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Funcional estructuralismo pdf

You read a free preview Page 2 is not displayed in this preview. Structuralist functionalism is a theoretical construct that sees society as a complex system, whose parts work together to promote social harmony. It is understood as the study of a society known as the structure or social system. [1] This approach sees society from a macro-level orientation, which is a broad focus on the social structures that make up society as a whole and sees society evolving as organisms. [2] Functionalism governs society as a whole in terms of the function of its constituent elements, namely: norms, customs, traditions and institutions. A common analogy, popularized by Herbert Spencer, presents these sectors of society as organs that work for the proper functioning of the body as a whole. [3] It assumes that the elements of a given social structure are interdependent with each other. A variation of one of them has an impact on the others. In the most basic terms, it is simplified by emphasizing the effort to allocate, as rigorously as possible, for each characteristic, custom or practice, its effect on the functioning of a so-called stable cohesion system. [5] The functionalist structural approach is a macro sociological analysis, with a broad emphasis on the social structures that society as a whole forms. The origins of this trend can be traced back to the works of Emile Durkheim. It was developed in British social anthropology by Bronislaw Malinowski and Alfred Reginald Radcliffe-Brown. In sociology, the American Talcott Parsons is one of its greatest representatives. Theory Classical theories are defined by a trend in biological analogy and notions of social evolutionism: Thought or functionalism, from Count, considered in particular biology as the science that provides the closest and most compatible model for the social sciences. Biology was taken to provide advice for conceptualizing the structure and function of social systems and for analyzing evolutionary processes through coping mechanisms ... Functionalism places particular emphasis on the pre-eminence of the social world through its individual parts (i.e. its constituent actors, its human subjects). -Anthony Giddens, The Constitution of Society 1984[7] Although functionalism cannot be seen as a logical extension of the organic analogies of society presented by political philosophers, such as Rousseau, sociology attracts greater attention in these institutions specific to industrialized capitalist society (or modernity). Emile Durkheim Emile Durkheim was interested in the question of how certain companies maintain and survive over time. Time, that these societies tend to be segmented, with equivalent parts that are maintained together by common values, common symbols or, as their nephew Marcel Mauss has argued, exchange systems. Durkheim uses the term mechanical solidarity to refer to these social bonds, based on common feelings and shared moral values, which are strong among members of industrial societies. [8] In modern and complex societies, members perform very different tasks, leading to strong interdependence. Drawing on the aforementioned metaphor of an organization in which many parties work together to support the whole, Durkheim argues that complex societies remain united by organic solidarity, i.e. social ties, based on specialization and interdependence, that we are strong among the members of industrial societies. [8] These views were ratified by Durkheim, who, after Count, believed that society constitutes a different level of reality, distinct from matter, both biologically and inorganically. Therefore, explanations of social phenomena had to be constructed within this level, as individuals were simply transient occupants of relatively stable social roles. The central concern of structuralist functionalism is the continuation of Durkheim's task of explaining the apparent stability and internal cohesion that societies need to last over time. Societies are seen as coherent, delineated and fundamentally a relational construct that function as organisms, with their different (social or institutional) working together in an almost automatically unconscious way towards achieving a general social balance. Therefore, all social and cultural phenomena are considered functional in the sense that they work together. They are discussed first in terms of this function. The individual is significant, not in himself and by himself, but rather in terms of his status, his position in the models of social relations and the behaviors associated with his condition. Therefore, the social structure is the status network united by the associated roles. Functionalism also has a basis in anthropological theory. It was in the specific use of Radcliffe-Brown that the structural prefix appeared. He proposed that primitive societies, which do not have strong centralized institutions, should be based on an association of groups of companies of ancestry. Structuralist functionalism also assumed Malinowski's argument that the basic block of society is the nuclear family.[10] and that the clan is a consequence. It is simplistic to directly match the perspective to the Policy. [11] The tendency to focus on coherent systems do not adequately account for social conflicts or inequalities. Concepts in Sociology The general system of action contains four subsystems in its structure: biological or organic behavioural, cultural, social and personality. Systems are an orderly set of interdependent elements that remain open to the perception of variables that can alter them. To maintain balance, they perform different functions: Biological is the species of organized type, adaptation is the function it performs, and is performed by the economic system. Culture is the set of common norms, values, language and symbols accepted by society. Its function is to maintain guidelines, so that individuals meet the expectations of the role and internalize values. In society, these functions are performed by various institutions, among them we can name the education system and the mass media, which are responsible for the dissemination of these norms, values, symbols, etc., which make up the cultural sphere. Social is about how individuals interact with each other. The primary function is integration and involves the acceptance of social goals and expectations. Corporations are responsible for this function, which will apply sanctions. There will be social mobility horizontally, vertically, up or down. In the same way, there will be social change and innovation. Goals or personally purposes. Try to coordinate motivations to achieve social goals. The units that can channel the aspirations of individuals are political institutions. Structural functionalism known as positivism. The eminent theorists Auguste Count Auguste Comte, the father of positivism, constantly stressed the need to keep society united, as many traditions declined. He was the first to invent the term sociology. Auguste Comte suggests that sociology is the product of development in three states. [12] 3. Theological state: From the beginning of human history to the end of the European Middle Ages, people had a religious vision of society expressed God's will. [13] In the theological state, the human mind seeks the essential nature of beings, the first and final causes (origin and purpose) of all effects, in a word, absolute knowledge- assumes that all phenomena occur through the immediate action of supernatural beings. [14] 2. Metaphysical state: People began to see society as a natural system rather than the supernatural. It all started with the Enlightenment and the ideas of Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau. It reflects the flaws of selfish human nature rather than God's perfection. [15] 3. Scientific status: Describe society by applying based on the work of scientists. Herbert Spencer Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), a British philosopher, best known for applying the theory of natural selection to society. He was, in many ways, the first true sociological functionalist. In fact, while Durkheim is widely regarded as the most important functionalist among positivist theorists, it is well known that much of his analysis was selected from the reading of Spencer's work, in particular his Principles of Sociology (1874-1896). Spencer alludes to society in analogy with the human body. Just as the structural parts of the human body — the skeleton, muscles and several internal organs — work independently to help the whole organism survive, social structures work together to preserve society. Although most avoid the tedious tasks of reading Spencer's massive volumes (filled as they are with long passages explaining the organic analogy, in reference to cells, simple organisms, animals, humans and society), there are some important ideas that have quietly influenced many contemporary theorists, including Talcott Parsons, in his early works The Structure of Social Action (1937). Cultural anthropology also uses functionalism at all times. This evolutionary model, contrary to most 19th-century evolutionary theories, is cyclical, starting with the increasing differentiation and completion of an organic body (in Spencer's words for a social system) or upper-organic, followed by a fluctuating state of equilibrium and imbalance (or state of adjustment and adaptation) and ending in disintegration or disintegration. Following Thomas Malthus' demographic principles, Spencer concludes that the company is constantly faced with selection pressures (internal and external) that force them to adapt their internal structure through differentiation. However, each solution provokes a new set of selection pressures that threaten the viability of the company. It should be noted that Spencer was not a determinist in the sense that he never said this: The selection pressures will be felt when changing them: They will feel and react, or the solutions will always work. In fact, he was in many ways a political sociologist.[18] and recognized that the degree of centralized and consolidated authority in a political community could make or break his ability to adapt. In other words, he saw a general trend towards the centralization of power by leading to stagnation and ultimately pushing for decentralization. Specifically, Spencer has recognized three functional needs or preconditions that produce selection pressure regulatory, operational (production) and distributive. He argued that all companies must solve the problems of control and coordination, production of goods, services and ideas, and finally find ways to distribute these resources. The solution, as Spencer sees, is to differentiate structures to perform more specialized functions, so that a leader or rand homm emerges, quickly followed by a group of lieutenants and, subsequently, kings and administrators. Structural parts of society (for example, families, work) work interdependently to help with social function, which, as we have already mentioned, helps to preserve society. Spencer's greatest obstacle, which was widely discussed in modern sociology, was perhaps the fact that much of his social philosophy was rooted in the social and historical context of ancient Egypt. Spencer coined the term survival of the strongest by discussing the simple fact that small tribes or societies tend to be defeated or conquered by the larger ones. Of course, many sociologists still use it (knowingly or not) in their analyses, especially because of the recent reappearance of the theory of evolution. Talcott Parsons Talcott Parsons was strongly influenced by Emile Durkheim and Max Weber, much of his synthesis in his theory of action, which is based on the concept of the theoretical system and the methodological principle of voluntary action. He argued that the social system is made up of the actions of individuals. [19] Therefore, their starting point is the interaction between two individuals facing a variety of choices about how they might act.[20] options that are influenced and limited by a number of physical and social factors. Parsons determined that each individual has expectations of the actions of others and reacts to his own behaviour, and that these expectations could (if successful) be derived from the accepted norms and values of the society in which he lives[20] As Parsons himself pointed out, in a general context, there would never be a perfect adjustment between behaviours and norms ... so that this relationship is never complete or arfa. [Social norms have always been problematic for Parsons, who has never said (as has been claimed) that social norms are generally accepted and agreed upon, if this avoids some form of universal law. Whether social norms are accepted or not was, for Parsons, merely a historical issue. As behaviours are repeated in more interactions and these expectations are deeply rooted or institutionalized, a role is created. Parsons defines a role as the regulated participation of a person a specific process of social interaction with specific and concrete roles-partner. [22] Although anyone, in theory, can perform any function, it is supposed to be comply with the rules governing the nature of the role they perform. [23] On the other hand, a person may or may not perform many different roles at the same time. In a sense, a person can be considered a composition[24] of the roles in which he lives. Certainly, today, if they were asked to describe themselves, most people would react by referring to their social roles. Subsequently, Parsons developed the idea of roles in role communities that complement each other in fulfilling the functions of society. [20] Some functions are linked in social institutions and structures (economic, educational, legal and even sexual). These are functional in that they help society in the functioning and fulfillment of its functional needs so that society functions well. Contrary to the prevailing myth, Parsons never spoke of a society where there was no conflict or some kind of perfect balance. The system of cultural values of a society has never, in the typical case, been fully integrated, never static and most of the time, as in the case of American society, in a complex state of transformation from its historical starting point. To find a Arfai balance, it was not on a serious theoretical issue in Parsons' analysis of social systems, in fact, more dynamic systems have generally had cultural systems with significant internal tensions, such as the United States and India. These tensions were (quite often) a source of their strength according to Parsons rather than the opposite. Subsequently, Parsons never thought of a system of institutionalization and the level of tensions (tensions, conflicts) in the system as opposing forces in itself. For Parsons, the key processes for the reproduction of the system are socialization and social control. Socialization is important because it is the mechanism for transferring accepted norms and values from society to individuals within the system. Parsons never spoke of perfect socialization - in any socialization of society was only partial and incomplete from a global point of view. Parsons states that these expectations [...] is independent of the sense in which [the] person is specifically autonomous or creative, rather than assi or onforman, through individuality and creativity, are to a large extent phenomena of institutionalization of hope; [25] they are culturally constructed. Socialization is supported by the application of positive sanctions and negative behaviours of the roles they perform or do not meet those expectations. [26] Punishment could be informal, such as laughter or gossip, or more formal, by institutions such as prisons and homes if these two processes were perfect, society would become static and immutable, but in reality it is unlikely to happen for long. Parsons acknowledges this, stating that it deals with the structure of the system in its problem and subject to change.[27] and that its concept of a tendency towards stability in change. [28] He believes, however, that these changes are occurring relatively well: Individuals interacting with changing situations adapt through a process of negotiation roles. [29] Once roles are established, they create rules that guide further action and are therefore institutionalized, creating stability in social interactions. When the adaptation process cannot be adjusted, due to acute crises or immediate radical changes, structural dissolution occurs and either new structures (or thus a new system) are formed, or society dies. This model of social change has been described as a moving balance[30] and emphasizes the desire for a social order. Action Theory Talcott Parsons developed the structuralist functionalism system, for which I am developing the AGIL scheme. The acronym AGIL corresponds to what Parsons considered to be four functional imperatives needed in any system: A: Adaptation, each system must be able to deal with external situations. You need to adapt to your environment and adapt the environment to your needs. G: (Objective: Ability to achieve goals. A system that is a finalist or responsible for defining and achieving fundamental objectives. Q: Integration. The system must regulate the integration between its components and among other functional imperatives: A, G and L. L: Latency (Reason Maintenance). A system must maintain, provide and renew the motivation of individuals and the cultural models that make up it. Every social system tends to balance and become stable. It is believed that the disruptive forces of the social system are individuals and that conflicts stem from the ideology or psychology of men. It is considered that the state should be an aid and administrative organization that benefits society as a whole. According to Talcott Parsons' analysis, psychology focuses on the study of the personality system, organic biology, anthropology of the cultural system and the sociology of the social system, with the exclusivity of sociology will be the structure of institutional guidelines that define the roles played by individuals. Davis and Moore Kingsley Davis and Wilbert E. Moore (1945) gave an argument for social stratification based on the idea of functional necessity (also known as the Davis-Moore hypothesis). The authors argued that the most throughout society have the highest incomes in order to motivate people to fill out the necessary necessary documents division of labour, especially therefore serves social stability. [31] This argument has been criticized as a mistake from a number of different angles:[32] It is also argued that the individuals who have the most merits are those who have the greatest reward, and that a system of unequal rewards is necessary, otherwise no individual would be as necessary for society to function. The problem is that these awards are supposed to be based on objective merit, without subjective motivations. Nor does it clear why some positions are worth more than others, even when they benefit more people in society, for example, teachers compared to athletes and movie stars. Critics has suggested that structural inequality (hereditary wealth, family power, etc.) is itself a cause of individual success or failure, not a consequence of it. Robert Merton Robert K. Merton made significant improvements to functionalist thinking. [34] Basically, he agrees with Parsons' theory. However, he acknowledged that this was a problem, believing that it was all widespread [Holmwood, 2005:100]. Merton tended to focus on intermediate-scope theory, rather than a great theory, meaning he was able to deal specifically with some of the limitations of Parsons' theory. Merton believed that any social structure probably has many functions, some more obvious than others. [35] He identified three main limitations: functional unity, universal functionalism and indispenability [Ritzer in Gingrich, 1999]. He also developed the concept of deviance and distinguished between overt and latent functions. The overt functions refer to the recognized and intentional consequences of any social model. Latent functions refer to the unrecognized and unintended consequences of any social model. Merton criticized the functional unit, saying that not all parts of a complex modern society work for the functional unit of society. As a result, there is a social dysfunction that refers to a social model that can disrupt the functioning of society. [17] Some institutions and structures may have other functions, and some may even be dysfunctional, or functional for some, but dysfunctional for others. [Note 1] This is because not all structures are functional for society as a whole. Some practices are functional only for a dominant individual or group [Holmwood, 2005:91] Merton also noted that there may be functional alternatives to institutions and that the structures currently perform the functions of society. This means that institutions that exist today are not essential to society. Merton just as the same object can have multiple functions, so the same function can be performed differently by alternative elements [quoted in Holmwood, 2005:91] This notion of functional alternatives is important because it reduces the tendency of functionalism to be overly deterministic. Merton's theory of deviancy stems from Durkheim's idea of anomie. It is essential to explain how internal changes can occur in a system. For Merton, anomie means a discontinuity between cultural goals and accepted methods to achieve them. Merton believes that there are 5 functionalist situations Compliance occurs when an individual has the means and desire to achieve the cultural goals socialized in him. Innovation occurs when a person strives to achieve accepted cultural goals, but decides to do so in the new or unresed method. Ritualism occurs when an individual continues to do things as outlined by society, but loses the achievement of goals. Retraction is the rejection of society's means and objectives. Rebellion is a combination of rejection of goals and social media and a substitution of other goals and means. We can therefore see that change can occur internally in society through innovation or rebellion. It is true that society will try to control these people and reverse the changes, but as innovation or rebellion grows, society eventually adapts or shows dissolution. Almond and Powell in the 1970s, political scientists Gabriel Almond and Bingham Powell introduced a structural-functionalist approach to comparing political systems. They argued that in order to understand a political system, it is necessary to understand not only its institutions (or structures), but also their respective functions. They also stressed that these institutions, in order to be properly understood, must be placed in a meaningful and dynamic historical context. This idea was contrasted with the predominant approaches in the field of comparative politics - the theory of the Crown corporation and the theory of dependency. They are descendants of David Easton's system theory in international relations, a mechanistic vision that has seen all political systems as essentially the same, subject to the same laws of er stimulus and answers - or entities and exits - with little attention to unique characteristics. The structural and functional approach is based on the idea that the political system is made up of several key components, including interest groups, political parties and branches of government. In addition to the structures, Almond and Powell have shown that a political system also of several functions, including political socialization, recruitment and communication. Socialization refers to how societies transmit their values and beliefs over time to successive generations, and political terms describe the process by which a society instills civic virtues in the habits of the effective citizenry. Recruitment refers to the process by which a political system generates citizen interest, engagement and participation, and communication refers to how a system promulgates its values and information. Structuralism and Unilinear Affiliation In their attempt to explain the social stability of stateless primitive societies in Africa where they carried out their field work, Evans-Pritchard (1940) and Meyer Fortes (1945) argued that the Tallensi and Nuer are organized primarily around unilinear affiliate groups. These groups are characterized by common objectives, such as asset management or defence against attacks, they also form a stable social structure that persists well beyond the lifespan of its members. In the case of the Tallensi and the nuer, these business groups are based on kinship, which in turn fits into the largest unilinear descent structures, therefore the Evans-Pritchard and Fortes model is called ten-year heories. On the other hand, in this African context, territorial divisions were aligned with lineages, so that the theory of ancestry synthesized both blood and soil and both sides of the same coin (cf. Kuper, 1988:195). Affinity with parents by whom decline is not counted, however, are considered merely complementary or secondary (Fortes created the concept of complementary affiliation), with the calculation of kinship by offspring considers the main organizational force of social systems. Because of its strong emphasis on unilinear descent, this new theory of kinship has been called ancestral history. Without delay, the theory of ancestry found its critics. Many African tribal societies seemed to fit this orderly model very well, although Africanists, such as Richards, also argued that Fortes and Evans-Pritchard had deliberately minimized internal contradictions and placed too much emphasis on the stability of local lineage systems and their importance to the organization of society. [36] However, in many parts of Asia, the problems are even more evident. In Papua New Guinea, groups of local patrilineal ancestry were fragmented and contained a large number of ungnate. The distinctions of status did not depend on progeny, and genealogies were too short to take into account social solidarity by identifying with a common ancestor. In particular, the phenomenon of cognatic (or bilateral) parenting posed a serious problem in the proposal that progeny are the main element behind the social structures of primitive societies. Leach's (1966) critique took the form of the classical Malinowskian argument, noting that in Evans-Pritchard's studies of the Nuer and also in studies of single-line parentage, Tallensis proved to be largely an ideal concept for empirical facts to be adapted only by fiction. (1966:8) Self-interest, maneuvering, manipulation and competition had been ignored. On the other hand, the theory of ancestry neglects the importance of marriage and affinity bonds, which has been highlighted by the structural anthropology of Levi-Strauss, to the detriment of emphasizing the role of descent. To quote Leach: The obvious emphasis on kinship and matrilineal relationships by affinity does not explain so much as explained far. Declining Functionalism Structuralist functionalism reached the peak of its influence in the 1940s and 1950s, and in the 1960s it declined rapidly. In 1980, in Europe, its place was taken by more conflict-oriented approaches.[39] and more recently by structuralism. [40] While some critical approaches have also gained popularity in the United States, instead, the mainstream of the discipline has shifted to a large number of empirically oriented mid-range theories without any theoretical general orientation. For most sociologists, functionalism is now as dead as a dodo. As the influence of functionalism and Marxism began to decline in the 1960s, linguistic and cultural changes led to a number of new movements in the social sciences: According to Giddens, the Orthodox consensus ended in the late 1960s and 1970s, the middle ground shared by competing perspectives otherwise ceased and replaced by a disconcerting variety of opposing perspectives. This third generation of social theories included phenomanal-inspired approaches, critical theory, ethnomethodology, symbolic interactionism, structuralism, poststructuralism and theories written in the hermeneutic tradition and the philosophy of ordinary language. Although absent from empirical sociology, sociological theory has remained detectable in functionalist themes, particularly in the works of Luhmann and Giddens. There are, however, indications of a nascent revival, as functionalist claims have recently been reinforced by the evolution of multi-level selection theory and empirical research on how groups resolve social dilemmas. Recent developments in the theory of evolution - in particular by biologist David Sloan Wilson and anthropologists Robert Boyd Peter Richerson - have provided strong support for functionalism in the form of the multi-level selection theory. In this theory, culture and socialist structure are considered a Darwinian adaptation (biological or cultural) at the group level. Review Main articles: Conflict theory and critical theory. In the 1960s, functionalism was criticized for being incapable of taking into account social changes or structural contradictions and conflicts (and therefore often referred to as consensus theory). [43] In addition, inequalities, including race, gender, class, which cause tension and conflict, are ignored. Previously, the rebuttal of the second critique of functionalism, which is static and has no concept of change, was expressed, concluding that if Parsons' theory allows for change, it is an orderly process of change [Parsons, 1961:38], a shifting balance. Therefore, the referencing of the Parsons company theory as static is inaccurate. It is true that it emphasizes balance and the maintenance or rapid restoration of the social order, but it is a product of the time when Parsons wrote (after World War II, and the beginning of the Cold War). Society was in shock and fear abounded. At the time, the social order was crucial, and this is reflected in Parsons' tendency to promote balance and social order, rather than social change. Therefore, the parsons company theory is called static is inaccurate. On the other hand, Durkheim favoured a radical form of trade union socialism as well as functionalist explanations. Moreover, Marxism, while acknowledging social contradictions, continues to use functionalist explanations. Parsons' theory of evolution describes systems and subsystems of differentiation and reintegration and therefore conflicts, at least temporarily before reintegration (bid). The fact that functional analysis may be considered by some to be inherently conservative and by others as inherently radical suggests that it cannot be intrinsically either. (Merton, 1957: 39) The strongest criticisms are the epistemological discussion that functionalism is tautological, that is, it attempts to explain the development of social institutions exclusively by using the effects attributed to them and, therefore, explains both circularly. However, Parsons directly called many Durkheim concepts in the creation of his theory. Undoubtedly, Durkheim was one of the first theorists to explain a phenomenon in reference to the role in the service of society. He said: A determination of function is ... necessary for the full explanation of the phenomena [quoted in Coser, 1977:140]. However, Durkheim made a clear distinction between historical analysis and saying: Unad ... That's right, it's true, on the explanation of a social phenomenon, we must look separately for the effective cause that produces it and the function it performs [quoted in Sewing, 1977:140]. If Durkheim makes this distinction, then we are unlikely to do so. However, Merton does not explicitly state that the functional analysis does not attempt to explain why the action occurred in the first case, but why it is being pursued or replicated. He says that latent functions ... they will go a lot to explain the continuity of the model [quoted in Eiter, 1990:130, accent added]. It can therefore be argued that functionalism does not explain the origin cause of a phenomenon in relation to its effect, and therefore not teleological. Other critics describe the ontological argument that society cannot have needs as a human being, and even if society had needs, it will not be necessary. Anthony Giddens argues that all functionalist explanations can be rewritten as historical accounts of human actions and individual consequences (see Theory of Structuring). Another criticism of functionalism is that it contains no sense of authority, that individuals are considered puppets, acting as required by their role. However, Holmwood asserts that the most sophisticated forms of functionalism are based on a highly developed concept of action [2005:107], and as explained above, Parsons took the person and his actions as its starting point. However, his theory does not articulate how these actors exercise their agency as opposed to socialization and has installed accepted norms. As noted above, Merton approached this limitation with its concept of deviation, and it can therefore be observed that functionalism allows the agency. However, it cannot explain why individuals choose to accept or reject accepted standards, why and under what circumstances they choose to exercise their bodies, and this remains a considerable limitation of the theory. Other criticisms have been directed against functionalism by defenders of other social theories, particularly conflict theorists, Marxists, feminists and postmodernists. Conflict theorists have criticized the concept of system functionalism by placing too much emphasis on integration and consensus, and by setting aside independence and conflict [Holmwood, 2005:100]. Lockwood [Holmwood, 2005:101], in accordance with conflict theory, suggests that Parsons' theory loses the concept of system contradiction. He did not realize that these parts of the system could have tendencies towards poor integration. According to Lockwood, these trends have surfaced, as have opposition and conflict. However, Parsons believed that in its model, the issues of cooperation were very intertwined and he tried to explain them to both 2005:103]. In this, however, he was limited by his analysis of an ideal type of consensus-based society. Merton, by his critique of functional unity, introduces into functionalism an explicit analysis of tensions and conflicts. Marxism, which was revived shortly after the emergence of conflict theory, criticized professional sociology (functionalism and conflict theory) for promoting advanced welfare capitalism [Holmwood, 2005:103]. Gouldner [in Holmwood, 2005:103] believed that Parsons' theory was specifically the expression of the dominant interests of social capitalism, which justifies institutions in relation to their role in society. Parsons' work may be implicitly or articulate that some institutions must meet the functional requirements of society, but whether or not this is the case, Merton explicitly states that institutions are not indispensable and that there are functional alternatives. That he does not identify any alternative to today's institutions, reflects a conservative bias, which, as has been said before, is a product of the specific time he was writing. At the end of the importance of functionalism, feminism grew and it was a radical critique of functionalism. Functionalism is thought to have neglected the repression of women in the family structure. However, Holmwood [2005:103] shows that Parsons had, in fact, described situations where tensions and conflicts existed or when they were about to occur, even if those conflicts were not articulated. Some feminists agree, suggesting that Parsons provided accurate descriptions of these situations. [Johnson at Holmwood, 2005:103]. On the other hand, Parsons acknowledged that he had simplified his functional analysis of women in relation to work and family, and that he had focused on the positive roles of the family for society and not on its dysfunctions for women. Merton too, although faced with situations in which function and dysfunction occurred simultaneously, did not have a feminist sensibility [Holmwood, 2005:103]. Postmodernism, as a theory, criticizes the pretensions of objectivity. Therefore, the idea of the great theory that society can explain in all its forms is at least treated with skepticism. This criticism is important because it exposes the danger that great theory can pose, when it is not seen as a limited perspective, as a means of understanding society. Jeffrey Alexander (1985) sees functionalism as a general school rather than a specific method or system, such as Parsons, which is capable of taking balance (stability) as a reference, rather than a hypothesis, and treats structural differentiation as an important form of implies a difference in method and interpretation that does not exist. (Davis, 1967: 401) This eliminates the determinism criticized above. Cohen argues that a society, rather than needs, has facts of disposition: characteristics of the social environment that support the existence of certain social institutions, but do not provoke them. Influential theorists Kingsley Davis and Wilbert E. 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