

PROJECTS AND COMPLEXITY

EDITED BY
FRANCESCO VARANINI
WALTER GINEVRI

 **CRC Press**
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AN AUERBACH BOOK

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*The English edition of this book is dedicated to Carlo Notari
for his unwavering support, and generous and endless
inspiration in helping to transform an idea into this book.*



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Foreword

This is an important book, for three principal reasons.

First, it addresses complexity, an area that is becoming increasingly important in the management of projects. There has been a developing literature on this subject, and over the last five years or so the profile of project-based complexity has been on a significantly accelerating trajectory.

Second, this book looks at complex projects through a number of interesting lenses, and in a cultural context that is quite different from many academic accounts. A markedly different sociological, philosophical, and cognitive perspective has been applied to the subject area, exposing new and novel viewpoints that add some thought-provoking insights to an already stimulating debate.

Third, emerging project management seeks to unravel a number of misconceptions about the field of project-based management, and attempts to document an “emerging” model of project management that embraces elements and incorporates concepts that take us in a distinctly different direction from the traditional and historically accepted “plan, then execute” project paradigm. In time it may become one of the cornerstones of what we may want to call “Project Management 2.0.”

The contributions offered here look at project management in such a way that your curiosity is awakened, and Walter Ginevri and his team of contributors, researchers, and colleagues are to be commended for this. I personally became aware of this material through a meeting with one of the contributors at a research conference. After that meeting, and a spirited discussion about the complexity that pervades and surrounds the modern project domain, Walter personally sent me a copy of the original text, in Italian.

Although I was very pleased to receive this kind and well-meant gift, unfortunately, the content was not very accessible to me (it is probably fair to say that my command of the Italian language would be challenged by the need to order a cup of coffee). My only Italian colleague at the time was not particularly entranced about carrying out a personal and essentially “bespoke” translation of all 300 pages of the original edition, so I was delighted to learn that progress was being made toward offering a published English translation. We have now arrived at that moment.

Inevitably, in the translation from the original Italian, I suspect that there are places where some of the subtlety of meaning is marginally either lost or distorted, and at times therefore, this is not a relaxing or a straightforward read. However, it has often been said that nothing worthwhile is ever acquired easily, and the rewards for those who persevere include an opportunity to look at the issues documented here in a quite different light.

So, what is this book trying to tell us? Vitrally, one of the key messages, and one that has been emerging from a number of different directions and research perspectives, is that project-based management is much more than the execution of an agreed-upon and defined plan. No one is suggesting that planning be abandoned, but this text is keen to stress that projects are uncertain, and that the turbulent environments in which they are executed add to that uncertainty.

This means that a range of emerging factors within the project management domain are pushed into prominence, and the content of emerging project management seeks to address these from a number of different perspectives. There will be some issues raised here with which the “traditional” project manager (if there is such a thing) will be profoundly uncomfortable. Looking at project management through a humanistic and philosophical lens is revealing, and often disturbing, but it is an important way of unraveling and dissecting elements of project-based work that are often taken for granted.

This does not mean that some of the more “traditional” elements within project-based management are ignored; there are sections in this text that deal with WBS, stakeholders, risk management, leadership, and with other mainstream components of project management. However, different philosophical and cultural viewpoints are adopted, and we can all learn from adopting different perspectives, especially in an area where we are very familiar with “accepted” thought. Indeed, it appears at times that the intention of this book is to take the reader as far away from accepted thought as is reasonably possible.

So, there are interesting viewpoints and perspectives, challenging concepts, and examples that offer a cultural viewpoint that the English speaker will find stimulating, and may find both thought-provoking, and inspiring. I particularly engaged with the sections on complexity, on the project as a complex adaptive system, and on *chrónos*-versus-*kairós* time. Some of these issues are starting to emerge as key elements in the future landscape of project-based management, and this text will assist in appreciating,

understanding, and accepting the need for project management to be explored and documented in new and different ways.

Read this book. It will reward you in many ways, and will probably change the way that you think about project management in the future.

Dr. Steve Leybourne
Boston University



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We are grateful to Francesco Varanini and Walter Ginevri who have provided leadership to the project and promoted the very first edition of this work: *The Emerging Project Management: The Project as a Complex System*, Guerini & Associati, Milan, Italy, 2009. This English version of the book is nearly an identical translation of the original Italian edition.

We are thankful to Livio Paradiso for his dedication and hard work in leading the English translation. We express our profound gratitude to Diego Centanni for his vision and persistence in transforming our Italian publication into an international edition. Without the passion and timely insight of Senior Editor John Wyzalek and his team at Taylor & Francis Group, the English edition of this book would not have been possible.



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About the Editors

Francesco Varanini spent three years as an anthropologist in Ecuador after obtaining his degree in sociology. On returning to Italy, he took a position with Mondadori, Italy's leading publisher, with responsibility for human resources development, organization services, and the full-text database of company products. Currently he works as a teacher and senior consultant in strategic and organizational development, new media, and social skills for change management. His projects include the Corporate University of Mobile Telecommunications Operator Vodafone and the Virtual Campus for e-Learning of Banca Intesa/Banca Commerciale Italiana (Italy's leading banking group), Internal Portal of Autogrill Group. He also is member of faculty, head of e-business and information and communication technology area, director of e-business management master, and director of customer relationship management master for ISTUD—Istituto di Studi Direzionali (Italian Business School). He is also managing editor of *Persone & Conoscenze* (<http://www.este.it/res/rivista/rid/1/p/Persone+e+Conoscenze>), adjunct professor in knowledge management, Università di Pisa, Corso di Laurea in Informatica Umanistica (digital humanities), and scientific director of Assoetica (www.assoetica.it).

Walter Ginevri, PMP®, PgMP®, has many years of experience as a senior consultant specializing in optimizing processes through the adoption of proven methodologies and tools. In this role, he collaborated with the most prestigious industrial groups and financial institutions providing advisory services within organizational turnaround programs.

He has participated in European research projects (Esprit, Eureka), contributed articles to several journals and attended, as an invited speaker, international congresses about project and portfolio management.

As founder and managing partner of PM for Complexity, he is a project advisor and executive coach for top firms in Italy, Germany, and France. He is also a senior trainer at the University of Verona and the Politecnico of Milan.

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About the Contributors

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Diego Centanni is a Rotarian and project manager in the construction industry. He has lived and worked in Europe, Africa and North America. After his master's in engineering and project management, he learned to respond to a complex environment, in a perpetually unknown combination of circumstances and possibilities. He is now a project management specialist with more than five years of experience in project management, stakeholders' management, project costing and forecasting, development, and marketing. Centanni has a passion for challenges and is a lifelong scholar with an entrepreneurial spirit. Full details at www.dthere.com.

Luca Comello is a project office manager at Electrolux. He collaborates with Professor De Toni in research and publishing texts on complexity theories and the analysis of their implications in the organizational field. Among these titles are: *Prey or Spiders: Men and Organizations in the Cobweb of Complexity* (2005, UTET Università, Italy) and *Journey Into Complexity* (2010, Lulu).

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Alberto Felice De Toni is a professor of operations management at the University of Udine, Italy, and is dean of the faculty of engineering. He is an author and coauthor of many publications including several books such as *International Operations Management: Lessons in Global Business* (2011, Gower Publishing), *Open Facility Management: A Successful Implementation in a Public Administration* (2009, IFMA—European Facility Management Network) and *Journey into Complexity* (2010, Lulu).

Fernando Giancotti is a major general of the Italian Air Force, and the defense attaché for the Italian Embassy in Berlin. He was formerly in charge of the staff policies, organization, and legal affairs of the Italian Air Forces. He published two essays in the United States and several articles and two books in Italy including *Leadership agile nella Complessità (Agile Leadership in Complex Environment)*, published in 2008, by Guerini, Milan.

Mariù Moresco is a primary school teacher for many years and has researched various teaching methods and learning strategies. Over the past several years, she has applied project management techniques to education and trained a team of teachers for this initiative. Thanks to her cooperation with PMI Northern Italy Chapter experts, she designed and tested a methodological kit for project management in schools.

Stefano Morpurgo, an engineer, has worked for 25 years in management and project management, mostly with multinational companies. Since 2004 he has been a freelance trainer, coach, and project manager running IT and re-engineering projects for large public and private companies. He gained PMP certification in 2008, is an active member of PMI Northern Italy Chapter, and PMI-NIC director-at-large since 2010.

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Roberto Villa's, PMP®, liberal arts education, technological experience and organization mindset are what distinguish Roberto. He has years of experience in both IT innovation projects and implementation of Lean methodologies in telco contexts. His curiosity led him to explore worlds, through small companies and large corporations. He then moved to project management, in a chaotic but not random way drawn by an invisible thread connecting passion, ability, and opportunity. He applies what he learned—and believes in—through his company, Projectize, with work, training, associations, conferences, testimonies, and writings.



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Introduction

This book is about projects and complexity but, because of its birth, it's a project in itself as well: an initiative aimed at reaching a goal within limits of time and cost. It's also a complex system: it has been drawn up with the contribution of several authors, who started comparing each other's experiences, and at the same time definitely influenced each other. Its origin lies in different processes as well, such as individual writing, dialogues, and teamwork.

Everything started from a proposal Francesco Varanini made to the PMI® Northern Italy Chapter (NIC), a professional association he had been co-operating with for a long time. His idea was to study the nature of a project as a complex system.

The approach to projects is usually well established. The method used, somehow limiting, but functional and reassuring, requires a previous description of all the activities deemed essential to reach the goal, first of all, then their even distribution over a certain period of time. But according to project managers' experiences, simplifying the process like this doesn't always add to effectiveness. Actually, seen under another light, a project appears as an organizational network, looking different according to the observer's point of view; a project takes a definite shape only in the course of time. Further on in a project, the whole picture doesn't simply amount to the sum of its parts, and managing a project means moving to the edge of chaos by trial and error. Therefore, inasmuch as we had started considering and looking at a project as a complex system, our challenge was to find in studies about those kinds of systems, attitudes and instruments that could be profitably used by project managers.

The PMI NIC Association's answer was prompt; the research very soon became an interdisciplinary one, assigned to a team composed of NIC members under Walter Ginevri's coordination. Calling themselves "Complexnauts" (another example of complexity might be that there are 12 of them, just like Jesus' Apostles), the NIC project managers—Bruna Bergami, Diego Centanni, Bice Dellarciprete, Walter Ginevri, Mariù Moresco, Stefano Morpurgo, Carlo Notari, Livio Paradiso, Andrea Pinnola, Michela Ruffa, and Roberto Villa—started their journey in the second half of 2008, guided by Francesco Varanini as mentor.

On their way, marked by periodical meetings and supported by a Web Environment 2.0 used to exchange and share the knowledge thus far acquired, the “Complexnauts” made lucky encounters, first of all with four expert travelers—Gianluca Bocchi, Alberto Felice De Toni, Luca Comello, and Fernando Giancotti—who in completely different domains, philosophy of science, new models of company management, and new models of military leadership, had much earlier already accepted the challenge of complexity. The conference “Projects and Complexity,” held in Milan in November 2008, represented an important milestone on the route, and at the same time was the opportunity to present the work to the public. This event was the first one dedicated to this subject in Italy and its success encouraged NIC and its chairman to carry on with even more energy.

The project of this book was born at that point. The book represents a complex object in itself, readable in different ways: its first part is an essay, exploring the philosophy and culture of projects from various points of view. The second part is a working tool, a toolbox, almost a handbook intended for project managers. This book primarily addresses professional project managers, but offers remarks and stimuli to all interested in corporate management and functioning. In fact, project management, as the management of mutable complex organizational systems, aiming nevertheless at one specific goal, appears as the paradigm of a new way of managing any enterprise.

As with all complex systems, this book is now completing the preparation stage and entering its real life. We expect it to evolve thanks to its creators’ and also its readers’ contributions and to all the people who will feel like taking part in this fascinating journey. To know more about our journey, please visit <http://www.projectsandcomplexity.org>

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Complexity in Projects: A Humanistic View

Francesco Varanini

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PROJECT

The Latin prefix *pro-*, “forward,” points to an Indo-European conception to which we owe the front, or “prow” of the boat as well: *progress*: “to walk forward”; *process*: the steps of those who *pro* (forward) and *cede* (ceed, give way without opposing any resistance); *produce*: “to bring forward,” “to bring out”; *program*: “written beforehand”; *planning*: “designing on a plane surface”; *prophecy*, too: “foretelling.”

The project is part of the same context: from the Latin *pro-jacere*, “to throw forward, to project,” to throw an arrow or a spear, in the way we throw dice. This expression reaches every language, even faraway ones: in Japanese it is called *purojekut*, through the French language. *Projecter* is found at the beginning of the fifteenth century. In the middle of the sixteenth century *project* replaces the former *pourget*.

A few years later, in 1553, in the *Giornale dell'assedio di Montalcino* (*Journal of the Montalcino Siege*) we find the word used in Italian for the first time. The meaning is not strictly the current one yet; *progetto* standing for “indefinite or peculiar plan, hardly feasible.” Only at the end of the sixteenth century does *to plan* become “devising a plan and find ways of carrying it out.” But at last in the nineteenth century the verb speaks exactly of “designing a building, making calculations and plans for its execution.” And yet (at the end of the twentieth century) purists of the Italian language oppose the expression. For once they are not completely wrong: unlike all other languages, the Italian words *progettare* and *progetto* only partially convey the Latin and French meanings.

The English *project*, the German *projekt*, the Russian *proekt*, the Spanish *proyecto*, the Portuguese *projeto*: in all languages this expression still

conveys the sense of “casting” something, therefore that of giving out rays of light or “reproducing images on a screen.” A single word, a single verb, expresses at the same time a military, geometric, psychological, and cinematographic idea. In Italian, on the contrary, the idea of *project* has been divided in two: on one side we have *proiettare, proiezione* (to project, projection) and on the other side *progettare, progetto* (to plan, project). Therefore—even though it is wise, when possible, to express ideas in a maternal language, not a merely technical one, a language making sense in everyday life too—when one wants to refer to “project” in the proper full sense, the use of the English word *project* is better: because I am not just planning, as we would say in Italian. I am also projecting myself into the future into a place that never existed before. I’m casting a projectile toward a target I cannot see.

The project, devoid of the idea of projection, missing its analogy with the projectile, removed from the image of the spear and the arrow, deprived of the idea of a light cone cast on a dark place, of the heart put into every effort, could appear to have lost its meaning, lacking emotion, a merely technical, abstract, faraway matter. Not so useful, and ineffective.

PROJECT SQUEEZED ON A PLANE

The French language, in the sixteenth century, starts using *plan*, from the Latin *planum*, Indo-European root *pela-* (flat, outstretched), with the meaning of “something represented on a flat surface.” Hence in the seventeenth century, the Italian and English words: in this language, the verb (planning) gains ground.

But the sociological and economic meaning goes back to much closer times: The Twenties of the past century: the economic cycles of the *laissez-faire* market deteriorate in an out-of control crisis, and the answer is sought through economic politics and target-oriented development projects. Thus the Soviet Union, in 1921 sets up the *Gosplan, Gosudarstvennaja Planovaja Komissija* (State Planning Commission), and in 1929 the first Five-Year Plan is launched. In the same years, Western economies (as in Roosevelt’s New Deal) look for a new agreement between social partners: this agreement will have to become, here as well, a plan based on the persuasion (or conceit) of being able to direct the economy toward pre-established goals.

The *Economist*, in its March 30, 1935 issue, indeed writes that if private companies clearly failed in taking the right steps, then “planning” must be tried, a new expression the journalist writes, with reason, in quotes.

It is surely useful, and maybe essential, to write programs (in Greek *progràphein*, “writing before”) or documents when the decision as to how to face the future is taken, in which one explains—to those who made demands, to those who will have to bear the expenses, in general to all those concerned—what will be done.

Planning, a schematic and brief but also not exhaustive representation of the future, is of great use. Indeed, as soon as an image of the future is put down in writing, one must remember that the future is still unknown, and that our possibilities of preordaining it are limited; our ability of directing development one way or another depends on variables totally beyond our possibility of control.

On the contrary, sometimes we prefer not to see. Fear of future negative events is fought by giving a preliminary definition of what the future will have to be. So the future is not “what will be” but what I decide today will be tomorrow. We don’t accept, in doing so, the future for its novelty: it won’t be possible to accept unexpected aspects of the future as blessings, as riches, because the future will be under control, that is, compared with the forecasting I am doing today.

In other words, using planning in a defensive way, the project is debased; the project, squeezed on the plane surface, considered as a predetermination of the future, is liberated from uncertainty. But it is also deprived of essential aspects: hope, dreams, and novelty.

PROJECT SUBMITTED TO CONTROL

And afterwards, the reduction of the project in the plan opens the way to another, even more dangerous reduction: *control*.

In France, in the thirteenth century, the *rôle* is the “register”: the list of the members of an organization, the description of some proceedings. How to check that the contents of the register exactly reproduce reality? Making another registration, keeping a counterregister, a *contre-rôle*. The verb *contreroller* is then coined (as in French, in Middle-Ages Latin: *contrarotulus*, *contrarotulare*). Hence in English, as early as the fifteenth century, *control*.

Control is certainly a useful activity. Checking registrations, making sure that the number of subordinates, the costs, and the revenues have been correctly calculated, is dutiful and necessary. As long as the limits of control are not forgotten: the behavior under the close examination of control is not the best behavior that is possible. It is only the behavior conforming to the rule. This is why sometimes orientation to control rewards the worst management: it rewards those who, hiding behind conformity to the rule, avoid assuming any responsibility and do not catch hold of opportunities for improvement.

We should also remember that the rule (translation of the Latin *norma*) is useful, even required, in an organizational, administrative, and accounting context. It's more difficult, more dangerous, to consider the rule, therefore the "normal behavior," as required inside a project. *Norma* (hence "norm") is Latin for "squadron, team." *Exquadrare* means "to reduce to a square shape." In this case, to the implicit compression on the plane, the representation through a one-dimensional image, a further compression is added: the shape the object I have in mind might take doesn't matter; the only shape I consider is the square one.

No one denies the necessity of "squaring accounts." Possibly the regular management of a company may be subjected to a single shape, maybe oriented to squaring. But if we have in mind the project, something complex and multiform, its one-dimensional, one-linear representation can but appear reductive.

Submitting a project to control means comparing what we are doing with a program, a document "written before." In this way of considering a project, the attention to the construction part, to the invention, to the discovery of something that wasn't there before, is limited to the starting phase. The "time for the project," the time we grant ourselves to look at the unknown, in which we afford to imagine what isn't there, is over very soon. The written descriptions of the "things to do" end it.

From this point on, following what has been written and signed, one executes and carries out what is "prescribed." One expects all activities to consist of what is described in a detailed comprehensive picture drawn beforehand, and only in that. One expects activities to be carried out in that sequence, keeping to the calendar defined earlier. Any deviation from the course previously outlined is considered a flaw; any variance is something that will require a justification.

One thinks again, goes back to the initial thought and modifies it, only if it's essential. As if thinking and working were two activities not to be carried

out together, as if, in order to start carrying out the work required to bring the project to a positive conclusion, thinking should be stopped. A project so reductively intended is born with the hand brake on. Tied to the starting point, the project will be turned backward instead of looking ahead.

PROJECT MANAGER'S ROLE

When a project is conceived in the light of planning control, when a project is divided into an initial phase of planning and a second phase of realization, the project manager is first of all considered the person responsible for its execution. The project manager takes in his hands a project already defined as to its preliminary scope (which is its target) a project already constrained (as to predetermined time and cost), and engenders, from a practical and material point of view, its execution.

I nevertheless believe experience and self-awareness, an awareness of the actual substance of work he's carrying out, will help the project manager realize his work isn't restricted to his overseeing its execution. Because, more than anyone else, the project manager is aware that the muddle can be clarified in several ways. He knows that "the way of doing things" finally adopted almost never coincides with what had been seen beforehand. He knows that the definition of aims and the execution cannot actually be conducted separately. He knows a plan always contains many imperfections and that only later will the way of putting them right be discovered. He knows no one can possibly declare when and how a project can reasonably be considered completed.

For this reason, I think, any project manager feels an uncomfortable loss of contact with reality when he's compelled to devote himself to the compilation of documents containing detailed estimates of what is unpredictable, when he has to write down detailed calendars of what will be done every day for years to come, and when he has to draw up on paper an accurate comparison between what was foreseen and what has been done, and when he has to state the exact measurement of how much of a project has already been executed.

The attention to planning and control is only right: nevertheless, treading this road means deviating from the project. Here is where, I believe, the annoyance and frustration originate: so much time, so much attention devoted to cultivating a fetishist image of the project. The center

of attention is not the project anymore. In the place of the project, entangled and partially obscure, yet alive, there is a simplified image, a fetish removed from the projection, from the eyes looking ahead, from hope, from the dream of what we undertook to realize; a fetish removed from what customers and all stakeholders involved in the project expected; a fetish removed from the actual project, the one lived through day by day by those who work on it. One ends up by worshipping an image, by working around a project that isn't there; one ends up by moving inside an illusory reality.

Annoyance and frustration are born from this awareness: how much wasted energy! What a great amount of time used simply to square things on paper. What a lot of attention diverted from the project in its full reality. And all this is because one is held prisoner by a linear idea of a project, because to face its complexity one looks for simplification, and because all available tools are directed to the definition of the goal, once and for all: to "secure" it. And what's more, they are control-oriented.

FEAR AND SELF-DECEIT

This behavior, I think, depends on our being faced, when considering the very idea of a project, with a complex situation, with a set heavy with uncertainties and risks, with a muddle of thoughts and actions that can only generate anxiety and fear.

Faced with this muddle, we choose to substitute the reality of things (we actually don't know what will happen and how to act in order to reach the goal) with a simplified image, a one-dimensional image, flattened on a plane. And on that plane, is a squared shape, clean-cut, well-trimmed, and reassuring. So in our eyes the muddle becomes a thread and links the idea we set out with to a specific result.

It's a pity this is an illusion that we use for self-deceit. We all do, all of us working on the project, expecting the project to answer our needs, meeting the costs of the project, all of us somehow involved in the project, because we are aware that the muddle can be clarified in many different ways. We are well aware that ours is but one of those possible ways, because we are very well aware there's no ideal way of clarifying the muddle, one that can be defined "better than the others." We know there are different ways, each bearing advantages and disadvantages. We know very well we

cannot say beforehand exactly what outcome will be reached, how much the costs will be, or how long reaching the outcome will take. The project constrained in a shape beforehand is not a project anymore, because the project is in itself denial of the rule. The project means going beyond.

COMPLEXITY

If I look at a project trying to set aside the overly simple picture I have in mind, I don't see an effective system, working by clear logic, where the whole equals the sum of its parts. I see a living organism, a defective one, in evolution, unceasingly metamorphosing. I see a muddle.

It makes me think of *Il Pasticciaccio* (The Awful Mess) by Gadda [1, p. 5]. Right at the beginning of this novel, Officer Ingravallo's investigation method is explained:

He sustained, among other things, that unforeseen catastrophes are never the consequence or the effect, if you prefer, of a single motive, of a cause singular: but they are rather like a whirlpool, a cyclonic point of depression in the consciousness of the world, towards which a whole multitude of converging causes have contributed. He also used words like knot or tangle, or muddle, or *gnommero* which in Roman dialect means skein.

Calvino in *Six Memos for the Next Millennium* [2, p. 106] talks about it: Gadda "sees the world as a 'system of systems,' where every single system influences the others and is influenced by them." Gadda describes the world "without any moderation of its inextricable complexity, or rather the simultaneous presence of the most assorted elements contributing to determine each event."

It's hard to find a more effective description of project: the project is a system of systems where each system influences the others, and is at the same time influenced by them; it's a knot or muddle appearing inextricably complex to us. The solution—just one of the possible solutions—appears mysterious. Only if we accept seeing the muddle, if we accept its inextricable complexity, only if we are able to live with the anxiety and the powerlessness connected to "not knowing how to do it," will we be able to build effective knowledge and obtain a good result.

I'm deliberately speaking of result. If I accept the project in its complexity, I know that at the moment I can't see any point of arrival. I have no way of knowing how and where the project will "end up." Having specified the goal—literally, the target—means having expressed the intention, having imagined a possible future. But even I, as the other people involved do, will be able to see in different moments of the project life different pictures, all coherently consistent with the departure point, all similarly coherent with the goal. If I keep to the picture of the future I can see in a particular moment, and then I derive from this single picture the work intended for the goal, I limit myself without reason. Accepting complexity is much better. That is, accepting that while I work the goal appears more distinctly only sometimes, The goal is not "what it was supposed to be"; it's the result that moment after moment I seem to be possibly reaching.

Therefore "the result is implicit in the process." The most effective way of reaching the goal is accepting the result (Latin *re saltare*). The result is what stands out, literally what "bounces back, turns out," and binds the situation under my eyes to the point of departure and to the possible point of arrival. We look forward to the result. To look forward to is "to turn to with our heart," or "to incline toward."

For these reasons, looking at the project, we can speak of exactitude. To exact is to act outwards (in Latin *ex agere*) "to push outward." The result I'm inclined to is pushed outwards, moment after moment, by my work. The result is an *emergence*. To emerge is the Latin word for "to come out, or to come out of the water." Legal language extends the figurative use: "*si aliquid inopinatum emergat*," in case of something unforeseen, something nobody thought of before, emerges (comes afloat).

PROJECT MANAGEMENT BEYOND MANAGEMENT

There is already enough for us to understand how the optics of complexity changes our view of the project manager's role. The project manager enjoys high technical consideration but still appears somehow subordinate, compared with the figure of the fully recognized manager. On the contrary, not only do we consider the project manager first of all a manager, as all others, a manager in every respect, but in our legitimate opinion the project manager is the manager of the future, the figure allowing us to look

beyond the limits of management, beyond that management, which, in its inadequacy, impairs the company.

Although the manager may, at least somehow, set the goals for himself, the project manager has to face preset goals. The manager may modify the regime of constraints, but the weight of the constraint to be complied with is taken on by the project manager.

Although the manager may follow the wind, hide in the crowd, justify himself saying he followed some consultant's indications, the project manager has no way out. The task, and the engagement undertaken, are clear enough.

Although for a manager the alibi of unfavorable and unforeseen outer conditions may work, for the project manager there's no possible alibi; the goal must be reached anyway.

So, by observation of how the project manager works day after day, the management of the future can be outlined, and the management needed to build the future can be described. All this is true, however, if, and only if, project managers, instead of conforming to a simplified and schematic image of the world, tied to the past, accept responsibility for the complexity of the project.

This is how, apart from any display of management, the project manager's role is revealed as care, guidance, and governance.

Care: The attention paid to taking care of others and procuring what they need

Guidance: Showing "how it is done," not as a boss but walking alongside as *primus inter pares*, first among equals

Governance: The gesture of the steersman who knows where the port of destination is and "stays the course" by subsequent adjustments

PROJECT MANAGER AS A STORYTELLER

What has been said so far, has been said by an observer. Any observer influences the object of his research and is subjected to its influence, in turn. Each stakeholder carries his own point of view. From that point of view, any actor observes the project. We could say that every actor illuminates