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SOCIAL CAPITAL: USEFULNESS OF THE CONCEPT

Dissertation

B.Sc. Martin Bulla

Supervisor

Mgr. Marek Skovajsa, Ph.D.

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Martin Bulla

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ABSTRACT

The vast amount of theoretical and empirical work on social capital that has inundated the social sciences, since the beginning of the nineties, can be roughly divided in to two categories. Firstly there are those writers, mainly political scientists and economists, who follow Putnam's line of reasoning and tend to see "associational membership" more as a source of social capital than as another form of it. Secondly those, mainly sociologists, who tend to treat the concept of social capital as primarily a social structural variable, which can be used to refer to social network or to the linkages between individuals and/or organizations. The later theorists, represented by writers such as Edwards and Foley (2001b), and Lin (2001a, 2001b), usually associate social capital with facilitating goods and service flows among individuals and organization. Through a historical overview, discussion on the major conceptualizations, as well as special characteristics and perspectives of social capital, we try to clarify the social capital debate and clearly differentiate between the two approaches. Subsequently, we present a thorough critique of Putnam's approach to social capital, as well as various arguments questioning its conceptualization and use. As a result, we argue that this line of argument leads to a dead end, as it does not help to explain anything new; moreover, we argue that in this approach, conceptualization of social capital is vague and its application problematic and almost immeasurable. We propose that the future value of social capital lies in the individual (personal/organizational) network analyses. While the main part of this work concentrates on the above analysis and comparison, we will also examine the use and application of social capital within the Czech Republic.

ABSTRACT (IN CZECH)

Rozsáhlé množství jak teoretických tak empirických prací o sociálním kapitálu, které zaplavily společenskovědní disciplíny od počátku devadesátých let, může být přibližně rozděleno do dvou kategorií. V první řadě na autory, převážně politology a ekonomy, kteří sledují Putnamův způsob uvažování a mají tendenci nahlížet na „členství ve sdruženích“ (“associational membership”) spíše jako na zdroj sociálního kapitálu nežli jako na další z jeho forem. V druhé řadě na ty, převážně sociology, kteří mají tendenci nakládat se sociálním kapitálem primárně jako se sociálně strukturálním faktorem, který může posloužit při popisu sociálních sítí nebo vazeb mezi jedinci a/nebo organizacemi. Ti druzí, reprezentováni autory jako jsou Edwards and Foley (2001b) a Lin (2001a, 2001b), spojují sociální kapitál většinou s usnadněním oběhu zboží a služeb mezi jedinci a organizacemi. Snahou je prostřednictvím historického přehledu, diskuse hlavních konceptualizací, stejně tak jako charakteristik a přístupů k sociálnímu kapitálu objasnit debatu okolo sociálního kapitálu a jasně rozlišit dva výše zmíněné přístupy. Následně předkládáme důkladnou kritiku Putnamova přistupu k sociálnímu kapitálu, stejně tak jako různé důvody, které tuto konceptualizaci a její užití zpochybňují. Zastáváme názor, že tato linie chápání sociálního kapitálu vede do slepé uličky, protože neumožňuje vysvětlit nic nového. Naopak tvrdíme, že konceptualizuje sociální kapitál vágně a že v jejím rámci je aplikace konceptu problematická a v podstatě skoro neměřitelná. Domníváme se, že budoucí hodnota sociálního kapitálu se nachází převážně v individualistickém, síťovém přístupu, který se zaměřuje na analýzu specifických sociálních sítí jednotlivců, skupin či organizací. Zatímco se převážná část této práce zaměřuje na výše zmíněné analýzy a srovnání, v krátkosti se také věnuje užití a aplikaci konceptu sociálního kapitálu v rámci České republiky.

KEY WORDS

- Access
- Associations
- Bourdieu, P.
- Capital
- Civicness
- Coleman, J. S.
- Putnam, R. D.
- Resource
- Social capital
- Trust
- Network

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1. INTRODUCTION

Perhaps no other subject in sociological research has experienced such enormous expansion as has the concept of social capital in the last decade. It has become one of the most successful "export commodities" from sociology into the public discourse, as well as into other social sciences (Portes 2000).

Social capital is currently a very popular term. Since Putnam's (1993a, 1993b, 1995, 2000) conceptualization, mainly in his seminal works (*Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, and *Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital*), it flooded sociological disciplines and spilled over into other fields of study (anthropological, economical, political). Currently, the term "social capital" is used in a very wide range of contexts to describe many different phenomena.

Several scholars emphasize its value (e.g., Woolcock and Narayan 2000, Svendsen 2006) and see its popularity (e.g., Lin 2001a, Cook and Burt 2001) in cutting across and bringing together many separate disciplines. "[A]s a social element, it may capture the essence of many sociological concepts (e.g., social support, social integration, social cohesion, and even norms and values) and serve as an umbrella term that can easily be understood and transported across many disciplines" (Lin, Cook and Burt 2001, p. vii).

On the other hand, the popularity of social capital has been accompanied by increasing controversy about its definition, nature, and impact. There is an increasing divergence in the way in which social capital is conceptualized and measured. Portes (2000) explains that the source of the controversy surrounding the term 'social capital' probably stems from its application to describe different types of problems and its use in theories involving different units of analyses. As a result, the attractiveness of the concept has led to its being used to explain almost everything from families and youth behavior, schooling and education (e.g., dropping out of schools, teen pregnancy, etc.), community life and collective action (e.g. participation in civic associations), public health and environment, to democracy and governance (e.g. effectiveness of political institutions), crime rates and violence, as well as economic development. This generic and uncritical application of the term has endangered the heuristic value of social capital and reduced its potential

usefulness for future research. Indeed, social capital is often claimed to have become "one term fits all", or a "cure-all for maladies affecting societies", and its meaning has become so blurred that it is often seen as "all things to all people". (e.g., Harriss 2001, Lin, Fu, Hsung 2001, Portes 1998, 2000, Stolle and Hooghe 2004, Veselý 2003, Kay, Pearce and Evans 2004, etc.). In sum, the attractiveness of social capital often results in:

> …a multitude of perspectives (e.g. is social capital a collective or individual asset?), definitions (is it community participation, social networks, or trust?), theoretical propositions (are closed or open networks better?), and emphases (can social capital operate in economic activities and organizations? Can it work in different social and institutional contexts?). In fact, there is a looming danger that the free flow of understanding, application and interpretation of social capital may soon reach a point where the term might be used in whatever way it suits the purpose at hand, and thus be rendered meaningless as a scientific concept that must meet the rigorous demands of theoretical and research validity and reliability.
>
> Lin, Cook and Burt (2001, p. vii)

There is no doubt that the concept of social capital has become vague, insufficiently conceptualized and controversially measured. Furthermore, it often seems that methodology and measurement is determined by desired outcomes. As a result, several scholars (e.g., Portes 1998, Lin 2001a, 2001b, Edwards and Foley 1998), stress the need for a clear theoretical anchor of the concept in order to preserve its heuristic value. For example, Lin, Fu and Hsung (2001, p.57) remind us: "Scientific viability of the notion of social capital depends on the development of approach that integrates theory and measurement of the concept. … Without clear measurement, it will be impossible to verify propositions or to accumulate knowledge."

Putnam's work, as well as of other collectivists (those aggregating social capital to the national level) has been substantially criticized. However, despite this, a great amount of current research still fails to accommodate the criticism, often ignoring it all together. The situation in the Czech Republic does not seem to be an exception to this general trend; it just lags a little behind, since Putnam's works enjoyed a greater awareness in the United States before they did in the Czech Republic.

1.1 Aims and Structure

The work is a theoretical exploration of the construct of social capital. The goal is to clarify the meaning of social capital by:

1. giving an overview of its historical development
2. discussing three major conceptualizations that popularized the term – those of Bourdieu (1986), Coleman (1988), Putnam (1993a, 1993b, 1995, 2000)
3. presenting the two major perspectives toward social capital (individual and collectivistic)
4. discussing other concept categorizations and strong/weak ties argument
5. showing the use of the concept within the Czech Republic
6. presenting and discussing the criticism of the concept, and
7. accounting for the criticism and issues, while also seeking to derive to possible relevant, testable and still valuable definition.

The possible usefulness of this dissertation lies primarily in discussing various criticisms of Putnam's very popular social capital conceptualization and conclusions. This may help future theorists and researchers to avoid past mistakes and misunderstandings, and help them to develop richer conceptualizations and research applications in the area of social capital. In particular, we would like to clarify the concept within the academic and research environment of the Czech Republic, as it is only during recent years that social capital has begun to receive wider attention. We would hope that this work might help Czech researchers (e.g., anthropologists, political scientists, sociologists) avoid many of the misconceptions and flawed arguments and logic regarding the social capital concept.

Clarifying the social capital construct is not new; a vast literature exists addressing this issue. However, existing literature is diffuse, widely dispersed, and often not particularly accessible. In this work, we have attempted, among other thing, to create – from an

extensive and wide-ranging literature review -- a comprehensive exploration of the social capital concept and to provide the reader with an analysis that shows the points of differences, similarities, and commonality that exist in social capital theory.

1.2 Methodology

Because we explore the social capital concept theoretically, we draw on the essential and relevant social capital literature, as well as on personal conversations with sociologists. In this way, we present a broad analysis of social capital with excursus to the use of the concept in the Czech Republic.

In reviewing the literature, there are three works that we consider essential in trying to clarify the concept of social capital. This dissertation draws primarily on these works: A] Bob Edwards, Michael W. Foley, and Mario Diani's volume *Beyond Tocqueville: Civil Society and The Social Capital Debate in Comparative Perspective*, which addresses the questions mirroring the work of Robert Putnam; B] Nan Lin, Karen Cook and Ronald S. Burt's volume *Social Capital: Theory and Research*, which addresses the social capital conceptualization and research mainly from the individualistic perspective; and C] Nan Lin's monograph *Social capital: A theory of social structure and action*.

While these sources are particularly helpful, we also reviewed and consulted an extensive body of scholarly literature much of which can be accessed via the Internet. The reference section of this work details this material. In conducting this review we identified several other works, in addition to the three mentioned above, that might be very helpful for the reader to gain an insight into the conceptualization of social capital (e.g., Krishna 2002, Svendsen and Svendsen 2004), although these works might not be readily available, at this time, in the Czech Republic.

2. DEVELOPMENT

Despite its current attractiveness, the term 'social capital' does not carry any really new idea:

> That involvement and participation in groups can have positive consequences for the individual and the community is a staple notion, dating back to Durkheim's emphasis on group life as an antidote to anomie and self destruction … [and] to Marx's distinction between an atomized class-in-itself and mobilized and effective class-for-itself.
>
> (Portes 1998, p.2).

Similarly, we consider Tocqueville's (1992) stress on the association of citizens as being the only way to act – either for personal (special interest in/formal associations) or public benefit (political parties, church, etc.) – and, as a means to overcome individualism and state's despotism. As Portes (1998, p. 2) points out "the term social capital simply captures an insight present since the very beginning of the discipline [of sociology]."

Probably the first scholar to use the actual term 'social capital' was Lyda J. Hanifan, while discussing the rural school community centers (Smith 2001, Veselý 2003, Woolcock and Narayan 2000). Hanifan (1916, p.130 cited in Woolcock and Narayean 2000, p. 228) described social capital as "those tangible substances [that] count for most in the daily lives of people… [such as] …good will, fellowship, sympathy, and social intercourse among the individuals and families…" Up until the 1980s, the term had not attracted wider interest. Several scholars (Homans 1961, Jacobs 1961, Loury 1977) had each used the term independently of one another, but interestingly each used it in the similar meaning to describe the vitality and significance of community ties (Woolcock and Narayan 2000).

The first systematic analyses and solid definitions of social capital appeared during the 1980s in the works of French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1986) and those of the American sociologist James C. Coleman (1988). However, the social capital boom started only at the beginning of 1990s with the seminal work of American sociologist Robert D. Putnam (1993a, 1993b, 1995, 2000). Since Bourdieu, Coleman, and Putnam have had such an influence on the way in which social capital has been employed, we will now consider each of their contributions.

2.1 Pierre Bourdieu (1930 – 2002)

In order to understand Bourdieu's concept of social capital and subsequent theoretical concepts, as well as their critiques, it is essential to have a clear understanding of capital in general, as well as the way in which Bourdieu considered capital, since the concept of social capital was initially derived from these ideas of capital.

2.1.1 WHAT IS CAPITAL?

Lin (2001a, 2001b) provides an excellent answer to this question by summarizing the problematic nature of capital. According to Lin (2001b, p. 4), the notion of capital can be traced back to Marx who conceptualized it as a "part of the surplus value captured by capitalist or the bourgeoisie, who control the means of production, in the circulation of commodities and monies between the production and consumption processes." Here capital represents first, the "*surplus value* generated and pocketed by the capitalists…" and second, "it represents an *investment* … on the part of the capitalists, with expected returns in the marketplace". The theory (Lin calls it *the classical theory of capital*) is based on the exploitative nature of social relations between the two classes, and it is the dominant class that makes the investment and captures the surplus value (Lin 2001b, p.4).

In subsequent theories, which are summarized in *Table 1*, capital remains "a surplus value and represents an investment with expected returns". Lin (2001b: 4-5) gives the following examples:

1. Human capital theory sees capital as an investment (e.g., in educations) with expected returns (earnings).
2. Cultural capital represents "investment on the part of dominant class in reproducing a set of symbols and meanings, which are misrecognized and internalized by the dominated class as their own".

However, Lin stresses that these theories diverge from the classical theory of capital because 'the oppressed classes' can now invest, and thus acquire capital of their own. Furthermore, they can also generate surplus value by participating in the production and consumption markets. In Lin's words, "theoretical attention have moved from a class-based perspective (where capital is invested and accrued by the bourgeois only) to an

Table 1. **Theories of Capital**

	Explanation	***Capital***	***Level of Analyses***
The Classical Theory			
(Marx)	Social Relations Exploitation by the capitalists (bourgeoisie) of the proletariat	A. Part of surplus value between the use value (in consumption market) and the exchange value (in production-labor market) of the commodity B. Investment in the production and circulation of commodities	Structural (classes)
The Neocapital Theories			
Human Capital (Schutz, Becker)	Accumulation of surplus value by laborer	Investment in technical skills and knowledge	Individual
Cultural Capital (Bourdieu)	Reproduction of dominant symbols and meanings (values)	Internalization or misrecognition of dominant values	Individual/class
Social Capital (Lin, Burt, Marsden, Flap, Bourdieu Coleman)	Social Relations Access to and of resources embedded in social networks	Investment in social networks	Individual
(Bourdieu, Coleman, Putnam)	Solidarity and reproduction of group	Investment in mutual recognition and acknowledgement	Group/individual

(Source: Lin 2001b, p.5)

actor-based perspective (where the actors, whether individuals or communities, invest and accrue such resources)" (2000, p. 786). Lin calls these neocapitalist theories, and argues that social capital concept reflects similar line of argument. Bourdieu's conceptualization of social capital is exemplary.

2.1.2 BOURDIEU'S UNDERSTANDING OF CAPITAL

Pierre Bourdieu (1986, pp. 241) treats capital as "accumulated (…embodied form [of])" labor, which makes social games[1] "other than simple games of chance." Bourdieu (e.g., 1986, 1998) differentiates between four types of capital – economic, cultural, social and symbolic. Essentially the possession of (access to) these forms of capital is advantageous to people in their "social games". Also, for Bourdieu (1986) all forms of capital can ultimately be converted to economic capital.[2]

[1] Bourdieu often uses the term field instead of game. By fields he understands systems of objective relations composted by various types of capital (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). Moreover, as Lande (2005) points out, "[for Bourdieu] something counts as capital only to the extent that possessing it incurs an ability to access profits specific to the field…" Simply, "A capital does not exist and function except in relation to a field" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, pp. 101). Bourdieu also talks about "habitus", by which he means customary practices and behavior within those fields (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). Furthermore, Lande (2005) explains that capital is very simplistically "whatever has an effect". As a result, what is a capital (has an effect) in one social world may not be capital (have an effect) in another (Lande 2005).

[2] Bourdieu (1986, pp. 243) says: "Depending on the field in which it functions, and at the cost of the more or less expensive transformations which are the precondition for its efficacy in the field in question, capital can present itself in three fundamental guises: as economic capital, which is immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the form of property rights; as cultural capital, which is convertible, on certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of educational qualifications; and as social capital, made up of social obligations ("connections"), which is convertible in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of a title of nobility." Symbolic capital relates to differences between identities; so while individuals may both possess economic capital the degree of the difference may also be perceived by those within the society in symbolic terms.

In sum, for Bourdieu capital is the product of accumulated labor that can be embodied, preserved, recognized, and used within different social systems ("fields"). Bourdieu distinguishes between four types of capital, all of which can be converted, albeit with loses in efficiency, to economic capital.

2.1.3 BOURDIEU'S SOCIAL CAPITAL

While discussing cultural, economic, social and symbolic forms of capital, Bourdieu (1986) defined the social capital concept as "the aggregate of the actual, or potential, resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition – or in other words to membership in a group" (1986, p. 248). The group provides its members with the collectively-owned capital, which allows them credit. For Bourdieu social capital is "made up of social obligations ('connections')" (1986, p.243), and depends "on the size of one's connections [network] and on the volume or amount of capital in these connections' possession", and is a production of the group's members (Lin 2001a, p. 22).

As Portes (1998, p. 3) points out, Bourdieu treats the concept instrumentally, focusing on "the benefits accruing to individuals by virtue of [their] participation in groups and on the deliberate construction of … [social networks] for the purpose of creating this resource [social capital]." Simply, individuals "intentionally build their relations for the benefits that they would bring later on" (Portes 2000, p. 531). Portes (1998) shows how Bourdieu's definition allows for decomposition of social capital into: A] the social relationship that allows individuals to claim access to resources possessed by their acquaintances, and B] the amount and quality of those resources.

It is worth mentioning that Bourdieu had developed the concept in order to study the reproduction of social classes and was concerned about the convergence process of different forms of capital (economic, cultural, symbolic) (Sedláčková and Šafr 2005). Thus, Portes (1998, p.4) demonstrates "through social capital, actors can gain direct access to economic resources (subsidized loans, investment tips, protected markets); they can increase their cultural capital through contacts with experts or individuals of refinement

(i.e. embodied cultural capital); or, alternatively, they can affiliate with institutions that confer valued credentials (institutionalized cultural capital)." Following the same logic, the acquisition of social capital requires investment of economic, as well as cultural resources.

Lin clearly and elegantly summarizes Bourdieu's approach toward social capital:

> Bourdieu sees social capital as a form of capital possessed by members of a social network or group. Through connections among the members, the capital can be used by members as credits. In this sense, social capital is a collective asset endowing members with credits, and it is maintained and reinforced for its utility when members continue to invest in the relationships.
>
> (Lin 2001a, p. 22-23)

2.2 James S. Coleman (1926 – 1995)

Coleman (1988) introduced the concept of social capital during his research on educational performance in schools; specifically students dropping out of high schools. He explored the role of social capital in the creation of human capital.

While Coleman's definition of social capital lacks precesion, he used the concept, as did Bourdieu, for describing a resource of individuals that emerges from their social ties (Portes and Landolt 1996). For Coleman, social capital consists of two elements: A) it is an "aspect of social structures" and B) it "facilitate[s] certain actions of actors – whether persons or corporate actors – within the structure." Thus, social capital "inheres in the structure of relations between actors and among actors" (Coleman 1988, p. 98). Consequently, Coleman defines social capital in terms of its function. Following Coleman's logic, any structural aspect is capital when it serves a function for certain individuals engaged in particular activities. Therefore, Coleman's "[s]ocial capital is not fungible across individuals or activities … [it] is the resources, real or potential, gained from relationships" (Lin 2001a p. 23). It is "a resource for action" (Coleman 1988, p.95).

Social relationships form the basis of Coleman's social capital concept, since through them the actors exercise control over the resources (norms, physical, monetary, etc.) in which they have interest (Lin 2001a, Portes 2000, Portes and Landolt 2000). Simply put,

Coleman sees the basic function of social capital in facilitating actor action (either personal or collective) within the structure (Sedláčková and Šafr 2005).

Coleman (1988) uses several examples to illustrate his point. In one of the examples, he depicts the mother of six children moving with her husband from Detroit to Jerusalem because she felt it is a safer place for her children. Coleman explains it by the difference in social capital available in the two cities. In Jerusalem, the presence of norms ensures that "unattended children will be 'looked after' by adults in the vicinity", while no such norms exists in most of metropolitan areas of the United States (1988, p. 100). It is a demonstration of "how individual actors adapt to the social capital available in a collectivity – the community" (Lin 2000, p. 23).

In sum, Coleman's social capital is embedded in various social relations, through which the actors can exercise the control over their present or future resources. The previous example showed that by social capital Coleman refers to "relations among persons that facilitate action, embodied in the collective norms of communities that extend beyond immediate family members and the trustworthiness of the social environment on which obligations and expectations depend" (Jackman , pp. 14216-14217). In Coleman's (1988) understanding, social capital can have various forms. He stipulates three:

1. obligations and expectations,
2. information channels, and
3. social norms and sanctions.

Coleman (1998, pp. 101-105) understands these as "useful capital resources for individuals" and "the value of these aspects of social structure to actors as resources that they can use to achieve their interests… All social relations and social structures facilitate some forms of social capital…" All these form of social capital (e.g., obligations, norms, sanctions) not only facilitate certain actions, but also constrain others. Simply, in the words of Stolle and Lewis (2002, p. 3): "Depending on the context, [Coleman's] social capital may have different pay-offs to the individuals in the social relation or to collective as an externality of the interaction. In the latter sense, social capital is a public good by-product of social interactions."

Thus, both Coleman and Bourdieu focus in general on the benefits accruing to individuals or groups (families, corporations, etc.) by virtue of their ties with others (Portes 2000). For both of them, "dense or closed networks are seen as the means by which collective capital can be maintained and reproduction of the group can be achieved" (Lin 2001a, p. 23). But in general, such collective social capital is usually the by-product of individual social capital of social interactions. It is this property, which is crucial for understanding the difference from the Robert Putnam's approach.

2.3 Robert D. Putnam (1941 –)

Putnam uses a rather different conceptualization of social capital. While Bourdieu and Coleman, as well as subsequent sociological analyses, grounded their works in relationships between actors or between individual actor and the group, and while they also focused on potential benefits accruing to actors from networks or broader social structure of which they are part of, Putnam stretched the concept by equating the extent of social capital with the level of involvement and participation in civic associations within a society (Portes 1998, Portes and Ladolt 1996, Lin 2000).

Putnam introduced his conceptualization of social capital in two famous analyses of 1) performance of regional governments in Italy – *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (1993b) and 2) declining social capital in the United States - "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital" (1995) article and subsequent publication *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (2000).

In the later, he explains declining public participation and trust in governmental institutions in the United States (declining social capital) by the declining membership and participation in civic associations (characteristically in bowling clubs) (Putnam 1995). In the former publication, he explains the differences in governmental performance, as well as in levels of economic development between North (civic) and South (un-civic) Italy by the variations in civic engagement and patterns of social networks (civic associations), measured by political participation, newspaper readership and the density of voluntary associations (football clubs, choirs, and bird-watching societies) (Putnam 1993b). As Jackman (2001, pp. 14217) points out, "[Putnam's] statistical analyses explain current performance as a function of social networks in place a century earlier, and at various

points, regional differences are traced back almost 1000 years." While this aspect of Putnam's *Making Democracy Work* was substantially criticized (*see Section 5.1.1.4*), his major achievement (apart from thorough 20 year long analyses of local governments in Italy) is probably, as Tarrow (1996) pointed out in combination of quantitative and qualitative cultural and policy research. As Tarrow (1996, pp. 396) argues:

> Putnam's achievement is to have gone considerably beyond the statistical mode of cross-sectional comparison with which he began and to have integrated both quantitative and qualitative historical sources with his findings on contemporary institutional performance. … The strength of Putnam's achievement was to go outside the comfort of his data into the less certain terrain of narrative and qualitative history…

While the qualitative analyses was inconsistent and not as thorough as it should be (Tarrow 1996), and while the work in general was subjected to severe criticism, neither of these factors undermine the initial accomplishment in combining the two types of the research. Here what we find laudable, as also Skovajsa (2004) pointed out, is not about the correctness of objective conclusions, but rather about the manner by which Putnam introduces cultural dimension to his explanations of institutional affectivity.

For Putnam (1993a, 1993b, 1995, 2000), social capital means the features of social organizations, such as networks (of civic engagement that are organized horizontally), norms (especially of generalized reciprocity) and trust, which facilitate action and cooperation for mutual benefit. Putnam follows similar communitarian logic as Tocqueville. While accordingly for Tocqueville (1992), political associations function as schools where all citizens learn the virtue of association (and therefore are schools for learning democracy), Putnam (1993b, 1995, 2000) sees civic associations as schools teaching citizens to trust each other (interpersonal trust). Subsequently, people who learn to trust each other in the civic association will more easily trust even non-members of their association, government, parliament and other public institutions - would develop generalized trust (Putnam 1993b). Trust is for Putnam (1993b, 1995, 2000) the essential component of social capital because it "lubricates social life [cooperation]".

Simply, Levi (1996, p. 49, italics by author) summarizes Putnam's logic by noting that bird watching clubs, choral groups etc. develop "sufficient interpersonal trust and assurances to

that citizens are able to overcome the free rider problem, organize, and then *effectively sanction governments* that are not performing well. Moreover, the pluralist and crosscutting cleavages of an active citizenry ensure that the demands will be democratic in overall effect." [3] Accordingly, Putnam (2000) prefers weak and dense social ties to strong interpersonal ties because, according to his view, weak ties are more likely to link members of different groups together than the strong ties concentrated mainly within particular, often closed groups (families, kin, close-knit minorities, etc).[4]

As a result, Putnam implies that "[w]orking together is easier in a community blessed with substantial stock of social capital" and that "[s]pontaneous cooperation is facilitated by social capital" (1993b, pp. 167). Putnam understands social capital as a "resource that benefits all individuals in a given society, independent of whether they all actively contribute to its production or not" (Stolle and Lewis 2002, p.4). Putnam (1993a, 1993b, 1995, 2000), contrary to Bourdieu, sees social capital as a property of communities and nations rather than individuals. For him it constitutes a public good and not the private property of those who benefit from it. Putnam (2000) often understands the concept as an alternative for the term civil society or 'civicness'. Accordingly, as Müller (2003) points out, Putnam's treatment of the concept is more or less in line with the concept of civic virtue, except that Putnam refers to linkages and values of social interactions.

In sum, Putnam sees the basis for social capital in civic engagement and in features of social organization (e.g., generalized trust, norms, and networks) that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions. He equates social capital with the number of, and level of membership in, civic apolitical (mainly special interest) associations (e.g. bowling and bird watching clubs). Among others, he suggests that whole societies may be differentiated in terms of their social capital (Harriss 2001).

[3] These assumptions are questioned in the *Section 5.1.1*.

[4] For discussion on strong/weak ties see *Section 3.1.1*.

3. PERSPECTIVES AND CONTROVERSIES

Even though the central idea behind the notion of social capital might be quite clear - it is some kind of investment in social relations that is expected to generate certain returns - and consistent with the various conceptualizations of all scholars who have contributed to the discussion (e.g., Bourdieu 1986, Coleman 1988, Putnam 1993b, 1995, Foley and Edwards 1996, 1999, Brehm and Rahn 1997, Edwards and Foley 1998, 2001, Portes 1998, 2000, Fukuyama 1999, Lin 2000, Burt 2001, Uslaner 2004, etc.), there are nevertheless various aspects of social capital which have been the subject of much debate and which deserve greater clarification.

This section will discuss and attempts to clafiry: 1] further theoretical, as well as measurement differences between Bourdieu's, Coleman's and Putnam's approach toward social capital, 2] individual and collective conceptualization of social capital, and 3] other social capital perspectives and characteristics

3.1 Further Differences between Bourdieu, Coleman and Putnam

Previous section introduced the three pioneers of social capital and their understanding of social capital concept. While there are many areas where Bourdieu, Coleman, and Putman's conceptualization and/or the measurement of social capital are clearly different and divergent, there are other areas that require some more elaboration. We address this issue along two lines: theoretical and measurement.

3.1.1 THEORETICAL

Even though certain features of Bourdieu's, Coleman's, and Putnam's understanding of social capital might be similar (e.g., it is some kind of investment in social relations), there are also major differences among their conceptualization of social capital (for summary see *Table 2*).

The theoretical base of Bourdieu and Coleman concept of social capital is quite close. Both "emphasize the intangible character of social capital … [that it] inheres in the structure of their [peoples'] relationships [and that] [t]o possess social capital, a person must be related to others, and it is those others, not himself, who are the actual source of

his advantage" (Portes 1988, p.7). Moreover, both sociologists treat social capital as a context dependent variable. Still, the two conceptualizations are not exactly the same. In Bourdieu's case, social capital serves as the foundation for inequality (Portes 1998). For him, "social capital is another way of maintaining and reproducing the dominant class. … [he] views social capital as class (privilege) goods" (Lin 2000, p. 24). For Coleman, however, social capital is embedded in social relations, but may take variety of forms (norms, social organizations, etc.) and his definition remains rather vague. Still, even though Coleman discusses collective social capital (and its subsequent public benefits), for him "community ties were important for the benefits they yielded to *individuals*" (Portes 2000, p. 3).

Table 2. Social Capital: Theoretical Differences

Characteristics	*Bourdieu*	*Coleman*	*Putnam*
Social capital	related to social Obligations (connections)	defined by its function an aspect of social structure that facilitates action in others	are features of social organization (networks, norms, trust) that facilitate cooperation for mutual benefit
Level of social capital benefits	individual	individual	collective (aggregate)
Attribute of	individual/group	individual/group	community as whole
Context	dependent	dependent	independent
Indicators of social capital	size of network connections and the amount of capital embedded there	context specific e.g., obligations, expectations, information channels, sanctions	aggregate indicators (e.g., number of certain civic associations, their membership, newspaper readership, perception of trust)

Source (Author)

On the other hand, contrary to the Bourdieu's and Coleman's conception, Putnam used social capital at the aggregate level to explain the processes beyond the immediate social network level, that is at the regional, or even national level. Putnam treats it as context independent. In his influential works, "social capital became an attribute of *community itself*"(Portes 2000, p.3). The benefits, in his version, do not accrue to individuals, but to the "collectivity as whole in the form of reduced crime rates, lower official corruption, and better governance (Portes 2000, p.3). Moreover, Putnam's (1993b) high/low levels of social capital serve as explanations for these benefits certain community is enjoying. This, in our opinion, made the concept popular, as it could be used and applied to explain various situations and features of reality. It seems likely that it is precisely this move from

a micro to a macro phenomenon, from an individual to a community issue, that has caused Putnam's analysis of social capital to be so attractive and has led, unfortunately, to over use and over generalization, as it could be used and applied to explain various situations and features of reality.

3.1.2 MEASUREMENT

Consequently, the different conceptualizations of the three authors lead to different approaches regarding the measurement of social capital. While Boudieu's construction of social capital may not be as easy to understand as the one of Putnam, his "understanding of how we might measure and weight social capital has a clarity and coherence not found in Coleman and Putnam" (Edwards and Foley (2001b, p. 9). For Bourdieu (1986, p. 249)

> The volume of the social capital possessed by a given agent … depends on the size of the network of connections he can effectively mobilize and on the volume of the capital (economic, cultural or symbolic) possessed in his own right by each of those to whom he is connected.

A typical example of a technique measuring the above are position generators (thoroughly discussed in the *Section 6.3.1.1.2*).

Coleman (1988) is particularly interested in effects of social capital on the creation of human capital (especially in the next generation) and applies respective measuring techniques. Depending on the operationalization of social capital, Coleman concentrates on measuring one, or several, of its froms that are relevant to his conceputalization (e.g., obligations, expectations, information channels, social norms and sanctions). For example, when Coleman (1988, p. 110) operationalizes social capital of the family as "the relations between children and parents (and when families include other members, relationship with them as well)", he measures the social capital available to the child from parents by the strength of the relations between parents and child (e.g., number of parents, siblings, mother's expectations for child's education). Even though Coleman often uses trust as one of the social capital indicators, it is not generalized trust, but rather a feature of the specific context in which specific individual/group can be trusted (Edwards and Foley 2001b)

In contrast to Bourdieu and Coleman, Putnam primarily uses aggregate indicators, available from existing (national and cross national) survey data sets, e.g., number of bird watching organizations (certain types of civic associations), membership in these organizations, newspaper readership, citizens' perception of trust. But, as stressed in the *Section 2.3*, he doesn't hesitate to use various qualitative research methods to support his findings.[5] When researching social capital, Putnam focuses at structural analyses drawing on the quantitative data from general surveys, but he does not hesitate to use qualitative research methods (historical analyses) to explain and give deeper meaning to the quantitative data (and his quantitative findings). This approach might be inspirational for other researchers, as understanding of social capital without at least minor context analyses might be rather limited.

Consequently, similarly to the various theoretical approaches toward social capital, there is no general consensus on how to measure social capital. Despite growing academic interest in social capital, many authors (e.g., Coffe and Gyes 2005) see this lack of consensus on how to measure it as primary weakness of the concept.

3.1.3 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

To summarize, Bourdieu and Coleman see social capital as primarily individual resource, while Putnam as a collective one (Stolle and Lewis 2002). Portes (2000, p.3) argues, "individual and collective benefits derived from primordial ties are not incompatible... But social capital as a property of cities or nations is qualitatively distinct form its individual version…" Unfortunately, the majority of the research that blossomed in the 1990s failed to recognize or accommodate the differences and often mixed the three different conceptions. Consequently, many of the resulting works on social capital are unclear and ambiguous.

Putnam's understanding of social capital became the most popular one. After its introduction enormous amount of studies concerning collective social capital was conducted; for example, the World Bank (2006a, 2006b, 2006c) made an official social capital policy for evaluation and enhancement of its development projects. We believe that

[5] Even thought their use is somewhat arbitrary as Tarrow (1996) might suggest.

growth and popularity of Putnam's social capital is based on A] relative ease with which it can be measured, B] it is truism, as well as cause and effect characteristic (thoroughly discussed in the Section 5.1.2.3 and the Section 5.1.2.4) that allows for explanation of almost everything and C] possible convertibility of the findings into specific policies.

On the other hand, Putnam's conceptualization, as well as statistical results were subjected to various degrees of criticism (e.g., Portes 1998, 2000, Portes and Landolt 1996, 2000, Stolle and Rochon 1998, Stolle and Hooghe 2004, Lin 2001a, 2001b, Harriss 2001, Newton 2001, Levi 1996, Edwards and Foley 1998, 2001) and some scholars even question the usefulness of the whole social capital concept (e.g, Navarro 2002).

The discussion of the various approaches towards social capital conceptualization might clarify current trends in social capital research and debate. Furthermore, discussion on the critique of individual and especially Putnam's (and subsequently collectivistic) approach to social capital and introduction of some major issues encompassing the social capital debate will add to clarification of the understanding of the concept. The subsequent parts address these issues.

3.2 Individual vs. Collective Social Capital

The above analyses of Bourdieu, Coleman and Putnam explained the major differences among the three social capital concepts. As described, they mainly differ in terms of level at which the benefits, outcome or utility can be assessed. Accordingly, current research could be divided into two main conceptualizations – *individual* and *collective*. The first one mirrors Bourdieu and partially Coleman and the second Putnam and again partially Coleman. Coleman fits both because his conceptualization bridges the two distinctive and opposing positions of Bourdieu and Putnam.

At the *individual* level the benefits of social capital accrue to individual or closed group (family, kin) – it is a private social capital, while at the *collective* level they accrue to the whole society – it is a public social capital. For the purpose of this work, those following *individual social capital* approach are called individualists, while those adhering to *collective social capital* are addressed as collectivists (or sometimes communitarians). Among the proponents of, or at least the sympathizers with, the former are Portes (e.g.,

1998), Lin (e.g., 2001a, 2001b), Burt (2001), Edwards and Foley (e.g., 1998, 2001a, 2001b), Svendsen (2006), Matějů (e.g., 1993, 2006), etc. The followers of the latter, the collectivists, include Putnam (e.g., 1993a, 1993b, 1995), Fukuyama (1999), Knack (2002), Marschall and Stolle (2004), Beyerlein and Hipp (2005), Coffé and Geys (2005), etc. In general, the World Bank, the European Union or various development agencies use the concept in the collectivists meaning - e.g. Kay, Pearce and Evans (2004), The World Bank (e.g., 2006a, 2006b).

3.2.1 INDIVIDUAL SOCIAL CAPITAL

Individual social capital is an investment made by individuals or groups with expected returns, some benefits or profits, to the individuals/groups (Lin 2001b). According to Lin (2001b, p. 8), "aggregation of individual returns also benefits collective. Nonetheless, the focal points for analysis in this perspective are (1) how individuals invest in social relations, and (2) how individuals capture the embedded resources in the relations to generate returns." Veselý (2003, p.29, italics in original) clarifies, *individual* social capital is based on the aphorism, "'It's not what you know, it's who you know'… In this view, social capital belongs to each *individual*, at times at the expense of others." Social capital is simply seen as the access of an individual or groups to favorable personal networks and as quantity and quality of connections to potential helpers. For this reason, an individual level approach to social capital is often also called a network approach. According to Edwards and Foley (2001b, p. 11), the individual (network) approach is more in line with social structural versions of social capital proposed by Coleman and Bourdieu, due to its emphasis on the role of individual and organizational social ties in predicting "individual advancement or collective action". Individualists generally propose that social capital enhances the possibilities of instrumental returns (e.g., better jobs, higher earnings, mental health) (Lin 2000).

A clear example of a social capital definition from the individual perspective is Lin's (e.g., 2000, p. 786). He defines social capital as "*investment and use of embedded resources in social relations for expected returns."* This definition looks at quality and quantity of *resources accessed* by or *available* to actor and their location in social networks, through which the resources are accessed.

Individualists measure social capital by following various quantitative and qualitative research methods – in-depth unstructured interviews, snowball techniques analyzing interpersonal networks, name and position generators, etc.[6] Most often they are concerned with actors (individuals or organizations) and their position in networks and conscious/unconscious connections to the relevant resources.

3.2.2 COLLECTIVE SOCIAL CAPITAL

On the other hand, the *collective* level social capital is seen as a capacity for collective action or something that allows individuals, groups and communities to resolve collective problems more easily or prosper economically. It helps social cohesion and allows development to be sustainable. It is a glue holding institutions within the society together (The World Bank 2006a, 2006b). Here, the discussion rests on "(1) how certain groups develop and maintain more or less social capital as a collective asset, and (2) how such collective asset enhances group members' life chances … [T]he central interest of this perspective is to explore the elements and processes in the production and maintenance of the collective asset." Another interest of the proponents of *collective* social capital is "how norms and trust, as well as other properties (e.g., sanctions, authority) of a group are essential in the production and maintenance of the collective asset" (Lin 2001b, p. 8). Simply, *collective* perspective sees social capital as an important (often national) resource available to societies for promoting collective action for the common good (having influence on all, economic, social and political level). Collectivists often argue that societies with high levels of social capital ought to outperform those societies where its levels are low.

Putnam's (1995, p.67) definition might serve as a good example of the collective perspective. He defines social capital as "features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit." An example of a typical operationalization, which represents the concept as a tight relationship between civic engagement and interpersonal trust, is: "The more that citizens participate in their communities, the more that they learn to trust others; the greater trust that citizens hold for other, the more likely they are to participate." (Brehm and Rahn 1997, p.1002)

[6] Some of the techniques are discussed in the *Section 6.3.*

Collectivists usually measure social capital by quantitative research methods - aggregating data from general (nationwide) statistical survey. Most often they are concerned with voter turnout, levels of generalized trust (measured typically by questions such as "Generally speaking, do you believe that most people can be trusted, or can't you be too careful in dealing with others?"), the number of certain type of civil associations, membership of these civil associations, etc. Yet, as stressed several times throughout this work, the qualitative research methods might be useful as well (e.g., for analyzing certain aspects of collective social capital, for understanding the context)[7].

3.2.3 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In sum, while both *individual* and *collective* social capital perspectives may differ about the level of analysis and the implications of that analysis, both generally agree about the basic features of social capital. Both perspectives understand this core concept rests on outcomes anticipated from social relations.

The two differ with respect to whom the returns accrue – individuals (small groups) or collective (cities, nations). It is worth mentioning that benefits derived from social networks and ties are not incompatible, nevertheless it is evident that there is qualitative difference among social capital as a property of individuals and collective (cities or nations). It is clearly illustrated in the *Table 3*, which summarizes the types of information sought during research and respective indicators of social capital measurement.

To appreciate researchers' social capital indicators, as well as their measuring and data generating methods, it is essential to understand whether and individualistic or collectivistic approach has been used. Often the conceptualization of individualists and collectivists may appear initially similar; however the further examination of the research methods will clearly distinguish the two camps. For example, aggregated statistical data, especially on the voters' turnout, associational membership or trust, can be almost always associated with collectivists in our social capital debate.

[7] Putnam's (1993) attempt to support quantitative data by qualitative research is discussed in the Section 2.3 and implicitly in the Section 5.1.1.4.

Table 3. **Basic Social Capital Conceptualizations and Examples of Indicators**

Social Capital Conceptualization	*Types of Information*	*Examples of Indicators*
Collective (communitarian)	**aggregate statistical data**	# of civic/professional associations (in the locality) membership in the civic associations proportion of donations toward the sum of personal income # of hours spend by volunteering
	individual responses	inquiry concerning the membership in the civic/professional associations trust of other citizens
Individual	**interactive**	frequency of societal activities
	mobilization	ability to mobilize social network in one's own benefit (e.g. acquire scares goods)

(Stachová and Šafr 2005) Adjusted and translated by author from Czech

In addition, while individualists are primarily concerned with networks and effects of social capital on, for example, the outcomes of individuals in job search, promotion in organizations, or outcomes in attaining various socio-economic statuses, collectivists focus on aggregation of individual attitudes and behavior in order to explain, predict and understand collective well-being (e.g., economic development, effective political institutions, low crime rates, etc.).

Although the two approaches are in certain aspects quit distinct, nevertheless all scholars (from both camps) remain committed to the premise of the social capital concept that "it is the interacting members who make the maintenance and reproduction of this social asset possible" (Lin 2001a, 2001b).

Still, it is worth to keep in mind these two different approaches to social capital when using the term, as the individual and collective level of social capital, although drawing on the same premise, represent almost incommensurable concepts. In the first instance (individual), it represents individual dispositions transferable to other forms of capital or feature of certain social group, while in the second (collective), it represents the positive glue of the society contributing to common good. Consequently, as demonstrated above, this individual/collective division reveals itself in measuring techniques as well (employed at the individual level – e.g. individual, household, organization; or aggregated – town, region, and nation).

Finally, as Sedláčková and Šafr (2005) maintain, in western, mainly Anglo-Saxon, literature the term social capital is currently used, despite the severe criticism, much more frequently in the collective meaning with its positive effects on the whole society[8], while in the Czech Republic the individualistic conceptualizations with the benefits accruing to an actor (individual, organization) is more common.

3.3 Other Social Capital Perspectives and Characteristics

Some scholars do not see the division of social capital research on individual/collective as sufficient and add/develop other categories (e.g., treating social capital as context dependent or independent; determined by socio-cultural forces or economical-political ones; perceived as positive or negative; or concentrating on strong (bonding) social ties or weak (bridging) ones, etc)[9]. To list all the perspectives and categorizations is beyond the aim and the scope of this work. Moreover, we consider the majority of the other divisions (beyond individual/collective as) unnecessary, since the individual/collective perspectives are the central issue, while the others often only complicate the picture.

As is obvious from the previous sections, the concept of social capital, both individual and collective, may have various features, characteristics and components. Again, there can be the issue of whether the conceptualization is context in/dependent, whether the outcomes of social capital are positive or negative (Portes 1998), or whether the concept accounts for the influence of government (Woolcock and Narayan 2000). These categorizations usually follow one line of argument that dictates the nature of the distinction (e.g., individual/collective categorization concerns itself with the level at which the benefit of social capital accrue or at which the research is conducted). It is important to note that while individual/collective division is crucial for understanding the different lines of arguments in social capital debate, the other divisions often only clarify one of the aspects

[8] E.g., the articles in the Social Capital Gateway database (www.socialcapitalgateway.com) confirm this tendency.

[9] For example, Woolcock and Narayan (2002) categorize the social capital research into four perspectives: 1) the communitarian view (is identical with the collective perspective), 2) the network view (mirrors the individualistic perspective of social capital), 3) the institutional view (groups the theories that treat social capital as an outcome of the political, legal, and institutional environment), and 4) the synergy view (attempts to integrate all three previous perspectives, while taking advantage of each of them).

of the conceptualization, or research, or distinguish between qualities of social capital, which are often included under the initial individual/collective categorization. Furthermore, the other conceptualizations often apply to both individual/collective social capital, and obscure the debate. For example, collective conceptualization of social capital can be either context dependent or independent[10].

In addition, there is one characteristic of social capital discussed by majority of scholars. This is the weak/strong social ties argument, which therefore requires closer attention.

3.3.1 WEAK AND STRONG TIES

Scholars often use weak/strong ties concept to characterize the relationships in and among the groups, families or institutions (as a proxy for social capital). The weak/strong ties concept (e.g., Granovetter 1973, 1983 Lin 2001a, Veselý 2003, Edwards and McCarthy 2004) rest on a similar base and is almost identical with the concept of bridges/bonds (bridging/bonding capital) (e.g., Putnam 2000, Beyerlein and Hipp 2005, Svendsen 2006) or closure/structural holes (e.g., Burt 2001). Even though, collectivists (e.g., Putnam 2000) use the weak/strong ties division to explain certain features and processes within the society related to their understanding of social capital, and even though sound as a concept, it is certainly not easy to measure. Granovetter (1973) proposed the concept as analyses of social networks that would link micro and macro levels of sociological theory. By putting emphasis on weak ties, Granovetter (1973, pp. 1360, italics in original) opens up a discussion about "relations *between* groups and to analysis of segments of social structure not easily defined in terms of primary groups." Still, because the concept of strong/weak ties looks at single relations and networks (micro level) it is generally more appealing for research from an individualist perspective.

The basic premise behind the concept is as following. Closely related and integrated groups and communities (e.g., families, kin, close friends) are rich in strong - bonding - ties (inwardly-focused relations) not available to outsiders. They serve as social protection mechanism during times of need. On the other hand, weak – bridging – ties refer to the (personal/group/community) connections to other groups/communities located outside the

[10] Context dependency and independency of social capital is discussed within the *Section 5* on criticism of Putnam's social capital line of reasoning.

scope of strong ties. Weak ties link people of different backgrounds (socio-economic, religious, ethnic etc.). Simply, strong ties link similar people (in homogenous groups), e.g, family members, colleagues, close friends etc, whereas weak ties link people with those dissimilar to themselves (e.g., distant second cousins, friends, colleagues, etc.), or simply disparate individuals and communities. Whereas involved, intimate and emotional relations may characterize weak ties, strong ties are characterized by non-intimate and low emotional involvement[11].

The social capital available through weak and strong ties is qualitatively different and its positive/negative effects are situation-dependent. For example, while strong ties to a kin may support this member (e.g., provide necessary resources) facing problematic life period (e.g., unemployment) – social capital accessed through the ties has positive value, and the effect of strong ties may be completely opposite (negative social capital) when the member seeks resources or takes actions (e.g., job, partner), which are not acceptable to kin. Similarly, weak ties might help the member of certain closed group (and therefore the group itself) to generate resources (e.g., educations, expertise, finances) not available in the group, which can improve member's and group's position (thereby contributing to positive social capital); while on the other hand, weak ties may pull the member apart from the community (negative social capital), which may result in the break of strong ties producing unpredicted community effect that may be negative or minimally positive.

More specifically, as Lin (2001b) argues, not all weak ties (bridges) lead to better information, influence or reinforcement. He explains, a bridge that links individual seeking new job in a corporation with those occupying influential positions in some corporations will probably be more valuable to that individual than a bridge to others who are members of a health club.

Still, the argument favoring one of the two ties is typical. For example, the World Bank (2000) sees weak ties (bridging social capital) as the most beneficial with respect to socio-

[11] Closure/structural holes argument follows the same logic. Closure refers to social capital that is created by "a network of strongly interconnected elements" whereas structural holes to the one created by "a network in which people can broker connections between otherwise disconnected segments." Similarly as in the case of weak and strong ties (bridging/bonding social capital), "[b]rokerage across structural holes is the source of value added, but closure can be critical to realizing the value buried in structural holes." (Burt 2001, p. 31)

economic development of the whole society. Similarly, as already described in the *Section 2.3*, Putnam (2000) also prefers week ties and often regards them as better than strong ones. Today, as Svendsen (2006, p. 57), points out strong ties (bonding social capital) should be "recognized as *just* as beneficial as" the weak ties (bridging social capital). As current research suggests (e.g., Schulman and Anderson 2001, Edwards and McCarthy 2004, Svendsen 2006), their value depends on the situations, kinds of networks and activities. The problem of weak/strong ties (bridging/bonding social capital) is illustrated by *Figure 1.*[12]

In addition, some authors (e.g., Veselý 2003, The World Bank 2006c) use the term linking ties in a manner synonymous with social capital when referring to vertical connections and ties among the groups of people with different vertical socio-economic status (e.g., those having access to power and resources and those who do not). While this term might clarify the picture, we think, it should be avoided, as the reality it tries to describe is included within the weak ties concept already.

At this point, there is a space for a short excursion into the treatment of social capital concept in the environment of the Czech Republic.

[12] For a comprehensive discussion on strong/weak, as well as direct/indirect ties see Nan Lin's (2001a) *Social Capital: A theory of Social Structure and Action.*

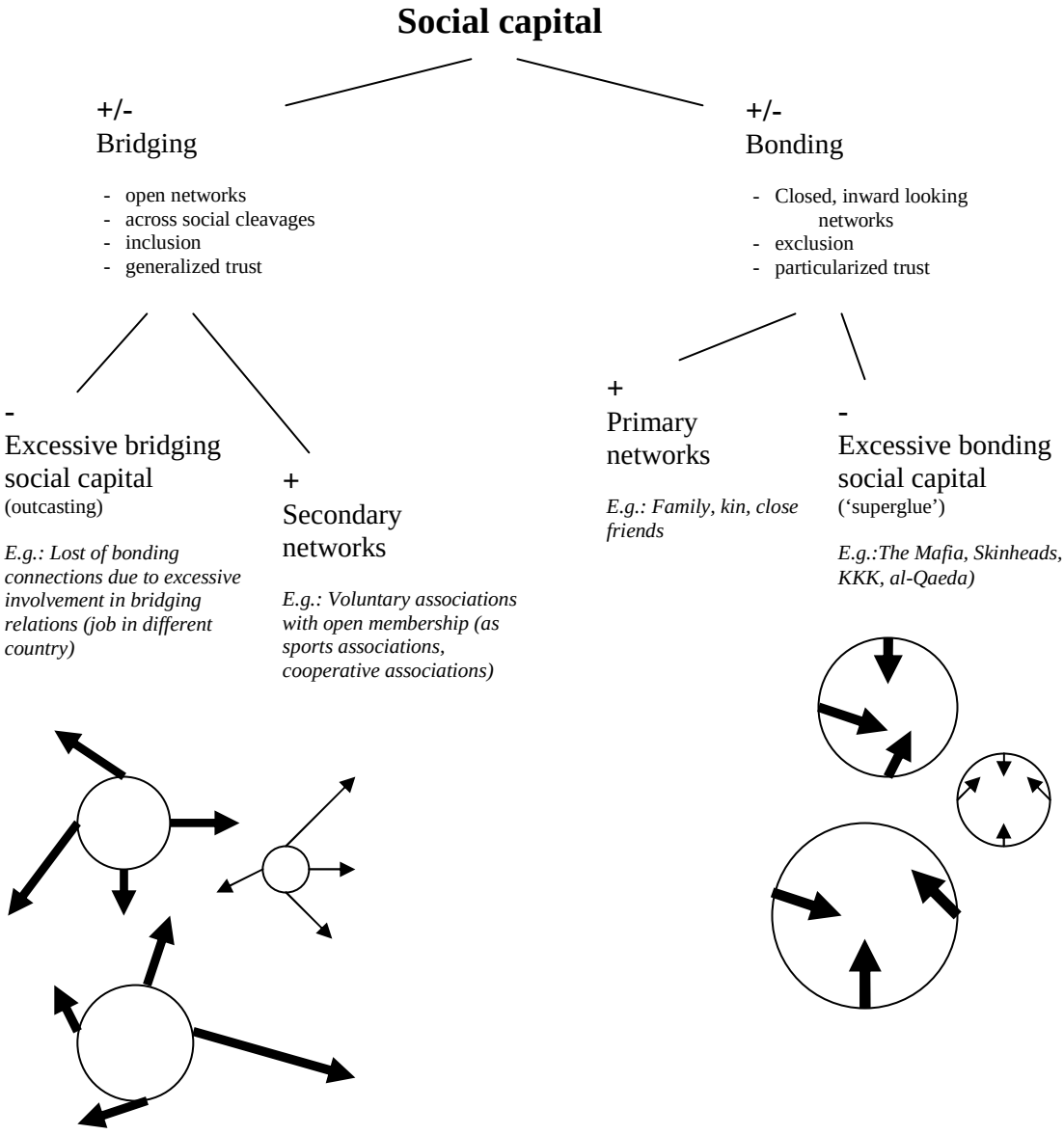


Figure 1. **Bridging and Bonding Social Capital**
Adjusted version of Svednsen's (2006) figure

4. EXCURSUS: SOCIAL CAPITAL IN THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

In contrast to western countries, where it has been a popular issue and widely discussed concept for almost two decades, social capital is a relatively new concept to the Czech Republic. While the term was known among Czech sociologists, as several works suggest (e.g., Možný 1991, Matějů 1993, Vajdová 1996), there was not major research (with exception of Matějů 1993) that attempted to deal with the problematic nature of social capital. Similarly, an in-depth analyses or criticism of the concept, as well as comprehensive conceptualization like that of e.g., Edwards and Foley (1998), Portes (1998), or more recently Lin (2000), has been missing within the Czech environment. This section touches upon the past use/absence of the concept within the Czech Republic.

4.1 Application of the Concept

Partially due to communism and the period of restructuralization and transformation following the Velvet Revolution, the Czech environment (research) missed the initial wave of interest in social capital caused by Bourdieu, Coleman and Putnam. Still there are several works that address the social capital issue. Substantial differences among individual and collective social capital approach make useful to discuss the Czech Republic's case along these two lines.

4.1.1 INDIVIDUAL SOCIAL CAPITAL

Ivo Možný (1991) was probably the first sociologist that used individual conceptualization of social capital within the Czech environment. In his work *Proč tak snadno…* (Why so easily…), Možný (1991) applied the social capital concept, in line with Bourdieu, in discussing the break up of Czechoslovak socialist state and in interpreting the differences in status of the dissident and non-dissident ("conforming") families. Možný (1991) understands social capital as emerging from the skill to develop a complex thread of social networks, to comprehend how the threads are connected and to use this knowledge for one's own benefit, mainly by shifting oneself and close associates within them to obtain strategic positions that were most beneficial. This skill can be accumulated.

Možný (1991) points out that the positions of power during the communist times were highly dependent on person's social capital, which is contextually dependent. Such dependency makes social capital disadvantageous when compared to economic capital, which is contextually neutral. That is why social capital is very fragile good – the only place where it could be reliably stored is owner's mind. It is impossible to move with it and every change in the social environment requires laborious effort to sustain it. Simply, a small mistake could devastate a whole career, which was social capital dependent. Možný (1991) sees the Velvet Revolution as result of pressures for principal systems changes of which the most pronounced was to get rid of the dependency on social capital and transform it into an economic one. On the other hand, even though social capital as the warp for functioning of large society systems became obsolete, modern society, Možný (1991) stresses, cannot function properly without it.

Another Czech sociologist - Petr Matějů (1993, 2006a, 2006b) - extended on Možný's work and understanding of social capital. He also treats social capital as an individual variable. In the study *Determinants of Economic Success in the First Stage of the Post-Communist Transformation,* he empirically analyzed, among others, A] the conversion of social capital acquired by "nomenclature cadres" during communism to other forms of capital during transformation period, and B] its effect on the upward social mobility. He used Bourdieu's approach to social capital, and capital in general, to operationalize the concept, as Sedlačková and Šafr (2005) pointed out, as a respondent's ability to mobilize his/her informal network of contacts in the times of need. Matějů's (1993) results show that convertibility of social capital (to economic capital) increased the life chances of former cadres to maintain their income privileges, especially among those equipped with social networks, which they were able to mobilize. Furthermore, the study confirmed the effect of social capital accumulated during communism on (and as a predictor of) the functional (bureaucratic) advancement (to leading positions), as well as on entering the entrepreneurial activities (starting the enterprise) after the year 1989. Matějů (2006b) continues to be involved in the individual social capital research.

4.1.2 COLLECTIVE SOCIAL CAPITAL

While Putnam's collective approach to social capital is very popular among western countries, it started to be cited and used more intensively in the Czech environment, or in the studies involving the Czech Republic, only in very recent works. It does not mean that ideas discussed by Putnam (e.g., influence of trust, norms, and civic associations on economic and political culture/development, government) were not present here. On the contrary, these issues were popular topics accompanying wide discussion about the usefulness, positive/negative effects and building of civil society in the process of economic/political transformation.

However, whereas in the West almost every analysis of trust, social networks or even performance of governments would at least marginally touch on the concept of social capital, it was usually not present during discussions of these topics in the Czech works up till 1999 (e.g., Vajdová 1998, 1999, Buštíková 1999, Nosál 1999,) and some works do not mention it until as late as 2004 (e.g., Kabele 2004a, Ryšavý 2004a). While for example Vajdová (1996) discusses Putnam's seminal work *Making the Democracy Work* within her essay dealing with the history and genesis of the term political culture, interestingly, there are several other texts and studies concerned with various aspects of (generalized) trust or social networks (e.g., Tuček 1996, Vajdová 1998, 1999, Stachová 2001) that do not consider Putnam's social capital at all. Similarly, for example, Borecký's and Prudký's (2001) study, on *Public Perception of Local Government in the Czech Republic*, Illner's and Wollmann's (2003) article *Decentralization: Lessons for Reformers* or Swianiewicz's (2001) comparison of *Citizen's Perception of Local Governments Reforms and Local Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe*, also do not consider Putnam's perspective. We believe that the discussion of social capital would be certainly (at least marginally) present in such types of studies, if conducted in the western countries (especially U.S.). Although, for example, Vajdová and Stachová (2005) cite Putnam's (1993b) *Making Democracy Work*, it is not in relation to social capital. There is not a single working paper, since 1989 up today, in Institute of Sociology of Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic Working Papers edition that includes the term Social Capital in its title. While it is possible that social capital might appear within the texts of these Working Papers, it is clear that the concept did not enjoy the prominence that would bring it into the titles of these documents. Several other works theoretizing or researching trust, civil society or

civil associations do not use Putnam and his social capital as well. For example, Karel Müller's (2003a) comprehensive monograph – *Czechs and Civil Society*, does not draw on Putnam or any other social capital theoretician, even thought the issue of trust is mentioned substantially. Moreover, it barely discusses the issue of social capital. While some may argue that social capital is not a primary focus of Müller's work, it is, especially in Putnam's understanding, highly connected to, if not synonymous, with civil society, which is the focus of Müller's monograph. Interestingly, in the same year as *Czechs and Civil Society*, Müller (2003b) does quote Putman but in the context of the conceptualization of civil society.

Similarly, Tereza Vajdová (2005) in her summary of analyses *An Assessment of Czech Civil Society in 2004: after Fifteen Years of Development* does not discuss social capital. The analysis was part of the CIVICUS Civil Society Index project of the international civil society network CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation. Therefore, it is clear that the analyses have to be in line with CIVICUS guidelines and if these do not access the problematic of social capital, a Czech analysis was not accessing it as well. On the other hand, it is interesting that Putnam's collective social capital was not used for final report of the study because the research asked respondents a typical question used by Putnam and several other collectivists in accessing social capital (e.g., "Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted, or that you can't be too careful in your dealing with other people?") (Vajdová 2005, p. 42).

To clarify, we do not use these examples to blame the authors for neglecting Putnam's or collectivist's social capital. We also do not want to build a picture that social capital concept has been completely absent in the Czech environment. Rather, the mentioned texts point to interesting difference when compared with western works. During specific analyses and discussion (concerning e.g., trust, civil society, civic associations, social networks) in which western authors often use or mention (even though marginally) concept of social capital, quite a lot of Czech authors do not. This shows that the concept either might not be thoroughly discussed within the Czech environment or that it might not be found valuable or important for the above works. For example, the absence of collective social capital in Vajdová's (2005) report does not damage her work because it avoids the

relabeling of already defined, even though still ambiguous, variable of trust by the term of social capital (which is often the case in the West).

Still, several short articles, discussing collective social capital together with aggregate generalized trust, or Putnam's neo-Tocquevillian understanding of civil society, have appeared recently (e.g. Stachová 2003, 2005a, Soudková 2006). Also, for example Veselý (2003) employs the collective social capital concept, in his study on *Knowledge-Driven Development,* to explain its potential for influencing economic development and quality of life, especially education. In addition, the Center for social economic strategies (CESES UK FSV) has been recently pursuing the research of collective social capital in the Czech Republic (Stachová and Šafr 2005).

4.1.3 SYSTEMATIC CONCEPTUALIZATION

As pointed out already, Czech Republic misses authors who would aim for in depth, systematic conceptualization of social capital comparable to e.g., Lin (2001a) or Edwards, Foley, and Diani (2001). There is only one short article by Sedláčková and Šafr (2005) that gives brief overview of the theories, approaches, research development, variables, and various social capital measurements.

The first serious more in depth attempt to conceptualize social capital (or even synthesize the individual and collective social capital approaches) was made by Matějů and Vitásková (forthcoming). They try to contribute to the conceptualization and measurement of social capital, mainly with respect to its role for the post-communist countries. They conceptualize and develop measurement strategies for both forms of social capital, individual (has a capacity to shed light on particular determinants of life-success) – called social capital 1 – and collective (has capacity to contribute to the explanation of economic growth) – called social capital 2 –, and treat them as context specific. They see social capital as one of the key issues in transforming societies because it helps in explaining the process of change. Moreover, they see the use of the two social capital forms in transforming (post-communist) societies as problematic as they generate basically the opposite effects (than in the Western countries). For example, solidarity or informal cooperation among the villagers in Russia increases with inactive, ineffective government (O'Brian as discussed by Matějů and Vitásková, forthcoming). The potential for collective

social capital (stemming from generalized trust) seems to be, according to Matějů and Vitásková (forthcoming, p.11), quite weak in these countries, while the individual (network) social capital may "hinder … effective functioning of market mechanisms and … economic growth." Therefore, it is crucial to develop research strategies that consider the specific socio-economic and historical context of these countries.

The concentration on both social capital concepts is interesting; as prior works of Matějů (1993) show that he is probably more inclined toward individual than collective social capital. Nevertheless, Matějů (2006) remarked that he has a problem with using the term social capital in collectivist understanding, as it is usually associated with trust and he does not see the need and/or relevance to rename trust by social capital. Social capital should explain something new. Consequently, Matějů (2006) admitted that he uses the term "social capital" for the collectivist case, just to follow the current trend.

4.1.4 SUMMARY

To conclude, Bourdieu's understanding of social capital (individual approach) is present in the Czech sociology ever since the break up of the communism. It was introduced by Možný and further used especially by Matějů.

The use of social capital concept in line with Putnam's understanding was sporadic during the nineties and started to be used more often only recently. Still, it is not widely used, nor even in studies perfectly fit for it. It might be due to lack of in depth discussion concerning Putnam's collective social capital concept or due to the understanding of the problematic issues accompanying his work. Maybe there is no need (luckily) in the Czech Republic to use new trendy terms for old readily available concepts.

As a result of this, coherent, in-depth conceptualization of social capital (either collective or individual) such as that of Portes (1998), Lin (2001a) or Edwards, Foley, and Diani (2001) is missing in the Czech Republic. Matějů and Vitásková (forthcoming) try to make the first step in this direction, while conceptualizing social capital for comparative analyses. The future of social capital research in the Czech sociology lies most probably within the individualistic framework, as it might help to clarify the process of change that took part in the Czech Republic since the fall of communism.

5. SOCIAL CAPITAL CRITICISM

While there is general consensus about *individual* social capital, *collective* social capital, ever since Putnam introduced it, has been considerably criticized. Nevertheless, a considerable amount of analyses, researches and texts on social capital does not account for such criticism. We find it essential to bring into the debate the majority of up to date critiques. This may help to avoid the uncritical use of the concept and may also help in avoiding past mistakes. Because Putnam's work inspired the majority of research on social capital, the systematic discussion of its problematic issues is essential for the clarification of the concept.[13]

5.1 Criticism of Putnam's (and Collective) Social Capital

As discussed, Putnam's work introduced a new social capital perspective and research, which gained a wide popularity almost immediately. While Putnam's handling of the concept and research contains of certain interesting and valuable features (e.g., use of qualitative research to support findings from the quantitative analyses), it also includes several questionable assumptions, which have been subjected to severe criticism. As a result, alongside the popularity, the critique of Putnam and collectivists (sometimes also called neo-Tocquevillians or communitarians) is also very wide, starting with minor corrections of his/their conceptualization and research methods, to severe disapproval of his/their theoretical base, operationalization of the concept, as well as the research results and conclusions. The following sections address the issue. We will start with low-level criticism and then move toward more in-depth critiques. At the end of this section, we present the severe and specific critique of Putnam and collectivists from Vicente Navarro, professor at John Hopkins University.

5.1.1 LOW LEVEL CRITICISM

The first set of criticism does not question the collective aspect of Putnam's social capital, but is concerned about certain features of his conceptualization and measuring methods.

[13] *Individual* social capital is usually quite clearly defined; therefore there are not many major critiques or disputes that would address this conceptualization or research. Still, some weaknesses of individualistic approach are discussed in the *Section 6.4*.

This section discusses and questions: 1) Putnam's use of trust, 2) the same origins of social and political trust, 3) his main indicator of social capital, 4) social capital as a precondition for good governance and path dependency perspective to explain the current *status quo*, and 5) overly positivistic treatment of social capital.

5.1.1.1 Putnam's Use of Trust

Trust is for Putnam essential component of social capital. It "lubricates" cooperation, facilitates action or makes associating possible. The advantage of using trust as one of social capital indicators is clear. The majority of general research surveys (especially in the U.S.) had been asking questions regarding trust in fellow citizens or local/state governments for long period of time already. As a result, there had been considerable dataset readily available for analyses. Moreover, it was/is quit easy to include the trust question into the new surveys in the states and countries that were initially missing it. As a result, it gave an opportunity for comparative kinds of research.[14]

Even though trust may play a role in certain processes and might have some advantages with respect to research, it still needs to be clearly defined. Putnam fails to do that. He does not offer a precise definition of trust and provides insufficient explanation of how it is developed and maintained within the society. It should be recalled that in Putnam's (1993b, 1995, 2000) logic, civic apolitical associations (e.g., bird watching clubs, bowling teams) develop interpersonal trust that allows citizens to overcome free rider problem and makes it easier to trust non-members of their association (develops generalized trust) and then sanction governments that are not performing well. As Levi (1996) pointed out, Putnam believes that the pluralism of such active citizenship ensures that the overall effect of the demands on government will be democratic.

However, it is not clear how bird watching and bowling clubs produce dense networks and norms of reciprocity with those outside the clubs (Levi 1996). Several scholars have argued (Levi 1996, Portes and Landolt 1996, Portes 1998), some of them supported by the research (Kim 2005), that civic associations might have just the opposite effect. Moreover,

[14] Comparability of social capital, as well as trust data generated from various contexts (states in the U.S. or countries around the World) is questioned in the *Section 5.1.2.1.*

by focusing on apolitical, predominantly horizontal civic associations[15], Putnam fails to acknowledge that "under certain conditions, vertical relationship may also facilitate trust, reciprocity, and, certainly, coordination [e.g., Mafia]" (Levi 1996, p. 52) and that political institutions, associations and parties are often main driving force of these (e.g., Tocqueville 1992, Whittington 2001)[16].

5.1.1.2 Origins of Social and Political Trust

In Putnam's (1995, pp. 73) words: "The close correlation between social trust and associational membership is true not only across time and across individuals, but also across countries." He supports this argument by the evidence from the 1991 World Values Survey. Consequently, Putnam (1995) also suggests that political trust evolves from the same origins as social trust - generated by interpersonal trust as an outgrowth of vibrant associational life in society. Nonetheless, empirical evidence suggests that political trust is not always positively correlated with associational involvement and social trust (social capital) (e.g., Brehm and Rahn 1997, Newton 2001, Uslaner 2004, 2006). For a negative correlation among social trust and political participation, plus the contrary effects of social capital on economic development in A] transforming (post-communist) societies see Matějů and Vitásková (Forthcoming) or in B] South Korea see Kim (2005). Also, it is hard to expect a significant contribution from voluntary apolitical associations in facilitating political trust as the majority of citizens are not engaged in such apolitical associations and even those who participate spend only a limited amount of time in their activities (Newton 1999 as cited by Kim 2005). Several scholars have argued that one of the most influential factors on citizens' political trust is actually the performance of political institutions – political context (e.g., Berman 1997, Mishler and Rose 2001, Uslaner 2002). As Berman (1997, p. 571) points out, "Militia movement, business improvement districts, and home schooling societies all arise out of dissatisfaction with how the public institutions are doing their jobs; [but] all of them should be seen as signs of sickness rather than signs of health [as Putnam would suggest]."

[15] Putnam (1993, 1995) stresses several times that horizontal, in contrast to vertical ties, represent more productive social capital.

[16] Upcoming *Sections 5.1.1.2-4* develop the argument and discusses these ideas in a greater detail.

5.1.1.3 Associations as Indicator of Social Capital

As presented, civic apolitical association play a crucial role in Putnam's concept of social capital. He uses the density of associations and their membership as an indicator for examining the formation and destruction of collective (public) social capital.

However, "not all types of associations will be equally effective in their relative capacity to create generalized, or public, social capital" (Stolle and Rochon 1998, p. 47). For example, Stolle and Rochon (1998, p.61-62) found, A] "different facets of public social capital are connected to associational membership in varying degrees", B] "different types of social capital are found in different sectors of associations", C] "the level of diversity of an association has an effect on the connection between social capital and association membership", and finally D] "there are … variations between countries in the types of associations most productive of social capital." For example, the most politically active membership is in political associations or "the least diverse associations are less likely to have membership with high levels of generalized trust and community reciprocity" (Stolle and Rochon 1998, p. 62). Nonetheless, the members of bowling clubs are usually quite homogeneous; consequently by using them as an indicator of social capital, Putnam fails to accommodate for the fact that there might be other associations more suitable for such purpose. In addition, it is almost impossible to use similar organizations (bowling, bird watching clubs, and church associations) across nations as proxies for generalized trust, since their functions often vary from country to country and therefore differ in the production of social capital. In sum, "the role of voluntary associations as creators of social capital, particularly generalized trust, is not yet established by empirical evidence. … Furthermore, there is considerable doubt that membership in voluntary associations captures the whole range of civic activities that constitute social capital" (Stolle and Lewis 2002, p.16).

Clearly, mere associational density as an indicator of social capital does not capture the complexity of the problem (e.g., mere existence of certain norms does not make them social capital). "Social structures must be 'appropriable' by individuals and groups to really be 'social capital'" and density of associations certainly does not have the same

meaning in all social and political contexts. It is the social context that makes the difference (Foley and Edwards 1996).[17]

5.1.1.4 Social Capital as Producer of Good Governance: Path Dependency Approach

Putnam (e.g., 1993b, 1995) also argues that social capital (specifically norms and networks of civic engagement) produces good governance (also discussed in the *Section 2.3*). Putnam argues that whereas the subnational governments seemed "identical on paper" (in his 20-year Italian research), their quality of governance varied significantly. Specifically, "[v]oter turnout, newspaper readership, membership in choral societies and football clubs – these were the hallmarks of a successful region" (Putnam 1995, pp. 66). Furthermore, Putnam stresses that his historical analyses suggests that the networks of organized reciprocity and civic solidarity (social capital) were a precondition for it. Consequently, Putnam concludes that for variety of reasons, "life is easier in a community blessed with a substantial stock of social capital" (1995, pp. 67).

However, opponents disagree: A], there might be other causes that promote/hinder good democratic governance and B] it is not clear how dense networks of civic engagement produce it. These two arguments are interconnected. Particularly, during his analyzes of socio-cultural elements, Putnam neglects the other essential economical, political and today even technological factors. Sheri Berman (1997, p. 562) illustrates, "examining societal and cultural variables in isolation from the broader context… misinterprets some of the most important dynamics of political development." She argues that civil society organizations are shaped significantly by specific features of broader national political context and, therefore, can in some condition weaken a democratic regime as well. Interestingly, she demonstrates the point with Weimar Germany. It did not lack civil society organizations; however, because various political groups had the ability to take over them, instead of "alleviating" the country's divisions, it "exacerbated" them, to use Sherman words, leading toward Nazism.

As might seem obvious, Putnam treats government as a dependent variable. He uses the concept of path dependency to explain the civic differences in Northern and Southern Italy

[17] Context-dependency of social capital is discussed in *the Section 5.1.2.1.*

by historical development dating far back to the late Middle Ages (1993b). Nevertheless, "…it remains an empirical question … that good government is a result of an interaction between a civic minded citizenry and civic-minded government actor. … [G]overnments also may be a source of social capital. [And] policy performance can be a source of trust, not just a result [of it]" (Levi 1996, pp. 50)[18]. Tarrow (1996, pp. 396) elaborates: "[W]hile the indicators of malaise [in southern Italy or the Third World countries] may be civic, the causes are structural." If the absence of civicness is, in Tarrows (1996, 396) opinion, "the by-product of politics, state building , and social structure," then the causes of the despair in southern Italy or in the Third World "are more likely to be found in such structural factors as the flight of real capital, … the instability of commodity prices and the presence of exploitative governments…" Tarrows (1996) extends the argument; policy makers who attempt to solve the lack of social capital by promoting association would be addressing the symptoms and not the causes of the problem.

Tarrow (1996, pp. 396) further explains that Putnam shifted his focus from "twenty-year time frame of the study and the expectation that explanation would come from direct inference on behavioral variables … to a much longer time frame in order to interpret and explain what he had observed. The key to that door became historically develop tradition of civic competence." However, Tarrow (1996, pp. 396) rightly asks: "[H]ow can a concept that is derived from contemporary democratic politics be transposed to other periods of history to other political systems?"

It is the context that plays the crucial role[19]. However, Putnam is very pessimistic, as Jackman and Miller (1996a) note, about the chances for social capital creation in absence of deep historically based traditions. Levi argues (1996, p. 46), "Past events may circumscribe contemporary choices, but they neither determine nor predict the decisions at all crossroads since the initial starting point". Furthermore, contrary to Putnam, Jackman's and Miller's (1996a, 1996b) results suggest that the cultural accounts of political life are substantially overstated. They have found no evidence, in their study, to support the view

[18] The cause and effect relationship among social capital and government is thoroughly discussed in the *Section 5.1.2.3.*

[19] Tarrow (1996, pp. 396) stresses that "Putnam's key variable intersected with a wide variety of institutional and sociological contexts" and therefore change meaning when traveling through history.

that cultural factors have systematic effects on political or economic outcomes. Moreover, in using Putnam's Italian data they found no evidence to suggest, "that the indicators examined by Putnam can be meaningfully combined into an overall measure of political performance" (Jackman and Miller 1996a, p. 653). They question the empirical analyses of Putnam's Italian research. Jackman and Miller (1996a, 1996b) further point out the limiting explanatory value of political culture, and thus propose that future research should acknowledge the role of institutional variations, as a powerful explanation of political participation. In their view, "institutions condition the distribution of both political and social resources" (1996a, p. 655)[20]. In addition, they see more useful strategy to look upon the institutions as being result of "conflict over the allocation of valued goods… [and actually] condition the distribution of both political and social resources [e.g., social capital]" (1996a, p. 655).

In addition, Tarrow (1996), in line with arguments discussed above, questions Putnam's reconstruction of historical development of northern and southern Italy for validation of his model of social capital (as well as his Italian research findings and conclusions) and therefore questions civic, social capital tradition foundation for the performance of good government. It is not clear, why Putnam chose the late-medieval period in order to explain the difference in twentieth century civicness in the South/North Italy. First, the fact "that the early Italian city-states had associational origins did not make them inherently civic, or even 'horizontal'" (1996, pp 393). Second, Putnam's use of historical evidence is rather arbitrary. There were also other important historical milestones (not necessarily civic) in South-North relations, which Putnam fails to discuss (e.g., collapse of northern Italian region in sixteenth century, conquest of the South in nineteenth-century, 1919-1921 generation of fascism or 1980's corruption-fed economic growth). In Tarrow's (1996, pp.

[20] Jackman and Miller (1996a) acknowledge that differences in institutional forms themselves might simply reflect cultural variations, but in such case they would be divorced from their political origins. That is why they view institutions as the result of conflict over the allocation of valued goods. In their words, "Institutions … acquire stability when groups with the resources to alter the rules of the game accept those rules; institutional change occurs when group(s) with sufficient power are able to challenge and transform those rules" (1996a, p. 655). As a result, they propose to analyze institutions with respect to: A] how do procedures and rules structure the choices made by different political actors?, and B] how does political conflict generate these procedures and rules?

393) words: “None of these phenomena were exactly ‘civic’; by what rules of evidence are they less relevant in ‘explaining the northern regions’ civic superiority over the South than the period of 800 years ago when republican governments briefly appeared in (some of) its cities?”

In sum, Putnam’s use of historical analyses for explaining the dependent relationship of government on social capital was questioned. It is not clear why presence/absence of social capital should be the major factor affecting performance of governments. Example from Sheri Berman (1997) work showed how vivid civicness (social capital) was used for something that is surely not understood as good governance today. This example, as well as the argument of Levi, Tarrow or Jackman and Miller showed that contexts (other factors), apart from socio-cultural variables, are very important in developing social capital. That is why, Tarrow (1996, pp. 396) sees Putnam’s main weakness “in the lack of a structural perspective with which to interpret what he found…” Moreover, the authors suggested that it seems more plausible that governments play major role in developing social capital or that at least there is reciprocal relationship between government and social capital where one might be enhancing another. In addition, Tarrow (1996) pointed out, Putnam, during his historical reconstruction in search of present civicness of northern Italy, misses the crucial points of Italian history.

Putnam’s stress on government as a dependent variable stands also behind more sever problems of his approach: A] confusing the causes and effects of social capital (discussed in the Section 5.1.2.3) and B] one-sided explanation of the reality, as well as truisms (discussed in the Section 5.1.2.4).

5.1.1.5 Positivistic Approach toward Social Capital

Putnam (e.g., 1993a, 1993b, 1995, 2000) (as discussed in the *Section 2.3*) defines social capital as features of social organizations that facilitate action for mutual benefit (e.g., effectively democratically sanction badly performing governments). It is a resource benefiting all individuals in the given society. Social capital, as described in the previous section, Putnam says, leads to better performance of governments or reduced crime rates. Simply, Putnam and collectivists see social capital, collective endeavors and activist skills

as a predominantly good thing (e.g., Levi 1996, Portes and Landolt 1996, Berman 1997, Portes 1998, Fukuyama 1999, Edward and Foley 2001).

Yet, it is clear, as we showed on Berman's Weimar Germany example that waste civic society and social capital do not have to generate only positive results. It is also apparent that the Mafia, Ku Klux Klan, al Qaeda or horizontal collective action (guerilla movements) in Bosnia or Rwanda refute such assumption. Even though these groups cooperate on the basis of shared norms, they produce negative externalities for the larger society within which they operate. Putnam focuses only "on the positive effects of community participation without considering its possible negative implications" (Portes and Landolt 1996). Portes (1998, p. 18) emphasizes that "sociability cuts both ways". For example, as we briefly discussed in the *Section 3.3.1*, "The same strong ties that help members of a group often enable it to exclude others … [for example] in industries with strong social ties, newcomers often find themselves unable to compete, no matter how good their skills and qualifications … [and] the same kinds of ties that sometimes yield public goods also produce 'public bads': …prostitution rings, and youth gangs…" (Portes and Landolt 1996). Also, membership in community often 1) brings demands on conformity, therefore restricting the individual freedom and business activity or 2) exposes individuals to "downward leveling pressures" on attempts to enter the "mainstream" lifestyle. Family and friends requesting support from successful entrepreneurs is example of the former, and the inability of ghetto members to rise above their poverty (or member of prostitution ring to find a different job), even thought a considerable amount of social capital may be present in example of the latter. In these cases, group pressure may hold the members down instead allowing them to rise up (Portes and Landolt 1996). In addition, Levi (1996, p.51) brings another argument against "good" social capital idea, "By themselves dense networks support localism, which is often extremely resistant to change. … Neighborhoods (and certain other networks of civic engagement) are a source of trust … [as well as] distrust. They promote trust of those you know and distrust of those you do not…" Moreover, Edwards and Foley (1998) point out, by adding moral, ethical or cultural 'value' to the concept of social capital, Putnam blunts "the fundamental heuristic value which was the basis of the concept's initial appeal."

In sum, it is crucial not to be overly optimistic about the effects of social capital. The mutual "positive" benefit for one group (e.g., Mafia) generated by social capital may not be viewed as "positive" within other groups or contexts. As Edwards and Foley (1998) rightly emphasize, social capital should be value free concept in order to preserve its heuristic value.

5.1.2 IN-DEPTH CRITICISM

The previous section have not questioned Putnam's collective approach to social capital, instead it concentrated on emphasizing and discussing certain theoretical, as well as research/measurement deficiencies of his work. This section advances on the "low-level" criticism by presenting a more serious (in-depth) critique of Putnam's conceptualization and research of social capital, and subsequently of those who have followed Putnam's line of argument. It centers on the following major issues: 1) context in/dependent social capital 2) public/private good, 3) confusion of causes and effects, and 4) one sided explanations and truism.

5.1.2.1 Context In/Dependent

As was discussed several times throughout this work, Putnam treats social capital as independent variable. Contrary to the prior conceptualization of Coleman that social capital "must be understood in its context and specific situation [context dependent], which makes it harder to generalize and to utilize in empirical investigations" (Stolle and Lewis 2002, p.4), Putnam (1993b, 1995, 2000) and others (e.g., Flora, Sharp, Flora and Newlon 1997, Knack and Keefer 1997) use social capital as an independent variable, where generalized attitudes and norms are seen as independent of their context and therefore can be captured with nation wide survey questionnaires. Such an approach is very helpful, especially for comparative analyses. If social capital is an independent variable, it does not depend on the specific contexts and its levels or quality can be compared among states (in the case of the U.S.), countries, regions or even cities.

However, we have already touched upon certain problematic aspects of treating social capital or civicness, as an independent variable in previous *Low-Level Criticism Section* and there are several scholars who disagree with such a conceptualization (e.g., Brehm and Rahn 1997, Stolle and Rochon 1998, Foley and Edwards 1999, Lin 2000, Paldam 2000,

Newton 2001, Svendsen 2006). For example, Foley and Edwards (1999) reason that generalized attitudes and norms occurring in individuals are context-dependent and that social capital cannot be conceived as an individual characteristic, which would constitute a fully portable resource that would not change its value as the individual moves in and out of different social contexts.[21] As Edwards and Foley (1998) suggest, norms and values held by individuals become 'social capital' only when they facilitate action by others. As a result, they are context specific since they have little value outside that context. Furthermore, treating social capital as an independent variable rests on assumptions that it can be generalized (through aggregation). However, social capital, as well as access to it, is unevenly distributed in any society, making a meaningful aggregation impossible (e.g., Edwards and Foley 1998, Navarro 2002, Svendsen 2006).

Foley and Edwards (1999) clarify the point thoroughly. In their view, neither attitudes (norms, trust) nor infrastructure (networks, organizations), can be treated as social capital without acknowledging the issue of *access*, which is neither divided equally nor distributed evenly among the citizens. *Access*, Foley and Edwards (1999) argue, is essential for converting social relations into social capital and has two components: 1) "the perception that a specific resource exists" and 2) "some form of social relationship that brokers individual or group access to those particular social resources." As such, brokerage can be socially organized at various levels (informal networks, voluntary associations, religious institutions, cities, national movements, etc.), the "specific social contexts in which social capital is embedded not only influence its 'use value'; they also shape the means by which access to specific social resources is distributed and managed." Foley and Edwards (1999) further acknowledge that treating social capital as context dependent creates conceptual and methodological difficulties for analyses that aim to explain the kinds of macro-social, political and economic outcomes. They also argue that the more straightforward the measures of social capital and the higher the level of social organization processes the analyses try to explain, "the more the model must posit that all social capital is of equal

[21] This line of argument is in accordance with Možný's explanations of the Velvet Revolution discussed in the *Section 4.1.1* about the use of individual social capital within the Czech Republic.

value and that all brokering relationships provide equal access." The above arguments also serve to explain why social capital cannot be an aggregate of individual capital – an issue discussed in upcoming section

5.1.2.2 Whose Property Is Social Capital (Public or Private Good?)

In this section we would like to further extend the individualists/collectivists debate from *Section 3.2*. There is no doubt that Putnam views collective social capital as an aggregate of individual one (aggregate, generalized social trust). However, as Portes and Landolt (1996) underline, collective social capital cannot be the sum of individual social capital. If it is "a resource available through social networks, the resource that some individuals claim come at the expense of others" (p. 2).

Lin (2001a, p.26, 2001b, p.9) explains, "Most scholars agree that it [social capital] is both collective [public] and individual [private] good." It is obvious that "institutionalized social relations with embedded recourse are expected to benefit both the collective and the individuals in the collective. At the group level, social capital represents some aggregation of valued resources (e.g., economic, political, cultural, or social, as in social connections) of members interacting as a network or networks." However, the problem arises when social capital is regarded as collective or public goods, next to trust, norms and other collective or public goods (Lin 2001a, 2001b). In such cases it makes the concept problematic because it often leads to the situation where some terms become alternative and substitutable terms or measurements.

Portes (2000) indicates that the transition from individual to community, or national resource, has never been sufficiently or explicitly theorized thereby confusing the meaning of the term. Portes and Landolt (2000, p. 535) hold that the heuristic value of the concept suffers when in one sentence, "social capital is an asset of children in intact families"; in the next "an attribute of networks of traders; and in the following, it becomes the explanation of why entire cities are well governed and economically flourishing while other are not." The confusion is evident when we realize "that the individual and collective definitions of the concept, though compatible in some instance, are at odds in others" (Portes 2000, p.4). Portes (2000, p.4) gives an example of how "…the right

'connections' [individual social capital] allow certain person to gain access to profitable public contracts…", while undermining collective social capital by "…bypassing regulations binding on others."

Treating the concept of social capital as collective property, especially in relation to trust, norms and other collective public goods often causes further problems. It makes it hard to distinguish between its causes and effects

5.1.2.3 Confusing the Causes and Effects

Putnam's conceptual stretch often confuses the sources of social capital with the benefits derived from them (e.g., Portes and Landolt 1996, Edwards, Foley and Diani 2001). Jackman and Miller (1996b, p. 706-707) demonstrate, by employing Putnam's (1993b) own data and estimating procedures, how he confuses assumptions with conclusions and how "absent his strong assumptions there is no basis for those conclusions." Simply, they show how Putnam's own data do not support the conclusions he draws.

Portes (1998, p.19) shows how social capital "as a property of communities and nations rather than individuals … is simultaneously a cause and an effect." "As a property of cities and nations, measurable in 'stocks,' social capital is said to lead to better governance and more effective policies, and its existence is simultaneously inferred from the same outcomes" (Portes 2000, p.4). The mixed causes and effects of social capital as a collective trait gave rise to circular reasoning (Portes and Landolt 2000). Example derived from Putnam's analyses of North and South Italy illustrates this point, social capital in the North Italy leads to positive outcomes (civicness, democracy, economic development, etc.) and stands behind the success of North Italian region, while the lack of it explains the "backwardness" of the Southern one. In other words, "if your town is 'civic', it does civic things; if it is 'uncivic,' it does not" (Portes 1998, p.20). Similarly, Portes and Landolt (1996) demonstrate, a student who obtains necessary financing from relatives to support his/her studies is thought to have social capital. If he/she does not obtain necessary financing, he/she does not have (lacks) social capital. This reasoning, however, fails to accommodate for the possibility that the unsuccessful student has dense and supportive social networks that simply lack the economic resources to provide for such expenses.

Such approach has further consequences: first, it does not allow for alternative explanations of the studied problematic, and second, even if not circular, the arguments still take the form of truisms. Both issues are discussed in the next section.

5.1.2.4 One-Sided Explanation and Truisms

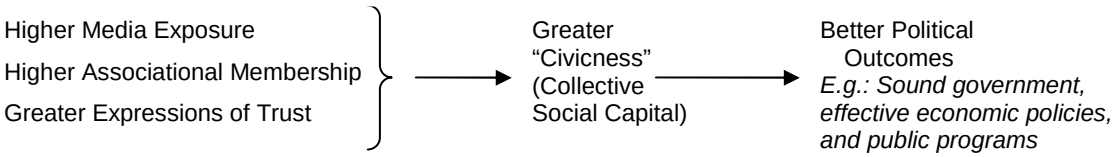
Portes (1998) maintains that tautology in Putnam's definitions stems from the two analytical decisions: 1) to start with the effect (i.e. civic versus uncivic cities) and work retroactively to find out what distinguishes them, and 2) to try explaining all of the observed differences. Portes (1998, p. 20) clarifies, "In principle, the exercise of seeking to identify post-factum causes of events is legitimate, provided that alternative explanations are considered." Jackman and Miller (1996b), as discussed in the *Section 5.1.1.4* about path dependency, also view the e*x post* analyses of Putnam and others as problematic.

Nevertheless, Portes (1998, p. 20) indicates that "[s]uch retrospective explanations can only be tentative, however, because the analyst can never rule out other potential causes and because these explanations remain untested in cases other than those considered." Moreover, even more cunning for Portes (1998) is the quest for a full explanation of all the observed differences since such a search often ends up by "relabeling" the original problem to be explained. Simply, seeking to explain all cases, gradually results in eliminating all exceptions leaving no space for the considerations of other possible causes. In our case, "the assertion that generalized 'civicness' leads to better political results obscures the possibility that extraneous causes accounts for *both* the altruistic behavior of the populations and the effective character of its government" (Portes 2000, p. 5, italics in original).[22] So, for example, population's education and income or democratic struggle may affect both associative behavior and responsiveness of government (Portes 2000). *Figure 2* on the next page demonstrates this argument.

Portes (1998) illustrates such a process on Putnam's analyses of Italian cities (in a way similar to our own analysis in a previous section). He suggests that factors like difference in levels of economic development, education, or political preferences proved to be imperfect predictors in Putnam's cases. Hence, his search for a single determinant of the

[22] This issue was also thoroughly discussed in the Section 5.1.1.4.

I. The Social Capital Argument



II. The Spuriousness Argument

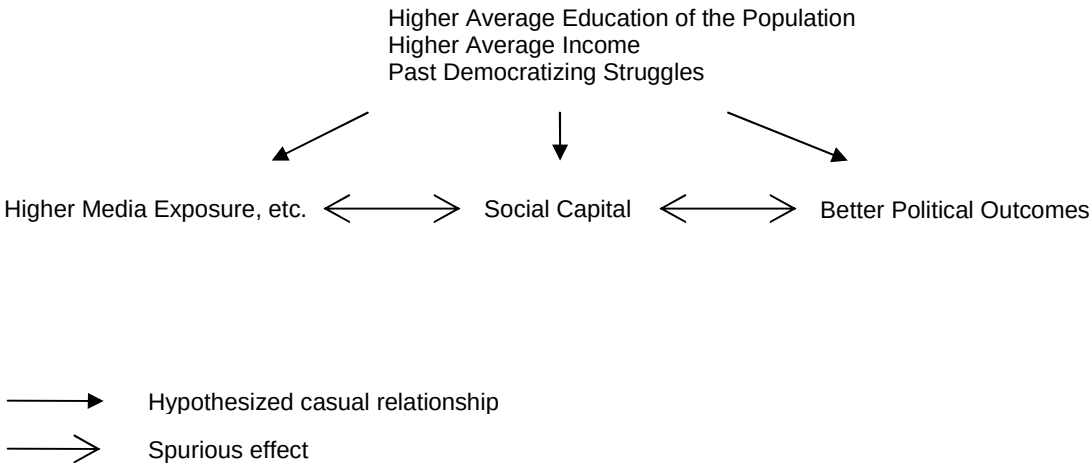


Figure 2. **Collective Social Capital: Alternative Causal Argument**

Source Portes (2000)

differences among the cities "narrowed to something labeled … civic virtue" (p.20). The consequences were shown in the previous section: civic virtue is then present in the cities where citizens are active, cooperate, vote, obey the law, leaders are dedicated to the public good, etc. (Putnam 1993b, 1995). As an outcome, the theory asserts that, "civic virtue is the key factor differentiating well-governed communities from poorly governed ones. [However,] [i]t could hardly be otherwise given the definition of the causal variable" (Portes 1998, p. 20). These statements take the form of truisms and furthermore are saying the same thing twice. "Cities where everyone cooperates in maintaining good government are well governed" (Portes 1998, p.20).

However, as pointed out above, the external factors (other than social capital) might be the key in the processes under the study. Portes and Landolt (2000) admit that there are cases where high levels of community solidarity do go along with sustainable development and economic growth, but it is erroneous to conclude that one causes the other. In addition, as Edwards and Foley (2001, p.228) suggest, Putnam's rhetoric leads to "a zero-sum tradeoff between social capital as a motivating and regulating factor and the sorts of regulation embodied in institutions and laws."

5.1.3 PARTIAL CONCLUSION ON CRITIQUE OF PUTNAM

In sum, "Putnam too often seems to place the blame for contemporary economic and political failings on the decline in secondary associations and traditional family structure" (Levi 1996, p. 50-51) failing to accommodate for social, technological and political change. More importantly, Putnam fails to recognize other forms, sources and uses of social capital. He "tends to focus on social capital that correlates with outcomes he seeks" (Levi 1996, p. 52).

Moreover, Putnam's and subsequent collectivists' reasoning suffers from "explaining major social outcomes by relabeling them with a novel term [social capital] and then employing the same term to formulate sweeping policy prescriptions" (Portes 1998, p.21). The truisms and self-evident character of the arguments, resulting from the above reasoning, stand behind the growing popularity of the concept as the 'truth' derived from such statements is immediately graspable and does not need any additional explanations

(Portes 2000, Portes and Landolt 2000). To illustrate the argument: "…Why are some cities better governed and richer than other? Because they are 'blessed' with substantial stocks of social capital" (Portes 2000, p.4).

The issues discussed in the *Sections 5.1.1* and *5.1.2* have not been resolved. Today's social capital analyses still do not take into account the fundamental criticism of the concept. It is true that some address one or two issues; however, even they remain silent about others, or make incautious use of these faulty assumptions in their research (e.g., Fukuyama 1999, Kay, Pearce and Evans 2004, Coffé and Geys 2005, Beyerlein and Hipp 2005). For example, Beyerlein and Hipp (2005) discuss the issue of social capital as predominantly a good thing, but then use voters turnout and associational membership, as indicators of social capital, even though this methodology has been heavily criticized. Not only do they use this problematic methodology, but they also fail either to discuss or to recognize the issues stemming from their decision.

5.1.4 VINCENT NAVARRO'S CRITICISM

Vincent Navarro accesses the social capital from the unique perspective of a person who has lived both in Europe and United States. Though born in Spain, he had to leave the country for political reasons, and therefore lived in Great Britain and Sweden. At the end, Navarro was invited to join Johns Hopkins University in 1965, where he was a student of James Coleman. Today, he does not only teach there, but in Barcelona as well. The following part is based on his article "Politics, Power, and Quality of Life: A Critique of Social Capital", which is expanded version of the speech Navarro gave to the Annual Congress of the Eastern Association of Social Sciences, Washington, D.C., February 22, 2002, where he was invited to share his thoughts about the concept of social capital.

In his article, Navarro (2002) discusses the social capital in relation to communitarianism, of which the most articulate description, Navarro claims, was put forward by Robert Putnam. In his classic *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, Putnam (2000) describes how Americans' deep engagement in the life of their communities was increasing during the first two-thirds of the twentieth century and how they were pulled apart from one another and from their communities over the last third of the century. Putnam calls for increased engagement in the American communities in order

to overcome their collapse. According to Navarro (2002, p. 426): "It is precisely this sense of community that Putnam … calls *social capital*, defining it, as did de Tocqueville (though not using this term) as a major resource – if not *the* major resource – for ensuring safety, good schooling, health, and other dimensions of what Putnam calls 'quality of life'."

Navarro (2002) explains, the above call for increased participation and involvement has been a longstanding feature of the American polity, particularly the Republicans, where communitarianism is seen as an alternative to central government. In contrast, the version of communitaranism in European (Christian democratic) tradition is not anti-state - it complements government. This is crucial, as the term has different connotations on the two continents and researches often fail to acknowledge it.

Navarro continues to summarize Putnam's classic and points out the solutions that Putnam has proposed, which are intended to reduce further deterioration of quality of life in America. Mainly, in Navarro's words, Putnam calls for "profound change, similar to the changes occurring in the Progressive Era [United States in the 1930s], that would lead us … to a new future in which people will participate in all sphere of private and public life…" (2002, p. 426). Navarro then continues with a critique of Putnam's communitarianism.

Navarro observes, Putnam's communitarianism approach is A] absent of *power* and *politics* and B] his analysis of togetherness and participation completely omits the political element of *purpose.*

5.1.4.1 Absence of Power and Politics

Navarro sees the absence of *power and politics* not only in political science, but also in other branches of social science in the United States, as a consequence of the supposed triumph of capitalism (being taken over by economic language). This had closed any debate about "what type of society and economic system we want, focusing the debate instead on how to manage the only system we have." As a result, "the purpose of all social action is reduced to accumulating more capital so that the individual can compete better" (2002, p. 427). Social capital is not exception. It is seen as accumulation of capital that

individual uses to seek scarce resources – social networks enhance the process. In Navarro's (2002, p. 427) words:

> Participation, organization, and togetherness make individuals stronger, more resourceful, and finally more competitive, by increasing their capital. Thus the purpose of increasing social capital is to increase the overall amount of capital by making more social capitalists.

This, Navarro argues, points to Putnam's lack of awareness about the possibility that the absence of togetherness may be actually rooted in capitalism and competitiveness, and these forces may be the cause of alienation and atomization of the citizens. Consequently, the contradiction between Putnam's desire for togetherness and his call for the competitiveness among citizens caused by capitalism is evident. Navarro concludes: "Togetherness would be encouraged not by expanding capitalist relations but by its precise opposite…" (2002, p. 427).

5.1.4.2 Absence of Purpose

Navarro (2002) asks, what is the purpose of Putnam's togetherness and participation? Is participation in labor union or Mafia example of social capital? According to Putnam yes, however Navarro disagrees. Navarro contends that it may be social, but is it capital? Often, the solidarity may be an objective in itself. As a result, Navarro (2002, p. 428) discusses: "To see solidarity as a means of getting more capital in order to become more competitive is to fail to understand the history of class struggle…" Labor movement struggled to achieve human emancipation, not social cohesiveness.

In Putnam's analysis of Northern Italy the absence of politics and struggle is evident. Putnam welcomes de-ideologization of North Italy (the elimination of the Communist party), but fails to recognize the well being (social capital) brought about by the party's struggle based on ideology. Putnam's failure to acknowledge such facts makes his analysis, according to Navarro, very superficial. "It reduces social change to a mere social engineering carried out by enlightened elites (his [Putnam's] term) with the participation of social agents in the background" (Navarro 2002, p. 428).

Similarly, Navarro criticizes Putnam's understanding of the Progressive Era in America – one of communitarianism and involvement. According to Navarro, Putnam again

attributes the success of that period's reforms to, "social engineers with the right ideas who found themselves in position of power" and today calls for the same (2002, p. 428-429). Navarro contends that such an approach neglects the underlying political movements (tensions and conflicts among social classes) and federal[23] intervention. Simply, 'pressure from below' is a factor missing in Putnam's analyses of the period.

In sum, Navarro explains, "…the Progressive Era was a very complex period, but it is just plain wrong to see the changes in those years as occurring outside enormous conflicts, of which class conflicts were of key importance" (p. 429). Furthermore, major reforms of those times took the direction opposite to those pronounced by Putnam and communitarians. For example, the progressives called for active federal interventions and less power for state and local communities using states' rights and communitarianism as a mean to prolong their privileges.

Similarly in his *Bowling Alone,* Putnam sees the declining membership in labor unions as an issue of cultural values among the young (less need/motivation to join, etc.). However, as Navarro notes, Putnam fails to account for the governmental and employers pressure against unions. This, Navarro stresses, explains the decline in labor unions membership much better, especially when more Americans express their willingness to join a union today than 20 years ago. As a result, "Social capital in this case depends on political power, highly skewed in favor of employers against laborers" (2002, p. 430). According to Navarro, the reversal of the dynamics discussed above is rooted in major change in distribution of political power within the United States (e.g., current financing of political parties – example of class power).

Navarro explains that 'political misunderstanding' mars *Bowling Alone.* Putnam does not understand power distribution and this "makes Putnam's solutions so insufficient and, frankly, irrelevant." Further, "Putnam's apoliticism (and moralism) even lead to a

[23] The division to and relationship among the state governments and federal government is typical for United States. Federal government, one seated in Washington D.C., has certain powers that are not dedicated to state governments of the Union (e.g., international relations, defense). On the other hand, state governments are autonomous of the federal government in several areas (e.g., education, traffic or partially criminal law). Typical example are different driving ages for youngsters in various states of the Union or the fact that some of the states use death penalty, while others do not employ this kind of punishment.

weakened sense of the community … he is advocating" (2002, p. 430). Navarro stresses, the problem of current social capital research is that it dismisses class as an irrelevant category.

Finally, Navarro (20002, p.431) calls for care in using the term 'social capital', if we want to deal with solidarity, as it "carries with it a set of values that run contrary to the objective of solidarity…" Simply, the "progressives" while using the language of social capital have forgotten its value. Navarro stresses, even though Bourdieu's use of social capital is very different from that of Coleman or Putnam, using this terminology that is embedded in capitalism has "hindered the full realization of Bourdieu's critical work" (2002, p. 431). Navarro's argument is that by employing a language that is essentially a product of classical economics and capitalism (social capital) we abandon the discourse of solidarity. He sees this use of "social capital" as indicating the strength of the corporate class which denies that such classism exists in America.

5.1.4.3 Navarro's Conclusion

In conclusion, Navarro sees the concept of social capital as put forward by Putnam and communitarians as superficial. It fails to discuss power and politics, and consequently misses the part of today's reality. Furthermore, the purpose of togetherness is not discussed and is not clear. Togetherness, Navarro explains, is social, but it may not constitute capital. Simply, the purposes of togetherness might be exactly the togetherness in itself and not accumulation of capital. Moreover, there is a certain contradiction within the social capital term. While in the heart of the social part lies cooperation and togetherness, the essence of the capital part, directly derived from theory of capital, lies in competition. Finally, due to the absence of power and politics, Putnam fails to accommodate in his analyses for other relevant processes that might serve to explain better the processes being analyzed (also discussed above in the *Section 5.1.2.4* on *One-Sided Explanation and Truisms*). At the end, while social capital concept, according to Navarro, may have a great value, it has been "stained by ideology", and means too much to too many people – particularly within a class setting where Navarro considers that capitalists have lost sight of/or abandoned social capital as related to purpose (especially the one related to solidarity), therefore its value is lost.

5.1.4.4 Discussion on Navarro

The majority of Navarro's objections can be accommodated and indeed have been in our argument. Even the apparent paradox produced when "social capital" is decomposed into "social" and "capital" can be reconciled; we should not reject the concept because of such issues. The concept of social capital is still useful in explaining the processes used by individual in accruing other resources and benefits. The fact that we compete for the resources with some individuals, does not mean that we cannot cooperate with others in order to gain such resources more easily. While, for example in the case of financial resources, firm merges or associates with other firms to realize higher return on financial capital, still these firms are in competition with those outside their merger or association. Similarly, while using the networks (e.g., credit unions) in order to compete at the market, the individual still competes, even with those within such union. We believe Navarro is aware of this fact. He, in our opinion, uses the contradiction objection against Putnam because Putnam completely fails to discuss this issue in his works.

5.2 Summary and Conclusions on Criticism of Putnam (Collectivists)

The major assumption of the collectivists that social capital can be aggregated in order to produce a measurement of the resources available to society was questioned several times throughout the analyses. Edwards and Foley (1998) compare it to the mistake the economists make in using GNP per capita as valid indicator of national economic 'development'. The same level of GNP per capita can hide essential variations in income, wealth and opportunities distributions among the subgroups within a society. They explain, "In both cases [aggregate social capital and GNP per capita], analysts inappropriately mix levels of analysis by aggregating measures [of social capital, income] that have their primary meaning only at the level of the individual, networks or subgroups of a society and using them as indicators of the health of the whole … [T]he resulting configurations bear almost no relation to the concept being measured" (1998).

Several other collectivists' assumptions were questioned thoroughly as well. Social scientists need to be aware of the criticism and problems associated with collectivist line of argument, if they wish to use the concept in meaningful way. Most of all, they need to be aware of the fact that:

> Divorced from its roots in individual interactions and networking, social capital becomes merely another trendy term to employ or deploy in the broad context of improving or building social integration and solidarity… Causal propositions may be formulated (e.g., that collective assets, such as trust, promote relations and networks and enhance the utility of embedded resources or vice versa;…), but it should not be assumed that they are alternative forms of social capital or are defined by one another (e.g., trust is capital; Paxton 1999).
>
> Lin (2001a, p.26)

It is evident that it is of no use to apply the social capital as a 'sticker' for the features of the society already described – be it political culture, civicness, generalized (or political) trust. [24] There is not much of an added value in re-labeling ones already defined concepts. We do not question these concepts here. We question the use of social capital in substitution of these terms. It is true that even the concepts like generalized trust were/are being put under sever criticism as well, but such discussion is beyond the scope of this work. [25]

Does the criticism suggest that we should give up the concept of social capital? Certainly not, the critique simply points to the problems associated with collectivist's line of social capital argument. As a result, if we define concept of social capital with greater care, and if we accommodate for the discussed objections, it still might be very valuable and useful concept. It might not be as popular as a current collectivistic (communitarian) approach, but it might gain in accuracy in describing certain process within a society. Thus, the concept has to be revised. The next section addresses this task.

[24] In these cases, the original, traditional terminology (political culture, trust, participation, civicness, etc.) should be used instead of social capital to describe the studied phenomena.

[25] For example, for discussion of trust and its conceptualization see Uslaner (2004) or for possible negative aspects of active civic associations in specific contexts see Berman (1997).

6. IMPLICATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS (CONCEPTUALIZATION)

6.1 Initial Considerations

The section on criticism emphasized several issues that need to be taken into account when conceptualizing and measuring social capital. To summarize, solid conceptualization, as well as meaningful analyses of social capital need:

A] to account for the following features of social capital:

1. context dependency and specificness (e.g., Lin 2001a, Edwards and Foley 1998, Foley and Edwards 2001b),
2. its uneven distribution among social groups in specific power contexts (e.g. Maloney, Smith and Stoker 2001, Svendsen 2006),
3. the various types of social capital – it is not only good (in a positive sense) but also bad (negative) (e.g. Portes and Landolt 1996, Portes 1998), and

B] must also conform with the following patterns of logic (based mainly on Portes 1998):

1. separate the concept's theoretical and empirical definition from its effects,
2. establish direction controls that demonstrate the presence of social capital prior to, and independent of, the outcomes that it is expected to produce,
3. control for other factors that may account for both social capital and the outcomes we ascribe to it,
4. identify the historical origins of community social capital in a systematic manner

5. distinguish among:

    a) the possessors (those making claims)
    b) the sources (those agreeing to or providing these claims)
    c) the resources themselves

Consequently, as Woolcock (1997, p. 35) argues, “definitions of social capital should focus primarily on its sources rather than its consequences, [since] long-term benefits, if and when they occur, are the result of the combination of different but complementary types of social relations, combinations whose relative importance will in all likelihood shift over time...”

6.2 Conceptualizing Social Capital

While taking the above factors into consideration, it is useful to make the attempt to produce a conceptualization on the general ideas about social capital with which the majority of scholars would agree. These have been discussed several times already, but are repeated here for convenience:

A. Interacting members are the ones making the maintenance and reproduction of this social asset possible.

B. It is an investment in social relations with expected returns.

Moreover, in order to possess social capital, “a person must be related to others [has to have *access* to the resources], and it is those others, not himself, who are actual source of his or her advantage” (Portes 1998, p. 7). Simply, the others link person to necessary resources. The issue of *access*, as pointed out in the *Section 5.1.2.1*, is crucial here because the resources possessed by others (individuals/groups) are of no use without access. As Foley and Edwards (1999) rightly point out, if there is one person present in our neighborhood, who adheres to the norm, previously described in the *Section 2.2* about Coleman, to look after unattended children, he/she is much more valuable to us, if we have a relationship that allows us “to count upon him/her” (have access to him/her); without that relationship he/she is valuable to us only in unusual situations when our children are in need of help and he/she is around to help.

Furthermore, it is crucial to acknowledge, as several scholars have pointed out, that resources in general (no matter which kind), attitudes and norms (e.g., trust), or social infrastructure (networks, associations and their membership) cannot be defined as social capital in themselves. It is necessary, as has been emphasized several times throughout this work, to account for the specific context because that context determines – as argue, among others, Foley, Edwards and Diani (2001, p. 267) – whether "[s]ocial relations may or may not facilitate individual and collective action – and therefore operate as social capital…"

As a result, conceptualization of social capital has to pay attention to *the social relations and social structures in which social resources are embedded.* This is in line with Bourdieu, Coleman, Lin, Burt, Portes and Edwards, Foley and Diani. Moreover, the social structures, "can be mobilized when an actor wishes to increase the likelihood of success in a purposive action [provides gains for those individuals acting for a purpose]" (Lin 2001a, p. 24). That is why it is essential to pay attention to the kind and degree of access social relations and social structures provided to individuals or groups (Edwards, Foley and Diani 2001). Consequently, the concept of social capital should consist of three components, which are also relevant for its analyses as well:

1. *resources* (embedded in social structure)
2. *access* (to such social resources by individuals)
3. *use/mobilization* (of such social resources by individuals in purposive action – for their benefits/gains)

There are several conceptualizations of social capital that well serve our purpose. An excellent example is that of Foley and Edwards (1999):

> *Social capital is defined as the* networked ***access*** *to resources available in a specific setting.*

and that of Lin (2001a):

> *Social capital is defined as resources embedded in a social structure which are* ***accessed*** *and/or mobilized in* purposive action.

It is easily recognized that these two definitions (as highlighted) are essentially the same, emphasizing the social capital existence within social networks, the key role of access in order to be used, and some kind of action in order to acquire the resources, which is perfectly in line with our previous assumptions. These two definitions, however, differ in the stress they put on the different aspects of the concept. While Foley and Edwards stress the specific context and networked access, Lin emphasizes that it is the purposeful action that leads to specific assets, embedded within the social structure, being identified and accessed.

Social capital may be accordingly defined, in line with Lin, Portes and Foley and Edwards as ***the resources embedded in social networks (available in a specific setting – context) accessed and used by actors for action.*** Alternatively, it can be viewed as an "investment in social relations with expected returns" (Lin 2001a, p.6). Furthermore, the definition suggests that "[s]ocial structures must be 'appropriable' by individuals and groups to really be social capital," to quote Edwards, Foley and Diani (2001, p. 272). In other words, if a person or group cannot use social network as their own (cannot appropriate it for their own goals or purposes) they cannot be said to have social capital. The above definition clearly makes social capital context-dependent and therefore accounts for its unequal distribution in the society - resources spread unevenly and access to them varies across the society. Simply, "use-value" of resources varies from one context to another (e.g., Foley and Edwards 1999, Edwards and McCarthy 2004).

The definition is quite complex. It shows, as Lin (2001a), and Foley, Edwards and Diani (2001) pointed out, that networks and social relations themselves do not make for social capital. Social capital requires embedded and accessed resources. There is a reciprocal relation between network and social relations on the one side and embedded and accessed resources on the other because embedded resources cannot be accessed or captured without the existence and availability of specific networks and relations. Simply, "[n]etwork locations are necessary conditions of embedded resources" Lin (2001b, p. 14). Therefore, in order to judge the value of social capital available to individual/groups, it is essential to examine both, network position and quantity and quality of the available resources (Edwards, Foley, Diani 2001).

Furthermore, there are two other important features of social capital which are discussed by Lin (2001a):

A. access of resources through direct or indirect ties, and

B. access of a person who may actually possess them (his/her personal resources) or may be able to access them through his/her social positions (his/her positional resource)

The condition indicated in A] points to the fact that "social capital is contingent on resources embedded in direct and indirect ties and accessible through these" and that it is not limited to direct connections and simple two sided relationships. Point A] simply accommodates for common situations when "social capital activates chains of multiple actors" (p. 44). If we want to get access to certain resource, we may contact someone who does not have such resource, but may know someone else who does.

Pont B] emphasizes that networked resources consist of accessed person's (a) more or less permanent resources and (b) those they control through their position in a hierarchical structure (e.g., organization). Lin (2001a) accentuates that the latter are much more useful than the former because they do not generate only "the resources embedded in positions in an organization, but also the power, wealth and reputation of the organization itself" (p. 44-45). As and illustration of how these networked resources might work, Lin gives an example of two equally competent professional programmers with the same personal resources (e.g., university degree, knowledge, earning), whose positional resources might be rather unequal (differ in quality) due to the fact that one of them works for Microsoft, while the other for a small local software company. Moreover, if we access these two programmers, we gain access not only to their permanent and positional resources, but possibly also to "resources through their connection in the organization, as well as the power, wealth and status of the organization itself" (p.45).

In addition, it is worthwhile emphasizing that access to social capital, as defined above, can be manipulated and shaped by conscious strategy (Edwards and McCarthy 2004). Simply, social capital is not only a determinant of social action, but also an outcome of it (Diani 2001). This is the focus of Diani's (2001) analyses of social movement and their

capacity to create new forms of social capital (accessible and embedded resources in social networks). Similarly, Edwards and McCarthy (2004, p.646-647) argue that under certain conditions "[g]roup leaders can pursue strategies to increase reserves of social capital by expanding the range of social networks spanned by group members."

6.3 Researching Social Capital

At the beginning of our work, we have pointed out that several scholars see one of the primary weaknesses of the concept of social capital in the lack of consensus about how to measure it. It is clear that the issue will not be resolved as long as there are various approaches to social capital (e.g., individual/collective). The discussed (network) definition of social capital is suitable only for certain research techniques, both quantitative, as well as qualitative. In this way it helps to clarify the discussion, on how to measure social capital, at least for individual (network) oriented conceptualization. Some possible, quantitative and qualitative, research techniques and applications of the concept are discussed.

6.3.1 QUANTITATIVE APPROACH

The quantitative measurements of social capital follow the two major conceptual components of the network social capital definition – embedded resources and network location. *Table 4* illustrates the issue. This section is predominantly based on Lin's (2001b) article *Building a Network Theory of Social Capital.*

Table 4. **Social Capital as Assets in Network**

Focus	*Measurement*	*Indicators*
Embedded resources	Network resources	Range/variety of resource, best resources, composition (average resources; contact resources
	Contact statuses	Contact's occupation, authority, sector
Network locations	Bridge or access to bridge	Structural hole/constraint
	Strength of tie	Network bridge, or intimacy, intensity, interaction, and reciprocity

Source Lin (2001b)

Logically, the first line of measurement concentrates on the valuable resources possessed by others and accessed by individuals through their networks and relationships. Lin (2001b) differentiates it further on A] network resources and B] contact resources. He explains: "Network resources refer to those embedded in one's ego-networks, whereas contact resources refer to those embedded in contacts used as helper in an instrumental action, such as job searches. Thus, network resources represent accessible resources and contact resources represent mobilized resources in instrumental actions. For contact resources, the measurement is straightforward – the contact's wealth, power and/or status characteristics, typically reflected in the contact's occupation, authority position, industrial sector, or income" (2001b, pp. 13). Thus, he sees: A] network resources that the individual is able to access in normal circumstances, and B] contact resources, which are potentially available in instrumental actions (such as job searches) and which are made available by the person's status, power, reputation, etc.

The second line of measurement concentrates on networks locations. It argues that weak ties (bridges), their strength or access to them, "facilitates returns in actions" (p. 15). Indicators for all these measurement approaches are introduced in *Table 4*.

6.3.1.1 Measurement Techniques

Lin (2001b) discusses three sampling methods useful for constructing social capital measurements: saturation survey, name-generators and position-generators. Advantages and disadvantages of each of the three techniques are presented in *Table 5* on the next page. While the saturation sampling technique can be employed only for definable social network and therefore is useful merely for studies of social capital in organizations or small networks, "ego-network" sampling techniques such as name and position generators are used for large and less definable networks (Lin 2001b). These "ego-network" sampling techniques are discussed in a greater detail.

Table 5. **Measurement Techniques**

Technique	*Advantages*	*Disadvantages*
Saturation survey	Complete mapping of network	Limited to small networks
Name-generator	Customized content areas Ego-centered network mapping	Lack of sampling frame Biased toward strong ties
Position-generator	Content free Sampling of hierarchical positions Multiple "resources" mapped Direct and indirect accesses	Lack of specificity of relations

Source Lin (2001b)

6.3.1.1.1 The Name-Generator

As stated, the name-generator is useful for less definable and larger networks and, as Lin, Fu, Hsung (2001) point out, is more common than position-generator. This technique generates list of names (ties) from a person by asking one or more question about respondent's contacts (names) in specified social contexts or situations[26] or for specific periods of time. By such approach the technique identifies the relationships between and among these names (ties). Such data are used to compute locations of respondent and these ties, relative to one another.[27] Name generator technique can be also applied for identification of network resources (Lin 2001b).

Lack of a theoretical or empirical framework that would identify the population to be sampled is a major problem of name generators making the comparative analyses impossible. Furthermore, respondents usually and logically name strong ties (closer contacts), rather than the weak ties. Also, name-generator tends to "locate access to

[26] These may range "from role or content (neighbors, important family or work matters) to closeness (confidences, intimacy, etc.), geographic limits" (Lin, Fu, and Hsung 2001, pp. 62).

[27] Lin, Fu and Hsung (2001) stipulate that the name generator technique has been adapted to measure social capital in two different but related ways. In first approach, the characteristics of networks are treated as indicators of social capital, as collective social capital (e.g., density of relationships among social ties) or as access to social capital (e.g., respondent's location relative to their contacts in the network – bridge, or near to it). In the second approach, compositions of contact characteristics are constructed, either as the collective resources possessed by the contacts (e.g., mean or range, diversity and heterogeneity of education, occupational prestige, or income) or the best-possible resources (e.g., the highest education, occupational prestige, or income) characterizing contacts, as indicators of social capital (Lin, Fu and Hsung 2001).

individual rather then social positions" (Lin, Fu, Hsung 2001, pp. 63), while "as in many structural theories, the concerns focus on social positions" (Lin 2001b, pp. 17).

6.3.1.1.2 The Position-Generator

The position-generator technique developed by Lin and Dumin (1986) tackles these issues by "sampling positions in a given hierarchy representative of resources valued in the collective (e.g., occupational status or prestige, authority positions, sectors, etc.)" (Lin 2001b, p. 17).

Position generator is a technique that: A] uses a sample of systematically organized structural positions, which fundamentally characterize society positions (e.g., occupations, authorities, work units, class or sector); B] asks respondent to show contacts (e.g., those known on a first-name bases) for every given position (Lin, Fu, and Hsung 2001) (for practical example see footnote 29 at the bottom of the page 69). Simply, the respondent is asked to indicate, whether he/she knows someone having job/position that is presented to him/her in the given list - sample of positions with identified valued resources, e.g., authority positions, occupations, etc. (Ling, Fu and Hsung 2001).

The responses make possible the construction of different "network resource indexes", e.g., the extent of accessibility to different hierarchical positions in the society (number of accessed positions), range or heterogeneity of the access (the distance between the highest and lowest accessed position), and upper reachability of accessed social capital (prestige or status of the highest accessed position). Moreover, the responses make possible the identification of direct/indirect relationships between respondent and his contact for each position (Lin 2001a, 2001b, Lin, Fu and Hsung 2001). Also, we should keep in mind, as Lin, Fu and Hsung (2001, pp. 63) stress, that the position generator is itself based on certain theoretical decisions, such as, "it chooses to sample positions in hierarchical structure, rather than sampling ego-centered interpersonal ties."[28]

[28] Lin, Fu and Hsung (2001, pp. 63-4) explain: "To the extent that social capital reflects embedded resources in the structure, then this approach should yield meaningful information regarding ego's [respondent's] access to such structurally embedded resources. The measurement is also deliberately content-free and role/location-neutral. Only after accessibility to a position is ascertained can the actual relationship or its content between ego and the contact be accessed. Conceivably, the generator casts a wide net over a range of

Lin (2001b, pp. 17) stipulates three main advantages of the position-generator technique: "(1) it can be based on a representative sample of positions meaningful to a given society; (2) it can directly or indirectly identify linkages to such resources; and (3) it can be based on multiple resource criteria (e.g., occupation, authority, and industry)."

6.3.1.2 Examples

Several examples of quantitative research on social capital, in accordance with our definition, are in the volume Social *Capital: Theory and Research* edited by Nan Lin, Karen Cook, Ronald S. Burt (2001) or in the volume *Beyond Tocqueville: Civil Society and the Social Capital Debate in Comparative Perspective* edited by Bob Edwards, Michael W. Foley and Mario Diani (2001) - especially the analyses of Charles H. Heying (2001). As an illustration we will discuss the work of Nan Lin, Yang-chih Fu, and Ray-May Hsung (2001), which uses the position generator technique to study social network in Taiwan. In addition, the analyses of Edwards and McCarthy (2004) concentrating on *The Contingent Value of Social Capital in the Survival of Local Social Organizations* will serve as more recent example of an analysis that uses network social capital definition (the one conceptualized in the previous section).

6.3.1.2.1 Lin's, Fu's, Hsung's Study

Their analyses uses data from an island-wide survey conducted on the stratified probability sample of 2,835 Taiwan adults administered in interpersonal interviews. They used position generator technique[29] and developed the various indexes listed above in the *Section 6.3.1.1.2* (e.g., extensity, upper reachability, range). Moreover, they differentiated

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relationships. It may be that social capital, in its capacity to affect many aspect of well-being, should also contain social resources scattered throughout the continuum of relationships' strength or intensity. As a measurement tool, it does not preclude such linkages from presenting themselves in the data."

[29] The generating question was: "Among your relatives, friends or acquaintances, are there people who have the following jobs? If you don't know anyone with these jobs, and if you need to find such a person for private help or to ask about some problems, whom among those you know would you go through to find such a person? Who would he/she be to you? What job does he/she do?" The respondents were choosing from fifteen "job" positions "sampled from two structural dimensions: occupational prestige and class", e.g., Physician, lawyer (to name the most prestigious and in upper class), electrician, truck driver, office workman/guard (to name those among the least prestigious and in the lower class) (Lin, Fu, and Hsung 2001, p. 66).

the access to social capital by household composition, respondent's social status, extensity of social contacts and whether the access was to kin or non-kin.

The results for this Taiwan case generally suggest that social capital generates returns in job prestige and income, however "[m]ales benefit much more from access to social capital and nonkin relations in getting more prestigious jobs and higher incomes [generating return from social capital] than females do." Females have to rely more on "human capital (education) to gain [the same] job prestige and higher income [economic attainments]." Moreover, "entrepreneurs need to use both kin and nonkin contact to locate beneficial social capital" (Lin, Fu, Hsung 2001, p. 73-75). In addition, their findings show that "the extensity of daily contacts [ties], rather than whether such contacts tend to be close or not [weak/strong ties], facilitates access to better social capital in general." On the other hand, when specific social capital needs to be accessed (e.g. certain specific position in the social structure), the study shows that, nonkin and probably weaker ties are useful. The authors also found that "better network locations increase the likelihood of reaching better social resources" (Lin, Fu, Hsung 2001, p. 75-76)

6.3.1.2.2 Edwards's and McCarthy's Study

Edwards and McCarthy (2004) employ the concept of social capital to social movement organizations (SMO). They ask whether the initial advantages of social capital, crucial for SMO mobilization, persist when SMO develops. In accordance with our line of argument, they treat social capital as "a precondition that either facilitates or constrains the mobilization of SMOs" (Edwards and McCarthy 2004, p. 622).

They investigated the above through broad empirical data from a survey of 376 Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) local chapters conducted in 1985. The survey accessed the factors affecting the short-term persistence of these MADD's local chapters. Their findings indicate that A] [g]roups with initial access to patronage or with a greater stock of weak ties in the community are more likely to survive than those without it, B] "SMOs that emerged from preexisting groups and those with leaders previously tied to one another through civic engagement were less likely to persist" and C] "groups that pursued networked recruitment strategies were generally much more robust than those that did not" (Edwards and McCarthy 2004, p. 621-645).

The results suggest that the initial advantages of building up an SMO by co-opting the resource of existing organization may be lost throughout the time as the organization tries to establish itself firmly within the society. Edwards and McCarthy (2004) explain, if the core leadership is interlinked through "shared organizational involvements", the competing demands flowing from such involvements will make the local SMO vulnerable. The preliminary short cut (of tying the SMO to other organization) may prove unreliable and detrimental in the long run (as it may pose demands on the leaders of the local SMO that are not in line with the activities of SMO).

6.3.2 QUALITATIVE APPROACH

To restrictively employ quantitative techniques in researching social capital would hinder the full potential of the concept, since social capital can be explored effectively using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Unfortunately there are not many studies that analyze social capital, understood as accessed resources embedded in social networks, in a qualitative way, since the use of qualitative research techniques in this field is relatively uncommon. Qualitative methodology (especially using long, loosely structured interviews), as Svendsen (2006) points out, has generally been neglected in social capital research.

Actually, the research focus of quantitative research proposed by Lin in the above *Table 4*, might serve the same purpose for qualitative research. Similarly, to Lin's categorization concerning the focus of quantitative research, qualitative research may also concentrate either on the investigation of networks or on embedded resources. The application of qualitative techniques, among others, due to its micro, context specific perspective, might be especially useful for exploring various aspects of social capital that might prove elusive to capture using broader quantitative techniques.

Qualitative research, due to its micro, context specific perspective, is particularly useful for exploration of unequal distribution of and variations (positive/negative effects) in social capital. Also, while for example position generators are helpful in identifying various structural relationships in a specific social context, qualitative techniques might help to specify, as well as to access the nature of such relationships.

While qualitative measures would seem to have an important place in understanding the nature or social capital, it is interesting that we have not found any generic examples in the literature. While quantitative approaches have become well established (such as network generators), the same cannot be said of qualitative approaches. Nevertheless, the following example provides a sample of an interesting and effective qualitative measure.

6.3.2.1 Example – Svendsen's Study

An exemplary application of qualitative research techniques is provided by Gunnar L. H. Svendsen (2006)[30] in his *in situ* study of social capital in a Danish municipality. He employed qualitative interviews to analyze formation of bridges/bonds (weak/strong ties) in order to understand the processes that stand behind social trap[31]. He (Svendsen 2006) stresses that this is "an inductive and highly explorative method…" His case study specifically looks at the relationship among local people and newcomers in rural Danish municipality of Ravnsborg, and reveals processes that build bridging/bonding social capital. It is a kind of micro-level study that focuses on "an *actual in situ* building of types of social capital, inseparably related to concrete discourses, social classifications, and identities in specific time-space contexts" (Svendsen 2006, p. 42).

Svendsen's study pays particularly attention to the processes that transform potential resource of bonding social capital into bridging social capital, which may benefit the whole community. He conducted around 70 loosely structured (taped) interviews with the

[30] There are not many qualitative studies on social capital. Apart from the discussed work of Svendson (2002), we have identified another three. Michael D. Schulman's and Cynthia Anderson's (2001) partially use qualitative interviews, aside of other mainly quantitative research techniques, to demonstrate the impact of economic restructuring on production of and access to social capital in Southern U.S. textile community. In the study of 69 Indian villages Anirud Krishna (2002) combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques to find out the answers to following questions: What is social capital? How does it operate in practice? What results can it be expected to produce? Similarly, Svendsen and Svendsen (2004) employ qualitative research techniques in addressing social capital as another factor of production, crucial for economic decision making. They analyze main factors affecting the creation and destruction of social capital.

[31] Social trap, as defined by Bo Rothstein (2005) is "a situation where individuals, groups or organizations are unable to cooperate owing to mutual distrust and lack of social capital, even where cooperation would benefit all" (as cited in Svendsen 2006, p. 42).

municipality citizens lasting up to 3 hours. To avoid over-representation problems, he also carried out 30 short, mainly unstructured, informal interviews/chats with arbitrarily chosen Ravnsborg citizens. His analysis reveals the costs that arise in the municipality, particularly among newcomers, due to alienation and isolation caused in the main by their physical and psychological distance from the local people; and the role bridging/bonding capital plays in this process. His case study illustrates the formation of "exclusive social networks… [bonding social capital] …that are monopolized by a specific group of people" with strictly inward oriented connections, as well as the production of bridging social capital, here built primarily by volunteer associations (2006, pp. 65). The case study is also, according to Svendsen a typical example of "formation of generalized distrust and ultimately 'social trap,' mirrored in prejudices, symbolic violence, group isolation, nepotism, and lack of cooperation (or even outright work against the other party)." In the Revnseborg situation the bridging social capital is not able to outweigh "the social and economic burdens stemming from excessively bonded networks" (2006, p. 65).

6.3.3 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS ON RESEARCH

We have attempted to demonstrate that both quantitative and qualitative methodologies could be used within the framework of network social capital concept. From a review of the literature, there is no doubt that quantitative research predominates. However, while as we have argued quantitative techniques can reconstruct the network of relationships and embedded resources, their ability to clarify the nature and quality of these indicated

relationships is rather limited. On the other hand, while qualitative techniques can provide more fine-grained information (e.g., on various aspects of the character and nature of structural relationships under the study), they are rather costly and time consuming.

Also, in constructing the network of relationships (in quantitative research) it is useful to have some knowledge about the actors under the study, as well as the context. As a result, it might be very useful to combine both, quantitative and qualitative, techniques. It can help to eliminate the identified problems associated with strictly quantitative social capital research technique, for example in the case of name generators the lack of the frame, or position-generators the lack of specificity of the relations. Importantly, "findings at micro levels [from qualitative research] can help to highlight, and interact with, key result

[generated by quantitative research] at the meso and macro levels" (Svendsen 2006, pp. 42). It should be noted that preliminary findings generated from initial qualitative social capital research are often very useful for the construction of protocols for subsequent quantitative social capital research.

6.4 Matters that May Cause Concern

Our work has substantially criticized the collectivist conceptualization of social capital, as well as their research. It is clear that networked (individualistic) social capital, despite certain general agreement concerning its conceptualization and measurement, is also not without flaws. The issues or criticism of networked social capital are not as great as those associated with Putnam's collectivistic conceptualizations; however, it is still necessary to discuss them, in order to highlight these concerns for those working with, or making use of, networked social capital. We consider 1] the problematic aspect of its research and generalization of the results, 2] the "overnetworked" perspective toward social capital, 3] the issues with its indicators, 4] skimming of differences between social capital and other forms of capital, and 5] indirect ties and positional resource.

6.4.1 RESEARCH AND RESULTS

There are certain specific issues accompanying the sociological research and interpretation of results when using the network/structural/resource definition of social capital. We will discuss three.

First of all, we have previously explained that social capital is context specific (dependent). As a result, it is an empirical task to identify those locally meaningful measures of social capital for a given society/network. The premise is simple; as social capital is contextually dependent, measuring methods are contextually dependent as well. Therefore, employing certain method in one specific context may not yield the desired measurements in another. That is why, for example, when using a position generator, the researchers will most probably have to develop a new sample of systematically organized structural positions, which form the base for the position generator technique, for every new society/network under study. In addition, those working with conceptualization of network social capital should be aware that the context specificness of the concept makes comparison with other

studies, as well as generalizations of their results almost impossible and essentially undesirable. Moreover, as Foley and Edwards (1999) further acknowledge, treating social capital as context dependent creates conceptual and methodological difficulties for analyses that aim to explain the kinds of macro-social, political and economic outcomes.

Second, as discussed in previous section, "network analysis tools [quantitative technique – e.g., name or position generators] are no substitute for a proper understanding of the specific relationships being analyzed" to use Edwards, Foley and Diani's words (2001, p.276-7). Some understanding of context (e.g., individuals, characteristics of ties, resources available through networks) is crucial for analyzing the amount of social capital possessed by individual or a group under study. In such a case, the use of qualitative research techniques is almost indispensable. Simply put, because the research of networked social capital often concentrates on the micro level analyses, usually some qualitative research techniques have to be used in order to adjust the quantitative research instruments according to the specific context and situation. This may make the research less convenient, a bit complex and most likely more costly.

Third, similarly even if the analyses is macro level, as in the case of Lin, Fu, Hsung's (2001) Taiwan study, the employed quantitative research techniques do not rely on the readily available or relatively easily obtainable aggregated data, as is for example the case of Putnam's research (e.g., surveys[32], secondary data analyses). The designed survey in the Taiwan study was pre-tested with 400 respondents and, as pointed out in the research *Section 6.3.1.3.1*, "[t]he finalized instrument was administered in interpersonal interviews with respondents in an island-wide stratified (levels of urbanization) probability (by district and household) sample of adults…" (Lin, Fu, Hsung's 2001, pp. 65). It is obvious that such a technique, even though quantitative, is still quite costly, challenging and time consuming, especially when compared with techniques employed by Putnam and collectivists.

As we can see the research of networked social capital is rather complicated. In comparison to readily available data and relatively easy statistical methods of analyses

[32] Typical is the use of data generated by question on trust from various national and cross national surveys and data sets.

used by collectivists to study the social capital, understood as norms and attitudes (e.g., trust, reciprocity), it is A] evident, why collective social capital concept gained on its popularity, and B] clear that the network/structural/resource (individualistic) approach would probably never gain such momentum. Its research is rather complicated and results cannot be used to explain the variety of processes and develop vast governmental policies as is the case of collectivist's social capital.

On the other hand, it is exactly the specific focus of proposed social capital conceptualization that makes the concept valuable. It cannot be as easily attacked and criticized for misconception or misuse, as collectivists' social capital, because it is defined more clearly and robustly. In addition, as Edwards, Foley and Diani (2001, p.273) correctly point out, it avoids "the methodological difficulties inherent in aggregating individual attitudes [discussed in the *Section 5.1.2.2*] or actions into a single measure of political culture with effects posited at the level of the polity or region."

6.4.2 OVERWORKED NETWORKS

Edwards, Foley and Diani (2001) warn against uncritical "overnetworked" conceptions of social capital. It is essential, as we have pointed out several times, to avoid concluding that the number of individual's network ties corresponds to the amount of social capital possessed by this individual. It is true that under certain conditions, higher number of ties allows an individual to access more resources, however "there are also substantial differences among networks in the sorts of resources and the character of the ties they offer" (Edwards, Foley and Diani 2001, p. 275). We showed in the *Section 3.3.1*, which dealt with weak and strong ties, and in *Section 6.3.1.3.2*, which provided examples from Edwards and McCarthy on SMOs, that it is the intensity of ties (and not the number) that matters and which makes different resources available. Moreover, Edwards, Foley and Diani (2001, p.276) underline that "while more, or more diverse, network ties increase an individual's likelihood of accessing crucial resources in a given socio-historical context, resources are accessed one tie at time." As discussed, knowing just one reliable person who adheres to the norm to look after unattended children in the park allows us to benefit

from this single social tie. Simply, "more ties are better, but one tie might be sufficient to gain access to a crucial resource" (Edwards, Foley and Diani 2001, p.276). Overall, it is not appropriate to consider social capital as being directly related to the number of ties.

In addition, the amount of access an individual gains from network depends not only on its structure and individual's position within it, but also on "the social location of the entire network within the broader socioeconomic context" since it "shapes the ways that specific network can and cannot link their members to resources" (Edwards, Foley and Diani 2001, p.276-7). Clearly, even if an individual has a great amount of access to resources in his, or her, network; it does not yield to him, or her, much benefit, if the network itself is embedded in a stagnating/declining sector (Edwards and Foley 1998).

In sum, "network analysis tools are no substitute for a proper understanding of the specific relationships being analyzed." If we are to judge the amount of social capital possessed by individual or a group, some understanding of the nature of ties, and resources accessible through networks is necessary (Edwards, Foley and Diani 2001, p.276-7). Access to network is only one social capital component (Portes 1998).

6.4.3 INDICATORS OF NETWORK SOCIAL CAPITAL

However, some researches are still not sure about the indicators of network social capital and see them as problematic. As we showed already, when we define social capital *as the resources embedded in social networks (available in a specific setting – context) accessed and used by actors for action*, there are two components of the social capital: A] embedded resources and B] networks that make access to such resources possible.

However, it is not fully clear whether these two aspects of network social capital have similar weight. As Lin's, Fu's, and Hsung's (2001, p. 76) analyses (from the *Section 6.3.1.3.1*), showed "better network locations increase the likelihood of reaching better social resources." As a result, the authors are not sure "whether it is advantageous to view both network locations and social resources as indicators of social capital or to postulate network locations as a precursor of social capital, the social resources accessed" (Lin, Fu, Hsung 2001, p. 76).

The possible consequences of the later are obvious: while networks play a crucial role for the networked social capital concept, the social resources are those indicating it. In the extreme, the network part of the definition could be dropped. Even though, we feel that networks and especially the access are crucial for networked social capital definition[33], the above point is relevant, as if accepted, it changes the whole definition.

6.4.4 SKIMMING OF THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FORMS OF CAPITAL

The situation gets even more complicated when we consider the respondents contacts and the resources of those contacts as social capital. Here, the skimming of the differences between social capital and other forms of capital becomes the problematic aspect of the networked social capital conceptualization.[34]

To explain the issue, if we are able to secure funding for our studies (and here, it does not matter whether as gift or interest free loan) from our acquaintances and relatives, we are said to have social capital.[35] However, do we really have social capital or do we have economic (financial) capital? Similarly, if our contact is in a certain position in a certain institution, is it our social capital or is it only his/her human (cultural) capital? Or, might we argue, are these processes of transformation where one capital is transformed to another as discussed by Bourdieu (1986)?

The answer is not obvious. An illustration of the first example might clarify the picture. We would say, in accordance with network social capital, that the person in the first example has social capital when his acquaintances and relatives have the financing (economic capital) he/she seeks and when he/she is able to access it (actually acquire it).

[33] We agree with Edwards, Foley and Diani (2001, pp. 278) that social capital = resources + access. Hence, "measures of network attributes should not be treated as direct measures of social capital, any more than the mere presence of some sort of resources should be." Individual cannot have social capital available without access. Therefore, the more access possibilities individual has the greater the "*likelihood*" of having more social capital available for use. "[M]easures of access are better indicators of one's potential social capital than would be some indication of the resources generally present in a given society" (Edwards, Foley and Diani 2001, pp. 278).

[34] Marek Skovajsa drew my attention to this problem during our personal communication.

[35] This does not mean (as in the Portes example that criticized Putnam) that those who are not able to secure funding from their acquaintances and relatives do not have social capital.

The presence of the resource and the ability to access (mobilize) it is social capital. Economic resources generated by the person for his/her study abroad are economic capital for him/her, however, the mobilization of funds was only possible due to his/her preexisting social capital. Simply, for this specific situation, the person had social capital available. The resource itself might be any kind of capital. The distinction is clear, person has social capital when he/she is able to mobilize the resources in his/her networks. The resources he/she subsequently generates represent the other forms of capital (e.g., economic).

Another possible solution to the skimming of differences among forms of capital problem, challenging the network definition of social capital, is to treat only the ties (contacts) and acquaintances as social capital separately of the effects derived from such ties (e.g., economic capital of the contact). Admittedly, such an approach would simplify the picture considerably. On the other hand, we feel that it would miss the point. Ties and contacts are simply that. Why should they be treated as social capital? Individuals are often engaged in hundreds of ties, but that does not mean that they are to possess social capital. To return to our old example, if we need someone to look after our children in the park, while we are not around, it is of no use for us (we do not have social capital for this specific situation) when we have ties with people living around the park, but do not know whether they adhere to the norm of looking after unattended children. In order to have social capital in this specific case, it is essential, among others, that we know of contact that adheres to such a norm.

6.4.5 INDIRECT TIES AND POSITIONAL RESOURCES

There is another problem (interconnected with the previous one) of treating social capital according to the network conceptualization and especially in accordance with Lin's (e.g., 2001a, 2001b) understanding. As showed during conceptualization, Lin (2001a) discusses two feature so social capital: A] access of resources through direct or indirect ties, and B] accessed person may either posses the resources (his/her personal) or may be able to access those resources through his/her social position.

The measurement of resources accessed through indirect ties, as well as of resources accessed through social position, might be quite challenging (especially when using

name/position-generator technique). When we ask a respondent to generate certain contacts (names), it is clear that he/she names those relevant to the given question. However, the respondent may not have known about indirect ties or of all resources that are available through his/her contacts position, and therefore does not have access to them. As a result, if we agree with Lin's features of social capital, we also have to admit that we would never be able to measure the full potential of social capital possessed by an individual. It is true that even though our respondent does not know all indirect ties or "positional resources" of his/her contact, we might use name/position generator technique for respondent's contact as well, in order to find out his/her positional resources. However, it is impossible to get definite results, especially because the respondent's contact will have other contacts, who in turn will have other, leading to an exponential spiral.

That is why it might be useful to avoid such features of social capital, especially for the measurement purposes. It might be useful to concentrate on direct resources only, or focus the research at only several levels of indirect contacts.

6.4.6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This section has showed that individual, network conceptualization of social capital also has its flaws. While certain issues can be theoretically resolved (e.g., skimming of differences between social capital and other forms of capital, network social capital indicators, "overnetworking" of social capital concept), others are inherent in the network conceptualization (e.g., cost and complexity of research, problems with comparative analyses) and cannot be avoided, although they may be minimized. Nevertheless, we believe that those issues do not inevitably diminish the value of network (individual) social capital concept, as they may help explain various unconsidered processes within the society that is being studied. However, it is true that the complexity connected with both the research and the measurement of this approach to social capital makes it less appealing than its collectivistic version.

7. CONCLUSION

The concept of social capital, which is one of the most popular sociological concepts of past decade, is still getting wider attention even within the Czech Republic. However, the very popularity and use of the concept also carries with it a diverse spectrum of unresolved issues that make social capital vague and subject to a number of misconceptions and misinterpretations. The use of social capital in the Czech Republic is no exception to this trend.

This work attempted to clarify the meaning of the social capital concept, especially for the environment of the Czech Republic, to help future researches and to avoid past mistakes, misunderstanding or re-labeling of old terms, and help them to build up thorough, graspable and measurable conceptualization of social capital. In order to do this, we conducted an extensive review of both current and classical social capital. Of critical importance was tracing the development and evolution of the concept of social capital and the ways in which the term has been applied, modified, and often misused.

From this analysis we have concentrated on the development of the concept as presented by three of the most significant contributors to the idea of social capital: Pierre Bourdieu (1986), James C. Coleman (1988), and Robert D. Putnam (1993a, 1993b, 1995). We have compared their individual approaches toward the social capital concept and used their definitions and position to explore similarity and difference. Moreover, we have considered various social capital categorizations that occur within the social capital debate. In particular, this work concentrated on the individual and collective division of social capital understanding. Additionally, it gave an overview of treatment of the concept within the Czech Republic. However, the main contribution of this works lies in critical assessment of the social capital issue, especially of the predominant, most widely used, (collectivist) stream of argumentation that draws on Putnam's conceptualization of social capital. Our comprehensive discussion on the issues connected to Putnam's understanding of social capital makes us believe that the future of social capital lies in individual – that is network – conceptualization rather than in collectivistic one.

Consequently, while taking into account the issues discussed within the criticism of Putnam, we have attempted to conceptualize social capital in line with and individual – or network – understanding of the concept as *the resources embedded in social networks (available in a specific setting – context) accessed and used by actors for action*.

In order to show the applicability of this conceptualization to research, we have presented quantitative, as well as qualitative research techniques that might be employed to access individual – network – social capital, together with concrete examples of the past research. We also raised the major issues that need to be taken into consideration when working with individual - network - social capital.

Social capital has been used to describe individual (as networked resources embedded in social relations) as well as collective conceptualization (as feature of social organizations) often mixing the two approaches together. This work showed and emphasized that these are two completely different perspectives and to use the term social capital for both is unfortunate. We hope that the discussions that we have entered into will allow researchers to be more critically aware of what social capital is – and is not – and allow them to select appropriate methodologies for its measurement.

In conclusion, we have shown that the usefulness of social capital concept lies primarily within the individual - network - approach. Paradoxically, while we found this conceptualization of social capital as richer, it will probably limit the attractiveness of the concept because the measurement of individual – network – social capital is complex, its research methodology is time consuming, and its results are not easy or, almost impossible, to compare between different contexts (network, regional, national). Moreover, the individual – network – approach does not lend itself easily for use in developing sweeping social policies or for promoting third world change, in sharp contrast with the presently popular collective approach to social capital.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

B.Sc. MARTIN BULLA

DATE OF BIRTH	31st August, 1981	**CITIZENSHIP**	Czech

EDUCATION

2006 – Present	**Czech Agricultural University,** Czech Republic • *Master in Forest, Landscape, Water Management*
2004 – Present	**Charles University in Prague,** Czech Republic • *Master in Civil Sector Affairs* • Dissertation: Social Capital: Usefulness of the Concept
2000 – 2004	**University of New York/Prague,** Czech Republic • *Bachelor of Science in Business Administration* • Thesis - Marketing Strategies of NGOs in the Czech Republic • GPA: 3.92, *2nd best student of the graduating class*
Autumn semester 2002	**American University-Central Asia**, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan • *Semester abroad*, organized independently as part of degree course, supported by Student Mobility 2002 Grant • GPA: 3.95 • *Other courses*: Russian, Spanish, Environmental Protection
1998 – 1999	**Kendall Senior High School,** NY, United States • *New York State Graduation Diploma*
1995 – 2000	**Gymnasium Arabska,** Prague, Czech Republic • *Czech Graduation Diploma*

COURSES/SEMINARS

June 2004	**Practice of Communicational Abilities for NGO Worker** (Czech Fundraising Center, *Hastalska 17, Praha 1*)
September 2003	**Accounting for NGOs** (Informacni centrum neziskovch organizaci, o.p.s., *Male nam.12*)

LANGUAGES

Czech (native), ***English*** (fluent); **Russian** (spoken); ***Spanish*** (basic)

WORK EXPERIENCE

October 2005 – Present	**ENVIROS, s.r.o.,** Czech Republic • *Generating EU funds, organizing seminars* (e.g., EKODESIGN) • *Assistance to Regional Environmental Center*
March 2005 – Present	**Project CzechKid,** Charles University in Prague and British Council • Multicultural education project similar to www.britkid.org • *Member of a development and methodological group*
December 2004 – Present	**The Organization for Aid to Refugees,** Czech Republic • *Member of the Board of Directors*
January – June 2005	**Civil Society Development Foundation,** Czech Rep. • *Translation of A Guide to EU Funds 11ed.*

Nov. 2004 – January 2005	**Tereza, association for ecological education,** Czech Republic • *Leader of Fundraising Through Volunteers Project*
August 2004	**NGO Alternative -V Dnipropetrovsk,** Ukraine • *Volunteer at international project* • Ecological conservation work at Crimean mountains
July 2004	**INEX - Association for Voluntary Activities,** Czech Republic • *Leading international environmental project of voluntary service*
March – June 2004	**Tereza, association for ecological education,** Czech Republic • *Volunteer of Fundraising Department*
September – December 2003	**Prague Business Partners,** Czech Republic • *Director's assistant* • Conduct market research for potential start-up of the university
January – March 2001	**Czech Statistical Authority,** Prague, Czech Republic • *Census Commissar* • Working with personal confidential information of Czech Republic citizens • Delivering materials, explain, retrieve, assort information
September – October 2000	**IMF, WB Group, Boards of Governors Annual Meetings, Prague 2000** *(ADECCO, spol. s.r.o., Prague,* Czech Republic*)* • Interpret to international delegations and security, messenger duties • Managing shift of interpreters and messengers

AWARDS/SCHOLARSHIPS

2001 – 2004 sessions	*Dean's Honor List* (top 5% of students), University of New York/Prague
2002 autumn session	*Higher Education Support Program Mobility Grant*, Open Society Institute Zug Foundation, Budapest, Hungary
2001 – 2003 spring sessions	*Academic Excellence Scholarship* (twice for highest and once of 2nd highest GPA), University of New York/Prague

PUBLICATIONS

Bulla, Martin and David Starr-Glass (2006). "Marketing and Nonprofit Organizations in the Czech Republic". ***European Journal of Marketing*** Vol. 40 No. 1/2: pp. 130-144. Available at www.emeraldinsight.com/10.1108/03090560610637356

Dobes, Vladimir and Martin Bulla (2006). "EKODESIGN". ***Environmentalni ASPEKTY podnikani*** 1/2006: pp. 5-7.

Bulla, Martin, and Barbora Viltova (2006). "Interview: Christopher Day v České republice." ***ERA21: more on architecture!*** 6 (4/2006): pp. 8

INTERESTS

- Trekking, climbing, mountaineering, traveling, learning about different cultures
- Yoga, salsa, skiing, squash, swimming, tennis, windsurfing, etc.
- Languages, philosophy, photography, reading, theatre, music

APPENDIX 1

ELECTRONIC VERSION OF THE DISSERTATION (CD)