (1999) six key purposes of language: the creation of socio-culturally-situated identities (such as “us” versus “them” identities, which is applicable to the majority of portrayals of China in the Namibian media) and the attribution of political power to individuals (such as the insertion of Namibians as politically powerful individuals in the face of foreign involvement and government mismanagement). While ethnographic methods (see Megoran 2006) would likely provide greater insight into how discourses are embodied by Namibians and a classical discourse analysis would have enabled me to analyze how discourse regarding foreign involvement has changed over time, textual analysis...
provides details on how foreign involvement is portrayed and which portrayals are most common. Thus, textual analysis best fits my analytical goal of engaging with Namibian opinions as opposed to trying to fit them into a particular theoretical lens.

Furthermore, this analysis draws on the approach of critical geopolitics. Critical geopolitics is a particularly useful framework through which to challenge simplistic portrayals of foreign involvement as “neo-colonialism” or as purely a “development opportunity.” Critical geopolitics has also proven to be a useful tool in considering how state-building and state processes interact with globalization, development, and foreign investment (Carmody and Taylor 2010; Power and Mohan 2010; Carmody 2011). Furthermore, engaging with critical geopolitics provides me with the opportunity to follow through on critiques of this approach as West-centric.

In Namibia, discourses relating to global powers revolve around the political economy of foreign investment in extractive resources as well as in other economic sectors. As Slater (2008), Power (2010), and Sharp (2011) have argued, there is a substantial need for critical geopolitics to analyze the performance of global power from the perspective of actors in the global South. This thesis aims to take up the call to research of Slater (2008), Power (2010), and Sharp (2011) by analyzing the critical geopolitics of foreign involvement in resource extraction in Namibia.

**The Critical Geopolitics Approach**

The contemporary critical geopolitics approach emerged out of the post-structural transition in the late 1980s and early 1990s as a power-focused bridge between international relations and geography (Power and Campbell 2010). The first English work in geography that explicitly defined geopolitics in terms of power relations was O’Tuathail’s “Language and the
Nature of the New Geopolitics,” published in 1986. This piece was followed by Dalby’s examinations of security and American geopolitics discourses (1990, 1991) and O’Tuathail and Agnew’s (1992) “Geopolitics and Discourse: Practical Geopolitical Reasoning in American Foreign Policy.” With a foundation in post-structuralism and political economy, Agnew, Dalby, and O’Tuathail sought to make academic geopolitics more than merely a tool for foreign policy-makers or a descriptive study of international affairs (Dodds 2001). Instead, through “critical geopolitics,” they aimed to both critique the historical influence of classical geopoliticians such as Mackinder and Ratzel (and later their neoclassical subscribers like Barnett and Kaplan) and to develop a “mode of interrogating and exposing the grounds for knowledge production” (Power and Campbell 2010, 243). Critical geopolitics’ broad mission remains to show how discourses, practices, and representations of global power take shape and are re-created through discourse relating to states, cultures, and individuals (O’Tuathail 2009).

**Strengths of the Critical Geopolitics Approach**

Taking a critical geopolitics approach in my textual analysis enables me to examine the ways in which understandings of foreign involvement in Namibia are intertwined with constructions of difference, including the designation of “friends” and “foes.” Critical geopolitics questions the presumed “naturalness” of the nation-state and global power hierarchies (e.g. North/South, core/periphery) (O’Tuathail and Agnew 1992). Instead, it analyzes global power dynamics as products of a particular time and place and as re-enforced through geopolitical discourses. O’Tuathail (1996, 14-15), explains that,

“The struggle over geography is also a conflict between competing images and imaginings, a contest of power and resistance that involves not only struggles to represent the materiality of physical geographic objects and boundaries but also

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16 O’Tuathail drew from the work of several critical international relations scholars, including David Sylvan and Richard Ashley.
the equally powerful and, in a different manner, the equally material force of
discursive borders between an idealized Self and a demonized Other, between ‘us’
and ‘them.’"

Thus, a critical geopolitics approach allows me to identify how processes of and reactions to
foreign involvement are neither “natural” nor innocent. Instead, these portrayals are creations of
spatial difference that have been constructed to achieve the aims of geopolitical powers
(O’Tuathail 1996), and, I would add, state elites. The latter is particularly important in this
analysis; as I demonstrate in this chapter and in Chapter 5, portrayals of China by Namibian
political elites are distinguished from media portrayals by their nearly-universal positivity.
Furthermore, such portrayals reinforce the power of the nation-state and provide details on the
factors (e.g. employment, extraction, etc.) that lead Namibians to construct their understandings
of the world. Understanding geopolitics as performed and constructed (Bialasiewicz, et al. 2007)
enables me to analyze the everyday geopolitics of foreign involvement in Namibia.

**Expanding Critical Geopolitics to North-South Power Relations**

In applying critical geopolitics to my analysis of Namibian portrayals of foreign
involvement, I engage with two understudied areas in critical geopolitics: Global South
perspectives and the interconnection of geopolitics and geo-economics. Over the past ten years,
critical geopolitics has overwhelmingly focused on Western actors, particularly the U.S.
Scholars have paid particular attention to the war on terror and discourses of security (Graham
2004, Gregory 2010; Hyndman 2010). As a result, with the exception of some much-needed
recent work in areas like the critical geopolitics of development (Power 2010) and subaltern
geopolitics (Sharp 2011), geographers have paid insufficient attention to non-Western
geopolitical perspectives (see critiques by Claval 2003 and Hepple 2000) and, furthermore, how
geopolitics are engaged with by elites and everyday citizens in the global South. While Hepple
(2000) argues for Anglo-American geographers to pay more attention to French scholars, a similar argument could be made regarding African scholars of geopolitics (e.g. Manji and Marks 2007; Southall and Melber 2009) who publish widely within Africa but are rarely referenced by Anglo-American scholars. Thus far, Anglo-American geographers have inadequately studied both the roles of non-Western creators of discourse (e.g. the “Chinese development model”), although recent work (see Carmody 2010 and Taylor 2009) has begun to correct this, and how non-Western and Western discourses are engaged with by non-Western audiences. Sharp’s (2011) work on “subaltern geopolitics,” which seeks to correct the inattention to how the “war on terror” is interpreted by Africans, and Manji and Marks’ (2007) attention to African perspectives on foreign investment represent valuable efforts to address this oversight of non-Western views.

Scholars of critical geopolitics have also paid inadequate attention to the connection between geopolitics and geo-economics. After the Cold War, U.S. policymakers began to put greater focus on the economic dimensions of foreign policy, largely with neoliberal goals (Solomon 1992). During this time, several geographers advocated for a critical study of geo-economics to supplement critical geopolitics (Cohen 1991; Nijman, 1992; Sparke 1993). The result has been several studies integrating geopolitics and geo-economics (see Sparke 1998; Smith 2000), as well as a growing (although still underdeveloped) attention to the ways in which critical geopolitics and critical development studies can come together in analyses of the critical geopolitics of foreign involvement in African states. Recent research by Marxist geographers (Cowen and Smith 2009; Huber 2011b; Labban 2011) on the state as both an economic and political agent have further illustrated the value of pursuing a re-integration of geopolitics and geo-economics. As Taylor (1996) notes, it is critical for scholars of political geography, and I would argue scholars of critical geopolitics in particular, to understand how the mutuality of
politics and economics reinforces global power hierarchies. In the following analysis, I use a critical geopolitics approach to analyze the ways in which geopolitics and geo-economics are inherently intertwined in questions of foreign involvement in Namibia.

**Methods**

For this chapter and Chapter 5, I analyzed over 300 newspaper articles mentioning Chinese, American, or South African involvement in three Namibian newspapers over two time periods: April 1, 2008-April 1, 2009, and October 1, 2010-October 1, 2011. I also analyzed over 250 SMSes (text messages, detailed later in this chapter) over the same time periods, for a total of over 550 portrayals. The first time period (2008-2009) encompasses the fieldwork for the Afrobarometer data used in the previous section, while the second time period (2010-2011) bookends the announcement of the Strategic Minerals Policy. For this chapter, I also analyzed more than 100 articles that referenced the GRN or Namibian political figures in conjunction with foreign involvement. For Chapter 5, I analyzed at least 70 articles that focused on each of the three countries of attention - China, South Africa, and the U.S. - as well at least 50 articles from each of the newspapers sampled: The Namibian, Namibia Economist, and New Era. I describe each of these publications, as well as the state of the media in Namibia, in more detail in the following sections. I selected China, South Africa, and the U.S. as the countries of analysis for two primary reasons. First, they represent three distinct sources of foreign investment (a “new” BRICS source, a neighbor and African BRICS member, and the major 20th century global power). Second, they are each the subject of an opinion question on the 2008 Afrobarometer survey (analyzed in Chapter 6), enabling mixed methods analysis.

In collecting media portrayals, I completed keyword searches of the digital archives of each source for both time periods. These keywords included the name of the country in question
(South Africa, the U.S., China, Namibia) and at least one the following words: resource, mineral, invest, involve, business, diamond, uranium, and extraction. I completed a separate search for each country-keyword combination (e.g. China + resource). These keyword combinations were applied systematically for searches of all three media outlets archives and the archived SMS section of *The Namibian*. The selection was equally split between the two time periods analyzed.

After collecting and organizing the portrayals in Dedoose qualitative research software, I searched for the following keywords to assist in determining the tone of the discursive portrayal and identifying patterns: partner, develop, grow, assist, help, exploit, colonial, imperial, invade/invasion, and corrupt. I then analyzed each article to evaluate the language used, its context, and its themes. I removed and replaced articles written by non-Namibian sources (e.g. the Associated Press) to ensure that my selection consisted of articles that originated with Namibian media sources. After labeling each article, I ran a quantitative analysis of my labels to identify the most prevalent themes, which are described in detail in this chapter an in Chapter 5.

4.2 The Namibian Media and Data Sources

*State of the Namibian Media: Context and Characteristics*

A significant amount of scholarship has focused on the role of the media in democratization in the global South, and a good proportion of this literature has focused on southern Africa, particularly South Africa. While the American social responsibility model of commercial media described by Christians and Nordenstreng (2004) has gained significant global acceptance, the meanings of media freedom and responsibility often take different forms in the newly-independent countries of the global South. In some cases, notions of media independence are not as normatively important as in the West (see Wasserman 2006, Wasserman and Rao 2008, and Wasserman 2010). Sparks (2009) argues that, in countries like Namibia and
South Africa, the combination of democratization and growing commercialization of media outlets, particularly as a result of increased competition, leads to tensions between the goals of creating an active commercial media and of increasing the involvement of formerly marginalized groups in the public sphere. In such situations, states sometimes view a critical, independent media as a threat to attempts at building the state’s legitimacy and authority and creating a shared state-based identity among citizens (Voltmer 2006). As a result, scholars such as Gurevitch and Blumler (2004) and McQuail (2005) have argued that the developmental goals of the state can trump press freedom in sub-Saharan Africa. As detailed below, concerns that a free press might undermine governmental authority are identifiable among GRN officials, who have sometimes portrayed criticism of the GRN among members of the press as unpatriotic, undermining of social stability, and counter-democratic (Wasserman 2010).

Tensions between media freedom and state-building in Namibia date from well before its independence. The media was suppressed, often violently, during both German colonialism and South African occupation (Rothe 2011). During South African occupation, Namibian journalists were subject to apartheid-era media repression practices including police raids, arrest, and harassment (Kudlak 2007). After independence, however, the new Namibian government made increasing press freedom a priority. The new constitution included a section on press freedom (which has been defended multiple times in the courts) and a guarantee of the freedom of opinion. Shortly after independence, and with full GRN support, Namibia hosted African journalists for a UNESCO seminar African media freedom, at which the 1991 Windhoek Declaration was signed (Kupe 2007). After independence, there was also a significant shift in the ownership of Namibian media in economic, political, and racial terms (Berger 2001). This shift has not been as dramatic as in South Africa, in part due to the continuing domination of South
African capital in the Namibian economy (Mason 2001), but it has resulted in the introduction of over 10 new newspapers (largely monthlies or weeklies) since independence.

Relative to neighboring post-apartheid South Africa, the GRN has taken an active role in regulating (some would say ‘meddling’ in) print and, more recently, digital media (Wasserman 2010), and there have been complaints about incursions upon media freedom. After independence, the GRN established the *New Era*, a daily newspaper, with the goal of ensuring that rural populations received news from the capital and vice versa. The continued GRN-ownership of the *New Era* has spurred critique from many independent journalists, who have reported that state journalists sometimes get preferential access to official information (Wasserman 2010). Like several other African countries, Namibia also has a ‘dignity law’ that prohibits the media from insulting political leaders (Blankson 2007), although I was not able to locate any cases of this law’s implementation. In a continuation of South African law, Namibian journalists can also be forced to reveal sources in court testimony (Wasserman 2010).

Despite these issues, the independence of the Namibian media has improved significantly since independence (Bauer 2001), and Namibia’s media is generally rated as free and fair by international observers. This finding was confirmed by Wasserman (2010) in a comparative study that featured over 45 interviews with Namibian and South African journalists. One of the reporters interviewed by Wasserman characterized the state of Namibia’s media as follows:

“I would say that since independence the media in Namibia have managed to play the role that they should within society, of being a voice for the community that they serve and the people of the country in general. Although this often brings the media into conflict with government…Namibia is fortunate that unlike other countries the government…has grudgingly come to accept that the media is there, it has a role to play and it’s not going to go away.” (Wasserman 2010, 574)

In 2012, Reporters Without Borders ranked Namibia as having the most press freedom in sub-Saharan Africa and as one of the twenty countries with the most press freedom in the world.
(higher than the ranking of the U.S.). It reported no attempts at media obstruction. Freedom House rated Namibia’s media freedom a bit lower, classifying its press as “partly free” in 2012 but reporting no major interferences with the free circulation of the news.

Namibia has both a large array of print media, especially given its small population. There are four daily and several weekly newspapers (all printed in English unless otherwise noted): Allgemeine Zeitung (also in German), Die Republikein (only in Afrikaans), Informante, New Era, Namib Times, Namibia Economist, Namibian SUN, The Namibian (also in Owambo), and The Windhoek Observer. Informante and the Namibian SUN are tabloid publications (Rothe 2011). According to Nielson Company polling, a higher percentage of Namibians read newspapers on a regular basis than citizens of any other sub-Saharan African country except for South Africa (2012). The newspaper penetration rate is near 86% (Nielson 2012).

Since independence, the print media has become a key forum for debate on politically sensitive topics.17 In terms of explicit government influence, the GRN has no regulatory authority over print media, although legislation has been proposed several times to create a regulatory body, supposedly on behalf of newspaper publishers (Rothe 2011). Furthermore, as detailed by Beukes (2007) and Mason (2001), Namibians have often contested GRN attempts to influence publicly-owned media outlets such as New Era and the Namibian Broadcasting Corporation. Even in the New Era, letters to the editor frequently turn a critical eye on GRN policies and politics. In his interviews with Namibian journalists, Wasserman (2010) found that citizens who do not support the ruling SWAPO political party often direct their concerns to media outlets through letters to the editors or other public forums. Wasserman (2010) traces Namibians’ proclivity to air their grievances with the press to the relative lack of a strong

17 Although digital media is growing in influence in Namibia, particularly in tabloid forms (e.g. celebrity gossip), print media remains dominant. According to Nielson data, Namibia had only approximately 130,000 internet users in 2009, the overwhelming majority of whom were concentrated in urban centers.
opposition party and SWAPO’s resulting political security. One of Wasserman’s interviewees described the media’s role in Namibian politics as follows:

“The citizens understand maybe it’s because the opposition are not that strong so people tend to go with their problems to the newspapers…Some will feel they want to address a paper who addresses a specific constituency amongst the readership so I think in that sense we are led by society much more than anywhere else [in Africa] that I see.” (Wasserman 2010, 583)

To capture this targeting of newspapers, I included three newspapers with significantly different readerships and support for the GRN in my analysis: *The Namibian*, *Namibia Economist*, and the *New Era*. I discuss the selection of these three sources later in this chapter.

**SMSes: Cellular Soapbox?**

My analysis attends to the use of the Namibian media as a forum for public debate, as described by Wasserman (2010). While much of this debate occurs through traditional forums – letters to the editor, columns, etc. – these are not the only means through which Namibians can share their opinions. One relatively new public forum is *The Namibian*’s SMSes (“short message service” or text message) feature, in which text messages of up to 160 characters are published in the daily print copy under the heading “What You’re Saying!” and featured on the newspaper’s website. *The Namibian* began publishing SMSes on November 21, 2008. Topics in the first publication ranged from the role of blame in politics to the war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the Kavango Regional Council’s management of water. SMS pages continue to include texts focused on a wide variety of issues. SMSes can also be laudatory; a section of the SMS page titled “Bouquets and Brickbats,” for example, is set aside for praise and criticism. *The Namibian* has also begun to set aside a daily section for responses to previous SMSes. Although *The Namibian* initially featured approximately 15-20 SMSes per weekday, its SMS page now includes 45-70 SMSes per day, the majority of which are anonymous.
The Namibian regularly receives 4-5 times more SMSes per day than it can print. The SMS editorial staff prioritizes which SMSes to print primarily based upon whether they match an emerging theme of discussion (e.g. a rising number of SMS submitted regarding a particular issue). Messages that don’t meet this criteria are sorted and published within a reasonable time frame (approximately 2 weeks) if additional messages come in on that topic. Messages that are deemed inflammatory or that promote violence are not published. The editorial staff explicitly does not sort messages based upon their political standpoint, and a diversity of political opinions is apparent upon a cursory glance at the SMS page. Among messages that meet the topic relevancy criteria, messages that respond to recent articles or debates in The Namibian are prioritized. For example, if several recent articles have focused on conservation, SMSes on conservation are more likely to be published. I found a significant number of SMSes (50+) in my selection that explicitly or subtly criticized The Namibian (e.g. “Why doesn’t The Namibian mention xx?”) or its articles. While editorial staff may balance published criticism with praise (as do many magazines), the editorial staff does not prevent the publication of particular texts simply because they’re critical of the newspaper. Of course, there is still likely bias, as I assume that individuals who write SMSes likely differ significantly from individuals who do not. This issue is explored in more depth in Chapter 5 and in the conclusion. Editors of The Namibian may also express biases in selecting SMSes for publication, despite the newspaper’s policy to the contrary.

The Namibian has been hailed as innovative for its SMS page by journalists and media scholars alike, but its SMS page is significantly less popular with the GRN. According to its founder, Gwen Lister, The Namibian was the first newspaper to incorporate SMSes into its print

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18 This section is based on personal correspondence with a staff member of The Namibian in August of 2012.
publication, and it is the only Namibian newspaper to do so.\textsuperscript{19} The Namibian’s SMS page has been praised at forums such as the 2008 Highway Africa conference (a public journalism forum hosted by South Africa’s Rhodes University) and by media scholars as an example of journalistic independence and accessibility. Bertha Amakali (2008), a scholar at the Polytechnic of Namibia, cites The Namibian’s SMS page as an example of “citizen journalism” that “makes ordinary citizens a part of the news production process.” Despite this support, The Namibian has come under fire from the GRN over the past four years for its publication of SMSes. In February 2009, the SWAPO Party Elders’ Council (SPEC), a non-elected consultative body, called for The Namibian to halt SMS publication, arguing that they insult President Pohamba and “propagate hatred and promote public discontent” that will “engulf the entire nation in turmoil” (Maletsky 2009). GRN officials have also threatened to press charges against the newspaper under Namibia’s dignity law. The Namibian has thus far refused to cease publishing SMSes.

SMSes are valuable data in several ways. First, they make it possible to analyze how ordinary Namibians, not just elites, are evaluating foreign involvement. Letters to the editor and columns are most often written by individuals with a relatively high economic status and education level (in Namibia, the 38.9\% of the population with a high school degree). Columns, for example, require individuals to formulate a detailed argument. As a result, and as evidenced by the language differences between SMSes and columns, they often serve as a forum more for elite-to-elite dialogue than for broad public engagement. In contrast, the ability to send an SMS is limited only by literacy (89\% in Namibia) and cell phone access. While the necessity of cell phone access would mean inaccessibility in some countries, Namibia’s cell phone penetration rate is among the very highest in Africa; there are more cell phone subscriptions than there are

\textsuperscript{19} While several South African newspapers allowed text message submissions prior to The Namibian, messages could only be submitted to comment on particular articles selected by newspaper editorial staff (Rothe 2011).
Namibians. In October 2012, 94% of Namibians reported having regular access to a cell phone (Nielson 2012). Furthermore, the brevity of SMSes means that they do not require significant time or evidence. Stamps, paper, the internet, writing utensils, or computers are not required, nor does sending a text require individuals to stop what they are doing (given the mobility of cell phones). This could be seen as a limitation; SMSes are likely to be more ‘off the cuff’ than traditional opinion writing and should not be assumed to reflect extensively-evidenced, long-held sentiments. For the purposes of identifying Namibian’s perceptions of foreign involvement and factors that play into those perceptions, however, SMSes are useful because they are everyday communications reflecting Namibians’ concerns as they go about their daily lives.

Print Media Sources

While The Namibian, Namibia Economist, and the New Era do not capture all in Namibian perspectives, they are three of the four highest-circulating Namibian newspapers and have been selected with the goal of capturing the widest possible spectrum of political perspectives. The following sections briefly describe each source.

The Namibian

The Namibian is Namibia’s largest daily circulating newspaper, with a paid circulation of approximately 50,000 (out of a population of 2.3 million). While its main office is in Windhoek, it operates regional offices in Keetmanshop, Oshakati, and Swakopmund and is distributed in over 440 outlets across Namibia. The Namibian was overwhelmingly cited as a critical newspaper toward the GRN by the individuals I interviewed in 2011, echoing the findings of Wasserman (2010). It regularly features letters to the editor and editorials from prominent public figures as well as the previously mentioned SMSes.
The Namibian was founded in 1985 by Gwen Lister, who was selected in 2000 by the International Press Institute as one of the 50 World Press Freedom Heroes. Lister served as chief editor until her retirement in March 2011, when Tangeni Amupadhi took over as chief (Ndjebela 2011). Founded with the goal “of opening and challenging the then extremely restricted and oppressive media environment in Namibia (Larsen 2007, 54),” The Namibian is one of very few newspapers that survived the transition to independence. In celebration of the paper’s 15th anniversary, then-UN Secretary General Kofi Annan praised its role in promoting democracy and media freedom under South African occupation and upon independence, remarking that,

“The Namibian worked courageously in…often dangerous conditions. Since then, it has contributed immeasurably to press freedom and nation-building in Namibia. Throughout, it has maintained its integrity and independent stance.” (Annan 2000)

With an initial weekly publication of 10,000 copies, The Namibian relied upon donations to support its operations in the 1980s before becoming a daily newspaper in 1989 (Maletzky 2010). Under South African occupation, it was listed as a pro-SWAPO newspaper by the South African government due to its reporting on human rights violations under South Africa occupation. As a result, The Namibian’s staffers were subject to violence and intimidation. Lister was nearly killed by a contract killer, the paper’s offices were bombed, and its staff were barred from shops and GRN buildings (Rothe 2011). Even The Namibian’s name was controversial, as the country’s official name under occupation was South-West Africa (du Pisani 2010).

Despite its support for SWAPO during the independence struggle, The Namibian came under fire from SWAPO after independence for its critical reporting. The GRN officially boycotted the paper on December 5, 2000, barring state officials from buying advertising space in it or from purchasing copies using GRN funds (Hofmann 2007; Rothe 2011). This boycott was not overturned until August 30, 2011, in celebration of The Namibian’s 26th anniversary (and in
response to international criticism) (*The Namibian* 2011c). When conducting fieldwork in June and July of 2011, however, I saw copies of The Namibian in GRN offices, leading me to doubt whether the ban significantly reduced readership among GRN officials, at least toward its end.

Namibia’s official language is English. Except for the Afrikaans newspaper *Die Republikein*, all Namibian newspapers print at least some (*Allgemeine Zeitung*) or all (all others) articles in English.20 *The Namibian* is printed in both Oshiwambo and English, although not all articles are published in Oshiwambo. As my Oshiwambo reading abilities are elementary, I enlisted the assistance of two Oshiwambo-speaking Namibian contacts21 to help me determine whether the Oshiwambo articles were similar in content and tone to those printed in the English version. I sent my contacts a sample of the Oshiwambo and English versions of articles from my selection. Both individuals separately confirmed that the articles were similar in tone (e.g. the connotation of the words used, etc.) and content, although the native Herero speaker indicated that the Oshiwambo versions were generally written more colloquially than the English versions. He also characterized several of the Oshiwambo articles as employing elements of “Namblish,” the term for the English-Owambo-Herero hybrid employed by some Namibians. Both indicated that the Oshiwambo versions contained some words that were difficult to translate to English, and vice versa, as would be expected of any translation. While there were differences in the exact phrasing and formality of wording, both individuals indicated that the content and tone with respect to the subject in focus (e.g. China, mining, etc.) was similar across the languages.

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20 Although English is the native language of only 1-5% of Namibians, it is the lingua franca of Namibian society (although Afrikaans remains a prominent business language in some southern communities; see Pütz, 1995). Oshiwambo, Afrikaans, Herero, Damara, Setswana, Silozi, Rukwangali, and German are also recognized as regionally-important languages by the GRN. Oshiwambo is the native tongue of the largest number of Namibians (48%), followed by Afrikaans (11%), Khoekhoe (11%), Kwangali (10%) and Herero (10%). Languages spoken by smaller subsets of Namibians include Few, Gciriku, Khwe, Kuhane, Mbukushu, Naro, Portuguese, Taa, Tswana, Yeyi, and !Kung. While primary education is taught in the languages above, all secondary education is in English.

21 Both individuals are male, college-educated, and residents of greater Windhoek (one in Windhoek proper and the other in Katatura). The Katatura resident is a native Owambo speaker who grew up in Katatura, while the Windhoek resident is a native Herero speaker who grew up near the Botswana-Namibia border.
The New Era

The New Era, founded in 1992 and owned by the GRN, is the newest of the four daily Namibian newspapers. Although it was initially published on a weekly basis, it has been a daily-circulating (Monday-Friday) newspaper since 2004. Distributed in all major cities and many small towns, its circulation is approximately 10,000 subscriptions. Although headquartered in Windhoek, the New Era operates a branch office in Oshakati and has contracts with at least 18 freelance journalists throughout Namibia (New Era 2012). The New Era is owned and operated by the New Era Publication Corporation, which is owned entirely by the GRN (Kupe 2007). The New Era Publication Corporation was authorized in the New Era Publication Corporation Act No. 1, passed by the National Assembly in 1992. Although the New Era Publication Corporation is run by an “autonomous” Board of Directors, those Directors are appointed (and can be replaced) by Namibia’s Minister of Information and Communication Technology (Rothe 2011).

The New Era’s creation was intertwined with Namibia’s establishment as a democracy. Its founding document proclaimed that “[w]e see all Namibians having access to the information they require to enable them to take individual and collective responsibility and decisions to be able to participate in an open democratic society at socio-political, cultural and economic levels (New Era 2012).” More practically, the GRN’s goal in creating the New Era was to ensure that the national media engages rural residents. Thus, the New Era is available in the vast majority of Namibian communities and selected New Era articles are available in local languages, including Otjiherero, Nama, Silozi, and Khwedam (San). While the entirety of the newspaper is only available in English, one page in each of the above languages is generally published per week.

Although the New Era purports to be “committed to providing an objective and factual information service to various readership groups (2012),” it is considered to be biased toward
GRN (namely SWAPO) positions, as would be inferred by its ownership. In interviews with Namibian politicians and journalists, Wasserman (2010) found that the New Era, like its GRN-owned counterpart the Namibian Broadcasting Corporation, was largely seen as pro-government. My interviews confirmed this sentiment. Several of Wasserman’s (2010) interviewees complained that the New Era uses its government subsidy to increase its profitability rather than to fulfill its mandate to report on events in remote communities. Interestingly, the New Era publishes government news under a separate section from its politics section, seemingly separating the GRN from politics (Rothe 2011). There have been reports of GRN officials telephoning New Era editors regarding unfavorable articles (Rothe 2011). In the spring of 2009, Namibia’s Minister of Information and Communication Technologies announced that,

“Government has a broader base of information dissemination channels to reach a wider audience through radio, television, regional information offices and its own print media such as the government news bulletin, New Era, and Namibia Review. These devices enable my ministry to pay a pivotal role in information dissemination.” (as reported by Rothe 2011, 25)

This equation of the New Era with a government (the GRN news bulletin) and a party publication (Namibia Review) diminishes its already tarnished claim to independence. The purpose of including the New Era in my analysis is primarily to evaluate how its coverage of foreign involvement, given its bias, differs from The Namibian and the Namibia Economist.

Namibia Economist

Like the New Era, the Namibia Economist is a post-independence publication with the motto of “custodian of Business Intelligence (Namibia Economist 2012).” Founded in 1991, it is a privately-owned, weekly newspaper with a circulation of approximately 7000 subscriptions. Despite its post-independence founding, it is one of Namibia’s longest-running weekly newspapers. Unlike The Namibian and New Era, the Namibia Economist is not designed for a
broad readership. It caters primarily to an urban, highly-educated, English-speaking, and, as its name suggests, business-oriented audience. According to the newspaper’s website, its target demographic is urban Namibians between the ages of 25 and 50 (Namibia Economist 2012). Since 1998, the Namibia Economist has maintained a prominent web presence, which received two million individual visitors during 2011. Compared with The Namibian, the Namibia Economist is biased in favor of industry (Rothe 2011). While some articles and letters to the editor in my analysis expressed negative sentiments toward particular corporations or source of foreign investment, I did not come across any articles in my selection of the Namibia Economist that were anti-business or anti-foreign investment in general. The Namibia Economist tends to be more critical of the GRN than the New Era but less critical than The Namibian (perhaps due to the GRN’s relatively pro-business positions). I included the Namibia Economist in this analysis primarily because of its business-orientation; I expected that portrayals of foreign involvement in the Namibia Economist would diverge from portrayals in the New Era and The Namibian.

**Other Media Sources**

I considered several alternatives to print media as sources for this analysis. The Internet and television, for example, are gaining prominence as information sources in Namibia. Yet, the 2004 Namibia Labor Force Survey indicated that only 29% of Namibian households reported that they owned a television.\(^{22}\) As of December 2011, there were only 148,000 internet users in Namibia, less than 7% of the total population (Namibia Labor Force Survey 2011). Namibia-based antenna television programming consists only of the government-owned Namibian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC); One Africa Television, a small independent television service in Namibia’s urban areas; and Trinity Broadcasting Network, a religion-oriented channel.

\(^{22}\) Oddly, the 2008 and 2011 surveys did not ask this question.
available in the immediate Windhoek area. None of these stations have widespread viewership. Satellite television, which is outside the budget of most Namibians, primarily consists of South African channels. The NBC also sponsors a 24-hour English radio broadcast and 10-15 hour daily radio broadcasts in nine languages. While radio reaches 61% of Namibians (versus 86% for newspapers), my pilot study of NBC radio and television broadcasts found that the perspectives presented largely overlapped with those of the New Era. Like the New Era, the NBC appears to demonstrate a bias in favor of SWAPO. As neither television nor radio match the Namibian print media’s penetration rate nor do either appear to radically differ from the perspectives presented in the print media, I have excluded radio and television broadcasts from my analysis.

Limitations

The conclusions that can be drawn from this qualitative analysis, as detailed in this chapter and in Chapter 5, are limited by the nature of the sample selection. First, my analysis relies on media portrayals from only three sources. While I have identified these sources as the most representative, they surely do not capture all portrayals of South Africa, China, and the U.S. in the Namibian media. Furthermore, my conclusions are limited to Namibians who have expressed their opinions in the three sources analyzed. As my sample is not random, the results are not generalizable to the entire Namibian population. Including SMSes likely increases the economic diversity of my sample (relative to a selection of articles, columns, and letters to the editor), but this does not overcome the sampling problems inherent in a media analysis. My analysis is likely biased toward the perceptions of Namibians who are more likely to read a newspaper (e.g., wealthier, more educated, and urban-dwelling).

In the case of SMSes, it is important to note that information regarding SMS contributors is not available from The Namibian. Thus, it is not possible to say how SMS respondents differ
from the broader Namibian population (although, as described above, we can speculate). While I argue that SMSes are a more democratic forum than traditional media forums because of the accessibility of text messaging, there is not data to confirm this. Furthermore, as SMSes are anonymous, it is possible that not all published SMSes originate from Namibians; ex-patriates and migrant workers, for example, can also submit SMSes. While SMSes likely capture a broader array of opinions than would be possible by analyzing only traditional venues such as letters to the editor, the limitations posed by the anonymity of SMSes must be taken seriously. For my purposes of analyzing portrayals of foreign involvement, however, it matters less who the writers of SMSes are than it would if my purpose was to definitively characterize Namibians' opinions of foreign involvement. Regardless of their authorship, the SMSes are printed in the Namibian media and are thus part of the broader discussion surrounding foreign involvement.

Finally, while some of my results were confirmed by my interviews, the conclusions of Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 are based solely on media analysis. While media analysis is useful to analyze portrayals of foreign involvement in Namibia and the ways in which those portrayals are debated, it does not lend itself to conclusions about the motivations of individual portrayals.

4.3 Portrayals of Foreign Involvement in Resource Extraction

While foreign investment in African resources has often been touted as an opportunity for African development by Western leaders, international institutions, and business elites, resource extraction in Africa has often taken the shape of enclave development (see Ferguson 2006). In 2010, the *Financial Times* reported that there has been over $854 billion in capital flight from Africa since 1970, the majority of which was tied to resource extraction. Thus, concerns over foreign involvement in resource extraction in Africa have become a topic of great debate.
Namibia, with its significant natural resources, is no exception, and the GRN’s largely neoliberal policies toward resource extraction have been questioned by Namibians recently.

To situate the portrayals of involvement by foreign actors (the U.S., South Africa, and China) examined in Chapter 5, I first analyzed general portrayals of foreign involvement in *The Namibian*, the *New Era*, and the *Namibia Economist*. This provides a baseline against which portrayals of particular involvement sources can be compared. Approximately 70% of portrayals of foreign involvement in broad terms were negative. Table 4.3.1 on the next page provides examples of these portrayals. The examples in Table 4.3.1 have been selected to reflect the three most prominent themes among negative portrayals: concerns that foreign investment does not benefit ordinary Namibians or unduly influences GRN policies (~30% of negative portrayals), concerns over foreign investment in extraction (~25%), and concerns over Western involvement (~10%). The sources of the examples in Table 4.3.1 reflect sources in the broader selection. Over 90% of negative portrayals of foreign involvement came from *The Namibian*, most *New Era* portrayals were positive, and, unsurprisingly given its business orientation, my selection from the *Namibia Economist* did not contain any negative portrayals of foreign involvement.

The large proportion of portrayals of foreign involvement focusing on resource extraction (~25%) indicates that this is a significant concern in discussions relating to foreign involvement. The SMS in example 2 in Table 4.3.1, which was written in response to an article in *The Namibian* on the increasing number of diamond mining companies operating in Namibia, describes concerns with exploitation as well as with the few employment opportunities offered by foreign mining companies. This concern reflects the small proportion of Namibia’s population that is employed in mining (see Chapter 3). In describing foreign involvement,

\(^{23}\) Note that there is overlap between these categories (e.g. concerns regarding Western involvement in resource extraction).
portrayals frequently drew upon behavioral descriptors such as “insatiable,” “unrelenting,” and “aggressive,” as is illustrated by the use of the word “relentless” in example 5 below.

Table 4.3.1. Examples of Negative Portrayals of Foreign Involvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media Source</th>
<th>Portrayal of Foreign Involvement</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>SMS, <em>The Namibian</em> “Thumbs up for Congo-Brazzaville for lending a helping hand to Zimbabwe. Let’s keep the comradeship. We are tired of Western indirect rule over Africa.”</td>
<td>5/22/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>SMS, <em>The Namibian</em> “I had no idea we had so many diamond mining companies in our country. Why is it that our GRN allows these foreigners to exploit us? Most of them don’t train Namibians. Their companies are full of foreign nationals…These resources should benefit the locals as much as they benefit the GRN behind closed doors.”</td>
<td>6/6/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>SMS, <em>The Namibian</em> “Western countries will remain imperial as they do not care for Africans. Let us unite for the good of Africa. Anticolonialism/imperialism.”</td>
<td>12/9/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Letter to the Editor, <em>The Namibian</em> “The slump in prices for Africa’s natural resources, which led to chronic deficits in the past, has been reversed. Consumption, fuelled by huge Asian demand for African commodities, is on the rise. For much of Africa, this turn of events should mark a decisive break with endemic poverty. But, unless African leaders change their ways, it will not.”</td>
<td>10/1/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Letter to the Editor, <em>New Era</em> “The relentless scramble for uranium and raw minerals from the rich sands of Namibia holds the great danger of risking the well-being of our communities and so damaging the environment that all future generations will have to bear the price of our short-sightedness”</td>
<td>11/5/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Article, <em>The Namibian</em> “[o]ver-reliance on foreign investment, as well as the acceptance that only market-friendly policies would work, has left Namibia stranded.”</td>
<td>2/14/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Editorial, <em>New Era</em> “The West which has been colonizing Africa somehow appears to have relegated to itself the right to control our raw materials as if it were their God-given right to exploit our resources…Since the Dutch East India Company…Africa has been inundated by western corporations making billions in the mining, service, construction and energy sectors.”</td>
<td>2/28/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Letter to the Editor, <em>The Namibian</em> “The economy of this country is in the hands of these few business people and they decide what is good for our country. The amazing things is that most of these people who are controlling our economy are from outside and from there they are calling the shots.”</td>
<td>4/1/11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
While the examples in Table 4.3.1 were drawn from media pieces on foreign involvement in general, authors often associated foreign investment with Western actors. Examples 1, and 3, for example, describe Western influence in Namibia as “indirect” and “imperial,” in contrast to the “comradeship” of other African countries (example 1). Example 4 mentions “Asian demand” for African commodities, but the “West” was mentioned more than “Asia,” by a ratio of approximately 2:1, in negative portrayals of foreign involvement.\(^24\)

While most negative portrayals cited foreign corporations as the actors to blame for foreign involvement-related problems, others blamed the GRN, as in examples 2, 4, 6, and 7. Critiques of the GRN included accusations of corruption (example 2) as well as portrayals of current policies toward resource extraction as “short-sighted” (example 5), putting Namibia at risk for environmental degradation (example 5), and handing too much power over to foreigners (examples 6 and 8). Namibians’ portrayals of the GRN’s management of Namibia’s resource wealth are considered in more detail in the next section.

*Positive Portrayals of Foreign Involvement*

Not all portrayals of foreign involvement were negative. While there were some positive portrayals of foreign investment in *The Namibian* (see Table 4.3.2 on the next page), most positive portrayals of foreign involvement came from the *Namibia Economist* and the *New Era*, particularly the latter. There were zero positive SMS portrayals of foreign involvement in *The Namibian*. The most prevalent theme among positive portrayals was that Namibia should pursue foreign investment through “partnerships” with foreign actors.

As demonstrated in examples 1, 2, and 4 in Table 4.3.2, positive portrayals often framed foreign involvement as “mutually beneficial” or as a “partnership” on “equal terms,” as opposed

\(^{24}\) This is not the case when portrayals of specific countries, such as China and the U.S., are examined, however, as is detailed in Chapter 5.
to the descriptions of “exploitation” in the previous section. This is one area where contrasts were visible between portrayals of Western involvement and “new” sources of involvement.

Example 4, for instance, portrays previous relationships between Namibia and “First World” states as primarily aid-based, a relationship rooted in “begging” rather than partnership.

Examples 1, 4, and 5, in their focus on “genuine” investment, equality, and local needs, insinuate that foreign investment hasn’t *always* been based upon relationships among equals.

**Table 4.3.2 Examples of Positive Portrayals of Foreign Involvement**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media Source</th>
<th>Portrayal of Foreign Involvement</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Letter to Editor, <em>Namibia Economist</em></td>
<td>“Let me…stress that I have absolutely no problem with genuine but mutually beneficial foreign investment in this country, regardless of who the investors are.”</td>
<td>9/12/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Column, <em>The Namibian</em></td>
<td>“Partnerships between governments and foreign investors are at the core of the sound management of natural resources…Genuine partnership is difficult to achieve when resource-rich countries view foreign mining and drilling companies only as adversaries, seeking unfair and inequitable contracting agreements.”</td>
<td>2/16/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Column, <em>New Era</em></td>
<td>“Because of constraints in mobilising domestic capital, there is need for an extensive liberalisation Namibia’s investment policy to attract FDI. Failure to do this, means the prospects for economic growth would be severely curtailed and unemployment and poverty would continue…Given the structural limitations in the economy and the unrelenting pace of globalization, FDI is the route for Namibia to take.”</td>
<td>7/19/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Editorial, <em>New Era</em></td>
<td>“It is time we discarded those begging bowls shamelessly asking for handouts from the First World countries that have their own problems. We should embrace the principle of being serious trade partners who should be treated on equal terms.”</td>
<td>9/11/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Article, <em>Namibia Economist</em></td>
<td>“…extraordinary effort is required to encourage support for Namibian businesses and to create sustainability for the local economy while not discouraging foreign investment.”</td>
<td>10/1/11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many positive portrayals also argued that foreign investment is in Namibia’s interests.

Examples 2 and 3 above argue that the pursuit of investment is a rational and necessary project, even scolding the GRN for letting its suspicions get in the way of “genuine partnership”
Example 3 similarly argues that it is wise and indeed necessary for the GRN to seek investment in light of the “unrelenting pace of globalization.” The author’s portrayal of globalization as “unrelenting” echoes portrayals of global resource demand as “relentless” while promoting a strategy of integration rather than protection in the face of such processes.

4.4 Criticism of the GRN’s Management of Namibian Resources

Namibians have expressed concern not only with foreign involvement in resource extraction but also with the GRN’s management of that involvement, including accusations that the GRN is unjustly benefitting from extraction at the expense of most Namibians. Many of these concerns have centered on Chinese investment (see Sasman 2011c), a topic of discussion in Chapter 5. Concerns with the GRN’s management of resources revolved around two primary themes: that GRN officials are unjustly benefitting from resource extraction while the poor suffer and that resource rights and revenue distribution processes are being handled corruptly and/or incompetently. Examples of these themes are provided in Table 4.4.1 on the next page. There is significant overlap between the two themes. Most critiques of the GRN’s management of resources came from The Namibian, particularly in the form of SMSes. Although the relatively few criticisms of the GRN in the New Era is not surprising, it is surprising that there were so few criticisms of the GRN in the Namibia Economist given its business-oriented audience. This may be related to the pro-business and pro-investment policies that have defined the GRN to date; these policies may leave capitalists with relatively few complaints.

Examples 1, 4, and 6 in Table 4.4.1 express concerns that the GRN and Namibian elites are unjustly benefitting from resource extraction at the expense of poor Namibians. Example 1 specifically cites Vision 2030, the GRN’s development strategy introduced in Chapter 1. The authors’ citation of Vision 2030 makes clear the difference between SWAPO-promoted policies
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media Source</th>
<th>Portrayal of GRN</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 SMS, The Namibian</td>
<td>“What is the future of Namibia? Vision 2030 will never be met! The wealth of Namibia belongs to only the elite politicians! My heart cries when seeing the need amongst our people. Can’t Swapo, our Government, start allocating fishing, mining, etc concessions to communities instead of rich Swapo individuals? Our GRN can feed the whole Namibia with its riches!” –Tate Pohamba and company</td>
<td>5/27/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 SMS, The Namibian</td>
<td>“[w]hat is so difficult for the Government to take good care of its small population while they make good profits everywhere [from foreigners] being in mining, fishing and tourism?”</td>
<td>6/6/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 SMS, The Namibian</td>
<td>“Hmm! A nation with a population of less than two million starving while the country is very rich in natural resources eg minerals, fishing meat…That’s all caused by…poor management and planning by our leaders, especially both Swapo and their very weak opposition leader who are all blaming the colonial era while the country is still rich. You can’t rule yourself. Please seek advice.”</td>
<td>6/19/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Letter to the Editor, Namibia Economist</td>
<td>“A SWAPO Party-led Cabinet has done it again…The 7 Namibia Liquid Fuel (NLF) individual shareholders game themselves payouts of N$36 million in dividends when the multi-billion-dollar oil contract of State-owned Namcor ended.”</td>
<td>8/11/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 SMS, The Namibian</td>
<td>“Can the Diamond Commissioner in the Ministry of Mines and Energy tell us why only certain groups of people are allocated Diamond EPLs? The Ministry declared a moratorium some time ago. When I enquired, as an honest Namibian with investors, we were told the local BEE [Black Economic Empowerment] had been allocated shares…Why the secrecy [sic]?”</td>
<td>8/25/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Interview, The Namibian</td>
<td>“These [external influences] might now be coming from countries like China than in the days when it was only ‘Western imperialism’ reigning. But the exchange patterns have not fundamentally shifted, only that a rent-seeking new elite can now cash in on its positions in the political and administrative offices and structures. Self-enrichment through privileged access to state tenders and appropriating public funds is a popular means of achieving this.”</td>
<td>2/7/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Column, New Era</td>
<td>“…let national platforms such as the Swapo Party Policy develop strategies to reduce the flow of mining income to foreign shores. Otherwise as His Excellency Dr Hifikepunye Pohamba recently commented to Al Jazeera ‘Inequality exists…people are not happy and when you talk about people not being happy what do you expect? They can react. And when they react, then those who have the land will not have land, people will take over the land.’”</td>
<td>10/1/11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

and the actual practices of SWAPO elites, illustrating a disconnect between rhetoric and practice.

Authors also frequently expressed frustration at the long-standing and pervasive nature of the
“abuse of power” by Namibian political elites (examples 4 and 6), using terms such as “rent-seeking,” “self-enrichment” and “appropriation” of public funds.”

Corruption and incompetence among GRN officials regarding the allocation of resource rights and their concomitant revenues was also a recurrent theme (see examples 1, 2, 3, 5, and 7). Several of these portrayals reflected upon such corruption and incompetence as a betrayal of the public trust. For example, the use of the phrase “our government” in example 1 demonstrates the author’s frustration at the GRN’s failure to allocate rights more equally, implying that the GRN should be “our” as opposed to “their” (SWAPO elites) government. Similarly, example 2 hints at GRN incompetence (the implied question seems to be “with such a small population, where exactly are the revenues going?”) while making a normative argument about the responsibilities of governance. Some portrayals critiqued those who blame non-government actors for problems such as poverty. Example 3, for instance, critiques portrayals of foreign exploitation, implying that persistent poverty has more to do with government mismanagement than with foreign exploitation. Other themes included concerns with secrecy (example 5) and the potential for violence related to inequality (example 7).

As demonstrated in several examples above, Chinese investment was frequently mentioned in discussions of the GRN’s management of natural resources. While some Namibians expressed optimism that Chinese investment represents a new direction for Namibia against a history of Western exploitation, others, as in example 6 in Table 4.4.1, argued that Chinese investment is merely more of the same. The following chapter compares and contrasts portrayals of Chinese involvement by the GRN with media portrayals before considering how narratives used to portray China differ from those used to describe the U.S. and South Africa.
4.5. Conclusions

This chapter analyzed Namibians’ opinions of foreign involvement as published in three Namibian media outlets, demonstrating that many Namibians have concerns both with foreign involvement and with the GRN’s management of that involvement. A substantial number of portrayals focused on foreign involvement in resource extraction, indicating that resource extraction is not only a topic of concern to the GRN but also a prominent part of the broader Namibian discourse on foreign involvement. Not all media portrayals, however, expressed concerns with foreign involvement; as demonstrated in Table 4.3.2, some portrayals described foreign investment in particular as both beneficial to and necessary for development. The picture becomes more complicated, however, when considering the portrayal of particular foreign actors rather than foreign involvement in general terms. This is the topic of Chapter 5.
Chapter 5: Namibian Resources for Namibians? A Critical Geopolitics Analysis of Portrayals of Foreign Involvement in the Namibian Media

This chapter continues the previous chapter’s analysis of Namibian media, focusing on portrayals of three foreign involvement actors: China, South Africa, and the U.S. These countries represent three distinct geopolitical positions in Namibia and in Africa more broadly: a rising economic power (China), a long-time economic power whose relative influence is declining (the U.S.), and a neighbor whose economy has long dominated that of Namibia (South Africa). Furthermore, opinions of these three countries were solicited in the most recent Afrobarometer survey in Namibia. The selection time periods, sources, and methods are the same as for Chapter 4; I analyzed 300 newspaper articles and 250 SMSes, for a total of 550 media pieces.

5.1.1. Introduction

In each of the following sections, I describe the key themes of portrayals of each country, attending to divergences within and across the themes. My separation of the selected articles into themes creates a bit of an artificial distinction, as alternative categories are possible, but these themes proved the most useful for the research questions of this thesis. When a portrayal reflected multiple themes, I categorized it according to the most prominent theme.

While certain portrayals of the three countries analyzed are particularly pervasive, I also found many examples of the ways in which prominent portrayals, whether promoted by GRN officials or other elites, are contested. As Foucault (1990, 101) argues, it appears that, while “discourse transmits and produces power,” it “also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it.” As is clear from this analysis, some Namibians have used the media to undermine and thwart the GRN’s portrayals of foreign involvement, particularly from China. Of the three countries analyzed, portrayals of China demonstrated the most thematic
diversity and disagreement. Thus, I detail portrayals of China in more depth than portrayals of South Africa or the U.S. Table 5.1.1 below presents the percentage breakdowns of positive, banal, and negative portrayals for each country. Portrayals were considered to be banal when there was either no descriptive language employed to describe the country (e.g. “American mine companies rose on news that…”) or the descriptive language did not carry a clearly positive or negative connotation. For both the U.S. and South Africa, the majority of portrayals were banal. China had the highest proportion of negative portrayals, with 60.5% of total portrayals of China (n=133) negative in nature. Section 5.2. explores the themes among portrayals of China.

Table 5.1.1. Percentage Breakdown of Portrayals by Country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number of portrayals</th>
<th>% Positive</th>
<th>% Banal</th>
<th>% Negative</th>
<th>Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>60.5</td>
<td>100.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>34.3</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>550</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2 Portrayals of China

**Portrayal of the Namibia-China Relationship: Namibian and Chinese Governments**

Namibia has a long history of relations with China. According to the GRN (although this is disputed by some Namibians), China was a key supporter of SWAPO’s struggle for Namibian independence. China was also one of the first states to establish diplomatic relations with the newly independent Namibia, doing so on the day after its independence (Odada and Kakujaha-Matundu 2008). Between Namibia’s independence in 1990 and 2009, China provided more than 1 billion Namibian dollars (approximately $150 million) in aid to Namibia, including funding for
transportation infrastructure, medical facilities, schools, a military academy, and an agricultural research center (Weidlich 2009). According to Dobler (2008), there are four reasons why Chinese partnerships are popular among GRN officials: the trade opportunities available with China, China’s aid contributions, the Chinese government’s provision of credits for Chinese exports, and the Chinese government’s provision of travel opportunities for Namibian officials.

Even after the announcement of the 2011 Strategic Minerals Policy, GRN officials have continued to portray Chinese involvement positively, referring to China as “a true and reliable friend” (see the 2012 speech by Deputy Parliament Speaker Kasingo, reported in Ileka 2012). In a 2011 speech in rural Namibia, President Pohamba criticized Namibian business people for accepting South African business owners despite the fact that “these are the people who oppressed the Namibians in the country before independence,” but protesting the presence of Chinese business people. “It is shameful,” he argued, “for black Namibian business people to condemn the Chinese who provided us with arms during our liberation struggle (quoted in The Namibian 2011d).” Thus, in addition to continuing to support Chinese involvement, GRN officials have distinguished Chinese involvement from the ‘exploitation’ of Western states and South Africa. GRN documents, including Vision 2030, emphasize Chinese involvement as promoting “partnership,” rooted in “mutually-beneficial” agreements between “equals.” The use of such positive language – partnership, mutual-benefits, equality - reflects a common portrayal of Chinese investment as distinct from the historically patronizing and exploitative relationships between Western and African actors, as described in Chapter 2 (see also Brautigam 2009).

The theme of Namibia-China ‘partnership’ has also been promoted by Chinese leaders. In a March 2009 New Era editorial celebrating the anniversary of Namibian independence, Chinese Ambassador to Namibia Ren Xiaoping praised Namibia, noting that,
The Namibian people have a glorious tradition. The heroic struggles you had waged, under the leadership of the Swapo Party, won you precious independence and freedom. Your victory also made historic contributions to the victory of the whole African people in gaining independence and freedom.” (Xiaoping, 2009).

Xiaoping went on to describe China’s desire to strengthen its “historical” partnership with the GRN in support of Namibia’s development. Noting that “the Chinese and Namibian people are true friends who have weathered storms together and shared weal and woe” and the two countries’ “long-existed brotherhood,” he promised that China will work with Namibia to “raise the level of practical economic cooperation on the basis of reciprocity and mutual benefit” (Xiaoping 2009).” As in GRN documents, Xiaoping portrayed the China-Namibia relationship as one of “brotherhood” and “partnership,” grounded in “reciprocity and mutual benefit.” Both the Chinese and Namibian governments are thus actively working to promote a vision of the China-Namibia relationship as beneficial to Chinese and Namibian citizens alike.

**Negative Portrayals of China in the Namibian Media**

Despite the GRN’s support for Chinese involvement, portrayals of China in the Namibian media were largely negative for the two time periods analyzed. The nature of these portrayals varied, however, with the publication in question. While portrayals in *The Namibian* were overwhelmingly negative (73%), there were a significant number of positive portrayals in both the *Namibia Economist* and the *New Era*, particularly the latter. This likely reflects the readership tendencies of each paper, as described in Chapter 4. Furthermore, language varied significantly among the publications. For example, while there were over 20 uses of the word “corrupt” in connection with mentions of China in *The Namibian*, no articles in the *Namibia Economist* used the word “corrupt” in connection with Chinese involvement.

I identified five key themes in negative portrayals of China, along the lines of which the following sections are organized. These themes were: China as neo-colonial/neo-imperial; China
as resource-hungry; Chinese investment as low-quality or exploitative; Chinese influence as immoral, corrupt, or undemocratic, and Chinese immigration as invasion. The percentage breakdown among these themes is provided in Table 5.2.1 below. The following sections briefly discuss and provide examples of each of these themes, ordered from most to least prevalent.

While there is overlap among the themes (as will become clear from the examples that follow), I classified each portrayal based on its most-prominent theme.

### Table 5.2.1. Percentage Breakdown of Negative Portrayals of China by Theme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Portrayal of China</th>
<th>% of Negative Portrayals (n=133)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exploitative, Unwelcome, or Low-Quality</td>
<td>30.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrupt, Immoral, or Undemocratic</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource-Hungry</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neo-colonial/Neo-imperial</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invasion</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>99.9%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chinese Investment as Exploitative, Unwelcome, or Low-Quality**

The most prominent negative theme characterized Chinese involvement as exploitative, unwelcome, or low quality (30.1% of all negative portrayals). Exploitation here refers to two sub-themes: exploitation of Namibian laborers and exploitation of Namibian consumers (through the selling of fake products, for example). As Dobler (2005, 14) notes in his analysis of Chinese commercial activity in Oshikango, Namibia, “there are many voices [in Namibian politics and the media] denouncing Chinese traders as capitalist profiteers selling cheap junk to poor Namibians, further weakening the country’s economy by exporting the resulting gains to China.” My analysis confirmed Dobler’s assessment. Most of the sub-portrayals in this theme (55%) focused on the exploitative nature of Chinese goods, which were characterized as inferior to
goods from other producers. Even more noteworthy, the number of portrayals in this theme increased by approximately two-thirds between the two time periods analyzed, perhaps reflecting increasing numbers of Chinese merchants in Namibia, particularly in the north. A recent editorial in the *Namibia Economist*, titled “You want guarantee or you want cheap?” to echo a discussion a reporter overheard in a Chinese shop, commented on the increasing Chinese presence. He noted that while Chinese businesses and the Chinese government did not attend a 1998 business forum organized by the *Namibia Economist*, Chinese contractors have become “emboldened by their success in avoiding labour issues” and have “suddenly started showing off [their Chinese ownership] on huge billboard and banners on their overhead cranes (*Namibia Economist* 2012).”

Examples of portrayals of Chinese investment as low-quality, unwelcome, or exploitative are provided in Table 5.2.2 on the next page. While a significant number of portrayals fitting this theme took the form of letters to the editor and columns, most were SMSes in *The Namibian*. More portrayals in this theme came from *The Namibian* than from the *Namibia Economist* and the *New Era* combined. It is unclear whether these differences reflect newspaper self-censorship, the characteristics of SMS authors (who I assume are more likely to have strong opinions than non-writers), or the different readerships of these three newspapers.

As demonstrated in examples 3 and 4 in Table 5.2.2, some portrayals of Chinese involvement as exploitative related to concerns about specific Chinese products. Many, for example, concentrated on a milk scare that occurred in September 2008, when the products of a Chinese company, including infant formula, were found to contain melamine. On Sept. 29, 2008, alone, *The Namibian* published three SMSes about Chinese milk, each urging Namibians to avoid Chinese products and calling on the GRN to protect citizens. These concerns, however, did not end with infant formula. As example 4 illustrates, some portrayals went beyond concerns
with the safety of Chinese products (“is this fish fit for human consumption?”) to question why such products are not provided by Namibian producers. The author of example 4 in Table 5.1.2, for example, argues that “we have plenty of fish in Namibia” before suggesting that the GRN is “favouring” Chinese companies over their Namibian counterparts.

Table 5.2.2: Examples: Portrayals of Chinese Involvement as Low Quality, Exploitative, and/or Unwelcome (Italics added for emphasis)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media Source</th>
<th>Portrayal of China</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 SMS, The Namibian</td>
<td>“[W] are also tired of Chinese shops at Outapi [city of approximately 3,000 in the far north of Namibia]. Their things are of low quality.”</td>
<td>6/30/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 SMS, The Namibian</td>
<td>“If your [sic] using drugs your [sic] fake like China shop products and you are surely not going to last long.”</td>
<td>9/26/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 SMS, The Namibian</td>
<td>“Congratulations to China for the space manoeuvre [sic]! Now please stop rotten milk to infants! – Etuna.”</td>
<td>10/2/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 SMS, The Namibian</td>
<td>“Why should Government buy fish from China for drought relief when we have plenty of fish in Namibia? Is this fish fit for human consumption and does the Government care about the poor? I will never trust Chinese food products or tolerate the favouring of Chinese companies over Namibian companies.</td>
<td>1/7/09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 SMS, The Namibian</td>
<td>“Mr President Pohama the Chinese are not good business people in our poor Namibia because there is no quality control in their businesses. That’s why they provide poor products.”</td>
<td>3/22/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 SMS, The Namibian</td>
<td>“Mr President you mean Chinese must ignore Namibian labour law because they supported us during the struggle for our Independence?”</td>
<td>3/22/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Article, New Era</td>
<td>“The report lays bare the murky Chinese investments and more importantly Government’s ineptitude to set strategic priorities on which to negotiate foreign direct investment.”</td>
<td>3/26/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 SMS, The Namibian</td>
<td>“I urge the leaders to search for investors to come and work together with our people but not the Chinese way of selling fake items.”</td>
<td>5/20/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Letter to the Editor, Namibia Economist</td>
<td>“Chinese nationals are allowed to do whatever they wish in this country, even if this is done at the expense and or to the detriment of Namibians – the owners of this country.”</td>
<td>6/29/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Letter to the Editor, New Era</td>
<td>“[F]rankly speaking, the only thing Chinese are good at is coming to Africa with their no-strings-attached agreements that contri-bute [sic] nothing or perhaps little to our economies, while at the same time failing to positively participate in our economic activities.”</td>
<td>9/30/11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other portrayals expressed suspicion that Chinese companies were violating Namibian laws and gaining unfair access to markets through “murky” practices (example 7) and a “no-strings-attached” strategy (example 10). While Chinese actors bore the brunt of such portrayals, some authors described the GRN as incompetent in protecting Namibians (examples 4, 6, and 7), “the owners of this country” (example 9), despite highly-publicized labor law violations by Chinese actors (example 6). The prevalence of critiques of the GRN’s support for Chinese investment demonstrates that the GRN’s portrayal of China as “partner” in Namibian development has not been accepted by all Namibians.

Finally, relative to other themes, portrayals of Chinese investment as exploitative contained the strongest language. Authors used words like “fake” (examples 2 and 8) and “rotten” (example 3) to describe Chinese products, and Chinese individuals were described using words connoting irresponsibility (e.g. “whatever they wish” in example 9). Example 8 describes the selling of inferior products as simply “the Chinese way,” generalizing such practices to all Chinese individuals, while example 10 argues that no-strings-attached deals are “the only thing[s] Chinese are good at.” The examples in this theme demonstrate that portrayals of China in the Namibian media, particularly among SMS writers, go beyond concerns about the Chinese government to encompass the practices of individual Chinese merchants and Chinese-manufactured products. In contrast to media and academic portrayals focusing on exploitation at the level of the state, Namibian media portrayals of exploitation by China extend the arena in which exploitation occurs from the boardroom or the capitol to the street corner.

**Chinese Influence as Corrupt, Immoral, or Undemocratic**

As is discussed in Chapter 6, corruption in the GRN is a topic of significant concern among Namibians. *The Namibian* and the *Namibia Economist* have paid substantial attention to
corruption allegations, and the GRN designated an Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) in 2003 to assuage these concerns (although the resulting investigations have rarely led to legal charges; see Lemon 2007). Despite the creation of the ACC, watchdog groups such as the Legal Assistance Center (LAC) continue to report substantial corruption in parastatal companies. Not surprisingly then, Namibians have also expressed concern about corruption related to Chinese involvement. Portrayals of Chinese involvement in Namibia as corrupt, immoral, or undemocratic were the second most pervasive theme in this analysis (19.5% of negative portrayals of China). These portrayals went beyond discussions of Chinese investments or business operations as corrupt to include allegations of corruption by Chinese and Namibian officials. These concerns have likely been aggravated by several widely-publicized corruption scandals, including a 2009 scandal involving Chinese President Hu Jintao’s son Hu Haifeng’s company Nuctech, which was accused of bribing Namibian contract management officials.

While this section focuses on media portrayals of Chinese influence, concerns about corruption have also been raised by Namibian officials. According to LaFraniere and Grobler (2009), who conducted over 20 private interviews with SWAPO members, SWAPO members have begun to privately worry that Chinese leaders may be buying influence with GRN officials in exchange for control of minerals. While no SWAPO members have gone on the record as concerned about corruption related to Chinese involvement, opposition party members have publically stated such concerns. In 2006, Member of Parliament (MP) and Congress of Democrats (CoD) president Ulenga moved that the National Assembly consider whether Chinese contract tenders had been unjustly favored by Namibian officials (Weidlich 2006). Furthermore, Ulenga argued that Chinese contractors were committing “malpractices in the building industry, like non-compliance with tender regulations, lack of standards and the role of foreign contractors
Ulenga’s argument was forcefully dismissed by SWAPO leaders. Despite SWAPO’s continued support for Chinese involvement, it is clear that cracks in the Namibia-China relationship are beginning to show among opposition party members. Table 5.2.3, below and on the next page, contains examples of portrayals of Chinese involvement as corrupt, undemocratic, or immoral. It is noteworthy that none of the New Era articles in either time period used the word “corrupt” in connection with Chinese involvement.

Table 5.2.3. Examples: Portrayals of Chinese Involvement as Corrupt, Undemocratic, or Immoral (Italics added for emphasis)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media Source</th>
<th>Portrayal of China</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 SMS, The Namibian</td>
<td>“The China Henan project for the road between Rundu and Elundu was a political deal with the Government due to credit which the state owes to China’s government. Namibians are suffering at this company but the government is silent.”</td>
<td>5/7/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Letter to the Editor, New Era</td>
<td>“Is it an irony of circumstance that while the rest of the world has been empathizing with the Chinese over the numerous deaths caused by the earthquake, the Chinese persisted in their nebulous scheme by ‘successfully’ delivering its dangerous cargo of arms and ammunition to Mugabe’s government to be potentially used in the destruction of the lives of hundreds or thousands of our African brothers &amp; sisters in Zimbabwe?”</td>
<td>5/27/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 SMS, The Namibian</td>
<td>“If Swapo is thinking of Russia and China to buy this meat, they must forget, because they are only interested in selling weapons. And later we will be forced to exchange pirated goods for our livestock to survive which will last for a week. When our livestock is finished, we will have no choice, but to sell the land.”</td>
<td>8/4/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 SMS, The Namibian</td>
<td>[re: Chinese involvement] “What leaders we have who care more about the interest of foreigners than of the citizens? Are they maybe enriching themselves in so doing?...Greedy leaders are hampering economic emancipation [sic] in the land and turning Namibia into a control-free zone anyone could take advantage of...”</td>
<td>8/11/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 SMS, The Namibian</td>
<td>“SPYL [SWAPO Party Youth League] seems to have the country’s priorities twisted. Why the big fuss about the Americans and Etosha, I am sure it would not have been such a big deal or a deal at all if it was the Chinese. After all they already took over the building industry and with it opportunities meant for Namibians and sadly this seems to be OK with SPYL and Swapo. Is that not hypocritical?”</td>
<td>10/8/08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As the examples above illustrate, corruption was often portrayed as occurring on both the Namibian and Chinese sides of the negotiating table. Mutual corruption was the most common sub-theme in this theme, composing approximately 54% of portrayals. Several portrayals focused on the lack of transparency in Chinese negotiating practices (example 8), while others blamed the GRN for perceived corruption. GRN-specific blame was most often cast on the greed of Namibian officials (examples 4, 5, and 7). Exemplifying some Namibians’ skepticism of the supposed historical relationship between China and Namibia, example 7 characterizes “so-called Chinese investment” as justification for a relationship the primarily benefits Namibian and Chinese elites. Example 7 is also significant for its representation of concerns regarding Chinese purchases of land, a topic of broader concern across Africa.

Concerns regarding Chinese weapons sales and support for undemocratic regimes such as Zimbabwe were also a prevalent sub-theme, comprising approximately 23% of portrayals in this theme. Portrayal 9 in Table 5.2.3, for example, argues that Namibian President Pohamba should...
not be “blinded by the few guns China gave to Swapo,” while example 2 criticizes the blind eye being turned on China’s “nebulous scheme” to provide weapons to Zimbabwean President Mugabe. Example 3, meanwhile, portrays China as “only interested in selling weapons.” This example also reflects concerns with the quality of Chinese goods (“pirated”) detailed in the previous example, demonstrating the overlap that often occurred among themes.

**China as Resource-Hungry**

The third most prevalent theme among negative portrayals of China was the characterization of China resource-hungry (14.3% of negative portrayals). These concerns were often intertwined with portrayals of China as neo-imperial or neo-colonial, as described in the subsequent section. In the *Namibia Economist*, John Daly, a Namibian business analyst, brought together these concerns in a January 2012 column titled “Namibia: The next pawn on China’s chessboard?” While it also touched on diamond and copper extraction, Daly’s column focused on Namibia’s budding oil industry. Barring investment from non-Chinese sources, Daly (2012) argued that “it seems likely that Namibia’s energy riches will become yet another pawn on China’s global energy chessboard.” Examples of portrayals of China as “resource-hungry” are provided in Table 5.2.4 on the next page.

The examples on the next page paint a picture of China as “resource-hungry” (example 3) and characterized by “determination” (example 1) and “naked exploitation” (example 6). Chinese involvement in resource extraction, more so than Chinese involvement in construction or other sectors, was often portrayed as exploitative. While descriptions of Chinese investment using terms such as exploitation were particularly common in *The Namibian*, both the *New Era* and the *Namibia Economist* featured similar portrayals. In fact, only six portrayals in all the sources analyzed characterized Chinese involvement in resource extraction positively, perhaps
indicating that Chinese involvement in resource extraction is more likely to be viewed negatively than Chinese involvement in other sectors. Portrayal 2 below, for example, which comes from an article by the *New Era*’s staff, describes China and India as “gobbling commodities in Africa,” insinuating that China’s “appetite” for commodities is insatiable. Example 5 connects Chinese involvement in extraction with its government’s need to support its population, again using appetite as a metaphor.

**Table 5.2.4. Examples: Portrayals of China as Resource-Hungry** (Italics added for emphasis)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media Source</th>
<th>Portrayal of China</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Article, <em>The Namibian</em></td>
<td>“[D]ays after Aluminum Corp. of China said it will invest US$19.5 billion in Rio Tinto Group…the offer underscores China’s determination to clinch access to offshore mining resources.”</td>
<td>2/17/09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Article, <em>New Era</em></td>
<td>“Emerging markets – China and India – that have been gobbling commodities in Africa at attractive prices, are also taking a knock on their economies.”</td>
<td>3/5/09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Article, <em>The Namibian</em></td>
<td>“Talk of more investment by resource-hungry China triggered sharp gains in other Australian mining shares.”</td>
<td>3/12/09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 SMS, <em>The Namibian</em></td>
<td>“[W]e all know the ANC government [South Africa] is just afraid of the big brother in Beijing. Cheap plastic toys in exchange for exploiting our natural and human resources. What a great deal! Congratulations comrades and keep it up.”</td>
<td>4/1/09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Letter to the Editor, <em>New Era</em></td>
<td>“[O]ne thing that Namibians need to realize is that China is busy sending all its underprivileged people to come feed themselves on African resources.”</td>
<td>9/30/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Letter to the Editor, <em>Namibia Economist</em></td>
<td>“Now the Namibian people are being told that they must allow naked exploitation by the Chinese businesspersons and/or that Namibians must cede their inalienable sovereignty over our natural resources to the Chinese.”</td>
<td>10/2/11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While the vast majority of portrayals of Chinese investment in resources focused on Namibia, four portrayals connected the situation in Namibia to Chinese investment in extraction elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa, particularly in southern Africa. The portrayal of South Africa in Example 4 as bending under Chinese pressure, for example, paints a picture of Chinese
involvement as aggressive as well as exploitative (providing a discursive connection with concerns about Chinese investment as immoral and intertwined with arms sales).

**China as Neo-colonial/Neo-imperial**

Based upon my review of the literature, I expected concerns with Chinese influence as neo-colonial or neo-imperial to be prevalent. While there were a significant number of portrayals of Chinese involvement as neo-imperial or neo-colonial, comprising 10.5% of the total number of negative portrayals of China, such portrayals were not as prevalent as descriptions of Chinese investment as resource-driven, low quality/exploitative, or corrupt. Portrayals of China as neo-imperial/neo-colonial do appear, however, to be increasing. While there were only four portrayals of Chinese involvement as “colonial” or “imperial” in the 2008-2009 timeframe, there were twelve such portrayals in October 2010-October 2011. Table 5.2 on the next page displays examples of portrayals of Chinese involvement as (neo)colonial or imperial.

As shown in Table 5.2.5, some portrayals of Chinese involvement echoed broader portrayals of Chinese involvement in Africa as a “new scramble” (example 2) or as explicitly colonial (examples 1, 3, and 5). Thus, while these terms may have more traction in the academic literature and in Western media than they do in the Namibian media, they were used by some Namibians to describe Chinese involvement. These portrayals also echoed frequent Western academic and media portrayals of Chinese involvement in Africa as “new” and/or distinct from the involvement of “former colonizers” (see example 1). Rather than framing Chinese involvement as a renewal or continuation of previous involvement in Africa, Chinese involvement was commonly portrayed as distinct from previous colonialism/imperialism – a “neo-imperialism with Chinese characteristics,” to borrow from David Harvey (2005).

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25 The two terms generally appeared to be used interchangeably by authors. I also categorized portrayals that described Chinese involvement in terms of a “scramble” in this theme.
Finally, as elsewhere, there was significant overlap between portrayals of Chinese involvement as neo-colonial/neo-imperial and other themes. For example, in addition to characterizing China as neo-colonial, example 1 in Table 5.2.5 argues that China is dealing with “overpopulation,” reflecting concerns of “invasion” analyzed in the subsequent section. Example 4, meanwhile, bemoans the GRN’s management of Chinese investment, framing the GRN as not only “in denial” about the threats of such investment but also as “deflect[ing] attention” away from “undoubtedly one of the biggest threats to the indigenization of the Namibian economy.”

**Chinese Immigration as Invasion**

Six percent of negative portrayals of Chinese involvement focused on the influx of Chinese citizens in Namibia, comprising a theme that I have labeled “invasion.” The rising
Chinese population in Namibia has been a topic of increasing debate not only in the Namibian media but also among academics and politicians. Dobler (2008), for example, has argued that Namibians’ concerns with China include social as well as economic issues, such as the impact of Chinese immigrants on the cultural characteristics and values of Namibian communities. Based on his research on Chinese merchants, Dobler (2008) has characterized the social climate facing Chinese immigrants as increasingly hostile. In 2004, Dobler identified 22 Chinese-owned businesses in the northern city of Oshikango (population 5,000). Two years later, the number of Chinese-owned businesses had more than tripled to 75 (Dobler 2008). Reflecting Dobler’s findings, I found that the number of portrayals of Chinese involvement as “invasion” doubled between 2008-2009 and 2010-2011. Namibian politicians, particularly opposition members, have picked up on these concerns; in a November 2006 parliamentary debate, for example, Monitor Action Group (MAG) and Member of Parliament (MP) Jurie Vilijoen argued that the “scramble for Africa is on again,” claiming that “[t]here are an estimated 44,000 of these [Chinese] people in Namibia” (Weidlich 2006). Vilijoen’s use of the phrase “these people” illustrates how prone portrayals of Chinese involvement as “invasion” are to over-generalization. Table 5.2.6 on the next page features examples of portrayals of Chinese investment as invasion.

There were no articles mentioning both China and the word “invasion” or “invade” in either the New Era or the Namibia Economist for either time period, with the exception of a film review in the Namibia Economist. Examples 2 and 5 in Table 5.2.6 present the only portrayals that characterized Chinese involvement as something reminiscent of invasion in the Namibia Economist or the New Era. As noted previously, the New Era is funded by the GRN and has

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26 As recently as 1998, the Chinese government reported that there were fewer than 50 Chinese citizens in Namibia. A 2009 U.S. government report, released through Wikileaks, reported that there were 3,000-4,000 Chinese citizens living in Namibia. Opposition politicians such as Ulenga of the CoD and Vilijoen of the MAG have argued that the number is closer to 40,000.
been accused of toeing the SWAPO party line, while the *Namibia Economist* caters to a middle-to-upper-class audience that is more likely to benefit from Chinese investment.

**Table 5.2.6. Examples: Portrayals of Chinese Involvement as Invasion** (Italics added for emphasis)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media Source</th>
<th>Portrayal of China</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 SMS, <em>The Namibian</em></td>
<td>“It seems Chinese people are encouraged, paid and financially supported by the Chinese government to migrate to Africa...because they import their goods solely from China – and <em>keep Africa dependent on China</em>. In so doing, <em>Africa will be held captive by this economic giant</em>. Namibia, open your eyes. I’m not preaching Chinese-phobia, but it seems that China is busy <em>invading Africa with questionable motives.</em>”</td>
<td>5/12/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Editorial, <em>Namibia Economist</em></td>
<td>“Before, it was only in informed circles that one obtained information about their [China’s] <em>aggressive</em> entry and expansion...The Chinese <em>will ask for their pound of flesh</em> somewhere in the not-too-distant future. Chinese merchants will only increase, trailing the expanding footprint as more and more small venders <em>penetrate Africa</em>.“</td>
<td>6/28/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 SMS, <em>The Namibian</em></td>
<td>“The Chinese population in Namibia should be limited and their activities be <em>regulated and monitored</em> by Government.”</td>
<td>8/11/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 SMS, <em>The Namibian</em></td>
<td>“His Excellency President Pohamba obviously doesn’t understand issue [sic] with Chinese people in Namibia. Few people have problems with foreign business people or technical experts who bring skills and expertise that is not available locally. The problem is that many of the Chinese that came to Namibia as labourers [sic], who take jobs away from unemployed Namibians.”</td>
<td>3/22/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Letter to the Editor, <em>New Era</em></td>
<td>“[O]ne thing that Namibians need to realize is that China is busy sending all its underprivileged people to come <em>feed themselves</em> on African resources.”</td>
<td>9/30/11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As in examples 1 and 5 in Table 5.2.6, one of the sub-themes that emerged within this theme was the characterization of Chinese immigration to Namibia as a Chinese government strategy. Portrayal 5, for example, characterizes Chinese migration as necessary for the Chinese government. The author’s use of the phrase “feed themselves on Africa resources” and argument that China is sending its “underprivileged people” to Namibia calls to mind Malthusian concerns about over-population. The GRN was also characterized in several portrayals as failing to protect
Namibians, laborers and business owners alike, in the face of increasing competition from China. This sentiment is illustrated in example 4, which offers the most nuanced language of the portrayals in Table 5.2.6. Although still relying on an over-generalized category of “Chinese people,” the author distinguishes between the desirability of individual Chinese immigrants. Even more so than the previously discussed themes, portrayals of Chinese immigrants often brought in other portrayals of Chinese involvement. Portrayal 1, for example, argues that China is working to “keep Africa dependent” on Chinese investment, while example 4 argues that the Chinese residents’ activities “should be…regulated and monitored by Government” to prevent “greedy leaders” from “hampering economic emancipation in the land and turning Namibia into a control-free zone anyone could take advantage of.” Furthermore, these concerns were not always portrayed as unique to Namibia. Many portrayals characterized Chinese “invasion” as continent-wide. Portrayal 2, for example, describes Chinese immigration as part of China’s goal to “penetrate Africa,” while example 1 argues that the Chinese government is “invading Africa.”

Finally, concerns about Chinese immigration appear to have grown since the end point of my analysis. A September 2011 article in *The Namibian*, for example, evaluated whether the international media had been too “alarmist” regarding Chinese investment in Africa. Its author concluded that, while the Chinese “footprint” is being felt differently in different countries, the “footprint of Chinese businesses are [sic] across the region [southern Africa] is replicated in virtually carbon copy fashion (Sasman 2011c),” implying that Chinese businesses are taking a one-size-fits-all approach to investment in southern Africa. The author argued that China’s footprint will only increase as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) furthers relationships with China through events such as the SADC-China trade fair held in Johannesburg.
from May 18-20, 2011. Such discussions reinforce both the ways in which Chinese involvement is generalized despite its diversity of forms and the ways in which some Namibians situate their concerns about Chinese involvement in the broader African context (echoing Ferguson’s (2006) argument that many Africans do indeed identify as “Africans”).

Bringing Negative Portrayals of China Together

To conclude this discussion of negative portrayals of China in the Namibian media, I must re-emphasize that the five themes discussed above reinforce one another and are often interwoven. A September 30, 2011, letter to the editor in the New Era, titled “Chinese should shape up or shape out [sic],” incorporated all five of identified themes. While the use of the phrase “feed themselves” in this letter has been used as an example of two of the previously-discussed themes (China as resource-hungry and Chinese immigration as invasion), it is useful to include a longer excerpt to demonstrate how these themes reinforce one another. I have italicized segments that correspond particularly well with the five themes discussed previously.

“[P]lease allow me to have a go at the trepidation on China-Africa relations… we as Namibians should start guarding ourselves against imperialism of any sort and shy away from agreements that might pose a threat on our economy or that will demoralise our human rights, so to say. I mean, frankly speaking, the only thing Chinese are good at is coming to Africa with their no-strings-attached agreements that contribute [sic] nothing or perhaps little to our economies, while at the same time failing to positively participate in our economic activities. Another comical matter that many Namibians haven’t noticed is that these Chinese dealers/traders operating from different local shopping malls do not bank their money in our banking institutions, nor do they buy Namibian-made products, and this disturbing exercise clearly shows that they don’t want to contribute a single cent to our economy…And one thing that Namibians need to realise is that China is busy sending all its underprivileged people to come feed themselves on African resources, and most importantly, use our people for their own enrichment, and not to mention their Chinese-made poor-quality products that out-march our local African-made products that our people largely depend

27 This trade fair included participation from a large number of Chinese corporations, including China Coal Group, the Sinopacific Shipbuilding Group, CRBC International (which works on hydroelectric projects), China Gezhouba, the China Railway Construction Corporation, and the China International Water and Electric Corp (Sasman 2011c).
on. Another good example of this whole sad situation is the Peop-le's [sic] Republic of Sudan which used to export 60 percent of its oil to China and in return got AK47's and ammunition which largely contributed to a civil war in Sudan for all these past years. I mean to be honest, haven't Africans suffered enough (slave trade, colonialism, apartheid) and since the beginning of man's history, Africa has been labeled the world's poorest continent, a war zone, and a place where one comes and reaps where they have not sown. All I'm saying is that we cannot be slaves in our own country. It's time to stand and rise for what we fought for and put an end to neo-colonialism. I rest my case!” (Hembapu 2011).

While I found it useful to delineate the key themes that emerged from this analysis to provide a more nuanced description of the diversity of forms that negative portrayals took, these themes were rarely completely distinct. Instead, they reinforced one another in portraying Chinese involvement in Namibia as exploitative, unwelcome, invasive, and corrupt. The following section contrasts these negative portrayals with the smaller number of positive portrayals of Chinese involvement.

Positive Portrayals of China

While most (60.5%) media portrayals of Chinese involvement were negative, 19.1% were positive (20.5% were banal). Some Namibians defended Chinese involvement or even praised its influence upon the GRN. For example, as part of a series of wrap-up articles on the biggest news stories of 2008, New Era journalist Julius Iikela commented on the controversy surrounding Chinese-owned businesses in Namibia. “For me,” he noted, “one of the stories that dominated…2008 was the unhappiness by local businesses about Chinese-owned businesses’ expansion in Namibia.” After describing the complaints of Namibian businessmen, he argued that Chinese businesses’ success despite social opposition is telling. “Asian people are known as work-alcoholics[sic]” who “have prospered because they were able to draw customers away from local businesses (Iikela 2009).” Iikela concluded by arguing that Namibian merchants should apply lessons from Chinese merchants to improve their own businesses.
The following sections describe three prominent themes among positive portrayals of China: portrayals of the Namibia-China relationship as south-south solidarity/partnership (42.9% of positive portrayals), uses of the media by Chinese and Namibian officials (33.3%), and portrayals of Chinese involvement as beneficial to economic growth (14.3%).

**Chinese Involvement as Partnership and/or South-South Solidarity**

The portrayal of China as a long-term friend of Namibia was the most common theme among positive characterizations of Chinese involvement in the Namibia media. This theme was also prevalent among statements of Namibian and Chinese leaders (presented in the following section). Examples of portrayals of Chinese involvement as rooted in partnership with Namibia are presented in Table 5.2.7 below. Unsurprisingly, the *New Era* had the highest number of

**Table 5.2.7  Examples: Portrayals of Chinese Involvement as Partnership and/or South-South Solidarity** (Italics added for emphasis)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media Source</th>
<th>Portrayal of China</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Editorial, <em>New Era</em></td>
<td>“There is little reason not to view China as a reliable political and trading partner…China [is set] apart from other ‘super’ nations in respect of their relations with smaller nations of the world.”</td>
<td>1/28/09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Article, <em>Namibia Economist</em></td>
<td>“Chinese businessmen are taking a long-term view and pursuing strategic expansion and partnership in Africa even though China’s multiplying investments on the continent have lost some lustre in the global downturn.”</td>
<td>1/29/09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Editorial, <em>New Era</em></td>
<td>“China has been on the right side of history during the bitter and protracted war of resistance and liberation throughout Africa. Moreover, China was not involved in colonizing Africa nor in the slave trade in which most western powers have been involved.”</td>
<td>2/2/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Letter to the Editor, <em>Namibia Economist</em></td>
<td>“I support President Hifikepunye Pohamba defense of the presence of Chinese business people in the Namibian market…They are friends of the Namibian nation who supported the country’s struggle for freedom and independence.”</td>
<td>3/17/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Letter to the Editor, <em>The Namibian</em></td>
<td>“[e]veryday you open newspapers it is just hate messages from our people especially toward Chinese nationals…If there are people who understand which [sic] means to be in a foreign country, it is us Namibians. I am supporting our President Hifikepunye Pohamba on his take on the Chinese. We need to understand that friends are friends forever.”</td>
<td>4/1/11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
positive portrayals of China (21), followed by the *Namibian Economist* (15). Positive portrayals of China outside of quotes from Namibian politicians were rare in *The Namibian*.

China’s support for SWAPO during the Namibian independence struggle was the most prominent sub-theme within this theme. As in example 3, many portrayals described China as being “on the right side of history.” Others engaged with critics of China, often referring to them as hypocrites, presumably given the fact that much of the SWAPO independence movement was led by Namibians in exile (see example 5). Some portrayals also emphasized that China approaches economic relationships with countries such as Namibia on the basis of “equality,” sometimes explicitly contrasting this with Namibia’s relationships with Western countries, as in the argument in example 1 that partnerships with China are distinct from those with “‘super’ nations” because of its “respect of…smaller nations.” Others were more subtle but expressed similar ideas. For example, the language of “long-term view” and, again, “partnership” in example 2 implies that Chinese involvement represents a long-term desire for economic partnerships with African countries as opposed to a short-term motivation of exploitation.

*Use of the Media by Politicians*

The themes of long-term partnership and friendship were also prevalent in portrayals of Chinese involvement by Namibian political figures, as quoted in Namibian media sources. Most of these portrayals referenced the “historical” or “long-term” partnership that China has offered to Namibia, explicitly or implicitly connecting Chinese support to Namibia’s independence struggle. Over 50% of these portrayals originated with President Pohamba, but he was far from the only Namibian leader who was quoted as portraying China in a positive light. With the exception of a description of a statement on corruption by opposition member Ben Ulenga, I found no negative portrayals of China originating with a GRN official. Furthermore, the number
of positive portrayals originating from GRN sources increased by approximately one third from the first time period analyzed to the second. Given the GRN’s support for increased regulation of foreign mining companies in the 2011 Strategic Minerals Policy, this is somewhat surprising. While it is impossible to determine the motivations of portrayals through textual analysis alone, it appears that political support for Chinese involvement has continued despite GRN efforts to reduce foreign dominance in resource extraction in Namibia (attempts perhaps based in the desire to quell an outraged electorate rather than to undertake a policy change, particularly given the lack of recent movement on the 2011 policy). Examples of support for Chinese involvement in Namibia from both Namibian and Chinese officials are provided in table 5.2.8 below.

**Table 5.2.8. Examples: Support for China in the Media by Namibian and Chinese Political Officials** (Italics added for emphasis)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media Source</th>
<th>Portrayal of China</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Letter to the Editor, <em>New Era</em></td>
<td>“The Chinese Government…encourage[s] established Chinese companies to invest in Namibia, <em>create more jobs</em> for the local people, and <em>transfer more technologies</em> to their Namibian partners.” (Chinese Ambassador to Namibia Ren Xiaoping)</td>
<td>3/20/09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Article, <em>The Namibian</em></td>
<td>“‘It is shameful,’ he [President Pohamba] argued, ‘for black Namibian business people to condemn the Chinese who provided us with arms during our liberation struggle.’”</td>
<td>3/17/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Article, <em>The Namibian</em></td>
<td>“‘This forum comes at the time when the forces of capitalism and imperialism are hard at work to discredit the good relationship being enjoyed between Africa and China,’ Iivula-Ithana said.” (Justice Minister)</td>
<td>5/18/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Article, <em>New Era</em></td>
<td>“<em>South-south solidarity, cooperation and mutual support</em>, are the defining characteristics of the relationship between Namibia and China, according to Theo-Ben Gurirab, Speaker of the National Assembly.”</td>
<td>5/23/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Article, <em>The Namibian</em></td>
<td>“A representative of the Chinese government argued that African countries welcome its no-strings-attached aid. It also says its goals in the continent are <em>purely selfless</em> and its projects and help have benefitted millions of ordinary people.”</td>
<td>10/1/11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As demonstrated in examples 2, 3, and 4, Namibian politicians ranging from the President to MPs have expressed support for Chinese involvement. GRN portrayals of Chinese
involvement largely centered on the theme of partnership, as well as “south-south solidarity,” “mutual support,” and “cooperation.” Such relationships were often explicitly or implicitly contrasted with relationships between Namibia and Western countries. Justice Minister Iivula-Ithana’s argument in example 3 that “the forces of capitalism and imperialism are hard at work to discredit” the Namibia-China relationship exemplifies two important narratives in this theme. First, it distinguishes the China-Namibia relationship from relationships rooted in capitalism and imperialism. Second, it addresses international criticisms of Chinese involvement in Africa, implying that such criticisms are based upon imperialist and capitalist interests. Chinese officials have also adopted the language of “partnership,” emphasizing that Chinese involvement offers opportunities for Namibian economic development, including “selfless” aid (see examples 1 and 5). Finally, it is important to emphasize that support for Chinese involvement from Namibian officials appears to come primarily from national political leaders. I did not identify any positive portrayals of Chinese involvement originating from local officials (e.g. mayors, city council members, etc.). While there appears to be a consensus among national SWAPO leaders that Chinese involvement is beneficial, it is not clear that such sentiments are held by local leaders.

*Chinese Involvement as Strengthening the Namibian Economy*

Some portrayals also described Chinese involvement as an opportunity to strengthen Namibia’s economy and role in the global economy. Unlike the portrayals in the previous section, portrayals of Chinese involvement as improving Namibia’s economic situation did not overwhelmingly originate in remarks from Namibian or Chinese officials. Examples of these portrayals are presented in Table 5.2.9 on the next page.
Table 5.2.9. Examples: Portrayals of Chinese Involvement as Strengthening the Namibian Economy/Namibia’s Position in the Global Economic System (Italics added for emphasis)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media Source</th>
<th>Portrayal of China</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Letter to the Editor, <em>The Namibian</em></td>
<td>“Where does Namibia position itself [in times of shifting political and economic power]? Firstly our good relationships with India/China must grow…”</td>
<td>7/18/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 SMS, <em>The Namibian</em></td>
<td>“The African continent can develop economically and militarily if China’s ideology and principles could be emulated by African leaders instead of criticizing the Chinese. China was once like Africa but <em>dynamic and visionary leadership has transformed China to a superpower</em>…Please let’s work closely with the Chinese and learn the human principles to <em>transform Namibia into Africa’s China</em>. Viva China, viva. – Victor O”</td>
<td>8/13/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Article, <em>The Namibian</em></td>
<td>“Hu’s commitment to Africa appears to reflect his belief that the continent offers a friendly stage to demonstrate to the wider world that China’s growth and international policies are a global good.”</td>
<td>11/4/09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Editorial, <em>New Era</em></td>
<td>“It cannot be denied that in recent years, the <em>Chinese spirit of hard work and patriotism</em> has transformed the economy of China and its people into a respectable status both inside and outside China…There is <em>no country on earth</em> that does not want to do business with China.”</td>
<td>1/28/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 SMS, <em>The Namibian</em></td>
<td>“Namibians are complaining about Chinese selling inferior goods. Now tell me why are we buying their goods?...The Chinese are not forcing us to buy their goods. We make a choice to buy. Leave the Chinese alone and <em>start learning from them</em>.”</td>
<td>3/22/11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some portrayals explicitly argued that Chinese involvement benefits Namibia’s economy because of the lessons China’s success offers for Namibia. Portrayal 2 (an SMS), for example, cites China’s “dynamic and visionary” leadership as the catalyst for its new superpower status, while example 4 describes “the Chinese spirit of hard work and patriotism” as making every country want to do business with China. Example 5 contradicts negative portrayals of Chinese products, questioning why Namibians buy Chinese goods if they aren’t better than Namibian goods. Instead of criticizing the Chinese for their success, the author argues, Namibians should “start learning from them.” This sort of ‘common sense’ response to arguments that Chinese goods are low quality, which was present in at least eight portrayals, implies that Namibian
businesses should adopt Chinese business strategies. Furthermore, it implies that, if they do not, their inability to adapt, rather than broader economic processes, is the source of their failure.

Some positive portrayals, as in example 3, did not take a strong normative position on whether Chinese involvement is good or bad, instead providing an argument as to why the Chinese government is pursuing relationships with Namibia. The following section brings together positive and negative portrayals of Chinese involvement by focusing on the topic of many portrayals: China’s involvement in the Namibian liberation struggle.

*Connecting Negative and Positive Portrayals: China in the Namibian Liberation Struggle*

Some Namibians have questioned the so-called “historical friendship” between Namibia and China as frequently referenced in positive portrayals of Chinese involvement. In a May 3, 2012, letter to the editor published in the *Namibia Economist*, an author referring to himself as “Citizen” Phil ya Nangoloh caused a stir with his argument that,

“[t]hrough their daily public pronouncements lately, our leaders have misled the people of Namibia into believing that during the liberation struggle…the Chinese Government militarily supported SWAPO. This explains why Chinese nationals are allowed to do whatever they wish in this country, even if this is done at the expense and or to the detriment of Namibians - the owners of this country…Such utterances are self-serving simply because those who are making them are personally benefitting in one way or the other from so-called Chinese investments in this country. There has been no such link military or otherwise between Namibia and China…As a Soviet-trained former cadre in the People’s Liberation Army of Namibia…I am one of the living testimonies about the fact that, since the Sino-Soviet Rift of the early 1960s, almost 99.99% of our military hardware came from, and our military training took place in, the former Soviet Union … Now the Namibian people are being told that they must allow naked exploitation by the Chinese businesspersons and/or that Namibians must cede their inalienable sovereignty over our natural resources to the Chinese presumably because of alleged historic Chinese links.” (Nangoloh 2012, emphasis added)

Ya Nangoloh’s argument implies that the discourse of Chinese “friendship” and “partnership” is being used to garner support for the GRN, whose officials have placed a significant emphasis on China’s role in the Namibian liberation movement in public speeches and public policy
documents. While many Namibians have adopted the discourse of China as a long-term political and economic partner, some Namibians are questioning both the nature of that “partnership” and the factual evidence on which it’s based. This is a clear example of the ways in which Namibians have divergently reacted to a particular portrayal of China.

5.3 Portrayals of South Africa

In contrast to portrayals of China, the overwhelming majority of portrayals of South Africa were banal (61%, versus 20% for China). While such banal descriptions were present in articles, as would be expected, they also occurred in SMSes, columns, and letters to the editor in a frequency that dwarfed banal descriptions of China in those mediums. Portrayals of South Africa also tended to be less essentializing than portrayals of China. Whereas portrayals of China often referred to “Chinese shopowners” or “the Chinese,” there were few references to “South Africans” writ large. Both negative (32%) and positive (6.8%) portrayals of South Africa also tended to focus on particular events, such as the 2008 xenophobic violence in South Africa, rather than on general sentiments. The following sections describe prominent themes among portrayals of South Africa.

Negative Portrayals of South Africa

Three themes were most prevalent in portrayals of South Africa in the Namibian media: violence, the South African government’s support for Zimbabwean President Mugabe, and South Africa’s exploitation of Namibia/Namibia’s dependence on South Africa. It is noteworthy that resource extraction was not a significant theme in portrayals of South Africa, despite South African companies’ substantial involvement in resource extraction in Namibia. The percentage breakdown for each theme is provided in Table 5.3.1 on the next page.
Table 5.3.1. Percentage Breakdown of Negative Portrayals of South Africa by Theme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Portrayal of South Africa</th>
<th>% of Negative Portrayals (n=61)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Violent/Violence</td>
<td>31.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South African exploitation of Namibia/Namibian dependence on South Africa</td>
<td>29.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South African support for Robert Mugabe</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>27.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unlike portrayals of China, there was not a significant difference in portrayals of South Africa among The Namibian, the Namibia Economist, and the New Era; the New Era was as likely to feature negative portrayals as The Namibian. Table 5.3.2 on the next page presents examples of the three most prevalent themes among negative portrayals. As the number and diversity of portrayals was relatively low, all negative portrayals are lumped together.

The number of negative portrayals of South Africa in 2008-2009 was roughly double that in 2010-2011, likely due to the xenophobic violence in South Africa in May of 2008. Over 30% of negative portrayals in both time periods addressed this violence, particularly in light of the global spotlight on South Africa’s hosting of the World Cup. Portrayals 1, 2, 3, and 4 in Table 5.3.2 provide examples of such characterizations. While example 1 is the most troubling of the portrayals of xenophobic violence in South Africa because of its lack of an anti-violence stance against groups such as the “Europeans, Arabs, Chinese, and Indians,” examples 2, 3, and 4 illustrate some of the ways in which authors characterized violence in South Africa and, by association, South African society. These characterizations included “not ready for the world,” “ungrateful” (given the support South Africans have received historically from other African states), “barbaric,” and “uncivilized.” Similar characterizations appeared in portrayals focusing on the South African government’s support for Robert Mugabe. Portrayal 3, for example,
describes Nelson Mandela’s shoes as “three sizes too big” for South African President Mbeki due to his support for Mugabe.

Table 5.3.2. Examples: Negative Portrayals of South Africa (Italics added for emphasis)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media Source</th>
<th>Portrayal of South Africa</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 SMS, The Namibian</td>
<td>“I am very disappointed by the South Africans attacking their black brothers and calling them foreigners taking their jobs. What about the Europeans, Arabs, Chinese, and Indians?”</td>
<td>4/6/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 SMS, The Namibian</td>
<td>“As a Namibia who considers himself as an ambassador of goodwill at all times, I am calling all peace-loving world citizens to join me in raising my cry to condemn the barbaric actions of xenophobia in South Africa. If South Africa is not ready for the world, then surely Fifa must reconsider staging its World Cup.”</td>
<td>5/23/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Letter to the Editor, New Era</td>
<td>“Take the World Cup away from South Africa. They don’t deserve it. Mbeki should step down…He is partly to be blamed for the Zimbabwean refugees in his country because he is backing Mugabe. Nelson Mandela’s shoes are three sizes too big for him.”</td>
<td>6/5/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 SMS, The Namibian</td>
<td>“With the high crime rate and the current strong xenophobia, South Africa does not deserve to host the 2010 Fifa World Cup. It’s bigger than rugby. Many black South Africans must get their history and economic facts right! Tomorrow they will need Africa’s help, like they did in the past!”</td>
<td>6/6/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 SMS, The Namibian</td>
<td>“A shortage of cement in Namibia is a first signal before World Cup in South Africa, more product shortages will follow soon. As a country we cannot just depend on RSA production. We have had 18 years (after Independence) but we did little regards [sic] major industrial development, only mining.”</td>
<td>9/22/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Letter to the Editor, The Namibian</td>
<td>“I have to know and see the brave sons and daughters who really fought under hostile circumstances and in a brutal environment, people who were tortured, arrested and denied jobs by the oppressive regime of South Africa.”</td>
<td>11/29/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 SMS, The Namibian</td>
<td>“I heard on the radio that apparently our local food producers are exporting the bulk of their produce to South Africa, and then local retailers have to re-import those foodstuffs! [i]t’s absolutely ridiculous considering the rising food prices…why isn’t Government stepping in to stop the madness?”</td>
<td>5/23/11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second most prominent theme characterized South Africa as exploiting Namibia and/or Namibians as being too reliant on South Africa, as in examples 5, 6, and 7. Some of these portrayals, as in example 6, referenced South Africa’s former illegal occupation of Namibia. This
example, as well as others fitting this theme, indicates that some Namibians maintain grievances toward South Africa stemming from the occupation, despite the transition from apartheid to the ANC. The majority of portrayals fitting this theme, however, did not explicitly reference South Africa’s occupation of Namibia but rather focused on South Africa’s domination of the Namibian market. These portrayals did not necessarily frame South Africa as “oppressive” or “exploitative” but rather described the South Africa-Namibia relationship as unequal, with several examples blaming the GRN for this situation (as in examples 5 and 7 in Table 5.3.2).

Surprisingly, resource extraction was not a significant theme among negative portrayals of South Africa. In contrast to portrayals of China, there were only three portrayals of South Africa or South African companies as exploiting Namibia’s resources. Given the dominant role that South African companies continue to play in mineral extraction in Namibia, this is highly surprising. While mining was mentioned in conjunction with South Africa in three articles and SMSes, the portrayals were not as explicitly negative as portrayals of China. While Namibians have significant historical grievances with the South African state due to its historical occupation of Namibia and its dominance of the Namibian economy, it does not appear that many Namibians are reacting, at least in the media, to South African involvement in mining with the same level of concern expressed toward Chinese involvement. Thus, it may not be the case that mineral extraction itself drives Namibians’ reactions to foreign investment. Instead, Namibians appear to distinguish Chinese involvement in extraction from involvement from sources such as South Africa and the U.S. (see section 5.4).

Positive Portrayals of South Africa

There were relatively few positive portrayals of South Africa (6.8% of total portrayals). This should not be assumed, however, to reflect a Namibian public that is largely opposed to
South African involvement. Instead, as mentioned previously, most portrayals of South Africa were banal (61.1%). This contrasts dramatically with portrayals of China, which were generally either strongly supportive of or strongly opposed to Chinese involvement (only 20.5% were banal). Furthermore, my selection included significantly more positive portrayals of China (42) than of South Africa (13). As shown in the examples below, a large proportion of positive portrayals of South Africa referenced its hosting of the 2010 World Cup. If my second selection time period had included the summer of 2010 (rather than beginning in October to encompass a time period six months on either side of the 2011 Strategic Minerals Policy announcement) I expect that there would have been an even higher proportion of World Cup-related portrayals. As the number of positive portrayals of South Africa was small (13), it was not possible to confidently identify prominent themes beyond praise for South Africa’s hosting of the World Cup. Examples of positive portrayals of South Africa are presented in Table 5.3.3 below.

Table 5.3.3. Examples: Positive Portrayals of South Africa (Italics added for emphasis)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media Source</th>
<th>Portrayal of South Africa</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Article, <em>New Era</em></td>
<td>“Mandela overhauled South Africa and it became a peace-loving nation. Namibian leaders must do the same.”</td>
<td>1/23/09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 SMS, <em>The Namibian</em></td>
<td>“Congratulations South Africa, you enspire [sic] the whole SADC region. You managed to host the Fifa successfully and effectively. It shows our ability…Best wishes from the Ndaitwa family.”</td>
<td>10/4/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Article, <em>Namibia Economist</em></td>
<td>“South Africa’s performance bears testimony showing that even developing countries can perform well provided the necessary requirements are met in due time. One aspect that Namibia can improve compared to South Africa is the fact that a fixed date should be given for budget announcement.” [Quote from Graham Hopewood, executive director of the Institute of Public Policy Research, regarding its recently-released Open Budget Index]</td>
<td>10/31/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Article, <em>Namibia Economist</em></td>
<td>“Good cooperation exists between South African and Namibian authorities.”</td>
<td>1/16/11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The author of example 2 above typifies support in the Namibian media for South Africa’s management of the World Cup, which the author argues reflects not only South Africa’s ability to host such an event but also “our,” presumably African, ability to do so. Example 1, in contrast to portrayals of South Africa as violent in the previous section, describes South Africa as a “peace-loving nation” and an example for the GRN. Example 4 is rather banal but portrays the relationship between South Africa and Namibia as rooted in cooperation (as opposed to exploitation). Some authors balanced their praise for South Africa with critiques of the GRN. Example 2, for instance implies that Namibian leaders are not providing the same standard of leadership that Nelson Mandela embodied. Interestingly, the author – the Ndaitwa family – chose to sign their SMS, a rarity among SMS submissions.

Portrayals of South Africa in the Namibian media were striking in their divergence from portrayals of China. In contrast to the substantial differences of opinion regarding Chinese involvement in Namibia, portrayals of South Africa were most often banal. While criticism of South African involvement wasn’t as strong as criticism of China, praise for South Africa was also rather muted except in a few positive portrayals, half of which centered on the World Cup.

5.4 Portrayals of the United States

As was the case for South Africa, I found few portrayals of the U.S. in the negative language often used to describe Chinese involvement – resource-hungry, neo-colonial, exploitative, etc. – despite the involvement of U.S. companies in mineral extraction in Namibia. Instead, most descriptions of the U.S. centered on its aid, foreign policy, and global power status. While I came across a large number of portrayals, both positive and negative, of “the West,” I
have excluded these portrayals because they do not specifically identify the U.S. The following sections describe prominent negative and positive themes among portrayals of the U.S.

**Negative Portrayals of the U.S.**

Two themes among negative portrayals of the U.S (which totaled 23.6% of the 140 total portrayals) were the most prominent: U.S. foreign policy as wrong-headed and U.S. involvement as exploitative and/or hypocritical. Unlike portrayals of China, there was not a significant difference in the number and type of negative portrayals among the three media sources. Furthermore, as for South Africa, portrayals of the U.S. were much less diverse than portrayals of China. Table 5.4.1 on the next page presents examples of negative portrayals of the U.S.

Approximately 15% of negative portrayals of the U.S. characterized it as neo-colonial or neo-imperial. In many cases, the U.S. was described along with European countries as a “Western imperial” power with a history of exploiting Africa. Interestingly, some portrayals of America as neo-colonial or neo-imperial specifically compared American involvement to Chinese involvement. The Namibian media, like its western counterparts, frequently portrayed U.S.-China relations and U.S. concerns with Chinese involvement in geopolitical terms (see example 6). Several framings of the U.S. in the context of geopolitics portrayed America as trying to undermine Chinese involvement. Portrayal 6, for example, argues that the U.S. is working “to denigrate the economic and political standing of China,” implying that not only are the U.S. and China involved in “geo-political fights” but that the U.S. is threatened by Chinese involvement in Africa.

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28 One example of a non-negative portrayal of “the West” was a May 27, 2008, SMS published in *The Namibian* that declared “To all Namibian and African brothers and sisters, the West is not our enemy. Either we don’t have an enemy or we are our own enemies.” The prevalence of mentions of “the West” as a coherent entity, as well as my own fieldwork in Namibia, leads me to suspect that the discourse of “the West” remains pervasive in Namibia.
Table 5.4.1. Examples: Negative Portrayals of the U.S. (Italics added for emphasis)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media Source</th>
<th>Portrayal of the U.S.</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 SMS, The Namibian</td>
<td>“To those who blame Mugabe for the situation in the country, you must blame those guys who set up sanctions against him. United States and United Kingdom, you are making the situation worse in Zimbabwe.”</td>
<td>7/14/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Letter to the Editor, Namibia Economist</td>
<td>“We really should not allow this acid tailing dam near our precious natural coastline, nor our holiday resorts. Let them have it somewhere else, perhaps in...America where they take the wealth to, but we don’t want it here near our homes.”</td>
<td>11/5/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Editorial, New Era</td>
<td>“[C]ondemn the Americans, the English and the entire Europeans who for one instance or another try to plant seeds of neo-colonialism in the country…I find it preposterous regarding the current fixation with anti-Chinese in our country and yet say nothing about western dominance in our economy and social fabric.”</td>
<td>1/28/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 SMS, The Namibian</td>
<td>“It’s about time somebody challenges the constitutionality of the Prevention of Organised Crime Act. It is absurdly draconian! It was forced on Namibia by Ameircans [sic]; who themselves did not make it law in America.”</td>
<td>3/22/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 SMS, The Namibian</td>
<td>“This is not America, we can’t kill everyone just because Americans are doing it.”</td>
<td>6/8/2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Editorial, New Era</td>
<td>“In the current geo-political fights of the Americans and China, the former is continuing to use proxies in order to denigrate the economic and political standing of China, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa.”</td>
<td>9/1/2011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other portrayals, such as example 3, characterized concerns about Chinese involvement but not with American involvement as illogical. While these arguments were not as common as the negative portrayals of China described previously, they indicate that some Namibians are observing a disconnect between portrayals of Chinese and Western involvement. Portrayal 3, for example, argues that Americans should be condemned for “try[ing] to plant seeds of neo-colonialism” in Namibia. The author calls out his or her fellow Namibians for their “anti-Chinese” fixation, which he or she argues is “preposterous” given the lack of concern about “western dominance in our economy and social fabric.” This statement is reminiscent of
President Pohamba’s argument that Namibians should not condemn Chinese businesses while failing to condemn South African businesses for similar practices.

Furthermore, 23% of portrayals of the U.S. characterized U.S. foreign policy as intrusive, wrong-headed, and/or hypocritical. Six portrayals within this subtheme focused on U.S. actions in Iraq and Afghanistan. Example 5 in Table 5.4.1 portrays American foreign policy (which was described in a longer SMS excerpted here) as violently intrusive, noting that, unlike the U.S., Namibia “can’t kill everyone” who opposes it. Other portrayals described U.S. actions as broadly hypocritical. Portrayal 4, for example, argues that the Prevention of Organised Crime Act, which the U.S. supported as an aid conditionality, is “absurdly draconian.” Finally, portrayal 2 is an example of portrayals of U.S. involvement as exploitative. Describing a proposed dam, the author implies that such projects rarely benefit Namibians because profits are exported back to the companies’ countries of origin while Namibians suffer the environmental consequences.

Positive Portrayals of the U.S.

Positive portrayals of the U.S. (n=48) centered on three themes: the U.S. as a democratic leader (43.7% of positive portrayals), support for Barack Obama’s election (22.9%), and U.S. aid as beneficial (18.8%). Examples of these themes are presented in Table 5.4.2 on the next page.

The “democratic character” of the U.S. was frequently emphasized in portrayals of the U.S. as a global leader. Example 5 on the next page, an excerpt from an editorial in The Namibian, is illustrative of such portrayals. While no other examples in my selection used the word “beacon,” several described the U.S. as an “example” of democracy at its best and/or as an example for Namibia. Another common theme was the portrayal of the U.S., through its aid, trade, and diplomatic relations, as a good partner for Namibia and as a global leader, as in example 4. The author of example 4, which appeared in the Namibia Economist, portrays
(through the use of the word “continue”) the U.S. as a historical source of aid for countries such as Namibia. Yet, while the article certainly does not portray this aid in a negative light, the author’s portrayal is ambiguous as to whether U.S. aid is inherently or universally beneficial (merely “generous”). While some portrayals of the U.S. cast the country in an entirely positive light, others conceded that some elements of U.S. policy are not so desirable. For example, while portrayal 1 describes the U.S. as a “proven and reliable partner,” it frames this positive description as being true despite the “aggressive” nature of U.S. foreign policy.

Table 5.4.2 Examples: Positive Portrayals of the U.S. (Italics added for emphasis)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media Source</th>
<th>Portrayal of the U.S.</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Letter to the Editor, <em>New Era</em></td>
<td>“[T]he US is a proven and reliable partner despite popular opinion based on their aggressive foreign policy.”</td>
<td>7/18/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 SMS, <em>The Namibian</em></td>
<td>“NELSON MANDELA [sic] is the first black president of South Africa. Barack Obama you are the first black president of the United States. Obama, we are looking for you to do the same [as Mandela]. The world yearns for peace and development. There is no need for wars as wars bring about nothing good but only destruction.”</td>
<td>11/12/08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Editorial, <em>The Namibian</em></td>
<td>“[t]he election of Barak Obama as the first black president of the United States generated unprecedented excitement among ordinary Africans: enough to wrap African leaders in shame. Barack Obama displays many of the qualities that many Africans would love to see in their leaders.”</td>
<td>1/9/09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Article, <em>Namibia Economist</em></td>
<td>“…the US will also continue with its large and generous global initiatives, such as the ‘Feed the Future’ project, a US $3.5 billion-a-year initiative focused on sustainable agriculture, as well as the Global Health Initiative.”</td>
<td>4/24/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Editorial, <em>The Namibian</em></td>
<td>“[t]o be ranked ahead of well-established beacons of democracy such as the United States of America suggests the country [Namibia] is on the right path.”</td>
<td>5/6/11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally, 22.9% of positive portrayals of the U.S. centered on President Obama’s 2008 election, likely related to the fact that the first time period analyzed included both the 2008 election and the 2009 inauguration. I would not expect to see so many mentions of President
Obama outside of this time period. In fact, there were only two references to President Obama in the 2010-2011 time period, one of which focused on drone strikes. Still, the prominence of this theme illustrates that many Namibians closely followed the U.S. election. Five portrayals explicitly connected Barack Obama to Nelson Mandela, as in example 2, which portrays President Obama as capable of the same sort of “peace and development” as Mandela. The author’s portrayal of the U.S., however, is not universally positive, as he or she concludes by arguing that “[t]here is no need for wars as wars bring about nothing good but only destructtion [sic].” Example 3 similarly remarks on the election of Barack Obama as “the first black president of the United States,” arguing that Obama “displays many of the qualities that many Africans would love to see in their leaders” and has been “enough to wrap African leaders in shame,” presumably because the author thinks some African leaders do not possess the qualities attributed to President Obama. While the author portrays the U.S. positively, this portrayal, as was the case for many others in this theme, is rooted in the election of a specific leader rather than the inherently “democratic” or “reliable” characteristics of the U.S.

While media portrayals of the U.S. were not as striking as portrayals of China, they were more divided than portrayals of South Africa. Unlike positive portrayals of China, however, which were dwarfed by the number of negative portrayals, there were more positive portrayals of the U.S. (48) than negative portrayals (33). Yet, the diversity of themes within portrayals of the U.S. did not come close to matching the diversity of themes in portrayals of China.

5.5 Conclusions

Portrayals of China showed the most diversity in terms of both negative and positive themes. Mentions of China (220) were also more numerous than mentions of the U.S. (140) or South Africa (190). This is surprising given the importance of South Africa to Namibia
economically (e.g. trade, the pegging of the Namibian dollar to the Rand) and politically (e.g. SADC, migration). Furthermore, negative portrayals of China were more nuanced than were negative portrayals of the U.S. or South Africa. Most negative portrayals of South Africa were connected to particular events (e.g. the xenophobic violence of 2008 or sanctions against Mugabe). Even among descriptions of South Africa as dominating the Namibian economy, portrayals often cast Namibia in a worse light (for letting itself be dominated) than South Africa.

Positive portrayals of the U.S. and South Africa also lacked the nuance of positive portrayals of China. While positive portrayals of the U.S. often used strong language, such as “beacon of democracy,” they were not as diverse as portrayals of China. The sheer number of portrayals of China relative to portrayals of South Africa and the U.S., as well as the divisiveness of Chinese involvement, leads me to conclude that Chinese involvement is the topic of far more vehement support and opposition than is South African or American involvement.

In addition, portrayals of China were more likely to focus on resources than portrayals of the U.S. or South Africa. There were few discussions of South African involvement in resource extraction, despite its dominant role in mining in Namibia. While the U.S. is less involved in resource extraction in Namibia than is South Africa, the lack of connections made between U.S. involvement and resource extraction is surprising (see Table 3.5.1 in Chapter 3).

Finally, the number of portrayals of “Namibians” as a coherent identity group is noteworthy. Namibia is a country of significant ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity. Yet, I found very few (<5) portrayals of resources, land, or other Namibian features as “Herero” or “Owambo.” While the representativeness of this analysis is limited, the dominance of descriptions of challenges, resources, and successes as “Namibian” may have implications regarding the success of the Namibian state in building a civic, Namibian nationalism.
Chapter 6: A Quantitative Analysis of Namibians’ Opinions on Foreign Involvement

In Chapters 4 and 5, I identified and analyzed several patterns in portrayals of foreign involvement in the Namibian media. These patterns included a higher proportion of negative portrayals of Chinese involvement relative to South African and American involvement, concerns with corruption related to Chinese involvement, and portrayals of U.S. involvement as democratic but Chinese involvement as anti-democratic. This chapter applies a quantitative approach to determine whether the media portrayals of investment actors described in Chapters 4 and 5 reflect Namibians’ opinions on foreign investment and foreign investment actors more broadly, as expressed in public opinion data. Using nationally-representative Afrobarometer survey data collected in 2008, 29 I employ cross-tabulations and logistic regression to address the following questions arising from the textual analysis of Chapters 4 and 5:

- Is there a relationship between media readership and Namibians’ perceptions of particular sources of foreign involvement?
- Is there a relationship between Namibians’ opinions on the prevalence of corruption and Namibians’ opinions of particular foreign investment sources?
- Is there a relationship between Namibians’ support for democracy and Namibians’ opinions of particular foreign investment actors?

Beyond these questions, I also analyze whether Namibians’ opinions on particular foreign actors vary with their opinions regarding the influence of foreign investment on the GRN (too little, about right, or too much) and their opinions of international business more broadly. My interest in evaluating these relationships is to determine whether Namibians regard specific foreign investment sources similarly to how they regard foreign investment in general and whether their opinions are related to the influence they think foreign investors have on the GRN.

29 Note that my textual analysis sample consisted of two time periods: 2008-2009 and 2010-2011. The possibility that Namibians’ opinions changed over time is discussed in the conclusion of this thesis.
After detailing the importance of a country-level approach and providing data source information and summary statistics, I analyze cross-tabulations of Namibians’ opinions of Chinese, South African, and American involvement with news readership and Namibians’ opinions on democracy, corruption prevalence, the influence of foreign investment on the GRN, and foreign investment broadly to determine whether there are patterns in Namibians’ responses. These cross-tabulations are followed by a logistic regression analysis testing the strength of each of these variables as predictors of Namibians’ opinions on Chinese, South African, and American involvement in Namibia.

6.1 Importance of a Country-Wide Approach

In focusing my analysis on Namibia, my aim is to provide a place-based analysis of foreign investment attuned to Namibia’s unique historical context and position in the global political economy. This avoids the generalization problem of continent-level analyses of foreign investment in Africa and attends to the diversity of factors that may shape Namibians’ opinions (and may not hold in other countries).

This country-specific approach is much-needed in the literature on the ‘new scramble for Africa,’ which too often paints Africa and Africans as passive actors in the geopolitical struggles among global powers for the control of valuable natural resources. For example, while Afrobarometer itself has released a statistical analysis of Africans’ opinions of Chinese involvement, this analysis aggregates data for all African countries in which Afrobarometer conducts surveys (see Gadzala and Hanusch 2010; Hanusch 2012). Such an approach provides details on over-arching trends in Africans’ perceptions of Chinese involvement, but it does not provide any indication of how these perceptions vary on a country-by-country basis. Furthermore, such analyses can lead to over-generalized conclusions regarding how an
essentialized group labeled “Africans” is responding to foreign involvement. To date, Afrobarometer data has been used to analyze citizens’ perceptions of specific foreign investment actors in only a limited number of case studies, such as Esteban’s (2010) analysis of Equatorial Guineans’ perceptions of Chinese involvement. My analysis seeks to extend the work of scholars like Esteban (2010) by providing a nuanced quantitative analysis of Namibians’ opinions of foreign involvement actors operating in Namibia.

### 6.2 Data Source

The data used for this analysis comes from the fourth round Afrobarometer survey of Namibians, which was conducted in 2008. Afrobarometer has released the results from five surveys in Namibia to date (1999, 2002, 2003, 2006, and 2008). Between July 2009 and December 2012, Afrobarometer carried out surveys in 35 African countries. Afrobarometer completed a fifth survey in thirty-five African countries including Namibia during 2011-2012, but the results for these surveys have not yet been released. The Afrobarometer survey is carried out through the collaboration of Michigan State University and its African research partners. Its core funders include the National Science Foundation, Mo Ibrahim Foundation, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, the Danish Governance Trust Fund at the World Bank, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the UK Department for International Development, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and Michigan State University. In Namibia, Afrobarometer’s research partner is the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR), an independent, non-profit organization (often referred to as a ‘think tank’) located in Windhoek.

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30 Briefing papers on the results will be released in May 2013, with the entire results dataset tentatively scheduled to be made available during the summer of 2013.
As Afrobarometer uses a standardized survey instrument, it is possible to conduct cross-national analysis of the results. Afrobarometer has thus proven to be a useful tool for geographers, political scientists, and area specialists. Afrobarometer data had been cited over 400 times in scholarly publications (examples from political science, regional studies, and geography include Bratton 2004, Lemon 2007, Esteban 2010, and Hutchison 2011). Lemon (2007), for example, used Afrobarometer data to evaluate democratic consolidation in the context of general elections in five southern African countries, while Hutchison (2011) employed Afrobarometer data to measure democratic trust in sixteen African states. While previous Afrobarometer surveys in Namibia contained questions on foreign investment, the 2008 iteration was the first to ask Namibians for their opinions on Chinese involvement.

The data used in this analysis was collected from October 24 to December 3, 2008. The survey was nationally-representative, with a sample size of 1200 out of the total Namibian population of 2.32 million. The sample universe consisted of individuals age 18 or older. The survey applied sample a random, clustered, multistage area probability sample design, which was stratified to ensure gender, urban/rural, and regional distributions that reflected that of the sample universe. The response rate was 60%, resulting in a margin of error of +/- 3% with a 95% confidence interval. This response rate is particularly impressive given that the survey generally takes one hour to complete and consists of 259 questions, 212 of which are answered by the survey respondent and 47 of which are answered by the interviewer. My analysis only incorporates interviewee-answered questions. Interviews were conducted in five languages (Afrikaans, English, Oshiwambo, Otjiherero, and Rukwangali) by sixteen Namibians trained by Afrobarometer and supervised by four field supervisors. The first four languages above are the

31 All information regarding the survey specifics comes from the Afrobarometer Data Codebook for Round 4 Afrobarometer Survey in Namibia (2010).
four most commonly-spoken first languages in Namibia, while the fifth is spoken in the far north of Namibia, a surveyed area in which few residents speak one of the four above languages.

6.3 Demographic Summary Statistics

Appendix 2 provides full demographic data from the 2008 Afrobarometer survey of Namibians, but I will summarize the most important elements of these data here. Afrobarometer data are particularly useful in evaluating the ethnic make-up of Namibia, as no census information on ethnicity has been collected by the GRN since independence. According to the Afrobarometer data, over 50% of Namibians belong to the Owambo ethnic group and speak Oshiwambo as their first language. The next largest ethnic group is Kavongo, representing 10% of the total population. Support for SWAPO is clear from the Afrobarometer data, which indicates that 51% of Namibians surveyed would vote for a SWAPO presidential candidate were the election held today. The next highest ranked party, the Rally for Democracy and Progress (RDP) received only 9% of surveyed Namibians’ support. The data also indicate that only 1.8% of Namibians have completed a university degree, while 58.2% have completed less than a secondary education. A full 60% of Namibians indicated that they were unemployed. This is higher than the GRN’s estimate of 51.2%, although this is likely due to the fact that the GRN’s measure does not count Namibians who are unemployed by choice.

6.4. Overall Opinions of Foreign Involvement

Afrobarometer included a question on Chinese involvement for the first time in its 2008 survey of Namibians. This question, which appeared midway through the survey, asked the respondent to answer “How much does each of the following do to help your country (Country)?” The available responses were do nothing/no help, help a little, help somewhat, help a lot, or don’t know. The country order of this question was South Africa followed by China
followed by the United States. Responses are provided for China, South Africa, and the U.S. in Table 6.4.1 below. The answers to these three questions serve as the dependent variables in the subsequent logistic regression analysis, although the three “help” categories are aggregated in that analysis to mitigate small cell size issues.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Do nothing/no help</th>
<th>Help a little</th>
<th>Help somewhat</th>
<th>Help a lot</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Afrobarometer 2008

As can be seen in Table 6.4.1, Namibians’ perceptions were positive overall for each country. The proportion of individuals indicating that the country in question does not help Namibia was highest for China at 13%, followed by the U.S. at 11% and South Africa at 10%. The U.S. received the highest proportion of “helps a lot” responses with 36%, followed by South Africa at 34% and China at 25%. While support for Chinese involvement is weaker among Namibians than support for American or South African involvement, the vast majority of respondents (83%) still indicated that Chinese involvement helps Namibia at least a little.
Namibians’ overall positive opinion of Chinese involvement is surprising given the findings of Chapter 5, which indicated that the majority of portrayals of China in the Namibian media are negative. While more Namibians indicated that China does not help at all than did so for the U.S. or South Africa, the survey data suggest that most Namibians’ do not share the strong negative opinions of China described in Chapter 5. In section 6.7, I analyze whether there is a relationship between news readership and opinions of China.

Before moving on to analysis, it is important to note that the survey did not provide respondents with a neutral response option for the above question; thus, respondents were forced to provide a negative or positive response or, alternatively, to answer “don’t know.” It is also unfortunate that the survey did not provide respondents with multiple negative responses (beyond no help); as a result, the data don’t provide details on the strength of negative opinions.

### 6.5 Summary Statistics for Non-Demographic Independent and Control Variables

In the cross-tabulations and logistic regression of the subsequent sections, I analyzed the relationships between Namibians’ opinions of Chinese, South African, and American involvement and a variety of independent and control variables. Data on these control variables (for which data are not provided in Appendix 2) and independent variables are provided in Table 6.5.1 on the next page. While the data below are included primarily for the purpose of providing more information on the control variables included in this analysis, they are also useful in their own right, particularly in comparison with the findings of Chapters 4 and 5.
Table 6.5.1 Non-Demographic Control and Independent Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of newspaper readership</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Less than once/month</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Few times/month</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Few times/week</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Everyday</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How is the Government of the Republic of Namibia (GRN) handling managing the economy?</td>
<td>Very badly</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fairly badly</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fairly well</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very well</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How is the GRN handling reducing poverty?</td>
<td>Very badly</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fairly badly</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fairly well</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very well</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vote in 2004 national election</td>
<td>Not registered/too young</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Voted</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Did not vote</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prevented from voting</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don't know/can't remember</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activism (Have you raised an issue with others in the past year?)</td>
<td>No, would never do this</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No, but would if had chance</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes, once or twice</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes, several times</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes, often</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for democracy</td>
<td>Democratic always preferable</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Doesn't matter</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-democratic sometimes</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>preferable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

32 Complete wordings for each question below are located in Appendix 3.
Table 6.5.1, Cont. Non-Demographic Control Variables (Afrobarometer, 2008)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of National Assembly members involved in corruption</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Some</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Most</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much do foreign businesses help Namibians?</td>
<td>Nothing, no help</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Help a little</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Help somewhat</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Help a lot</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence of international businesses and investors on the GRN is:</td>
<td>Far too little</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Somewhat too little</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>About the right amount</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Somewhat too much</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Far too much</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown above, a far higher percentage of Namibians were highly supportive of the GRN’s economic management efforts (21%) than were highly supportive of the GRN’s efforts to reduce poverty (8%). A full 34% of Namibians indicated that the GRN is doing “very badly” in its efforts to reduce poverty. This corroborates the prevalence of negative sentiments in the Namibian media regarding the GRN’s efforts to reduce poverty (and the closely related issue of inequality). Furthermore, most Namibians (64%) indicated that democratic governance is always preferable to other systems of governance. Relationships between Namibians’ answers to this question and Namibians’ opinions on foreign involvement actors are considered in section 6.7. Finally, several of the results above appear to contradict dominant discourses in the Namibian media. First, despite the prevalence of concerns regarding the GRN’s corruption in the media, far more Namibians indicated that no members of the National Assembly are involved in corruption (21%) than indicated that all members of the National Assembly are involved in corruption.
(5%). In addition, despite the frequency of negative sentiments toward foreign investment in the media, most Namibians (62%) indicated that foreign businesses help Namibia at least somewhat (35% indicated that such businesses help somewhat, while 27% indicated that international businesses help a lot). Only 11% of Namibians indicated that international businesses do not help at all. Finally, 31% of Namibians indicated that the level of influence that international businesses and investors have on the GRN is “about the right amount.” This is higher than would be anticipated given the media portrayals analyzed in Chapter 4, although more Namibians (39%) think that international businesses/investors have somewhat too much (23%) or far too much influence (13%) on the GRN than think that foreign investors have somewhat too little (16%) or far too little (9%) influence.

6.6. Cross Tabulations

For each of the five independent variables identified in the introduction (newspaper readership, support for democracy, corruption perceptions, support for foreign investment broadly, and opinion on the influence of foreign investment on the GRN), I completed cross-tabulations with Namibians’ opinions on each of the three foreign investment actors of interest. The findings of these cross-tabulations are described in the following sections.

Newspaper Readership

As Chapter 5 of this thesis consisted of a textual analysis of media portrayals of Chinese, South African, and American involvement, I was interested in whether news readership was a significant predictor of Namibians’ opinions on foreign involvement. A cross-tabulation of Namibians’ opinions of Chinese, South African, and American involvement is presented in Table 6.6.1 on the next page. The table presents news readership among Namibians who answered questions regarding foreign involvement. For example, the top-left cell indicates that, among
individuals who said that Chinese involvement is not helpful, 42.1% indicated that they never read a newspaper.

**Table 6.6.1. Cross Tabulation of Namibians’ Opinions of Foreign Involvement and News Readership**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper Readership</th>
<th>China not helpful (n=76)</th>
<th>China helpful (n=540)</th>
<th>South Africa not helpful (n=70)</th>
<th>South Africa helpful (=546)</th>
<th>U.S. not helpful (n=77)</th>
<th>U.S. helpful (n=539)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never read a newspaper</td>
<td>42.1%</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
<td>51.4%</td>
<td>30.8%</td>
<td>50.6%</td>
<td>30.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read a newspaper &lt; once/month</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read a newspaper a few times/month</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read a newspaper a few times/week</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
<td>24.7%</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read a newspaper everyday</td>
<td>22.4%</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>18.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>99.9%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>99.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is noteworthy that, while greater proportions of Namibians who supported South African and U.S. involvement were daily newspaper readers than Namibians who did not support these two countries’ involvement, the situation was reversed in the case of China. Of individuals who indicated that Chinese involvement is not helpful, 22.4% indicated that they read a newspaper daily, versus 16.3% of those who indicated that Chinese involvement is helpful.

Furthermore, among individuals who said that they never read the news, the gap in readership between those who think South African and U.S. involvement is helpful and those who think it is not helpful was larger (approximately 20%) than was the case for China (approximately 10%).
Of individuals who indicated that they thought involvement was helpful for each country, roughly 30% indicated that they never read a newspaper. Finally, there were generally not significant differences in readership depending on the level of support for China. The largest difference between Namibians who indicated that Chinese involvement is helpful and Namibians who indicated that it is not helpful was in the second lowest readership category (less than once per month). While a higher percentage of Namibians who indicated that Chinese involvement is not helpful also indicated that they never read a newspaper (42.1%) than did Namibians who indicated that Chinese involvement is helpful (31.9%), the low number of Namibians who indicated that Chinese involvement is not at all helpful (76) reduces this result’s significance.

**Corruption Prevalence**

Chapter 5 indicated that portrayals of Chinese involvement in the Namibian news media are more likely to describe Chinese influence as corrupt than portrayals of South African or American involvement. To determine whether this reflects Namibians’ sentiments more broadly, I ran cross-tabulations of Namibians’ opinions of Chinese, South African, and American involvement and Namibians’ perceptions of the prevalence of corruption in the Namibian National Assembly. The results of this cross-tabulation are presented in Table 6.6.2 below.

**Table 6.6.2. Cross Tabulation of Namibians’ Opinions of Foreign Involvement and Perception of National Assembly Corruption**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Assembly Members Involved in Corruption</th>
<th>China not helpful (n=71)</th>
<th>China helpful (n=451)</th>
<th>South Africa not helpful (n=60)</th>
<th>South Africa helpful (n=451)</th>
<th>U.S. not helpful (n=66)</th>
<th>U.S. helpful (n=456)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
<td>25.8%</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some</td>
<td>53.5%</td>
<td>53.2%</td>
<td>58.3%</td>
<td>52.6%</td>
<td>51.5%</td>
<td>53.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>99.9%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For both South Africa and China, a higher proportion of those who indicated that no National Assembly members are involved in corruption indicated that Chinese/South African involvement is helpful than indicated that it was unhelpful. This was reversed in the case of U.S. involvement; of Namibians who indicated that U.S. involvement is not helpful, 27.3% said that no Assembly members are involved in corruption, versus 24.6% of Namibians who indicated that U.S. involvement is helpful. Overall, Namibians who indicated that Chinese involvement is not helpful were more likely to say that most or all Assembly members are involved in corruption (33.8% versus 23.3% for South Africa and 21.2% for the U.S.). It is noteworthy, however, that the differences between Namibians’ views on corruption were not large across the three countries. For each of the countries, for example, approximately 4% of individuals who opposed that country’s involvement indicated that all Assembly members are involved in corruption. The proportion of Namibians who indicated that some Assembly members are involved in corruption did not vary greatly between countries regardless of whether the country in question was rated as helpful or not helpful; approximately 53% of Namibians think that some members of the National Assembly are involved in corruption in every case.

**Support for Democracy**

Chapter 5 demonstrated that Chinese involvement was often portrayed in the Namibian media as undemocratic, while the U.S. was often associated with democratic values (although some authors did characterize the U.S. as imperialist and/or hypocritical). To determine whether a relationship between support for democracy and support for particular foreign actors holds for the broader Namibian population, I ran cross-tabulations (displayed in Table 6.3.3 on the next page) for each of the three countries analyzed. Support for democracy was measured on the three-point scale in Table 6.6.3.
Table 6.6.3. Cross Tabulation of Namibians’ Opinions of Foreign Involvement and Support for Democracy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support for Democracy</th>
<th>China not helpful (n=71)</th>
<th>China helpful (n=451)</th>
<th>South Africa not helpful (n=56)</th>
<th>South Africa helpful (n=462)</th>
<th>U.S. not helpful (n=66)</th>
<th>U.S. helpful (n=456)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-democracy sometimes preferable</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of gov’t doesn't matter</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
<td>21.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy always preferable</td>
<td>62.0%</td>
<td>69.6%</td>
<td>56.7%</td>
<td>70.1%</td>
<td>74.2%</td>
<td>67.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>99.9%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>99.9%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interestingly, the highest percentage of individuals who indicated that democracy is always preferable occurred not among Namibians who support U.S. involvement but instead among Namibians who oppose U.S. involvement. Furthermore, among Namibians who indicated that Chinese involvement is helpful, 69.6% said that democracy is always preferable, a higher proportion than was the case among individuals who said that U.S. involvement is helpful (67.8%). Despite the frequency with which U.S. involvement was associated with democracy and Chinese involvement was portrayed as anti-democratic in the media, it does not appear that democracy supporters are more likely to view U.S. involvement as helpful and less likely to view Chinese involvement as helpful. This relationship is tested in the subsequent section.

**Opinion of Foreign Businesses**

As detailed in Chapter 4, media portrayals of foreign investment in general terms were mixed. While some portrayals described such investment as necessary and/or beneficial, others
described it as exploitative and/or neo-colonial. To evaluate whether Namibians’ opinions are also mixed and to determine whether Namibians’ opinions on specific foreign actors reflect their opinions on foreign investment more generally, I ran cross-tabulations of Namibians’ opinions of particular foreign involvement actors and their opinions of foreign investment in general. The results are presented in Table 6.6.4 below. Note that this cross-tabulation was based on Namibians’ responses to the foreign investment question, so the percentages in the cells below should be interpreted based as the percentage among Namibians who think that international investment is or is not helpful. For example, the top-left cell indicates that, among Namibians who said foreign investment was not helpful, 77.6% said Chinese involvement was helpful.

**Table 6.6.4. Cross Tabulation of Namibians’ Opinions of Foreign Involvement and Opinions on Foreign Investment Broadly**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foreign Investment Actors</th>
<th>China helpful</th>
<th>China not helpful</th>
<th>South Africa helpful</th>
<th>South Africa not helpful</th>
<th>U.S. helpful</th>
<th>U.S. not helpful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreign investment not helpful (n=67)</td>
<td>77.6%</td>
<td>22.4%</td>
<td>68.7%</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
<td>58.2%</td>
<td>41.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign investment helpful (n=455)</td>
<td>87.7%</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
<td>91.4%</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>91.6%</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is noteworthy that 87% of Namibians indicated that foreign investment in general is helpful, a far different result from the mixed picture result of my textual analysis. Among individuals who indicated that foreign involvement is not helpful (n=67), 77.6% indicated that Chinese involvement is helpful, 68.7% indicated that South African involvement is helpful, and 58.2% indicated that U.S. involvement is helpful. This supports the theory that Namibians view Chinese involvement as distinct from other sources of involvement; even among Namibians who
think foreign investment overall is unhelpful, a full three-quarters support Chinese involvement. Meanwhile, fewer Namibians who view foreign investment in general as unhelpful support the involvement of the U.S. than support the involvement of either China or South Africa.

Furthermore, while there is overlap between individuals who support foreign investment and individuals who support Chinese involvement, not all Namibians who support foreign investment support Chinese involvement, and not all Namibians who oppose foreign investment oppose Chinese involvement. There was more overlap between opinions of foreign investment broadly and opinions of South African and U.S. involvement, particularly the latter, than was the case for Chinese involvement. Finally, among individuals who indicated that foreign investment is not helpful, a higher proportion of respondents supported the involvement of each of the countries analyzed than opposed such involvement. This may indicate that some Namibians support foreign investment in the abstract but oppose specific sources of foreign involvement.

**Influence of Foreign Investment on the GRN**

Finally, the 2008 Afrobarometer survey included a question requesting Namibians’ opinions on the influence of foreign investment on the GRN. The possible responses were that this influence is far too little, somewhat too little, about the right amount, somewhat too much, or far too much. The results of a cross-tabulation for this variable and Namibians’ opinions on Chinese, South African, and U.S. involvement are presented in Table 6.6.5 on the next page.

In contrast to the findings of Chapters 4 and 5, Table 6.6.5 does not support the conclusion that individuals who think that foreign investment has too much influence on the GRN also oppose Chinese involvement. While the percentage of individuals indicating that the influence of foreign investment on the GRN is “far too much” was higher among Namibians who indicated that U.S. (3%) or South African (6.7%) involvement was not helpful than among
Namibians who indicated that Chinese involvement was not helpful (7%), these differences are not dramatic. Among all characterizations of the influence of foreign investment on the GRN, the percentage breakdowns between South Africa and the U.S. are remarkably similar, perhaps indicating that Namibians view involvement by these two countries similarly in terms of influence on the GRN. It is also noteworthy that Namibians who oppose U.S. involvement were more likely to think that foreign investment has somewhat or far too little influence on the GRN is than opponents of either South African or Chinese investment. The relationship between Namibians’ opinions of foreign investment actors and their opinions regarding the influence of foreign investment on the GRN is tested in the following section.

### Table 6.6.5. Cross Tabulation of Namibians’ Opinions of Foreign Involvement and Perceptions of the Influence of Foreign Investment on the GRN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Influence of foreign investment on GRN is...</th>
<th>China not helpful (n=71)</th>
<th>China helpful (n=451)</th>
<th>South Africa not helpful (n=60)</th>
<th>South Africa helpful (=451)</th>
<th>U.S. not helpful (n=66)</th>
<th>U.S. helpful (n=456)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Far too much</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat too much</td>
<td>32.4%</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
<td>25.3%</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>26.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About right</td>
<td>35.2%</td>
<td>34.8%</td>
<td>28.3%</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
<td>30.3%</td>
<td>35.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat too little</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>24.2%</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Far too little</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
<td>24.2%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>99.9%</td>
<td>99.9%</td>
<td>99.9%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>99.9%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6.7 Logistic Regression Analysis

I followed the previous section’s cross-tabulations with logistic regression models for each country of analysis: China, South Africa, and the U.S. Logistic regression enabled me to determine whether the independent variables of interest (described on the next page) were statistically significant predictors of Namibians’ opinions on each of the three foreign
involvement actors (the dependent variables), controlling for important demographic and socioeconomic factors. For each independent variable-dependent variable relationship, logistic regression provides probability scores as predicted values. Logistic regression is appropriate for categorical dependent variables such as Namibians’ opinions on foreign involvement actors.

The independent predictor variables of primary interest in this analysis reflected the cross-tabulations above: news readership, support for democracy, opinion on corruption prevalence, opinion on the influence of foreign investment on the GRN, and support for foreign investment broadly. These six variables are displayed at the top of Table 6.7.1. The variables below the first heavy black line in Table 6.7.1 are control variables, such as employment, gender, education, and ethnicity, which were controlled for to ensure that the relationship between a predictor variable and the dependent country variable were not largely due to a third factor (e.g. that news readership and support for China are not both predicted by education). I also controlled for political factors, such as Namibians’ opinions of the GRN’s economic and poverty policies. As most of these control variables were not significant, they are not discussed in detail.

For each of the three countries for which a logistic regression model is presented in Table 6.7.1, the predictions are based upon a “helps”/“does not help” response binary. The “helps” response option is an aggregation of three responses: “helps a little,” “helps somewhat,” and “helps a lot.” I aggregated these responses to avoid low cell count issues among the three “help” categories. As a result, some of the nuance of Namibians’ opinions is lost, but the models still provide a useful picture regarding whether independent and control variables are associated with Namibians’ opinions of each country’s involvement.

33 Responses of “don’t know,” which represented less than 5% of responses, were dropped. Approximately 42% of individuals who responded “don’t know” in response to the question on one of the three countries analyzed also answered “don’t know” to at least one of the independent variable questions, resulting in small cell number sizes for each independent variable-dependent variable combination involving a “don’t know” response.
Table 6.7.1. Logistic Regression Models of Namibians’ Opinions of Chinese, South African, and American Involvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor Variables</th>
<th>China</th>
<th>South Africa</th>
<th>United States</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>News Readership</td>
<td>0.034</td>
<td>0.010</td>
<td>0.028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for Democracy</td>
<td>0.217 *</td>
<td>0.057 **</td>
<td>-0.024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corruption Prevalence</td>
<td>-0.065 ***</td>
<td>-0.022</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Investment Influence on GRN</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>-0.022 .</td>
<td>-0.035 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for Int’l Investment</td>
<td>0.083 .</td>
<td>0.198 ***</td>
<td>0.254 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>0.380 *</td>
<td>0.681 ***</td>
<td>0.539 ***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Control Variables

| Education | 0.022 . | 0.095 | 0.009 |
| Employment| -0.003 . | 0.002 | 0.016 |
| Urban/Rural | 0.047 | -0.012 | 0.061 |
| Comparative Living Standard | 0.001 | -0.019 | -0.024 |
| Activism| -0.012 | -0.004 | 0.012 |
| Age | 0.013 | 0.013 | 0.009 |
| Vote in Last Election | -0.447 | -0.077 * | -0.035 |
| Gender | 0.015 | 0.005 | 0.029 |
| Opinion of GRN Economic Policies | 0.029 . | 0.024 | 0.008 |
| Opinion of GRN Poverty Policies | 0.014 | 0.009 | 0.008 |
| Owanabo | 0.053 | -0.081 | 0.087 |
| Herero | 0.083 | 0.029 | 0.097 |
| Caprivi | -0.155 | -0.030 | -0.225 |
| Kavango | 0.058 | -0.076 | 0.048 |
| White | -0.032 | -0.027 | 0.177 |
| Nama | 0.106 | 0.025 | 0.112 |
| Colored | 0.046 | 0.006 | 0.101 |

Null Deviance (df) | 61.34 (521) | 53.10 (521) | 57.66 (521) |
Residual Deviance (df) | 56.61 (499) | 46.55 (499) | 46.88 (499) |
AIC | 369.71 | 267.58 | 271.32 |

34 Significance Key: *** α<0, ** α<.00, *α < .01, . α < .05
Dependent Variable: How much does each of the following do to help your country (country)? This question was asked for China, South Africa, and the United States, as indicated above.
The most noteworthy finding of this analysis, as displayed in Table 6.7.1., was the relationship between Namibians’ perceptions of corruption among National Assembly members and Namibians’ opinions of Chinese involvement. Corruption perception was a highly significant predictor (with an alpha approaching zero) of Namibians’ opinions of Chinese involvement, with perceptions of higher levels of corruption in the General Assembly associated with lower support for Chinese involvement. This finding echoes the findings of Chapter 5, which found that negative portrayals of Chinese involvement often centered on concerns with corruption. Corruption perception was not a statistically significant predictor of Namibians’ opinions of either South African or U.S. involvement. Thus, it appears that Namibians who think that corruption is prevalent are more likely to view Chinese involvement in Namibia negatively and, furthermore, that Namibians may view Chinese involvement as related to corruption in a way that is not true for American or South African involvement.

Furthermore, as shown in Table 6.7.1, news readership was not a significant predictor of Namibians’ opinions of Chinese involvement or South African involvement. This result was particularly surprising for Chinese involvement given that the overwhelming majority of media portrayals of Chinese involvement were negative. News readership was a statistically significant predictor of Namibians’ support for U.S. involvement, however, with support increasing along with news readership. This relationship held even after controlling for a variety of control variables. There are a variety of potential reasons for this finding. Interestingly, education was not a significant control variable in the model of U.S. involvement; thus, more educated individuals are not necessarily more likely to express more support for the U.S. (or vice versa). Employment, urban/rural location, self-identification as white, and comparative living standard, however, all showed significant positive relationships with opinions of the U.S. Thus, it appears
to be the case that Namibians who read the news more regularly are also (unsurprisingly) more likely to be residents of urban communities, to have full-time employment, and to have a higher living standard than the average Namibian. Furthermore, these Namibians are more likely to be white. It is interesting, however, that this combination of factors did not similarly predict Namibians’ opinions of South African or Chinese involvement. I suspect that this result may reflect racial differences and the legacy of apartheid. More specifically, I suspect that support for the U.S. may be related to individual Namibians’ self-identification with the West, which seems more likely in the case of Namibians of German and British descent than for Namibians who self-identify as belonging to non-European groups.

Interestingly, support for democracy was a significant positive predictor of opinions of South Africa and China but not of U.S. involvement. I suspect that this result may reflect a level of disillusionment with U.S. democracy promotion, which, as noted in Chapter 5, some Namibians see as hypocritical and/or imperial. This result could also be related to the dominant news coverage of the U.S. at the time of the Afrobarometer survey in pre-election 2008, a significant proportion of which focused on the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. It would be interesting to see if this relationship has changed since the election of President Obama (which, as described in Chapter 5, was widely supported in the Namibian media). The release of the most recent iteration of the Afrobarometer survey in Namibia will make such a comparison possible.

In contrast to the findings of Chapters 4 and 5, statistical analysis did not support the theory that individuals who think foreign investment has too large of an influence on the GRN are less likely to support Chinese involvement. Opinion of foreign investment influence on the

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35 The result was particularly surprising given the finding that there were statistically significant relationships between support for South African and Chinese involvement and support for democracy. These findings led me to re-check the data and my analysis several times, but the findings held. I suspect that there may be a latent factor underlying these findings, but I have been unable to identify it in this analysis.
GRN was not a statistically significant predictor of opinions on Chinese involvement. It was, however, a significant predictor for opinions of both South African and American involvement.

Unsurprisingly, support for international business was a significant predictor of opinions of all three countries. In each case, support for the foreign involvement actor in question increased as support for international businesses increased. While support for foreign involvement overall was a highly significant predictor of support for U.S. and South African involvement, however, it was a relatively weak predictor of support for Chinese involvement. The difference in the strength of this relationship between the U.S./South Africa and China may support the theory, espoused by scholars such as Brautigam (2009) regarding Africans’ opinions more generally, that Namibians view Chinese involvement as distinct from other sources of foreign involvement. As noted previously, three-quarters of Namibians who oppose foreign investment in general still support Chinese involvement.

Finally, several control variables were significant predictors of Namibians’ opinions of foreign involvement actors, although none were consistent predictors for all three countries. These variables included education, urban/rural location, employment status, comparative living standard, and opinion of the GRN’s economic policies. It is surprising both that no other control variables were significant predictors of Namibians’ opinions toward foreign involvement actors and that there was no consistent control variable predictor for all three countries. This may indicate that there is a latent variable behind Namibians’ opinions or that Namibians’ opinions are dependent upon a more nuanced range of factors than was tested in this analysis.

6.8 Conclusions

This chapter analyzed Namibians’ perceptions of the helpfulness of Chinese, South African, and U.S. involvement using data from the 2008 Afrobarometer survey. These data
provide a useful comparison to the analysis of media portrayals of Chinese, U.S., and South African involvement in Chapters 4 and 5. The differences in results between the two analyses are discussed in Chapter 7, but several findings are particularly significant. First, in contrast to what might be assumed based on the textual analysis of Chapter 4 and 5, public opinion data indicates that the vast majority (83%) of Namibians think Chinese involvement is at least a little helpful. Moreover, a full 25% of Namibians think that Chinese involvement “helps a lot.” These findings paint a substantially different picture of Namibians’ opinions of Chinese involvement than did my textual analysis. It is important to note, however, that the survey data analyzed in this chapter was collected in 2008, and Namibians’ opinions may have changed significantly since that time. This is discussed further in Chapter 7. Second, Namibians’ perceptions of corruption are a highly significant predictor of Namibians’ opinions of Chinese involvement, with negative opinions of Chinese involvement associated with higher opinions regarding corruption prevalence. This finding confirms the results of Chapter 5.

There are, however, several significant limitations to this analysis, ranging from the specific to the broad, that must be noted. Three limitations are particularly important. First, the conclusions that can be drawn from this analysis are limited by the design of the question on opinions of Chinese, South African, and U.S. involvement, which did not allow respondents to provide a neutral response. Thus, respondents were forced to describe such involvement as helpful or unhelpful when they may have been ambivalent. Second, the questions soliciting Namibians’ opinions of Chinese, South African, and U.S. involvement did not specify which particular actors from that country should be considered in responding. There is no way to know, for example, whether a Namibian responding to the question asking their opinion of Chinese involvement was thinking of the Chinese government, a particular Chinese mining company,
Chinese companies broadly, a Chinese shop owner across town, or a Chinese neighbor. Thus, it is important to not overstate the conclusions that can be drawn regarding, for example, Namibians’ perceptions of the involvement of the South African government in Namibia.

Finally, statistical analysis of the questions employed by Afrobarometer cannot provide details regarding why particular individuals answered in particular ways. For example, I cannot indicate that Namibians who oppose Chinese involvement do so because they perceive corruption as widespread. Statistical analysis can indicate, however, to use the same example, that individuals who think corruption is widespread are more likely to view Chinese involvement negatively than are individuals who do not think corruption is widespread.
Chapter 7: The View from Namibia: Conclusions and Future Directions

7.1. Significance of a Critical Geopolitics of Foreign Involvement from the Global South

In this thesis, I considered Namibians’ perspectives on foreign involvement, including involvement in resource extraction. As argued by scholars such as Sharp (2011) and demonstrated through this analysis, critical geopolitics can be enhanced by considering the perspectives of individuals living in the Global South in addition to its historical focus on global powers (O’Tuathail 2006). Through a case study of Namibia, this thesis has, among other findings, provided evidence against the argument that U.S. involvement is perceived as democratic in African states (a logical conclusion based upon the relatively high support for the U.S. in African states versus other world regions; Gallup (2010) concluded that “sub-Saharan Africa leads the world in U.S. approval”). I have also provided support for theories that Chinese involvement is associated with corruption in African states (see Carmody 2009 and 2011). Finally, I have provided evidence for arguments by scholars such as Brautigam (2009) that Chinese involvement is viewed as distinct from other sources of foreign involvement. These results demonstrate the ways in which Namibian perspectives are similar to and different from Western discourses on foreign involvement in Africa.

Furthermore, this thesis has illustrated the diversity of opinions Namibians hold toward foreign involvement and the diversity of factors that appear to shape those opinions (such as support for democracy and concerns with corruption). Such diversity challenges the simplicity of the foreign investment as “development opportunity”/ “neo-colonialism” dichotomy, illustrating the necessity of a place-based approach to better understand how foreign involvement is interpreted, negotiated, co-opted, and contested by African actors. Consideration of “African experiences” of Chinese involvement is highly useful for the purpose of calling attention to the material changes in investment patterns underway in Africa. I agree, for example, with
Ferguson’s (2006, 5) argument that “Africa” as “a category through which a ‘world’ is structured” cannot be brushed aside as pure social construction, because it is “also a category that is ‘real,’ that is imposed with force, that has a mandatory quality, a category within which and according to which, people must live.” Yet, descriptions of “African experiences” run a significant risk of vastly overgeneralizing what foreign involvement means for particular Africans. In this thesis, I considered such diversity among too-often generalized “African” opinions. The following sections reflect upon three of the key findings of this analysis regarding Namibian opinions, resource extraction, and the state before concluding with a discussion of additional research needs.

7.2. What Do Namibians Think? Media Portrayals versus Public Opinion on China

As noted in Chapter 6, the differences between the findings of my textual and statistical analyses are noteworthy. These differences were particularly striking in the case of Namibians’ opinions of Chinese involvement; while 60.5% of media portrayals of China were negative, 13% of Afrobarometer respondents had a negative opinion of Chinese involvement. In the remainder of this section, I consider several possible explanations for this result.

The total number of negative portrayals of China in the Namibian media increased modestly between the 2008-2009 and 2010-2011 sampling periods. The reason for the divergence between media portrayals and public opinion data could be related to timing. Namibians’ opposition to Chinese involvement might have increased since the 2008 survey was conducted, reflecting the increase in the number of negative media portrayals of China during this time. It will be possible to test this hypothesis once the 2012 Afrobarometer survey data are released later in 2013. Even if an increase has occurred, however, it is unlikely to account for the full difference between negative opinions of Chinese involvement between the two sources.
Beyond timing, the difference between the two sources could be related to the 64% of Namibia’s population that lives in rural communities. While 41% of Namibia’s urban residents indicated that they read a newspaper daily, only 4% of Namibia’s rural residents professed to reading the newspaper on a daily basis. If there was a causal relationship between newspaper readership and opinions of Chinese involvement, i.e. if it appeared that individuals who read the news are less likely to have positive opinions of China, this could explain the difference. There is no evidence to suggest, however, that media readership is a significant predictor of Namibians’ opinions on Chinese involvement. A follow-up logistic regression of Namibians’ opinions on Chinese involvement confirmed that residents of rural communities are only slightly more likely to view Chinese involvement negatively than urban residents; rural/urban location is not a significant predictor of opinions on Chinese involvement.

Another reason for the difference could be due to survey question wording. The Afrobarometer question on Chinese involvement, as well as other involvement sources did not include a neutral response option; respondents were forced to indicate that Chinese involvement either helps (a little, somewhat, or a lot) or does not help Namibians (or to respond “don’t know”). The high number of “helps a little” responses to the question on Chinese involvement, may indicate that Namibians without strong opinions chose this option. Even if this is the case, however, 25% of respondents indicated that Chinese involvement “helps a lot,” far more than the 13% of respondents who indicated that Chinese involvement “does nothing/is no help.” While the nature of the question may be part of the reason for the differences between the textual and quantitative analyses, it is unlikely the entire story.

Based on both the textual and statistical analysis, I think that the most straight-forward explanation for the difference is likely the most influential: negative experiences with Chinese
involvement are perhaps more likely to motivate individuals to write to the newspaper (whether via SMS or letter to the editor) than are positive experiences. While individuals may write to the newspaper in outrage at a specific high-profile event, such as dangerous milk imported from China, this outrage may be short-lived (i.e. an individual can think that a particular Chinese product is low-quality but not hold long-term negative opinions of Chinese involvement overall). Textual analysis of media portrayals is highly useful in providing insight into the media discourses surrounding Chinese involvement, particularly in evaluating how these discourses differ from those in the Western media regarding Chinese involvement in Africa, but it appears to be far less useful in predicting Namibians’ opinions writ large.

7.3. The Resource Extraction-Foreign Involvement Connection

In my analysis of media portrayals of Chinese, South African, and U.S. involvement in Namibia, resource extraction concerns were not as prominent as I had anticipated based upon the literature. While many analyses of Chinese involvement in Africa have focused on the “new scramble” for resources (see Carmody 2011 in particular), it does not appear that Namibians’ concerns with particular foreign involvement actors overwhelmingly focus on resource extraction. While resource extraction concerns represented the third most common negative portrayal of China (14.3% of negative portrayals), these portrayals were dwarfed by concerns regarding Chinese products as low-quality. Resource extraction concerns were negligible among portrayals of both South Africa and the U.S., despite the extensive historical and contemporary involvement of both countries, and South Africa in particular, in resource extraction in Namibia.

Thus, while concerns over resource extraction were prominent in portrayals of foreign involvement in general terms (~25% of total portrayals), my analysis indicates that Namibians’ concerns over foreign involvement go far beyond the “new scramble for African resources”
focus of much of the academic literature. Instead, Namibians’ concerns often centered around personal experiences with foreign businesses or individuals, such as concerns over the quality of Chinese infant formula, extending the arena of debate over foreign involvement from the boardroom or the capitol to the street corner and household. As the Afrobarometer survey has not polled Namibians on resource extraction concerns to date, it is not possible to conclusively say that resource extraction concerns have no influence on Namibians’ opinions of particular foreign involvement actors. Still, the lack of resource extraction concerns in media portrayals is striking and challenges the focus of the academic literature on such concerns, possibly leading academics to overlook other ways in which foreign involvement affects Africans’ everyday experiences.

7.4. The State, Development, and Foreign Involvement

This case study has also illustrated the complexities of state policies regarding resource extraction and foreign involvement, particularly the often contradictory motivations that states may face in a time of increasing commodity demand. I have demonstrated, for example, how the GRN appears to be walking a narrow line between maintaining the support of a Namibian public frustrated with high unemployment and inequality and maintaining its strong relationships with foreign capital, including Chinese investment, which has extensively benefitted Namibian elites. Namibia is certainly not alone in this challenge, and further analysis of the Namibian state may offer insights for how increasing foreign investment is affecting state power in Africa.

As demonstrated in the Vision 2030 development document, the GRN has made reducing income inequality one of the top goals of the state (NPC 2004). This framing appeals to widespread concerns regarding income inequality and unemployment, both of which Namibians’ ranked as two of the five most important issues facing the country in the most recent Afrobarometer survey. Yet, the GRN has framed the twin challenges of unemployment and
income inequality as only solvable through economic growth, which it has further argued requires foreign investment in mining. Through the Strategic Minerals Policy, the state has framed questions of resource ownership as having a binary outcome; resources are either state-controlled or corporate-controlled, with the state assumed to represent the interests of all Namibians. Yet, the GRN remains close with foreign capital interests, including private and government sources of Chinese investment, emphasizing, for example, China’s support for the Namibian liberation struggle as a demonstration of “partnership” rather than exploitation. This thesis does not include the kind of detailed interviews with GRN officials that would be necessary to draw conclusions about the motivations of state actors. Yet, given the continued support of GRN officials for FDI, particularly from China, it seems doubtful that GRN officials will push the Strategic Minerals Policy forward into law in the near future. In the meantime, however, the GRN’s announcement of the SMP may have temporarily alleviated public discontent with unemployment and inequality while simultaneously challenging the dominance of foreign capital in the Namibian economy, all in the lead-up to the 2014 elections. Thus, while the lack of movement on the SMP may appear to indicate political weakness, the debate over the policy may have actually strengthened the position of the Namibian state.

7.5. Future Research Needs

To conclude, I would like to reflect on the theoretical and topical limitations of my thesis through a consideration of ways in which future research could expand this analysis. I begin with a topical direction for future work and conclude with two more theoretical interventions, drawing on recent work in political and development geography.
Beyond China: Brazil, Russia, and India

This thesis focused on only three actors: China, South Africa, and the U.S. China in particular has been the focus of a substantial amount of scholarship and media attention, while scholars such as Schroeder (2012) have demonstrated the importance of investigating South African involvement in Africa. The involvement of countries such as Brazil, Russia, and India, however, is also rising in southern Africa and, depending on the country, has long been rising. In May of 2012, I had the opportunity to sit down with an employee of the Angolan Ministry of Mining during his visit to the University of Colorado. I initially asked the employee a question about Chinese investment, and he provided a response that was quite expected, noting that Chinese involvement is rising in the Angolan oil sector and that the Angolan government expects that China will continue to be a major player in oil exploration and drilling in Angola. I then asked him how Chinese involvement compared to Brazilian involvement, to which he laughed and replied, “Ah, Brazil! Angola is Brazil.” He went on to explain that, due to Brazil and Angola’s shared language and similar positioning on the Earth’s crust (a legacy of Pangaea), Brazil was one of the most dominant influences on the Angolan oil sector. Furthermore, he indicated that a substantial number of Brazilians live in Angola and that they “integrate more than the Chinese.” Brazil’s influence is rising in Namibia as well, particularly with new oil discoveries off of Namibia’s coast. A July 2011 article in The Namibian described Brazil and Africa, including Namibia, as “ready to do the samba” as “cracks…appear in Africa’s much-vaunted ‘Look East’ doctrine.” The Brazil-Namibia samba was quite literal at a June 2011 launch party for Brazilian oil exploration company HRT. A photo of the event featuring former President and liberation struggle hero Sam Nujoma with Brazilian samba dancers, which was printed in the June 20, 2011 copy of The Namibian with the clever heading “Let’s Sam-ba!” is included in Figure 7.4.1 on the next page.
Geographers studying foreign involvement in Africa, particularly in resource extraction, should attend to the ways in which the shape that BRICS investment takes may differ significantly among BRICS countries. These differences may include the nationality of individuals employed in the investment activity and the level of engagement with the African population. HRT, for example, has promised to train over 5,000 Namibians to work in the oil fields off of the Namibian coast, a promise that has not been made regarding Chinese investment projects in Namibia. Furthermore, competition between BRICS economies may change the bargaining position of African elites. Finally, as all BRICS economies have their own state-owned resource company or companies (e.g. Petrobras, the China National Petroleum Corporation, Rosneft, PetroSA, IndianOil), increasing BRICS investment may influence debates

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36 In my observation of Chinese construction projects in Namibia, Chinese citizens were generally employed as managers and general employees. In the case of mining operations, particularly uranium mining, it appeared that all managers and many employees were Chinese, although more Namibians seemed to be employed as general laborers in the case of mining than in the case of construction. These conclusions are supported by the analyses of Dobler (2008) on Namibia specifically and of Carmody (2010) and Brautigam (2009) on Chinese business practices in Africa more broadly.
over resource ownership in African states as well, as BRICS investors may be less opposed to state involvement in resource extraction than Western investors have been historically.

**Foreign Investment in Extraction and the Performance of the State**

In this thesis, I have largely taken the existence of “Namibia” at face value. Given the ways in which state power has interacted with foreign involvement and extraction, however, future research should consider how African states and, in some cases, national identities have been brought into existence in part through processes such as foreign investment and resource extraction. As evidenced in Chapters 4 and 5, much of the discourse surrounding foreign investment in Namibia employs the rhetoric of “Namibian resources for Namibians.” Thus, rather than threatening the Namibian state (as could be assumed based on discussions of the weakening of the state in an age of networks by scholars such as Agnew (2003)), foreign involvement in resource extraction may actually constitute the re-performing and strengthening of the Namibian state. Drawing upon the work of scholars such as Jeffrey (2012) and Wainwright (2008), scholars should explore the ways in which resource extraction can serve to cement the power of the state, and perhaps the power of a civic nationalism (e.g. a sense of ‘Namibian-ness’ that transcends racial and ethnic categorizations) as well.

**Ethical Geographies of Extraction**

Beyond my inclusion of several Namibians’ concerns regarding unjust distributions of wealth, this thesis did not extensively consider the politics of resource distribution in ethical or moral (see Ferguson 2006) terms. Yet, it is impossible to analyze the political economy of resource extraction and revenue distribution, particularly in light of the extensive damage to communities and environments such extraction can present (see Hecht 2009 on uranium extraction) without turning to questions of justice and morality. Despite programs such as the
Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) and the efforts of individuals such as George Soros and Jeffrey Sachs, both of whom have done consulting work with resource-dependent African economies such as Sao Tome and Principe to help to prevent the “resource curse,” resource extraction and revenue distribution cannot be, to use the language of Li (2007), ‘rendered technical’ or made *un*-political. Furthermore, the ethical questions raised by extraction cannot be thought of outside of the larger context of ongoing relationships of exploitation that have continued long past the “end” of colonialism. As Melber argued in a 2011 interview,

“The colonial economy [of Namibia] has not been fundamentally transformed. The self-enrichment strategy of the new elite sacrificed any redistribution of wealth on a national scale in favour of the majority for their own luxury and privileges. We have a pact among elites, old and new, but no true emancipation from colonial rule. The real scandal is that we once again sold out the ordinary people for the benefit of a few.” (Melber 2011)

In seeking to analyze the ethics of extraction, future research should build on the work of several scholars of development studies, namely Ferguson’s work on moral economies in Africa (2006), Li’s (2007) analysis of the development industry’s efforts to render political issues ‘technical’ in Indonesia, and Wainwright’s (2008) post-colonial approach in *Decolonizing Development.*
Works Cited


The Namibian. 2011e. Let’s Sam-ba! June 20.

The Namibian. 2012. Namibia has more cellphones than people. October 11.


Appendix 1: Minister of Mines and Energy Katali’s Announcement of the 2011 Strategic Minerals Policy

MINISTRY OF MINES AND ENERGY

MEDIA STATEMENT BY HONOURABLE ISAK KATALI, MINISTER OF MINES AND ENERGY ON PUBLIC – PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP IN THE MINING SECTOR IN NAMIBIA, HELD ON THE 10TH MAY 2011 @ 17:00 AT THE MINISTRY OF MINES AND ENERGY

Towards Public-Private Partnership in the Mining Sector of Namibia

Cabinet Decision

The Cabinet at its Fifth Meeting (2011) declared certain minerals as controlled and high value minerals or strategic minerals. These strategic minerals include uranium, gold, copper, coal, diamonds, and rare earth metals. They are declared strategic minerals in the interest of Namibia’s mineral resources and national development towards the realization of Vision 2030.

Cabinet decided that the right to own licenses for the strategic minerals should only be issued to a State owned company. Cabinet, therefore, directed that after approval of the license by the Minister of Mines and Energy, the State-owned company may enter into joint ventures with interested parties for exploration and development.

The Content

The mining sector is a significant contributor to Namibia’s economy. The sector accounts for 25 percent of national income and 15 percent to the gross domestic product.

However, the mining sector’s contribution to government revenue is not commensurate with its share to the gross domestic product. Such contribution is mainly through royalties levied on the market value of the minerals. This means that Namibia benefits from its natural endowment mainly through rent-seeking. This situation is untenable.

Since the mining sector is dominated by foreign multinational corporations a disturbing phenomenon has developed whereby ownership of the Namibian resources is sold through licenses internationally on the back of the Namibian government through speculative activities without government deriving any benefits through sales taxes, values added taxes, or stamp duties.

Moreover, the export of Namibian minerals in raw-form denies the citizens of the country the full benefit of the value chain. Namibia has, therefore, become an Eldorado of speculators and other quick-fix would be mineral explorers and mining developers. It is for this reason among many others, that Namibia’s Gini-Coefficient remains skewed.
Rule of Law

Cabinet decision on public-private partnership in the mining sector is based on the mandate of the Namibian Constitution.

- Article 100 of the Namibian Constitution states: “Land. Water and natural resources below and above the surface of the land and in the continental shelf and within the territorial waters and the exclusive economic zone of Namibia shall belong to the State, if they are not otherwise lawfully owned”.
- Article 98 (1) of the Namibian Constitution reads: “The economic order of Namibia shall be based on the principles of a mixed economy with the objective of securing economic growth, prosperity and a life of human dignity for all Namibians”.

The Cabinet decision captures the spirit and the letter of the Constitution.

Already there are similar arrangements within the economy of Namibia.

Examples are many, but a few will surface; NAMDEB; DEBMARINE; NDTC; MTC; Windhoek Country Club and Resorts etc. The alarmist reports of “nationalization” are red herring! In fact they are based on African stereotypes as neither the Cabinet decision nor my budget statement in Parliament mentioned nationalization.

Consider the following: On May 4, 2011 Devon Maylie of Dow Jones Newswires reported: “Shares in mining companies operating in Namibia took a hit last week after Mines and Energy Minister Isak Katali said uranium, copper, gold, zinscs and coal have been declared strategic minerals”. On May 5, 2011 AAP reported: “Shares in uranium explorer Extract Resources have risen sharply on mounting expectation that a Chinese state-owned nuclear power firm will launch a takeover bid”. What is the difference between a Chinese state-owned company and a Namibia state-owned company. International investment perception is still crowded by racial stereotypes!

Namibia Chamber of Mines of Namibia concerns

In a letter dated April 27, 2011 the Chamber of Mines of Namibia addressed certain concerns to me as to how the Cabinet decision will affect the current mondus operandi. I respond as follows:

a) Renewal of existing Explorations and Mining Licenses

The existing explorations and mining licenses will not be affected. There are however individuals and companies that have been granted mining licenses for which no development has taken place for a very long time. In order to accelerate the development of resources under such licenses, it will be in the interest of both government and license holder to look at a joint development arrangement without negatively impacting the rights of the existing holder, but in the interest of the development of the resource.
b) Explorations and Mining Licenses currently in the pipeline

The applications will be considered under the existing procedure on own merit. It is well known that the license holders often do not have the full technical and financial resources to develop a mine once a mining license is granted. They often seek capital funds in exchange of shareholding from investors or bank loans to finance the development. It might require that the conditions of the license include one that subjects the license holder to give the first right of refusal of shareholding to the GRN before they can approach other parties. Importantly, each application will have to be considered on its strength without prejudice. It should also be clear that an application remains an application, where there is no guarantee that it will be successful until it has been assessed and has been determined to have satisfied the minister.

c) Mining Licenses applications arising from existing EPLs

The same principles as in (b) above should be applied.

d) Future expansion of mining operations by conversion of adjacent existing EPLs into existing mining licenses.

The fact that the EPLs already exist places them in a similar category as existing operations. However, where a license holder cannot demonstrate capacity to develop the expansion, a joint development could be an option for both GRN and license holder to effectively and optimally develop the resource.

e) Future expansions of existing EPLs by addition of size or commodity.

To add size to an existing license practically means a new application covering a new area. This is similarly the same when one applies to amend a license to include minerals not originally on the existing license. These should be treated as new applications and would thus be affected by the Cabinet Decision.

A win-win partnership

The Public-Private Partnership in the Mining Sector seeks to enhance a win- win partnership in the sector. This partnership aims at:

- a shared growth in the mining sector;
- a shared risk in exploration, mine development and mining business;
- making the government and the people of Namibian meaningful participants in the mining business rather than rent-seekers;
- ensuring a sense of ownership of natural endowment by the people of Namibia;
- creating conditions for individual Namibians to participate when at the appropriate time the State-owned company shall sell some of its shares to private investors;
- and ensuring that when private investors sell their shares government shall at all times be in the picture.
The win-win public-private partnership shall create security, stability and predictability in mining business. All genuine investors should embrace it.

The Process

To implement the Cabinet decision, a change in legislation shall be effected. The Minerals (Prospecting and Mining) Act, 33 of 1992 is currently being drafted and when finalized, it will inform the license holders and the general public on the operating modalities.

- END -
### Appendix 2: Demographic and Political Data (Afrobarometer 2008, Namibia)

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<td>(vs. other Namibians)</td>
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## Appendix 3: Afrobarometer Independent and Control Variable Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Survey Question Wording</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activism</td>
<td>Here is a list of actions that people sometimes take as citizens. For each of these, please tell me whether you, personally, have done any of these things during the past year. If not, would you do this if you had the chance: Got together with others to raise an issue?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>How old are you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude toward international business</td>
<td>In your opinion, how much do each of the following do to help your country, or haven’t you heard enough to say: International businesses and investors?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern with GRN(^{37}) corruption</td>
<td>How many of the following people do you think are involved in corruption, or haven’t you heard enough about them to say: Representatives of the National Assembly?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy support</td>
<td>Which of these three statement is closest to your own opinion?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Statement 1: Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Statement 2: For someone like me, it doesn’t matter what kind of government we have.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Statement 3: In some circumstances, a non-democratic government can be preferable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education level</td>
<td>What is the highest level of education you have completed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Status</td>
<td>Do you have a job that pays a cash income? Is it full-time or part-time? And are you presently looking for a job (even if you are presently working)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Group</td>
<td>What is your tribe? You know, your ethnic or cultural group?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Respondent’s gender (note: answered by interviewer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income/employment</td>
<td>Do you have a job that pays a cash income? Is it full-time or part-time? And are you presently looking for a job (even if you are presently working)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International business influence</td>
<td>Do you think that each of the following has too little, too much, or about the right amount of influence over your government: International businesses and investors?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location (urban/rural)</td>
<td>Urban or rural primary sampling unit (note: answered by interviewer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media readership</td>
<td>How often do you get news from the following sources: Newspapers?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{37}\) Government of the Republic of Namibia
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opinion of GRN economic policies</td>
<td>Now let’s speak about the present government of this country. How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven’t you heard enough to say: Managing the economy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinion of GRN poverty policies</td>
<td>How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven’t you heard enough to say: Improving the living standards of the poor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political identification</td>
<td>If a presidential election were held tomorrow, which party’s candidate would you vote for?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-economic status (self-identified)</td>
<td>In general, how do you rate your living conditions compared to those of other Namibians?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status as voter in most recent election</td>
<td>With regard to the most recent, 2004 national elections, which statement is true for you?</td>
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</table>