

The Concept of Conflict Responsibility: Classical Interpretations and Modern View.

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Abstract. Interpreting the classical conflict studies concepts, the authors put forward an alternative methodology of state activity analysis, which is presented from the point of view of the level of conflict responsibility and irresponsibility in state social conflicts management. The article deals with the concepts of responsibility, genesis and moral basis of responsibility, and the interrelation of conflict as a means of needs satisfaction and responsibility. The research results in a model of conflict responsibility that helps to analyse the efficiency of the defence of social actors' interests by the state. Major social subjects often delegate the right to defend their interests to the state. This phenomenon is interpreted as conflict responsibility. A rating scale of conflict responsibility levels is offered: from a low level, where the fact of taking responsibility by the state is manifested, to a high one, where the defence of conflict interests becomes apparent in political reality.

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1. Introduction

The phenomenon of responsibility comprises a number of details: the state of responsibility subject and object, the end and means, particular actions, etc. Responsibility, on the one hand, is linked with the "free" will of the subject (Strawson, 1994; Levy and McKenna 2008), and on the other, with various imperatives (Jonas 1984) that determine the decision-making process. As an element of the social life of subjects, responsibility is and has been an object of study within the social sciences. As an object of study, responsibility has been divided into several types. For example, Hart distinguished between role responsibility, causal responsibility, liability responsibility, and capacity responsibility (1968). Additionally, one may come across the notions of moral responsibility (Frankfurt, 1969), legal responsibility (Green 1943; Feigenson and Park 2006), corporate responsibility (Montiel, 2008; Aguinis and Glavas, 2012; Garriga and Mele, 2004), economic responsibility (Usunier et al., 2011), human responsibility (Freedman, 1983), group responsibility (Held, 2002), social responsibility (Strebkov, 2012), and so on. Nevertheless, the analysis of the nature of responsibility within the framework of the conflict approach has not been seriously attempted in conflict studies. By claiming that, with the help of the conflict studies paradigm, we can comprehend a person, society, and state through their participation in a social conflict, we do not try to re-define the concept of responsibility by methodological means of conflict studies. Rather, as an alternative, we would like to introduce into the academic discourse a specific type of responsibility – conflict responsibility.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Genesis of conflict responsibility

The notion of responsibility even semantically presupposes a necessity and obligation to give someone an account of one's actions. *The Oxford Dictionary of English* (2010) defines it as "being morally accountable for one's behavior". This necessity implies the existence of such relations in society that would endow people with an obligation to give an account. On the other hand, society holds it important to know to whom the account is given, especially if the account deals with the activity of a democratic state, in which people realize their power directly, as well as through regulatory bodies and autonomous public bodies. Realising their power directly (with referendum and free election being its highest expression), people become self-accountable. It should be mentioned that a subject and responsibility instance (the one to who account is given) (Lakazova, 2009) coincide, and responsibility itself, both as a notion and an attitude, disappears. Relations of responsibility are represented only in such associations where mediatory relations are constitutive, where someone represents someone, as it happens in the modern representative state.

Separation of the subject of responsibility from its instance is quite a ponderable fact of the representative state, in which power is alienated from people in the form of relations and actions. What could be done by people without regard to external pressure is done in a compulsory way, not as a voluntary and conscious act. Power as an external force determines or seeks to determine social interest coercively, which leads to tension between power and

people and entails struggle. By determining the object of its influence as something opposite to power the state thereby leaves to people only what they can do without power. Appropriating conflict management, the power leaves peace and peaceful co-existence to people, both among themselves and in relations with power. Thus, the power presumes that in civil society infliction of harm upon each other is out of the question, as well as any struggle at all, because harming someone is possible only in a conflict.

The instance and subject of responsibility are, respectively, society (people) and state. In this case, conflict responsibility is better analysed in terms of social conflict as a means of achieving public welfare. As it has been shown, responsibility in the context of relations between its subject and object reproduces itself in the form of an obligation of some people towards others, and conflict responsibility, accordingly, in the form of an obligation of the accountable subject to enter the conflict. Following this argument, the reverse situation emerges in case the state, or another major subject of the social action, avoids conflict, although circumstances, norms, customs, and moral obligation prescribe it to do so in order to achieve significant, generally shared aims. A necessary condition here is that otherwise (mostly, by interacting with socially deviant actors) these aims cannot possibly be achieved. Conflict irresponsibility is also demonstrated by the subject that manifests in its declarations the existence of incompatible aims and its obligation to enter the conflict without doing so in practice.

Obviously, one cannot but wonder (by way of verifying this hypothesis) whether there are such needs, interests, and aims of people as a whole that pass to the state; if there are none, conflict responsibility, described in this article, is merely a figment of our imagination. To put it another way, if one argues in terms of understanding responsibility as an action, based on rational motives, where are the reasons of conflict responsibility of the state to be sought? To deal with this issue, one might find it helpful to refer to the concept of “common goods”¹, somewhat forgotten, but nowadays gaining popularity again.

2.2. Common good and conflict responsibility

“Common good” appears to be the very rational motive that underlies the accountable actions of the state. The ancient interpretation of common good, which gave rise to the discussion about the possibility of voluntary identification of private and common good (in our case, private and common interests), recognised the validity of common good as an indispensable element of political progress. In its further development the concept of common good suffered self-renunciation in classical liberalism and

enjoyed a modest revival in contemporary history. Basically, it can be summarised in two points of view. One is the minimal state by W. Humboldt, in which common good can be positive when the state takes care of the needs of its citizens, and negative in case the state starts to fight against the social evil, neutralising the consequences of destructive social conflicts. The idea of minimalism of the state (maximum reduction of overall responsibility, including conflict responsibility) is connected, according to Humboldt, with negative consequences of the actions of the state that deprive its citizens of independence and impinge on their “moral good”, that is, their energy and entrepreneurship (1969). The other point of view is presented by a concept of the Welfare State, expounded particularly in the famous report of W. Beveridge. It postulates state responsibility for people’s welfare, which, actually, is the common good to be sought (1942). Further development of this concept is thought to be possible through the cross between its liberal renunciation and its classical presentation as a virtue. There are a number of arguments in favour of this idea.

The argument of globalisation fixes the problem of depleting resources and pluralism of global competition, predicting an approaching impossibility of the existence of societies where liberal individualism is economically secured for the few chosen countries and people (Dupre, 1993). The restitution of common good is to help to avoid global shocks, against which there are no prescriptions in the liberal theory. This becomes possible only in case common good does not acquire an autonomous character, that is, it does not become separated from private good. The moral argument proceeds from the fact that the most common private needs and interests, such as safety and welfare, are premises for the realisation of other, less common and more private interests, which are to be interpreted as the common good to be sought (Rentto, 1988; Warnock, 1971). The ethological argument is very close in meaning to the moral one, the only difference being that the former defines common good as the right order in society, which fixes the interdependence of social subjects in satisfying their needs (Connell, 1987). Finally, the cultural studies argument emphasises the idea of a crisis, primarily the cultural one, which has befallen western liberal society. A type of social and cultural order, which used to be considered the apex of progress, is now criticized by many intellectuals. For example, J. Galtung defines it as a community of psycho-socially isolated, atomized individuals, who find the key notion of the social subject – interaction – meaningless (1996). Could the idea of common good be an impetus for a possible revival of western society?

Notwithstanding the previous research, the question “Whose good is the common good?” remains unanswered. It is self-evident that, theoretically, common good includes full health and education. However, it appears problematic to measure and determine the degree of the common in them; moreover, these goods are likely to contain a private interest. Common good is interpreted as something that economic subjects strive to achieve when they are not interested in gaining profit, with the emerging opposition of the common and private in their interests being resolved through their “attitude of mind”. This situation is accordant with the idea of voluntary responsibility as a moral category (Clohesy, 2003). One might as well appeal to the category of justice, but R. Dahrendorf convincingly demonstrated the way at least three interpretations of justice clash with each other (1996). Political justice guarantees basic rights and freedoms, people’s sovereignty; social justice guarantees social security; economic justice excludes conditions that prevent a part of society from achieving a certain level of well-being. As a result, common good turns out to be something that “we seek [.....] inside the magic triangle of these three types of justice” (Offe, 2012:679).

Thus, taking into account the idea that a rational motive for the responsibility under discussion is the realisation of common good, one should underline the significance of the conflict approach in studying this phenomenon. An important methodological advantage of conflict studies is the introduction of the needs, interests, and conflict resources of the other party, which is often overlooked, into the analysis. Common good and common interests are not realised a priori, otherwise the Welfare State would be a reality for everyone. This realisation is hindered by objective conditions of resource shortage or subjective circumstances. Who is that subject that society has to come into conflict with to realise common good? Evidently, it is the private interest, which has been defined as the opposition to common good throughout the existence of this concept.

We have clarified the foundations of the origin of conflict responsibility. The object of conflict here is common good, based on the interests and needs of the majority, which specify this notion in the subject matter of a particular conflict. The original subject of the conflict – the majority – explicitly or implicitly passes the right to lead the conflict to the state. This happens because the majority cannot exceed the bounds of their private interests, for, according to Aristotle, they “pay most attention to what is their own: they care less for what is common” (Aristotle, 1995:42). Another reason is the realisation of the impossibility of their victory without the conflict

resource that belongs solely to the state, that is, power or legitimate coercion of the opponent. So, what can one say about the state performing the incurred liabilities and how is one to analyse the quality of this performance in terms of conflict studies?

2.3. Conflict studies about responsibility

Classical concepts of conflict studies characterise suchlike conflicts in two ways. Arguing about ideology, conflict, and party struggle, G. Simmel notes that a conviction that people struggle for an idea, not for private interests, which is inherent to party consciousness, adds to the radicalism and ruthlessness of the conflict (1995). L. Coser, by way of interpreting Simmel’s idea, claims that the objectified struggle, transcending all private concerns, is normally more merciless, because the realisation of fighting on behalf of the superindividual “right” makes both parties absolutely adamant in their determination (1956). In other words, if the conflict is superindividual, the underlying interests are hard to modify, since a person representing a certain community believes they are not entitled to change anything about the initial position. Social subjects in such conflicts consider themselves to be representatives of greater communities, even if these communities never delegated any powers to them. This leads to a lockstep position in the interaction, and, furthermore, to the antagonistic character of the controversy, because the representatives of a superindividual interest do not consider themselves free as far as concessions and compromises are concerned. This is usually characteristic of ethnoreligious strife, ideological debates, all conflicts over values. Here all decisions and actions are perceived by the participants particularly acutely. As for compromise and co-operation, standard behaviour models in any other conflict, they are seen as betrayal of delegated interests. According to the above-mentioned, the state, when taking conflict responsibility on itself, is supposed to defend common interests unrelentingly.

R. Dahrendorf formulates this idea slightly differently, introducing the notion of a conflict’s intensity. He claims that the more significance the participants attribute to the debated issues, the more intense the conflict is (1959). Thus, the key point is the value of the matter in dispute, not representation identity. At the same time Dahrendorf partly agrees with Simmel and Coser in his study of the factors determining the intensity of the conflict. He singles out, among others, a factor of social mobility, the rate of which is inversely proportional to the rate of the conflict’s intensity. Thereby he corroborates a thesis that the more individuals identify themselves with a certain social attitude, the higher their commitment to

the group interests, and the more intensely the conflict might develop. Besides, Dahrendorf notes that external characteristics of the conflict, expressed in the variable of violence, can be manifested quite explicitly, misguiding the outside observer, while the analysis of the contents variable may demonstrate its rather low value.²

In the works of the next stage of development of conflict studies – general theory of conflict resolution and prevention – the emphasis is not put on the social system and its institutes, but on the unrealised needs of the participants of conflict relations. D. Burton argues that the main cause of a stable social contradiction consists of the very social institutes – the state, first of all – because of their reliance upon the interests of the elite and existing norms. This idea seems rather significant in view of speculations about the conflict responsibility of the state. He claims that a gap between the expectation of needs satisfaction and the satisfaction itself is actually a measure of the real legitimate power. In other words, the more effective the state is in championing the key interests of society (common good included), the more legitimate it looks in people's eyes. Basically, a permanent loss in a struggle for common interests may cause the state to lose the support of its electorate. Moreover, it does not matter in this case whether this loss is legitimate in legal terms. If social groups do not satisfy their basic needs within the framework of existing social norms and institutes, they will seek satisfaction out of these bounds (Burton and Dukes, 1990:153). Thus, without getting support for their conflict interests from the state for a long time, or, as it often happens, getting only promises, people will start to defend their rights, but hardly conforming to current norms.

The above-mentioned situation has been described in detail by sociologists. For example, Coser's teacher, R. Merton, held that the main reason for social conflicts is an explicit discrepancy between the purposes of social subjects and legitimate means of achieving these purposes. This contradiction, in his view, reflects the anomy of the social system. Merton is known to have introduced five patterns of reaction of social relations participants to this contradiction: conformity, innovation, ritualism, retreatism, and rebellion (1938, 1986). Let us examine how Merton's system can work as regards the issue discussed.

Conflicts concerning common good are believed to belong to the contradictions that either lead to the anomy of the social system, or, through their successful resolution, save society from falling into the abyss. Two of the five patterns – conformity and retreatism (suicide) – can be straightaway discarded, for they are impossible in the given circumstances. Conformity, that is, acceptance, according to Merton,

of both ends and means of their achieving, actually does not imply conflict behaviour of the social subject. As for retreatism, it fixes the subject's refusal from both ends and means – i.e., the social conflict itself. That leaves us with innovation, ritualism, and rebellion as the most appropriate patterns for our analysis. Innovation seems to be the most evident pattern for the state, if society entrusted it with the defence of its common interest. Indeed, this pattern presupposes the presence of ends, which are considered to be just and legal, but the existing means are so imperfect or ineffective that unsatisfied needs cannot be a priori satisfied with the help of the given tools. The role of the state appears to consist in a timely transformation of social conditions, especially when it deals with common good and the ways of achieving it. Burton claims that the modern state should pass from the use of primarily tough ways of influencing society, based on the law and traditions, to alternative tools intended for the needs of social subjects (Burton and Sandole, 1987:99). In reality, however, the state frequently seeks to use another pattern – ritualism, a model of conflict behaviour in which the use of the available means, norms, and laws becomes the only meaningful purpose of government activity. Then the discourse about common good runs against the argument that this contradicts the laws of market economy. Furthermore, a demand to invest extra state funds into either human resources (education, health care, social security), which is held just by everyone, is discarded under the pretence that it is going to worsen macroeconomic indices and boost inflation. Naturally, the law and norms cannot annul the needs, nor can they satisfy those needs. When the state, to which society delegated its conflict interests, for a long time does nothing but declare its struggle for common good, unsatisfied needs force people to choose the last pattern – rebellion. In this case we deal with a refusal from both legitimate ends and means. Society arrives at the need to modify the whole system of social relations, which means that citizens start to realise their interests with the help of all possible means.

Examples of conflict irresponsibility abound in the history of every state. Why, then, does the state, agreeing to carry this burden, prove to be unable, notwithstanding all available tools, to represent the common interest effectively? To put it another way, what is the nature of conflict irresponsibility?

2.4. Conflict responsibility and irresponsibility

Discussing the nature of conflict responsibility we come to the conclusion that in the most general sense it reflects the procedure of making someone's interests your own. In this case a necessary condition for the state to tackle the conflict about the common

good extremely conscientiously must be the identification of the public and state interests. To what extent are the delegated interests important for the state? Obviously, the process of delegating the conflict interest from the instance to the subject of responsibility, especially being heteronomous, is not always voluntary for the latter. The essence of relations between the modern state and its citizens generates a plethora of situations in which the state has to undertake some obligations, which does not necessarily lead to the identification of the public and state interests. The conflict that emerges as a result automatically becomes unrealistic, because the actual state interest is not rooted in it. In the given case the explanatory potential of the conflict approach to such obligations on the part of the state is great. It is only here that a thorough analysis of the public and state interests is possible, along with a prognosis of how successfully the state is going to defend common interests in their conflict with private ones. In case of an inconsistency of these interests, or, sometimes, a contradiction between them, it becomes unreasonable to hope for a successful resolution of such social conflicts by the state.

Another possible reason for conflict irresponsibility might be a gap in the link between the responsibility instance and subject. Getting back to the idea that an action can be considered a responsible one either through the recognition of its rationality or its legitimization, the following conclusions can be made. In case the instance of conflict responsibility, that is, people, is convinced of the redundancy of legitimate coercion the state uses to achieve common good, the state's actions might not be considered responsible by the instance. Thus, the link is broken because common good, as the state sees it, has evolved into something autonomous and become the opposition to common good as the sum total of most of private goods.

The third reason deals with the state as a specific subject of conflict responsibility. If, in a particular case of delegating a conflict interest from one party to the other, one can be sure that it is the delegated interest of the instance that is going to underlie the attitude of the subject of responsibility, in the case with the latter being the state, things become complicated. Firstly, one can claim that the responsibility of the state is burdened with the responsibility before economy and classes, prevailing in it, as well as obligations to create conditions that are necessary to maintain the level of the profit so that a high competitive ability could be kept. This type of responsibility is established by a formal and negative activity of the state in the social sphere. Secondly, it is burdened with the responsibility of the state before itself, which requires that civil society

and its structure be kept in the differences that will enable the state to reproduce itself as a political organism. This responsibility is established by a formal, real, and negative activity in the social sphere. Thirdly, social responsibility before society is represented as residual, as a result of deductions of responsibility before the market and state (Strebkov, 2012).

To summarise the above-mentioned, one can claim that the state deals with three instances of conflict responsibility: capital, people, and itself, with each of them delegating to the state its interests, either really common or pretending to be so. The state has, by way of realising the interests of instances, to come into conflict with them, which means that they are simultaneously instances and the embodiment of the forces against which the state is obliged to struggle. All this generates quite intricate relations between them.

G. Simmel, describing the Europe of the 18th century, mentions the nobility, who comprised the prince's counsel and lived in his residence as guests. They harmoniously combined the interests of the monarch, whom they served and helped to rule the country, and their own class interests, which were actually opposed to those of the monarch. At that time their attitude was considered consistent, although nowadays its components seem antagonistic to each other. Simmel also notes that social and political relations in their development come to differentiate the attitude of the participants. These interests get regularised, unlike subjective personal relations, which become more and more entangled (1908).

Writing about the irreconcilability of the party of economic growth and the party of rights, Dahrendorf also mentioned that the private interest or the interest of capital is antagonistic to the common interest (1988). A lot of examples illustrate this phenomenon. Why does the state very often take on itself conflict responsibility without intending to perform its obligations? The answer is simple. By doing so, the state transforms uncontrolled spontaneous mass conflicts, which would emerge if the citizens decided to enter the struggle for the common interest against their opponents, into institutionalised forms of conflict action, such as social, economic, criminal, and other policies. The transformation itself may be characterised as a transition of the conflict from its realistic into an unrealistic mode, from an intense into an externally violent one, acquiring manipulative features.

2.5. Method of conflict responsibility research

The method of conflict studies, however incomplete it might be, is mostly reduced to the analysis of compound parts of the conflict through

making a more or less detailed map of the conflict. Traditionally, the following statistic characteristics of the conflict are taken into account: the subjects of the conflict, the resources they have, the object, the subject matter, the disagreement zone, the external social environment, etc., as well as dynamic characteristics, that is, the stages of its development. Sometimes also attributed to conflict studies expertise are the specification of the type of the conflict, stereotypes of the parties' behaviour, stages of the conflict's evolvement, and a number of others. By examining these characteristics, one can predict the development of the conflict in question and give recommendations regarding measures of its management and solution (Boulding, 1962).

Research into statistic characteristics of the conflict, giving rise to specific responsibility relations that we deal with here, seems quite beneficial. The main distinctive feature of the given contradiction is the object of the conflict. As mentioned earlier, the object is common good, consisting of the interests and needs of the majority, which every time particularises common good in the subject matter of the conflict. The object can be materialised in resources, values, and statuses. This statement by no means contradicts the previous thesis, for common good can be expressed in all objects collectively or in every single object of the conflict. Common good as a resource can be exemplified by what people consider to belong to everybody by right: land, mineral resources, state budget, etc. Common good as a status may be contained in people as bearers of sovereignty. However doubtless this statement sounds, people frequently feel that this right is somehow being ignored. Finally, common good may be a value per se; besides, it can be objectivised in values, enabling to identify the nation, ethnos, and cultural stereotype.

The subjects of conflict have already been mentioned. For purposes of discussion they can be divided into the bearers of "common interest", striving to achieve common good, and representatives of particular private interests, going against the idea of common good. It is noteworthy that the actual conflict party here is the state, which the bearers of "common interest" requested to act on their behalf. The key point is the ambiguity of the state's role in the conflict, for the universality and heterogeneity of this subject implies mixing the roles of a participant and a third party, that is, a mediator between the common and private interest.

In a particular conflict, common good is found in a certain subject matter, which becomes a reason for violent controversy. As we deal with a really universal object of conflict, there is no end to possible subject matters. It is important to emphasise

the fact that the subject matter itself is already a specific materialisation of common good, which might lead to manipulations. Indeed, sometimes it is next to impossible to determine whether a certain subject matter contains common good.³ Moreover, it is doomed to remain controversial unless there is a clear-cut definition of the common good and national interests of this or that people. Getting back to the issue of a search inside a magic triangle of three kinds of justice and a possibility of finding this common good, "even when we do so, more than enough remains open to contestation and requires decision" (Offe, 2012: 679).

Last, but not the least, it is worth reiterating the idea that we really need a profound and concise analysis of the interests and needs of the subject of conflict responsibility, the instance, and that private that a *priopi* confronts them. Without this analysis there is no way to predict how effective the state will be in championing common interests.

It goes without saying that the method described above is quite applicable to the study of the phenomenon of conflict responsibility, but what it needs is a certain modification.

The cornerstone here must be a detailed analysis of the compound parts of a conflict: the interests, needs, and attitudes of the parties, the chosen strategy of conflict behaviour, the parties themselves, and the object and subject matter of the conflict. On a first approximation, a conflict studies expert concentrates on the external characteristics of conflict responsibility: responsibility for conflict manifestation and the chosen strategy of conflict behaviour, as well as an obligation to realise this conflict and its strategy in current political reality. By reference to the traditional classification of conflict behaviour strategies – competition, compromise, avoidance (Thomas, 1976) – one can identify the levels of responsible behaviour of the state in a social conflict (see Table 1). The first level reflects a situation in which a conflict is manifested, with the chosen strategy being inadequate for the purposes of the conflict and the conflict itself being absent in political reality. At the second level the conflict is manifested, the strategy is expedient, but in practice the principles chosen turn out to be declarative. Finally, the highest level is illustrated by the situation in which all the three above-mentioned components of conflict responsibility are systematised and fulfilled (Sunami, 2012).

A deeper analysis of conflict responsibility is aimed at the research into the interests of the instances and the agent of responsibility, as well as the interests of opposing social forces. Not infrequently, while describing the struggle of the state against a particular social evil, the researcher tends to

forget about the true reasons for this struggle. The concept of conflict responsibility helps to remind us that a starting point of the state's struggle for common good is an unsatisfied need and the impaired interest of the responsibility instance, the people, while the state here is only an agent of this action. By groundlessly identifying the interests of the instance and the state, one labours under a grave methodological mistake. A test for the feasibility of the manifestation and the conflict action of the state should become a test for their correlation with the instance's interests solely, not the political class or a free interpretation of these interests by a political class. In case this correlation is absent we deal with an unrealistic conflict or a totally different conflict, which has nothing to do with the one under discussion. It should be added that the state is prone to dexterous manipulations while defining the opposite party of the conflict.

Table 1. Level of responsible behaviour of the state in a social conflict

conflict responsibility level	conflict manifestation	expedient conflict strategy	conflict activities
low	+		
middle	+	+	
high	+	+	+

3. Conclusions

It might seem that if the state realised its conflict responsibility adequately, it would reduce social tension and guarantee stable development by satisfying the unsatisfied needs and interests of frustrated social instances. However, the contradictions between different instances of responsibility, shown above, considerably complicate the model of realisation of this particular function of the state. This complication is accounted for by the fact that, first of all, the conflict, balancing between peace and struggle, retains its meaning as struggle in peace and peace in struggle. That is why whatever limits for conflict interaction in society are set by the state, it will still be reproduced by its policy (especially, legal one) with a certain degree of intensity and violence.

Secondly, society itself, beset with contradictions, cannot possibly be a measure of conflict responsibility. Neither can the state. This measure can only be a product, created by society, in which all social contradictions are alleviated – common good, expressed in the conditions of life worthy of human beings and their free development. Common good, being a result of both conflict and positive interaction, that is, struggle and peace, becomes an object of the same contradiction in the

process of its exchange and redistribution. It becomes a field where conflict responsibility is manifested to the full because the subjects of responsibility receive from the instance the right to control exchange and redistribution.

Thirdly, the state is invested with tools, particularly legal tools, to manage responsibility in a conflict. As far as conflict responsibility is concerned, legal tools are not enough. This is deduced from differences of conflict responsibility and responsibility in conflict. If conflict responsibility is an attitude and the actions of the responsibility subject and instance, taking into consideration and recognising the interests of the other party as their own interests, responsibility in a conflict is practical recognition and adherence to the rules and norms accepted in society and the state. A distinctive feature of conflict responsibility and responsibility in a conflict is the fact that conflict responsibility reflects the process of rapprochement of interests, elimination of conflict, and strengthening of peace.

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Notes

¹ Modern economic theory tends to distinguish between common and public goods, common goods being things that belong to everybody (fish stocks, mineral resources). Public goods, according to Paul A. Samuelson, are goods that all people enjoy in common, in the sense that each individual's consumption of such goods leads to no subtractions from any other individual's consumption of those goods (1954). To these one attributes national defence, free-to-air television, and so on. The goods are divided into four categories according to the characteristics "rivalrous" and "excludable": private goods (rivalrous and excludable), club goods (non-rivalrous and excludable), common goods (rivalrous and non-excludable), and public goods (non-rivalrous and non-excludable). In our paper we are not going to draw the line between public and common goods. Alternatively, we are going to use the term "common good" as a conflict studies category, that is, something that has been publicly agreed upon as having a common interest for everybody.

² While analyzing Russian cases, it has been estimated that for the fourteen years of the post-Yeltsin epoch the supreme power in the person of

Vladimir Putin has given a severe telling off about housing maintenance, namely, communal services tariffs, eleven times. However, the tariffs continued to grow dramatically. Moreover, the Head of the Tariffs Federal Agency announces directly that the President's assignment to reduce the growth of tariffs is not going to change the status quo. Obviously, in the given case we observe in practice the situation, described by us theoretically. The citizens cannot realize their economic interests (which can be defined as common interests) in the conflict with those who are responsible for housing maintenance management. That is why they pass their interests to the state, which demonstrates an outwardly uncompromising attitude. However, the current result of the conflict shows its stagnant character.

³ No one is likely to doubt the thesis that the development of science is common good for people. However, is there a real threat to common good in the prospective reform of the Russian Academy of Science, the news of which drew a huge public response in Russia in the summer of 2013? Alternatively, is it a threat only to the private good of the academicians? The point is whether one can identify the private interest of the members of the Academy, resisting the reform, and the common interest of the Russian people. Otherwise, is it impossible to realize the common interest without suppressing this resistance and reforming Russian science? Evidently, this issue cannot be solved without deep expertise, but even that does not guarantee a simple answer.

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