

A New Sense of CSR in the Age of Ecological and Migration Crisis

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Abstract

Corporate Social Responsibility is an international self-regulation on the production side of the economic activities of large companies/monopolies at the national and international level that has much in common with ethic codes (as it is related to production and consumer rights). The principal claim against the CSR is to use it as a PR tool for improving the corporate image. Against the backdrop of the ecological crisis of the world triggered by the contradiction between the capital and nature and mass migration from underdeveloped countries to the industrially developed ones, the role of CSR should be reconsidered and reassessed. This paper argues that the Marxist semiotic discourse analysis could give the reliable terms to explain the CSR's new meaning in the contemporary world. After the 1970 Washington Consensus (Dezelay, 1998), IMF made an attempt to introduce the neoliberal approach to New Public Management (NPM) in South America. The devastating consequences are even accepted by World Bank and IMF (Stiglitz, 2002). The new Good Governance approach was created and offered by international organizations such as the IMF, the World Bank, the UN and the EU to promote local, sustainable, eco-friendly development and

participative democracy and social welfare with active citizenship. The aim of the study is to show that the classical claim about the CSR could be revisited and seen as an insufficient theoretical framework to explain the complex situation. Marxist semiotic discourse analysis provides a rich theoretical framework to figure out the role and position of CSR theory and practices in the new state of affairs. The terms primitive capital accumulation as the source of migration flux from the underdeveloped countries to the industrially developed ones, the contradiction between capital and nature as the source of the ecological crisis, have been introduced for the first time within this theoretical framework in an attempt to explain the CSR's new meaning.

Keywords: Semiotics, ecology, backward countries, migration, good governance.

JEL: M1, M14

1. Introduction

Corporate Social Responsibility is an international self-regulation on the production side of the economic activities of large companies/monopolies at the national and international level that has much in common with ethic codes (as it is related to production and consumer rights). The principal claim against the CSR is to use it as a PR tool for improving the corporate image. Against the backdrop of the ecological crisis of the world triggered by the contradiction between the capital and nature and mass migration from underdeveloped countries to

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the industrially developed ones the role of CSR should be reconsidered and reassessed. This paper argues that the Marxist semiotic discourse analysis could give the reliable terms to explain the CSR's new meaning in the contemporary world. After the 1970 Washington Consensus (Dezelay,1998), there was an attempt on the part of the IMF to apply the neoliberal approach of New Public Management (NPM) to South America. The devastating consequences are even admitted by the World Bank and IMF (Stiglitz, 2002). The new approach of Good Governance was developed and offered by international organizations like IMF, World Bank, UN and EU to promote local, sustainable, eco-friendly development and participative democracy and social welfare with active citizenship.

2. Objectives

The aim of the study is to show that the classical principal claim about CSR could be evaluated as an insufficient theoretical frame to explain the complex situation. Marxist semiotic discourse analysis provides a rich theoretical framework to identify the position of CSR theory and practices in the new state of affairs. The terms primitive capital accumulation as the source of migration flux from the underdeveloped to the industrially developed countries and the contradiction between capital and nature as the source of ecological crisis have been offered for first time in this theoretical framework to explain the CSR's new meaning.

3. Material and methods

This study is based on literature review with regard to the creation of the theoretical basis. The evolution of CSR definitions, models, tools, approaches and methodologies in history have been examined in the key academic research like Carroll's and Epstein's. The method is the classical Marxist semiotic discourse analysis

of Raymond Williams. In particular, the classic Marxist political economy feeds the analysis (Williams,1977). Within this paradigm, after primitive communal societies, each societies' economic activities are established in three columns: Production, change, distribution. Political economy is the science of studying the societies' production, change and distribution relationships (Engels, Anti-Dübing). Marxist political economy was established on the basis of historical materialism, which in turn was based on dialectical materialism. Infrastructure and superstructure are two key terms of the concept the reproduction of the real world in mind as well (Marx, 1973). Heterodox Marxist approaches like Ernest Mandel (Mandel, 1995) and Samir Amin (Amin, 1973) creates their own political economy point of views with their original though unjustified claims. The study uses the Orthodox political economy approach.

4. Literature review

As an international self-regulation concept/practice, CSR is a sign of respect for nature by the large companies/national and international monopolies that benefit from it with regard to the production process. Coca Cola's water protection CSR campaigns and Nestle's rainforest protection CSR campaigns are prominent examples at the international level. Coca-Cola uses a large amount of water source for the production process as Nestles consumes palm oil. The campaigns have been criticized as insufficient/imaginative PR campaigns to improve the corporate image. In a similar vein, Nike's ethics code was not consistently implemented in Vietnam because of the ban of children workers.

4.a Evolution of measuring tools, methodologies, and approaches on CSR

A starting point of the literature review is Carroll's three papers published between 1991 and 2016. According to Carroll in 1991,

CSR is just a moral management issue (Carroll, 1991, pp. 39 – 47). The concepts of sustainability or raw material supply guarantee were absent from the research. All that Carroll did was to create a Maslow Pyramid that was an imitation of the CSR pyramid. According to this piece of research, ecology means only the respect for the laws of nature protection, which is an environment protectionism in general. The research could be evaluated as archaic. In 1999, Carroll once again revisited the CSR concept. This time he resumes the evolution history of CSR from 1950 to the late 1990s. However, even in this research, sustainability, raw material supply guarantee question and ecology are of no relevance for him (Carroll, 1999). Twenty-five years after the first article about Carroll Pyramid, he comes back to the model. This time he uses the term sustainability but he just recognizes sustainability as an economic responsibility of CSR without touching the ecological crisis, the raw material supply risks and migration crisis (Carroll, 2015).

Kaur and Agrawal's approach to CSR as a brand management or image making tool (Kaur, Agrawal, 2011). Kiran et Sharma share this approach. Kiran and Sharma underline the ecological factor raw material supply, though they ultimately consider the topic as a corporate image tool as well (Kiran, Sharma, 2011).

Astara's study focuses on the impact of CSR as a marketing tool via the company's stock exchange value records (Astara, 2015). In Astara's study with a view to the use of CSR campaign as a marketing tool, the main target group is the conscious consumer from developed countries. Astara's study does not examine the ecological and migration crises, nor does it consider the topics of raw material procurement.

Clarkson offers an analysis of the diverse repertoire of the CSR metrics, indicators,

frames and methods (Clarkson, Max, 1995). In the study CSR is described basically as a management/leadership tool, where the main motivation of the CSR is ethical in nature, and the main issue at stake with regard to the CSR is measurability: How to measure the impact and efficacy of CSR applications. Clarkson introduces a rich and diverse collection of frames and tools. Clarkson's study does not go into detail about the ecological and migration crises, nor does it touch upon the topics of raw material procurement.

Kakabadze discusses CSR within the context of the following terms: Leadership, CSI (Corporate Social Initiatives), TQM (Total Quality Management), Ethic, Stakeholder Management and win-win game/synergy (Kakabadze, Rauzel, Lee-Davies, 2005). In the study the main approach to CSR is the stakeholder approach. Criticism of the approach is limited to the ethical basis. The key point of the stakeholder approach is described as the value-creating capacity in synergy in win-win game concept. CSR is discussed as Stakeholder Management with regard to the different descriptions of stakeholders. According to Kakabadze, the key determinant of the stakeholder approach is leadership. Kakabadze's study does not go into detail about the ecological and migration crises, nor does it touch upon the topics of raw material procurement. It discusses the subject in classical terms and concepts. This study has provided the basis for the social and environmental responsibilities theory. However, Kakabadze does not identify any connections between environmental responsibilities and raw material procurement or social responsibilities and migration.

Nasrullah's study also discusses the CSR in a diverse but too abstract and inefficient theoretical framework (Nasrullah, Rahim, 2013). From societal to stakeholder approaches, the study offers an overview

of the diverse but abstract repertoire of the classical terms and concepts of CSR. Nasrullah's study makes no mention of the ecological or migration crises, not does it consider any aspects of the problem of raw material procurement.

According to Martinez, CSR could be evaluated only as a communication tool for expectation management of stakeholders (Martinez, Fernández, Fernández, 2016, P.8). According to the researcher, the environmental crisis could be seen simply as a competitive disadvantage. The rich literature review of Martinez exposes the fact that CSR is not only criticized as a PR tool but also as a fiscal abuse tool and "an opportunistic strategy in the finance landscape" (Martinez, Fernández, Fernández, 2015, P.8). Martinez's study discusses neither the migration question nor raw material procurement, yet he raises questions pertaining to environmental issues as well as to those of social inequalities, poverty, hunger, discrimination and business consolidation by stakeholder relations rather than raw material supply chain guarantees by CSR. After his detailed summary of the CSR evolution, the researcher discusses the theoretical concepts such as public opinion, the expectation of stakeholders, media, communication and EU decisions. Within such an inadequate theoretical framework, Martinez arrives at an unclear result. He states that there is no effective methodological shortcut to measure the impact of CSR and clear single framework to describe CSR (Martinez, Fernández, Fernández, 2015, P.13).

States/governments/supranational organizations could be discussed in the context of the transfer their responsibility to global corporations in CSR under Martinez's analysis. To guarantee the raw material supply is not the responsibility of the states or governments but to protect nature as the sustainable source of the raw material

could be evaluated as the responsibility of the States/ governments/ Supranational Organizations like EU.

Doh and Guay's approach could be evaluated as an activism-based CSR approach (Doh, Guay, 2006). The link of the approach with the reality of capitalist production and its crisis and the transformations could not be seen.

Dahlsrud's content analysis exposes the two dimensions of CSR that became evident back in 2008: Environmental and Social (Dahlsrud, 2008). He found as a third dimension voluntarism that could be interpreted as a reference of self-regulation tool character of CSR for global corporations.

After the political speech of Fidel Castro in 1992 about the global environmental problems of sustainability (Castro, 1993), the book of Epstein could be seen as a supportive response to USA's academic-professional works (Epstein, 1996). Epstein describes the sustainability along the three lines: Social, environmental and financial. Even in Epstein's academic works, the signs of confusion about the description of the CSR transpire: "Sustainability cannot be managed as just a public relations strategy to pacify stakeholder concerns." Epstein, 2017, p.3). In his view in 2017 CSR still remains a tool of PR for pacifying the stakeholders. On the other hand, Epstein sees CSR as a raw material supply guarantee for the global companies that functions as a financial guarantee and a source for competitive advantage (Epstein, 2008, 2014, 2017). By Epstein, CSR is not a charity or non-strategical function of the corporation, it concerns the sustainability, especially raw-material and financial sustainability, that is why "sustainability must be an integral component of corporate strategy" (Enpstein, 2017, P.31). The mention of the communicative value of the CSR in Epstein's research at large concerns the communication of sustainability

with stakeholders (Epstein, 2017, P.30). The leadership and the corporate cultural changing are the musts for organizational changing in management. Epstein touches upon the issues of *leadership* and *corporate culture* in CSR/sustainability topic in this context. In his opinion, CSR and sustainability are the same concepts. On the other hand, the mention of community relations/management, PR, Philanthropy and the collaborations with NGOs in CSR context could be regarded as the traces of the confusion about the evaluation of CSR context. While he writes that CSR strategies can serve as examples for the middle and small companies as well, for the three editions of the book (Epstein, 2008, 2017, Epstein, Buhovac, 2014) starts with the introduction "Improving sustainability and financial performance in global corporations". It could be seen as a principal point that CSR is a tool for global corporations. Epstein adds the special subhead of "Leadership and Global Climate Change" in the 2014 edition of the book (Epstein, Buhovac, 2014, p.49). It shows that the role of climate change in CSR theory of Epstein. For five research pieces of Epstein that have been included in the study for literature review from 1996 to 2017 his main idea is that CSR is a strategic component to guarantee the social, environmental and financial sustainability of the global companies to create competitive advantage. In his view the impact of CSR strategies is measurable. Throughout his research, he notes the option for a mass migration crisis in the social risk line of CSR. This could be regarded as a weakness of the Epstein's research. Furthermore, in some cases, Epstein's works can be seen as confusing the general eco-friendly approach and specific raw-material supply guarantee-based CSR approach. Epstein discusses the decentralization of sustainability in the outsourcing process. According to Mintzberg,

only the secondary activities of a corporation might be outsourced (Mintzberg, 1987). The main activity (core activity) is production, whereas secondary activities in Mintzberg's view are IT and logistics. Outsourcing is seen as indirectly dependent on the raw material consumption/supply. In conclusion, Epstein gives a rich arsenal of tools, methodologies, and approaches for measuring an effective CSR strategy's impact of global corporations.

4.b What is not Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

An important theoretical point to describe is what Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is. To avoid the historical confusion it is important to describe what CSR is not. CSR is not a:

- PR Tool
- Philanthropy
- Community Management tool
- pacification/ loyalty tool for conscious consumers
- Branding/marketing/image making tool

4.c Good Governance and Sustainable Develop Welfare Societies: Human Development

Acemoğlu and Robinson's study shows that nowadays the innovation, investment, and productive labor as the key factors of economic development need to be regarded as basic legal, social and cultural universal values (Acemoğlu, Robinson, 2012). The countries without democracy, the protection of human rights and a constitutional state under universal values are not able to attract foreign investment and to preserve their qualified manpower. Therefore democracy and human right standards, the freedom of speech and of the media, a constitutional state, gender equality, positive discrimination, assistance to and visibility for disadvantaged / marginalized groups, LGBTI rights and actively

fighting against discrimination, insecurity and extreme poverty are the fundamentals of economic development. In an anti-democratic country, not only backwardness but also discrimination, intolerance, homophobia and political oppression bring about a brain drain, among the other social and political barriers. The brain drain destroys qualified labour force, savings are headed abroad due to lack of safety of life and property. As a result, the lack of lending stalls the new investments projects. The country gets access to loans from a foreign source at higher interest rates than these in democratic countries because of the higher risk premium. This is called Credit Default Swap (CSD). The limited and relatively costly access to credits tends to slow down economic progress.

The UNDP Human Development Report (HDR) is the key document to create the indicators for measuring human development across the world. The UNDP Human Development Report is drawn up by the Human Development Report Office (HDRO) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (***,2016, P.V). The report was released the first time in 1990. Each year the selected high-level academics assist the preparation of that year report.

Thus transparency with regard to all (especially unfavorable, minority) identities, positive discrimination, the increased participation in the democratic dialogue and in the decision-making process, benefits the Industry 4.0 revolution's opportunities to create a sustainable and develop welfare society, improve public spending to support economic progress, eliminate extreme poverty, malnourishment and the extremism that arise from the conditions, balanced inter-regional inequalities. There is a consistent recognition of the first, second and third generations of human rights from a holistic point of view, supporting the disadvantaged

groups against marginalization and vulnerability. there is an enrich human life, and support the well-being for each individual are the main recommendations suggested the report (***,2016). They are the key points of the sustainable development concept of the UNHD report (***,2016).

5. Results

The classical Marxist definition contradiction between capital and labor expands the contradiction between capital and nature (Kürkçü, 2017) because the capitalist mode of production in the imperialist age largely erodes the natural resources. Nature's own self-repairing capacity could not be sufficient in repairing the damage. The objective base of the CSR projects is that fact. The manipulation of the projects as a communication tool comes from the profit-oriented primitive characters of corporations. Primitive capital accumulation is a term used by Marx to explain the plundering regime of colonialist countries in colonies. In this concept the profit does not come from a classic production-trading process. The profit comes from vulgar plundering. The colonialism age was replaced by imperialism age. In *The Capital* volume III, Marx explains that the organic compound of capital increases. The dead labor rate increases against living labor. In this case, the profit rate is decreasing but the amount of profit increases (Marx, 1894). This creates unified and unequal development (Lenin, 1917). To put it simply, the capital migrates from expensive countries to cheap countries. The increasing procedure renders impossible the mass destructive wars in the metropolis because the repairing is practically impossible because of low profit rate (high degree of capital's organic compound). In this case each mass destruction of metropolis remains irreparable. Peace remains an objective fact there. The mode of production

that devastates nature in the backward countries export the wars/proxy-wars from the metropolis (because the new mass destructive wars are economically impossible there) to the periphery (backward countries). In backward countries, the wars could be a source of profits like plundering nature and cheap labour with the collaboration of local actors like corrupt governments or “freedom fighters”. Ecological exploitation, cheap labour (especially children labour) and war-profits stay as the three faces of the same pyramid in this context.

At the same time, the pyramid comes back to the head of the national/international level large/monopolistic companies like a boomerang. The exploitation of nature, especially in the backward countries, creates an ecological disaster. The disaster falls upon the human race. The disaster triggers the mass migration from the backward countries to developed countries like wars/proxy-wars. The mass migration creates the problems in the metropolis. And finally the increasing the awareness of the disrespect for human rights increasingly grows among the metropolis consumers: They start to protest or boycott the brands that exploit nature and cheap child labour. CSR like ethic codes and fair trade are created within this context.

As a discourse, CSR could be transformed into a Public Social Responsibility (PSR) in this case. As Marx says, the bourgeoisie wants to have only the losses shared, whereas it wants to keep the profits private. PSR could be financed by labor because of perverted tax politics. As a monopoly, the corporate controls the resources, production, and distribution as well. The large production makes an excessive consumption of natural source. The monopoly is private property but nature is public property. The excessive consumption of nature not only threatens the

monopoly but also threatens the whole of humanity.

After the Second World War, the destruction of the war brought about the statist politics and import substitute model for peripheral countries. In the import substitute model, the internal production for each country, even as a non-rentable and bad quality production was a must. The main market was internal, in this case, the worker salaries were consciously increased to improve the consumption. The strategical and high-tech production areas stay in the monopoly of well-developed countries like airplane production. The imperialist economies did not get a mass good exportation capacity in this period. The existence of the Soviet Union also limited the world market. The articulation of the world economy for these peripheral countries was on the import substitute model. Large public intervention on the economy was the new normal in this period. Public Administration model was shaped by these social and economic facts. After the 1980s, the industrially developed countries recovered their good export capacities. In this context, the neoliberal politics emerged. NPM was born. Fidel Castro even notices the ecological disaster agreement in 1992 Rio de Janeiro Summit (Castro,1993). In this period NPM as a neoliberalist model offers the universal principles:

According to the principles, the public sector was defined as an unproductive or inefficient sector. It was suggested that the working principles of the private sectors should be transferred to the public sector to increase the latter’s efficiency. Under the NPA, thanks to the private sector model, the public sector would be more efficient and the state budget would be decreased. According to this concept, public spending and social assistance were abolished. The state should not produce the goods by the NPA and

could take on only the regulation mission. Mass privatization was one of the universal principles of the NPA because in the concept public investments are unproductive and cannot be fixed even under the private sector principles. This was neoliberalism.

The principles were tested first in Latin American countries. The results were catastrophic. In 2002, even the World Bank and IMF admitted the failure of neoliberalism. The good government concept was embraced and offered as the new normal. Under the concept democracy and constitutional state are the the necessary factors for development. Anti-democratic states cannot develop. The local democracy might be improved. Civil participation and active citizenship are the other necessary conditions. Ecology-friendly development has a correlation with local and sustainable development. The representation and active participation of the democratic process for each minority should be guaranteed. The media freedom and transparency and positive discrimination are necessary conditions for the Good governance concept (***,2016).

Acemoğlu and Robinson show that democracy, freedom of speech, constitutional state, media freedom, active citizenship, gender equality, positive discrimination, and human rights are the undeniable components of a sustainable developed welfare society (Acemoğlu, Robinson, 2012), like Washington Consensus practices first of all in Latin America and then all over the world shows that the neo-liberal model devastated the countries' economies (Stiglitz, 2002), the lack of democracy, human right, constitutional state, freedom of speech, gender equality, positive discrimination, and media freedom devastate the countries' economies as well (Acemoğlu, Robinson, 2012). Recognition of the different identities with their right and to get the constitutional guarantees and

social support/visibility programs are the fundamental base of sustainable development. Nowadays a sustainable development model neither lack of democracy, human right, freedom of speech, media freedom, constitutional state, social rights, gender equality, and positive discrimination, nor with the Neo-liberal concept could be evaluated as a void model. Acemoğlu and Robinson's study shows that there is no China Wall between political and economic realities. Economic progress and welfare society under a totalitarian state/government ruling is a delusion. For a sustainable developed welfare society, the infrastructural (economical) and the superstructural (political, ideological, moral etc..) components might be coherent as possible as under the capitalist frame. As Lenin notices, "politics is a concentrated expression of economics" (Lenin, 1921).

UN Human Development Report gives a detailed explanation of the concept with its values and targets. The report offers moral universalism pluralist value in the non-absolutist sense as a superstructural component of sustainably developed welfare capitalist societies. Good governance is also a necessary condition for sustainable development. Moral universalism as a philosophical term constitutes an inclusive concept for all human beings. According to the report, the ultimate aim might be that all the individuals are included benefiting the gains, standards, rights, and guarantees of the sustainable development process and the welfare society. The benefiting might be without any discrimination, marginalization, and exclusion. The report describes the tangible and cognitive obstacles of sustainably developed welfare capitalist societies. Moral universalism could be interpreted as a sign of the limitations for the multiculturalism as well. The report could be evaluated as an actual and compact manual of Good Governance

and the fundamental reforms of a sustainably developed welfare society.

The new public management (Good Governance) concept might be a must by the new social and political facts: The contradiction between capital and nature. The increase in the organic compound of the capital, ageing of the world population, a large increase in the average labor power efficiency, migration crisis are all triggered by the ecological crisis and wars/proxy-wars. The ecological and migration crisis and aging of the world population improve the social protectionist politics. The increasing the organic compound of the capital makes impossible the mass destructive wars in metropolis in the first place and after that (because of migration crisis) day by day in peripheries as well. The ecological exploitation also could possibly deepen the environmentally-induced migration crisis. At the same time, a large increase in the average labor power efficiency could get the possibilities to finance the mass social expenses like unemployment and citizenship salaries.

6. Discussion

After the Washington Consensus, neoliberal NPM approach was implemented first in Latin America and after that throughout world. The approach proved fallacious and was accordingly replaced by the Good governance approach. CSR practices support the Good governance concept as a stakeholder contribution with NGO – company trust cooperations as well. On the other hand, Good governance could replace CSR with true tax politics in the contemporary world.

The CSR concept comes from the modern monopoly capitalist economy. Without the monopolies/large companies at the national and international level, CSR is impossible. CSR suggests that a company that consumes natural resources in its own production/distribution

process should put effort into repairing/protecting the natural resources. The monopolies control the majority of production in each sector in our modern world. Hence it is the monopolies that should also bear the major responsibility for the exploitation of natural resources. Even if CSR could be transformed into the Public Social Responsibility (PSR) the tax might be charged on the monopolies rather than the workers and employees.

Conclusion

As the first result of the contradiction between capital and nature, the world could become an uninhabitable place since the human race could be terminated. As the second result: During the future life of the capitalist mode of production, nature should be helped to recover by the use of CSR projects and international standards/protocols from Kyoto and by the Good Governance concept and practices. Considering that nature is no longer capable of regeneration on its own, without human help or in the same sense, an autonomous part of nature, human society should presumably contribute to the ongoing and future regeneration of nature, at least in this mode of production. The objective basis of the CSR projects provides such grounds. The manipulation and use of CSR as a PR and communication tool of the projects comes from the profit-oriented primitive characters of corporations. As an ultimate solution, the mode of production will be abolished by a superior mode of production. As a final result, the ecological crisis triggers the mass migration flux from backward countries to develop countries like wars/proxy-war that they are exported from develop countries to backward countries. As the humans flux from backward to develop countries, the capital flux from develop (expensive) to cheap (backward) countries. It creates the social problems in the metropolis. Capital centralization makes

possible CSR campaigns/projects. CRS could be a tool for only national/international level large companies/monopolies. The centralization of the economy/capital creates these monopoly companies in each sector and countries in international level. The companies control the absolute majority of production and markets. The increasing the awareness of societies about human rights improve the boycott/protest action against the brands who use cheap/children labor. The tendency also creates the ethical codes and fair trade as international level of self-regulations, such as CSR. The two could encompass the complementary components of CSR. The primitive capital accumulation term could be seen as a starting point for the analysis of the study in an analogy, and the term should not be treated as a theoretical fetish. Good governance approach could be supported by CSR project, or it could replace the CSR concept with true tax policies. Nature protection could be accepted as a public service responsibility in this case.

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