



Cultures of Crisis 3 – Professional Cultures of Crisis Management

International Workshop

Frankfurt, 8-9 November 2018

NORMATIVE ORDERS



PROGRAM

Thursday, 8th November 2018 (Peace Research Institute, Frankfurt)

- 12:30-13:30** **Arrival and light lunch**
- 13:30-14:00** **Welcome, round of introduction & workshop outline**
Oliver Ibert, Stefan Kroll and Antonia Witt
- 14:00-16:00** **Panel 1 “Regional cultures of crisis management”**
Moderator: Oliver Ibert
Panelists: Markus Kirchschrager, Michelle Ndiaye Ntab, Tilmann Röder
- 16:00-16:30** **Coffee Break**
- 16:30-18:30** **Panel 2 “Organizational cultures of crisis management”**
Moderator: Antonia Witt
Panelists: Shoshana Fine, Tine Hanrieder, Peter Schumann, NN
- 19:00** **Workshop dinner (location tba)**

Friday, 9th November (presumably University of Frankfurt, Cluster of Excellence “Normative Orders”)

- 9:00-10:30** **Keynote “Crisis? What Crisis? A public perspective on the nature, consequences and challenges of modern crises”**
Arjen Boin
- 10:30-11:00** **Coffee Break**
- 11:00-13:00** **Panel 3 “Crisis management as global epistemic community”**
Moderator: Stefan Kroll
Panelists: Rhageb Aljaoor, Arjen Boin, Verena Brinks, Eleonora Rohland
- 13:00-13:30** **Concluding Panel**
Oliver Ibert, Stefan Kroll, Antonia Witt
- 13:30** **Light Lunch**

Overall concept

The concept of crisis is elusive and it is highly disputed what actually makes a crisis a crisis. However, some elements reoccur more frequently than others when talking about crises. Among them are: “Decisive situation for better or worse”, “ambivalent combination of threat and opportunity”, “acting outside the routine”, “high degree of indeterminacy” and “acting under pressure”. What can be said is that such and similar understandings of crisis do travel far. Crises occur in different regional contexts and many cultures use the concept itself or a similar term. Yet, at the same time, crisis is no universal concept that is used by all humankind and at all times in the same way. It has evolved over time and some cultures adapt it more readily than others. It seems to be bound to particular cultural beliefs, such as: human agency exists, the future is open and can be influenced in the present and humans are responsible for the course of events. In institutional terms it has some affinity with capitalism, democracy and the existence of a free media.

Crises pervade all parts of society. They occur in the economic, ecological and political spheres, they affect organizations, states and institutions. All kinds of professionals thus have to deal with crises and have to develop their own understanding of crisis. The topic of this workshop is to explore the similarities and differences in how professional cultures use and understand the concept of crises and to assess the magnitude of practices and knowledge orders that exist to deal with crises within such professional cultures. We therefore invite representatives from different practical fields as well as researchers, who have studied professional cultures of crisis, to exchange ideas about their respective understanding of crises and their particular approaches to manage crises. In three panels, we approach this topic from different ways: Are there different regional approaches to crisis management? Are there different organizational cultures of crisis management? And is there a global epistemic community around practices of crisis management?

The workshop is inter-disciplinary, international and highly interactive. Our intention is to provide extensive time slots for joint discussion and to stimulate discussion by pointed inputs from dedicated experts. The panels are thus intended as informal exchange forums, open to diverse perspectives and controversial debates. In order to stimulate discussion we kindly asked each panelist to prepare a short statement of 5 to 10 minutes. We provide a few guiding questions in order to focus the inputs on the panel’s topics but encourage all panelists to bring in their respective subjective and personal experiences gained under highly divergent circumstances.

Keynote Lecture:

Crisis? What crisis?

A public perspective on the nature, consequences and challenges of modern crises

By

Arjen Boin (Universiteit Leiden)

Defining crisis has exercised academics for decades and continues to emerge on their agendas for discussion. In such discussions, functional and symbolic perspectives tend to clash; objective approaches are cast against subjective notions. In this lecture, professor Boin will reflect on these various perspectives and offer a uniting approach that can serve to connect the analytical capacities of all relevant academic disciplines. This is necessary, as modern society is increasingly confronted with a dynamic threat environment that challenges the traditional tools wielded by the nation state. Boin will discuss how current and future threats may erode key institutions and undermine democratic leadership. He will discuss the challenges that leaders face and explain how social science research can contribute to a better understanding of the causes, dynamics and consequences of modern crises. The aim is to further an agenda for interdisciplinary research that may also prove relevant for society.

Panel 1 “Regional cultures of crisis management”

The professionalization of crisis management in many cases is associated with the emergence of knowledge and practices which seems to be decoupled from regional contexts and expectations. For a long time, international interventions, from peace keeping to rule of law reforms, followed an international model which only marginally was oriented at regional social contexts, traditions and histories. More recently, the importance of regional normative expectations and institutions has been acknowledged not only by academics but also by practitioners. Taking this as a vantage point, the first panel is dedicated to regional approaches of crisis management. What are the differences between international and regional approaches of crisis management in particular cases? How and to what effect do hierarchies between international and regional professional cultures emerge? In which cases and under what conditions are regional approaches considered as source of innovation with the potential to also transform the international script?

Confirmed panelists:

Markus Kirchschlager, *German Institute of Global and Area Studies (GIGA), Hamburg, Germany*

Michelle Ndiaye Ntab, *Institute for Peace and Security Studies, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia*

Tilmann Röder, *FU Berlin and Federal Foreign Office, Berlin, Germany*

Panel 2 “Organizational cultures of crisis management”

Both within states as well as internationally, the detection, management, and prevention of crises is often the task of complex organizations. What happens within such organizations is thus of crucial relevance for understanding the governance of crises today. In the second panel we therefore scrutinize different organizational cultures of crisis management, that is specific practices and knowledge orders that shape how organizations react to and deal with crises. In particular, we seek to understand differences in such organizational cultures both between different types of organizations (e.g. organizations that are prone to crisis vs. organizations that have to avoid crises) as well as within different sections or departments of one organization (such as field offices, headquarters, crisis committees): Is there a global script for modern organizations in how crises are addressed? How do different organizational cultures of crisis management travel globally as well as within organizations? And how do they adapt to different contexts? Where do different organizational cultures clash or create pathologies? Empirically, this panel will bring together experts working in different policy fields ranging from humanitarian aid to health and the prevention of violent conflict.

Confirmed panelists:

Shoshana Fine, Centre de Recherches Internationales (CERI), Paris, France

Tine Hanrieder, Berlin Social Science Center (WZB) Berlin, Germany

Peter Schumann, formerly United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Panel 3 “Crisis management as a global epistemic community?”

Crises occur in almost all societal sub-systems. A diverse range of professions and professionals have to deal with crises and have to develop systematic knowledge about crisis management. This raises the question about the nature of crisis management as a professional culture. Is there something like a shared understanding of what actually constitutes crisis management as a coherent practice? Or is it rather the case, that each profession develops an own understanding of crisis adapted to the specificities of different areas of application? Is it possible to share knowledge about crisis management across different geographical and organizational contexts or are these practices incomparable as they have to be integrated in their respective contexts? The panel brings together researchers and practitioners, discussing the (non)existence and characteristics of a global epistemic community on crisis management. What constitutes the practice of crisis management? How is global knowledge on crisis management shared between practitioners? Is there something like a discipline of crisis management and can this professional knowledge be applied to all contexts?

Confirmed panelists:

Ragheb Aljaoor – Support Group Network (SGN), Vänersborg, Sweden

Arjen Boin – Universiteit Leiden & Co-Founder of Crisisplan BV, Leiden, Netherlands

Verena Brinks – Leibniz Institute for Research on Society and Space, Erkner, Germany

Eleonora Rohland – Universität Bielefeld, Bielefeld, Germany