Preface

This volume contains a number of revised papers that were selected from papers presented at the last ModelAge workshop held in Certosa di Pertignano (Italy) in 1997, organised by the Institute of Psychology of the Italian CNR (IP-CNR), Division of Artificial Intelligence, Cognitive Modeling and Interaction. The organisation chair was held by Amedeo Cesta. The workshop, and indeed the ModelAge project as a whole, aimed to bring together a number of researchers stemming from different disciplines to discuss formal models of agency from different perspectives. These disciplines included artificial intelligence, software engineering, applied logic, databases, and organisation theory. The field of intelligent agents has become an important research area within these disciplines, and in the workshop as in the present volume the concept of agency is thus considered from a multi-disciplinary perspective.

In the introductory chapter of this volume more can be found on the area of intelligent agents as well as on the topic of formal models of these. We furthermore provide some key references, so that the reader can better appreciate the position of the present volume within the literature on agent technology. Moreover, we briefly describe the ModelAge project which was an ESPRIT-funded Basic Research Working Group dedicated to the study of formal models of agents, and one may find the details of the organisation of the workshop here. Finally in this chapter we give a detailed overview of the contents of this book from which we hope you will get an impression of the deliberately multi-disciplinary approach that is taken.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to thank all the persons involved in the realisation of this book: authors, PC members, additional reviewers, the organisers and audience of the ModelAge workshop, and the people from Springer-Verlag.

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