**The Graduate Programs in**

**International Studies**

***Dissertation Defense***

Jody-Ann Jones

**TEMPERING THE RESOURCE CURSE IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA:**

**AN EXPLANATORY ANALYSIS OF THE VARIANCE OF THE RESOURCE CURSE IN NIGERIA AND BOTSWANA**

The issue of the resource curse has been central to the academic debate since the 1990s. In recent years, we have witnessed a resurgence of the importance of this topic because of the discoveries of oil, natural gas, and other point source resources in several developing countries such as Ghana, Mozambique and Tanzania. It is important to note that while the resource curse is not solely limited to developing states, the main observation is that the majority of negative effects associated with the resource curse primarily afflicts poorer countries, especially those in Sub-Saharan Africa. It is reported that sub-Saharan Africa possesses the majority of the world's natural resources; therefore, it is puzzling that most of these resource-rich countries continue to struggle both economically and politically despite the abundance of mineral and/or oil wealth. Using a three-level typology, this study presents a comparative examination of the leadership, government and civil society in Botswana and Nigeria. It explains how the contrast in these critical aspects has an effect on the degree of the resource curse. The study finds that, overall, Botswana has depicted a lower degree of the resource curse than Nigeria because of three predominant reasons: 1) its leadership has been more cohesive in terms of attaining its developmental goals because of the similarity in socioeconomic backgrounds among its immediate post-independent leaders, 2) the country adheres to a developmental state model, which has engendered a highly meritocratic civil service that is relatively free of corruption and 3) its civil society has depicted a greater level of cooperation and collaboration with the government, which could possibly be because of the relatively higher degree of ethnic homogeneity and consequently lower level of ethnic strife.

**Committee:** Dr. Francis Adams (Chair), Dr. David Earnest, Dr. Steven Yetiv and   
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