ЖЕЛИМИР КЕШЕТОВИЋ
Факултет безбедности
Београд
СРЂАН МИЛАШИНОВИЋ*
Криминалистичко-полицијска академија
Београд

METHODOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL CHALLENGES IN CRISIS AND DISASTER RESEARCH**

Summary: Since ancient times, people have dealt with crises and disasters, and tried to avoid these events and mitigate and minimize their consequences. Over the time, the concept of crisis is developed, but the crisis management concept as a product of the XX century. The authors present the theoretical sources of crisis management and anlyse crisis as a theoretical problem and a challenge for research. Special attention is given to the observation of the crisis in the political context, giving the possible theoretical and methodological framework for the study of crises and disaster. Public management in crisis and disaster management is becoming increasingly important and essential task of contemporary society. By the fact that it represents a serious threat to the structure of political or safety systems, the management crisis involves the strategic knowledge, prediction and control of the uncertain situation at all levels.

Key words: crisis, disaster, political context, methodology, research, safety

Introduction - From Fatalism to Rational Crisis Approach

From the beginning of time, people in different ways tried to prevent, avoid or at least mitigate various types of dangerous and undesirable situati-

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ons and to manage crises. Hatred of others, envy, material inequality, religious diversity, myths and conspiracy theories are just part of the propaganda arsenal, which explains why the solution should be sought in situations of conflict and war. The concept of crisis has evolved and developed during the time, and its meanings were often changed while its vertical and horizontal expansion and application spread rapidly even today including different situations and aspects of social life. Crisis management is both as a term and as a concept, a product of the twentieth century. In fact, the origin of the term *crisis management* is in the political sphere.[1]

As John Gottschalk said, in a sense, especially at the highest levels of government, crisis management can be seen as creating tactics for dealing with situations that are developing quickly with the consequences to national security. People who professionally deal with these situations and their resolution determined that the time of its creation is precisely October 1962. The circumstances of its birth were associated with the Cuban Missile Crisis and groups involved in crisis management in the White House. Scientists and government officials called this activity „crisis action planning" or just „crisis management" which can sometimes lead to confusion. (Gottschalk, 2002).

Crisis management as a function or crisis management activity is older than the term itself. Thus, the management of special events as a formal responsibility of the U.S. government emerged with efforts to respond to the growing threats of fire in the big cities in the 19th century. Later, crisis management emerges as an organization, with formed institutions, bodies and agencies that deal with crisis management. (Kešetović, 2008).

Among the authors there is almost a consensus that the modern field of crisis management emerged by solving the crisis caused by poisoning with Tylenol drug made by Johnson & Johnson Company, which was a turning point in 1982 and set the standard in this area. (Mitroff, 2000).

The emergence and development of crisis management as a theoretical concept has been preceded by research of various aspects of crises, disasters and similar events, as well as individual, collective and organizational responses to them within political science, psychology, sociology, management and administrative sciences that resulted in the fund of scientific knowledge which, nowadays, is an integral part of the knowledge on crisis. As stated by

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[1] It is claimed that U.S. President John F. Kennedy first used this phrase during the Cuban crisis in 1962 when the U.S. confronted the Soviet Union due to installation of Soviet nuclear warheads missiles in Cuba leading the world to the very edge of the World War III. In that way, Kennedy described the management of a serious, emergency situation. (Milašinović, Kešetović:2011)

Uriel Rosenthal, Michael Charles and Paul t'Hart, primarily the following five sources are given (Rosenthal, Charles and 't Hart:1989).

Brinkmanship - One of the most important sources in the study of crisis are international relations. In this area, the crisis is related to acute confrontation on the brink of war between two or more countries. Observing the ways of the participants' behavior in these international confrontations, from a wider perspective of crisis management, crisis analysts have studied these events from the perspective of changes in the international system, its structure and communication patterns.[2] Others used these efforts as the basis trying to develop an international monitoring and early warning system.[3] However, the majority of researches in this area are devoted to the analysis of behavior of key players and decision makers within the parties in conflict, examining their behavior under stress, patterns of communication and negotiation, as well as domestic political factors that influence the decision-making process.[4]

Disasters - Another important source of crisis research is disaster analysis, especially the development and management of situations that involve a collective stress. It is a very wide range of events such as natural disasters like earthquakes, floods and tornadoes, those caused by human activities such as a loosening of dams, buildings demolition, fires, train collisions and industrial accidents, but high-risk events such as nuclear accidents and accidents in the petrochemical industry, as well. Nowadays, there are a number of standard empirical studies and bibliographies that cover key issues in the field of disaster.[5]

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[2] McClelland, C., "The Acute International Crisis", *World Politics*, 14, 1961, pp.109-128; Beal, S.L., *System Analysis of International Crisis*, Washington: University Press of America, 1979; Brecher, M., Wilkenfeld, J., and S.Mosher, *Crises in Twentieth Century*, Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1987, Vol I and II.

[3] Belden, G.T. "Indications, Warning and Criris Operations", *International Studies Quarterly, 21*, 1977, pp. 181-198; Andriole, S.J., and R.A.Young, "Towards the Development of an Integrated Crisis Warning System", Ibid, pp. 107-150.

[4] George, AL and R.Smoke, *Deterence in American Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice*, New Yok: Columbia; Snyder, G.H. and P. Diesing, *Conflict Among Nations: Bargaining, Decision Making, and System Structure in International Crisis,* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977; Brecher, M., *Studies in Crisis Behaviour*, New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1978; Holsti, O.R. "Theoties of Crisis Decision Making" in *Diomacz: New Approaches in History, Theory and Policy*, New York: Free Press 1979, p. 99-136; Gilbert, A.N. and P.G.Lauren, "Crisis Management: An Assesment and Critique", *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 24, (1980), pp. 641-664; Lebow, R,.N., *Between Peaca and War: The Nature of Internatioal Crisis*, Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1980; Roberts, J.M., *Decision Making During International Crisis*, London: McMillan,1988.

[5] Dynes, R.R., *Organized Behavior in Disaster*, Lexington:Heath, 1974; Quarantelli, E.L., *Disaster: Theory and Research*, New York: Sage, 1978; Turner, B.A., *Man-Made Disaster*, London: Wykeham, 1978; Cuny, F.L., *Disaster and Development*, New York: Oxford University Press,

Conflicts - Studies of social and political conflict have over time become very numerous and thematically quite broad, covering the conflict management, as well. These include events such as a coup d'état, revolutions, demonstrations and riots in the cities, strikes and other conflicts related to labor relations, domestic and international terrorism.[6]

Individuals and groups - following a long tradition established in psychology, there have been numerous studies of how individuals make decisions during crisis situations. They are all based on the concept of stress, where the stress is considered quite broadly (as stimulus, as perceptual phenomena and as behavioral response). In addition, stress can be observed and measured in different ways: biophysical, cognitive-psychological and interpersonal and collective. There is a tendency to combine these concepts during decision making processes under stress.[7] The relationship between stress and individual behavior in making decisions and solving problems has been investigated with different individuals and in different situations, including probe patients, struggling soldiers and political leaders during political crises.[8] These studies as well as those performed in laboratory conditions resulted in numerous studies that indicated various mutual influences and gave some suggestions and recommendations. A general solution is that a high level of stress adversely affects the ability to make rational decisions and right choice between several possible alternatives. Similar conclusions can apply to the behavior of small groups during crisis circumstances.

Organizations and corporations - Hermann was among the first researchers that contributed the field of crisis analysis.[9] His pioneering paper linked the abundance of various researchers' findings in an effort to develop

1983; Drabek, T.E., *Huma System Response to Disaster: An Invetory of Sociological Findings*, New York: Springer, 1986; Comfort, L.K., *Managing Disasters: Strategies and Policy Perspectives*, Durham: Duke University Press, 1988.

[6] Gurr, T.R., *Why Man Rebel,* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970; Gurr, T.R., *Hanbook of Political Conflict: Theory and Research*, New York: Free Press, 1980; Zimmerman, E., *Political Violence, Crises and Revolutions: Theories and Research*, Boston: Hall,1983; Schmid, A.P., Jongman, A.J. et al. *Political Terrorism: A New Guide to Actors, Authors, Concepts, Data Bases and Literature*, Amsterdam: North-Holland, 1988.

[7] Lazarus, R.S:, *Psychological Stress and the Coping Process*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966; Holsti, O.R., Crisis, Escalation,War, Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1972; Janis, L.J. and L.Mann, *Decision Making: A Psychological Analyusis of Conflicts, Choice, and Commitment*, New York: Free Press, 1977.

[8] Grinker, R.R. and J.P. Speigel, J.P., *Men Under Stress*, Philadelphia, Blakiston, 1945; Wiegele,T.C., "Decision Making in an International Crisis: Some Biological Factors", *International Studies Quarterly*, 17, (1973), pp. 295-335; Holbrook, M.B. and Ryan, M.J., "Modeling Deceision-Specific".

[9] Hermann, C.F:, "Some Consequences of Crisis wich Limit the Viability of Organizations", *Administrative Sciences Quarterly*, 8, (1963), pp.61-82.

a conceptual model of the effects of the crisis on the organization performance. This original effort was the starting point for many studies that followed in this area. Following the economic crisis in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the literature about the corporations' breakdowns, limiting costs condition and organizational changes under pressure appeared. It treats the effects of internal and external trouble and stress sources and how they affect the structure of authority, communication flows, job satisfaction and the quality of organization and its member's efforts.[10]

On the basis of these theoretical sources, nowadays there is intensive development of crisis research, and the crisis management has become a subject matter at numerous faculties and research institutes in many countries. Crisis and crisis management are significant as the subject of theoretical interest, as well. Crisis and conflict management represents a challenge for the theory, since scientists with concise and neat theories based on "normal" conditions and situation, are not accustomed to deal with incidents and events that deviate from the standard. Despite to this, the human thought of crisis has evolved so that the concept of disaster and destruction as divine punishment was ceded with the ratio-scientific explanation of the cause, patterns and characteristics of crises and conflicts. This is illustrated by the fact that the study of crises and conflicts in the world today is very developed.[11]

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[10] Milburn, T.W., Schuler, R.S. and K.H. Watman, "Organizational Crisis, Part I: Definition and Conceptualization", *Human Relations* , 36, (1983), pp. 1141-1160; Milburn T.W. et al., "Organizational Crisis, Part II: Strategies and Responses" *Human Relations*, 36, (1983), pp.1161-1180; Cameron, K.S., Km, M.U., and D.A. Whetten, "Organizational Effects of Decline and Turbulence", *Administrative Science Quarterly* 32, (1987), pp.222-240; Koberg, C.S., "Resources Scarcity, Environmental Uncertainty and Adaptive Organizational Behavior", *Academy of Managemet Journal*, 30, (1987), pp. 798-807.

[11] Conflict Studies, Conflict Analysis - U.S., UK, Theories of crises and conflicts, The crises and conflicts Sociology - Russia is a scientific discipline that is taught at a number of university of security studies and human sciences worldwide. In the neighbouring surroundings of the Republic of Serbia, the mentioned discipline is taught at the University of Zagreb, University of Primorska - Slovenia, University of Sarajevo, University of Cyril and Methodius in Skopje - Faculty of Philosophy. The importance of discipline is stressed by a number of international and national institutes engaged with a problem of social crises and conflicts, and their resolution, of which the best known are: Center for Research on Conflict Resolution, the University of Michigan. United Nations Institute for .... (UNITAR). Center for Conflict Analysis England: Institute for Conflict Research in Oslo, Canadian Peace Research Institute, Finnish Institute for Peace Research, while the two most significant international institutes are: the Stockholm Peace Research Institute SIPRI, which deals with the documentation and analytical studies, and the International Institute of Peace in Vienna, which was established with support of the Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries. Among the major organizations, the International Association for Peace Research (IPRA) in Groningen, The International Peace Research Association in Philadelphia, and others are distinguished. Milaši-

Crisis management as cognitive-theoretical discipline is of particular importance for the understanding of modern processes and events in the world, especially from the standpoint of security doctrine, institutions of social control, and, in general, humane profession. Unprevisibility and escalation and various forms of social crises and conflicts (from war to the group and racial) after the end of world bloc division in the early 1990s - both in transition countries and in countries of the third and fourth world - has further settled humanistic public to release a different approach in the study and resolution within the social and interstate conflicts and crises. Besides a number of national and international research institutes there has been a strong development of the non-profit sector which at different levels of generality and specialization became interested in issues of peace and of all type crises and conflict studies, from interstate, ethnic and religious to business and family issues.[12]

It must be told that even the well developed world is still looking for an adequate theoretical framework for the crisis research. The development of theoretical and conceptual framework implies the need of the researchers to move from simple and prescriptive models that supply managers with standardized checklists with information on what should be done prior, during and after the crisis, to descriptive models that develop and/or test models, concepts and theory of crisis management in order to determine how and why the crisis management efforts have been successful and effective.

Crisis as a Theoretical Problem

Crisis management as a science is still in its early life, largely because of the difficulties in measuring, standardization and comparison of crisis situ-

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novic, S., Kešetović, Ž., Crisis Management, Academy of Criminalistic and Police Studies, Belgrade, 2009.

[12] In the nonprofit sector the following organizations are of particular importance: Center for Information Technology and Dispute Resolution at the University of Massachusetts; Conflict Management Group (CMG) established by the U.S. Harvard University, Fund for Peace, USA; INCORE, the organization of initiatives holder for conflicts and Ethnic Affairs resolution (Initiative on Conflict Resolution and Ethnicity) established by the University of Ulster and the United Nations University, Professors World Peace Academy – a nonprofit educational organization dedicated to the peace activists establishment for peacekeeping missions around the world with branches in over 100 countries. PWPA publishes studies on the issue of conflict resolution, and regularly publishes a journal International Journal on World Peace, International Crisis Group (ICG), Men's International Peace Exchange, Peace Action, USA; Peace On Earth Foundation's; Peace Brigades International (PBI); Peacelink Italia, PeaceQuest; Transnational Foundation for Peace and Future Research, Sweden; Milašinović, S., Kešetović, Ž., Crisis Management, Academy of Criminalistic and Police Studies, Belgrade, 2009.

ations. In addition to the general lack of consents of the crisis management measures and vocabulary, many organizations have difficulties to release the information about the structural weaknesses of management. There are real environmental sanctions - such as legal and market - acting against the current trends of transparency and accountability.

It must be recognized that the rigidity of the scientific method is not always applicable in crisis situations. It does not fit in according to Karl Popper, generally accepted criteria for the classification of an activity as a scientific activity. In addition to the complexity (and, to some extent, uncertainty) of the concept of crisis and disasters, there are two very significant aggravating factors make that the scientific research of these phenomena are almost impossible, given by Bertrand Robert and Chris Lajtha (Robert and Lajtha, 2002). Here is the point:

- Crisis is an event that is relatively rare. As a result, many forms of numerical validation or statistical approaches are, therefore, much harder applicable;
- Crisis is an event that cannot be reproduced. Each crisis situation is unique. The idea of its reproduction or the ability to reproduce the event in experimental conditions is not valid. In that sense it is not possible to carry out successive and hypotheses tests based on an identical experience;
- It is not possible to detect the error in the existing and proposed theories. No one can prove without a doubt that the different treatment of the crisis had a different (acceptable) result;
- It is not certain that a real life experience would really look like that set in the scientific model. Fabricated crisis are impossible to be tested in real life;
- Experiments with living subjects are not an option. For obvious ethical reasons it is not possible to set the explosion at an industrial plant or launch a biological attack, in order to measure the effects of different responses to these events; and
- The price of experiment is unacceptable. When wagers include human lives and the great impact on social infrastructure, experimentation is simply unthinkable.
- Researchers earn for living by publishing. Very few decision makers are willing to open their doors to researchers and permit them to observe and write about how they manage the crisis. When the crisis is in its so-called acute phase, crisis researchers cannot are omitted form crisis command center.
- Second, researchers are rarely allowed and permitted to witness the crisis itself.
- Even when researchers are invited they tend to question managing models and beliefs. They have a number of uncomfortable questions, while managers want immediate advice for action ("I called you to give me a solution, not to question me"). And that's why researchers are not invited...
- In the stage of collecting feedback information, the available information is partial and flawed. Power play, potential legal repercussions can cause lack or corruption of information

- As witnesses' experts, researchers may be forced to answer questions made by public authorities (boards of inquiry, courts, etc.) on how to manage the crisis and the quality of crisis preparation, which may have implications to the members of the crisis team and the responsibility of the company or organization affected by the crisis.
- Paradoxically, pre-crisis phase of the crisis are more accessible to researchers because they appear to have fewer barriers. However, very few organizations are interested in this phase of crisis management.

Based on the presented it is possible to understand why there is a relatively small number of researchers in the field of crisis and crisis management.

Basically, crises and disasters researcher faces with the same methodological problems as well as researchers in all areas of behavioral and social sciences research. However, the crisis situation itself creates new and specific problems or increases standard and already known ones that the researcher has to deal with. (Killitm, 1956). The main tools in the crises and disasters research - a theory, a hypothesis, an appropriate research design, selection plan for the research study, a strategy for collecting data or documentation of observations, and the way to understand the meaning of the collected material - are more or less recognizable and similar to those used in other social sciences.

The main difference between the research of crises and disasters and other phenomena is primarily in the context in which it is implemented (Mileti, 1987:69; Taylor, 1978:276). The bigger differences between normal (everyday) situation and the context in which other studies are conducted in the social sciences and the context of the crisis, the greater the challenge for researchers (Stallings, 2002b :21-22). This means that the research carried out during the period of acute crisis is facing the challenges which are not in phase prior to the crisis (the mitigation and preparation), but also after the crisis has passed (in the later stages of recovery from past crises).

The core of the difference between "normal" and the research during everyday conditions and research in crisis conditions Stallings reduces to:

(1) Time, that is when the process of observation and data collection and other material begins with regard to the beginning of the crisis/disaster;

(2) Access, which refers to the initial contacts of researchers with subjects that are to be interviewed, the respondents in the survey and those who have documents and other relevant materials; and

(3) Generalizability, or what the Killian calls the ability to draw valid conclusions from studies of crises and disasters (Killian, 2002:56).

While many of these problems have only partial solutions, triangulation of certain research patterns that use different methods of disaster research can provide valid conclusions. Of course, these three dimensions are interrelated: the ability to generalize research findings of individual crises and disasters is directly affected by successful solving of the problem of timing and approach, while the access to the relevant subject is associated with the issues of the time dimension. (Stallings, 2007:56)

The Political Context of Crisis Management

In a modern context highlighting of certain social situations or specific events using the term "crisis" has become a political act.[13] Therefore it is no longer a routine bureaucratic work, but the challenge for political leaders and top managers. When society or some of its top institutions fall into a serious crisis, the public sight is fixed on leaders (presidents, prime ministers, mayors and other officials) from whom is expected to eliminate the threat or at least minimize the damage. At the same time, political rivalry between the various actors about the interpretation of fast-changing events appears.

In everyday life, in some situations, it is crystal clear that this is a crisis, while others are certainly debatable, so that they fit into the concept of crisis development: the situation definition with the term crisis is a product of the political process. Some situations "become" crisis, which means that they travel in the continuum, which ends with "no problem" at the one of this end, and "deep crisis" at its another end (and back).

Crises give free rein to politicians and increase their legitimacy, but it may not last too long. At the time of serious crisis of view of the nation is pointed to the political leaders. Often, the successful resolution of the crisis makes them real statesmen and, contrary to that, failure eliminates them from the political scene. Behind President Jimmy Carter in 1979 stood the most of the American people supporting him in his efforts to free the hostages from the U.S. embassy in Tehran held by radical students, supporters of Imam Khomeini. After 444 days in total of imprisonment and 11 months of unsuccessful actions, he easily lost the election having Ronald Reagan for the opponent. Citizens demand results and punish failure.

The final resolution of any serious crisis involves a general consent on its causes and issues as well as on the responsibility of some of its actors.

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[13] Thus, for instance, during the socialims it was spoken about the crisis only in Western countries, and the socialist countries had "temporary difficulties". Similarly, workers' strikes were euphemistically called a "work stoppage".

Once the operational part that dealt with the crisis was over, a kind of battle of interpretation of past events and the role of individual actors, leaders and their organizations in the last crisis appears. This leads to a need of very different skills and knowledge than those implied by crisis operational branch. The outcome of the battle, and who will be and how much convicted for the occurrence of the crisis or for incompetent dealing with it, depends on the fate of political leaders, administrative officials and top managers in corporations, as well as the reputation, credibility and legitimacy of organizations and agencies they lead. It should be noted that here, as often in life, the truth and the facts themselves are not essential, but it is primarily due to the interpretation of the facts and their placement in different semantic contexts. The reality is not defined by those who know best but those who manage it. It is, however, not essential if someone did a really good job or not for which he/she is competent, responsible and paid, but how much and how able he/she is to shape the meaning and interpretation of the past events and its place and role in it.

So, at the end of the crisis it is necessary to implement the process of determining liability which is not always only the way to end the crisis, but it also can extend its life, and transform the perception of the crisis itself, its causes and flows, as well as its consequences. In many cases, the process of determining the responsibilities initiated by crisis produce the actual crisis after crisis in which some tough questions about the conduct, management and skills have been asked. Specifically, these processes elevate the initial set of events from the operational level to the political arena. What began as an accident or series of accidents becomes a "power play", the story of power, competence, leadership and legitimacy (or its absence) (Boin et al. 2010). In addition, a much wider circle of problems and issues than those associated with the initial event itself can occur.[14]

All disclosed are primarily related to the crisis that occurred in reality and in which the actors actually did fail because successful examples of prevention and mitigation of the crisis do not attract too much attention. Success in managing the crisis is not even news. It is hard to give someone credit for things that did not happen and for the serious consequences that have not occurred in the media surroundings obsessed with finding errors in the political arena, which is itself focused on the search for the culprits rather than to praise of politicians and managers. Contrary to this, when things go wrong,

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[14] Thus, for instance, after Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, the security questions raised concernig the "colored" and the poorest U.S. citizens in front of terrorism and natural disasters, problems of economic injustice, poverty, racism, insensitivity of the government towards the most vulnerable part of the population and lack of responsibility towards the environment.

they are faced with an outbreak of negative publicity and critical examination. The situation is further worsen by the fact that success and failure are estimated by observers and those who are interested in presenting stories about the crisis in a way in accordance with their particular interests and viewpoints.

Blaming others and/or getting rid of the responsibility from himself/herself is the political life, which involves official government authorities and agencies, some officials and political parties. Sometimes one gets the impression that finding the victim, in a sense, makes others feel better, and soon after that, all can forget what had happened and move on.

The undertaken efforts with the goal of shaping public understanding of events usually begin in the middle of acute phase of the crisis, but it comes into focus only when the dust settles. No professional player during crisis can afford to avoid that game. Those who are careless and unworried and who think that they were doing well and that their actions spoke for themselves were badly wrong. Lulled in their personal success they can, when it is already too late, realize that the process of determining responsibility can hide unpleasant consequences when you start operating after the political crisis management.

Provide an explanation of what actually happened involves tactical mix of factual reconstruction, image manipulation and drawing lessons. The reconstruction and evaluation of complex management episodes is quite difficult under normal circumstances, and the circumstances of great crisis are almost impossible to do something like that, and not to meet with strong political pressure. Because of its dramatic and disturbing nature, crisis set questions that are not easy to give a clear and explicit answer: Why did it happen? What was done to prevent it? What should be done next?

In this context, an integral part of any crisis, especially at the end, is the actors attempt to deny crisis event, to avoid, eliminate or substantially reduce their own liability for the previous crisis event, or to attempt to transfer the responsibility to someone else, or at least to share the responsibility. All these attempts have often referred to the phrase "blame game", as term that is widely used and somewhat indefinite in political debates.[15]

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[15] Researchers in political science often play about responsibility understood as a set of interactions of elected politicians and the general public and voters in general. There are at least three general ways in which politicians' management responsibility and guilt even though it is not always possible to precisely delineate. The first is a presentation strategies (what Schlenker called "impression management"), so that the arguments are chosen to minimize or avoid blame, for example choice of apology that should diminish accountability and justification to convert the responsibility into trust. The second is the strategic policies – for example choice

Application of this phrase in the field of crisis management, Boin et al suggest that it is related to the interaction between the participants who are willing to protect their own selfish interests rather than to serve the common good. When attempts to research the crisis convert into a game about determining the responsibility, finding the truth through dialogue and debate, the lost ahead of the defensive rationalization ("we did nothing wrong"), intentional suppression and distortion appears. If all the actors of the crisis (individuals and institutions) were fully prepared to make the most objective and honest dialogue and by comprehensive analysis of the facts and arguments exchange forces (rather than argument forces exchange) investigate all aspects of crisis events and activities of each actor in order to determine their committed errors and omissions, and therefore their guilt and responsibility, and accept the consequences of that, then there would be no games about responsibility. In the reality in which both individuals and institutions work primarily through the prism of their own interests and positions of power it is, however, very rare. The game about responsibility does not necessarily always happen. In some post-crisis contexts, there are also forms of cooperation that are not obsessed with assigning responsibility or restoration of degraded image or reputation (Seeger et al, 2005). Such organizations are able to create a framework of events that increases the motivation of those affected by the crisis and encourages cooperation with others and their support.

Game of liability involves interaction between the two groups of participants - those who blame the defendants on the one hand, and those who transferred the responsibility and those to whom the responsibility is transferred to, on the other side. In the political sphere, everything is based on the idea that politicians, with an effort to gain the trust of the voters and avoid guilt, faced within each political domain with the choice to take direct control or to entrust it to others, while voters or citizens choose between praise or blame from those that have direct control in public politics. If the investigation after the crisis reveals the failure in preventing the crisis event or responding to it, then the situation becomes politically delicate and causes two types of reactions. In the center of the debates that necessarily ensue in the political arena may be emphasizing the need to learn from mistakes, redefining and improving the organization's policies according to that or, else, it can focus on the issues of guilt and responsibility as a kind of extension of crisis poli-

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between the policies that support the policy risk and that supporting victim risk. The third way to manage the liability relates to agency strategy, namely, the choice of institutional arrangements to minimize liability as, for example the choice between direct control and its delegation. (Hood, 2002).

tics. These two approaches are often completely excluded, although in certain cases the synergies of these two are possible.

Learning requires a safe environment in which the progress motive predominates, and not a desire to gain points or avoid losses, which is difficult to achieve when the process of establishing a professional responsibility is overwhelmed with the political games having different rules. The same is applicable for objective scientific research situations.

Towards a Methodological Framework for the Crises and Disasters Research

There is a need for research studies that would follow different paradigms in order to improve our understanding of crises and crisis management, that include:

- The application of chaos theory and complexity to the crisis and disaster;
- Positivistic approaches in order to quantify levels of readiness and reactions to crises and disasters and to help in predicting incidents through modeling using computer simulation;
- Phenomenological approach in order to explore the attitudes and opinions of managers in the public and private sectors on the management of crises and disasters; and
- Case studies in order to test models and concepts of the crisis management surroundings

Such research approaches should provide additional insight into crises and disasters and contribute to better understanding of the chaos and changes, which probably helps industry and public sector to accept these incidents as part of everyday life and to get ready for them and plan, when they happen, how to operate in a strategic and holistic manner, minimizing their negative consequences for the economy and society. As the crises and disasters multiply, the managers and planners skills in both private and public sectors will be increasingly important.

As part of a research project Management and Leadership in Crisis, among others, a practical goal of creating a unified methodology for the study of management and leadership in a variety of crises has been set. This methodology would represent the foundation and the starting point for studies of individual crises and crisis management and leadership in the Republic of Slovenia. In that sense the Reminder for crisis management and leadership study was designed.

The Reminder is made on the basic understanding of the crisis, in which the crisis is set as an actual threat to the basis and norms of the social system and its subsystems. For crisis, a time pressure and unclear circumstances that require rapid decisions of the relevant individuals, agencies and institutions are of importance. The process of making and implementing decisions often require different institutional paths and connections than usual or approved for normal non-crisis conditions and require activation of previously set mechanisms of the crisis management leadership. The crisis is closely bounded with the phenomenon called crisis management and leadership, which can be defined as the design procedures, agreements and decisions that affect the course of the crisis, and the scope, organization, preparation, action and resource allocation in order to conquer it. Crisis management and leadership normally takes place in the organizational chaos, under mass media pressure, in stressful conditions and in the lack of accurate information, with just few most important features.

The Reminder is methodologically primarily derived from cognitive-institutional approach to the study of crises and crisis management and leadership, which is being developed within the framework of the European Crisis Management Academy and research project Project Crisis Management Europe. Cognitive-institutional approach focuses on the analysis of numerous individuals, groups, networks and institutions in crisis and in that sense represents the perception, knowledge of people skills, dealing with crisis, as well as group and institutional framework in which decisions are made. In addition, during the preparation of the Reminder other relevant methodological approaches, especially functional, systemic and symbolic-political, were also valued in order to develop a case study.

The Reminder therefore is an instrument for studying crisis management and leadership and consists of variables and indicators. Variable represents a narrow assembly composed of individual indicators. Indicators are analytical results for the various crises analysis such as natural and man-made disasters, military, technological, environmental and economic crisis, terrorist attacks and other crises. There are numerous crisis appearances and its consequences and it is very difficult to formulate universally understanding of the crisis and crisis management and leadership. The scientific literature states that there are various crises and, with them the associated crisis management and leadership that have some common elements such as vulnerability of the fundamental values of the entity to whom the crisis is addressed, limited time for making decision, uncertainty and stress of actors of the crisis management and leadership. The Reminder, in this sense, cites elements (degrees and indicators) that are common to most of the presented crisis.

The Reminder allows multistage studies of crisis and crisis management and leadership, and in particular:

1st degree: situating a single crisis in the historical, political, geographical and administrative system context;

2nd degree: establishing a time frame and a crisis description;

3rd degree: crisis partition into special situations or moments that require crisis decision;

4th degree: repeated overall crisis review with all its complexity, such as the use of a holistic approach.

Each level has more analytical terms, variables and indicators that represent analytical guidance during the particular crises research. An attention must be paid while trying to understand the indicators' general nature, so it is possible to provide the Reminder guide for analyzing of different crisis. It has to be clear that it is not possible, from the point of the set indicators, to study all potential crisis, as some crisis are simply not enough complex or the information availability will simply not allow it. On the other hand, some crises require further specific degradation of indicators, since every crisis, besides the general and common features, has its completely distinctive situational and contextual features.

In addition to the crisis management and crisis management and leadership division to a different levels, analytical special topics decomposed to a number of variable and indicators can be established. These analytical themes include prevention and awareness of the crisis, the identification of actors of the crisis management and leadership, crisis perception, crisis management and decision-making process, political and organizational cooperation and conflict, crisis communication (collection and information processing, technical information systems, crisis communication with the public media and its role in crisis and crisis management and leadership), the crisis internationalization, the effects of the crisis time frame, the cost of the crisis, crisis management and leadership, as well as gaining experience and knowledge. The practical limit on the number of analytical issue is the crisis nature itself, researchers risk interest, the availability of data and the time available for the crisis analysis.

In addition to that the Reminder with identified levels and analytical issues and with associated variables and indicators primarily allows the *post festum* analysis (after the event) of the crisis and its management and leadership. To a certain extent, it was also possible to use it *in situ*, namely within the crisis itself. The analysis of crisis and crisis management and leadership by the Reminder allows the creation of report related to the specific crisis management and leadership, which together can form a national database of

the examples of crisis management and leadership. Reminder is designed so that, on the basis of statements about various crises, it is possible to perform primarily qualitative (to a limited extent also quantitative) comparisons of content components (analytical levels, variables and indicators). Comparative analysis of this kind can further help in post-crisis knowledge achievement of crisis management and leadership institutions.

We know different methods of collecting and analyzing empirical data in order to make a case study of crisis management and leadership, so it is therefore necessary to identify them first. Durin the analysis of the crisis and crisis manage management and leadership a great number of primary and secondary sources appear, among which the most important are: official documents (meetings records, facts statements, diaries, testimonies, authorities findings, the official opinions, the analysis of the system actions, etc.), press releases, published technical analysis, technical and scientific articles, newspaper articles and news releases on the Internet, in broadcast forms (TV, radio) and in print media. The analysis of the contents of these documents is the basis for the analysis of crisis management and leadership. Extremely useful method is interviewing with the responsible actors of crisis management and leadership, which results should be used as a supplement in content analysis of documentary sources listed above. In this sense, it is necessary to highlight especially very useful group interviews with actors of the crisis management and leadership ("symposium story"), with which it is really possible to get a complete picture of the crisis extent, the crisis perception, relationship between the actors and so on.

Some actors in fact see only a partial picture of crisis management and leadership, so that their confrontation allows them to complement and sharpen the real picture. Descriptive and comparative methods are infallible in listing, describing and confronting events and processes, important from the point of crisis management and leadership. Significant method is also a secondary analysis of statistical data that are related to the crisis and its resolution. To fulfill the Reminder successfully, it is important that different methods of collecting data and information, their selection and usage, are in accordance with the analytical levels, subjects, variables and indicators.

Endemic nature of modern crisis is a part of the political and social context. The agreements will be more difficult to reach when it comes to identification, definition and assession of the crisis and its consequences. Different crises may be the product of different critical paths. The old order is violated, and about the new one we have to negotiate. The assumption that the crisis is the first step toward a future of many alternatives, and that the point where we will arrive in the future depends, at least partly, on the res-

ponse to the crisis, substantially raises the importance of crisis decision-making process. This requires a lot of political skill in order to transform crises and disasters form threats and accidents into an opportunity, and political advantage.

Conclusion

Public management in crisis and disaster management is becoming increasingly important and essential task of contemporary society. By the fact that it represents a serious threat to the structure of political or safety systems, which under the pressure of deadlines and complex security conditions require quick vital decisions, the management crisis involves the strategic knowledge, prediction and control of the uncertain situation at all levels. Technological revolution transformed the term of time and space, so that crises and conflicts adopt international character, while solving models include sophisticated integration and security services, and related systems. Cooperation becomes imperative, exchange of information and intelligence data requirement for success, while expenses of management must be transparent in order to ensure full public support.

In a liberal democracy, security services and its promoters must have control over the crisis development and the extent of the disaster, whether in the context of the political, legal or moral order. The methodology of crisis management requires entire and permanent engagement process, which with competence, knowledge and training guarantees the successful overcome of the conflict. This means that success is guaranteed by the uniqueness of the team and its actions, while the leader has the role of a coordinator who oversees the development of all five strategic phases: identifying the crisis, making vital decisions, reduce uncertainty and good publicity to the public, prompt and successful completion of the crisis, and, bringing instruction as inheritance of planning and training for future crises!

Crises are a potential training ground for the reform of public policy, since every lessons learned from it serves to the future generations. The old way of controlling them in a time of technological and global transformation is no longer possible, while public policy can survive only if quickly breaks it or minimize its effects. Routines that were once the privilege of the security services are increasingly becoming levers in the hands of people who drive the media content and the capacity of public attention. The crisis management is therefore moving in the institutional structure overseeing crisis situation, and creating a strategy to overcome it. Crisis and disaster planning is a responsible and important process: the illusion is that they will disappear on their own - they have to be predicted, controlled and resolved!

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Сажетак

Кризе и катастрофе старе су као и човечанство и као зао усуд прате људско постојање од самог почетка угрожавајући живот и виталне вредности цивилизације. Исконски људски инстинкт за самоодржањем терао је човека да тражи и налази мање или више успешне начине да се овим догађајима супротистави, да њихове последице ублажи и смањи ако већ не може да их избегне. Кризни менаџмент је ново (модерно) име за рационалан и систематичан приступ кризама и катастрофама и покушај да се њима управља у условима савременог и све више глобализованог и повезаног света. У том смислу, као модеран менаџерски концепт и настајуће истраживачко и академско поље, он је чедо друге половине XX века.

Ипак, криза као феномен остаје озбиљан изазов за истраживаче пошто се ради о несвакидашњем и неочекиваном догађају који се не уклапа у строге научне теорије а чије је истраживање скопчано са мноштвом практичних, методолошких и етичких проблема.

Такође, самом употребом термина криза за опис неког догађаја већ се улази у домен политике и политичког где се сусрећу и сукобљавају најразличитији интереси.

Ипак, ваља имати у виду да су кризе потенцијални полигон за реформу јавне политике, јер свака поуке из њих може да послужи будућим генерацијама. Стари начин њихове контроле у време технолошке и глобалне трансформације више није могућ, а јавна политика може да опстане само ако се кризама ефикасно управља и ако се минимизирају њихови ефекти. Рутине које су некада биле привилегија служби безбедности постају све моћније полуге у рукама људи који управљају медијским садржаја и обликују јавно мњење.

Методолошки и политички изазови у проучавању криза и катастрофа

Апстракт: Од најстаријих времена људи су се сусретали са кризама и катастрофама и покушавали да ове догађаје избегну и њихове последице ублаже и умање. Током времена је развијен концепт кризе, али је кризни менаџмент као концепт производ XX века. Аутори презентују теоријске изворе кризног менаџмента и разматрају кризу као теоријски проблем и изазов за истраживање. Посебна пажња се посвећује посматрању кризе у политичком контексту. Даје се и могући теоријско методолошки оквир за истраживање криза и катастрофа. Јавна управа данас има све значајнији задатак да управљање у кризним ситуацијама катастрофама које представљају озбиљну претњу структури политичких или безбедност система, тако да управљање кризама подразумева стратешко знање, предвиђање и контролу над неизвесним ситуацијама на свим нивоима

Кључне речи: криза, катастрофа, политички контекст, методологија, истраживање, безбедност