

Parsons (1951): "Society" is a system founded on normative understanding and integration (people have to be socialised into the general norms of their society).

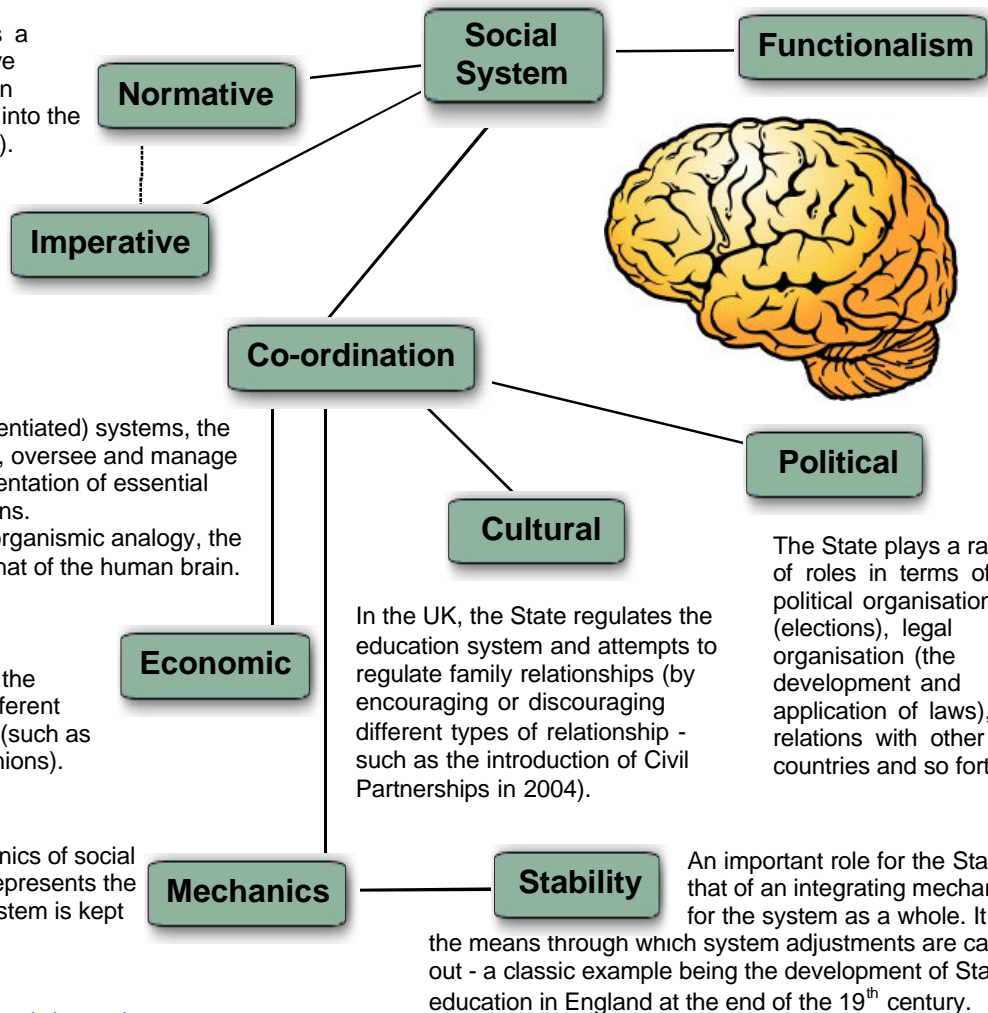
Social systems involve certain structural imperatives - things that must be performed (such as primary socialisation) if they are to survive.

In complex (functionally differentiated) systems, the State develops to co-ordinate, oversee and manage the development and implementation of essential system resources and functions.

Example: Using the familiar organismic analogy, the role of the State is similar to that of the human brain.

The State co-ordinates the relationship between different economic organisations (such as employers and Trade Unions).

The State handles the mechanics of social (normative) organisation - it represents the means by which the social system is kept in broad equilibrium.



A contemporary variation on the general Functionalist approach.

