Preface

The founders and frontrunners of management and organization studies, from Chester Barnard and Mary Parker Follet to James G. March and Karl E. Weick, provided organization scholars with a great many insights, theories, and conceptualizations. Yet even a cursory observation of the contemporary developments reveals many new phenomena, either within the field of organizing or of obvious relevance to it. Some of them may be old processes in new shapes (perhaps all of them are); some may be truly new, but all need some re-thinking.

This is why I asked 15 mid-career scholars to contribute to this volume, to share with me and with readers their opinions on what should be studied in the next decade or so. Most of them had had experiences of living and working in several countries, so local variations of global phenomena were also taken into account. Some of them added to their own wealth of experience by seeking the opinions of younger colleagues.

The chapters in this volume begin with a text that briefly presents the history of management, in order to speculate about its future. A similar stance has been taken by the authors of the following chapters, which represent traditional subdivisions of management and organization studies: accounting, marketing, strategy, personnel. Communication and technology are also on the verge of becoming topics with a long tradition. Other chapters present either new phenomena or new directions of research in established areas: gender, globalization, diversity. It can be said that the range of topics relevant to management and organization is widening, so it should be of no surprise to anyone that waste management can be a neighbor of art management or that the obvious impact of popular culture may turn scholarly interest toward spies and other hidden organizations. The volume ends with a discussion of the future of research in the context of management education.

I abstain from summarizing messages contained in the chapters, because, as Hayden White (1990) so rightly noticed, the form is also the content. Particular chapters are dedicated to specific phenomena that the authors consider worthy of study, but there are also samples of various forms of writing. Readers need to familiarize themselves with the originals, rather than relying on second-hand renditions.

All I can promise is that there is much to choose from.

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