Letter from the Editor

During this volume year *Management and Organization Review*, I personally and with several MOR editors, were involved with remembering, honoring, and celebrating one of the greatest scholars of the modern era, James Gardner March, who passed away September 27, 2018. The Dialogue, Debate, and Discussion section of this issue shares several reflections on James March's contributions and a subsequent special issue honoring his theoretical contributions, co-edited by Peter Ping Li, Mooweon Rhee, and Bilian Ni Sullivan will be published next year.

My personal introduction to the emerging interdisciplinary field of organization studies occurred when, for my MSc thesis (1962) at the UCLA School of Engineering, Professor Jacob Marschak (the co-supervisor) handed me a small red book (not Chairman Mao's book). It was *Organizations* by James March and Herbert Simon (1958). It was about how to develop an employee behavior model for the 'Task Manufacturing Company' management simulation at UCLA. The model was based on Chapter 3, which covered the three underlying themes of the motivation to produce; the decision to join the organization; and the decision leave the organization (the factors affecting perceived desirability of movement from the organization). In August 1963, I was one of 12 PhD students admitted to the Graduate School of Industrial Administration at the Carnegie Institute of Technology (today the Tepper School at Carnegie Mellon University). In retrospect I was fortunate to have had the privilege of being James March's PhD student for one year before he left for the University of California at Irvine to be the founding dean of the School of Social Science.

It is not my intention to even try to describe my intellectual debt to James March, the scholar, thinker, philosopher, poet, friend, human being, and family man, whose wife of 71 years, Jayne, and teenage sweetheart, died one month earlier. In my mind, James March's scholarship defined the interdisciplinary challenge represented by the field of organization studies, encompassing the forever present catch-22s of how organizations live with unresolved conflicts; the central role of organization decision-making under constraints of bounded rationality; the role of organizational routines; the interplay between the logic of appropriateness (anchored in role identity) and the logic of consequentiality; the balance between exploration and exploitation, and addressing competing demands through sequential attention, or buffering through organizational slack. James

March had a deep interest in the confound of ambiguity, which is often related to paradoxical balance, and the many ways that individuals, organizations, cultures, and political systems cope with ambiguity, which underlies his fascination and deep interest in China. His essay (2005), 'Parochialism in the Evolution of a Research Community: The Case of Organization Studies', which appeared in the inaugural issue of *Management and Organization Review,* anticipated the criticism of empirical social sciences – the loss of transparency, the decline in safeguarding criteria of falsifiability, the creeping parochialism of in-groups around journals or editorial areas enforcing their ideological and theoretical and methodological orthodoxies, and the necessity to preserve the research diversity by protecting the indigenous or local perspectives. The issues that James March wrote about in his 2005 article are all issues which are even more relevant today and which *Management and Organization Review* is placing much attention on.

Going forward, I would like to emphasize my fervent desire to attract consequential research (conceptual, empirical, exploratory, qualitative, experiments, etc.) that explores and informs the Chinese context or that of other transforming economies. It is imperative that management scholars who aspire to elucidate the applicability of extant management theories to China (or to other transforming economies), embed their research in the context of Chinese history (3,000 years and 24 major dynasties), culture, dominant traditional philosophies (e.g., Daoism, Confucianism, Zhongyong, and Chinese Buddhism in terms of Zen) and the modern context – a 70-year experiment in social order led by the Communist Party in China.

The range of topics worthy of attention in China and other transforming economies is unlimited. Some topics coming to mind include the challenge of attracting and retaining the younger generation of university educated employees; leadership succession from family founders to professional managers; the role of venture capitalist in identifying and growing future spires of excellence and agglomeration of new industrial sectors, the internationalization strategies of domestic enterprises (SOEs, POEs, and family businesses), technological upgrading and innovation; the size distribution of entrepreneurial regions in China and why the southern coastal regions of China have experienced an increasing rate of firm formations relative to static or no growth in other regions of China; the premature aging of the population (by 2030 a quarter of population will be age 60 or greater) and the implications for economic growth, manufacturing, employment, number of university graduates, the social security system, and public services for senior citizens; the role of the Chinese Communist Party Organizations inside Universities, SOEs, POEs and family businesses; firm investments in innovation, performance and survival; the importance of political connections for survival and performance; Chinese outward foreign direct investments in transforming economies (e.g., Africa, India, and Russia), the digital revolution's (e.g., AI, big data, cloud computing, digital transformation, IoT/IoE, blockchain encryption, edge computing, robotics, etc.) effect on manufacturing, export,

global supply chain, industry structure, de-globalization, escaping the middle income trap, and the possible emergence and co-evolution of a long-term economic cold war with America as predicted by Senior Editor Michael A. Witt in his invited editorial essay 'China's Challenge: Geopolitics, De-Globalization, and the Future of Chinese Business' that leads off this issue.

For those who decide to pursue any of the above topics or other topics for articles to be published in *Management and Organization* Review, I would like to stress that it is critical to get to know the country or countries your research is set in (e.g., China) and to build the unique country context into your research. This is the unique competitive advantage of scholarship published in *Management and Organization Review*, which has the great potential not only to inform Chinese management research, but also management research more broadly as we explore the generalizability of extant theories, develop new theories appropriate for the context being studied, and explore the appropriateness and implications of theories and practices initially developed in China to other special contexts in the advanced economies.