FROM TRADITIONAL TO MODERN FORMS OF CRISES – A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF HUMAN CRISES

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Abstract:
This article presents the variety of types of crises in human society. The reader is briefly introduced to the essence and content of the concept of crisis, as well as *the concept of the human security, which emphasizes that in addition to traditional security threats, the world nowadays faces a number of modern forms of global threats. The crises caused by military conflicts; crimes against humanity; usage of weapons of mass destruction; terrorism and organized crime; natural crises and environmental degradation; economic crises and poverty; social crises; health and infectious disease crises; crises caused by globalization and by a change in the value system and morality of people; political and governance crises are presented in more detail in order to fully achieve the informative goal of the article.*

Keywords: crisis*, security, human security*

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Introduction

This article examines the variety of types of crises in human society. In order to more fully achieve the informative goal of the article, the reader is briefly introduced to the essence and content of the concept of „crisis", as well as the concept of the human security which emphasizes that in addition to traditional security threats, the modern world faces a number of forms of global threats. The crises caused by military conflicts are presented in more detail; crimes against humanity; use of weapons of mass destruction; terrorism and organized crime; natural crises and environmental degradation; economic crises and poverty; social crises; health and infectious disease crises; crises caused by globalization and by a change in the value system and morality of people; etc.

1. Crisis – nature, characteristics and types

A number of alternative definitions of crisis exist in theory and practice. In the most general sense, the term „crisis" implies an unwanted and unexpected situation that brings latent harm to individuals, organizations or society. Crisis is (Canyon, 2020):

• a serious threat to the basic structures or fundamental values and norms of a system, which in conditions of time pressure and extremely uncertain circumstances necessitates the making of vital decisions;

• a low-probability, high-impact event that threatens the viability of the organization and is characterized by uncertainty about cause, effect and means of resolution, and a belief that decisions must be made quickly;

• a damaging event or series of events that indicate conditions have arisen that exceed the organization's ability to cope with the task, generating consequences that may affect a significant part of the organization;

• change – sudden or developing those leads to an urgent problem that needs to be addressed immediately;

• any event that could seriously harm people, the reputation or the state of the organization;

• instability with a pronounced possibility of an undesirable result;

• any situation that poses a risk of escalation and increased intensity, interfering with the normal activity of the organization, endangering the positive image and damaging the bottom line of the organization.

In 2004, the UN High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change produced the report: A more secure world: our shared responsibility. (United Nations, 2004) According to the report and the recommendations of the UN Secretary General corresponding to it, the main threats to society and collective security are (United Nations, 2004):

- poverty;
- infectious diseases;
- the deterioration of the environment;
- military conflicts;
- genocide and related atrocities;
- the use of weapons of mass destruction;
- terrorism and transnational organized crime.

The broader concept of security emphasizes crises of a different nature in human society.

In this regard, the concept of human security emphasizes that, in addition to traditional security threats such as military operations, the modern world faces many new global threats as poverty, pandemics, chronic diseases, shortages of food and clean water, pollution of nature and loss of natural resources as a result of human activity, energy dependence, economic crises, demographic problems, organized crime and terrorism. Nowadays, the concept of human security as a paradigm is aimed at understanding global vulnerabilities causing crises and conflicts and includes economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, public security and political security (United Nations Development Program, 1994).

The main types of crises emerging globally are:

- military conflicts and military actions – wars, revolutions, uprisings, civil wars and infighting, coups, military conflicts on an ethnic or religious basis;
- crises caused by crimes against humanity – genocide and related atrocities, the use of weapons of mass destruction;
- crises caused by internal organized crime – murder, theft, violence, extortion, theft and abuse;
- crises caused by transnational organized crime – terrorism, sale of drugs and narcotic substances, prostitution, illegal donation and transplantation of human organs;

- natural crises and natural disasters – pollution of the natural environment, spills of hazardous materials, extinction of animal and plant species, critical reduction of natural resources, air pollution, destruction of the fertile soil layer, large day-to-day temperature amplitudes, earthquakes, floods, strong storms with hurricane winds, heavy snowfalls, landslides;
- economic crises and poverty – low wage levels, low purchasing power, poor living conditions, high unemployment rates, hyperinflation, high interest rates on loans, lack of investment, low GDP, low national income, low levels of international trade, negative trade balance, increased internal and external debt, states of bankruptcy;
- social crises – crises related to social policy, including marginal groups in society, various forms of discrimination, lack of social services; demographic crises;
- health crises;
- political and governance crises;
- technological crises – industrial accidents, accidents and crashes with equipment and vehicles, damage to important equipment, derailment of vehicles, refusal of the functioning of new technology, crises resulting from the use of IT, cyber-attacks;
- business crises – corruption, misappropriation of property, frauds, hostile takeovers, sabotage, discrimination, violence and aggression in the workplace;
- crises in education and science;
- cultural crises.

2. Crises in human society – an attempt for presentation

A crisis can be a natural event beyond the reach of human intervention, but it can also be a violent, man-made upheaval. Crises cause complex emergency situations and pose a threat to public security. They are often the result of a combination of events that lead to a synergy of hazards.

War, in its most popular sense, is a conflict between political groups involving hostilities of considerable duration and scale. Sociologists treat war as an institution recognized in custom or law. Armed conflicts of powerful states with isolated and powerless peoples are usually called pacification, military expeditions or explorations; in the case of small states, they are designated as interventions or repressions; and conflicts involving internal groups are defined as riots or uprisings. If the resistance is strong or prolonged enough, these conflicts can reach

a scale that qualifies them to be defined as „war" (Frankel in Encyclopedia Britannica, 2022). Civil wars also have a negative impact on local and global peace and security. As a type of struggle between factions within a country, their goals can range from taking control of a particular region to completely changing government and state policy.

Crises caused by *crimes against humanity* include genocide and related atrocities, as well as the use of weapons of mass destruction. The most comprehensive definition of genocide can be found in the UN Convention on the Prevention and Prosecution of Genocide, which was adopted on December 9, 1948 and entered into force on January 12, 1951. Its main purpose is to preserve the existence of separate human groups and to affirm basic principles of humanity and morality worldwide. Article 2 of the UN Convention on the Prevention and Prosecution of Genocide contains an internationally recognized definition of genocide that has been incorporated into the national criminal law of a number of countries. Article 2 defines genocide as „any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group as such:

(a) killing members of the group;

(b) causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;

(c) deliberately imposing upon the group living conditions calculated to result in its physical destruction in whole or in part;

(d) imposing measures designed to prevent births within the group;

(e) forcible transfer of children from the group to another group. (United Nations, 1948)."

Genocide has probably been practiced throughout the whole human history, and in ancient times it was common for the victors in war to slaughter all the males of the conquered tribe. The events of the 20th century, however, were of an unsuspected global scale and led to the almost complete extermination of European Jews, Roma (Gypsies) and other groups by Nazi Germany during World War II (Andreopoulos, in Encyclopedia Britannica, 2022). In modern international law, the crime of genocide is part of the broader category of "crimes against humanity" defined by the Statute of the International Military Tribunal (Nuremberg Charter).

Weapons of mass destruction are weapon or device that is intended or has the capability to cause death or serious bodily harm to a significant number of people through the release, spread or impact of a biological agent, toxic or poisonous

chemicals, radiation or radioactivity. For the purposes of US Criminal law the weapons of mass destruction are defined as (US CODE: Title 18, § 2332a):

- any destructive devices – explosive, incendiary devices, poison gas bombs, grenades, rockets, mines, other device;
- any weapon that is designed or intended to cause death or grievous bodily harm through the release, distribution and exposure of toxic or poisonous chemicals or their precursors;
- any weapon involving a biological agent, toxin, or vector;
- any weapon that releases radiation and leads to radioactivity above levels dangerous to human life.

Modern weapons of mass destruction are nuclear, biological or chemical weapons. The world community's efforts to control the spread of WMD are anchored in international agreements such as the 1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention and the 1993 Chemical Weapons Convention.

In 1947, in view of the devastating effects of the atomic bomb, the original developer of the concept, Albert Einstein, stated: „I do not know with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones (Einstein, cited in Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, 2010)."

Organized crime is a complex of highly centralized groups created to carry out illegal activities. Such groups engage in theft, fraud, robbery, kidnapping for ransom and demanding „protection" payments (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2022). Here we also count the various forms of damage and loss of personal dignity, security, freedom, health, life of the victims through: traffic of people (including children), sexual slavery, forced prostitution and pornography, child prostitution and pornography, tourism for the purpose of taking advantage of sexual services, trade in human organs, etc.

Transnational organized crime undermines democracy, disrupts the functioning of free markets, drains national assets and halts the development of societies. National and international criminal groups pose a threat to the security of all nations. Serious manifestations of international crime, such as crimes against humanity, are investigated by the International Criminal Court, and in 2000 the United Nations adopted a Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

The 20th century saw organized and specifically targeted actions to undermine the foundations of international security, such as terrorism and transnational organized crime. They are designed to cause terror and psychological fear through

violence, persecution and destruction of mainly civilian targets. Such actions are carried out by illegal, illegal organizations and aim to send a message to society or the government that is in power in a country. Terrorists attack national symbols to show their power and try to shook the foundations of the state, society or ideology they oppose. Terrorism has been practiced by political organizations with right-wing and left-wing aims, by nationalist and religious groups, and even by state institutions such as armies, intelligence services, and the police. Terrorists initiate kidnappings, hostage-taking, mass shootings, bombings, and suicide bombings. Targets include schools, shopping malls, bus and train stations, restaurants and nightclubs, both because they attract large crowds and because they are familiar places to the civilian population. Other main targets of terrorist acts are buildings that are important economic or political symbols, such as embassies, military depots or military-industrial plants (Jenkins, in Encyclopedia Britannica, 2022). While countering potential terrorist threats is mainly carried out by the police and special units of the ministries of internal affairs of the respective countries, military formations have more specific tasks such as guarding objects of national importance, controlling movement in their assigned areas of responsibility, patrolling in settlements and risk areas and others (Gluhchov, 2013).

According to Louise Shelley, transnational organized crime will be a defining problem of the 21st century, much like the Cold War in the 20th century and colonialism in the 19th century. (Williams, 1996)

Natural crises are associated with environmental degradation, including the depletion and pollution of air, soil and water resources, the destruction of ecosystems and the extinction of wildlife. They are defined as harmful and unwanted change related to the disturbance or destruction of the environment. Pollution is related to the introduction of new substances uncharacteristic of nature or exceeding the level of their normal concentration and can be radioactive, noise, light, electromagnetic, thermal and chemical pollution.

The UN defines environmental damage as „a reduction in the capacity of the environment and the inability to meet the social and environmental goals and needs of society" (United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, 2010). Environmental protection is part of the modern doctrine of sustainable development of society, according to which in the process of consumption of the present generation must take into account the needs of future generations, and which requires the achievement of harmony between the ecological, economic and social spheres.

Economic crises are „closely related to recession in the economy, which is a downward trend in the economic cycle characterized by a decline in production, employment, a decline in household income" (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2022), and a sharp change in the micro- and macroeconomic indicators of the economy. The increase in the level of poverty in an economy is a major effect of economic crises, appearing immediately after their occurrence and related to the decreasing incomes and increasing expenses of the population. Poverty is the inability to meet basic human needs of clean water, food, health care, education, clothing and shelter. According to the World Bank definition, it includes – low income and the inability to acquire basic goods and services necessary for the survival of individuals with dignity, low levels of health care and education, lack of access to clean water and sanitation, insufficient physical security and others.

According to a UN report: „At the root of poverty are the lack of choices and opportunities, the violation of human dignity...the lack of access to food and clothing, the lack of access to education and health care, the lack of work." It means insecurity, helplessness and isolation of individuals, households and communities, increased levels of violence and poor living conditions." (United Nations, 2004). Poverty includes lack of income and resources for sustainable livelihoods, hunger and malnutrition, increasing morbidity and mortality, increasing homelessness, living in inadequate housing and unsafe environments, social discrimination and isolation of individuals, groups and segments of society, inability to participation in the civil, social and cultural life of society. Economic crises are accompanied by rising costs of living, making poor people less able to afford the purchase of certain goods and services. In times of economic crisis, they allocate a significant portion of their budget to food and can be particularly vulnerable to increases in food prices. The poor strata of the population are mainly directed towards buying cheaper products, and covering their costs for heating, lighting, water (satisfaction of existential life needs). There is a high risk of falling behind in education for children from low-income families, due to the family's inability to cover costs related to education and participation in the learning process.

The fight against poverty is a priority of social policy. Social policy is concerned with the welfare of society and the response to the multitude of societal challenges. According to the European Parliament it is „a plan or action of governmental or institutional institutions that aims to improve or reform society and includes:

- employment policy – setting the minimum wage, the role of collective bargaining between employers and trade unions, the organization of the pension system, unemployment benefits, sickness benefits, fair working conditions, ensuring health and safety at work, ensuring equal opportunities and access to the labour market;
- gender equality and anti-discrimination policies;
- improving health and eliminating inequalities through legislation and funding;
- adequate social protection of specific groups of the population, including disadvantaged persons and their integration into social life (European Parliament, 2022)."

The traditional social crises include high unemployment; low wages; the reintegration of young people; harmful working conditions; discrimination; violence, sexual harassment and stalking; lack of access to health care; dealing with racism. Infectious diseases are a typical example of a specific health and social crisis. These are infectious diseases, with enormous potential for transmission from person to person or species to another through the reproduction of disease-causing agents. According to the World Health Organization, the deadliest infectious diseases are lower respiratory tract infections, HIV/AIDS, gastrointestinal disorders, tuberculosis, malaria, measles, whooping cough, tetanus, meningitis (World Health Organization, 2004). We also saw the impact of the pandemic caused by Covid-19. The reduced level of social and health care, the lack of a health culture, and insufficient financing of the health sector led to health-threatening consequences and threaten global security. In addition to traditional social crises, new ones arise in society, caused by globalization and by changes in the value system and morals of people, for example: LGBT issues (such as same-sex marriage), the legal status of abortion, carrying and using weapons, euthanasia.

What is society's response!?

Already in the Treaty of Rome of 1957, the main social principle was laid down and it was an equality between workers. There is also a legal framework for working conditions and occupational safety, as well as legislation against discrimination in the workplace. The European Parliament proposed measures to facilitate the return to work of people with long-term illnesses and the integration of chronically ill people and people with disabilities, as a result of which the European Commission adopted the Disability Rights Strategy 2021-2030 (European Parliament, 2022).

Conclusion

As a reaction to all these traditional and modern crises in human society, the concept of crisis management has emerged.

The origin of the term „crisis management" could be found in the political sphere. American President J. F. Kennedy used this expression for the first time - during the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, when the confrontation between the USA and the USSR, caused by the installation of Soviet nuclear missiles in Cuba, brought the world the Cold World War, but of course the crisis management as a function, that is, crisis management activities are older than the term itself. In this line of thought, crisis management first arose as a practice in human history, and recently in the 19th century as a theory, and in the 20th century as a science being studied. Crisis management is a set of functions or processes whose purpose is to identify, investigate and predict possible crisis situations and to create special means that would allow the organization to prevent or deal with a crisis, to overcome it with minimal consequences and to return to its normal state or position as soon as possible. (For more details see: Milasinovic, Kesetovic, 2008)

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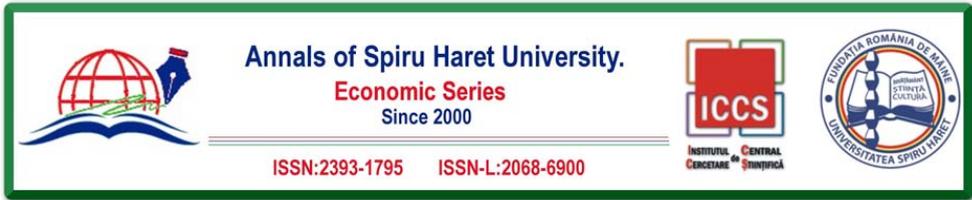
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