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Political crises and conflicts: theory and practice
(Review of the monograph by Medvedev N. P.
“Political crises and conflicts: theory and practice”. –
Moscow: Publishing house of the journal Political science,
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Reviewer:

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Military events in Syria, Yemen and Iran, terrorist attacks in Turkey, Russia, the European Union and the United States suggest that the conflict potential in the world at the beginning of the XXI century is not reducing, but only changes its form. And the paradigm of politics that goes through “conflicts and cooperation” is becoming more and more relevant for political science, and political conflictology as a new scientific direction is becoming more and more popular.

Analysis of the sources of origin, issues of crisis prevention and resolution, the study of the consequences of political conflicts are important theoretical and practical tasks for political science.

The problem of social conflict has been well developed in numerous recent publications by scientists from various fields of social knowledge. At the same time, many aspects of political conflicts themselves are not yet sufficiently explored. Scientific literature as a rule analyzes specific conflicts, their genesis, the subjects of the conflict, the issues of settlement and stabilization of the political situation. But, it is obvious that so far there are few monographs on the General theory of political conflict and the practice of post-conflict political stabilization.

The monograph of Medvedev N. P., Doctor of political sciences, Professor of the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia, “Political crises and conflicts: theory and practice” is a successful attempt to consolidate various concepts of socio-political crises, to present typology of political conflicts and examine the post-Soviet models of ethno-political destabilization in Russia and the CIS countries. The monograph also analyzes possibilities of political consensus and its role in socio-political stabilization of modern states.

It can be said that the reviewed monograph consists of three main parts. The first part (Chapter 1 and Chapter 2) provides an analysis of the basic concepts of political conflicts and reveals the theoretical foundations of the sources of political conflicts. In doing so, an attempt is made to clarify the definition of “political crisis” and to characterize the distinctive features associated with

its more systemic nature than a political conflict. Proceeding from the generally accepted approach to the typology of political conflicts, the monograph expands the boundaries of this approach and distinguishes ethno-political conflicts and post-Soviet political crises.

The second part (Chapter 3) provides a description of the sources and consequences of political crises in Russia in 1991 and 1993. For the first time in Russian scientific of the political science literature says about the positive role of inter-party conflicts as sources of socio-political development.

The third part of the reviewed study (Chapter 4) deals with the problems of conflict resolution, analyzes the main ways to achieve political stability and the methods of political consensus as a basis for stability and development.

When politics is viewed as "the art of the possible", the idea is first of all to resolve social conflicts through consensus and compromise, that is, everything opposite to military force. In this context, the monograph N. P. Medvedev from the methodological point of view successfully analyzes the main concepts of political conflict and actualizes the sources of such type of conflicts. And based on the typology of conflicts, the main resources and the mechanism of their settlement by diplomatic means through negotiations, mediation and compromises are revealed.

Drawing conclusions about the peculiarities of the post-Soviet political crises, the reviewed monograph describes in sufficient detail and thoroughly the historical and ethno-cultural factors that turn into an additional resource of this kind of political clashes. Characteristics of the political crisis of 1991, according to the author, provide a reasonable basis for the conclusions, on the one hand, about the dramatic end of the democratic reforms that started in the economy and politics, the weakness of the new political institutions of the time, and, on the other, about the state of society and the attitudes of young democratic elite of Russia, which greatly increased the resource of perestroika political forces and the emerging new political regime. It is the key to the victory over the GKChP-91, which was historically the most significant world event of the late XX century, which prevented the return of the Communist forces to power in the USSR through the use of violent methods and military force.

But that victory failed to completely destroy the systemic conflict between the group interests of the pro-Soviet elites and the democratic forces of Russia. Actually, according to the author of the monograph, the main sources of the constitutional and political crisis of 1993 are hidden here. Many post-Soviet elite groups, both in politics and economics, focused on half-hearted solutions, afraid of radical social reforms. According to Professor N. P. Medvedev, fundamentally different approaches to the reforms of that time divided the Russian Parliament (the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation) as a representative institution of power into two opposing groups. The constitutional reform of 1993 was carried out with the use of force, which later largely caused an imbalance in the new Constitution of Russia with the predominance of the powers of the President of

the Russian Federation and the executive authorities. In the circumstances unfavorable for the society, violation of the principle of separation of powers into legislative, executive and judicial and the principle of checks and balances may lead to the withdrawal of the executive branch from the parliamentary control, further political crises and the use of force for their resolution.

That is why, the author of the reviewed monograph emphasizes, it is so important in the conditions of modern Russia to further expand knowledge about ways to achieve political stability and the possibilities of applying consensus methods for their resolution in emerging socio-political crises.

Monograph by RUDN Professor Medvedev N. P. "Political crises and conflicts: theory and practice" is of both scientific interest for political scientists and undoubted practical interest for conflict scientists, diplomats and politicians.