

Classical Concepts of Social Solidarity As The Basis of Theoretical Studies on The Institutions of Modern Civil Society

Irina Vladimirovna Naletova^a, Alexander Vladimirovich Okatov^a,
Olga Valentinovna Zhulikova^b

^aTambov State University named after G.R.
Derzhavin, Russia

^bThe Russian Presidential Academy of
National Economy and Public
Administration, Russia

ABSTRACT

Current importance of this investigation has been stipulated by the modern trends in the development of civil society. Differentiated processes of its development, increased significance of certain institutions of the civil society often require not just empirical description of the principal trends of the functions of civil society, but also need theoretical justifications for the methodology of its investigation. With this regard the given article is focused on identifying the position and role of social solidarity within classical sociology that would make it possible to use this heuristic potential in modern practices as well. The principal method of the study is represented by the analysis of classical sociological theories. In the course of the investigation the authors were guided by such methodological landmarks as the general principles of socio-cultural, activity-based, socio-structural and systemic approaches, by the principle of the unity of theoretical constructions and by real social practice. The study considers the concepts of social solidarity developed by the representatives of classical sociology. The suggested approach makes it possible to obtain more comprehensive and profound understanding of the structure and essence of modern civil society. The result of the investigation is represented by the justification of the thesis that modern civil society encompasses social solidarity as an inseparable component which cannot be investigated otherwise than being duly supported by classical sociological theories.

KEYWORDS

Civil Society, Social Solidarity, Classical Sociology,
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1. Introduction

The modern stage of understanding the civil society is characterized by the variety of theories and approaches predetermined by the current social, political, economic and cultural processes (Naletova and Okatov, 2012). This stage is personified by such most outstanding representatives as C. Schmitt, T. Parsons, A. Gramsci, H. Arendt, M. Foucault, N. Luhmann, R. Dahrendorf, J. Habermas etc. C. Schmitt perceives the role of parliament as key for the establishment of modern civil society institutions. T. Parsons has suggested the idea of societal community. A. Gramsci used to criticize the bourgeois ideal of civil society and exhorted that it should be replaced by socialist civil society that would make for

CORRESPONDENCE

Irina Vladimirovna Naletova



Email: naletova.ir@yandex.ru



the supremacy of the proletariat.

Expounding on Hegelian total state H. Arendt attempted to integrate the elements of social and political systems of the ancient polities into the modern complex communities. R. Dahrendorf studied civil society through the prism of his sociological theory of conflict. M. Foucault was rather critical about such commonly adopted values of civil society as freedom and equality maintaining that in the western society the relations of domination and subordination are much more important. N. Luhmann investigates civil society based on his concepts of social systems and differentiation. J. Habermas suggested that civil society should be investigated as interactions between personality and official structures of the state, between the world of systems and the world of life.

In these latter days, the trend of describing civil society through the pluralism of interpretations has been often replaced by the attempts at synthesis of the leading theoretical traditions. This is exactly the case of the investigations belonging to E. Gellner, B. Barber, R. Putnam, J. Cohen, A. Arato, M. Walzer, J. Alexander, E. Wnuk-Lipinski, etc. E. Gellner perceives civil society as such a type of civil order that promotes the development of human personality and facilitates the establishment of the independent voluntary associations (Gellner, 1994). B. Barber believes that one of the most significant features of civil society is embodied in the principle of freedom which is an attribute of the private sector, and also in the principle of regard for the common welfare which is intrinsic to the public sector (Barber, 1995). R. Putnam analyzes the role of social capital in the civilizing influence produced by civil society on the individuals (Putnam, 2000).

J. Cohen and A. Arato interpret civil society as a sphere of social interactions between the state and the economy that covers different social associations and forms of public communication (Cohen, Arato, 1994). J. Alexander supports these views on the nature of civil society. However, in his opinion, the emphasis has to be laid on the issue of the contradictory unity of individual voluntarism and collective solidarity within the framework of the modern civil society (Alexander, 2006). M. Walzer believes that the foundations of civil society are represented by voluntary social organizations and also by the relations established therein (Walzer, 1995).

2. Concept headings

Thus, modern theoretical approaches to studying civil society interpret it as a social system that has reached some certain level of social, economic, political and cultural development and that features such attributes as market economy, democracy, respect to human rights, foundational principles of free will and cooperation. The authors of this study believe that social solidarity is an essential component element of the existence and functioning of modern civil society. In this study the authors will try their best to abstract from the political, economic and religious interpretations of solidarity and to concentrate on studying solidarity as a meaningful component element of the modern civil society. Assisted by the concepts of classical sociology the authors will undertake the comparative analysis of the fundamental theories of social solidarity in the context of investigating the modern civil society institutions.

The attention of the authors is concentrated on such classical sociological theories as the concepts of A. Comte, H. Spencer, K. Marx, F. Tönnies, F. Giddings, E. Durkheim, P.A. Sorokin and T. Parsons. The heuristic potential of these concepts is discovered through the cognition of being and from the perspectives of the functions of modern civil society institutions. The issue of the essence of social solidarity and of its role in the genesis and evolution of the civil society institutions has been raised. The concept of social solidarity developed by A. Comte has been

analyzed as a component part of his social statics. H. Spencer's ideas about social solidarity that are included in his theory of evolution and that can become the foundations for studying the establishment of modern civil society institutions have been considered. The study touches upon the problem of social solidarity in the context of the theory of class struggle belonging to K. Marx. The specifics of social solidarity in the communal and social types of sociality, described by F. Tönnies have been investigated. The concept of F. Giddings has been analyzed along with the idea of "the consciousness of kind" as the natural precondition for the formation of social organizations. E. Durkheim's theory of social solidarity has been studied; the forms of social solidarity (mechanical and organic) intrinsic to traditional and modern types of society have been described. Structural functionalism of T. Parsons and his concept of societal community have been analyzed.

3. Results

Among the representatives of classical sociology, the problem of social solidarity was most closely investigated by such researchers as A. Comte, H. Spencer, K. Marx, F. Tönnies, F. Giddings, E. Durkheim, P.A. Sorokin, T. Parsons and others (Kultygin, 2000). The pioneer studies on social solidarity belong to the founder of sociology A. Comte (1798-1857). Within the structure of sociology, he used to distinguish two major sections: social statics and social dynamics that corresponded to two parts of his famous slogan "Order and progress". The object of social statics is represented by society at rest. This is a type of social anatomy investigating the constitution of social organism. The objective of social statics is to discover the laws of social order. Social dynamics studies the society as it moves. It can be called social physiology, as it investigates the functions of social organism. The principal objective of social dynamics is to identify the laws of social progress.

Thus, the problem of social unity and social solidarity is considered by A. Comte within the framework of social statics. Its purpose is to identify the conditions of human society existence and to discover the associated laws of order and harmony. Famous French sociologist of the middle of the 20th century R. Aron (1905-1983) notes that social statics of A. Comte solves two major issues. First, it enables anatomical analysis of social structure at some particular moment. And, second, social statics aims to identify the prerequisites for social consensus and to find the mechanisms that turn the aggregate of separated individuals and families into the community and that also unite all social institutions (Aron, 1992). In fact, the second task implies understanding of the prerequisites for the establishment of civil society institutions that would give people the possibility to resolve their urgent social problems in fast and efficient manner without any interference of the central government.

Searching for the solution to the first task A. Comte considers such social elements as individual, family and society and general (mankind). According to A. Comte, an individual is a social being who is intended to live in the society. However, apart from the natural social instincts, an individual is also naturally endowed with egoistic ambitions. Therefore, to become a fully functional member of society, an individual has to undergo some special training. The knowledge and skills of communal life can be obtained within the family (Gofman, 2003).

A family, says A. Comte, is a school of social life where individual learns how to obey and how to rule, how to live in harmony with others and for the sake of others. "Only because of the familial responsibilities man betrays his original selfishness and can dully ascend to the final level, to sociality" (Comte, 1996).



The family instills the sense of social succession and the understanding of one's dependence on the preceding generations connecting the past with the future. The ideal of A. Comte is the traditional patriarchal family with its hierarchy and subordination.

Family is just the first stage on the way to the truly "collective being" (mankind). Later, there would emerge such social formations as tribe, nation and state. A. Comte believes that society consists of the aggregate of families. Solidarity that is intrinsic to all living objects comes to its highest manifestation in the society. To identify this degree of social solidarity A. Comte introduces the notion of social consensus (concordance). The idea of the consensus is fundamental in social statics (Gofman, 2003).

Notwithstanding the fact that family is the prototype of society, the sociologist points out the considerable difference that exists between these forms of communal existence of the individuals. While family is founded on the instincts and emotional attachments, the foundations of the society, according to A. Comte, are represented by rational cooperation built of the principles of the division of labor (Aron, 1992). Thus, the theory of A. Comte makes it possible to consider the modern civil society as rationally organized cooperation between individuals and their associations.

Having identified the principal elements of social structure A. Comte proceeds with solving the second task of social statics, namely, determining the mechanisms of social integration. The scientist thinks that this mechanism is the division of labor. Before A. Comte this phenomenon used to be primarily regarded from the perspective of economics. The theorist of positivism was among the first to focus on the social implications of the division of labor and called it "the most important condition of our social life". It is the division of labor, maintains the sociologist that makes the foundations of social solidarity. It promotes growth and complexity of social organism. The division of labor develops social instinct, instilling in each family the sense of being dependent on others and the understanding of one's own significance. As a result, each family starts to regard themselves as parts of social system (Gofman, 2003).

The division of labor not only became the meaningful factor of civil society genesis and evolution. It also predetermines the structure of modern civil society and the functions of its institutions. Besides, A. Comte's concept of social solidarity makes it possible to study civil society as the complex system that is involved into the relations of cooperation with other spheres of society. In particular, the French sociologist attaches special importance to such social institutions as religion and morality. He distinguishes two principal functions of religion. The first is the integrative function that implies the achievement of social consensus, the unity of the individuals. The second is the imperative or normative function that contains the requirement that all individuals should adopt the principle of unity as their common conviction. In other words, religion unites society and makes people accept and believe the very fact of this unity (Aron, 1992).

Another founder of sociology, the English thinker H. Spencer (1820-1903) studied social solidarity within the framework of his concept of social institutions. According to H. Spencer, social institutions are similar to the organs of the social organism that enable the communal life and the cooperation between the people (Khvostov, 2011). They include any stable super-organic forms of activity where naturally unsocial man has to accommodate and to learn how to interact with other people (Davydov, 1997). Social institutions emerge in the course of the historical development in response to the growth of the population (the increased amount of mass results in more complicated structures and in functional differentiation). The purpose of social institutions, according to

H. Spencer, is to ensure normal functionality of the entire social organism.

In his work called “Principles of Sociology” H. Spencer identifies several types of social institutions:

1) home institutions (family, marriage, nurture) that characterize the involvement of people in different forms of interpersonal relations. They evolve from the disordered relations between the sexes up to the modern form of monogamy.

2) ritual (ceremonial) institutions that regulate everyday behavior of the people by establishing the rites, rituals, etiquette, fashion or habits that are either obligatory or desirable for the most of the population.

3) political institutions (central government, army, police, courts, legislation) that predetermine and regulate political and legal relations between people and social groups.

4) church institutions that ensure integration of the society on the basis of common beliefs and traditions.

5) professional institutions (merchant guilds, shops, trade unions) that emerge based on the division of labor and consolidate people by their professional attributes (Spencer, 1994).

6) industrial institutions that also exist because of the division of labor. They support the production structure of the society (Gofman, 2003; Szacki, 1981).

Professor of Warsaw University E. Szacki has highlighted the principal postulations of H. Spencer in his analysis of social institutions. First, the Polish scientist says that none of the institutions can be regarded as a product of conscious human activity. H. Spencer chose to explain institutions not in terms of individual motives and objectives, but rather in terms of their functions within the system. Second, studying the current state of that or another institution one has to take into account the specifics of its origin and development. No investigation of the functionality of the institution can be undertaken beyond the context of its evolution. Third, all institutions are mutually connected. They are parts of a single social system; therefore, the interference in the activities of only one of them will affect the functionality of all others. Fourth, each institution performs only the functions that are inherent to it. If due to some reasons it takes over the functions of other institutions, then the whole social system may lose its equilibrium. And this can turn the social evolution to the opposite direction, i.e. it can return to primitive (military) methods of coordination and to non-differentiated social structure (Davydov, 1997).

According to H. Spencer’s theory, the establishment of civil society is an expected result of the evolution of social organism in general. The authors of this study believe that the modern civil society institutions are closely related to Spenserian professional institutions.

The outstanding German thinker K. Marx (1818-1883) studied social solidarity in the con-text of class struggle. Within the framework of capitalist formation, he distinguished two classes: bourgeoisie and proletariat. K. Marx believed that the paid labor of a worker was founded “solely on the competition among the workers” (Marx, 2003). Communist revolution had to unite the workers around their common interests. In his “Capital” K. Marx noted that as the efficiency of the production grows so does the solidarity of the oppressed classes. As a result, the conflict between the dominating and the oppressed classes escalates continuously.

Marx thought that during its historical development each class goes through



two stages: 1) “class in itself” – a social group that does not perceive itself as possessing specific interests and needs; 2) “class for itself” – a social group that does perceive its special interests and, therefore, stands in opposition to another social group, to other classes (Dobrenkov and Kravchenko, 2000).

Thus, Marx’s idea of solidarity was predominantly associated with the oppressed working class who, becoming conscious of its own rights and powers, expressed social protest against the dominating class of bourgeoisie. In this case the class conflict is of an integrating nature. Class solidarity is associated with self-identification of the workers, with their perception of themselves as “fellows” as opposed to “alien” representatives of another class (Ursulenko, 2009).

German sociologist F. Tönnies (1855-1936) considered social solidarity through the prism of his concept of the types of sociality. In his work “Community and Society” (1887) F. Tönnies notes that all social phenomena should be regarded as willed relationships. The will itself can be of two types: organic (instinctive) will and rational will that suggests the opportunity of choice and the consciously preset purpose of behavior (Tesch-Römer, 2000). Depending on the nature of will there are two types of social relations: intimate, interpersonal relationships that correspond to the community (spiritual kinship, attachment to each other, personal emotions); and all external, social relationships that belong to society (exchange, trade, choice) where there is a ruling principle of “every man for himself” and where there are tensions between the people. Community is the realm of instincts, feelings, organic relations; society is dominated by reason and abstraction (Tönnies, 2002).

Basic types of communal (community) relationships, according to F. Tönnies, are represented by familial relations, by relationships between neighbors and by friendship. Community is a strong and stable social system, because kinship and friendship are known by their stability and longevity. The social type of relations can be most vividly exemplified by the state. It is created to attain some definite objective. Peoples, ethnic communities enter this union consciously and purposefully, and they break it when they lose the interest in this common objective.

Real solidarity, F. Tönnies declares, exists only in the community where the relationships between individuals are founded on concordance and mutual understanding. Meanwhile, in the society the solidarity, the sense of unity is imposed upon the people from without; it is enforced through the mechanisms of the state.

Thus, based on the ideas of F. Tönnies, the voluntary non-governmental organizations, NGOs that are the backbone components of the modern civil society should be regarded as purely rational associations intended for solving definite problems. Besides, social organizations can be viewed as an attempt to preserve the communal type of solidarity in the modern rational world.

American sociologist F. Giddings (1855-1931) suggested psychological interpretation of social solidarity supported by the idea of “the consciousness of kind”. He introduced this term in scientific circulation influenced by the theory of moral sentiments (Spencer, 1994) developed by Scotch economist A. Smith (1723-1790) (Smith). F. Giddings defines the consciousness of kind “as a state of consciousness in which any being <...> recognizes another conscious being as of like kind with itself” (Giddings, 2012). The consciousness of kind predetermines spiritual unity of individuals. It enables their conscious interaction with each other while preserving the individuality of everyone.

The consciousness of kind is a purely social phenomenon inasmuch as it can emerge only in society. The consciousness of kind, according to F. Giddings, is exactly the thing that makes the foundations of social identity of personality.



The consciousness of kind “leads to more defined ethnic or political group making the basis for class differentiation” (Giddings, 2012). We subconsciously feel affection for the representatives of our own race, of our country, of our social stratum, etc. And, vice versa, we feel dislike toward people of other nationality, citizenship, social origin.

F. Giddings’s concept of the consciousness of kind makes it possible to regard the modern civil society institutions and the non-governmental organizations primarily as natural manifestation of sociality, of real human nature.

French sociologist E. Durkheim (1858-1917) is generally recognized as classical researcher of social solidarity. Pride of place in his works is given to this issue. The scientist believes that this problem can be solved by providing the answers to the questions as follows: what are the connections that unite people with each other; why people live together and why they can interact with each other. In his work called “The Division of Labour in Society” (1893). E. Durkheim makes an attempt to give answers to these questions. He aims to prove that the division of social labor that represents the “redistribution of the functions that used to be common earlier” ensures social solidarity, i.e. it performs some certain moral function.

Understanding the fact that any man depends on another, that all people are connected through the system of social relations established by the division of labor makes people not only feel dependent on each other, but also makes them perceive their connections with the society, i.e. social solidarity. Different occupations of the people, the necessity to perform multiple tasks in different spheres of activity make people express solidarity, get united to support their normal lives (Durkheim, 1991).

It can be said that according to E. Durkheim’s concept of social solidarity the genesis and evolution of civil society institutions and their principal values have been predetermined by the manifestation and by the understanding of this general social feeling of mutual dependency. The French sociologist maintains that this feeling, although it is originated by the division of labor, is a purely moral phenomenon that, as it is, cannot be observed and measured. This is the highest moral principle, the highest value that is universal because it is recognized by all members of society (Aron, 1992).

Analyzing the essence and forms of social solidarity E. Durkheim compares two types of society: traditional (archaic, or “segmental”) and modern (“organized”). In archaic (“segmental”) communities social solidarity is founded on complete dilution of individual consciousnesses in the collective consciousness (mechanical solidarity). The segment, according to Durkheim, is an isolated, localized group where individuals are closely connected with each other (Pickering, 2008). The people in segmental societies differ from each other just slightly. They feel the same, they are committed to the same values, and they worship the same things. The community is consolidated, because the individuals have not been differentiated yet.

Obviously, the civil society institutions in such types of communities are at their lowest, initial level of development. This can be explained by the fact that there is almost no need for them. Inasmuch as the people in segmental societies are very much alike and insofar as their needs are almost the same, the central authorities can easily satisfy them. Thereat, the individuals do not make attempts at developing non-governmental organizations.

In the developed communities social solidarity is based on the autonomy of the individuals, on the redistribution of functions, on functional interdependence



and on the exchange (organic solidarity). The consolidation of the groups emerges as a consequence of differentiation and it is explained by it. Here the individuals are not the same. They are different; and, to some extent, because they are different the consensus is achieved. The collective consciousness in such communities does not disappear, but it becomes more common, more intangible, its intensity and its effective area are reduced.

In modern societies where the differences between the people caused by the division of labor are expressed more vividly, the central authorities are no longer capable of satisfying the needs of all the categories of the population. A natural solution to this problem is to create and develop the network of non-governmental organizations focused on various and multiple needs of the individuals.

E. Durkheim did not limit himself with just considering the essence and the forms of social solidarity at theoretical level. He made an effort to identify the reliable empirical indicators of social solidarity in the society. The rate of suicides was selected by the French sociologist as one of such indicators. The problem of suicides and the correlation of this phenomenon with social solidarity are analyzed in his special study called "Suicide" (1897). In this book the scientist notes that the rate of suicides was selected as indicator of social solidarity because the phenomenon of suicide can be measured and expressed quantitatively based on statistical data.

E. Durkheim demonstrates that suicides correlate with the fact of belonging to some certain social groups, and he discovered the dependency between the number of suicides and the degree of value-based and normative integration of the society (of the group). It can be said that the reason for suicides, in his opinion, is hidden in the nature of the interactions between an individual and a group.

E. Durkheim assumes that based on the statistical correlations it is possible to identify the types of the suicides. He distinguishes three principal types: egoistic, altruistic and anomic. Egoistic suicide occurs in cases when social (collective) connections of the individual are weak; he is left by himself and loses the sense of living. People, according to Durkheim, are more prone to assault their own lives when they think about themselves, when they are not integrated into the social group, when the desires that keep them going do not correlate with the evaluations of these desires adopted by the members of the group, or when they do not correlate with the meaning of duty imposed by close and solid environment.

By contrast, altruistic suicide is associated with the full submergence of the individual into the society when he sacrifices his life for the sake of the society, i.e. when he does not see any sense in life beyond social life. For example, in many archaic communities the widow used to follow her deceased husband. In this case an individual meets his death in conformity with social imperatives and he does not even attempt to protect his right to live. In the same manner, the captain commits suicide to escape the dishonor of defeat or not wishing to outlive his ship.

E. Durkheim discovered that altruistic suicides are above all common in highly consolidated groups, in groups where the level of integration is very high. Thus, for instance, he found that the rate of suicides in the army was higher among the military officers of some specific rank and age.

Anomic suicide is caused by the state of anomy in society. Anomy (from French "anomie" the lack of law, disorganization) is a moral and psychological condition of individual and social consciousness that is characterized by the decaying system of values caused by the social crisis, by the contradictions

between the declared objectives and the lack of the opportunities to achieve them for the majority of people. It usually shows itself as alienation between man and society, apathy, disappointment in life, criminality. Durkheim pays special attention to this type of suicides, because it is most indicative in the modern society which life is not regulated by traditions; individuals continuously compete with each other; their life expectations and aspirations are great, they are always haunted by misery that originates from the disproportions between their hopes and their satisfaction. Such atmosphere of anxiety promotes the development of “suicidal trend”.

E. Durkheim makes efforts to identify the most reliable methods of social integration that would make it possible for a man to find support in norms and values. He considers such means as family, religious, political and professional groups. The first three groups, according to Durkheim, cannot become the factors of social solidarity (Khvostov, 2011; Aron, 1992). Family gradually loses its functions (education, upbringing, economic function). Statistical data testify of the fact that the index of anomic suicides among lonely people is not higher than that among married couples. The state and political groups are too distant from an individual, they are too abstract and they cannot facilitate social integration. Religion in modern society cannot unite the people. While earlier religion used to be the foundation of discipline, now, according to Durkheim, it acquires rather abstract and intellectual nature being deprived of its function of coercion.

The only social group that can facilitate the engagement of individuals into a collective is represented by professional group (“corporation”). Thus, E. Durkheim believes that professional associations being the inseparable components of civil society can support social solidarity and the unity of the society; they can put sense into the lives of the individuals and regulate their behavior.

Considerable contribution to the investigation of social solidarity has been made by out-standing Russian-American sociologist P.A. Sorokin (1889-1968). He used to consider social solidarity within the framework of his concept of integralism. In his opinion, solidarity is a positive form of interaction between individuals that implies a high degree of mutual agreement as regards the mindsets and behavioral purposes; and it is also the striving for mutual help and support. P.A. Sorokin opposes solidarity to antagonist interaction that is founded on coercive social relations. P.A. Sorokin believes that studying the reasons for social solidarity with its forms and foundations will make it possible in future to eliminate such negative social phenomena as conflicts, wars, crimes, inequality and oppression (Sorokin, 1947). Thus, the functions of the civil society institutions viewed through the prism of sociological concept of P.A. Sorokin are predetermined by a high degree of solidarity and concordance, by pro-active attitudes of the individuals that are the members of these institutions.

American sociologist T. Parsons (1902-1979) considered social solidarity within the framework of the concept of structural functionalism. In his opinion, any action system aimed at its own survival should meet four systemic needs or functionally prerequisite requirements. These are as follows: pattern-maintenance, integration, goal-attainment, and adaptation. According to T. Parsons, the function of integration is the predetermining one. Essentially it means that each system should support its unity and prevent any deviations. It should coordinate the interrelations between its elements and control the relations with three other functional preconditions.

Within the action system the function of integration is performed by social system. It represents the aggregate of statuses and roles; and it is controlled by the norms that predetermine which actions should be preferred.



Within the framework of social system the function of integration is performed by the system of societal community. In its essence, the term “societal community” has very much in common with the idea of “civil society”. Societal community includes all institutions of social control from the laws down to the informal rules. It coordinates different elements of the social system. This is a system of normative patterns that serve to bring order and to organize the communal life of the individuals. The principal features of this system, according to Parsons, are represented by the regularity of the relations between the individuals and by the collective nature of human existence. Being a regulated system the societal community contains the values, the norms and the rules. Being a collective system it expresses the patterned ideas about the membership of this community that predetermine which individuals belong hereto, and which do not.

Parsons suggests that the societal community became differentiated from economic, political and cultural subsystems in the process of three modern revolutions: 1) industrial, 2) democratic and 3) educational. In the course of the industrial revolution with the epicenter in England economic sphere separated from the social system. Democratic revolution concentrated in France made the political subsystem a standalone phenomenon. And finally, the educational revolution whose central institutional complex was represented by university facilitated separation of the cultural sphere of society. Thus, the establishment of societal community, according to Parsons, is a residual phenomenon associated with the process of separation of other subsystems in the course of revolutions (Cohen and Arato, 1994).

4. Discussion

Upon considering the principal approaches to studying social solidarity it should be noted that this idea is one of the most developed ones in classical sociology. It ranks considerably high in the investigations of the foundations and preconditions of social order. Almost all classics of sociology (A. Comte, H. Spencer, K. Marx, G. Simmel, etc.) have considered the problem of solidarity in their works. The scientists aimed to identify the conditions, the bases and the components of social solidarity. To solve this problem, sociologists investigated such phenomena as conflict and concordance, competition and co-operation, integration and disintegration.

The studies of the modern authors suggest a wider spectrum of definitions and interpretations of the term of “social solidarity”. L. Coser, A. Giddens, P. Bourdieu, J. Alexander, J. Turner, J.L. Cohen, A. Arato, G. Ritzer and others made their contributions to the understanding of the role and position of social solidarity in the current social and cultural processes. However, the majority of the works belonging to the abovementioned authors are of descriptive nature and they do not aspire to become generalizing methodological investigations of civil society and of its social institutions. They do not claim to create a comprehensive theoretical concept.

5. Conclusion

The authors of this study believe that studying the heritage of classical sociologists (A. Comte, E. Durkheim, M. Weber, V. Pareto, T. Parsons and others) for the purposes of investigations of modern social and cultural phenomena and processes provides the opportunity for developing theoretical and methodological model of modern civil society. Possessing high heuristic potential classical sociological theories make it possible to consider social solidarity as a manifestation, as a property of social order.

Upon generalizing the analyzed definitions of social solidarity developed within classical sociological theories it can be concluded that social solidarity is usually understood as such condition of the society that is characterized by the unity in



terms of values, ideas, convictions, views, interests, norms, and also by functional interdependence and mutual agreement as to the actions aimed at the implementation of the interests of this society. Undoubtedly, social solidarity is a meaningful component of modern civil society prerequisite for the functionality of its basic institutions. Thus, non-governmental organizations cannot be conceived without social solidarity that creates the foundations for effective and mutually beneficial interactions between the individuals within the frameworks of these associations.

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Notes on contributors

Irina V. Naletova, Professor, Department of Theoretical and Applied Sociology, Tambov State University named after G.R. Derzhavin, Russia

Alexander V. Okatov, Associated Professor, Department of Theoretical and Applied Sociology, Tambov State University named after G.R. Derzhavin, Russia

Olga V. Zhulikova, Vice-Dean, Faculty of International Regional Studies and Regional Management, The Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration, Russia

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