

## OPINION

*by*

**Valentina Angelova Dramalieva, Doctor of Philosophy, Professor**  
Philosophy and Ethics Section, Department of Political Economy, UNWE,  
Member of Scientific Jury – Faculty Council Decision of FJMC: 02/31.10.2019  
and Order of the Rector of SU: ПД 38 - 649/13.11.2019

*concerning*

a Dissertation for Awarding a **Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)** Educational and  
Scientific Degree in Professional Field **3.5. Public Communications and  
Information Sciences (Media and Communications – *Public Relations*)**  
*on the topic:*

**“CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR)  
IN THE MISSION, VISION AND PRACTICES  
OF BUSINESS ORGANISATIONS”,**

Author: **Plamen Stoilov Bobokov**, Doctoral Student on Freelance Training,  
Department of Communication, Public Relations and Advertisement,  
Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication,  
Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”

### *General idea and formal criteria for dissertation*

At the first meeting of the Scientific Jury (19.11.2019) I received in two copies - electronic and paper - a Dissertation and an Abstract in Bulgarian, as well as an Abstract in English (electronic only). Along with that I received electronically important reference documents: CV – EU format in Bulgarian, CV – business format in English, NCID statement of compliance with the minimum requirements for a Ph.D., four publications on the subject of the dissertation, four official notes from publishers for accepted publications. I also received a Declaration of Authorship, signed personally by the author and by the scientific adviser - Assoc. Prof., D-r Svetoslava Kovacheva. In preparing my opinion, I have read all of the above materials.

The dissertation presented to me for an opinion contains 317 pages and is structured in: an introduction (15 p.), three chapters (a total of 280 p.), a conclusion (6 p.), and a bibliography (17 p.). The bibliography includes 270 sources with cited authors in Bulgarian, Russian and English, as well as 94 sources without cited authors, documents, etc. The literature is described uniformly and in a transparent manner. 13

figures (tables) were also used. This volume, structure and referenced sources meet the formal criteria for a doctoral dissertation, and even exceed them.

The PhD candidate Plamen Bobokov has prepared also an Abstract in Bulgarian (40 p.), as well as in English (37 p.). I believe that the Abstract adequately presents the dissertation and supports the orientation in the text and in the topic, and along with that it contains other elements that are important for the doctoral defense. What is missing for easier handling of the Abstract is a *Table of Contents*.

The Abstract summarizes the basic ideas of the dissertation and contains three parts: I. General Characteristics of the Dissertation; II. Summary of Dissertation Work; III. Conclusion. The first part presents the goals, tasks, object and subject of the research, the relevance and elaboration of the topic, the methods used, the structure of the dissertation, as well as its contents. In the second part, the content is summarized by chapters. The conclusion summarizes the findings and highlights how the objectives and tasks are achieved.

At the end of the Abstract the author has emphasized the contribution points of the dissertation - a total of five, as well as a list of his publications on the subject - a total of four. All four publications are in print and are due to be published in authoritative editions - *Yearbook of FJMC*, vol.26, 2019; *Philosophical Alternatives* magazine; *Collection of Scientific Reports*. One of these forthcoming publications has been mentioned twice - as a part of a Collection and as a report on International Round Table. The publication activity shows the author's serious and deep interest in the topic of the dissertation, as well as his willingness to share scientific views and practical experience in the public space.

***The topic of the dissertation*** touches on one very important and especially relevant aspect of business - its social responsibility. For a long time now, both in theory and in practice, it has not been argued whether a business has such a responsibility, but rather is discussed in what way this responsibility expresses itself and how far its borders extend. The concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has today become a successful and mutually acceptable model of the understanding concerning the social openness of business. It is used purposefully by both - theorists and managers.

Therefore, the author's choice to analyze the CSR phenomenon deserves congratulations. I must emphasize that this phenomenon is analyzed not only in theory but also in the real business practice, which is an additional advantage. On the one hand, the author views CSR as a strategic tool that supports both business and society as a whole, sustainable development and all important social systems - education, health care, science. On the other hand, he accepts CSR as a dynamically evolving theoretical and practical system in which processes undergo rapid and profound development and which are the subject of growing public interest.

I think that the topic chosen is appropriate for a PhD thesis. It is interesting and useful both with its practical orientation and with its attempt to fill some of the gaps in the research of the issue in our country. At the same time, this topic provides an excellent opportunity for the author to fully demonstrate his research potential, which is important for any scientific work.

*The methodology used in the dissertation* is relevant to the topic. It is suitable for achieving the objectives which the author sets - first, to examine CSR in the context of the philosophy of "doing business", and second, to review the different types of institutional frameworks in which CSR is defined and acts as a set of regulations and self-regulations. At the same time, the methodology enables him to reveal his research skills and competences, as well as to develop the analysis in depth. The use of case studies, which represent the principles and practices of CSR strategies and tactics of multinational companies, is also impressive. The author also does his own empirical research to confirm some conclusions. Thus, combining the relevance of the topic with the application of modern research approaches and methods is a reliable prerequisite for a successful research, as actually it is demonstrated in the thesis.

*The structure of the dissertation* - three chapters and a conclusion - meets the "classic" requirements for a scientific dissertation research. The first chapter is a thorough theoretical overview of CSR, the second chapter presents the development of the concept of CSR, and the third - examines CSR in the vision, mission and practices of multinational companies (on the example of BMW South Africa, Shell Nigeria, Shell Petroleum Development, Prista Oil Group).

I believe that structuring is fully relevant to the theme, goals and objectives, and that the sources used are presented correctly. The individual parts are balanced both with each other and with respect to the whole thesis. The clear, uniform numbering of the individual chapters and their parts and sub-parts - both in the text and in the table of contents - contributes to a better perception and logical tracing of the theses and arguments, and at the same time facilitates the reader to refer to the text and to handle it.

*The hypotheses and arguments in the dissertation* are well formulated and skilfully protected with adequate evidence. The conclusion shows that the goals and objectives originally set were achieved.

*Contributions of the dissertation.* I agree with Plamen Bobokov's own assessment of the contributions to the scientific-theoretical, methodological and scientific-applied plan, which he cited as basic for his dissertation in the Abstract (pp. 38-39). There are a total of five contributions that are well structured and rationalized, so I will not mention or comment them.

I will highlight some special merit of the dissertation:

1. Topical topic.
2. Theoretical - applied character.
3. Good balance in the study of both theory and practice; research skills demonstrated in both problem fields.
4. An interdisciplinary approach to the problems analyzed.
5. Combination and adequacy of the methods used.
6. Accurate argumentation and reasoned conclusions.
7. Clear language, good style and layout.
8. Extensive review of the literature on the subject and its intelligent use in support of certain topics.

I am convinced that the dissertation has all the merits of being defended publicly by Plamen Bobokov and he will be able to present and justify this interesting and important topic because he has delved deep into it. This scientific paper shows his ability to work independently and purposefully in the study and understanding of theory and empirics, to interpret various sources - scientific publications and documents (corporate and legal), to analyze and systematize thoroughly.

All the dissertation, the conclusions and the mentioned contributions show that Mr. Plamen Bobokov is a pleasant exception to the widespread maxim that one cannot be both a good theoretician and a good practitioner in business at the same time. Obviously this maxim is outdated or it is simply a fallacy.

*In conclusion, I will point out that I positively appreciate the choice of the topic and the efforts made both - in the study and comprehension of the literature on the subject, and in the author's observations, experiences, analyzes, interpretations, and conclusions, as well as the overall systematization and design of the dissertation. Along with this, the author has prepared a sufficient number of scientific publications on the subject, which fully meets the minimum requirements of NCID for a “doctor” (PhD).*

*On these grounds I recommend the respected Scientific Jury to award a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) educational and scientific degree in professional field 3.5. Public Communications and Information Sciences (Media and Communications – Public Relations) to Plamen Bobokov.*

01.12.2019

Sofia

Signature: .....

(Prof. V. Dramalieva, PhD)