

## Abstract:

1. In my thesis I try to answer the question: “*What holds society together?*” by using theoretical conceptual tools of Parsonian functionalist sociology. I work especially with Parson’s concept of *societal community* as it is defined in his book *Societies. Evolutionary and Comparative Perspective*. I work with the definition of societal community used in this book.

Societal community is formed on one hand by a normative system of order, on the other hand by statuses, rights and obligations derived from membership thereof. [Parsons 1966: 31]

I work with this skizza concept and try to reconstruct Parson’s concept by using conception of other authors, especially neo-functionalists (Jeffrey Alexander, Richard Münch, Samuel Eisenstadt), and by other authors as well (David Lockwood, Stein Rokkan, Lewis Coser, John Rawls). In spite of the fact that I use the interpretations of these authors, I consider my thesis an original piece of work, because especially last named authors do not explicitly use the concept of societal community. I reconstructed the concept of societal community with the complexity which cannot be found in the works of other authors [Gerhardt 2001].

2. In the first step I try to reconstruct the concept based on the work of Talcott Parsons. I came to the conclusion that Parsons sees the problem from two perspectives. For the purpose of my thesis, I call the first perspective historically genealogical- this is when Parsons describes the differentiation and the development of societal community in the concept of evolution of different societies. I call the second point of view system theoretical approach, this is when societal community is viewed as a subsystem of society which fulfill the function of integration from the perspective of analytical differentiation by using AGIL scheme.
3. In the thesis Parsonian concept of societal community is put in the context of general social theory: the theory of social action, the concepts of social order itself, the concepts of social and system integration. Furthermore, it is viewed in the context of history of sociology (second chapter) where I discuss how integration was conceived by other authors before Parsons.
4. The concept of societal community concerns not only the social integration but also describes the system integration. I devote myself to these problems in the fourth chapter devoted to the system theoretical aspect of the concept of societal community. Each

subsystem of a society (differentiated by means of AGIL scheme) has its own symbolical generalized medium (money, power, influence, value commitment), societal community corresponds to the medium of influence. The influence is institutionalized in the form of status system, which is the second attribute of the Parsons's definition of the concept of societal community. System integration is ensured by processes of double exchanges between subsystems.