Acknowledgements

The conception of this book dates back to the summer of the year 2000: over the long time span till the work has gone to press I have contracted too many debts with too many people for adequately acknowledging them all in a small space here. For this reason, and uncomfortably, I will necessarily have to be selective.

First of all, I wish to thank Elio Borgonovi and all the numerous colleagues at the Institute of Public and Health Care Management at Bocconi University, an institute that is now part of the larger Department of Institutional Analysis and Public Management – a denomination that perfectly summarizes the two broad streams of study and academic investigation that have nourished the elaboration of this book. The even larger ‘community’ of colleagues at the Public Management and Policy Area of SDA Bocconi School of Management has provided me with incommensurable inputs, stimuli and opportunities of professional development that have so crucially contributed to the preparation of this book. The intense collaboration with three younger colleagues, Dario Barbieri, Paolo Fedele and Davide Galli, has been especially enriching for me. Research projects that have provided important findings for this book have been conducted in close collaboration with Fabrizio Pezzani and Giovanni Valotti, to whom I am very grateful.

The research work conducted for the publication of the Italian edition of Christopher Pollitt and Geert Bouckaert’s authoritative book Public Management Reform: A Comparative Analysis, which included a new section on Italy, was the starting point of this endeavour. Over the time, I have contracted a huge intellectual debt towards Geert Bouckaert and Christopher Pollitt: their suggestions have powerfully contributed to my research work.

The periods of study and research that I conducted abroad powerfully contributed to my development as a researcher: I am particularly grateful to Michael Barzelay (the London School of Economics and Political Science) and B. Guy Peters and Alberta Sbragia (the University of Pittsburgh). During my stay in London I particularly benefited from the interchanges with Alberto Asquer, Anne Corbett, Francisco Gaetani, Raquel Gallego, Surapong Malee and Valentina Mele; my attendance at innumerable seminars helped me a lot in shaping this book. Closer to
home, a number of prominent scholars visited Bocconi on a long-term basis during these years: among them, I am especially grateful to Anne Drumaux, Les Metcalfe and Christoph Reichard for their highly valuable inputs.

The authors of the articles in the special issue on ‘Public Management Reform in Napoleonic States: France, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain’ that I had the honour of editing for the *International Journal of Public Sector Management* contributed to a joint intellectual enterprise that has profoundly shaped this book: I am grateful to Isabel Corte-Real, Salvador Parrado, B. Guy Peters, Luc Rouban, Calliope Spanou and Giovanni Valotti as well as to those who served as reviewers for the special issue: Giovanni Azzone, Geert Bouckaert, Eugenio Caperchione, Cristoph Reichard, Jeffrey Straußman and the anonymous reviewers. Later, the interchanges I had with the authors that contributed to the symposium on the journal *Public Administration* were particularly inspiring: I want to thank particularly the editor Walter Kickert – his ideas about the different theoretical perspectives from which to investigate Southern European countries have proved of great importance in the preparation of this book – as well as all the authors: Carlos Alba and Carmen Navarro, José Magone, Dimitri Sotiropoulos and Calliope Spanou.

Martin Painter and B. Guy Peters were so kind as to invite me to the Workshop ‘Administrative Traditions: Inheritances and Transplants in Comparative Perspective’, held at the City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, 25–27 June 2007. I learnt much from the comments on my presentation of a paper on the Napoleonic administrative tradition on that occasion, and from the debate at large: the first part of Chapter 7 would probably not have seen the light without my attendance at that seminar: I am profoundly grateful to Martin Painter and B. Guy Peters, the promoters, as well as all the participants who attended the seminar, namely: Philippe Bezes, Anthony Cheung, O.P. Dwivedi, John Halligan, Shafiqul Huque, Goran Hyden, Martin Lodge, Jan Meyer-Sahling, Yorge Nef, Dimitri Sotiropoulos, Tony Verheijen, Kutsal Yesilkagit.

The organizers of the First Trans-European Dialogue (TED1) on the theme ‘Towards the Neo-Weberian State? Europe and Beyond’, held at the Tallinn Institute of Technology, Tallinn, 30 January to 1 February 2008, thought of me as one of the contributors to the start-up conference of a series aimed at building important bridges between public administrators across Europe: I am grateful to Geert Bouckaert, Wolfgang Drechsler, Christopher Pollitt and Tiina Randma-Liiv as well as to all the participants to the first Trans-European Dialogue, whose ‘round table’ interactive format created an exciting opportunity for the progress of
the research on the topic of the Neo-Weberian State. The second part of Chapter 7 owes very much to my attendance at that conference.

The members of the academic network named ‘Comparative Public Organization Data Base for Research and Analysis’ – COBRA – chaired by Geert Bouckaert and B. Guy Peters provided me with invaluable inputs and advice, since I joined the network in 2005, on different pieces that later contributed to the book. I thus also wish to thank Koen Verhoest, Eva Beuselink, Falke Meyers, Bram Verschuere (now at the University of Gent) and Ian Rommel from the Institute of Public Management at Katholieke Universiteit Leuven; Per Lægreid, Paul Roness and Kristin Rubecksen at the University of Bergen; Tom Christensen at the University of Oslo; Jon Pierre at the University of Goteborg; Christoph Reichard, Werner Jann and the team at the University of Potsdam; Sandra Van Thiel and Kutsal Yesilkagit at, respectively, Erasmus University, Rotterdam, and the University of Goteborg; Christoph Reichard, Werner Jann and the team at the Institute of Public Administration in Dublin; Oliver James at the University of Exeter; John Burns and Janice Caulfield from the University of Hong Kong and Martin Painter from the City University of Hong Kong; Chris Aulich, John Halligan and Roger Wettenhall from the Centre for Research in Public Sector Management at the University of Canberra; Ian Thynne from Charles Darwin University; Bidhya Bowornwathana from Chulalongkorn University.

Andrew Massey and Ellen Wayenberg, with whom I have co-chaired since 2006 the Permanent Study Group on Intergovernmental Relations of EGPA (the European Group of Public Administration), have provided me with inputs and reflections. The opportunity to write a chapter for the forthcoming *International Handbook of Civil Service Systems*, edited by Andrew Massey, for the same publisher as this book has been a source of ideas for the section on personnel reform in Italy. I am particularly grateful to Andrew for his esteem and continuous support, in many ways.

Last, but definitely not least, I wish to thank Joanne Betteridge, Alexandra O’Connell, Elizabeth Clack, Alice O’Mahoney and all the team at Edward Elgar, for their patience, understanding and support. Errors are all mine.

Edoardo Ongaro
Milan, March 2009