Chapter 3
Corporate Social Responsibility: A Governable Space

Anthea Wesley, Martin Brueckner, Christof Pforr, and Diana MacCallum

Abstract The rise in the discourse and practice of corporate social responsibility (CSR) has been significant over the last few years, driven largely by a dominant business case logic. The CSR concept though, as suggested here, is more complex, loaded and problematic than is acknowledged within mainstream CSR scholarship. In this chapter, we present the view that CSR should be re-conceptualised as being situated within a relational space, ever unfolding and constituted by a range of forces, be they political, institutional, economic or social. This allows governmentality and spatiality as analytical instruments to deconstruct CSR at the level of the political economy. In this way, it is possible to capture the construction, dissemination and the lived experience of CSR. We also indicate that the impact of global social forces such as the prevailing neoliberal mentalities and the global accumulation agenda are for example better understood when taking this perspective.

3.1 Introduction

Recent decades have witnessed a discernible growth in interest in, and debate on doing business the 'right' way (Shamir, 2002, 2004). This shift has been quite remarkable given that only a few decades ago the ideology of business was constructed around Milton Friedman's (1970) dictum that 'the social responsibility of business is to increase its profits'. Despite the vast array of terminologies within the literature addressing this ethical space, in this chapter we use 'Corporate Social Responsibility' (CSR) as the umbrella term to capture this longstanding and

A. Wesley • C. Pforr • D. MacCallum
Curtin University, Bentley, WA, Australia

M. Brueckner (✉)
Institute of Social Sustainability, School of Management and Governance, Murdoch University, 90 South Street, 6150 Murdoch, WA, Australia
e-mail: m.brueckner@murdoch.edo.au

constantly evolving conversation about the role and responsibility of business in society (Jenkins, 2005).

In early conceptualisations of CSR (pre-1960s), social responsibility was rationalised from an altruistic and moral standpoint, where being good was simply the right thing to do (see for example Bowen, 1953; Drucker, 1954; Mikkilä, 2003). Today, an alternative construction of social responsibility has been advanced, rationalised on the basis of making good economic business sense (Idemudia, 2009). The discourse that underpins the 'business case for CSR' suggests that corporations' bottom lines improve when companies consider their social and environmental impacts, as this can enhance their reputation and help minimise their risks as well as realise efficiency gains and enhance stakeholder value (Branco & Rodrigues, 2006; Hart, 1997; Kotler & Lee, 2005; Lantos, 2001; McWilliams & Siegal, 2001; O'Riordan & Fairbrass, 2008; Porter & Kramer, 2002, 2006, 2007; Schreck, 2011). The 'win-win' ideology that underpins this idea is based on the assumption that a company can both be profitable and contribute to the welfare of communities in which they operate (Banerjee, 2007; González & Martinez, 2004; Schreck, 2011). This at least is the dominant message sent by development elites from the northern hemisphere and by proponents of the capitalist strands of CSR theory.

With the mainstream research agenda dominated by the 'business case' logic, there is a largely naïve and unproblematic portrayal of CSR (Brueckner & Mamun, 2010), and an evident absence of robust internal critique (Blowfield, 2005). In this chapter, we present the view—also shared by others in the field (e.g. Banerjee, 2007; Blowfield, 2005)—that this conceptualisation of CSR and associated CSR scholarship are problematic. We argue that CSR must be understood as largely political in nature, in that the intersections between its social, economic, environmental and cultural (indigenous) aspects are firmly embedded in, and affected by structural influences and mechanisms of power (Banerjee, 2010). These complexities indicate that CSR is more loaded and problematic than suggested by the mainstream CSR agenda.

Accordingly, this chapter proposes a new conceptualisation of CSR; CSR as a *governable space*. This is about bringing to the surface some inherent structural challenges and contradictions embedded within CSR that tend to encourage certain corporate behaviours over others (Blowfield, 2005). Thus, we look critically at CSR, both in policy and practice, from a number of perspectives: (1) *Political economy*, the way government, corporate and social interests interact; (2) *Governmentality*, the vast and different array of techniques, institutions, technologies of power, discourses and rationalities underlying the conduct of government in support of particular interests over others, (3) and *Spatiality*, how social, economic, political and ecological relations interact across multiple scales. To achieve this, we conceptualise CSR as occurring in relational space, ever unfolding, 'constituted through a very large number of spaces, discursive, emotional, physical, natural, organisational, technological and institutional' (Rose, 1999, p. 248).

In sum, the aims of this chapter are threefold: (a) to problematise some key aspects within the dominant CSR theory, (b) to introduce CSR as a governable

space, and (c) to propose an analytical framework that incorporates governmentality and spatiality. We argue that this framework represents an opportunity to identify often invisible CSR problems and challenges and to find alternative pathways to move forward.

3.2   Deconstructing Corporate Social Responsibility

The proliferation of the CSR discourse among political, corporate and international non-government organisations (NGOs) demonstrates the magnitude of support for the caring and friendly face of corporate capitalism (Doane & Abasta-Vilaplana, 2005). This is a face that displays a balance between the diverse demands of host communities, environmental protection and shareholder expectations (Jenkins, 2004). Those companies that succeed are rewarded for being good corporate citizens while others are punished for having or being perceived to have broken the social contract (Greening & Turban, 2000; Idemudia, 2007; Maignan & Ferrell, 2004). Despite corporations' 'emancipatory rhetoric' (Banerjee, 2008, p. 51), critics of contemporary CSR suggest that serious questions remain about the social and environmental efficacy of many CSR practices and strategies. For example, Zappala (2010) questions the capacity of CSR to address global social problems such as poverty and social inclusion, inequality and environmental security. Palazzo and Scherer (2008) highlight the way companies with 'good' CSR credentials continue to find themselves at the centre of community outrage and in some cases costly litigation (see also Blowfield, 2007).

The mining industry, as one of the primary champions and leaders of the CSR movement, is also increasingly the focus of critical research and advocacy concerning industry-community conflicts (Kemp, Owen, Gotzmann, & Bond, 2011). In this regard, Idemudia (2009) asks why, despite the 'win-win' philosophy of mainstream CSR, do some mining companies find themselves unable to secure their social license to operate without conflict and confrontation? An ongoing problem for the industry, as Frynas (2005) suggests, is that the design and implementation of CSR policy and practice is not in fact based on, and does not refer directly to, the negative economic, social and environmental consequences of the operations themselves. As a consequence, industry-community conflicts continue to erupt over the perceived inequitable distribution of risks, benefits and impacts associated with resource projects (Kemp et al., 2011).

Within the CSR literature, there is continuing disagreement about what CSR is (conceptual definitions), what it achieves (outcomes) and what it should do (potential) (Prieto-Carron, Lund-Thomsen, Chan, Muro, & Bhushan, 2006). There also appears to be a critical shortcoming in the way the mainstream CSR literature privileges corporate interests over sociological ones (Lee & Carroll, 2011) through an excessive emphasis on corporate social performance and the business case logic for CSR (Banerjee, 2005; Blowfield & Frynas, 2005; Brooks, 2010; Lee, 2008; Lee & Carroll, 2011). This 'outcomes' focus, particularly in economic and financial

terms, means that sociological ideas have had very little influence on the design and implementation of CSR policy and practice (Idemudia, 2007). For example, in Idemudia's (2010, p. 841) research into the CSR practices of multinational corporations (MNCs) in Nigeria, 'systemic deficiencies inherent within CSR initiatives at the level of design and implementation' were revealed. In particular, Idemudia (2008) identifies the tendency by oil MNCs to use CSR to meet business objectives, which results in limited contextual analysis of the development needs of the local communities, and also results in ongoing conflict. Newell (2005) also points to the way the strategic business ambitions of image enhancement and performance management are central concerns shaping CSR practice today.

In addition to the dominant business case logic setting the boundaries for CSR policy in practice, political-economic dynamics at the national and global level also play a role (Frynas, 2009a, 2009b; Gjølberg, 2009; Hiss, 2009; Idowu & Filho, 2008; Moon, 2007). It is considered that even the most enlightened examples of CSR initiatives can be constrained by structurally embedded limitations that exist within the wider political systems and mechanisms for societal governance (Frynas, 2008; Gulbrandsen & Moe, 2007). This led the former president of the World Bank to suggest 'perhaps a critical look at the system ... may reveal the limits of what corporations can and cannot do to address societal ills' (cited in Banerjee, 2007, p. 127). Consequently, we can conclude that CSR does not operate in a neutral terrain, but instead within a politically contested one (Idemudia, 2010), where 'structural biases' operate to define and in some cases, constrain CSR policy and practice (Blowfield & Frynas, 2005, p. 504).

By deconstructing the CSR construct, the processes, interactions, relationships, and the politics shrouding its very nature and core can be explored (Idemudia, 2008). This especially involves examining the relationships between major actors and institutions—corporations, governments, international institutions, NGOs and others, as well as the structural and discursive mechanisms of power that define these relations (Banerjee, 2007). Banerjee (2008) explains how these interact to produce a particular kind of political economy and define the rules of the game for participating (Banerjee, 2008). In the CSR literature, very few have undertaken a systematic and detailed analysis of power where power is central to the CSR construct (Banerjee, 2007, 2010; Gordon, 2005).

In this chapter, we are interested in the way the state, market and civil society function not as mutually exclusive, but as an interconnected, complex whole that defines and structures 'socio-political' morality (Banerjee, 2010). We use the phrase 'socio-political' morality because CSR emerges from within a contested 'socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs and definitions' (Suchman, 1995, p. 574) as well as various imaginations, discourses, techniques and practices (Rutherford, 2011). This combination of factors structures managerial rationality that influences how problems are defined and the formulation of solutions to those problems (Banerjee, 2010; Blowfield, 2005; Blowfield & Frynas, 2005). As Enoch (2007, p. 80) points out, 'to view the adoption of CSR as an individual management choice is to lose sight of the system in which it is meant to operate'. As the

mainstream CSR agenda fails to problematise these aspects in any great detail, we propose an alternative way to conceptualise and analyse CSR.

3.3   Defining CSR as a Relational Space

Over recent decades, scholarship has seen a persistent 'spatial turn' across various disciplines outside the business schools, especially Human Geography and Sociology. This refers to a view of space and place as continually unfolding and evolving as a consequence of, and a contributor to, the construction of social relations (Warf & Arias, 2008). It is therefore assumed that no social or cultural phenomenon—for instance, CSR policy and practice—can in fact be separated from its spatial context. As Warf and Arias (2008, p. 7) explain, 'the social, the temporal, the intellectual, and the personal are inescapably always and everywhere also the spatial'. Consequently, we are encouraged to think about space relationally, rather than in its earlier absolute and relative constructions (Jones, 2009, 2010).

These former perspectives treated space as fixed and immobile, an inactive 'container' for functions and events (Soja, 1989), while the relational view of space is thought to play a much greater role in human affairs and the sociology of modern life (Arias, 2010; Soja, 1996). Similarly, it is now acknowledged that global social phenomena such as globalisation, neoliberalism and 'New capitalism' as well as the persistent problems of inequality and poverty have led scholars to think more critically about space and spatiality (see, for example Ferguson and Gupta, 2002; Harvey, 2012; Sheppard, 2002). Space has since reached 'new levels of material and ideological significance' (Warf & Arias, 2008, p. 5) through the writings of prominent geographers such as Henri Lefebvre (1991), David Harvey (2006), Edward Soja (1996), and also to some extent Michel Foucault, albeit less visibly (Hubbard, Kitchin, & Valentine, 2004).

According to the relational view, space is conceived as a social product (produced and producer) 'continuously being made, unmade and remade' (Jones, 2010, p. 243) by heterogeneous arrangement of physical and social relations, patterns, structures and processes, be it political, legal, economic and/or social (Martin, McCann, & Purcell, 2003; Valentine, Holloway, & Clifford, 2009). While space is significant for being inherently political as well as geographical, physical and social (Butler, 2010), it is also a concept that 'defies easy summarising', as Amin (2007, p 103) demonstrates:

> These new spatialities have become decisive for the constitution of place. The varied processes of spatial stretching, inter-dependence and flow, combine in situ trajectories of socio-spatial evolution and change, to propose place—the city, region or rural area—as a site of intersection between network topologies and territorial legacies. The result is no simple displacement of the local by the global, of place by space, of history by simultaneity and flow, of small by big scale, or of the proximate by the remote. Instead, it is a subtle folding together of the distant and the proximate, the virtual and the material, presence and absence, flow and stasis, into a single ontological plane upon which location—a place on the map—has come to be relationally and topologically defined. Grasping the implications

of such a definition of place is not easy, given the grip of cartographic legacy measuring location on the basis of geographical distance and territorial jurisdiction.

We argue here that the theory underlining the relational view of space, representing unchartered territory within CSR theory, provides an alternative, more critical way of conceptualising the CSR construct. By acknowledging the importance of space and spatiality, we conceive CSR as a 'swirling, complex, contingent, ever-changing maelstrom of possibilities' (Warf & Arias, 2008, p. 8) influenced by a variety of dynamics, flows and politics (Massey, 1994, 2005). Similarly, with relational space being understood to anchor and foster domination, oppression, contestation, liberation, disintegration and other phenomena that define lived everyday experience (Kaspersen & Strandsbjerg, 2007; Ma, 2002), we can capture some key sociological aspects that plague CSR in policy and practice. In addition, as space is also a site of power, we can capture the way the lived CSR experience is defined and given shape though these power arrangements (Ma, 2002).

In order to contextualise and problematise the current system shaping CSR, the examination of experiences, perceptions, processes, relations, politics and the power asymmetries between and among these elements analytically requires 'touching down' on the ground in a Cartesian sense (Ettlinger, 2011). However, through this spatial lens, the territory in which CSR policy and practice are designed and implemented must be considered 'more than merely land, but a rendering of the emergent concept of "space" as a political category: owned, distributed, mapped, calculated, bordered, controlled' (Elden, 2007, p. 578). Therefore, CSR is not simply about things that exist and events that happen. It is more than some physical or absolute space, but in fact something far more complex (Arias, 2010).

3.4   The Governmentality Perspective

By changing the way we think about CSR from its being a simplistic business tool to representing a space of relational unfolding, we can also demonstrate the value of the governmentality perspective, first developed by Michel Foucault (2004) and subsequently shaped by leading scholars such as Miller and Rose (1990), Rose (1999), Rose and Miller (1992), Lemke (2001), Miller and Rose (2008) and Dean (2010), as an analytical instrument to interrogate the complex CSR terrain. We are not the first to consider governmentality a valuable sense-making tool for CSR 'in providing a critical understanding of how it works and what it does' (Vallentin & Murillo, 2009, p. 10). The governmentality perspective, along with Foucault's other key ideas about power, biopower/biopolitics and discourse have been applied in various ways to the field of CSR (see, for example Banerjee, 2007, 2008; Blowfield & Dolan, 2008; Charkiewicz, 2005; Shamir, 2008; Vallentin & Murillo, 2008, 2009, 2012).

Increasingly, Foucault's ideas have emerged as fruitful for 'unpacking the assumptions' that embed the ongoing conversation among the socio-political institutions of society (i.e.: academia, industry, non-government organisations, community and government) about CSR (Roseberry, 2007, p. 1). Following Foucault, a critique of CSR 'does not consist in saying that things aren't good the way they are'. Rather, and more importantly, 'it consists in seeing on just what type of assumptions, of familiar notions, of established and unexamined ways of thinking the accepted practices are based' (Foucault, 1994/2000, p. 456).

Conceptually, the governmentality perspective acknowledges the existence of 'a tricky combination' (Lemke, 2010, p. 34) of multiple causalities, webs of relations (Miller & Rose, 2008) and a 'coagulation of practices' (Valverde, 2008, p. 15) that shape the way things happen, the process of governing, and the conduct of people and territories (Hannah, 2000; McKee, 2008; Miller & Rose, 2008). This is aligned with a hegemonic political rationality, as Miller and Rose (2008, p. 40) explain:

> There [. . . is] a diversity of mechanisms, both direct and indirect, through which political authorities have sought to act upon entities and processes that make up a population in order to secure economic objectives, and the loose linkages between political ambitions, expert knowledge and the economic aspirations of individual firms.

Given its focus, the governmentality perspective brings with it a view about the political as an articulation of a very specific form of power that is embedded in liberal democracies and regimes of practice (Dean, 2010). This perspective captures a 'productive dimension of power' (Lemke, 2010) that is 'productive of meanings, of interventions, of entities, of processes, of objects, of written traces and of lives' (Miller & Rose, 2008, p. 9). Shown to exist within social relations and norms, articulated within discourses and institutions and distinctive forms of knowledge, this form of power is conceived as being diffuse, capillary and omnipresent (Foucault, 2004), enabling and constraining (McHoul & Grace, 1993, p. 34) and productive, facilitative and creative (McKee, 2009, p. 470). Similarly, relational space is 'inextricably linked to power: it limits and enables, it creates and hinders through precise spatial arrangements' (Kornberger & Clegg, 2003, p. 78) making governmentality and relational space compatible constructs for conceptualising and analysing CSR.

The 'art of government' is a situated activity that is taking place within a discursive field (Dean, 2010; Miller & Rose, 2008)—that is, it is mediated and continually constructed through particular discursive practices. Discourse is argued to inextricably permeate all aspects of social life (Punch, 2005), resembling a manifestation of diverse and hegemonic power relations and constructions of knowledge and ideology (Dean, 2010; Fairclough, 1989; Prince, Kearns, & Craig, 2006; Punch, 2005). Consequently, discourse cannot be seen as neutral, it must be viewed as having ideological effects through the way it represents the world and positions people (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997).

The 'analytics of government' that underpins governmentality thus forms a style of analysis that entails mapping the multiple aims of government and range of mechanisms (manoeuvres, visions, proposals, strategies, schemes, programmes and

technologies of government) (Rose & Miller, 2010). It also includes the embedded and taken-for-granted truths and stratums of knowledge and professional bodies of expertise that exist to shape conduct, behaviour, attitudes and opinions of individuals, organisations, societies and populations (Dean, 2010; Huxley, 2008; Rose, 1999; Rose, O'Malley, & Valverde, 2006). Its empirical power thus is a critical one, concerned not with explaining 'why' something happened, but 'how' people and places are governed, including the definition of problems, the objectives sought, the conflicts between them, the heterogeneity of techniques, strategies used and the solutions rendered (Rose, 1999). It then becomes an instrument for understanding the way CSR is constructed, disseminated and experienced by private and public organisations (Huxley, 2008).

3.5   Merging Governmentality and Spatiality

Rose (1999) argues that dominant political rationalities are diffused through spaces, institutions, discourses, knowledge, practices and programmes. This gives rise to issues, patterns and contradictions that become visible in 'spaces' and distinctive 'places' at various scales: national, sub-national and enclosed spaces (Rose, 1999; Stenson & Watt, 1999). Given this, among its various and diverse 'instrumentations', governmentality is also seen to give rise to 'governable spaces' (and 'governable subjects'), reflecting the objects of governance (Rose, 1999). Rose (1999) also suggests that the production of governable spaces involves 'marking out a territory in thought and inscribing it in the real, topographizing it, investing it with powers, bounding it by exclusions, defining who and what can rightfully enter' (Rose, 1999, p. 34). Thus, the spatial arrangement of territory, built forms (schools, factories, prisons, and offices) as well as projects to manage the population, their spatial arrangement and the qualities of their environment, are seen to be embedded with the aims and rationalities of government as 'truths' (Huxley, 2006, 2008). Thus, in the process of shaping collective and individual forces, governmentality becomes inherently spatial (Huxley, 2006, 2007, 2008; Raco, 2003).

Shamir (2008), Blowfield and Dolan (2008) as well as Vallentin and Murillo (2008, 2009, 2012) employing a governmentality perspective have all demonstrated that CSR is neither natural nor coherent, but shaped and formed by various mechanisms of human intervention at various stages and places underpinned by a prevailing political rationality (Johnston & Shearing, 2003; Miller & Rose, 2008). However, grounding our analysis of CSR in relational space draws further meaning into the way CSR is being re-imagined and re-constituted by way of spatialised forms and arrangements (Larner, 2008).

An engagement with space demonstrates attentiveness to the issues at the core of the political economy, that is, social relations, practices, institutions and power structures as well as associated modes of oppression and domination that define these arrangements (Gregory, Martin, & Smith, 1994, Warf & Arias, 2008). As Flyvbjerg and Richardson (1998, pp. 9–10) explain: 'spaces . . . may be constructed

in different ways by different people, through power struggles and conflicts of interest ... spaces are socially constructed, and ... many spaces may co-exist within the same physical space...suggest[ing] the need to analyse how discourses and strategies of inclusion and exclusion are connected with particular places'.

3.6 CSR as a Governable Space

By situating both the policy and practice of CSR within a relational space, we acknowledge the strategic, political and ideological character of CSR. We also acknowledge that the constitution of these forces will always emerge in different ways and in different places (Arias, 2010, p. 39) suggesting the need to be attentive to the construction, dissemination and experience of CSR in individual case examples. It is through this conceptualisation that the impact of capitalist expansion and the emergence of 'glocalisation' associated with transformations of the nation-state under neoliberal ruling mentalities (Swyngedouw, 2004) on CSR can be better accounted for, and understood.

These forces cannot be separated from the debate about CSR as they play a critical role in the way CSR is constructed, disseminated and experienced. For example, the 'moralisation of the corporation' (Shamir, 2004) came about at the same time as the 'economization of the political' (Shamir, 2008) which was accompanied by the process of 'decentering' (Brenner, 1999) or 'hollowing out' (Jessop, 2004) of the nation state. These 'neo-liberal ruling mentalities' of the North (Charkiewicz, 2005, p. 80) encompassing economic ideology and technologies of production and control (Mitchell, 2006) have been responsible for marked changes in the political and social landscape (Charkiewicz, 2005; Enoch, 2007).

This has led to a lively debate about the way market based economic rationality has now come to shape how authorities are organised, their policy positions, their corporate ethos and its consequences on the ground (e.g., Bourdieu, 1999; Harvey, 2005; Jayasuriya, 2005; Jessop, 1997; Lemke, 2001; Strange, 1996). The resulting 'public policy vacuum' has placed increased expectations on corporations to fill the social and environmental voids, which has provided a space for CSR discourse (Enoch, 2007; Shamir, 2004; Wright & Rwabizambuga, 2006). The resulting 'CSR space' has been occupied by indirect forms of regulation and a range of internal CSR discourses in the form of voluntary corporate codes of conduct statements, as well as strategic stakeholder partnerships (with for example, the World Wildlife Fund 'WWF') considered as adequate substitutes (Enoch, 2007; Shamir, 2004).

While corporations are emerging as 'global private authorities' capable of influencing and shaping socio-economic-politic spaces (Shamir, 2004), there is also a global capitalist accumulation agenda being aggressively pursued. This has the extraction and exchange of key resources (raw materials and energy) at its epicentre. With continued production imperatives, new territorialities are being opened up to industrial development with domestic and foreign capital at an ever

increasing rate (Harvey, 2006). CSR policy and practice thus emerges as a moral legitimisation tool, a source of modification, or 'a spatial fix' (see Harvey, 2006) for a system of capitalist relations of production that is premised on profit maximisation and a never ending cycle of growth (Enoch, 2007, Magdoff & Foster, 2012).

The literature also points to a systematic entrenchment of the profitability and competitiveness agenda that underpins the 'business case' permeating successfully through and within CSR discourse (e.g., Blowfield & Dolan, 2008; Shamir, 2008; Vallentin & Murillo, 2008, 2009, 2012). The 'profit promotion' (Amaeshi, Osuji, & Doh, 2009) message is being effectively legitimised by key knowledge disseminators as 'truths'; academic CSR theorists (particularly from American business schools) continue the cycle alongside experts, corporate executives and a range of non-government organisations (Shamir, 2004). Elkington (1997) who pioneered the 'greening of business' can be seen as—perhaps an unwitting—architect of this shift in CSR whose influential concept of the 'Triple Bottom Line' became a platform for non-financial reporting (see Global Reporting Initiative 2000–2006) (Charkiewicz, 2005). This shift meant that the discourse of CSR and sustainability was effectively moved from its roots in social justice to that of cost-benefit analysis and other such economic concepts (Charkiewicz, 2005). Thus, CSR was defined as a 'merger of profits and morals' (Charkiewicz, 2005, p. 78) or as 'converging values with value creation' (Shamir, 2008, p. 11). Shamir (2004) points to the 'dozens' of MaNGOs (market-orientated non-government organisations) operating in Europe and United States that promote this kind of CSR, which is easily amenable to business interests.

We have since witnessed a gradual and systematic framing of CSR as a business opportunity, resulting in the concept becoming embedded within a system that seeks to undermine its radical social transformative potential (Shamir, 2004). Björn Stigson, President of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), representing the 'foremost industry association promoting' (Enoch, 2007, p. 81) the 'economic arm' of CSR notes that: *A coherent 'CSR' strategy, based on integrity*, *sound values and a long-term approach can offer clear business benefits. These cover a better alignment of corporate goals with those of society; maintaining the company's reputation; securing its continued license to operate; and reducing its exposure to liabilities, risks and associated costs.* This dominant 'economic arm' of CSR also extends to the belief that economic development is in its own right a form of social responsibility (Blowfield, 2005), because it provides 'sustainable livelihoods' for local communities (Enoch, 2007). This perspective also underpins the WBCSD's justification that 'sustainable development is good for business and business is good for sustainable development' (cited in Shamir, 2010, p. 11). Business development opportunities are then closely interrelated with the goal of poverty alleviation, both of which are intertwined within CSR policies and practices (Fox, 2004). In short, all matters social and environmental are thus prone to fall within the market domain under the umbrella of a narrowly constructed brand of CSR and become subject to a dominant economic rationality. As such, calls once made for value changes at the firm level have effectively been replaced by the notion that enlightened, economic self-interest serves the common good. It is through the governmentality perspective and the theory of spatiality that the nature,

and impact of these dominant CSR constructions can be better conceptualised and understood. These lenses allow for a more realistic assessment of the potential and pitfalls of CSR, which mainstream theory today does not yet fully capture and articulate.

3.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, we drew attention to some leading contributors of the critical research agenda for CSR (e.g., Banerjee, 2007, 2008, 2010; Blowfield & Frynas, 2005; Vallentin & Murillo, 2008, 2009, 2012). The critical perspective suggests that CSR is not only shaped by the discretion of managers, it is also embedded in spatial, social and political contexts, with consequent interests and implications (Amaeshi & Amao, 2009; Ungericht & Weiskopf, 2007). In doing so, this perspective shifts CSR, both its policy and practice, from a simple business phenomenon to one situated within an entanglement of forces, subject to power relations and political processes.

To better account for this complexity of CSR, we have re-conceptualised CSR using the theory of spatiality and in particular situated CSR within a relational space. We argued that this perspective can provide the foundations for a critical analysis. Along with other CSR scholars, we indicated how a governmentality perspective can be a powerful instrument for deconstructing the CSR construct. At the same time, however, we suggest that because governmentality also gives way to governable spaces, spatiality must sit alongside governmentality perspectives for a more complete analysis of the way CSR is actualised on the ground.

We also pointed to the way global forces such as globalization, neoliberalism and late capitalism inevitably shape locally-based constructions, disseminations and experiences of CSR. For future research, we suggest examining the way these dominant constructions reveal themselves in local based constructions, either at the national policy or project level.

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