Brown Bag Lunch

Tuesday, November 8th, 2011, 12:30-1:30 pm
"Chinese Mining Investment in Peru"
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Chinese state-owned company investments in South American minerals and oil have exploded over the last ten years. Western observers have warned that these companies will harm the environment, workers, and communities where they operate because they will transplant exploitative practices from China. These observers point to the tarnished reputation of the iron mine Shougang Hierro Peru, the first Chinese mine in South America. Shougang does indeed have a bad reputation for environmental and labor violations in Peru. However, the government’s actual data on environmental and labor standards shows that Shougang does not lag far behind the leading Western mining companies. Shougang’s reputation problems stem largely from mistakes made by the Peruvian state. Today, observers warn that the handful of new Chinese mining operations in Peru will all follow in Shougang’s footsteps. Amos argues that Shougang should not be seen as a prime example of the hazards of Sino-Peruvian investment, but rather a worst-case scenario from which Chinese companies must learn.

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