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Resource Governance and Developmental States in the Global South

Critical International Political Economy Perspectives

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Contents

<i>List of Illustrations</i>	ix
<i>Preface</i>	x
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xiii
<i>Notes on Contributors</i>	xv
Introduction: Resource Governance at a Time of Plenty	1
<i>Jewellord Nem Singh and France Bourgouin</i>	
The new context of resource dependency in the Global South	4
Extractive capital and economic development	6
Neoliberalism in the resource sector	8
The plan of the book	12
Note	18

Part I Theoretical Debates in Natural Resource Politics

1 States and Markets in the Context of a Resource Boom:	
Engaging with Critical IPE	21
<i>Jewellord Nem Singh and France Bourgouin</i>	
Resource exploitation from systemic perspectives	22
Global commodity chains research	26
The resource curse, rentier politics and good governance	29
Re-engaging with critical IPE concepts	32
Authority in the global resource economy	35
Conclusions	39
Notes	39
2 Neoliberalism, Mineral Resource Governance and	
Developmental States: South Africa in Comparative Perspective	40
<i>Andrew Lawrence</i>	
The spectre of the developmental state in South Africa	41
The present neoliberal conjuncture	42
Developmental state theory	43
Extractive economies in Southern Africa	48
BEE as substitute for a qualitative approach	54
Conclusions	56

Notes	57
3 Citizenship, Democratisation and Resource Politics	61
<i>Jean Grugel and Jewellord Nem Singh</i>	
The resource wealth-democratisation debate	63
The limits of 'oil impedes democracy' thesis	63
Political economy of development approaches	66
Resistance politics, natural resources and patterns of citizenship	69
Diffusion of codified international agreements	70
Political incorporation of mining workers	73
Bringing back politics in resource governance: the role of citizenship studies	77
Conclusions: challenges in claiming rights	81
Notes	82
 Part II Interrogating 'Good Governance' in Resource Management	
4 From 'Good Governance' to the Contextual Politics of Extractive Regime Change	87
<i>France Bourgouin and Håvard Haarstad</i>	
The good governance framework and the resource curse	89
The good governance of extractive industries	89
Good governance policy initiatives	91
Beyond the good governance criterion	92
Expanding the analytical scope	95
Processes of change in extractive politics beyond good governance	96
Macroeconomic and ideological trends	96
Conflict driven governance change	100
Organisation of social interests	102
Conclusion: towards a contextual theory of extractive regime change	104
5 The EITI Transparency Standard: Between Global Power Shifts and Local Conditionality	107
<i>Ana Carolina Gonzalez-Espinosa and Asmara Klein</i>	
A sociological approach to the EITI: between norms and agency	108
The EITI and its evolution towards an international standard for resource-rich states	112

The challenge of local implementation: a transparency standard weakened from below	118
Conclusion	121
Notes	122

Part III Neoliberalism, Resource Management and the Diversity of National Experiences in the Global South

6 'The Chilean Wage': Mining and the Janus face of the Chilean Development Model	127
<i>Jonathan R. Barton, Cecilia Campero and Rajiv Maher</i>	
Development and export-oriented production	131
A 'Chilean miracle': development models and mining policy, 1990–2010	134
The resource curse of marginalised voices at the community level	139
Conclusion: the janus face of mining and dependency	145
Notes	148
7 Sustainable v. Development? Mining and Natural Resources Governance in Colombia	149
<i>Olga L. Castillo-Ospina</i>	
Sustainable v. development? A false dilemma	150
The Colombian environmental policy: between utilitarian conservationism and environmentalism	154
Sustainability, extractivism and new-extractivism	164
Conclusions	169
Notes	170
8 Mining Governance in India: Questioning the Neoliberal Agenda	172
<i>Matilde Adduci</i>	
Reforming mining policies in India under a new paradigm	173
Combining privatisation and socio-economic sustainability in the mining sector	176
India's mining governance: between developmentalism and neoliberalism	179
Bringing power relations back in: Odisha amidst India's neoliberal turn	181
Conclusions	188
Notes	189

**Part IV Moving the Debate Forward: The Role
of Critical IPE Studies**

9	Conclusions: Shifting Authority in the Age of the Resource Boom	195
	<i>France Bourgouin, Andrew Lawrence and Jewellord Nem Singh</i>	
	Changing patterns of state–market relations in extractive sectors	196
	Depoliticisation, good governance and resistance politics	202
	Taking the debate forward with IPE	205
	Notes	209
	<i>Bibliography</i>	211
	<i>Index</i>	237

List of Illustrations

Figures

I.1	Current resource boom	5
6.1	Copper exports and all mining exports (percentage by value)	128
6.2	Contribution of the mining sector to GDP (percentage at current prices)	129
6.3	Electricity consumption in Chile (GWh)	130
6.4	Non-consumptive water use by sector (M3/s/year)	130
6.5	Metal mining production (baseline: 2003 average = 100)	133
6.6	Mining employment, 1992–2011	137
6.7	Hours worked, by principal and sub-contracting firms, 2002–2011	138
7.1	Share of extractive resources in terms of FDI, 2000–2011	158
7.2	Map No. 1: Colombia valid mining permits (17 May 2011)	162
7.3	Map No. 2: Colombia mining permits application (1 February 2011)	163

Tables

1.1	Patterns of political authority	37
2.1	Growth rate of real value added per manufacturing worker, by country, 1970–1999	50
7.1	Colombian mining production, 2000–2009 (revenues percentage over ten-year revenue)	156
7.2	Mining exports, 1990–2010 (selected years) in FOB million USD	157
7.3	Growth of Colombian export sectors, 2007–2011 (percentage over previous year)	158
8.1	Sectoral net state domestic product (NSDP) growth rates, Odisha	185

Preface

This volume is about the global political economy of extractive industries. More importantly, it offers a fresh approach to theoretical and interpretative challenges that such a complex, diverse and dynamic sector evokes. On the basis of an array of case studies from across the Global South, we explore the potential of critical IPE approaches to frame our understandings of the inter-relationship between resource extraction and economic growth in the context of development. The edited collection brings together country and regional specialists from a broad range of social science disciplines as well as those who are interested in natural resource politics and offers the first step in pushing further novel understandings of resource-based development beyond the narrow resource-curse approach.

This volume builds its argument on the contemporary dynamics of the global resources extractive industry as they are manifest in new geographies of production and consumption, changing patterns of FDI and plurality in governance practices. The potential of resource-led economic development for countries of the Global South has been long debated and is still on-going indeed. Yet, studies which approach this question while fully acknowledging how the political and economic structures have evolved, and especially so in the new millennium, are still relatively scarce. In combination with the detailed cases, this volume examines the new architecture of global governance of resource sector management, with the aim of probing into the developmental potential of mining and oil extraction. It offers a new look at the political economy of resource-led development by setting itself the task of studying and understanding the complexities of this new system of global governance in the resources sector, as articulated in the inter-relationship of diverse power structures which bind together multiple actors of influence – both public and private – from the local to the transnational. However, we depart from existing literature on resource governance by asking questions that link the IPE of natural resources to developmental roles of states, democratization and, most importantly, a political approach to resource management as embedded in global governance discourses.

It is the ambition of this volume to set the debates into new directions. It does not present a single theoretical outlook in the way of a

new panacea – something to be applied by scholars to come. Rather, it builds the argument as to why it is important for scholars to adopt critical IPE approaches when endeavouring to offer new outlooks on extractive industries and their inherent political complexities. In particular, we recognise that neoliberalism has had variegated effects across the Global South. This picture is further complicated by sector-specific dynamics, making it difficult to speak of a discrete set of policy choices for resource-rich, poor countries. Instead, we present how global governance discourses and practices have shaped the new resource governance agenda in the context of the boom, and consequently, the array of unique country experiences that allowed some (but not all) to take advantage of the developmental spaces opened up by the resource boom since 2003. In other words, our collection opens up the debate on resource-led development in two significant ways. Firstly, we demonstrate the importance of linking actual changes in the global resources industry and the intellectual thinking in realising the developmental potentials of mineral and oil wealth. We posit that the restructuring of the international division of labour has created both opportunities and challenges for new and old resource producers alike in transforming resource wealth into productive capital. Most notably, policy debates at the international and domestic levels have focussed, *inter alia*, on how to minimise rent-seeking, sustain FDI inflows to keep the sector buoyant, and how states can enhance their accountability in the face of resistance against mining-based development. Our contributors offer some cues on how some countries have successfully dealt with these issues, most exemplary being Chile. But equally, they also point to the challenges ahead as a consequence of the long-term realities of extractive economies. Secondly, we move the debate forward by interrogating the potentials and limitations of an ‘IPE of resources’ as an emerging approach to the resource abundance-economic development nexus. The book, written by sociologists, geographers, political scientists and anthropologists, collectively expresses the contributors’ concerns regarding the highly economic approach in the mainstream literature on resource curse which narrowly defines the politics of natural resources as a function of institutional design or as a problem of rent-seeking and good governance. In contrast, we suggest that policy reforms are intrinsically political, and, therefore, the solution to the governance problem rests not so much on alterations in regulatory frameworks, but on building state capacity. That is, state capacity as it is negotiated politically among key stakeholders and the assertion of state agency and collective action in the face of very difficult circumstances. Nevertheless, all the contributors in

this volume see the potential in using extractive resources as leverage for development, even if this must be done with caution. We suggest here, emphatically, that policies must account for the intrinsically contested nature of resource extraction whenever governments make the decision to open their resource sectors to large-scale mining. This implies, above all, recognising new societal demands for inclusive development, greater confidence on states as agents of development and the importance of pragmatism in grafting policy reforms. The book is a rather small attempt to think more creatively about states, neoliberalism and the challenges of resource-led development.

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Acknowledgements

This book is the product of a collective effort started in November 2011 by Jewellord Nem Singh of Sheffield University in collaboration with France Bourgoignie, then at the Danish Institute of International Studies (DIIS) and currently the manager of advisory services at Business for Social Responsibility (BSR) and affiliate to the Centre interdisciplinaire de recherche en développement international et société at UQÀM (Université du Québec à Montréal) (a workshop was organised in Copenhagen, gathering together many international scholars, at senior, early career and PhD levels). We were both determined to explore the complexities of the political economy of natural resource extraction in the Global South today and enrich the debates on the role of extractive industries in the context of development. Most of the authors in this collection presented papers at the workshop, and new authors were invited to join the effort as we sought to develop a book that addressed the main political economy issues in different geographies and from different scholarly perspectives. While not all papers were eventually included in the final outline, the disagreements and discussions in the workshop have substantively shaped our vision and argument, so we owe this to the active participation of our fellow scholars.

At Sheffield, we would like to thank Jean Grugel for her guidance and for extending to us the facilities of the Sheffield Institute for International Development (SIID). In Copenhagen, Helle Ravnborg has offered invaluable support in making this project a reality. Our colleagues, including Joe Turner, have been helpful in polishing the final version of this book project.

We are grateful to the DIIS for having facilitated the workshop and to the Lund University Centre for Sustainability Studies (LUCSUS) for having provided additional financial support. Above all, we are grateful to the contributors to this book for their enthusiasm and cooperation throughout the project.

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McGrath was also instrumental in following through the ups and downs of putting together this edited collection.

Finally, the success of an intellectual project rests both on having a supportive academic environment and having been blessed with an understanding family. Crucially, the book was written at a time of transition and immense uncertainty for both editors, and, therefore, it is of utmost importance to recognise the contribution of our friends and families in Europe, Canada and the Philippines. Our partners, Aidan and Patrick, as well as France's kids have been very patient with us as we sought for a balance (and continue to do so) between our professional careers and family life, which oftentimes does not come easily. Without their love and enduring capacity to understand the stresses in academia, this book would not have been accomplished.

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