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978-1-107-01553-1 - The Rise of Global Corporate Social Responsibility: Mining and the Spread of Global Norms

Hevina S. Dashwood

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The Rise of Global Corporate Social Responsibility

Combining insights from international relations theory with institutional approaches from organization theory and public policy, this book provides a complete explanation for the adoption of corporate social responsibility (CSR), showing how global norms influenced CSR adoption in the mining industry. Global normative developments have clearly had an important influence on major mining companies: by the mid-2000s, the majority had adopted sustainable development as a normative frame for their CSR policies and practices. However, there is significant variation between firms in terms of the timing, degree of commitment, and the willingness to assume a leadership role in promoting global standards for the mining industry. The author finds that attributes internal to the firm, including the critical role of leadership, and the way in which management responds to the institutional context and operational challenges faced in different countries are important influences on CSR adoption and important factors explaining variation.

HEVINA S. DASHWOOD is Associate Professor of Political Science at Brock University, Canada. Her broad research and teaching interests encompass international political economy, the role of non-state actors in global governance, international public policy, and Canadian foreign policy. Professor Dashwood is the author of numerous journal articles and book chapters on corporate social responsibility (CSR) in the mining sector, and has conducted case-study research on Canadian mining companies' CSR in Africa and Latin America.

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HEVINA S. DASHWOOD

Brock University, Canada



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To my parents, J. Noreen and James W. Smith

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Preface

The research and writing of this book has been a long journey that began in the early 2000s. The question I wanted to explore was to what extent emerging global corporate social responsibility (CSR) “norms” (standards) influenced the policies and practices of major mining companies. With support from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) in the form of a Standard Research Grant, I commenced research hoping to find answers within my field of international relations. It did not take me long to realize that the international relations literature could provide only a partial answer to my research question. Global CSR norms are important, as evidenced in the uptake of sustainable development norms by mining companies, but the explanation for CSR adoption requires a multidisciplinary approach. Preliminary interviews with company officials revealed that operational challenges in the countries in which they had operations were a major influence on the adoption of CSR policies and specific practices.

The significance of institutional context led me to adopt a three-level institutional approach, drawing from rational choice institutionalism, historical institutionalism and the “new” institutionalism in organization theory. Together with the global governance and constructivist literature in international relations theory, I was able to develop a more complete explanation of CSR adoption on the part of major mining companies. A major contribution of this study is that it builds bridges between different methodological and theoretical approaches, and crucial debates on the role of norms/interests and agency/structure in shaping action.

I owe a huge intellectual debt to Aseem Prakash, editor of the series in which this book is published, who provided exceptional direction and guidance. He drew my attention to the promise of institutional analysis and provided invaluable insight into how to execute this project. Aseem has been a major source of support in encouraging me to publish my research in various scholarly outlets, and in overseeing the completion of this book. I would also like to thank the two anonymous reviewers,

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whose careful reading of the manuscript and constructive comments allowed me to further refine the theoretical and methodological approach. I am grateful to John Haslam and Carrie Parkinson for their patient oversight in moving the manuscript forward.

This study involved case-study research of three major Canadian mining companies, Noranda, Placer Dome and Barrick Gold. I am very grateful to the people from these companies who gave so generously of their time. It can often be challenging for social scientists to gain access to busy people in major companies, even more so since they are not always prepared to divulge pertinent information. In this respect, I was very fortunate to have the full support of all three companies. I would like to thank my “key informants” from Noranda and Placer Dome who, even though they are all retired, kindly met and/or talked with me multiple times over a good many years. These include Dr. Frank Frantisak and David Rodier (Noranda) and James Cooney (Placer Dome). Many other company officials within those companies kindly provided their time, as did officials at Barrick Gold. With their help, I have been able to systematically examine the variation in CSR adoption among major mining companies, constituting an important empirical contribution.

Many others provided helpful input on this book. I am grateful to Virginia Haufler, who very generously provided theoretical guidance at an early stage of this book’s development. Tony Porter, Fred Bird, Rosalyn Warner, Steve Bernstein, Mary Louise McAllister, Wes Cragg, Fred Eidlin, and Kernaghan Webb also provided useful insights on various aspects of the book. Through research collaboration with Bill Pupilampu, I have gained insights on CSR in the developing country context. I would like to thank my colleagues at Brock University, Dan Madar, who pointed me to some very useful data sources, and Livianna Tossutti, who provided excellent guidance on research methods. A number of graduate students at Brock University provided superb research assistance, including Calum McNeil, Katie Winstanley, Isaac Odoom, Jeff Cornelissen, Nathan Andrews, and Denis Dogah. I also benefited greatly from the research assistance of Chris Hann (BA, Brock University), who helped with some critically important data compilation.

This book may well not have been written without the love and support of my family. My husband, Geoff, provided unwavering support over the years. My two sons, James and John, in addition to putting up with a sometimes distracted mother, also provided invaluable IT

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support. They instructed me to acknowledge our springer spaniel, Cedric, who kept me company during the many lonely hours of writing. Finally, I am grateful for the support and encouragement of my parents, J. Noreen and James W. Smith, throughout my academic career. It is to them that this book is dedicated.