

## Chronicle of a transformation foretold

*Víctor Hugo Malagón Basto\**

He was so perplexed by the enigma that fate had touched him with, that he kept falling into lyrical distractions that ran contrary to the rigor of his profession. Most of all, he never thought it legitimate that life should make use of so many coincidences forbidden literature, so that there should be the untrammelled fulfilment of a death so clearly foretold.

Gabriel García Márquez, *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*

In today's knowledge society, with the inevitable advance towards what we know as the Fourth Industrial Revolution, development approaches and theories that privilege cooperation among various significant actors for the generation, transmission and application of relevant knowledge are gaining importance. Even more so now, in the midst of this unexpected pandemic that has put us to the test as a society, has put our habits and customs to the test and, what is more relevant, has put to the test old structures, methodologies, pedagogies and didactics, forcing companies, universities, States and civil society to accelerate the inevitable transformation that had been announced in the rhetoric of our society, but that was only timidly advancing towards its realization.

For this reason, the theories and approaches that insist on university-business and state-society articulation are not only enlightening, but also a fundamental reference for understanding the path that knowledge societies must follow in the search for and achievement of acceptable standards of sustainable development.

Since the first decade of this century, a line and a significant group of researchers worldwide have been consolidating their efforts to explain the characteristics, evolution, postulates, implications and, above all, the results and applications of the "triple helix" model. At the beginning of the century, Henry Etzkowitz and Loet Leydesdorff began to enunciate this model under the analogy of a helix with three blades that represent the integration of a harmonious system of collaboration between universities, companies and the State, for the

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\* University Professor. Manager of Colombia Científica. President of the Presidents Forum. Businessman and member of boards of directors.

intelligent and relevant promotion of science, technology and innovation, including a new broader and more comprehensive scope of innovation to the traditional policies for the promotion of research and development, hence the evolution of the concept of R&D to a new and generalized concept of R&D&I (research, development and innovation).

From this new perspective, the potential and virtues of the relationship between universities, companies and the State are more clearly understood, as a conformation of inter-institutional forces that allow for better innovation scenarios and ecosystems in today's societies, since not only does each actor play a role and fulfill a conclusive role in the course of a society's innovation, but also the behaviors, languages and modes of relationship, in themselves, are decisive messages for the achievement of development.

It is no less important to stress the relevant and recent inclusion of a new "blade" in the helix, represented by organized civil society bodies, which are also responsible for the necessary dialogue in this area of innovation and competitiveness. Not surprisingly the broader, more comprehensive and coherent idea of the "tetra helix" is currently proliferating.

The capacity to produce new knowledge and innovation (including technological development) is closely related to the characteristics of a country's human capital and its capacity for the effective development of science, technology and innovation activities, through tetra helix alliances. Therefore, although the formation of highly qualified human capital becomes a factor that determines the quality and production of new knowledge, it is necessary to have adequate conditions to develop knowledge generation processes, i.e., installed capacities for the development of research and innovation activities, as well as sufficient incentives for the participation of the best professionals in them.

Thus, the fundamental preliminary step to consolidate a quality higher education and research system that responds to the country's needs in educational and productive terms, and that effectively contributes to the transformation process towards a more developed, innovative and competitive country, is the increase of investment in higher education and research, focused on projects identified as pertinent and with priority for the country's development.

This is, without a doubt, the tone of the articles included in this special issue of the journal *Revista CIFE*, made up of business application projects of my esteemed students of the Graduate School of Business (GSB) of the Universidad del Rosario. In addition to thanking the academic authorities of Universidad Santo Tomás and Universidad del Rosario for this generous invitation, I must give special recognition to the effort and dedication of the authors. As professor at the GSB, I have had the privilege of directing students on several occasions in the development of their applied business project (ABP) and I am an exceptional witness of the enormous professional, personal and family effort involved in the development of these projects which, in short, are a concrete contribution to practical and relevant knowledge, always in the spirit that we have previously called "tetra helix".

The journal that the reader has in his hands deals in this special issue with six articles of practical application, entirely appropriate and with specific contributions to the current reality of our country. We will see, for example, the design of a knowledge management system for patient safety that offers concrete solutions to the main problems of quality and care in the different stages of health care provision, as well as the relationship of these processes with authorities and public entities at national and local levels. Along this line, we will have the opportunity to know the specific proposal of a strategic marketing map that responds to the needs of the environment of health companies, seeking the best and greater approach of interest groups to their rehabilitation services, with a practical application model in a particular company (Profesionales de la Salud y Cía.).

On the road to the application of knowledge in other sectors, it is of great interest for the reader to know, through the case study of a construction company (Unión Constructora Álamos S. A. S.), the development of a strategic planning model that involves specific dimensions of operation, management, product, environment and even organizational culture.

The routes of adaptation and transformation of the financial sector are also present in this edition, addressing models such as the progress of digital transformation ranging from plans that show an increase in digital adoption rates in the digital channels of Banco Amigo to the development of a venture in the Colombian *fintech* sector (as is the case of ABI-Microcréditos), based on the collaborative economy and that lays the foundations of knowledge for the development of a sustainable strategy against informal credit systems based on a large technological and social component.

Finally, the last article makes us dream with the development of Colombian undertakings, with an important and necessary focus on equity, led by women and implemented with absolute professionalism, learning environments, personal growth and female empowerment, through the interesting and challenging SerendipiaWooman methodology.

I am sure that readers will be as delighted as I am to dive into the reading of these texts, knowing that behind each of them there is relevant knowledge, stories and unique and meritorious life projects, as well as a certain, specific and constructive bet that necessarily involves coordination between university, business, state and civil society.

Allow me, dear reader, a final disquisition —key for the understanding and the true application of this knowledge that we will address—: in our society, a harmonious, active and efficient collaboration among the four blades of our helix will only be possible when we are able to depose and completely banish the “egos” (personal and institutional), when we are able to speak and recognize ourselves as peers, to recognize in the other the value of his vision in the difference, when we are able to overcome that populism that speaks of ‘common good’ in rhetoric but is far from applying it in practice, when we are able to break down the

walls of languages and categories that distance us, when we are able, especially as a ‘university’, to build *unity in diversity*. This, of course, entails the most important challenge in the chronicle of this announced transformation: the cultural one.

For the title of these lines I have used one of the most important titles in the recent history of world literature which, by the hand of the great Gabriel García Márquez, continues to teach us lessons every day: “Chronicle of a Death Foretold”. I invite you to make this reflection on the urgent cultural transformation, for the advancement of our society, as passionate as the one of that judge with obvious “literature fever”, who never appeared in the summary papers of the case of the death of Santiago Nasar:

He was so perplexed by the enigma that fate had touched him with, that he kept falling into lyrical distractions that ran contrary to the rigor of his profession. Most of all, he never thought it legitimate that life should make use of so many coincidences forbidden literature, so that there should be the untrammelled fulfilment of a death so clearly foretold.

