

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

Answering the research question as to how the structural power of global capitalism sustains the illegal exploitation of coltan in the DRC, it has been analyzed that through the structural power of global capitalism, DRC's century-long role in the global economy is the provider of raw materials for global production of goods at the behest of foreign capital owners, and coltan exploitation is integrated within this economic arrangement which has been perpetually exploitative for over a century. During the colonial era, Belgium integrated the Congo to the global economy via colonization, and developed an extractive economy, specifically Congolese mining industry; that served the needs of Belgium's colonial projects at the expense of Congolese people's welfare and self determination. Decades later in post-colonial Congo, Mobutu's continuation of the colonial legacy of extractive economy was by and large the attempt to consolidate power in a divided Congo by appealing to Western powers, in which DRC retained its role as the provider of raw materials even in the post-colonial era. Fast forward to the 21st century, the late 1990s coltan boom spurred DRC's mining productions, exacerbating the long-held exploitative mining practices further exacerbated by corrupt leadership after decades of political upheaval.

In the 21st century, this exploitation of coltan is further sustained by the internationalization of capital, a feature of 21st century capitalism that further diffuses state power towards corporate entities. This internationalization of capital

has spread the coltan supply network worldwide, which further exacerbates the coltan exploitation as well as blurring the culpability due to its decentralized nature. Due to corporations' role as the main driver of economic growth and main apparatus to integrate states to the world economy, the 21st century DRC leadership ultimately sustained the exploitative mining practices, even at the cost of the welfare of Congolese people. Within the network of coltan exploitation, collusion is found between class-conscious high-ranking officials and business representatives, who seek to maintain the globalized nature of DRC's coltan industry.

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