

Review

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Cieślík, J. (2017). *Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies*. Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 266.

Professor Jerzy Cieślík is in the – until recently – relatively small elite group of Polish researchers who study the broadly understood entrepreneurship. This spearheading group developed most successfully over the last years due to the growing importance of entrepreneurship for the prospects of further development of the Polish economy; among others, about the significance of its possible “middle-income trap.” A consensus exists that without modern, dynamic, and innovative entrepreneurship, facing the upcoming socioeconomic challenges will be more than demanding. One may perceive Professor Cieślík’s accomplishments as an original and individual program that encompasses both the *internationalization* and *entrepreneurship in the Polish economy*. The reviewed book summarizes the most significant research results from the decades of work in this framework. In our opinion, the work exhausts the most important aspects of entrepreneurship and as such the work can be considered complete. Cieślík’s approach is twofold, and his most characteristic features draw on both micro- and macroeconomic perspectives.

The microeconomic approach considers

- the internationalization of companies in the era of economic transformation, including reasons for the increase in the number of exporters in the first phase of transformation, a conceptualization of the “international small business” phenomenon, and the estimation of its scale;
- the impact of geographic diversification on export efficiency, including the identification of a new strategy type called “balanced concentration;”
- dynamic businesses (gazelle companies), including the proposal of an alternative method for their identification and measurement;
- the ethical dimension of entrepreneurship, including the recognition of the “ethic flaw” phenomenon in the early development stages of a company.

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The macroeconomic approach gathers

- international comparisons of the entrepreneurial activity levels; international comparative research on entrepreneurial activity with important applications for entrepreneurial policy;
- research in the *self-employment* phenomenon as an in-between stage of employment and employing, including estimations of the scale of the self-employment phenomenon and distinguishing between the two communities of the self-employed and micro-employers.

A distinctive feature of Professor Cieślik's book is the strong emphasis on applied research, particularly oriented on formulating recommendations for economic policy. Thus, it is important to contextualize Cieślik's contribution with his following projects:

- policy in the field of company internationalization: participation in the research project *International Entrepreneurship in Poland*, which resulted with the monograph *Internacjonalizacja polskich przedsiębiorstw. Aktualne tendencje – implikacje dla polityki gospodarczej (The Internationalization of Polish Enterprises. Current Trends and Policy Implications)*; (2010);
- supporting the internationalization of young, technologically advanced companies: two publications in 2011; with recommendations for creating support systems based on the research commissioned by the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development;
- local support of entrepreneurship: recommendations for local government units published in the monograph *Supporting the Development of Entrepreneurship in Metropolitan Areas* (2014).

Among Jerzy Cieślik's many accomplishments, the work entitled *Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies* from 2017 is of special importance. In our view, the book constitutes one of the most complete works on contemporary entrepreneurship, particularly in the way it affects the formulation and conduct of economic policies. We foreground that this publication is highly innovative for the Polish economic literature, where the issues raised have not received enough recognition or comprehensive discussion. At the same time, *Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies* masterfully adds to the rich international achievements in this field, which diffuse the knowledge on the subject both locally and internationally. The English premiere of the book familiarizes the broader public with not only its conceptual subtleties but also the specific conditions of entrepreneurship in the "catching-up" economies, as Cieślik calls them.

Hence, the issues raised in the book are very current and highly important, especially in the context of the experience of economic transition and its influence on policy-making. The development of entrepreneurship along its rational support through economic policy instruments rightly falls within the group of factors that affect a country's developmental aspirations. The book explains the role of entrepreneurship in the process of economic development via a macroeconomic perspective.

Secondly, the study aptly substantively justifies its selection of the aspects of entrepreneurship. Cieřlik avoids overcomplicating his ideas so that the work is understandable and reader-friendly, prepared not only for academics but also entrepreneurs and policymakers. Furthermore, Cieřlik skillfully shows the most important threads of discourse on the role of entrepreneurship in economic development. Moreover, Cieřlik convincingly extracts the most important and controversial issues from the literature, striving to solve these dilemmas while introducing his own perspective into the ongoing debate. Cieřlik's significant structuring of popular classifications is one its most important contributions to the field. Hence, the book facilitates the reader to become a more conscious participant in the debate on entrepreneurship.

Thirdly, this strength of the work corresponds with another advantage, namely its clear, convincing, and logical structure. The publication comprises introduction and seven chapters on the different aspects of entrepreneurial engagement. The book also includes an index that facilitates search for specific topics. The chapters contribute to the following issues:

- Essence of Entrepreneurship,
- Dimensions of Entrepreneurship,
- International Comparisons on Measuring Entrepreneurship,
- Entrepreneurship and Employment,
- Entrepreneurship and Innovation,
- International Dimension of Entrepreneurship,
- Entrepreneurship Policy: Towards an Integrated Framework.

Furthermore, the visible strong research workshop affirms the book's impact. Its essential component is Cieřlik's attention in defining the applied terms and concepts, a move particularly justified in the case of a relatively poorly ordered research area. On the one hand, Cieřlik is familiar with the literature and, thus, aware of the abundance, diversity, and often significant inconsistencies among concepts, classifications, and typologies used by other researchers. Nevertheless, Cieřlik introduces them with skill and sensitivity. On the other hand, he consistently organizes them, realizing that

such procedure is a sine qua non condition for a high-level scientific discourse. Hence, Cieślík remains critical of the various approaches and proceeds with due care. Cieślík invokes only those statistical data and methods that are necessary for understanding the matters at hand, but for more detailed analyses suggests using the datasets from the literature. His intention to explain and illustrate the recent trends rather than overload the reader with oversophisticated statistical constructs is a splendid achievement.

Finally, another strong side of Cieślík's work is a carefully thought-through and selected set of references. The size of the bibliography is not large in comparison to the volume, which explicitly means that the Author selected its items with great determination and consistency, focusing only on the elements significantly related to the issues at hand. Cieślík thus reveals a great knowledge of the international literature on the subject, and his work can certainly be seen as a useful tool for transferring knowledge in this field with a special focus on emerging economies.

As for the weaker points of the book, they do not have an important impact on our assessment. Nevertheless, firstly, its holistic and comprehensive character does not mean that it is unreasonable to suggest a deeper approach to the issues discussed. We do not mean including more chapters – which would probably make the structure fussy and less logical – but to expand the particular items in the outline. Particularly chapter eight – dedicated to establishing links on entrepreneurship and policymaking – devotes much attention to Poland to the detriment of other “catching-up” economies. The book might benefit from including more “real life” cross-country comparisons that would illustrate the otherwise perfectly presented context of the National Entrepreneurship System.

Secondly, although the bibliography is well-selected, still some of the most prominent and fundamental items seem to be missing; e.g., Mark Casson's comments on entrepreneurship included in *The Entrepreneur: An Economic Theory*.

In summary, the book *Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies* by Jerzy Cieślík is, without doubt, an up-to-date, important publication that focuses on one of the most significant developmental forces of emerging economies: entrepreneurship. Cieślík's writing style is reader-friendly and caters to a wide audience. The book has a clear, well-established structure, includes high-level research, and moreover refers to the latest literature in the field. An important aspect of the work is the fact that it goes well beyond an economic perspective, drawing on the sociological impact that entrepreneurship has on the emerging economies.