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BOOK REVIEW

Rolf Sternberg, Maria Elo, Jonathan Levie and José E. Amorós (Eds.), *Research Handbook on Transnational Diaspora Entrepreneurship*, Edward Elgar Publishing, Cheltenham, 2023, 424 pages, eISBN: 978-1-78811-869-9

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KİTAP İNCELEMESİ

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Transnational Diaspora Entrepreneurship (TDE) has emerged as a strategic sub-discipline within the triangle of migration studies, international business, and development economics. While the *age of migration* has been extensively mapped by macro-sociologists, the solely economic agency of migrants who cultivate cross-border commercial ties has generally been addressed within a theoretical fragmentation in the literature. In the introductory Chapter 1, the editors Rolf Sternberg, Maria Elo, Jonathan Levie, and José E. Amorós explain how The Research Handbook on Transnational Diaspora Entrepreneurship fills this gap by offering a systematic consolidation of the field. Distinct from the general migration literature, this work positions the diaspora entrepreneur not merely as a demographic statistic or a source of remittances, but as a unique economic actor capable of leveraging dual *embeddedness* to bridge institutional voids (p.22). In the book, which consists of 17 chapters organized into four thematic parts: Conceptual Foundations, Country Case Studies, Migration Corridors and Their Effect on the Home and Destination Countries, and Policy Implications, the editors present a comprehensive framework extending from theoretical abstraction to empirical evidence and policy analysis.

The first part of the book, titled Conceptual Overview of TDE is dedicated to determining the theoretical and methodological boundaries of the field. In Chapter 2, which forms the basis of the study, Maria Elo and Léo-Paul Dana address the definitional challenges that have historically occupied this field of study. The authors distinguish between the concepts of transnationalism, diaspora, and entrepreneurship, and argue that TDE differs from general ethnic entrepreneurship in terms of its cross-border orientation and reliance on diasporic social capital. According to Elo and Dana, these entrepreneurs function as institutional *brokers* who use their cultural competencies to overcome informal barriers that frequently hinder traditional multinational corporations (p.10). Complementing this theoretical grounding, Johannes von Bloh addresses the methodological crisis in Chapter 3. Acknowledging that TDE is an *extremely rare event* from a statistical perspective, von Bloh shows how Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) data can be adapted to cover this elusive demographic group (p.87). His analysis regarding the challenges in random sampling validates the need for specialized data filtering techniques to distinguish true transnational entrepreneurs from the general migrant population, thereby offering a critical roadmap for future quantitative researchers. Nevertheless, von Bloh's admission that TDE remains a rare event highlights a fundamental limitation of the handbook; the heavy reliance on GEM data may overlook the deeper, qualitative informal barriers that quantitative filters simply cannot capture. One might argue that by focusing so intently on statistical rare events, the research risks missing the broader socio-cultural impact of the brokers it seeks to define.

In the second part of the work, by shifting its focus to Country Case Studies, the manifestation of TDE in different forms located within various institutional contexts is examined. In this part, the editors present the examples of Germany, Bulgaria, Puerto Rico, and Israel within a specific systematic framework, thereby concretely revealing the differentiation process of diaspora entrepreneurship according to each country's own economic and social conditions and, consequently, the context-sensitive nature of the phenomenon. In this context, Rolf Sternberg first analyzes the German context using the previously discussed GEM data in Chapter 4. The study empirically proves that although TDE actors are numerically rare (constituting a very small portion of the population), they exhibit remarkably higher

export intensity and innovation rates compared to their domestic counterparts, thus justifying special policy interest directed at this niche area. In the following Chapter 5, Andonova, Gavrilova, Perez, Schmutzler, and Krusteff turn the focus to the case of Bulgaria, a transition economy. Contrary to the established structure in Germany, the Bulgarian context shows that diaspora entrepreneurs act as substitutes for missing institutional support. The authors emphasize that returning migrants import a *growth mindset* and Western business practices that are mostly absent in the local post-transitional economy (p.86). In Chapter 6, which offers a different geographical and situational context, Aponte, Alvarez, and Lobato focus on the role of TDE in post-natural disaster and crisis reconstruction processes by addressing the example of Puerto Rico. Following hurricanes Irma and Maria, it is discussed that the diaspora is a critical source of resilience in the island's economic recovery through knowledge and network transfer, in addition to financial aid. In Chapter 7, located at the end of this part, the analysis of Israel is presented as an example of a high-maturity ecosystem. Here, Schafer and Henn describe the phenomena of *New Argonauts* and *Sunshine Migration* detailing the active role of the circular migration of highly qualified professionals between Silicon Valley and Tel Aviv in Israel's transformation into a *Start-up Nation* (p.129-135). The chapter opens a new space for country examinations by arguing that the primary contribution of the diaspora is not only capital but the transfer of innovation and venture capital networks. While these case studies illustrate context-sensitivity, the lack of a direct comparative framework between such diverse economies as Germany and Bulgaria remains a weakness. The Sunshine Migration in Israel appears as a high-tech outlier compared to the crisis-driven survival in Puerto Rico, raising the question of whether the editors have successfully identified universal TDE patterns or merely collected a series of exceptional, non-replicable narratives.

The third part of the handbook, Migration Corridors and Their Effect on the Home and Destination Countries, adopts a dynamic perspective by analyzing specific bilateral relationships under stress and crisis conditions. By emphasizing bilateral corridors, the editors effectively capture the micro-dynamics of international business that are often lost in broader global surveys. This part begins with the context of forced migration in Chapter 8. Zamantılı Nayir, Eryılmaz, and Ayci turn the lens to Syrian refugee entrepreneurs in Turkey. Using the *bricolage* theoretical approach, the authors show how refugees lacking formal capital creatively recombine scarce resources and social networks to create value, thereby defining refugees as active economic actors instead of passive burdens (p.151). In Chapter 9, Jones, Indianna D, Minto-Coy and Elo shift the focus to the Caribbean diaspora in the United Kingdom. Authors emphasize that diaspora entrepreneurship is not purely an economic activity but is also used as a tool for the preservation of cultural heritage and the strengthening of intra-community solidarity networks. In a similar geographical context, in Chapter 10, Siwale, Ursula F. Ott, and Aluko examine the entrepreneurial activities of the Sub-Saharan African diaspora in the United Kingdom. The study analyzes the dual role these entrepreneurs undertake at the point of providing development support to their countries of origin, as well as holding on in the host country, and the institutional obstacles they encounter. In Chapter 11, focusing on crisis management in the European context, David, Terstriep, and Zbierowski address the United Kingdom-Poland corridor. The authors suggest that Polish entrepreneurs used transnationalism as a resilience strategy while managing the double shock of Brexit and Covid-19, and survived market fluctuations by benefiting from *mixed-embeddedness* (p.227).

In the 12th and 13th chapters of Part 3, the focus shifts to the American continent and Asian connections. In Chapter 12, Méndez and Alvarado examine the business diaspora at the USA-Mexico border from an *intercultural management* perspective, arguing that success depends on the ability to manage cultural asymmetry (p.262). Complementing this, in Chapter 13, García-Hernández and González-Tamayo develop a typology of returning entrepreneur migrants in the Mexico-USA migration corridor, analyzing the processes by which these actors convert their acquired human capital into investment in the country of origin. In Chapter 14, the final link of the third part, Shuquan, Elo, and Breitenbach discuss the impact of the Chinese diaspora on economic development and the entrepreneurship dynamics on the European routes extending from Hungary to Germany within the context of the *Belt and Road* initiative (p.304). The primary strength of this part lies in its capacity to illustrate that migration corridors are dynamic spaces where both social and economic value are generated, moving beyond the conventional focus on financial remittances. Furthermore, the authors effectively document how these actors navigate various institutional barriers and cultural asymmetries, providing a robust, evidence-based counter-narrative that highlights the creative potential of diaspora networks in ensuring cross-border stability during periods of global turmoil.

The fourth and final part of the work, Policy Implication, presents these empirical findings in the form of applicable strategies for governance. In Chapter 15, Morgan presents the Canadian perspective by proposing a *Policy Triad* framework that integrates migration, international trade, and entrepreneurship policies (p.333). The author argues that Canada's success lies in recognizing the diaspora not only as a source of labor force but also as a channel for diversifying international trade. In contrast, in Chapter 16, Elo, Volovelsky, and Wang analyze China's state-led approach in detail. The authors show that the Chinese government evaluates the diaspora primarily in terms of *rencai* (talent) attraction and makes a strategic transition from seeking financial remittances to seeking technological upgrading with policies like the *Thousand Talents Plan* (pp. 345-346). This comparison effectively demonstrates that there is no *one-size-fits-all* policy; nations exporting labor like China focus on the return of talents, while nations importing labor like Canada focus on integration and global connectivity.

In Chapter 17, which forms the finale of the work, editors Sternberg, Elo, Levie, and Amorós come together with migration and development expert Giacomo Solano to ensure a definitive consolidation of a field that has long remained scattered among disciplines. In this chapter, the authors emphasize that the complex nature of TDE cannot be managed with "one-size-fits-all" policies and present a comprehensive future agenda directing academics to longitudinal and multi-level research to fully grasp the dynamism of the process (p. 28). While this proposed agenda is intellectually stimulating, one might argue that the practical implementation of such multi-level research designs remains a daunting task, given the persistent data silos and fragmented institutional frameworks the authors themselves highlight. By structuring the volume in a logical progression from concept to context, to corridor, and finally to policy, the editors have thus drawn a solid roadmap for TDE research. The unique emphasis of the book lies in its rigorous empirical foundation extending from the statistical depth of the analysis of Germany to the qualitative richness of the Syrian refugee case; this foundation confirms the claim that diaspora entrepreneurs are unique institutional

brokers essential for the global economy. Although methodological depth shows some difference between quantitative and qualitative chapters and the leap from specific case studies to broad policy generalizations occasionally highlights the inherent difficulty of unifying such a dispersed field, these tensions do not detract from the book's overall value. On the contrary, the editors' meticulous attention to detail and their ability to weave together such disparate geographic and economic contexts is nothing short of masterful. Every chapter feels carefully curated to contribute to a larger, complex puzzle, reflecting an unparalleled level of intellectual craftsmanship in a domain traditionally defined by theoretical fragmentation. Ultimately, by successfully grounding scattered theories in diverse empirical realities, this handbook provides a necessary and profound foundation for future discourse.