The social system according to Talcott Parsons, “An Outline of the Social System”, 1961

Par.4: “More specifically, the theory of the social system belongs within the more general class of conceptual schemes seen in the frame of reference of action. Within that framework, the boundaries of social systems have been defined in terms of their relations, first to each other, then to the behavioral organism, to the personnality of the individual and to cultural systems.”

Par.6: “The basic functional classification underlying the whole scheme involves the discrimination of four primary categories: pattern maintenance, integration, goal attainment, and adaptation.”

Par.33: “Our view is that economy and the polity should be treated as functional subsystems within society. The primary concern of sociology is not with the functioning of these subsystems but with the other two primary functional subsystems: those concerned with the functions of integration and of ‘pattern-maintenance’.”

Par. 59 f.: “The function of pattern maintenance. (…) Maintenance, at the cultural level, of the stability of institutionalized values through (…) religious beliefs, ideology, and the like”

Par. 71 f.: “The function of integration: (…) primary focus in its system of legal norms (…) courts and the legal profession.”

* Mentioned in TP, Societies, 1966