

# Preface

I became interested in studying uncertainties in crisis during my master study, because I personally experienced a crisis in China, the Songhua River pollution crisis. In 2005, an explosion of a chemical factory in Jilin Province caused a spill of poisonous materials into the Songhua River, which led to a shutdown of the water pipe system in Harbin city, Heilongjiang Province (where I studied), with a population of 10 million. The water pollution evolved into an international crisis when the Russian city downstream of the river began to protest against this pollution to their quality of life. The uncertainties regarding the impacts of the pollution and the social panic caused by uncertainties of the crisis in Harbin shocked me and inspired me to explore this topic.

In 2007, I decided to continue pursuing my research interests at Leiden University. I learned about the reputation of the Crisis Research Center (CRC) which had produced high-quality publications in the field. Then, CRC Director Dr. Arjen Boin accepted me as a Ph.D. researcher. Starting from a student with background in engineering and management, I am grateful to Dr. Boin for his guidance in the new world of social science research. During the six and a half years' study, Dr. Boin provided constructive advice and encouragement with consistent patience and encouragement. When Dr. Boin stayed in the USA for the first year of my Ph.D. study, Dr. Sanneke Kuipers and Prof. David Lowery helped me complete the research proposal and grasp the knowledge foundation of crisis management and public administration.

This book has been written at offices in four universities and a company; the assistance and advice by colleagues in these five organizations have been extremely helpful. At Leiden University's Institute of Public Administration (formerly Department of Public Administration), I owe so much to Toon, who helped me in adapting to life in the Netherlands. At Louisiana State University's Stephen Disaster Management Institute, Ping discussed with me about crisis research and introduced new friends to me in Baton Rouge. Special thanks to Warren, a former colleague at LSU (now at WVU), who commented on two chapters of this book. At Crisisplan, I would like to express thanks to Werner. At Tsinghua University, I owe thanks to Dean Xue Lan, Associate Dean and Center for Crisis Management

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Finally, many thanks go to my wife Dan for always standing right beside me for more than thirteen years. This book is dedicated to my parents, who taught me about life and encouraged me always in the six-year-long Ph.D. study.

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