

EMERALDHANDBOOKS

THE EMERALD HANDBOOK OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN LATIN AMERICA

UNLEASHING A MILLENNIAL POTENTIAL

EDITED BY

OSCAR JAVIER **MONTIEL MÉNDEZ**
ARACELI **ALMARAZ ALVARADO**



The Emerald Handbook of Entrepreneurship in Latin America

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The Emerald Handbook of Entrepreneurship in Latin America: Unleashing a Millennial Potential

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

To all the academic scholars who participated in this project. Thank you so much for your hard work, and confidence. To all the Latin American entrepreneurs and agents, who fight every day against so many obstacles to make a better entrepreneurial ecosystem and take their businesses and our region to the place it deserves.

To my family.

– Oscar Montiel

To groups of entrepreneurs, business families, Latin American creatives, institutions dedicated to technological change, universities and research centers, as well as groups of specialists who, next to me, write the history of business in our region.

– Araceli Almaraz Alvarado

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Prior to moving to the United States, she balanced academia and the private sector. At the age of 25, she founded and managed her own company, which aimed at bringing culture closer to the people and activities of private companies. She produced and published books on history and art; corporate, educational, and cultural institution histories; as well as art exhibits and script writing. During that time, she graduated with a PhD in History from the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile and Université Paris 1, Pantheon Sorbonne. Afterward, she began a career as a university professor and researcher.

Upon moving to the United States, she worked at several international organizations. She joined the Organization of the American States (OAS) to lead the OAS museum's fundraising and development efforts, as well as updating the museum's mission and vision. Then, she moved briefly to the World Bank, where she was part of the Change Management Process that the organization was undergoing at that moment.

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Preface

This preface is written in an unorthodox manner. We felt that in this way, a better and more complete lens can be brought to the Handbook's audience. We end it with a consensus statement.

Oscar

A preface commonly directly addresses the book topic, but sometimes a little bit of history on what was built before can give a better picture. Back in 2018, a vision was beginning to build up. I had just received a grant from the Mexican Government, in support to buy academic books and enrich my research library. Looking through the many options available, I began to see that there was a nascent interest in exploring and understanding entrepreneurship from the historical studies perspective, but there was a lack of books regarding this issue, at micro, meso, or macro levels. A couple of ideas began to cross my mind on how to approach this gap.

So, I began to reflect on elaborating a book with a focus on my country, Mexico. Since my area was entrepreneurship, the search for a partner that could bring a historical perspective to the project began. Bernardo Batiz-Lazo, a Mexican world-renowned historical researcher, was very kind and put me in contact with Araceli Almaraz Alvarado, who, without even knowing me, believed in the project and agreed to participate. In 2020, *The History of Entrepreneurship in Mexico: Contextualizing Theory, Theorizing Context* was published, a seminal effort not only for our country but also for the Latin American region and at a global scale, since there are very few books regarding this perspective.

Once the first book was published, there was space for a second idea to take form. The entrepreneurial processes that the aforementioned book showed can be (of course, context-dependent) extrapolated more or less to the Latin American region. So, to understand better the diverse entrepreneurship dilemmas that our region faces under this new geopolitical order taking place in our era, a Handbook was proposed, focusing not only on the academic audience but also on others interested in this angular, vital issue of our time. It is indeed a critical junction.

My position on entrepreneurship is under a multidimensional perspective always within an allostasis process. Sadly, entrepreneurship is still generally looked under an economic mirror, where outcomes linked to the productivity

dilemma are an axiom, a kind of dualism. For us, this not only cruelly atomizes the construct, losing the intrinsic opportunity to extract an otherwise rich, deep, socially constructed process and multiple realities, but also and most importantly dehumanizes it.

Despite that the Handbook reflects the entrepreneurship etic tradition built upon the grand narrative contribution from the Western hemisphere and makes a strong call on recovering Latin American ontology and roots, an emic position that can recapture and reinvent the way our economies have been operating since neoliberalism arrived and was adopted into the region. A dialectic task and a historicism (Dilthey's view, not that of Popper) should be fruitful (and a breaking point from the "anacyclosis" that Latin America has fallen in), given the indexical way of thinking of Latin American entrepreneurship – a Latin American theory of entrepreneurship.

The data are clear. Our region, generally speaking, has not been able to insert itself properly into the dynamics of the global economy. Remember that East Asia was, in the post–World War II era, in economic terms, behind Latin America. Then, a clear disengagement can be detected, wherein public policies that failed to grasp and achieve creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship throughout the region, where they must blend theory (knowledge and thinking), poiesis, and praxis (action and doing), to increase its efficacy (not forgetting the unintended and undesirable consequences entrepreneurship might incur in), must capture the *verisimilitude* of our context, increasing a potential symbiosis as Latin Americans, but inserted in a geopolitical world. Real photosynthesis in our entrepreneurial ecosystem is inclusive, where all of its actors can increase their chances of improving their quality of life.

So, this Handbook, the first in Latin American history, should be approached in many ways, depending on the different positions each author brought to their chapters, but also without overlooking other research positions that should bring more richness (i.e., big history studies, feminist perspectives, among others). It is a critical view, even with a *via negativa* process that can shed light on each of the topics within this Handbook, where historical processes tacitly or explicitly are embedded in each chapter and myriad elements juxtapose unceasingly to depict a genealogy of what has been written in the region. Moreover, infer what has been left out, and also reflect on the repercussion the Handbook might have.

Araceli

Creativity, Entrepreneurship, and Technological Development in Emerging Economies

Considering that the so-called emerging economies reflect development paths and a relatively successful business base, it allows us to place the Latin American region at the center of a new debate. This Handbook allows us to understand to a great extent technological transformations, innovations, and the global

development of markets from the Latin American position. In this way, we want to highlight the research agendas on the history of business, entrepreneurship, and creativity. This Handbook attempts to break with a priori inferences and omissions about the advancement and evolution of Latin American creative dynamics. The three sections in this Handbook make a call to discuss the economic organization of our region, innovation, technological development, and entrepreneurship; the readers of this Handbook will have their vision of Latin America transformed.

Communities of undergraduate students, mainly from careers in business administration, economics, industrial sociology, and those who focus on corporate strategies, as well as groups of specialists around the world, will have the opportunity to have statements, theoretical reflections, and references to a good part of the works that have been published throughout the twentieth century on Latin American advances in terms of the advancement of organizations, sectoral evolution, technological development, and entrepreneurship. Each chapter, as well as the testimonies presented, outlines the characteristics of the economic spaces, of the branding spaces, including the heterogeneity of the Latin American reality, who in turn expose the enormous potential of the organizations and business groups.

The antecedents of this Latin American vividness and greatness have been overshadowed by the inability of governments to overcome recurring crises, especially those of the twentieth century. However, it should be noted that Latin American economic problems faced throughout the nineteenth century, immediately after the independence processes, were not minor; the difficult moments of Latin American resulted in long periods of political and economic instability. Added to these circumstances was the public debt situation, which had intrinsically diminished the strengthening of nation-states since the first decades of the nineteenth century. In two centuries, the weakness of Latin American financial systems and slow productive advance (heterogeneous and uneven) was reflected in great difficulties to sustain the growth of the countries.

The mismanagement of current accounts, inconsistencies in trade balances, high rates of inflation, a disorder in public finances, as well as constant increases in public debt, devaluations, and scarce monetary reserves largely explain the erratic behavior of Latin American GDP throughout the twentieth century. The attention to structural problems detracted from the attention that local and regional systems of innovation should have technological development and creativity as internal engines of Latin American development. The development paths were subsumed by national models with divergent industrialization processes via import substitution, which in some countries arrived early and without planning, and in others by the effervescence of regional policies promoted by organizations such as the ECLAC.

The millenary knowledge of our region and the potential of the primary sectors associated with the wealth of raw materials were not enough. The influence of the modern business model and the management of resources and inputs were not combined with the vestiges of a native productive organization, and their meanings on sustainability and the care of natural environments. After World

War II, the economic models adopted in Latin America were largely oriented toward promoting and protecting domestic markets. As international trade was accelerated by the Breton Woods Agreement (1944), new policy instruments and economic regulation schemes appeared. However, the nascent “international cooperation” scheme strengthened the commercial relations of most industrialized countries. In this context, one of the countries most interested in reviving the world economy was the United States. In the voice of its Secretary of State William Lockhart Clayton, the following was emphasized: “We need large markets around the world, where to buy and sell.” This phrase had a very clear background for the country and for Clayton’s businesses, which since the 1920s had started one of the largest family-based companies in the United States, dedicated to the sale of cotton: the Anderson Clayton Co.¹ The international monetary system from 1947 onward was controlled by the International Monetary Fund, and world trade by the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which was replaced in 1995 by the World Trade Organization (WTO). The stabilization of the economies affected by the war required a model of world integration, which did not prosper due to division between capitalist states and socialist states, and in the middle the dependence of the Latin American region.

The global economic dynamics of the 1980s undermined Latin American economic structures through the privatization of parastatals and structural reforms. Trade opening and the gradual collapse of tariff barriers have been motivated to a large extent by the different generations of Regional Trade Agreements (RTAs) as described below. In 2018, 280 Regional Trade Agreements were enabled, of which 80 were concentrated in Latin American countries. According to the IDB, RTAs “constitute a commercial policy strategy that guarantees multiple benefits, such as a greater volume of trade flows, attraction of investments, the achievement of political objectives and other commercial complementarities” (IDB, 2018), and tariff liberalization is one of the key elements.

RTAs, according to the IDB (2018), use three types of liberalization: (1) “liberalization by baskets” by which the elimination of tariffs is assigned to all products and a set of differentiated categories, “providing each one of them a time frame and a path toward the complete elimination of tariffs for goods that originate in one or more of the ACR partner countries.” In this case, the rule of the Most Favored Nation is applied, which avoids conducts unfair; (2) “liberalization by sectors” that subjects all the products of the sector with the marking of exceptions especially for those in which a country is stronger, also working with “protocols that regulate the treatment granted to agricultural products, fishing, and processed agricultural,” and (3) “liberalization through preferential tariffs” which focuses on a preferential tariff.

Subregional Agreements and Customs Unions From the 1960s to 1991. The agreements signed by Latin American countries in this period were the Central American Common Market (CACM) “which began in 1960 as a free trade agreement,” the Andean Community in 1969, the Caribbean Community (Caricom) in 1973), and the Southern Common Market (Mercosur) in 1991 initially signed by Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay, and later by Venezuela, and bilateral agreements signed in the framework of the “Latin American Integration

Association, known as Economic Complementation Agreements (ACE)” whose objective was to provide access to markets and eliminate tariffs.

ACEs correspond to firms between individual countries and between individual countries and RTAs of Latin American countries: for example, Mercosur-Bolivia, Mercosur-Chile, Mexico-Bolivia, Mexico-Uruguay, Mexico-Brazil, and Mexico-Argentina. According to IDB (2018), a significant number of agreements between Latin American countries are due to the increasingly protectionist positions of developed countries, which contradict the principles of international cooperation proposed since the late 1940s by the countries themselves, which were regulatory bodies for trade and international diplomacy.

Intrahemispheric Trade Agreements. The second stage, or second generation of agreements, runs from 1994 to 2003-2004. The most emblematic agreement of the period is undoubtedly the NAFTA, which has concluded its first 25-year stage in 2019 to be renewed as a next-generation agreement. This second wave of RTAs, initiated by Mexico and its partners, was also replicated in the Asian region. In 1996, Canada signed a trade agreement with Chile and in 2001 with Costa Rica. In 1998, Mexico signed agreements with Chile, and in 2004 and 2005 with Mercosur, and with the Andean Community. In 2003, Chile and the United States signed a free trade agreement, followed by the free trade agreement of the Dominican Republic, Central America, and the United States (CAFTAS-DR) in 2004.

Bilateral transcontinental agreements. The third stage or generation of ACR began to take shape between 2000 and 2006. In this regard, we will only point out the agreements in which Mexico participates: the global Agreement between Mexico and the European Union that entered into force in 2000, the Trans-Pacific Treaty (TTP) signed in 2011, and the Economic Association Agreement between Mexico and Japan, signed in 2005, which constituted the first extraregional free trade agreement of Japan (IDB, 2018).

Mega Regional Commercial Agreements. Finally, the latest generation of RTAs have two characteristics: (a) they are agreements that involve mega-regions and b) they constitute aspects that exceed most of the rules negotiated in the first RTAs, including electronic commerce, intellectual property, public procurement, state-owned companies, union and business aspects, exchange of academics, tourists, among other aspects. The latest generation agreements are therefore conceived as “the embryo of new trade rules” because they go beyond the rules of the WTO created in 1995. The IDB pointed out in 2018 that while the latest negotiations of the WTO initiated in Doha in 2001 were bogged down, the RTAs advanced in the integration of the countries, promoting an open regionalism for the benefit of the countries and their companies, and recognizing new employment segments and exchange sectors such as the financial sector, and cross-border relationships.

This scenario of opening and gradual integration between Latin American countries and outside the region does not leave aside the pressure to reduce the costs of large global companies and the time in production cycles. This has led Latin American governments to continue reviewing their development models and implementing strategies to promote innovation, creativity, and technological

development. Now, beyond the international fragmentation of production processes and the opening of economies, Latin American companies with global reach have also emerged in the last four decades, among which are techno-Latin companies.

The millennial strength of Latin America seems to be recovering with the circulation of knowledge in global production networks, the collapse of tariff barriers, and the growing participation of the region in global value chains. Local learning, synergies between companies, entrepreneurs, and the articulation between universities and local governments have made it possible to locate and reinforce regional Latin American innovation systems whose characteristics resemble models such as the Triple Helix. In this context, it is possible to distinguish the presence of important family-based Latin American groups with more than two and three generations, the positioning of business families, and particular modes of entrepreneurship. Latin America has been experiencing for several decades the presence of new developments and technological environments, new financing schemes, and new groups of investors. The growth in product volume and quality has been notable since the early 1990s. The features of Latin American entrepreneurship and its regional foundations can no longer be ignored, even in recent times of uncertainty due to SarsCov2. The legacy is such that one cannot but imagine a better future.

We

We believe that this Handbook covers topics that have been or might be of relevance for the future of entrepreneurship studies in Latin America. We consider its publication a timely (15 years ago might have been unthinkable, since the topic seeds were just getting planted in our region), breaking point event for the ecosystem and all our colleagues (participants in the Handbook or not) throughout the region, since all their work, a wealth of knowledge now substantial and mature, is directly or indirectly reflected in it. The Latin American works are growing more than ever before, and a solid research corpus is now formed, exploring theoretical frameworks and methods from various epistemological positions.

Its audience can get a first approach on the region's literature on creativity, innovation, and how this is related to entrepreneurship (all three areas are deeply embedded, the reason why the Handbook was organized in three sections, one for each, so a more integral view can be made on the last one, entrepreneurship), and how the latter has been evolving through time, and what the future might behold or, most important, what issues should get attention and change the actual patterns.

The reader will have timely information on the theoretical/empirical research that has been done in our region, some of them groundbreaking in the global literature but for some reason, until now, not available to a global audience. This is a project (like we once said in a Zoom meeting we held with all the contributors)

that belongs to all parties involved in the entrepreneurship ecosystem, since everyone, more or less, has contributed.

Although 27 chapters cover the multidimensional reality of the entrepreneurial spectrum in our region, by no means are they exhaustive, and we acknowledged some topics were not covered, such as venture capital, feminist perspectives, technological dynamics, sustainability topics, climate change, and COVID-19, among others. We apologize for that, as agenda issues of our colleagues or the pandemic context were the main obstacles.

We are sure that this Handbook will be a turning point to inspire entrepreneurs, policymakers, academics, not-for-profit organizations, students, teachers, or everyone involved within the ecosystem, to make a change in one's trench, to build a new path for our people and region. Exciting possibilities await to be pursued, explored, and make a real impact in our societies.

Special thanks to all the chapter authors and reviewers, thank you so much for your patience and trust, and to Emerald and our Editor-in-Chief Fiona Allison, for believing in this idea.

The time has come.

Oscar Montiel
Araceli Almaraz Alvarado

Note

1. The expansion of this company into countries in Latin America and Africa reveals business interests that became state interests, as well as the way that Clayton and the United States dodged trade barriers.

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Section I

Creativity and Entrepreneurship in Latin America

Testimonial

Association Our Godchildren of Guatemala (ANA de G) (Asociación Nuestros Ahijados de Guatemala)

Testimony of Vanessa Rodas de Montenegro

... my greatest satisfaction is *the opportunity to serve* ...

For 30 years, ANA de G has had the vision of addressing basic needs based on education as a long-term solution against poverty. The Mother's Club is a strategic program because it supports socially disadvantaged Guatemalan women by empowering them in different areas of their lives since most of them have single-parent families and are illiterate. Empowerment has been achieved by building dynamic capacities to eradicate circles of domestic violence and to get out of the conditions of poverty or extreme poverty in which they live.

In addition, entrepreneurship has been the key mechanism for them to overcome their situation of vulnerability and sustainably generate income through their own business or a microenterprise, whose activity ranges from production to the commercialization of local products, goods, or services. This is accompanied by participation in self-help groups and ongoing training. A very important challenge to overcome is the prevailing machismo in the territory. For this reason, recently, the Parents' Club initiative began with complementary and entrepreneurial activities to reinforce gender equality and respect for the human rights of their wives, daughters, and sons. This group is made up of unemployed parents, with some disability or illness, and the elderly.

This model of empowerment through entrepreneurship with education has multidimensional benefits both at the personal level of women and at the

2 *Testimony of Vanessa Rodas de Montenegro*

collective level of the communities where they live. ANA de G's support is comprehensive, and practically the 200 people in these programs have stated that their lives have changed because their microbusiness (entrepreneurship) allows them to feel their usefulness, self-worth, and productiveness; in addition, it awakens solidarity between them to move forward as a community. These programs have made it possible to advance on a culture of "achievement" to leave welfare assistance and motivate them to change the negative and become productive mothers, innovators, and agents of change with their economic income.

The process begins with literacy and training in trade workshops (education), and with a collaborative approach, they also dignify their homes. I believe that ANA de G processes should be strengthened through social reinvention and innovation to achieve sustainable community and local development ventures, which would allow achieving mobilization, relocation, and multimedia with sustained governance framed in the different realities, values, and own needs as a starting point.

Chapter 1

Creativity and Entrepreneurship in Latin America: The Time has Come

*Hortensia Mínguez García, Oscar Montiel
and Araceli Almaraz Alvarado*

Abstract

Through the metaphor of navigation, we offer the reader a journey that goes from the literature review about the main theories of creativity throughout the last century to the present, to later address it for Latin America, outlining some reflections on its current context, as well as what the future holds. The literature review shows that, unlike the Western Hemisphere, creativity as a line of research in our region has been somewhat neglected, without being given its rightful place, generally very little addressed. Therefore, it is proposed to get back on track, rescuing what has been done and through an exercise of reflection, proposing new lines of research linked to creativity itself, to innovation, and also toward entrepreneurship.

Keywords: Creativity; innovation; entrepreneurship; Latin America; ecosystem; national system

We ended up being a laboratory of failed illusions. Our greatest virtue is creativity, and yet we haven't done much more than to live on overheated doctrines and wars of others, heirs of a Christopher Columbus hapless who found us by chance when he was looking for the Indies.¹

The Port (About Creativity)

In ancient times, creation was only the power of the divine. Man, at the foot of the Platonic conception, could only imitate the shadows of things and, therefore, creating, as such, was not his competence or concern.

What we did not understand due to its originality, beauty, and inexplicable origins, such as poetry or music, was the consequence of the inspiration of the muses who seized man, possessing him and deceiving him with their songs, like sirens, toward madness and creative delusion. In addition, very contrary to what we assume today, the rest of artists – such as painters – were artificial men destined only to serve, due to their skills, to manufacture and build beautiful things, that is, aesthetically pleasing objects due to their ability to mimic Nature.

From this perspective, it is important to understand that the faculty to create – anthropocentrically speaking – did not even make sense since, only Nature or the Gods were worthy of engendering such unintelligible enterprises, and therefore, creativity per se was inaccessible to us, mortals.

The idea of creating, from which we will start to understand what creativity is today, is a much more current and complicated construct. Although in its origins, as we said, it was linked to the theocratic vision and therefore, to the Christian concept of *creatio ex nihilo*, that is, the creation of the universe by a divine entity from nothing, it was from the twentieth century when we can talk about creativity.

The first intellectuals to promote the concept of creativity between 1930 and 1950 were Robert Crawford, Karl Duncker, Alex Osborn, and William Gordon. However, it is the American psychologist Joy Paul Guilford to whom we owe the popularization of the term and the impetus of its study. His lecture “Creativity” delivered in 1950 in front of the *American Psychological Association (APA)*, marked a decisive watershed in the history of creativity. In it, the theoretical bases of the future studies were established based on the axiom that creativity was not an exclusive characteristic of gifted geniuses or with a high intellectual capacity, but a systemic set of aptitudes immanent to all human beings that, each one, at different levels, we use to express ourselves culturally or solve any activity or problem.

In addition, Guilford was who identification some of the characteristics of creative subjects such as the capacity for synthesis and analysis from divergent thinking, originality, fluency, argumentative capacity, and decisive. In this way, divergent intellectual traits are potentially observable, measurable, and educable to which we should add more contemporary meanings such as those of [Pawlak \(2000\)](#) and [Vecina \(2006\)](#) regarding the possession of a strong personal judgment and the capacity to accept criticism, and on the other hand, the tendency to risk, nonconformity, and independence of judgment, respectively.

Since then, creativity has become an object of study for many areas of knowledge, reaching popularity status decades later, currently being of interest to neuroscience, psychology, pedagogy, sociology, art, and related areas, and later, to those interested in the fields of innovation and entrepreneurship.² All of them, striving to unravel mysteries regarding the ontology of being and the complexity of the creative subject concerning the mind, thought, intelligence, personality, characterology, in addition to other dimensions of the construct of creativity such as the process of creating a creative environment design. Without leaving aside

the area of education and companies – sometimes in partnership – to deepen the Creativity and improve the instruments for its evaluation.³

Making a recount of the contributions of the past and present century, today we could infer that creating implies perpetrating an activity conceived from the free subject who make original results (Arieti, 1976; Frondizi, 1977), new (Romo, 2006) and useful (Sternberg & Lubart, 1997) Creators of products or ideas that allow us to think a new way of restructuring stereotyped situations (Getzels & Jackson, 1962) and generate new variants of available knowledge (Koestler, 1964; Stein, 1953).⁴ What we usually consider creative usually responds to ideas or products derived from associative processes in which the subject processes the available knowledge in different ways. Either, generating unusual relationships between distant and previously disconnected semantic nuclei (Mednick, 1962; Mednick et al., 1964; Osborn, 1953; Parnes, 1962; Thurstone, 1952), reasoning fluently in an analogical way, solving problems through divergent or lateral thinking (De Bono, 1967, 1999), or simply giving unusual uses to common objects.

In turn, creativity has been defined as the result of applied imagination (Ribot & González Serrano, 1901), a specific nonstatic capacity of the human mind (Gardner, 1983, 1995, 2001) capable of handling different types of intelligence (Guilford, 1950, 1967), and solve problems. In short, a concept that great authors have been defining as an aptitude for knowing how to give operational form to certain problems (De Bono, 1999; Torrance, 1998) or as knowing how to decide and invest (Sternberg, 1990); while in parallel, others point out that we must also understand creativity as a vital attitudinal potential for the man (Maslow, 1994; Rogers, 1972) since creating, supposes, reaching the highest degree of self-realization (which can be linked to that outcome of entrepreneurship) or self-update and therefore a peak experience (Maslow, 1943):⁵

For them to bear their best results, all peak experiences must be understood as culminations of acts [...] or as the recollection of Gestalt psychologists, or according to Reich's paradigm of the complete orgasm, or as a total discharge, a catharsis, a culmination, a climax, a consummation, an emptying or a conclusion (Maslow, 1968, p. 111). Two years later, he would add that a peak experience is similar to "the perception of infinite horizons opening to vision, the feeling of being simultaneously more powerful and weaker than one has ever been before, a feeling of ecstasy, magic and reverence, the loss of location in the temporal and spatial dimensions.

(Maslow, 1970, p. 164)

Now, beyond the creativity centered on the individual in the hands of Humanist Psychology with Maslow or Rogers at the head front, another compendium of authors inferred how determining is, for our creative psyche, the environment, the environments, and other socio-historical factors.⁶ Cuban-born Albertina Mitjans (1991) reminds us that "creativity cannot be explained solely in

terms of cognitive operations” (p. 120). As bodies located in a time and space that we are, since the mid-eighties and especially since the 1990s, creativity has been studied with a much more integrative approach where not only are the personality, cognitive, affective, and motivational factors of the subjects considered relevant but also the social and contextual ones.

Thus, in addition to [Mitjás \(1991\)](#), it should be added other authors who, such as Mihály [Csíkszentmihályi \(1988, 1998\)](#), [Robert Sternberg and Todd Lubart \(1997, 1999\)](#) or [Amabile \(1996\)](#), conceive creativity as a phenomenon that integrates both individuality and socialization of creative processes in a specific context. A current, although not emerging, perspective that helps us better understand the complexity of the scope of creativity as a systemic model.

On the edge of these ideas, Csíkszentmihályi published his systems model for creativity in 1988. A theory that would close with a flourish with his famous work *Creativity: Flow and the psychology of discovery and invention* (1998) in which we can see how the author articulates that creativity is a motor system of cultural evolution in which the interaction of the creative individual, the cultural domain or context, and the field of professionals, experts or competent personalities that will give viability and recognition to what is produced by the subject. [Csíkszentmihályi \(1998, ed. 2015\)](#) said:

There is no way to know if a thought is new if it is not by reference to some criteria, and there is no way to tell if it is valuable until it passes the social evaluation. Therefore, creativity does not occur within people’s heads, but in the interaction between a person’s thoughts and a sociocultural context. It is a systemic phenomenon, rather than an individual one (p. 41). Later he adds: (...) Creativity can only be observed in the interactions of a system made up of three main parts. The first of these is the *field*, which consists of a series of symbolic rules and procedures. Mathematics is a field (...) In turn, the fields are located in what we usually call culture, or symbolic knowledge shared by a particular society, or by humanity as a whole. The second component of creativity is the *domain*, which includes all individuals who act as guardians of the gates that give access to the field. Your job is to decide whether a new idea or product should be included in the field. (...) Finally, the third component of the creative system is the *person*. Creativity takes place when a person, using the symbols of a given domain, such as music, engineering, business, or mathematics, has a new idea or sees a new layout, and when this novelty is selected by the corresponding domain to be included in the appropriate field. (...) Thus, the definition that follows from this perspective is: creativity is any act, idea, or product that changes an existing field, or that transforms an existing field into a new one. And the definition of a creative person is someone whose thoughts and actions change a field or establish a new field.

(pp. 46–47)

To this end, Csíkszentmihályi incurred the need to rethink what we consider characteristic of creative subjects, to include – from this more kaleidoscopic systemic view – the importance of being able to preview the permanent mutability and changing the speed of those domains and areas at the same time, the effect that these have directly on our creative processes.

The Piaget's legacy about how knowledge is generated and structured, the general theory of Bertalanffy systems, the paradigm of the complexity of Morin (1998) and the international spread of the transdisciplinary vision, are some of the architectural pillars of creativity studies today. Epistemological pillars supported by concepts such as: the multidimensionality of problems, the polycasuality of phenomena, the holographic paradigm (Mínguez, 2011), and other concepts related to chaos theory, chance, the dialectic of order/disorder, the properties of systems such as the resilience and self-organization (autopoiesis) (Garcia, 2006) and a long etcetera.

From this point of view, we could name the Spanish Saturnino de la Torre, with his idea of paradoxical creativity (2003) in which, for the first time, it is taken into consideration that some of the most valuable products or creative ideas for humanity were not born precisely from a conscious creative process and in favorable contexts if not by chance, or through the power of resilience to “transform adversity into creativity” (2006, p. 157). De la Torre (2006) explains it as follows:

Creativity has been understood throughout the 20th century as a good, a quality, emotional and cognitive. Creativity, as the exuberant face of the human being, increases in states of well-being, balance, of favorable conditions. (...) Now, if this were so, how then to explain the works, discoveries, inventions, and creative contributions that arose in conditions of loss of freedom, in emotionally regrettable states, in adverse conditions, or as a consequence of errors and failures? How to explain the creativity that sometimes arises after a disaster, a serious illness, a traumatic separation, unemployment, or retirement? (p. 158). (...) This type of event and all those that are rooted in mistakes, chance, adversity, and irreparable losses, is what I call paradoxical creativity or creative adversity. Paradoxical, because precisely that transforming energy that exists in each one of us does not arise from abundance, but from adversity. (...) Thus, Paradoxical creativity is the human potential to transform and transform in the face of adversity or deficiency states. It is accompanied by the awareness of the situation, emotional energy, and an overcoming attitude.

(pp. 160–161)

Currently, the contributions of the Cuban-Brazilian psychologist Albertina Mitjás Martínez and the Brazilian Maria Candida Moraes are also noteworthy. [Mitjás \(2006\)](#) argues that “Creativity, as one of how the human is expressed, maintains with other processes relationships of articulation, interpenetration, interdependence, and unity without which it cannot be understood, and for which, more general conceptions and theories are necessary” (p. 116) such as those of complexity. Therefore, the author defines it as:

(...) A complex process of human subjectivity in its simultaneous condition of individual and social subjectivity. (...) But beware, as the author puts it, considering creativity as a complex process of human subjectivity implies recognizing its singular, recursive, contradictory and inclusive nature that is unpredictable, which is in contradiction with still deeply rooted beliefs such as, for example, the fact that there is a profile of creative individuals or that there are quite universally barriers to creativity.

(pp. 118–119)

In short, a vision that is related to the idea of paradoxical creativity of which we spoke in earlier lines and that, come to blur the path traced by some of the researchers of the last century. Especially in the field of psychology and education; the latter, an area in which the author has also incurred, in the need to promote a transpersonal awareness ([De la Torre & Moraes, 2006](#)). A form of awareness that is aware of the problems that concern us today in tune with nature, highly involved with achieving the common good at the ecosystem level.

Finally, we will close this brief overview about creativity with [Moraes \(2006\)](#), who has joined the diatribe of opening the studies of creativity transgressing any anthropocentric conception to argue that nature should also be considered in itself, a creative entity by how it self-organizes, self-regulates, and evolves. [Moraes \(2006\)](#) asks:

Is nature creative or is creativity just a capacity intrinsic to human nature? Could it be that there is a creative intelligence responsible for the evolution of life? Is not creativity a capacity to give rise to new forms, to new wholes, a property present like both an amoeba and that of a human being? (...).

(p. 102)

Her questions give us a glimpse of some of her sources of inspiration openly declared by the same author, such as the theories of the physicists Ilya Prigogine, David Bohm, Gerd Ginning, and those of the biochemist Rupert Sheldrake. Especially when [Bohm \(2009\)](#) spins the concept of structure – which we could define as a hierarchical system based on a certain order – to any energy system in motion. Thus, from the micro to the macro, each atom, cell, multicellular organism, planet, star, or galaxy constitutes a particular way of ordering and articulating the elements that compose them. Hence, Moraes’ conception of