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Hönke, Jana

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Transnational Clientelism, Global (Resource) Governance, and the Disciplining of Dissent

JANA HÖNKE
University of Groningen

Schemes for more responsible global governance have often come with new ways of thwarting the meaningful voice, participation, and dissent of those they are claimed to benefit. This article argues that these processes extend beyond the more often criticized disciplinary effects of civil society promotion and community participation, which, despite a rhetoric of empowerment and emancipation, also contribute to containing protest within narrow confines of technocratic management. Using the case of transnational resource governance and examples from multinational mining companies in Tanzania, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and South Africa, the article demonstrates that, alongside the “air-conditioned” politics of participatory development and corporate social responsibility, operate the “veranda” politics of transnational governance: practices of stabilizing order and containing dissent through transnational clientelist practices. These do not operate despite, or outside, liberal global governance but are an inherent part of it. The article contributes to understanding the manifold ways in which dissent is disciplined in global governance, pushing critical engagement with indirect technologies of government beyond the liberal self-image.

The focus of much of the literature on global (resource) governance has been on new policies and institutions, and their effectiveness (cf. [Haufler 2010](#); [Weiss and Wilkinson 2014](#)). The critical literature has stressed the resistance to seemingly well-intentioned liberal global governance. It has also tended to focus on repressive and productive technologies of liberal governance and their (unintended) effects. Both have been brought together in critical analyses of external governance and resistance as intertwined. Thus, dissent is not only helped but, importantly, contained through transnational rights-based discourses and agendas of participatory governance and community engagement ([Colàs 2002](#); [Coleman and Tucker 2011](#); [Richmond 2011](#); but see also [Ryan 2015](#); also [Huysmans and Nogueira 2016](#), 2, 12; [Lisle 2016](#), 14).

Schemes for responsible business governance, in particular, thwart meaningful voice, participation, and dissent on the part of those whom corporate social responsibility (CSR) claims to serve. CSR opens up, in some instances, opportunities for concerned and affected populations to contest (resource) governance. However, companies that commit to CSR also control contestation in new ways. What appears as increased opportunity for critique and citizen participation is interwoven with subtle ways of “disciplining dissent” ([Coleman and Tucker 2011](#)).

Attention to *indirect* ways of “conducting the conduct” ([Rose and Miller 2008](#)) of potential contenders has, until now, mainly focused on political technologies that operate through programmatic discourse, disseminated through air-conditioned offices by government officials, corporate representatives, and INGOs. While the

enmeshment of liberal indirect government with physical violence and coercion has been thoroughly scrutinized (e.g., [Zalik 2004a](#); [Watts 2005](#); [Coleman and Tucker 2011](#); [Coleman 2013](#); [Hönke 2013](#)), this article argues that we should be more attentive to alternative modes of indirectly containing contestation. Practices of freedom are not only combined, and interrelate with, forms of violent coercion. Other technologies of governing indirectly also remain underanalyzed. One such technology is transnational clientelism—the discharging of order-making to brokers and intermediaries via an asymmetric distribution of benefits and co-optation. It is important to pay more attention to how transnational liberal governance relies on clientelist means for containing dissent.

While different modes of indirectly disciplining dissent in transnational (resource) governance coexist and are intertwined, the aim here is to distinguish them analytically and to illustrate each one. To this end, I draw on Emmanuel [Terry's \(1986\)](#) metaphors of “air-conditioned” and “veranda” politics. Air-conditioned politics are named after the conference rooms and offices in which much of official politics takes place and which are built on claims to bureaucratic rationality, technocratic efficiency, and democratic principles ([Terry 1986](#), 37–38). Applied to transnational governance and its contestation, an example of air-conditioned politics would be when NGOs articulate dissent by writing letters and reports to governments, donor organizations, or multinational companies. In response, the latter may justify their activities, convene meetings to explain their policies, or discuss measures of redress. “Air-conditioned politics” thus likens the enactment of the liberal idea of civil society as separate from, but interacting with and checking on, rational-bureaucratic politics. Much Foucauldian critique of how dissent is disciplined in transnational governance rightly revolves around how these politics have powerful, disciplinary effects, well beyond the office.

While important, this critique tends to overlook the “veranda politics” of transnational governance, which revolve around practices of transnational clientelism. [Terry \(1986, 38\)](#) describes veranda politics as driven by a distinct logic, that of “*partage*,” perhaps best translated as “sharing.” He derives the idea from ethnographic work on governing practices in Côte d’Ivoire, many of which have revolved around stabilizing order through distributing resources among factions, in this case along religious, ethnic, and regional lines. These practices were particularly visible on the verandas of influential office holders, thus the metaphor. In other contexts, it may be the airport lounge, the meeting room, or specific hours in the very same office in which air-conditioned politics take place. Since poor people rarely have access to formal political institutions and to public goods provided by the state, access to collective goods provision depends upon networks of access built around intermediaries ([Chatterjee 2004](#); [Hönke and Müller 2018](#)). These contain reciprocal but asymmetric personal relationships, through which access to welfare and other goods is distributed, and provide subtle yet effective means of preventing contestation and engineering social peace.¹ How such clientelism is used and (re)produced by external actors, and how it disciplines dissent to transnational governance, requires more systematic attention.

Following a discussion of transnational governance and the idea of disciplining dissent, this article uses research on transnational resource governance and contentious politics around multinational mining companies in hugely diverse contexts (Tanzania, DRC, South Africa), in order to develop and illustrate its key arguments.² Methodologically focusing on “specific practices of power at their point of application” ([Death 2013](#), 763), the next section traces how dissent is disciplined in air-conditioned politics, with a subsequent section turning to the disciplining of

¹They can also be powerful resources for mobilizing protest (see [Auyero, Lapgena, and Poma 2009](#)).

²The article draws on desk research and field research in Katanga and South Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo, in Tanzania and South Africa.

dissent through transnational veranda politics. The article ends with a discussion of the implications of the argument for research on global governance and resistance.

Transnational Governance and the Disciplining of Dissent

How protest is contained with repression has been demonstrated at length by students of contentious politics (e.g., [McAdam and Snow 1997](#); [Goldstone and Tilly 2001](#)). In transnationalized business spaces, especially mining enclaves, repression is a widespread means of containing dissent (e.g., [Drohan 2004](#)). However, as in other issue areas of transnational governance, discourses and practices of engagement, participation and inclusion have grown in importance and are promoted as means to reduce the use of physical violence. Mounting public pressure across borders has led to the emergence of community engagement policies by multinational oil and mining companies and attempts to make transnational resource governance more participatory and less violent ([Haufler 2010](#)).

However, Foucauldian and neo-Gramscian work has insisted that neither such engagement nor resistance operate outside of power relations. Governance schemes that stress development, community participation, and work with civil society can depoliticize contentious issues as they are turned into technical problems. Or they may contribute to delegitimizing dissent as criminal, such as when the “street politics” ([Bayat 1997](#)) of claiming access to streets, markets, or mineral resources become framed as “illegal” and, thus, criminal, not political, problems. The very discourse of engagement encourages certain forms of political expression while discouraging others. At the same time, this literature has argued that contestation of global governance may ultimately stabilize and reproduce the existing order rather than challenge it ([Colàs 2002](#); [Neumann and Sending 2010](#), 110–31; [Coleman and Tucker 2011](#)). It is the *disciplined* nature of much dissent that renders it particularly susceptible to the reproduction of power relations, which this article examines in more detail.

In the case of extractive industries, human rights and CSR discourses have, over recent years, changed how a number of companies (and governments) deal with protest. These discourses have also shaped how access to resources and their use are negotiated. This is evidenced by a rise in transnational standards, such as the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Companies, the UN Compact, the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative and the Voluntary Principles in Security and Human Rights (VPs). An increasing number of companies—though certainly not all—have introduced participatory community engagement practices around oil and mining sites ([Deitelhoff and Wolf 2010](#); [Haufler 2010](#)). At the same time, however, evidence of the limited implementation and ambiguous effects of these practices abounds ([Zalik 2004b](#); [Frynas and Blowfield 2005](#); [Watts 2005](#); [Hönke 2014a](#)).

It is not necessary to expound at length on how liberal global governance, for example of extractive industries, contains, and is entangled with, violent and repressive forms of government, as this has been argued comprehensively elsewhere (cf. [Valverde 1996](#); [Hindess 2001](#)). Mining companies that invest in the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Africa, Colombia, or Brazil protect themselves with fortress-like walls and security patrols, relying on private and state security forces to keep away intruders and repress or disperse protest. Extractive companies committed to CSR still rely on coercion to protect their concessions as part of what [Hönke \(2013, 7\)](#) refers to a “hybrid regime of security practices” (see also [Avant and Haufler 2012](#); [Coleman 2013](#)).

Importantly though, the more subtle and indirect ways in which transnational “governors” ([Avant, Finnemore, and Sell 2010](#)) discipline contestation require more attention ([Amoore and Langley 2004](#); [Coleman and Tucker 2011](#)). [Coleman and Tucker \(2011, 399\)](#) use the notion of discipline to bring into view the multiple mechanisms “through which resisting subjects are both produced and

reabsorbed into processes of ordering.” They mostly reserve the term “disciplining” for mechanisms of shaping dissent that work through narratives and practices that establish some, but not all, protest as “visible, “sayable,” and “audible” (Coleman and Tucker 2011, 399; also [Odysseos 2011](#)).³ However, other important indirect modes of containing protest have been overlooked, namely the transnational clientelist arrangements that international organizations and companies rely on to discharge order-making to intermediaries. Through these alliances, external actors exchange material and symbolic support in return for social peace. This article argues that we need a better understanding of how the disciplining of dissent through rational-bureaucratic and participatory techniques of government (the “air-conditioned”) is enmeshed with other indirect techniques of containing dissent to global governance (the “veranda”).

“Veranda” modes of disciplining dissent are indirect in a double sense: they are based on working via intermediaries—whether bureaucrats, customary authorities or “big man”—and chiefly rely on modes of engineering voice without recourse to physical violence (even though it is not excluded). Intermediaries may claim authority from traditional sources, from public office, or from charisma and personal achievement. Indeed, attaining formal office is an important resource for extending and maintaining authority. At the same time, the personal networks and ties that intermediaries rely on are often in flux and personalized ([Terray 1986](#); [Utas 2012](#), 8). In any case, they derive authority from their brokerage between “external” actors and the subjects of transnational governance (for a review of the literature see [Hönke and Müller 2018](#)). While physical violence and outright repression can be an intrinsic element of their rule, as [Pansters and Knight \(2005\)](#) put it, veranda politics rely more on “carrots” than “sticks.” They are embedded in patron-client relations in which actors of unequal status and power are linked by bonds of reciprocity ([Pansters and Knight 2005](#); cf. [Chatterjee 2004](#), [Auyero et al. 2009](#); [Pitcher, Moran, and Johnston 2009](#)). In the context of transnational projects—ranging from large agribusiness projects, mineral extraction, and dam construction to security interventions—such clientelism is transnational and stretches across borders. Rewards for intermediaries can range from individual or collective material handouts (e.g., land, cash, jobs, a school, the provision of electricity) to obtaining a lucrative contract or externally funded project, or protection (e.g., from the law, from eviction).

Instead of describing these practices as deviations from modern governance, they must be understood as a specific mode of regulating behavior, and of distributing penalties, goods and services and, thus, of governing public space ([Mbembe 2001](#); see also [Kühn 2008](#)). Indeed, I argue that such veranda politics are an ubiquitous characteristic of contemporary transnational governance, even more so in times when discourses of local ownership and participation might in fact extend the need for such practices, not reduce them. From the 1980s and 1990s, transnational governance by, and through, intermediaries has grown ([Mbembe 2001](#); [Avant et al. 2010](#); [Neumann and Sending 2010](#)), and has perhaps been researched in the greatest detail in relation to development projects ([Lewis and Mosse 2006](#)). However, governance through intermediaries and transnational clientelism has also increased in the security sector ([Veit 2010](#); [Pospisil and Kühn 2016](#); [Moe and Müller 2017](#)). With regards to companies, these practices have well-known historical roots. The chartered and concessionary companies of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with authority delegated to them by European states, worked through indirect rule through local “traditional” chiefs. However, many of the companies and the associated imperial government helped to invent and keep them in power in the first

³ At times, the term is extended to the overtly violent repression of protest (e.g., [Coleman 2013](#)). While the latter is certainly a widespread means of containing protest, the added conceptual value of the term “disciplining” is, in my view, that it sheds light on less visible mechanisms of delimiting and shaping dissent.

place (Reno 2004; Bowen 2006). How the disciplining of dissent works through these arrangements today, however, remains understudied in IPS.

Veranda politics are often wrongly described as liberal global governance's "other," which undermines it (see the discourse on corruption). However, transnational clientelism is part and parcel of liberal global governance and coproduced by "external" actors such as multinational companies. For example, in Mexico it is the *cacique's* obligation as intermediary to gather and display political support for their respective patrons, such as the politician elected in their ward (Pansters and Knight 2005). How the public gatherings are organized to welcome visiting dignitaries from a political party and impress them with public displays of political support in Mexico is remarkably similar to the display of support and community participation during visits of international inspectors at the sites of multinational mining companies in DRC or Tanzania. There are new ways in which these relationships are negotiated and represented today, such as through CSR, but from palm oil plantations to mines operated by multinational companies, practices of orchestrating community support through intermediaries and clientelist practices play an important role in engineering stability around corporate projects (cf. von Hellermann 2010; Hönke 2013; Rajak 2016). Furthermore, companies that are more seriously committed to the standards of CSR draw on such arrangements. Perhaps paradoxically, they may indeed be more inclined to engage in such practices as they need to demonstrate they are peacefully working with local actors.

Two caveats are due at this point. First, it is important to bear in mind that, despite the place-based metaphors of the air-conditioned office and the veranda, related technologies of disciplining dissent do not operate separately but are mutually imbricated. Second, the following analysis does not presume that attempts at disciplining are always effective. Nevertheless, in order to understand resistance more fully, it is crucial to understand its molding and entanglement with dominant regimes of transnational governance. Encouraging specific, visible dissenting practices, while ostracizing others, indeed helps in producing and maintaining unequal power relations.

In the following, I draw on research on multinational mining companies and transnational schemes of resource governance from different contexts of statehood (notably Tanzania, South Africa, DRC) to illustrate air-conditioned and veranda technologies of indirectly disciplining dissent. I posit that the findings are exemplary and relevant for extending our understanding of the disciplining of dissent in transnational governance more broadly.⁴

Air-Conditioned Politics—Teaching the Art of Disagreeing

Over the last fifteen years, alongside governments and NGOs, multinational companies have come to promote notions of civil society, community participation and local ownership. In response to growing public criticism, the extractive sector has invested in air-conditioned policies and developed voluntary principles of corporate social and security responsibility (Zerk 2006; Deitelhoff and Wolf 2010). While the ideas, institutions, and practices related to such standards may have opened up new opportunities to voice grievances in struggles over mineral extraction, they have also invoked new repertoires of disciplining dissent.

Many of these repertoires are actuated through a basic distinction drawn by mining companies and donor organizations: between supposedly legitimate ("constructive") and illegitimate ("obstructive," "useless") dissent. Further illustrated below, this distinction endorses, and brings into being, certain forms of contention while discouraging others. In the words of Louiza Odysseos (2011, 439), "dissenting

⁴It will be for future research to investigate this phenomenon more systematically in other issue areas.

conduct is channeled into ‘acceptable’ and ‘productive’ practices.” Such practices are borne out empirically around sites of extraction.

The local governance of transnational resource extraction involves governments; companies; donor institutions such as DFID (the UK’s Department for International Development), USAID (United States Agency for International Development), and GIZ (German Corporation for International Cooperation); and many INGOs. They all, firstly, contend that the *lack of knowledge* on the part of the local population is a key obstacle to peaceful business operations. If only the population understood mining and its operations more fully, interlocutors often told the author and her colleagues from the DRC and Tanzania to Guinea, there would be more constructive and “useful” contestation (Hönke 2013; Thomas 2014). This is reflected in the types of programs designed to improve resource governance. They emphasize local ownership but are nevertheless premised on the implicit assumption that local communities are unfit for modern development and its democratic politics. Therefore, they would need to be educated in the “right” values and rights and, indeed, the appropriate means through which to claim them. Indeed, a policy of the Tanzanian government included measures to teach people “the art of disagreeing without recourse to fighting” (Kelsall 2004, 10; for DRC and South Africa, Hönke 2013).

The conflict resolution program introduced by African Barrick Gold (ABG), a subsidiary of Canadian company Barrick Gold and the largest gold mining company in Tanzania, illustrates this point further.⁵ Before discussing ABG’s NGO-led conflict prevention and resolution program, it is important to know that violent confrontations between company and local population regularly occurred around ABG’s North Mara site in the north-west of Tanzania. These conflicts revolved around the loss of land, the lack of adequate compensation for relocation, and restricted access to gold for local artisanal miners. Almost every family in this area has a member involved in artisanal mining; this comprised an important part of household income before the arrival of the multinational mining company. Five out of seven neighboring villages previously held customary mining rights over tracts of what has since become the AGB concession. There have been frequent, violent encounters between local populations and the security forces, resulting in casualties: “events of physical encounters between artisanal miners and security guards are regular, about every month,” according to the Tarime district commissioner.⁶ People caught trespassing within the concession were taken into custody without investigation by mine security forces and were regularly mistreated. In January 2013, company security guards caught trespassers on the concession, which resulted in the death of one villager and the injury of a police officer.⁷

How have air-conditioned politics contributed to containing dissent in this case? Two years previously, in May 2011, this ongoing conflict appeared to reach a turning point following a mass invasion into the concession by over eight hundred people, which gained infamy due to its tragic outcome: the deaths of seven local people with many more injured.⁸ Tanzanian newspaper *The Citizen* quoted Barrick Gold’s CEO at length; he promised to improve the companies’ community programs and to work toward “common ground and ways to work together.”⁹ As a consequence, Barrick hired Search for Common Ground (SFCG) for North Mara, an INGO with headquarters in Washington and Brussels, specializing in local peace-building. SFCG’s philosophy was: “Conflict and differences are inevitable. Violence is not.” To prevent violence, they focused on support work that aimed to “ignite

⁵ After research for this article was completed, ABG was renamed as Acadia. Barrick has remained the company’s majority shareholder.

⁶ Tarime District Commissioner, interview, November 14, 2013, Tanzania.

⁷ Based on field research in 2011, 2012, and 2013. See also Thomas 2014.

⁸ See for example, Koven (2011).

⁹ “North Mara” (2011). Barrick Gold (2012).

shared solutions.”¹⁰ In the case of its contract with ABG, SFCG translated this mission into helping communities *understand* the work of ABG, the agreement they had with the government, and the importance of the industrial mining sector to the national economy.¹¹ In addition, SFCG was contracted to mediate between the villages around the concession and the company, in case future tensions arose. Over the next two years, ABG complemented this program with increased infrastructural investment in neighboring villages. It constructed a hospital, four new schools, and offices for the local government.

SFCG’s work might have opened new channels for legitimate voice and helped to implement certain measures to redistribute mining revenues to affected communities through social investment. However, at the same time, SFCG’s very presence further legitimized the existing extractive order and the legal pillars it rested on.¹² While well-intentioned, the “common solutions” they promoted suggested an equal say in a situation characterized by substantial hierarchies. Further, promoting nonviolence delegitimized dissent by other means, such as trespassing into AGB’s concession for artisanal mining. At the same time as ABG engaged SFCG, the company started constructing a wall around their mining pits and employing special police forces to rigorously exclude neighboring communities from access to mineral wealth. Thus, community engagement through SFCG, at least partly, helped to contain dissent while making possible a politics of exclusion and coercive property rights protection.

Secondly, while it can be an effective strategy for NGOs to educate people on mining laws and thereby support rights-based claim-making (Frynas 2004), such strategies promote an understanding of the law as neutral. At the very least, it demands the acceptance of historically specific legal frames and the attendant conditions under which claims over access to, and redistribution of, resources can be made. In addition to its condescension toward those protesting, such strategies depoliticize the legal framework on which mineral extraction is based. This includes the boundaries as to what counts as permissible ways of negotiating access to mineral resources. As Odysseos and Coleman have shown, rights-based agendas, interpellating dissenters as subjects of private contract, subject those negatively affected by companies to articulating “demands and responses through the idioms, vocabularies, and concerns of recognized political and legal subjectivities of citizen and rights-holder” (Odysseos 2011, 452; Coleman 2013, 177).

Third, the distinction between legitimate and illegitimate contestation in air-conditioned politics has important material effects. On the one hand, with regards to donor governments and international organizations, it informs decisions over whom external actors work with and/or fund. The concept of “certification” (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001) usefully flags that resourceful international actors who support certain contenders (and not others) provide them with crucial economic and symbolic capital that enables and legitimates effective action (see also Dodworth 2018). Yet certification is more likely for those who frame their struggle around established, liberal norms and rights than for those who want to change the system (della Porta and Tarrow 2005, 6).

In transnational resource governance, donor organizations as well as companies prefer to certify those that align their program to the dominant global norms and strategies of “air-conditioned politics” and confine their actions to nonviolent and “problem-solving”-oriented cooperation. In the DRC, for instance, DFID and USAID have worked with mining companies on “good resource governance.” Both organizations have a specific take on what they consider “legitimate” protest and

¹⁰ Search for Common Ground (2015).

¹¹ SFCG field agents, interviews, 2012 and 2013, Tanzania.

¹² For similar interpretations and findings, see Neumann and Sending (2010) on professional INGOs in global governance and Karen Tucker (2014) on the WTO, NGO subjectivities and their effects on indigenous communities.

“good” or “bad” civil society conduct. In interviews, representatives of both agencies described service-providing, problem-solving NGOs that collaborate with companies as “good” and legitimate parts of civil society. By contrast, they criticized watchdog NGOs that observe and denounce companies’ security and human right practices to a broader public as useless and problematic.¹³ By their logic, this latter form of civil society stood in the way of constructively working toward a solution with all stakeholders.¹⁴ They thus cooperated with a service-oriented NGO, Pact Congo, who at the time worked with several companies in DRC’s copper-rich Katanga region, but refrained from funding local, critical watchdog NGO ACIDH.

At the same time, other forms of claim-making are ignored, delegitimized and criminalized. The assertion that particular repertoires of dissent are legitimate facilitates the criminalization of other claims and forms of protest. Artisanal miners are, for instance, referred to as “pirates,” “criminal intruders,” and outlaws on the South African Witwatersrand and the Katangese copperbelt (Hönke 2013, 65–72; 92–98), as well as in the Tanzanian mining areas in the Victoria Lake region mentioned above. Protest that uses blockades or violent means can be branded as illegitimate and criminal and is thus met with repression. This encourages dissent to resonate with established norms and means accepted by transnational governors and, hence, “disciplines dissent” in Coleman and Tucker’s sense (2011). Such practice delegitimizes those actors who do not wish to work with companies.¹⁵ As Lara Coleman (2013, 183), quoting a Colombian farmer she interviewed at a site of British Petroleum, puts it: “first BP destroyed the social fabric, now they are trying to build another one in their image.”

Overall, there has been an increasing number of INGOs, such as International Alert, Pact Congo, and the Corporate Engagement Project, that work *with* multinational mining companies rather than *about* or *against* them. This is not solely a response to monetary incentives or the threat of repression but the manifestation of a market-liberal *zeitgeist* in which companies are seen as part of the solution rather than the problem and in which it has become normal for NGOs to work as subcontractors with companies. Similar to the security sector, for which Deborah Avant (2005) diagnosed the emergence of a veritable “market for force,” there has similarly emerged a market for community management and social engineering. More and more NGOs work (from) within this market, hoping for incremental change through processes of socialization and learning as described in norm-oriented constructivism, instead of engaging in more radical critique and public pressure aiming for more fundamental change.

A final point is that many large multinational mining companies have adopted mechanisms to increase ownership and community participation. Often, these are prescribed by voluntary standards such as the UN Global Compact, the Global Reporting Initiative, or the VPs. Yet critical development studies have illustrated that, in practice, well intentioned ideas of community participation and empowerment in aid projects may become reduced and molded into technocratic procedures of risk management (Cooke and Kothari 2001; Dill 2009). The de facto practices and effects of such air-conditioned politics by mining companies are similar. In Tanzania, DRC, and South Africa, mining companies have all invested in engaging

¹³ USAID country representative DRC, interview, October 2008; DfID country representative, personal communication, November 2008. This is a surprising stance in light of the fact that public shaming campaigns of multinational mining companies by watchdog NGOs Global Witness and Publish What You Pay, amongst others, were crucial in pressuring companies to engage in codes of conduct and participatory community engagement in the first place.

¹⁴ Cooperative problem-solving can go a long way but has difficulties questioning the fundamental parameters and problematic effects of the dominant development model with which it works: the emphasis on large, external business and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) at the expense of local input and small-scale solutions; the light, insufficiently enforced regulation of the multinational companies involved; and the negative security, human rights, and environmental externalities of extractive industries. For a critique of the commodities consensus see Siegel (2013); Svampa (2015).

¹⁵ This refers to companies deemed “good” by donor organizations. NGOs and communities would presumably be forgiven for opposing Chinese companies. I am grateful to Sarah Katz-Lavigne for this observation.

local communities, such as through liaison officers and community forums, and collective discussion of social investment and compensation payments (Hönke 2012, 2013; Geenen and Hönke 2014; Thomas 2014). More fundamental claims, however, such as about the redistribution of mineral wealth and access to mineral resources, are not. Community programs, therefore, and as argued in more detail elsewhere (Hönke 2013, 2014b; Rajak 2016), fall considerably short with regard to the genuine emancipatory potential that these terms initially imply, despite their claim to empower people and catalyze popular participation in politics.

The case of Impala in South Africa is particularly insightful in this respect. It is the largest platinum mining corporation in South Africa, and the traditional authority of the Royal Bafokeng is a major shareholder, which should make it a likely case for community participation. Despite community involvement in the ownership of the corporation, however, which raised many hopes for sustainable economic activity “under the guidance of 300,000 shareholders” (Cook 2011, 155), a substantial lack of genuine community participation has been found, for example in developing a community development plan (Mnwana 2014, 334f). In response to such challenges, the Royal Bafokeng Authority (RBA) argued that customary *kgotha kgothe* meetings provided such opportunities, as they are open to the entire Bafokeng community and have been celebrated as examples of direct democracy. However, these are mass meetings that do not lend themselves to the purposes of meaningful participation and community oversight. In addition, the technical language of community development excluded many from participating in debates about the plan, so that, overall, the dominance of experts prevailed (Mnwana 2014, 835–37).

In sum, the air-conditioned politics of transnational resource extraction discipline dissent by incentivizing specific modes of contestation while containing and criminalizing others. The findings resonate with other debates in other contexts, such as Cruikshank’s (1999) work in North America looking at how empowerment and participation have become contemporary techniques to make people govern themselves in specific ways. Much of the critical literature in IPS and elsewhere has focused on this disciplinary nature of “air-conditioned” politics.

Transnational Clientelism and Veranda Politics

Surprisingly little attention has been paid, though, to disciplining dissent by recourse to veranda politics in transnational governance. Ordering sites of transnational resource extraction also operates through veranda politics. Thus, dissent is indirectly governed through multifaceted clientele arrangements.

Indeed, a clientelist logic, in its starkest form, is inherent in corporate social responsibility itself. CSR requires beneficiaries, and benefits are distributed in specific and selective ways among groups that claim a stake in a project and its effects. As Rajak (2012, 267) pointedly argues, based on research in South Africa, “practices of CSR serve to exclude large sections of society while demarcating a select target zone of responsibility (the ‘community’) which is bound into relations of corporate patronage and clientelism.” Companies define who is part of “their community” and worthy to be a recipient of social investment. Others are overlooked or categorized as “criminal” or “illegal.” Instead of exchanging goods for votes, corporate clientelism via CSR aims at exchanging goods for peace.

The policing literature has shown how security governance has become a form of “actuarial risk management” (O’Malley 1992), a rationality of governing that emerged from the corporate sector. Consequently, governing the security of transnational (business) projects can be understood as the flexible management of risk groups and spaces adjacent to corporate sites. Companies in Southern Katanga thus refer to surrounding communities ambiguously as both their most immediate threat as well as a potential belt of protection for operational security (Hönke 2013, 66). Confrontations with neighboring communities have similarly become

classified as a security risk by mining companies in South Africa (Hönke 2013, 92–98). Consequently, Anglo Platinum presents community engagement as an *investment* that contributes to achieving the company's goals of stability and security (Anglo Platinum, 2007, 62).

While there is a normative expectation that such responsibility should be organized through legitimate representatives of the communities affected, the demand for strongmen (and women) has not disappeared. A manager of Impala Mining explains: "We want communities to be organized and we want a recognized line of communication, and we have established that. But we can't deal with any Tom, Dick, and Harry."¹⁶ Such perceptions have led to complex "alliance strategies" (Avant and Haufler 2012, 265–66): transnational clientele strategies persist despite and alongside "air-conditioned" politics of participatory community engagement.

A key strategy is the co-optation of local authorities. In the case of Canadian Barrick Gold, the largest mining company in Tanzania, communities affected by the companies' operations strongly claim that district commissioners have been captured by the company. Our observation of the events around official visits at the mine support these allegations. In a district in which Barrick Gold operates in Tanzania, when foreign investors or other important guests came to visit Barrick Gold's operations in the Kahama district, local intermediaries organized for villagers to be available to tell them how well the company was behaving and contributing to local development.¹⁷

Co-optation may also work through the guise of air-conditioned politics. In South Africa, mining companies around Rustenburg decided to support individual police stations in the vicinity of their operations, including donations of cars and other equipment, in order to protect their operations.¹⁸ This sponsorship was heavily criticized as appropriation of the state. In response, companies moved from direct spending on individual stations to the collective sponsoring of the South African Police Service through the Support Program for Police Stations managed by Business Against Crime, a national, business-led anticrime initiative. This strategy can be understood as an attempt to repackage "veranda politics" as a liberal state-building intervention: an "air-conditioned" measure run by an independent association. However, the program ensured that donations made by individual companies for the public good were largely spent in their specific areas of operation and for their own purposes. In the case of Impala Platinum, eleven police stations, which either impact Impala Platinum directly (in the immediate surrounding communities) or indirectly (via labor-sending areas), were identified for sponsorship by the Impala Community Development Trust in 2007 (Hönke 2013, 94, fn. 157). In this way, the company kept orchestrating security governance and indirectly operating through selected "client police stations" in order to secure the concession.

According to William Reno (2004), companies are conservative forces and support and side with those in power for legal and de facto physical security. If no local intermediary is readily available, historically the practice has been to engineer an appropriate counterpart. In so doing, external governors such as companies help to invent traditions (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983) that (re)produce asymmetries. I argue that companies draw on the "repertoires of domination" (Poteete and Ribot 2011) that become available through—often neotraditional—arrangements for fabricating social peace. Poteete and Ribot (2011) identified a number of such repertoires, which appear hugely relevant in contemporary corporate community management via intermediaries. These include, first, to control the transfer of power

¹⁶ Impala Mining representative, interview, South Africa, quoted in Hamann 2004, 271.

¹⁷ Ward officers, interviews, 2011 and 2012; former community relations officer for Barrick Gold, interview, 2011, Tanzania.

¹⁸ Auditing firm managing the social investment projects of companies, interview, December 2008, South Africa.

to participatory bodies, such as community forums. Such forums are manipulated through only bringing in people they control. Second, it includes (de)legitimizing other actors, fostering dependencies, and using bribes. These repertoires are crucial around multinational mining operations, large-scale infrastructure projects, and agribusiness. They need to be included in critical analysis of how large economic projects, but also peacebuilding and counterterrorism interventions, are transnationally governed in ways that tacitly discipline contestation.

The case of Canadian company Banro in Eastern DRC is illustrative in this regard. Banro acquired its concession, located approximately 80 km from the provincial capital of South Kivu, in 2005. The mine entered into production in late 2012, making Banro the first industrial mining company to actually produce in the conflict-afflicted east since the Congo wars in the 1990s and 2000s. Banro has made quite some effort to abide by transnational standards (Geenen and Hönke 2014, 120) and has been even portrayed as a model company with “a community development program that would put many majors to shame, let alone other juniors” (Mineweb 2007). Ever since the arrival of Banro, however, access to the concession has been contested. The same is the case for the distribution of benefits from the mining operations to neighboring communities and compensation for loss of land, income, and relocation (Geenen and Claessens 2013). What is striking is that for a long time, despite widespread discontent, (open) dissent remained very limited. It remained restricted to villagers sending letters or representatives to the company to cautiously signal issues. Discussions largely remained within designated committees set up as part of the air-conditioned politics of transnational resource governance.

How this was possible can only be understood if veranda politics are taken into account. The traditional authority of Luhwindja, the *mwamikazi*,¹⁹ has been a key partner and intermediary for the company and played a major role in indirectly disciplining dissent around Banro’s concession. Initially, in the course of reclaiming government control over the gold deposits in the area that had been lost to various rebel groups during the Congo wars, President Kabila and Banro helped to install the current postholder. Relations between her, the company, and Kinshasa proved close. Traditional chiefs in South Kivu build their authority on nurturing patron-client relationships through the distribution of land. The *mwamikazi*’s position as broker between the company, the Kabila government in Kinshasa, and the local population afforded her further extensive patronage resources with which to engineer stability despite discontent (Geenen and Hönke 2014). She has controlled, for instance, a range of business ventures and development projects, all contracted or funded by Banro. These allow her to benefit supporters, and to co-opt those critical of Banro through providing economic opportunity. The *mwamikazi* set up a subcontracting company, Cinamula, which provides day laborers from the Luhwindja area to Banro, and has remained a majority shareholder in a subcontracting firm that built houses for families resettled by Banro. The distribution of projects funded by the corporate charity is also discussed with the *mwamikazi*. All of this places her in an excellent position to control the distribution of the company’s social investment and manage stability.

The ensuing relations of loyalty and dependency also served to control new channels of political participation introduced with Banro’s CSR and community engagement policies. The local development committee that was put in place—as required by Banro—quickly became a “closed shop” (Geenen and Hönke 2014). The *mwamikazi*, allegedly able to manipulate who serve on this committee, hand-picked community “representatives” to an extent that some informants view the committee as entirely in her hands. Therefore, dissent remained voiceless (Geenen and Hönke 2014). It is difficult to ascertain to what extent Banro’s headquarter

¹⁹ There is always an element of invention to tradition (Hobsbawn and Ranger 1983). For readability quotation marks have been avoided but the term is used here as the notion used by the person herself and others to refer to her.

was aware of the strategic (ab)use of social investment. It is clear, nonetheless, that company staff were involved. It is difficult to conceive how headquarters, monitoring the use of Banro's funds, could have remained unaware of the widespread veranda practices.

Having experienced similar practices, protestors against the aforementioned company Impala in South Africa put it as follows:

The mines choose their own partners in the community, someone who they can control. If you are raising issues, if you are confrontational you are considered radical and they will not talk to you at all. . . . Activists that want real fundamental change are discredited by the mines as well as by some authorities as people that do not want any development at all.²⁰

This also resonates with Marianna Welker's (2009) study of US mining company Newmont, in Indonesia. Newmont had introduced a community engagement program after being criticized for partnering with the regime and not working sufficiently with local communities. Welker demonstrates how the company nurtured patrimonial networks through CSR and strengthened conservative chiefs against environmental activists in order to maintain stability. In all these cases, activists find their dissent confined by a transnational alliance drawing on "veranda" repertoires. Such clientele practices have been *globally made* and reproduced in entangled histories (Bhambra 2014; Hönke and Müller 2016).

In transnational security governance, logics of transnational clientelism are particularly deeply embedded. During interviews in the Copperbelt in Southern DRC, a security officer working for a foreign mining company complained about the difficulties of working in the DRC. In many African countries, he argued, as in Afghanistan where he had worked before, working with the state depended entirely on maintaining personal contacts within the administration.²¹ Whilst he did not consider this as unusual or concerning, he complained about the lack of stability in lower-rank positions in the DRC—a source of much consternation:

There is no point in climbing into bed with these people, thinking they are going to be there for two or three years . . . If he [local intelligence service agent] upsets his boss or for political shakedown or whatever—he could be gone tomorrow.²²

His complaint was not about clientele practices as such. These he considered usual business practice. Instead, he complained about the unpredictability of veranda politics in the DRC, which rendered it more difficult to work there than elsewhere. It put at risk, in fact, the co-optation model he had been trained in, was familiar with, and used to practicing.

Governing through clientelist arrangements can hence not be understood as rooted in "traditional" African political culture that captured rational-bureaucratic transnational governance. "External" actors, such as transnational security professionals and companies, take an active part in (re)producing practices of "veranda politics" in transnational governance. Company agents and local intermediaries are part of historically grown transnational practice communities. Communities of practice are groups of actors that are functionally linked, repeatedly interact with each other, and, in these interactions, agree on shared ways of doing things. They are "not necessarily about good or bad practices, but rather about what people happen to practice, for better or worse" (Adler 2008, 200). As argued in more detail elsewhere (Hönke and Müller 2018), bureaucrats and professionals of international organizations such as MNCs are part of transnational communities of practice that (re)produce heterogeneous governance practices.

²⁰ Luka Environmental Committee representatives, interview, October 8, 2008, South Africa.

²¹ Corporate Security Manager in Katanga, interview, October 2008, DRC.

²² Corporate Security Manager in Katanga, interview, October 2008, DRC.

Conclusion

Much attention has been rightly paid to hidden articulations of power in global governance (in IPS see recent reviews by [Huysmans and Nogueira 2016](#), 2; [Lisle 2016](#), 14). This article has demonstrated that it is necessary to extend such critical analysis from the more often analyzed modes of indirectly conducting conduct to transnational clientelism in global governance. Both are important components of the heterogeneous “regime of practices” ([Dean 1999](#); [Hönke 2013](#)) that characterize contemporary transnational governance in the Global South.

The article has shown that in very different contexts—Tanzania, South Africa, and the DRC—transnational governance of multinational companies, despite norms of corporate social responsibility, subtly discipline contestation. The air-conditioned politics of civil society promotion and community participation, despite a rhetoric of empowerment and emancipation, contain protest within narrow confines of technocratic management of resource governance. Thus on the one hand, it joins in with the broader critique of technologies of indirectly “conducting the conduct” of those trying to resist global governance, alongside violent repression ([Amoore and Langley 2004](#); [Coleman and Tucker 2011](#)). However, the article argued further that disciplining dissent through veranda politics requires more attention as transnational clientele practices are key for channeling, preventing, and maintaining the massive inequalities of transnational (resource) governance.

The welcome turn to practices and ethnographic approaches in IR is fruitful for capturing transnational veranda politics and how they affect dissent. Given the rise of transnational governance through intermediaries ([Mbembe 2001](#); see recently [Hönke and Müller 2018](#)), and a growing geography of zones beyond extractives ([Barry 2006](#); [Sidaway 2007](#); [Nyiri 2012](#); [Hönke and Cuesta-Fernandez 2017](#)), such a line of research will be insightful for other issue areas ranging from development projects, infrastructure, and agribusiness investments to peacebuilding and counterterrorism interventions. A broader understanding of indirect technologies of governing, and how these are globally made, is required for a critical understanding of how support is manufactured and dissent contained in transnational governance.

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