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BOOK REVIEWS

Paweł Marszałek, *Systemy pieniężne wolnej bankowości. Koncepcje cechy, zastosowanie* [Free Banking Monetary Systems. Concepts, Characteristics, Application], Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego w Poznaniu, Poznań 2014: 342, ISBN 978-83-7417-827-3

The monograph by P. Marszałek is an extensive study of the topic. The analysis devoted to evolution of monetary systems, with particular reference to free banking monetary systems, undoubtedly demonstrates a complex, multi-aspect, profound and critical, scientific approach, It will be extremely valuable for both financial theory and practice.

The main objective of the author is an in-depth study of the "characteristics of contemporary concepts of free banking and an assessment of the possibility for their possible practical application". The hypothesis is explored as to whether "free banking systems are not an alternative to central banking systems".

The monograph is divided into two parts. Chapters 1–3 are a systematic overview of historical issues and problems, combining a well-balanced approach to both theoretical and empirical aspects. Chapters 4–6 are devoted to the specific concepts of free banking perceived by the author as an alternative to the present institutional arrangements. The reader can readily follow the theoretical development, the events, the nature and the processes and future trends in monetary practice.

The contents of the first chapter are a collection of determinants characterising a monetary system and factors which shape it, as well as the classification of different monetary systems throughout history. It also presents the premises and stages of transition to monetary systems of fiduciary money. From this the reader will receive a clear picture of the essence, structure and changes that the monetary systems have undergone as well as the impact of various factors and processes upon monetary systems which have shaped their form and development.

The second chapter deals with the author's assertion that "it is necessary to set in order and expand on the theoretical issues, merely indicated so far... it is necessary to determine what concepts constitute the theoretical background for the functioning of contemporary monetary systems... It has become even more necessary because the transition to the systems based upon independent money was accompanied by significant shifts of values in the theory of macroeconomics and economic policy". The focus is on the concepts of K. Wicksell and J.M. Keynes, which the author regards as foundations of the theory of contemporary money. He also presents the evolution of the approach to money and monetary policy in mainstream economics after 1970 and the basics of the so-called "New Neoclassical Synthesis".

This part examines the implications of the New Neoclassical Synthesis for the functioning of monetary systems and for the shaping of the "New Consensus" in the implementation of monetary policy. The findings, based on the analysis of the elements of this consensus (amongst others, inflation targeting, relations between price stability and financial stability) and the conclusions he formulates in respect of the "New Consensus Monetary Policy", create a systematic picture of new problems which emerged in the course of the evolution of monetary systems.

The author acknowledges that the list of issues which would then facilitate the analysis of modern free banking is incomplete, so he devotes a subsequent chapter to selected conditions for the functioning of contemporary monetary systems (and their consequences), such as the globalization of financial activities, changes in banks' activities, financialization, changes in the forms and modes of using money and, as a result of other phenomena - the so-called monetary disorder, being the main consequence of changing circumstances. The author and the literature cited give valuable insights into factors of a global character and the microeconomic factors relating to the functioning of banks.

The final part of this chapter is devoted to criticism of the theoretical bases on the functioning of contemporary monetary systems. These concern not only the current state of affairs but also constitute relevant reasons for the subsequent reflections. These conclusions led the author to devote the subsequent three chapters to the issues concerning "features, construction and principles of the functioning of modern free banking concepts and – to the assessment of the possibilities of their practical application".

The next three chapters deal with one of the three variants of modern free banking: Selgin-White's and Rothbard-Mises' models, Friedrich Hayek's denationalization of money and the New Monetary Economics enabling a comparison of the concepts presented.

The monograph enriches the list of supportive arguments for the hypothesis. The author shows great caution in his conclusions which closely correspond with the results found in related literature.

The final part of the monograph is devoted to an overall analysis of the research procedures which verify the hypothesis that individual modern free banking systems, although cohesive in their structure, are not an alternative to central banking systems. The author states clearly that "restructuring of monetary systems on the basis of free banking concepts would not be the best solution, even if it were possible due to political reasons". He also points at theories of heterodox economists, particularly the concepts formulated by the Post-Keynesian School and so-called New Economic Sociology, as more suitable for analysis of changes in the contemporary monetary systems.

The monograph by P. Marszałek is characterized by a high substantive and methodological level of approach, the wide use of related literature and consideration of scientific trends, theories and concepts, taking other opinions into account, yet clearly stating his own position in seeking to verify the hypothesis. The monograph is a significant contribution to monetary theory and practice, especially with reference to banking.

Bogusław Pietrzak Warsaw School of Economics Collegium of Socio-Economics Ewa Mińska-Struzik, Od eksportu do innowacji. Uczenie się przez eksport polskich przedsiębiorców [From Export to Innovation – Learning by Exporting in Polish Enterprises], Difin, Warszawa 2014: 284, ISBN 978-83-7930-361-8

The fundamental factor of growth at the present stage of the globalization of the world economy (semi-globalization) is scientific-technological progress and, within its frameworks, innovation. On the basis of crucial inventions modern branches of industry and services were developed and their share in the economy of a given country, including exports, improves its competitiveness and welfare. Awareness of this is widespread but the possibility of implementing the concept of a "knowledge-based economy" encounters huge barriers from various sources. This concerns not only developing countries in particular, but also many well developed countries, which is proved, e.g. by a failure in the implementation of the European Union's Lisbon Strategy. These problems are particularly acute in Poland's economy which, due to its exceptional weakness in the sphere of innovative development, is threatened by a fall into the middle-income growth trap, thus ruining its chance to catch up with the highly developed EU countries. Poland as is described by the author of the monograph reviewed has a distant position in the rankings of innovation and its position in Europe is one of the last. Due to this fact one should welcome research works whose aim is to explain the conditions, state, and above all, ways to solve these key problems for Poland. The monograph reviewed conforms to this scientific trend and I regard the choice of its subject matter as relevant and useful, not only for scientific but also for practical reasons. It offers valuable recommendations concerning the sphere of innovativeness for both politicians and entrepreneurs.

The monograph itself is of an innovative character as regards the subject of research in the Polish literature. There are many publications about importing as a channel of innovation transfer, but exporting still awaits proper research and publications. Meanwhile studies on the mechanism and consequences of learning by exporting (LBE) have dynamically developed abroad for over two decades. The author has made an attempt to bridge the existing research gap. She gives a positive answer to the question as to whether LBE effects occur in Polish enterprises but nonetheless this confirmation is limited by a number of additional conditions. Her findings mainly concern a fairly narrow group of high-tech enterprises. Although this is an important group, the symptoms of learning by exporting observed cannot be simply generalized to cover all of Poland's industrial enterprises. Since the phenomenon studied is complex, difficult to grasp and separate from other relationships, there is a probability that the results of potential subsequent studies may be different. Therefore the subtitle of the book may also be too broad.

Despite these limitations, the book is quite interesting from the methodological point of view. The main goal of the work which is (p. 12) showing conditions and implications of learning by exporting and the verification of its occurrence in Polish manufacturing industry, with special reference to high-tech enterprises was clearly formulated. Apart from this the author constructed a series of relevant research steps which should be treated as auxiliary aims.

The fundamental thesis of the work is as follows (p. 13): learning by exporting is not an automatic process. It is determined by a bundle of factors in each enterprise and its meso- and macroeconomic environment, so it is impossible to predetermine the final learning results in the form of the implementation of innovation and productivity growth. Moreover three hypotheses were formulated, namely:

- H1: between enterprises at different levels of technological advancement there exist differences as regards the significance of exporting in the process of implementing innovation;
- H2: conducting export in certain defined conditions stimulates high tech enterprises to implement innovation and increase productivity;
- H3: learning begins along with the start of interaction with the foreign market entities.

The author divided the procedure she devised into three stages and each one of them was used to verify one of the previously formulated hypotheses. Doing this, she used a system of combined research methods (triangulation), due to the complexity and unclear nature of learning by exporting.

To determine the significance of exporting for innovative activities of enterprises with a different degree of technological advancement an econometric study was carried out using individual data from the Central Statistical Office (CIS 2008), comprising about 8.5 thousand manufacturing enterprises and the model of logistic regression. This stage of the research procedure showed that exporting stimulates implementation of innovation (above all product innovation) in all groups of enterprises but the strongest relation between the variables appeared in high-tech entities.

The second hypothesis was verified by the author's nation-wide survey where the

results were interpreted using methods of descriptive statistics, inductive statistics and independence analysis. On the basis of interviews conducted at the beginning of 2012 with competent representatives of 200 high-tech enterprises the author confirmed the existence of a link between exporting and innovation of a non-determinist nature and she showed which conditions stimulate LBE in this group.

The third hypothesis was verified at the final stage and was based on a multiple case study of enterprises preparing themselves for starting exporting. For this purpose the author designated seven firms for participation in the study and she observed them for nearly two years after the survey was completed. She used such research techniques as partly structured in-depth interviews, non-participant observation, analysis of documentation and the contents of the websites of the enterprises' investigated. The author returned many times to the persons she had interviewed in order to supplement information and determine more precisely the interdependencies she had assumed. The collected material did not confirm the third hypothesis, so she came to a conclusion that in itself the commencement of interaction with foreign markets is not sufficient to initiate the mechanism of learning by exporting.

The construction of the book is logical and subordinated to the main objective. In accordance with general methodological principles the author passes from general and theoretical problems to detailed issues based upon empirical studies. The monograph consists of introduction, five chapters, concluding remarks, bibliography, and a list of tables and figures. The first chapter "International trade as a source of innovation" ends with an original conceptualization of the notion of "learning by exporting". "A theoretical basis of learning by

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exporting", which is the subject of chapter two, was extensively described, taking into account several approaches in the theory of foreign trade, the theory of economic growth, the theory of organizational learning and the theory of internationalization.

Chapter three "Learning by exporting in the light of empirical studies" contains a critical analysis and a synthesis of the results of over ninety research works concerning the mechanism and consequences of learning by exporting. There the author's added value consists of constructing a paradigm of learning by exporting and devising a research plan to identify the effects of learning by exporting in Polish enterprises, with special reference to high-tech firms.

The final two chapters, are of a strictly empirical character. They are devoted to the presentation of studies conducted on the impact of exports upon innovativeness of Polish enterprises and the verification of the previously postulated research hypotheses.

In chapter four entitled "The significance of exporting for innovation in Polish manufacturing enterprises" the author, used the tools of descriptive statistics and regression analysis, to present the modes of behaviour of the Polish companies, tak-

ing into account their branch classification, the level of technological advancement, and the division into exporters and non-exporters. Chapter five "Learning by exporting in Polish high-tech enterprises" is crucial to the whole book because it contains the results of basic studies conducted by the author, i.e. surveys and multiple case studies. The aim of the surveys was to diagnose the effects of learning by exporting and the spillover of those effects into non-exporting enterprises. The multiple case studies were aimed at establishing the moment when learning by exporting was initiated.

In my opinion the reviewed monograph is of a high scientific and cognitive value. It starts filling the gap in Polish literature on the relationship between exporting and innovative activity. The author highlights an underestimated channel of innovation transfer and potential benefits of its effective exploitation stimulated by appropriate activities at both macro- (policy) and micro- (enterprise) levels. This is all the most important because for us innovation means "to be or not to be"!

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Aims and Scope

Economics and Business Review is the successor to the Poznań University of Economics Review which was published by the Poznań University of Economics Press in 2001–2014. The Economics and Business Review is a quarterly journal focusing on theoretical and applied research work in the fields of economics, management and finance. The Review welcomes the submission of articles for publication dealing with micro, mezzo and macro issues. All texts are double-blind assessed by independent reviewers prior to acceptance.

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