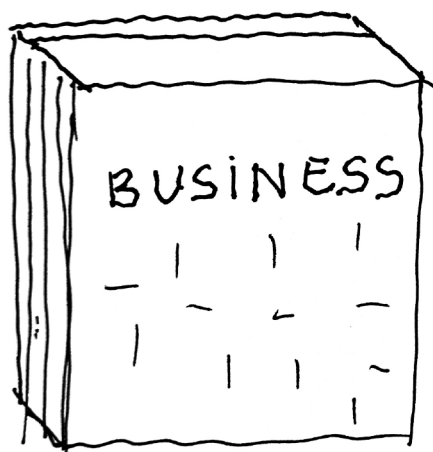


BUSINESS PERSPECTIVES ON CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITY FOR HUMAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

13 — 14 MARCH — 2025

SNSPA , 2 Emanoil Bacaloglu St.

Bucharest



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This conference examines how different business groups and associations from different world regions, political cultures, economic sectors, and with different sizes of capital have engaged with, supported or undermined concrete responsibility for human rights violations and ecological degradation, since the rise of neoliberalism in the 1970s. While providing critical analysis of transnational corporations' extractivist behaviours, we also aim to identify alternative forms of economic production with less devastating consequences for humans, non-humans and the nature: from traditional business cooperatives (regrouped, for instance, in the International Cooperative Alliance), to digital platform cooperatives challenging the growth imperative models of Big Tech corporations, to small ecological businesses and Indigenous associative projects.

- How do different business groups and associations shape or react to corporate accountability initiatives, including the negotiation of international and regional treaties, national and transnational litigations, due diligence laws, boycotts, divestment campaigns etc.? And what social, cultural, political, economic, ecological, legal and ethical ideas underpin such reactions?
- What methods of compliance or counterattack do businesses employ to respond to civil society organizations' demands for corporate accountability? How do they mitigate the impact of such campaigns, through what methods, and toward what ends?
- What alternative business models - more friendly to human rights and the environment – have emerged in the past three decades, and who was at the lead of these initiatives? What is the role of grassroots and Indigenous economic actors in developing these alternative models? How are these models perceived by multinational corporations and what potential do they have to reform or alter the dominant neoliberal discourse?

THURSDAY 13.03.2025

9:15 — 9:30

INTRODUCTION

RALUCA GROSESCU (SNSPA, Bucharest)

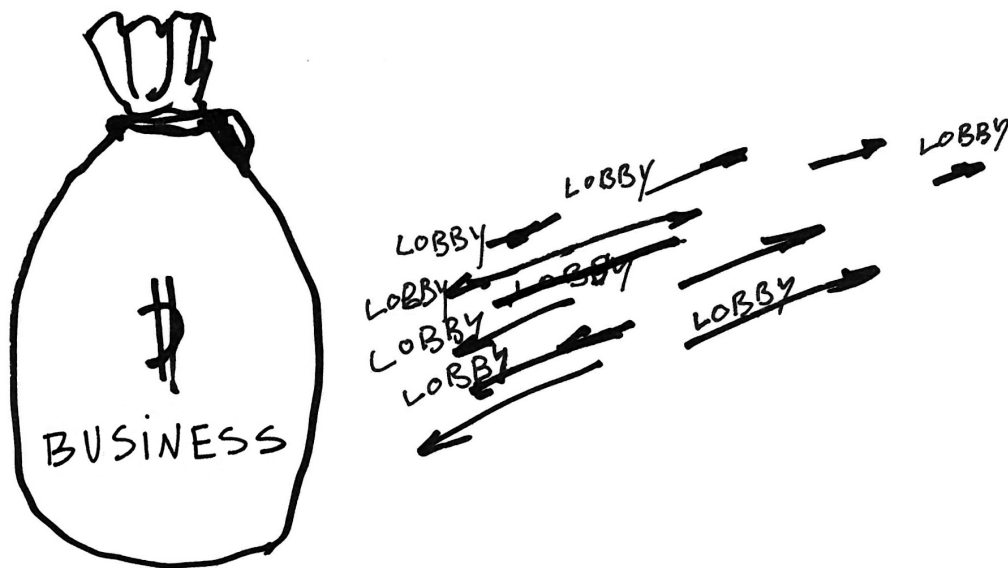
9.30 — 11.00

BUSINESS RESISTANCE TO CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITY

Discussant — ALMUT SCHILLING-VACAFLOR

(Friedrich-Alexander-University Erlangen-Nuremberg)

- ANDRU CHIOREAN (SNSPA, Bucharest), *Safeguarding Neoliberal Global Governance: Tactics, Collaboration, and Mobilisation of Transnational Business Advocacy*
- BEGUM KILIMCIOGLU (University of Antwerp), *The 'Weaponization' of the Legal System: The Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation Suits*
- RALUCA GROSESCU (SNSPA, Bucharest), *Expanding Extractivism, Avoiding Accountability: Transnational Business Alliances in post-1996 Guatemala*



11:00 — 11:30

COFFEE BREAK

11:30 — 13:00

BUSINESS RESPONSES TO CRIMINAL AND CIVIL LITIGATIONS

Discussant — JOHANNA HOEKSTRA, (Edinburgh University)

- TIMOTHY WEBSTER (Western New England University), *Settling Scores: Forced Labor, Memory, and World War II Reparations in Contemporary East Asia*
- ISABEL SCHOULTZ (Lund University), *Corporate Defence Strategies when Accused of Complicity in War Crimes – the Lundin Case*
- ELIN JÖNSSON (Stockholm University), SHAI MULINARI (Lund University) and ISABEL SCHOULTZ (Lund University), *Corporate Responses to Complaints within the UK Pharmaceutical Industry Self-Regulation*

13:00 — 14:30

LUNCH

14.30 — 16.00

WHEN AND WHY DO BUSINESSES COMPLY WITH CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITY? (I)

Discussant — FILIPE DOS REIS (University of Groningen)

- HENRY RAMMELT (SNSPA, Bucharest), *Corporate Reactions to Consumer Activism: Boycotts and Divestment Campaigns in Global Perspective*
- VICTORIA BASUALDO (CONICET-FLACSO, Argentina / SNSPA, Bucharest), *Transnational Corporations' Accountability for Human Rights Violations from a Historical and Geopolitical Perspective. The Cases of Ford, Mercedes-Benz and Volkswagen*
- BRETTON J. MCEVOY (University of Bayreuth), *(Dis)Arming Responsibility: Historicizing the Legitimization Strategies of European Arms Manufacturers Across (Post)Apartheid South Africa*

16:00 — 16:30

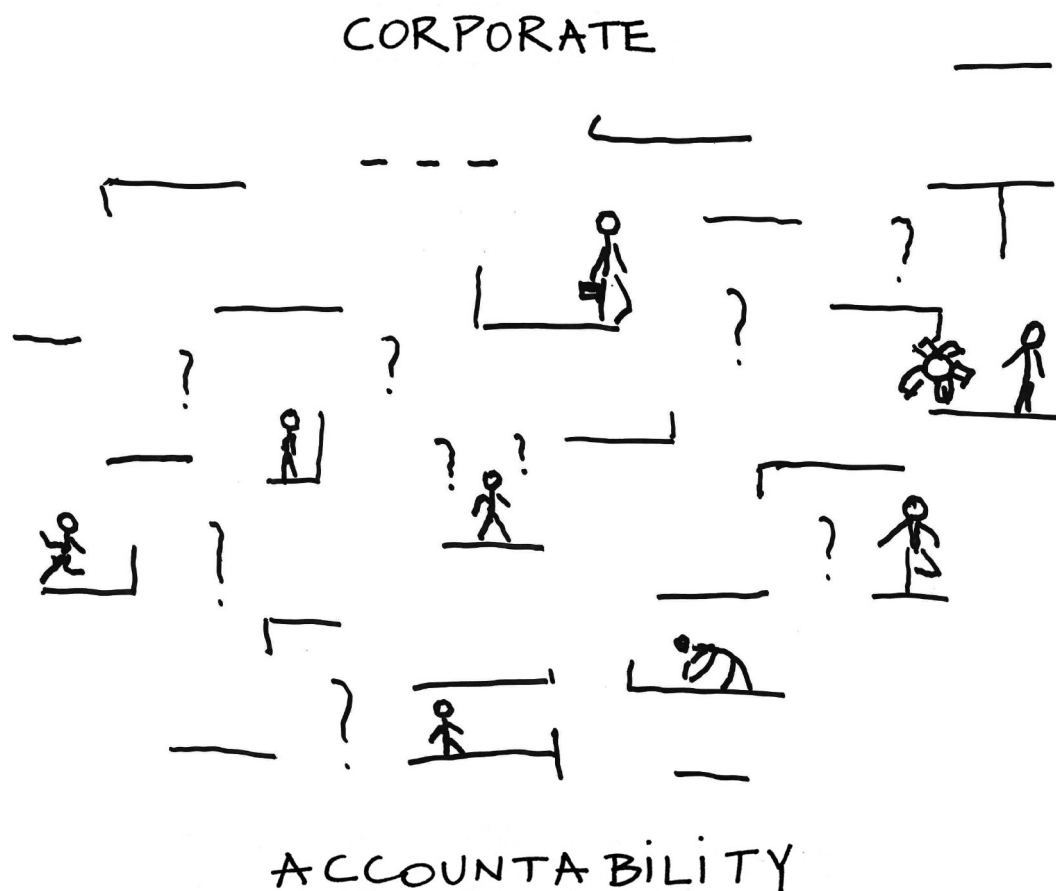
COFFEE BREAK

16.30 — 18.00

WHEN AND WHY DO BUSINESSES COMPLY WITH CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITY? (II)

Discussant — JOHN DALE, (George Mason University)

- AHMED ELKHATABI, (Moulay Ismail University, Meknès), *The Accountability of Watermelon Investors in Water Scarcity: The Case of Draa Oasis in Morocco*
- SHUVRA DEY (University of Erlangen-Nuremberg), *Franchisors' Perspectives on Human Rights Impacts and Responsibilities under Business and Human Rights*
- ANDREI CRĂCIUN (SNSPA), *Pathways to Energy Democracy: The Rise of Energy Communities in Romania & Centralized Energy Landscape*



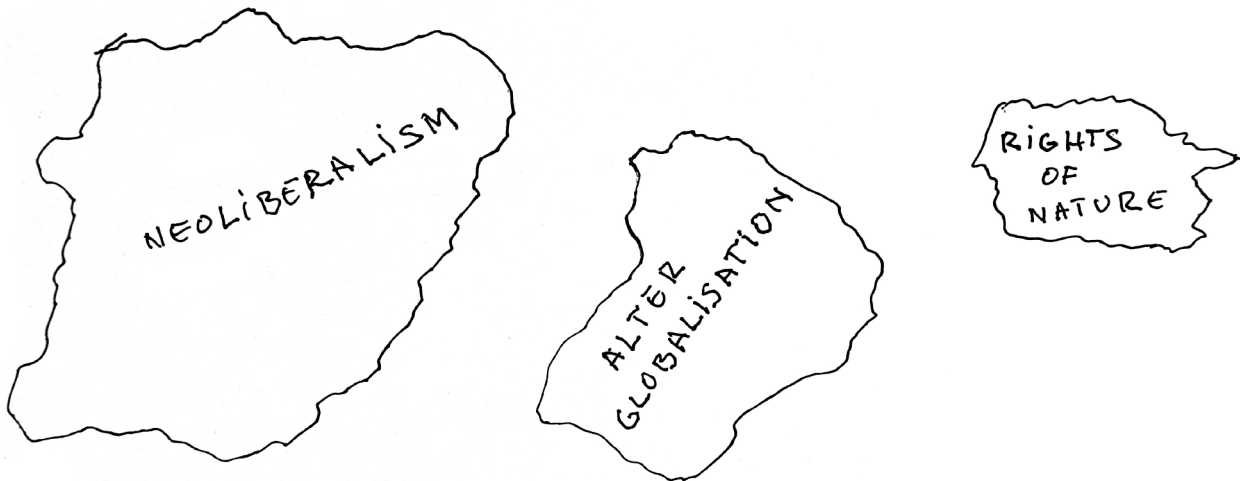
FRIDAY 14.03.2025

9.00 — 11.00

ALTERNATIVE ECONOMIES AND CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITY FROM BELOW

Discussant — IRINA VELICU (Coimbra University)

- BOAVENTURA MONJANE (Cape Town University), *Reclaiming Accountability and Building Alternatives: Agrarian Social Movements in Southern Africa and the Challenge to Corporate Power in Food and Agriculture Systems*
- JOHN DALE (George Mason University), *Collective Action and Cultural Refraction in Bristol Bay: Mapping Diverse Business Perspectives on Corporate Accountability, Human Rights, and the Rights of Nature*
- DHRUV DEEPAK (George Mason University), *Democratizing Digital Futures: Community-Led Initiatives as Models of Corporate Accountability in the Platform Economy*



11.00 — 11.30

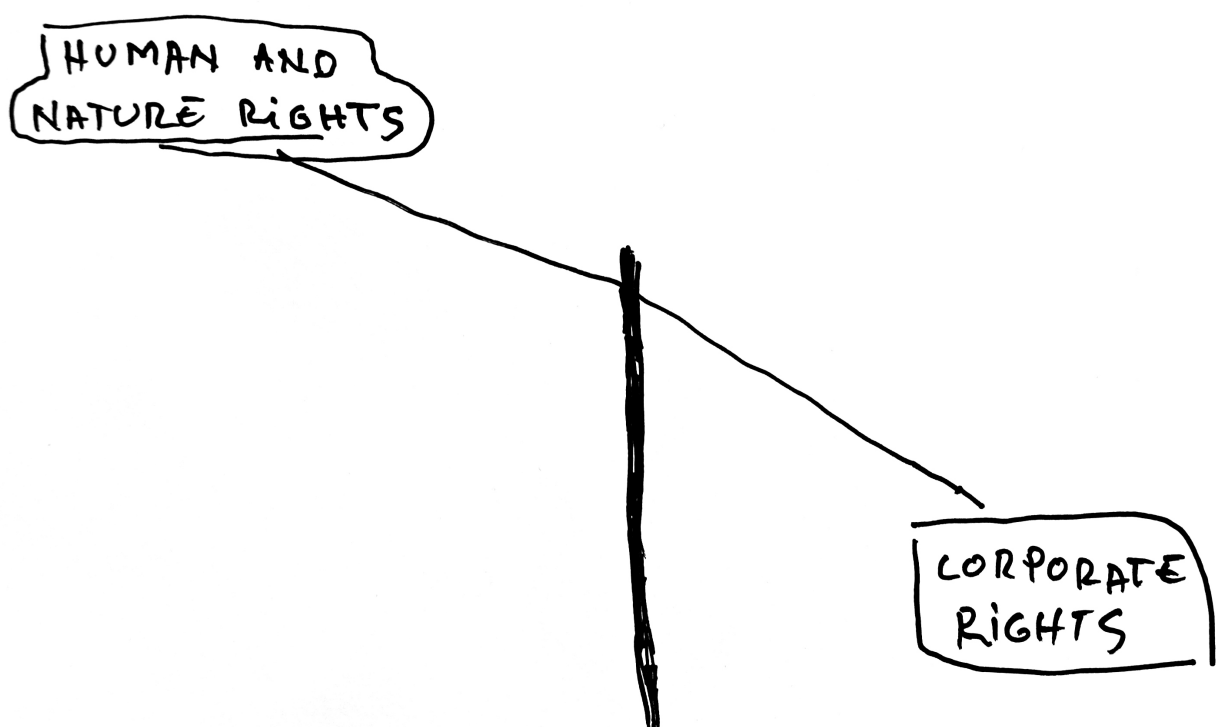
COFFEE BREAK

11.30 — 13.30

BUSINESS ACTORS & DUE DILIGENCE LAWS IN EUROPE

Discussant — ARPAD TODOR (SNSPA, Bucharest)

- MARIA-THERESE GUSTAFSSON (Stockholm University) and ALMUT SCHILLING-VACAFLO (Friedrich-Alexander-University Erlangen-Nuremberg), *Can Human Rights and Environmental Due Diligence Mitigate Trade-Offs in Critical Raw Material Extraction?*
- CAROLINE OMARI LICHUMA (Friedrich-Alexander-University Erlangen-Nuremberg), *The Lieferkettengesetz (LkSG) Through the Lens of Sense-Making: Critically Analysis of How German Companies Translate Abstract Human Rights Due Diligence (HRDD) Norms Into a Corporate Reality*
- ANNIKA VAN BAAR (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam), *Business Perspectives on Due Diligence Laws in the Netherlands*
- JOHANNA COENEN (Stockholm University), MARIA-THERESE GUSTAFSSON (Stockholm University), ALMUT SCHILLING-VACAFLO (Friedrich-Alexander-University Erlangen-Nuremberg), *Private Governance Responses to Public Supply Chain Regulations: The Case of Corporate Grievance Mechanisms*



The workshop is part of the ERC-Consolidator project Transnational Advocacy Networks and Corporate Accountability for Major International Crimes. This project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (grant agreement No. 101002993 — CORPACCOUNT). The project is hosted by the National University of Political Science and Public Administration, Bucharest.

REGISTRATION

To register for the event, please write to MĂRIUCA PETRE at corpaccount@politice.ro by 10.03.2025 at the latest.

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National University of Political Studies and Public Administration



European Research Council
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