## 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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Emerald Publishing Limited Howard House, Wagon Lane, Bingley BD16 1WA, UK

First edition 2022

Editorial matter and selection © 2022 Oscar Montiel and Araceli Almaraz Alvarado. Individual chapters © 2022 The authors.

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#### **British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data**

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-80071-956-9 (Print) ISBN: 978-1-80071-955-2 (Online) ISBN: 978-1-80071-957-6 (Epub)



ISOQAR certified Management System, awarded to Emerald for adherence to Environmental standard ISO 14001:2004.





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 Universitè 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

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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.