

## FUNCTIONAL THEORY OF TALCOTT PARSONS Paper – CC3 2<sup>nd</sup> Sem

In the "Structure of Social Action" Talcott Parsons advocated an analytical realism in building sociological theory. Parsons was about very much concerned as to how social order is possible. He noted excessiveness of Utilitarianism, unregulated and atomistic actors in a free and competitive market place rationally attempting to choose those behaviours that will maximise their profit in their transactions with others. In contrast to individualistic approach of functional analysis Parsons developed a Grand theory. According to him, integration is the main component that binds society together. He opined that concept of social action is the base of social system.

According to Parsons, "Social system consists of plurality of individual actors interacting with each other in a situation, actors who are motivated in terms of a tendency to the optimization of qualification and whose relation to their situations including each other, is defined and mediated in terms of a system of culturally structured and shared symbols". To him human action is located in four context – 1) Biological 2) psychological 3) Social 4) Cultural. These four systems are related in an interdependent and complimentary fashion so that analysis of each must at least take into consideration the existence of three others which form its environment.